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Special Issue

June Fourth at 25:
The Quarter-Century Legacy of Tiananmen

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Special Issue

June Fourth at 25: The Quarter-Century Legacy of Tiananmen

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SPECIAL COMMENTARY

The Reemergence of Public Intellectuals in Late Twentieth-Century China: Reflections on the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of Tiananmen / Merle Goldman

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BOOK REVIEW

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Special Issue

June Fourth at 25

The Quarter-Century Legacy of Tiananmen

Special Issue Editor

Emile Kok-Kheng Yeoh





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INTRODUCTION

The Long Shadow of Tiananmen: Political Economy of State-Civil Societal Relations in the People's Republic of China Twenty-five Years On

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Abstract

At the 25th anniversary of the 1989 Tiananmen demonstrations and June Fourth crackdown in Beijing, this article examines the legacy of the tumultuous episode unprecedented in the history of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and scrutinizes the prospects and challenges in the struggle of post-1989 Chinese dissent and nonviolent action (NVA), both exiled and domestic, in the context of State-civil societal relations. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP)'s Party-State domination has so far continued to be stable, with the NVA movements being disadvantaged by both a low degree of internal solidarity and organization as well as numerical weakness to effectively engage in concerted action, vis-à-vis the same factors on the side of the State. Without any impending national economic crisis, military defeat or internal power struggle severe enough to destroy the CCP's ruling echelon from within and with no sign of the weakening of the State's will and machinery to suppress those who dare to challenge the CCP's self-justified legitimacy to rule without being elected to do so, the Party's rule looks set to continue to stay strong and political democratization of China seems destined to be long in coming.





Ironically, the CCP's present consensus-based collective leadership, while supposed to prevent the rise of another disastrously strong leader like Mao Zedong, will count against quick democratization too. Against this backdrop, taking into consideration the divergence and convergence of the strategic and ideological approaches of the democracy movement and civil rights activism as well as the corresponding factors of instrumental activities, bargaining power and ideology on the part of the Party-State, the article analyses the conflict and reluctant symbiosis across the unfortunate State-society divide, assesses the tribulations and prospects of contemporary Chinese dissent and NVA, and ponders on the potential for political change.

Keywords: *June Fourth, Tiananmen, Chinese Communist Party, authoritarianism, Party-State, dissent, non-violent action, democracy movement, weiquan activism*

JEL classification: *H11, H12, K49, Z18*

... while I recognize the dangers to truth of relating scholarship to life,
I also believe that we who live by the pen bear some measure of
obligation, however tenuous, to those who die by the sword.

Alan Wood, "Preface" to *Limits to autocracy* (1995)¹

1. Introduction

On 17th April 2014, Gabriel José de la Concordia García Márquez (6 March 1927 – 17 April 2014), Colombian laureate of Neustadt International Prize for Literature (1972) and Nobel Prize in Literature (1982) and author of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967), *The Autumn of the Patriarch* (1975) and *Love in the Time of Cholera* (1985), passed away at the advanced age of 87. "In *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel García Márquez the banana company [...] massacred three thousand striking workers in the main square of Macondo. After the killings there was a cleanup so perfect that the incident could be flatly denied. It never took place, except in the memory of José Arcadio Segundo, who saw it all", notes Salman Rushdie, the 1981 Booker Prize



laureate and 1999 Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, in *Joseph Anton* (2012) while referring to the 3rd-4th June 1989 Beijing 北京 massacre. "Against ruthlessness, remembering was the only defense", adds the fugitive writer who was the thirteenth on *The Times*'s 2008 list of the fifty greatest British writers since 1945, "The Chinese leadership knew this: that memory was the enemy."²

The massacre in García Márquez's story is fictitious, just like the fictional village of Macondo where it happened. That occurred in June 1989 is not, although the Chinese Communist Party's government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) has spent the last twenty-five years trying to convince a generation that has grown up after 1989 that it is. Yet, "certain events are so monumental, so symbolic, so glorious, and speak so eloquently to our highest ideals that they transcend the immediacy of the news", as Howard Chapnick observes in his foreword to *Beijing Spring* (1989), "History demands that they be preserved."³

This special issue of the *International Journal of China Studies – June Fourth at 25: The quarter-century legacy of Tiananmen* – represents a collection of papers in commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the poignant events in Beijing in 1989: the hundred-day demonstrations⁴ in Tiananmen⁵ 天安门 Square, as the world watched as "incredulous spectators as the Chinese students dared to dream what became an impossible dream"⁶, culminating in the bloody crackdown on that fateful night of 3rd-4th June, when a besieged regime finally responded with a massacre to reclaim the capital from the unarmed peaceful protesters. Chang'an Avenue/Chang'an Jie 长安街 (literally "Street of Eternal Peace") was the main theatre of the June Fourth massacre that spanned across Beijing when People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops fired into the crowds blocking their advance towards Tiananmen Square during that fateful night of 3rd-4th June 1989. Massacre along Chang'an Avenue/Boulevard (with heaviest casualty on the night of 3th-4th June 1989 but as a whole lasted from about 10 p.m. of 3rd June to the midnight of 5th June) mainly occurred along the route of PLA advance at the Wanshou Lu 万寿路 junction, Muxidi 木樨地 intersection, Fuxingmen 复兴门 (Fuxing, i.e., "revival", Gate) outside Yanjing Hotel (燕京饭店) and Minzu Hotel (民族饭店), and Xidan

Bei Dajie 西单北大街 (Xidan North Street) junction along West Chang'an Avenue at Xinhua Gate 新华门 (Xinhua, i.e. "new China", Gate) and Nan Chang Jie 南长街 junction onto Tiananmen Square (天安门广场) from the western side and from the eastern side of the Chang'an Avenue near Hongmiao 红庙 to Jianguomen 建国门 (Jianguo, i.e. "nation founding/building", Gate), along East Chang'an Avenue near Beijing Hotel (北京饭店) and Nanchizi Dajie 南池子大街 (South Chizi Street) junction onto Tiananmen Square.⁷ In addition, massacre also occurred along Qianmen Dajie 前门大街 (Qianmen, i.e. "front gate", Street – PLA's southern approach to Tiananmen that night), at Chongwenmen 崇文门 (Chongwen, i.e. "culture/civilization revering", Gate), between Jianguomen and Chaoyangmen 朝阳门 (Chaoyang, i.e. "sun facing", Gate), the approach to the university district and around Peking University (北京大学), Yiheyuan 颐和园 (Summer Palace imperial garden) and Tsinghua University (清华大学).⁸ Outside Beijing, similar massacre at that time mainly occurred in Sichuan Province's capital city of Chengdu 成都。

While the official death toll stood at four hundred and forty-three, 223 of whom were soldiers and police officers, plus 5,000 soldiers and police officers and 2,000 civilians wounded in the crackdown, exiled dissidents estimated the number of civilians, workers and students killed in the Beijing crackdown during the night of 3rd-4th June 1989 to be from 2,000 to 3,000⁹, while Soviet sources in 1989 put the number massacred in Beijing as 3,000, as cited by Mikhail Gorbachev at a politburo meeting in 1989¹⁰:

Not only is Peking a nightmare streetscape awash in atrocity and anguish; the nation at large has become a haunted land. This howling, lurching megaghost is the Chinese Communist Party. In one staggeringly brutal stroke, it shot itself through the heart. It will not recover. A regime that professes itself to be the distillation of popular will has turned on the Chinese people, committing the ultimate sacrilege of eating its own children. Hundreds of China's brightest, most idealistic sons and daughters, their movement commanding wide public sympathy, were nakedly sacrificed to the cause of preserving an élite.

(*Asiaweek*, 16th June 1989, p. 16)

While *Asiaweek* in its 16th June 1989 editorial “The Rape of Peking” lamented a Goya-esque landscape, these lines seem today, by hindsight, a gross underestimation of the resiliency of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)¹¹ and the effectiveness of authoritarian power, given the stark asymmetry in power relations and one-sided monopoly of violence.

In the process of maintaining a tight grip on political power in ensuring the CCP’s perpetuation of its Party-State monopoly while delivering on the economic front and bringing prosperity and wellbeing to the long-suffering people of this giant country, the neo-authoritarian developmentalism followed since June Fourth could be leading the country on a path threaded before by various East Asian countries like Taiwan (Republic of China) and Singapore – a model sometimes termed “State corporatism”. When the enraged and desperate Beijing citizens yelled “fascists” at the rampaging People’s Liberation Army (PLA) armoured vehicles on that murderous night of 3rd-4th June 1989, when Chai Ling 柴玲 in hiding screamed “fascists” in her taped condemnation of the massacre shortly following that night of terror, when that lone individual¹² stood in front of and blocked a column of tanks signifying terrifying State power in that poignant image reminiscent of Pablo Picasso’s *Guernica*¹³, when melancholy and despair descended upon and the tune of *Xueran de Fengcai* 血染的风采¹⁴ surrounded the hunger strikers in the Tiananmen Square, there was little telling of the course to come to pass in China’s subsequent political involvement. “Fascism” could eventually prove to be an overstatement – other than that night’s slaughter and subsequent arrests and executions, nothing that came in this one-party state in the aftermath of June Fourth remotely approached Franco’s repression against the defeated Republicans and their supporters in the dictator’s “no-party” State¹⁵ immediately following the end of the civil war, though the term could still be in a certain way fitting if it is defined as the requirement for the faith in and unquestioning loyalty to the one-party State (or in the case of Franco’s Spain, in particular to the *Caudillo*). The post-June Fourth State corporatism, or referred to by some observers as “Leninist corporatism”¹⁶, could provide a closer resemblance to Franco’s *Nuevo*

Estado (New State), and the “harmonious society” vision declared in recent years does recall Franco’s vision of social cohesion and harmonious relationship between employers and workers via corporatism that would promote a close collaboration between them under the direction of the State and his corporatist policies to regulate the economy by controlling the conditions of work, wages, prices, production and exchange. What has turned out to be is that decades after the June 1989 massacre, notes Jean-Philippe Béja (2009), China represents “doubtless a post-totalitarian regime [continues to be] ruled by a ruthless Party [which] seems to have reinforced its legitimacy”:

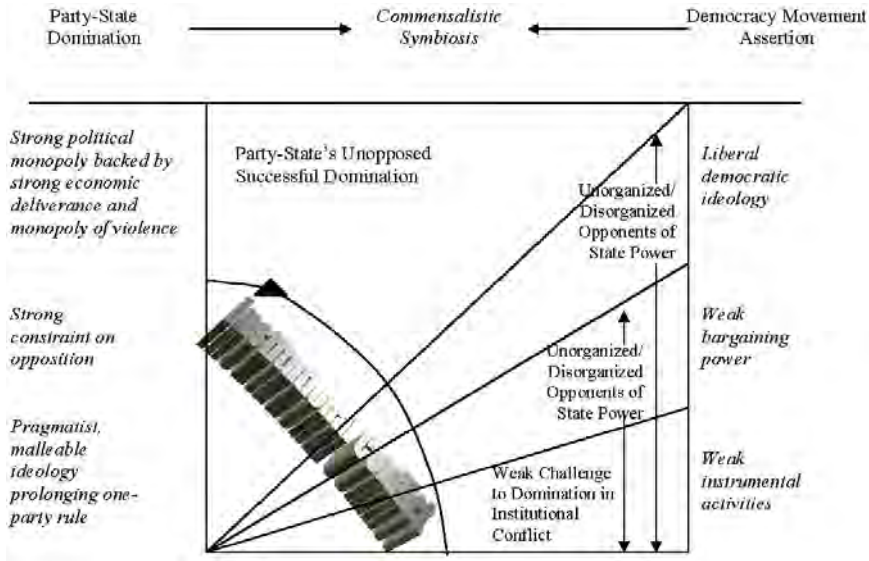
[The CCP] has not followed the communist regimes of the Soviet bloc into oblivion. Its policies of elite cooptation, subtle response to social contradictions, and instrumental support for the “rule of law” have become major complements to its continued control over the press and the political system. It has made concessions to prevent discontent from crystallizing into social movements that might challenge its rule, and it has sent in the police to silence dissidents. Over the course of the same two decades, the opposition has had to wrestle with the trauma of the June 4 Massacre and the huge difficulties that it has raised for anyone who would challenge the CCP’s primacy.

(Béja, 2009: 14-15)

2. The Long Wait for Deliverance: What Does the 25th Anniversary of June Fourth Hold for Chinese Nonviolent Action (NVA) Movements?

Facing an entrenched CCP looking increasingly formidable, China’s democracy movement by contrast has been seen to be mired by organizational disorder and lack of institutional construction, short of leadership talent, lack of true democratic organizational framework and spirit of devotion, over-reliance on external power and short of pro-activeness, according to Ch’en (1995: 131-134). In other words, the movement is characterized by relative weakness not only in bargaining power but also in the instrumental activities which of course affected its bargaining power too, as portrayed in Figure 1.

Figure 1 State Domination and NVA Assertion: Commensalistic Symbiosis



Source: Yeoh (2013a: 293), Figure 12.4. Schema based on Vaughan and Archer (1971: 16-32).

While the earliest democracy movements germinated in the PRC around 1978, may it be the “Beijing Spring” Democracy Wall/*dazibao* 大字报 movement or the democracy movement organized by Fu Yuehua 傅月华 and Wei Jingsheng 魏京生, strictly speaking these could not be considered organized movements; and well-known intellectuals like Liu Binyan 刘宾雁, Li Honglin 李洪林, Wang Ruoshui 王若水, Yan Jiaqi 严家其, Fang Lizhi 方励之, Su Shaozhi 苏绍智 and Wen Yuankai 温元凯 who were either social thinkers or critics of CCP’s bureaucratism were rarely involved in matters of movement organization, Ch’en remarks, whether due to political implausibility or perception as unnecessary by personal objective (Ch’en, 1995:128-129). Two Chinese democracy movements that take matters of organization seriously are,

according to Ch'en, the Chinese Alliance for Democracy (中国民主团结联盟) and the Federation for a Democratic China (民主中国阵线). The Chinese Alliance for Democracy was founded in the United States on 27th November 1983 (developed from the "China Spring" movement initiated earlier in the year), i.e. six years before the Beijing massacre, by Wang Bingzhang 王炳章, Liang Heng 梁恒, Huan Guocang 宦国苍 and Li Lin 李林 and has since developed into a large China political pressure group overseas with over 2,000 members and over 50 divisions and branches in places such as Japan, Hong Kong 香港, France, Germany, United Kingdom and Australia. The Federation for a Democratic China, proposed on 2nd July 1989 by the intellectuals and activists just escaped from China immediately after the June Fourth massacre including Yan Jiaqi, Örkesh Dölet (Wu'erkaixi 吾尔开希), Wan Runnan 万润南, Su Shaozhi and Liu Binyan, and officially established on 22nd September 1989, is also a large organization with about 1,500 members, headquartered in Paris with liaison offices in America, Europe and the Asia Pacific. (*ibid.*: 129-130)

2.1. Chinese Democracy Movement in Exile since June Fourth, 1989

Nevertheless, effectively the history of the major part of the Chinese democracy movement in exile should be traced back to the June Fourth Beijing massacre of 1989. Many pro-democracy organizations were born during that tumultuous hundred-day mass protests and these included the China Support Network (CSN), Human Rights in China (HRIC) and the Independent Federation of Chinese Students and Scholars (IFCSS). New groups emerged in the years following the massacre: besides the abovementioned Federation for a Democratic China, these include the Party for Freedom and Democracy in China (PFDC) founded in 1991, the Wei Jingsheng Foundation and the Overseas Chinese Democracy Coalition¹⁷, the Free China Movement founded in 1998 led by Lian Shengde 连胜德, as well as the new anti-CCP news outlets formed at the turn of the new millennium – *The Epoch Times* (*Dajiyuan* 大纪元), the New Tang Dynasty Television and the Sound of Hope Radio – during the beginning of the crackdown on Falungong 法轮功. However, the core of the democracy movement in exile which is still mainly made up

loosely of such US-based organizations like China Alliance for Democracy, the Federation for a Democratic China and the IFCSS appears fragmented and suffers from internal disputes, factional strife and in-fighting, and has little impact against CCP's continued one-party rule in China, owing in no small measure to the miraculous economic performance and impressive poverty reduction record of China since the bloody crackdown of 1989, the liberalization of the Chinese society accompanying the no-holds-barred market reform and increasing degree of intra-CCP democratization even while the party's monopoly of political power remains ruthlessly non-negotiable.

2.1.1. Organizational effectiveness

In terms of organizational structure, the Chinese Alliance for Democracy consists of the coordinating tiers of headquarter, divisions, branches and smaller groups, supervising committee produced by elections, and tripartite division of power between its alliance committee, supervising committee and headquarter for legislation, supervision and administration respectively in mutual cooperation and restraint, as well as eight departments of information, contact, theoretical study, action planning, organization, finance, magazine (*Zhongguo zhi Chun* 中国之春 / *China Spring*) and radio (*ibid.*: 129-130). The Federation for a Democratic China, on the other hand, is made up of the representative assembly (top authority), executive council, supervising council and secretariat, and seven specialized committees under the executive council overseeing foreign policy, mainland policy, Taiwan relations, students overseas, human rights, consultation and fund collection. While admitting that movements such as the Chinese Alliance for Democracy and the Federation for a Democratic China do exhibit proper organizational structure, Ch'en is doubtful of their structural effectiveness given their loose and encumbering nature and hence the lack of precision and compactness, a trait which he describes as having a structural "shape" but without structure "contents", hence without any significant political effectiveness (*ibid.*: 130-131).

In terms of organizational purpose, the Chinese Alliance for Democracy's stated objectives include breaking through news blockade

and strengthening propaganda offensive towards PRC, enhancing contacts inside PRC, rescuing and providing long-term assistance to democracy activists, formulating strategies in fighting for freedom and democracy, studying steps of nation-state construction, strengthening international relations, doing well internal contact work, cultivating democratic quality, strengthening internal construction and enhancing alliance abroad for the possibility of forming a party (*ibid.*: 129-130). The Federation for a Democratic China's basic ideals, on the other hand, consist of protecting fundamental human rights, defending social justice, developing private economy, ending one-party political monopoly, with the ultimate objective of establishing a democratic China. All these objectives and ideals showcase the typical strategic direction of long-term struggle for systemic change (revolutionary objective of bringing down CCP's one-party authoritarianism) as shown in the second column of Table 1, and the ideological orientation of viewing the movement's and the Party-State's interests as incompatible (thus rejecting the compromise solution of a *dictablanda*¹⁸ or a benevolent ruler within the

Table 1 Chinese Democracy Movement and *Weiquan* (Civil Rights-defending) Activism: The Strategic Dimension

	Democracy Movement	<i>Weiquan</i> Action
Criterion	Transformative, revolutionist	Reformative, involuntional
Analysis of Social Framework	Relatively structural; focusing on a structural analysis of overall sociopolitical relationships	Relatively conservative; focusing on a particular goal within an existing sociopolitical framework
Aim	Revolution (planned change of <i>system</i>)	Reform (planned change of <i>elements</i> within a system)
Operational Timeframe	Long Term	Short/Medium Term

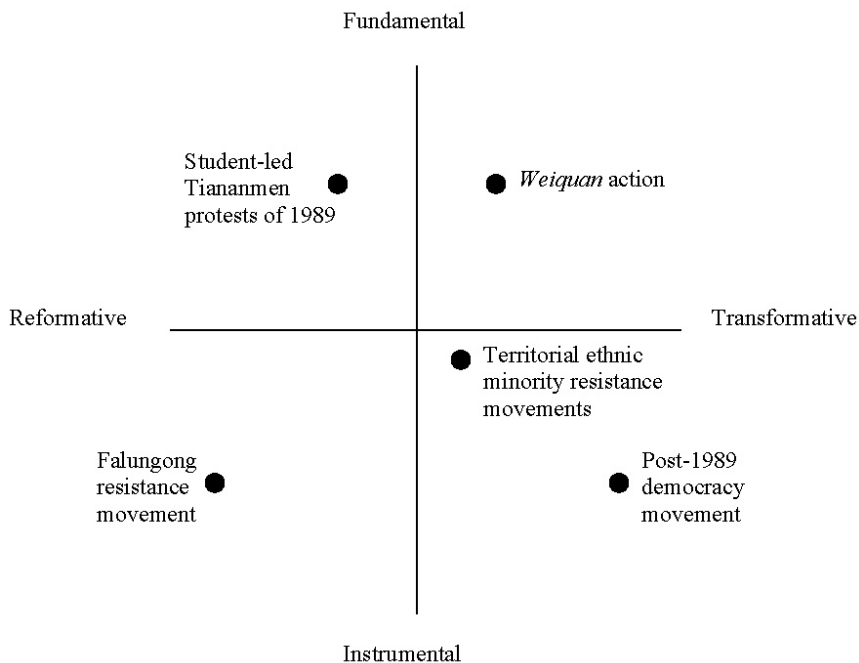
Source: Yeoh (2013a: 322), Table 12.5. Based on framework from Weber and Burrowes (1991); Vinthagen (2010).

Table 2 Chinese Democracy Movement and *Weiquan* (Civil Rights-defending) Activism: The Ideological Dimension

	Democracy Movement	<i>Weiquan</i> Action
Criterion	Instrumental, practical	Fundamental, ideational
Nature of Commitment	Despite lack of progress, still committed to NVA as the most plausible and effective means to effect change	Despite State persecution under the pretext of <i>weiwun</i> , still committed to NVA as ethically best in fighting for social justice
Means and Ends	Relentless persecution by the Party-State and frustration over lack of progress of a moderate approach could be leading to belief that means and ends are separable, precipitating radicalism, e.g. justification of “lies against lies” in media combat, especially in territorial ethnic minority resistance movements which could more easily foster a “we vs. they” mentality	Believing in the unity and indivisibility of means and ends, because the end can never justify the means “for the simple and obvious reason that the means employed determine the nature of the ends produced” (Huxley, 1938: 9)
Approach to Conflict with the Party-State	Incompatible interests; aiming at terminating one-party political monopoly and replacing it with multi-party free and fair electoral system; rejecting the compromise solution of a <i>dictablanda</i> or a benevolent ruler within the Party-State	Shared interests, at least with the more liberal, reformist and moderate faction within the Party-State; looking more for synergy of action together with “enlightened” members of the central Party-State against local corruption and abuse of power
Approach to Opponent (Party-State)	Disillusioned with the traditional idea of waiting for an “enlightened ruler” (<i>mingjun</i> 明君) within the system (imperial court in the old days; the one-party State today), hence in a competitive relationship with ruling Party-State to destroy the Party’s political monopoly	Seeking cooperation at least with the more liberal, reformist and moderate faction within the Party-State to <i>zuozhu</i> 作主 (enforce justice) for the people

Source: Yeoh (2013a: 323), Table 12.6. Based on framework from Weber and Burrowes (1991); Vinthagen (2010).

Figure 2 Matrix of Chinese NVA



Source: Yeoh (2013a: 296), Figure 12.5.

Party-State) and aiming at terminating one-party political monopoly and replacing it with multi-party free and fair electoral system, as shown in the second column of Table 2. Such strategic direction and ideological orientation also places the post-1989 democracy movements far toward the “transformative” end of the “reformative-transformative” spectrum of nonviolent action (NVA) matrix in Figure 2.

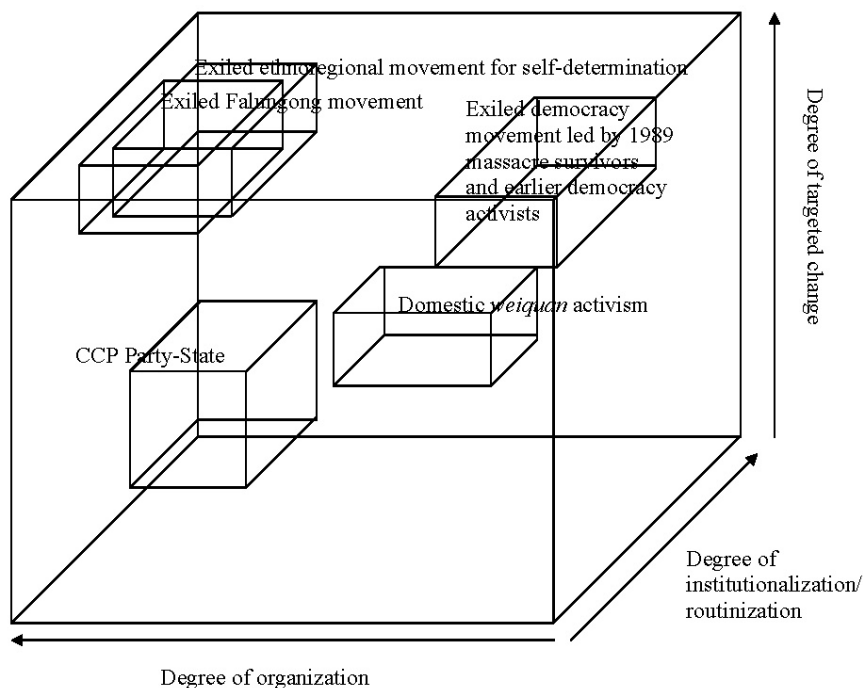
Further on the democracy movements’ organizational effectiveness, Ch’en (1995) attributed the internal strife, susceptibility to infiltrating control and potential for breaking up (e.g. power struggle between the former presidents Wang Bingzhang and Hu Ping 胡平 of the Chinese

Alliance for Democracy and Wang Bingzhang's breaking way to form the China Democracy Party (中国民主党) to the movements' encumbering and loose organizational structure (Ch'en, 1995: 131). Not only that these movements are accused of lacking in grassroots participation, they are also criticized for being headed by "celebrities" who lack skills of organization, administration and leadership especially those formed by exiled activists after the 1989 Tiananmen demonstrations, lacking in devotional spirit despite the emphasis on democracy in organizational structure taken at face value, and lacking in power of mobilization and influence leading to over-relying on the hope of external shocks in the form of China's domestic disturbances and upheavals which are more often than not only reflecting the movement leaders' simplistic personal subjective evaluations and whimsical predictions (*ibid.*: 132-134). Such an unenviable situation is reflected in the imbalance in the democracy movement's assertion (right vertical axis) vs. the Party-State's domination (left vertical axis) configuration in Figure 1 earlier, and the contrast between the Party-State and the exiled democracy movement in terms of the degree of organization (with the exception of the similarly exiled Falungong movement and ethnoregional movement for self-determination) as shown in Figure 3.

2.1.2. Leadership conflicts

In contrast with cases such as Burma, it is a fact that contemporary Chinese dissent and NVA suffer from a lack of leadership – the lack of a "centre", an Aung San Suu Kyi. While the Tibetan resistance movement has its 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso¹⁹, and its Uyghur counterpart has Rebiya Kadeer, there is no single figure in the democracy movement for the exiled democracy activists or their counterparts within China to coalesce around – neither Wei Jingsheng nor Dr Liu Xiaobo 刘晓波²⁰, nor any of the exiled former Tiananmen student activists or former labour leaders like Han Dongfang 韩东方. Neither is there any such figure among the relentlessly harassed *weiquan* 维权 (civil rights-defending) activists in the country. Chen Guangcheng 陈光诚's indomitable spirit underlined by his disability and accentuated by his incredible escape might make him the much needed symbol of struggle

Figure 3 Chinese NVA and the Party-State: Typology of Political Actions



Source: Based on Zhao (2008: 767), Figure 26-1.

but he is now also exiled, with little hope of returning to China. It can of course be argued that the democracy movement's fragmentation and the squabbling between Chinese dissidents could also have the potential of being turned into an advantage. After all, democracy is and has to be a messy business, in contrast with an authoritarian system – a “China model” as such – where decision making is usually very much facilitated by the existence of a strongman or a party that monopolizes political power by force. “You pays your money and takes your choice”, as

Aldous Leonard Huxley says in his 1946 foreword to *Brave New World* (1932). That said, the lack of solidarity and a united front, nevertheless, still make the movement look weak or even pathetic.

Xu Zhiyuan 許知遠 in his book *Weizhuang de shengshi* 偽裝的盛世 [feign flourishing age of prosperity] (2012) attributes the endless squabbling between Chinese dissidents to their being products of a totalitarian system and their terrifying experiences under the system, their language and behaviour being a continuation of the system. Witness the astonishing reversal of attitude from Wei Jingsheng's calling in the *International Herald Tribune* on President Barack Obama to exert pressure on China to release Liu Xiaobo when the latter was sentenced to 11 years of imprisonment to Wei's later scathing attack on the Nobel Committee and Liu whom he deemed was unworthy of the Peace Prize, citing Liu's denial of seeing massacre occurring "on" Tiananmen Square during the crackdown on the night of 3rd-4th June 1989 besides accusing him of being too moderate. It is noteworthy that in a commentary essay in May 1989 Liu had accused the Chinese intellectuals of being hypocritical and servile in their outpouring of accolades towards the just deceased Hu Yaobang 胡耀邦 – the tidal wave of grieve being chock-full of the longing for a benevolent, enlightened ruler (*mingjun*) – in contrast with their cold, unconcerned attitude towards the decade-long incarcerated Chinese democracy activist and human rights and freedom fighter Wei Jingsheng. (Xu, 2012: 53-55) One could not help but wonder whether the Nobel Committee's ignoring Wei Jingsheng, the grand avant-garde of post-Cultural Revolution Chinese democracy activism whose era-shaking manifesto "The Fifth Modernization" (i.e. democracy)²¹ in 1978 landed him a 15-year jail term followed by continuous subsequent persecution before being exiled in 1997, to bestowed the Peace Prize on the newly jailed Liu Xiaobo instead of, more fairly, making the two joint laureates was inadvertently sowing the seed of discord between the two most likely towering leaders of a future post-CCP China should one-party authoritarianism finally give way to multi-party liberal democracy.

Such internal strives and disarrays are also evident, for instance, in Feng Congde 封從德's *Liu-si riji* 六四日記 (*A Tiananmen journal*)

published in 2009, one of the latest first-hand accounts of the 1989 Tiananmen demonstrations and Beijing massacre in print, whose postscript and chapter notes reveal a dismal web of scapegoating, intrigue, clash of egos, personal agenda and even insinuations of planted moles and agents provocateurs.

Indeed, Wei Jingsheng's attack on Liu Xiaobo's Nobel award of 2010 was just a repeat of a past episode, as Xu reminds us, when Wei himself was first exiled to Washington and was subjected to public denunciation by a furious Wang Xizhe 王希哲 who was exiled much earlier than him for the tidal wave of attention which greeted Wei in 1997 had deeply hurt the much earlier champion of Chinese democracy, by then largely forgotten by the public (Xu, 2012: 54-55). It was the same playing out of histrionics came 2010. Xu asks us to understand such intriguing phenomenon by looking at the CCP's brutality, since Mao Zedong 毛泽东's time, of thought reconstruction, of destroying personality, and the inhumanity in Chinese prisons and labour camps (*ibid.*: 55) – just witness how Li Wangyang 李旺阳 was tortured and broken and stripped of all dignity of a human being over the 23 years' repeated imprisonment since the June Fourth massacre.

At the time in 2012 when the image of Li Wangyang broken by long years of beating and torture and his suspicious death was brought into the world's limelight, attention was also directed to the plight of those still in jail since participating in the demonstrations in 1989 or in fighting back against the rampaging PLA across Beijing. According to the San Francisco-based watchdog Dui Hua Foundation (中美对话基金会) in 2012, of the 1,602 people thus jailed, seven has still not been released and long years of imprisonment and ill treatment had not only led to a broken body like the case of Li Wangyang but also mental disease, like the activist Yu Rong 余蓉. Li Yujun 李玉君, a hawker who fought the PLA with a burning oil cart during the June 1989 crackdown, who was released in May 2012 after his 23-year long imprisonment, but placed under surveillance for another 8 years, was also said to suffer from mental illness and a broken body after long years of ill treatment and beating in jail.²²

While the 23-year imprisonment, beating and torture, and ultimately death, of Li Wangyang could be seen to epitomize the fate of Chinese democracy movement and the inhuman extent to which the Chinese State machinery could be used to crush any expression of dissent and defiance, the suicide of Zha Weilin 轧伟林²³ truly symbolizes the increasing dejection and despondency of those who are struggling to hold on to their principled but forlorn fight for justice in an environment devoid of political morality and decency, where two decades of relentless censorship and GDPism have resulted in the prevalent political apathy, acquiescence and resignation among the citizenry.²⁴ As a response to such a reality, to the great masses now with improved living standard under CCP's brave new world of rugged capitalism, money-making and free-market hedonism represent the rule of the day, while for the powerless intellectuals who still have a principled commitment to social justice founded upon political freedom and human dignity, what lies ahead is a bleak future for the ruminating selves of "human reflexivity [...] in situations that were not of [their own] making" (Archer, 2003: 342), "[...] a tremendous void. A pale gray nothingness that is all [one's] future holds", as that grimly described in a recent dystopian novel, Suzanne Collins's *Mockingjay* (2010)²⁵.

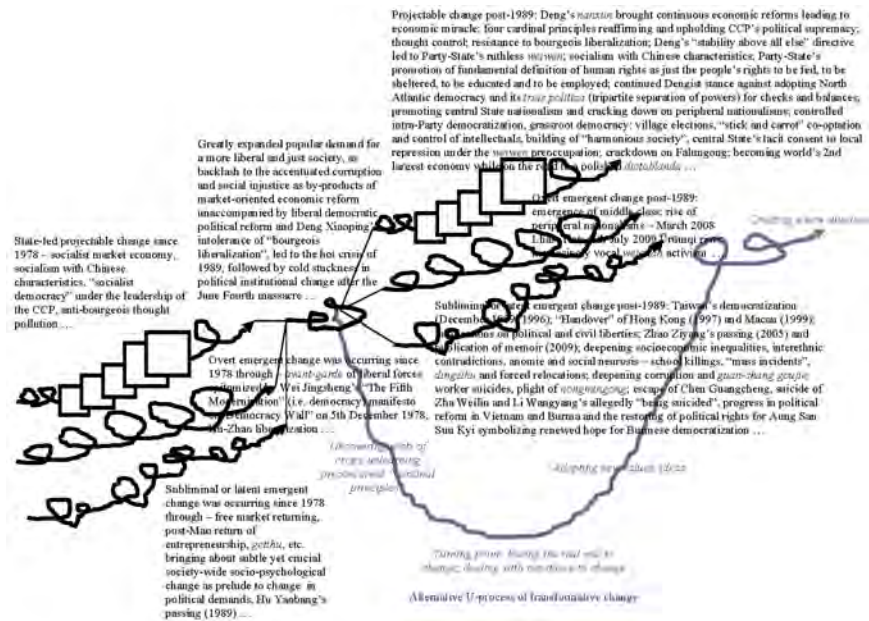
According to an *Apple Daily* (蘋果日報, Hong Kong) report in February 2014 citing Beijing artist Wu Wenjian 武文建 who as a seventeen-year-old youth was sentenced to 7 years of imprisonment for the crime of "anti-revolutionary propaganda instigation" during the June 1989 crackdown, there is still one last known death-row "June Fourth" inmate called Miao Deshun 苗德顺, sentenced to death for helping to burn a tank during the 1989 Beijing massacre but with two years' probation, who has spent the last 25 years in prison suffering from repeated beating by prison guards with electric baton for unrepentant insubordination and rejecting hard labour correction. According to his relatives, Miao is still presently being incarcerated in Beijing's Yanqing 延庆 jail, and as Yanqing is a prison for the old, sick and disabled, Wu is not optimistic about the health condition, after a quarter of a century's ill treatment in jail, of this valiant youth who stood up in 1989 against the army of a government that shot its own citizens.²⁶

Looking at such State brutality, it is not difficult to concur with Xu that Wei Jingsheng, Liu Xiaobo, Wang Xizhe and countless other less well-known dissidents are not personalities in a beautiful fairy tales. So aren't the exiled survivors and Tiananmen student leaders of the 1989 massacre. These dissidents who have at least valiantly stood up for freedom and justice at the respective critical junctures also have their respective personal shortcomings and tragic experiences at the hands of a ruthless State, and squabbling and mutual accusations, cautions Xu, are but part of a long journey without an always clear direction and not necessarily leading us towards a conclusion we would expect (*ibid.*: 55).

2.2. The Other Track of Chinese NVA since 1989: Weiquan Activism

Sending the prominent dissidents into exile – be they democracy activists like Wei Jingsheng, leading Tiananmen student leaders or well-known *weiquan* activists like Cheng Guangcheng – has always been a way out for the Chinese government if it deemed continued persecution too damaging in terms of its diplomatic and economic relations with the West and the rest of the world community. Nevertheless, a different tactic is usually employed to deal with dissidents especially dissident movement leaders who are less well-known. These key organizers of dissident movements are usually charged with crimes like endangering state security or revealing official secrets and sentenced to long imprisonment. At the same time, the government would act as a benevolent patriarch to attempt to address the grievances that had given rise to the movements in the first place. In this way, the government takes back the control of public discourse and makes the movements and their leaders irrelevant and hence nipping any sign of “deviation-amplification” in the bud before it could take the first step to trigger systemic change, all under the façade of territorial unity, political stability and a “harmonious society” (*hexie shehui* 和谐社会), the key conceptual cornerstone since the Sixth Plenary Session of the 16th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in October 2006 passed the “Resolution on Major Issues Regarding the Building of a Harmonious Socialist Society” (关于构建社会主义和谐社会若干重大问题的决定).

Figure 4 China's Sociopolitical and Socioeconomic Transformation Pre- and Post-June Fourth, 1989: Projectable and Overt and Subliminal/Latent Emergent Changes



Source: Yeoh (2013a: 284), Figure 12.1.

This is how modern dictators work, in contrast to the despots of the yesteryears, notes William Dobson in *The dictator’s learning curve* (2012), “in the more ambiguous spectrum that exists between democracy and authoritarianism. Most strive to win their people’s support by making them content, but failing that, they are happy to keep their critics off balance through fear and selective forms of intimidation.” (Dobson, 2012, ppb 2013: 6) By sending the leading activists of the New Citizens’ Movement to prison and with the detention of another dozen of activists similarly involved in pressing for asset disclosure by officials, the Xi Jinping 习近平 administration is warning the civil society that his CCP

one-party State remains the sole authority to implement the anti-corruption campaign and it has its discretion to do it in its own way (see projectable changes in Figure 4, as against the societal emergent changes²⁷) even if that means doing it with selective investigation and prosecution very much tied to intra-CCP factional rivalry, and pressure from societal activism in this regard would never be tolerated and would continue to be seen as organized challenge to the CCP rule.

The CCP's current treatment of *weiquan* activism is intriguing, for a distinction between system-threatening and non-system-threatening protests has always been important for explaining State response in the PRC. Referring to Muslim marchers in 1989 protesting the publication of a Chinese book entitled *Xing fengsu* 性风俗 [sexual customs] that they claimed denigrated Islam, Dru Gladney (1991) drew a parallel with the other, more well-known, protest of 1989:

Just prior to the bloody suppression of the 1989 democracy movement in China, in the midst of the flood of protesting students and workers who, for a remarkably lengthy moment in history, marched relatively unimpeded across Tiananmen Square and the screens of the world's television sets, another comparatively unnoticed, but nevertheless significant, procession took place [...] the protest began with mainly Hui Muslim students who were joined by representatives of all 10 Muslim nationalities in China, including some sympathetic members of the Han Chinese majority [...] this procession was on its way to Tiananmen Square, the so-called "Gate of Heavenly Peace", which soon opened on to a hellish nightmare of indiscriminate warfare in the streets of the terrorized city. This procession to the Square also made its way along Changan Jie, "the Avenue of Eternal Peace," that shortly thereafter was to be renamed "Bloody Alley" by Beijing's citizens [...] (Gladney, 1991: 1-2)

Gladney moved on further to draw an interesting picture of stark contrast in State responses between this case of "protest *to* the government" and the other case of "protest *against* the government" in those same days staged by the students and workers and their supporters from all walks of life around Beijing and other Chinese cities who eventually paid dearly by blood:

Remarkably, and in another dramatic contrast to the crackdown on the student Pro-Democracy Movement, the state took the following actions in response to this Muslim protest over an insignificant Chinese book: The government granted full permission for all the Muslim protests, often despatching police to close streets, stop traffic, and direct the marchers [...] By stressing the legality of the Muslim protests, what Barbara Pillsbury noted as their “*protest to the government,*” rather than *against* it – the fact that the Muslims had permission and were often escorted by police – the state-controlled press sought to juxtapose the legal Muslim protest with the *illegality* of the student protests.

(*ibid.*: 3-5, italics in the original)

One of the most prominent student leaders who led the pro-democracy demonstrations in Tiananmen Square was Örkesh Dölet (Wu'erkaixi). It is interesting to note that Örkesh Dölet was then a Beijing Normal University student of the Muslim Uyghur nationality. However, unlike the protesters in the parallel State-permitted demonstration in Beijing at that time against *Xing fengsu*, Örkesh Dölet's involvement in leading the pro-democracy movement since the Tiananmen days till today transcends ethnicity, and it was notable that his condemnation – jointly issued on 7th July 2009 with Taiwan's China Human Rights Association (中國人權協會) – of perceived government repression in the July 2009 Xinjiang disturbance was issued, while not denying his ethnic identity, as a civil rights activist²⁸, in comparison with some pronouncements made by former Nobel Peace Prize nominee Rabiya Qadir (Rebiya Kadeer), chairperson of the World Uyghur Congress²⁹. Nevertheless, in the eyes of the Party-State during those turbulent days of 1989:

The students [demonstrating on Tiananmen Square in 1989 against corruption and for democracy], as an unrecognized voluntary association, were considered unlawful, riotous, and a threat to the state's order. For that they were met by a military crackdown. The actions of the Muslims [marching against the book *Xing fengsu*], as members of state-assigned minority nationalities and believing in a world religion approved by the state, were considered permissible. For

that they were inundated with state-sponsored media and assisted in their demands. The difference, from the Chinese state's standpoint, was one of order and disorder, rationality and confusion, law and criminality, reward and punishment.

(Gladney, 1991: 5-6)

Successful it might seem to be, the CCP regime's reassertion of its legitimacy and unassailability has in reality not been immune to a series of challenges, some rather severe and unexpected, since June Fourth, exemplified by the horrific events of March 2008 in Tibet and July 2009 in Xinjiang. Regrettably, in facing such challenges, the regime has never been able to grow out of the tendency to recycle the "black hand" (*heishou* 黑手) theory – the "shopworn conspiracy theories that blame mass protests primarily on the CCP's foreign and domestic enemies, reflecting the classic Leninist insistence that social protest in a Communist country cannot just happen, it must be instigated" (Tanner, 2004: 143) – which is unfortunately so apparent in the ruling regime's response to the Xinjiang crisis or the Tibet riots. For this "black hand" theory, Murray Scot Tanner (2004) gave an example from the 1989 Beijing massacre:

In the days after the Tiananmen demonstrations, this Leninist conspiratorial worldview was typified in a report on the protests issued by Gu Linfang, the Chinese vice minister of public security who was in charge of "political security." To document a conspiracy in 1989, Gu painstakingly listed dozens of allegedly nefarious contacts among protest leaders; reformist Communist officials; foreign academics; and, of course, Western and Taiwanese intelligence agencies. The vice minister railed against party reformers for coddling schemers who fomented rebellion. A Leninist to his marrow, Gu refused to concede any acceptance of what social scientists have known for decades, that whenever a society grows and changes as rapidly as China has, an increase in political protests is a normal development.

(*ibid.*)

Similar State response can be observed following the 5th July 2009 Xinjiang riots when Nur Bekri (Baikeli 白克力), chairman of the Xinjiang Uyghur Zizhiqu, declared on 18th July 2009 the source of the riots being “the triumvirate of terrorist, secessionist and extremist forces”³⁰ and Wu Shimin 吴仕民, vice-chairman of China’s State Ethnic Affairs Commission, stated on 21st July 2009 that the July Fifth riots had absolutely nothing to do with China’s nationality (ethnic minority) policies. Without the courage to face up to domestic realities, any solution to the root problems leading to either June Fourth or July Fifth would remain illusive.

Coming back to *weiquan* activism, the Party-State’s stance is clear: the State welcomes *protests* to it but it retains the full discretion of how to deal with the grievances. Organizing campaign to force the hand of the State like what the New Citizens’ Movement was doing is equated to *protesting against* the State for the action is tantamount to questioning the ability, discretion and ultimately the power, authority and legitimacy of the State, and the action will not be tolerated. Such crackdown on the *weiquan* activists is in spite of the fact that most of their protest activities are expressed in single-issue demonstrations which the one-party State has apparently so far found tolerable to a certain extent. Contrary to the democracy movements, *weiquan* activism does not call for eliminating CCP’s one-party authoritarianism and *weiquan* activists do not deny the possibility of just relying on reform from within the CCP rather than to subject themselves to persecution by the State for the severe crime of “inciting subversion of State power”. Unfortunately, as we have seen earlier, such prudence did not prevent a host of *weiquan* activists from being convicted and given heavy sentences under the charge, though others like the leaders of the New Citizens’ Movement were convicted on a different charge.

In an interview by the *Yangguang Shiwu* 阳光时务 magazine³¹ shortly after she assisted Chen Guangcheng to escape from house arrest, Her Peirong 何培蓉 (“PearlHer”/Zhenzhu 珍珠) reiterated that she was not a pro-democracy activist but just a simple person who felt the need to assist those other civil rights activists who were being persecuted by the authorities ever since, as a volunteer helping the child survivors of

the 2008 Sichuan Province³² earthquake, she got to know about the injustice done to Tan Zuoren 谭作人 and Huang Qi 黄琦 because of their exposure of and investigation into the real death toll of students and the “tofu dregs” (豆腐渣) schoolhouse scandal.³³ Despite her apparent contempt for the Shandong government that perpetuated the injustice towards Chen Guangcheng, Her Peirong said during the interview that she was more concerned with effectiveness of her action than unending rhetoric criticizing the government, for it is always important to leave “face” for the government, i.e. to be realistic in order to open space for positive interaction with the government in solving problems, and that she would rather believe in gradualism in building a democratic society. Such utterances of moderation of course also reflect the vulnerability of the civil rights activists, especially those less known internationally and hence more helpless in the face of State persecution and abuse, who desperately need to protect themselves against the recurring severe charge of “inciting subversion of State power” (煽动颠覆国家政权罪) that the State has been unfailingly using to put them away.

Such divergence in strategic approach and ideological orientation is illustrated in Table 1 and Table 2 earlier. Nevertheless, in the light of the recent arrest and conviction of Xu Zhiyong 许志永 and other leaders of the New Citizens’ Movement (*Zhongguo Xin Gongmin Yundong* 中国新公民运动) and the earlier persecution of Chen Guangcheng, Huang Qi, Tan Zuoren, Zhao Lianhai 赵连海 and others, though some on a different charge, there are apparently points to ponder in veteran artist-civil rights activist Ai Weiwei 艾未未’s expression of disdain for such naivety on the part of the *weiquan* activism: “Xu Zhiyong is representative of many young scholars who focused on social issues and sought practical ways to bring about reform. I know many of them and consider them friends. But when they say they have no enemies, I fear they are being unrealistic.”³⁴

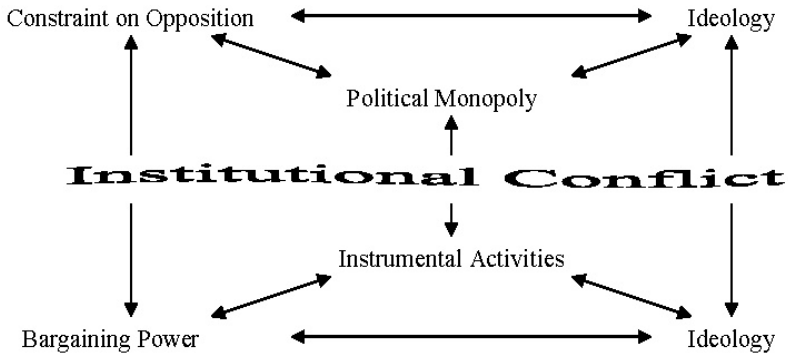
Finally, related to such a divergence, there has been a debate recently even among the pro-democracy activists and June Fourth survivors over the conventional use of the term “*pingfan* 平反” (i.e. to rehabilitate or to redress a mishandled case) in the demand “to *pingfan* June Fourth”. The concern is understandable as the demand for the CCP

regime “to *pingfan* June Fourth” is rightly, as argued by those opposing the use of the term, tantamount to admitting the legitimacy of the CCP regime who is merely asked to rehabilitate the 1989 protests as a patriotic movement, to release those remained jailed for the protests and to apologize to and compensate those injured during the brutal crackdown or persecuted thereafter and families of those who were slain on the Chang’an Avenue and elsewhere in Beijing in June 1989, and to allow the long-exiled former protesters to return home. Hence, while no one doubts the political defiance shown by the exiled democracy movement, the continued use of the word “*pingfan*” could probably explain the internal dilemma concerning the determination and the ultimate aim of the movement and its leadership, as well as throw light upon the current disarray of the movement.

2.3. Necessary Conditions for Assertive Action and Institutional Domination: Democracy Movement and Weiquan Activism vis-à-vis Party-State

The three factors of instrumental activities, bargaining power and ideology, according to Vaughan and Archer (1971), represent necessary (though might not be sufficient) conditions of success for assertive groups. On the other hand, facing these assertive groups is institutional domination whose success also depends upon the existence of three necessary conditions, namely monopoly, constraint and again, ideology. Juxtaposing Vaughan and Archer’s two constructs gives the composite schema as shown in Figure 5. Monopoly is used here in the Weberian sense of the word, referring to CCP’s monopoly of political power. The corresponding feature on the side of democracy movement or civil rights activism comprises instrumental activities defined as the sum of actions to devalue the political monopoly of the authoritarian ruling party on which domination is based.

For the dissidents, instrumental activities are not enough, whether for successful civil rights assertion or striving for political liberalization. Bargaining power, according to Vaughan and Archer, is as necessary as “an alternative to the use of violence and yet implies a degree of

Figure 5 Assertion, Constraint and Institutional Conflict

Source: Yeoh (2013a: 288), Figure 12.2. Schema based on Vaughan and Archer (1971: 16-32).

organization which would make revolt effective if reform were denied” (Vaughan and Archer, 1971: 27). However, its two components of numerical strength and organization are crucial to its effective use and success – the two elements which both the democracy movement in exile and the *weiquan* activism are presently lacking. The fragmented democracy movement in exile has not been able to command any credible bargaining power in an environment of astounding economic power and international clout of CCP-ruled China as well as the collective amnesia on the 1989 Tiananmen demonstrations and Beijing massacre resulted from more than two decades of successful information wipe-out inside China for those born or educated after 1989, and nationalism and national pride that came with increasing national strength – sentiments that the CCP has been unabashedly relying on to justify its continued unchallengeable political monopoly as the “party that delivers”.

Most importantly, with the absence of both the elements of numerical strength (referring more to actively mobilized members of a movement than simply to sympathizers and moral supporters in general) and organizers – despite the emergence of Falungong as an exiled

resistance group which has shown impressive solidarity, numerical strength, organizing skill as well as focused dedication to a cause that the wider democracy movement lacks – the NVA movements' pressure on the Party-State as the dominant group still remains insignificant in terms of making the latter relinquish some of its position-related advantages, the success for which necessarily depends on the conjuncture of these two elements (Vaughan and Archer, 1971: 27). Under this situation, the Party-State domination has continued to be stable, with the NVA movements being disadvantaged by both a low degree of internal solidarity and organization as well as numerical weakness to effectively engage in concerted action, vis-à-vis the same factors on the side of the State (*ibid.*: 27-28).

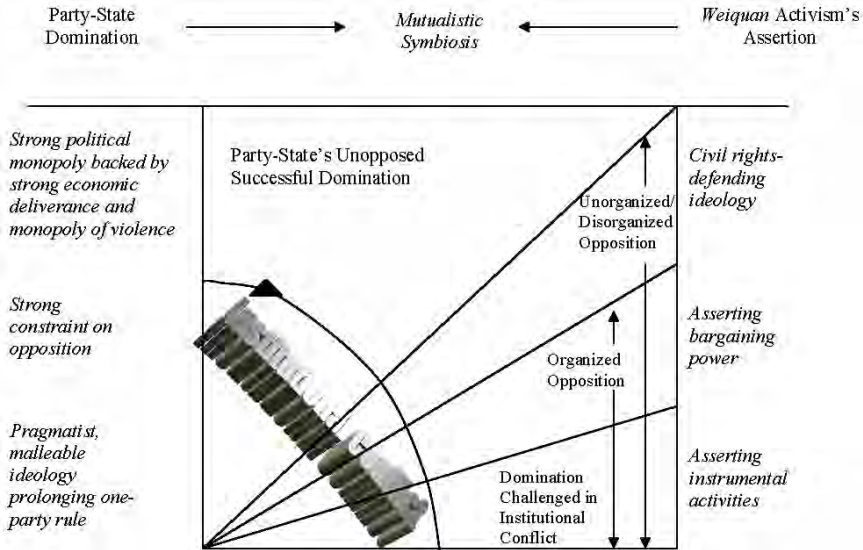
According to Margaret Archer, each mode of human reflexivity “is a distinctive way of deliberating about oneself in relation to one’s society. It is the modality through which the active agent continues to align her personal concerns with her social context.” (Archer, 2003: 349) The method of alignment varies, though, directly with the mode of reflexivity being exercised, adds Archer, while conclusions are being reached on the prioritized concerns which are in turn crystallized into determined projects, and certain orientation has been arrived at towards the reflexives’ encounters with constraints and enablements, while “the internal conversation, as the fundamental process mediating between structure and agency, also canalised the personal-societal relationship in different directions, according to its mode – thus articulating the precise form of the micro-macro link” (*ibid.*).

Such canalization of personal-societal relationship, or in the present context the relationship of the civil society (reflecting the stance of particular reflexives) with the Party-State, would result in the divergences not only within a movement, e.g. the disarray in the exiled democracy movement, but also between movements. The latter, for instance, can be seen in the contrast between the current state of relationship between the weiquan activism’s assertion and the Party-State’s domination (which while coercive, does exhibit certain degree of tactical flexibility as in the case of the Wukan 乌坎 uprising and the Shifang 什邡 incident) that could at the risk of oversimplification be

probably described as a reluctant “mutualistic symbiosis” (see Figure 6), i.e. to a certain extent benefiting both sides, and the relationship between the exiled democracy movement and the Party-State which – probably with the exception of the particular cases of ethnoterritorial resistance movements which have been able to maintain continued influence on events in the particular territories – could probably be described as a “commensalistic symbiosis” (see Figure 1 earlier), i.e. a fluid relationship of association yet at the risk of indifference and oblivion, if not, as observed earlier, for the injection of the more focused and better organized element of the Falungong resistance movement. Such divergence of course could not solely be attributed to the mode of reflexivity, but also to a higher degree to the variations in the properties of State domination and NVA assertion, shown by the left and right vertical axes of Figure 1 and Figure 6, which with reflexivity, form a complex nexus of micro-macro, agency-structural factors and influences. This is of course not to mean that a possible better synergy between the democracy movement and *weiquan* activism in putting aside strategic and ideological differences to pursue a common goal of political freedom, civil liberties and social justice (as depicted in Figure 7) has to be precluded, though the objective environment currently in existence in the country would make an imminent realization of such synergy rather implausible.

2.4. The Ambiguous Role of Political Violence

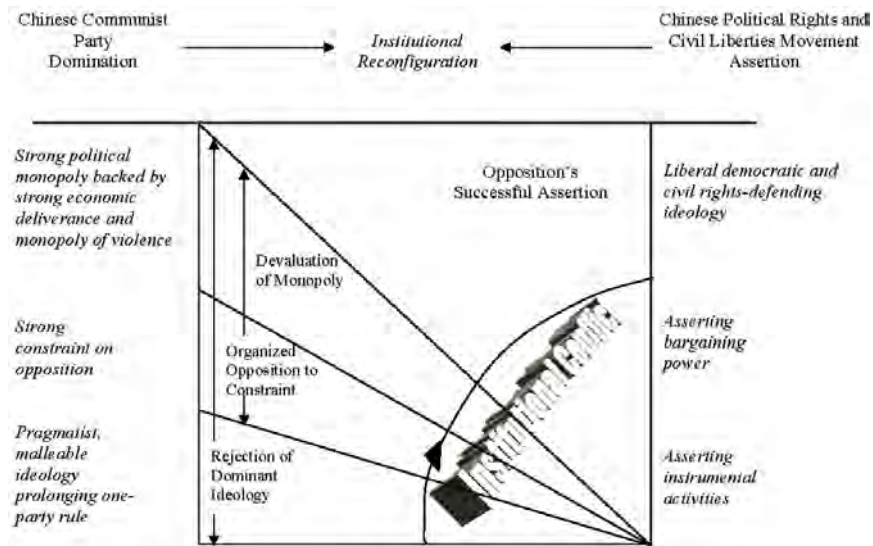
George Orwell in *Nineteen Eighty-four* (1949) talks about a totalitarian Party-State that controls life and creates human nature: “We control life [...] at all its levels. You are imagining that there is something called human nature which will be outraged by what we do and will turn against us. But we create human nature. Men are infinitely malleable. Or perhaps you have returned to your old idea that the proletarians or the slaves will arise and overthrow us. Put it out of your mind. They are helpless, like the animals. Humanity is the Party. The others are outside – irrelevant.” (Orwell, 1949, re-pub. 1954: 232) Irrelevant – as probably often felt by the exiled Chinese democracy activists in their individual real “ruminating self” that intervenes in between the field and the

Figure 6 State Domination and NVA Assertion: Mutualistic Symbiosis

Source: Yeoh (2013a: 335), Figure 12.9. Schema based on Vaughan and Archer (1971: 16-32).

habitus (Bourdieu, 1990, 2008) while constructing in foro interno their existential projects for sociopolitical change the effectiveness and pertinence of which are contingent upon “human reflexivity; namely, our power to deliberate internally upon what to do in situations that were not of our making.” (Archer, 2003: 342) Truly, in the interplay between the State and the civil society, much like what Kristensen’s law in public choice theories postulates, the negotiation between human agencies tends to be asymmetrical. In entrenching and expanding its power, the ruling regime as a rule would resort to exploit such power asymmetry not only through the overt repression of dissent in the preservation of stability as an ongoing stalemate – one of the possible results of social conflicts from the neo-Marxist perspective – but also by forging and re-forging alliances with societal groups based on common interest and the

Figure 7 State Domination and NVA Assertion: Institutional Reconfiguration



Source: Yeoh (2013a: 337), Figure 12.10. Schema based on Vaughan and Archer (1971: 16-32).

cooptation of the societal élite including segments of the intelligentsia. All these, of course, depend on the State's ability to monopolize the concentrated means of coercion and violence. In this, China is not unique, as Charles Tilly (1985) observes:

At least for the European experience of the past few centuries, a portrait of war makers and state makers as coercive and self-seeking entrepreneurs bears a far greater resemblance to the facts than do its chief alternatives: the idea of a social contract, the idea of an open market in which operators of armies and states offer services to willing consumers, the idea of a society whose shared norms and expectations call forth a certain kind of government.

(Tilly, 1985: 169)

While that brings to mind Thomas Paine's iconoclastic dictum that "government even in its best state is but a necessary evil; in its worst state an intolerable one"³⁵, Tilly notes that apologists for a government usually argue that the government offers protection against local and external violence and these apologists call people who complain about the price of protection "anarchists", "subversives", or both at once. Tilly basically finds an analogy of such a government that perpetuates its power through violence, in one sense or another, with a racketeer:

Back to Machiavelli and Hobbes [...] political observers have recognized that, whatever else they do, governments organize and, wherever possible, monopolize violence. It matters little whether we take violence in a narrow sense, such as damage to persons and objects, or in a broad sense, such as violation of people's desires and interests; by either criterion, governments stand out from other organizations by their tendency to monopolize the concentrated means of violence.

(*ibid.*)

Witness the 3rd-4th June 1989 Beijing massacre.

But as veteran Tiananmen student leader Dr Wang Dan 王丹 says in his Ph.D. thesis "A comparative study of state violence in mainland China and Taiwan in the 1950s" (Harvard University, 2008), "under totalitarian and authoritarian regimes, violence is not simply a means to maintain control. Instead, it provides an institutional support for the regime [...] Violence is effective because it creates omnipresent fears in society – fear of mutual-accusations between colleagues, fear of being watched by the secret police, and fear that personal opinions might lead to punishment. Such fears lead to self-censorship, first by individuals and then by the entire society. State violence establishes a prison in every individual's inner consciousness, and this prison is the secret to the success of the dictatorship."³⁶ With violence being an integral component of the Party-State since the Mao years, it would not be realistic to hope for an imminent change in the CCP's approach in ruling the country.

Nevertheless, a new worrying phenomenon that is emerging recently from the opposite side of the Party-State vs. civil society divide, albeit restricted in its origin to ethnoregional peripheral nationalism – namely the increasingly violent backlash against CCP’s central authoritarian State dominance in the frontier ethnic region of Xinjiang which seems to be turning from attacking State apparatus to terrorism targeting innocent citizens – inevitably raises the question of the effectiveness of such approach in forcing changes in State policy. Table 3 shows the spate of attacks, lately increasingly on civilians, throughout China, during the first five months of 2014, all believed to be linked to Xinjiang’s ethnoregional nationalism.³⁷ It has been a widely observed phenomenon that while government responds to challenges from ethnic community organizations that seek to influence public policy, “within an inverted and complementary paradigm [...] ethnic communities take shape as response to stimuli which induce a process of ethnogenesis” (Gheorghe, 1991: 842-843). Such an inverted paradigm, as shown in the lower flow line in Figure 8, wherein State policy has induced reethnization and polarization among ethnic minorities or even ethnogenesis in places like Spain’s Andalucía or some other *imagined communities*, as described by Benedict Anderson (1983)³⁸. This is exactly what is occurring in China’s ethnic frontier regions of Xinjiang, Tibet and Inner Mongolia where the CCP central State’s repressive, uncompromising and inflexible political paradigm verging on internal colonization, coupled with massive Han demographic and economic invasion leading to resource exploitation and local cultural and environmental destruction, is pushing local resentment, reethnization and polarization to an extreme of desperation (as reflected in the horrifying Tibetan self-immolations) or to a boiling point (as manifested in the regional unrests and Xinjiang-based cross-province terror attacks).

Xinjiang, of course, is not the only trouble spot among the ethnic regions. In mid-July 2011, for instance, over a thousand ethnic Mongolian herdsmen demonstrated against alleged government-business collusion in an ethnic Han Chinese businessman’s low-price purchase of over ten thousand *mu*³⁹ of grazing land, according to the New York-based Southern Mongolian Human Rights Information Center.⁴⁰ The

Table 3 Terrorist Attacks in China in the First Five Months of 2014

Date	Attack	Casualty
24th January 2014	Xinjiang police, while dealing with terrorist incident in Xinhe County (新和县) were attacked with incendiaries.	6 suspects died by suicide bombing; 6 suspects killed by police; 5 suspects arrested; 1 policeman slightly injured
14th February 2014	Attack on police in Xinjiang's Wushi County (乌什县).	3 suspects died by suicide bombing; 8 suspects killed by police; 1 suspect arrested; 2 policemen and 2 civilians injured.
1st March 2014	Knife attack on civilians in Kunming 昆明 train station, Yunnan Province.	29 civilians died; 143 civilians injured; 4 suspects killed by police; 4 suspects arrested.
30th April 2014	Bomb and knife attack on civilians in Urumqi 乌鲁木齐 train station, Xinjiang.	3 civilians died; 79 civilians injured; 7 suspects arrested.
6th May 2014	Knife attack on civilians at Guangzhou 广州 station, Guangdong Province.	6 civilians injured; 1 suspect killed by police; 1 suspect arrested.
22nd May 2014	Car crashing and bomb attack on civilians at Urumqi's morning market.	31 civilians died; 94 civilians injured.

Figure 8 Interrelationship of Ethnic Fragmentation and State Policy

Source: Yeoh (2013b: 537), Figure 20.3.

subsequent development of the purchased land had allegedly brought in hundreds of ethnic Han workers with trucks and bulldozers whose brutal intrusion into the ethnic Mongolian village concerned had resulted in the death and injury of over a hundred livestock and the injury of over 20 herdsman who were trying to defend their rights. Another 20 more herdsman were injured in the thousand-strong demonstrators' clash with the police in mid-July.⁴¹

This, in fact, is not the first such incident in 2011. Earlier, on 25th May, over two thousand ethnic Mongolian students and herdsman demonstrated in front of the government building in Xilinhot (Siliyinqota) following the death of a herdsman after being hit by coal truck on 10th May while protecting his grazing land against destruction by ethnic Han's economic development drive that has caused increasingly acute resentment among ethnic Mongolians who see themselves as the oppressed people of Inner Mongolia, devoid of political power and falling prey to the insatiable rapacity of the Han Chinese migrants – an extension of the dominant central Han political power of the country – who are destroying their traditional economy, culture and environment. Also, in May, demonstrations erupted in the regional capital Hohhot (Kökeqota) ending with the arrest of 50 students and other citizens, and according the Southern Mongolian Information Center, by early June at least 90 students, herdsman and other citizens had been arrested in Inner Mongolia's demonstrations, with many students seriously injured in their clash with the police.

The herdsman's death was not an isolated case in Inner Mongolia. There was another case occurring also around that time that involved the death of an ethnic minority young man being hit by an excavator in a fight with the miners over issues related to environmental pollution due to mining activities.⁴² The Inner Mongolia troubles came at a time when tensions were high due to that year's approaching anniversary of the June Fourth 1989 Beijing massacre, and when this multiethnic nation⁴³ was still reeling from the shock of the 14th March 2008 Lhasa riots and the 5th July 2009 Xinjiang ethnic conflict. There are indeed many similarities between the newer incident in Inner Mongolia and the 2009 ethnic violence in Xinjiang, as shown in Table 4.⁴⁴

Table 4 “Mass Incidents” in Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang: Comparison and Contrast

	Inner Mongolia, 11th May 2011	Xinjiang, 5th July 2009
Trigger	Rights-defending herdsman killed by coal truck	Uighur workers killed by Han 漢 / 汉 Chinese
Back-ground	Herdsmen’s livelihood in great difficulty and poverty blamed on mining activity on their grassland	Poor development in Uighur areas leading to acute poverty
Way of protest	Peaceful demonstrations	Violent Uighur backlash killing Han Chinese
Slogan of protest	“Remembrance of the killed! Stop mining!”	“Blood for blood! Han Chinese get the hell out of Xinjiang!”
Participants	Mongolian students and herdsmen	Uighur youths
State response	Suppression with army and riot police; making arrests before situation worsened	Suppression with army and riot police; making arrests after conflict

Source: Yeoh (2011: 427), Table 11.

Hence, it can be seen that public protests in the ethnic “autonomous regions” have been growing alarmingly in recent years, though only in the case of Xinjiang’s Uyghur nationalism has an ethnic self-determination movement which is initially a legitimate protest against an authoritarian central State and the State’s collusion with capricious, exploitative ethnic Han business interests been apparently veering into terrorism against non-Uyghur innocent civilian targets. However, to advocates of nonviolent action, political violence against an authoritarian State or a dictatorship could be counter-productive:

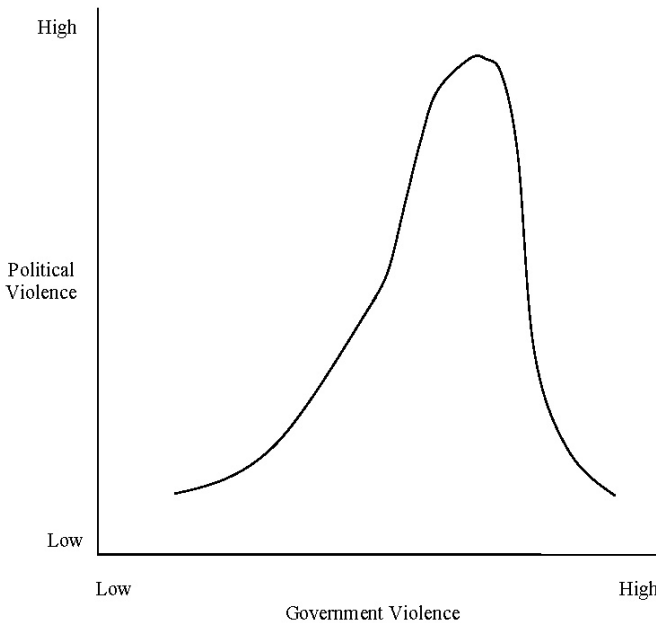
Armed resistance, even for a just cause, can terrify people not yet committed to the struggle, making it easier for a government to justify violent repression and use of military force in the name of protecting the population. Even rioting and vandalism can turn public opinion against a movement, which is why some governments have employed agents provocateurs to encourage such violence. The use of force against unarmed resistance movements, on the other hand, usually creates greater sympathy for the government's opponents. As with the martial art of aikido, nonviolent opposition movements can engage the force of the state's repression and use it to effectively disarm the force directed against them.

(Zunes, 2009)

This is indeed something that the democracy movement and human rights activism in general and advocates of ethnic self-determination especially in the frontier regions need to take heed of, as evident in the world support for China's anti-terrorism declarations after the increasing incidents of attacks on civilians by suspects with background of ethnoregional nationalism, specifically Uyghurs.

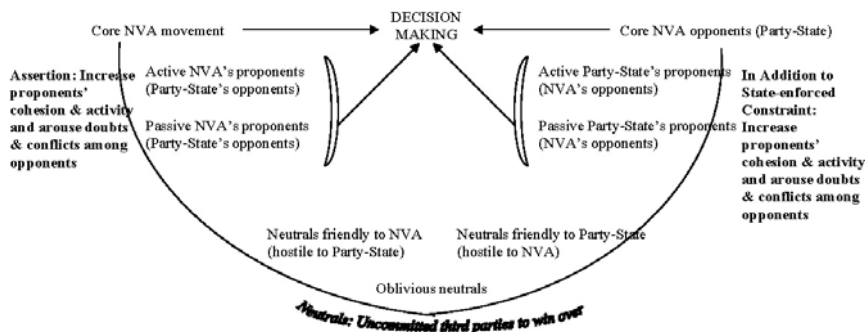
Moreover, while political violence tends to increase along with government violence, political scientists have observed the relationship between government violence and most types of political violence to appear to be curvilinear (as depicted in Figure 9), i.e. a threshold will be reached "where increased government violence coincides with a rapid decline in the collective violence of citizens" (Greene, 1990: 143)⁴⁵. The threshold varies from case to case and depends on the intensity of the citizens' hostility for the particular regime in question, while the cohesion of the political élite on both sides remains key to the citizens' revolutionary potential vis-à-vis the authoritarian regime's capacity for counter-revolutionary violence (*ibid.*) in a process referred to by Irwin and Faison (1978) as a "political *jujutsu*"⁴⁶ in which shifts of attitude are important as well as shifts of behaviour "because both sides adjust their actions according to how they gauge their support", as illustrated in Figure 10. On all counts, the current situation seems to be absolutely more favourable on the side of the Party-State.

Figure 9 Political Violence and Government Violence:
A Curvilinear Relationship



Source: Greene (1990: 144), Figure 10-1.

Ever since the party hardliners shot down Hu Yaobang's bold suggestion in 1980 of moving Tibet policy from what he perceived as what was then equivalent to colonialism to more satisfactory ethnic autonomy partly by allowing ethnic Tibetans to have more than absolute two-third majority in cadre proportion (“*mianshui* 免税、*fangkai* 放开、*zouren* 走人”)⁴⁷, government violence in the form of draconian suppression as in Xinjiang and Tibet has always been the way of the Party hitherto in dealing with unrests in the ethnic regions – an ironhanded approach that can be traced back to the Cultural Revolution brutalities including the attack on the so-called “Inner Mongolia's February Counter-Current” (内蒙古二月逆流)⁴⁸ and the Shadian 沙甸 massacre.⁴⁹

Figure 10 Process of NVA Assertion vis-à-vis Party-State

Source: Yeoh (2013a: 291), Figure 12.3; schema based on Irwin and Faison (1978).

Judging from the current trend and in view of Xi Jinping's hardline approach to the escalating Xinjiang tension and the regime's continued inflexible policy towards Tibet in these remaining years of the moderate spiritual leadership of the 14th Dalai Lama (which might not last for too long) of the Tibetan government in exile, political violence looks set to escalate in these ethnic regions. However, contrary to what happened in Romania in 1989, such ethnic uprising against the authoritarian government of the CCP would not look likely to spread into the Han-dominant China proper; instead the Han majority's State-cultivated ethnocentric, xenophobic and chauvinistic patriotism and nationalism as well as the deep-seated fear of China breaking up will continue to be useful for Beijing in avoiding effective challenge to the CCP's enforced strict political monopoly in the Xi Jinping era of "benign" free-market, anti-corruption authoritarianism.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that reaction to State violence in the ethnic regions does not necessarily mean a prelude to ethnic cessation. With a common cause for liberation from the clutch of a common enemy – the authoritarian Party-State – a spark in an ethnic region could well ignite a cross-ethnic nation-wide uprising. The Romanian Revolution

that ultimately resulted in the violent overthrow and execution of longtime Romanian president Nicolae Ceaușescu and spelt the end of both the Socialist Republic of Romania and the Romanian Communist Party (PCR) which, unlike other former ruling Communist parties in Eastern Europe that reconfigured themselves into social democratic or democratic socialist parties during the anti-communist “Revolutions of 1989”, just melted away in the wake of the revolution, first started in the form of a protest among the ethnic Hungarians of the city of Timișoara in the country’s ethnic Hungarian region of Transylvania in response to an attempt by the government to evict Hungarian Reformed Church pastor László Tőkés whom the government had alleged of inciting ethnic hatred after an interview of Tőkés by the Hungarian television. The ethnic Hungarian protest soon expanded into a furious backlash against harsh government crackdown and spread throughout the country. Situation went out of the regime’s control when in the capital București (Bucharest) in the morning of 21st December 1989 the supposedly politically frightened and apathetic crowd spontaneously coalesced into a revolutionary critical mass during Ceaușescu’s speech condemning the Timișoara uprising. Such an unexpected development then led to Ceaușescu’s flight the next day and arrest and execution three days later that signaled the fall of Communist Party dictatorship in Romania. It is apparent that the fate of the Ceaușescu regime was sealed when the rolling waves of event first emanating from Timișoara began to unthinkably change the attitude of the traditionally politically frightened and apathetic “neutrals” among the masses.

2.5. Politicizing the Apathetic, Winning over Neutrals

With economic success and mesmerizing projects showcasing astounding national strength and glory to negate the desire for regime change, may it be that of the *weiquan* activism, Falungong resistance or the wider spectrum of the democracy movement, the CCP’s Party-State domination has continued to be stable. In view of that, ideological or institutional “attractiveness” is all the more important in the struggle against authoritarianism, as winning over uncommitted third parties (as seen above in the Romanian Revolution) is absolutely crucial for any

chances of success in NVA assertion, in a process of “political *jujutsu*” (Irwin and Faison, 1978) referred to earlier in which shifts of attitude and behaviour are both important because the respective support gauged by both sides would determine the adjustment in their actions. Above the “third parties” in Figure 10 are “opponents” who, from the perspective of the NVA proponents, represent potential converts especially among State-coopted intellectuals, emerging middle class, disgruntled working class but also moderates and reformers in the ruling echelons and bureaucracy, and from the point of view of the Party-State, the dejected and demoralized leaders and members of NVA who feel lost outside the country’s economic success and who are at the edge of losing conviction in the movements that they feel are increasingly becoming irrelevant in the eyes of the world while facing the continuously growing strength of the Party-State and the China it rules, just like the perceived outcast described in Salman Rushdie’s reflection in *Joseph Anton*: “Dead, he might even be given the respect due to a free-speech martyr. Alive, he was a dull and unpleasantly lingering pain in the neck.” (Rushdie, 2012, ppb 2013: 415)

Such tactics as described above are crucial for if “the assertive group has limited members willing to engage in concerted action and a low degree of internal organisation, while the dominant group has a strong and highly organized portion of its membership engaged in applying constraints, domination is likely to prove stable” (Vaughan and Archer, 1971: 28). However, while such variations in relative numerical and organizational strength on the two sides could significantly account for their relative degrees of success in this process of “political *jujutsu*”, as Vaughan and Archer caution, a parameter inevitably influencing this power interplay that has to be taken into consideration is “the alliances either group can form in order to acquire wider support for either domination or assertion” (*ibid.*), i.e. not only the active and passive opponents but also the “neutrals”, the uncommitted third parties, to win over as we see in the example of the Romanian Revolution, as portrayed in Figure 10. This is where “soft power”, backed by “hard power” together forming what has been called “smart power”, comes in to count. This is where the present China’s rising next-superpower status is

making the CCP's authoritarianism continue to look unassailable. This is where the analogy between the legacy of 1989's hundred-day mass protests and June Fourth massacre and that of Emperor Kuang-hsü 光緒's Hundred Days' Reform (戊戌變法 / 百日維新) of 1898 and the martyrs of the Yellow Flower Mound (黃花崗七十二烈士) of 1911 fails. The CCP today is not similar to the decrepit and inefficacious Ch'ing⁵⁰ 清 court in its waning days; the PRC today does not resemble the "Sick Man of East Asia" (東亞病夫) at the turn of the last century. This shows how difficult it is in reality for the side of NVA to politicize the apathetic, win over the neutrals and to galvanize diverse social forces into joint action against a formidable, frighteningly ruthless one-party regime. Contemporary China is no basket-case Romania of Nicolae Ceaușescu, and there is not going to be a spark from a Chinese Timișoara to ignite a conflagration.

3. Hong Kong and the Spirit of Operation Siskin: Protecting

Mainland China's Last Corner of Free Speech and Civil Liberties

Nevertheless, there is an earlier example of how at a critical juncture in contemporary China diverse social forces were galvanized into an almost inconceivable joint action against a ruthless central State: the now legendary "Operation Siskin" or "Operation Yellowbird" (黃雀行動) in the wake of the June Fourth massacre of 1989.

Known as "Secret Passage" at an earlier stage, "Operation Siskin" was a loosely structured Hong Kong-based rescue syndicate hurriedly put together by some key members of the Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements in China (the Alliance / 香港市民支援愛國民主運動聯合會 / 支聯會), Hong Kong actors-cum-filmmakers John Shum Kin-fun 岑建勳 and Alan Tang Kwong-wing 鄧光榮 and businessman and triad boss Chan Tat-ching 陳達鈺 ("Brother Six" / 六哥) in the immediate aftermath of the June 1989 Beijing massacre. While the United States and Hong Kong's British colonial government were undoubtedly involved in the rescue missions to various degrees and the costly and highly dangerous operations were financed mainly by Hong Kong businessmen and its underworld among other

benefactors, Operation Siskin owed much to the organizing strengthen and network of the Hong Kong underworld, mainly the smuggling triads, which successfully rescued, by one estimate, more than 300 to 400 wanted student leaders, democracy activists, scholars and writers, mainly from June to the end of 1989, but with sporadic operations lasting till June 1997, just before the “Handover” of Hong Kong to China.⁵¹

3.1. Lesson One: Operation Siskin as a Textbook Example of Galvanizing Diverse Social Forces in Facing a Ruthless State

In an interview by the *Sunday Telegraph* (UK) of 18th May 2014 as the 25th anniversary of the Beijing massacre was approaching, Chan Tat-ching, now retired, gave an account of how it all began with a meeting with Alan Tang Kwong-wing and Shum Kin-fun in a hotel in Kowloon 九龍 arranged by Hong Kong activists in which he was asked whether he was willing to participate in a dangerous mission to rescue the students and he agreed and plunged into action. Chan put the final amount spent as 10 million Hong Kong dollars, mainly used to pay the speedboat operators and some to bribe mainland Chinese officials, in the incredible secret operation “that spirited at least 150 people out of China under the noses of the authorities”, according to the *Sunday Telegraph*.⁵² For the protection of lives and careers, many details including the identity of those involved have remained unrevealed. During the past two decades, most of the well-known figures in the Operation and various other possible participants⁵³ have since passed away, including Szeto Wah 司徒華, chairman of the Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements in China from 21st May 1989 till his passing on 2nd January 2011 and a member of the Hong Kong Legislative Council from 26th September 1985 to 12th September 2004, Alan Tang Kwong-wing, singer-actress Anita Mui Yim-fong 梅艷芳, and the Hong Kong democrat Leung Wah 梁華 whose mysterious death in neighbouring Shenzhen 深圳 was alleged by some to be the work of the Chinese security agents. While government officials in southern China appeared to be keeping an eye closed towards Operation Siskin, the rescue action which was mainly carried out in the dark nights was

still highly dangerous and in fact resulted in the death of four of Chan Tat-ching's operatives during rescue action and three others being arrested by Chinese police.⁵⁴ According to Lee Cheuk-yan 李卓人, current chairman of the Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements in China, the French Consulate provided the major assistance in issuing about a hundred visas to the fugitives even without approval from Paris.⁵⁵

3.2. Lesson Two: Urgency in Guarding and Supporting Hong Kong as the Last Corner of Mainland China where Political Freedom Is Still Possible

While Operation Siskin represents a brazen joint effort of a response at a critical juncture in the yesteryears which is slowly fading into oblivion in collective memory, Hong Kong continues to stand proud in the Greater China area – just like China's "renegade province" across the Taiwan Strait today with a vibrant liberal democratic political system and a free and decent civil society brimming with vim and vigour – with her uniqueness in being the only corner of China under PRC's jurisdiction where large-scale public demonstrations against China's one-party authoritarianism are still possible. This is manifest in the annual large-scale remembrance of the 4th June 1989 Beijing massacre and the annual "Handover" anniversary demonstrations – in which from 150,000 to over 510,000 Hong Kong people⁵⁶ took to the streets upon this year's 17th anniversary on 1st July 2014, just after about 22 per cent (787,767 in number) of Hong Kong's registered voters in an unofficial referendum organized by the pro-democracy activist group Occupy Central with Love and Peace (OCLP) voted for full democracy and free elections for the city's next leader.⁵⁷ These are besides other specific demonstrations like that in 2012⁵⁸, the year of the suspicious "suicide" (or "being suicided")/*bei zisha* 被自杀 ?) of Li Wangyang, in defense of freedom and democracy, protesting against "party-official-business collusion" and calling for a thorough investigation of Li Wangyang's cause of death, as well as gatherings and demonstrations against the CCP regime's encroachment into the enclave's political and civil liberty, e.g.

its introduction in 2012 of “brainwashing” curriculum into the Special Administrative Zone’s education institutional framework. “We have the freedoms we fight for, and we lose those we don’t defend.” (Rushdie, 2012, ppb 2013: 528) It is heartening to see that this is a point still well understood by the Hong Kong society, almost two decades after the “Handover”.

The “brainwashing” curriculum encroachment, nevertheless, is but just part of the long-running, on-going process of consolidating China’s hegemony in the local Hong Kong society through the former’s United Front Work which includes, according to Lam and Lam (2013), “the soft tactics of integration, cooptation and collaboration, as well as the hard tactics of containment and denunciation”. Lam and Lam summarize China’s treatment of different political players in post-“Handover” Hong Kong – through “education, persuasion, threats and inducement” and in the case of denunciation, outright political exclusion – in terms of integration (developing common instrumental interests as well as “common wills and feelings”) and cooptation (with Chinese Communist agents actively and selectively recruiting and appointing “supporters to political institutions and power positions, so that alternative views of its supporters can be put in line with those of the Chinese authorities”) in dealing with the majority and supporters; collaboration (ensuring “that the targets do not join force with the opposition, whether or not they explicitly support Beijing”) targeting the moderate, wavering middle; and containment (with Chinese Communist agents checking the democrats’ expansion or influence and fragmenting the opposition camp to neutralize its influence) and denunciation (with China publicly condemning and accusing, outright rejecting and verbally threatening the democrats and refusing to communicate with them in order to “halt their influence immediately and permanently”) excluding or constraining the influence of enemies (*ibid.*: 306-307). For a diagrammatic depiction of such strategic moves by the Party-State, see the right panel of Figure 10.

Within such an atmosphere overshadowed by China’s United Front Work, a question presents itself, as Yeung (2013: 163) asks: should Hong Kong’s chief executive “be a political leader, in its full sense, or just an administrator?” Yeung then gives his take on this regarding Donald

Tsang, Hong Kong's second chief executive (2005-2012):

That Tsang saw his appointment as a job he would strive to get it done is widely seen as indicative of the mind-set of civil servants [...] His "boss-servant" mind-set has been manifested in his body language when he met with mainland Chinese officials and leaders in Beijing. Television news footage of him listening attentively and taking down notes carefully on what state leaders such as President Hu Jintao had to say has reinforced the public perception of him being a loyal servant. It is also open secret that he had addressed to the former Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office Director Liao Hui as "laoban", or boss, when they met although they enjoyed a similar rank in the Chinese hierarchy.

(*ibid.*: 163-164)

The sad implication of this situation is that, sighs Yeung,

The excessive show of humbleness of Tsang when dealing with Beijing officials has weakened his role and position as a champion of the interest of Hong Kong people when it comes to issues such as democratic development where the city and the central government do not see eye to eye.

(*ibid.*: 164)

It is against such backdrop that the spirit of the Hong Kong people in fighting for their rights and freedom has come out to be so noble. Upon the 25th anniversary of June Fourth, while looking back at that critical juncture in 1989, the passing of Hong Kong's democrat stalwart Szeto Wah on 2nd January 2011 seemed to signal the closing of a chapter on the memory of the valiant Siskin Operation of the yesteryears. Yet the spirit of Szeto Wah and of Operation Siskin live on. Seventeen years after "Handover" and a quarter century after the launching of the almost inconceivable Operation Siskin, the Hong Kong people have not only persisted in standing up for their rights and freedom but also continued to hold on to their fight for justice and freedom for all China with vim and vigour in this last corner of the country where speaking one's mind is still possible – the latest gesture in this regard being the setting up of the world's first permanent June 4th

Museum (六四紀念館) in the enclave.

Located in a commercial building in Hong Kong's Tsim Sha Tsui 尖沙咀 district in Kowloon, the 70-ft² museum sponsored by the Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements in China during its launching on 26th April 2014 was met with confrontation from pro-Beijing organizations and threat of legal action from the building's owner while other occupants of the same building want the museum shut down, citing safety concerns – actions which the museum's backers believe are being orchestrated by CCP officials.⁵⁹ Undaunted by such threats, Szeto Wah's successor Lee Cheuk-yan, the current chairman of the Alliance, said that among the groups of visitors to the museum were Hong Kong students and mainland Chinese tourists, in line with the purpose of establishing the museum, i.e. to break through the information blockade and memory wipe-out and distortion imposed by the Chinese government over this quarter century, to remind people what really happened in 1989 in order to urge on the struggle for a liberal democratic China.⁶⁰

Yet the prospects could be grim. Just shortly after the 6,500-person rally organized by Hong Kong journalist in February 2014 to decry against increasing levels of coercion against the Hong Kong press and the candlelight vigil on 4th June 2014 in Victoria Park to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the 3rd-4th June 1989 Beijing massacre which was attended by 100,000 to over 180,000 people⁶¹, on 10th June the CCP government released an unprecedented, alarming 14,500-word White Paper⁶² – which was described by Hong Kong's pro-democracy advocates as “sending a shiver up the spine” and representing a sea-change to their understanding of what “one country, two systems” should be – affirming Beijing's “comprehensive jurisdiction” over Hong Kong and stating that Hong Kong must be run by “patriotic” people of Hong Kong, as stated in item 3 (“The Hong Kong People Who Govern Hong Kong Should Above All Be Patriotic”) under section V:

There are lines and criteria to be observed in implementing “Hong Kong people governing Hong Kong,” that is what Deng Xiaoping stressed, Hong Kong must be governed by the Hong Kong people with patriots as the mainstay, as loyalty to one's country is the

minimum political ethic for political figures [...] In a word, loving the country is the basic political requirement for Hong Kong's administrators. If they are not consisted of by patriots as the mainstay or they cannot be loyal to the country and the HKSAR, the practice of "one country, two systems" in the HKSAR will deviate from its right direction, making it difficult to uphold the country's sovereignty, security and development interests, and putting Hong Kong's stability and prosperity and the wellbeing of its people in serious jeopardy.⁶³

There is nothing strange for this White Paper issued by the State Council in emphasizing patriotism, but the catch is: in the befuddled realm of the CCP State = China = Chinese people cognition of the one-party monopoly of her Beijing overlord, what is being asked of the Hong Kong people is not just patriotism towards China as a nation, but also loyalty to the CCP who has continued to stifle dissent and deny citizens' free political choice with brutal coercion while justifying itself with economic achievements as the only rightful political party to have absolute, effective rule over the country in perpetuity.

4. Top-Down Political Change Is a Real Possibility, but Unfortunately Not around the Corner

For an authoritarian country like China, William Dobson, author of *The dictator's learning curve* (2012) was rather pessimistic about the prospect of huge revolutionary change in the short and medium term.⁶⁴ As organization, preparation and good understanding of the authoritarian regime are absolutely essential to bring down an authoritarian regime, we have already seen that China's (exiled) democracy movement as a whole is desperately weak in these aspects, and the symbiosis depicted in Figure 1 earlier (or Figure 6 in the case of the *weiquan* activism) is at best an unbalanced one or worse one characterized by the almost absolute domination of the Party-State vis-à-vis the NVA whose survival very much counts upon the State's willing tolerance for diplomatic goodwill and pretension of progress in human rights.

Would changes come as top-down in the PRC? Dobson sees no encouraging sign that the CCP is seriously working on that, for the

current priority of the Party seems to be a single-mindedness in strengthening and protecting its one-party political control. Referring to the view that the first 30 years of the PRC were spent on Mao's "class struggle" and "perpetual revolution", the second 30 years on economic development, and the third 30 years would be on how to achieve good governance, Dobson indeed sees the possibility of a top-down transformation, but as the country is now in the very early stage of the third 30 years, future development is very uncertain and very much depends on how the CCP would view the whole process of change.⁶⁵

4.1. Opportunity Missed for Top-Down Political Reform

Besides that of the Tiananmen crackdown, the year 2014 also sees the 25th anniversary of the passing of Hu Yaobang, the late reformist chairman and general secretary of the CCP purged by Deng Xiaoping and other Party elders in 1987 for being too tolerant of the wave of their perceived threat of "bourgeois liberalization" among intellectuals in the late 1980s. Hu's passing away on 15th April 1989 triggered the student protests in Tiananmen Square that eventually led to the June Fourth massacre that shook the world. Hu Dehua 胡德华, the third child of Hu Yaobang, in a recent interview by Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post*, lamented the lack of political reform and press freedom in China and regretted that, with the purge of his father (who had ironically been highly respected both in and outside of the Party for executing the reversal of the internal Party purges of the Mao years, including the rehabilitation of Xi Zhongxun 习仲勋, the current president Xi Jinping's father), China lost the opportunity for political reform in the 1980s, given that Hu Yaobang who believed in the need for simultaneous political and economic reform had planned in 1986 for the launching of the news and publication freedom laws which were scuttled by the Party after he was purged a year later.⁶⁶ "Reforms have their specific windows in history," lamented Hu Dehua, "Once missed, how do we know when will the next window arrive?" Being the first step and the most fundamental legislation in political reform, press and speech freedom laws' dismissal 27 years ago meant that such legal protection of Chinese citizens' basic rights might just forever remain an unattainable dream.

How ironical this renders Xi Jinping's talk of a "China Dream"? Just a dream of the glory of China standing tall among nations, a China continued be under the iron grip of a CCP intolerant of all political competition and dissent, a China in which the dream of her citizens for the freedom of speech and political choice continues to be trampled and quashed as the errant ways of "bourgeois liberalization" seen as but a curtain raiser for the concerted effort on the part of the enemies of the State to eventually bring about the grim scenario of a "Peaceful Evolution" (à la John Foster Dulles)⁶⁷.

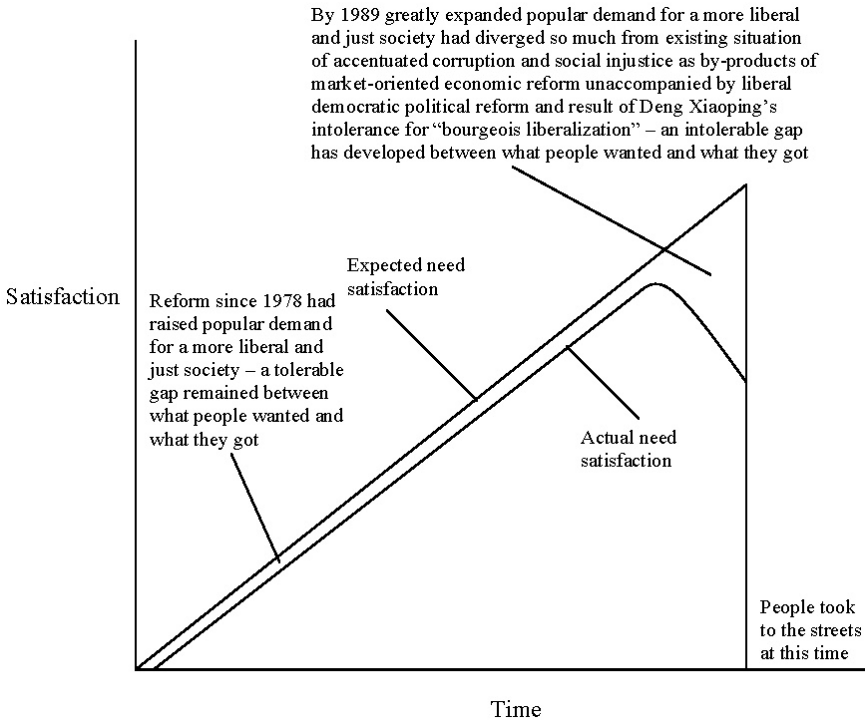
Among the legacies of Hu Yaobang, Hu Dehua was proudest of his father's promotion of democracy and rule of law, staunch principled objection to rule by repression, rehabilitation of victims of Mao's political campaigns, ending of discrimination against the so-called "black five types" (*hei wu lei* 黑五类) and other political enemies and abolition of the practice of individual's class entry in the filling up of government forms, thus for the first time giving PRC's citizens freedom from fear. As the University of Science and Technology Beijing (北京科技大学) professor Zhao Xiao 赵晓 sums up in an essay posted on the Internet on 14th April, Hu Yaobang had repeatedly proclaimed his remonstrance: "How could it be possible for an unfree people, shackled and repressed spiritually and in organization, to freely compete with the world's developed nations?"⁶⁸ After the purge of Hu Yaobang, Zhao Ziyang 赵紫阳 – who became the Party's general secretary and first vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission – at the 13th Party Congress in October 1987 proposed the one and only political reform package in the history of the Chinese Communist Party which attempted to introduce reforms such as the separation of powers between Party and State (Zhao, 2009a: 286; 2009b: 315; 2009c: 364)⁶⁹. Zhao passed away in 2005, being under house arrest for sixteen long years until his death for his refusal to repent his decision to oppose the 1989 Beijing-Tiananmen crackdown and to urge for the accommodation of the hunger-striking students' demands. In his letter to the 15th Party Congress in 1997 during his house arrest, Zhao lamented the halting of the political reform he initiated: "Because of the impact of the [Tiananmen] incident, the political reform initiated by the 13th Party Congress died young and

in midstream, leaving the reform of the political system lagging seriously behind. As a result of this serious situation, while our country's economic reform has made substantial progress, all sorts of social defects have emerged and developed and are rapidly spreading. Social conflicts have worsened, and corruption within and outside of the Party is proliferating and has become unstoppable." (Zhao, 2009a: 79; 2009b: 97; 2009c: 112)

The tragedy of Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang, the two rare embodiments of the "conscience of China" from within the CCP's ruling politburo, reflected a recurrence of the fate of the Hundred Days' Reform of 1898. Hu and Zhao are the 1980s' version of Emperor Kuang-hsü⁷⁰, their think tankers like Yan Jiaqi and Bao Tong 鲍彤 are the new K'ang Yu-wei⁷¹ 康有为 and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao⁷² 梁启超, Deng Xiaoping the butcher of Beijing is Empress Dowager Tz'u-hsi⁷³ (慈禧太后) resurrected, and the violently suppressed students of Tiananmen Square and the valiant people of Beijing who stood up to give their lives in protecting the students and the cause they championed are the new martyrs of the Yellow Flower Mound. It would be natural to move forward with this analogy to equate the CCP with the Manchu imperial court of the Ch'ing Dynasty (满清) on the wane in the early 1900s, but the fact would then be flying in the face of such generalization, for the CCP of today is nothing like the Ch'ing court of the early 1900s in a China that was decadent, poor and backward and humiliated internationally, ripe for a revolution to break out.

As Samuel Huntington points out, "modernity breeds stability, but modernization breeds instability" (Huntington, 1968: 41)⁷⁴, admittedly thirty years of economic reform, by bringing about a sea change in economic life and rule of game, has unleashed forces and momenta – whether in March-June 1989 in Beijing (as depicted in Figure 11), March 2008 in Tibet or July 2009 in Xinjiang, whether with or without an ethnoregional content – that had caught the ruling establishment by surprise and overtaken its ability to catch up and understand and to effectively accommodate. On the conception of revolution as a process, it has been observed that "conditions which produce a revolution are no

Figure 11 China: Expanding Demand for Political Institutional Change, 1978-1989



Source: Yeoh (2013a: 297), Figure 12.6. Based on Davies's J-Curve Theory of Revolution; see Vander Zanden (1988: 584), Figure 21.2 (adapted from Davies, 1962: 6, Figure 1).

different in principle from those that produce a smaller or even an unsuccessful protest movement.” (Geschwender, 1968: 128)⁷⁵ Raised expectation of what is now perceived to be possible has fuelled the passion for speedier targeted change and in the context of ethnicity or ethnoterritoriality brought back the long-suppressed ghost of identity investment which the ruling establishment could be ill-prepared to

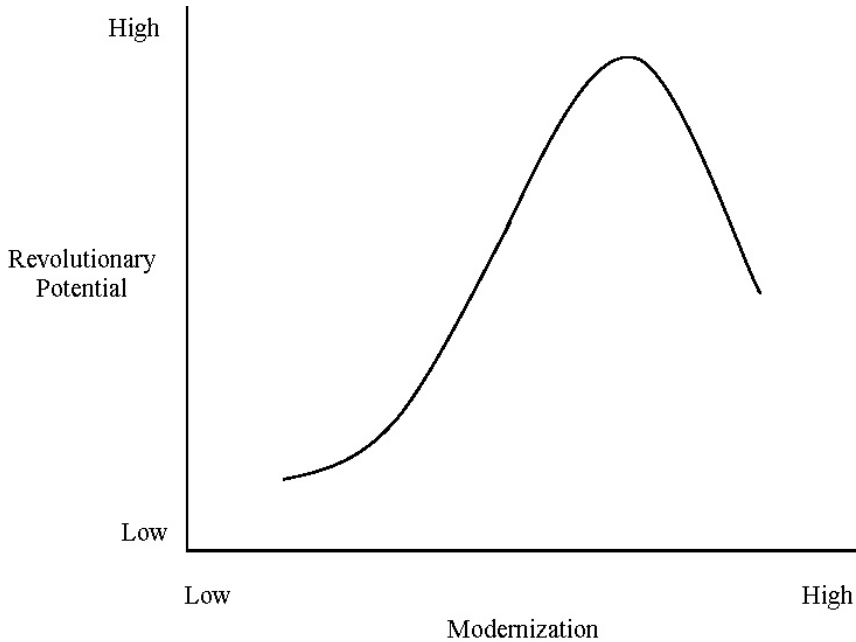
accommodate. However, whether they be the 1989 anti-corruption-turned-pro-democracy demonstrations in Beijing or the 14th March 2008 riots in Tibet or the 5th July 2009 riots in Xinjiang (which precipitated the rising terrorist attacks of the subsequent years), they were at best one-off and did not spell the doom of CCP's rule, much unlike how the Empress Dowager Tz'u-hsi and her conservative Manchu aristocrats' suppression of Emperor Kuang-hsü's organic reform campaign had precipitated Sun Yat-sen 孫逸仙 (孫中山)'s revolution that completely overthrew the Ch'ing monarchy – due to a host of developmental factor variations resulting in (see Figure 12):

[...] a curvilinear relationship between revolutionary potential and economic development or – in all its social and political ramifications – “modernization.” [...] Revolutionary potential is low in traditional societies because of the low incidence of economic change that consequently exerts minimal pressures for adaptation on established political and social institutions. Revolutionary potential increases with the development of a market economy in agricultural production, with urbanization and industrialization, and according to the rate of economic change, the extent of foreign control, and the coincidence of the developmental crises associated with modernity. Revolutionary potential then declines as new authority patterns, welfare institutions, and the social norms related to modernization are firmly established at an advanced stage of economic development.

(Greene, 1990: 166)

Similarly, in their work “Modernization: Theories and facts” (1997), Przeworski and Limongi contended that an increase in economic modernization, and thus an increase in the per capita income of a country increases the possibility of a democratic transition to occur, but only until the per capita income of the said country reaches US\$6000. Above that level, authoritarian governments grow stronger and the possibility of the country's democratic transition becomes weaker as per capita income increases. To put that plainly, the American political theorist Robert Kagan argues that, contrary to the prediction of the “modernization theory” that economic modernization, liberalization and prosperity would propel political liberalization too, the richer a country

Figure 12 Revolutionary Potential and Modernization: A Curvilinear Relationship



Source: Greene (1990: 167), Figure 11-1.

gets “the easier it may be for autocrats to hold on to power. More money keeps the bourgeoisie content and lets the government round up the few discontented who reveal their feelings on the Internet.” (Kagan, 2008, cited in Chu, 2013: 81)

4.2. The Retreat of NVA Assertion and Lack of Urgency for Party-State To Compromise

Facing a strong, ruthless regime, there is a prevailing view of acquiescing to a “democracy, Chinese style” and of giving up challenge against the CCP regime, and talk of letting the increasingly “catch-all”

CCP to take its time to move along its “intra-party democracy” path to eventually evolve into popular democracy for the country. However, Nobel Peace Prize nominee Professor Gene Sharp warns us that when fundamental issues such as those related to human freedom or the whole future development of the society are at stake, “negotiations do not provide a way of reaching a mutually satisfactory solution. On some basic issues there should be no compromise. Only a shift in power relations in favor of the democrats can adequately safeguard the basic issues at stake. Such a shift will occur through struggle, not negotiations [...] The point here is that negotiations are not a realistic way to remove a strong dictatorship in the absence of a powerful democratic opposition.” (Sharp, 2010: 10)⁷⁶ This is not to say that an authoritarian regime as strong as the present CCP would actually negotiate in any realistic way with its political opponents, including those in the country’s restive frontier regions whose desperation is recently increasingly translating into terror action striking the China proper – witness the latest Kunming, Beijing, Urumqi and Guangzhou attacks. “Negotiations, of course, may not be an option at all”, Sharp remarks, “Firmly entrenched dictators who feel secure in their position may refuse to negotiate with their democratic opponents.” (*ibid.*)

Even if the all-powerful authoritarian regime is willing to embark on a certain extent of democratization at its own pace in a best-case scenario for the democracy advocates, as Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe Schmitter (1986) opine, while a transition from authoritarian rule could probably produce a democracy, it could also terminate with a liberalized authoritarian regime (*dictablanda*) or a restrictive, illiberal democracy (*democradura*) (O’Donnell and Schmitter, 1986: 9)⁷⁷. While shadows of the remnants of her ghostly past still linger to haunt the one-party State, there are already telling signs that the continuing transformation from a *dictadura* (dictatorship) into a *dictablanda* leading further to a highly restrictive *democradura* in the near future is the most possible direction the CCP regime is heading to and indeed planning to head to, given the fact that the Western, “bourgeois liberal” multi-party competitive electoral democracy (*democracia*), together with its notion of separation of powers, has already been ruled out of the cards, or at

least not until mid-2000s. In fact, following Professor Zhou Tianyong from the Central Party School, China's authoritarian one-party political system will and should remain unchanged until at least 2037 (Zhou, Wang and Wang (eds), 2007: 2, 6, 45-46)⁷⁸. This is in line with what Deng Xiaoping stated in 1987, that direct general elections could only be held after half a century had passed in the 2000s, and at the moment the country had to make do with indirect elections above the county level and direct elections only at county and below county level, given the colossal population and inadequate level of cultural quality of the people (Hu, Hu, He and Guo, 2009: 19-20)⁷⁹.

4.3. Top-Down or Bottom-Up: It Could Be a Long Way To Go

Chiang Ching-kuo 蔣經國 has often been referred to as the best dictator China has ever have (at least for those who are not bent on severing completely the history of Taiwan, Republic of China, from the overall history of China) for his willingness to end the authoritarianism of Kuomintang and bring multi-party competitive liberal democracy to Taiwan. In short, a top-down political institutional change. Such a change, as has occurred in the former Soviet Union, in Taiwan, in the Republic of Korea, could yet happen in China, though the process could be slow, given the present national economic and military strength which would make such top-down fundamental change seem less urgent. Yet one could be overestimating the CCP regime's staying power and underestimating its inherent weaknesses. Just look at the surprising level of jitteriness of the regime in late 2012 as the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (中国共产党第十八次全国代表大会) was approaching, just look at how a government ruthless as such could virtually tremble at its citizens holding a flower in the street, how a government could basically declare a war on a flower or on words like "democracy", "freedom" and "human rights" on the Internet – one can then realize to what extent a government's lack of self-confidence could be, and to what extent a government could see in every person in the street a potential agent of subversion.

Nevertheless, taking note of the hypothesis that a society's revolutionary potential is directly related to the severity of military

defeat, economic crisis and fragmentation of the ruling élite but inversely related to the regime's political legitimacy (Greene, 1990: 150), without any impending national economic crisis, military defeat or internal political struggle severe enough to destroy CCP's ruling echelon from within and with no sign of the weakening of the State's will and machinery to suppress those who dare to challenge CCP's self-justified legitimacy to rule without being elected to do so, the Party's rule looks set to continue to stay strong. Political democratization of China is destined to be long in coming. Ironically, China's present consensus-based collective leadership, while supposed to prevent the rise of another disastrously strong leader like Mao Zedong, will count against quick democratization too. Counting on a benevolent strong man (China's millennia-long notion of a *mingjun*) might sound ridiculous in other parts of this modern world, but ironically at least a Chinese Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev who is strong enough to push for real political reforms might just come in handy.

In a recent interview by Voice of America just prior to this year's June Fourth anniversary, Wang Dan, who holds both a Master's degree in East Asian history (2001) and a Ph.D. (2008) from Harvard University, was asked the hypothetical question of what he would tell or wish to tell President Xi Jinping's daughter Xi Mingze 习明泽 who is presently studying at Harvard if he happened to meet the latter. After expressing his lack of personal interest in Xi Mingze, Wang Dan said that, nevertheless, since her father was Xi Jinping, he would hope that she would talk properly to her father about the importance of democracy to the feeling of honour and pride of every Chinese. If Xi Jinping considered himself a Chinese, he should hope that China would be more democratic, and as the daughter of Xi Jinping and also feeling the honour of being a Chinese, added Wang Dan, Xi Mingze should persuade her father not to continue obstructing the tide of history. This would be the only way to enable every Chinese, including Xi Mingze herself, to have the true honour and pride of being a Chinese.⁸⁰

Such hope for a closet Gorbachev who could be persuaded to eventually come out to do what is right when the time is ripe (or when the older and more conservative members of the politburo have retired)

is real. Without economic crisis, without military defeat, any discretionary decision to move away from the current one-party authoritarianism towards multi-party competitive liberal democracy could well be coming from a strong man's personal political will. Contrary to all hopes and dreams of the democracy movement, such political reforms would most likely not be bottom-up because the objective urgency for such changes simply does not exist at the moment in this rising superpower whose economic (and military) power advancement continues to be the object of both envy and apprehension of the world. In a country full of unprecedented hope of prosperity under a ruling Party that is ruthlessly protective of its absolute, unassailable political monopoly, yet executively efficient and currently even showing good political will in bringing corruption down to a tolerable level, why should the people at large risk chaos and bloodshed in fighting for a liberal democratic dream that has been seen to turn sour in Russia, Thailand, the Philippines, the Arab world, and even India? Why would the masses still not be contented with this, as Aldous Huxley calls it in his 1946 foreword to *Brave New World* (1932), “welfare-tyranny of Utopia” – a totalitarianism “called into existence by the social chaos [...] and developing, under the need for efficiency and stability”? “You pays your money and takes your choice”, shrugs Huxley, metaphorically.⁸¹

However, ultimately, so long as Mao's portrait is still hanging high on Tiananmen, where is the hope for China's political liberalization? Until the perpetrator of some of worst horrors of China's long torturous history is finally taken down from the altar and the Party through which such horrors were being perpetrated is finally prepared to face the verdict of the people through electoral choice, all talks of a “China Dream”, of a China standing proud among the modern nations would forever ring hollow, for a mark of infamy continues to hover over the empty pride maintained by brutal internal repression on dissent, trampling on human rights, and self-justified monopoly of political power by naked coercion. Meanwhile, in a new take on Bertrand Russell's analogy between Judeo-Christian eschatology and Marxist socialism – Dialectical Materialism = Yahweh, Marx = the Messiah, Proletariat = the Elect, Communist Party = Church, the Communist

Revolution = the Second Coming, Punishment of the Capitalists = Hell, and the Communist Commonwealth = the Millennium (Russell, 1946)⁸² – this is all that is being asked of the masses of today’s PRC: to be contented with the “China Dream” wherein Mao remains in the messianic pantheon; a rejuvenated, increasingly catch-all and technocratic Communist Party continues to be the umbrella Church to all societal groups religious or otherwise; and a CCP-ruled, stability-above-all-else, high-growth economic and military leviathan constitutes the centre of the imminent *Pax Sinica*, or to the ever unrepentant devil’s advocate at least “a spectacular vision of a happy hell” (Ryan, 1988)⁸³.

5. Structure of the Volume

Following this editor’s introduction, this *IJCS* special issue of *June Fourth at 25: The quarter-century legacy of Tiananmen* consists of eight articles preceded by a special commentary from Merle Goldman, and closes with a review of the 2014 edition of Philip J. Cunningham’s *Tiananmen moon: Inside the Chinese student uprising of 1989* (2010).

In her special commentary for this issue, “The reemergence of public intellectuals in late Twentieth-Century China: Reflections on the twenty-fifth anniversary of Tiananmen”, Merle Goldman traces the development of intellectual dissent in the People’s Republic of China from Mao Zedong’s totalitarian rule through the authoritarian administrations of Hu Yaobang, Zhao Ziyang, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao-Wen Jiabao, bringing into focus, the ebb and flow of the plight of dissidents, the uneasy co-existence of pluralistic discourse and openness to foreign ideas and continued tight surveillance and purges and persecution of dissenting intellectuals, including Liu Xiaobo, the key founder of Charter 08. Nevertheless, Goldman notes that while persecution of dissident public intellectuals continues even after the country’s transition from a totalitarian to an authoritarian polity, the rule of the CCP is today admittedly less repressive than during the Mao era, and together with China’s increasing participation in the international community, making it possible for intellectuals to speak out periodically and publicly on political issues, with an impact beyond their immediate

intellectual circles.

Following the editor's introduction and the special commentary are eight articles which, opened with Arif Dirlik's haunting epigraph of Murong Xuecun's personal reflection upon the State's lens on the "tank man" of Tiananmen⁸⁴, focus from various perspectives on the quarter-century legacy of the 1989 Tiananmen demonstrations and fatal June Fourth crackdown, with the exception of two, namely Guy de Jonquières's article "The problematic politics of China's economic reform plans" which concentrates on the politics of the latest economic reform programme under the new Xi Jinping administration and Roy Anthony Rogers's "Xinjiang in the aftermath of Tiananmen: Prospects for development and challenges for the new administration" on the PRC's perennial Xinjiang dilemma. While de Jonquières critically points out the central State's fundamental paradox created by maintaining the right to exercise unfettered power over every aspect of Chinese society, as the *raison d'être* of the CCP, while simultaneously seeking to free up the economy by expanding the role of markets, Rogers brings to our attention another paradox, here related to ethnoterritorialism in one of China's most restive ethnic frontier regions, wherein granting greater autonomy will not receive much appreciation but rather create more demands for political and ethnic autonomy – "a terrible paradox the Chinese have created for themselves"⁸⁵ – and higher level of education and higher socioeconomic status among the Uyghurs may not ensure the dampening of the Uyghurs' desire of seeking independence for Xinjiang⁸⁶.

Among the other six articles in this special issue, contemplating China's political future by reviewing the grim post-Tiananmen period in terms of political rights and civil liberties of the citizens of PRC are Arif Dirlik's article "June Fourth at 25: Forget Tiananmen, you don't want to hurt the Chinese people's feelings – and miss out on the business of the new 'New China'!" and Joseph Yu-shek Cheng's "Whither China and the Communist Party regime? – Reflections on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Tiananmen incident". Also portentous are Dirlik's piercing observation of foreign complicity in the CCP State-enforced "forgetting" of Tiananmen and Cheng's highlighting the liberals'

disappointment with Xi Jinping who looks keener on following the example of Vladimir Putin rather than that of Mikhail Gorbachev, including Xi's ostentatious exploitation of "forever holding aloft the flag of Mao Zedong Thought" to enhance his own administration's legitimacy. The reason for Xi's tolerance for the neo-Maoists could probably be found in Bo Xilai 薄熙来's failed challenge, riding the crest of the popularity of his alternate platform of "Chongqing model" (重庆模式), against the central leadership which serves, despite the fall of Bo, to reveal the depth of popular resentment against social injustice and official corruption – sentiment well reflected in the results of a survey conducted by the *Renmin Luntan* 人民论坛 [people's forum] magazine at the end of 2009 widely circulated among the micro-blogs in China. Soon after the exposure of the Bo Xilai incident, according to Cheng, the "enforced forgetting" of Tiananmen, on the other hand, which involves exacting "pain and punishment for remembering", in service of the "combined pressures of business interest and the ideology of globalization" has been aided in the West, notes Dirlik, by a "reductive multi-culturalism [which] demands that "the other" must be respected – no matter how despicable." Looking at how educational institutions, including those in the U.S., will more than likely view Tiananmen "as a nuisance dragged out of the past", it is noteworthy, says Dirlik, that Hong Kong, as reflected in her academic publications and press, will remember the tragedy. Indeed, attended by a truly impressive number of 100,000 to over 180,000 people⁸⁷ was the commemorative gathering this year upon the 25th anniversary of June Fourth that was held in Victoria Park on the night of 4th June 2014, whose poignant image of over a hundred thousand candles burning in vigil of those slain in the brutal repression two and a half decades ago makes the cover of this special issue.

Also highlighting the role of "pragmatic Western political and economic elites" in the PRC's "powerful memory politics" over the June 1989 massacre and the continuing silence over the country's human rights issues in the environment of "a slow convergence of logics of authoritarian power in global politics" is Johan Lagerkvist's article "The legacy of the 1989 Beijing massacre: Establishing neo-authoritarian rule,

silencing civil society” – the Western élites to whom the benefits are paramount in cooperating with PRC’s authoritarian capitalism and neo-authoritarianism which are serving to win back the Party-State’s legitimacy through impressive economic growth and selective appropriation of the 1989 student movements’ discourse on corruption, as well as appealing to State-sponsored Chinese nationalism. Focusing on the issue of CCP’s quest for legitimacy, though from an different angle, is the subsequent article, “Revisiting the role of the media in the Chinese Communist Party’s legitimation strategy in post-Tiananmen China: Case study of News Corporation” by Chin-fu Hung and Stuart Dingle which uses the case of the News Corporation’s repeated failure to gain entry into the Chinese market to examine the central position of the media in the CCP Party-State’s post-Tiananmen strategy for regime legitimation. Ensuring tight control of the media sector is a core requirement for CCP’s maintaining control of the population’s ideological lens, observe Hung and Dingle, for allowing the development of an open media would place pressure on CCP’s strategy of legitimation via the ideological framework it has promulgated domestically that attributes socioeconomic progress to the ruling party’s monopoly over political power.

Harking back to Arif Dirlik’s article that emphasizes a global context earlier in the special issue are the last two papers of the volume: Barış Yörümez’s “Old question revisited: Towards a holistic understanding of 1989” which argues against the academic disentanglement between Chinese and Eastern European revolutions of 1989, and Emile Kok-Kheng Yeoh’s “The quarter-century legacy of June Fourth: Prospects and challenges in the struggle of post-1989 dissent and nonviolent action in the People’s Republic of China” that analyses the conflict and reluctant symbiosis across the unfortunate State-society divide, assesses the tribulations and prospects of contemporary Chinese dissent and NVA, and ponders how the struggle of this one fifth of humanity for political rights and civil liberties could be understood in a more global, long-term context, especially in view of the PRC’s increasingly assertive foreign policy manifestation and the momentous global reach of her awe-inspiring economic influence and controversial

“soft power” assertion. Finally, closing this special issue of the *International Journal of China Studies* is Monir Hossain Moni’s review of the 2014 edition of the book *Tiananmen moon: Inside the Chinese student uprising of 1989* by Philip J. Cunningham (2010). This June/August 2014 issue of IJCS is slightly longer than a usual issue for, as a special thematic issue, more leeway has been given to the papers in terms of length, paying heed to Aldous Huxley’s concern that sometimes brevity might not do justice to all the facts of a complex situation⁸⁸.

Before ending this introduction, I would like to thank all the contributing authors and paper reviewers for their invaluable efforts in making the publication of this 2014 IJCS special issue of *June Fourth at 25: The quarter-century legacy of Tiananmen* possible. I am also grateful to the journal’s administrative and webpage officer Miss Susie Yieng-Ping Ling and administrative assistants Miss Geeta Gengatharan and Miss Nazirah Hamzah for webpage, printing and distribution arrangements, and Miss Si-Ning Yeoh for her technical help with image-editing and DTP softwares. The responsibility for any errors and inadequacies that remain is of course fully mine.

Notes

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and a member of the international editorial committee of the *México y la Cuenca del Pacífico*. His recent books, as both editor and contributor, include *China and Malaysia in a globalizing world* (2006); *Global impacts and domestic challenges of China's economic reform* (2007); *Facets of a transforming China* (2008); *China in the world* (2008); *CJAS* special issue – *Transforming China* (2008); *Regional political economy of China ascendant* (2009); *China-ASEAN relations* (2009); *Towards Pax Sinica?* (2009); *East Asian regional integration* (2010); *IJCS* special issues – *China in transition: Social change in the age of reform* (2010), *Reform, governance and equity: Exploring the sociopolitical implications of contemporary China's transformation* (2011), *State, governance and civil societal response in contemporary China: Critical issues in the 21st century* (2012) and *Taiwan: Democracy, cross-strait relations and regional security* (2014); and *China: Developmental model, State-civil societal interplay and foreign relations* (2013). His most recent writings also include “The role of China in Asia-Pacific trade framework in the context of APEC” in *APEC and the rise of China* (World Scientific, 2011), “Ethnicity and development: State action and ethnic coexistence in multicultural societies” in *Cultural diversity and world development* (Xiyuan, Beijing, 2013), “Evolving agencies amid rapid social change: Political leadership and State-civil society relations in China” in *Culture and gender in leadership: Perspectives from the Middle East and Asia* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), “Poverty reduction, welfare provision and social security challenges in China in the context of fiscal reform and the 12th five-year plan” in *Managing social change and social policy in Greater China: Welfare regimes in transition* (Routledge, 2014), “Literacy and education in contemporary China: Daunting challenges amidst rapid economic development” (*The Copenhagen Journal of Asian Studies*, 2014, forthcoming), and “Nationalism, historical consciousness and regional stability: Rising China as a regional power and its new assertiveness in the South China Sea” in *Interpreting China as a regional and global power: Nationalism and historical consciousness in world politics* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, forthcoming). <Email: yeohkk@um.edu.my, emileyeo@gmail.com>

1. Alan Wood, *Limits to autocracy: From Sung neo-Confucianism to a doctrine of political rights*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1995, p. xiii.
2. Salman Rushdie, *Joseph Anton: A memoir*, Random House, New York, 2012, Random House Trade Paperback Edition, 2013, p. 188.

3. David Turnley, Peter Turnley, Melinda Liu and Li Ming, *Beijing Spring*, New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1989, p. 15.
4. Or paraphrasing *Yazhou Zhoukan*, “the hundred days of People Power that made one proud to be a Chinese” (“Preface”, 亞洲週刊 (*Yazhou Zhoukan*), *Chingt’ientungti te ipai jih* 驚天動地的一百日 [a hundred days that shook heaven and earth], Hong Kong, 1989, p. 4).
5. Tiananmen 天安門, i.e. Tian’an Gate (gate of heavenly peace).
6. David Turnley, Peter Turnley, Melinda Liu and Li Ming, *Beijing Spring*, New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1989, p. 15.
7. *Yazhou Zhoukan* 亞洲週刊 (1989), *Chingt’ientungti te ipai jih* 驚天動地的一百日 [a hundred days that shook heaven and earth]. Hong Kong, p. 80.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Will Hutton, *The writing on the wall: China and the West in the 21st Century*, London: Little, Brown, 2006, p. 27. Hutton’s figures (drawn from Zhang Liang (pseudonym, compiler), Andrew J. Nathan and E. Perry Link (editors and translators), *The Tiananmen papers: The Chinese leadership’s decision to use force against their own people – in their own words*, New York: Public Affairs, 2001) were those of the General Office of the State Council reported to the Committee of Elders. Hutton also cited (p. 364) the estimates of Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, Beijing correspondents of *The New York Times*, that up to 800 unarmed people were killed and several thousands injured (Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, *China wakes: The struggle for the soul of a rising power*, New York: Time Books, 1994).
10. ODN, 19th August 2011. (东方日报 / *Oriental Daily News* / ODN is a Malaysian daily in Chinese, with China news sources mainly from the Hong Kong and Taiwan media.)
11. Or officially the “Communist Party of China” (CPC, 中国共产党).
12. An unknown protester some had identified later, though unconfirmed, as a young man named Wang Weilin 王维林, whose fate remains unknown to date.
13. Pablo Diego José Francisco de Paula Juan Nepomuceno María de los Remedios Cipriano de la Santísima Trinidad Ruiz y Picasso (25th October 1881 – 8th April 1973). *Guernica* (1937), arguably Picasso’s most famous work, is his portrayal of the German bombing of Guernica during the Spanish Civil War.
14. Usually translated as “Blood-stained glory” but literally “Blood-stained elegance”, a song written in 1987 originally to commemorate those who died during the Sino-Vietnamese War, the melancholic tune came to be a

- hymn to the determined but forlorn struggle of the hunger strikers during the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989.
15. Describing Franquist Spain, Richard Gunther (1980) stated, “The ultimate source of political authority was the Caudillo, himself. Officially a single-party authoritarian state, it can best be regarded as a no-party regime.” (See Richard Gunther, *Public policy in a no-party State: Spanish planning and budgeting in the twilight of the Franquist era*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980, p. 2.)
 16. See, e.g., Hutton (2006: 8, 98, 144-148).
 17. Formed by Wei Jingsheng, the grand avant-garde of post-Cultural Revolution Chinese democracy activism exiled in 1997.
 18. A liberalized authoritarian regime (O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986: 9, cited in Diamond, 2002: 24).
 19. Tenzin Gyatso is the 14th Dalai Lama, who was born Lhamo Dondrub on 6th July 1935. “Tenzin Gyatso” is the shortened form of the religious name “Jetsun Jamphel Ngawang Lobsang Yeshe Tenzin Gyatso”.
 20. Leading intellectual dissident activist from the 1989 Tiananmen demonstrations and hunger strikes to Charter 08 – for which he was sentenced to 11 years of imprisonment – Liu Xiaobo was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize on 8th October 2010 but was unable to receive it as he was serving his 11-year sentence. He received his Ph.D. from the Beijing Normal University in 1988 with his thesis “Shenmei yu ren de ziyou 审美与人的自由” [aesthetics and human freedom].
 21. Meaning in addition to the pursuit of the “Four Modernizations” of China’s agricultural, industrial, national defense and science sectors declared by Deng Xiaoping at that time.
 22. ODN, 4th June 2012, 7th June 2012, 8th June 2012, 9th June 2012, 10th June 2012; 11th June 2012; 13th June 2012; *Bajiu Yidai Tongxun* 八九一代通讯 [89 generation bulletin], Issue 2, 30th May, 2012; “关于要求严肃调查李旺阳死亡真相的紧急呼吁 / Urgent appeal for credible investigation into the truth of Li Wangyang’s death”, initiated by journalist and human rights activist Bei Feng 北风 (Wen Yunchao 温云超), then Peking University’s economics professor Xia Yeliang 夏业良 and scholar of historic documentation (US) Wu Renhua 吴仁华, 6th June 2012 <<http://www.peacehall.com/news/gb/china/2012/06/201206070601.shtml>>.
 23. Zha Weilin was a member of the Mothers of Tiananmen group led by Professor Ding Zilin 丁子霖 whose son, like the children of all other members, was killed by the PLA during the June Fourth massacre. After 23 years of fighting for justice on behalf of his younger son Zha Aiguo 轧爱

- 国 who was shot dead by the PLA in the night of 3rd June during the crackdown and suffering from repeated police threats and surveillance, Zha Weilin left home and was found to have hanged himself in a yet-to-open underground car park on 25th May 2012 at the age of 73. The police cordoned off the area, took away his body and had it cremated on 27th May. Zha's wife and elder son said that they had persuaded Zha not to kill himself, after finding sometime earlier a suicide note in which Zha had written his name and work unit and stated his decision to fight for justice with death after more than two decades of petitioning the government in vain. In its obituary for Zha, the Mothers of Tiananmen group strongly condemned the government's inhumanity and urged it to immediately return the suicide note, which had been presumably confiscated by the police, to Zha's family. (*ODN*, 29th May 2012; "Tiananmen Muqin qunti fugao 天安门母亲群体讣告" [obituary by Mothers of Tiananmen], 27th May 2012, from Mothers of Tiananmen (天安门母亲群体), posted by Ding Zilin (see *Bajiu Yidai Tongxun* 八九一代通讯 [89 generation bulletin], Issue 2, 30th May, 2012).
24. Besides Zha Weilin who killed himself just before the massacre's 23rd anniversary and Li Wangyang who was suspected of "being suicided" immediately after, Fang Zheng 方政 who went on stage on his wheelchair during the Victoria Park commemoration that year in Hong Kong which was attended by the largest number ever of 180,000 people also stands to represent a poignant living proof of State cruelty and hypocrisy. A student of the Beijing Academy of Physical Science, Fang Zheng lost both his legs in the early morning of 4th June 1989 in saving a fainted student during their evacuation from the Tiananmen Square from a row of approaching tanks along West Chang'an Avenue. While he successfully pushed the girl out of harm's way, his own legs were crushed by a tank. Though the authorities had asked him to state instead that he was hit by a car, the gruesome photograph shot by a foreign reporter of his shattered body lying at the crossroads of Liubukou 六部口 stands to symbolize the brutality of the ruthless crackdown and cut through the lies and conceits fostered by the authorities in subsequent decades in whitewashing the unfortunate "incident". (*ODN*, 2nd June 2012; *Bajiu Yidai Tongxun* 八九一代通讯 [89 generation bulletin], Issue 2, 30th May, 2012)
 25. "But when I open the door to step out into the world, there's only a tremendous void. A pale gray nothingness that is all my future holds." (Suzanne Collins, *Mockingjay: The final book of The Hunger Games*, New York: Scholastic Press, 2010, p. 166)

26. ODN, 11th February 2014.
27. Based on Reeler's threefold theory of social change (Reeler, 2007). See Yeoh (2010) for its adaptation for the Chinese context.
28. See, for instance, Örkesh Dölet's 8th July 2009 *The Guardian* article "A declaration of oppression" <<http://wuerkaixi.com/>>.
29. 世界維吾爾代表大會。
30. ODN, 20th July 2009.
31. Kuang Da 旷达, "Nanjing nüzi Zhenzhu: Wo bushi yingxiong 南京女子珍珠：我不是英雄" [Pearl from Nanjing: I'm not a hero], *Yangguang Shiwu* 阳光时务, 18th May 2012.
32. Provincial-level administrative units in the People's Republic of China refer to the country's 31 *sheng* 省 (i.e. provinces of Anhui 安徽, Fujian 福建, Gansu 甘肃, Guangdong 广东, Guizhou 贵州, Hainan 海南, Hebei 河北, Heilongjiang 黑龙江, Henan 河南, Hubei 湖北, Hunan 湖南, Jiangsu 江苏, Jiangxi 江西, Jilin 吉林, Liaoning 辽宁, Qinghai 青海, Shaanxi 陕西, Shandong 山东, Shanxi 山西, Sichuan 四川, Yunnan 云南 and Zhejiang 浙江), *zizhiqu* 自治区 (i.e. "autonomous regions" – each a first-level administrative subdivision having its own local government, and a minority entity that has a higher population of a particular minority ethnic group – of Guangxi 广西 of the Zhuang, Nei Monggol/Inner Mongolia 内蒙古 of the Mongols, Ningxia 宁夏 of the Hui, Xizang/Tibet 西藏 of the Tibetans and Xinjiang 新疆 of the Uyghurs) and *zhixishi* 直辖市 (i.e. municipalities directly ruled by the central government – Beijing 北京, Chongqing 重庆, Shanghai 上海 and Tianjin 天津).
33. At that time she began an Internet donation campaign to provide the two jailed activists' families 1500-2000 yuan monthly for subsistence, as she has also been long doing for other incarcerated activists. She then turned her attention also to the plight of Chen Guangcheng and his family, and made six trips to Linyi 临沂's heavily guarded Dongshigu 东师古 village to attempt to visit Chen, despite being warned repeatedly by the *guobao* 国保 (national security officers) in Nanjing of the danger and knowing well that other activists including Hu Jia 胡佳 and Wang Keqin 王克勤 had been beaten up by the guards while trying to do so. Others who had been roughed up in their attempts to visit Chen Guangcheng include the Hollywood actor Christian Bale who, accompanied by CNN reporters, tried to reach Chen's residence on 15th December 2011. (A yuan 元 of renminbi 人民币 is equivalent to about US\$0.161.)
34. "Xu Zhiyong, the quiet lawyer holding Beijing to account: the campaigner's demands that officials obey the law have been met with fury" (by Tom

- Mitchell), *The Financial Times*, 24th January 2014. <<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/d9a136da-838d-11e3-86c9-00144feab7de.html#axzz31aLuJJFj>>
35. "Society in every state is a blessing, but government even in its best state is but a necessary evil; in its worst state an intolerable one [... man] finds it necessary to surrender up a part of his property to furnish means for the protection of the rest; and this he is induced to do by the same prudence which in every other case advises him out of two evils to choose the least", said Thomas Paine in the beginning paragraphs of *Common sense* (1776).
 36. <http://gradworks.umi.com/33/12/3312615.html>
 37. ODN, 24th May 2011.
 38. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*, revised edition, London and New York: Verso, 1991 (first published in 1983).
 39. 1 mu 畝 = 0.0667 hectares.
 40. ODN, 26th July 2011.
 41. *Ibid.*
 42. ODN, 31st May 2011.
 43. Due to the abnormal size of China's population and in particular the size of China's citizens of the Han ethnicity, a distortion or misrepresentation emerges in the application of the term "multiethnic" to China as the country's large populations of minorities – about 110 million in total, including the 16 million Zhuang, 10 million Manchu, 9 million Hui, 8 million Uyghurs, 5 million Mongols and 5 million Tibetans – are practically dwarfed almost to invisibility by the sheer size of the Han population (about 92 per cent of the total population of China). In fact, based on the "critical mass" theory (advanced, among others, by Semyonov and Tyree, 1981), societies are considered multiethnic only if minorities constitute more than ten per cent of their population.
 44. ODN, 29th May 2011.
 45. Citing Bwy (1968), Gurr (1970: 239-240) and Markus and Nesvold (1972).
 46. *Jūjutsu* 柔術 is a Japanese martial art of close combat, using no weapon or only a short weapon, for defeating an armed and armored opponent by manipulating the opponent's force against himself rather than directly opposing it with one's own force. *Jūjutsu*, which dates back to the 17th century, is an ancestor of *Aikidō* 合気道 referred to by Stephen Zunes (2009) above, which was developed in the late 1920s.
 47. Hu used six characters to summarize his policy suggestion: "mianshui 免稅、fangkai 放開、zouren 走人", i.e. tax abolition, loosening control, and moving Han cadres en masse out of Tibet. (Wang Dan 王丹,

- “Chongwen Hu Yaobang de Xizang zhengce 重溫胡耀邦的西藏政策” [reviewing Hu Yaobang’s Tibet policy], *Apple Daily* (蘋果日報, Taiwan), 10th March 2014. <<http://www.appledaily.com.tw/realtimenews/article/forum/20140310/357377/>> 王丹：重溫胡耀邦的西藏政策>
48. As well as the attack on the so-called “Ulanfu Anti-Party Treason Clique” (乌兰夫反党叛国集团) and the ruthless witch-hunt to find members of the fabricated New Inner Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party (新内蒙古人民革命党 / 新内人党).
 49. See Jin, Kang and Huang (2006: 85-87) and Gao (2008).
 50. Or Qing.
 51. See “黃雀行動背後港人捨命救危內情” [inside story of how Hong Kong people risked their lives to embark on rescuing those in danger behind the Operation Siskin] by Jiang Xun 江迅, originally published in *Yazhou Zhoukan* 亞洲週刊 [Asia week], Issue 23, 14th June 2009; reproduced in *Bajiu Yidai Tongxun* 八九一代通訊 [89 generation bulletin], Issue 2, 30th May, 2012. See also “陳達鉦披露：黃雀行動幕後英雄還有梅艷芳” [Chan Tat-ching reveals: Anita Mui was also a behind-the-scenes hero of Operation Siskin], 澳洲日報 (*Daily Chinese Herald*, Australia), 28th May 2009 <<http://dailynews.sina.com/bg/chn/chnnews/ausdaily/20090528/2344305965.html>>, “營救八九民運領袖 前線總指揮首次披露黃雀行動幕後英雄鄧光榮、梅艷芳” [rescueing 1989 democracy movement leaders: frontline commander-in-chief reveals for the first time Operation Siskin’s behind-the-scenes heroes Alan Tang and Anita Mui], 蘋果日報 (*Apple Daily*, Hong Kong), 29 May 2009 <<http://hk.apple.nextmedia.com/news/art/20090529/12814772>>.
 52. *ODN*, 20th May 2014; “Tiananmen Massacre 25th anniversary: How Chinese triads enabled the Great Escape” (by Malcolm Moore), *The Telegraph* (UK), 18th May 2014. The difference in number from that given in Jiang Xun’s article above could be due to Jiang’s account of the whole operation being extended from the immediate rescues in 1989 to 1997 just before the “Handover”.
 53. Referring to personalities reportedly to have been involved, but unconfirmed, in the covert operation in some way, whether in terms of direct organization and operation, financial support or otherwise.
 54. Of the four who died in the rescue operation, two were killed in speedboat accidents in thick fog, two died when their speedboat engine caught fire while being pursued by Chinese police (“陳達鉦披露：黃雀行動幕後英雄還有梅艷芳” [Chan Tat-ching reveals: Anita Mui was also a behind-the-scenes hero of Operation Siskin], 澳洲日報 (*Daily Chinese Herald*,

- Australia), 28th May 2009 <<http://dailynews.sina.com/bg/chn/chnnews/ausdaily/20090528/2344305965.html>>; “營救八九民運領袖 前線總指揮首次披露黃雀行動幕後英雄鄧光榮、梅艷芳” [rescuing 1989 democracy movement leaders: frontline commander-in-chief reveals for the first time Operation Siskin’s behind-the-scenes heroes Alan Tang and Anita Mui], 蘋果日報 (*Apple Daily*, Hong Kong), 29 May 2009 <<http://hk.apple.nextmedia.com/news/art/20090529/12814772>>; ODN, 20th May 2014).
55. *Ibid.*
 56. More than 510,000 by organizers “conservative” estimate (which is the highest estimates in a decade); 98,600 by police’s estimate; between 154,000 and 172,000 by Hong Kong University researchers’ estimate. See “Passions run high as Hong Kong marches for democracy” (by James Pomfret and Clare Baldwin), Reuters, 1st July 2014 <<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/07/01/us-hongkong-protests-idUSKBN0F632A20140701>>; “Police arrest 511 after big HK democracy rally” (by Kelvin Chan of Associated Press), *ABC News*, 1st July 2014 <<http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/big-hk-democracy-rally-fuelled-fury-beijing-24375097>>.
 57. “After almost 800,000 Occupy Central ‘votes,’ Hong Kong readies for massive protest” (by Euan McKirdy and Wilfred Chan), CNN, 1st July 2014 <<http://edition.cnn.com/2014/06/30/world/asia/hong-kong-occupy-central-july-1-protests/index.html>>; “Passions run high as Hong Kong marches for democracy” (by James Pomfret and Clare Baldwin), Reuters, 1st July 2014 <<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/07/01/us-hongkong-protests-idUSKBN0F632A20140701>>; “Police arrest 511 after big HK democracy rally” (by Kelvin Chan of Associated Press), *ABC News*, 1st July 2014 <<http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/big-hk-democracy-rally-fuelled-fury-beijing-24375097>>.
 58. Participated by 40,000 people, according to organizer’s figures.
 59. “Tiananmen Square protest museum opens in Hong Kong”, BBC, 26th April 2014 <<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-27172041>>; “六四纪念馆开幕在即被大厦法团指违反公契”, 法国国际广播电台 /Radio France Internationale (RFI), 7th April 2014 <<http://www.chinese.rfi.fr/中国/20140407-六四纪念馆开幕在即被大厦法团指违反公契>>.
 60. ODN, 20th April 2014, 27th April 2014.
 61. 100,000 by police’s estimates and over 180,000 by organizers’ estimates.
 62. ODN, 11th June 2014; “Alarm in Hong Kong at Chinese white paper affirming Beijing control” (by Tim Hume), *CNN Global NewsView*, 11th

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63. For the full text of the White Paper “The practice of the ‘One Country, Two Systems’ policy in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region”, see *South China Morning Post* (Hong Kong), 10th June 2014 <<http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/1529167/full-text-practice-one-country-two-systems-policy-hong-kong-special>>.
 64. “‘变革会在不经意间到来’：专访《独裁者的学习曲线》一书作者威廉·道布森”（美国之音记者林枫专访）[change could come unawares: special interview of William Dobson, author of *The dictator's learning curve* (by Voice of America reporter Lin Feng)], 阿波罗新闻网 (*AboluowangNEWS*), 28th August 2012. <<http://www.aboluowang.com/news/>>
 65. *Ibid.*
 66. *ODN*, 16th April 2014.
 67. First formulated by John Foster Dulles, former United States Secretary of State, during the Cold War in the 1950s, the “Peaceful Evolution” theory “envisioned a ‘peaceful’ transition from autocracy or dictatorship to democracy in a communist country” which is seen by the Chinese leaders as the American strategy of infiltration and subversion through the propagation of Western political ideas and lifestyles, incitement of discontent and promoting local challenges against CCP’s one-party political monopoly, and hence represents the biggest threat to CCP’s continuous rule – and for leaders of the CCP, “nothing is more important than safeguarding party rule.” (“Hu warns successors over ‘peaceful evolution’” (by Wu Zhong), *Asia Times*, 11th January 2012 <<http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/NA11Ad02.html>>)
 68. *Ibid.*
 69. Besides his declaration that China is at the “initial stage of socialism” which served to clear the way for further market transformations. See “A brief biography of Zhao Ziyang”, in Zhao (2009a: 283-287); “趙紫陽年表” [chronological table on Zhao Ziyang], in Zhao (2009b: 311-316; 2009c: 359-365).
 70. Or Guangxu.
 71. Or Kang Youwei.
 72. Or Liang Qichao.
 73. Or Cixi.
 74. Cited in Greene (1990: 180), note 35.
 75. Cited in Greene (1990: 14).

76. Gene Sharp, *From dictatorship to democracy: A conceptual framework for liberation*, 4th U.S. edition, The Albert Einstein Institution, Boston, Massachusetts, 2010 (originally published in Bangkok in 1993 by the Committee for the Restoration of Democracy in Burma; 1st U.S. edition, 2002), pp. 7-8. Multiple-time nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize, Gene Sharp is the Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. Sharp received his Ph.D. in political theory from Oxford University in 1968.
77. Cited in Diamond (2002: 24).
78. See Bo (2009: 10-11).
79. Cited from 《邓小平文选》第3卷 [selected works of Deng Xiaoping, volume 3], Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe 人民出版社, 1993 年版, 第 220 ~221 页。
80. “其实说实话, 我对她本人没有什么兴趣。但是, 因为她的父亲是习近平, 那我就希望她能好好地跟她父亲谈一下。中国好, 中国坏, 中国是是否会民主, 这涉及我们每一个中国人的光荣和骄傲。习近平假如认为他是一个中国人, 他就应当希望这个国家更加民主。作为他的女儿, 她也以作为中国人为荣, 那么她就该劝她的父亲不要再继续阻碍历史的潮流。这样才能使每一个中国人, 包括她自己可以有真正的尊严和骄傲。” See “六四前访王丹: 中共当年幸存凭侥幸” [interview of Wang Dan before June Fourth: CCP then (in 1989) survived with luck] (by Qi Zhifeng 齐之丰 and Wei Zhi 魏之), Voice of America, 26th May 2014 <<http://www.voachinese.com/content/june-4th-interview-wangdan-20140526/1922785.html>>.
81. Aldous Huxley, *Brave new world*, London: Chatto & Windus Ltd, 1932, republished with a 1946 “Foreword” by author, by Harper & Bros., New York and London, 1946, and Granada Publishing Limited, London, 1977, p. 14.
82. Russell, Bertrand, *History of Western philosophy and its connection with political and social circumstances from the earliest times to the present day*, London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1946, Book Two, Part 1, Chapter IV (second edition (reset) published in 1961, see page 361).
83. Alan Ryan was referring to this as Bertrand Russell’s debt to Aldous Huxley’s *Brave new world* whose ideas Russell thought as having been stolen from him (see Alan Ryan, *Bertrand Russell: A political life*, Allen Lane/The Penguin Press, London, 1988, re-published in Penguin Books, London, 1990, p. 136).
84. In the epigraph, well-known public intellectual and writer Murong Xuecun 慕容雪村 reflects upon the adamant, contemptuous comments of the

official news broadcaster on the lone individual who stood in front of and blocked a column of tanks which signified terrifying State power on Chang'an Avenue in plain view of the world's news cameras in the morning 5th June 1989 after a night of terror: “稍有常识的人都会看出，如果我们的铁骑继续前进，这个螳臂挡车的歹徒，难道能够阻挡得了吗？”。 “Murong Xuecun” is the pen name of Chinese author Hao Qun 郝群。 To hear the cold, steely voice of the State, watch, e.g., video “六四天安门事件《3小时纪录片》大陆禁片” at <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vF2YACrLP8w&feature=em-hot-vrecs>>. Recently Murong was briefly detained by police officers in Beijing for interrogation from 8th-9th July 2014 when he returned to China – the detention was believed to be related to a June Fourth commemoration held at a gathering at an apartment on 3rd May where an essay he had written about Tiananmen was recited (“Author held in Beijing after a spate of detentions” (by Edward Wong), *The New York Times*, 8th July 2014 <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/09/world/asia/chinese-author-is-detained-by-beijing-police.html?_r=1>). Those attended the gathering were detained and later released, but Pu Zhiqiang, the most well-known participant, remains in custody.

85. Starr (2004), cited by the author of the article.
86. Ji (1990: 200), cited by the author of the article.
87. 100,000 by police's estimates and over 180,000 by organizers' estimates.
88. “The soul of wit may become the very body of untruth. However elegant and memorable, brevity can never, in the nature of things, do justice to all the facts of a complex situation. On such a theme one can be brief only by omission and simplification. Omission and simplification help us to understand – but help us, in many cases, to understand the wrong thing; for our comprehension may be only of the abbreviator's neatly formulated notions, not of the vast, ramifying reality from which these notions have been so arbitrarily abstracted.” (Aldous Huxley's “Foreword” to his *Brave new world revisited*, Chatto & Windus Ltd, London, 1959, re-published by Grafton Books, London, 1983, p. 7)

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SPECIAL COMMENTARY

**The Reemergence of Public Intellectuals in Late
Twentieth-Century China: Reflections on the
Twenty-fifth Anniversary of Tiananmen**

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With the establishment of the People's Republic of China, headed by the leader of the Communist Party, Mao Zedong, China was ruled by a totalitarian political system. What then made possible the students' demonstrations in Tiananmen Square that spread to the rest of urban China in the spring of 1989? Mao and the party had not only dominated the country's political life, but also the economic, intellectual, artistic and personal lives of its subjects. With Mao's death in 1976, his successor and former Long March comrade, Deng Xiaoping, became China's paramount leader until his death in 1997. During this period, China moved from a totalitarian to an authoritarian regime. The party still dominated the political system and except for elections at the village level, determined the political hierarchy. Yet, at the same time that China moved to a market economy and participated in the international community, controls over the economic, social, cultural, and personal lives of its populace were loosened. Along with China's opening to the outside world, these changes gradually made possible a degree of freedom in people's personal, cultural and intellectual lives. Though an authoritarian one-party state, the party's loosening of controls over people's every-day lives unleashed a proliferation of ideas, activities and



artistic endeavours outside the party's control.

These changes in the post-Mao era also made possible the emergence of public intellectuals in the People's Republic, a phenomenon not unique to Western civilization. Public intellectuals have played a major role throughout Chinese history. China's pre-modern intellectuals, the Confucian literati, not only advised the emperor and ran the governmental bureaucracies, they were also viewed as the conscience of society. Their ideological commitment to improving the human condition led them to assume responsibilities comparable to those of public intellectuals in the West. They were generalists, who publicly discussed and dealt with political, economic and social issues, organized philanthropic efforts, and supervised education. In addition, a number of Confucian literati regarded it as their responsibility to criticize officials and even the Emperor when they believed their actions diverged from the Confucian ideals of morality and fairness.

Public intellectuals also helped to bring about the end of China's dynastic system during the Hundred Days of Reform in 1898 in the late Qing dynasty and they prepared the way for the 1911 revolution, whose leader Sun Yat-sen personified a public intellectual. Even though the Kuomintang government, led by Chiang Kai-shek (1928-1949) attempted to stifle criticism, it was too weak to silence dissident intellectuals, who publicly criticized repressive officials and Kuomintang policies and called for democratic reforms, such as freedom of speech and association. With the exception of brief periods, such as the Hundred Flowers period, 1956-June 1957, it was only during the totalitarian rule of Communist Party leader Mao Zedong (1949-1976) that China's public intellectuals were silenced and were unable to play their traditional role. A major difference, however, between the West and China during the dynastic, Kuomintang, Mao Zedong, and post-Mao eras, has been that there were and still are no laws to protect public intellectuals when what they say displeases the leadership, who could silence them with relative impunity.

Even before the Chinese Communist Party established the People's Republic of China in 1949, there was already evidence that its leader, Mao Zedong would not tolerate public criticism or dissent from his

policies. In the early 1940s, in the party's Yanan revolutionary base area, Mao launched a campaign against a group of writers who were committed to the humanitarian aspirations of Marxism and believed they were true to its basic ideals when they publicly called for equality, democracy and intellectual freedom.

As intellectuals in the past had criticized their government in the name of Confucian ideals, these writers did so in the name of Marxist principles. Several of them published their critiques in the party's official newspaper in Yanan, *Liberation Daily* (*Jiefang Ribao* 解放日报), in which they expressed disillusionment with finding that life in the revolutionary base area had not measured up to their ideal of an equal, just and free society that they had expected. They criticized the bureaucratism, corruption and inequalities they found there. In reaction, Mao launched a rectification campaign against them and their associates in spring 1942. He also issued his "Talks on art and literature", in which he served notice that henceforth literature and all aspects of intellectual activity were to be dictated by the party. At the same time, he initiated a campaign against writers and intellectuals who had dissented from his policies. Thus, even before the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949, Mao served notice that any intellectual, who deviated from the party's policies and Mao's teachings would be purged and their views publicly attacked.

During the early years of the People's Republic, the party's policies toward the intellectuals oscillated between stifling intellectual initiative and encouraging creativity needed to modernize. The party's approach was contradictory. On the one hand, it sought to indoctrinate intellectuals in Marxism-Leninism and Mao's doctrine; on the other hand, it tried to stimulate intellectuals to work productively and creatively in their disciplines. These contradictory goals evoked a cyclical policy toward intellectuals that oscillated between periods of repression and briefer periods of relative relaxation. Each cycle was determined by internal political and economic factors as well as international events.

Thus, in 1950, shortly after it came to power, the party briefly relaxed its controls over intellectuals as it sought to consolidate its rule over all of China. Then in 1951 it began an effort to reorient China's

intellectuals away from the West and toward its major ally at the time, the Soviet Union, by denouncing liberal values and indoctrinating intellectuals in Marxism-Leninism. In the process, the party attacked the ideas of the well-known Western-oriented Chinese scholar, Hu Shi, who in the early decades of the twentieth century had introduced John Dewey's theory of pragmatism into China. In 1955, the party launched an ideological campaign against the writer Hu Feng and his disciples, who had rebelled against being ordered to write in the Soviet style of socialist realism. The Hu Feng campaign established the model for future campaigns. It broadened its scope beyond a small number of intellectuals into a nation-wide campaign that encompassed virtually all intellectuals and professionals, who were ordered to purge themselves of non-Marxist-Leninist ideas and conform to party dictates.

Because of the unprecedented ferocity of the Hu Feng campaign, by the end of 1955, a large segment of China's intellectuals was silenced. The campaign's crusading zeal had even alienated some of the China's much-favoured scientists, whose help the party sought in its efforts to modernize the economy. Confronted with a passive intellectual community and in urgent need of its services, Mao then launched a new campaign called "A hundred flowers bloom, hundred schools contend" in 1956 and first half of 1957, in which he relaxed ideological controls and provided a degree of freedom in the intellectual realm. Intellectuals were urged to engage in independent thinking, wide-ranging discourse and critical thought. In addition, Mao urged intellectuals to criticize officials and point out how they had misused their power. He even encouraged discussion of political issues and airing of grievances.

In response, intellectuals began to question Marxism-Leninism and called for far-reaching political and cultural reforms. They not only criticized Mao's "Talks on art and literature", they also called for intellectual autonomy and demanded that the cases against writers who had been publicly criticized, such as Hu Feng, be reopened. When the Hundred Flowers in spring 1957 spread beyond the intellectuals to the population at large, who also demanded more freedom, Mao suddenly reversed his policy of tolerance and relaxation of controls. In June 1957, he launched the Anti-Rightist campaign in which sweeping attacks were

directed against those who had been outspokenly critical of Mao's policies. People who had voiced criticisms, as well as their families and colleagues were labeled "rightists", were forced to make public confessions, and were dismissed from their positions. By late 1957, the cycle had come around full circle to the ideological rigidity that had prevailed before the Hundred Flowers.

With the subsequent launch of the Great Leap Forward in 1958-59, the gap between the party and the intellectuals widened still further as Mao sought to turn China quickly into a true Communist society before the Soviet Union. In this effort, intellectuals were dispatched to factories and villages to be remolded through manual labour at the same time they were to bring culture to the masses. Even esteemed scientists were "sent down" to learn from the achievements of the peasants and workers. Intellectual endeavours came to a standstill.

The failure of the Great Leap Forward, which caused the death of thirty million Chinese, due to food shortages in the countryside and economic chaos in the cities, caused disillusionment with Mao's policies not only among intellectuals and technocrats, but also among his party colleagues. As Mao withdrew from policy-making in the early 1960s, a brief period of intellectual relaxation ensued in which intellectuals published essays in the traditional "*zawen* 杂文" style of short critical essays and used the traditional Chinese opera subtly to criticize Mao's policies.

In reaction, Mao in 1966 then launched the Cultural Revolution in which he sought to transform Chinese society and retaliate against those whom he believed were conspiring against him. For almost ten years, with the exception of a small number of young radical intellectuals who acted as Mao's spokesmen, most intellectuals, their families and colleagues were ostracized, persecuted, imprisoned or driven to suicide in the most severe intellectual repression in modern Chinese history. Great damage was done to China's educational institutions, intellectual endeavours and cultural life. Even China's prized scientists, who were supposedly to lead China's economic modernization, were persecuted and cut off from the outside world. At the time of Mao's death in September 1976, China's intellectual community was demoralized and

its educational institutions were not functioning.

Although the People's Republic still remained under the political control of the Chinese Communist Party, when Mao's Long March comrade, Deng Xiaoping became China's paramount leader in the late 1970s, China could no longer be categorized as a totalitarian state. China still remained under the political control of the Communist Party, but Deng's policies of moving China to a market economy and opening the country to the outside world made possible a degree of personal, intellectual, and artistic freedom. In 1987, however, Deng purged Hu Yaobang, whom he had appointed as head of the party in the early 1980s and in June 1989, he purged Zhao Ziyang, who had replaced Hu as the head of the party, because they had both advocated political as well as economic reforms. Moreover, Zhao had refused to go along with Deng's order to use the military to crack down on the demonstrators in Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989. Nevertheless, after a brief pause, the intellectual, artistic and personal spheres of Chinese life continued to remain relatively open and engaged with the outside world.

China's third generation of Communist Party leaders, who assumed power in the aftermath of June 4, 1989, led by former Shanghai mayor Jiang Zemin (1989-2002), and the fourth generation, headed by Hu Jintao and his associates, from the China Youth League, who assumed power in 2002, sought to recentralize political authority and re-strengthen the party's capacity to deal with the increasing inequalities and rampant corruption unleashed by China's move to a market economy. Yet, despite a retightening of the party's power over academic and cultural institutions after June 4, a degree of pluralistic discourse and openness to foreign ideas continued to prevail in China's universities, artistic circles, academic journals and think tanks, particularly in the sciences. Nevertheless, the Hu Jintao leadership continued to detain, put under surveillance and purge from the academic establishment intellectuals who dissented politically and criticized the party's policies publicly.

Unlike in the Mao era, however, when any intellectual who dissented from the party's scientific, artistic, historical, or economic views lost his or her job, was unable to make a living, and was

ostracized from the intellectual community, China's market reforms and opening to the outside world made it possible for intellectuals to publish abroad and in Hong Kong and support themselves and their families with free-lance jobs. While in the post-Mao period, there were still no laws to protect political and civil rights, most of the intellectuals whom Mao had persecuted were rehabilitated in the 1980s and were able to find positions in the political and intellectual establishments. Public space for political discourse and pluralistic views opened up in the media, books, universities, research centres and cultural institutions.

Yet, even though most of the rehabilitated intellectuals became members of the establishment and the party, when a small number of them called for reform of the China's Leninist party-state, they were purged once again. Unlike in the Mao era, however, although they were silenced for a while, China's market economy and increasing interaction with the outside world made it possible for them to make a living, speak out periodically and publish on political issues by means of the newly-introduced Internet technologies, private publishing, and contact with the foreign media, such as VOA, BBC, Radio Free Asia and Hong Kong, which would then beam back their views into China.

It had been expected that when China's fourth generation of leaders, which came to power in 2002, led by Hu Jintao, who were better educated than previous generations and came primarily from the China Youth League, a supposedly less doctrinaire organization than the party, the opening of public space for political discourse would expand, though circumscribed within certain limits. That, however, did not happen. In fact, there was a contraction of public space for political discourse since the late 1990s when Jiang Zemin had headed the party.

The Hu Jintao leadership cracked down on a number of people who used the new communications technologies and websites to discuss political issues. Scores of cyber-dissidents were imprisoned as a warning to others as to how far they could go in discussing political reforms on the Internet. Along with the suppression of a number of well-known independent intellectuals and the imposition of limitations on the discourse of "public intellectuals", the Hu Jintao government tightened controls over the media. Reports on growing protests against corruption,

abusive officials, property confiscation and peasant and worker demonstrations were banned from the media. Journalism professor, Jiao Guobiao, who on the Internet had criticized the party's repressive control of the media, was no longer allowed to teach at Peking University. A law lecturer at Chengdu University, Wang Yi, who called for a system of checks and balances, was also barred from teaching. The journal *Strategy and Management* that had been an outlet for intellectuals of a liberal persuasion, was closed down.

Although the party itself publicly reported that 87,000 protests had taken place in 2005, journalists were ordered not to report on the myriad of demonstrations spreading across China. When China was struck by devastating earthquakes in Sichuan province in 2008, initially the media and civic groups were allowed to report freely on the event, but when parents of children, who were killed in their class rooms, began to point out publicly that the quake had led disproportionately to the collapse of schools due to cheap construction, media openness was quickly curtailed. Nevertheless, despite the crackdown on public intellectuals and the media and censorship of the Internet, unlike during the Mao period when millions were harshly persecuted as in the Anti-Rightist campaign (1957-58) and in the Cultural Revolution (1966-76) for the acts of a small number, in the post-Mao period persecution for public dissent did not reach far beyond the accused and their associates. Moreover, though they might lose their jobs in academia and the media and may be briefly detained, they were able to find jobs and outlets for their views in China's expanding market economy, media outlets and abroad.

Thus, unlike during the Mao era, public intellectuals were not completely silenced. Some still tried to function as citizens, either on their own or with others and they continued to express their political views in unofficial publications and increasingly in organized petitions and public protests. Although their writings may be officially banned, they found ways to distribute their views on street corners, through private publication and over the Internet by means of connections to outside servers. Moreover, in the post-Mao era, for the first time in the People's Republic, a number of lawyers were willing to defend those

accused of political crimes and journalists reported on the party's repressive policies in a small number of media outlets, such as the *Southern Metropolitan Daily*, based in Guangdong province.

There were also major differences between the actions of public intellectuals in the 1980s and in the first decade of the early twenty-first century. Whereas a number of prominent public intellectuals in the 1980s, such as the journalist Liu Binyan and the poet Ai Qing, called themselves "Marxist humanists" and pointed out how the party's policies differed from the ideals of Marxism, because of the increasing bankruptcy of Marxism-Leninism as a governing philosophy by the end of the twentieth century, most public intellectuals in the early decades of the twenty-first century gradually become imbued with a myriad of political views and used different political strategies. They moved away from the focus on ideology and emphasized the need to establish new institutions in order to achieve political reforms.

Another major change was that whereas until the 1989 Tiananmen demonstrations, public intellectuals considered themselves an elite and did not join with other social classes in political actions, starting with the Tiananmen Square multi-class demonstrations in spring 1989, a small number of them began to join with workers and small business people in petition drives and in organizing diverse groups calling for political reforms. Journalists wrote about these events and lawyers defended the leaders of such movements when they were detained. Therefore, in the first decade of the twenty-first century, despite continuing repression, there was a qualitative change in the thinking and actions of China's public intellectuals: they became increasingly independent political actors and showed a willingness to join with other social groups in political actions.

China's increasing interaction with the rest of the world, particularly with the West, in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, was another factor promoting a liberalizing intellectual environment. China signed the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in October 1998, having already signed the UN Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1997. Although the latter Covenant was confirmed by China's rubber-stamp National People's Congress, the Covenant on Civil

and Political Rights has not. Nevertheless, China's signature on UN human rights covenants as well as an easing of political controls at home were part of China's effort to create goodwill abroad, particularly with the United States and other Western countries. At the same time, thousands of Chinese students and scholars went abroad to study at American and West European universities. China's engagement with the international community correlated with relaxation of ideological controls at home.

Thus, one hundred years after China's Hundred Days' Reform in 1898 that ultimately led to the beginnings of political change and to the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911, the late twentieth century ushered in broad-ranging public discourse on political reforms. And like the Hundred-Day reformers in 1898, the major exponents of political reforms in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries were establishment intellectuals – academics, writers, journalists, lawyers, and ex-officials – who like their predecessors were not at the centre of power. They worked in think-tanks, universities, newspapers, and law offices, or were retired, but they managed to promote their ideas of political reform in books, scholarly journals, academic forums, and other channels in the public arena that opened up in the post-Mao era. At times, they even joined people outside the establishment in their calls for political reforms.

Advocates of political reform in the early years of the twenty-first century represented a broad ideological spectrum, from the older generation of Marxist humanists to younger intellectuals in the universities and the party's think tanks, such as the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China's premier centre for social science research. Unlike the earlier generation who still cited Marxist texts as the basis for their arguments for reform, the younger generation cited a broad range of Western liberal thinkers from Adam Smith to Karl Popper to support their arguments and were more direct in calling for political reforms.

Although none of China's establishment intellectuals publicly proposed a multiparty system or called for direct elections of the political leadership by universal suffrage, a small number advocated the establishment of other institutions associated with liberal democracy:

some emphasized the rule of law; others stressed freedom of expression and association; and still others called for more competitive elections. Some were concerned with inner-party democracy; others with grassroots democracy. A few urged the establishment of an elected parliamentary system. Virtually all advocates of reforms, however, called for a political system based on some form of checks and balances. Though of a variety of political views, what they had in common was a shared emphasis on the need for political reforms in order to deal with the rampant corruption and accelerating economic and social inequalities accompanying China's economic reforms. Those expressing liberal political views in the early decades of the twenty-first century differed from the Marxist humanists of the 1980s in that they were relatively more independent of political patronage than the latter – not only because of China's accelerating market economy and openness to the outside world that made it possible, but also because of their desire to acquire more intellectual autonomy.

Another new phenomenon in the People's Republic in the early years of the twenty-first century was the public demand by a small number of Chinese citizens that the party live up to the principles to which it had expressed verbal and written approval. For example, on December 10, 2008, the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Right, a group of people from all walks of life launched a movement called Charter 08. They put forth a blueprint for fundamental legal and political reforms with the goal of achieving a democratic political system. Patterned on Václav Havel's Charter 77 movement in the former Czechoslovakia, Charter 08 criticized the party for failing to implement human rights provisions to which its leaders had signed onto, such as the United Nations Covenant on Political and Civil Rights and amendments to China's constitution in 2004 which included the phrase "respect and protect human rights". Charter 08 pointed out that "Unfortunately most of China's political progress has extended no further than the paper on which it is written." The political reality, Charter 08 explained, "is that China has many laws but no rule of law; it has a constitution but no constitutional government." Charter 08 called for a political system based on the democratic institutions of checks and

balances.

These demands for political reforms have been periodically and publicly expressed in post-Mao China by intellectuals and students. The most well-known effort was the 1989 Tiananmen Square demonstrations of students and intellectuals. Although just before the Party crackdown on the 1989 Tiananmen movement workers and their families had started to join the movement, what made Charter 08 qualitatively different from past protests was that it became a political movement which crossed class lines. Past demonstrations were usually carried out by specific classes focused on particular economic issues, such as peasant protests against confiscation of their land by local officials or workers' protests against non-payment of salaries or poor working conditions. Even during the 1989 student demonstrations in Tiananmen Square, students at first linked arms to keep workers and other urbanites from participating, because they knew that the party feared an alliance between intellectuals and workers. When other social classes forced their way into the 1989 protests by late May and the movement spread to other cities and classes, the party's then paramount leader Deng Xiaoping, fearing a threat to the party's rule, ordered the army to suppress the movement which it did in a violent crackdown on June 4.

What made the Charter 08 movement unprecedented in the People's Republic was that while initially it was signed by over 300 intellectuals, as it circulated on the Internet and elsewhere it became a multi-class movement. Ordinary Chinese citizens from all walks of life – entrepreneurs, professionals, local officials, workers, farmers, housewives, and street vendors – signed their names. Also another new phenomenon in grass-roots political movements in the People's Republic was the participation of a number of lawyers, who volunteered to defend those accused of political crimes, an unprecedented action in the People's Republic. Despite the party's denunciation of Charter 08 and the detention of one of its originators, the writer Liu Xiaobo, just before the party completely shut down its website in mid January 2009, over eight thousand people from all walks of life had managed to sign their names in support.

The Charter 08 episode revealed that not only intellectuals were willing to voice public dissatisfaction with China's authoritarian market economy, but also farmers, workers, and small entrepreneurs, supposed beneficiaries of China's post-Mao political system. The broad class participation in the Charter 08 movement may be attributed to worsening economic conditions in late 2008 due to the closure of a number of China's export industries because of slackening demand for Chinese consumer goods in the West undergoing a recession and college graduates, who for the first time in the post-Mao era had difficulty finding jobs. The economic situation also led to questioning of the political system which in the post-Mao era based its legitimacy on the Communist Party's ability to deliver economic growth. Despite the crackdown and the detention of the writer Liu Xiaobo and a few other signers, the appearance of Charter 08 represented an emerging multi-class movement for political change in the post-Mao era.

Equally significant, unlike the Mao era, when intellectual dissenters were brutally suppressed, in the post-Mao era and especially the early years of the twenty-first century, China's intellectuals not only experienced intellectual pluralism, they also participated in vigorous debates and engaged in the international academic community. They were not completely silenced politically and at times, they joined with other classes and groups in calling for political reforms. Thus, while China's movement from a totalitarian to an authoritarian polity does not protect public intellectuals from reprisals and detention, the party's less repressive rule and its engagement with the international community make it possible for intellectuals periodically to speak out publicly on political issues and have an impact beyond their immediate intellectual circles.

Note

- * Dr Merle Goldman, Professor Emerita of Boston University and an Associate of the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies at Harvard University, was born on March 12, 1931. She received her Bachelor's degree from Sarah Lawrence College in 1953, earned her Master's degree from Radcliffe in 1957 and Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1964. She was influenced both by her undergraduate advisor, Martin Wilbur at Sarah Lawrence and her mentor at Harvard, John Fairbank, who never lost interest in her work, even though Goldman had four children while in graduate school. Fairbank encouraged her to follow her particular area of interest, the role of the intellectuals in the People's Republic of China. Goldman's first academic appointment was at Wellesley College, where she was an instructor in Far Eastern history from 1963 to 1964. She was a lecturer for the Radcliffe Seminars from 1968 to 1970, and in 1972, she was appointed a professor at Boston University, where she remained until her retirement in 2004. At the same time, she had and continues to have a research appointment and office at the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies at Harvard. Two of Goldman's three books were selected as Notable Books by *The New York Times*. The third book, *Sowing the seeds of democracy in China: Political reform in the Deng Xiaoping decade*, also won Best Book on Government Award from the American Association of Publishers, Professional and Scholarly Publishing Division. Goldman edited or co-edited five additional books and is the author of over fifty scholarly articles and numerous newspaper and magazine articles. She also updated the Fairbank textbook, *China: A new history*, republished in 2006. Her most recent book is *From comrade to citizen: The struggle for political rights in China*. Goldman has been the recipient of numerous awards, including the Sarah Lawrence Distinguished Alumni award and the Radcliffe Graduate Medal for Distinguished Achievement. She served as a fellow at the Radcliffe Bunting Institute. She has received grants from the Guggenheim Foundation, the Social Science Research Council, the State Department, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the Wang Institute. In addition to her professorship at Boston University, Goldman has been a Research Associate of the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies at Harvard University since 1964. Goldman's professional service also includes committee appointments to the American Historical Association, the Association of Asian Studies, the Council on Foreign Relations, and the Social Science Research Council. She served as vice-president and



president of the New England Council of the Association of Asian Studies, a board member of Asia Watch, a division of Human Rights Watch, a Phi Beta Kappa Lecturer, and the Chair of the New England China Seminar which meets monthly at the Fairbank Center. Aside from her academic accomplishments, Goldman has worked on behalf of human rights advocates in China. Her research on the history of China's intellectuals led to her activism on their behalf, when a number of them were persecuted following the Chinese revolution of 1949. She served on the Presidential Commission on Radio Free Asia and was a member of the United States delegation to the Commission on Human Rights in Geneva in 1993-1994. <Email: mgoldman@fas.harvard.edu>







Articles







**June Fourth at 25:
Forget Tiananmen, You Don't Want to Hurt the
Chinese People's Feelings – and Miss Out on the
Business of the New “New China”!+**

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Abstract

Twenty-five years ago, in the early hours of June 4, the people's government in Beijing turned its guns on the people of the city who had risen in protests that spring to express their frustration with Party despotism and corruption. The refusal to this day to acknowledge the crime is matched by continued criminalization of those who still live under the shadow of Tiananmen, and with courage continue to pursue the goals it had put on the political agenda – some from within the country, others from exile. The Tiananmen democracy movement brought to a head the contradictions of “reform and opening” that had acquired increasing sharpness during the decade of the 1980s. The successful turn to global capitalism in the aftermath of the suppression has been at least as important as the censorship of memories in the “forgetting” of Tiananmen among the PRC population. In historical perspective, Tiananmen appears as one of a series of popular uprisings around the globe that have accompanied the globalization of neo-liberal capitalism. The discussion throughout stresses foreign complicity – including that of foreign China scholars and educational institutions – in covering up this open sore on so-called “socialism with Chinese characteristics”.



Keywords: *Tiananmen, democracy movement, “reform and opening”, “socialism with Chinese characteristics”, global capitalism, China fever, Confucius Institutes*

JEL classification: *A14, H12, P16, Z13*

I vividly recall the shrill voice of the announcer commenting on the scrawny youth standing in front of a column of tanks in Tiananmen Square on June 5, 1989: “If our tanks press forward,” he asked, “would that pathetic low life really be able to halt their progress?” I was 15 at the time. “That’s right!” I thought. “The soldiers were being truly merciful.”¹

Twenty-five years ago, in the early hours of June 4, the people’s government in Beijing turned its guns on the people of the city who had risen in protests that spring to express their frustration with Party despotism and corruption. Students from Beijing universities held centre stage in their occupation of Tiananmen Square. But people from all walks of life had risen, including workers who quickly organized themselves into autonomous workers’ associations. As a friend from Beijing Normal College (now Capital Normal University) told the author later that summer, “we were all there.” It was the “city-people” (*shimin* 市民) who bore the brunt of the government violence as they fought back to stop the troops from reaching the students in the square. The movement in Beijing triggered demonstrations in cities around the PRC, bringing out into the streets thousands of people of all walks of life, making the movement national.

To this day, it is not clear how many lost their lives – estimates range from the official hundreds to unofficial thousands. The numbers game is not likely to be resolved. The numbers are important so that the victims, named or nameless, may be preserved in historical memory, and the grief of parents and relatives assuaged. They are not crucial to assessing the criminality of the suppression. Even at the lower end, they stand witness to the hypocrisy of a state that would slaughter its own people in the name of defending them.² The refusal to this day to

acknowledge the crime is matched by continued criminalization of those who still live under the shadow of Tiananmen, and with courage continue to pursue the goals it had put on the political agenda – some from within the country, others from exile.

* * *

A *People's Daily* editorial published on 26 April 1989 that contributed significantly to the escalating confrontation between students and the authorities blamed the protests on an “extremely small number of people” whose “purpose was to sow dissension among the people, plunge the whole country into chaos and sabotage the political situation of stability and unity”, and described the movement as a “a planned conspiracy and a disturbance. Its essence is to once and for all, negate the leadership of the CPC and the socialist system.”³ On June 5, in the immediate aftermath of the suppression, the State Council led by prime minister Li Peng issued an open letter addressed to the Party and the people that repeated some of the same charges and condemned the movement as a “counterrevolutionary riot” inspired by “Western” bourgeois ideas, instigated and financed by Hong Kong and overseas agitators. In the words of a *Beijing Review* editorial,

The plotters and organizers of the counter-revolutionary rebellion are mainly a handful of people who have for a long time obstinately advocated bourgeois liberalization, opposed Party leadership and socialism and harbored political schemes, who have collaborated with hostile overseas forces and who have provided illegal organizations with the top-secrets of the Party and state ... Taking advantage of students' patriotic feelings ... this handful of people with evil motives stirred up trouble.⁴

There was a kernel of truth in the charge, calculated to confound a public whose hesitant exuberance had collapsed overnight into “no-exit” (*meiyou banfa* 没有办法) pessimism. To quote from an article by this author written shortly after the event in collaboration with Roxann Prazniak,

Chinese government charges of foreign involvement, while misguided in their suggestion of an organized conspiracy, are not vacuous ... There is hardly any question about the contributions of the Voice of America which, as Chinese students proudly proclaim, shaped their understanding of the situation in the world, including the situation in China. Most intriguing is the conversion of the movement into a *Chinese* movement rather than a movement in the People's Republic of China. Chinese from Taiwan, the US and Hong Kong freely participated in the movement (in the PRC or from abroad) as if it were an ethnic movement and not a political movement in a sovereign state. Chinese secret societies were involved in smuggling people in and out of the PRC. And Chinese in Hong Kong freely admit (now with regrets) that funds from Hong Kong kept the movement alive past where it should have gone. It may be a function of racist attitudes toward the PRC (and Chinese) that the peculiarity of this situation, not to speak of its contribution to the final tragedy, has not been raised even as a question.⁵

Nation-states thrive off the celebration of their glories. Just as avidly, they seek to bury in forgetfulness that which reflects badly on them, or to deflect blame onto others. The PRC is no exception but for the unswerving faith of the Communist Party leadership that the best way to deal with any blemish on its record is to prohibit public recognition and discussion, and then pretend it does not exist even when the said blemish is in full public view – as if the mask of infallibility were a guarantee of legitimacy and political survival.⁶ Charges against Tiananmen dissidents of conspiracy and collaboration with outside forces hostile to the national interest – also common items in the ideological tool-box nation-states draw upon to discredit dissent – were gross distortions of peaceful patriotic protests triggered by anxiety about economic distress, bureaucratic corruption, and intra-Party conflict that further deepened uncertainty over the future of the decade-long “reform and opening”. But they served well to deflect attention away from the Communist Party, which increasing had come to identify national with party interest – much like the warlords of an earlier day who had been targets of the revolution. “Counter-revolutionary riot” would become the

official verdict on the movement. To this day, the Party has refused to budge from it – even with the rise to leadership of a generation that in its youth had themselves been caught up in the ferment for reform and democracy.⁷

* * *

The PRC leadership has been quite successful in dimming memories of the event, and even turning it to political advantage, even though extinguishing memories has proven to be more difficult than clearing the protestors from Tiananmen. The Party has been assiduous in blacking out reference to Tiananmen in the media, including the Internet. But it has not been able to silence the “Tiananmen mothers” who, like “the Madres de Plaza de Mayo” in Argentina or “Cumartesi Anneleri” (Saturday Mothers) in Turkey, have refused to give up on the struggle to force the state to account for their missing children.⁸ Occasional incidents of fatal punishment inflicted on jailed activists bring back into public consciousness those apprehended at the time languishing to this day in the anonymity of incarceration.⁹ Others continue to call on the Party to reverse its verdict, knowing full well that they are likely to join their jailed comrades for their temerity. Most dramatic in these acts of remembrance are the annual demonstrations in Hong Kong to commemorate June 4, fueled by local anxieties about the progressive suffocation of freedom in the Special Administrative Region by oppressive practices emanating from Beijing, demographic “invasion” from the north that threatens everyday livelihood and welfare, and a corporate-dominated government that is more willing to follow Beijing’s dictates than to share political power and responsibility with the people it governs. Modeled after the Tiananmen original in 1989, the Hong Kong “Goddess of Democracy” (*minzhu nüshen* 民主女神), “temporarily” housed at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, keeps alive memories of June 4 as inspiration for local autonomy and democracy.

Memories of Tiananmen are nevertheless challenged by increasing obliviousness to what the movement stood for, as well as to its present-

day repercussions. The forgetfulness that comes with the passing of time is no doubt an important element. If time does not necessarily heal, it still throws over the past the cover of new concerns and challenges that filter the memories and give them new meanings. The “forgetting” in this case, is an enforced forgetting, which exacts pain and punishment for remembering, and denies to the generations who did not personally experience the event all knowledge of it except perhaps a passing reference now and then to the victory over the attempted counterrevolution by “an extremely small number” of misfits. Indeed, on a rare occasion when reference to Tiananmen has appeared in print, a newly acquired “soft power” approach has been in evidence in testimonials by experts on “how well China has done, economically and politically, since 1989, upholding the official verdict that the government acted correctly in crushing the 1989 protests.”¹⁰ The experts variously attributed the incident to youthfulness, anxiety about the reforms, and an immature reliance on “the West” over native resources. If a Chinese millennial has any knowledge of the event, it is at best likely to be along the lines of, “The Chinese government is not evil. They did it out of good intentions. If they had had more appropriate equipment, they would have done a better job in 1989 ... The Chinese government didn’t tell the truth, but the West didn’t tell the truth either because they didn’t like China’s rising.”¹¹ The knee-jerk patriotism of a foreign student in an alien environment is reinforced in the case of students from the PRC by an atavistic patriotic education intolerant of any criticism at home or abroad, whether the subject is Tiananmen, Tibet, Xinjiang or the Republic of China in Taiwan. That many of these students are offspring of Party cadres enriched by corruption adds an additional motivation for defense of the Party line.

Much more so than the passage of time or censorship, with the phenomenal economic, social and cultural transformation of the PRC during the past two decades, Tiananmen seems to belong to an entirely different age that is best left behind. This is the message conveyed by the apparent desire to shift emphasis from the event to the economic development made possible by political stability in its aftermath. It is likely the utmost desire of the Party itself. An eloquent example of this

desire is the intriguing case of Wu'erkaixi, a student leader in the movement, who was among China's most wanted after June 4. Having managed to escape into exile, he studied in the US, and subsequently moved to Taiwan where he has been living for a number of years. In recent years, he has made a number of attempts to get himself arrested so that he can go back to see his aging parents. He has repeatedly been refused entry into the country. It is not every day that a country refuses to get its hands on its most wanted voluntarily submitted. It is difficult not to conclude that the Party simply does not want any of the publicity that would attend his return, especially a criminal trial guaranteed to open the gates to a flood of memories, and possibly serve as a lightning rod for social and political conflict. That Wu'erkaixi is of Xinjiang Uighur origin is no doubt an additional consideration of no little significance in the midst of ongoing government efforts to quell Uighur resistance to Han colonialism.¹²

* * *

Government efforts to relegate Tiananmen to a different age have fallen on receptive ears both in the PRC and abroad. There is good reason for this because from both Chinese and global perspectives, it does belong in more than one sense in a different world than that of the present.

The suppression of the movement brought to an end a decade of uncertainty and unrest that had accompanied the changes ushered in by "reform and opening" after 1978. Tiananmen was a tragedy, not only because of what transpired on the night of June 4, 1989, but also because it was the product of the seemingly inexorable sharpening of the contradictions in the course of the decade that the reforms had given rise to, culminating in the fateful events of that night. One of the most remarkable things about Chinese society in the 1980s was the contradictoriness of the messages it conveyed to the observer, within or without the PRC. Evidence of impressive economic progress on all fronts coexisted with accumulating evidence that something had gone very wrong. Continued economic growth was accompanied after 1985 with increasingly severe inflation (ranging from 30-50 per cent



annually), problems in agriculture (decline in grain production, shortage of fertilizer, and deterioration of the agrarian infrastructure), industry (failure to register increases in productivity). Increasing wealth for some was accompanied by problems of unemployment and poverty, exacerbating the problem of social division. Social vitality, evident in the flourishing of individual entrepreneurial activity, was accompanied by signs of social deterioration (appearance of beggary, prostitution and criminal activity ranging from petty theft and street muggings to organized crime in the peddling of drugs and sale of women and children) and social breakdown (ranging from worker strikes and peasant attacks on granaries to social banditry, including train robberies). Release of political controls to encourage economic growth was accompanied by unprecedented political corruption. The opening to the world which ushered in a cultural revival brought with it a cultural disorientation that not only intensified dissatisfaction with a seemingly incoherent socialist system beyond redemption but also produced disaffection with the very idea of being Chinese. The new emphasis on producing an educated elite was accompanied by decline in the educational system. New vitality in the realm of culture, unprecedented since the establishment of the People's Republic, was accompanied by alienation and moral indifference, even social irresponsibility. Students on campuses revolted against Party control which they felt obstructed the educational excellence that would be the guarantee of future prospects.¹³ The massive student demonstrations that erupted in December 1986 in east central China appear in hindsight as a dress rehearsal for what was to come in 1989.¹⁴ By late 1988 and early 1989, there was every sign that Chinese society was in deep trouble and that the reforms had run into a dead end. The government and the Communist Party, in turn, seemed incapable of dealing with the problems its policies had created, riddled as it was with corruption, factionalism and the organizational incoherence it displayed as these social and ideological tendencies worked their way into the very constitution of the existing political order.

The Tiananmen movement was the making of a generation that had come of political age in the midst of this social, cultural and political



incoherence. Youth who had been rusticated during the Cultural Revolution were returning to the cities, radicalized by their experiences of poverty and backwardness in rural China that had further deepened their cynicism of the Communist Party. Their younger counterparts, born at the tail end of the Cultural Revolution, experienced politicization as they sought to overcome uncertainties provoked by the unsettled question of whether the future lay with socialism or capitalism. Party efforts to depoliticize them by the discipline of “socialist spiritual civilization” fell on deaf ears against evidence of Party corruption and infectious materialism. At the same time, criticism of the system by prominent intellectuals like Fang Lizhi and Liu Binyan reinforced a new political idealism nourished by exposure to novel political philosophies and cultural practices that came with the opening to the outside world. The mix of idealism and cynicism would be very much in evidence in 1989.¹⁵

These contradictions disorganized the Party leadership even as they sought to bring the events under their control. The Party almost lost it in May-June 1989. The possibility acquired additional urgency from the global context. 1989 was to mark the end not just of historical socialism but the era of revolutions in modern history. Whether or not the PRC leadership in China perceived it in these historical terms is beside the point.

The Tiananmen movement was to prove every bit as profound in its consequences as the turn to reform ten years earlier. Between 1989 and 1992, when the decade-long enthusiasm for Deng Xiaoping of global capital turned into condemnations that made him into a villain second only to Mao Zedong, the Party leadership made a decision to resolve the contradictions that had brought about June 1989 simply by abolishing the entrapment between socialism and capitalism, opting for capitalism as the choice for China’s immediate future. Deng’s visit to the South in 1992, described in imperial terms (*nanxun* 南巡, or “progress to the South”), reaffirmed what had been accomplished in the special economic zone of Shenzhen. His conclusion that it was time not to worry about whether the path followed was socialist or capitalist, so long as it worked, echoed his statement of the early 1960s, that “it did not matter

whether a cat was black or white so long as it caught mice.” That had landed him in hot water for two decades as a “capitalist-roader”. His injunction in 1992 had an electrifying effect, albeit in a politically antithetical direction, similar to Mao’s statement back in late 1957 that “people’s communes are good”, which had led to the communalization of the country within months.

This time around, the message was to jump into the sea of capitalism, and many followed Deng’s advice. The Party made a conscious decision at the time that consumption might well serve as a substitute for politics, so that there would be no repetition of Tiananmen in the future. The “spiritual solutions to material problems” of a decade earlier were now to be replaced by material solutions, at least for those sectors of the population prone to demands for political participation, whose political desire could be replaced by the desire for the good life. There was something of an important bargain here: so long as the Party delivered the goods, its leadership would go unchallenged. The freedom to consume would pave over the “cries for democracy”¹⁶. In the aftermath of Deng’s trip to Shenzhen a local official quipped, “Let them [young people] have their desires! If they have money, they can do what they want. Just no more Tiananmens!”¹⁷ If hedonism was preferable to political involvement, Chinese capitalism of the kind associated with Singapore showed the way to controlling the socially degenerative consequences of capitalist development. In his talks in Shenzhen in 1992, Deng noted that through “strict management”, Singapore had succeeded in preserving “social order” while developing rapidly. He thought that China could borrow from the Singapore experience to do even better.¹⁸

The turn to a culture of consumption was accompanied from the early 1990s by a revival of “traditionalisms”, symbolized by the term “Confucianism”, that rounded out the circle by bringing together modernity and tradition, which had been an aspiration going back to the origins of the Chinese Revolution – except that it was neither the modernity nor the tradition that the revolution had sought to achieve. It was quickly obvious that Confucianism was subject to the same instrumentalization (and commodification) as socialism had come to

be.¹⁹ The revival of tradition came as a relief to those who had mourned its passing all along. Official commentators were quite explicit that the revival of the Confucian tradition was intended to supply values of order and ideological unity at a time when the population had lost faith in socialism or its promises. Confucianism also held the promise of orderly development, as had been promoted since the early 1980s by cheerleaders of the authoritarian developmentalist regimes of East Asia. The late 1980s had witnessed, side by side with the calls for democracy and “civil society”, the promotion by some of so-called “new authoritarianism”, inspired by the likes of right-wing political scientists in the United States such as Samuel Huntington.²⁰ The Confucian revival was entangled in these various efforts to find remedies to the contradictions created by efforts to articulate socialism to capitalism.²¹ In the end, however, what mattered the most was the offer of consumerism (of commodities, socialism, or Confucianism) in exchange for the abandonment of political democracy.

The bargain worked. And the circumstances were auspicious. The PRC’s full-scale incorporation in global capitalism coincided with the globalization of capital with the fall of socialism globally. The PRC would emerge by the end of the decade as one of the motors of globalization. A labour force, trained by a socialist revolution carried out in its name, was now rendered into a forcefully submissive force of production for a global capitalism, in the name of a socialism that was postponed further and further into the future. Oppression and exploitation were still there, to be sure, but they could be pushed to the background as passing abnormalities soon to be replaced by plenty as the forces of production advanced, and the country had a genuine basis for socialism. In the meantime, consumer goods were made widely available to a population starved for them by decades of revolutionary puritanism.

Deng Xiaoping was the architect of these policies in a very real sense, but efforts to make him into a Chinese capitalist saint ignore his faithfulness to Bolshevik elitism, which was also his legacy to the reforms.²² His successor, Jiang Zemin would complete the counter-revolution that Deng had initiated.²³ By the early part of the twenty-first

century, under Jiang's leadership, China was able to claim a place for itself among the ranking powers of the world – not by virtue of ideological priority as a socialist state but as a country on which capital globally had come to depend. It also had come to emulate other capitalist societies in the increasingly unequal distribution of wealth and welfare between classes, genders, and between urban-rural areas, as well as its contribution to pollution that threatened not just its own future but that of the globe as a whole. Jiang Zemin's "important thought of three represents"²⁴, something of a joke even among Communist Party circles, sought to make the Communist Party into an instrument of development that would serve the most "advanced" sectors of the country – which translated readily into the making of the Party into a party of the urban economic ruling classes. The contradictions this time around were not of socialism, but of successful incorporation in global capitalism.

The 1989 generation were products of a post-socialist milieu in which the experience of the Cultural Revolution was still very much alive despite its official repudiation in 1978, and the future of socialism still presented itself as a central issue of contention. The Communist Party has still not abandoned its pretensions to socialism, but its ritualized reaffirmations of "socialism with Chinese characteristics" have ceased to have any meaningful connection either to its own policies or to the population at large – except perhaps to legitimize the plunder of public goods in the name of development. In the two decades after Tiananmen, PRC Chinese society has gone through further "cultural revolutions" that mock the Cultural Revolution Mao Zedong had launched to guarantee socialism as the PRC's future. In the late 1990s, the turn to markets, advertising and consumption were viewed by its agents some as a "second cultural revolution", more powerful by far than the original in its staying power. More recently, Internet activism has been described as another "cultural revolution". Whatever we may choose to make of these appellations, they are indicative of the transformation of PRC society and culture.²⁵

Chinese millenials have come of age in the context of "China's rise" by successful exploitation of opportunities provided by the globalization of capital, which has also fueled nationalist fervour and cultural

introspection. The restructuring of domestic spaces and the PRC's relationship to the world at large has induced the transformation of intellectual orientations and "the structures of feeling". Despite the cosmopolitization of everyday life that has accompanied the globalization of PRChinese society, however, in contrast to the Tiananmen rebels' thirst for cultural and philosophical understanding of the outside world, the present generation is shielded from the world outside by an education that instills in youth the provincial narrow-mindedness of an exuberant nationalism. The Tiananmen generation, too, had been raised on the nationalist education of the early 1980s that already sought in nationalism a substitute for socialism. But this was still a nationalism that drew its logic from a century of revolution. The nationalist ideology that came to the fore in the 1990s turned for inspiration to the very traditions that the revolution had sought to overturn. Even as the PRC inserted itself in global capitalism, it began to turn its back on the universalism that had informed the revolutionary movement. In this sense the PRC has followed a trajectory similar to that of the Guomindang in the 1930s. In its "superior" ability to police unwanted ideas of human rights and democracy, it has been more effective in enforcing among the people the provincial mentality of the Party itself.²⁶

The regime's efforts to depoliticize the population have worked, but only up to a point. Coercion is readily at hand to make up where ideological education falls short of silencing dissent. The PRC population readily expresses its frustrations on everyday matters. The agrarian population, popular source of the Chinese revolution, readily fights back against the state to protect its rights. The industrial sector is marked by frequent worker strikes against poor pay and oppressive working conditions. And though present-day concerns are different from the anxieties and hopes that drove the generation of 1989, youth is quite contentious. The contestation is there, but its effectiveness in achieving its goals should not be exaggerated. Party and government organs strictly regulate and circumscribe the sphere of protest, and are prepared to nip in the bud any tendency to politicize social issues.²⁷

It is not only Party control that conditions protest. It is constrained also by popular concerns about jeopardizing “China’s rise”. The Communist Party itself is by no means monolithic. It has its own advocates of greater democracy and the rule of law in governance. Popular ferment is also an eloquent indication of cravings for more effective civic and political participation and voice among social groups empowered by development. While talk about democracy (and kindred notions such as freedom and human rights) is an ongoing feature of political discourse within the Party and among the public at large, however, it would seem to be trumped for most people by concerns for stability and continued development.²⁸

These concerns are no doubt exacerbated by nationalist cravings for “China’s rise”. The patriotism instilled in youth by a chauvinistic nationalist education can even become an embarrassment in forcing the state to take positions in international relations it might well desire to avoid.²⁹ Popular patriotism draws energy from its entanglement in pervasive aspiration to achieve the good life which may be fulfilled only by further “rise”. In contrast to the anxieties of the earlier generation about the future – personal or national – the present generation is taught that the future belongs to the PRC – evidence for which seems to be readily available in the rapid advance of an otherwise obscene consumerism that has become a defining feature of present-day PRC culture, driven by a predatory global capitalism that looks to the PRC as the source of its future customers. Democracy is by all appearances a remote concern to the new “middle classes” so long as the Party can guarantee the freedom to consume.

It would be interesting, were it allowed, to see what the contentious Internet clientele would make of the Tiananmen movement. Despite radical transformation, the two periods have commonalities arising from frustration with the despotic rule of the Communist Party. Party abuse of the people is an ongoing issue. So is the demand for democracy. The problem of inequality surpasses what the generation of 1989 might have dared to imagine. Private exploitation of public resources by Party members places the PRC among the most corrupt countries in the world. These commonalities might or might not enter the evaluation of June 4.

The views expressed by the Harvard student cited above are likely representative of prevailing sentiments, especially among the new generation. Such sentiments no doubt draw at least some plausibility from the subsequent careers of Tiananmen veterans who have gone their various ways, some of them to Wall Street, justifying suspicions that they had been motivated by elitism if not opportunism.³⁰

* * *

Memories of Tiananmen among the foreign public and scholars of China have also been significantly attenuated by the PRC's phenomenal development and the radical changes in its relationship to the world. The number two economic power in the world has quickly learned to emulate the imperial policies of number one, embellishing them with "Chinese characteristics" in which memories of the imperial tribute system of an earlier age are blended with the legacies of a revolution that for half a century sought to challenge the capitalist world order. Hype about "China's rise" celebrates the PRC's return to the "normalcy" of the capitalist world system. It is forgotten in the process that the PRC all along has been a major power, but as a Third World socialist threat to the global capitalist system. Those old enough may still remember US officials in the 1960s declaring solemnly that if the "Red Chinese" were not stopped in Vietnam, "we" would have to fight them in California!

The Tiananmen suppression brought back these memories of "Red China". The turn from revolution to reform in 1978 expectedly had been greeted with an orgy of enthusiasm for the PRC, and especially for Deng Xiaoping. For a decade, until the eve of the suppression, Deng was the golden-haired boy of Americans and Westerners in general. He was hailed as the greatest revolutionary of the twentieth century who had returned China to its proper historical path after three decades of aberrant revolutionary socialism. In the US, he had been named "man of the year" more than once (*Time*, 1979, 1985; *National Review*, 1985).

A decade of "China fever" evaporated when on June 4, 1989 the Communist Party called out the troops to put an end to the movement. In the aftermath, it was hard to find anyone to put in a good word for the

Chinese government or its leaders, at least publicly. The insults heaped upon Deng equaled in their negativity the extravagance of the praise bestowed upon him earlier. He was called a butcher, placed in a category reserved of the likes of Fidel Castro, Kim Il-sung, and the Romanian Communist dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu, and, perhaps most irredeemably, charged with resurrecting Mao Zedong's policies – a bugaboo of the US government, press and many establishment China scholars.³¹ Scholars who had been admirers of his “revolutionary” policies discovered suddenly that those policies had created “the worst of all worlds”³². One professional anti-Communist, a consistent critic of the Communist Party, perceived in these uniformly negative appraisals “a remarkable and truly moving unanimity on the issue of China”³³. Not everybody gave up on China. Realist “soft anti-Communists” continued to hope that China might yet be eased out of communism “peacefully” by the effects of a “market economy”.³⁴ Leaving aside ethical questions which are of little interest to “Realist” policy makers and advisers, they would be right in the long run – although from a contemporary perspective, the results are less than benign!³⁵

While suspicion of the PRC remained alive for the next few years, as relations with the outside world were “normalized”, there was a return by the end of the 1990s to enthusiasm for the PRC which in the new millennium would reach orgiastic proportions, possibly unequalled since the European *Chinoiserie* craze of the 17th/18th centuries.³⁶ The China hype would reach a crescendo by the time of the 2008 Olympics and the 2010 Shanghai Exposition. It has been tempered somewhat since then in the face of the PRC's sneaky expansionist moves in East and Southeast Asia. But the PRC is still hot, if more of a threat to US hegemony and world peace, not to speak of the environmental health of the earth.

Underlying this China hype is the phenomenal economic development of the PRC that has catapulted it to second place in the world economy by GDP, even if on a per capita basis it remains one of the poorest countries in the world. The PRC, unsurprisingly, is an attractive example to many in the developing world who no doubt feel empathetic to its challenge to imperial Western domination of the last two-three centuries, and a counter-balance to a hegemonic US with a

seeming addiction to war. More importantly, as it has emerged as the “factory of the world” and the primary consumer of developmental resources, it has created a “market dependency” that has made it indispensable to the continued welfare of economies around the world, including economies more advanced than its own. When the US and Europe were thrown into economic turmoil with the recession of 2008 their financial institutions had managed to engineer, the PRC’s ability to overcome the adverse effects of the recession made it into a beacon of salvation of sorts for both businesses and populations in search of a way out of their economic woes.

A most important aspect of these changes has been the unprecedented expansion of social and cultural exchanges. For the last decade, everyone – from “wealth management” firms like Bain Capital, of Mitt Romney fame, to all the major auto companies in the world, from top-notch peddlers of luxury goods from Europe to Hollywood, from US universities opening up campuses in the PRC to National Basketball Association players – has located in the PRC as the new land of opportunity, with promises of unbounded future riches of one kind or another. In the capital in Beijing, the hyper-developed coastal urban conglomerations around Guangzhou and Shanghai, and Chongqing and Chengdu in the interior, expats share in the new life of luxury with few equals in the world. There are more than 300,000 foreign students in the PRC. There are trading communities of Africans, Arabs and others that are reminiscent of trade in the treaty ports of imperial China. So long as they stay out of politics – and the sight of security – the PRC might seem to these groups as an exciting playground, in many cases freer than where they came from. They in turn are allowed to bring world culture into the midst of Chinese society; at least so long as they stay away from those aspects of world culture that might “hurt the feelings of the Chinese people” or transgress “Chinese” cultural and political norms – which include a great many things from Tibet to Xinjiang, Falungong, Tiananmen, democracy, human rights, constitutional government, etc., etc. Fair enough. If the Chinese people cannot speak about those things, why should foreigners!



Movement in the opposite direction is equally intense. Going out into the world (*zouxiang shijie* 走向世界 – and now, *zouchuqu* 走出去, “getting out” pure and simple) has almost become obligatory for professors and government personnel. The Kennedy School at Harvard has become home away from home for top-level officials who receive instruction in the latest methods of political management (including “soft power”), followed by institutions like the Sanford School of Public policy at Duke University for lower-ranking personnel. In cumulative numbers, two and a half million PRC students have been schooled abroad. The great majority of them have stayed abroad, peopling business, and cultural and educational institutions.³⁷ Since 2004, more than 300 Confucius Institutes have been established around the world (around 70 in the US) to add what officialdom considers to be “Chinese culture” to the PRC’s many exports. The PRC has its own colonies in the Chinese labourers sent abroad to work on projects abroad, many of them government funded. We could add to these officially sanctioned exports the many – poor peasants to multi-millionaires – who move abroad in search of livelihood or to secure their wealth, some of it ill-begotten. If world culture has become part of the PRC, it is also the case that “Chinese culture” in one form or another has become part of global cultural sensibility.³⁸

These changes have also transformed the Communist Party. As Mao suits have given way to Western garb, Marxist literature has been replaced in the Party’s education by management texts.³⁹ In the Party and national institutions like the National People’s Congress, billionaires and millionaires have unseated the peasants and workers who had made the revolution against them. Remarkably, through these radical changes, the Party has stuck to the narrative of revolution, adding a new chapter to it with every change of leadership, construed as one more step in the unfolding of “socialism with Chinese characteristics”.⁴⁰ In 1989, the movement’s suppression was justified by charges of “counter-revolutionary” conspiracy to overthrow socialism. For the last decade, renaissance and renewal have replaced revolution. The revolutionary narrative now incorporates elements from native traditions that a century of revolution had sought to overcome and eradicate. But the Party still



presents itself as the personification of the revolution and the nation, and defender of “socialism with Chinese characteristics” against any attempt to turn the country in a liberal “bourgeois” direction. In foreign affairs, too, it invokes its “semi-colonial past” to manufacture a sense of kinship with people of the Global South. It disguises its expansionism with the cloak of anti-imperialist struggle to retrieve territories “stolen” from it by imperialists of a former age. And it continues to behave as if it is still determined to pursue the revolutionary goal of transforming the global order dominated by the same old imperialists. What this new order might be is puzzling to the outsider, as the PRC’s economy is already integrated with that of the global capitalist economy, and its new ruling class (including top officials in the Party) hobnobs with the new transnational capitalist class. Unlike in Cold War days, the political and military supremacy the PRC seeks is hard to credit as anything but a striving for imperial hegemony within the global capitalist order. Nevertheless, legacies of the revolution are readily available to justify continued containment of political and cultural demands from its citizens, and to cloak imperial activity abroad.

None of this should be news to anyone even remotely connected with PRC affairs. Nevertheless, PRC leaders have been quite successful in containing foreign criticism as well through a combination of hard and soft power. While military threats to neighbours have become commonplace, economic blackmail still provides the most effective weapon against those who displease the PRC by thwarting its imperious (and imperial) claims. The PRC readily uses the threat of denying economic participation in its riches to retaliate against anyone who contradicts one or another of its proliferating claims (as in the case of its neighbours in East Asia, India and Australia), or breaks one of its prohibitions – especially regarding the Dalai Lama.⁴¹ Visiting dignitaries are regularly chastised for their transgressions. It denies visas to foreign journalists who in the authorities’ opinion report unfavourably on its leadership. Scholars are denied visas for their work on the oppressed minorities, especially in Tibet and Xinjiang. When a US citizen of Taiwanese descent decided to have a mural on Tibet painted on a building he owned in the small town of Corvallis that is home to Oregon

State University, officials from the PRC Consulate in San Francisco were dispatched to warn the mayor of consequences if the “transgression” was not stopped.⁴²

The hubris of PRC officialdom has been puffed-up by the adulation extended to them by those filled with awe at the country’s economic growth and promises, as well as by an Orientalist inflation of its cultural charms, which reached fever pitch between the Beijing Olympics of 2008 and the Shanghai Expo in 2010, both of which set new standards in vulgar excess.⁴³ The PRC has deployed “soft power” tactics to exploit this adulation. The most egregious product of its efforts to project “soft power” has been the notorious “Confucius Institutes” already referred to above.

“Soft power” was proposed by the Harvard scholar Joseph Nye to refer to the intangible aspects of power (such as cultural power) that make its holders attractive, and enable persuasion rather than coercion in international relations – sort of like the Gramscian notion of hegemony. Propaganda may be part of it, but it is more than propaganda, at least in the sense of disguising or misleading. It also entails offering the self as an example that others may be tempted to emulate. The PRC deployment of the idea has reduced “soft power” to propaganda, which possibly also has something to do with the Chinese notion of propaganda (*xuanchuan* 宣传), that conveys also a sense of propagation, dissemination, making known, and, therefore, education. Be that as it may, Confucius Institutes are governed by an “autonomous” unit (Hanban) directly under the PRC Ministry of Education, but ultimately under the propaganda branch of the Party, as is the Ministry of Education itself, along with many other units of Party and government, including the Party’s own research institutes. Remarkably, the PRC was successful in placing these institutes on university campuses where in addition to teaching and cultural activity, they could also keep an eye on scholarly activities that went against its prohibitions, and if possible head them off – this is at least the impression yielded by a number of incidents around the world to keep the Dalai Lama or talk of Taiwan independence off campuses. The refusal – in violation of the equal opportunity laws of Canada – of the institutes to hire members of the Falungong, has recently led the

Canadian Association of University Teachers to call for the dismissal of the institutes from college and university campuses. Spurious comparisons to the German Goethe Institutes or the Alliance Française ignore that these institutions are not located on university campuses, and are not subject to the kinds of restrictions that are demanded of the Confucius Institutes by the dictates of the propaganda bureau. Soft power in service of cultural attraction should include the living culture of society, not just its clichéd historical legacies. This is rather a challenge in the case of the PRC where some of the most creative intellectuals and artists who are admired globally find themselves in jail, under house arrest, or subject to severe restrictions on speech and creativity. Defenders of these institutes have been silent over the removal from Tiananmen of the statue of the sage after whom they are named. Intellectually oriented Party members scoff at the song-and-dance version of Chinese culture that the institutes promote, while linguists have complained of their restriction of Chinese language teaching to official Mandarin, which is more and more problematic as local languages assert themselves in daily life in the PRC.⁴⁴

The primary acknowledged goal of the institutes is to spread the teaching of Chinese language and culture around the globe. One of their most remarkable characteristics, however, is to bring cultural and business relations together in the localities where they are established, while sugar-coating cultural work with the promise of economic benefits. This was a major attraction in many instances in the US, especially in the midst of the economic recession. As the institutes have spread, they have diversified, tailoring their offerings to their broader institutional contexts. While the Hanban has refrained from imposing restrictions on a university like Stanford which no doubt seems like a plum catch, where they can in lesser universities and smaller institutions they have not hesitated to assert their prerogatives. It is interesting that university and college administrators, who protest against charges of the restriction of academic freedom, refuse to make public the agreements they have signed with the Hanban on the grounds that concealment was part of the agreement!⁴⁵

The receptivity extended to the Confucius Institutes is inexplicable given their insipid contribution to university education in a country like the US where studies of China have been a significant part of the academic curriculum for half a century, not to speak of top institutions like Stanford, Columbia or the University of Chicago. Scholars of China, of course, always want more China studies. University administrators always want money – especially when outside sources are dwindling, as has been the case in the US for some time. The culture-business-education nexus of the institutes has also arrived at an opportune time, when business seeks to shape education and educational institutions behave increasingly like businesses. The combined pressures of business interest and the ideology of globalization have shifted attention from the education of citizens to the training of global citizens – for whom the PRC may well be a destination as the seemingly top player in the global economy. Past concerns about “conflict of interest” between donors of funds (including the state) and academic freedom have retreated before financial interest and business pressure. Since the September 11 attacks on the New York World Trade Center, dissident academics have been punished for speaking out against US policies or Israel, raising questions about the realities of academic freedom in the US, let alone elsewhere. A reductive multi-culturalism demands that “the other” must be respected – no matter how despicable. The PRC’s success at capitalism without democracy has made authoritarianism respectable in influential quarters who perceive the “exuberance of democracy” as an obstacle to efficient business and government. The behaviour of the global elite in recent years has confirmed long-standing doubts that capital’s commitment to democracy stops at the boundaries of the so-called “market economy.” In the Orwellian language of a Trilateral Commission report in 1975, “... the effective operation of a democratic political system usually requires some measure of apathy and non-involvement on the part of some individuals and groups ... In itself, this marginality on the part of some groups is inherently undemocratic, but it has also been one of the factors which has enabled democracy to function effectively.”⁴⁶

Ironically, the multi-culturalism that calls for cultural sensibility to others also views with disdain “cultural imperialist” advocacy of democracy, human rights, universal values, and so on and so forth, ignoring the importance of these to millions in the Global South, including in-between societies such as the PRC, India, Turkey and many others. It does not seem anything out of the ordinary under these circumstances to find US university professors who respond to criticisms of the mistreatment of their colleagues in the PRC by questioning the appropriateness of applying the “Western” idea of academic freedom to other societies.⁴⁷

It will be interesting to see, in this context, how educational institutions will remember Tiananmen – if they do at all. It is more than likely that they will view it as a nuisance dragged out of the past. There are many, of course, who are unhappy with the trends I have observed above, including many scholars of the PRC and Chinese intellectuals and academics working abroad or in exile. Hong Kong will remember for sure, and the tragedy will be the subject of much notice in academic publications and the press. As far as US universities are concerned, it remains to be seen. A group of concerned scholars, intellectuals and concerned professionals have circulated a letter to all the Confucius Institutes in the US urging the commemoration of June 4.⁴⁸ So far there have been no takers!

* * *

In historical perspective, the private and public trauma of Tiananmen was also the trauma of the radical transformation of the PRC. It hardly matters whether Tiananmen represented the death-pains of socialism (by then, already post-socialism) or the birth-pains of the authoritarian capitalist society that the PRC has become. From a global perspective, it seems hardly fortuitous that a decade-long unrest exploded in spring 1989. The very day of the suppression, the Solidarity Union in Poland which had overthrown communism there went to the polls for new elections. A few months later the Berlin Wall fell. The rest, as they say, is history.

Less obvious but equally significant was the context of “actually existing socialism” in the 1980s in an ascendant neo-liberalism which would in short order be named “globalization”. The transformation of societies globally over the last four decades has been marked by popular protest against forced subjection to the vagaries of a new global economy and the inequities it has created, devastating environmental deterioration that has accompanied the globalization of the developmentalist faith, and uncertainties about the future even among those who have been its beneficiaries. States have responded to proliferating popular protest by the intensification of authoritarian controls and repression that are very much the realities of contemporary life. Had the Tiananmen tragedy occurred today, it most likely would have been tagged as “Occupy Tiananmen” along with “Occupy Tahrir” or “Occupy Gezi”. It had its precedents, too, of which the most traumatic was the bloody overthrow in 1973 of the Allende government in Chile that in some ways inaugurated the neo-liberal era. This is easily overlooked in the US, as the overthrow of an elected communist government was “our” thing, unlike the Tiananmen suppression perpetrated by a Communist state. Henry Kissinger, the guiding light of “realists” in US foreign policy who has played a major part in “forgetting” Tiananmen infamously declared of the anti-Allende coup he had helped engineer in 1973 that “we cannot let a country go Communist due to the irresponsibility of its people.” In a contemporary perspective, a proper commemoration of Tiananmen of necessity calls for deep reflection on our times, and what they may yet bring.

Notes

- ⁺ I am grateful to David Bartel, Veysel Batmaz, Yinha Chan, Stephen Chu, Ya-Chung Chuang, Christopher Connery, Dongyoun Hwang, Roxann Prazniak, Stuart Souther, Tim Summers, QS Tong, Sebastian Veg, and Shaobo Xie for the comments they have offered on this article. Their suggestions and encouragement have been very helpful. They are in no way responsible for my argument.
- ^{*} Dr Arif Dirlik lives in Eugene, Oregon, in semi-retirement. He was formerly Knight Professor of Social Science and Professor of History and

Cultural Anthropology at the University of Oregon and Professor of History and Cultural Anthropology at Duke University. He was also formerly a Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies, University of British Columbia, has held honorary appointments at China Center for Comparative Politics and Economics, Central Compilation and Translation Bureau, Beijing, the Center for the Study of Marxist Social Theory, Nanjing University, Northwest Nationalities University, Lanzhou, PRC, and has taught at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Arif Dirlik is one of the most important critics writing at the nexus of globalization, postcolonial theory, historiography, Asia-Pacific Studies, and capital critique. He has published over fifteen books and numerous articles. His 1997 book *The postcolonial aura: Third World criticism in the age of global capitalism* (Westview) is a trenchant analysis and critique of postcolonial theory, and an assessment of its adequacy to the contemporary situation. *After the revolution: Waking to global capitalism* (Wesleyan, 1994) posed a similar set of challenges to Marxist theory, calling for a new set of oppositional practices and modes of critique that respond to the situation of a newly hegemonic global capitalism and the demise of the socialist states. Dirlik's other books include *Places and politics in the age of global capital* (ed. with Roxann Prazniak, Rowman and Littlefield, 2001), *Postmodernity's histories: The past as legacy and project* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2000), *What is in a rim? Critical perspectives on the Pacific region idea* (Westview, 1993), and *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution* (University of California, 1991). His works have been translated into Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Turkish, Bulgarian, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish. Dirlik recently (Fall 2011) held the Rajni Kothari Chair in Democracy at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies in Delhi, India. In Fall 2010, he served as the first Liang Qichao Memorial Distinguished Visiting Professor at Tsinghua University, Beijing. Dirlik serves on the editorial boards of over ten periodicals in Chinese, Asian and Cultural Studies, and is the editor of two book series, "Studies in global modernity", with the State University of New York Press, and "Asian modernities" with the Chinese University of Hong Kong Press. His various recent book-length publications include *Selected works of Arif Dirlik* (2010, in Turkish), *Snapshots of intellectual life in contemporary China* (2008, special issue of *Boundary 2*), *Pedagogies of the global* (2007), *Global modernity: Modernity in the age of global capitalism*, and two edited volumes, *The formation and indigenization of the disciplines in China: Sociology and anthropology* and

The end of the peasant? Global capitalism and the future of agrarian society. His other publications in English include *Revolution and history: Origins of Marxist historiography in China, 1991-1937*, *Origins of Chinese Communism; Marxism in the Chinese Revolution*, *Schools into fields and factories: Anarchists, the Guomindang and the Labor University in Shanghai, 1927-1932*, and recently, *Culture and history in postrevolutionary China: The perspective of global modernity*. Dirlik was born in Mersin, Turkey, in 1940. He has a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from Robert College (now Bosphorus University) in Istanbul and a Ph.D. in History from the University of Rochester, Rochester, NY. <Email: dirlikster@gmail.com>

1. Murong Xuecun, "Beijing's propaganda crisis", *The New York Times*, March 17, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/18/opinion/murong-beijings-propaganda-crisis.html> (consulted same day).
2. These numbers, even at the high end, are insignificant compared to the millions who lost their lives in previous episodes of revolutionary "high tide" during land reform in the early 1950s, the Great Leap Forward of the late 1950s, and the Cultural Revolution. The difference from these earlier episodes is nevertheless quite significant. Loss of life during the earlier episodes was part of revolutionary mobilization in which political struggles found expression in social struggles. What was novel about June 4 within the PRC historical context was the broad social opposition to the Party-state characteristic of popular struggles against conservative dictatorship. The Party still had broad support among the population, but rather than call on its supporters, it chose to suppress the protests with military means, also characteristic of run-of-the-mill dictatorships. In these years, and subsequently, the experience of the Cultural Revolution has made the Party fearful of any mass activity – and the people beyond its control.
3. "IT IS NECESSARY TO TAKE A CLEAR-CUT STAND AGAINST DISTURBANCES", *Renmin Ribao* (People's daily) editorial (printed April 26, 1989), Beijing Domestic Service, reported April 25; Foreign Broadcast Information Service, April 25, pp. 23-24.
4. "Notes from the editors: On the events in Beijing", *Beijing Review*, 32.26 (June 26 - July 2: 7-9, p.7, quoted in Rowena Xiaoqing He, "Curriculum in exile: teaching Tiananmen at Harvard", *Curriculum and Teaching Dialogue*, 14.1-2 (2011-2012): 53-66, p. 56.
5. Arif Dirlik and Roxann Prazniak, "Socialism is dead, so why must we talk about it? Reflections on the 1989 Insurrection in China, its bloody suppression, the end of socialism and the end of history", *Asian Studies*

Review, 14.2 (July 1990): 3-25, p. 16. This article was written upon the authors' return from a six-month stay in Hong Kong (Summer) and Nanjing (Fall). The personal encounters and experiences that informed it are carried into the present article as well. I have made a few changes when quoting from that text, mainly changing "China" in the original text to "PRC". Our nomenclature is the source of much ideological confusion that easily degenerates into racial and racist identifications of "China" and "Chinese". Daily reference to the PRC as China in all manner of conversation ignores that there is more than one Chinese state. And Chinese are not all PRC citizens – for the generations born abroad, are not even from "China", except by remote ancestry. We need at the very least to make a distinction between states and their ethnic constituencies that overflow borders. The foremost example of such a distinction would be between Israel and Jew – a relationship of difference as much as of identity.

6. This self-deceptive (and self-defeating) attitude is apparent on even the most urgent questions, as well as on trivial matters. For a recent example, see, "China deletes media reports calling Beijing 'unlivable'", Yang Fan for Radio Free Asia Mandarin service, tr. By Luisetta Mudie, *Eurasia Review*, February 14, 2014, http://www.eurasiareview.com/14022014-china-deletes-media-reports-calling-beijing-unlivable/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29 (consulted 14 February 2014). Recently, censorship has been extended to Hong Kong with the complicity of Hong Kong government and "tycoons". See, Wilfred Chan, "Hong Kong journalists: Freedom is at an all-time low", CNN, Monday, February 24, 2014, <http://www.cnn.com/2014/02/24/world/asia/hong-kong-press-freedom/> (consulted 24 February 2014). What effect this will have on June 4 commemorations this year remains to be seen.
7. Andrew Jacobs and Chris Buckley, "Elite in China molded in part by Tiananmen", *The New York Times*, June 3, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/04/world/asia/chinas-new-leadership-has-ties-to-tiananmen-era.html?pagewanted=all> (consulted 8 February 2014). The elite includes the current prime minister, Li Keqiang.
8. Needless to say, it is not just the mothers. For a tragic case, see, "Father of Tiananmen victim commits suicide after years of official obstruction", *The Telegraph*, 28 May 2012, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/9295329/Father-of-Tiananmen-victim-commits-suicide-after-years-of-official-obstruction.html> (consulted 8 February 2012).

9. "China dissident Li Wangyang found dead in hospital", *The Guardian*, Wednesday, 6 June 2012, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/jun/06/china-dissident-li-wangyang-dead> (consulted 8 February 2014). Li had been condemned to twenty years imprisonment for his activism in Hunan to establish autonomous labour unions. He was found hanging in his hospital room with his feet touching the floor. The authorities' claim that he had committed suicide was greeted with widespread skepticism given the circumstances. Suicide under suspicious circumstances is so pervasive that some in China refer to it as "being suicided." See, for a case not directly related to June 4, "Dissident's father dies in disputed suicide", *news24*, 2014-02-08, <http://www.news24.com/World/News/Dissidents-father-dies-in-disputed-suicide-20140204> (consulted 8 February 2014).
10. "Global Times breaches China's official media silence on Tiananmen", *The Wall Street Journal*, June 4, 2009, <http://blogs.wsj.com/chinarealtime/2009/06/04/global-times-breaches-chinas-official-media-silence-on-tiananmen/> (consulted 8 February 2014).
11. Cited in He, "Curriculum in Exile", p. 53, from one of the PRC students in her symposium on the subject. Some Chinese officials did say at the time that the excessive violence had been due to lack of riot control equipment and experience with riot control. In subsequent years, the PRC has made up for this lack by learning from the US and Israel. The language of "evil" regrettably is all-too-common in the discourse on the PRC.
12. For a report, see, "Wu'er Kaixi: The Chinese dissident who can't get himself arrested – not even to go home and see his sick parents", *The Independent*, Sunday, 09 February 2014, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/wuer-kaixi-the-chinese-dissident-who-cant-get-himself-arrested--not-even-to-go-home-and-see-his-sick-parents-8963140.html> (consulted 9 February 2014). In an essay written before his incarceration, Liu Xiaobo wrote of the "Tiananmen paranoia" of the PRC state. But the paranoia is not entirely misplaced, as in "I may be paranoid, but that does not mean they are not out to get me." In the case of Wu'erkaixi, it is also sign of considerable political perspicacity. For Liu, see, "China's Tiananmen paranoia", *Wall Street Journal*, June 2, 2006, <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB114919520411069026> (consulted 9 February 2014). Liu views Tiananmen as a "lightning rod" for dissent in the PRC.
13. The author was witness to one of the first of such revolts on the Nanjing University campus in May 1984, quickly dubbed the "May 28 movement" by the student leaders.

14. Julia Kwong, "The 1986 student demonstrations in China: A democratic movement?", *Asian Survey*, 28.9 (September 1988): 970-985.
15. Arif Dirlik, "Spiritual solutions to material problems: The 'Socialist Ethics and Courtesy Month' in China", *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, 81.4 (Autumn 1982), pp. 359-375. One of the most incisive analyses of the cultural transformations at work during this period is to be found in Ci Jiwei, *Dialectic of the Chinese Revolution: From utopianism to hedonism* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994).
16. This was the title of a book, Minzhu Han, *Cries for democracy: Writings and speeches from the 1989 Chinese democracy movement* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989).
17. Cited in Aihwa Ong, "A momentary glow of fraternity: Narratives of nation and capitalism in East Asia", paper presented at the symposium "The rise of 'Asian' capitalism: Class, nation, state and new narratives", The New York Academy of Sciences – Section of Anthropology (25 February 1995).
18. Zhonggong Shenzhen Shiwei Xuanchuanbu (Propaganda Section of the Shenzhen Municipal Committee) (ed.), *Deng Xiaoping yu Shenzhen* (Deng Xiaoping and Shenzhen) (Shenzhen: Haitian Publishers, 1992), p.9. Deng's comments prompted the sending of a high level delegation to Singapore in July 1992 to investigate the secrets of social order there. See, Zhongguo Fu Xinjiapo Jingshen Wenming Kaochatuan, 1993. The volume contains reports on housing, labour unions, opposition parties, ideological propaganda, etc., as well as an account of a conversation with Lee Kuan Yew, who seated his guests on "two sofas arraigned around a bust of Confucius", and lectured them that "it was not necessary to 'desinicize' (*fei Zhongguo hua* 非中国化) in order to achieve modernization" (*ibid.*: 19).
19. Arif Dirlik, "Confucius in the borderlands: Global capitalism and the reinvention of Confucianism", in Dirlik, *Culture and history in postrevolutionary China* (Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, 2011), pp. 97-155.
20. For a sampling of discussions in China in the late 1980s, see, Stanley Rosen and Gary Zou (ed.), *The Chinese debate on the new authoritarianism, Chinese Sociology and Anthropology* (M.E. Sharpe), 23.2 (Winter 1990-91).
21. The best guide to recent discussions of Confucianism in the PRC is John Makeham, *Lost soul: "Confucianism" in contemporary Chinese academic discourse* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008).

22. For these tendencies, see, Maurice Meisner, *The Deng Xiaoping era: An inquiry into the fate of Chinese socialism, 1978-1994* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1996).
23. David Harvey, *A brief history of neo-liberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). Harvey includes Deng Xiaoping among the leaders (others being Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher and Augusto Pinochet) who were responsible for the neo-liberal turn. If Deng played a crucial part in turning the PRC toward a market economy, however, it would be more accurate to say that it was under Jiang Zemin that neo-liberalism was consolidated in Party ideology.
24. The “three represents” refers to the necessity for the Communist Party to always represent “the development trend of China’s advanced productive forces, the orientation of China’s advanced culture and the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people”. The most important consequence of the “Three Represents” was the admission into the Party of the new bourgeoisie and business people (along with intellectuals as representatives of culture).
25. See, Arif Dirlik, “Markets, power, culture: The making of a ‘Second Cultural Revolution’ in China”, *Asian Studies Review*, 25.1 (March 2001):1-33, and, Guobin Yang, *The power of the Internet in China: Citizen activism online* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), pp. 213-218. For “post-socialism”, see, Arif Dirlik, “Post-socialism – Reflections on ‘Socialism with Chinese Characteristics’”, in Arif Dirlik and Maurice Meisner (ed.), *Marxism and the Chinese experience: Issues in Chinese socialism* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1989), pp. 362-384.
26. The question of cosmopolitanism vs. provincialism in the Communist Party was the subject of a brilliant essay by Joseph R. Levenson, *Revolution and cosmopolitanism: The Western stage and the Chinese stages* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1971).
27. Yang, *The power of the Internet in China: Citizen activism online*, offers an illuminating discussion. See, also, Orion A. Lewis, “Net inclusion: New media’s impact on deliberative politics in China”, *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 43.4 (2013): 678-708. Popular struggles against illegal land appropriation, labour abuse and environmental destruction are well documented in reportage on the PRC. See, for example, “Chinese villagers attack factory after reports of pollution”, *The Guardian*, Wednesday, 12 February 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/12/chinese-villagers-factory-polluting-police-baha-attack> (consulted 12 February 2014). For strikes in the industrial sector, see, *China Labor Bulletin*,

- “Searching for the Union: The workers’ movement in China, 2011-2013” (February 2014). If I may add an anecdote, in the fall of 1993, I happened to share a train ride from Shanghai to Nanjing by Party cadres from Nanjing returning from a required study session in Shanghai of Jiang Zemin’s report in the 14th Party Congress the previous year. They were very unhappy cadres, with *sotto voce* references to “bastards” (*hundun* 混蛋) in charge who were abandoning socialism.
28. For a discussion by a highly respected Party intellectual, see, Yu Keping, *Democracy is a good thing: Essays on politics, society, and culture in contemporary China* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2009). Yu himself is a “graduate” of the ferment surrounding the Tiananmen movement in 1989. He gained recognition at the time as part of a group advocating “Mr. Luo (law)” in addition to the May Fourth slogans of “Mr. Science” and “Mr. Democracy” that the protestors had made their own. See his essay calling for human rights as a necessary ingredient of reform, “Lun renquan” [on human rights], in n.a., *De xiansheng, Sai xiansheng, Luo xiansheng yu dangdai Zhongguo: Jinian Wusi Yundong qishi zhounian* [Mr. Democracy, Mr. Science, Mr. Law and contemporary China: commemorating the seventieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement] (Beijing: International Culture Publications, 1980, pp. 25-30.
 29. The “spontaneity” of popular nationalism is easily exaggerated. While there is no reason to question the propensity of the public to nationalist enthusiasm, it needs to be remembered that state propaganda organs play an important part in proactively shaping public opinion, in the press but especially on the Internet. See, Yang, *The power of the Internet in China*, pp. 50-51.
 30. Yang writes that in contrast to the present, when the Internet has enabled participation by broad sections of the population, “the main force of this cultural blossoming [in the 1980s] consisted of intellectuals, writers, artists and professors. Its elitist bias was exposed most starkly during the climactic event of that age – the student movement in 1989. During that movement, despite belated efforts to unite with workers and peasants, students and intellectuals not only dominated the stage of political action, but deliberately tried to distinguish themselves as the torchbearers – the ‘chosen few’.” (*ibid.*, p. 214). We might add that this was encouraged by reporting on the event which almost completely ignored participants outside of the Tiananmen occupation. For further discussion, see, Dirlik and Prazniak, “Socialism is dead”. A thoughtful self-critical discussion of the event by one of the leading participants is to be found in Shen Tong

- (with Marianne Yen), *Almost a revolution* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1990).
31. The former US ambassador to the PRC, Winston Lord, in *Newsweek*, 18 December 1989, p. 36.
 32. Roderick MacFarquhar, "The end of the Chinese Revolution", *The New York Review of Books*, 20 July 1989, p. 9.
 33. Simon Leys, "The curse of the man who could see the little fish at the bottom of the ocean", *The New York Review of Books*, 20 July 1989, p. 29.
 34. US senators who voted to sustain then President Bush's veto of a bill granting automatic visa extension to Chinese students gave this as the most common reason for their vote. It was also suggested repeatedly on US television by experts close to the government such as Michael Oksenberg and Kenneth Lieberthal.
 35. For a critical discussion of "dreams" of remaking China in the US image, written in the aftermath of Tiananmen, see, Richard Madsen, *China and the American Dream: A moral inquiry* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996). Which US they might have in mind is another question, and an important one which is rarely addressed.
 36. For a sharp analysis of *Chinoiserie* in contemporary PRC, with reference to the "Mao fever", see, Ruth Hung, "Red nostalgia: Commemorating Mao in our time", *Literature Compass*, forthcoming. The *Chinoiserie* exceeds Mao, needless to say, and involves generous promotion of clichés about "5000 years of Chinese history".
 37. The wealthier among these students make their own playground abroad. For a report on PRC students at the University of Oregon, see, Diane Dietz, "Bringing the bling: College students are flocking from China, many of them wealthy", *The Register-Guard*, February 23, 2014, p. A1, A8/9.
 38. For the figures cited here and related matters, see, "Why are overseas Chinese students not returning to China", *chinaSMACK* (from Xinhua news), Thursday, November 7, 2013, <http://www.chinasmack.com/2013/stories/why-are-overseas-chinese-students-not-returning-to-china.html> (consulted 12 February 2014), and, Robert Frank, CNBC, "Where are China's millionaires going?", *USA Today*, February 9, 2014, <http://www.usatoday.com/story/money/business/2014/02/09/china-millionaires-leave-country/5228219/> (consulted 12 February 2014). The relationship between wealth and power is analysed in James Reilly, "China's economic statecraft: Turning wealth into power", Lowy Institute for International Policy, 27 November 2013, <http://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/>

- chinas-economic-statecraft-0* (consulted 21 February 2014). I am grateful to Tim Summers for bringing this article to my attention.
39. Frank N. Pieke, *The good Communist: Elite training and state building in today's China* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
 40. See, Arif Dirlik, "The discourse of 'Chinese Marxism'", in *Modern Chinese religion: 1850-present, value systems in transformation*, ed. Vincent Goossaert, Jan Kiely, and John Lagerwey (Leiden and Boston: Brill, forthcoming).
 41. Natalie Thomas, "China says it will win West over to its view on Tibet, Xinjiang", Reuters, Wed, February 19, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/02/19/us-china-tibet-idUSBREA1109520140219> (consulted 19 February 2014). "China" does not say anything, of course – countries do not speak, people do – but Zhu Weiqun of the United Front Work Department "criticized foreign leaders who meet the Dalai Lama, many of whom have later found themselves frozen out diplomatically by Beijing. Those who do so should 'pay a price', Zhu said, 'We can only push the West to change its way of thinking if we let them understand that China's power cannot be avoided ... and that the West's interests lie in development and maintaining ties with China, not the opposite.'" There is no pretense here to questions of legitimacy or right or wrong. It is a simple, and somewhat simple-minded, assertion of power.
 42. "China asks city in Oregon to scrub mural for Tibetan, Taiwanese independence", NBC News, Wednesday, September 12, 2012, http://usnews.nbcnews.com/_news/2012/09/12/13833952-china-asks-city-in-oregon-to-scrub-mural-for-tibetan-taiwanese-independence?lite (consulted 14 February 2014).
 43. In the US, the servile reporting on the PRC contrasts sharply with the negative reporting on Russia, which has reached its own crescendo during the ongoing Sochi Olympics. The legacies of the Cold War may be a partial explanation, but only a partial one, as the PRC was also an "enemy" at the time, and a more "erratic" one at that. Attitudes toward the PRC began to change in the late 1970s, under the Carter administration, when the national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski sought to recruit the PRC as an ally against the "Russian bear". With Mao gone and the PRC firmly brought into the capitalist fold, except for the brief hiatus during the Tiananmen period, a benign orientalism has led to a mindless adulation of the PRC while the hostility to Russia continues (past the Gorbachev interlude). For a critical discussion of the reporting on Russia, see, Stephen F. Cohen, "Distorting Russia: How the American media misrepresent



- Putin, Sochi and Ukraine”, *The Nation*, March 3, 2014, <http://www.thenation.com/article/178344/distorting-russia#> (consulted 20 February 2014).
44. For Canadian universities, see, “Teacher body calls for closure of Confucius institutes”, *The Epoch Times*, 10 January 2014, <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20140109190740549> (consulted 14 February 2014). The suppression of linguistic diversity in the PRC is discussed in, Michael Churchman, “Confucius Institutes and controlling Chinese languages”, *China Heritage Quarterly* (Australian National University), no. 26 (June 2011), http://www.chinaheritagequarterly.org/articles.php?searchterm=026_confucius.inc&issue=026 (consulted 14 February 2014).
 45. The most extensive critique of the Confucius Institutes has been penned not by a China scholar but the distinguished anthropologist Marshall Sahlins. See “China U.”, *The Nation*, November 18, 2013, <http://www.thenation.com/article/176888/china-u#> (consulted 14 February 2014).
 46. Quoted in Nafeez Ahmed, “Are you opposed to fracking? Then you might just be a terrorist”, *The Guardian*, January 21, 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/earth-insight/2014/jan/21/fracking-activism-protest-terrorist-oil-corporate-spies> (consulted 14 February 2014). The “exuberance of democracy” is how the former prime minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew, described the Philippines’ developmental woes. See, also, Arif Dirlik, “King Kong in America”, *Boundary 2* (Summer 2014), forthcoming. For foreign business complicity in PRC censorship, see, Gwynn Guilford, “Is Microsoft’s Bing spreading the Chinese government’s censorship around the world?”, *Quartz*, February 11, 2014, <http://qz.com/176048/is-microsofts-bing-spreading-the-chinese-governments-censorship-around-the-world/> (consulted 14 February 2014).
 47. This was proposed by a professor of English at Wellesley College in the US seeking to deflate the controversial sacking from Beijing University of the economics professor Xia Yeliang on the grounds that he was a “bad teacher”. Professor Xia also happened to be a critic of the Party-state. In this author’s experience, most PRC universities would have to shut down if bad teaching were made into a serious criterion of employment. See, Thomas Cushman, “China’s war on thought is being waged in Western universities”, *THE CONVERSATION*, 28 January 2014, <https://theconversation.com/chinas-war-on-thought-is-being-waged-in-western-universities-22430> (consulted February 14, 2014). It is reported that



Professor Xia will join the libertarian Cato Institute in the US. See, Tamar Lewin, “Chinese dissident lands at Cato Institute with a caution to colleges”, *The New York Times*, February 9, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/10/us/chinese-dissident-lands-at-cato-institute-with-a-caution-to-colleges.html> (consulted 15 February 2014). Xia will also be joining Cushman’s Freedom Project at Wellesley. Warning against the pitfalls of collaboration with PRC universities, Xia also observed that, “I can’t say we’re headed toward another Tiananmen Square, but there’s definitely a crackdown on dissidents.” It is disgraceful that while oppressed intellectuals and academics around the world yearn for “academic freedom” and democracy, university faculty in the US should be exploiting cultural studies criticism to defend authoritarianism and worse in the name of cultural sensibility. See, Michael R. Gordon, “Chinese ask Kerry to help tear down a firewall”, *The New York Times*, February 15, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/16/world/asia/chinese-ask-kerry-to-help-tear-down-a-firewall.html?hpw&rref=politics> (consulted 15 February 2014). Revealingly, “during the meeting, Mr. Kerry sometimes seemed inclined to see a glass half full, while the bloggers were worried that it was emptying.” The Wendy Doniger affair in India with Penguin Books caving in to threats from religious thugs is another sad example of deference to so-called “cultural difference”, which often translates into political or economic calculation.

48. Names available at <http://www.June4commemoration.org> Several scholars have acknowledged that while they would like to sign on, they are unwilling to do so for fear of reprisals.





Whither China and the Communist Party Regime? Reflections on the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Tiananmen Incident

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Abstract

It does not appear that the new Chinese leadership is ready to initiate serious political reforms. Even if Xi Jinping is a Mikhail Gorbachev-type of leader (he does not appear to be so), he still needs time to consolidate his power base. As the core political elites agree on maintaining the Party's monopoly of power, there is no consensus on political reforms. The new leadership realizes that corruption is a serious threat, and will try to make the cadre corps clean and responsive to the people's needs and grievances. The formula of the Hu Jintao-Wen Jiabao administration to maintain political stability had been economic growth plus a basic social security net covering the entire population plus good governance in the absence of democracy.

Keywords: *Tiananmen Incident, political reforms, civil society, corruption, "colour revolutions", non-governmental organizations*

JEL classification: *H11, H12, Z13, Z18*



1. Introduction: Surviving the Tiananmen Incident

The year 1989 not only marked the 200th anniversary of the French Revolution; in future centuries it will celebrate the fall of the Berlin Wall and commemorate the Tiananmen Incident.¹ At that time, some of the leading dissidents like Liu Binyan predicted that the Party regime would not last more than three months. The incident shattered Western illusions about China, and Western countries imposed sanctions; the European Union's ban on weapon exports lasts until today. The tragic event generated much skepticism about many of China's achievements in the recent past and a deep pessimism about its future.

Deng Xiaoping's southern tour in early 1992 turned the tide. The leftism which emerged in the wake of the Tiananmen Incident perhaps symbolized by Jiang Zemin's statement "to bankrupt the household entrepreneurs" was arrested. Chinese leaders too had identified the most threatening challenge – dissatisfaction in the countryside. Economic stagnation plus maladministration by corrupt cadres could easily create an explosive situation because the status quo would then be no longer "acceptable" nor would the leadership of the Party be tolerable. The leadership succession process could be, to borrow an economic term, a soft-landing if it coincided with a period of respectable growth and low inflation.

The Fourteenth Party Congress in 1992 will go down in Chinese history as the first Party Congress after 1949 which ordinary people could afford to ignore. The post-Mao leadership appreciated that the legitimacy of the regime would henceforward depend on its ability to deliver the goods. While the Four Cardinal Principles could be reduced to one – leadership of the Party, people were willing to accept it because it managed to improve their living standards.

About three years after the Tiananmen Incident, most intellectuals in China acquiesced to the military crackdown, though they still condemned the deployment of tanks and machine-guns. They saw what had happened in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and came to the conclusion that there was no alternative to the leadership of the Party. There was nothing like the Catholic Church or the Polish

Solidarity movement in China and it would remain so in the foreseeable future.²

While Chinese leaders and the mainstream media have been avoiding mentioning the Tiananmen Incident, so much so that many young people in China today may not even be aware of the tragedy, the leadership's sense of insecurity remains strong. Li Jingjie, the director of the former Soviet-Eastern Europe Institute at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, was interviewed by David Shambaugh in 2003; and Li indicated that the break-up of the Soviet Union and the collapse of the Soviet Communist Party regime "had haunted the Chinese leadership ever since." Li said that Chinese leaders tried "to understand the implications and lessons, so that they don't make the same mistakes of Gorbachev..."³

Another focus regarding the Chinese leadership's concern for the survival of the Chinese Communist regime is the "colour revolutions" in the former constituent republics of the Soviet Union in the early years of this century, i.e., the "rose revolution" in Georgia in 2003, the "orange revolution" in Ukraine in 2004, and the "(yellow) tulip revolution" in Kyrgyzstan in 2005. David Shambaugh believes that the Chinese leadership is very worried about the causes and implications of the "colour revolutions" for the Chinese Communist regime. He identifies six major aspects of the Chinese analyses of the "colour revolutions" in his survey; the nature of the "revolutions", the role of the U.S., the role of international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the potential for more "colour revolutions" in Central Asia, the implications for Russia, and those for China.⁴

In response to the "colour revolutions", the Chinese authorities adopted certain measures to limit their potential impact. In general, Chinese media did not report these events. The Chinese government also suspended a plan to allow foreign newspapers to be printed in China. It was observed that when George Soros visited China in October 2005, local media did not cover the event, and his scheduled lectures and meetings were all cancelled.⁵ It was also said that President Vladimir Putin warned Hu Jintao at a 2005 Shanghai Co-operation Organization meeting about the subversive potential of the international NGOs; and

partly as a result of this warning, the Chinese authorities began to scrutinize NGOs operating in China.⁶

It appears that Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping, despite the country's impressive economic growth, have been worrying about the survival of the one-Party regime and would not entertain the introduction of democracy. The present leaders are ready to follow the hitherto line of enhancing Party organization, propaganda work and thought work among cadres, intra-Party supervision, the cultivation of cadres, etc. They repeat the same line of economic development before political reforms. They also caution against separatism among China's national minorities; and especially the Western world's "peaceful evolution" strategy, the "Westernization" strategy and the "division" strategy against China.⁷

2. Stability and Prosperity: Achievements and Challenges

China's economic growth, however, has been most impressive. Before China's launch of its programme of economic reform and opening up to the external world at the end of 1978, its total trade value was only US\$20.6 billion, ranking 32nd among all trading nations and accounting for less than one per cent of the world's total. Since then, its economy has grown more than a hundredfold, at an average annual rate of 10.1 per cent. China surpassed Germany as the world's largest exporter in 2009, and surpassed Japan as the world's second-largest economy in 2010. In 2012, it leapfrogged the U.S. to become the world's biggest trading power. In 2012 alone, China secured a trade surplus of US\$231 billion with the U.S. By mid-2013, China's foreign exchange reserves reached US\$3.56 trillion, the largest in the world, nearly three times that of the next largest holder, Japan (US\$1.3 trillion).⁸

Moreover, Beijing held the Olympics in 2008 and the Shanghai Expo in 2010. Chinese people really feel that they have stood up, as claimed by Mao on October 1, 1949 when the People's Republic of China (PRC) was founded. Though Chinese leaders avoid the use of the acronym "G-2" (the U.S. and China as the only two superpowers in the world), Chinese people are proud of the country's impact on

international affairs. This national pride has become an important source of the Party regime's legitimacy too. The fourth-generation leadership under Hu Jintao failed to tackle the problem of corruption, but it had a much more sober understanding of the challenges of rapid economic growth. Even before the global financial tsunami in 2008 and 2009, the Chinese authorities realized that for sustainable economic growth China would have to reduce its dependence on exports and investment in infrastructural projects, instead it would have to rely more on domestic consumption. More resources were allocated to environmental protection and the enhancement of energy intensity; as the structure of the economy improved and the service sector further developed, there would be a better chance that pollution might be reduced very slowly. The Hu-Wen leadership in its past eight years began building a basic social security net covering the entire population to contain the grievances generated by the widening of the gap between the rich and poor. The emphasis on stability and prosperity was prominent, and the strategy and tactics adopted by the fourth-generation leadership were sophisticated.

The mainstream Chinese media often describes China today as “*shengshi* 盛世”, a traditional Confucian term for historical eras of peace, prosperity and achievements.⁹ Hu Jintao also promoted his models of “harmonious society” and “harmonious world”. These concepts are hardly Marxist-Leninist nor dialectical; and it is significant that the Chinese leadership and intelligentsia no longer care. Further, the “eight honours” and “eight shames” advanced by Hu as ethical standards for cadres were distinctly Confucian. These ideological trends initiated by the fourth-generation leadership were significant, though it was also strengthening traditional Marxist-Leninist ideological studies at the same time.

The Party still has no intention of giving up its monopoly of political power; and in fact in the past decade and more, there have been no significant political reforms. Parallel to this rejection of democratization, the Chinese leadership has been very sensitive to potential unrest. There had been a crackdown on dissidents, independent non-governmental organizations (NGOs), human rights groups, and freedom of information flow on the Internet in the two years or so before



the Beijing Olympics. But there has been no relaxation after the event as 2009 was a year of significant anniversaries. This acute sense of insecurity was best symbolized by the Chinese authorities' asking the Beijing residents to stay home to watch television during the National Day parade in 2009, the sixtieth anniversary of the establishment of the PRC.

Zheng Yongnian describes China in 2011 as “full of anger, political consciousness, anxiety and uncertainty”.¹⁰ High rates of inflation and the problems of access to education, medical services and housing have made the bulk of population at the grassroots level wonder if its quality of life has been improving, despite the rise in monetary incomes. The tertiary institutions produced 6.6 million graduates in the summer of 2011; the government expected an unemployment rate of 10 per cent six months after their graduation, but unofficial estimates are considerably higher.¹¹

With the rapid expansion of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) which had been much benefitted by the four-trillion-yuan financial stimulus package in the wake of the global financial crisis in 2008, private-sector enterprises have been squeezed out largely because of their difficulties in securing bank credits. Many small and medium-sized enterprises are in crisis.

Even the elites seem to have lost confidence. According to a report by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in March 2012, spouses of senior and middle-ranking cadres at the provincial/central ministerial level, prefectural/bureau level and county/section (*chu* 处) level who held foreign passports or had permanent residential rights in foreign countries amounted to over 185,700, and children of such cadres enjoying the same status numbered more than 813,000.¹²

The Bank of China released a report in 2011 indicating that in the future, three out of five rich Chinese would hold foreign passports. Among those each with 10 million yuan and more available for investment, 14 per cent had already emigrated, and 46 per cent were planning or in the process of doing so. In another report by the China Merchant bank, among the 20,000 Chinese each with 100 million yuan or more available for investment, 27 per cent had already emigrated, and



47 per cent were considering doing so. The two banks estimated that these rich Chinese had invested 36 trillion yuan overseas, despite strict official controls.¹³

At the end of 2009, *Renmin Luntan* 人民论坛 (People's forum), a magazine of the *Renmin Ribao* 人民日报 group, conducted a survey on the "Ten Most Serious Challenges in the Coming Decade". A total of 82.3 per cent of the respondents chose "the issue of corruption exceeds the baseline of people's tolerance"; 80.6 per cent of the respondents picked "the widening of the gap between the rich and poor as well as injustice in distribution exacerbate social contradictions"; and 63.2 per cent identified "conflicts between cadres and the masses at the grassroots level". Soon after the exposure of the Bo Xilai incident, this *Renmin Luntan* article was widely circulated among the micro-blogs in China.

The English edition of *Global Times* (环球时报), which also belongs to the *Renmin Ribao* group, released another alarming survey report in early 2012. Over 15 per cent of the respondents firmly believed that China was "at the edge of a new revolution"; and 34 per cent of the respondents considered that China was possibly in that kind of situation.¹⁴

It was exactly this kind of anger which had provided the foundation for Bo Xilai to exploit the "Chongqing model" (重庆模式) as his personal political asset to pursue his career advancement and challenge the central leadership. It is probably the awareness of such anger which supports the tolerance of Chinese leaders including Xi Jinping for the neo-Maoists.

In fact, Xi Jinping attempts to exploit Mao Zedong to enhance the legitimacy of his administration and fill the ideological vacuum. The entire Standing Committee of the Party Political Bureau visited the Mao Mausoleum on the 120th anniversary of Mao's birthday in late 2013, and Xi delivered an important address at the memorial forum on the same day. Xi emphasized that "we shall forever hold aloft the flag of Mao Zedong Thought" and highly evaluated Mao's contributions. Earlier on March 20, 2011, shortly before his assumption of the leadership position at the Twelfth Party Congress, Xi visited Mao's birthplace in Shaoshan, Hunan to pay respects to Mao.

3. Political Reforms

There has been another type of healthy response to this anger. Probably since August 2010, then Premier Wen Jiabao made several open and formal appeals for political reforms. A significant example was Wen's speech at the Summer Davos Forum in Dalian, Liaoning Province on September 14, 2011. Wen elaborated his ideas in a five-point proposal ranging from the separation between the Party and the state to "expanding people's democracy" through elections.¹⁵

Wen's appeals, however, while attracting considerable attention of the international media, were not accorded significant treatment by the official media in China. There was no support from the top leadership. In fact, Wu Bangguo, then chairman of the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee, set the limits for China's political reforms in his speech at the NPC annual session on March 10, 2011. Wu explicitly said no to the following liberal political ideas: competition and rotation among several political parties to capture government; diversity in ideological guidelines; a system of checks and balances among the three branches of government; a bicameral legislature; a federal system; and a privatized economy.

In 2013, it was reported that the new Chinese leadership under Xi Jinping set limits to discussions among university teachers and the official media. Topics including universal values, freedom of the media, civil society, civil rights, independence of the judiciary, the Party's historical mistakes and the power elite bourgeois class became taboos.¹⁶ At the end of April 2013, the Party Central Office released a notice on ideological issues which, among other things, severely attacked "historical nihilism". The latter referred to the denials and criticisms of the Party's established positions on various historical questions, especially the attacks on Mao and Mao Zedong Thought. These criticisms were seen as attempts to erode the legitimacy of Party leadership.¹⁷

Further, Xi Jinping was said to oppose "using the post-economic reforms and opening to the external world historical era to denigrate that before the reforms, and vice versa".¹⁸ The new leadership apparently

wants to strengthen control over the ideological sphere, and limit the liberation of thinking. Meanwhile, the Chinese authorities have been cracking down on dissidents like Xu Zhiyong and other human rights lawyers as well as their “new citizens movement”. In 2013, the liberals in China in general have expressed their disappointment with Xi Jinping and no longer expect that he is going to initiate significant political reforms.

In view of the resistance of vested interests, pushing for political reforms demands strong leadership backed by a broad consensus. Both are absent for the time being, and hence the maintenance of the status quo. The declaration of assets on the part of cadres had been on the political reform agenda for more than a decade, and in recent years specific regulations had been promulgated, yet the actual implementation has been far from satisfactory. This is certainly a significant indicator of the resistance of vested interests as well as the lack of strong leadership and political will, leading to cynicism and anger among the people.

It was decided at the third plenum of the Eighteenth Central Committee at the end of 2013 that two new organs were to be established: the State Security Commission and the Central Leadership Group on the Comprehensive Deepening of Reforms, following the recent trend of concentration on the design of the top leadership structure (*ding ceng sheji* 顶层设计). As Xi Jinping intends to exploit the combat of corruption and serious economic reforms to enhance the Party regime’s legitimacy and his own popularity, he needs to tackle the resistance of strong vested interests and therefore he has to strengthen his own personal control. Critics believe that Xi wants to follow the example of Vladimir Putin and not that of Mikhail Gorbachev.

4. Economic Challenges

In the era of economic reforms and opening to the external world, economic growth has been the most importance source of legitimacy for the Party regime. Since the beginning of this decade, most economists in China agree that the country has entered a stage of slower or sub-high

economic growth. A study of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences forecast that China's potential economic growth rate would fall within the range of 7.8-8.7 per cent in 2011-2015, 5.7-6.6 per cent in 2016-2020 and 5.4-6.3 per cent in 2021-2030.¹⁹

In the past three decades and more, the primary sector's share of China's economy has been falling, the share of the secondary sector (especially manufacturing industries) has been expanding rapidly, while that of the tertiary sector has been increasing relatively slowly. When labour moves from the primary sector to the secondary sector, labour productivity in the case of China rises tenfold, hence labour productivity of the entire economy improves substantially. At this stage, the development of the secondary sector has almost saturated, labour and other resources mainly flow to the tertiary sector in which labour productivity is lower than that in the secondary sector. Research indicates that in Shanghai where labour productivity is highest in China, labour productivity in the tertiary sector is only about 70 per cent that of the secondary sector.²⁰ This is probably the main factor leading to slower economic growth rates in China in the foreseeable future.

Labour, capital and technological advance are the major factors of production supporting economic growth. In the past three decades and more, China's labour force has been increasing at the rate of about ten million per annum; and it has been the principal factor supporting China's high economic growth rates. In view of the aging population, this increase in labour inputs is expected to decline; and this is a long-term trend.

China's extremely high savings rate in the past decades is also anticipated to fall slowly because of the aging population, the approaching termination of the traditional industrialization process, and the gradually climbing consumption rate. Finally, the progress of technological advance has been slow, and the return rate on capital low, as admitted by China's official think tank. These trends may likely contribute to slower economic growth rates in the future.

High investment rates amounting to 50 per cent of GDP and net exports approaching 10 per cent of GDP have also been important factors supporting China's economic growth. In the 1980s and 1990s,

ecological degradation and environmental pollution, however, brought economic damages estimated to be around 8 per cent of GDP per annum. This proportion has been decreasing, but still stayed at 4 per cent of GDP in 2011.²¹ Hence if the economic loss caused by ecological degradation and environmental pollution was taken into account, China's real economic growth would be reduced to about 5 per cent.

There are considerable economic wastes in the Chinese economy too. Products produced which cannot be sold only expand the inventory. Excess production capacity is another source of waste. As a result of the four trillion yuan economic stimulus introduced in late 2008 in response to the global financial crisis, substantial excess production capacity has become a serious problem, especially in traditional industries. In 2013, average utilization rate of production capacity in China was below 80 per cent, in some industries even below 70 per cent, compared with the normal international norm of 85-90 per cent.²² Bankruptcy has become a genuine threat in some industries.

Until recent years, local governments and state-owned enterprises had been obsessed with increasing production and raising the local GDP; the input/output ratio and efficiency were generally neglected. Since 1978, China's additional capital/output ratio experienced two stages of changes. In the 1979-1995 period, the average annual ratio was 2.3; in the following 1996-2011 period, the average annual ratio rose to 3.5. This compared unfavourably with Japan in the 1950s to the 1970s era, when its corresponding ratio was only 2.²³ The above problems highlight the danger of China falling into the "middle-income trap" in the near future. Chinese leaders have been actually aware of this challenge, as the legitimacy of the Party regime is highly dependent on respectable economic growth, which generates revenue for the central government to maintain control and tackle the deteriorating social contradictions. Economic stagnation plus corruption and incompetent administration present the most threatening scenario for the maintenance of the Party's monopoly of political power.

The third plenum of the Eighteenth Central Committee of the Party issued a document in on the comprehensive deepening of reforms in November 2013.²⁴ It appears to be a detailed policy platform of the new

leadership, covering even relatively minor issues like university entrance examination and the gradual raising of the retirement age. The contents were not controversial, embodying the consensus reached in the past, though political reforms were conspicuously absent. The real challenge is effective implementation.

As the reforms proposed go against many vested interests, and if local governments and cadres cannot support the reforms from their perceived self-interests, implementation may encounter strong resistance. President Xi Jinping visited Shandong soon after the plenum and appealed to a “proper, accurate, orderly and co-ordinated” approach in the implementation of the reform measures.²⁵ Xi’s appeal probably reflected the top leadership’s concern that local governments might rush to secure quick achievements while securing their own benefits such as the establishment of free-trade zones.

The setting up of a Central Leadership Group for the Comprehensive Deepening of Reforms has been interpreted as an attempt to further centralize power in the hands of Xi Jinping. Official think-tank scholars argue that this centralization of power is to centralize power for the maintenance of stability, but to decentralize power for development too; however power decentralization has to be premised on an initial power centralization, so as to correct the unhealthy phenomenon of policies do not go beyond the Party headquarters in Zhongnanhai, Beijing.²⁶

These scholars admit that an ideology and theoretical framework as well as a political structure supporting reforms are lacking. At this stage, China’s reforms are “authoritarian reforms; the leadership’s authority has to be strengthened to ensure an adequate momentum for the promotion of reforms and the maintenance of their sustainability.

The following broad principles behind the present leadership’s economic reform programme are praiseworthy, i.e., government should decentralize power to society and the market; monopolistic and oligopolistic sectors should be open to the private sector; and the government should limit its functions and reduce its establishment. In view of the powerful resistance of vested interests, Xi may well adopt a strong-man style to raise the efficiency of policy implementation. But

the risks and inadequacies of strong-man politics are obvious too, and China in the past had suffered from its consequences.

Four types of vested interests are perceived to be blocking the realization of social justice: monopolistic and oligopolistic state-owned enterprises; government agencies; interest groups based on collusion between cadres and entrepreneurs; and networks of ties based on family and Party connections. Using rectification campaigns to combat such vested interests may be effective to a certain extent in the short term, but the long-term impact may likely be limited.

Normally reforms cannot be pushed at too many fronts. According to the official documents, broadening market access, deepening social security reforms, and reform of the land system allowing collectively-owned land to be traded in the market are the anticipated breakthroughs. But social security reforms are quite time-consuming, and short-term achievements are hardly conspicuous; the reform of the medical and public health system is a good example. Similarly the difficult legislative work necessary for the reform of the land system has yet to begin.

Broadening market access and reforms of the financial and taxation systems are probably better choices for breakthroughs in the immediate future. Concrete plans are needed to ensure that the latter reforms will benefit local governments and allow them to have sufficient financial resources to improve social services.

Chinese leaders realize that in the absence of serious political reforms, economic growth remains the most importance source of the Party regime's legitimacy. There is a consensus on the broad directions of economic reforms, and the new leadership under Xi Jinping understands that effective implementation is its real challenge. Its strategy seems to concentrate power to fulfill the objective, but this approach may only exacerbate China's other political problems and obstruct the democratization process.

5. Conclusion

It does not appear that the new Chinese leadership is ready to initiate serious political reforms. Even if Xi Jinping is a Mikhail Gorbachev-

type of leader (he does not appear to be so), he still needs time to consolidate his power base. This will at least take two or three years; and if he appears to be too aggressive, he may antagonize all other factions prompting them to unite against him. As the core political elites agree on maintaining the Party's monopoly of power, there is no consensus on political reforms. Many Western governments refuse to tackle their accumulated deficits because tough austerity measures can easily mean their electoral defeats; they therefore procrastinate and hope that the crises would come after their respective tenures. Chinese leaders share a similar dilemma. There is a good understanding of the sharpening social contradictions and accumulating grievance, but the initiating of political reforms is highly risky and may easily lead to their downfall, they therefore opt to delay the reform process and simply adopt measure to contain the grievance and contradictions.

The formula of the Hu Jintao-Wen Jiabao administration to maintain political stability had been economic growth plus a basic social security net covering the entire population plus good governance in the absence of democracy.²⁷ Maintaining an economic growth rate of about seven per cent per annum in the coming five years or so should not be too difficult because the central government has ample resources to spend on infrastructural projects and because the economic take-off has been spreading from the coastal to the interior provinces. There is ample room to improve the social security net and again the central government has the revenues and fiscal reserves to do so. The new leadership realizes that corruption is a serious threat, and will try to make the cadre corps clean and responsive to the people's needs and grievances.

Meanwhile, civil society will continue to grow quantitatively and qualitatively. Li Fan's optimistic estimates are that at this stage China has about seven to eight million social organizations involving about three hundred million people, i.e., about one fifth of China's total population; and he considers this "progressive civil society population".²⁸ This critical mass is still inadequate to exert pressure on the Party regime to introduce serious political reforms; but if this "progressive civil society population" expands to 30 per cent or 40 per cent of the entire population in less than ten or ten to fifteen years' time,

then the threshold may be reached. This may not be a very useful way of defining or examining the threshold, but just an interesting illustration.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which are perceived to pose a threat to the Party regime will continue to be suppressed. United front tactics would likely be adopted, and leaders of these NGOs will be induced to alter their mode of operation into one acceptable to the Chinese authorities, i.e., both carrots and sticks are applied. The Chinese authorities are very sensitive to the emergence of nationwide autonomous civic organizations. At this stage, through the Internet, nationwide campaigns can indeed be organized. In 2010, the Nobel Peace Prize for Liu Xiaobo has made him a national leader, at least a spiritual leader while he is in prison. Ai Weiwei certainly has become a national civil society leader and he has the capacity to call national campaigns.

In sum, in the coming four or five years, it is difficult to anticipate serious political reforms leading to democratization, and civil society is not likely to achieve significant breakthroughs. But the trend is obvious, civil society in China will continue to expand and strengthen, and pressure will build for a dialogue between the Party regime and civil society to avoid crises and violent confrontations.

Notes

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The Legacy of the 1989 Beijing Massacre: Establishing Neo-Authoritarian Rule, Silencing Civil Society⁺

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Abstract

The significance of the 1989 military crackdown on the broad social movement for political liberalization in central Beijing was enormous. In retrospect, the outcome of the violent crackdown was earth-shaking for both China and the world, as the ideology of technocracy and economic growth spurring a market society was given unprecedented momentum, aided by pragmatic Western political and economic elites. Silence over human rights issues and benefits of cooperating with authoritarian capitalism and neo-authoritarianism in China has led to a slow convergence of logics of authoritarian power in global politics today. China gradually attained political stability and high economic growth – albeit at a very high cost. Neo-authoritarian political repression and predatory state capitalism entailed delaying democratic development and improvement of human rights, while deterioration of political accountability, corruption and the natural environment increased. Today, Chinese youth know little about the events of the Beijing 1989. Effective state censorship has turned the vast majority of Chinese youth into “amnesiacs”, while their parents and others of their generation keep silent about the recent past. After June Fourth, it was crucial for the Party-state to quickly take the initiative to write history to inscribe its version of the events into the collective memory of China. The powerful



memory politics of the Chinese Communist Party managed to silence an incipient civil society for more than two decades. Yet, under its new leader, Xi Jinping, championed as a new neo-authoritarian ruler, social stability is at risk if deepening market reforms are carried out.

Keywords: *collective memory, civil society, neo-authoritarianism, democratization*

JEL classification: *A14, H11, H12, Z13*

1. The Rise and Fall of the Broad Social Movement of 1989

On 3 June 1989, horrific scenes took place at Muxidi in central Beijing. When thousands of students, workers, and ordinary citizens attempted to halt the advance of the People's Liberation Army toward Tiananmen Square, they realized in disbelief, that the soldiers were using live ammunition against them. The martial law troops had been given a direct order by Deng Xiaoping, China's elderly and "paramount leader" behind the scenes, that the square must be cleared on the night of June 4 (Brook, 1998; Nathan *et al.*, 2002). As the bloodied bodies fell to the ground, people screamed: "fascists", "murderers", and "gangster government". Muxidi on Chang'an Avenue was the main site of the Beijing massacre, the bloody end of nearly seven dramatic weeks of marches for democracy in the capital and across the country. It was a broad social movement, whose ranks and supporters were not limited to young students and the capital alone. What had begun as mourning over former General Secretary Hu Yaobang, who died on April 15, quickly turned into a strong movement against corruption and expanded civil liberties (Calhoun, 1995; Chai, 2011; Shen, 1998). Tiananmen Square, the symbolic heart of China, soon became the headquarters of the mobilization. It was not immediately crushed because the one-party state did not speak with one voice. The demonstrations had further widened the rift between the more lenient approach of General Secretary Zhao Ziyang and the hardliner Premier Li Peng, who orchestrated the publication of a strident editorial on April 26 in the Communist Party's

mouthpiece, the *People's Daily*. It accused the students of concocting “a planned conspiracy intent on confusing and poisoning the minds of ordinary people”, echoing the class struggle rhetoric of the Cultural Revolution. This was an insult to the students, who insisted that their marches and intentions were peaceful and patriotic, and they demanded that the government retract its sharp words.

It was when the students were met with complete silence that they began to occupy Tiananmen Square around the clock. When the government's rebuff continued, thousands of students began a stakes-raising hunger strike. Therefore, a long planned welcoming ceremony in the square for the leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, had to be cancelled on May 15. The “party elders”, including Deng Xiaoping as the power behind the scenes, lost face and were aggravated. To the detriment of Zhao Ziyang and triumph of Li Peng, Deng “suggested” that martial law be declared. Wishing no formal part in carrying out a violent crackdown, Zhao resigned, but the citizens' resistance was so determined that the army groups that entered the city centre on May 20 had to withdraw. Tensions further increased and a frustrated Deng Xiaoping, backed up by a nervous Li Peng, ordered the elite troops to clear the square by June 4.

2. The Unknown Recent Past

In 1993, government figures stated that 241 people had been killed (quoted in Berry, 2011), whereas the Chinese Red Cross had initially put the death toll at 2,600. Yet today, few of China's young generation know about any number of casualties. Effective state censorship has turned the vast majority of Chinese youth into “amnesiacs”, while their parents and others of their generation keep silent about the recent past. In 2014 efforts to silence activists wishing to commemorate the massacre have redoubled, as the arrests of lawyer Pu Zhiqiang, writer Liu Di, and philosopher Xu Youyu in May 2014 indicated.¹ However, it is important to note that Western political and economic elites have also played their part in the powerful memory politics of the People's Republic. On May 17, 1989, Deng let slip his opinion that: “The Westerners will forget.”



(Nathan, Zhang and Link, 2002) He was responding to other cadres' fears that foreigners might impose sanctions and force China into the freezer if the army was used. Only too well did he understand the Western dream of China's market potential and their geopolitical fear of Beijing realigning with Moscow. Two months later, on a secret visit to Deng, Brent Scowcroft carried a message explaining that President George H. W. Bush would do everything he could to maintain the relationship (Kluver, 2010: 83). It is clear that isolating China was never a serious issue among the pragmatic leaders of the Western world. Sanctions were short-lived and already by the beginning of 1990, foreign direct investment started to pour into China, regarding a safe destination for foreign money. The words of Deng Xiaoping that "development is a hard truth" and that the People's Republic more than anything needed stability did not fall on deaf ears. When Sweden's former social democratic prime minister, Göran Persson, visited China in 1996 he bluntly compared the situation in authoritarian China and newly democratic Russia. In a speech in front of hundreds of businessmen he said: "To me, it is enormously striking what political stability means for economic growth when you look at the Chinese case." In retrospect Deng Xiaoping's decision to use tanks against civilians sent a clear signal to the Chinese people that, paradoxically in light of the enforced collective amnesia, still pulsates throughout society: never oppose the party-state.

3. Re-launching the Party-State's Powerful Memory Politics

Immediately after the crackdown the government's counter-offensive to win the struggle about memory was in full swing: in the mass media, at work places, and in classrooms (Béja, 2010). As has been pointed out by the late dissident and astrophysicist Fang Lizhi, due to the memory politics of the Communist Party, every new generation in the People's Republic grow up unaware of the atrocities suffered by the older generation (Fang, 1990). To the patriarch Deng Xiaoping it was important to re-launch the party-state's longstanding techniques of enforced collective amnesia. He was intent to hammer through the long-



term “truth” what the events on June 3 and 4, before the shooting of unarmed people, were really about: overthrow and subversion of the existing political order. The Party was not embarrassed to embrace one core demand of the democracy movement: to combat systemic corruption to turn the tables and increase its legitimacy in the eyes of ordinary citizens (Hsu, 2001). The official explanation of the Communist Party for the events of June fourth takes as its point of departure Deng’s speech on June ninth to the officers responsible for the clearing of Tiananmen Square. A mere five days after the crackdown Deng regained the initiative in what he foreshadowed to be a long and hard struggle with the conservatives inside the Communist Party. Most important to Deng was the imminent struggle against the stubborn leftist conservative faction of the Communist Party. Deng began by saying: “Comrades, you have been working very hard,” then he offered a deterministic analysis:

This storm was bound to come sooner or later. This is determined by the major international climate and China's own minor climate. It was bound to happen and is independent of man's will. It was just a matter of time and scale. It is more to our advantage that this happened today.²

One can question Deng’s fatalism, i.e. it was an inevitable tragedy with him as lead character, since he was in fact off-stage during the most intense phases of the drama in April and May. It is only on June ninth that he came forth as the saviour who rescued China: first from the ashes of the Cultural Revolution and poverty, and at this moment later in his life the country from destruction in the form of the 1989 threat of counter-revolution. In his speech Deng was also abundantly clear about how he viewed domestic development: the planned economy and the evolving market economy had to become more integrated, China could never again become a country isolated by the outside world. After having explained how the “dregs of society” had betrayed the students by wanting to overthrow the socialist system of China and the Communist Party he moved on to observations of everyday politics, which was not at all that deterministic. Deng forcefully asked two questions. The first question was: “Is it the case that because of this



rebellion the correctness of the line, principles, and policies we have laid down will be called into question?” Deng answered himself: “In answering the first question, we cannot say that, at least up to now, we have failed in the strategic goals we laid down. After sixty-one years, a country with 1.5 billion people will have reached the level of a moderately developed nation. This would be an unbeatable achievement.” The second question was “Are the two basic points – upholding the four cardinal principles and persisting in the open policy and reforms – wrong?” Again Deng had found the answers within himself: “In recent days, I have pondered these two points. No, we have not been wrong.” The thrust of Deng’s answers to the two questions was directed against the conservative elders Chen Yun and Deng Liqun, and the younger Premier Li Peng, even if he did not name their names. Chen Yun accused Deng of being a rightist in economic affairs, but a leftist in terms of using military violence against the counter-revolutionary student uprising. Thus, Deng well knew that the Party’s conservative faction mobilized for an attack against him, and as the June ninth speech indicates he did not pause to strike the first blow. Sicker and older, this was the battle he had to fight for three long years, from June 1989 through June 1992. The struggle was one he had inherited from his former disgraced protégés Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang, whom he had protected from leftist attacks throughout the 1980s.

Deng now had to step down from his comfortable referee position in between leftist and reformist forces within the Party. The latter were in utter disarray after the crackdown, whereas the former felt they had a new momentum. Deng had to gather a new team of strong-willed technocrats, market friendly experts to finally conquer the conservatives who wished to turn back the clock to pre-reform time of 1977. This drawn-out battle was in many respects much more dangerous to Deng than the challenge of the democracy movement had been. The students were young and inexperienced intellectuals with limited networks. The Party’s old orthodox masters had vast and strong connections throughout the party-state apparatus, including the military. They were a formidable enemy, which the three-year long imbroglio illustrates. Yet, without the student demonstrations and subsequent revelations of the basic lines of



conflict within the Party, this struggle would quite likely have continued for far longer. Deng's programme of market reform was now under constant sniper attack from the conservatives, who wanted to discredit him for the debacle of not dealing resolutely with the democracy movement at an earlier stage. Regarding the issue of military violence to solve the crisis, growing numbers within the Party sided with Deng's official version. But concerning the economic reforms, there was not a unanimous chorus about his professed policy of continuing along the blueprint. In his speech to the army on June ninth, Deng demonstrated clearly how well he perceived the lurking danger of market opponents.

4. The Impact of Memory Politics on Social Activists

A common argument for the long-established status quo in state-society relations in China is that year-on-year economic growth won back the legitimacy lost in the aftermath of the Beijing massacre. Yet selective appropriation of the students' discourse on corruption, and appealing to state-sponsored Chinese nationalism through the "patriotic education campaign" were also meant to enhance legitimacy. From then on, people were encouraged and compelled to focus on personal wealth creation and to refrain from collective political participation. As a result, the technocratic and pragmatically oriented party-state has dominated the formal political process and been able to stem any threat of challenges from a dormant Deng Xiaoping and the other Party elders to all activists of what was then a budding civil society in the making: take heed and never oppose the Chinese Communist Party. After June Fourth, it was crucial for the Party-state to quickly take the initiative to write history to inscribe its version of the events into the collective memory of China. Interpretations of history concerns also visions about the future, and who is to design and decide over them. Thus, the Chinese propaganda system as well as schools and institutes of higher learning were given huge resources by Deng Xiaoping after the crackdown. On several occasions in May and June Deng deplored how the Party, under the leadership of the two successive General Secretaries Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang, had neglected political education and therefore made Chinese youth the

victim of Western “bourgeois values”. To counter years of neglect, “socialism with Chinese characteristics” and patriotism would be emphasized in education and in the mass media.

It goes without saying that processes involving collective memory are far from static. The German historian Reinhart Koselleck described their dynamic and wave-like character. He argued, for example that the events of 1933 have occurred once and for all, but the experiences that they are based upon may change over time. The memory of an event, as for example the victory of Adolf Hitler’s Nazi Party on 5 March 1933 and the following rapid march toward total usurpation of power and full dictatorship on 23 March, shift over time just as individuals’ interpretations of the past does. Their memories have been adjusted to adhere to their own or others’ perceptions of the future past and present. One such example, pertinent to illustrate the oscillations over time regarding how to evaluate the events of June 1989 in Beijing is the views of Han Dongfang. Today Han is a well-known labour rights activist based in Hong Kong. In 1989 he was one of the leaders of the autonomous labour union that was formed during the dramatic days and heyday of the democracy movement in Tiananmen Square. After the army had taken full control of Beijing after June Fourth, the net was cast wide around the leaders of the student and worker demonstrations. One of those who was caught and put into prison was Han Dongfang. While incarcerated he fell ill and lost one of his lungs. In the past twenty-five years his views of the activism of the Beijing Spring has changed dramatically, as has his strategy to attain the goals of his current organization *China Labour Bulletin*. In the run-up to the commemoration of June Fourth in 2009 Han told *The Telegraph* that campaigning for democracy is pointless: “In the last 12 years of my radio show, I have used the word ‘democracy’ fewer than five times. I realized that when you talk about how to make people’s lives better, that is enough.”³ Han Dongfang also argued: “There is no good or bad, black or white, right or wrong. To sum up China in one sentence, you can only say: It has changed.” Perhaps most interesting is his argument of the lack of civil society, or rather the lack of a “proper” civil society. On the issue of the broad social movement that took to the streets to vent their

frustration with corruption and dictatorial rule in 1989 Han said: “I really believe this kind of excitement in the streets is not constructive. If there is another choice other than this, I would choose it, rather than what happened in 1989. It’s based on anger and excitement and release of pressure, particularly in a country like China without proper civil society.”

In response to this argument one could ask: how is a so-called proper civil society produced? The histories of both the West and other East Asian countries such as Japan and South Korea show that neither a vibrant civil society, nor a democracy can be brought by subservient attitudes toward political power and elites. The fostering of powerful public opinion and joint collective action in which a variety of different groups make an effort to counter and protest power is necessary to attain progressive victories. The pragmatic idea that China can be “changed from within” and that all confrontation is by definition is self-defeating can in fact be the most self-hurting and counter-productive strategy of all for a citizenry that aspires to both more autonomy for associational groups and inclusiveness in terms of political decision-making, building civil society, rule of law, and democracy. The unwillingness of Han Dongfang to make a distinction between black and white is an echoing of the “cat theory” of Deng Xiaoping, i.e. “it does not matter if the cat is black or white, as long as it catches mice.” A similar story, also proving how effective the party-state’s counter narrative had become over the past twenty years, appeared in an article in *The New York Times* on 7 January 2010. In it, a former student from Tsinghua University, Shi Yigong, who took part in the movement on Tiananmen Square said he doubted if a multiparty system “would ever work in China.”⁴ Having worked eighteen years as a natural scientist at an American University he had returned to Tsinghua as a leader of research – and just like labour activist Han Dongfang his views had changed. In the United States he had been an active citizen, who had voted for the Democratic Party in elections to Congress and the Presidential election. He regarded democracy and multiparty system to be perfect for America. However, he also claimed that: “Multiparty democracy is perfect for the United States, but believing that multiparty democracy is right for the United

States does not mean it is right for China.” It is important to note that the above views are pronounced not by Mainland Chinese who have not spent a considerable time of their lives abroad. These are the words of former activists who have lived for a long time in the United States and Hong Kong. Then imagine how the non-existence of alternative views and voices inside China has made collective amnesia possible and narratives that compete with the official version of history and contemporary policy almost impossible to gain a foothold in public conversations. As a journalist of Chinese Central Television (CCTV) confided to me in 2012: “Us journalists at CCTV are under a tight leash. Discipline is strict. We cannot even travel abroad as ordinary tourists. We become brainwashed: as soon as we start working at CCTV our leaders tell us that the interest of the nation is number one to us.”⁵ It goes without saying that the Chinese media system plays a significant role as transmission belt for regime-vetted arguments. Control of its nuts and bolts, the journalists and editors, is crucial to the staying power of the Party-state’s narrative and continued hold on power. The above arguments are at the heart of the matter if one wants to fathom why former student and labour activists were later also bought into the discourse of the late patriarch Deng Xiaoping.

5. Curbing Civil Society

A common argument in favour of the status quo in state-society relations is that economic growth won back the legitimacy that was lost during the 1980s, especially after the Tiananmen massacre in 1989. From then on, people were encouraged or compelled to focus on personal wealth creation and to stay out of politics. As a result, the market-oriented party-state has dominated the formal political process and defeated those challenges that occasionally popped up from the dormant civil society beyond. To reach that conclusion the Party-state had to prove it could raise the people’s living standard considerably. Before that was proved, however, China’s people were unsure if the increasingly repressive state could deliver. During the second half of 1989, despite its harsher tone and behaviour, the government had a hard time to put down labour

unrest in different parts of the country. The internal security services and the police had to mobilize considerable energy and resources to quell the ventilating of discontent that had been set in motion by the expanding democracy movement. It took further repression, easing of Western sanctions, increasing inflow of foreign direct investment, and a re-launch of market reforms in 1992 for the previously incipient civil society to accept a politically more oppressive and closed atmosphere, amidst further market liberalization of the economy.

Critiques against unreserved faith in civil society as the golden key to open up locked-in authoritarian political systems come from many angles. A main point is that idealizing social organizations as per se contributing to the public good is too simplistic. Associational and non-associational groups such as violent biker gangs or racist organizations are anti-social and non-inclusive in their attitudes and behaviour. Pertinent post-colonial arguments hold that the idealized schemata of state, market and civil society is of standardized Western European origin and fits poorly with realities in non-Western countries and cultures. A state and its bureaucracy need not be polarized in tension against civil society. Several China scholars have argued against shoehorning the People's Republic into a model that do not take account of the country's particular history and circumstances. Such arguments, however, do have a resemblance of the words of Chinese government spokespersons. While it is a fact that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in China do not seek autonomy from the state, this situation is to be attributed less from a cultural inclination to lean to the state, than the impact of silencing a civil society that was in a budding state in the late 1980s, whereas today its benefits are substantial if they align with the government. Registering an NGO does elevate the status of the organization in the eyes of the community and citizens. A registration is proof of support, recognition, and protection. It is a fact that not even the jailed Nobel laureate Liu Xiaobo, the oppositional person who more than most other political dissidents has not shunned confrontation, argued for subversion of the Chinese political system from *outside* its perimeters. In the manifesto, Charter 08, that he and other intellectuals authored in 2008, political changes were to be implemented in concert with the

Communist Party and within the demarcations of the existing political structures. Therefore, anti-communist organizations such as Falun Gong and the Chinese Democracy Party that both clashed sharply with state power in 1997 and 1998 were exceptions to the general rule of seeking “within-system change”.

Nonetheless, this general picture of symbiosis between a repressive state and a quiescent society is far from complete. As the Chinese sociologist Jia Xijing has argued the relationship between state and civil society is in a thorny dilemma, a contradiction: “In China, the relationship between civil society and the state is in a dilemma. The CSOs want to free themselves from interference from the state while at the same time they try to rely on the government.” (2008: 172) Yet, an increasing tendency of non-sanctioned social activism among many groups in society, ranging from peasants and migrant workers to city intellectuals, must also be acknowledged. Growing income equality, social divides, and a stalled political reform process are the reasons generating and fuelling discontent. Yet, the party’s increased legitimacy, reported in a number of surveys such as the Asia Barometer, says nothing about quality of life. Are Chinese people happier today than before? Arguably, rising living standards should generate more life satisfaction. However, the evidence suggest otherwise. Christian Welzer and his team of scholars analysed the puzzle of why the percentage of Chinese who described themselves as very happy plummeted from 28 per cent in 1990 to 12 per cent in 2000. The researchers explained the puzzle in terms of the party-state’s “monetization of happiness”, which created the phenomenon of “frustrated achievers” (Welzer *et al.*, 2009). In light of these numbers one can imagine the frustration of all social strata, including the have-nots, if rebalancing the Chinese economy from 2014 through 2017 enters troubled waters.

6. Today’s Neo-Authoritarian Rule and Its Blind Spots

On 16 January 2013, the Communist Party’s nationalistic mouthpiece, the *Global Times*, published an op-ed by the scholar Wang Zhanyang who after the third plenum sang the praise of neo-authoritarianism and

the new party chief Xi Jinping: “China is historically lucky to have a strongman during a nation's transformation era.”⁶ Originally, its tenets were associated with Zhao Ziyang, the former General Secretary who was put under house arrest after the bloody Tiananmen crackdown in June 1989. Zhao and his aides looked to the East Asian developmental market states for a new model to propel the century-long dream of modernizing China. It even envisaged democratization after a period of strongman rule. For three years after Tiananmen, the patriarch Deng Xiaoping stepped in to perform the role of the neo-authoritarian in a version stripped of any potential for political reform. Today party chief Xi Jinping is set to rebalance the economy, control society and reset the state using ideas of “new authoritarianism”.

The incumbent General Secretary Xi Jinping and his Prime Minister Li Keqiang have inherited the scar of June Fourth from Deng Xiaoping. It is not likely that anyone of them would risk opening up Pandora's box by allowing a discussion of what really happened during the Beijing Spring of 1989. If the victims and the student movement were rehabilitated, how would that impact on the legitimacy of the Communist Party? What other episodes of the People's Republic would be exempt to be put on the table for further investigation? Neither the Cultural Revolution, nor the Great Leap Forward with its ensuing famine has been thoroughly investigated by Chinese historians. There are oceans of repressed and forgotten history in China. That is why the leader who opens Pandora's box must be a very strong and fearless leader, intent on pursuing a mission to correct the injustices of the past to redirect energies toward a brighter future. It would take an exceptional leader to undertake such a gigantic mission of conviction, far removed from the neo-authoritarian materialism of the late Deng Xiaoping or the present leader Xi Jinping. Such a person would hardly have risen through the vetting procedures at every level of the Party hierarchy. Yet, we also know from the history of the Soviet Union that such a person, Mikhail Gorbachev, may change *after* having ascended to the top position.

Nonetheless, memory, guilt, and reconciliation are difficult processes to work with even in open societies and democracies, which

have freedom of speech and rights laid down in basic laws. In light of this perspective future evaluations of the events of June 1989, decided upon by the leadership of the Communist Party, seem highly unlikely at the time of writing. If General Secretary Xi Jinping and his Prime Minister Li Keqiang were to secretly nourish the idea to open up the archives and a process of reconciliation, they would have to actively shed ties to powerful patrons who underpin their own power bases. Thus, they are dependent on the very system they would want to hold accountable for past atrocities. Moreover, given his pronouncements on democracy, it looks unlikely that Xi Jinping, as the “new neo-authoritarian”, will usher in more inclusive politics at a later stage. Moreover, as the increasing tensions over territorial sovereignty with Japan, Vietnam and the Philippines demonstrate, the politics of Xi Jinping are unlike the policies of all his predecessors, barring the great helmsman Mao Zedong, and unafraid of taking strident nationalism offshore. Yet, despite being a stronger leader than both his immediate predecessors, Hu Jintao and Jiang Zemin, Xi is likely to run into trouble. For all the smartness of the legions of technocrats in the party-state machinery, they, with Xi Jinping in the driver’s seat, have a blind spot in their rear-view mirror. New neo-authoritarianism is out of step with the social and technological transformations that the country is going through.

Almost a year after the third plenum of the Chinese Communist Party, the world is still trying to fathom the future trajectory of deepening economic reform under General Secretary Xi Jinping. The idea that the aim of the new liberalizations is to prolong the rule of “the ruling party”, as it is called in China, will surprise no one. Prolonging economic growth is vital for stability, and vice versa, according to the party’s mantra since the crushing of the social movement and student demonstrations of 1989. To ensure the staying power of the Communist Party, its leaders realize that a new growth model is needed. In concert with the World Bank report of 2012, *China 2030: Building a Modern, Harmonious and Creative Society*, China’s Premier Li Keqiang and his aides in the Development Research Council have advocated a freeing-up of China’s financial market. Yet rebalancing might cause serious

dislocations in society, and that is one possible reason for why implementation of the proposals in the plenum's communiqué has stalled since the end of 2013. It is understandable that capital controls have been a mainstay for controlling society and politics. Liberalizing them entails walking a new and perilous line. Therefore, alongside the decision at the third plenum to make market mechanisms "decisive" in the Chinese economy came the announcement of a revamped domestic security organization – a new "State Security Committee". Headed by Xi Jinping, it highlights the further centralization of both the powers of the security apparatus and the General Secretary himself. This indicates that the new leadership of the one-party state is cognizant of possible crises related to socioeconomic ills and ethnic tensions and therefore of the need for strong "stability maintenance". And that maintenance is getting firmer. In 2013 and 2014 the net was tightened around high-profile so-called big Vs on the twitter-like Sina Weibo platform. Celebrities such as Lee Kaifu and Pan Shiyi had their accounts briefly suspended, or were rebuked for disseminating irresponsible comments about air pollution, corruption and government censorship to their millions of followers. At the beginning of 2014, in the run-up to the Chinese New Year celebrations on 31 January, the trials of civil rights lawyer Xu Zhiyong and his associates in the "New Citizens Movement" also indicated that while the party is intent on further liberalization, marketization and pluralization of the economy, no such liberalization is envisaged for China's locked-in civil society. Yet with the rapid modernization of Chinese society and maturing use of digital communications today, preventing social mobilization according to the practices of neo-authoritarian rule, such as by cracking down on even micro-level independent political discourse, is likely to be counterproductive. Many Chinese people engage in networks beyond the effective control of the party-state. In China, the number of registered nongovernmental organizations increased from a mere 4446 in 1989 to 387 000 in 2007 and more than 490 000 at the end of 2012.⁷ Even this spectacular increase says little about the mushrooming of non-associational organizations, in the realm of the shadows, on the ground. Official statistics only include registered organizations. According to estimates,

as far back as 2004 the number of such "shadowy" and truly nongovernmental organizations was as many as 8.31 million. What might unfold from Xi Jinping making the market more decisive in Chinese society? There could be a combustible mix of more absolute losers and more frustrated achievers. If the property market implodes, which is not at all unlikely, it could further increase inequalities, bringing tensions to an all-time-high. If rising inequality is combined with declining levels of happiness in Chinese society, continued suppression of social activism, the prospect of a failed "rebalancing" and a burst property bubble in Chinese cities, you get a potent cocktail indeed. If huge swaths of non-registered associations and surveillance-sensitive urban advocacy leaders go offline to avoid state surveillance, the state would, by forcing it into the shadows, be feeding a phenomenon it desperately wants to prevent. The cumbersome registration procedures for social organizations and a general good-governance deficit in the Chinese countryside mean that a shadow civil society continues to grow. Hypothetically – just like in Taiwan in the 1980s – organizations beyond the purview of the state could prepare for an alternative social reality and an alternative future. In the years ahead, given a serious economic or political crisis, international humiliation due to a clash with American-backed Japan in the East China Sea over the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, potentially large-scale demonstrations and unrest are likely to be fuelled by the continued growth of social media, which despite pervasive mass surveillance and clever censorship could mobilize people into collective action.

7. Concluding Remarks

The significance of the 1989 military crackdown on the democracy movement in central Beijing is enormous. In retrospect, the outcome of the violent crackdown was earth-shaking for both China and the world, as the ideology of technocracy and economic growth spurring a market society was given unprecedented momentum, even if Deng Xiaoping had to fight internally with party conservatives until 1992. In this way China gradually attained social and political stability – albeit at a very

high cost. Neo-authoritarian political repression and predatory state capitalism entailed delaying democratic development and improvement of human rights, while deterioration of political accountability, corruption and the natural environmental increased. There is a hard chain of causality that connects the tragic ending of the Beijing Spring of 1989 and our contemporary world. Without it and the ensuing harsh turn toward a market society and robust economic growth, a Western leader, such as Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg would hardly circumvent meeting Tibet's spiritual leader in exile, who visited Oslo in May 2014 to commemorate the Nobel Peace Prize he received there in 1989. Solberg explained "It is not as if China said that we cannot meet the Dalai Lama, we just know that if we do, we are going to remain in the freezer for even longer." Therefore, silence over human rights issues and benefits of cooperating with authoritarian capitalism and neo-authoritarianism in China has led to a slow convergence of logics of authoritarian power in global politics today (Lagerkvist, 2014a). This phenomenon will require more theorizing by social scientists and students of international politics in the future. Conventional wisdom holds Western responses to the attacks of 9/11 responsible for erosion of political liberties and human rights in Western democracies, but these only partially explain the trend. The tiptoeing of Western leaders who visit Beijing illustrates how the tables have been turned. The UK Prime Minister David Cameron brought with him a delegation of businessmen to China in December 2013. During his state visit between 2nd and 4th December his tweets well illustrate the priorities vis-à-vis China. Of twenty-seven tweets, only one tweet concerned human rights, the others were business related. Concluding his trip, Mr. Cameron tweeted: "The end of a successful trip. £6billion of deals and a step up in the relationship between the UK and China."⁸

Thus, while lip-service is paid to human rights, the world's soon-to-be largest economy continues to pursue Deng's mix of dictatorial politics and free market economics. The hope that the wind of liberal democracy would sweep the world after the fall of the Berlin Wall has been dashed. Nonetheless, Western policymakers enthusiastically promote national business interests in China, still hoping that democracy will naturally

follow on from China's embrace of capitalism. At a time when the wind has changed, we need to revisit the failed promises of 1989 and pose important new questions. As the Chinese defence lawyer Pu Zhiqiang has argued: "a certain lazy comfort" attends amnesia about the massacre. Such complacency risks letting universal human rights slide into the cold not just in China but elsewhere too. The crushing of the broad social movement in favour of political liberalization on June Fourth 1989 made it easier, especially after Deng had secured final victory against party orthodoxy in 1992, to enforce massive industry lay-offs. Powerful memory politics and market reform compelled people to redirect their energies and forget about the 1989 crackdown. As a result, China has become an economic juggernaut but also an unequal country that many citizens say lacks both solidarity and morals. Economic growth has also made non-democratic China more nationalistic and self-assured, whereas the rise of authoritarian power logic worldwide has left liberal democracies insecure, with their basic values eroded.

Notes

⁺ Parts of this article were previously published in the essay "The legacy of Tiananmen Square", *YaleGlobal Online*, 3rd June 2014 <<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/m/content/legacy-tiananmen-square/9299>>.

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Revisiting the Role of the Media in the Chinese Communist Party's Legitimation Strategy in Post-Tiananmen China: Case Study of News Corporation

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Abstract

Over the last 25 years China has maintained a high level of domestic political legitimacy through developing a strong ideological framework that links socioeconomic progress to the ruling party's monopoly over political power. The continuing control of the domestic media has been an essential part of this process as it is the tool through which the ideological framework is propagated and thus links the party and the people. It is clear that following the turbulence of 1989, China placed a new focus on the maintenance of political legitimacy, with a key plank of this strategy being its comprehensive system of media control. Allowing the development of an open media would enable the establishment of an alternative lens through which to view the party's achievements, which would reduce the effectiveness of the party's ideological framework, and therefore place pressure on the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP's) strategy of legitimation as normative justifications would no longer be captured by the government. This paper examines the central position of the media in China's post-Tiananmen legitimation strategy by reviewing a case study on News Corporation's (News Corp's) repeated failure to gain entry into the Chinese market. This failure can arguably be attributed to the high



quality propaganda model that has been developed and continuously refined by the CCP to strengthen the media's role in regime legitimization; and the perceived threat posed to this model by the entrance of a powerful foreign company.

Keywords: *China, legitimization, propaganda, Chinese Communist Party, News Corporation*

JEL classification: *L82, L86, L88, P48*

1. Introduction

As related by Rousseau, no authoritarian regime can depend solely on the use of force to ensure its longevity. All governments need to build a strong source of domestic legitimacy to ensure the continued support of their populace. The maintenance of this legitimacy requires both the construction of socioeconomic justifications along with an ideological framework to link these normative justifications to the ruling party's monopoly over political power. For any hegemonic regime, control of the media is an essential part of this process as it is the tool through which the ideological framework is propagated and thus acts as the link between the party and the people.

Whilst not being a central focus of recent studies on Chinese legitimacy since the 1989 Tiananmen Incident, the theme of the government-run and Party-controlled news media is inadvertently crossed in many academic and policy discussions on contemporary China. A common thread in these discussions is the importance of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) maintaining its monopoly of media ownership. It can be seen that the media's role in China is primarily maintaining control of the party's narrative on society and propagating the ideology of the central government. Without the media linking China's contemporary socioeconomic development with the CCP's governing ideology and thus their justification for one-party rule, it would be difficult, if not impossible, for the CCP to consolidate the Chinese party-state regime.

This view is apparently shared by the CCP who have thus far been reluctant to allow the development of an independent press to act as a liberal fourth estate. Instead it may be seen that the CCP's role in the traditional media in China has retrenched rather than retreated in recent times with news organizations remaining off limits to foreign ownership, and under a growing pressure to self-censor.

The case of News Corporation (News Corp)'s repeated failure to gain entry into the Chinese market gives an insight into the value that the CCP places on the media for its central role in their legitimation. Rupert Murdoch's News Corp is one of the most powerful media organizations in the world and in recent years has committed billions of dollars towards expanding its viewership in the burgeoning Chinese market. However, despite Rupert Murdoch's vast experience in international media and his priority placed on the Chinese market, his efforts to enter China were continually blocked by a defensive CCP. This failure can arguably be attributed to the high quality propaganda model that has been developed and continuously refined by the CCP to strengthen the media's role in regime legitimation; and the perceived threat posed to this model by the entrance of a powerful foreign entrepreneur.

Against this backdrop, this article tackles the theme of media's role as a propaganda mechanism in China's legitimation since the Tiananmen Incident in 1989. The media in China has generally played the dual role of both transferring the party's ideology, and further providing a medium to create a universal ideological filter through which the Chinese citizens can acquire information and knowledge that is deemed to be politically correct by the authorities. This work highlights the hegemonic media's role in Chinese legitimation through a recent case study of News Corp's failed bid to expand its global media investment in the People's Republic of China (PRC). This case is indicative of the way in which the CCP has treated all foreign multinational media companies and shows the fundamental value the CCP places on a monopolistic control of its media sector. This case combined with a further discussion of the Chinese propaganda model in the information age will reaffirm the importance of a single, authoritative narrative and universal national ideological

framework in maintaining the domestic legitimacy of the CCP regime in post-Tiananmen China.

This paper first reviews important concepts in relation to Chinese legitimacy and legitimation as well as the role of the media in this process. It then moves to examine media control in China and links this back to the existing theories on autocratic legitimacy. Following this it reviews a case study of News Corp's attempted entry into the Chinese media industry. Finally it discusses the failure of News Corp in China in light of its perceived potential impact on the Chinese model of media control and domestic legitimation.

2. Chinese Propaganda and Media: Legitimacy and Ideology

2.1. Legitimacy

The literature on autocratic domestic legitimacy and the media's role in maintaining it has received a strong academic focus in recent years, with researchers attempting to use these theories to predict the future of the CCP and the other remaining autocratic regimes around the world (Stockmann and Gallagher, 2011). This research has primarily focused on the origins of domestic legitimacy, the basis for its continued existence, and the source of its change and adaptation. Research has further focused on the role that ideology plays in the legitimation process and the importance of the media. (Shirk, 2007: 79-104; Brady, 2008; Stockmann, 2013)

Political legitimacy was defined by Seymour Lipset as the "capacity of a political system to engender and maintain the belief that the existing political institutions are the most appropriate ones for a society" (1981: 64). In order to build and maintain this belief, governments develop a historical narrative for the ruling authority, and pursue the delivery of normative benefits for the population. Guo (2006) has labelled these two stages of legitimation original and normative justifications.

In existing theories on authoritarian legitimacy, a nation's ideology is often regarded as a type of political institution (Nathan, 2003; Holbig, 2009). Like any institution, it is possible for support for China's

ideology to change and adapt. In line with North's theory of institutional change, the catalyst for a change in any institution comes in the form of increased transaction costs (1990). In North's reasoning, people will generally choose to abandon costly institutions in favour of more efficient ones. In the case of domestic legitimation, the costs could be seen to rise when a citizen believes that the negatives of supporting a particular ideology outweigh its positives.

2.1.1. Original justifications

The importance of an original justification in the legitimation process was first raised by Max Weber. He claimed that all governments draw their legitimacy from a mix of historical, traditional and rational-legal grounds, with the exact justifications varying depending on the circumstances of a governments birth (Tarifa, 1997). In the case of China, it is argued that the CCP's original claim to legitimacy rests upon its empowerment of the countryside, its restoration of pride to the country following the century of humiliation, and its role in organizing resistance to Japan's occupation (Downs and Saunders, 1999: 119).

2.1.2. Normative justifications

Whilst a strong original justification can provide a government with a veneer of legitimacy, it is argued that this alone is not enough to guarantee continued support for the ruling group (Guo, 2006). To ensure the continuation of its governing legitimacy, authoritarian regimes, like their democratic counterparts, need to develop and continually provide a normative or utilitarian justification for their rule. For most autocratic leaders, normative claims act as an ongoing source of legitimation in the absence of rule of law or direct multiparty elections.

The most obvious normative justification utilized by modern single party governments is that of economic growth. Stephen White holds that economic or eudemonic legitimation is a principal tool employed by authoritarian governments to create a "social compact". He defines this as a situation in which a nation "surrenders a wide range of political liberties, such as competitive elections and an independent press, in

return for a range of socioeconomic benefits, such as comprehensive social security, full employment, stable prices, relaxed industrial discipline and steadily rising living standards” (1986: 468). This view of economic legitimation has come to be labelled performance legitimacy by authors such as Huntington (1991), Sadurski (2005) and Canache and Kulisheck (1998).

Since the 1989 Tiananmen Incident, CCP legitimacy has become virtually synonymous with economic performance. It could be argued that the use of the People’s Liberation Army against the Chinese population harmed one of the original justifications of the CCP as a party that protects the people. To counter this it appears that the Chinese government has embraced normative justifications such as economic development to keep the population happy or at least content, and then retain a sense of political legitimacy.

According to authors such as White, the wholesale adoption of a strategy in which economic development serves as the basis of political legitimacy can be dangerous for the ruling party. White argues that “Communist regimes can only temporarily and precariously be legitimated by their economic performance; in the long run there is no alternative to legitimacy based upon institutional procedures” (1986: 464). If a country has restricted political rights in exchange for economic development, then any downturn in economic output would ultimately lead to a destabilizing legitimacy crisis (Shue, 2004).

It is for White’s above described reasoning that successful authoritarian regimes chiefly place their political future on more than one source of normative justification. Indeed the source of China’s utilitarian legitimacy comes not from a single source but rather from several unique pillars. It has been said that for China these pillars are mainly comprised of economic growth (Laliberte and Lanteigne, 2008), nationalism or national pride (Downs and Saunders, 1999; Lary, 2008), and stability (Herber and Schuber, 2009; Lagerkvist, 2006).

2.2. Ideology

The academic literature on authoritarian political legitimacy holds that along with original and normative justifications for power, governments

also require a strong constantly evolving ideological framework (Holbig 2009; Guo 2006) in order to stay in power. As argued by Wolgemuth (2002), ideology acts as a symbolic resource for the formation of public opinion and as a framework for the social construction of reality. This view is further supported by Heike Holbig who believes that the framework constructed by a regime's ideology is exploited by its citizens to perceive and interpret the successes of a regime's normative legitimation strategies (2006). Without this framework in place, the normative improvements in the country would not be linked back to the ruling party and thus they would lose their justification for single party rule in the long run.

Holbig (2009:16) summarizes ideology as having three principal roles in domestic legitimation. Firstly it has to provide the normative foundation for the rightful source of political authority, outlining the reasons for support of the current system. Next ideology has to define the performance criteria of government, setting the filter through which results are rightly interpreted and hence the government is judged. Finally ideology has to serve as a stimulus to mobilize popular consent, incentivizing long-term goals and discouraging a short term focus. In this sense, no single authoritarian party could ultimately do without a distinct yet convincing governing ideology if it would like its people to trust and identify with it.

If a government loses control of their ideological narrative, it would be no longer capable of linking normative gains to its existence as a monopolistic political entity. Whilst this would see the benefits of continued support of the government's ideology fall, the costs would remain static or possibly increase as restricted liberties and lack of representation would remain constant or increase in response to rising instability. This process has been labelled by Tarifa as the "withering away of utopia", a process in which the gap between ideology and reality continues to widen until it becomes untenable (1997: 452). When the state loses control of the narrative and the growth in the space between the official ideology and reality widens, it will lose a sense of legitimacy and it increasingly will have to resort to control and coercion to achieve stability. Shambaugh boldly summarized this problem by

stating “If the party state loses the battle for minds, losing the battle for hearts will not be far behind” (2007: 58).

2.3. Propaganda and Media

In order to maintain control of domestic ideological narratives, authoritarian governments are required to develop and utilize propaganda and the media. The media’s role in the CCP’s legitimization strategy is described as ensuring that the ruling party’s ideology is universally, correctly, and authoritatively translated to the general public. It is the media that transmits information of normative gains to the populace, whilst in the meantime providing the core and precise ideological framework through which the public may “correctly” interpret these results. Over the last few decades, the pre-eminent reason for the Party-State’s need for information control has been urgently presented as the need to safeguard social and political stability (Lagerkvist, 2006; Shue, 2004). Fundamentally if the mass media were to fail in its object of propagating a universal ideology, then the process of legitimization would be interrupted and the party’s hold on power would eventually come into question.

Propaganda, according to Olive Thomson, refers to “the use of communication skills of all kinds to achieve attitudinal or behavioural changes amongst one group by another” (Thomson, 1999: 7). The CCP’s propaganda system represents “the quintessential transmission belt for indoctrination and mass mobilisation” (Shambaugh, 2007: 26). It is a tool employed by the Party to both educate the masses and mobilize the public towards socialist progress; leading to it being labelled the “mouth and tongue” (*hou-she* 喉舌) of the Party. It is through its hegemonic control of the media that the CCP maintains a monopoly on discourse in China. Its ability to control the public’s perception and to fortify the persuasion of the Party makes it their most significant tool in maintaining and strengthening regime legitimization.

The importance of retaining a monopoly on discourse is contended by Adam Przeworski who expounded “it is not legitimacy that keeps an authoritarian regime in power, but the absence of a preferable and viable alternative” (1986: 52). If an alternative voice and opinions were to

emerge through the mainstream media, providing a competing narrative, discourses, or ideological framework through which to interpret the results of the countries utilitarian improvements, than it is conceivable that citizens would begin to question the need for a single party rule, therefore diminishing the legitimacy of the rulers. It is for this reason that for any authoritarian government wishing to maintain a strong level of legitimacy and in the end, strengthen its socio-political stability, it is in their paramount interest to uphold a hegemonic control news and information available in their country.

3. The Chinese Propaganda Model

In recent decades, the CCP has been refining its approach to propaganda and has moved away from blatant propaganda towards a more subtle approach to ideological distribution and persuasion. This is not to suggest that they have abandoned their political belief in the media's role in domestic legitimation. Rather, China has enabled the media sector to adapt to changes to the informational, societal, and political environments in the post-Tiananmen era. At times, the media has retrenched rather than retreated, albeit moving their strategy of control from force and clear restrictions, to a more effective system based on vagueness, the threat of force, and self-censorship.

China's media control is widely based upon the Six No's of the media established by the CCP Propaganda Department (CCPPD) in 1994. These include: no private media ownership, no shareholding of media organizations, no joint ventures with foreign companies, no discussion of the commodity nature of news, no discussion of a press law, and no openness for foreign satellite television (Zhao, 1998: 176). Further to these basic principles, the limits of acceptable media content are constantly directed and revised, with specific press guidance containing specific instructions on topics to pay special attention to or avoid, and specific terminology to use (Shambaugh, 2007: 44)

To prevent the emergence of a competing ideological framework and discourse in the mainstream media space and cyberspace, the CCP has employed a three pronged approach to media censorship. This

approach encompasses an active and passive mix of cooption, coercion, and political/legal institutions. The mechanism is vertically managed and supervised by the CCPPD which is usually headed by a member of the CCP's politburo, and extends to all areas of Chinese culture; ranging from traditional media such as newspapers, broadcast media, to the new media such as the Internet, and to cultural amusement parks, primary schools and libraries, too (*ibid.*: 27). This propaganda model has proved relatively effective in managing the Chinese traditional media.

3.1. Cooption

Since the Tiananmen Incident of 1989, the Chinese government has gradually moved away from the absolute use of force as a means of control, opting instead for cooption over coercion where possible. This approach has carried over into its current propaganda and thought work (思想工作) system of media control, becoming one of the dominant techniques for influencing the actions of its domestic broadcast media sector.

This cooption approach has been carried out in many ways. Examples include with bonuses paid to journalists and reporters on the basis of published politically preferable, or at least, acceptable stories, and media operators receiving direct propaganda directives that instruct them in their daily media practices. For Chinese journalists, bonuses make a substantial portion of their salary, with monthly performance ratings in the Shanghai Media Group determining 75-80 per cent of the total pay (Esarey, 2006: 21). These bonuses are based on the quality of their stories, with quality defined as both the amount of circulation as determined by traditional AC Nielson rankings and further on political acceptance. This process has meant that a majority of journalists China now evaluate news according to how well it communicates politically correct messages on behalf of the Party-State (Saether, 2008).

In addition to quality based bonuses, journalists are also paid based simply upon the quantity of articles that they produce. Reports rejected on the basis of political sensitivity are done so before they are published; they are not included in a reporter's total number of articles. This means that the more politically sensitive articles authors write, the less articles

they will have printed and thus the lower their bonuses. Therefore the higher the number of pro-government stories, the higher an individual's salary will be (Esarey, 2006).

3.2. Legal-Political Mechanisms

Whilst most journalists seek to reduce the amount of politically sensitive articles for economic gain, they are nevertheless restricted on what they are allowed to discuss in their media coverage by stringent yet arbitrary Chinese legal and political mechanisms. It is apparent that the CCP is at times breaching its own laws on freedom of speech by dictating what topics and subjects the press can cover and talk about. This censorship is arguably in contradiction to the Chinese Constitution which guarantees the right to free speech in Article 35 (Shambaugh, 2007).

Whilst the right to free speech and publication is guaranteed in the Chinese constitution, the Chinese Communist Party bases in censorship in several other contradictory articles. Article 38 mandates that the reputation of PRC citizens cannot be compromised by humiliating or libellous statements, whilst Article 51 states that citizens cannot, in the exercise of their freedoms, harm the collective interests of the nation, society, or the freedoms enjoyed by other citizens. Furthermore Article 53 calls for all citizens to "protect state secrets, cherish public assets...respect public order and social morals" whilst Article 54 states that citizens have the obligation to safeguard the "security, honour and interests of the motherland" and that to do otherwise is prohibited. These articles are stipulated by the CCP to assure that they maintain a constitutional control over the mass media and have the final say on what is acceptable and preferable for the media to report and cover.

These constitutional restrictions are reinforced by further detailed legal controls. The first of these is a law prohibiting private ownership of the media. Until this day there are no officially independent news media outlets in China (Hassid, 2008: 419). Foreign investment is also illegal with the only current foreign ownership coming in a joint venture permitted by the Chinese government called *Jisuanji Shijie* 计算机世界 (Computer World), run by a Chinese and an American company (Hassid, 2008). In addition to this, relevant laws enacted by the National People's

Congress Standing Council (全国人大常委会) in 2006 allow the government to penalize Chinese media outlets up to RMB10,000 for reporting contingent events without authorization or in a way that could cause serious consequences (Hassid 2008). Several other regulations make it legal for the CCP to warn and arrest journalists reporting on stories that they consider socially, economically, and politically sensitive. The Chinese propaganda department has also practised issuing a national and international journalist “ID Card” or press card (记者证) that is renewable on a yearly basis so as to strengthen their media controlling mechanism through directly controlling locally based foreign journalists (中国记者网, Chinese Journalist Net).

3.3. Coercion

Whilst cooptive and legal controls generally achieve the behavioural outcomes in the media pursued by the CCP, should these approaches fail, they can and do resort to the use of coercive controls and penalties. The CCP has access to a wide range of these controlling mechanisms including jailing of journalists, forced closure of media bureaus and outlets, investigations, intimidations, persecutions, arrests, prosecutions, imprisonments, and even deaths (He, 2008; Hassid, 2008). Notable examples of this coercion include the 2002 death of an investigative reporter Feng Zhaoxia 冯钊侠, the ten-year jailing of Shi Tao 师涛 for leaking details of a propaganda meeting (Shirk, 2011), well-known dissident journalist Gao Yu 高瑜's disappearance before the 25th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square Incident in 2014 (Michael Forsythe & Chris Buckley, 2014), and the arrest of the dissident Liu Xiaobo 刘晓波, a Nobel Prize winner, in 2009.

Whereas the aforementioned approaches constitute compelling, active coercion, it is passive and nuanced forms of coercion that are attributed with having the greatest impact on China's media sector. This is skilfully achieved through the construction of a regime of uncertainty (Hassid, 2008). This can be understood as a deliberate process in which the boundaries of what is politically unacceptable are demarcated in an ambiguous and arbitrary way. For instance, whilst some manifest topics and taboos such as Falun Gong 法轮功, independence of Taiwan

(台独), Tibet (藏独), and the Uyghur Muslim ethnic separatism in Xinjiang, are legally off limits by all journalists, others are located in areas where their appropriateness is vaguer and it is thereby dependent upon the political climate, the individual reporter's discretion, as well as media outlets' political judgment to ponder whether these topics and subjects are appropriate for coverage. Yet, these topics are increasingly overlooked as many reporters practise self-censorship for fear of active coercion should they inadvertently write on a topic the CCP considers politically sensitive and reactionary. Francis F Lee sums up this vagueness by commenting that "The difference between advocacy and objective reporting has never been clarified" (2008: 210).

Self-censorship is defined by the journalist scholar Chin-Chuan Lee as a set of editorial actions ranging from omission, dilution, distortion, and change of emphasis to choice of rhetorical devices by journalists, their organizations, and even the whole media community in anticipation of currying reward and avoiding punishments from the power structure (1998: 57). A simple example of this is if a writer who has written several papers in this political grey area is arrested for unstated reasons, authors will tone down almost all sorts of political writing on the basis that they do not clearly know what the specific problem was. They overcompensate to ensure their safety. This practice of self-censorship amongst China's media practitioners allows the government to control the content of national broadcasts at a low cost; with the government jailing fewer than one in five thousand reporters (Hassid, 2008). This vagueness, according to Perry Link (2005), is indeed a purposeful strategy utilized by the Chinese government to heighten the effect of its active coercion measures. He describes this process through his striking metaphor of an "Anaconda in the Chandelier" in which he envisions the CCP as a threat constantly lurking and watching from above, encouraging writers to limit their behaviour or suffer its wrath.

China's threatened and actual coercion makes it difficult for political activists and media dissidents to report openly and independently in the PRC. This difficulty is reflected through surveys conducted by Reporters Sans Frontiers (Reporters without Borders), who in their 2014 world press freedom index ranked China 175th out of 180

countries (Reporters without Borders, 2014). The NGO Freedom House is also critical of press freedom in China, rating them 183rd out of 197 countries in 2014 (Freedom House, 2014).

The comprehensive propaganda model developed by the Party-State and practised by almost all party-run and government-owned media outlets has by and large been effective in preventing a major alternative discourse and narratives rising through the national broadcast or press network within China. In one sense, this guarantees that the CCP has been able to claim successes as its own, whilst explaining failures in a positive light that do not affect the credibility and authority of their leadership.

Whilst China's system of media and propaganda has served to maintain its ideology in recent decades, this system is being challenged by the emergence of new information and communication technologies, and the continuing encroachment of powerful foreign media companies. Leaving aside the increased challenges posed by an emergent cyberspace which is beyond the scope of this article, it is clear that the CCP is most worried by foreign media enterprises. China's massive population and growing economic power make it an attractive market for foreign media companies. However, to date, gaining access to this market has been made difficult, if not impossible, by the CCP.

All media companies in China operate at the behest of the Chinese government. The content of their reports are controlled through a series of incentives and restrictions that guide what is appropriate. A foreign media company operating openly in China would theoretically be less beholden to constitutional restrictions and government directives, and thus would be less willing to self-censor. Furthermore, if the government coercion ever became too overt to undertake and they felt a genuine risk to their well-being, they would always have the option of packing up and leaving the country.

Nonetheless, if the Chinese government could not control the content of a major media organization in the country, there would be a threat to the government's ideological narrative and therefore a threat to the ongoing linkage between the country's development and the government. It is for this reason that the Chinese government to this day

has been unwilling to allow foreign media organizations access to its domestic market. These factors are evident in the ensuing case of the attempted entry of Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation into the Chinese Market.

4. Case Study: Murdoch and News Corp in the PRC

4.1. Background

Over the past three decades, China has been not only willing to accept but also actively engaged in attracting foreign capital to improve its domestic industries. This investment of capital and knowledge has been seen across the board under the Chinese paramount leadership of Deng Xiaoping 邓小平, Jiang Zemin 江泽民, Hu Jintao 胡锦涛 and Xi Jinping 习近平, with agriculture, heavy industry, the modern service industry, and education all being benefactors of China's reform and opening-up (改革开放) policy. Despite a broad opening of China's market to foreign investors, the media has continued to remain one of the few areas that is virtually closed off to foreign investors.

As earlier discussed, the Chinese authorities may perceive the potential threat posed by foreign companies once they are entering the Chinese media sphere and bypassing the highly sophisticated and developed domestic media control mechanisms. One of the direct consequences of this would be the surge of an alternative narratives and possible ideological framework, and hence an eventual legitimacy crisis for the CCP. Consequently the CCP places the political value higher than the economic one on its domestic media market. It is through this lens that the case on the Chinese rejection of the advances of Rupert Murdoch's News Corp is closely evaluated and highlighted. In one sense, the rejection of billions in investment in exchange for domestic control over news content could be seen as a clarification of theories on Chinese legitimation.

The following case study of Rupert Murdoch's failed entry into China is based primarily on the work of Bruce Dover. Bruce is the former Vice-President (China) of News Corp and has provided a detailed first-hand account of News Corp's attempts to enter the Chinese market.

4.2. Rupert Murdoch and News Corp in China

Rupert Murdoch is a household name across the globe and he is commonly seen as one of the most powerful media moguls in the world. He has an intimate control over News Corp and its operations in nine different types of media across every continent. Included in this are 132 newspapers, 25 magazines, 2 book publishers, several major broadcasters including Fox, BskyB and Australia's Seven, satellite and cable TV networks, a movie studio (Twentieth Century Fox), home video (Fox Video), and on-line streaming services (Auletta, 1995).

Through this multitude of resources, Murdoch has developed substantial political and economic influence in several major countries, and has demonstrated no signs of settling. Over the last two decades News Corp has sought to expand into several countries, with the most notable target being China. With a market of over 1.3 billion viewers and a fast growing economy, China makes an extraordinarily attractive target for Murdoch.

News Corp's first investment in China came in 1985 with a deal to invest US\$40 million in CCTV (China Central Television) to build its international hotel and news centre in Beijing. The centre included a 300 room hotel and 100 apartments for journalists and business executives. The political good will built from this investment helped him secure his first major media investment in the 1987 purchase of the South China Morning Post for US\$230 million. In 1993 he made his most significant investment when he purchased a 64 per cent controlling stake in Hong Kong satellite broadcaster STAR TV for US\$525 million (Dover, 2008: 16). At the time this purchase was questioned by outsiders who pointed to the loss making unencrypted signal of STAR being pirated throughout China, and its broadcast being restricted to only foreign hotels and CCP leader's compounds. Despite this Murdoch was still eager as he saw it as the important first step in a greater expansion throughout China.

Murdoch's initial foray into Chinese media was followed only months later by an inexplicable misstep. In a speech in late 1993 on the potential impact of satellite television, Murdoch stated,

“Advances in the technology of telecommunications have proved an unambiguous threat to totalitarianism regimes everywhere; Fax machines enable dissidents to bypass state-controlled print media. Direct Dial telephony makes it difficult for a state to control interpersonal voice communications. And satellite broadcasting makes it possible for information-hungry residents of many closed societies to bypass state-controlled television channel.”

(Dover, 2008: 18)

This speech came at a sensitive time for the Chinese leadership. Less than four years earlier fax machines had played a central role in the Tiananmen protests. Protestors used the newly developed fax machines to circumvent the traditional telephone lines that were being monitored by the Chinese security forces (*ibid.*: 18). In addition, satellite broadcasting was used to instantly send the now iconic images of the protests around the globe, generating widespread condemnation of the Chinese government (Dover, 2008).

Murdoch's speech was widely condemned by the CCP. Within a month, Premier Li Peng 李鹏 signed proclamation 129, banning the possession, distribution, installation and use of satellite dishes anywhere in China. Ding Guangen 丁关根, the head of the CCPPD, furthermore proclaimed that any request from Murdoch for a meeting in China would have to come through his office, the State Council Information Office (SCIO, 国务院新闻办公室) (*ibid.*: 23). This resolution could be interpreted as a realization of the potential impact of satellite television on China's control over its ideological narrative and an attempt to control and limit the impact the entry of Murdoch into the Chinese market. Its timing can also be seen as evidence of China tightening its media market in order to ensure domestic stability in the wake of the turbulent Tiananmen protests.

Following these announced restrictions on News Corp's entry into Chinese market, Murdoch made a concerted effort over the next decade to work around and lift the ban. Over this period he made several compromises and attempts at appeasement in order to make up for his earlier mistake.

4.3. *Compromises*

His first compromise came with the sale of the *South China Morning Post* in the lead up to the handover of Hong Kong in order to avoid angering the CCP. This was followed in 1994 by his dumping of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) from his STAR-TV signal. He did this in response to CCP criticism of the BBC after they ran a documentary on Mao's sex life (*ibid.*: 28). Murdoch again tried pleasing the party by ordering Harper Collins, his subsidiary to pay US\$1 million to get the rights to a biography on Deng's life, despite the book receiving particularly poor reviews from *The New York Times*, and criticisms of its propaganda subtext. Murdoch further paid US\$20 million to build a studio complex in Tianjin 天津 to cover the World Table Tennis Championships; the new Television Studio was called Golden Mainland Company, and was closed down not long after the competition after suffering millions in losses (Dover, 2008).

Another instance of attempted appeasement was when Murdoch personally funded a tour to Australia by Deng Xiaoping's paraplegic son, Deng Pufang 邓朴方. Deng Pufang was part of a dance troupe that was touring Australia but was suffering very low ticket sales. Murdoch decided to underwrite the whole tour in an effort to build his relationship with the Chinese leadership. After the tour, Murdoch further paid for the whole Dance troupe to fly to Australia's Hamilton Island for a one week fully funded holiday (*ibid.*).

Murdoch's flattery appeared to prove successful when in 1996 he was granted permission to establish a joint venture television programme called Phoenix with Chinese mogul Liu Changle 刘长乐. This was a mainstream channel which provided news and entertainment, yet, like STAR, was restricted to only Guangdong 广东 province, foreign hotels, and CCP residences. However unlike STAR, Phoenix was a commercial success, attracting US\$65 million in revenues from a roster of 300 advertisers by the end of the millennium (Curtin, 2005). It achieved this through providing controversial, high quality reports on domestic China, whilst further tapping into popular outrage and fervent nationalism in the manner of Murdoch's American Fox news. The Chinese stations were not allowed to do this simply because the government worried about

stirring up nationalist sentiments; creating an ideological movement that could easily escape from their control (*ibid.*: 170).

Despite the impact of Phoenix, its market coverage was still restricted to a tiny portion of China's population. Further unrestricted access to the Chinese market was still being withheld. It was believed that this was due in large part to his earlier speech on satellite television. To try and make up for this earlier mistake, Murdoch made another speech in 1997 that stated,

“Advances in telecommunications contribute to the universalisation of cultural interests and lifestyles. However, nations retain their social and moral values that the media must take into account. China is a distinctive market with distinctive social and moral values the western companies must learn to abide by.”

(Dover, 2008: 102)

Following this speech, Murdoch embarked upon a concerted push that saw him further attempt to appease the CCP. This push included comments in 1999 on the Dalai Lama, commenting “I heard cynics who say he’s a very political monk shuffling around in Gucci Shoes.” (BBC News, 7th September 1999) Further comments were made on Tibet including “It was pretty terrible old autocratic society out in the Middle Ages ... Maybe I’m falling for their propaganda, but it was an authoritarian medieval society without any services.” (Dover, 2008: 178)

Murdoch’s son James Murdoch furthered his family’s appeasement when he announced that the “Falun Gong were a dangerous and apocalyptic cult” and supported the CCP’s harsh treatment of protestor’s in 2000 (Dover, 2008: 204). Rupert Murdoch’s continued efforts at flattering the CCP even reached his businesses back in the U.S. with gossip writers on the *New York Post*’s page six allegedly ordered to avoid items that could be connoted as being critical of China and accordingly endangering his investment attempts within the country (Barron and Robertson, 2007).

4.4. Rejection

Given his continued attempts at appeasement, by the end of the 1990s it was becoming clear that China was unlikely to completely open their critical media sector to a politically and economically powerful foreigner. By this time Murdoch had invested \$2 billion into STAR, and was continuing to lose over \$2 million a month in the hope that one day he would be able to turn the business profitable by expanding beyond the Pearl River delta (珠江三角洲). Murdoch's window of opportunity for investing in China was effectively closed in 2002 with the rise to power of Hu Jintao, replacing the previous administration and removing the effect of Murdoch's previous appeasement. In August 2005 The Propaganda Department changed the government's regulations relating to foreign media under the auspices of "safeguarding the national cultural security" (捍卫国家文化安全), effectively shutting the door to News Corp (Dover, 2008: 268).

Murdoch seemingly admitted defeat in China in 2007 with the selling of his entire share of Phoenix. In 2010 he completely withdrew from China by selling Xing Kong International (星空国际), a channel he had earlier established in China's legal grey-zone, to a Chinese state fund established to develop the domestic media (*The Australian*, 2010). On his withdrawal from China, he stated that he had hit a brick wall in China, believing that whilst the CCP had originally promised to allow overseas and multinational companies to run print and electronic media in China, it was now clear that they had become quite paranoid about what gets through to their leaders and this policy had been reversed (*ibid.*: 227).

5. Discussions

In the post-Tiananmen era, China has maintained an extraordinarily high level of domestic legitimacy. Studies by authors such as Tianjian Shi, Bruce Gilley and Peter Sanby-Thomas have all listed it amongst the top countries in the world in terms of quantified legitimization. In a 2006 study, Bruce Gilley rated China the 13th in the world in terms of domestic legitimacy, with a level of support above several notable

democracies including both the UK and Australia (2006: 71). These figures back up Andrew Nathan's statement that the Chinese regime is not supine, weak or bereft of policy options (Nathan, 2003: 465).

The degree of support for the CCP is argued in this work as an output of its highly developed legitimation strategy. It is clear that following the turbulence of 1989, the CCP placed a new focus on the maintenance of political legitimacy, with a key plank of this strategy being its comprehensive system of media control. The link to Tiananmen can be seen in the timing. The importance of the media in China's post-Tiananmen legitimation strategy is evident in the News Corp case. The outcomes of this may be interpreted in two different ways, yet despite their different approaches, both contain a similar valuation of the media, and a core belief in the importance of central media control for authoritarian governments.

5.1. Divergent Media Valuation

One interpretation of News Corp's case sees Murdoch as a friend who received preferential treatment by the CCP and gained unprecedented access to the lucrative Chinese media sector. This is explicitly expressed in the CCP's incredulous comments made after Murdoch had stated that he had hit a brick wall in China. Murdoch complained that despite billions of dollars invested, large efforts at individual and broad scale flattery, and the constant building of high level *guanxi* 关系, he was still incapable of obtaining any meaningful investments in the PRC.

The CCP conversely felt that Murdoch had been treated exceptionally well in his investments. He had acquired significant concessions such as near open broadcast rights in Guangdong that were not gifted to other media moguls and were previously thought beyond the limit of foreign capital. Nevertheless they thought it inconceivable that Murdoch could expect unfettered access to their total media sector, a critical industry that has continually proved too high to afford allowing foreign influence.

For China, like other authoritarian governments, the media will always be regarded as firstly a political tool charged with developing their ideological and thought work, with its other roles of providing

objective information and entertainment to the people receiving a significantly lower priority. Support for this theory comes from a statement by Hu Jintao's propaganda head that the content of STAR's programming was posing a formidable threat to "national cultural security" and a further statement from the propaganda head that "After all, the TV business is about ideology and propaganda ... For us, social responsibility is more important than entertainment." (Dover, 2008: 221)

The CCP under Jiang Zemin deemed Murdoch as a friend who had proven his loyalty through critical statements on Tibet, Taiwan, the Dalai Lama, and universal media norms; along with making billions of dollars of investment into improving China's domestic media, and helping promote China to the outside world through his adoption of CCTV 9 on his American cable networks (Kahn, 2007). The seemingly harsh treatment of Murdoch can under this interpretation be seen primarily as a result of poor timing. Murdoch's attempted entry into the market came during a time when China's main priority was domestic stability in the wake of the Tiananmen protests. The entrance of a foreign media organization was never going to be a viable option at such a time, and Murdoch's failure to appreciate this political sensitivity could be better explained as the major cause of the damaged relationship between News Corp and the CCP.

The difference of opinion between Murdoch, who saw the concessions from the CCP as minimal, and the CCP, who saw them as significant concessions to a close friend, demonstrates the different valuation of the media between the two. The likely cause of this is that Murdoch saw the Chinese media simply as a market for investment, whilst the CCP saw it along the lines of Prezworski's (1986) above discussed theory in that it was not just an industry, but also a critical tool for maintaining a universal ideology, thus guaranteeing domestic legitimacy and the continuance of their one-party rule.

5.2. Quality-based Retrenchment

Whilst the above discussion has as its base a friendship between Murdoch and the party, an alternate interpretation is of China using an interested foreign investor to improve their own media sector with the

ultimate goal of media retrenchment. In this view, the CCP fully appreciated the value of its media in the legitimation process, and saw Murdoch's attempts at flattery and his willingness to compromise as an opportunity to learn Western broadcasting techniques and apply them to their own state CCTV. The constant denials of Murdoch's advances could further be seen as delays made to give their own domestic news agencies adequate time to develop.

The CCP realized that to make their propaganda more effective and successful in a globalized and competitive environment, and thus expand the reach of its governing ideology, it needed to improve the quality of its news presentation (Kahn, 2007). This is in line with Ithiel de Sola Pool's statement that when regimes impose daily blatant propaganda in large doses, people stop listening (1973). As stated earlier, the success of Phoenix was based upon its high production values and use of nationalistic propaganda to gain viewers. China desired to take these methods and apply them to their own CCTV programming.

The wider the reach of a state's propaganda, the more universal its ideology, and therefore the lower the cost of following it. In this sense, the Chinese propaganda model ensures that the party decides news content, whilst their monopolistic control of media organizations meant that this message will be universally disseminated and relayed. Whereas the CCP had total control over the narrative in their reporting and broadcasting, they could not force viewers to watch these broadcasts and thus adopt their ideological framework naturally. The only way of guaranteeing that people would willingly watch their broadcasts was to move away from bland presentations of overt propaganda, towards more nuanced, interesting, better presented news broadcasts on topics that people fancied to listen to.

Evidence could be seen for this in Murdoch's experience in China with one incident of his flattery seeing him treat the top member of the CCP to a viewing of *Titanic*, produced by News Corp's Fox. Before the start of this screening Jiang Zemin addressed the crowd announcing, "I invite my comrades of the politburo to see the movie – not to propagate capitalism but to better understand our opposition, the better to enable us to succeed, don't fool ourselves that we are the only ones who know

how to create propaganda to our own end” (Dover, 2008: 158). It can be argued that he was actually relaying his belief that the media had fallen behind his rivals in presentation and thereby attraction, and therefore had to increase its quality if it were to assure its own ideology were to reach a wider base.

6. Conclusion

Whether the CCP treated Murdoch as a genuine friend or a rival to be used, the common thread in both of these discussions is that they placed a priority on propaganda control over market opening and financial reward. These cases exhibited that the CCP has maintained a strong understanding of the critical nature of the media in its legitimation strategy. This strong understanding has meant that China has persisted with a closed media market in order to sustain intimate control of its domestic media, and accordingly its ideological narrative.

As argued by Chinese media commentator He Qinglian 何清涟, although the CCP can force obedience from the domestic media, it has no way of controlling the pens of foreign journalists (He, 2008: 159). If the CCP’s media control and governance was largely undermined through increased globalization, marketization and privatization, the effectiveness of its propaganda model would be reduced as the party’s power to, for example, appoint managers, editors, financially punish subversive writing, and encourage self-censorship would be taken away. It is consequently anticipated that unless the Party-State decides to move away from single party rule and embrace political liberalization, the CCP is unlikely to legalize private ownership in China anytime soon.

If the CCP were to relax control of its ability to censor the media, it is apparent that this would allow a political opposition and thus an alternative narrative to emerge. The rise of an alternative lens through which to view the party’s achievements would reduce the effectiveness of the party’s ideological framework, thus increasing its perceived costs as normative justifications would no longer be captured by the government. Eventually this process could lead towards a legitimacy crisis and pressure for regime change.

The case of Murdoch's failed attempts to enter into China, along with the discussions of China's comprehensive system of censorship and surveillance, highlights the significance of the media in authoritarian domestic legitimation. The CCP has repeatedly demonstrated a deep appreciation of this cardinal principle by ensuring that the content of their media sector remains tightly controlled and therefore off limits to foreign influence. This is regarded as a core requirement for maintaining their control of the population's ideological lens and for that reason ensuring that China's socioeconomic development continues to be attributed to the party's monopoly on political power in China.

Notes

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The Problematic Politics of China's Economic Reform Plans⁺

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Abstract

China is in a race against time to reengineer its faltering economic model, famously described by Wen Jiabao, its last prime minister, as “unsustainable, uncoordinated, unbalanced, and unstable”. Against a background of soaring debt levels, proliferating asset bubbles and chronic excess capacity in many sectors, Xi Jinping, China’s president, has announced a programme of sweeping, market-oriented, structural reforms intended to “re-balance” its economy and lay the foundations for the country’s future growth. Since taking office in 2012, Mr Xi has rapidly accumulated massive personal power and tightened his grip on the ruling Communist Party, while instituting one of the most ferocious crackdowns on corruption in China’s history. By establishing an unchallenged hold over the Party’s machinery and national decision-making, he has put himself in an exceptionally strong position to ram through much-needed changes in policy and bulldoze obstacles to the planned reforms. However, as this article argues, tightening political control while seeking simultaneously to free up the economy by expanding the role of markets has created a fundamental paradox. To be effective, many of China’s reform proposals will entail less – not more – state intervention and reduced politicization of the legal system and other economically important institutions. Yet the core purpose, indeed, the *raison d’être*, of the Communist Party is the right to exercise





unfettered power over every aspect of Chinese society – and that right is unlikely to be surrendered willingly. How the paradox will be resolved is still far from clear.

Keywords: *China, Communist Party, economic reform, leadership, corruption, political power*

JEL classification: *E61, E66, F41, G38*

1. Introduction

Joseph Schumpeter, the Austro-American economist, once said that economics was all about “politics, politics, politics”. Nowhere is that truer than in China, where politics both explains the urgency of the wide-ranging economic reform plans unveiled by the government last November and holds the key to their success or failure.

The importance of the reforms to China’s ruling Communist Party is manifest. Xi Jinping, China’s president – and, more important, secretary general of the Party – signalled as much by choosing to announce the 60-point programme personally at the end of the Party’s leadership plenum in November. In addition, implementation of the reforms will be overseen by a special committee of the Party, not the government, and chaired by Mr Xi. Both moves are unprecedented and clearly intended to emphasize the seriousness of the leadership’s commitment to change.

That commitment is rooted in the most powerful political imperative of all: the survival instinct. Though China’s leaders are not accountable at the ballot box, they display a hair-trigger sensitivity to trends in the public mood that may affect their grip on power. For 35 years, they have maintained that grip by means of “performance-based legitimacy”: that is, garnering popular support by delivering rapid and sustained improvements in incomes and living standards. Until recently, that has meant achieving double-digit levels of annual growth.

The increasing difficulty of sustaining such heady expansion, along with the severe environmental costs and strains on resources that it has imposed, has spurred a lively political debate in China about re-



engineering its economic model for several years. Starting in 2007, Wen Jiabao, China's last prime minister, famously warned his fellow citizens at regular intervals that its economy was "unsustainable, uncoordinated, unbalanced, and unstable".

However, neither Mr Wen nor former President Hu Jintao did much to turn those doom-laden words into action: indeed, it is common today to describe their time in office as a "lost decade", when difficult decisions were ducked or deferred. In retrospect, China's ability to keep growing after the 2008 financial crisis, the vulnerabilities that the crisis exposed in the west and the surge of national pride generated by the Beijing Olympic Games all appear to have bred a dangerous mood of hubris and complacency that deflected political attention in Beijing from the country's own pressing economic problems.

Those problems have now become too glaring and too serious to be ignored any longer. Three developments, in particular, have conspired to catapult reform to the top of the political agenda since Mr Xi succeeded Mr Hu last year.

First, weak global demand in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis has depressed many of China's biggest export markets, possibly permanently. Contrary to widespread belief, China's economy is not export-driven: exports matter, rather, because they support millions of producers and jobs by providing a vital outlet for disposal of goods that are produced in volumes far too large to be consumed entirely at home. From Beijing's perspective, exports have been at least as important as a contributor to maintaining social peace and stability – overriding priorities for China's leaders – as engines of national wealth.

Second, the efficiency of investment, which has long been China's principal growth generator and is largely financed by debt, has sharply declined, with ever larger amounts needed to produce the same incremental unit of GDP. It has been estimated that the increase in GDP generated by \$1 of credit has fallen from 83 cents in 2007 to barely 10 cents today.

Those rapidly diminishing returns are to a large extent a result of the third factor, China's massive, credit-fuelled 2009 stimulus package. Widely applauded at the time as a master stroke that averted a sharp



economic slowdown in the wake of the Lehman crisis, it has bequeathed a toxic legacy: asset bubbles, chronic excess industrial capacity, oversupply of property in many cities, feverish speculative activity and rising bad debts, the true size of which is almost certainly far greater than shown in the carefully massaged official figures.

Though the government has been striving to bring things under control, total social financing, the main official measure of debt, is still growing twice as fast as GDP, while China's overall debt level has soared in five years from 130 per cent to around 220 per cent of GDP. Some unofficial estimates put the level higher still.

But while the debt explosion has made reforms more urgent, the precarious economic conditions it has bequeathed have also made them harder to put into effect. China has dealt with big run-ups in bad debt before by rolling it over, in the confident expectation that continued high growth in the future would take care of the problem. That fix worked in the past and may still work for a little longer. However, trying to keep growth going indefinitely by pumping ever more credit into investments that is growing steadily less productive is a zero-sum game. Ultimately it piles up still bigger problems down the road and risks destroying, instead of generating, national wealth.

On the other hand, while China's leadership appears prepared – indeed, is obliged – to tolerate a moderate slowdown in growth in order to stabilize the economy, it cannot afford to let growth collapse. If that happened, it could swiftly turn China's debt hangover into a crisis, severely damaging the Party's popular standing and fomenting the social unrest that China's rulers so dread.

That, in summary, is China's dilemma today. Of all the factors that will determine the country's chances of breaking out of it, none is more important than politics – a point that Mr Xi has been quick to grasp.

2. Return of the Strongman Leader

Mr Xi has lost no time stamping his authority on the country and the Party since he took over last year, accumulating more power faster than any Chinese leader since Deng Xiaoping and assiduously cultivating a



“strongman” image. In so doing, he has confounded the wisdom of those foreign pundits who, not long ago, were proclaiming that China’s governance had evolved irreversibly from a system dominated by one individual into a more amorphous, consensus-based, style of collective leadership.

Mr Xi’s first priority has been to tighten his grip on the Party, imposing strict disciplines and meting out tough penalties on those who flout them. Self-criticism sessions, loyalty oaths and rhetoric intended to evoke the Mao era have all made a comeback, both in government and in state-owned enterprises. Those measures have been powerfully reinforced by one of the most ferocious crackdowns on corruption in recent Chinese history, involving the arrest, trial and predictable conviction of officials at almost every level. By one estimate, some 180,000 people have been apprehended so far, and rumours swirl constantly in Beijing about whose heads will be next to fall.

Anti-corruption campaigns have long been favoured by China’s rulers as a method of eliminating political enemies or rivals. Given the prevalence of corruption among Party officials, not to mention the political malleability of the judicial system, it is not difficult to come up with charges against almost anyone in a position of authority that can be made to stick.

In addition, the current crackdown appears to have at least two other motives. One is to try win back popular support by attacking a prime source of public resentment and disenchantment with the Party – though at the risk of inadvertently encouraging the belief that every senior official is lining his or her pockets at the country’s expense. The other objective is to break down political and economic “vested interests” in government and industry that oppose reforms because they profit so handsomely from the status quo. The drive appears to have been particularly effective in bringing to heel the powerful energy SOEs, which have long been used to doing as they pleased and have been more important than the government in shaping energy policy – always to their own advantage, of course.

Meanwhile, the Party has clipped the wings of the National Development and Reform Commission, architect of China’s legendary



five-year plans and a once-powerful voice in the making of many kinds of economic policy. The central government's regulatory business approvals process is being streamlined and rules for starting new businesses simplified. Plans are also afoot to sell minority stakes in some non-bank SOEs, though these are likely for the foreseeable future to remain ultimately under firm political control.

Some commentators detect signs of an embryonic personality cult in the energetic promotion and projection of Mr Xi's image. There are also suggestions of grumblings by party elders, including former President Jiang Zemin, still an influential figure behind the scenes. Mr Jiang, a number of whose own followers have been targeted by the anti-corruption campaign, is reported to have urged Mr Xi to rein it in, arguing that it risked tearing the Party apart.

Yet the six other members of the Politburo Standing Committee, the Party's supreme decision-making body, appear willingly to have endorsed the glorification of Mr Xi. One reason may be that many of them will be required to step down in 2017 on grounds of age, so presumably harbour few unfulfilled ambitions for career advancement. Another is that they have come to accept that only a leader perceived to be an unstoppable human bulldozer is capable of driving through change and sweeping away entrenched obstacles to reform.

3. What Kind of Reforms?

But can Mr Xi actually deliver? And what, precisely, will he be delivering?

By any standards, he appears to be taking a giant gamble. If it pays off, he – and China – will reap rich rewards. But if it fails, there will be no obvious fall-guys onto whom to shift the blame, since all the most likely candidates have been nudged into the sidelines, including Li Keqiang, the prime minister, who is nominally responsible for overall supervision of economic policy. And the agenda to be tackled looks daunting.

The programme endorsed by the Plenum calls for a broad swathe of policy measures. They include opening to market forces sectors long



dominated by SOE monopolies, such as telecommunications, water, energy and transport; changing the laws on rural land ownership and accelerating liberalization of the financial system and achieving capital account convertibility. Apparently in an effort to make structural changes more palatable to the public, there are also plans to reform some deeply unpopular policies by loosening the one-child policy and the hukou household registration system and by abolishing correctional labour camps.

Though steps are being taken to implement some of these proposals, at this stage much of the reform programme is still a work in progress, not a done deal. Some proposals will unavoidably require a long time to be put into effect: for instance, because land sales provide a growing source of funds for cash-strapped local governments, new systems of local government financing will need to be put in place before the planned rural land reforms take effect. However, there are other reasons for being cautious about how far and how fast China's rulers are prepared to go in implementing the programme.

First of all, the reforms are being imposed top-down by an iron-fisted leadership that seems even more determined than its predecessor to suppress public debate and expressions of dissent. Yet history, in China and elsewhere, tells us that effective market-based reforms usually are often propelled by strong and direct pressure from the bottom up - and/or a manifest crisis of some kind. Since China's leaders will go to great lengths to avoid both developments, much is likely to depend on whether Mr Xi and his colleagues can generate the necessary momentum for change through the exercise of sheer political will.

Second, the Plenum identified giving a "decisive" role to the market as a centrepiece of the planned reforms. But if that pledge is genuinely to be fulfilled, two conditions must be met. One is that the state, or the Party, must scale back the extensive intervention and micro-management long practised in many sectors of the economy. The other is that China needs to develop the sound institutional frameworks, clear rules and effective supervision and regulation that markets require in order to function efficiently.

However, in China today, property rights are still ill-defined; the rule of law is applied unevenly; the courts are subject to political control; market regulation is haphazard and subject to political manipulation; and, crucially, every institution is constitutionally subordinated to the will of the Party, whose decision-making is opaque, unaccountable and often unpredictable. Even if Beijing is committed to changing all those things – itself a highly questionable assumption – they will not be changed quickly.

Third, successful implementation of the reforms will rely heavily on enlisting the cooperation and commitment of authorities at provincial, municipal and local level, which Beijing has not always been able to secure in the past. In recent years, its efforts to moderate the rate of growth and curb debt and inflation have often been frustrated by lower-level officials in different parts of the country who have not only seen themselves as in competition to maximize economic expansion but in many cases have profited personally from it. In post-imperial China, the old adage that “the mountain is high and the emperor is far away” remains as relevant as ever.

The leadership appears to be counting heavily on the anticorruption drive and mooted reforms of local government financing to bring lower levels of the Party into line. But much more may be needed: in particular, the creation of a structure of incentives that encourages officials to behave differently – in other words, a change in the political and institutional culture. As anyone who has ever attempted that knows, it is not easy to achieve.

Fourth, structural reforms on the scale that China needs and its leaders appear to envisage are bound to create job losses and other social upheavals and dislocations, at least temporarily. In the 1990s, when Zhu Rongji, then prime minister, rammed through China’s last big round of structural reforms, he presided over the mass closure of inefficient and uncompetitive state-owned enterprises, throwing an estimated 40 million people out of work and devastating the social welfare support that state industries provided.

But much has changed in China since then. Though it is still a long way from having an “entitlement culture”, expectations of steady

improvements in living standards and quality of life have become entrenched in the popular consciousness. Opinion polls suggest that, unlike many people in the west, China's citizens believe that, materially at least, they will be better off tomorrow than today. If their hopes are disappointed, popular disenchantment with the Party is likely to rise.

The growth of an educated, travelled and increasingly vocal urban middle class, able to express its demands and grievances through social media, increases pressure on the Party officials to deliver results that cannot be measured by crude economic statistics. That means providing such public goods as clean air and water, safe food and medicines, efficient and reliable healthcare services and a less corrupt education system. As one senior official recently admitted privately, the Party has yet to demonstrate that it is capable of responding to and managing such expectations effectively.

Furthermore, while rapid growth can no longer be counted on to generate the public support for the Party that it secured in Mr Deng's and Mr Zhu's day, nor can its continuation be guaranteed in the future – even, or especially – if the reforms are implemented in full and succeed in the objective of “re-balancing” the economy. That is because the result will be to make demand much more reliant on domestic consumption and services, rather than on massive fixed asset investment and exports. Though that shift promises to raise household incomes – indeed, it will need to do so in order to support increased domestic consumption – it is not a formula for producing double-digit rates of headline GDP growth.

Fifth, the reforms are intended not just to free China from the constraints of an obsolete growth model but to lay the basis for a new one that will fulfil its ambitions to become an advanced high-income economy and a global technology leader. In order to do so, China needs to avoid falling into the “middle income trap”. That is the no man's land in which developing economies often get stuck because they find it increasingly hard to compete with lower-cost competitors yet lack the capacity and resources needed to vault into the ranks of the rich ones.

Remarkably few developing countries have managed to extricate themselves from that morass. Indeed, the World Bank says that of 101



economies categorized as middle-income in 1960, only 13 had achieved high income status by 2008. Success depends on putting in place policies that stimulate innovation, productivity and a sustained move into higher value-added goods and services. The trick lies not only in choosing the right policies but in assembling them in the right combination. No reliable text books or road maps exist for how to do this.

4. An Existential Challenge?

These are all essentially issues of practical implementation. Beyond them looms a much bigger and more fundamental question: one, indeed, that goes to the heart of China's governance and ultimately poses an existential challenge to the Communist Party and the system over which it has presided.

The system's foundation is the Party's absolute right to rule over and dictate every aspect of the nation's life. Accountability in China has always been from the top down, never from the bottom up, and anyone or anything that dared to challenge the Party's pre-eminence has been either coopted or, more often, sidelined or suppressed. Reduced to its purest essence, the Party is about the unfettered exercise of control and power.

Yet it is hard to see how the reforms can fully succeed unless the Party is prepared to loosen or even abandon entirely control over a wide swathe of the economy, ranging from the ownership and management of state-owned enterprises to the operations of the judiciary. Indeed, some observers, in China as well as abroad, argue that economic reforms will only work if they are accompanied by at least a measure of political reform. Yet, for reasons explained below, that is anathema to the current leadership.

All this amounts to a profound, possibly historic, paradox. As Mr Xi and his colleagues evidently recognize, pressing ahead with the reform and modernization of the economy is indispensable to shoring up the basis of the Party's continuing legitimacy and monopoly on power. Yet the pursuit of those objectives poses a direct challenge not only to the



party's traditional way of doing things but, potentially, to its essential purpose and reason for existence. After all, if the Party is not about control, what is it about?

That Party leaders are keenly aware of the tension between these two forces, and the risks that they pose to their own position, is apparent. Perhaps the clearest evidence is the intense attention they have devoted to studying the events leading up to the collapse of the Soviet Union. The lesson they appear to have drawn from it is that Mikhail Gorbachev's crucial mistake was to couple perestroika, economic restructuring, with glasnost, the opening of the machinery of power to public scrutiny and, by extension, accountability. To be tagged "China's Gorbachev" is a fate that every Chinese politician is desperate to avoid.

That Mr Xi and his colleagues are simultaneously tightening their political grip while embracing, at least rhetorically, the objective of economic reform suggests that they are optimistic that the tension can be managed. Whether they are right and whether this high-wire act can be sustained is still far from clear. But it will certainly be made no easier by another set of conflicting impulses with which policy must contend.

These centre on the speed with which to proceed with reform. On the one hand, China's leaders are acutely sensitive to the danger that pressing ahead too rapidly could produce destabilizing upheavals that, at worst, would cause them to lose control. Those dangers are especially great at a time when growth is slowing and the authorities are struggling to rein in the credit explosion without provoking a property market crash that would depress growth still further.

Politically, there are two risks to rushing reforms which will necessarily involve inflicting short-term pain in the name of benefits that will only materialize over a much longer time span and which cannot be guaranteed in advance. Mr Li, the Prime Minister, has acknowledged as much, by comparing reforms to the act of cutting off one's own hand.

One risk is that the pain will prove unacceptable to public opinion, deepening the Party's unpopularity. The other is that, conversely, liberation of market forces might fuel popular pressure and demands for parallel political liberalization. Both possibilities argue in favour of advancing carefully one step at a time by, in line with Deng Xiaoping's



much-quoted approach, “crossing the river by feeling the stones”.

Yet that option involves other potential problems. There is a natural tendency, when implementing reforms, to seek to make them politically acceptable by tackling the easiest ones first. However, in the over-used terminology of international trade negotiators, there is a finite quantity of such “low-hanging fruit” to be harvested. Once it has all been picked, if the process is to continue, tough and difficult decisions become unavoidable. Delaying them risks derailing the endeavour and allowing more time for “vested interests” to mobilize opposition to reform.

There are also technical risks. These are most conspicuous in the financial area and, in particular, in the challenge of correctly sequencing domestic reforms on the one hand and the opening of China’s closed capital account and the achievement of currency convertibility on the other. Though in theory the two operations could be undertaken separately, in practice they are closely linked.

Lifting China’s tight capital controls would be recklessly imprudent until its fragile domestic banking system and primitive financial markets have been strengthened and modernized. Though a number of steps have been taken in that direction, much remains to be done. Unless the process is managed successfully, premature external liberalization could unleash a tsunami of destabilizing capital flows, both in and out of the country, with severe adverse systemic consequences – for China and for the rest of the world.

However, if external liberalization is delayed until after domestic liberalization is completed, there is a risk that momentum will be lost and the latter enterprise will run out of steam. Without external pressure, there will be less incentive to adapt. Indeed, attempts to ratchet up that pressure, notably by pushing for “internationalization” of the renminbi, are one of the most powerful psychological instruments that reformers in the politically otherwise weak People’s Bank of China possess.

These conflicts and contradictions go some way to explain the sometimes puzzling hesitations and oscillations that have characterized recent Chinese macro-economic policy. One week, credit is tightened, in an effort to curb speculative excess and expunge moral hazard. The next week, it is relaxed again, apparently out of fear of precipitating financial



collapses and a steep, and politically unacceptable, further slowdown in growth.

Meanwhile, there is a continuing steady trickle of piecemeal financial “reforms”, each pointing in a generally liberal direction but individually modest and collectively lacking the obvious hallmarks of a coherent master plan. The overall impression is of a scattergun array of semi-experimental shots fired into the air, rather than of an orderly and carefully planned sequence of measures leading up to a pre-determined conclusion.

For how much longer can this state of affairs continue? Flawed as China's economic model undoubtedly is, it may well be possible to eke a few more years of growth out of it. But the costs of doing so, in terms of growing capital misallocation, squandered resources and a rising debt burden, are likely to be large. And the longer things continue that way, the bigger the eventual bill will become.

Sooner or later, the pressures to bite the bullet and take difficult and painful measures will become too great to withstand. Unless, of course, China's leaders resolve before then to pre-empt that risk by acting boldly and decisively to move beyond talking about tough reforms to implementing and enforcing them vigorously.

It would be fruitless, at this stage, to speculate about which direction China's leadership will follow, even more so about the precise destination to which it will lead. Events have too often conspired to show that the main function of predictions about how the country will or will not develop has been to confound those making them. The one thing that can be said with some confidence is that rarely, if ever, have its leaders been forced to confront so many formidable challenges at once.

Notes

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Xinjiang in the Aftermath of Tiananmen: Prospects for Development and Challenges for the New Administration

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Abstract

The political conditions in Xinjiang and the Tiananmen Square demonstrations both remain taboo topics in China. Since 1978 when Deng Xiaoping took over the leadership of China after the demise of Mao Zedong in 1976, China including Xinjiang witnessed dramatic changes in the economic and political situation. This article examines the impact of the Tiananmen Square demonstrations in 1989 on the political conditions in Xinjiang. Political violence and separatist activities in Xinjiang have increased in the 1990s despite some conciliatory measures which were undertaken by the Chinese administration. This article argues that one of the factors include the Tiananmen Square demonstrations which have provided a boost to some Uyghurs to openly challenge the Chinese administration. In addition, it also analyses the possible strategies that the new Chinese leaders can take into consideration to overcome the security problems in the province.

Keywords: *Tiananmen Square demonstrations of 1989, Xinjiang, Uyghur, Han, Central Asia*

JEL classification: *F54, H12, J15, Z13*



1. Introduction

This paper examines the impact of the Tiananmen Square demonstrations in 1989 towards the political and security conditions of Xinjiang in the 1990s and 2000s. In addition, it also discusses the challenges faced by the new Chinese administration to resolve the conflict in Xinjiang. More specifically, it analyses pertinent issues related to the factors that have influenced the political scenario in Xinjiang, the prospect for regional economic development and also the reaction by the new Chinese leaders towards the security problems in the province. Unlike previous studies, this paper focuses on the multiple factors that have contributed to the civil unrests including lack of cultural and religious freedom, economic deprivation and incompetence of the local government. Apart from the common factors mentioned in the previous works, this study argues that the Tiananmen Square demonstrations has inspired certain Uyghur groups to openly challenge the Chinese administration.

This paper demonstrates that the province is rich with natural resources and possesses the potential to be developed as China's northwestern regional economic hub. In addition, Xinjiang also functions as a link between China and its Central Asian neighbours and other Islamic states in the Middle East. Unlike previous studies which only concentrate on major revolts or specific periods of Chinese administration in Xinjiang, this paper attempts to provide a fair analysis on the political conditions in Xinjiang. This study differs from previous works such as James Milward (2009), Dru Gladney (2004) and S. Frederick Starr (2004). These and other works have elaborated largely on the Uyghur's quest for independence. Xinjiang has been selected for this study because it is a unique Chinese province which has a large number of Muslims and non-Han populations such as the Turkic and Russian minorities. Besides, it is one of the richest provinces in northwestern China. Meanwhile, its security and political conditions are very challenging for the new Chinese administration led by Xi Jinping.

2. Background

Xinjiang is of strategic importance to China because it is located in an area that is rich with oil and gas reserves which are among China's major sources of energy. Xinjiang is situated in the northwest part of China, the largest province covering about 617,800 square miles (1,600,000 square km) or 1/6 of the total Chinese territory. It stretches 1,650 km from north to south and 2,000 km from east to west (Lutfi, 2001: 179-180). In addition, it also borders eight countries, namely the People's Republic of Mongolia to the northwest; the Russian Federation to the north; Kazakhstan to the northwest; Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to the west; as well as Afghanistan, India and Pakistan (Jammu Kashmir) to the southwest.

Ethnically, Xinjiang can be divided into two major categories: the Turkics who are natives of Xinjiang and the non-Turkic people. The Turkics are further divided into the Uyghurs¹, Kazakhs, Kirghizs, Uzbeks and Tajiks with the majority of them being Muslims. The Tajiks speak Persian in addition to Turkic. The Uyghurs (45.2 per cent) are the largest ethnic group in Xinjiang followed by the Kazakhs (6.7 per cent), Kirghizs (0.86 per cent), Tajiks (0.7 per cent) and Uzbeks (0.6 per cent) (Department of Population, Social, Science and Technology Statistics of the National Bureau of Statistics of China and Department of Economic Development of the State Ethnic Affairs Commission of China, 2003). However, the Uyghur people are not confined to just Xinjiang as they are scattered throughout Central Asia in countries like Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and parts of Russia. The Uyghurs are ethnically similar although they may be divided politically and physically.

The non-Uyghur category consists of the Han Chinese, Hui, Mongolian, Dolan, Lopliks, Abdal, Salar, Dongxiang, Zhung, Tibetan, Taranchi, Sibo, Solon, Bonan, Manchurian and Russian peoples (Tomur, 1993: 7). The large number of nationalities in the province is due to migration from China proper since the late 1950s. The Chinese Hans are concentrated in the northern and eastern parts of Xinjiang.

3. Economic Development in Xinjiang since 1978

The demise of Mao Zedong marked the end of an era of ideological narrowness in China and ushered in a period of reorientation and restructuring based on economic development. New pragmatic leaders such as Deng Xiaoping and Hu Yaobang knew that China requires the support of all the minorities, including the Hui Muslims and the Uyghurs in order for the country to progress economically. In October 1979, the Nationalities Commission of the National People's Congress (NPC) which was abolished during the Cultural Revolution was re-established (Clarke, 2007: 43). It was part of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)'s initial effort to bring about reconciliation between the government and the ethnic minorities after the Cultural Revolution.

In Xinjiang, the CCP adopted liberal policies for minority nationalities with the aim of resolving the problem of ethnicity and creating a common identity through economic development. For example, the 1978 Constitution emphasized the importance of national minorities. It guaranteed freedom for the minorities to maintain their language, customs and representation in the government (Dreyer, 1976: 206).

It is noteworthy to mention that the primary aim of the liberalization of policies was to gain the support of the Uyghurs in order to develop China's agriculture, industry, science and technology and defence. The ultimate aim was to serve China's national interest by providing some basic freedoms to the Uyghurs so as to seek their cooperation in developing Xinjiang's economy. The CCP was aware of the economic potentials of Xinjiang especially its vast natural resources. Therefore, it required the support and cooperation of the Uyghurs.

The dramatic economic development experienced by Xinjiang between 1980 till 2000 led to drastic changes in the social structure of the Uyghurs. In the early 1950s, over 95 per cent of Xinjiang's population was illiterate, but by 1990, illiteracy was reduced to 12.75 per cent. In 1949, Xinjiang had had only one institution of higher learning with an enrolment of only 379 students, but by 1991, the province had 21 institutions of higher learning. Similarly, in 1949, Xinjiang had 363 industrial and mining enterprises but by 1990, Xinjiang's total industrial

output value rose by 142.73 per cent (please refer to Table 1). (*Beijing Review*, 7-17 November 1994) Urumqi was transformed from an oasis town to a bustling commercial and tourist centre.

Table 1 Industrial Output in Xinjiang in 2001

Commodity	Percentage
Oil and petrochemicals	71.7
Agriculture	8.6
Textiles (cotton)	7.8
Smelting and metal pressing	6.6
Non-metal minerals	5.3

Source: *Xinjiang Yearbook 2001*, Urumqi: Xinjiang Yearbook Editing House, 2002, p. 134.

Therefore, Xinjiang is no longer considered an isolated province located in the northwest of China. Events which include political and socioeconomic conditions have become a major concern of the international community. Hence, the CCP has been very careful about the socioeconomic conditions in order to promote a positive image and to attract foreign investment into the province. As a result, the CCP has published several white papers such as *White Paper on the situation in Xinjiang* and *White Paper on the history and development of Xinjiang* in its effort to portray a positive impression and to respond to the international criticism on the human rights conditions in Xinjiang.

Other than that, there were developments in the areas of transportations, telecommunications and postal services which contributed to the improvement in contact among the minorities in

Xinjiang. Hence, the trade and economic activities increased among the non-Hans.

The agricultural sector in Xinjiang, especially in cotton, has also shown increase in production. For example, between 1978 and 1998, cotton production has increased more than 25 times and in 1992, the total production of cotton was 750,000 tonnes (*White Paper on the history and development of Xinjiang*, 2003). The Chinese government also emphasized on the development of oil and gas industry in Xinjiang especially after the discovery of the Yakela oil field in October 1984 and gas field to the south of Korla in September 1987 (Felix K. Chang, 2001: 220). Both are located in the Tarim Basin area. By mid-1989, the Chinese National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) dispatched about 10,000 Han workers to Xinjiang to develop the energy reserves in Tarim Basin. Among the major oil and gas projects in the late 1980s were the developments of polyester production capability in Urumqi petrochemical plant and construction of a power plant in Manas with a total investment of 2.575 billion yuan (Clarke, 2007: 73). However, it is noteworthy to mention that the success has also contributed to the influx of Han immigrants into Xinjiang (Becquelin, 2004: 369).

This has caused mixed feelings among the locals because the economic development of Xinjiang benefited the Han migrants more compared to the Uyghurs. The Han Chinese owned and managed most of the oil enterprises such as China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) and China Petroleum Corporation (SINOPEC). The non-Hans, especially the Uyghurs, were mere labourers in these companies. Whereas, the Han Chinese dominated the managerial positions.

As a result, the relationships between the Uyghurs and the Hans deteriorated. However, there were no serious incidents of civil unrests and riots in Xinjiang during the 1980s except for a few minor scuffles. Despite their frustration, the Uyghurs remained calm and the province continued its peace in the 1980s. What inspired certain Uyghur groups to clash with the Chinese authorities? Why were there violent ethnic riots in Xinjiang since the 1990s till now?

4. Tiananmen Square Demonstrations and Similarities with the Conditions in Xinjiang

The experience of Uyghurs in Xinjiang also bears similarities with the students who demonstrated in Tiananmen Square. It is interesting to note that the 1980s were a crucial period in the history of modern China. The reforms initiated by Deng Xiaoping contributed to the betterment in the standard of life, economic development, and some political freedom compared to the Mao Zedong administration.

The hope of the people in China including the Uyghurs for greater political and economic reforms was manifested in the Tiananmen demonstrations of 1989. The students who were dissatisfied with the authoritarian regime, corruption and nepotism in the government led the demonstrations. Similar to the Uyghurs in Xinjiang, the students were convinced that economic development must be accompanied by democracy. Therefore, they demanded democratization and political liberalization. It is interesting to note one that of the student leaders involved in the demonstration was Wu'erkaixi from Xinjiang.

The desire for a better future has inspired the students and ordinary citizens in Beijing to take to the streets on 22nd April 1989 demanding for democratization and fulfilment of the rights enshrined in China's Constitution 1982. It is noteworthy to mention that the economic reforms have contributed to the rapid urbanization in China. However, unemployment among workers had increased and their frustrations were not given proper attention when the authorities denouncing their protests as part of an effort to undermine the government. This further angered the students and protestors. Therefore by 15th May 1989, more people gathered at Tiananmen Square and thousands began participating in hunger strike. Nevertheless, the government still refused to acknowledge their appeal.

The situation in Tiananmen Square became very tense, and between 17th and 18th May 1989 it was estimated around one million people had gathered to demonstrate. Students from all over the country came to Beijing in solidarity. In addition, separate demonstrations were held at provincial party headquarters in Hubei and Fujian. During the same period, approximately 3,000 Uyghur students from the University of

Xinjiang and the Urumqi Institute of Quranic Studies demonstrated in front of the Xinjiang CCP headquarters to protest the publication of *Sexual Customs*, which allegedly contained insults and blasphemy against Islamic teachings. (Gladney, 2004: 231)

Demonstrations were also conducted in major Chinese cities such as Shanghai, Wuhan, Nanjing and Chengdu (Zhao, 2009). The participants of the demonstrations were not only from among the students but also from various groups with the needs to express their grievances. With the intention of gaining international attention, the demonstrators in Tiananmen Square also took advantage of the state visit of the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to Beijing on 13th May 1989. On the same day, as many as 300,000 people had gathered at the square. In spite of the demonstrations, Gorbachev continued his meeting with the Chinese leaders at the Great Hall of the People (*ibid.*: 169).

Initially the government did not know how to respond. It is important to note that the government was not prepared to face such an unprecedented situation. The government was split on how to deal with the situation, on what were their demands, and whether to negotiate or to crack down on the demonstrations by force. Zhao Ziyang, then Secretary General of the CCP, argued that the government should recognize the demonstrations as patriotic movement and hold dialogue with the students. However, the hardliners which included the military were worried that the demonstrations would cause the country to disintegrate and lead to a civil war.

The Chinese leaders including Li Peng, then premier of China, attempted to meet the demonstrators on 18th May. During the meeting, the students demanded recognition from the government that the demonstrations were “patriotic”. However, the meeting did not manage to convince the demonstrators as Li Peng was more concerned that the students would call off the demonstrations. On the following day, Zhao Ziyang accompanied by Wen Jiabao also made a final appeal to the demonstrators in the square. He called on the students to end the hunger strike and return home.

Finally, on 20th May 1989, the government declared martial law and called the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) into Beijing. The

government gave the demonstrators till 4th June to withdraw and clear the square. However, the students' refusal then resulted in the military being mobilized to crack down on the demonstrations. On 9th June, the government defended its actions instead of addressing the grievances of the students and the authorities discredited the demonstrations as anti-government with the objective of overthrowing the socialist system.

Tiananmen Square demonstrations of 1989 symbolizes the aspirations of the people for progress but instead it has reversed the reform process. Progressive leaders within the CCP such as Zhao Ziyang were expelled. Ever since the demonstrations in 1989, the party has hardened its stance of refusing to accept political reforms.

It is interesting to note that the Tiananmen demonstrations of 1989 happened when the economic development and reforms were reshaping China. The students were seeking for political reforms. Similarly, some Uyghur groups considered that the economic development in Xinjiang must be accompanied by political reforms. During the mid-1980s, Xinjiang experienced economic development especially in the field of agriculture and energy. As a result, it has attracted many Hans from other Chinese provinces to migrate to Xinjiang to work.

In addition, the government also supported the Han migration policy. This has created disgruntlement among the Uyghurs as they considered themselves to be "colonized" by the Hans. It also contributed to the increase of unemployment among the Uyghurs. In addition, they also feared their religious and cultural identity would be eroded due to the influx of Hans into Xinjiang. The Uyghurs demanded better employment prospects and greater autonomy. Furthermore, they wanted the CCP to stop the policy of mass migration of Hans to Xinjiang but their demands did not receive the attention of the government.

Both cases of Tiananmen Square demonstrations and Xinjiang have clearly demonstrated that the government is suppressing the voices of the people instead of fulfilling their aspirations. Yet, the spirit of freedom and aspiration for greater political reforms were far from being extinguished in China, especially in Xinjiang.

5. Tiananmen Square Demonstrations of 1989 as Impetus for Political and Security Challenges in Xinjiang

The failure of the Tiananmen Square demonstrations of 1989 has deep impact on the Uyghur groups seeking greater freedom and political reforms in Xinjiang. They viewed the government as incapable of listening to the grievances of the people and intolerant to any political reforms. Unfortunately, the death toll as a result of the Tiananmen Square demonstrations also convinced some Uyghur groups that the so-called “peaceful demonstrations” would not provide the intended results; instead they were convinced that the only way to bring about change was through violence. Therefore, since the 1990s the outbreak of political violence has been serious that the province could be considered to be in a constant state of emergency.

One of the worst riots was in the 1990s which occurred in the town of Baren, 50 kilometres southwest of Kashgar. The Chinese authority held the Eastern Turkestan Islamic Party (ETIP) responsible for the riots. It started on 5th April 1990 when a group of Uyghur men criticized the Chinese policies towards the ethnic minorities while attending prayers at a mosque. It eventually developed into a mass demonstration against the Han Chinese. The police were unable to subdue the riots and their weapons were confiscated. In fact, the rioters threw bombs at police stations and attacked government buildings (Shichor, 1994: 74).

On 5th February 1991, several explosions occurred in Urumqi, the provincial capital of Xinjiang. The incidents had resulted in three persons being killed, four seriously wounded and another 11 suffering minor injuries. It was followed by another explosion at a bus terminal in Kuqa County of the Aksu Prefecture on 28th February which killed one person and wounded 13.

The aim of the attack was to create fear among the Han Chinese living in Xinjiang. Three years after the Urumqi bombings, Xinjiang was again faced with yet another civil unrest. It happened on 22nd April 1995 in the district of Ili, located in the northwest of Xinjiang. Residents of the district gathered at Yining, the administrative town of the district, demanding independence. They shouted anti-Chinese slogans such as “Long Live Uyghur Xinjiang” and “End Communist rule in Xinjiang”.

About 50,000 people gathered during the rally.

The province continued to experience ethnic violence. In fact, in February 1997, another insurrection against Chinese rule broke out in Yining. At least ten Hans were killed and more than 100 injured including police and paramilitary personnel. Consequently, the authorities imposed a curfew. Military units from other districts were called in to suppress the insurrection. Despite the efforts from the Chinese authorities to suppress any insurrections from occurring, the political violence in Xinjiang did not end. In March 1997, it was alleged that a group of Uyghur separatist was responsible for the bombing of a bus in the capital city of Beijing injuring 30 people (Dillon, 1995).

On 21st January 2002, the Information Office of China's State Council published a document entitled "'East Turkistan' terrorists forces cannot get away with impunity". The aim of the document was to highlight the security problems in Xinjiang caused by the alleged "East Turkistan terrorists". The document claimed that the international terrorist organizations such as the Uzbekistan Islamic Liberation Movement and Al Qaeda supported the Uyghur separatists. It also claimed that Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan trained the separatist groups in Xinjiang.

According to the document, the alleged East Turkistan terrorist forces carried out more than 200 violent attacks in Xinjiang between 1999 and 2001, killing 162 people and wounding more than 440; the victims were from every ethnic group, grassroots cadres and even Islamic religious figures. On two occasions the Chinese Foreign Ministry declared that Uyghur separatists had close connections with the Taliban forces in Afghanistan.²

The Chinese government declared that there were three forces which threatened the security of Xinjiang. They were separatist forces, religious extremist forces and terrorist forces (Wayne, 2008: 24). Hence, the authorities had strategized their efforts to fight against these three forces. The Chinese government had labelled them the "Three Evil Forces" and intensified the "Strike Hard" campaign to counter these "Three Evils" (*ibid.*). The "Strike Hard" campaign which started in the mid-1990s was initially targeted at organized violent crime. However,

the national and provincial authorities had expanded its scope to fight against political dissidents. In the case of Xinjiang, the CCP used it to eliminate separatism and illegal religious activities.

Following the attacks of September 11, 2001 in the US, China intensified its crackdown in Xinjiang. The Chinese government claimed that the security and stability of Xinjiang had been threatened by separatists and religious extremists. China even suggested that the separatists were linked to international terrorists.³ Ironically, prior to the attacks of September 11, China had never admitted that Xinjiang was facing problems, yet openly called for international support in their struggle against domestic terrorism.

According to Rohan Gunaratna⁴, “the Uyghur separatist groups such as the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) were responsible for a series of bombings in Xinjiang and elsewhere in China in the lead up to the recent Beijing Olympics” (Gunaratna, 2009: 2). Gunaratna also claimed that ETIM had received training, weapons, finance and ideology from international terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda (*ibid.*).

It is undeniable that the cross-border trade between China and the Central Asian republics contributed to the economic development of the province but it also brought the Uyghurs into closer contacts with the Muslim societies in Central Asia. Beside closer contacts with the Muslims in Central Asia, the cross-border links enabled Pakistan to extend its cultural and religious influence in Xinjiang. According to Sean Roberts, “the most significant Pakistani influence on Xinjiang was through the education of Xinjiang’s mullahs and imams in Pakistani madrasahs.” (Roberts, 2004: 226-227). These led to the revival of Islam and the Uyghur identity.

However, this article argues that these factors alone are not sufficient to inspire the resurgence of Uyghur nationalism. The main motivating factor is the mass migration of Hans into the province and reluctance of the government to listen to the frustration of the people. Similar to the Tiananmen Square demonstrations of 1989, the government responded with harsh retaliations which only caused more animosity between the Hans and Uyghurs. This paper does not deny the possibilities of the involvement of external forces such as Islamic

extremists and terrorist organizations from Central Asia which have managed to radicalize some Uyghurs. Nevertheless, the core factors are due to the economic deprivation and the inability of the Chinese government to hold dialogue with the people and provide greater political reforms. In addition, the Tiananmen Square demonstrations of 1989 have become an impetus for the Uyghurs to continue their struggle.

For example, the incidents occurred in March 2008 and July 2009 have shown that ethnic grievances, rather than external influences, were the factor. The death of two Uyghur workers in Guangdong and the way the Chinese government handled the case triggered the riot in July 2009. The Uyghurs alleged that the Han employers in Guangdong discriminated against and treated the Uyghur workers poorly. Besides, the Uyghurs in Xinjiang also alleged that their fellow Uyghurs working in Guangdong were also subject to discrimination by Han workers.

Hence, on 25th June 2009, a fight occurred between the two groups in a toy factory in Shaoguan, Guangdong, over a rumour that six Uyghur workers raped two female Han workers, which resulted in the death of two Uyghurs. The incident had caused the Uyghurs to be very upset. It had also triggered frustration and anger among them. On 5th July 2009, at least 1,000 Uyghurs protested and attacked the Han Chinese. The police attempted to quell the rioters with tear gas, water hoses, armoured vehicles, and roadblocks; the government imposed curfew in most urban areas. Two days later, on 7th July, the Han retaliated against the Uyghurs. According to the authorities, 197 people were killed and 1,721 were injured. In addition to the loss of lives, many vehicles and buildings were destroyed (Leonard, 2009). These incidents have clearly confirmed the argument of this article that the political violence which occurred in Xinjiang since the 1990s was due to internal factors which encompassed economic deprivation, failure of the government to hold dialogue with the people and its unwillingness for political reforms. What's more, as mentioned earlier, the Tiananmen Square demonstrations have taught the Uyghurs to be more assertive.

6. Looking Forward: Towards a Stabilized Xinjiang

This paper has recommendations for the Chinese government to consider. The first set of recommendations is directed towards the new Chinese leadership. These recommendations include reducing the mass migration of Hans to Xinjiang. Until the educational levels in the province are improved and the Uyghurs are able to compete with the Hans, the Uyghurs will not accept the increase of the Hans' presence in Xinjiang. The policy of mass migration of the Hans is exacerbating rather than alleviating the tensions between the government and the Uyghurs. Hence, it should be reviewed.

Moreover, this paper would like to propose to the new Chinese leaders to further upgrade the educational system within the province, especially among the Uyghurs. This is to enable them to have better opportunities to participate in the province's economic development and never consider themselves deprived or left behind. In addition, the Chinese government should offer more incentives to the middle-class and well educated Uyghurs to remain in Xinjiang. They should be recruited into the province's bureaucracy and promoted to high administrative posts instead of reserving such posts for the Han migrants.

The Chinese government should discourage the middle-class and educated Uyghurs from leaving Xinjiang to move into Central China. One of the strategies is to offer them more incentives and better positions. It is noteworthy to mention that the Chinese government's attempt to suppress Islam by confining it to tight state control may also produce negative impacts on Xinjiang. Suppressing Islam shall alienate the Uyghurs, drive religious expression further underground and encourage the growth of more radicalized and oppositional forms of religious identity. If this trend continues, it may result in more and more Uyghur youths to be radicalized and the number of moderate Uyghurs will decline.

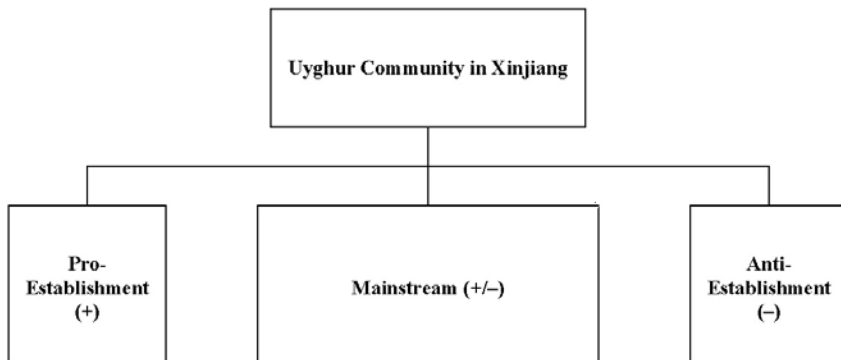
According to Rohan Gunaratna, "Beijing will need to invest even more in developing Xinjiang and empowering the mainstream Uyghur community. Beijing will need to win over the Uyghurs who resent the Han settlers. Beijing and its representatives in Xinjiang also must work

with Xinjiang's community and religious leaders to build social resilience." (*op. cit.*) Therefore, this paper would like to propose that policies barring Islamic religious believers from being a member of the CCP or working for the government should be changed. In fact, the Uyghurs should not be deprived of their rights to retain their Islamic identities such as women wearing their headscarf or men keeping beard. This is to encourage greater participation of the Uyghurs rather than isolate them.

It is interesting to note that the Uyghur community in Xinjiang can be divided into three different groups. The first group consists of the mainstream Uyghurs, who may despise the Chinese policies but want to live peacefully. They have no intention to destabilize the security of the province. The second group is made up of pro-Chinese Uyghurs, who are either member of the CCP or government officials. They receive preferential benefits from the state due to their support towards the government. The third group consists of the Uyghurs who are against the Chinese administration and willing to adopt violent approach in order to achieve their political aims. The second and third groups are minorities among the Uyghurs. Unfortunately, thus far the Chinese government has focused its attention on either empowering Uyghurs who are members of the CCP (second group) or pursuing harsh policies on the extremists (third group). China needs to re-focus its attention on the mainstream Uyghur community before they isolate themselves and turn towards extremism.

7. Conclusion

It seems that China has adopted the "carrot and stick" approach in maintaining stability which has had tremendous impact on the sociopolitical conditions in Xinjiang. The CCP adopted the "carrot" approach by granting some freedom to the Uyghurs such as the right to worship and use their language as well as some preferential policies like employment in government departments. The "stick" or coercive approach was used when the CCP was confronted by the separatist groups demanding independence. China is even willing to take a

Figure 1 The Divisions of Uyghur Community in Xinjiang

hard-line approach in order to defend its national unity and security. It has also intended to send a message to the international community that it will never give up its sovereignty over any of its provinces, including Xinjiang.

It is essential to mention that based on the political and economic developments that have taken place in Xinjiang since 1978, China is in a “Catch 22” no-win situation. It is due to the dilemma that if the Chinese government were to grant greater autonomy, it will not receive much appreciation but rather more demands for political and ethnic autonomy. According to Frederick Starr, “it is a terrible paradox the Chinese have created for themselves.” (Starr, 2004) Scholars who have dealt with the issues relating to ethno-nationalism in Xinjiang such as Ji Ping suggested that there is no guarantee that higher level of education and higher socioeconomic status among the Uyghurs will dampen the desire of the Uyghurs to seek independence (Ji Ping, 1990: 200).

However, this paper argues that if the new Chinese leadership can ensure the Uyghurs the rights provided by the 1984 Law and the Uyghurs’ economic and social rights as enshrined in the Chinese Constitution are protected, it will override any appeal for ethnic sovereignty. Scholars such as Justin Rudelson and Doak Barnett have also argued that if the Chinese economy continues to develop in

Xinjiang and it manages to improve the living standards of the Uyghurs, it is possible to overcome the problem of separatism (Rudelson, 1992; Barnett, 1993: 97). This paper agrees with Rudelson and Barnett; on another hand, it emphasizes that China should also adhere to the provisions regarding the rights of the ethnic minorities in its own constitution.

Notes

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1. “Uyghur is often pronounced /wi ær/ by English speakers, though an acceptable English pronunciation closer to the Uyghur people’s pronunciation of it would be /u .i r/. Several alternate romanizations also appear: *Uighur*, *Uygur*, and *Uigur*. The Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region provincial government recommends that the generic ethnonym [j], adopted in the early 20th century for this Turkic people, be transcribed as ‘Uyghur.’ The meaning of the term *Uyghur* is unclear. Most Uyghur linguists and historians regard the word as coming from *uyughur* (*uyushmaq* in modern Uyghur language), literally meaning ‘united’ or

- ‘people who tend to come together’.” <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uyghur_people>
2. “‘East Turkistan’ terrorist forces cannot get away with impunity”, *People’s Daily* (China), 21st January 2002. <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/2002/01/21/eng20020121_89078.shtml>
 3. “‘East Turkistan’ terrorism part of international terrorism: FM spokeswoman”, *People’s Daily* (China), 23rd November 2001 <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/2001/11/22/eng20011122_85127.shtml>. See also, “Uygur captives in Afghanistan are ‘East Turkistan’ terrorists: FM spokeswoman”, *People’s Daily* (China), 22nd January 2002 <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/2002/01/22/eng20020122_89137.shtml>.
 4. Rohan Gunaratna is a professor at the Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technology University in Singapore. He is also the head of the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR).

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Old Question Revisited: Towards a Holistic Understanding of 1989

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Abstract

This paper provides analyses for the reasons behind the different fates of 1989 movements in Eastern Europe and in China. Many Sinologists have suggested that the cultural peculiarities of China necessitate the disentanglement of Tiananmen Democracy Movement from broader 1989 narrative. This paper demonstrates the epistemological constraints resulting from the academic disentanglement between Chinese and Eastern European revolutions of 1989 and argues that many of the so-called Chinese peculiarities within Tiananmen Movement were prevalent in Eastern European revolutions of 1989. Hence, neither students' mobilization nor their failure can be explained through an exotic quest for Confucian values or Asiatic despotism. Instead of making far-stretched speculations on the impacts of distant Confucian past, I will suggest one has to consider the structure of People Liberation Army, China's post-1978 integration to world capitalism, and the subsequent shift in the subjectivity among the new urban youth in the so-called post-modern era.

Keywords: *Tiananmen Square, 1989 movements, neoculturalism, People's Liberation Army, global culture*

JEL classification: *A14, H12, P16, Z13*



1. Introduction

We are living in the post-1989 era.

Although the repressive nature of Communist regimes in China and Eastern Europe was hardly a secret before 1989, total moral and ideological collapse of “actually existing socialism” signified the demise of the revolutionary Left as a universal alternative to global capitalism. Everything that twentieth-century communism represented, from Lenin to Mao, from radical redistribution of wealth to the collective (or state) ownership of the means of production, became obsolete. While right-wing fundamentalism and neo-liberal economic policies gained currency at a global level, “class politics”, once the core principle of international Left, became increasingly irrelevant for the mainstream political scene. Yet even after almost twenty-five years, it is surprising to see that there have been few attempts to understand the global meanings of the year “1989”. Scholars working on the collapse or persistence of totalitarian regimes in Europe and China largely focus only on one side of the story (East European or Chinese) with very limited reference to success or failure of communisms in other parts of the world. The old question of why the 1989 the revolutions succeeded in Eastern Europe but not in China seems to be forgotten.

In Sinology, in particular, there have been conscious attempts to disentangle Tiananmen Square from the broader 1989 narrative. Marie-Claire Bergeré, for instance, suggests that since “China has its own idiosyncrasies, its own political culture, its own geographical characteristics and its own historical and demographic peculiarities,” the disentanglement of the 1989 stories of Eastern Europe and China is necessary. (Bergeré, 2003: 241) Similarly, Elizabeth Perry emphasizes the importance of “deeper reality that is essentially Chinese” (i.e. Confucian intellectual elitism), while Lucian Pye notes the repressive characteristics of Chinese state tradition. (Perry, 1992: 148; Pye, 1990) In other words, these scholars suggest that China’s peculiar cultural norms played crucial role in the beginning and the end of Tiananmen Democracy Movement and this peculiarity requires us to approach China’s 1989 separately from the East European revolutions.

This paper aims to demonstrate the epistemological constraints resulting from academic disentanglement between Tiananmen and European stories of 1989. First, I will discuss so-called Chinese peculiarities, which Sinologists often emphasize for explaining the emergence and demise of Tiananmen Movement. I will argue these so-called Chinese features cannot be considered as “peculiarity” because they were prevalent in Eastern Europe as well. Hence, neither students’ mobilization nor their failure can be explained through an exotic quest for Confucian values or Asiatic despotism. Instead of making far-stretched speculations on the impacts of distant Confucian past, I will suggest, one has to consider the structure of People Liberation Army, China’s post-1978 integration to world capitalism, and the subsequent shift in the subjectivity among the new urban youth in the so-called post-modern era.

2. “Confucian” Tiananmen and “European” 1989?

The emergence of neoculturalism as a paradigm for explaining the recent history of China is in close relationship to what the death of Mao and the year 1989 represented in the global history. As the so-called “actually existing socialisms” were declared dead, many historians of China began to deny the historicity of revolution and conceptualize it rather as an aberration. (Dirlik, 1996) In other words, as China integrated into global capitalist economy, it became more traditional or “Confucian” in the field.

The weigh of tradition in Chinese historiography becomes apparent when it is compared to historiography of late socialism in Europe. There is virtually no serious attempt to explain any event in post-war history of European socialism by attributing importance to – say pre-1917 – cultural values of Europe. In the literature on the collapse of European communism, there have been two main positions for explaining the sudden collapse of the twentieth-century communisms. The first one highlights the structural weaknesses of the Eastern bloc regimes in 1989: the chronic problems of central planning in a command economy, the arms race with the US-led NATO, bureaucratic inefficiency, corruption,

the Gorbachev factor etc. (Kotkin, 2009) The second “ideas-matter” position emphasizes the role of civil society, the call for freedom of the people and the devastating critique and activism of public intellectuals against the socialist states. (Falk, 2003)

Meanwhile in the historiography of the Tiananmen Square Protest, the influence of Chinese culture overshadows the structural and/or idealist explanations. The peculiarities of “Chinese-ness” are emphasized not only to explain the brutal suppression of the Democracy movement by the armed forces but also the mobilization of the students and their weaknesses. Elizabeth Perry, an important exponent of this approach, writes:

To explain the weaknesses of China’s 1989 protests, one must not stop with the country’s revolutionary heritage or peasant population. Rather, the very people who launched the Tiananmen protest – urban intellectuals – were perhaps the greatest fetter on its further development. The seemingly cosmopolitan and contemporary style of the demonstrations masked a deeper reality that was essentially Chinese.

(Perry, 1992: 148)

There are two main interrelated “essentially Chinese features” offered in order to explain the peculiarities of the Tiananmen Square uprising and its eventual failure: traditional elitism of the Chinese intelligentsia and the authoritarian characteristics of Chinese state tradition. In addition to economic reasons such as high inflation, unemployment, and corruption, these two “Chinese” features are emphasized (to a varying degree) for explaining both causes and the failure of student mobilization in Beijing 1989. First, the so-called neoculturalist school portrays the Chinese students and intellectuals as traditionally elitist, and due to this elitism, they were unable to mobilize the large segments of the society in 1989. Perry openly blames students and dissident intellectuals for “their style of *remonstrance* (presenting petitions and banners and demanding dialogue with the authorities), and their search for political patrons emphasizing the need for state strengthening and switching quickly from one ‘hero’ to the next.” (Perry,

1992: 158) She conceptualizes the sympathy of students for certain reform-minded party members as a sign of their elite factionalism and Confucian intellectual traditionalism. Moreover, she argues, since the students were tainted by Confucian elitism, they were exclusionary towards workers and peasants in the formation of their movement. For these reasons, she suggests that students were protesting for regaining their traditional role in the Chinese political scene rather than challenging the very authority of the party. This extremely patronizing explanation ignores the mass participation of Beijing residents in the movement, and it does not offer an explanation for the fact that the great majority of the people, who resisted and died during this –supposedly elitist – movement on the night of June 4, were not students but workers. In the words of Tim Brook, “it was the workers who were fodder for PLA guns, not the students.” (Brook, 1992: 168) Furthermore, Perry completely ignores the similarity between Eastern European and Chinese citizens in their so-called elite factionalism, a supposedly Confucian phenomenon in which protestors sought the patronage of a reform-minded party leader rather than carrying on their own political agenda in a more radical way. One cannot help wondering whether East German students were also showing their Confucian heritage when they enthusiastically welcomed Gorbachev, the grand chief of European communism, and famously chanted “Gorby help us! Gorby save us!” during the Soviet Chairman’s visit to Berlin in 1989.

In addition, urban-intellectual elitism towards the less educated rural people was not an “essentially-Chinese” phenomenon either. With the possible exception of Poland, where the working class held the leadership of the opposition, this kind of elitism was common among the university students and intelligentsia in Eastern Europe as well. During my oral history research in Slovakia, my respondents often blamed Communist Party officials for being crude, supported only by uneducated people with peasant origins. *Sedlak*, the derogatory term for “uncivilized” peasant, is used to describe the supporters of the Party. In fact during the heyday of the Velvet Revolution, one of the most satirized moments happened when Karel Urbánek, then the prime minister of socialist Czechoslovakia, made some grammar mistakes (a



clear indication of his peasant/uneducated background) in his speech on television, “people remarked ... Masaryk spoke seven languages. Can anybody be found here who can at least speak good Czech or Slovak?” (Wheaton and Kavan, 1992: 83)

Esherick and Wasserstrom go even one step further than Perry and suggest an almost ontological difference between European and Chinese conceptions of democracy. They claim that the Chinese equivalent of the word democracy, *minzhu* 民主, values “the principle of unity above that of majority rule” and protesting students, tainted by elitist pre-revolutionary Chinese political culture, perceived it “in a limited sense to refer not to the populace at large but mainly or exclusively to the educated elite of which they are part.” (Esherick and Wasserstrom, 1992: 31) Again, for this account not only Chinese political culture lacked the Western pluralist understanding of democracy, but also students were elitist and dictatorial in their own ways. Esherick and Wasserstrom regarded the discourse of Wu’er Kaixi – one of the prominent student leaders of the Tiananmen Student movement – during his televised negotiation with the party elders as an example of non-democratic elements within the Chinese student movement:

... Wu’er Kaixi explained what it would take to get students to leave Tiananmen Square: ‘If one fasting classmate refuses to leave the square, the other thousands of fasting students on the square will not leave.’ He was explicit about the principle behind this decision: ‘On the square, it is not a matter of the minority obeying the majority, but of 99.9 percent obeying 0.1 percent.’ This may have been good politics – and Wuer Kaixi made powerful theater – but it was not a democracy.

(Esherick and Wasserstrom, 1992: 30)

The problem here is that Esherick and Wasserstrom do not discuss the context of the speech, nor the apparent will of the negotiating student committee to be recognized by the party as a legitimate representative of the thousands in the square. In addition, they do not provide an explanation for how Kaixi was different than Eastern European “pro-democracy” movement leaders as Lech Wałęsa or Václav Havel, who



represented and negotiated in the name of thousands of people without being elected. Nevertheless, while European dissidents appear as the champions of democracy, young student leaders of Tiananmen Square remain elitist Confucians.

The accounts of the Tiananmen Square movement tend to cite the “essential characteristics of Chinese culture” for explaining not only the weakness of the movement but also the ability of the state to use armed forces to crush the movement. In other words, Chinese political elites could suppress the Tiananmen Square protests thanks to authoritarian Chinese political culture, in which use of violence by the authority is habitual and considered legitimate. “As for the actions of the leaders,” Lucian Pye remarks “what more is there to say, except to shake our heads sadly and curse, ‘There go those Chinese leaders again – so typical of them.’” (Pye, 1990: 331) In fact, simplistic as it may seem, this sentence effectively summarizes the common position for explaining the decisions of Chinese Communist Party officials in the early summer of 1989. Even in Dingxin Zhao’s self-described non-culturalist account, China emerges as an underdeveloped nation and the Chinese state, having inherited pre-modern characteristics from its Imperial predecessors, played a more active role in the economic and social affairs and held a stronger grip over society than its Western counterparts. For him, students failed because the gaps in state control were not big enough for the movement to disturb elite cohesion. (Zhao, 2001) Unfortunately Zhao does not provide explicit criteria for measuring the difference between developed and underdeveloped nations, nor does he explain what impact Chinese state tradition had on the course of events during the Tiananmen Square incident. The fundamental question remains unanswered: What was the difference between Eastern European (e.g Romanian) and Chinese state traditions, which made difference on the course of events in 1989? Nor are we offered an explanation for how (the actions of) East European communist leaders were different when they were deciding for the bloody suppression of the Prague Spring in 1968, martial law in Poland in 1981 or *Securitate* massacre of hundreds of protestors in Romania in 1989. In fact, as I will argue, the political elites of the East European

Communist Parties gave up their power in 1989 not because they were less authoritarian or ruthless than their Chinese counterparts, but because they realized that there was no force that could uphold their political position in the politics.

The problem here is the conceptualization of the East European story of 1989 as a Weberian “ideal type”, in which European “democracy” activists created a civil society outside of state control and eventually could topple the Party rule through their civil rights movements; meanwhile in China, not only the activists were not democrats in a “Western” sense but also the party punished their transgression by violence thanks to the state tradition in China. However, this projection of Europe is exclusively based on the Polish experience and disregards the complexities and differences between East European revolutions. It is completely silent about the fact that there was no organized opposition group nor meaningful “civil society” outside of party control in any other central European countries prior to 1989; and the dissidents, who later received wide acclaim in Western media, were rather unknown figures for the majority of population. Apart from small and isolated circles of radical individuals, there was no popular, politically active “civil society” anywhere else in the region. (Kotkin, 2009) The successful Solidarity of Poland surely triggered a series of uprisings in the Eastern bloc, yet there would have been no “domino effect” if other Eastern European regimes had maintained effective security force still loyal to them.

3. Suppressing Masses

In 1989, the communist parties from Beijing to Berlin had one common political as well as moral problem: How to deal with the great number of protesting individuals, who gathered every day on the main squares of the major cities and demanded democratic rights? Before Gorbachev came to power and announced his non-interventionism policy, East European local party hardliners could rely on the Soviet army – or its threat of intervention – in their battles against party reformers or non-communist dissidents. Red Army intervention in Hungary (1956) and

Czechoslovakia (1968) gave further legitimacy to the authoritarian practices of the local regimes; as these army interventions assured the citizens that any deviation from the Soviet line would face a violent reaction from Moscow. Yet in 1989, as Gorbachev had already broken away from Brezhnev's interventionist policy, communist parties of Eastern Europe could rely only on their own security forces. On the other hand, although Gorbachev's non-interventionist doctrine was very important for the fate of East European movements, the crucial moment of their success came when the party bosses recognized their inability to mobilize their own security forces for suppressing the protestors without risking civil war. As public activism became stronger, more and more members of the security forces became increasingly reluctant to intervene in the masses' peaceful demonstrations. In Czechoslovakia, for instance, the massive number of protestors turned police officers into passive state party officials, stating that they would be in the squares for the protection of the general order, but not to intervene against the protestors. As a result, on November 20, 1989 the party called People's Militia, paramilitary irregulars of the regime, to Prague's Old Town Square to secure the party's order. Members of the militia were coming from small towns in northern Bohemia, and when they arrived in Prague, in the heat of political turmoil, they realized that the party simply had not arranged any place for them to spend the night. They had to stay in their buses in freezing temperatures and were grateful to receive constant supplies of soup and hot drinks delivered by students, occupying the nearby university faculties. Within a few days, members of the militia participated in a public meeting of the workers of the Kolben-Daněk factories and supported the declaration demanding the Party to end censorship and "open dialogue involving all society." (Wheaton and Kavan, 1992; 71,209) A few days later, various People's Militia units began to vote themselves out of existence. With the army in the barracks, a passive police, and disintegrating People's Militia, the party did not have any option but to bargain with the opposition.

The only exception to this non-violent transformation in Eastern Europe was Romania, where the army not only rejected attacks on protestors but also actively participated in the revolution. When Nicolae

Ceaușescu's secret police, the infamous *Securitate*, began to use live ammunition against protestors, Romanian soldiers intervened to help bring down the regime. Everywhere else in the region, the political elites of the Communist Parties gave up their power not because they were more democratic or felt a moral crisis in their countries, but because they realized that there was no force to uphold their political position. In other words, the reason why East German or Czechoslovak communists did not use soldiers against the protestors was simply because the army was unavailable or unwilling to perform such a task.

Hence, the decisive difference between the European and Chinese experience of 1989 was the People's Liberation Army's loyal obedience to party. The political and historical independence of the Chinese communism from Soviet Union (and hence the Gorbachev factor) may explain the loyalty of Chinese generals, who were mostly the veterans of civil war; but it does not explain the obedience of ordinary soldiers and low-level officers' in shooting against the civilians in Beijing in July 1989. During the initial stages of revolution in Romania, for instance, when the party ordered army platoons to open fire against the protestors in the city of Timișoara, "individual soldiers refused to carry out orders to fire on protesters; some joined in the demonstration and others abandoned their positions. By the evening several T-55 tanks were in the possession of protestors." (Rady, 1992: 96) Elsewhere in the region, the top leaderships in the army and political leaders of East European communism knew that any forceful military intervention would risk a civil war; which, as Ceaușescu's case showed, they were destined to lose.

In China, both government and students were aware that the fate of the movement almost entirely depended on the army's loyalty to the party. A year after Tiananmen Square events, Deng Xiaoping told former Canadian Minister Pierre Trudeau that he had feared the dissolution of the army into opposing camps and a consequent civil war in the country (cited in Miles, 1996:22-23). During the heyday of the democracy movement, rumours about the reluctance of the Beijing-based 38th Army to fight against the protestors and their replacement with the troops from remote areas (Inner Mongolia) circulated in the square (Calhoun, 1994).

Unfortunately, although there were defectors and passive resisters, especially among the junior and medium level officers, neither did the 38th have to be replaced nor did the great majority of foot soldiers hesitate to carry out the orders (Brook, 1992). There were individual cases of defection, but not mutiny.

Then, the key question remains: why did PLA officers and soldiers remain loyal to the party? Part of the answer lies in the way the Communist Party of China came to power. Unlike in east central Europe, where communist parties made bloodless coup d'états in close coordination with Moscow, the Chinese communists took over power after winning a long and bitter civil war largely independent of Soviet Union. This explains the unity and determination among the majority of higher-level military and party officials, many of whom were comrades-in-arms during the war. Deng Xiaoping remarked on the importance of this for their "success" in suppressing the Tiananmen movement in his famous June 9 speech, which was given only three days after the crackdown of the movement:

This storm was bound to happen sooner or later. As determined by international and domestic climate, it was bound to happen and was independent of man's will. It was just a matter of time and scale. It has turned out in our favor, for we still have a group of veterans who have experienced many storms and have a thorough understanding of things ... we still have a group of core cadres who took part in the revolution at various times. That is why it has been relatively easy for us to handle the present matter.

(Deng, 2009: 67-68)

Yet again, this does not explain the obedience of young rank and file soldiers. This is crucial as it was – arguably – the main advantage of the Chinese military and political elite over their East European counterparts. In order to understand this obedience, instead of placing emphasis on Chinese traditional authoritarianism and Asiatic despotism, I suggest that one needs to stress the essential difference between the rank and file soldiers in China and Eastern Europe. Unlike Warsaw Pact armies, the People's Liberation Army was not comprised of conscript

soldiers. In other words, the Chinese army was (and is) staffed by professional soldiers, whom the party preferred to call “volunteers”. Especially in rural China, joining the army was the only career move to obtain social mobility for many young people. Hence, the majority of the soldiers who faced demonstrators in Beijing in May and June 1989 did not have much in common with urban residents and students. This was certainly one of the crucial reasons for the relative immunity of the People’s Liberation Army towards the party’s legitimacy crisis, which was felt especially in urban setting in China.

On the other hand, the professional character of the PLA was surely not the sole factor for the defeat of the Tiananmen movement. Although the loyalty of soldiers gave party elites a necessary self-confidence to crush the protestors violently, it does not explain the inability of democracy activists to form a strong counter-hegemonic position after the military crackdown in 1989. In other words, the persecution of protestors may explain their tactical defeat, but not the strategic one. In order to understand the reasons for the long-term weakness of the opposition and the longevity of party rule in the country, one needs to focus on the global meanings of the year 1989 and its relation to the culture of late capitalism.

4. The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism and 1989 Uprisings

Instead of negotiating between the structural reasons (corruption, economic problems, shortcomings of economic reforms, increasing inequalities etc.) and ideo-culturalist characteristics (Confucianism as student elitism or traditional state authoritarianism) in a “chicken and egg” fashion, my emphasis goes to the rooster; a different, foreign and charming factor, if you will, contributing as much as the chicken to the genes of the egg. My basic conviction is that the rooster was, in Fredric Jameson’s term, the cultural logic of late capitalism (Jameson, 1991). In other words, the 1989 uprisings cannot be explained by focusing a magnifying glass on the inner dynamics of Eastern European and Chinese politics or culture, while ignoring the post-war transformation in the global capitalism, which gained an ability to spread its ideology with

the help of mass media technologies. The West, not only with its humanism and democratic values, but also with its life-style – blue jeans, the Beatles, clean streets and fashionable cars – appeared, as the only way to have a decent life. The wide range of cultural products – such as rock’n’roll, Hollywood, and Coca Cola – served this change in one way or another. Consequently, as Jameson argues the new cultural logic of capitalism gained a “tremendously powerful force, which in sheer gravitational attraction and capability of diffusion, is known, or used to be known, as cultural imperialism. Nothing like a global socialist culture exists as a distinct oppositional force and style to this.” (Stephanson and Jameson, 1989: 16)

Mass media, especially television, played an essential role in the diffusion of this new transnational culture. As Tony Judt writes,

... television was a medium of social subversion. It contributed hugely to ending the isolation and ignorance of far-flung communities, by providing everyone *with the same experience and a common visual culture*. Being ‘French’, or ‘German’ or ‘Dutch’ was now something shaped less by primary education of public festivities than by one’s understanding of the country as gleaned from the images thrust into each home.

(Judt, 2005: 345-346)

In Eastern Europe the cultural transformation took place almost simultaneously with the West thanks to the increasing availability of TV and radio sets together with ham radios and black market trade of certain cultural products from the West. Stephen Kotkin describes how the communication revolution brought a feeling of relative deprivation in the Eastern bloc:

... (despite the Wall) East Germans could continue to make direct comparisons with life in West Germany from their own living rooms – just by watching West German television. In Albania the populace could watch Italian TV and in Estonia Finish TV – rare windows. But in GDR, Western TV was accessible in the inhabitants’ native tongue (except in a poor reception area around Dresden, dubbed ‘the valley of clueless.’) North Koreans have never had anything like this vis-à-



vis South Korea. West German TV offered East Germans a ‘nightly emigration’ – and a frustrating tease.

(Kotkin, 2009: 38)

Consequently, despite the party’s fruitless counter propaganda, long hair, short skirts, denim jackets and jeans formed a distinctive fashion through the Eastern bloc countries as well.

While European societies (both capitalist and socialist) were undergoing this radical cultural transformation in the 1960s, Mao’s cultural revolution was heading in a completely different direction in China. In other words, while the 1960s represented youth rebellion, consumerism and increasing political diversification in North America and Europe, during the so-called cultural revolution in China “any transgression of the stringent limits on personal or political expression could have the direst of consequences, and most urban residents had to be constantly on guard against giving offense to the defenders of revolutionary orthodoxy.” (Esherick, Pickowicz and Walder, 2006: 27) Until the death of Mao, there was simply no free cultural space for the dissemination of the cultural logic of late capitalism in China.¹

The similar cultural sea change could take place only during Deng Xiaoping’s post-1978 reform period. In addition to accelerated urbanization and more visible inequality, the reforms brought an increase in living standards and relatively liberal cultural policies, which – in fact – far exceeded Eastern European countries. For instance, the Voice of America, which was still illegal in Eastern Europe, was permitted to broadcast from inside the country and became one of the most popular radio stations in the entire China (Zhao, 1996:3).² Meanwhile TV ownership rose from three million to 149 million in ten years, and Chinese TV channels began to import American shows such as “Falcon Crest, Knot’s Landing, Hunter, Alf, and animated shows such as Thundercats and Silverhawks” (Hong, 1998: 61). TOEFL and “going abroad” became part of the so called “cultural fevers” in late 1980s alongside with “jeans”, brand name, Hong Kong/Taiwanese pop music, Western food and holiday fevers (Zhao, 2001: 44-45). In short, within ten years time, a new generation of Chinese youth came an age; and their subjectivity and aspirations were almost completely different than the



ones who formed the Red Guards during the Cultural Revolution a decade earlier. This radical change in Chinese society felt especially during the airing of the controversial yet immensely popular documentary series named *River Elegy* (*Heshang* 河殇) on China Central Television in 1988. The episode on the Cultural Revolution with raw footage of the Red Guards' marching and chanting of socialist slogans while holding Mao's Little Red Book seemed surreal for many people under roughly thirty years of age. A letter from a fifteen-year-old girl in Beijing clearly reflects the radical change in the subjectivity of many Chinese:

... when I saw in Heshang some scenes reflecting the conditions of that time, I urgently wanted to know what the China of that time was like. When I saw some of those scenes on TV, such as: young people waving the little red book and yelling 'Long Life!' upon seeing Chairman Mao, so moved that hot tears filled their eyes; or the 'fervor' of people at a criticism meeting; or the situation during the 'Great Leap Forward' – I felt I did not understand them at all, didn't understand why they were that way.

(cited in Calhoun, 1994: 235)

Rapid economic liberalizations, opening of the borders, increasing commercialization and alleviation of restrictions created a relatively free cultural atmosphere, within which neither Mao's ascetism, nor Deng's neo-authoritarianism had place. Wu'er Kaixi, a student leader of the Tiananmen Democracy Movement, explains the generational gap and this new subjectivity eloquently:

There has never been a generation like ours. We mock the state, we mock the government, we mock the leaders. And there has never been a generation that had seen the outside world. It is so beautiful... Does our generation have anything? We don't have the goals that our parents had. We don't have the fanatical idealism of our older brothers and sisters once had. So what do we want? (After a brief pause) Nike shoes, lots of free time to take our girlfriends to a bar, the freedom to discuss an issue with someone, and to get a little bit of respect from the society ...

(Gordon and Hinton, 1995)

To summarize, in both Eastern Europe and China, a new, postmodern (alternatively, late modern, or late capitalist) subjectivity emerged and signified a radical break from the earlier, ascetic visions of communist leaders. While this process took place during 1960s in east central Europe, in China it began only after 1978. What then, was the decisive difference between Chinese and European 1989s if the same cultural logic, was the underlying factor in both geographies? As argued before, a part of the answer lies in the fact that unlike in Eastern Europe, the People's Liberation Army consisted of professional soldiers instead of conscripts. The more structural reason for the failure of the movement was the small percentage of urban population in China. Since the above mentioned cultural logic flourished first and foremost in urban centres around the globe and the 1989 movements were predominantly urban uprisings; the size and the proportion of the urban population with access to mass media technologies made a difference.

Surely this is not to suggest that the Chinese peasantry is essentially backwards, or indifferent towards social movements. Yet in 1989, the size of the urban population with access to mass media was important because it was the communication revolution that brought the phantasmagoria of the "good life" and embedded the idea of relative deprivation in socialist countries. Yet in 1989, only 26 per cent of the Chinese population was living in urban areas. In contrast, this was 65 per cent in Czechoslovakia, 66 per cent in Hungary and 61 per cent in Poland. (World Bank, 2013) Even in Romania, where the small-scale civil war had to take place to overthrow the regime, the number of people living in urban areas was 53 per cent of the total population. While in Eastern Europe, almost every household had TV; there were only 149 million TV sets in all China, a country with 1.1 billion people. (Cheng, 1990: 21) In such conditions, the Chinese peasants could compare their existing conditions only with the ones in their memories, and thinking of the horrors of famine and Cultural Revolution, they had every reason to be satisfied with their conditions. Consequently, the Communist Party of China enjoyed far greater performative legitimacy than their East European counterparts among large segments of society. As the majority of the Chinese rural population showed indifference

towards the movement, the party could confidently suppress the “active minority” by violent means.

5. Conclusion

Five months after the massacre in Tiananmen, massive demonstrations hit east central Europe and the socialist regimes fell one after another. The unease among the Chinese Communist Party elites became obvious when they put the security forces on high alert following the summary executions of the Ceaușescus in Romania. Arguably, the bigger shock came when the Soviet army failed in its coup attempt to prevent the collapse of communism in USSR. By 1992, China was the only major international power in the world ruled by Communist Party. Deng’s consequent 1992 reforms were primarily aimed at breaking away from the resentment of urban classes by increasing economic growth and reconciling with the new cultural and ideological predicament of the late capitalist era. It greatly increased the size and purchasing power of the Chinese middle class, and the above-mentioned post-modern culture flourished especially in Chinese urban settings while the party retained its political power through use of force and intimidation. Especially the big cities such as Shanghai and Beijing – with their vibrant business districts, familiar global brands, quick-pace music and street fashion – became almost indistinguishable from any other metropolis in the capitalist world. Under these circumstances, the majority of the protesting students of Tiananmen Square movement withdrew into middle-class conformism and political cynicism. In a disordered world, where the most successful exponents of corporate capitalism are card-carrying communists, this becomes hardly surprising.

Notes

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1. The political dissidents in Eastern Europe were surely persecuted as well. Yet the level and ferocity of this persecution was nowhere near the terror inflicted during the Cultural Revolution, which is comparable only to the Stalinist terror of late 1930s in its scope. Famous east central European dissidents, such as Václav Havel or Adam Michnik, who had both bourgeois background and political deviation, simply would not have survived the Cultural Revolution in China. In fact, the traumatization of the idea of dissidence during the Cultural Revolution could be the reason for the absence of any senior dissident intellectual with moral authority, who could potentially lead the movement in 1989.
2. Prior to the movement, the VOA claimed to have 18 million listeners in China, and during the movement in mid-1989 it claimed to attract 200 to 400 million listeners (Zhao, 1996: 3).

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The Quarter-Century Legacy of June Fourth: Prospects and Challenges in the Struggle of Post-1989 Dissent and Nonviolent Action in the People's Republic of China

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Abstract

A quarter of a century has passed since the 1989 Tiananmen demonstrations and June Fourth crackdown in Beijing. At the 25th anniversary of the tumultuous events of 1989, this paper scrutinizes the prospects and challenges in the struggle of post-1989 Chinese dissent and non-violent action (NVA), both exiled and domestic, in the context of State-civil societal relations, analyses the conflict and reluctant symbiosis across the unfortunate State-society divide, assesses the tribulations and prospects of contemporary Chinese dissent and NVA, and ponders how the struggle of this one fifth of humanity for political rights and civil liberties could be understood in a more global, long-term context, especially in view of the PRC's momentous global prowess by means of her astounding economic influence and "smart power" outreach, and in particular, her controversial "soft power" leverage.

Keywords: *June Fourth, Tiananmen, Chinese Communist Party, authoritarianism, Party-State, dissent, non-violent action, democracy movement, weiquan activism*

JEL classification: *H11, H12, K49, Z18*





Indeed, unless we choose [...] the means to producing a race of free individuals, we have only two alternatives to choose from: either a number of national, militarized totalitarianisms [...] or else one supra-national totalitarianism, called into existence by the social chaos [...] and developing, under the need for efficiency and stability, into the welfare-tyranny of Utopia. You pays your money and takes your choice.

Aldous Huxley, "Foreword" (1946) to *Brave New World* (1932)¹

1. Introduction

Presently incarcerated Nobel Peace Prize laureate Dr Liu Xiaobo 刘晓波² closes the 2002 collection of his works *Xiang liangxin shuohuang de minzu* 向良心說謊的民族 [a nation that lies to its conscience] with a passage titled "The Chinese who use 1% of good policies to defend 99% of vicious policies" ("用1%的善政來為99%的惡政辯護的中國人", see Liu, 2002: 401-402) in which he reiterates his fear for the increasing acceptance by the people of Chinese Communist Party's warning that Western multi-party liberal democracy will only bring chaos and instability to China. Just how the one-party State's brutality and callous disregard for human life and dignity that the blood-soaked record of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)³ from the Yan'an 延安 days to the Great Leap Forward (*Da Yuejin* 大跃进), the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (*Wuchan jieji Wenhua Da Geming* 无产阶级文化大革命), and to the 1989 Beijing 北京 massacre, or on the more individual level inclusive of the treatment of political prisoners like Li Wangyang 李旺阳, could render even remotely possible for the people to accept its simple reassurances to forgo the demand for multi-party political choice and just continue to hope that perennial hope that heaven will bestow them from within the same party an enlightened and benevolent ruler (*mingjun xianzhu* 明君贤主) is truly beyond imagination. This is despite the fact that the same Party now seems to be slightly less outright brutal while turning into a star performer in economic growth – though it is still arguable whether it is the Party who has the right to claim credit for the economic miracle or the people who had been freed from the Party's earlier pre-1978 cruel economic constraint who are really



contributing to the economic miracle, just like the overseas Chinese who, being free from ideological constraint, were creating economic miracles all over the world in the earlier days.

“Against ruthlessness, remembering was the only defense”, Salman Rushdie, the 1981 Booker Prize laureate and 1999 Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, tells us in *Joseph Anton* (2012).⁴ Yet George Orwell paints us a bleaker future in *Nineteen Eighty-four*: “Who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present controls the past”⁵, or in plainer language, “We, the Party, control all records, and we control all memories [...] Whatever the Party holds to be the truth, is truth. It is impossible to see reality except by looking through the eyes of the Party.”⁶ So far the world has not yet reached that part of the 21st Century when the “civilizational state” of China would “rule the world” as Martin Jacques⁷ predicts, but at this juncture of the 25th anniversary of the 1989 Tiananmen⁸ 天安门 Square demonstrations and the June Fourth massacre it is a right time to reflect upon how long the right to remember could at least be continued to be protected in this harsher and harsher winter of Chinese dissent and nonviolent action (NVA) that seems to be with no thaw in sight, especially in view of the recent death of dissident rights-defence lawyer Cao Shunli 曹顺利 in custody and convictions of the leaders of the New Citizens’ Movement. This paper sets out to explore the vicissitudes of Chinese dissent and NVA, both domestic and exiled, since the 1989 Beijing massacre and gauge the resilience and prospects of such citizens’ struggle against the authoritarian one-party State of the People’s Republic of China (PRC), keeping in mind Nobel Peace Prize nominee Professor Gene Sharp’s four basic requirements for bringing down a dictatorship⁹: strengthening determination and resistance skills, strengthening independent social groups, creating powerful internal resistance force, and developing wise grand strategic plan for liberation and implement it skillfully. In the process of developing and strengthening these which calls for much patience, some of the last words of Li Wangyang¹⁰ could probably give much encouragement in the momentary fight at least for the right to remember – a struggle against mass amnesia enforced by a ruthless self-serving State. “There’s no looking back even if they chop off my head,”

said a blind and frail Li Wangyang, broken in body by 23 years of life spent almost entirely in jail and under repeated beating and torture¹¹ in an impassioned, heart-rending video-recorded interview¹² broadcast in Hong Kong 香港 on 2nd June 2012, before his suspicious “suicide”¹³ in a tightly guarded Beijing hospital ward on 6th June, two days after that year’s 23rd anniversary of the June Fourth massacre.

While the valiant efforts of the Chinese NVA in maintaining its assertiveness and vitality in such harsh political environment, probably best summed up in the homepage motto “I persevere, therefore I am” (*Wo cheng gu wo zai* 我撑故我在)¹⁴ of Her Peirong 何培蓉 (“PearlHer”/Zhenzhu 珍珠, the social activist best known as the key player in blind civil rights lawyer Cheng Guangcheng 陈光诚’s 2012 dramatic escape from his inhuman house arrest), is truly admirable in the context of citizens’ struggle for political rights and civil liberties, this paper argues that with the country’s “smart power” (including both components of “soft” and “hard” power) perceived to be gaining ground on a global scale in an era of the Beijing Consensus/China Model gaining attractiveness, such a struggle is no longer just a national endeavour but is increasingly taking on a global significance. Even if seeing it as a national struggle, the stake is simply too high for the fate of over 1.3 billion¹⁵ people – one fifth of humanity.

2. Continuing Crackdown on Dissent

The first half of 2014 was marked by another series of setbacks for China’s crestfallen civil and political rights activism. The death of rights-defence lawyer (*weiquan lüshi* 维权律师) Cao Shunli on 14th March 2014 was believed to be due to a delay of treatment for illness in police custody. Cao, who became a rights-defence lawyer after having been sacked from her post in the Ministry of Labour for exposing corruption in the said ministry, was arrested at Beijing Capital International Airport while she was leaving for Geneva to attend a United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) meeting.¹⁶ This represents another shocking case of death in custody of China’s civil and political rights activists since the suspicious death of long-imprisoned

and tortured 1989 Beijing demonstration activist Li Wangyang, who had been under continued surveillance since release in May 2011, on 6th June 2012, when he allegedly “committed suicide” under mysterious circumstances in a tightly guarded hospital room. On 11th April 2014 the Beijing Higher People’s Court upheld a lower court’s verdict and sent another rights-defence lawyer Xu Zhiyong 许志永, founder of the Chinese New Citizens’ Movement (*Zhongguo Xin Gongmin Yundong* 中国新公民运动), on the charge of “gathering a crowd to disturb order in a public space” (which carries a maximum sentence of five years) to four years in prison. The Chinese New Citizens’ Movement is a collection of numerous civil rights activists promoted by the loosely-organized civil rights group “Citizens” which is the successor to the Open Constitution Initiative (OCI, or *Gongmeng* 公盟 – an organization that advocates the rule of law and greater constitutional protections, established in 2003 by Xu Zhiyong, Teng Biao 滕彪, Yu Jiang 俞江 and Zhang Xingshui 张星水 from the Peking University Law School and shut down by the government on 17th July 2009). Started in June 2010 by a group of scholars, lawyers, journalists and activists, including Xu Zhiyong, Teng Biao, Wang Gongquan 王功权, Li Xiongbin 黎雄兵, Li Fangping 李方平, Xu Youyu 徐友渔 and Zhang Shihe 张世和 (Laohumiao 老虎庙), shortly after the proscription of OCI, the New Citizens’ Movement represents a political movement aiming to facilitate China’s peaceful transition towards constitutionalism, as well as a social movement striving to facilitate China’s transition from a “society of servility” to a civil society.

The jailing of Xu Zhiyong came just weeks after another civil rights activist Tan Zuoren 谭作人 completed his 5-year jail term. An environmentalist and civil rights activist who had supported the 1989 Tiananmen student demonstrations, Tan drafted the “512 Earthquake Casualty Investigation Report” (512 地震伤亡调查报告) following the 2008 Sichuan earthquake to press for the investigation of the construction quality of the “tofu dreg” schoolhouses that instantly collapsed and killed an astonishing number of students during the quake. He was arrested on 28th March 2009 and subsequently sentenced to five years of imprisonment on the charge of “inciting subversion of

State power” (*shandong dianfu guojia zhengquan zui* 煽动颠覆国家政权罪).¹⁷ The charge of “inciting subversion of the State” was announced in a 1997 amendment of the Criminal Code of the People’s Republic of China and has since been leveled against a number of political dissidents and civil rights activists and rights-defence (*weiquan* 维权) lawyers, including among them Huang Qi 黄琦 who was sentenced in February 2003 to 5 years of imprisonment, with 1-year deprivation of political rights, and again to 3 years of imprisonment in November 2009 for “illegal procession of state secrets” after voicing, together with Tan Zuoren and Guo Quan 郭泉, on the alleged school building construction scandal exposed by the 2008 Sichuan earthquake that resulted in a huge number of student casualties due to the collapse of school buildings¹⁸. Other targeted included Wang Xiaoning 王小宁 (arrested for his online publishing and sentenced in September 2003 to 10 years of imprisonment), Gao Zhisheng 高智晟 (sentenced in December 2006 to 3 years of imprisonment, with 1-year deprivation of political rights), Yang Chunlin 杨春林 (sentenced in February 2008 to 5 years of imprisonment, with 2-year deprivation of political rights), Hu Jia 胡佳 (sentenced in April 2008 to 3 and a half years of imprisonment), Guo Quan (arrested in November 2008 and sentenced in October 2009 to 10 years of imprisonment), Liu Xiaobo (arrested in 2008 for organizing the signing of Charter 08 that included an Item 18 “A Federated Republic”¹⁹ and sentenced in December 2009 to 11 years of imprisonment, with 2-year deprivation of political rights), and Tan Zuoren (sentenced in February 2010 to 5 years of imprisonment).

2.1. *Weiquan Activism as Domestic NVA*

In his manifesto published on 29th May 2012 which was quickly censored by the authorities, Xu Zhiyong described the New Citizens’ Movement as at the same time a political, social and cultural movement:

The New Citizens’ Movement is a political movement. China needs to complete a political transformation, establish a free, democratic China with the rule of law. The New Citizens’ Movement is a social movement. The solution to power monopoly, rampant corruption,

wealth disparity, education imbalance, and similar problems does not solely depend on a democratic political system, but also rely on the continuous social reform. The New Citizens' Movement is a cultural movement. It aims to rid of the tyrannical culture, which is degenerate, depraved, treacherous, and hostile, and build a new nationalist spirit of "freedom, justice, and love."²⁰

It can be observed here a careful attempt, as a rule in China's *weiquan* movements, not to be seen as challenging the authority of the Chinese Communist Party in order to avoid shift repression as that experienced by Liu Xiaobo with his Charter 08. Upon the recent arrest and conviction of Xu Zhiyong and other leaders of the New Citizens' Movement, commenting in a *Financial Times* report on Xu Zhiyong's New Citizens' Movement, veteran artist-civil rights activist Ai Weiwei 艾未未 expressed disdain for such movements' naivety: "Xu Zhiyong is representative of many young scholars who focused on social issues and sought practical ways to bring about reform. I know many of them and consider them friends. But when they say they have no enemies, I fear they are being unrealistic."²¹ What Ai criticized as unrealistic is in fact typical of today's Chinese *weiquan* activists in carefully restricting their demand for redressing civil grievances to single issues, justifying their actions by appealing to the written laws and constitution, and localizing the targets of the protests to avoid challenging the central CCP government whom they are protesting *to* rather than *against*. Such reservations reflect a common consciousness for self-preservation among civil rights activists, especially those who are less known internationally and hence could not expect international pressure to support them in the event of the State's decision to destroy them. In terms of strategic direction, in contrast with the democracy movements' looking for long-term systemic, revolutionary change, the *weiquan* activists are relatively conservative, focusing instead on a particular short- or medium-term goal within the existing sociopolitical framework and aiming just for reform, i.e. planned change of *elements* within a system rather than *the system* itself, as shown in the third column of Table 1 in the introductory article²² of this special issue (p. 206). In terms of ideological orientation, in contrast with the democracy

movements' seeing incompatible interest with the one-party State that they aim to overthrow, the *weiquan* activists see shared interests at least with the more liberal, reformist and moderate faction within the Party-State, hence are looking more for cooperation and synergy of action together with "enlightened" members of the central Party-State, i.e. the more liberal, reformist and moderate faction therein, to *zuozhu* 作主 (enforce justice) for the people against local corruption and abuse of power. *Weiquan* activism's less revolutionary orientation places it somewhere closer midway on the "reformative-transformative" spectrum in the NVA matrix in Figure 10 in the introductory article of this special issue (p. 234).

2.2. "Disturbing Social Order" Charges under Articles 290-293 and the Crackdown on New Citizens' Movement

After the upholding of Xu Zhiyong's prison verdict on 11th April 2014, four more New Citizens' Movement activists – Ding Jiaxi 丁家喜, Zhao Changqing 赵常青, Zhang Baocheng 张宝成 and Li Wei 李蔚 – were respectively sentenced in Beijing to two to three and a half years on 18th April 2014 also on the charge of "gathering a crowd to disrupt public order" or "picking quarrels and provoking troubles" (*xunxin zishi* 寻衅滋事), the usual charge now facing a political activists, civil rights lawyers and worker rights advocates which could mean five years in prison or ten years for multiple offenses, under article 293 of China's 1997 amended Criminal Law.²³ One of the earlier well-known cases is that of Zhao Lianhai 赵连海, the *weiquan* activist who voiced on behalf of parents of children who were victims in the melamine-tainted milk scandal of 2008, who was sentenced to two and a half years of imprisonment in November 2010 on this charge. The charge was criticized by Dui Hua Foundation (中美对话基金会), the San Francisco-based human rights organization that focuses on detainees in Chinese prisons, in 2011, as a nebulously defined "pocket crime" charge into which "anything can be stuffed", shortly after a change in the law doubling the possible length of imprisonment or allowing even a 10-year jail sentence upon conviction.²⁴

More recent targets of the law include Guangdong Province lawyer Wang Quanping 王全平 who is under detention since April 2014 under the charge after staging a protest with satirizing slogans on his car regarding Chinese officials' resistance to public disclosure of their assets, Shenzhen 深圳 labour activist Lin Dong 林东 who is being held since late April on the same charge after attempting to advise workers striking at a Nike and Adidas supplier in Dongguan 东莞, and Pu Zhiqiang 浦志强 (the lawyer who previously represented artist activist Ai Weiwei) who is now being detained under the charge since taken way on 6th May 2014 after a holding a meeting with a group of activists to discuss the June Fourth massacre just weeks before this year's 25th anniversary of the bloody crackdown. Xu Zhiyong as well as formerly Chen Guangcheng 陈光诚 were charged instead under Article 291 – Xu for “gathering a crowd to disrupt public order” and Chen for “gathering a crowd to disturb traffic order” – which together with Article 293 are part of what more generally referred to as the “disturbing social order” charges under articles 290-293 of the amended Criminal Law.²⁵

2.3. The Judicial System and Its Implication Domestic and Foreign

“Absurd court verdicts will not be able to hinder the trend of human progress; the pall of Communist authoritarianism is destined to disperse; the sunshine of freedom and justice will illuminate every corner of China!”²⁶ yelled a defiant Xu Zhiyong, upon the high court's upholding on 11th April 2014 of a lower court's verdict of his imprisonment. Ironically, on 26th May 2014, just as the year's 25th anniversary of the June Fourth massacre is approaching, the Chinese government published its white paper on the “Progress in China's Human Rights in 2013” (2013 年中国人权事业的进展) which declares that free speech is prevailing in China. The white paper introduces China's achievement in human rights from nine perspectives – right to development, to social security, to democracy, to free speech, personal rights, ethnic minority rights, rights of the disabled, environmental rights and China's international cooperation and interaction in the human rights domain, and proudly emphasizes that “there is no best in human rights matters, only better”. According to the white paper, China is doing her best in

promoting and protecting her citizens' freedom of expression, and free speech is widespread in the Chinese society and being effectively realized in protecting the people's ability to supervise the government.²⁷ Just shortly before this, human rights lawyer Pu Zhiqiang was arrested by Beijing's police on the charge of "picking quarrels and provoking troubles" after he attended a family gathering commemorating the 25th anniversary of the June Fourth massacre.²⁸

For anyone who still has any illusion about China's judicial system, the following person accounts would bring one back to reality. *Weiquan* lawyer Teng Biao in his article on China's legal system published in the 19th-25th October 2012 special issue of the *New Statesman*²⁹ guest edited by Ai Weiwei (*China and its future*, published on 18th October 2012 in collaboration with Lisson Gallery, United Kingdom)³⁰ relates how he was physically carried and thrown out of court for questioning the legal foundation of suppressing Falungong 法轮功 in his defense of a Falungong family, and was kidnapped and tortured by special police in charge of thought surveillance after he joined other lawyers in pushing for democratic elections in the Beijing Lawyers Association (北京律师协会). Almost all lawyer associations in China are government-controlled, and Teng says that the thought police who kidnapped and tortured him often said, "Don't talk to us about law!" which echoes very much a well-known statement by the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Jiang Yu 姜瑜: "Law is not an excuse!" (法律不是挡箭牌!) (Teng, 2012: 12-13) This seems to have a familiar ring to it, bringing to mind across the globe in the Venezuela activist's joke cited in William Dobson's *The dictator's learning curve* (2012) that (the late) President Hugo Chávez ruled through the motto "For my friends, everything, for my enemies, the law." (Dobson, 2012, ppb 2013: 5) "Today's dictators understand that in a globalized world the more brutal forms of intimidation – mass arrests, firing squads, and violent crackdowns – are best replaced with more subtle forms of coercion", notes Dobson, "Rather than forcibly arrest members of a human rights group, today's most effective despots deploy tax collectors or health inspectors to shut down dissident groups. Laws are written broadly, then used like a scalpel to target the groups the government deems a threat."

(*ibid.*) As is now experienced by the New Citizens' Movement. As was experienced by the movement's proscribed predecessor, the Open Constitution Initiative/*Gongmeng* which was outrageously fined RMB1.46 million yuan³¹ on 14th July 2009, and declared "illegal" and shut down on 17th July 2009.

This is a system without judicial independence, in which all important cases have to be directed by the *Zhengfawei* 政法委 (政法委員會 / Political and Legal Committee of the CCP) which even determines how to convict and sentence, and Party branches are established or Party instructors are appointed into the over 14,000 law firms, according to *weiquan* lawyer Liu Xiaoyuan 刘晓原 (Liu, 2012: 10). Interestingly, the CCP's attitude towards the law has also been criticized as having a significant outreach to the despotic regimes in the developing world which find alliance or potential alliance with this biggest dictatorship on the planet a balancing safeguard against Western sanctions over their trampling of human rights, as Juan Pablo Cardenal and Heriberto Araújo summarize in the report of their field survey in over 25 countries across the globe on China's expanding influence among the developing countries that for the overriding political and economic interest of the Party-State, whenever China sees an opportunity, she invariably "chooses to act as an accomplice in these excesses rather than acting as a guardian of the law", and following from that:

It is not just the fact that China has become the great champion and favourite business partner of the world's most repressive regimes (Burma, North Korea, Iran, Sudan, Cuba), or that its state-owned companies often enjoy *carte blanche* in their dealings as a result of the dizzying effect of the all-powerful Chinese state. What is just as important is the infiltration and acceptance of Chinese standards and values – which are highly ambiguous when it comes to good business practices or labour, social or environmental issues – throughout Beijing's sphere of influence [...]

(Cardenal and Araújo, 2011, tr. 2013, 2014: 262)



“Will this new world [anticipated by Martin Jacques] under China’s leadership be a better world? Will it consist of more equal and just societies? Will there be a greater respect for the human rights of the weakest members of society or a fuller awareness of preserving the environment? Will the world be safer and more participative?” – these are the questions Cardenal and Araújo posed for their extensive research project (*ibid.*: 263). While admitting that a greater temporal perspective is required to provide definitive long-term answers to such research questions and “to determine whether the Chinese model and formula is administering the sickness or the cure”, the authors do not find it optimistic based at the moment on the findings of their impressively extensive research “of the impact which modern-day China is capable of having in places as remote and distant from one another as Russian Siberia and the Congolese province of Katanga in the mining heart of sub-Saharan Africa” (*ibid.*).

Judging from the trend of the present mode of development and its impact on human rights, social justice and the environment in China, whether one truly believes in the sincerity, political will and capability of the new Xi Jinping 习近平 -Li Keqiang 李克强 administration in cleaning up the mess left by the Hu Jintao 胡锦涛 -Wen Jiabao 温家宝 decade, the continued upholding of the one-party authoritarian model without judicial independence, which has been rejected as part of the division of powers, in insisting on the political bottom line of “five ‘won’t do’” (*wu bu gao* 五不搞), and the recent conviction of Xu Zhiyong and others in the New Citizens’ Movement, as well as the continuing crackdown on civil rights lawyers are making it every difficult to question Cardenal and Araújo’s pessimism.

3. *Après Nous, le Déluge ... Tightening Political Monopoly of a “Degenerative Totalitarian” Polity*

In view of the recent crackdown on the New Citizens’ Movement, the continued persecution of pro-democracy activists (including the incarceration of Charter 08 organizer Liu Xiaobo) and civil rights activists and rights defence lawyers, and the followers of the physio-



spiritual Falungong movement and the repressive policy in the ethnic frontier regions, one could not help but feel that it is humanity's whiff of luck that amidst all these talks of the decline of the West and the advent of a Chinese century, and despite the weaknesses caused by the tussles between consistent, holistic human rights-based foreign policy and *realpolitik* based on narrower national interests, the leading advanced, dominant powers today in the world still consist of the North Atlantic liberal democracies, not the People's Republic of China. It would be the harbinger of humanity's disaster if the world really were to witness the advent of a Chinese century along with a decline of the West, while China remains a repressive one-party authoritarian state maintained through the trampling of her citizens' civil and political rights as she is today.

3.1. *The Rise of China and Decline of the West*

The undermining of the trust in North Atlantic liberal democracy by a now dominating authoritarian system that “works better” would lead to the reality that “not only is universal recognition not universally satisfying, but the ability of liberal democratic societies to establish and sustain themselves on a rational basis over the long term is open to some doubt”, as Francis Fukuyama ruminates ominously in *The end of history and the last man* (1992), “Following Aristotle, we might postulate that a society of last men composed entirely of desire and reason would give way to one of bestial first men seeking recognition alone, and vice versa, in an unending oscillation.” (Fukuyama, 1992: 335) At the heart of this is the recognition of the rise of a “non-Western” Asian value and “democracy, Chinese style”, a recognition backed by relativism – relativism not just whose fallacies, as Salman Rushdie warns in *Joseph Anton*, “were at the heart of the invective of the armies of the religious” (Rushdie, 2012, ppb 2013: 626), but relativism that Fukuyama chillingly foretells would lead to “a future nihilistic war against liberal democracy on the part of those brought up in its bosom”:

Relativism – the doctrine that maintains that all values are merely relative and which attacks all “privileged perspectives” – must

ultimately end up undermining democratic and tolerant values as well. Relativism is not a weapon that can be aimed selectively at the enemies one chooses. It fires indiscriminately, shooting out the legs of not only the “absolutisms,” dogmas, and certainties of the Western tradition, but that tradition’s emphasis on tolerance, diversity, and freedom of thought as well.

(Fukuyama, 1992: 332)

3.2. The “China Model”

To see what the “China Model” is all about, let us take the five points provided by Yu Keping 俞可平, deputy director of CCP’s Central Compilation and Translation Bureau (中共中央编译局), in his definition of the term, as summarized in Xu (2011: 109-110).

In terms of ownership, China is practicing neither pure public ownership nor thorough privatization, but rather a public economy-led mixed ownership system, according to Yu Keping. In politics, China insists on the Chinese Communist Party’s one-party leadership, is not going for multi-party parliamentary political system and is not going to practice the separation of the three powers (legislative, executive and judicial), and yet China’s is not simple one-party politics, but a unique system of “multi-party cooperation under one-party leadership”. From the ideological perspective, China still insists on Marxism’s leading position in political ideology, but at the same time allows the existence of other streams of thought, within a situation of the co-existence of a single dominant political ideology and pluralistic trends of thought in society. In the domain of military-politics relationship, China has always been practicing the institution of civilian control of the military and not allowing military interference in politics, yet all along been following the principle of putting the gun under the command of the Party (*dang zhihui qiang* 党指挥枪). In State-society relations, while a relatively independent civil society has already come into existence, China’s civil society is also characterized by being government-led, with most of the civil societal organizations not having the type of autonomy enjoyed by the civil societal organizations in the Western countries. Yu Keping’s five points on the “China Model” basically reflect the Party’s “five

‘won’t do’” (*wu bu gao*) bottom line which has blocked any meaningful political reform for China: “We won’t do multi-party alternation of governing; we won’t do pluralism in guiding ideology; we won’t do separation of the three powers (legislative, executive, judicial) and bicameralism; we won’t do federalism; we won’t do privatization.”³²

3.3. Human Rights or “Humane Authority”?

Yan Xuetong 阎学通, one of China’s most prominent “neocons” (neo-conservatives), or rather “neocomms” (neo-communists), and one of the five candidates from China in the American journal *Foreign Policy*’s list of the world’s top 100 public intellectuals in 2008, was invited by the Institute of China Studies, University of Malaya, to give a public lecture entitled “Humane Authority and China’s Sub-Regional Integration” at the university’s Kuala Lumpur main campus on 2nd June 2014. As this was just two days prior to the year’s 25th anniversary of June Fourth, after the public lecture Yan was interviewed by the local television channel NTV7’s reporter who asked him to comment on the issues of June Fourth and China’s human rights situation. Yan explained that there were different types of human rights but the most important thing was that in China, the citizens enjoyed the human right to have a livelihood – “policy that benefits the people *is* human right” (*limin zhengce jiushi renquan* 利民政策就是人权). Yan’s meaning is clear: whereas the West talks so much about freedom of speech, of free political choice through multi-party elections, the right to change government by voting – China does not allow all these, but China emphasizes the citizens’ human right to have a livelihood. It is apparent that Yan was just expressing the adamant Party line that the Western notion of human rights should not be made applicable to China which has a completely different set of national conditions (*guoqing butong* 国情不同).³³ Such argument could be seen as for the convenience of legitimizing the continued authoritarian rule of the one-party regime that ruthlessly proscribes freedom of speech and freedom of political choice, but there could also be an ideological basis for it. Causes of social changes can usually be categorized into three groups, viz. the economic, the political and the cultural factors. Economic factors, especially the impacts of industrial



capitalism, form the core of the Marxist approach to social changes. Such Marxist emphasis on economic factors, whether for ideological reasons or for the convenience of power maintenance, still forms the basis of the CCP's fundamental definition of human rights as the people's rights to be fed, to be sheltered, to be educated and to be employed. It is upon this ideological foundation that regime-coopted intellectuals could be so confidently singing praises for the Party's definition of human rights ("with Chinese characteristics") while providing academic support for the Party's rule.

What Yan told the reporter about his stance on the human rights issue of China was in fact just a continuation from his view on the universal values like "democracy" and "freedom" he expressed earlier during the public lecture. Yan did not agree with that sort of absolute importance conventionally accorded to concepts like "democracy" and "freedom". Instead, to Yan, "fairness" would be more important. Again, Yan was just expressing CCP's stance that the "Western" notions of multi-party competitive electoral democracy and emphasis on individual freedom were not necessary good for China which has her own uniqueness. She could be better ruled by just the unchallenged Communist Party which has rejuvenated itself with the guiding principles of humane authority, *yi min wei ben* (以民为本) imperative – Hu Jintao's people-first politics (*minben zhangzhi* 民本政治) and new Three People's Principles (新「三民主义」: 权为民所用、情为民所系、利为民所谋 , i.e. power used for the people, love the people, benefits for the people) and the promotion of a harmonious society (*hexie shehui* 和谐社会).

3.4. Monopoly over Public Discourse

Whether dealing with existing social inequality or corruption, the CCP State of course has to be the sole discretionary authority for enforcement or public discourse – a point that has been so forcefully demonstrated by the recent crackdown on the New Citizens' Movement and other civil rights activists (*weiquan fenzi* 维权份子) whom Yan Xuetong described to the NTV7 reporter as "a bunch of well-to-do people saying that they are defending the rights of the poor people ..." Referring to the 2000-



3000-strong protesters marching in Hong Kong on Sunday (1st June) to commemorate the June Fourth massacre, Yan told the reporter that these were but only 1 per cent of the people. Yan might not be right with the level of discontent among the Hong Kong people, but with China's very adaptive and inclusionary United Front (*tongyi zhanxian/tongzhan* 统一战线 / 统战) Work in Hong Kong through the five types of State corporatist measures, including integration, cooptation, collaboration, containment, and denunciation as described by Wai-man Lam and Kay Chi-yan Lam of the University of Hong Kong in their paper "China's United Front Work in civil society: the case of Hong Kong" (2013), it would really be an increasingly uphill task to safeguard whatever that are left of Hong Kong's democracy and political freedom from the tightening grip of Beijing. Already, efforts at increasing State monopoly of public discourse is already evident in the dismissal of outspoken newspaper editors and programme hosts and their replacement under pressure from Beijing, a most recent example of which being the case of *Ming Pao* 明報. Intellectual acceptance of such State attempt at monopolizing public discourse is evident when Yan Xuetong during the public lecture talked about China's donation of school buses to Macedonia in 2011 which was widely derided by the people in view of the fact that so many of China's poor school children in the rural areas do not even enjoy proper school building or transport (while some even have to carry their own desks to school). Saying that he could not understand why those people (who criticized the government's donation of school buses to Macedonia) were so money-minded, Yan quipped: "Beggars have to help beggars too." Apparently the major problem with such arguments is the befuddlement between the State, an authoritarian one at that, and the civil society, for surely the parents of the poor school children were not the decision-makers on whether or not to donate the school buses. The authoritarian State, controlled by a party which was not elected by the people, was.

Similarly, the strong warnings to the Hong Kong people hardly need to be insinuated in the unprecedented White Paper³⁴ released by the CCP government on 10th June 2014, as stated in item 1 ("The Central Leadership Directly Exercises Jurisdiction over the HKSAR in



Accordance with the Law”) under section II and item 1 (“Fully and Accurately Understanding the Meaning of ‘One Country, Two Systems’”) under section V, again represent an affirmation that it is what Beijing says counts, regardless of what the pro-democracy advocates in Hong Kong would like to think:

The NPC Standing Committee has the power of interpretation regarding the Basic Law of the HKSAR, the power of decision on revising the selection methods of the chief executive and the Legislative Council of the HKSAR, the power of supervision over the laws formulated by the legislative organs of the HKSAR, the power of decision on the HKSAR entering a state of emergency, and the power of making new authorization for the HKSAR [...] The high degree of autonomy of HKSAR is not an inherent power, but one that comes solely from the authorization by the central leadership. The high degree of autonomy of the HKSAR is not full autonomy, nor a decentralized power. It is the power to run local affairs as authorized by the central leadership. The high degree of autonomy of HKSAR is subject to the level of the central leadership's authorization. There is no such thing called “residual power.”³⁵

Similarly, for the ethnic frontier regions, while official discourses are formulated in such a way as to include the ethnic minorities in the contexts of “national unity” and “development”:

It is only within this overarching framework of national unity that ethnic minorities have been permitted to seek state recognition of their self-defined identity. They are also presented as groups in need of economic development. Believing that economic well-being may ease discontents amongst ethnic groups, Beijing presents itself as a benevolent patron, which unavoidably confines the groups’ developmental choices to the ones formulated by the state. A similar mentality has been exhibited in Beijing’s interaction with the civil society in Hong Kong, with an emphasis on Hong Kong as an economic city and the state as an important source of support and inspiration. While such cultural diversity is built upon hierarchies and formulated from top-down, united front unavoidably alienates and suppresses important aspects of ethnic and native cultures, and



precludes other possibilities of development wanted by the locals from being actualized.

(Lam and Lam, 2013: 322)

3.5. The Chinese “Newspeak”

In *Nineteen Eighty-four* (1949) George Orwell said this about Newspeak, the official language the author created for Oceania, his epitome of totalitarianism:

The purpose of Newspeak was not only to provide a medium of expression for the world-view and mental habits proper to the devotees of Ingsoc, [or English Socialism,] but to make all other modes of thought impossible. It was intended that when Newspeak had been adopted once and for all and Oldspeak forgotten, a heretical thought – that is, a thought diverging from the principles of Ingsoc – should be literally unthinkable, at least so far as thought is dependent on words. Its vocabulary was so constructed as to give exact and often very subtle expression to every meaning that a Party member could properly wish to express, while excluding all other meanings and also the possibility of arriving at them by indirect methods.

George Orwell (1949), *Nineteen Eighty-four*, appendix: “The principles of Newspeak”³⁶

In the 2011 collection of his works *Wo meiyou diren* 我没有敌人 [I have no enemies], Liu Xiaobo tells us since the 1980s he has rejected the use of phrases like “since the founding of the nation” (*jianguo yilai* 建国以来), “since liberation” (*jiefang yilai* 解放以来) and “new China” (*xin Zhongguo* 新中国) and purportedly replaced them respectively with “after 1949”, “after the Chinese Communist Party took power” and “since China came under the CCP’s rule”. (Liu, 2011: 202-204) The reason is that such “Newspeak” phrases of the PRC have been made popular by repeated indoctrination and have deposited deeply in the masses’ collective memory to endow the CCP with a “heaven’s mandate” for its regime legitimacy.

Austrian-British philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein’s view that the choice of mode of thinking is the choice of way of life implies here that

being used to a style of speech that expresses Party power supremacy and overwhelming gratefulness towards the Party is being used to the reality of messianic autocracy which is in turn being used to a way of life of servitude always in waiting for favours bestowed from above, which then in turn creates fear in the minds of the people for instability, chaos and apocalypse if the savour were to disappear from their lives. (*ibid.*: 202) Such is the power of words. Here goes a Party slogan from Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-four*: "Who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present controls the past" (Orwell, 1949, re-pub. 1954: 213) and Newspeak ultimately would be the key to that. To sum up the bleak future, Orwell adds, "We, the Party, control all records, and we control all memories [...] reality is not external. Reality exists in the human mind, and nowhere else. Not in the individual mind, which can make mistakes, and in any case soon perishes: only in the mind of the Party, which is collective and immortal. Whatever the Party holds to be the truth, is truth. It is impossible to see reality except by looking through the eyes of the Party." (*ibid.*: 214) Indeed, it would be impossible to *think* reality except by thinking through the Newspeak that the Party would eventually rely on for total thought control, and in our case at hand, whether to ensure acceptance of regime legitimacy, to discredit multi-party liberal democracy, to demonize civil rights activists who are disrupting the Party's benevolent course of action, or to whip up xenophobic patriotism and nationalism to rally the masses around the Party.

Substitute "Socialism with Chinese characteristics" for Orwell's "Ingsoc, or English Socialism", Eleanor Roosevelt's words at the Sorbonne on 28th September 1948 come back to us with a punch under the shadow of the looming Chinese century: "Democracy, freedom, human rights have come to have a definite meaning to the people of the world which we must not allow any nation to so change that they are made synonymous with suppression and dictatorship."³⁷ As the Beijing Consensus or the China Model as succinctly explained to us by Yu Keping is gaining converts across a world awestruck by the Chinese success story, suddenly the increasingly forlorn struggle of the Chinese democracy activists and civil rights defenders against the brutal one-

party authoritarianism is no longer a matter of concern for one single country but begins to take on the mantle of an epic struggle of global proportions for the future of human dignity, freedom, political rights and civil liberties.

Xu (2011) indeed analogizes Yu Keping's expression of the China Model to Orwell's Newspeak. Intrinsically the Model is just an upgraded version of Chen Yun 陈云's "birdcage" theory, with the Party and country being the birdcage, and market economy, civil society and value diversity the birds in the cage. Nevertheless, like Orwell's Newspeak, the apparent contradictions that stand out in Yu's expression are giving the impression that they no longer constitute China's worries, but sources of strength (Xu, 2011: 110).

3.6. "Democracy", Chinese Style, and All Is Forgiven

Would Asian values, "democracy, Chinese style" (or rather "democracy", Chinese style) that CCP is touting be coming gun-blazing with the advent of a Chinese century? Officially, the CCP has never come up with a blueprint for "democracy, Chinese style". However, there is no lack of PRC's individual academics who have attempted to introduce their respective visions of this.

As an example, Zhou Zhifa 周志发, an associate research fellow at the Institute of African Studies, Zhejiang Normal University, in his book *Rongcuoxing minzhu: Zhongguo tese minzhu lilun yanjiu* [mistake-tolerant democracy: a theoretical study on democracy with Chinese characteristics] (2013)³⁸, introduces his theory of "*rongcuoxing minzhu*" (literally "democracy that tolerates mistakes"):

The core idea [of "mistake-tolerant democracy"] is "entrusting the right of trial and error (*shicuoquan* 试错权) via elections; protecting political élites' right of trial and error and obligation to carry out criticism and self-criticism and rectification of errors". This has nothing to do with whether there is alternate party governance – which means that it is a democratization process suitable even for a "no-party system" or "one-party leadership system", inclusive of and going beyond the Western model of democratization [...] China is a "new-model democratizing country". After experiencing over 30



years of reform and open-door policy, China has successfully explored and found a path of democratization with Chinese characteristics, i.e. the path of “democratization under one-party leadership”, and not a democratization model of multi-party competition [...] The theory of “mistake-tolerant democracy” is more universally appropriate than liberal democracy as the scientific method of trial and error is universally appropriate [...] “Open self-criticism” is a good practice of the Chinese Communist Party; it also formed the core of Confucius’ thought on ethics.

(Zhou, 2013: 137; my translation)

According to Zhou who labels himself a fighter against Western liberal democracy (*ibid.*, postscript, p. 174), this theory of “democratization under one-party leadership” (*ibid.*: 138) should be the future system of democracy for the world to replace the Western liberal democracy which has proven not to be universally suitable, to have failed in the developing countries, and to have even been questioned in the Western countries themselves.

Zhou places his “mistake-tolerant democracy” as part of the greater work of Chinese scholars in constructing theories of “democracy with Chinese characteristics”, including Peng Zongchao 彭宗超’s “*heheshi shehuizhuyi minzhu* 和合式社会主义民主” (harmonious model of socialist democracy) proposed in 2010 and Lin Shangli 林尚立 and Xiao Cunliang 肖存良’s concept of “*fuhe minzhu* 复合民主” (composite democracy) introduced in 2011 which is based on the two pragmatic paths of the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party and the people as the masters of their own country (*ibid.*: 136). Interestingly, presaging the later discussion on the Confucius Institutes in this article, Zhou’s exposition of his new “mistake-tolerant democracy” contribution to this stream of attempts at theoretical rationalization of “Chinese-style democracy under the one-party leadership of the CCP” being superior to Western liberal democracy, at least for the “Third World” developing countries that China the rising “Third World” superpower is supposed to lead and be a role model for, was given in 2011 to the academics and students in interaction at République du Cameroun’s Université de Yaoundé II, mainly at its Confucius Institute. Indeed, summing up his



visit to Université de Yaoundé II and its Confucius Institute and his student's one year there as language teacher "with the additional mission of disseminating 'mistake-tolerant democracy'" (*ibid.*, postscript, p. 176), Zhou expressed the initial fulfillment of his aspiration: using this indigenously Chinese "mistake-tolerant democracy" theory of democratization under CCP's one-party leadership (as against Western multi-party liberal democracy), i.e. from the Chinese perspective, to reflect upon the development of African politics; to provide the Confucius Institute's vocational programme with theoretical backing, i.e. to enable the Confucius Institute to disseminate, on top of its foundation of Chinese language-teaching, a new value system in the form of this new theory of CCP's one-party-led democracy with Chinese characteristics (as an antithesis of Western multi-party liberal democracy), which would in turn serve to enhance China's soft power abroad (*ibid.*: 177):

There is a premise for China's political institutional reform, i.e. it must insist on following the four cardinal principles, with its core being the insistence on Chinese Communist Party leadership. As "democracy with one-party leadership under socialism with Chinese characteristics" (*Zhongguo tese shehuizhuyi yi dang lingdao de minzhu* 中国特色社会主义一党领导的民主) is the intrinsic requirement of the four cardinal principles, the construction of a new theory of democracy in defence of "democracy with one-party leadership under socialism with Chinese characteristics" is presently a theoretical matter of great importance, and forms the backdrop against which this theory of "mistake-tolerant democracy" is proposed. "Mistake-tolerant democracy" is interlinked with Lenin's and Mao Zedong's thoughts on Party construction, the gradualist trial-and-error principle of "crossing the river by groping the stones" (*mo zhe shitou guo he* 摸着石头过河) proposed and promoted by Chen Yun and Deng Xiaoping, and the "mistake-tolerant mechanism" established by Hu Jintao. Its core is "entrusting the right of trial and error (*shicuoquan*) via elections; protecting political élites' right of trial and error and obligation to carry out criticism and self-criticism and rectification of errors". It has nothing to do with whether there is alternate party governance, which means that other than the two-party

or multi-party competitive democratization model promoted by the Western countries there exists a new model of “no-party system or one-party leadership” democratization model.

(Zhou, 2013: 113; my translation)

Referring to Lenin’s and Mao Zedong 毛泽东’s thoughts, Zhou stressed that the Chinese Communist Party has the obligation to “criticize and self-criticize, and rectify errors”, and hence it also has to have the “right of trial and error”; otherwise, the Party would only have obligations without rights. One could infer that Zhou’s “mistake-tolerant democracy” would include tolerating CCP’s past errors that consume millions of human lives (the Great Leap Forward) and that subject million others of China’s citizens to unspeakable brutality and murder (party purges, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, June Fourth massacre, the continuing persecution of democracy and civil rights activists) as all these could be justified by the Party’s “right of trial and error”, and the same Party that has now been reborn into a creator of economic miracles should have the inalienable right to continue its self-defined natural mandate to be the sole political party to rule while crushing any attempts by its citizens at forming an alternate party that would challenge its political monopoly, and denying the country’s citizens the right to free choice of governing party through multi-party elections. At this point, one cannot help but be reminded of the exiled former “general commander” of 1989 Tiananmen student demonstrations Chai Ling 柴玲’s declaration that she had forgiven Deng Xiaoping 邓小平 and Li Peng 李鹏, as well as the People’s Liberation Army (PLA), who were held to be responsible for the massacre, following her embrace of the Christian faith in recent years.³⁹ Anyway, according to Zhou’s reasoning (*ibid.*: 113), China’s human rights situation and priorities are what Western human rights organizations could not understand. This is of course in line with CCP’s adamant argument which we have seen expressed earlier by Professor Yan Xuetong.

3.7. The “Right to Harmony” and the “Beijing Consensus”

Moreover, Professor Xu Xianming 徐显明, president of the China University of Political Science and Law (中国政法大学) posited in 2005 the *hexiequan* (和谐权, i.e. “harmony rights”, apparently in line with the official “construction of a harmonious society” policy of the CCP) which according him is to “supersede the earlier three generations of human rights (i.e. rights of freedom, rights of survival and rights of development)”⁴⁰. This new “harmonious society” model is what makes the “Beijing Consensus” so attractive to many developing countries, a magic formula built “on the one hand, the interventionism of an omnipresent state in its economy and society; and, on the other hand, a fierce degree of political control which includes the submission of the state powers – as well as the media – to the one party which holds a monopoly on power without having to be accountable to anyone” with an efficiency which Juan Pablo Cardenal and Heriberto Araújo caution in the epilogue of the captivating report of their field survey in over 25 countries concerning China’s expanding influence across the planet that while “grossly described as ‘harmonious’ by the propaganda machine, offers many countries a shortcut to development at a very high price, paid for by the people left behind”, and yet:

This Chinese pragmatism has clearly triumphed in the developing world. In emerging nations which are characterized by civil liberties and the division of power, the local political elites show signs of giving in under the pressure of the excitement caused by China’s arrival. On the other hand, this formula is particularly attractive to despotic regimes in Africa, Asia and Latin America, whose shady alliances with the biggest dictatorship on the planet help them keep their heads above water.

(Cardenal and Araújo, 2011, tr. 2013, 2014: 262)

This is against a backdrop of rising strength of the decolonized non-Western civilizations and a perceived decline of the West as Samuel Huntington describes in *The clash of civilizations and the remaking of world order* (1996):



Western values and institutions have appealed to people from other cultures because they were seen as the source of Western power and wealth [...] As Western power declines, the ability of the West to impose Western concepts of human rights, liberalism, and democracy on other civilizations also declines and so does the attractiveness of those values to other civilizations [...] when non-Western societies felt weak in relation to the West, they invoked Western values of self-determination, liberalism, democracy, and independence to justify their opposition to Western domination. Now that they are no longer weak but increasingly powerful, they do not hesitate to attack those same values which they previously used to promote their interests.

(Huntington, 1996: 92-93)

Or redefine these “Western” values into something, may it be socialism or democracy or human rights, “with Chinese characteristics”. Here lies the danger that is beyond China, bigger than China.

Domestically, China’s very adaptive and pragmatic brand of State corporatism provides a tested and workable model for the despots or authoritarian regimes among the developing countries – ranging from the more heavy-handed policy of assimilation in the ethnic regions of this largest dictatorship in the world to a more inclusionary version through integration, cooptation, collaboration, containment, and denunciation in the case of the post-Handover Hong Kong, as highlighted by Lam and Lam (2013: 322-323), which include both hard and soft tactic depending on whether the targets are considered as friends, valuable potential cooptees or enemies of Beijing (as depicted on the right-hand side of Figure 10 in the introductory article of this special issue, p. 234), combined with ideological indoctrination from preaching consensus, harmony and patriotism to the reinterpretation of political ideas – a Chinese Orwellian “Newspeak” – to be conducive to cultivating obedience.

3.8. Bonapartism and the New Dictablanda

On the other hand, in its relationship with the civil society or at least some parts of the civil society such as the business classes, with the carrot-and-stick approach to maintain its survival, the once-brutal-



dictatorship-turned-benevolent-*dictablanda* (à la O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986)⁴¹ has managed to preserve the status quo of its own rule as well as the interests of the “other power-holders” by both selling the credit it claimed for the country’s economic miracle (ironically on behalf of the industrious, enterprising and persevering masses whose newly freed entrepreneurial spirit, long-recognized in the communities of their brethren worldwide, resulted from the Party’s repudiation of the Maoist policies, has doubtlessly led to the country’s economic success during the economic reform decades since 1979), as well as extracting the support of these “other power-holders” who are willing to abdicate their opportunity to rule in exchange for other kinds of protection by the ensuing strong State run by the present regime (Stepan, 1985), in a *faute de mieux* deal much akin to Karl Marx’s description of the Bonapartist regime in “Der 18te Brumaire des Louis Napoleon” (1852).

Marx’s classic analysis of Bonapartism as a basis of State autonomy rests mainly in the sharing of common interests between the State and the dominant group, which in the case of contemporary China, the ruling CCP regime and the dominant social élite and groups whose inability to overcome the present State’s monopoly of violence to force a regime change has given the Party-State the opportunity to use the leverage gained both to preserve the status quo and to propound its claim as the protector of stability and prosperity in exchange for the acceptance of its legitimacy. This is because even when “a government’s use of force imposes a large cost, some people may well decide that the government’s other services outbalance the costs of acceding to its monopoly of violence” (Tilly, 1985: 172), though it could turn out to be a Faustian bargain that some of these social élite and interest groups might one day live to rue, for as American inventor and statesman Benjamin Franklin warned, “They who would give up essential Liberty, to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety.”⁴² Meanwhile, Beijing’s United Front Work, as Lam and Lam (2013: 322-323) observe in the case of Hong Kong as in the ethnic frontier regions of Tibet and Xinjiang, with parallel soft and hard tactics mentioned earlier through the expansion of its agents for State corporatism has in a divide-and-rule manner “resulted in further

politicization and polarization of the civil society, and transformed the tension between the state and the local groups into clashes between different local groups”.

4. Smart Power-Backed Assault on the Notion of Liberal Democracy

Yet, on the ideological, conceptual level, lies an even great danger of such smart power-backed crafty befuddlement to aid authoritarianism’s assault on the core values of liberal democracy, as quoted earlier Eleanor Roosevelt’s grave warning while speaking at the Sorbonne in 1948. Here lies the global danger of the advent of a Chinese century with the present political system of CCP’s one-party monopoly intact.

Commenting on Joseph Nye’s arguments on “soft power”, Samuel Huntington ruminated in *The clash of civilizations and the remaking of world order* (1996) on what makes a country’s culture and ideology attractive so much so that others will be more willing to follow her leadership:

They become attractive when they are seen as rooted in material success and influence. Soft power is power only when it rests on a foundation of hard power. Increases in hard economic and military power produce enhanced self-confidence, arrogance, and belief in the superiority of one’s own culture or soft power compared to those of other people and greatly increase its attractiveness to other peoples. Decreases in economic and military power lead to self-doubt, crises of identity, and efforts to find in other cultures the keys to economic, military, and political success. As non-Western societies enhance their economic, military, and political capacity, they increasingly trumpet the virtues of their own values, institutions, and culture.

(Huntington, 1996: 92)

The remarkable growth in China’s military budget in recent years would serve to reflect such a mentality on the part of an emerging superpower (see Table 1 for a comparison of the growth of military expenditure budgets of China, United States of America and Japan in 2013)⁴³.



Table 1 Comparison of Military Expenditure Budget Growth/Decline: China, USA and Japan, 2013

Country	Budget (US\$ billion)	Increase (+)/decrease (–) from previous year (%)
China	118.8	+10.7
USA	631.0	–13
Japan	52.2	–9.4

Table 2 China's Key Economic Indicators

Year	2013	2014
GDP growth rate (%)	7.7	7.3
Unemployment rate (%)	6.4	6.1
Inflation rate (%)	2.6	3.4
Exports (US\$ billion)	2,134	2,037
Imports (US\$ billion)	1,762	1,901
Exchange rate (RMB yuan equivalent to 1 US dollar)	6.21	6.16

Note: Data represent forecast figures.

Source: Liu (2014: 115), Table 3; data from EIU databank.



Table 3 China's Economic Achievements by 2012 in Comparison with Selected Nations

Gross domestic product (GDP)	US\$8.22 trillion	2nd in the world USA (1): US\$16.24 trillion Japan (3): US\$5.96 trillion
GDP per capita	US\$6,086	87th in the world out of 190 Monaco (1): US\$163,026 USA (14): US\$49,965 Japan (16): US\$46,720 India (145): US\$1,489
Exports	US\$2.049 trillion	1st in the world (11.2%) USA (2): US\$1.547 trillion Germany (3): US\$1.407 tril. Japan (4): US\$0.799 trillion Taiwan (17): US\$0.301 tril.
Imports	US\$1.818 trillion	2nd in the world (9.8%) USA (1): US\$2.335 trillion Germany (3): US\$1.167 tril. Japan (4): US\$1.167 trillion Taiwan (18): US\$0.270 tril.
Foreign (inbound) investment	US\$121.1 billion	2nd in the world and 1st among developing nations
External (outbound) investment	US\$84.2 billion	3rd in the world and 1st among developing nations

Source: Liu (2014: 111-112), Table 1; data from EIU databank.

4.1. Nationalism and Patriotism in Service of a Resilient Authoritarian State: Foreign Policy Manifestation since Tiananmen

Liu Xiaobo in *Daguo chenlun* 大國沉淪 [great nation drowning] (2009) sees the present wave of rising nationalistic *daguo jueqi* (大國崛起 – the rise of a great nation) sentiments that the CCP is riding on as not simply a result of CCP’s ideological indoctrination but rather rooted in the traditional Great Han-ism and the egocentrism of *tianxia* 天下 (“under the heaven”) mentality (Liu, 2009: 201-202) which was related to the worldview of “普天之下，莫非王土，率土之濱，莫非王臣” (“all land under the heaven belongs to the Emperor and all people on the land extending to the coast are subjects of the Emperor”, from the classic *Tso Chuan*⁴⁴ 左傳 compiled ca. 389 BC). With today’s newly revived pride coming with rising economic and military strength, the CCP has effectively exploited and promoted a new mix of patriotism-induced nationalism to mobilize loyal support for the Party-State. The intelligentsia and masses have responded well – witness the continuing great success of the sedulously crafted films and television series on China’s past great emperors that coated brutality and despotism with beautiful set, scenery and choreography, intoxicating audience with the prime sense of national greatness by pushing the judgment of social justice and the masses’ freedom and dignity into negligible importance (*ibid.*: 203-204). A good example could be found in the message conveyed by celebrated director Zhang Yimou 张艺谋’s star-studded, national-unity-is-all-that-counts epic film *Yingxiong* 英雄 (*Hero*) – in a medley of what Liu calls “beautiful feeling of a flourishing age of prosperity” (*shengshi meigan* 盛世美感) and “aesthetics of despotism” (*baojun meixue* 暴君美學), reflecting the great efforts of the members of a subservient intelligentsia to ingratiate themselves with the authorities by extolling the present with analogies from the past and falling in line with the current trend of State-directed public discourse.

If June Fourth was seen to have shown the vulnerability of CCP’s authoritarian power, the post-June Fourth combination of economic miracle – world’s number 2 in terms of gross domestic product (GDP), with strong key economic indicators (see Table 2 and Table 3) – and nationalistic, assertive foreign policy (backed of course by economic

strength) has been working really well in rallying support for and lending legitimacy to China's unelected ruling Communist Party.

Just as class hatred was efficiently employed by Mao Zedong in bringing about the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution to obliterate his opponents, climaxing in unspeakable brutality including cannibalism⁴⁵, maintaining popular hatred towards China's World War II aggressor, Japan, and backing her "historical" claims in the East China Sea and South China Sea with unabashed assertiveness and new military muscles have combined into a new tool for Chinese Communist Party to re-channel the social discontents outward and project itself as the upholder of national pride and dignity. What looks like a complete reversal of Mao Zedong's open tactic of using Japanese invasion of China to weaken the Kuomintang 國民黨 (KMT)⁴⁶ in order to enhance the strength of the Red Army ("Patriotism is to let the Japanese occupy more land")⁴⁷ to the extent of purging leftist intellectuals who advocated strong resistance against Japanese invasion is in close scrutiny perfectly consistent with the CCP's paramount interest in its quest for political dominance.

4.2. The "Hard" Component of "Smart Power" and Nationalistic Pride as a Tool of Regime Maintenance

Former US State Secretary Henry Kissinger recently warned that with the increasing tension between China and Japan, the phantom of war is again hovering over East Asia. The increasing nationalistic rhetoric by Chinese leaders especially with the rise of the younger leaders like Xi Jinping could be steering the country into a course of direct collision with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's new "strong Japan" flambeau which in turn represents the stepping up of provocativeness from the "beautiful Japan" slogan during the same Abe's earlier 2007 administration. Abe himself has, in his address at the World Economic Forum in Switzerland in January 2014, suggested the analogy between the present Sino-Japanese tension and the Anglo-German relations on the eve of the eruption of the First World War (see Table 4)⁴⁸.

Table 4 Comparison of Anglo-German relations on the Eve of World War I and Sino-Japanese Relations at Present

	Anglo-German relations on the eve of World War I	Sino-Japanese relations at present
Overall situation	Britain, France and Russia together confronting the rise of Germany in Europe	USA and Japan together confronting the rise of China in East Asia
Region of conflict	The Balkan Peninsula	Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands
Nationalism	German nationalism vs. Slavic nationalism	Chinese rejuvenation vs. a "strong Japan"
Foreign policy	Colonial expansion	Expansion of Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ)
Military strength	Strengthening British and German naval forces	Strengthening Chinese and Japanese naval forces

Figure 1 China's Defence Expenditure Budget, 2004-2013

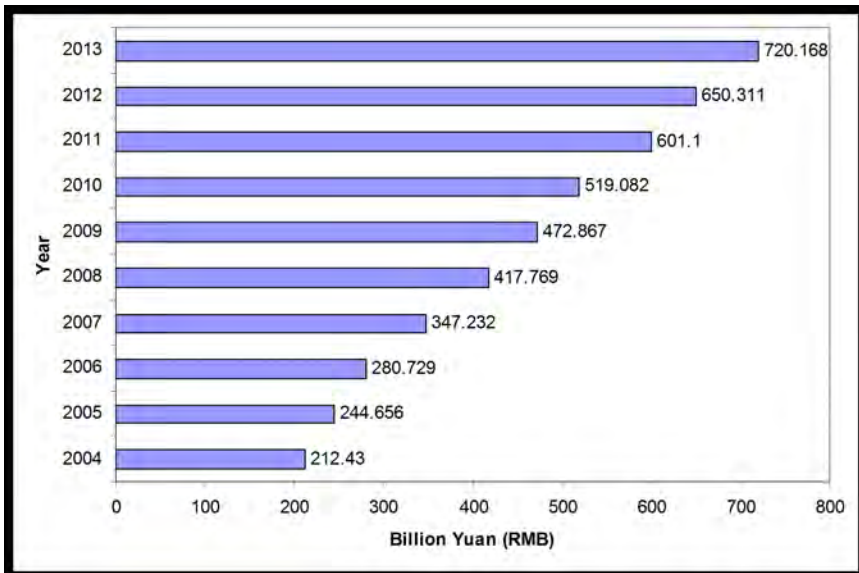
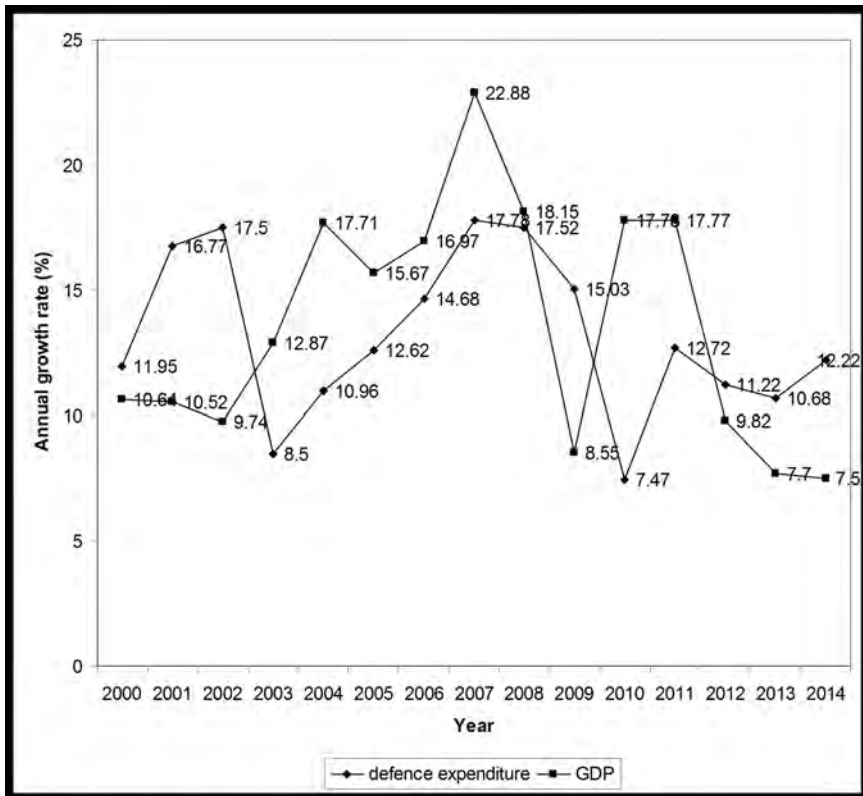


Figure 2 China's Defence Expenditure and GDP Growth Rates, 2000-2014

Note: Defence expenditure growth rate is by comparing current year budget with previous year's actual expenditure.

Source: Tao (2014: 98, 102), Figure 1, Appendix Table 1.

On the other hand, the steep rise in national defence expenditure is also reminiscent of the “arms race” just before the First World War. According to Oxford University professor Margaret MacMillan, in view of China's increasing her defence expenditure (see Figure 1, Table 5 and Figure 2), a comparison can be made between today's Sino-American

relations and Anglo-German relations a century ago. In 1900, the strength of the British navy compared to Germany's gave a ratio of 3.7:1. By 1914, the year when the First World War began, Germany had closed the gap, turning the ratio to just 2.1:1. China increased her defence expenditure by 10.7 per cent from 2012 to 2013's 740.6 billion yuan (renminbi) or US\$139.2 billion.⁴⁹ According *Jane's Defence Weekly's* latest report, while the Western countries were drastically cutting military spending in recent years, China's military expenditure has continued to rise and is estimated to reach the range of US\$130-\$150 billion in 2014 and expected by 2015 to supersede those of Britain, Germany and France combined and by 2024 to surpass the combined total military spending of Europe.⁵⁰ According to *The Military Balance 2014* report released by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), London, on 5th February 2014, China's defence expenditure could be chasing up to that of the USA by the 2030s if her present economic growth rate could be maintained. The world's highest absolute defence expenditure growth in 2013 was seen in East Asia, and China's present defence spending is roughly three times that of India (see Table 5) and higher than the combined figure of the other East Asian countries of Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Vietnam.⁵¹

Table 5 Comparison of Military Expenditure of USA, China, Russia, Japan and India, 2014

Country	Military Expenditure (US\$ billion)	% of GDP
United States	496.0	4.4
China*	132.0	1.3
Russia	76.6	4.0
Japan	59.3	1.0
India	36.2	2.8

Note: *China's military expenditure of RMB808.23 billion yuan is roughly equal to US\$132 billion.

Source: Tao (2014: 99), Table 1.

Table 6 Comparison of China's Foreign Policy Strategies
Past and Present

	1970s	2010s
Opponent	Soviet Union	Japan
Enlarging coalition	USA, Japan	Russia
Main countries of visit	Non-Communist countries	Central Asia, Southeast Asia
Strategy to disunite	Driving a wedge between Russia and India	Sowing discord between Japan and South Korea

Table 7 Protests against the Controversial China Passports

Protesting countries	Controversial map in China's new passports	Protest action
Taiwan (Republic of China)	Printed tourist resort of the Sun Moon Lake (日月潭) in Taiwan	Not accepting Taiwan being a part of the People's Republic of China
The Philippines	Printed China's disputed sovereignty claim over territories in West Philippine Sea/South China Sea	Refusing to chop visa on the China passports
Vietnam	Printed China's disputed sovereignty claim over territories in Biển Đông (East Vietnam Sea)/South China Sea	Issuing visa on a separate sheet of paper
India	Printed China's disputed sovereignty claim over territories at the India-China border	New visa page totally covering up the controversial passport page

Source: Liu (2013: 14), Table 4.

Clear changes can be observed in China's South China Sea⁵² policy over the past few decades (see Table 6), from Deng Xiaoping 邓小平's "yi lin wei ban, yu lin wei shan" (以邻为伴、与邻为善 – to be partner of neighbours and do good to neighbours) foreign policy strategy towards the Southeast Asian countries and the suggestion of the principle of "gezhi zhengyi, gongtong kaifa" (搁置争议、共同开发 – to put aside the sovereignty conflicts and concentrate on joint resource development) which were continued to be practiced by Jiang Zemin 江泽民 and then Hu Jintao, to the assertive, unambiguous and non-compromising declaration of sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands⁵³ and South China Sea of the Xi Jinping administration (Liu, 2013: 14). Such new territorial assertiveness was even reflected in the inclusion of China's map comprising the disputed territories in the China passports. This action has provoked severe protests from the countries which are also claimants of the disputed territories (see Table 7), as there have been precedents of the International Court of Justice taking "admission by silence" as recognizing territorial transfer in decisions on territorial disputes (*ibid.*).

Given China's increasing military aggressiveness in the South China Sea against Vietnam and the Philippines, which is getting worse during the first half of 2014 (backed by her "historical" claim to over 80 per cent of the Sea which is flying in the face of the international law of the sea) and with that infamous nine-dash-line boundary (see Figure 3) – though not created but inherited by the PRC from the pre-1949 Republic of China (ROC)⁵⁴ – not only demarcating a wide area of ownership directly overlapping with the ASEAN claimants' exclusive economic zones (EEZs) in accord with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS) but in fact extending to the doorsteps of neighbouring countries, it is truly not easy for her neighbours to accept without doubt her repeating claim of a "peaceful rise" or even "peaceful development".

Take the case of Malaysia or Indonesia which unlike Vietnam and the Philippines has tended to play down their maritime disputes with China. On 26th January 2014 a People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) flotilla comprising three ships – an amphibious landing craft and two

Figure 3 China's Official Nine-Dash-Line Map of South China Sea



Source: Thayer (2011: 557), from China's submission to the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, 7th May 2009.

destroyers – patrolled the James Shoal which is just about eighty kilometers off the Malaysian state of Sarawak on the Borneo island. While in this area which Beijing counts as the southernmost part of its territory, the soldiers on board the Chinese ships conducted an oath-taking ceremony vowing to safeguard the sovereignty and maritime interests of China. This is the second time in two years Chinese warships have appeared at James Shoal to declare China's sovereignty.⁵⁵ Even Indonesia which has been distinctive among the maritime ASEAN countries for her non-involvement in the South China Sea disputes with China seems to be getting tougher, with talks of taking more assertive

legal and military actions, against China's inclusion of Indonesia's energy resource-rich Natuna islands within the former's notorious nine-dash-line claim area.⁵⁶

Back by economic strength, China's present foreign policy strategies under the Xi Jinping administration seem to hark back to the Maoist era. The over-generalization of the concept of *liyi zhi bang* 禮儀之邦 ("land of ceremony and propriety") by those who see China from the perspective of "Cultural China" (*Wenhua Zhongguo* 文化中國) into the implication that China has always been a gentlemanly country promoting peace and respect towards others is simply a myth. From ancient time to the modern era, the imperial courts' unending wars of conquest of "barbarian" (*manyi* 蠻夷) lands and frontier regions, the wars between fiefdoms, the palace struggles, and the post-World War II civil war and Mao's bloodcurdling purges and political campaigns altogether make a millennia-long record of mass murders, genocides, massacres, unimaginable tortures and all forms of extreme human cruelty.

Indeed, here in this East Asian landmass, the blood-soaked history of the CCP since the bloody purges of the so-called "AB" ("anti-Bolshevik") League of the 1930s in the Chinese Soviet regions that claimed the lives of more than a hundred thousand people had continued throughout its reign (Gao, 1999; Hu, 2012) – the inhuman violence that typically accompanied the rise of the Communist Party to power whether in the former Soviet Union or China. For instance, according to a Party History Publishing House (中共党史出版社) publication, by the end of the 1950-1953 "Movement to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries" (镇压反革命运动), over 2.4 million "bandits" were liquidated, 1.27 million "counterrevolutionaries" were incarcerated, 230 thousand brought under surveillance and 710 thousand killed (Bai, 2006, repr. 2008: 494). However, placing these in the proper perspective, they are but minor incidents throughout the millennia-long blood-soaked history of the Chinese dynasties – may they be through State brutality, suppression of peasant revolts, pacification of the frontiers, conquests for the imperial realm, or even palace purges. So much for a "land of ceremony and propriety".

In terms of regional foreign relations, somehow contrary to what Professor Yan Xuetong described as “*zunxun wangdao*” (遵循王道, i.e. following the way of a (benevolent) king) in his 2nd June 2014 public lecture⁵⁷ referred to earlier, a prominent Vietnamese academic at a seminar organized by the same institute once summed up China’s behaviour in foreign policy as “*da guo bu ren* 大國不仁” (“heartlessness of a huge country”). “How could one use a simple term of “*ren*” (仁, “benevolence”) in the Confucian tradition to cover up the blood-soaked history of the internal strife of China?” asks Dr Liu Xiaobo in *Xiang liangxin shuohuang de minzu* 向良心說謊的民族 [a nation that lies to its conscience] (2002), “Even the history of the very term ‘*ren*’ (仁) is also a history of ‘*chiren*’ (吃人, man-eating [*lijiao* 禮教⁵⁸]) that Lu Xun (魯迅) referred to.” (Liu, 2002: 117).

Hence, under such circumstances, it is not difficult to understand the Southeast Asian countries’ wariness with regard to China’s apparent hegemonic intentions over the South China Sea waters which are at their doorsteps. In response to Professor Robert Beckman and Professor Clive Schofield’s recent suggestion that China should depict the outer limit of her EEZ claims from the islands over which it claims sovereignty so as to create an area of overlapping claims in the middle of the South China Sea where the claimant States could move towards joint development pending a final agreement on maritime boundaries, Professor Raul Pedrozo (Captain, USN, Ret.) assigned to the International Law Department at the US Naval War College in an article posted in February 2014 presented several reasons against the proposal which he said “will allow Beijing to further advance its salami-slicing strategy in the South China Sea at the expense of the other claimants.”⁵⁹ First of all, he challenged China’s claim to the South China Sea islands other than the Pratas Island based on the fact that the Paracels and Spratlys were both French territories until the Japanese invasion during the Second World War; thereafter the island groups were returned to France after the Second World War and then acquired by South Vietnam after the Franco-Indochina War and inherited by the Socialist Republic of Vietnam after the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. Most importantly, Pedrozo doubted that China would ever live up to her obligations under UNCLOS. This is

apparent from China's non-compliance with her commitments under the 2002 ASEAN-China Declaration of the Conduct of Parties (DOC) despite her signing up to it, as well illustrated by the incidents of Viking II ramming and Binh Minh 02 cable-cutting, and of Reed Bank and Scarborough Shoal; the establishment of Sansha 三沙 City; the implementation of the Hainan maritime security and new fisheries regulations; the recent naval patrols to the James Shoal, and the most recent ship ramming in May 2014 provoked by China's building an oil rig in the area of dispute which led to lethal anti-Chinese riots in Vietnam. Both for real geostrategic considerations and to feed the rising tide of domestic nationalism, upholding dubious historical claims of sovereignty would have to take precedence over international law, while each of these acts "designed to alter the status quo through unlawful intimidation" is bringing China one step closer to achieving de facto total control over the South China Sea⁶⁰ in complete defiance of the outcries from her Southeast Asian neighbours – all the more so when, as Ernie Bower, a Southeast Asia specialist at Washington's Center for Strategic and International Studies, put it, "the Chinese are drawing the conclusion that these guys are not ready for prime time."⁶¹

4.3. The Dangerous Trap of Nationalism in the Struggle for Democracy

Hence, one of the most significant development of the post-Tiananmen CCP was its rediscovery of the usefulness of nationalism in strengthening citizens' loyalty to the ruling Party and the country in the aftermath of the end of the Cold War and the demise of Communist Party rule in most other parts of the world, leading to its embrace both by the intellectuals who have produced countless books and essays in rousing ovation for such nationalism and the wider masses who made books with titles like "China can say 'No'"⁶² instant best-sellers in the country. Such a phenomenon is accompanied by the inexplicable reemergence of Mao-latry – the veneration, the hero-worship of the one person in recent Chinese history who caused such unparalleled level of human misery with crimes against humanity through murderous purges and blood-curdling political persecution, and man-made famine through

whimsical economic policies that led even to widespread cannibalism.

In contrast to the rising Chinese nationalism in the early 20th Century whose main contents – like those reemerged in the Tiananmen student movement in 1989 – circled around the resentment against government corruption and the aspiration for a clean and able government, today's new government-promoted nationalism in China is in support of and serving to strengthen the governing legitimacy of the present unelected ruling party and the authority of the present political institution that outlaws any attempt in electoral challenge to the CCP, while abiding by CCP's rhetoric in emphasizing the importance of political stability rather than political change. Whereas in the early days of the modern era, as Day (2012: 37) observes, with the Chinese State and society still in a way exist in separation, democracy followed the development of nationalism, leading to the establishment of Asia's first republic from the ruins of the Manchu monarchy in the early 20th Century, denying a separate existence of society from the political State run in monopoly by today's increasingly catch-all Communist Party, the present wave of State-promoted, mass-inciting nationalism has not only been contributing nothing to democratic reform, but instead has been intensifying bitter xenophobic behaviour in the realm of foreign affairs, especially in the form of hate-filled anti-Japanese and anti-American nationalistic sentiments. "The survival of democracy depends on the ability of large numbers of people to make realistic choices in the light of adequate information", Aldous Leonard Huxley tells us in *Brave new world revisited* (1959), "A dictatorship, on the other hand, maintains itself by censoring or distorting the facts, and by appealing, not to reason, not to enlightened self-interest, but to passion and prejudice, to the powerful 'hidden forces', as Hitler called them, present in the unconscious depths of every human mind."⁶³ Day gives the textbook example of the aftermath of the (allegedly accidental) bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade by American bombers, and cites Japanese China expert Miyazaki Masahiro 宮崎正弘 commenting on the extreme anti-American actions by demonstrators in China that amidst such an atmosphere of incited fanatic nationalistic outburst, anyone who are trying to constrain or neutralize the situation would themselves become

victims of attack by those around them (Day, 2012: 38).

As Deng Xiaoping told visiting former US president Richard Nixon just after the June Fourth 1989 Beijing massacre while calls for sanction was brewing, “Please tell President Bush ... even if it takes a hundred years, the Chinese people will never beg to have the sanctions lifted. If China would not respect itself, China can’t stand firm and there won’t be national dignity. It’s a very big issue, and any Chinese leader who commits error on this issue would definitely fall from power. The Chinese people will not forgive him. I’m telling the truth.”⁶⁴ Here goes the war cry of the new nationalists: “Don’t think that Chinese youths will thank America for imposing sanction on China. You can’t separate the individual from the nation. When you hurt the Chinese government, you hurt the Chinese people.”⁶⁵ In the befuddled realm of the CCP State = China = Chinese people cognition, questioning the CCP State’s policy actions is logically equated to insulting the Chinese people and hurting Chinese nationalistic feeling. Nationalism in such context represents a “single-edged venomous sword”, in the opinion of Liu Xiaobo expressed in *Dan ren du jian: Zhongguo minzuzhuyi pipan* 單刃毒劍：中國民族主義批判 [single-edged venomous sword: a critique of Chinese nationalism] (2006).

Especially in the post-colonial, post-Cold War era, the roar of nationalism tends to become the last refuge for authoritarian regimes against the global march of human rights-, political choice-respecting liberal democracy, a rediscovered ideological instrument to crush any challenge to the ruling party’s political monopoly (Liu, 2006, “Introduction”, p. i). Increasingly adept in handling such nationalistic sentiments, observes Day (2012: 39-41), the CCP State is able to summon them up whenever they should be useful for dealing with foreign relations while avoiding them from turning into a threat to the regime itself. Day gives the examples, among others, of the mass nationalistic paroxysms of rage following respectively the mid-air collision between a United States Navy EP-3E ARIES II signals intelligence aircraft and a People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) J-8II interceptor fighter jet near the Chinese island province of Hainan in 2001, and the Chinese actress Zhao Wei 趙薇’s photo shoot, also in

2001, for a fashion magazine wearing a dress featuring the Japanese “rising sun” military flag, culminating in her being splashed with human waste while performing on stage at the end of the year. Such outbursts represent the manifestations of the frightening nationalistic sentiments whipped up by the State to project the image that the CCP is presently the great torchbearer of Chinese nationalism, having proving itself to be the best hope of China to finally be a strong and unified nation, to eventually cleanse itself completely from the shame of the “hundred years of national humiliation” (*bainian guochi* 百年国耻) – that painful experience of China’s humiliation at the hands of the Western powers and Japan up to the Second World War – which is still crying out loud for redemption (while Mao’s “patriotism is to let the Japanese occupy more land”⁶⁶ directive during the Japanese invasion could best be forgotten).

Such image spinning is undoubtedly highly effective among a whole generation of business leaders and intelligentsia both within China and amidst the overseas Chinese communities to whom Beijing’s stance that the benefits of stability under one-party rule far outweigh the risky endeavour of democratization and decentralization and that the human rights of the 1.3 billion-strong populace to be free from starvation and to be sheltered far outweigh the Western notion of freedom of speech and freedom of political choice would find resonance, and a generation to whom a China that could stand tall among the community of nations, a China that is fast becoming a superpower, and a world that stoops to a rising economic, military and “Cultural China” (*Wenhua Zhongguo*) are all that count in bestowing pride on one’s Chinese ethnicity, whilst probably little else matters. Nevertheless, how far the Party-State could continue to exploit this antediluvian cycle of what William Callahan (2010) termed “pessoptimism” of national humiliation and national glory to rally the people – both Chinese citizens and Chinese Overseas – around the five-star red flag and garner support for the legitimacy of CCP’s enforced political monopoly and suppression of political dissent in the name of *hexie* 和谐 (harmony), especially among the Internet-savvy post-90 generation who are further removed from the memory of the “hundred years of national humiliation” seems to be increasingly

doubtful. Herein might lie the hope that the trap of xenophobic nationalism may not turn out to be the catch-22 of Chinese NVA as long as the latter remains clear of its ultimate *raison d'être* – the struggle for political rights and civil liberties in China as part of humanity's world-wide struggle for freedom and democracy, for breaking away from the shackles of authoritarianism and obscurantism.

5. Resiliency of a “Degenerative Totalitarian” Regime

Such flexing of military muscles, in combination with economic strength, has so far served well in rallying support for the performance-, not electorally, based legitimacy of the one-party State. This smart power-backed assault on the notion of liberal democracy is epitomized here by Zhou Zhifa's declaration (2013: 113-114) that China is already a new-model democratizing country, and she has created and ushered in a new path of democratization, i.e. “democratization with one-party leadership under socialism with Chinese characteristics”, which has provided a new democratization model for human race's democratic political civilization. Hence, according to Zhou, (refuting Fukuyama's thesis) history is not ending with liberal democracy, as China's over 60 years of development not only represents the rise of prosperity and national strength, but also the rise of human civilization. China's political institutional reform is not just simply a transformation from one system to another, but is purported to bring to perfection the socialist democratic system through democratization with one-party leadership, a contribution to human civilization with cosmic importance.

China's practice and theory have shown that “democracy with one-party leadership under socialism with Chinese characteristics” has been explored and practiced for over 90 years since the founding of the Chinese Communist Party. The institution of the National People's Congress (人民代表大会制), the system of multi-party cooperation and political negotiation under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, “democratic centralism” (*minzhu jizhong zhi* 民主集中制) and the Communist Party's work style of criticism and self-criticism together represent the role model of democracy under one-

party leadership, which has transcended the scope of what liberal democracy could explain [...] Liberal democracy is not universal; it is merely a special manifestation of Western civilization.

(Zhou, 2013: 113; my translation)

Such a “perfect” system, much superior to Western liberal democracy and which by Zhou’s criteria represents an unprecedented contribution to human civilization and a model of mankind’s political future, was succinctly and confidently described by Chen Xiqing 陈喜庆, deputy head of the United Front Work Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (中共中央统战部), at a press conference in which he unreservedly declared that China’s “multi-party” system was already perfect, hence there was no need to establish new political parties.⁶⁷ The CCP, according to Chen, has been absorbing the workers, peasants, soldiers as well as members of the intelligentsia as party members, while the eight existing “democratic parties” (*minzhu dangpai* 民主党派) are focusing mainly on recruiting people from the middle and upper social strata, including those in the fields of technology, culture and sports, as their party members. In China’s so-called “multi-party cooperation” (*duodang hezuo* 多党合作) system, these “democratic parties” are neither “non-ruling parties” (*zaiyedang* 在野党) nor “opposition parties” (*fanduidang* 反对党), but “participating parties” (*canzhengdang* 参政党). Besides that, according to Chen, there are also “party-less” (*wu dangpai* 无党派) people in the system, comprising those who are not members of these nine political parties.

Despite such smokescreen of rhetoric, basically what we are witnessing is the resiliency of what Hsu Szu-chien 徐斯儉 called “degenerative totalitarian polity” (*t’ui-hua chi-ch’üan cheng-t’i* 退化極權政體) since mid-1990s which while having lost the original totalitarian regime’s ideology, power of political mobilization and monopoly over the economy, still not only continues with but tenaciously maintains the absolute monopoly of the “Party” over political power and State machinery and control over media of propaganda and social organizations (Hsu, 2003: 168). The major characteristic of such a degenerative totalitarian regime is, according to Hsu, just like many authoritarian and post-totalitarian regimes, by

sourcing its legitimacy from economic development, and with the unchallengeable national power inherited from its totalitarian past is now playing the role of a developmental State to drive economic development, while at the same time continuing to prohibit political pluralism, freedom of political association and the existence of independent mass media.

Moreover, a degenerative totalitarian regime does not need to worry about justification for long-term survival that used to plague authoritarian regimes from the perspective of the ultimate value legitimacy, for not only that the degenerative totalitarian regime has inherited totalitarianism's self-justification of political monopoly, it is also carrying forward and strengthening the reign of terror and State machinery of repression that it inherited from its totalitarian past (*ibid.*: 168-169). Such an ingenious combination of the capability for national development and that for repression has served to continue a mode of governance which is justifying repression (in the name of *weiwen* 维稳, i.e. "maintaining stability") with economic development, observes Hsu, as long as the benefits of development surpass the costs of repression, as development (which has replaced ideology and social reconstruction in its totalitarian past) is now main aim of this degenerative totalitarian regime as the key to the paramount *raison d'être* of maintaining the status quo of monopolistic political governance. Unlike under an authoritarian government, even limited pluralism and self-organization of societal interests to any meaningful extent are absolutely prohibited lest they jeopardize this degenerative totalitarian regime's absolute monopoly of all political power (*ibid.*: 169).

5.1. *Weiwen and the Feign Era of Peace and Prosperity*

Nevertheless, if we take China as a whole in 2012, the country's *weiwen* allocation had actually amounted to 7.017 hundred billion yuan (which the government defined as "public security" expenditures), as compared to 6.703 hundred billion yuan for national defense.⁶⁸ Professor Sun Liping 孙立平 of Tsinghua University (清华大学)'s Faculty of Social Sciences in a 2011 report⁶⁹ comments on the sharp increase in the very high *weiwen* expenditure which in some places has reached a spare-no-

expense, regardless-of-cost proportion. Part of these expenses actually do not make economic sense, according to Yu Jianrong 于建嵘, director of the Center for the Study of Social Issues at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, as, e.g., ten thousand yuan spent on blocking a *shangfang* 上访 petitioner (who *shangfang*, i.e. “travels up”, to the capital for petitioning) could have been better spent on helping to solve the petitioner’s problems. In an article later deleted from *Gongshiwang*⁷⁰, Chinese scholar Cai Shenkun 蔡慎坤 questions whether a yearly spending of hundreds of billions of yuan on a million-strong Chinese police force (or probably above ten million if inclusive of local non-police or para-police public security teams) within an environment devoid of judicial independence is leading to out-of-control, self-justified *weiwen*-induced corruption.

Here is a stability brutally maintained by coercion through spare-no-cost clamping down on social protests and persecution and surveillance of civil rights activists in order to project an image of *hexie shehui* (the government slogan of a “harmonious society”) – a feign flourishing age of peace and prosperity that Xu Zhiyuan referred to in *Weizhuang de shengshi* 偽裝的盛世 [feign flourishing age of prosperity] (2012) while a repressed, muzzled society just cruises on and plays along in an auto-pilot mode with the formidable system that nobody could challenge – a society that as Xu observed in his earlier book *Jiquan de youhuo* 極權的誘惑 (*The totalitarian temptation*, 2011) is increasingly submerging itself into what German-American political theorist Hannah Arendt called the “banality of evil”. Xu made this comment from his observing the group of youth sitting close by while he and dissident author Yu Jie 余杰 were having a meal in a restaurant in Beijing (Xu, 2011: 253). These seven or eight people’s involvement has nothing to do with loyalty to the country, party or ideology; it is just a job, a day’s pay. In the case of Cheng Guangcheng before his dramatic escape to the US embassy in Beijing, the number of local thugs who were paid to enforce a watertight round-the-clock surveillance of his residence where he upon ending his jail term was put under long-term inhuman house arrest in Linyi 临沂, Shandong Province⁷¹, came up to at least a hundred – a structure that Chen himself with a dry sense of humour referred to as the

“Chen Guangcheng Economic Zone”, though probably some local villagers were under duress and threat to themselves and their families to be paid to guard Chen.⁷² *Wei quan* activists who were coming to visit him to render help were repeatedly beaten up by local thugs who were guarding his house. To the admirers of the “China Model”, is this exactly the type of stability they are so in love of – the feign era of peace and prosperity they are so worried that would be destroyed in the advent of liberal democracy incomparable to the tidiness and single-minded efficiency of one-party authoritarianism?

5.2. Weiwen, War on the Internet, and the Media Battlefield

In a recent 9th meeting of the secretaries of the Security Councils of the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (上海合作组织 / Шанхайская организация сотрудничества) held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, on 17th April 2014, China called upon SCO's member countries (6 members including China, Russia, and the former Soviet Central Asian states of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) to strengthen control over the Internet and the management of non-governmental organizations in order to ward off “colour revolutions” (street protests that Russian military officers view as a “new US and European approach to warfare that focuses on creating destabilizing revolutions in other states as a means of serving their security interests at low cost and with minimal casualties”⁷³ which had overthrown autocratic leaders of Ukraine, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan over the past decade.⁷⁴ Such call has raised fear that these SCO member countries led by China are going to join hands in strengthening control over domestic dissidents and stepping up suppression of voices of dissent.

Interestingly, while Mr Ai Weiwei the dissident artist says that the Internet represents an effective technology to terminate authoritarian regimes and the best gift heaven has ever bestowed upon China⁷⁵, President Xi Jinping the General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party has virtually declared war on the Internet which he says represents a greatest peril that could lead to the downfall of the Chinese Communist Party and the doom of the nation⁷⁶. Recently, when announcing on-line

the publication of the “Human Rights and Democracy Report 2013” on its official *weibo* 微博 (China’s Internet weblog) on 11th April 2014, the British embassy in China had to break up the two characters of the Chinese term for human rights, 人权 (*renquan*), into three characters 人木又, and use “MZ” to represent 民主 (*minzhu*), the Chinese term for democracy, in order to circumvent the Chinese government’s Internet censorship of “sensitive words”.⁷⁷ In order to more effectively enforce Internet censorship against information from outside China critical of CCP’s policy, the Chinese government has asked Fang Binxing 方滨兴, president of the Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications (北京邮电大学), to organize the development of the “Great Firewall of China”⁷⁸ (国家防火墙 / 防火长城) to filter unchecked information from outside China to make it impossible for China’s netizens to visit foreign websites which are critical of the CCP and PRC and to Google search for “sensitive” terms (Cheng, 2012: 7-8). Readers’ comments are also monitored to check for “sensitive” words like “democracy”, “freedom”, “multi-party system”, etc., and round-the-clock manual checks are conducted to detect comments with anti-government nuances and related IP addresses are investigated (*ibid.*). Netizens who post anti-government opinions are often arrested and jailed.

Indeed, in trying to control the power of the pen by drawing blood with their swords, the Chinese authorities’ official policy towards dissent has long been chillingly Orwellian, as already related in Poole (2006: 203) almost a decade ago: “In June 2005, users of Microsoft’s newly launched Chinese weblog service were banned from using words and phrases such as ‘democracy’ or ‘democratic movement’: attempts to type these terms invoked an error message that read: ‘This item contains forbidden speech.’” The attempt by the Chinese government in 2009 to enforce the compulsory installation of a “*lǜbā* 绿坝” (Green Dam)⁷⁹ Internet filtering software was widely interpreted to be yet another similar assault on dissent in cyberspace.⁸⁰ The list of forbidden words on the Internet has been growing, covering terms that could be even merely remotely related to dissent, including the now and then ludicrously prohibited *moli* 茉莉 [jasmine], *pangzi* 胖子 [fatty – nickname of Ai Weiwei], etc.⁸¹ Super-sensitive terms like *liu-si* 六四 [June Fourth] and

related words of course have long been banned, but users of social media like *weibo* have been heightening their creativity in inventing homophones to circumvent the censorship, or with such truly indigenous phrases like *wuyue sanshiwu ri* 五月三十五日 [35th May].⁸² Nevertheless, in an interesting incessant battle of wits, the round-the-clock censors have also not been lax in tracking such creativity to block any new suspicious terms created. Just ahead of this year's 25th anniversary of the June Fourth massacre, adding to the existing blockade of popular foreign social media websites of Facebook, Twitter and Google's YouTube, the CCP regime went further and blocked all Google services, including search, image, Gmail, maps, translation, either HTTP or HTTPS, as well as all versions of Google countries, including Google Hong Kong, Google.com, etc.⁸³

This is of course an important component of the nation-wide blockade of information, war on investigative journalism and enforced mass amnesia. During this year's candlelight vigil at Victoria Park on the night of 4th June, video tributes were played in honour of those arrested in recent weeks in the mainland for trying to commemorate the anniversary. Among them was outspoken 70-year-old journalist Gao Yu 高瑜 who has been arrested several times before, and jailed for having "published state secrets". She will face years of imprisonment if convicted of the charge of "leaking state secrets to a foreign news site" she is now accused of. Over two months after her arrest, Gao – who disappeared on 24th April 2014 and officially confirmed in May of being arrested – was still not allowed to meet her defence lawyer Zhang Sizhi 张思之, thus raising suspicion that she had been badly beaten up and injured according to information received by US-based human rights activist Wen Yunchao 温云超 (Bei Feng 北风) from unnamed sources, according to an *Apple Daily* (蘋果日報, Hong Kong) report on 24th June 2014.⁸⁴ "They arrest journalists, and then arrest journalists who try to bring light to those arrested," said rights-defence lawyer Teng Biao, presently a visiting scholar at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, who revealed that he was warned firmly by China's State security forces not to attend the Victoria Park commemoration but came despite of the warning.⁸⁵ "The ruling Communist Party had elevated its notorious

‘stability maintenance’ to a political cleansing with its spate of arrests and detentions,’ added Teng who roared his defiance with an oft-repeated slogan following a triad-style savage knife attack on *Ming Pao*’s former editor-in-chief Kevin Lau Chun-to 劉進圖 earlier this year: “BUT YOU CAN’T KILL US ALL!”⁸⁶ In addition to its stance supporting greater democratic reforms in Hong Kong and against Hong Kong government policies such as the Moral and National Education (MNE, 德育及國民教育) school curriculum proposal which the Hong Kong Professional Teachers’ Union has accused as being a brainwashing political action – whose teaching material “China Model National Conditions Teaching Manual” refers to the Chinese Communist Party as an “advanced, selfless and united ruling group” (進步、無私與團結的執政集團) while denouncing the multi-party system of the United States, the liberal newspaper under Lau’s leadership has continued in the last few years with its investigative reporting that has increasingly been seen by Beijing as a pain in the neck, including the investigation into the death of Li Wangyang, and participated in investigative work with the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) that looked into the offshore assets of China’s leaders and their relatives and reporting on the stories.⁸⁷ The stabbing of Lau in the morning of 26th February 2014 occurred barely a month after his abrupt replacement as editor-in-chief in January.

A historian once said, “[...] while I recognize the dangers to truth of relating scholarship to life, I also believe that we who live by the pen bear some measure of obligation, however tenuous, to those who die by the sword.” (Wood, 1995: xiii) Indeed, from Gao Yu to Kevin Lau, from the mainland to Hong Kong, in the fight for freedom of expression, the fight against obscurantism and authoritarianism in the face of a ruthless State machinery of repression, these valiant guardians of the people’s right to know are, notwithstanding the State’s relentless efforts to silent them, being transforming into the Archerian “metareflexives” constantly driven by the force of their sociopolitical ideals and cultural concerns – for some, shaped by their personal encounter and tragedy at the hands of a ruthless regime, and for others, by the day-to-day grotesque injustices perpetrated by the actions of a racketeer State – and an almost religious

devotion to the embodiment, pursuance and actualization of such ideals and concerns (Archer, 2003; see also page 227 of the introductory article of this special issue for the concept of a “racketeer State”).

6. From Extraterritorial Action to the Confucius Institutes: Nature and Effectiveness of China’s “Soft Power”

Talking about the Russian situation, William Dobson (2012)’s source noted that unlike the former Soviet citizens who had few legal protections, for today’s Russian citizens the Russian constitution “guarantees the same set of freedoms and rights as any Western constitution [but] actually only one right is really observed – the right to travel abroad, to leave.” The effect of this is that “many people who might have opposed the regime simply left”, notes Dobson – “while the dictatorship of the Soviet system required closed borders, the authoritarianism of Putin’s Russia aims to sustain itself with open borders and passports.” (Dobson, 2012, ppb 2013: 7) Exiling political activists who are too well-known in the West to be too damaging for the authoritarian State in continuing to persecute them has always been a good option. Earlier example of Chinese dissidents so exiled during the post-Mao era included Wang Dan 王丹 and Wei Jingsheng 魏京生 through the usual procedure of giving them a severe jail sentence and then granting them medical parole, or in the case of the late Fang Lizhi 方勵之 who sought refuge in the US embassy during the June 1989 crackdown and was allowed later to leave for America. Similarly, Chen Guangcheng also sought refuge in the US embassy after his escape from house arrest with the help of Her Peirong and other *weiquan* activists and was later allowed to leave for America. There are rumours at the moment that negotiation has been going on regarding possible similar solution for Liu Xiaobo which Liu allegedly rejected.⁸⁸ In an interview by the *Sunday Telegraph* (UK) published on 18th May 2014 as the 25th anniversary of the Beijing massacre was approaching, retired businessman and former triad boss Chan Tat-ching 陳達鉦 (“Brother Six”/ 六哥), mastermind of the legendary Operation Siskin that successfully spirited hundreds of dissidents in danger out of China in the



wake of the June Fourth massacre of 1989, recalled how he went personally to Beijing in the 1990s to negotiate for the release of two of his operatives involved in the Operation Siskin who were arrested by the Chinese police and sentenced to 6 years' imprisonment, after the Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements in China (the Alliance / 香港市民支援愛國民主運動聯合會 / 支聯會) failed to rescue them within half a year as Chan requested them to do. Interestingly, as the plucky mastermind of the Operation Siskin related to *Sunday Telegraph* in the recent interview, at that time he told the Chinese authorities that they should in fact thank him for bringing out of China those people who gave them such headache, and in response, the Chinese authorities told him that they would release his people if he stopped the Siskin rescue operation.⁸⁹

Nevertheless, even though being safe from State persecution beyond China's shores, to coordinate a resistance movement through influencing China's students overseas and expatriates is not a simple task given CCP's tight surveillance of the country's citizens sojourning overseas through covert operation network and allegedly an extension of the country's so-called "soft power".

6.1. United Front Work and Extraterritorial Action

Recently Australian media reported that the Chinese government had set up large covert informant networks inside Australia's leading universities to put the Chinese academic staff and students under surveillance in order to protect Beijing's "core interests".

According to an article by John Garnaut, the Asia Pacific editor for *Fairfax Media*, published in *The Sidney Morning Herald*, China is establishing an extensive secret network of informants in Australia's major universities, including the University of Sidney and the University of Melbourne which have over 90,000 students from China, who now have the opportunity to be exposed to ideas and activities which are prohibited in China.⁹⁰ The Chinese government is allegedly using the China student associations in Australia for collecting intelligence and promoting political activities, according to the article, with function in parallel to the other intelligence networks operated by the Chinese



diplomatic mission. Among the lecturers and Chinese-born students interviewed “who have suffered repercussions because of comments they made in Australian classrooms which were reported through Chinese intelligence channels”⁹¹, the article highlighted the case of a Chinese senior lecturer at a high-ranking Australian university who was interrogated four times by the Chinese intelligence agency regarding his comments made at a seminar about democracy at the University of New South Wales. The article also gave another case of a Chinese student in Australia who met with the Dalai Lama, leader of the Tibetan government-in-exile. The Chinese intelligence got to know about this through its informant network, according to the report, and the student’s parents back in China were subsequently asked by security officials to restrain their child’s behaviour.

According to a former Chinese diplomat Chen Yonglin 陈用林 who has defected to Australia, the Chinese government is also using students to infiltrate dissident organizations, especially those related to Tibet and Falungong 法轮功.⁹² The Chinese Consulate-General in Sidney vehemently denied all these allegations. Chen Yonglin, the former First Secretary of the Chinese Consulate-General in Sidney who defected in 2005 for Australian political asylum, stated that his main job during the four years and two months at the Consulate-General was to keep watch on the dissidents. He also pointed out that Chinese spies in Australia, who numbered over a thousand, were involved in kidnapping targeted dissidents back to China.⁹³ This reminds us of Voltaire’s words and experience as related in *Joseph Anton*: “Voltaire had once said that it was a good idea for a writer to live near an international frontier so that, if he angered powerful men, he could skip across the border and be safe”, and indeed “Voltaire himself left France for England after he gave offense to an aristocrat, the Chevalier de Rohan, and remained in exile for seven years.” (Rushdie, 2012: 15) Alas, as the author of *Joseph Anton*, the fugitive writer who was the thirteenth on *The Times*’s 2008 list of the fifty greatest British writers since 1945 proceeded to remind us from his own bitter experience: “But to live in a different country from one’s persecutors was no longer to be safe. Now there was *extraterritorial action*. In other words, they came after you.” (*ibid.*: 15-16) The recent

Australian media report just acts to confirm the well-known fact that China's nationals overseas are under close surveillance for detection of any activities which could be considered as anti-CCP.

A blatant example of such extraterritorial attack on dissent is reflected in the exiled blind Chinese civil rights activist Chen Guangcheng's accusation that he was being forced to leave New York University for "as early as last August and September, the Chinese Communists had already begun to apply great, unrelenting pressure on New York University, so much so that after we [i.e. Chen and his wife and son] had been in the United States just three to four months, NYU was already starting to discuss our departure with us."⁹⁴ Despite N.Y.U.'s denial of the allegation and its law school's claim that the fellowship as that given to Chen was always to be for one year, it is probably difficult not to link that turn of events to the then newly opened New York University Shanghai (NYU Shanghai), the first university jointly operated by China and the U.S., and part of a major initiative the NYU law school calls its Global Network University.⁹⁵ This brings to mind an episode related by Tiananmen student leader Dr Wang Dan⁹⁶, whose name tops China's Most Wanted list for the 21 Tiananmen Square Protest leaders and who was arrested and imprisoned in 1989 immediately after the massacre and arrested and jailed again in 1995 for his continued political activism and released and exiled to the United States in 1998, in his latest memoir *Cong Liu-si dao liuwang* 從六四到流亡 [from June Fourth to exile] (2012)⁹⁷ in which there were objections from some quarters among the academics during the approval process for him to teach at Taiwan's National Cheng Kung University in 2011 presumably for fear of adverse effect on the university's academic collaboration with China, leading him to caution about the inclination of "Hongkongization" in Taiwan (in the form of "not to make the Mainland unhappy" kind of self-constraint taking root) and its impact on Taiwan's political development (Wang, 2012: 395-396). This is definitely not alarmist talk – just witness the sudden "Sunflower Movement" that was sweeping Taipei through March-April 2014, led by hundreds of thousands of student protesters enraged by President Ma Ying-jeou 馬英九's "Politburo-esque maneuver"⁹⁸ to enact a trade pact with China to

open up the island state's service industries without fulfilling the promise to allow a clause-by-clause review before implementation. The ultimate source of the protest movement is the increasing wariness felt by Taiwan's younger generation of, besides and more than the economic impacts of effective merging the two economies through the trade pact, the foreboding sense of China's incremental political control over Taiwan and the "Hongkongization" of Taiwan's hard-won democracy.

Paralleled to such covert operations to put dissidents overseas under tight Chinese surveillance is the escalating influence the Chinese government is exerting on free academic enquiry overseas, leading to self-censorship of academics critical about China's human rights violations and brutal repression of dissent. To be able to engage in free academic enquiry, and to live the life of an intellectual with dignity, "one had to make the presumption of freedom. And a further presumption: that one's work would be treated as having been created with integrity." (Rushdie, 2012, ppb 2013: 117) It is precisely such presumptions on the part of the world's academia that has been increasingly eaten away in the relentless drive of extraterritorial academic cooptation through huge deployment of funding, propaganda and manpower in the name of academic and educational exchange to move academics to shy away from speaking openly about human rights violations in China proper and in the frontier regions under CCP's military occupation, CCP's political authoritarianism and suppression of civil liberties and political rights; in short, anything deemed by Beijing as "sensitive subjects".

6.2. Confucius Institutes: Cultural Schools or "Trojan Horses with Chinese Characteristics"?

Bloomberg reported in November 2011 that when Hanban 汉办, formally named the Office of Chinese Language Council International, a government-affiliated group under the Chinese education ministry, which has spent at least US\$500 million since 2004 establishing 350 Confucius Institutes worldwide, offered Stanford University US\$4 million to host a Confucius Institute on Chinese Language and Culture and endow a professorship with a caveat that the professor was not supposed to discuss delicate issues such as Tibet, "Stanford refused,

citing academic freedom, and Chinese officials backed down”. Nevertheless, the university then “plans to use the money for a professorship in classical Chinese poetry, far removed from the Tibet dispute.”⁹⁹ On the other hand, the same Bloomberg report cited that when the University of Chicago created a Confucius Institute in 2009-2010, “more than 170 faculty members signed a petition objecting to it as an ‘academically and politically ambiguous initiative’ established without the faculty Senate’s consent.” The *Columbia Daily Spectator* reported such unease at Columbia University – one of the 20-odd U.S. colleges that opened Confucius Institutes in 2009 and 2010¹⁰⁰ – citing Professor Robert Barnett, the director of the Modern Tibet Studies Program, that “There is this strange silence about Tibet and other sensitive issues when it comes to Columbia, academics, and talks of China [...] The silences are a worry because they could be self-censoring.”¹⁰¹ This is even more troubling in view of the fact that the Chinese government “shut down the Modern Tibetan Studies Program’s study abroad program in Tibet in 2006, and several Columbia faculty members have been denied visas to China – including [Professor Andrew] Nathan, ever since the publication of his 2001 book [*The Tiananmen papers*] which included leaked Chinese government documents”¹⁰², the latter reflected a tactic the CCP regime is increasingly using to silent critics abroad¹⁰³ as well as to quash reporting on sensitive issues¹⁰⁴. Whether the tactic really works would of course depend on whether the foreign scholar or the foreign news agency involved would choose to acquiesce and self-censor for the sake of a visa.

In mid-June 2014 the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), a 47,000-member association which was founded in 1915 to guard academic freedom, accused the Confucius Institutes which “function as an arm of the Chinese state” of flouting basic rules of academic freedom and integrity, and called for the agreements between Confucius Institutes and close to 100 universities in the United States to be either cancelled or renegotiated to ensure that the value of free speech would be safeguarded. Otherwise, in its strong-worded statement, the authoritative AAUP urged universities in the United States to “cease

their involvement” with the Confucius Institutes as most “agreements establishing Confucius Institutes feature nondisclosure clauses and unacceptable concessions to the political aims and practices of the government of China”, while the academic activities “are under the supervision of Hanban, a Chinese state agency which is chaired by a member of the Politburo and the vice-premier of the People’s Republic of China”.¹⁰⁵ “Specifically,” said the AAUP statement, “North American universities permit Confucius Institutes to advance a state agenda in the recruitment and control of academic staff, in the choice of curriculum, and in the restriction of debate.”¹⁰⁶

Similarly, the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) has earlier urged all Canadian universities to sever all ties with the Confucius Institutes as these on-campus institutions were playing “too close a role in the development of university curricula” and bringing about a “fundamental violation of academic freedom”. “Simply put,” said CAUT executive director James Turk in a 17th December 2013 statement, “Confucius Institutes are owned and operated by an authoritarian government and beholden to its politics.”¹⁰⁷ The University of Manitoba had earlier declined offers for a Confucius Institute “because of worries about the potential whitewashing of controversial subjects such as Taiwan or the Tiananmen Square massacre”, and another Canadian university, McMaster University, announced plans in February 2013 to “shut down its Confucius Institute due to concerns, raised in an Ontario Human Rights tribunal case, that the school required instructors to swear not to be members of Falun Gong”.¹⁰⁸

In a testimony paper aptly titled “Confucius Institutes: Trojan horses with Chinese characteristics” presented to the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the United States House of Representatives on 28th March 2012, American social scientist Steven Westley Mosher representing the Population Research Institute pointed out that the Confucius Institutes’ “seemingly benign purpose leaves out a number of purposes both salient and sinister, namely, sanitizing China’s image abroad, enhancing its ‘soft power’ globally, and creating a new generation of China watchers who [are] well-disposed towards the Communist dictatorship.” At the outset of his



testimony, Mosher – who in 1979 was the first American social scientist to visit mainland China and the first research student from the United States to conduct anthropological research in post-Cultural Revolution rural China, and whose expulsion from Stanford University's Ph.D. programme in the mid-1980s became a cause célèbre in the academic world – gave his personal “experience in how the Chinese Party-State deals with its overseas academic critics”:

Following my expose of human rights abuses in China's one-child policy in the early eighties, the PRC, acting through the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, put tremendous pressure on my university, Stanford University, to deny me the Ph.D. Beijing went so far as to threaten to abrogate its scholarly exchange program with the U.S. unless I was, in its words, “severely punished” for speaking out. In other words, I know from personal experience how ruthless the CCP can be when it comes to pursuing its own interests and how sycophantic, not to say craven, some academic administrators can be.

Even for those who are disposed to see in this a person with an axe to grind, it would not be easy to dismiss the facts that Mosher, currently the president of the Population Research Institute, presented:

While the Confucius Institutes are sometimes compared to France's Alliance Française and Germany's Goethe-Institut, this is misleading. Unlike the latter, Confucius Institutes are neither independent from their government, nor are [sic] do they occupy their own premises. Instead, they are located within established universities and colleges around the world, and are directed and funded by the so-called Office of Chinese Language Council International (Hanban), located in Beijing, which answers in turn to the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China and, chiefly, to the United Front Work Department of the Chinese Communist Party. In fact, the Chairman of the Confucius Institute is none other than Liu Yandong, who served as the head of the United Front Work Department from 2002 to 2007.

On the United Front Work Department, as well as the “democratic parties” (*minzhu dangpai*) referred to earlier in this paper, Mosher went on to explain:



The purpose of the United Front Work Department, it should be noted, is subversion, cooption and control. During the Communist revolution, it subverted and coopted a number of other political parties, such as the Chinese Socialist Party, into serving the interests of the Communist Party. After the establishment of the PRC, it continued to control these parties, which were allowed to exist on sufferance, albeit as hollow shells, to create the illusion of “democracy” in China. That it has *de facto* control over the Hanban suggests, more strongly than anything else, what one of the chief purposes of the Confucius Institutes are, namely, to subvert, coopt, and ultimately control Western academic discourse on matters pertaining to China.

In their paper “China’s united front work in civil society: The case of Hong Kong” (2013), Wai-man Lam and Kay Chi-yan Lam of the University of Hong Kong pointed out that

To strengthen its rule, China has actively promoted patriotism in the form of “China can say no” and rejection of foreign intervention. In addition, it has attempted to develop a set of standards different from the West, so that it would not be evaluated on the same ground as in liberal democracies. Series of attempts have been made to deny the relevance of certain Western concepts, notably human rights and democracy.

(Lam and Lam, 2013: 304)

Such concern over educational institutions serving willingly as vehicles for State-guided propaganda of a regime paranoiacally suspicious of free critical inquiry beyond its control could indeed be grave in view of their potential influence on the outlook and orientation of the human agency. Herein also lies the danger of the current fashionable glorification of the “Beijing Consensus” (à la Joshua Cooper Ramo, 2004) or a “China Model” – whose onslaught has seen the effective discrediting of the Chinese democracy movement, in-exile or domestic – which represents not solely a domestic tragedy of this huge nation of 1.3 billion people who constitute one fifth of humanity. On the contrary, governments of developing countries around the world which are tired of the West



criticizing and censuring them for their despotism, cronyism and corruption increasingly see China “as a new and unquestionable paradigm of efficiency”, and as Juan Pablo Cardenal and Heriberto Araújo add in the epilogue of the report of their field survey in over 25 countries concerning China’s expanding influence in the world:

As if that were not enough, this new world leadership is being run by an emerging country – one of their own – which is also prepared to lend money, make investments and reinforce political ties without imposing any conditions or asking any awkward questions. Therefore democracy, the albeit imperfect system which has brought more prosperity, well-being, justice, liberty and equality to human life than any other idea conceived by Man, now finds itself having to compete with the ‘Beijing Consensus’, as the Chinese model has been labeled.

(Cardenal and Araújo, 2011, tr. 2013, 2014: 262)

The increasing influence and acceptance of the so-called “Beijing Consensus” or “China Model” is tantamount to a subliminal universal acceptance of an authoritarian, repressive political model of development where economic advancement takes unquestionable precedence over liberal democracy, free political choice, free speech and human dignity (see Professor Yan Xuetong’s “policy that benefits the people *is* human right” argument referred to earlier in this paper). The also currently fashionable so-called “soft power” (à la Joseph S. Nye, Jr, 1990, 2004) projection of China includes such politico-cultural outposts like these over 360 Confucius Institutes and over 500 Confucius classrooms worldwide, but language teaching and learning is never purely about language, for it inevitably embodies the inculcation of not only cultural values but subliminal political brainwashing through textbooks (including what is omitted in them) and “cultural immersion programmes”, as Steven Mosher’s testimony reminded us: “It is naïve to think that teachers trained in the PRC will limit themselves to teaching language and cultural programs, while avoiding such controversial subjects as China’s military buildup, its abysmal human rights record, and its disdain for democracy. Such subjects invariably come up in the classroom, and Beijing’s trained cadre of ‘language teachers’ will know



exactly how to allay the concerns of their young and impressionable charges.” Remember, as mentioned earlier in this paper, how the teaching material “China Model National Conditions Teaching Manual” for Hong Kong’s school curriculum Moral and National Education proposal unabashedly refers to the Chinese Communist Party as an “advanced, selfless and united ruling group” (進步、無私與團結的執政集團) while denouncing the multi-party system of the United States.

6.3. Yu Ying-shih’s Take on Confucius Institutes

Yu Ying-shih 余英時 is an Emeritus Professor of East Asian Studies and History at Princeton University who has taught at three Ivy League universities (Princeton, Harvard, and Yale) and the University of Michigan and had been the president of New Asia College, Hong Kong, and vice-chancellor of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. He was named on 15th November 2006 the third recipient of the John W. Kluge Prize for lifetime achievement in the study of humanity. Professor Yu has always advocated, in the face of the conventional generalization on Confucianism, that liberal Confucian values unshackled by imperial ideology of the dynasties are not incompatible with democracy. He had been a vocal critic of the authoritarian Taiwanese government on the Kaohsiung/Formosa Incident (高雄 / 美麗島事件 , 1979) and provided strong, vocal and concrete support for China’s democracy movement following the 1989 Beijing massacre. The Princeton China Initiative (普林斯頓中國學社), fruit of Yu and his wife’s indefatigable efforts, became an unforgettable post station and asylum for many exiled intellectuals and student leader following the Beijing massacre. As revealed in an interview, the 19-year-old son of Yu’s female cousin was killed near the Chang’an Jie¹⁰⁹ 長安街 (literally “Street of Eternal Peace”), the main theatre of the June Fourth massacre that spanned across Beijing when People’s Liberation Army (PLA) troops fired into the crowds blocking their advance towards Tiananmen Square during that fateful night of 3rd-4th June 1989.

On 22nd March 2012, Yu Ying-shih was interviewed at Princeton by writer Bei Ming 北明, programme host of Radio Free Asia, for his opinions on the Confucius Institutes.¹¹⁰ Regarding why a regime which

has not been known to be attaching primary importance to humanistic culture or education (witness the first thirty years' political campaigns and strengthening of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist hybrid ideology during the CCP's six-decade reign and the second thirty years' rugged materialism under economic reform) is now backing the global dissemination of the Chinese language with national strength, Yu saw the motivation as twofold. The first is for commercial convenience especially in the initial stage of the Confucius Institute initiative, since the ancient Chinese teacher and philosopher Confucius¹¹¹ 孔子 is well-known to the outside world and the name of Marxist-Leninism was getting inconvenient, and hence exploiting the name of Confucius would create an illusion that the CCP has changed and is now identifying with something quintessentially Chinese. The deception is reflected in the fact that Confucian studies organizations like the International Confucian Association (国际儒学联合会 / 国际儒联) etc. are all civil or semi-civil organizations and no CCP leaders even including Wen Jiabao who had tried so hard to cultivate for himself the image of a traditional humanistic Chinese patriarch had ever dared to openly praise Confucius or promote Confucianism, and that a colossal statue of Confucius which appeared in January 2011 on Tiananmen Square was removed in hardly three months after intense backlash from inside the CCP. Hence, exploiting the name of Confucius to popularize the Chinese (Mandarin) language has nothing to do with ideology.

Besides the economic, commercial reason, there is also a political dimension of the Confucius Institute initiative – that of the United Front Work. While there have even been accusations from Western governments and scholars alleging Confucius Institutes being involved in espionage, the more apparent victim of the Confucius Institutes is academic freedom, according to Yu. Huge fundings have been used for political purposes, as foreign universities including those in the United States, United Kingdom, Sweden, etc. are being “bought up” as the Confucius Institutes make inroads into these higher education institutions. Such fundings have been used to, through unwritten conditions, dissuade the beneficiary universities from employing or inviting academics who are considered “anti-PRC”. This has led to an

atmosphere of intimidation preventing academics from voicing anti-CCP opinions, especially among those who are yet to receive long-term tenure.

While considering the political motive of Confucius Institutes to have already overtaken the commercial, Yu did not agree with certain worries on the part of some Western, Indian and Japanese media circles that along with Chinese language teaching, certain ideology, presumably Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, is being imparted. Yu felt that this is totally impossible as there should be absolutely no such intention on the part of the Chinese authorities as even the CCP government itself no longer believes in the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ideology and hardly ever brought it up. The only concrete thing the CCP government now believes in is its absolute political power – the Chinese Communist Party’s continued unchallenged one-party rule (*yidang zhuanzheng* 一党专政) – that is intricately linked to huge pecuniary interests of the élites from the party leaders’ families to the PLA. This is the bottom line that cannot be abandoned. This is what China wants countries all over the world to accept: CCP’s *yidang zhuanzheng* is Chinese democracy, or “socialist democracy with Chinese characteristics”; and CCP’s *yidang zhuanzheng* is closely related to Chinese traditions, to Confucius. What is intrinsically the most attractive part of Confucius for the CCP when it is promoting the name of the sage? It has to be Confucius’ teaching of not to defy one’s superiors and start a rebellion – that emphasis on reverence and obedience based on the feudal social order of human relationship and filial piety. On the contrary, the Confucian insistence on the critique of political power and the contingent nature of political mandate, as well as the emphasis on the voice of the people in governance and the importance of public discourse and individual responsibility for social action have to be conveniently ignored or given a warped reinterpretation. What the CCP has been selectively promoting is the era-specific imperial dynasty-serving decadent feudalistic component of Confucianism – the same kind of ancient holy laws being promoted by religious fundamentalists as heavenly mandated and hence infallible. These constituted the “Confucian shop” (*Kongjiadian* 孔家店) that the May Fourth Movement (*Wu-si Yundong* 五四運動, 1919) had aimed to

destroy. “The CCP is reopening the *Kongjiadian* because its *Majiadian* 马家店 (‘Marxist shop’) has failed miserably,” quipped Yu.

In terms of management, unlike the British Council, the Goethe-Institut or formerly the United States Information Agency, the currently over 360 Confucius Institutes and over 500 Confucius classrooms are aggressively infiltrating universities all over the world and directly represent China’s United Front Work backed by huge funding to make political inroads into the core of the foreign, especially Western, universities in an effort to alter the international, Western in particular, views on the CCP regime. Funding from the CCP regime through the Confucius Institutes is increasingly controlling the direction of Western research on contemporary China. As such external fundings mean a lot to cash-trapped universities, especially State universities, in times of economic recession and education budget cuts, they work to create campus environments more and more untenable for academics with anti-CCP regime viewpoints and lead to the muzzling of the harsh critics of the PRC who are now in fear of not getting long-term tenures due to their open criticism of the CCP regime. In other words, the United Front Work through the Confucius Institutes is implanting a perception that the CCP’s one-party rule is most suitable for China. The CCP is not asking anybody to accept the Marxist-Leninist ideology which it is not even mentioning, observed Yu, but there is only one main thing one has to accept: there is only the rule of the Communist Party of China, and that is the only true order of things, right and proper, perfectly justified, and this is in line with Chinese historical traditions and perfectly in conformity with the teachings of Confucianism. The June 1989 Beijing massacre might not be right, but the CCP through its “soft power” is asking everyone to accept that the bloody crackdown was inevitable for the good of China.

On the other hand, Yu is critical of the view from some quarters that regardless of the ulterior motive of the CCP’s exploitation of the name of Confucius, it would always be a positive development for China to promote the name of Confucius at the expense of the Marxist-Leninist ideology. Instead, to Yu, by exploiting the name of Confucius, the CCP is giving Confucianism a “kiss of death” – the same negative impact as

bestowed by its warped, shameless reinterpretation to justify its own absolute political control upon a list of terms ranging from “People’s” to “democracy” to “human rights”. In other words, the CCP’s brazen usurpation of the name of Confucius for the Party’s own rebirth could lead to the destruction of Confucianism and the second death of Confucius. What the May Fourth Movement wanted to destroy in 1919 was neither Confucianism nor the name of Confucius, for whom the reformist leaders like Hu Shih 胡適 and Ch’en Tu-hsiu 陳獨秀 had great respect, but the repressive Confucian “religion” (*Kongjiao* 孔教), also derisively dubbed Confucian “shop” (*Kongjiadian*) – the use of Confucius’ name as a political instrument of the ruling class for the absolute subjugation of the masses through the indoctrination of unquestioning obedience, of the “three cardinal guides and five constant virtues”¹¹² of the era-specific, dogmatic, repressive “Confucian” ethical code of *mingjiao* 名教 (or *lijiao* 禮教) under the disguise of the quintessential Confucianism (*rujiao* 儒教). The Confucius Institute initiative represents the CCP’s reopening of the *Kongjiadian*, not to be taken by deception to be considered as efforts to revitalize Confucianism.

In summary, Yu reminds us that the Confucius Institutes have nothing to do with education or culture. They have never been aimed to promote education or culture, not even any ideology. Hence they also have nothing to do with ideology. On the contrary, they have everything to do with economic interest, with the political United Front Work of the CCP. The Confucius Institutes do not constitute, though widely mistaken to be, a cultural phenomenon, but political behaviour, pure and simple. Confucius Institutes are the old “Confucian shops” (*Kongjiadian*) with a new name. The CCP has managed to set up hundreds of such outlets overseas, and they are selling well.

6.4. Subliminal Universal Acceptance of Political Authoritarianism as Effectiveness of Soft Power

Similar concern, as that surrounding the Confucius Institutes, over the subliminal universal acceptance of political authoritarianism can be seen in the 2009 Nobel Literature Prize laureate Herta Mueller’s description

as a “catastrophe” the 2012 award of the same Prize to Mo Yan 莫言, vice-chairman of the Communist Party-backed, State-run Chinese Writers’ Association, whom she criticized as “celebrating censorship”.¹¹³ It made a mockery of the Nobel spirit indeed that this is the same Mo Yan who in 2011 joined a group of authors to transcribe by hand a 1942 speech by Mao Zedong on how art should serve Communism – a speech that began decades of government control over Chinese writers and artists. Some might see the award of the Nobel Prize in Literature to Mo Yan as reflecting a triumph of CCP’s effort in developing its soft power in the world, besides being an act of appeasement on the part of the Nobel committee and Sweden to mend relationship with the PRC after the confrontation resulted from the earlier award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Liu Xiaobo in 2010 and subsequent diplomatic and economic retaliation from the PRC (including “denying visas to Norwegian dignitaries and delaying shipments of Norwegian salmon for so long that the fish rotted before they could clear customs”¹¹⁴), hence vindicating the latter’s openly stated strategy to enhance culture as part of the soft power of China, a “factor of growing significance in the competition in overall national strength” – as described by former president Hu Jintao in a 2007 speech to the national congress of the CCP – a strategy probable best reflected by the Confucius Institutes.¹¹⁵

However, in the latest ranking of countries by soft power according to the British magazine *Monocle*, it seems that China, not being ranked among the top 20, would still have some way to go. According to this latest investigation by *Monocle* on soft power based on government standard, diplomatic facilities, cultural exports, educational capability, business environment, etc., topping the list in 2012 is the United Kingdom, followed by the United States, Germany, France, Sweden, Japan, Denmark, Switzerland, Australia, Canada and South Korea.¹¹⁶

That the recent claim of China’s increasing “soft power” is much overhyped can also be seen in the 2013 Country Ratings Poll of 25 countries and the European Union conducted by GlobeScan, an international polling firm, and the Programme on International Policy Attitudes at the University of Maryland for the BBC’s World Service which shows global views of China’s influence having deteriorated

sharply to reach their lowest level since the poll began in 2005, with positive views falling eight points to 42 per cent and negative views rising eight points to 39 per cent.. Perceptions of China are seen plunging markedly not only within the EU, expectedly worst in Japan (with only 5 per cent holding positive views against 64 per cent holding negative views), but also in China's regional neighbours which are not her traditional enemies, e.g., Australia (swinging around dramatically from the previous survey's 61 per cent positive and 29 per cent negative to this latest survey's 36 per cent positive and 55 per cent negative).¹¹⁷ Admitting that "the rating had put China in an 'embarrassing' position, compared to the nation's rising economic power and the national image it sought to project", sighed Professor Qiao Mu 乔木 of the Beijing Foreign Studies University (北京外国语大学), "It seems China is getting rich fast but its influence ranking is dropping dramatically [...] China is drawing more attention globally, for its increasing foreign aid and participation in international affairs, but now it turns out that the values and the political system China holds are not accepted by the world."¹¹⁸

The above observations on the Confucius Institute phenomenon inevitably lead us to question: is the 1989 Beijing massacre just an overhyped local hiccup in the long torturous process of a developing nation's modernization (albeit that of a huge nation comprising one fifth of humanity) and the hitherto forlorn struggle to end one-party authoritarianism in China just a local effort to bring about true political change in an East Asian state, or should the 1989 massacre in reality be seen to have implications much wider than that observed on a local national level and the struggle of this one fifth of humanity to be free from one-party authoritarianism be understood in a more global, long-term context, as pondered earlier in this paper? And if so, what role have the two tracks of Chinese NVA, the democracy movement and the *weiquan* activism, been so far playing in this larger-than-national struggle against authoritarianism, and is the seemingly forlorn struggle truly despondent?

7. Concluding Remarks

Putting aside the argument whether the CCP should really be credited so much for China's economic miracle in the recent decades, or rather the credit should be in the most part due to Chinese citizens' entrepreneurial spirit freed from the Maoist yoke since the late 1980s, it is an undeniable fact, even from the perspective of the most ardent detractors of the CCP regime, that the social changes the recent decades of astounding economic transformation had wrought upon China is reaping apart and reconstituting the social fabric of the vast nation. Against this backdrop, the following are several concluding remarks pertinent to the preceding analyses in the paper in conjunctive reading with the introductory article of this special issue.

7.1. *The Predominant Role of Economic Condition and Prospect*

Economic condition and prospect apparently played a large part in the failure of the 1989 student movement to ignite a nation-wide, society-pervasive uprising that would have even crossed the urban-rural divide. While it was a night of "*min bu wei si, naihe yi si ju zhi?*" (民不畏死，奈何以死惧之？[“the people have no fear of death, why threaten them with it?”]) against the State's instrument of carnage in Beijing on 3rd-4th June 1989, such manifestation of incredible valour was constrained to Beijing and there was in general no significant uprising elsewhere in support of the civil disobedience in Beijing, except for sporadic demonstrations in some cities in protest of the government's bloody crackdown in Beijing which were either brutally put down (as in Chengdu 成都 where at least 300 people were killed, according to Amnesty International) or more peacefully dispersed (e.g. in Shanghai 上海 where university students also took to the streets at the time of the Tiananmen demonstrations, Xi'an 西安, Wuhan 武汉 and Nanjing 南京).

Of course, this is not to say that there was no hidden sympathy even in the rural areas for the Beijing demonstrators and victims of the crackdown; otherwise the student leaders' and wanted activists' escape through the secret network under Operation Siskin to southern China and

then to Hong Kong would not have been possible. However, other than these, the lack of similar level of uprising outside Beijing should be noted. For China in 1989 was not an economic basket case but a nation in the fervency of reform – and full of hope. Just coming out from the Maoist barbaric cannibalistic horror (which was the one last horror – though probably one of the worst – in the torturous history that China had to endure from imperial time to the republican era), Deng Xiaoping's China while suffering from corruption, inequalities and urban hardship (even in these aspects it was not intolerable for the majority of the masses who would probably be willing to give Deng's reforms a shot at whatever cost) is still a place that was full of hope. The same sentiments still prevail today. After having gone through hell, a softer form of purgatory would taste like sweet heaven. As Professor Gerald Chan of the University of Auckland observes in the closing remarks of a recent article, "China can now afford to dream dreams, whereas in the recent past it has a lot of nightmares." (Chan, 2013: 13)

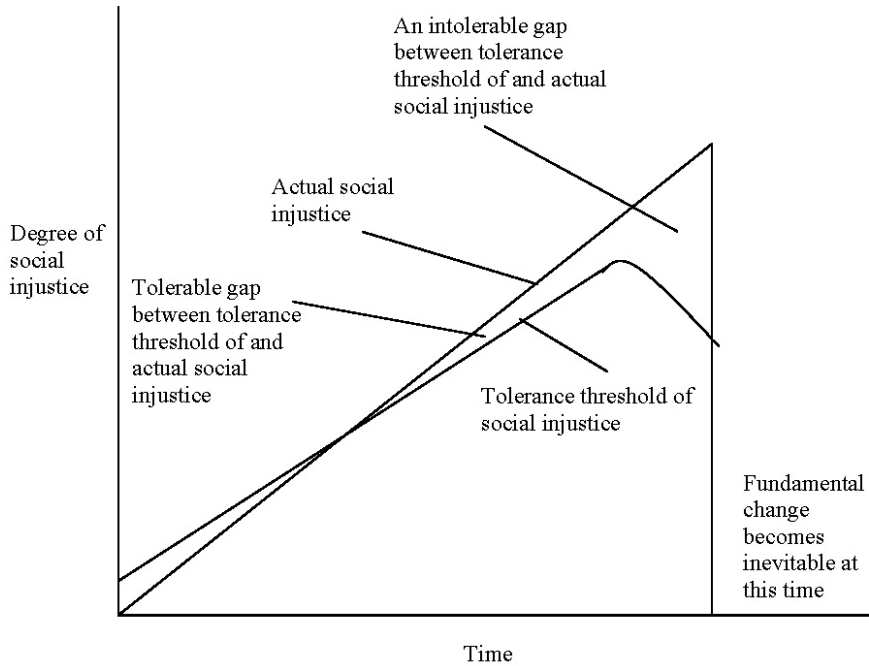
7.2. The Incredible Extent of Mass Acceptance of Authoritarianism in Exchange for Material Progress

Therefore, it could be said that one of the most negative legacies of June Fourth is that economic progress and miracles (and concomitant technological and military strength and pride) can be created by maintaining an authoritarian grip on political power, by suppressing free political choice and bypassing the messy democratic processes which, after all, could be argued as hugely inefficient for many developing countries that gravely lack the prerequisites for their correct execution. Hence, as we have seen earlier, the Beijing Consensus, the China Model (and the glamorous, spot-on 2008 Games of the XXIX Olympiad in Beijing, in comparison with, say, 2010's XIX Commonwealth Games in Delhi that came two years later) looks so attractive to many developing countries' dictatorships and flawed democracies. And to a great many Chinese citizens too, who are willing to be convinced by the government that the murderous crackdown in 1989 was for the good of the country, or as expressed in the blood-chilling words, attributed to Deng Xiaoping, that it was worth killing 20 *wan* 万 (i.e. 200 thousand) people to ensure

China's 20 years of stability – and prosperity. While resentment at the level of corruption and public office abuse and injustice could be draining support from the CCP, this should not be exaggerated. The damage this has done to the CCP as often emphasized by the exiled democracy activists and the Falungong movement could just be whimsical. The level of corruption and public office abuse, for a people who had suffered enough through the imperial time, warlord period, early republican era, and the Maoist excesses, seems tolerable, amidst unprecedented affluence, not only in the urban areas, but also in the rural townships. As illustrated in Figure 4, situation remains on the left-hand side of the point of intersection between actual social injustice and the tolerance threshold of it, i.e. with the former still well below the potential level which the people at large would no longer be able to tolerate.

Anti-corruption drives, whether during the Jiang Zemin era, or with the renewed zeal under the Xi Jinping administration, albeit often criticized as lacking in its thoroughness amidst corruption accusations aimed at the top leaders' families themselves, have seemed to be well appreciated by the people at large within the overall environment of economic efficiency and increasing national pride. It is within such atmosphere that the former, now exiled, leaders of the 1989 mass movement are forgotten, and calls for justice by victims of public office abuse and government-business collusion, and by the persecuted civil rights activists and rights defence lawyers are met with general apathy from those who are not directly victimized. Dominant group nationalism, whether its imaginary nemesis be Japan the World War II aggressor and Nanjing massacre perpetrator, America the "hegemonic" imperialist, or the "splittists" in Xinjiang, Tibet and Inner Mongolia, never fails to rally the Han 漢 / 汉 Chinese majority and even the overseas Chinese to defend the ruling Chinese Communist Party against political dissidents who are often seen as doing the rejuvenated nation a disservice by trying to destabilize the rule of the Party that has turned China from the "Sick Man of Asia" into the world's coming modern superpower.

Figure 4 Social Injustice under a Racketeer Government* and Fundamental Change



Note: *For the concept of a “racketeer government” and the monopolizing of violence, see page 227 of the introductory article of this special issue.

Source: Yeoh (2012: 470), Figure 8. Based on Davies’s J-Curve Theory of Revolution. See Vander Zanden (1988: 584), Figure 21.2 (adapted from Davies, 1962: 6, Figure 1).

As the CCP’s authoritarian grip on China is growing stronger, PRC’s international economic, military and diplomatic clout continue to rise, and civil societal protests against CCP’s “democracy, Chinese style”, whether from China’s exiled democracy movement or domestic *weiquan* activism, continue to wane or to be crushed into oblivion, a myth seems to be increasingly taking hold: the struggle for a free society

in China with political rights and civil liberties of all citizens fully protected from State ruthlessness and with multi-party representative democracy firmly established looks increasingly forlorn, as the PRC's growing strength is ensuring the CCP's one-party authoritarianism very long-term staying power. There is a bon mot that some ascribe to the ancient Chinese military general, strategist and philosopher Sun Tzu¹¹⁹ 孫子, some to Confucius and some say is a Japanese proverb: "If you sit by the river long enough, you will see the body of your enemy float by."¹²⁰ It is true that the year 2013's Gini coefficient of 0.473 announced by the National Bureau of Statistics of the People's Republic of China in January 2014 which was the lowest in the past ten years has been suspected of underestimation by many scholars and experts outside China¹²¹, while a recent April 2014 report from the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research gives China's Gini today at around 0.55¹²², compared to 0.45 in the United States. Yet, ironically, despite such growing socioeconomic inequality, in the current environment of a PRC growing fast to be a world superpower with continued strengthening of her economy and the well recognized, truly remarkable success of her poverty reduction efforts, the acute power asymmetry – as depicted in Figure 1 and Figure 6 in the introductory article of this special issue (p. 203 and p. 225) – between the increasingly formidable Party-State and the political dissidents who seem to look set to continue their descent into oblivion and irrelevance is making the body that could float by less and less likely to be that of the authoritarian regime. Despite the subjective hopes and aspirations that persist in the dreams of the advocates of democracy and social justice, there is no fortunate cosmic alignment apparent to spell an imminent death of this one-party authoritarian regime which, as ruthless and repugnant as it is, is increasingly adept and innovative along Dobson's "learning curve" in its catch-all Bonapartist cooptation of societal interests – a benevolent *dictablanda*¹²³ ever willing to expand societal freedom, as long as doing so would not jeopardize its political monopoly and the concomitant private interests of the ruling élites, in a social contract that the civil society is dictated to accept – in the foreseeable decades.

7.3. Revolutionary Changes Still Could Come Unawares

Although just like the other authoritarian regimes, the CCP is using a variety of methods to protect and continue its one-party rule, including severe news surveillance and censorship and tight control of the social media (including the blocking of popular foreign social media websites of Facebook, Twitter and Google's YouTube), as William Dobson, author of *The dictator's learning curve* (2012) reminds us, revolutionary changes could still pop up when you are least aware of it.¹²⁴

In 1949, Kuomintang (KMT) leader Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek 蔣介石 retreated with a significant amount of gold and approximately 2 million Nationalist refugees to the small island of Taiwan where he established a hard-line authoritarian regime, shortly following the 228 Massacre of 1947 (二二八大屠殺). The White Terror (白色恐怖) to which Taiwan was consigned after the massacre was one of the longest martial law periods in world history, as tens of thousands of Taiwanese were imprisoned and executed under the grim eye of the Taiwan Garrison Command secret police body. Who in that era could have predicted the day would come when four decades later President Chiang Ching-kuo 蔣經國 (son of Chiang Kai-shek) and Taiwan's ensuing leaders¹²⁵ would successfully facilitate a bloodless and relatively peaceful democratic transition by imposition for their nation and turn the de facto independent island state into one of the most vibrant democracies in the world and a best-case paragon of civil liberties and political rights-respecting free society? Similarly, who could have predicted even in the 1980s that Mikhail Gorbachev's *perestroika* would eventually bring about the downfall of Communist Party totalitarianism in Russia, the rest of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and the disintegration of the Russian-dominated Soviet Union, hence liberating the many long-tortured subordinate nationalities from the "prison of nations". This is of course from the point of view of those who are unwilling to be blinded by the central State dominant nationalism, and who are ready to admit that, despite being lamented by the Russians, this represents a liberation well cherished from the perspective of the non-Russian citizens of the Soviet Union, who have long languished under Leninist-Stalinist totalitarianism, not to mention particularly the horrors



of the Stalin years, ever since the days their quest for national self-determination was hijacked by the Bolsheviks.¹²⁶

7.4. Ripples in Time ...

There is an interesting description of the Tiananmen Square, the centre of the 1989 demonstrations and the ultimate target of the brutal crackdown after the massacres elsewhere in Beijing of valiant citizens who went to streets to block the advancing tanks and armoured vehicles of the PLA, in *Chinese Whispers* (2013) by Ben Chu, the economics editor of *The Independent*:

To stand at the north end of Tiananmen Square in Beijing is to straddle the historical fault line that separates two Chinas. To the north is the opulent and vermilion-walled Forbidden City, the enormous palace complex constructed by the Ming emperors in the fifteenth century. To the south lies the almost equally vast concrete expanse of Tiananmen Square, one of the largest public spaces in the world, commissioned by Mao Zedong. The architecture comes from two profoundly different eras, one imperial, the other Communist, and yet the sensation for the individual as he gazes north, and then south, is rather similar. The scale of both the square and the palace is intimidating. Both, in their own ways, project a cold and ruthless power. Both plant a feeling of insignificance into the soul of the individual. On this spot the Wittfogel proposition, that Chinese political history is one long and seamless story of autocracy, feels plausible.

(Chu, 2013: 82-83)

Chu is referring to the historian Karl Wittfogel who identified a connection between ancient “hydraulic empires” and modern China’s (and Russia’s) bureaucratic totalitarianism, and saw Mao’s CCP, despite all its modern trappings, as merely the latest imperial dynasty to rule China through the same technique he termed “oriental despotism”¹²⁷ as practiced by the former emperors. Chu notes that Wittfogel, himself a refugee from Nazi Germany, was following a long dismal tradition which can be traced back to the Enlightenment political philosopher



Montesquieu and the Victorians and had hence projected a perpetual nightmare (Chu, 2013: 231).

It is true that symbolic protest actions as in Rangoon in 1988 and Beijing in 1989, while having a tremendous moral and psychological impact and arousing major national and international attention, as Gene Sharp reminds us, are by themselves “unlikely to bring down a dictatorship, for they remain largely symbolic and do not alter the power position of the dictatorship” (Sharp, 2010: 61). Yet despite all the dismal projections and series of heart-rending disappointment, probably it would be mildly encouraging to note that a key element in this causation is the perspective of time frame. “The air does not cease to have weight, although we no longer feel that weight”, says Émile Durkheim (1895)¹²⁸. Under brutal repression, simmering ripple effects take time to break through the surface to eventuation through an often slow, meandering process of fermentation or even metamorphosis while brewing social forces bringing along subliminal emergent changes (as depicted in Figure 4 in the introductory article of this special issue, p. 215) continue to threaten to subvert the stability of well laid-out projectable changes envisaged by the ruling regime; hence patience is called for. While there might not be enough ripples to momentarily change the tide of events for a country as huge as China and a ruling party as entrenched as CCP, one may recall the theoretical example given by the “butterfly effect” of the late American mathematician and meteorologist Professor Edward Norton Lorenz, who was professor emeritus at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and a pioneer of the chaos theory, in which the formation of a hurricane is being contingent on whether or not a butterfly somewhere far away had flapped its wings a couple of weeks earlier. The recent positive developments in democratic reform in Burma came more than two decades after the “8888” (8th August 1988) Rangoon massacre. The painful memory of the June 1989 Beijing massacre was but just 25 years old. The brutal reign of the Soviet Communists lasted just seven decades, compared to its predecessor, the three-century long Romanov dynasty. The rule of the CCP has just been over six decades, a speck in the millennia-long history of Chinese dynasties, mostly each lasting a few centuries. To judge the success and



failure of social action, a right perspective on time is pertinent, as the literary world's most well-known fugitive from dogmatic terror illustrates on the resiliency of art: "The poet Ovid was exiled by Caesar Augustus to a little hellhole on the Black Sea called Tornis. He spent the rest of his days begging to be allowed to return to Rome, but permission was never granted. So Ovid's life was blighted; but the poetry of Ovid outlasted the Roman Empire. The poet Mandelstam died in one of Stalin's labor camps, but the poetry of Mandelstam outlived the Soviet Union. The poet Lorca was killed by the Falangist thugs of Spain's Generalissimo Franco, but the poetry of Lorca outlived Franco's tyrannical regime."¹²⁹ The same for today's exiled dissidents and those physically stay back in China but intellectually exiled from the land where citizens are compelled to trade political freedom and civil liberties for lucre and security. The struggle for political freedom, civil liberties and social justice may continue to seem forlorn in the short term, but the last page of the seemingly Sisyphean endeavour will forever remain unwritten, so long as commitment and conviction remain steadfast for these social actors who would not allow an authoritarian regime "to draw lines in the sand and order them not to cross."¹³⁰

Notes

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1. Aldous Huxley, *Brave new world*, London: Chatto & Windus Ltd, 1932, republished with a 1946 “Foreword” by author, by Harper & Bros., New York and London, 1946, and Granada Publishing Limited, London, 1977, p. 14.

2. Leading intellectual dissident activist from the 1989 Tiananmen demonstrations and hunger strikes to Charter 08 – for which he was sentenced to 11 years of imprisonment – Liu Xiaobo was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize on 8th October 2010 but was unable to receive it as he was serving his 11-year sentence. He received his Ph.D. from the Beijing Normal University in 1988 with his thesis “*Shenmei yu ren de ziyou* 审美与人的自由” [aesthetics and human freedom].
3. Or officially the “Communist Party of China” (CPC, 中国共产党).
4. Salman Rushdie, *Joseph Anton: A memoir*, Random House, New York, 2012, Random House Trade Paperback Edition, 2013, p. 188.
5. George Orwell (Eric Blair), *Nineteen Eighty-four*, Martin Secker & Warburg, London, and Harcourt, New York, 1949, re-published by Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, 1954, p. 213.
6. *Ibid.*: 214.
7. Martin Jacques, *When China rules the world: The rise of the Middle Kingdom and the end of the Western world*, London: Allen Lane, 2009.
8. Tiananmen 天安门, i.e. Tian'an Gate (gate of heavenly peace).
9. Gene Sharp, *From dictatorship to democracy: A conceptual framework for liberation*, 4th U.S. edition, The Albert Einstein Institution, Boston, Massachusetts, 2010 (originally published in Bangkok in 1993 by the Committee for the Restoration of Democracy in Burma; 1st U.S. edition, 2002), pp. 7-8. Multiple-time nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize, Gene Sharp is the Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. Sharp received his Ph.D. in political theory from Oxford University in 1968.
10. A glass factory worker who was first arrested in 1983 for organizing the Mutual Aid Association of Shaoyang Workers (邵阳市工人互助会) under the influence of the Beijing Spring (Xidan 西单 Democracy Wall) and Poland's Solidarność, and who during the tumultuous months of 1989 organized and chaired the independent workers' union of Shaoyang city (邵阳市工自联) and led workers' demonstrations in support of the students' protests in Beijing, Li Wangyang was arrested on 9th June 1989 immediately after the Beijing massacre and jailed for 13 years for “anti-revolutionary propaganda and instigation” and released on 8th June 2000 blind and deaf and in extremely poor health, after enduring long years of beating and torture in jail, but was soon jailed again in 2001 for 10 years for “subverting government institution” and under continued surveillance upon release in May 2011.

11. The torture of Li Wangyang included the use of the inhuman undersized handcuffs and pincers and repeated solitary confinement (sometimes for as long as three months) in the dark, hot, smelly and lice-, fly- and mosquito-infested “coffin cabin” of just 2 metres x 1 metre x 1.6 metres and being long shackled with rusty fetters weighing over 50 kilogrammes that caused terrible festering and ulceration from ankles to haunches, according to the Hong Kong-based 中國人權民運信息中心 (ODN, 14th June 2012). (东方日报 / *Oriental Daily News* / ODN is a Malaysian daily in Chinese, with China news sources mainly from the Hong Kong and Taiwan media.)
12. http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=IK47hlQtCQ0
13. Such doubts include the fact that the death scene photographs show that Li’s legs did not leave the floor and his hand was on the window frame, the white bandage strip around Li’s neck was not tightened and the loop was too small to fit his head, Li’s face showed no distortion and there was no trace of struggle as often with hanging, where the white bandage had come from as the bed sheet and blanket were not torn, how a blind and deaf person who could hardly walk without help managed to tie the strip on the window frame and on his neck to successfully commit suicide and how he did manage to commit suicide under the watchful eyes of as many as nine guards that night, whether it was the purpose of the hospital to let Li’s family see him having hanged himself the reason that it had chosen to notify the family first instead of taking him down urgently to resuscitate him, and whether the police was trying to hide something by urgently wresting his body away from his family. (ODN, 4th June 2012, 7th June 2012, 8th June 2012, 9th June 2012, 10th June 2012; 11th June 2012; 13th June 2012; *Bajiu Yidai Tongxun* 八九一代通讯 [89 generation bulletin], Issue 2, 30th May, 2012; “关于要求严肃调查李旺阳死亡真相的紧急呼吁 / Urgent appeal for credible investigation into the truth of Li Wangyang’s death”, initiated by journalist and human rights activist Bei Feng 北风 (Wen Yunchao 温云超), then Peking University’s economics professor Xia Yeliang 夏业良 and scholar of historic documentation (US) Wu Renhua 吴仁华, 6th June 2012 <<http://www.peacehall.com/news/gb/china/2012/06/201206070601.shtml>>)
14. “我撑故我在 A prayer for the wild at heart, kept in cage” <<http://pearlher.org/>>.
15. In this paper, following the US (rather than British) convention, billion = 1000,000,000 and trillion = 1000,000,000,000.
16. ODN, 22nd March 2014.

17. ODN, 28th March 2014, 12th April 2014.
18. ODN, 3rd September 2009.
19. Charter 08's suggestion of a Federal Republic of China – which was seen by the CCP as inciting splittism – was not new, though such schemes suggested in the past did vary in arrangement details. These included a prominent confederation proposal of a *Chunghua Lienpang Kunghekuo* 中華聯邦共和國 (“Federal Republic of China”), a “Third Republic” – the first republic being the *Chunghua Minkuo* 中華民國 (Republic of China) and the second, *Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo* 中华人民共和国 (People's Republic of China) – proposed by Yan Jiaqi 嚴家其 (1992) encompassing the “loose republics” of Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, Tibet, Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang (in an arrangement like that of the European Union) and “close republics” consisting of the rest of present-day China (in an arrangement akin to that of the United States). Yan obviously had in mind some sort of coexistence of federal and confederal systems within a single country.
20. “新公民运动是一场政治运动，中国必然要完成政治文明转型，建立民主法治健全的自由中国。新公民运动是一场社会运动，强权垄断、贪腐横行、贫富差距、教育失衡等问题的解决不仅靠民主政治制度，也要靠不断进行的社会革新运动，中国人必须告别臣民社会、关系社会，建设一个公平正义自由幸福的公民社会。新公民运动是一场文化运动，彻底改造腐朽、堕落、猥琐、敌意的专制文化，缔造“自由·公义·爱”新民族精神。” See Xu Zhiyong, “The New Citizens’ Movement in China”, translated by *seeingredinchina.com* (*China change: news and commentary from those who work for change*) <<http://chinachange.org/2012/07/11/china-needs-a-new-citizens-movement-xu-zhiyongs-%E8%AE%B8%E5%BF%97%E6%B0%B8-controversial-essay/>> from “中国新公民运动” (published on 15th November 2012 in 许志永文集) <http://xuzhiyong2012.blogspot.com/2012/11/blog-post_9281.html>.
21. “Xu Zhiyong, the quiet lawyer holding Beijing to account: the campaigner’s demands that officials obey the law have been met with fury” (by Tom Mitchell), *The Financial Times*, 24th January 2014. <<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/d9a136da-838d-11e3-86c9-00144feab7de.html#axzz31aLuJJfj>>
22. Emile Kok-Kheng Yeoh, “The long shadow of Tiananmen: Political economy of State-civil societal relations in the People’s Republic of China twenty-five years on” (editor’s introduction), *International Journal of China Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (June/August), 2014, Special Issue – *June Fourth at 25: The quarter-century legacy of Tiananmen*, pp. 197-275.

23. “‘Picking quarrels and provoking troubles’ – The crime sweeping China” (by Dexter Roberts), *Bloomberg Businessweek*, 12th May 2014. <<http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2014-05-12/picking-quarrels-and-provoking-troubles-the-crime-sweeping-china>>
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Ibid.*
26. “荒谬的判决，阻挡不了人类进步的潮流，共产专制的阴霾必将散去，自由公义的阳光，必将普照中华。” (ODN, 12th April 2014)
27. ODN, 27th May 2014.
28. *Ibid.*
29. The *New Statesman* is a British left-leaning political magazine founded in 1913. This issue guest-edited by Ai Weiwei represents the first time the *New Statesman* has produced a translated issue (*ibid.*).
30. “Ai Weiwei to guest-edit the *New Statesman*: Renowned artist becomes the eighth guest editor of the magazine” (by *New Statesman*), 7th October 2012 <<http://www.newstatesman.com/2012/10/ai-weiwei-guest-edit-new-statesman>>, <<http://www.absolutearts.com/artsnews/2012/10/08/artspublish/2348915712.html>>.
31. A yuan 元 of remimbi 人民币 is equivalent to about US\$0.161.
32. “我们不搞多党轮流执政，不搞指导思想多元化，不搞三权鼎立和两院制，不搞联邦制，不搞私有化。” – as stated by the NPC chairman Wu Bangguo 吴邦国 in the Report of the Eleventh National People’s Congress in 2011 (Liu, 2012: 10).
33. Also reported in 星洲日報 (*Sin Chew Daily*, a Malaysian newspaper). See “閩學通：各國標準不一 —— ‘利民政策就是人權’” [Yan Xuetong: there is no standard yardstick – “policy that benefits the people is human right”], 星洲日報 (*Sin Chew Daily*), 3rd June 2014 <<http://news.sinchew.com.my/node/368941?tid=1>>.
34. ODN, 11th June 2014; “Alarm in Hong Kong at Chinese white paper affirming Beijing control” (by Tim Hume), *CNN Global NewsView*, 11th June 2014 <<http://edition.cnn.com/2014/06/11/world/asia/hong-kong-beijing-two-systems-paper/index.html>>.
35. For full text of the White Paper “The practice of the ‘One Country, Two Systems’ policy in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region”, see *South China Morning Post* (Hong Kong), 10th June 2014 <<http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/1529167/full-text-practice-one-country-two-systems-policy-hong-kong-special>>.
36. Orwell, George (Eric Blair), *Nineteen Eighty-four*, London: Martin Secker & Warburg, and New York: Harcourt, 1949, re-published by Penguin

- Books Ltd, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, 1954, p. 257.
37. Cited by Dobson (2012), epigraph.
 38. Zhou Zhifa 周志发, *Rongcuoxing minzhu: Zhongguo tese minzhu lilun yanjiu* 容错性民主：中国特色民主理论研究 [mistake-tolerant democracy: a theoretical study on democracy with Chinese characteristics], Kunming: Yunnan Daxue Chubanshe 云南大学出版社, 2013.
 39. *ODN*, 5th June 2012.
 40. "Let the *hexie* spirit transcend the confrontational spirit of the three generations of conventional human rights, to cultivate and produce a new generation of human rights – the *hexie* rights (rights of harmony). *Hexie* rights will become the foundation stone and key element of the building of the *hexie shijie* (harmonious world)." ("以和谐精神超越传统三代人权的对抗精神，将化育出新一代人权——和谐权。和谐权将成为和谐世界建设的基石和要素。" See "法学专家徐显明提出第四代人权‘和谐权’" [legal expert Xu Xianming proposes the fourth-generation human rights "the rights to harmony"], 中国新闻网 / 腾讯网, 22nd November 2006 <<http://news.qq.com/a/20061122/002038.htm>>.)
 41. Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter opine that a transition from authoritarian rule could produce a democracy, but it could also terminate with a liberalized authoritarian regime (*dictablanda*) or a restrictive, illiberal democracy (*democradura*) (O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986: 9, cited in Diamond, 2002: 24). While shadows of the remnants of her ghostly past still linger to haunt the one-party State, there are already telling signs that the continuing transformation from a *dictadura* (dictatorship) into a *dictablanda* leading further to a highly restrictive *democradura* in the near future is the most possible direction the CCP regime is heading to and indeed planning to head to, given the fact that the Western, "bourgeois liberal" democracy (*democracia*) has already been ruled out of the cards, or at least not until mid-2000s. In fact, following Professor Zhou Tianyong from the Central Party School, China's authoritarian one-party political system will and should remain unchanged until at least 2037 (Zhou, Wang and Wang (eds), 2007: 2, 6, 45-46, see Bo, 2009: 10-11). This is in line with what Deng Xiaoping stated in 1987, that direct general elections could only be held after half a century had passed in the 2000s, and at the moment the country had to make do with indirect elections above the county level and direct elections only at county and below county level, given the colossal population and inadequate level of cultural quality of the people (Hu, Hu, He and Guo, 2009: 19-20, cited from 《邓小平文选》第3卷 [selected works of Deng Xiaoping, volume 3], Beijing: Renmin

- Chubanshe 人民出版社 1993 年版，第 220~221 页).
42. First written by Benjamin Franklin for the Pennsylvania Assembly in its *Reply to the Governor* (11th November 1755), with several paraphrased variants including: “Those who surrender freedom for security will not have, nor do they deserve, either one.” “Any society that would give up a little liberty to gain a little security will deserve neither and lose both.” “He who sacrifices freedom for security deserves neither.” etc.
 43. ODN, 7th February 2014.
 44. Or *Zuo Zhuan*.
 45. A continuation of such brutality climax in the death of Li Wangyang, which except for some street protests in Hong Kong, was largely met with apathy in China as well as the most parts of the Chinese émigrés.
 46. Or officially the “Kuomintang of China” (中國國民黨).
 47. See, e.g., Zhong Bo 鍾波’s “毛泽东：让日本多占地才爱国” [Mao Zedong: patriotism is to let the Japanese occupy more land] <<http://m.secrechina.com/node/408171>> and “日本侵华给毛泽东带来的好处” [how Mao Zedong benefited from the Japanese invasion of China] <<http://m.secrechina.com/node/407891>>.
 48. ODN, 9th February 2014.
 49. ODN, 7th February 2014, 9th February 2014.
 50. ODN, 7th February 2014. According to *The New York Times*, the *Jane's Defence Weekly* figures are much higher than China's government figures because the former Chinese military's research and development (R&D) spending and pension, etc. which are excluded by the latter. Also, China does not include in her military spending many items which are potentially military in nature, e.g., space programme and rocket programme. China officially announced in March 2014 a 12.2 per cent rise in military spending to 808.23 billion yuan (US\$131.57 billion) for 2014, without giving a breakdown of how that amount would be spent. (“A nervous region eyes robust Chinese response to missing Malaysian plane” (Reuters), *The Baltimore Sun*, 13th March 2014. <<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/nation-world/sns-rt-us-malaysia-airlines-china-response-analysis-20140313,0,2758820.story?page=1>>)
 51. ODN, 7th February 2014.
 52. South China Sea / Biển Đông (East Vietnam Sea) / West Philippine Sea.
 53. The Pinnacle Islands – a group of uninhabited islands currently controlled by Japan who calls them the Senkaku Islands 尖閣諸島, a part of Okinawa prefecture 沖縄県, but claimed by both the ROC and the PRC as the Diaoyutai Islands 釣魚台列嶼 / 钓鱼台群島, part of the Taiwan

- province. The largest island of the group is the Uotsuri Jima 魚釣島 / Diaoyu Dao 釣魚島。There are other similar military concerns, such as the June 2009 incident around the atoll of Okinotori-shima 沖ノ島島。Such thorny issues, together with the sensitive and complex entwinement of historical legacy and national honour and dignity such as that surrounding the Yasukuni Shrine (*Yasukuni Jinja* 靖国神社), serve well to illustrate how, almost seven decades after the end of World War II, shadow of the past still lingers to haunt the bilateral relations between these two East Asian powers.
54. "From Taiwan's perspective, the ROC Government was the first in the twentieth century to claim sovereignty over the Pratas Islands, Macclesfield Bank, the Paracel Islands, and the Spratly Islands, basing its claim on discovery and continuous patronage of these islands dating back to the first century. When the Spratly Islands were 'retroceded' to the ROC in 1946, the Kwangtung provincial Government was given jurisdiction over them. In 1947, the ROC Ministry of the Interior's subsequent proposal to the central Government to 'temporarily transfer jurisdiction of the islands to the ROC Navy' was approved. In addition, an official map titled as 'Map of the Location of the South China Sea Islands' was released that showed the Pratas Islands, Macclesfield Bank, Paracel Islands, and Spratly Islands within the 11-dotted U-shaped lines." (Sun, 2011: 3-4) See also Ts'ai (2014: 35). The nine-dash line (*jiu duan xian* 九段线) or U-shaped line (U 形線) is called đường lưỡi bò (牛舌線), i.e. "cow-tongue line", by the Vietnamese.
 55. "China risks Asean unease with patrol off M'sia" (Asia News Network), *The Straits Times*, 31st January 2014 <http://www.nationmultimedia.com/aec/China-risks-Asean-unease-with-patrol-off-Msia-30225664.html?utm_source=getresponse&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=rsis_publications&utm_content=RSIS+Fortnightly+Summary+%28Issue+71%29>; Carl Thayer, "Tensions set to rise in the South China Sea", *The Diplomat*, 19th February 2014 <<http://thediplomat.com/2014/02/tensions-set-to-rise-in-the-south-china-sea/>>.
 56. ODN, 31st May 2014.
 57. See " '中國外交遵循王道' —— 閻學通：現時成果未達理想" ["China's diplomacy follows the way of a (benevolent) king" – Yan Xuetong: with less than ideal outcomes at the present], 星洲日報 (*Sin Chew Daily*), 5th June 2014 <<http://news.sinchew.com.my/node/369299?tid=1>>.

58. The era-specific, dogmatic, repressive “Confucian” ethical code of *mingjiao* 名教 used to be upheld in feudal China under the disguise of the quintessential Confucianism (*rujiao* 儒教).
59. Raul (Pete) Pedrozo, “The South China Sea disputes: Formula for a paradigm shift? – a response”, *RSIS Commentaries* (S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore), 25th February 2014. <http://www.rsis.edu.sg/publications/Perspective/RSIS0392014.pdf?utm_source=google&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=rsis_publications&utm_content=RSIS+Commentary+039%2F2014+The+South+China+Sea+Disputes%3A+Formula+for+a+Paradigm+Shift%3F+-+A+Response+by+Raul+%28Pete%29+Pedrozo++++>
60. *Ibid.*
61. “A nervous region eyes robust Chinese response to missing Malaysian plane” (Reuters), *The Baltimore Sun*, 13th March 2014. <<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/nation-world/sns-rt-us-malaysia-airlines-china-response-analysis-20140313,0,2758820.story?page=1>>
62. Song Qiang 宋强 *et al.*, *Zhongguo keyi shuo bu* 中国可以说 [China can say “No”], Beijing: Zhonghua Gongshang Lianhe Chubanshe 中华工商联合出版社, 1996.
63. Aldous Huxley, *Brave new world revisited*, London: Chatto & Windus Ltd, 1959, re-published by Grafton Books, London, 1983, p. 79.
64. Cited in Song Xinwei 宋新伟, *Minzuzhuyi zai Zhongguo de shanbian* 民族主义在中国的嬗变 [the evolution of nationalism in China], Beijing: Shehuikexue Wenxian Chubanshe 社会科学文献出版社 (Social Sciences Academic Press), 2010, p. 264, from *Deng Xiaoping wenxuan* 邓小平文选 [selected works of Deng Xiaoping], Volume 3, Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe 人民出版社, 1993, pp. 331-332.
65. Cited in Song Xinwei (*op. cit.*: 264) from Song Qiang 宋强 *et al.*, *Zhongguo haishi neng shuo bu* 中国还是能说不 [China can still say “No”], Beijing: Zhongguo Wenlian Chuban Gongsi 中国文联出版公司, 1996, p. 405.
66. See, e.g., Zhong Bo 钟波’s “毛泽东：让日本多占地才爱国” [Mao Zedong: patriotism is to let the Japanese occupy more land] <<http://m.secretchina.com/node/408171>> and “日本侵华给毛泽东带来的好处” [how Mao Zedong benefited from the Japanese invasion of China] <<http://m.secretchina.com/node/407891>>.
67. *ODN*, 1st July 2011.
68. According to a 30th April 2012 Reuters report (see Hai Tao, 2012); see also report in *ODN*, 17th November 2012.

69. “Yi liyi biaoda zhiduhua shixian shehui de changzhijiu'an 以利益表达制度化实现社会的长治久安” [realizing society's long-term governance and stability by institutionalization of interest expression], cited in “Gonggong anquan zhangdan 公共安全账单” [bill of public security], *Caijing* 财经 [finance and economics], 9th May 2011.
70. Cai Shenkun 蔡慎坤, “Zhongguo teshe weiwen fuchu le duoda daijia 中国特色维稳付出了多大代价?” [what is the price of stability maintenance with special Chinese characteristics?], *Gongshiwang* 共识网, 10th May 2012.
71. Provincial-level administrative units in the People's Republic of China refer to the country's 31 *sheng* 省 (i.e. provinces of Anhui 安徽, Fujian 福建, Gansu 甘肃, Guangdong 广东, Guizhou 贵州, Hainan 海南, Hebei 河北, Heilongjiang 黑龙江, Henan 河南, Hubei 湖北, Hunan 湖南, Jiangsu 江苏, Jiangxi 江西, Jilin 吉林, Liaoning 辽宁, Qinghai 青海, Shaanxi 陕西, Shandong 山东, Shanxi 山西, Sichuan 四川, Yunnan 云南 and Zhejiang 浙江), *zizhiqu* 自治区 (i.e. “autonomous regions” – each a first-level administrative subdivision having its own local government, and a minority entity that has a higher population of a particular minority ethnic group – of Guangxi 广西 of the Zhuang, Nei Monggol/Inner Mongolia 内蒙古 of the Mongols, Ningxia 宁夏 of the Hui, Xizang/Tibet 西藏 of the Tibetans and Xinjiang 新疆 of the Uyghurs) and *zhixiashi* 直辖市 (i.e. municipalities directly ruled by the central government – Beijing 北京, Chongqing 重庆, Shanghai 上海 and Tianjin 天津).
72. *ODN*, 1st May 2012.
73. Anthony H. Cordesman, “Russia and the ‘Color Revolution’: A Russian military view of a world destabilized by the US and the West”, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Washington, DC, 28th May 2014. <<http://csis.org/publication/russia-and-color-revolution>>
74. *ODN*, 19th April 2014.
75. *ODN*, 9th November 2010.
76. “据报，习近平曾在全国宣传部长会议，公开呼吁中共全党「严防西方意识形态的影响渗透」，更将互联网列为「亡党亡国」大患，多次掀起「清网」行动。” (*ODN*, 29th April 2014)
77. *ODN*, 12th April 2014.
78. The colloquial term for the Ministry of Public Security's censorship and surveillance project officially called the “Golden Shield Project” (金盾工程).
79. Dubbed “*lūba* 滤霸” [filtering bully], this software was originally scheduled for compulsory installation by 1st July 2009 on all personal

computers entering the Chinese market. The attempt was later temporarily postponed following domestic and international outcry, and finally declared on 13th August to be abandoned except for those computers for public access in schools, cybercafés and other public places. (ODN, 10th June 2009, 15th August 2009)

80. ODN, 2nd July 2009.
81. ODN, 24th June 2011.
82. “微博鎮壓六四言論 創諧音詞破封鎖” [weibo suppresses June Fourth expression; create homophones to break through the blockade], *Ming Pao* 明報 (Hong Kong), 6th June 2010. <<http://www.aboluowang.com/2010/06/06/168645.html#sthash.v4G4btSi.dpbs>>
83. “China blocks all Google services ahead of Tiananmen Square anniversary”, *Revolution News*, 2nd June 2014. <<http://revolution-news.com/china-blocks-google-services-ahead-tiananmen-square-anniversary/>>
84. ODN, 25th May 2014.
85. “Tiananmen Square massacre: 180,000 attend Hong Kong candlelight vigil to mark 25th anniversary” (by Philip Wen), *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 5th June 2014. <<http://www.smh.com.au/world/tiananmen-square-massacre-180000-attend-hong-kong-candlelight-vigil-to-mark-25th-anniversary-20140605-zrxzi.html>>
86. *Ibid.*
87. ODN, 14th February 2014, 28th February 2014, 1st March 2014.
88. Such rumours, while highly convincing, were as usual unconfirmed, just like the alleged negotiations conducted in recent years by the State with the Mothers of Tiananmen on terms of compensation for death of their children in the 1989 massacre.
89. ODN, 20th May 2014.
90. ODN, 23rd April 2014.
91. “Chinese spies at Sydney University” (by John Garnaut), *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 21st April 2014. <<http://www.smh.com.au/national/chinese-spies-at-sydney-university-20140420-36ywk.html>>
92. *Ibid.*
93. *Ibid.*
94. Quoted in “N.Y.U., China, and Chen Guangcheng”, Letter from China – Dispatches from Evan Osnos, *The New Yorker*, 17th June 2013.
95. *Ibid.*
96. Wang Dan 王丹 received his Ph.D. in 2008 from Harvard University with his thesis “A Comparative Study of State Violence in Mainland China and Taiwan in the 1950s”.

97. Wang Dan 王丹, *Wang Dan huiyi lu: Cong Liu-si dao liuwang* 王丹回憶錄：從六四到流亡 [Wang Dan's memoir: from June Fourth to exile], Taipei: 時報文化出版企業股份有限公司 (China Times Publishing Company), 2012.
98. "Ma seems to have forgotten he's running a democracy, not a Communist Party precinct", commented William Pesek in "Is China losing Taiwan?", *BloombergView*, 1st April 2014 <<http://www.bloombergtview.com/articles/20140331/ischinalosingtaiwan>>.
99. "China says no talking Tibet as Confucius funds U.S. universities" (by Daniel Golden), *Bloomberg*, 1st November 2011. <<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-11-01/china-says-no-talking-tibet-as-confucius-funds-u-s-universities.html>>
100. *Ibid.*
101. "China-funded institute tests Columbia's commitment to academic integrity" (by Melissa von Mayrhauser), *Columbia Daily Spectator*, 11th November 2011.
102. *Ibid.*
103. Like Andrew Nathan and Perry Link, the two U.S. professors who co-edited *The Tiananmen Papers* (2001), who were denied visas to enter China, Professor Elliot Sperling from Indiana University was the latest in the list of academics to be denied entry to China – a tactic the CCP regime increasingly uses "as punishment against scholars, journalists and others who write or speak in ways that Chinese officials deem politically offensive" ("China denies entry to an American scholar who spoke up for a Uighur colleague" (by Edward Wong), *The New York Times*, 7th July 2014 <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/08/world/asia/us-scholar-who-supported-uighur-colleague-is-denied-entry-to-china.html?_r=1>). Sperling, who vocally supported Ilham Tohti (the moderate ethnic Uighur economics professor who has been held incommunicado since 15 January 2014 when police officers escorted him from his apartment on the campus of Minzu University of China (中央民族大学), and was charged by the Chinese authorities in February 2014 with separatism), was forcibly expelled from China when arrived at the airport in Beijing on 5th July 2014 and his valid one-year tourist visa was cancelled on spot. (On Ilham Tohti's arrest, see also "China accuses Uighur intellectual of separatism for his advocacy work" (by Andrew Jacobs), *The New York Times*, 25th January 2014 <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/26/world/asia/china.html?_r=1>.) Gardner Bovingdon, Sperling's colleague at Indiana University, was also met with the same fate earlier when he was expelled on arrival in

- Beijing in May 2013 with a valid visa (though he has already been put on a Chinese visa blacklist together with 12 other scholars after they jointly contributed to a 2004 anthology on Xinjiang) (“China denies entry to an American scholar who spoke up for a Uighur colleague”, *The New York Times*, 7th July 2014).
104. For two years running, new resident visas have been denied to *The New York Times* and *Bloomberg News* which published stories in 2012 on the hidden wealth of CCP leaders’ families, and recently two longtime resident journalists, Paul Mooney of Reuters and Melissa Chan of Al Jazeera English, were forced them to leave Beijing when their visas were denied. (“China accuses Uighur intellectual of separatism for his advocacy work” (by Andrew Jacobs), *The New York Times*, 25th January 2014 <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/26/world/asia/china.html?_r=1>.)
 105. “US professors urge Western universities to end ties to China’s Confucius Institutes” (by Peter Foster), *The Telegraph* (UK), 18th June 2014. <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/10907971/US-professors-urge-Western-universities-to-end-ties-to-Chinas-Confucius-Institutes.html>>
 106. *Ibid.*
 107. “Canadian teachers urge universities to close on-campus cultural schools funded by Chinese government” (by Tristin Hopper), *National Post* (Canada), 1st January 2014. <<http://news.nationalpost.com/2014/01/01/confucius-institutes/>>
 108. *Ibid.*
 109. Chang’an Avenue/Chang’an Jie 长安街 (literally “Street of Eternal Peace”) was the main theatre of the June Fourth massacre that spanned across Beijing when People’s Liberation Army (PLA) troops fired into the crowds blocking their advance towards Tiananmen Square during that fateful night of 3rd-4th June 1989. Massacre along Chang’an Avenue/Boulevard (with heaviest casualty on the night of 3th-4th June 1989 but as a whole lasted from about 10 p.m. of 3rd June to the midnight of 5th June) mainly occurred along the route of PLA advance at the Wanshou Lu 万寿路 junction, Muxidi 木樨地 intersection, Fuxingmen 复兴门 (Fuxing, i.e., “revival”, Gate) outside Yanjing Hotel (燕京饭店) and Minzu Hotel (民族饭店), and Xidan Bei Dajie 西单北大街 (Xidan North Street) junction along West Chang’an Avenue at Xinhua Gate 新华门 (Xinhua, i.e., “new China”, Gate) and Nan Chang Jie 南长街 junction onto Tiananmen Square (天安门广场) from the western side and from the eastern side of the Chang’an Avenue near Hongmiao 红庙 to Jianguomen 建国门 (Jianguo,



- i.e. “nation founding/building”, Gate), along East Chang’an Avenue near Beijing Hotel (北京飯店) and Nanchizi Dajie 南池子大街 (South Chizi Street) junction onto Tiananmen Square (*Yazhou Zhoukan* 亞洲週刊 (1989), *Chingt’ientungti te ipai jih* 驚天動地的一百日 [a hundred days that shook heaven and earth]. Hong Kong, p. 80). In addition, massacre also occurred along Qianmen Dajie 前門大街 (Qianmen, i.e. “front gate”, Street – PLA’s southern approach to Tiananmen that night), at Chongwenmen 崇文門 (Chongwen, i.e. “culture/civilization revering”, Gate), between Jianguomen and Chaoyangmen 朝陽門 (Chaoyang, i.e. “sun facing”, Gate), the approach to the university district and around Peking University (北京大學), Yiheyuan 頤和園 (Summer Palace imperial garden) and Tsinghua University (清華大學) (*ibid.*). Outside Beijing, similar massacre at that time mainly occurred in Chengdu 成都, the capital city of Sichuan Province.
110. 「孔子學院及其影響 —— 專訪余英時」 [Confucius Institutes: A special interview of Yu Ying-shih], 《縱覽中國》 [China overview], 8th April 2012.
 111. Or K’ung Tzu / Kong Zi.
 112. *San gang wu chang* 三綱五常 as specified in the feudal ethical code: the three cardinal guides of “ruler guiding subject, father guiding son, and husband guiding wife”, and the five constant virtues of “benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and fidelity”.
 113. ODN, 26th November 2012. “Mo Yan”, literally meaning “do not speak”, is the pen name of writer Guan Moye 管謨業。
 114. “After fury over 2010 Peace Prize, China embraces Nobel selection” (by Andrew Jacobs and Sarah Lyall), *The New York Times*, 11th October 2012. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/12/books/nobel-literature-prize.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0>
 115. “China says no talking Tibet as Confucius funds U.S. universities” (by Daniel Golden), Bloomberg, 1st November 2011. <<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-11-01/china-says-no-talking-tibet-as-confucius-funds-u-s-universities.html>>
 116. ODN, 20th November 2012
 117. “China’s image takes a battering as majority of nations brand it a ‘negative influence’” (by Laura Zhou), *South China Morning Post* (Hong Kong), 24th May 2013. <<http://www.scmp.com/print/news/china/article/1244498/china-takes-battering-poll-perceptions-25-nations-and-eu>>
 118. *Ibid.*
 119. Or Sun Zi.



120. “If you sit by the river for long enough, the body of your enemy will float by”, as cited in *Joseph Anton* (Rushdie, 2012, ppb 2013: 532).
121. The Gini coefficient of 0.473 for year 2013, announced by the National Bureau of Statistics of the People’s Republic of China in January 2014 (see “国家统计局局长马建堂就 2013 年全年国民经济运行情况答记者问”, 中华人民共和国国家统计局 (National Bureau of Statistics of the People’s Republic of China), 20th January 2014 <http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjgz/tjdt/201401/t20140120_502414.html>), which is the lowest in the past ten years also represents a continuous decline over the past five years since 2009. The figure was suspected of underestimation by many scholars and experts outside China after its announcement (Sun, 2014: 12).
122. Which makes income inequality in today’s China “among the highest in the world, especially in comparison to countries with comparable or higher standards of living”, according to sociologist Yu Xie 谢宇, the University of Michigan researcher who published the article “Income Inequality in Today’s China” (co-authored with graduate student Xiang Zhou 周翔 in April 2014 online in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, with their main analyses based on data from the China Family Panel Studies, a large-scale survey project conducted by Peking University’s Institute of Social Science Survey (“Income inequality now greater in China than in US”, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, 28th April 2014 <<http://home.isr.umich.edu/releases/income-inequality-now-greater-china-us/>> / *Michigan News* (University of Michigan), 28th April 2014 <<http://www.ns.umich.edu/new/releases/22156-income-inequality-now-greater-in-china-than-in-us>>; “中国收入不平衡比美国严重”, *Michigan News* (University of Michigan), 29th April 2014 <<http://www.ns.umich.edu/new/chinese-translations/22165-2014-04-29-20-27-50>>). China’s Gini coefficient was 0.30 in 1980. Family income Gini in China was 0.61 in 2010, according to a December 2012 report by the Southwestern University of Finance and Economics (西南财经大学) in Chengdu (Sun, 2014: 12).
123. See O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986).
124. “‘变革会在不经意间到来’: 专访《独裁者的学习曲线》一书作者威廉·道布森” (美国之音记者林枫专访) [change could come unawares: special interview of William Dobson, author of *The dictator’s learning curve* (by Voice of America reporter Lin Feng)], 阿波罗新闻网 (*AboluowangNEWS*), 28th August 2012. <<http://www.aboluowang.com/news/>>

125. In particular, President Lee Teng-hui 李登輝, the first popularly elected president of the first human rights-respecting liberal democracy in the five millennia of Chinese history and the first native Taiwanese Chinese to become Taiwan's head of state – “who successfully guided the Taiwanese people into full democracy through an election-led, gradual and peaceful process that some international observers have praised as a ‘quiet revolution’” (Mashiro Wakabayashi, “Taiwan de zhuzhang (Taiwan's viewpoint), by Lee Teng-hui” (book review), *China Perspectives*, n°25, September-October 1999 <http://www.cefc.com.hk/uk/pc/articles/art_ligne.php?num_art_ligne=2509>, quote from page 91).
126. “According to history, the Empire of the czars was a ‘prison of the peoples’ and Lenin opened it. But history is never quite that simple. At the start of the twentieth century the empire was already showing signs of weakness; all its subject peoples were beginning to resent its domination and looking for ways to escape from it. Lenin's genius lies in having grasped the breadth of these desires for emancipation, and in having understood that by utilizing those desires – which had nothing to do with the working class – he could assure the victory of the workers in his own country.” (Carrère d'Encausse, 1979: 13)
127. Karl Wittfogel, *Oriental despotism*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967. See Chu (2013: 80).
128. Émile Durkheim, *The rules of sociological method* (originally published in 1895, English translation 1938), edited with introduction by Steven Lukes, New York: The Free Press, 1982, p. 53.
129. Salman Rushdie, *Joseph Anton* (2012, ppb 2013: 628).
130. *Ibid.*

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Book Review

Philip J. Cunningham, *Tiananmen Moon: Inside the Chinese Student Uprising of 1989*, Twenty-fifth Anniversary Edition, Lanham, Maryland, Toronto and Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014, 487 pp + xxiv

With young people's dissatisfaction about dirty politics and bad governance, student protesters are best known for symbolic gestures. But student activism has often been a driving force for profound social and political transformation. It is evident that students in Asia have long led resistance movements that overthrew authoritarian regimes in many countries throughout this region. Elsewhere in Asia, student protests have shaken regimes until they were brutally suppressed. The massacre around Beijing's Tiananmen Square where, facing down rows of tanks and troops, students peacefully protested for democracy and against China's Communist rulers, is however one of the most striking examples of crimes against humanity. Very briefly, it is a great participatory upsurge that has marked Chinese politics. While the Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) was a historical tragedy, the horrific Tiananmen incident has ultimately shaped today's China. Unfortunately, despite the significance of many more students' loss of lives, such movements have received only a fraction of the notice. The timely and pertinent book titled *Tiananmen Moon: Inside the Chinese Student Uprising of 1989* by Philip Cunningham tries to redress this neglect.

Although this single-authored book was first published in 2010, the publisher has just released this new and enlarged edition on the 25th anniversary of the historic Tiananmen incident. Divided into four parts (Part I: The Moon, Part II: Waxing Moon, Part III: Waning Moon, and Part IV: No Moon), the volume attempts to tell us the chronological



events of the Tiananmen Square student protests of 1989, which eventually led to what is referred to in much of the world as the Tiananmen massacre and in Chinese as the June fourth incident, while providing the readers with a portrait of diverse reactions from various corners of the Chinese society towards this bloodiest tragedy. As the author claims, looking back at the eventful uprising at Tiananmen Square in central Beijing in 1989 makes it clear that what happened there was shaped by the fall of Mao Zedong, the rise of Deng Xiaoping and the shifting expectations born of archetypal change. According to him, the real problem for China now, as memories fade and young people grow up oblivious to an event that shaped and constrained their lives whether they know it or not, is how to remember it. It is too easily dismissed as *liu si* or 6/4, a shorthand term with controversial connotations, a tag that cannot even begin to do justice to the remarkably peaceful, transformative and uplifting weeks that preceded the June 4 violent military crackdown. As he also suggests, China wounded itself badly and dangerously by betraying the trust between the people's army and the people, which was all but serving the unspoken bond of consent between the government and the governed. Therefore, accountability and transparency, even late in the day, can serve to heal. Conclusively, the writer looks forward to the day when a million souls can gather again peacefully in Tiananmen Square to pay respects and remember the departed, while also taking time to recall, with warmth and fondness, the joyful and heartfelt contributions of the myriad unsung heroes who gathered in peace under the late spring moon of 1989, chasing the dream of a more beautiful China. Nonetheless, this book also suffers from some weaknesses, and it has a number of shortcomings.

Firstly, while the author has followed a novel writing style, the volume has neither central focus nor basic claim. Also, though the term "Student Uprising" has been used in the book's sub-title, no analytical framework or methodological approach about it has essentially been developed. Admitting that a 12-page section (before "Preface") titled "Tiananmen: Trying to remember, trying to forget" has been included, I do not agree with the second part (i.e., trying to forget). It is such a powerful event that can never be forgotten, but always be remembered.

Indeed, 25 years after Chinese tanks crushed the student-led pro-democracy demonstrations, metaphorically blood still stains the stones of Tiananmen Square and the event is acutely alive. Is it possible to forget the image of “Tank Man”, a true example of unimaginable courage, who became an iconic symbol of both the bloody events of June 4 and non-violent resistance? Seemingly, it does not go with his following statement: “Over a million of people in Beijing alone were drawn into the gyre of transformative demonstrations, whether out of principle, or merely caught up in the excitement, whether out of passing sympathy or in deep solidarity” (p. 485).

Secondly, the author said: “Today’s China, basking in a post-Olympic glow and newfound national strength, is still profoundly haunted by the seminal events of 1989, though the topic is strictly taboo in the media and still feared by influential people in the leadership” (p. xix). It is obvious that the Chinese government has condemned the protests to this day as a counter-revolutionary riot. In other words, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) hard-liners tried to erase the June 4, 1989 Tiananmen massacre from history and endeavoured briefly to convince the skeptical public that violence against unarmed protesters had been necessary to prevent a national disaster. Also, the government has never released a death toll for the crackdown. Actually, students took to the streets to voice their criticism of the high level of corruption in politics and demanded political change in favour of a more liberal system. Thus, it would have been rational if the author had intellectually answered the following two most inescapable questions: (1) Have the Tiananmen Square protests ended in bloodshed a long-lasting impact, and led to some democratic progress with clean government in China? (2) Has any control of public opinion through media control prohibiting all forms of discussion or remembrance of the event since 1989 helped maintain social harmony and political stability in the country?

Thirdly, in this study, the author has asked: (1) How should the hundreds of individuals who died that night, soldiers included, be remembered? (2) How should the extraordinary exertions of students, townpeople and party members who struggled to redefine China under such punishing conditions be commemorated? But he has not responded

more satisfactorily to these important questions. The book should have revealed that social media have replaced the hand-lettered placards at Tiananmen, and images of the massacre have been circulated via the *WWW* (world wide web) by thousands while many online Internet users attempt to evade the censorship efforts to commemorate the event. I do not think that the democracy-loving ordinary Chinese people are living with “amnesia”, i.e., people cannot remember things for long periods of time. Moreover, it should have been emphasized that a quarter century after Tiananmen, China can no longer confine information on its attacks on human rights to within its national borders. In fact, there are increasing international responses towards the Tiananmen massacre and the episode left a bitter legacy the world still remembers even though people in the country are forced to forget about the brutal incident. In this connection, it may be mentioned that Hong Kong and Macau are the only places on Chinese soil where the 1989 crushing of China’s pro-democracy movement can be commemorated.

Fourthly, it is true that this comprehensive volume covers a series of domestic events on the subject in each of its four parts, but it does not offer some insightful thoughts on Beijing’s foreign policy-making process during the period, granted that China’s international relations with the great powers of the world have been deeply affected by the Tiananmen incident. More specifically, it lacks any inside story of China-United States (US) relations after Tiananmen, while the US together with its allies quickly imposed a series of diplomatic and economic sanctions against China. Besides, the author has overlooked the response of Japan to the political situation in China following June 4, 1989 when Tokyo was criticized for pursuing an ambivalent foreign policy with a globally isolated China at that time predominantly motivated by Japan’s economic interests. In the case of the European Union (EU), it is empowering the military rise of China by approving multi-million dollar deals for the transfer of weapons despite an arms embargo stemming from the 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown. Moreover, India is very much concerned about Tiananmen, and the event introduced a considerable level of uncertainty into the business and investment climate between China and the Association of Southeast

Asian Nations (ASEAN). In short, the book does not see the Tiananmen incident as a subject of much debate, despite the fact that China, a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), has maintained to the outside world that June 4 is “much ado about nothing” and a “strictly internal affair”.

Fifthly, while the author says “The challenges remains how to teach a chapter of the past that current power holders continue to deny, how to appreciate the good and bad of it, and, if possible, to draw appropriate lessons” (p. 484), the book has not persuasively presented some valuable lessons that can be learned from Tiananmen, about which Beijing continues to find itself in a sticky situation. It might have been helpful for the better learned readers if the author had proposed that:

(1) A genuinely confident leadership in Beijing would account for those killed, detained or missing in connection with the events surrounding June 4, 1989 in view of the fact that the attitude of China’s leadership 25 years later has remained unchanged;

(2) Time has come for the Chinese authorities to stop the suppression of remembrance, information blockade, media censorship, prohibition of public discussion and harassment of artists, scholars, lawyers, bloggers and relatives of victims as well as to put an end to their impunity over the 1989 atrocities;

(3) The independent Chinese pressure groups could engage directly with the involved United Nations organizations, particularly the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR), even though these sorts of actions often provoke extraordinary wrath of the government;

(4) The Tiananmen movement of 1989 was the most serious challenge to the legitimacy of the Chinese government over the years, and the tensions that surfaced during that movement although muted, remain a hurdle to the future of the nation;

(5) In the last three decades with planned reform and opening up, enormous socioeconomic achievements of the world’s second largest economy have received global attention. Nevertheless, these do not excuse China of its continued human rights violations. Rather, they do explain how the country’s Communist rulers can remain popular despite repression, corruption and other problems. Hence, the building of



democracy and rule of law must continue to be perfected, when the voices to topple the Chinese Communist Party have become louder than ever. Apart from this, in order to maintain the country's growth miracle, China's leaders should no longer separate political change from economic reform.

Notwithstanding my abovementioned critical viewpoints, this book possesses several plus points. More categorically, although there are many volumes on the issue available in the world of scholarly publishing, this piece is based on personal narratives and observations of Philip Cunningham. In fact, this American-born China expert skilled in the Chinese Language, who as a foreign student was living on campus at Beijing Normal University during the week-long popular uprising, actively took part in the demonstrations. At the same time, he covered the events as a freelance journalist for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). Furthermore, he in person conducted interviews and made interactions with the protesters. Thus, this book represents a different kind of coverage that richly complements the existing literature on the 1989 Beijing Spring. While its major purpose has successfully been attained, this work which is grounded in practicalities has uniquely been organized as well.

Lastly, as a book dedicated to those wonderful martyred souls who will never know the fruits of their great sacrifice, the memoir by Philip Cunningham has been told in an outspoken manner and conversational tone. From his study, we have understood about how two and a half decades later the Tiananmen massacre has become more relevant than ever before while the Chinese Communist rulers are trying to make this influential incident irrelevant. Despite its descriptive nature, this highly-informative and easy-to-read volume will be of interest to those who want to know the thrilling stories of the Tiananmen Square upheaval and the June 4, 1989 government military crackdown from a real person who directly experienced this archival event in the modern People's Republic of China.



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