THE CHALLENGES TO DENG XIAOPING'S POLICY OF INDIRECT LEADERSHIP OVER THE ARTS IN CHINA, 1979-1989

Li Yan, MA

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Abstract

Li Yan

PH. D IN ARTS POLICY AND MANAGEMENT
Department of Arts Policy and Management
City University

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This thesis investigates and illustrates the challenges made by Chinese writers and artists towards Deng Xiaoping's reform in the arts in China between 1979 and 1989. This process started against the background of widespread disillusion with the Cultural Revolution and the Communist Party of China after Mao Zedong's death in 1976. The way a communist country reformed its arts administration while balancing the twin objectives of developing the arts and maintaining the stability of the communist regime is first examined, using a comparative approach and qualitative analysis to cast light on the issue from six aspects. Deng Xiaoping's reforms in the arts resulted in six major problems: the lack of legal basis or support for the implementation of Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts, the failure to cope with constructive criticism made by Chinese communist writers particularly, the enforcement of new forms of censorship, the rejection of demands for further freedom of expression and pursuit of independence, the fear of criticism of Chinese culture as an alternative in the fight against official censorship, and the suppression of demands for a reform of the communist political system supported by writers and artists.

The implementation of Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts replaced Mao Zedong's direct control while Chinese writers and artists gained the opportunity to exercise relatively more freedom in their artistic creativity and pursuit of independence compared with their experience between 1949 and 1976. However, these changes created a series of crises for the communist regime in relation to the arts, but were almost impossible to reverse. Two key factors contributed to this process: the gradual but continuous demands for freedom of expression from the literary and arts circles in China, and Deng Xiaoping's pragmatic and contradictory approach, in terms of maintaining the political control of the communist regime while developing an economy which was a mixture of socialist central planning and the capitalist free market, in the implementation of his reforms. Consequently, the arts in China developed in an evolutionary way rather than through drastic change as in the former USSR and Eastern Europe.

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The thesis expressed, and any remaining errors, are, of course, the sole responsibility of the author.

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London, October, 1994

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Objectives and Background

There have been many changes in the administration of the arts in China since 1979. For example, one of the initial aims of Deng Xiaoping's reforms was to create a climate of non-interference in the arts. An arts elite was also established to take over part of the job carried out by the communist party arts officers of the Mao Zedong regime. More changes of a similar kind were implemented under Deng Xiaoping's "indirect leadership" policy in respect of the arts. However, the policy itself posed many problems which in turn led to its being challenged. It is the nature of those challenges to the policy of "indirect leadership" between 1978 and 1989 which is the central theme of this study.

Mao Zedong died in August, 1976 and the Cultural Revolution which he started in 1966 and ended when the Gang of Four — his close followers — were arrested soon afterwards in October 1976. The following two years were marked by power struggles from which Deng Xiaoping emerged as the dominant figure in Chinese politics at the Third Plenary Session of the Tenth Congress of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in December, 1978. At that Congress Deng Xiaoping not only secured the posts of Vice-Chairman of the Central Military Committee, Vice-Chairman of the Communist Party and Vice-Premier of State, but he also ensured that his strong supporters including Hu Yaobang, Wang Zhen and Deng Yingchao formed the majority of the Politburo of the Communist Party while another key ally Chen Yun became another Vice-Chairman of the Party. Between 1979 and 1981, Deng Xiaoping gradually succeeded in undermining and removing Hua Guofeng, the successor nominated by Mao Zedong, from his post of Chairman of the Communist Party and Premier of State along with two of Deng's strongest supporters: Hu Yaobang, Chairman of the Communist Party (the post of Chairman of the Communist Party was later abolished and replaced with General Secretary in 1982) and Zhao Ziyang, Premier of State.[1] From 1979 onwards, Deng Xiaoping began to implement a series of reforms, including a policy of "indirect leadership" in respect of the arts, which promised to give more freedom to artists and to reduce state control to a minimum. 1979 was also the year of the "Beijing Spring" movement, during which Chinese artists, poets and democrats began to challenge Deng Xiaoping's reforms by demanding more freedom from state control than he was offering.

Between 1979 and 1989 efforts were made to implement the "indirect leadership" policy, but they came up against a series of problems to which Deng Xiaoping's administration was unable to provide solutions. New challenges emerged one

after another, and the more they were repressed or ignored the stronger they came back to threaten the Chinese authorities.

The Chinese government could not find an administrative solution and, most symbolically in Tiananmen Square in May 1989, used military force to suppress demands for freedom and democracy. For the two years following 1989 it appeared that Deng Xiaoping's policy of "indirect leadership" had been set aside and Mao's earlier policy of direct control of the arts was being restored. Deng's chief supporters responsible for the arts were dismissed or forced to resign including Hu Qili, Executive Secretary of the Secretary Department of the Communist Party and member of the Standing Committee of Politburo, Wang Meng, Cultural Minister and Ying Ruocheng, Deputy Cultural Minister. Many factors, however, made it almost impossible to return to Mao's centralised control. In particular, changes caused by the implementation of Deng's "indirect leadership" between 1979 and 1989 and its wide-spread influence had undermined the authority of Mao Zedong's ideological control over the arts. I shall examine in my study the various attempts to implement the "indirect leadership" policy and the challenges that faced it.

This thesis also continues research already begun in my MA Arts Administration dissertation. From 1988 to 1990 I conducted research into Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts under the supervision of Dr. Michael Hammet in the Department of Arts Policy and Management, City University. This MA dissertation, entitled *One Hundred Flowers or One: On the Implementation of Mao Zedong's Arts Policy*, examines the implementation of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts, its control of writers and artists as well as its consequences.

In addition to my normal research sources, this PhD dissertation is very much inspired by my experience of working and living in China until 1988. This personal experience can be divided into three areas: my work experience as a performing arts officer at China Performing Arts Agency of the Ministry of Culture, my own relationship with some of the Chinese writers or artists who suffered and struggled for freedom of expression under the communist control of the arts and my experience as a poet, and my direct observation of the arts events in China. Since 1982, I had come to know some key Chinese writers and artists, both young and old, and gained an insight into their pursuit for freedom, their disillusion with Deng Xiaoping's reforms. I also observed all the important changes in the arts during this period either directly through the media, or in discussion with writers and artists as well as in the compulsory study of official policies organised by the party branch of my previous employing organization. I also worked for China Performing Arts Agency - an executive agency of the

Ministry of Culture - to promote international performing arts in China and taking Chinese performing arts to the outside world in return, as part of Deng Xiaoping's "open door" policy. During this period, I participated in some of the changes in the implementation of Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts and, together with some of my colleagues, also suggested from within the system further reforms in the administration of the performing arts on the basis of a decentralisation of power from the Ministry of Culture. Though our efforts did not achieve what we hoped, it led to my determination to explore the underlying courses of the problems of the communist structure of arts administration. In 1983, I studied at College of Cultural Management of the Ministry of Culture. However, the emphasis was on the knowledge of China's art history and the present state of the arts in China and little room was allowed for debate or criticism of official policy towards the arts. Finally in 1988, I decided to leave China to study arts administration in Britain.

1.2 Overall Purpose and Methods of this Study

The arts in Mainland China were directly controlled by Mao Zedong's administration from 1949 to 1976. Having personally experienced the destructive effect on the arts of Mao Zedong's successive policies, soon after he came to power Deng Xiaoping attempted to introduce an alternative approach towards the arts. This formed part of his more general reforms of 1979. This change in direction of government policy towards the arts resulted in: more freedom in the arts, structural changes in governmental administration of the arts, but on the negative side chaos in arts management when Deng Xiaoping's policy for the arts failed to meet the demands from the arts circle, resulting in censorship being exercised to suppress these demands. There has been little specific and critical research on Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts and my study in this field therefore aims to look at this transition from direct to indirect control in Chinese communist government by examining how creative artists in Mainland China responded to Deng Xiaoping's new policy for the arts.

The objectives of this research were as follows: (a) to examine how Deng Xiaoping's policy for the arts was shaped and what effect it had upon Chinese writers and artists, (b) to explain why some Chinese writers and critics sought to improve this policy whilst others challenged its feasibility, (c) to explain how this change in policy led to more demands for freedom and how the government suppressed these responses, and (d) to provide a critical analysis of what happened in the arts in China between 1979 and 1989. The research uses the case study method through a qualitative approach. It examines the major arguments and criticism of Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts and therefore identifies

its problems as perceived by Chinese artists.

1.3 Sources and Current Research

In this study I have relied on three principal sources: documents, articles and books published in Chinese, research on Chinese contemporary literature and Chinese politics in English, and my interviews and conversations with artists, poets, critics, and arts officers.

Information in respect of the arts published in Chinese comes from three areas: Hong Kong, Taiwan and Mainland China. Journalists from Hong Kong have reported and commented constantly on Deng Xiaoping's reforms since 1979. The same is true of their coverage of the arts in China, which was published mainly by four major political journals in Hong Kong: *Nineties Monthly*, *Cheng Ming Monthly*, *Emancipation Monthly* (which was renamed as *Open Monthly* in 1990), and *Pai Shing Monthly*. Due to the nature of media reporting, these publications tended to concentrate on single events or aspects of the scene and, inevitably, provided little systematic analysis of Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts. However, they did cover most of the arts development and policy changes in China between 1979 and 1989 and as such they are one key source of information for research in this field.

In Mainland China, articles and books published in Chinese about the arts can be divided into two categories: official publications and controversial criticism by arts critics which were either published and later suppressed in China or published overseas. Among the official publications, there are four books which stand out as informative although they did not attempt to challenge official policy. They are: *Almanac of China's Arts and Literature 1983-1989*, which includes both a detailed account of the arts provision in China and official documents about the policy towards the arts during various periods. *Deng Xiaoping's Thoughts on the Arts*, an official collection of Deng Xiaoping's speeches on the arts. *History of Literature of the New Period*, edited by Yang Shumao, published by Huacheng Press, Guangzhou in 1989 and *On Literature of the New Period*, edited by He Xilai, published by Jiangsu Literature and Art Press, in 1985, are each historical accounts of Chinese literature under Deng Xiaoping's administration.

Two valuable and controversial analyses of the arts in China came from two Chinese scholars. Dr. Liu Xiaobo, Lecturer in Chinese Literature at Beijing Normal University wrote a thesis, which was entitled *Crisis! China's Literature in the New Period Is Facing a Crisis!* and published by *Shenzhen Youth* in 1986. This was a critical analysis of the development of Chinese literature under Deng

Xiaoping's leadership. Whilst it did not directly challenge Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts because of the political situation of the time, it did question the assumption that Chinese literature had made tremendous advances in post-Mao China.

Dr. Henry Zhao, Senior Lecturer in Modern Chinese Literature at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London University, also made critical analyses of Chinese literature in the context of cultural studies in two of his theses: *The Red Flag Folk Song* published in the *Today Literary Magazine* by Social Thought Press (Hong Kong) in 1992; and *Sex Liberation and the Downward Extension of Confucian Ethics*, published by Wenhuashenghuo yu xinzhi chubanshe Press (Taiwan) in 1992. The former was a study of the red flag folk song campaign during the Great Leap Forward movement under Mao Zedong's administration in 1957, focusing on the relationship between mainstream literature and the folk literature. He argued that a completely new model of cultural structure had been created during the implementation of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts. On the one hand, the officially promoted folk song had gained a dominant position in China and been used to reform the mainstream literature, but on the other hand had been closely controlled by the authorities. Consequently, the political folk song had undermined the foundations based on traditional literature. The thesis was a study of sexual liberation under Deng Xiaoping's administration, arguing that there has been three general models used by the authorities to control sex literature within Chinese Culture. For example, official control during normal periods appears to be tight at the top class but loose at the bottom of the Chinese society. During the transitional period, it is loose at the top but tight at the bottom, and during the downward periods, it is tight at both ends. Having examined the Chinese history, he argued that Mao Zedong's control of sex literature fell into the category of the third model because of his expansion of power, but in contrast Deng Xiaoping's control in the 1980s had been loose at the top but tight at the bottom of the Chinese society due to the transition caused by Mao Zedong's death in 1976. Dr. Zhao also published a thesis in English which is of particular importance to the research of arts administration in China. Entitled *The New Waves in Recent Chinese Fiction*, he discussed the increasing awareness of independence among Chinese writers in terms of being masters of their own, seeking their own positions in society and negating of everything including the significance of their own existence since 1985. He argued that Chinese writers finally freed themselves from both political tasks imposed by the Chinese authorities and the moral and social responsibility which has always been demanded by the Chinese tradition. The Chinese fiction therefore has won the right of developing according to its own direction, not otherwise.

Two books published in Taiwan, Republic of China, gave account of two arts events in the People's Republic of China. The first was entitled *Beijing Spring*, edited by Liu Shengyiu and published by the Lion Cultural Press (Taipei) in 1984. The "Beijing Spring" movement led by a group of Chinese democrats, artists and poets represented the first challenge to Deng Xiaoping's reforms in the early 1980's. Liu Shengyiu focused on underground publication in China in the context of the "Beijing Spring" movement. The second entitled *No Breakthrough No Literature: the Unrequited Love of Bai Hua*, edited by Ye Hongsheng and published by Caifeng Press (Taipei) in 1982, was a collection of the works and speeches by Bai Hua, one of the most controversial Chinese writers in the early stages of Deng Xiaoping's period.

Two scholars have also conducted research in English in relation to the arts and official control of the arts under Deng Xiaoping's administration. Professor Bonnie S McDougall at the University of Edinburgh wrote a series of studies on the arts in China, two of which were particularly inspiring: *Censorship & Self-Censorship in Contemporary Chinese Literature* in *After The Event, Human Rights and their Future in China*, edited by Susan Whitfield and published by Wellsweep Press (London) in 1993, and *Breaking Through: Literature and the Arts in China, 1976-1986*, Copenhagen Papers in East and Southeast Asian Studies in 1988. In the former, Professor McDougall made a study of censorship and self-censorship in China from three aspects: the Chinese tradition, communist ideology and censorship; its structure and mechanics; and the failure of work without literary value as a result. She also discussed the rise of a cultural elite and its relationship with the political elite. In the latter, she discussed three major issues in literature and the arts in China between 1976 and 1986: the changing relationships between writers and artists and the authorities, the search by Chinese artists for new forms of expression, and the difficulties encountered by Chinese artists in terms of both producing and distributing their work. She concluded that a crisis of political leadership was central to the problems of arts administration in China. Chinese artists as well arts officers lost confidence in the political leadership of Deng Xiaoping's administration and vice-versa. Dr. En-Jen Chiang at the University of Washington U.S.A. also conducted a research of arts administration in China. In his doctoral dissertation - The Models in China's Policy towards art and literature, Dr. Chiang examined various patterns of official policy towards the arts and their characteristics and compared them with other public policies in communist countries. He argued that there have been three main models of policy towards the arts in China: the bureaucratic model, the radical model and the semi-market model. He also argued that China's policy towards the arts has four main roots: ancient Chinese tradition, the revolution experiences of the Communist Party of China, Leninist practice of the Communist Party, and

influences of Western capitalism. Each of these origins has contributed to the formation and interaction of and among the three policy models. He believed that in each case there are winners and losers, which could form different clusters supporting or resisting a particular policy. One of the causes, perhaps the chief cause of changes of policy models was not the uncompromising battle between the intellectuals and the Communist Party, but the conflicts between different groups among the intellectuals themselves. Dr. Chiang concluded that a synthesis of the three models may be found in some areas of China's public policy, and also in other socialist countries, though policies towards the arts in other communist countries did not follow such a clear pattern of the three trajectories as China.

1.4 Terminology

A word abut the terminology is very important because terms reflect certain basic authorial premises and assumptions relating to the subject discussed. This is particularly important in the study of arts administration in communist China where a lot of apparently familiar terms are used differently from their Western equivalents.

"Art", "literature" and "culture" have the same meaning in the West but the term "writers and artists" in this thesis is used to refer to all who are involved in creative arts fields, including poets, novelists, short-story writers, visual artists and performing artists.

The term "intellectual" is also used in this thesis in the Chinese sense. In Chinese, the equivalent of intellectual is *shi* . In ancient China, the word *shi* usually embraced three meanings: (a) a bachelor, (b) a social stratum between senior officials and the common people, (c) a scholar. As a result of the Confucian influence in Chinese politics, a scholar could be promoted to state official through the Confucian educational system. This developed into a civil service examination system, which was divided into imperial, provincial and county levels. Candidates who passed the imperial examination were to wait for official appointment. Then the scholar became part of the *literati and officialdom*. In China, *shi* were part of officialdom while intellectuals in the West were not. That was the main difference between *shi* in the Chinese concept and intellectual in the Western concept.

The use of the term "democracy" throughout this study corresponds to the Western concept. It differs from the official Chinese usage by Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping's administration, which set out to convince the public that China's system of control by the communist system provided the most

democratic system in the world.

The terms "censor" and "censorship" used in this thesis are quite different from their Western equivalents. A Chinese censor is not a person who is appointed only to exercise censorship but any official who volunteers to do the job because of his desire of promotion, determination to protect official ideology or fear of controversial works produced or distributed in areas of his responsibility. Censorship often appears in form of post-censorship, and it is usually followed with a ban of an art work by the authorities after its public exposure. It works on the basis of official brain-wash and self-censorship.

1.5 Outline of the Structure of the Thesis

Chapter 2 is both an analysis of Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts and review of arts provision in China. Its aim is to give an introduction to the arts administration, policy towards the arts and arts provision in China. It provides a view of the state of the arts faced by Deng Xiaoping's administration in 1979, and compares his "indirect leadership" policy with Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts.

Chapter 3 examines the demands made by artists and democrats who started Beijing Spring movement as well as their attitudes towards the government. It discusses the possibilities for co-operation with the government and how these possibilities developed or disappeared.

Chapter 4 discusses the fears of artists who, though greatly encouraged by the "indirect leadership" policy, were concerned about how it would develop. Bai Hua, a poet and novelist, is discussed as an example. He argued that the "indirect leadership" could revert into direct control at any time, and kept writing about his fear until his prediction came true. He was forced into silence and his works were criticised by the authorities, and banned as examples of bourgeois liberalism. This chapter explains why he and the government feared each other.

Chapter 5 discusses the vulnerability of legal rights in China as argued by Wang Ruoshui, Deputy Chief Editor of *the People's Daily* (the Party's official voice). He generated sensitive debates about the interpretation of Marxism, and tried to find theoretical support for Deng Xiaoping's reforms in the arts through his new interpretation of Marxism in relation to humanism and alienation in the Chinese society. The former gave support to new literary experiments. The latter encouraged writings that abandoned socialist realism for the arts. When he was expelled from his post during the Anti-Bourgeois Spiritual Pollution campaign in

1983, Wang Ruoshui focused his criticism on the vulnerability of legal rights in China and its effect on the arts.

Chapter 6 examines the arguments of Liu Binyan as a typical model of constructive criticism. Liu Binyan was a loyal communist and tried very hard to improve the communist system through his writing both as a journalist and a writer. This chapter also discusses the differences in government policy towards journalism and creative writing, showing how Liu Binyan tried to deal with it through his journalistic reportage.

Chapter 7 investigates censorship of the arts using the work of Wu Zuguang and Zhang Xianliang as examples. Wu Zuguang, a playwright, persistently criticised censorship in theatrical productions, arguing that censorship had a psychological impact on artists. Zhang Xianliang became most famous for his novel - *Half of a Man is a Woman*, in which he wrote about prohibited sexual topics against a political background. Outside his creative writing, he was active in demanding freedom for all, including freedom for capitalism under the dictatorship of communism.

Chapter 8 examines why Liu Xiaobo, Lecturer in Literature at Beijing Normal University, claimed that there was no significant literary achievement during Deng Xiaoping's reform period, and why he is so critical of the current state of literature. Whilst a great number of Chinese senior writers were optimistic about the implementation of the "indirect leadership" policy, Liu Xiaobo attacked Chinese traditional culture in general, which he believed had not only produced Mao Zedong but also generations of "writers" who were no more than intellectual slaves. He argued that China had experienced an actual disaster caused not only by Mao Zedong personally but they also by the thousands of intellectuals who had accepted and followed Mao's teachings and control. This chapter examines the pursuit of independent thinking and its criticism of intellectuals.

Chapter 9 examines how a few artists like Ma Jian, a photographer and a short-story writer, rejected all forms of government policy towards the arts, and how the government interfered with their attempts to search for an independent road. It sets out to investigate the political complexity that prevented artists from remaining in an independent "ivory tower".

Chapter 10 discusses the impact of television when it was used by some young writers to criticise Chinese traditional culture. Taking *The River Elegy* (a television series of 1988) as an example, it examines the debate about

Chinese culture among Chinese intellectuals and explains why the government was divided into those who were in favour and those who decided to interfere.

Chapter 11 examines the demands of writers and artists for reform in the communist political system and demonstrates how that demand was suppressed by the regime. It also discusses how Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts re-emerged as the official line as well as the objections and resistance this provoked from both Chinese artists and Deng Xiaoping's supporters in the arts.

Chapter 12 is a critical analysis of Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts, the challenges that faced it during its implementation as well as its consequences. It examines the objectives behind Deng Xiaoping's policy for the arts and the shift from direct to indirect control over the arts . It also explains how and why Chinese artists chose to criticise its defects in their pursuit of the artistic development in China.

The finally chapter is a brief outline of the post 1989 situation and explores areas of further research for arts administration in China. Important issues include the gradual collapse of official ideology, the arts and commercialism, and the prospects for the arts in China after Deng Xiaoping, aiming to cast light on the current situation of the arts in China as well as its future.

Notes to Chapter 1

[1] Han Shan Bi, *"Pingzhuan Deng Xiaoping" (On Deng Xiaoping)*, East & West Publishing Co., Hong Kong, 1988, pp. 13-27.
Yuan, Ming, *"Hu Yaobang shangtaizhichu" (Hu Yaobang and me)*, Issue 5, December, 1990, La Sarl Minzhu Zhongguo, France, pp. 67-72.

Chapter 2: Deng Xiaoping's Policy towards the Arts

2.1 A Comparison between Deng Xiaoping and Mao Zedong in their Administration of the Arts

Between 1979 and 1989, Deng Xiaoping's administration had implemented a type of "indirect leadership" over the arts in contrast to Mao Zedong's direct control of the arts. This "indirect leadership" had three characteristics. First, it attempted to prevent the Communist Party from giving immediate tasks to writers and artists in their artistic production. Secondly, it claimed that the arts did not have to serve communist politics though they could not expect to be detached from politics. Thirdly, it promised that the arts would have more freedom in deciding their own creative expression.[1] This change in direction of government policy for the arts was variously welcomed, criticised and challenged by both Chinese writers and artists, and official arts officers. An outline of Mao Zedong's policies towards the arts is there helpful in the study of Deng Xiaoping's reforms in arts administration in China.

Mao Zedong's arts policies can be divided into three periods: the Wartime period from 1942 to 1949, the National Construction period from 1949 to 1966, and the Cultural Revolution period from 1966 to 1976. Mao Zedong launched his first policy for the arts in 1942, aiming at guiding as well as building an arts army in his fight against the Japanese invasion and the Kuomintang government. Great importance was attached to the idea that artists had to fight with their creative expression in the same way as soldiers fought with weapons. His declared principles included: (a) writers and artists must work as cogs and wheels of the revolutionary machine and they must obey and carry out orders as instructed by political commissars, (b) they must come out from the ivory tower of the arts to serve workers, peasants, and soldiers and art's for the art's sake was a matter of irrelevance, and (c) they must make themselves accessible to the people through a popularisation of their art expression but maintaining a high quality at the same time.[2] The main characteristics appeared in the implementation of his policy towards the arts were that dissenting voices were suppressed ruthlessly and dissidents were imprisoned; and that some artists joined his "arts army" and were promoted to key administrative posts due to their success achieved under Mao Zedong's guidelines. Mao Zedong's policy during this period was described as the theory of "arts as weapons" by Chinese critics. One of those critics was Liang Maochun, who argued that the policy was appropriate during the wartime in the 1940s but required modifications after peace had been achieved in 1949, and that it instead only became more and more restrictive and dogmatic between 1950 and 1976.[3]

The period of National Reconstruction, 1949 - 1966, also saw two characteristics in the implementation of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts. First, the emphasis shifted from the arts fighting against the enemy to co-operating in the national construction of the economy after the war was over. Mao Zedong seemed to have realised that it was necessary to give more freedom for his "literary and art soldiers" in their experiments and he suggested that different opinions be allowed for debate and various arts experiments encouraged. This development in official policy for the arts was later described by Mao in 1956 as "the principle of letting a hundred school of thoughts contend and a hundred flowers bloom". Mao Zedong's confidence in the ability of his communist government to allow more freedom and bear a certain extent of public criticism clearly helped to shape this policy.[4] However, this principle was short-lived. The debates among Chinese writers, artists and intellectuals and burst of dissident voices that followed shocked the authorities and they were therefore severely suppressed. As a direct result, it was estimated that over 800,000 intellectuals including writers and artists were sent to labour camps.[5] Among these were Bai Hua, poet, Wang Meng, novelist, Wu Zuguang, playwright, Liu Binyan, journalist, Zhang Xianliang, novelist, and Wang Ruoshui, critic, all of whom will be discussed in this study. There was another interpretation of Mao Zedong's new principle: that Mao Zedong was aware of the growing discontent among the Chinese public about the communist government and decided to set a trap to catch dissidents who dared to exercise the new freedom and speak out.[6] Secondly, it was dominated by the fights among Mao Zedong's followers in their interpretation of his policy. How to implement Mao Zedong's policy for the arts in a peaceful environment raised difficult questions for his arts officers. Some insisted that the arts should be used as weapons in the continued fight of the class struggle. Others believed that the arts had a different function, which could be developed in the course of peaceful economic construction. Mao's famous dictum of "letting a hundred flowers contend and bloom" also contributed to the complexity of this debate on the interpretation of Mao Zedong's policies for the arts. Different opinions claiming to reflect Mao Zedong's policy for the arts continued to be expressed though counter arguments against this policy were not acceptable.

However, Mao Zedong seemed satisfied with none of these interpretations and decided to establish a new arts army along the lines of the wartime arts army during the Cultural Revolution in 1966. Both professional writers and artists and official arts officers were treated as enemies of the Cultural Revolution and were sent to labour camps for re-education. There were two important consequences: experienced arts officers were replaced by workers, peasants or soldiers who had no experience nor ideas of how to manage the arts, and young and amateur

writers and artists occupied the centre stage of the arts and enforced new revolutionary forms of art with the participation of few professionals who proved that they could still contribute to the Cultural Revolution. By 1969 throughout China, only eight productions of the performing arts were accepted as models for all Chinese writers and artists to follow, and no other interpretations of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts were allowed.

To sum up, Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts implemented direct control over the writers and artists. It was aimed to make them produce works according to the objectives of the revolution through unquestionable instructions. In contrast, Deng Xiaoping seemed to take a different approach, which attempted to avoid giving administrative instructions to writers and artists and allowed them more freedom in their artistic experiments while still expecting them to produce works conducive to his reforms.

2.2 Deng Xiaoping's Ideology towards the Arts

Generally speaking, in most things Deng Xiaoping was pragmatic while Mao Zedong had been dogmatic, and this profound difference was also reflected in their attitudes towards the arts. Mao Zedong planned to build an arts army which would serve the course of his revolution and he worked hard to achieved this aim. When he was dissatisfied with progress, Mao Zedong issued new guiding principles and re-established this arts "army". In marked contrast, the arts were secondary to Deng Xiaoping's priority of economic construction. He never issued a detailed "policy towards the arts" statement or document. Instead, he just set general principles in form of speeches for his arts officers to follow and when an important issue was raised he usually left them to find solutions to the problems. Deng Xiaoping's speeches on the arts were usually general and brief, lacking the analysis of a theory compared to Mao Zedong's policy for the arts. Deng's speeches on the arts were published in *Deng Xiaoping's Collections* by the People's Literature Press in 1987, and *Deng Xiaoping on Literature and Art* by the People's Literature Press in 1989. These are discussed below.

On 30th October, 1979 ten months after he came into power, Deng Xiaoping made a speech at the Fourth National Congress of Artists and Writers, in which he presented his policy for reforms in the arts consisting of two parts: aims and objectives set out for writers and artists, and reforms in arts administration for government arts officers.[7] Deng Xiaoping argued that there were two main aims that Chinese writers and artists must work towards. First, they were to contribute to a national construction of culture (the so-called socialist spiritual civilisation), which was to be part of China's modernisation. Secondly, they were to educate

and encourage the people in socialist ideology. In the speech, Deng Xiaoping also set out five objectives for Chinese writers and artists: to serve the people at large while giving a priority to workers, peasants and soldiers, to absorb the essence from the Chinese tradition and the arts of foreign countries and enrich and develop skills of artistic expression, to follow the principle of allowing a hundred school of thoughts to contend and a hundred flowers to bloom, encouraging a variety of artistic expression, to allow debates and criticism among writers and artists of different schools, and to train new writers and artists and assist them to develop towards the direction demanded by Chinese socialism. [8]

In the second part of his speech, Deng Xiaoping indicated three key directives in the reform of arts administration: communist party committees at all levels must stop giving administrative orders to writers and artists and critics in terms of what and how to create, they must learn to assist them in their career development according to the nature of the arts, rather than demanding the arts to be subordinated to instant, detailed and direct political objectives, and government arts officers should exchange opinions with writers and artists on a equal basis, in contrast to the previous relationship, such as a senior officer to an ordinary soldier.[9]

Deng Xiaoping's December 1979 speech reflected three main elements in his new policy towards the arts. First, he revised the main aims of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts implemented during the National Construction period between 1949 and 1966. Originally Deng Xiaoping expected artists to continue to serve his goal of the modernisation of China, within his normalisation of arts administration after the chaotic years of the Cultural Revolution. He ordered that all the propaganda teams implementing Mao Zedong's thoughts - the model used by Mao Zedong to replace the previous structure of arts control - be dismissed and that all the banished writers and artists be allowed to return from labour camps in the countryside and resume their previous posts, so that the arts resumed their function of serving the communist regime. On the other hand, he demanded that writers and artists should educate and encourage the Chinese people to participate in his reforms. In other words, writers and artists were now expected to praise his economic reforms instead of singing paeans to Mao Zedong's revolutionary ideals.

Secondly, he modified Mao Zedong's objectives for writers and artists. Though he insisted that workers, peasants and soldiers must remain the priority figures to be praised in their creative works, Deng Xiaoping indicated that other areas could also be chosen by artists for their creative experiments. This modification provided an opportunity for artists to expand the areas in which their talents

could be active, rather than merely regurgitating the stereotypical image of workers, peasants and soldiers. However, this opportunity was marginal and engendered potential conflicts between artists and arts officers. In contrast to the later implementation of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts in terms of rejecting both the Chinese tradition and Western culture, Deng Xiaoping might have believed that they could be used to enhance the national glory of Communist China. As his reforms proceeded, Chinese tradition was not only used to gain economic benefits for the Chinese authorities, but was also used to protect the communist system in the name of developing socialism with Chinese characteristics and to resist Western influences. Whenever Chinese tradition or Western culture posed a threat to the interests of the Chinese authorities, they were then treated as dross rather than essence. In terms of the variety of art forms, Deng Xiaoping also inherited Mao Zedong's principle of letting a hundred flowers bloom, put forward by Mao Zedong in the 1950's. In contrast to the monopoly of revolutionary arts during the Culture Revolution, Deng Xiaoping encouraged the development of various art forms such as folk, traditional, Western classical, and different contemporary schools of art, which were all at one time prohibited. They were to form part of the arts prosperity demanded under Deng Xiaoping's administration. Deng Xiaoping also indicated that debates and criticism among writers and artists of different schools could be tolerated by socialist realism - the official school of art. However, this tolerance was clearly limited. When Wei Jingsheng warned in 1979 that Deng Xiaoping could become another dictator like Mao Zedong without the introduction of a democratic system, he was immediately arrested and sentenced to fifteen years imprisonment by the Chinese authorities. Another modification was Deng Xiaoping's instruction that the Chinese authorities should train new artists to develop their artistic talents according to the guidelines of socialism. From then on, he continuously reminded his arts officers of the danger of losing the younger generation when they were more and more attracted and influenced by Western art forms and ideologies.

Thirdly, Deng Xiaoping revised Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts by restricting interference from party officials: his most important change of policy towards the arts. He perhaps believed that a tight control of the arts by the Communist Party failed to achieve the aims and objectives of the official policy towards the arts. He therefore attempted to strengthen the power of the Ministry of Culture and the National Federation of Writers and Artists in implementing his reforms in the arts. He instructed party committees at all levels to cease interfering in the development of the arts and to let the writers and artists themselves decide how to experiment within the framework of his policy towards the arts. He also demanded that arts officers should not impose short-

term political tasks upon the writers and artists, but should allow them to concentrate on the long-term objectives of Chinese Communist Party. In an old Chinese story, a peasant who is eager to see his crops grow lifts them up to make them look taller. Naturally, his crops die as a result of his impatience. Perhaps in Deng Xiaoping's mind, party officials were doing exactly the same thing with the arts. Fundamentally, Deng Xiaoping did not believe that there was anything wrong with the control of the arts. He only requested the arts officers and party official to step back and let the arts develop, hopefully in a way that would serve the communist system strategically. Deng Xiaoping also intended to change the relationship between arts officers and writers and artists as established by Mao Zedong. He suggested that they should be able to exchange their opinions of the arts on an equal basis, so that writers and artists could feed back their ideas, complaints and criticism to the party and thereby improve the party's management of the arts.

Comparing Deng Xiaoping's aims for the arts with Mao Zedong's policy for the arts, three major differences can be recognised. First, it inherited Mao Zedong's original policy for the arts launched during the Wartime period but shifted Mao Zedong's emphasis on the importance of revolutionary arts to more traditional arts. Secondly, Deng Xiaoping followed Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts implemented during the period of National Construction with its "hundred flowers", and its emphasis on the importance of the arts to economic development rather that revolution. Thirdly, the promotion of extreme revolutionary arts, the key arts policy of the Cultural Revolution, was abandoned. Fundamentally Deng Xiaoping was maintaining Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts and changing only its implementation. The major change was that Deng Xiaoping chose an indirect approach to the control of the administration of the arts compared to Mao Zedong's overt control. The party committees were to be at arm's length and should give writers and artists relatively more freedom in their artistic experiments so that the Chinese authorities could expect a better service from the arts. This change in the arts was similar to Deng Xiaoping's later reforms in the state-owned enterprises in the mid 1980s, when he introduced the system of "General Manager's Responsibility", aiming to give the general managers more power in the running of their factories by diminishing the power of communist party secretaries and party committees.

2.3 A General View of the Arts Provision in China

When he began to experiment with "indirect leadership" in 1979, Deng Xiaoping inherited a huge army of politicised national, provincial and local arts

administrators from the times of Mao Zedong, who had played a significant role during the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976. During this period senior artists and party secretaries were first purged and then replaced by revolutionary guards. Then all traditional art forms were replaced throughout China by eight revolutionary art models, including *The Tale of the Red Lantern, The White-haired Girl, Overtaking the Tiger Mountain by Wit, The Red Detachment of Women, The Shanghai Harbour, Paean to Longjiang River, Shajiabang* and *Raid the White-Tiger Division*. All art groups, companies and organisations then became propaganda troupes promoting Mao Zedong's thoughts. Also during the Cultural Revolution all the differences between professionals and amateurs in the arts were eliminated. Mao Zedong demanded that Chinese writers and artists become his arts soldiers:[10] it is difficult to estimate the size and scope of this army, though there was a propaganda arts troupe in every section of Chinese society — a rural village school, a small factory or a street committee, any group one could think of. We also know that in the crazy years of the late 1960s most public meeting always started with songs of Mao Zedong's quotations, poems, paeans or a loyalty dance to him in which everyone participated. It is difficult to estimate how many people were in this "army" though the number must have been enormous at the peak of the Cultural Revolution .

The concept of an arts army had first been raised by Mao Zedong in his policy for the arts in 1942,[11] believing it was urgent that in addition to organising all Chinese soldiers in the Resistance War against Japan, he should also mobilise Chinese writers and artists to fight against the cultural invasion of both the Japanese army and the Kuomintang government . As he attempted to reconstruct China after the founding of the People's Republic in 1949, Mao Zedong had made special efforts to strengthen this army as part of his spearhead of continuing his revolution. In practical terms, Mao Zedong made one highly significant change to Chinese cultural history. Not only did he question the role of traditional characters ranging from emperors, generals, ministers, scholars and beauties to beggar heroes presented in all forms of Chinese arts, he also demanded that traditional characters in literature and art be replaced by the new revolutionary heroes and heroines of workers, peasants and soldiers.[12] So far as the structure of the Chinese arts was concerned, after the communist take-over of China in 1949 all arts sectors were nationalised and his new "arts army" was in effect controlled by party secretaries at every level from the village up to the national.. In both fields, he achieved his objectives through the medium of the loyal party secretaries which he had placed at all levels of leadership. Through this system of control writers and artists were told what to do and what not to do according to various changing political aims and objectives. This arts army was thus truly treated as soldiers whose job was to obey the orders or the rationale of the system or policy

and to carry out the allocated tasks but not to question in any way.

It seems clears that Deng Xiaoping differed from Mao Zedong in at least two important aspects. First, he showed more interest in professionalism in the arts compared to Mao Zedong. When he assumed power after Mao's death, he first normalised the country by sending everyone back to their own professions after their periods working in the fields, factories or even in prison. The soldiers , workers and peasants in turn withdrew from their control of universities and resumed their own trades while professors, intellectuals and students left farms and returned to their studies. The actors, playwrights and dancers abandoned the street performance of revolutionary drama and re-opened the formal theatres.[13] Secondly, Deng Xiaoping might have never felt a need for, or feared the lack, of an art army as Mao Zedong did: this was never Deng's priority.

If we look back into the arts theories of the ancient Chinese philosophers, we see that Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping had their roots in very different Chinese traditions: Mao Zedong and Confucius had a similar view of arts while Deng Xiaoping's views were close to those of Mo Tze. Confucius (551 - 479 BC) was a philosopher, politician, educationalist and founder of Confucianism and Mo Tze (c. 468 - 376 BC) was a philosopher, politician, founder of Moism, the belief in universal love and that society should be ruled through love rather than the rituals of Confucianism and laws of the Legislators' school of philosophy. Mo Tze received a Confucian education when he was young but he turned into Confucianism's main opponent through his arguments of "anti-rituals", "anti-aggression", "anti-luxury" and "promotion of economy".[14] To Confucius and Mao Zedong, the arts played an important role in politics since they could either serve or damage the state. Though there were significant differences in their approach, both feared the power of the arts. Confucius preferred to educate people through the arts while Mao Zedong chose to transform people's ideology through the arts. When it seemed that the arts were becoming a threat to state politics, both took extreme measures to suppress those trends. When a court musician played what sounded a kind of sexy and evil music to Confucius' ear, he demanded that anyone who played such anti-ritual music deserved nothing but death and the poor musician was persecuted subsequently. In a similar way when writers and artists criticised the communist administration of the state, Mao Zedong believed that they were intentionally spreading anti-communist ideas through their works. He usually sent the most dangerous artists such as Wang Shiwei, Hu Feng and Wu Han to prison and the less dangerous to rural areas for re-education.[15] The similarity between the two may be due to their arts backgrounds: Confucius was a musician and Mao Zedong a poet, but both believed in using the arts to serve their own purposes. At the same time, they each

knew that the arts could be used to achieve different aims by other people.

Mo Tze and Deng Xiaoping each recognised that the arts might become a threat to state security but in contrast with Confucius and Mao Zedong they realised that the arts were never as important as the economy. Both of them aimed to keep the arts in a secondary role while concentrating on the development of the state economy and politics. To them, the people's livelihood was vital to state security, and hence needed the fullest attention. Mo Tze had started his career as carpenter and Deng Xiaoping had no cultural background apart from listening to Peking Opera. In their minds, perhaps the arts belonged to an idealistic or intellectual minority whose pursuit went beyond their own understanding or interest. However, the arts were not a threat to state security unless state leaders themselves became obsessed with the power of the arts. Alternatively the arts could be seen as economically damaging to the state: a burden on resources, weakening state production or even national defence as had happened many times in the Chinese history when vital economic resources had been diverted into vast unaffordable cultural projects. One well-known example was the Empress Dowager Cixi of the Qing Dynasty (1643 - 1912) who diverted loans granted for the reconstruction of the Chinese Navy to build the Beijing Summer Palace for her own pleasure, creating also the best theatre for Peking Opera within the new palace.

Although the record is silent on the point, faced with Mao Zedong's huge arts army, Deng Xiaoping may well regarded it as simply a burden on the state economy. Certainly Deng Xiaoping saw a need to transform this army to meet the needs of his reforms for economic growth.

The *1981 Almanac of China's Literature and Arts* show that after three years' efforts Deng Xiaoping had completed an initial reform of Mao Zedong's arts army: amateur propagandists had been dismissed and professionalism was again the rule in the arts. The statistics show that the number of informal and revolutionary troupes was greatly reduced and formal institutions had been re-established. However, the arts army was still viewed as an integrated team consisting of various troupes and institutions under the control of various levels of party secretaries. It was in this third aspect that Deng Xiaoping went a significant step beyond Mao Zedong: while he continued to modernise the People's Liberation Army, Deng Xiaoping also attempted to adapt the arts army to fit into his economic reforms. He made it clear that in principle party secretaries, who were usually ignorant about the arts, should not interfere with artistic creativity; and in practice, he replaced many political administrators with writers or artists and experienced arts officers.

According to *the 1981 Almanac of China's Literature and Arts*, there were by that time 3,302 performing art troupes, 99 publishing houses, 456 literature and arts magazines, 101 arts academies, 58 film studios and institutions, 41 literary and arts research centres (See Figure 2.1).[16]

In the field of the performing arts, there were 2,051 Chinese opera troupes, 110 story-telling and comedy troupes, 60 puppet and shadow puppet troupes, 86 folk art and local drama troupes, 116 acrobatic troupes, 87 folk musical and dance drama troupes, 2 folk dance troupes, 2 TV drama troupes, 13 orchestras, 76 Mongolian cultural troupes, 105 song and dance ensembles, 113 theatre companies, 472 cultural troupes (see Figure 2.2).

These can be divided into two broad groupings: traditional art forms ranging from Chinese opera to folk dance of the "nationalities" (e.g. racial and cultural minorities) and modern art forms ranging from TV drama to cultural troupes which were established under foreign influence. Art forms such as Chinese opera, story-telling and comedy, puppet, folk art and local drama, acrobatics folk musical and dance drama , and folk dance all maintained, by and large, their traditional ways of performing. Traditional arts used to be regarded as low arts in the society but under Mao Zedong became state arts in the name of "the people's arts". Though they remained under communist control, both family traditions and close traditional relationships between masters and students within the troupes managed to survive.[17]

The second category, regarded as modern art forms, covers those introduced since the late Qing Dynasty such as western-style orchestras and theatre. Other modern art forms such song and dance ensembles and cultural troupes were copied from the Soviet model, especially after the national victory of the Communist Party over the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang) in 1949. These were then further developed with a combination of traditional art forms and Soviet patterns by the revolutionary arts officers post 1949. The official ideology in these art forms appeared to be more explicitly stated as compared with traditional art forms. Fig. 2.2 shows that Mongolian cultural troupes are a substantial percentage of the performing arts, following the mobilisation of the minority arts of the "nationalities" to serve the Cultural Revolution by central, provincial and local revolutionary committees. Mongolian cultural troupes usually consisted of ten to fifteen performers and they moved themselves from place to place very efficiently on horse-back. They were therefore favoured and specially funded by the authorities, especially after the Mongolian, the Tibetan and Korean styles of song and dance were commonly used in singing paeans to Mao Zedong.

In the field of literary and art magazines, the 1981 *Almanac* also identifies 206 general literary and art magazines, 34 musical, 32 film , 29 children's, 28 theatre, 17 foreign literature, 25 fine arts, 20 pictorial, 16 literary and art theory, 8 cultural history, 4 short-story, 4 story-telling, 3 poetry, 3 photography, 3 dance, 2 TV, 3 folk literature, 2 prose, 1 reportage literature magazine plus 16 others difficult to classify (see Figure 2.3). Of 99 publishing houses, those specialising in literature and the arts numbered 25, 10 were concerned with ancient books, 8 with culture and education, 7 with ethnic culture and arts, 3 with children and youth, 3 with translation of literature and arts, and 8 belonged to other arts-relevant publishing houses (see Figure 2.4). In the film industry, there were 20 studios, 30 distributors, 1 information centre, 1 import and export company, 1 agency of co-production, 1 film technology research centre and 4 others (see Figure 2.5). Of 101 arts academies, 33 were operas and theatre, 28 general arts, 17 music, 15 fine arts, 4 dance and 4 were film academies(see Figure 2.6). Of 41 literary and research centres, general research centres numbered 18, Chinese opera and theatre 12, literature 4, music 3, fine arts 4 (see Figure 2.7).

Figure 2.1 Official Statistics of the Arts 1981

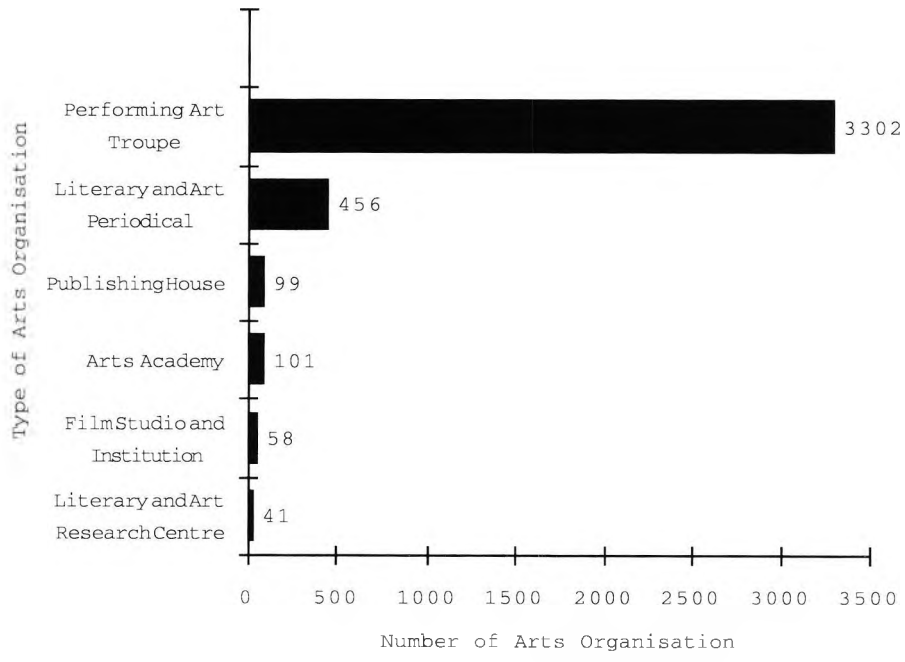


Figure 2.2 Performing Art Troupes

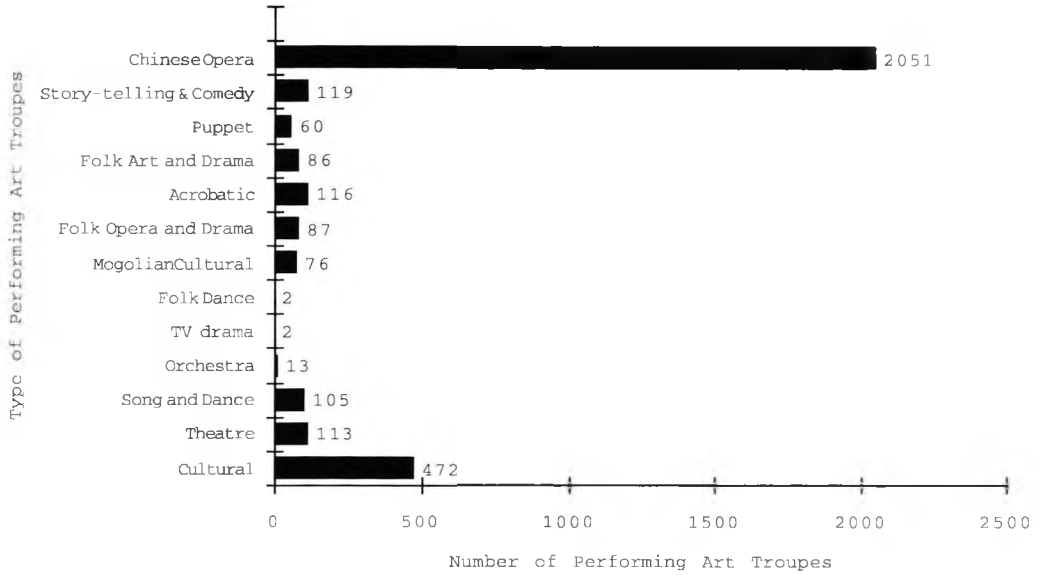


Figure 2.3 Literary and Art Magazine

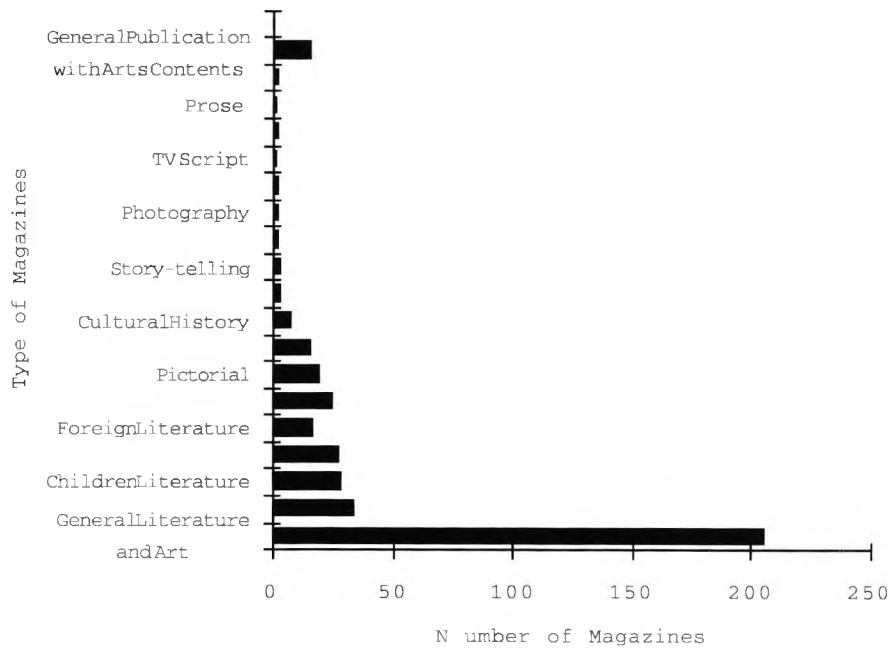


Figure 2.4 Literary and Art Publishing Houses

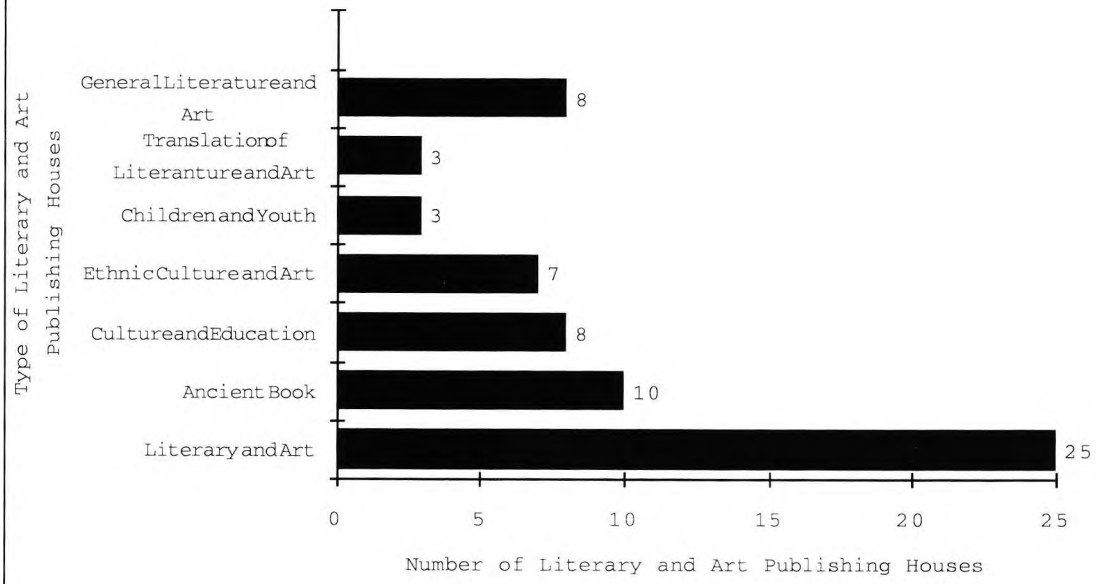


Figure 2.5 Film Studios and Institutions

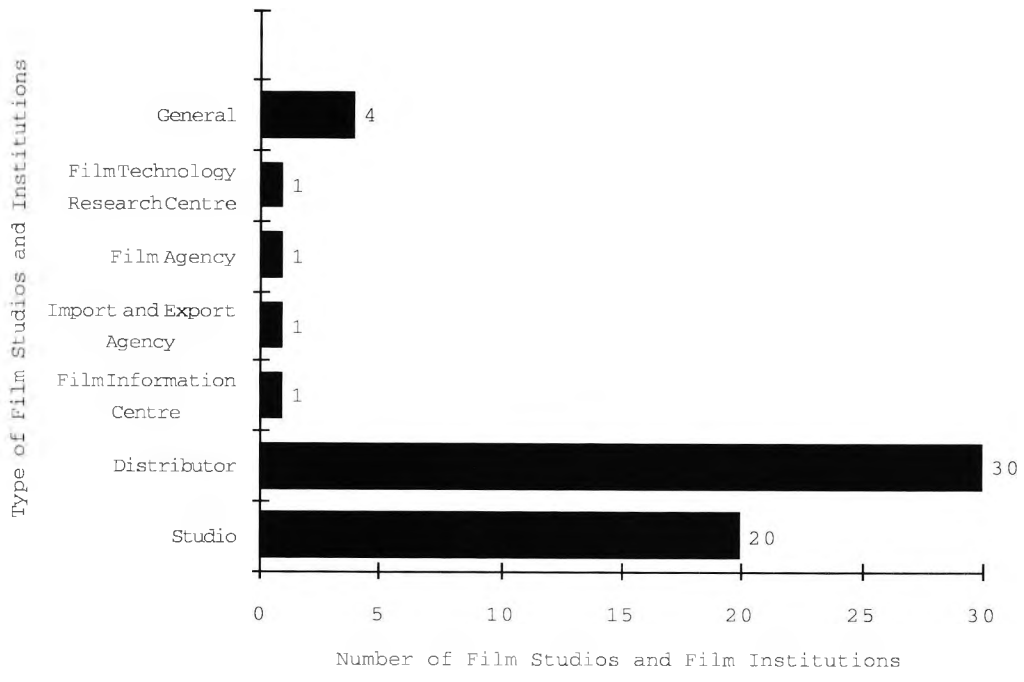


Figure 2.6 Arts Academies

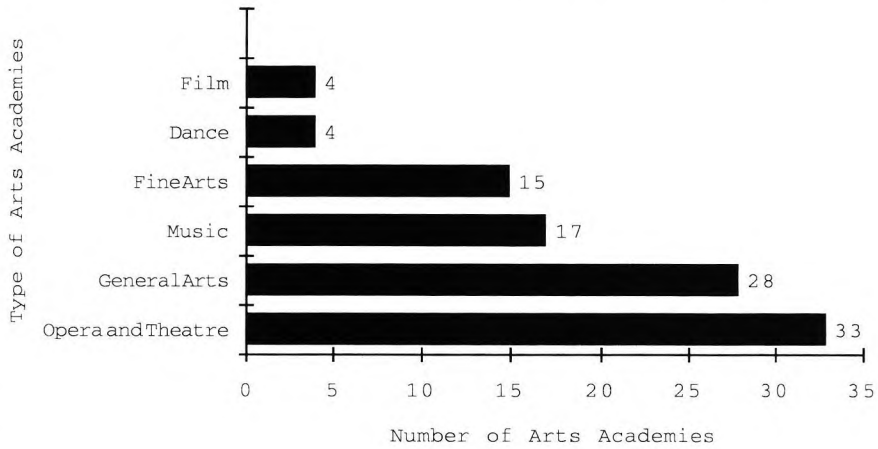
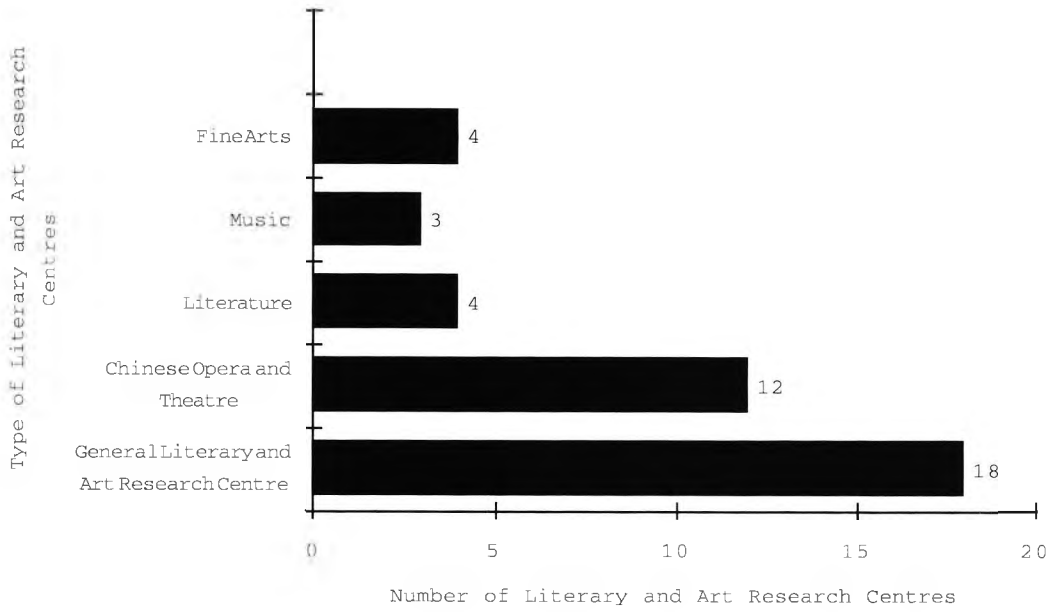


Figure 2.7 Literary and Art Research Centres



2.4 Structure of Arts Administration and Arts Officers under Deng Xiaoping's Administration

The structure of arts administration in China shows two distinct characteristics: there is a well-established national governmental network through the Ministry of Culture, and in parallel the government has formed the National Federation of Writers and Artists. Each structure extended in a hierarchy from the central government to the provincial, regional and municipal governments throughout the country, and down to individual "production units" - troupes, ensembles, artists' groups etc.. The Ministry of Culture is the official body controlling arts administration, and has the following four functions: controlling the arts through an official channel, implementing official arts policies, allocating grants to arts organisations and promoting arts productions by the arts organisations. Its funding comes from the State Office.

The National Federation of Writers and Artists is a so-called mass organisation, meaning a non-government body. Its major functions are: controlling the arts through a seemingly non-official channel, promoting official policy towards the arts amongst writers and artists and reflecting the needs of writers and artists back to the government, publishing arts journals and magazines, organising the exhibition and sale of works of art etc., and conducting arts research and organising conferences. Its funding comes not from the Ministry of Culture but from the Department of Propaganda of the Communist Party.

The Ministry of Culture and the National Federation of Writers and Artists form a network model of arts administration which covers every corner of the arts world in China. However, the body that controls this network is the Department of Propaganda of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, not the Culture Ministry. This system operates in two ways. First, it ensures that all the key arts officers appointed to the Ministry of Culture and the National Federation of Writers and Artists are orthodox members of the Communist Party. Secondly, it equips each officer with a party committee or a branch committee at every level, ensuring that the party policy for the arts is effectively implemented by the Ministry of Culture and the National Federation of Writers and Artists. However, during the Cultural Revolution, Mao Zedong replaced both of these with a single revolutionary committee system in order to exercise more direct control of the arts.

Arts officers in China comprise four categories of personnel. First, there are the officials who are in charge of the various arts departments of central and local government. The second group are in charge at various levels in the national and

local federations of writers and artists. Then there are party cadres in charge of the arts who work for the Central or local propaganda departments or work within the network of the Ministry of Culture and the National Federation of Writers and Artists, and finally there are genuine arts administrators in charge of performing arts troupes, arts academies, performing and visual arts agencies and arts centres.

Arts officers of all categories are appointed according to two major criteria: they must be loyal members of the Communist Party and they must be supporters of the official policy towards the arts at the time. The usual characteristics of all regardless of category are: (a) they are either officers of the Communist Party or writers and artists appointed by the party to control their fellow writers and artists, (b) they are paid by either the government or the Party (according to category) and their job is to manage the arts on behalf of the Communist system, (c) their careers and promotion depend on their loyalty to the party, their comprehension of current party policy towards the arts, their knowledge of arts control and their efficiency in carrying out the tasks set out by the party, and (d) all enjoy special social, and economic privileges, the level of which depends on how their contribution is accessed by the party. Cars and housing are two of the most common rewards: an arts officer at departmental level in the Ministry of Culture headquarters is provided with a car and a driver for his sole use as well as a four bedroom flat, while an arts officer at divisional level would have a shared car and driver and a three bedroom flat. By way of contrast, a musician at the Central Ensemble of National Music can wait for ten years for a one bedroom flat. Similar complex hierarchies of material rewards apply at the provincial and local levels within both the government and party structure.

There are however some major differences. Firstly, arts officers of the Ministry of Culture are the official arts representatives of the Chinese government. They come under the direct control of the State Office, but the key arts officers are appointed with the approval of the Central Propaganda Department of the communist Party, and arts officers at local government levels are responsible jointly to the Ministry of Culture and their local government body. Secondly, arts officers within the National Federation of Writers and Artists are answerable to the Central Propaganda Department while arts officers at local federations are subject to the control of the local departments of propaganda. They are the so-called "unofficial" representatives of the Chinese authorities and they thereby are an extension of the official control of the arts. Thirdly, arts officers within the party system are necessary tools of the party and work to apply the party's control over both writers and artists and other arts officers. Fourthly, arts officers within performing arts troupes, agencies, arts academies and arts centres are

responsible to the appropriate national or local cultural bureaux according to the status of their organisation. Unlike the other groups of arts officers, they are not involved in shaping policy towards the arts but merely undertake its implementation. Between them the different groups of arts officers ensure that the network of official controls over the arts in China functions effectively. During the Cultural Revolution, Mao Zedong was dissatisfied with the bureaucracy and the ineffectiveness of arts officers in carrying out his policy, so he replaced the whole structure with a single, centrally directed revolutionary committee system. In contrast with this, Deng Xiaoping in his reforms attempted to keep the arts officers of the party system (category (a) above) at a distance from the arts and gave the arts officers of the other three groups more power and freedom to exercise his "indirect leadership" over the arts.

2.5 Deng Xiaoping's "Indirect Leadership" over the Arts

In 1978, at the end of the two year transitional period following the death of Mao in 1976, Deng Xiaoping's administrational control was firmly established, and he had succeeded in launching his political and economic reforms throughout the country. Legitimising his own assumption of power depended partly at least on launching a fierce criticism of Mao Zedong. Though a long-servicing senior party and government figure, Deng Xiaoping had been condemned by Mao Zedong as a revisionist and was expelled from the Communist Party in 1976. In order to guarantee the survival of his Mandate, Deng Xiaoping had to eliminate the widespread worship of Mao Zedong which had peaked during the Cultural Revolution. However, at the same time, he had to limit his criticism to avoid damaging the authority of the communist system itself, of which he had been and remained part. In his criticism of Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping therefore rejected those parts of "Mao Zedong's thoughts" which he believed were obstacles to his own reforms while insisting on those which laid down the fundamental principles of the Chinese communist dictatorship. In addition to economic reforms, Deng Xiaoping also initiated the reform of the political structure in 1978 and he reconfirmed this after he finally removed Hua Guofeng - the nominal Head of State - in 1980. Deng Xiaoping demanded that the powers and functions of the Communist Party and the government should be separated: the Party should henceforth concentrate on policy-making and ideological control leaving to the government the administration of day-to-day affairs. In this his aim was to paradoxically improve and more importantly strengthen the leadership of the Communist Party.[18] He believed that Mao Zedong's model of extending the Party's direct control over every field had led to inefficiency and in the end weakened rather than supported the party's leadership over China.[19] It was against this background that Deng Xiaoping announced his new policy towards

the arts in October 1979.[20]

In his reforms from 1979 onwards, Deng Xiaoping's open-door policy aimed to bring Western science, technology and investment into China while at the same time keeping the influence of Western liberalism to the minimum practical level.[21] He also aimed to introduce Western style management into enterprises in order to ensure the success of his reforms, and appears to have included arts administration in this objective, too. Replacing Mao Zedong's direct control of the arts with his approach of indirect control, Deng Xiaoping's administration attempted to establish a new arts elite consisting novelists, poets, actors and artists appointed as the new arts officers at ministerial, provincial and local levels, though with anti-liberalism campaigns and censorship to fill the gap in the system left by the withdrawal of political control through the party appointed arts officers of Mao Zedong's regime.

As discussed above, the dominating motivation behind Deng Xiaoping's revision of Mao Zedong's policy and his move to indirect leadership over the arts was by his pragmatism. Although in theory similar to Mao Zedong's arts policy of National Construction period (1949 - 1966), in practice it left more room for flexibility and experiment by his new arts officers. Deng Xiaoping's new approach can be justifiably described as indirect leadership over the arts for two main reasons. First, he believed that arts officers must stop allocating explicit political tasks and objectives to writers and artists, leading to more arm's length relationship. Secondly, arts officers who supported his reforms found new motivations and worked hard to experiment with his concept of an indirect control over the arts.[22] This indirect leadership over the arts differed in important respects from Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts of the Cultural Revolution period. It emphasised the principle of allowing more freedom for writers and artists. It also aimed to put arts officers on an equal level with writers and artists and kept them at arm's length from interfering with the creative process, and allowed more freedom for arts officers themselves to experiment and develop this policy. There was however a continuous change in the details of the policy, reflecting the in-fighting against both leftism and liberalism. Examples included the anti-liberalism campaigns in 1981 and 1985 and the anti-spiritual pollution campaign in 1983, each marking marked changes in direction or emphasis in his approach to the arts within a comparatively short period of time, and soon after its official adoption.[23]

Following his ending of the Cultural Revolution in 1976, Deng Xiaoping aimed to normalise the state of the arts. Between 1978 and 1979 he laid down that China's modernisation must rely on technology and education and that hence

intellectuals and professionals of all kinds must be respected. Professional writers and artists purged in the Cultural Revolution were to be brought back from the villages or factories, to which they had been exiled, and restored to theatres, concert halls, music conservatories and writers' associations.[24] In the field of arts administration, Deng Xiaoping first replaced Cultural Revolution radicals with more experienced arts officers who had been removed from office by Mao Zedong's administration during the Cultural Revolution, and then promoted some renowned writers and artists who supported his reforms to key posts in arts administration. These two types of new arts officers were seen as the key in implementing his indirect leadership over the arts.

The typical arts officers of the first category were the kinds of writers or artists favoured by Mao Zedong during the Wartime period, who had them been made officers in Mao Zedong's arts army before moving into civilian arts administration. The second group were writers or artists well-known for their works produced during the early years of Deng Xiaoping's regime, after which they were appointed arts officers. The main difference between these two categories of arts officers was that the first had supported Mao Zedong's successive policies towards the arts up to the Cultural Revolution and in particular wanted to return to the policies of the period of National Construction in 1950s and 1960s, while the latter were attracted by Deng Xiaoping's policy of establishing an indirect leadership over the arts, and tried to experiment in implementing this policy. This difference in interpretation of Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts between the two groups was not only the main factor that caused instability and inconsistency in its implementation, as well as affecting and shaping Deng Xiaoping's own decision-making for the arts. From time to time, he supported one group or the other, depending on how he was influenced by their opinions and the political climate of the time. The actions and attitudes of these arts officers at central, provincial and local levels constituted an integrated part in the implementation of Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership over the arts.

Between 1979 and 1989, Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts seemed to pass through four identifiable stages. The first period was from 1979 to 1981 during which Deng Xiaoping first announced his policy of indirect leadership over the arts, which was greatly welcomed by the Chinese writers and artists. There were also many detailed reforms and personnel changes compared to those inherited from Mao Zedong. Deng Xiaoping clearly expected that the writers and artists to be satisfied with the freedom now granted, though they were still expected to produce works according to the needs of socialist construction in the long run.[25]

The second period lasted from 1981 to 1985 during which Deng Xiaoping

continually reduced and restricted the exercise of freedom of expression in the face of the increasing trend of liberalism. He kept warning his arts officers to be aware of the danger that growing dissident voices might in the end destroy the authority of the communist system.[26] Three major modifications in his policy emerged: the arts were not allowed to be independent from politics though the arts did not have to belong to or to be subordinated to politics, writers and artists were requested to take the interests of "the people" and the Communist Party into consideration, while unofficial publications and the introduction of contemporary Western culture were to be controlled by direct censorship. However, Deng Xiaoping did not regard these changes as abandoning his policy of indirect leadership over the arts. It was during this period that prominent Chinese writers and artists as well as some arts officers who were in support of his policy were promoted to key posts in arts administration throughout the country. For example, in the Ministry of Culture, Wang Meng, a novelist, was made Cultural Minister, Ying Ruocheng, an actor, Deputy Cultural Minister, Gao Zhanxiang, a prose writer, also Deputy Cultural Minister. They all tried hard to continue the initial ideas of Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership in their own ways. [27]

During the third period, which covered 1986 to 1989, progress in implementing Deng's policy of indirect leadership was on hold. Appointments of writers and artists to key posts ceased and interference with the arts by arts officers wanting to return to the days of Mao Zedong continued. However, demands for independence, freedom, and struggles against official censorship were also increasing, and there was a growing feeling that Deng Xiaoping's administration had failed in solving this conflict between artists and arts officers.
Finally, the government responded with direct control of the arts by the central authorities after 4th June Massacre in Tiananmen Square in 1989. Some key arts officers, who were writers or artists rather career party officials such as Wang Meng, Cultural Minister and Ying Ruocheng, Deputy Cultural Minister, were dismissed from office or resigned and returned to their own trades, and were replaced by followers of Mao Zedong. However, generally this process failed to spread down through the middle and lower levels of arts administration. After ten years of reforms, it was almost impossible to return to the control and repression of Mao Zedong and there were not enough younger arts officers who still believed in Mao Zedong's direct control of the arts, though the average age of the controlling arts officers of thirteen top arts associations was 69 years.[28] Just as it had been difficult for Deng Xiaoping to replace cadres in the middle and lower levels when he first initiated his reforms ten years earlier indirectly, it was now difficult to replace reformers who he had himself directly promoted to numerous posts in a large country like China. Deng Xiaoping had no intention of

offering all the key posts in arts administration to pro-Mao Zedong arts officers who were unenthusiastic about, if not strongly against, his approach of indirect leadership over the arts and who were likely to be against him in the wider political context as well.

Deng Xiaoping blamed the senior officials in his administration for making the biggest mistake of loosing ideological control and being inconsistent in the fight against liberalism and spiritual pollution. He made it very clear that hard measures were to be applied in the fight against liberalism and great efforts to be made in the education of political ideology.[29] However, this change in policy did not mean that Deng Xiaoping wanted to replace "indirect leadership" over the arts with direct control. In fact, Deng Xiaoping's administration continually appointed new arts officers who, though not radical reformers, were strongly against returning to the extremes of Mao Zedong's control of the arts. Therefore despite his concerns about the political risks of liberalism and internationalism in the arts and media, Deng Xiaoping attempted to maintain the middle way overall , and in general supported the implementation of his policy towards the arts along a "middle way".

2.6 Conclusion

There appear to have been three underlying motives behind the way Deng Xiaoping implemented his policy of indirect leadership over the arts between 1979 and 1989. First, there was wide-spread disillusion and criticism of the Communist Party after the Cultural Revolution, which not only greatly damaged the communist system but also destroyed its legitimacy. Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution proved to be both immensely destructive and a failure in every field, including the arts. He faced great demands from the people for economic reconstruction and development and new policies therefore had to be worked out to build on Mao Zedong's inheritance in an attempt to lead the Chinese people forward. Secondly, though close to him for decades, Deng Xiaoping disagreed with Mao Zedong's extreme pursuit of ideals of revolution at the price of damaging the state economy and people's livelihood, and as a consequence he had several times been expelled from the core of decision-making and once from the Communist Party itself in April 1976, four months prior to Mao Zedong's death. After thirty years of power struggles within the Communist Party, Deng Xiaoping finally emerged victorious between 1976 and 1979 and at last had the opportunity to put his ideas about the running of the state into practice when he assumed supreme office. Thirdly, Mao Zedong's "hundred flowers" principle was not fully implemented and remained attractive to the Chinese public, leaving room for further experiment.

The changes in policy towards the arts following Deng Xiaoping's assumption of power was welcomed at the time and led to great expectations throughout the arts. Those of Mao Zedong's arts officers who had been expelled from the arts army during the Cultural Revolution believed that this change would bring back the "golden age" for the arts - that of the National Construction period. In a way, they seemed intent on trying to turn the clock back and had no progressive intentions. Secondly, arts officers who were in favour of Deng Xiaoping's reforms expected that serving this policy would allow them at the same time to continue to apply Mao Zedong's principle of "allowing flowers to bloom" and hence create a new period of arts prosperity. Also writers and artists who had been persecuted during the Cultural Revolution were excited at the prospect of the freedom of expression promised by this policy, and were therefore willing to contribute their artistic talents under Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership. Younger writers and artists also supported, if with some reservations, the reforms and agreed to co-operate with the authorities under such a policy in order to develop their artistic potential. However, some more liberal writers saw it as an opportunity to develop their independence. As time went by, this group in particular became more and more critical of both its theory and implementation.

As Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership of the arts began to be implemented, three problems began to emerge. First, there was the inherent contradictions and dilemmas in Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts. On the one hand, Deng Xiaoping had to launch a criticism of Mao Zedong in relation to his policy during the Cultural Revolution, during which Deng Xiaoping himself suffered. On the other hand, Deng Xiaoping had to defend Mao Zedong in relation to the earlier policies of the National Construction period, since Deng Xiaoping was part of this. His reforms consequently always faced this dilemma, creating tension and conflicts between the Mao Zedong's arts officers who were still in office and Deng Xiaoping's supporters who were in favour of radical reforms. Both sides continually engaged in fights about where to draw the line in terms of the criticism of Mao Zedong. The former group could only tolerate criticism of Mao Zedong's policies in relation to the Cultural Revolution while the latter seemed to want more, in order to carry Deng Xiaoping's reforms forward, taking them perhaps further than Deng Xiaoping himself wanted.

There was also a problem in the shift from direct political control to the concept of indirect leadership, resulting in both confusion and different interpretations among both arts officers and writers and artists. Mao Zedong had controlled the arts directly in terms of ideological obedience, artistic creativity for political tasks, and subordination of the arts to politics. The new concept of "indirect leadership"

in contrast with this implied freedom of ideological difference as long as this was not against the communism system, the ending of interference with artistic creativity in terms of what and how to create and the concept of the dependence of the arts on politics instead of the subordination of the arts to politics. However, freedom in ideological differences was always subject to interpretation of the Chinese politics of the time, which made it impossible to be objective. "Interference with the arts" was not defined further, and was in practice transformed into other forms of control over the arts such as censorship, "anti-bourgeois-liberalism" campaigns and "anti-spiritual-pollution" campaigns. The shift from subordination to dependence of the arts to politics did not mean that the arts were given an equal position to politics, even though this was a key claim of Deng Xiaoping's "indirect leadership" over the arts.

Supporters of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts agreed with ideological differences only within the framework of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts during the War and National Construction periods. They seemed to have constrained their interference with the arts, but at the same time tightened their control in the wide ideological sphere and in administrative legislation. They no longer demanded the subordination of the arts to communist politics, but at the same time suppressed every attempt to achieve independence for the arts. Deng Xiaoping's reformers seemed to be more tolerant towards ideological differences which were seen as moves away from communism. They tried to create an environment in which artists could work according to their own wishes instead of obeying the instructions of individual arts officers, but the writers and artists were still expected to produce works which were conducive to their reforms. The arts officers had a confusing attitude towards the increasing pursuit of independence among the writers and artists. On the one hand, they typically assumed that the writers and artists were to be grateful to be lifted from their subordinate position. On the other hand, they expected the writers and artists to stay within the bounds and not to go too far or too fast with their demands for independence.

Generally speaking, Older writers and artists who had suffered during the Cultural Revolution were content with the limited freedom promised by Deng Xiaoping's administration, though they remained suspicious of its credibility and permanence due to their past experience. On the whole, they were more concerned with how and when it could be implemented. Younger writers and artists welcomed this change in policy and they believed that they could contribute to both its development and implementation through their participation. Both of older and younger writers and artists believed that this new policy might lead to greater freedom for the arts, and therefore began to explore

that possibility in their own ways. However, some liberal writers and artists became gradually aware of the limitations of Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts. They therefore tried to change the centre's dominant role in the arts through their criticism, though they seemed to have ignored the nature of this policy which had been produced with the intention of protecting China's dictatorship through the Communist Party and system.

There was also a lack of legal basis for the implementation of Deng Xiaoping's "indirect leadership" over the arts. No arts law was issued to safeguard this policy so it depended its legitimacy on Deng Xiaoping's speech at the Fourth National Congress of Writers and Artists in 1979 plus some additions from his later speeches about the arts in later periods. Such unofficial and imprecise sources were inevitably subject to different interpretations, and it was up to the arts officers to make final decisions. This led to both inconsistency and instability in the implementation of this policy.

When arts officers chose to interfere with the arts, there was no legislation which could prevent them from doing so, nor were there legal punishments that could be applied for illegality. Chinese writers and artists therefore continued to suffer from direct and personal interference from arts officers. They were under constant demands to co-operate with official policies, though these changed from time to time, but were unable to seek legal support to defend the freedom of expression promised by Deng Xiaoping. When writers and artists were persecuted by arts officers, they were in a helpless position, unable to defend either their freedom of expression or even social and financial support through their writers and artists' association or other arts organisations.

It was these three factors, the dilemma in Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts, the shift from direct control to indirect leadership and the lack of legal support, that caused continual challenges from the Chinese writers and artists over both the policy and implementation of Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership over the arts.

Notes to Chapter 2

[1] Deng Xiaoping, *"Deng Xiaoping lun wenyi" (Deng Xiaoping on literature and art)*, the People's Literature Press, 1989, Beijing, p.19., p. 84., p. 108.

[2] Mao Zedong, *"Yanan wenyi zuotanhui shangde jianghua" (Talks on literature and art at the yanan forum), "Mao Zedong xuanji disanjuan", (Selection of Mao Zedong's works iii)*, the People's Press, Beijing, 1953, pp. 849-880.

[3] Liang, Maochun, People's Music, People's Music Press, 1988, Beijing, p. 10.

[4] Mao Zedong, *"Guanyu baihua jifang, baijiazhengming" (On letting a hundred flowers bloom and a hundred schools of thought contend), "Mao Zedong xuanji diwujuan", (Selection of Mao Zedong's works vi)*, the People's Press, Beijing, 1977, pp. 388- 395.

[5] Collins Bown, *China 1949-1976*, Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., London, 1977, pp. 54-68.

[6] Li Yu, *"fanyou yundong hao wu biyao" (It is unnecessary to launch the anti-rightists campaign)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 116, June, 1987, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, p. 32.
Han Shan Bi, *"Pingzhuan Deng Xiaoping" (On Deng Xiaoping)*, East & West Culture Publishing Co., Hong Kong, 1988, pp. 298-300.

[7] Deng Xiaoping, *"Deng Xiaoping lun wenyi" (Deng Xiaoping on literature and art)*, the People's Literature Press, 1989, Beijing, p.19., p. 84., p. 108.

[8] Deng Xiaoping, *"Deng Xiaoping wenxuan 1975 - 1982" (Deng Xiaoping's collections 1975 - 1982)*, the People's Literature Press, 1983, Beijing, pp. 179 -86.

[9] Deng Xiaoping, *"Deng Xiaoping wenxuan 1975 - 1982" (Deng Xiaoping's collections 1975 - 1982)*, the People's Literature Press, 1983, Beijing, pp. 179-186.

[10] Mao Zedong, *"Yanan wenyi zuotanhui shangde jianghua" (Talks on literature and art at the yanan forum), "Mao Zedong xuanji disanjuan", (Selection of Mao Zedong's works iii)*, the People's Press, Beijing, 1953, pp. 849-850.

[11] Mao Zedong, *"Yanan wenyi zuotanhui shangde jianghua" (Talks on literature and art at the yanan forum), "Mao Zedong xuanji disanjuan", (Selection of Mao Zedong's works iii)*, the People's Press, Beijing, 1953, pp. 849-850.

[12] Mao Zedong, *"Yanan wenyi zuotanhui shangde jianghua" (Talks on literature and art at the yanan forum), "Mao Zedong xuanji disanjuan", (Selection of Mao Zedong's works iii)*, the People's Press, Beijing, 1953, pp. 856-858.

[13] Deng Xiaoping, *"Deng Xiaoping wenxuan 1975 - 1982" (Deng Xiaoping's collections 1975 - 1982)*, the People's Literature Press, 1983, Beijing, pp. 37-38, pp. 45-55, and personal experience of living in China and working for the Ministry of Culture between 1982 and 1988.

[14] Zhou Yanong, ed. *"Baijiageyan xuanyi", (Translation of quotations from the hundred schools of philosophies)*, China Commerce Press, Beijing, 1990, pp. 41-50.

[15] Cai, Zhongjun, *"Zhongguo dangdai wenxueshi" (history of contemporary Chinese literature)*, Jilin People's Press, Changchun, 1984, pp. 41-50.
Dai Qing, *"Wang Shiwei yu yiebaihehua" (Wang Shiwei and the wild lily)*, Wenhui Monthly, Shanghai, May, 1988.
Li Hui, *"Lishibeige - Hu Feng fandangjituan yuanan shimo" (The historical facts of the Hu Feng anti-party group)*, Xiangjiang Press, Hong Kong, 1989, p. 225.

[16] Editing Committee of Almanac of Chinese Literature and Art, *"Zhongguo wenyi nianjian 1981" (1981 almanac of Chinese literature and art)*, People's Literature and Art Press, Beijing, 1982.

[17] Personal experience of touring with the Jiangxi Acrobatic Troupe in East Africa in 1983 and touring with the Inner-Mongolian Peking Opera Troupe in Europe in 1984.

[18] Che, Fulin, Huang, Hai, ed. *"Deng Xiaoping zhengzhitizhigaige sixiangyanjiu" (Research on Deng Xiaoping's ideology of political reforms)*, Spring and Autumn Press, Beijing, pp. 60-69.

[19] Tan Jian, *"Lun zhongguo zhengzhitizhigaige " (On reforms of China's political structure)*, Spring and Autumn Press, Beijing, pp. 60-69.

[20] Deng Xiaoping, *"Deng Xiaoping lun wenyi" (Deng Xiaoping on literature and art)*, the People's Literature Press, 1989, Beijing, pp. 3-10.

[21] Deng Xiaoping, *"Shixian sigexiandaihua, jianshe youzhongguotesede shehuizhuyi" (To realise the four modernisations and to build socialism with Chinese characteristics), "Deng Xiaoping lun wenyi" (Deng Xiaoping on literature and art)*, the People's Literature Press, 1989, Beijing, pp. 48-54.

[22] When I discussed this question with Ying Ruocheng, Deputy Cultural Minister, at the First International Conference of Arts Administration held in Oxford in 1989, he also confirmed that they had been implementing an indirect leadership of the arts as part of Deng Xiaoping's reforms, which he considered was similar to the arm's length principle famous in the arts in Britain.

[23] Deng Xiaoping, *"Deng Xiaoping wenxuan 1975 - 1982" (Deng Xiaoping's collections 1975 - 1982)*, the People's Literature Press, 1983, Beijing, pp. 344-348.

[24] Deng Xiaoping, *"Deng Xiaoping wenxuan 1975 - 1982" (Deng Xiaoping's collections 1975 - 1982)*, the People's Literature Press, 1983, Beijing, pp. 37-38, pp. 45-55, and personal experience of living in China and working for the Ministry of Culture between 1982 and 1988.

[25] Deng Xiaoping, *"Deng Xiaoping wenxuan 1975 - 1982" (Deng Xiaoping's collections 1975 - 1982)*, the People's Literature Press, 1983, Beijing, pp. 179 -86.

[26] Deng Xiaoping, *"Shixian sigexiandaihua, jianshe youzhongguotesede shehuizhuyi" (To realise the four modernisations and to build socialism with Chinese characteristics), "Deng Xiaoping lun wenyi" (Deng Xiaoping on literature and art)*, the People's Literature Press, 1989, Beijing, p. 33, pp. 48-54.

[27] Deng Xiaoping, *"Deng Xiaoping lun wenyi" (Deng Xiaoping on literature and art)*, the People's Literature Press, 1989, Beijing, p.19., p. 84., p. 108.

[28] Huan Dongfeng, *(arts officers of Yanan school and left wing School)*, Open Magazine, Issue 64, April 1992, Celeluck Co., Ltd., Hong Kong, p. 68.

[29] Deng Xiaoping, *"Deng Xiaoping lun wenyi" (Deng Xiaoping on literature and art)*, the People's Literature Press, 1989, Beijing, p. 90.

Chapter 3: The Rise of "the Today Poets"

3.1 A Review on the Development of the Chinese New Poetry

When Bei Dao and his friends, who became known as "the Today Poets", began to produce their own poetry journal "Today" at the end of 1978, their poems soon spread throughout China and influenced the style of a new generation of poets.[1] However, before examining how and why they inspired or shocked other Chinese poets, it is important to review the development of Chinese New Poetry and particularly the restrictions it had suffered under the communist administration from 1949 to 1976.

From the administrative point of view, the development of Chinese New Poetry prior to the Today Poets can be roughly divided into three periods corresponding to the political change in the country. The first period started from 1919, when the New Poetry was born, to 1937. From 1919 to 1937, the whole of China was, in name, under the administration of Republic of China though in reality some areas were under the control of the Chinese communists, and others were under provincial war-lords. The second period started from the Japanese invasion of China in 1937 through to the communists' take-over of Mainland China in 1949. During this 1937 to 1949 period China had been divided between the Japanese, the Nationalist Party and the Communist Party. 1949 to 1976 saw the third period during which time, Chinese poets became isolated within the restrictive demands of socialist realism imposed by the Communist Party of China, and they lost normal contacts with other Chinese poets either in Hong Kong or in Taiwan.

This section examines some poets of each of these three periods, with the emphasis on the impact either on the government's administration of the arts or on the Chinese tradition, rather than their importance in the history of Chinese poetry in aesthetic terms. Their poetry is therefore shown here for the purpose of illustrating their social influence rather than their aesthetic essence. Unfortunately this narrow focus excludes many excellent poets and poems, which were of less significance in terms of the social and political debate.

3.2 On the Translation of Chinese Poetry

Many would agree that, broadly speaking, poetry is untranslatable, though there have been continuous attempts to do so, some successful but most failed. In this respect, it is more difficult to illustrate the difference between a classical poem and a contemporary poem. However, one can use the comparison of the change from sonnet to free verse in order to gain a rough idea on this transition from the

classical to the contemporary. To be more specific, a good example can be drawn from David Hinton's translation of Tu Fu's poem-Impromptu. Tu Fu (712-70AD) has been regarded as Saint of the Chinese classical poetry and his poems have always been taught as models to Chinese students. This poem was translated by David Hinton as:

A river moon cast only feet away, storm-lanterns
Alight late in the second watch...Serene

Flock of fists on sand—egrets asleep when
A fish leaps in the boat's wake, shivering, cry.

David Hinton further interpreted the second part as:

(bank)
sand head / sleep egrets // gather fists / tranquil
boat tail/ jump fish // spread cut / cry(sound)
(wake)

Then David Hinton commented that

"throughout this couplet, the paring of contrasting elements creates a sense of poise, which is the most basic function of parallelism. This balance of contrasts is uncomplicated in the first three positions (sand-boat, head-tail, sleep-jump). But in the fourth, a threatening tension arises ....., an impending violence already foreshadowed in the striking description of egrets as clenched fists in the first line (it is when reading the second line of a couplet that this added dimension of parallelism is registered). The tension builds through the fifth and sixth positions, ...

This is a remarkably expressive couplet , in which parallelism goes far beyond its basic function of holding the two lines together in a balanced relationship. Parallel construction creates another dimension in the poem, an interiority which is impossible to reproduce in English, although some of its effects can be rendered indirectly."[2]

David Hinton also made a very valuable commentary on the translation of

Chinese poetry. He pointed out:

> "It is only because Chinese is such an austerely minimal language that individual words have enough weight and immediacy for these parallel interactions to occur. If a translator mimics parallel structures in English, the very lines which are richest and most intricate in the original become the most noticeably flat, simplistic, and monotonous."[3]

This parallelism was one of the principles that Hu Shi, Guo Moruo and many literary revolutionaries wanted to break through. Both Hu Shi (1891-1962) and Guo Moruo were regarded as the most daring pioneers of creating a new Chinese culture during the 4th May movement of 1919.[4] There might have been two reasons for their intentions. On the one hand, classical poetry was so perfect that no newcomers could possibly go beyond it so that they had to destroy its structure in order to find their own identity. On the other hand, this structure had become so rigid by the end of the Qing Dynasty (1643 - 1912) that it lost real life in it -something it used to have. To express new ideas stimulated by the introduction of Western Civilisation, Chinese poets began to seek new forms to replace the old.

3.3 Chinese Poetry and the 4th May Movement

The 4th May movement was a significant language and literary revolution in contemporary Chinese history. It was started in 1919 and its main aims included creating a new plain language that could be understood by the common people and developing a new literature that was about the common people.[5] It was during this movement that Chinese classical poetry lost its dominant position because it was regarded as so rigid that it could no longer express adequately contemporary feelings. Many Chinese poets from the 1920s onwards decided to give up the classical rhyme and began to experiment with a new type of poetry-free verse. Their inspirations mainly came from two sources: Western poetry and traditional Chinese folk songs. Their poetry thus appeared to be a mixture of Western poetry, Chinese folk songs, and Classical poetry in which they had been well-trained. Two of them were very famous. These were Hu Shi, who wrote the first New Poem(or plain language poem), and Guo Moruo whose long poem "Goddess" shocked Chinese poets and produced great impact on the New Poetry.[6]

These poets held a range of various beliefs and opinions. For example, Hu Shi believed in "saving China through education" while Guo Moruo chose to "save China through revolution." It is always dangerous to relate an individual's poetry to his or her motives and great caution must be taken if any attempt. On the one hand, it is important to realise that the result of poetic creation does not always coincide with the poet's declared intention. What the poet wants may not be what his or her poem can do. On the other hand, the social effect of a poem is often closely related to the reality of the time.

Hu Shi studied English literature, philosophy, and political science at Cornell University in 1909. He completed his Ph. D at Colombia University in 1915.[7] When he returned to China in 1917, he contributed to the New Literature movement together with Chen Duxiu who later became the first Chairman of the Communist Party of China. The New Literature movement was also called the "plain language" movement, which aimed at replacing the official language with the language used by the common people. The same thing happened in Chinese poetry.

Hu Shi declared in his *Talks on New Poetry* in 1919 that

> "any literary revolutions, either in the past or at present, either in China or abroad, always began with the form of literature. Probably, they all aimed at an emancipation of the language, the style etc.. ..... The new literature is all written in the plain language. Its style is free and against tonal patterns and rhythm schemes." [8]

Hu Shi also emphasised that poetry would not be able to contain accurate observations, lofty ideals, complicated feelings and richness of life until the style of poetry was liberated.[9]

Putting his theories into practice, Hu Shi was the first to use colloquial language to write a poem, though his main contribution was made through the theory of New Poetry, and academic and philosophical education rather than creative writing. He published the first four new poems together with another two poets - Shen Junmo and Liu Bannong in *New Youth Journal* in January 1918. He also published the first book of New Poetry in March 1920. The following was one of his "plain language" poems, which was regarded as the first new poem.

Two Butterflies

two butterflies, in pairs were flying to the sky.
suddenly one returned, not knowing why.
the other was left alone, so pitiful.
having no intention to follow for it was too lonely in the sky.[10]

My translation of the poem above tries to maintain the original form of the poem in Chinese. In order to see how his poetry was interpreted by an English translator, I also cite another of Hu Shi's poems, which was translated by Robert Kotewall and Norman L. Smith.

A Trifle

I too have wished not to love
That I might escape love's agony
But now after much appraisement,
I willingly accept love's agony.[11]

A better idea of what Hu Shi was attempting to do can be gained by comparing the first one, *Two Butterflies*, to one of Tu Fu's poems.

Two yellow birds are singing in green willows,
A line of white cranes are flying into the blue sky.
Beside my windows lies snow of a thousand miles.
Alongside the river anchors boats from South China ten thousand miles away.

When I translated this poem, I tried to maintain the same language pattern in the original Chinese, which was almost word for word translation. In my translation, I gave up its rhythm for its poetic picture. To gain a better understanding of Tu Fu's poetry, I also choose one of his poems translated by David Hinton as follows:

Standing Alone

Empty skies. And beyond, one hawk,
Between river banks, two white gulls
Drift and flutter. Fit for an easy kill,
To and fro, they follow contentment.

Dew shrouds grasses. Spiderwebs are still
Not gathered in. The purpose driving
Heaven becomes human now, I stand where
Uncounted sorrows begin beginning alone.[12]

Through a comparison between *Two Butterflies* and the "two yellow birds", we can see that *Two Butterflies* was almost a poor copy, which could hardly compare to the poetic picture started by the "two yellow birds." However, two important things should to be mentioned. First, in his Two Butterflies, Hu Shi began to make comments through an invisible "I", something rare in Chinese classical poetry but common in Western poetry. Chinese poetry traditionally tends to express the poet's feelings or ideas through the "voice" of an object in nature such as a bird, a tree, a river or a stone etc.. It is rare to find a Chinese classic poet standing out and speaking through the personal "I', "he" or "she". Implication was one of the important principles which was dropped by Hu Shi in this poem. Secondly, his poem seemed to be an interpretation of Chinese classical poetry. He made it more colloquial but he did not drop its rhyme completely. Though he made more effort in writing the New Poetry, Hu Shi's achievement in creative writing was limited compared to Guo Moruo, who made a much more influential break-through in the history of Chinese poetry.

Guo Moruo went to Japan to study medicine in 1914. As with Lu Shun, another important writer in the New Literature movement, Guo Moruo's interest turned to literature. He started creative writing in 1919 and published "Goddess"-a collection of his new poems.[13] The following is a selection of lines from one of his poems.

Song of the Birth of Phoenix
(selection)

the morning tide rises,
the morning tide rises,
the dead brightness is reborn.

the spring tide rises,
the spring tide rises,
the dead universe is reborn.

the living tide rises ,
the living tide rises,

the dead phoenix is reborn.

the phoenix is singing.
we are reborn.
we are reborn.
one of everything, is reborn.
everything of one, is reborn.
we are him, they are me.
you are in me, i am in you.
i am you.
you are me.
fire is phoenix.
phoenix is fire.
fly! fly!
sing! sing!

we are fresh, we are bright,
we are graceful, we are fragrant
one of everything is reborn
everything of one is reborn

we are warm, we are passionate.
we are joyful, we are harmonious.

one of everything , harmony.
everything of one , harmony.
harmony is you, harmony is me.
harmony is him, harmony is fire.
fire is you.
fire is me.
fire is fire.
fly! fly!
sing! sing!

we are vivid, we are free,
we are vigorous, we are long-standing.
one of everything, long-standing.
everything of one, long-standing.
long-standing is you, long-standing is me.
fire is you.

fire is me.
fire is him.
fire is fire .
fly! fly!
sing! sing!

we are singing, we are flying.
we are flying, we are singing.
one of everything, is always singing.
are you singing? am i singing?
is he singing? is fire singing ?

singing is singing!
singing is singing!
nothing but singing!
nothing but singing!
singing!
singing!
singing! [14]

This poem was published in 1921, two years after the 4th May Movement. In this poem, we can see the confidence, the grandeur and simplicity of the American poetry of Whitman rather than the sorrows, imagination and complicity of Qu Yuan, a famous Chinese poet (c. 343-278 BC). The Western influence came together with the concepts of democracy and liberty which Chinese intellectuals saw as hopes for fighting against the ignorance and cruelty of Chinese feudal society. This poem broke all the rules of classical poetry and provided complete freedom for people to express themselves. It was therefore warmly acclaimed by the young, but on the other hand it lost the beauty of Chinese classical poetry in terms of its carefully chosen images, accurate use of language, and balanced structure. Guo Moruo later became a revolutionary poet after 1949 was regarded as "a cultural flag" of communist China.[15]

3.4 Further Development of Chinese New Poetry

As time went by, the New Poetry became more mature and different schools not only began to take shape but also became established. First came the Lake school in April, 1922 represented by Feng Xuefeng, Ying Xiuren and Pan Mohua. Then came the New Moon school from Beijing in 1923, represented by Wen Yiduo and Xu Zhimo, who also fostered successors such as Bian Zhilin and He Qifang. The

July school, named after the *July* Journal with Hu Feng as its editor, fostered a group of poets such as Lu Yuan, Lu Ling and Niu Han since 1930. Simultaneously came the Left Wing school of revolutionary poets in March, 1930. The Resistance War against Japan also created the Wartime Poets such as Ai Qing and Tian Jian.[16]

All these schools were influenced by various philosophical beliefs at the time. But it is important to notice that the Left Wing school and War poetry were largely promoted and developed after Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts was produced in 1942 with its demand that writers and artists must work as "arm's against the enemy " and "serving the workers, peasants and soldiers". Many poets of these two schools went to Yanan and joined Mao Zedong's revolutionary army. They followed Mao's policy of absorbing excellence from folk traditions and produced popular new folk poetry. The following are some examples from each of the schools.

Loneliness
by Feng Zhi, poet of the Lake school

my loneliness is a long snake,
quite, without a word.[17]

Who Knows
by Xu Zhimo, a poet of the New Moon school

sitting on a rickshaw, I was going home in the mid-night——
in rags, an old man was pulling hard;
there was not even one star in the sky,
there was not even one light in the street:
that tiny fire of the vehicle lamp
lit the dust in the middle of the street————
bumping towards the left and right,
the rickshaw puller was staggering along;
.....[18]

When I Was A Kid
by Lu Yuan, poet of the July school

When I was a kid
I did not know how to read
Mama was my library

I read Mama

one day
this world become peaceful
man can fly...
wheat grows from the snowy land...
money becomes useless...

gold is used as bricks for houses
notes are used to make paper-eagle
silver coins are used to splash ripples...

Along with a red crane from Egypt
I want to be a wandering youth
to travel through tales
to propose a marriage to the princess of Candy Kingdom

But
Mama said
Now you must work [19]

If We Did not Go To Fight
by Tian Jian, Wartime poet [20]

If we did not go to fight,
We would killed,
By the bayonets of the enemy,
Pointing to our skeletons, they would say:
"Look.
They are slaves!"

Making a sound analysis on the differences of the Lake, the New Moon and July schools requires both a thorough study of them and more space, but this is not the aim of this dissertation. But in general at least one difference between those schools and the Left Wing and Wartime poetry is obvious through the above poems. It can be seen that the first communicated with readers through personal experience and the latter through the "revolutionary course" of fighting for the victory of communism. It was this difference that decided their future literary career when the communists took over in 1949.

3.5 Poetry under the Communist Administration between 1949 and 1976

By 1949, a lot of poets saw the Communist Party of China as a free and democratic alternative to the dictatorship and corruption of the government of the Nationalist Party. At the First National Conference of Chinese Writers and Artists in 1949, they all believed that art should serve the people as demanded in Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts and they believed that great prosperity for Chinese literature was arising in the People's Republic of China. However, they soon found that there was a difference on how to serve the ordinary people between them and their arts officers. Unfortunately, they were not given the right to argue their opinions. Hu Feng and other July poets were treated as anti-revolutionaries in 1955 and sent into prison.[21] All other schools of poetry, except Revolutionary Poetry, were suppressed by the authorities.

Revolutionary poetry , which was developed from Left Wing, and Wartime poetry, began to obtain its dominant and monopoly position in the forum of Chinese poetry. Poetry had been used as the voice of every political movement. As various communist campaigns followed one after another, it appeared to contain more and more slogans and revolutionary optimism in order to serve the political aims. Finally, even those Left Wing poets found it difficult to keep pace with the Party's political demands and had been denied the right to write during the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976.

The following are two poems written during the "Great Leap Forward" movement in 1958 when the Chinese government called upon the people to catch up with Britain in three years and America in five years. Poetry also boomed for it was counted by quantity rather than quality. Both of these two poems were devoted to the great socialist construction.

A Girl's Reply

We were under the trees when I asked with a sigh;
" You still won't take up with a sweetheart, now why? "
Her cheeks became flushed with a mantle of red
And after some light-hearted banter she said:
" I won't be a wife till the hills are reclaimed,
I won't leave my home till the river's been tamed.
Green hills and green water for bride-chair I'll take,
for my dowry the orchards and fields that we'll make."[22]

The Girl Checker

The dark eyes of the girl checker are sharp:
Not a single defect in warp and woof escapes them.
Some I know are afraid of these eyes
But still more are fascinated!
I send her the cloth I have woven myself,
And my heart that can stand any test.
I hope she will take the keenest look at them
With her beautiful eyes![23]

Those are just two examples of thousands of poems that were produced the workers, peasants and soldiers under the Party's call. The famous *Wartime poet* Tian Jian also wrote a poem during the same period:

At the Foot of Qilian Mountain

Oh, Qilian mountain,
Standing by your side,
A moon-cup of the wine spring in hand,
I hold your snow water,
Facing thousands of lights in front of me,
I praise the oil workers——
These heroes turned on drillers,
Fighting a battle in the oil fields;
From the sea of lights,
New cities emerge one after another;
.....[24]

Tian Jian was one of the most famous *Wartime poets* as well as a keen supporter of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts, once saying that what he read most frequently was Mao Zedong's Talks on Literature and Arts at the Yanan Forum.[25] Tian Jian had always been a poet singing paeans to the revolutionary causes rather than criticising its defects. As he wrote in 1957: " I am a member of the Communist Party. My responsibility as a writer is, undoubtedly, to praise the proletariat and Communism." However, he suffered the same fate as poets of other schools when the Cultural Revolution came in 1966 and was purged to work in the countryside.[26]

During the Cultural Revolution, the poetry of Mao Zedong swept over China.

Older poets were all regarded as spokesmen of the bourgeoisie and sent to the fields for re-education. The young threw out both traditional and the "old revolutionary" poetry as rubbish and worshipped Mao's poetry, and also tried to write the "new revolutionary" poetry. However, on the fringe of this revolutionary tide there were some poets who began to experiment a different kind of poetry in the mid 1970s after the heat of the Cultural Revolution. These poets, including Bei Dao, Mang Ke, Duo Duo, who gathered in Baiyangdian, a lake district not far away from Beijing, and formed a underground poetry club, challenging the official doctrines in their poetry.[27] When they revealed their works after the Cultural Revolution on 23rd December, 1978 in their poetry journal *Today*, some Chinese were excited and inspired and others were either confused or shocked. During the Beijing Spring movement of 1979 to 1980, these poets became one of the main challenges to the official arts ideology.

It should be stressed that this section only aims to provide a picture of the mainstream development of the Chinese New Poetry. Simultaneously, there have always been other poets producing poetry of different values. For example, in the 1930s, there were poets like Li Jinfa who experimented with symbolism from his experience in France. His poetry was ignored until the 1980s when some young poets discovered in him a unique value. So it is important to be aware that there were other valuable poetic schools and individuals not mentioned.

3.6 The Today Poets and the Beijing Spring Movement

In 1980, one of my friends went to Beijing to meet the Today poets after reading their poetry journal - *Today*. He stayed with them until his money ran out. Mang Ke, one of the main Today poets, bought him a train ticket and he returned home with the following story: "I went for a drink with them one day. They talked about poetry, of course. They were saying that sooner or later the history of Chinese poetry would have to devote a page to them - the Today poets." As time went on, the history of Chinese Poetry began to devote more and more pages to the rise of those Today Poets.

The Beijing Spring movement started in early 1979 when some young people pasted posters of their opinions on a wall in Xidan Street, which was therefore known as the Xidan Wall of Democracy. The Beijing Spring movement appears to have consisted of four groups: the democrats, the artists, the poets and the photographers. Each played a different role in this movement. The democrats were represented by Wei Jingsheng, Wang Juntao, Ren Wanting: they aimed at a political reform in the communist system. The artists on the other hand demanded freedom of expression established the Star Artists' Association, which

held exhibitions in the streets after being rejected by public venues. The poets formed a group and began to publish an unofficial journal called *Today*, first published on 25th December, 1978. Apart from these poets, there were some writers who edited a literary magazine called *the Fertile Earth* published around the same time.[28] However, they did not seem to produce the impact of the Today poets. Finally, there were a group of photographers who formed the April Photographers' Association, but they did not seem to have any direct or indirect political demands. In contrast, they appeared to be more concerned with art, compared to the other three groups as mentioned above.

When the Xidan Wall of Democracy was used by those young people, they found that their posted works were soon covered over by new articles. This was one of the reasons that the democrats and the poets decided to produce their own magazines. They had three ways to raise the necessary capital. First, the editors decided that each of them donate one *yuan RMB* to the magazine every month (which was about one thirty-seventh of their monthly salary). Secondly, they asked the public for donations.. Thirdly, they began to sell their underground publications. *The Fertile Earth* was sold at one *yuan*, *Life* twenty-five cents, and *Truth* five cents to the Chinese and fifty cents to foreigners.[29] It is not clear at what price the *Today* poetry journal was sold, it is known that they also offered a national subscription in addition to direct sales in Beijing.

It was the introduction of subscriptions which brought about essential changes to those underground magazines. First, it was possible for them to survive and develop as a normal publication from a financial point of view. Secondly, their influence became wide-spread. Last but not least, through their existence and regular circulation, they became a challenge to the authorities in terms of the freedom of the press, which had been granted in the National Constitution of 1954 and of 1975 but ignored during Mao's administration.

3.7 The Today Poets, their Poems and the Response

The most famous Today poets include Bei Dao, Mang Ke, Yang Lian, Gu Cheng, Duo Duo, etc., who all made their own contributions to *Today*.[30] There is not space to discuss each of them in this dissertation, so I shall only discuss typical examples and examine their roles from an administrative point of view since it is difficult to go through each of them in the space of this dissertation. Nowadays, they are regarded as representatives of the Today poets, and this certainly ignores the individualities of each poet. It is important to be aware of this distinction between the evaluation of a critic and of an arts administrator, and one should bear in mind that other poets of the group may have other important

contributions which have not yet become known outside their own code.

I decided to choose as examples four of the Today poets, beginning with Bei Dao, who is the best known Today poet both in China and in the West. Unlike other Today poets he also spent a lot of time explaining the ideas of the Today poets. The second example was Duo Duo. His poems were more influenced by Western poets compared to others such as Gu Cheng and Yang Lian. His poems are therefore easier to understand after being translated. The third was Gu Cheng, himself the son of a revolutionary poet. When he began to published his Today style poems, Gu Cheng confused many senior Chinese poets. The last poet I have chosen is Mang Ke, who is the least-known poet of the four. When all the Today poets decided to join either the officially run publications or official literary associations, Mang Ke continued alone as an unofficial poet.

When Bei Dao announced that "I do not believe," this echoed in the hearts of many people in different parts of China who were suffering disillusion with the Cultural Revolution. The following are two poems from Bei Dao, The first one was entitled *The Answer*. It was written in 1972 and published in the first issue of *Today Poetry Journal* in 1979. The second one was *Declaration*, devoted to one of his friends who died for freedom.

The Answer

Debasement is the password of the base.
Nobility the epitaph of the noble.
See how the gilded sky is covered
With the drifting twisted shadows of the dead.

The Ice Age is over now.
Why is there ice everywhere?
The Cape of Good Hope has been discovered.
Why do a thousand sails contest the Dead Sea?

I come into this world
Bringing only paper, rope, a shadow,
To proclaim before the judgement
The voice that has been judged.

Let me tell you, world,
I do not believe!

If a thousand challengers lie beneath your feet,
Count me as number one thousand and one.

I don't believe the sky is blue;
I don't believe in thunders' echoes;
I don't believe that dreams are false;
I don't believe that death has no revenge.

If the sea is destined to breach the dikes
Let all the brackish water pour into my heart;
If the land is destined to rise
Let humanity choose a peal for existence again.

A new conjunction and glimmering stars
Adorn the unobstructed sky now;
They are the pictographs from five thousand years,
They are the watchful eyes of future generations.[31]

Declaration
for Yu Luoke

Perhaps the final hour is come
I have left no testament
Only a pen, for my mother
I am no hero
In an age without heroes
I just want to be a man

The still horizon
Divides the ranks of the living and the dead
I can only choose the sky
I will not kneel on the ground
Allowing the executioners to look tall
The better to obstruct the wind of freedom

From star-like bullet holes shall flow
A blood-red dawn[32]

If we make a comparison with the most popular song of the Cultural Revolution,

we can see that Bei Dao was certainly challenging to the official education which demanded worship of the leadership of the Communist Party. This was called "Sailing in the Ocean depends on the Captain" and it was no exaggeration to say that it was known to every Chinese family. It was sung at every important gathering and could easily be recognised by many Chinese who came through the Cultural Revolution. It began as follows:

Sailing in the ocean depends on the Captain.
Everything that grows depends on the sun.
The revolutionary course cannot do without Mao Zedong's thoughts.

After debating fiercely on the role of Mao Zedong after his death in 1976, the Deng Xiaoping's administration made it very clear that insisting on Mao Zedong's thoughts was one of the four guiding principles. The official arts officers would presumably be well aware of the danger when poets like Bei Dao expressed disbelief. Even more shocking to them would have been Bei Dao's lines: "I will not kneel on the ground/allowing the executioners to look tall/the better to obstruct the wind of freedom." These three lines were only known to the readers of *Today* at the time, but later became one of the most popular poems in China. Ten years later students in the Tiananman Square wrote these three lines on their flags and demanded democracy and freedom from the authorities. But at the time , the arts officers appeared to be indifferent rather than vigilant.

I have chosen two poems from Duo Duo. One is *Blessings* and the other is *In Autumn*. Both of them were written in 1973 and printed in 1979. They were different from Bei Dao's poems and they appeared to be more indirect, but were equally powerful. They went as follows:

Blessings

When society has difficulty giving birth
that thin, black widow ties magic charms on a bamboo rod
which she waves at the rising moon.
A blood-soaked streamer emits an endless stench,
makes vicious mutts everywhere howl the whole night long.

From that superstitious time on
the motherland was led by another father,
wandering in the parks of London and the streets of Michigan,
staring with orphan's eyes at hurried steps that come and go
and again and again stuttering out old hopes and humiliations.[33]

1973

In Autumn

Autumn, in front of a cream-coloured Western house
an old French woman, died, slowly,
in a place far, far away from her homeland.
Children who'd run up, together, led away her faithful dog,

tied a rope round its neck, hung it from a white birch
in a place not far from the corpse of its mistress.
Slowly, it died,
a pedigree French dog.

On earth turned unfamiliar
it was these children, who'd shared out the old woman's sweets,
who, together, led away her faithful dog
and hung it from a tall white birch.

Died, together, slowly,
an old French Woman, a pedigree French Dog,
some children, some Chinese children
in front of a cream-coloured Western house, in Autumn[34]

1973

I have also chosen one of Gu Cheng's poems. Gu Cheng was another important *Today poet*, whose short and philosophical poems won acclaim from the public at that time. The following is one of his poems written in 1980.

A Snowman

I made a snowman
in front of your door
to play slow-witted me
waiting for ages

you pulled out a lollipop

a sweet sweet heart
to bury in the snow
saying this will make him happy

but the snow man did not laugh
and never said a word
until the warm spring sun
came and melted him away...

where is the man?
where is his heart?
honey bees hover
over a tiny pool of tears[35]

It can be seen that the Today poets travelled a very different road from the revolutionary poets, or the poetry of socialist realism. They brought more Western influences into Chinese poetry, which had been dominated by the Soviet socialist realism from 1949 to 1979. The early Chinese New Poetry from 1919 to 1949 had been strongly influenced by the English, French and Russian poetry. The Today poets inherited this tradition though, as Professor Bonnie S. McDougall, translator of Bei Dao's *August Sleepwalker*, suggested, they did not try to adapt so closely to Western verse forms in Chinese, unlike their predecessors.[36] This was one of the main reasons that they could be easily understood and therefore accepted by the West. They all admired many Western poets. For example, as Gregory Lee, translator of Duo Duo's *Looking Out From Death*, pointed out, Duo Duo was "a keen admirer of Robert Desnos, Dylan Thomas, Sylvia Plath, Marina Tsvetaeva and the father of modernism, Baudelaire."[37] Secondly, they went further in the development of the Chinese New Poetry. Compared to their predecessors who had been well-educated either in Chinese classic poetry, or Western poetry, or both in most cases, the Today poets were of a generation that did not have a formal education because of the Cultural Revolution. However, they were therefore free of many restrictions of the formal education, and study on their own had enabled them to take in as much as they liked of different traditions to create a style of their own. They made a connection with the heritage, which had been created by the Chinese New Poetry from 1919 but then severely suppressed since 1949. This communication with the past provided opportunities for the Chinese New Poetry's future development. The social and political significance of this was neglected by the authorities and led to the flourishing of poetry in terms of both quality and diversity in the 1980s.

When these poems finally came to public notice, there were broadly three types of

responses. First, young people were excited by these poems though they might not know why they were so touched, and it is difficult to know how many were affected in this way. This was followed by the second type of response: criticism from established poets, mainly the Left Wing and Wartime poets who survived from the Cultural Revolution. They found these new poems had nothing in common with their own works of socialist realism. The Today poems seemed to be obscure, strange, and not containing the revolutionary spirit. They did not believe that those poems had a role to play in serving the revolutionary masses, as they could hardly be understood. They therefore criticised those poems of obscurity, but the Today poets did not seem to be bothered by their criticism. However, one poetry critic came to their defence in 1981, and his arguments illustrate some of the differences between the senior revolutionary poets and the Today poets. This critic was Sun Shaozhen and he published an article entitled "A New Aesthetic Principle is on the Rise" in Issue 3, of *Poetry Journal* - the top official poetry publication. He pointed out that there were three major differences compared with the revolutionary poetry promoted since 1949: (a) the Today poets were not obedient to the established principles of the communist aesthetics, (b) they refused to be the voice of the glorious time of socialism and they avoided writing about the brave revolutionary struggle or socialist construction, and (c) they rejected the role of praising the public life of socialism and had began to search the mind and private feelings.[38]

The arts officers were shocked by the "obscure" poems of the Today poets but they might also have been more confused. When Bei Dao said that he did not believe the sky was blue and when Duo Duo wrote about various strange images, the arts officers were not sure what those young poets were up to, though knowing that it was not the type of poetry they themselves preferred. Son on the whole the arts officers were silent and hesitated over what decisions to make. At the official level there were three factors to be taken into consideration. First, Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts was recognisably different from that of Mao Zedong. The policy of indirect leadership over the arts he forward promised that there would be no interference with the arts from the Communist Party. Though its practicality was much to be questioned, the arts officers probably thought twice about how to approach the new poetry before they made up their minds. Secondly, the contemporary style of writing might have helped a little in avoiding immediate censorship. Those arts bureaucrats knew that the Today poets were not their comrades, but on the other hand they were not sure if those strange poets were actually their enemies. Thirdly and most important was the position taken by the Today poets themselves. Unlike the Democrats, the Today poets did not get involved in demands for a reform of the political system of the Communist Party. Compared to the artists of the Star Association, they did not

join street demonstrations to demand freedom of expression. They seemed to be more moderate and less of a threat.

Publications produced by the Democrats were all prohibited and some of their editors such as Wei Jingsheng and Ren Wanting were sent either to prison or to labour camps. The Star artists were not only denied the right to use public venues but were also prohibited from holding any further exhibitions, either in the streets, or in public parks. The reason given was that their exhibitions obstructed public traffic: true but the actual reason. Certainly the Star artists could well attract thousands of people either in the streets or in a park, but it was their constant demand for complete freedom of expression that frightened the communists and led to strict control over their artistic activities. In contrast, some of the Today poets were somewhat unwillingly accepted by the government and they were either appointed editors of official magazines or became members of official writers' associations. For instance, Bei Dao became editor of the *New Review* in May, 1980 and literature editor of *China Report* in 1981. He also became editor of a liberal magazine *China* in 1986, though it was banned by the government in the same year.[39] Other Today poets joined either national or provincial writers' associations, which usually meant two things: stable salary provided by the government and social privileges like other communist cadres.

Bei Ling, a poetry critic, criticised this transfer from unofficial to official status later in 1990. He believed that Chinese intellectuals and writers never had their independence, but they had a tradition of pursuing political privilege through academic positions as well as pursuing academic privilege through politics. Once they were accepted by the authorities, most of those unofficial poets abandoned their independence and co-operated with the government in Deng Xiaoping's reforms.[40]

3.8 The Debate on the Role of the Today Poets

In the Spring of 1979, the Today poets organised a meeting in Beijing entitled "The Debate between Politics and Literature", which attracted about two or three hundred people. The role of literature was discussed and two important principles were agreed at the meeting, that literature should have its own role and that the press should have its freedom and should not be interfered with by the government.[41]

Literature had not been allowed an independent role under Mao Zedong's administration, but was regarded as part of politics and viewed as a servant to politics. Under Deng Xiaoping's administration, it was announced by the

government that literature was not subordinate to politics though it should serve politics. At first it seemed that this new attitude held by the arts officers following the Cultural Revolution was not far from the ideas of the Today poets. Literature was given a different role to play in Deng Xiaoping's reforms and it was this similarity that brought the Today poets and the authorities closer. However, the co-operation was far more complicated than this, as the Today poets and the arts officers had very different interpretations of the role of literature in society.

The government seemed to feel that literature might be able to serve the course of socialism better if given more freedom: following the failure of Mao Zedong's tight control over the arts, it was worth trying something different, so literature was given a new role to play. Deng Xiaoping promised that art officers would not interfere with the arts directly, and the arts were given freedom as far as artistic creation was concerned, though not for its publication. However, this new freedom was not expected to overstep the proletarian dictatorship, nor should it ever ignore the leadership of the Communist Party.[42]

To the Today poets, the role of literature was something for them to argue about and decide for themselves. They did not believe in the guide lines set by the government, nor followed the demands of the Democrats of the Xidan Wall. They were more concerned with their impression of the social reality than with changing the system under which it was controlled. Their criticism was intended to be completed through their long term, artistic experiment rather than by an immediate approach.

Bei Dao explained his ideas on the role of intellectuals in reply to Bei Ling's criticism in 1990.[43] In his article *Intellectuals and the Literary Triads*, Bei Dao first cited the analysis of contemporary intellectuals by Camus arguing that (a) rebellion had its limits and revolution did not, (b) moderation meant a determination to live with contradictions rather than solving them, and (c) revolution destroyed the balance of contradictions.[44] Then Bei Dao made a comparison between Hu Shi and Chen Duxiu, two representatives of the 4th May Movement, which was regarded as the beginning of 20th century Chinese culture. In Bei Dao's mind, Hu Shi had chosen rebellion and Chen Duxiu revolution. Hu Shi emphasised moderation and chose to save Chinese culture through education. Chen Duxiu, who became the first Chairman of the Communist Party of China in 1921, broke through the balance of contradictions and decided to save Chinese culture through revolution. Since the 1930s, most Chinese intellectuals had similarly chosen revolution and exchanged independent thinking to loyalty to authority, which, he argued, had led to their moral degeneration during the Cultural Revolution. Bei Dao also recalled that in

1979 they argued over the role of literature in 1979. Facing the rising tide of democracy, they were not sure whether they should insist on the unique function of the language itself. But he believed that they, as "rebels of the official language", made the right decision: to be language rebels rather than democrats. By taking this role, they as poets became more powerful in destroying the structure of the Communist regime than they would have if they had followed the path of the democrats.[45]

That was how the Today poets themselves saw how they differed from the democrats in 1979, and this distinction remained when new generation of democrats gathered in Tiananman Square in 1989. It was perhaps this difference that made the implementation of Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership over the arts possible, and which saw that more and more writers and poets destroying the official propaganda through a very slow but steady process.

3.9 Conclusion

This analysis of the rise of the Today poets suggests that they made three important contributions to the development of the Chinese New Poetry. On the one hand, they challenged the official art ideology by refusing to be poets in praise of socialism. They also made great efforts to discover their own unique language and succeeded in first influencing , and then overstepping the authorised official language. On the other hand, they inherited, though unwittingly, the tradition of the Chinese New Poetry of the 1920s to 1940s, which had been suppressed since late 1949. They also in turn developed the tradition of the Chinese New Poetry from the three sources of Classic Chinese poetry, folk songs and Western poetry. More important, these two factors, the challenge to the official language and rediscovery of the recent but suppressed tradition, enabled further development of Chinese poetry by the new poets in the 1980s.

I believe that poets of the Chinese New Poetry can be divided into five generations. The first generation emerged in the 1920s to challenge the Chinese tradition. They favoured the Western poetic approach, believing that it could free the Chinese soul, and put these ideas into practice though they could not avoid the traditional influence at the same time. While Hu Shi and Guo Moruo claimed to have abandoned traditional poetic forms, the Lake poets attempted to create similar poetic images to the New Poetry, and achieved a certain success in portraying the beauty of nature. The New Moon poets felt that the New Poetry was so free that it not only lost control but was also full of excessive words. They consequently began to experiment with a combination of Classic and New Poetry. A more rhythmical free verse was their main contribution, which was generally

commented on as either a further enhancement of the New Poetry or a retreat back to the dead classics.[46] The second generation made further developments both in terms of variety and in style. For instance, the July poets believed that poetry was from the imagination of poets and they held a subjective approach to nature. The Left Wing poets were later very much influenced by the revolutionary poetry from the USSR and went further in making the poetic language into revolutionary slogans. The Wartime poets became the voice of a suffering nation, a view which was widely shared throughout China. The Left Wing and the Wartime poets were much inspired and encouraged by Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts published in Yanan in 1942 and both of them travelled further on the path of learning from folk traditions. Since 1949, it was clear that the third generation had become a monopoly group of poets. Revolutionary poets were supported and promoted by the government but all other schools suppressed. The development of the Chinese New Poetry in terms of variety and style was greatly frustrated though this did not necessarily mean that its development was completely halted. Instead, it went underground and experienced the most difficult time in its own history. The Today poets stood out in 1978 as the separate fourth generation. By challenging the monopoly of official poetry, they made Chinese poetry open both to the previous tradition and the future development. Although their understanding of the Chinese Classic poetry, folk songs and Western poetry was limited at the time, they brought these three key parts of the Chinese New Poetry back on the agenda. In this sense, they were the first who broke through the barriers for the newcomers, who formed the fifth generation and greatly expanded both the variety and style of the Chinese New Poetry.

Apart from the main schools of poetry as mentioned above, it is important to point out that there were many other poets who also made their own unique contributions to the development of the Chinese New Poetry and who did not go along with the development of the main stream poetry. From an administrative point of view, it is always easy to put poets into groups in the interests of efficiency, and this general attitude makes it difficult to evaluate individual poets. Overall the area remains seriously under-researched.

This study also suggests that Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership over the arts was infeasible in some respect though it represented progress in the communist arts administration compared with the tight control of Mao Zedong's period. Facing the challenges of the democrats, artists, poets and photographers, the arts officers of Deng Xiaoping's administration took different decisions in respect of each of the four groups. In terms of their decision towards the poets, three factors: the indirect leadership policy, the confusion with regard to the interpretation and

underlying meaning of obscure poetry, and the comparatively moderate demands of the Today poets, may have vital. On the one hand, the administrators had just been given the new party policy of not interfering with artistic creation as long as it did not propose a direct threat to the communist system: how to deal with the Today poets became the first test of the indirect leadership over the arts policy. On the other hand, arts officers of Deng Xiaoping's administration were confused about the Today poetry. More importantly, it was the Today poets' decision to avoid direct involvement in politics or democracy that made it possible for the arts officers to let them stay free for the time being. Hence, the Today poets were invited to join official associations and organisations at the same time that some of the democrats were arrested and the Star artists were prohibited from holding public exhibitions. The different treatment of three categories became an example of the indirect leadership over the arts and parallels of the flexibility of Deng Xiaoping's principles.

Compared with Mao Zedong's direct control over the arts, Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership represented progress, allowing more literary possibilities to grow. From Wei Jingsheng's imprisonment in 1979, the voice of the democrats was silenced until 1985. Compared with the fate of the democrats, Chinese writers and artists had five years in which to explore their freedom and develop independent thought. However, could the poets and others be satisfied with the limited freedom given by the indirect leadership policy? As time went on, would they still want this indirect leadership? Would arts officers of Mao Zedong's era be so frightened by the consequences brought about by the indirect leadership that they would want to exercise tight control again? These were the questions that not only the Today poets but also other Chinese writers had to face .

To the Today poets, being accepted by the official organisations itself might not have a special meaning, but it was important to consider that they retained their role as poets, not anything else. It may be true, as Bei Ling pointed out in 1990, that some of the Today poets abandoned their search for independence and became official poets. It may also be true, as Bei Dao argued in his key 1990 article, that the Today poets lived with all kinds of contradictions including the reality of writing under the communist system, and that they continued to criticise society in their distinct and fairly obscure language. It is also likely that some of the Today poets saw Deng Xiaoping's reform as a new opportunity to personal literary prosperity and decided to join the experiment. Since poetry , just like other forms of art, is individual, every poet is different from each other, it is dangerous to attempt to generalise about the expectations of the Today poets. However, when we examine their literary experience in the 1980s, one common factor emerges: for various reasons most of the important Today poets left China

around the mid 1980s after years of frustration working with the arts officers of Deng Xiaoping's administration. For example, Bei Dao and Duo Duo went to Britain in 19 and Mang Ke and Yang Lian the United State in 19 and decided to re-establish their own poetry journal Today in Norway in 1990.

During the period of Deng's indirect leadership from 1979 to 1989, they had always been regarded by arts officers as dissidents or dangerous poets who did not want to follow the indirect hints made by the authorities. When they found that their effort to maintain their own voices was becoming more and more difficult through continuous campaigns of anti-liberalisation, most of them finally decided to follow the Star artists who left China in the early 1980s. This suggests that the Today poets might have gradually realised the limits of indirect leadership and felt extremely disappointed with the authority. When the Star artists left China for freedom, the Today poets perhaps believed that they could stay and contribute more to freedom by working alongside the government. However, both the Today poets and the arts officers working under the indirect leadership policy failed in their efforts to create a better environment for Chinese literature due to the infeasibility of the policy itself. Though the Today poets might have felt that they had destroyed the official language to a certain extent, they might also have found that their freedom of expression did not change much. So they chose to find more freedom in the West.

Living in the West, particularly after 1989 when they lived in exile, they met with much more difficulties compared to the Star artists. As discussed in the section of On the Translation of Chinese Poetry above, Chinese poetry is almost impossible to translate. Interpretation of meaning may vary a great deal compared with the original meaning of the poet. The Today poets only found a minority of audience in the West while the estimated forty million Chinese overseas appeared indifferent due to their very different cultural and political background. As time went on, the exiled also began to worry about their isolation from their mother tongue. Ironically, it also created great frustration for the art officers. They might have felt that the freedom given to the arts was as much as they could afford, but the writers and artists were neither grateful nor satisfied. When the arts officers began to recognise this situation, they began to question the writers and artists , warning them not to move too far from their leadership. This issue will be discussed in a study of the first campaign against "bourgeois liberalisation" in 1981 through the experience of Bai Hua, a communist poet.

Notes to Chapter 3

[1] Zheng Xian, *"Weiwancheng de pianzheng" (An uncompleted Chapter)*, Today, Oxford University Press (Hong Kong) Ltd, Hong Kong, 1994, p. 7.

[2] Translated by David Hinton, *The Selected Poems of Tu Fu*, Anvil Press Poetry Ltd., 1990, London, p. xii & p. 75.

[3] Translated by David Hinton, *The Selected Poems of Tu Fu*, Anvil Press Poetry Ltd., 1990, London, p. xiii.

[4] Editorial Committee of Normal College of Central China, "Zhongguo *dangdai wenxue" (China's contemporary literature)*, Shanghai Literature and Art Press, Shanghai, 1984, pp. 44-45.
Hu, Shi, *"Hu Shi yuchui" (Collection of Hu Shi's comments)*, Jiu Jiu Press, Taipei, 1982, p. 1.

[5] Yang, Yi, *"Zhongguo xiandai xiaoshuoshi" (History of contemporary Chinese short-stories)*, People's Literature, Beijing, 1986, pp. 66-83.

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Hu, Shi, *"Hu Shi yuchui" (Collection of Hu Shi's comments)*, Jiu Jiu Press, Taipei, 1982, p. 1.

[7] Edited by Zhu Yixian, *"Hu Shi - zhongguo dangdai zuojia xuanji" (Hu Shi - a selection of modern Chinese writers)*, San Lian Book Press in association with the People's Literature Press, Hong Kong, p. 200.

[8] Edited by Zhu Yixian, *"Hu Shi - zhongguo dangdai zuojia xuanji" (Hu Shi - a selection of modern Chinese writers)*, San Lian Book Press in association with the People's Literature Press, Hong Kong, p. 200.

[9] Edited by Zhu Yixian, *"Hu Shi - zhongguo dangdai zuojia xuanji" (Hu Shi - A selection of modern Chinese writers)*, San Lian Book Press in association with the People's Literature Press, Hong Kong, p. 200.

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[12] Translated by David Hinton, *The Selected Poems of Tu Fu*, Anvil Press Poetry Ltd., 1990, London, p. xii & p. 46.

[13] Edited by Sun Bofen, Yang Guozhang, Ma Zhonglin, Liu Shehui, Yuan Xiquan, Zhang Yiajun, Zhu Bingyao, Sun Dexiang, Zhang Lianxin and Guo Jizhu, *"Zhongguo zuoja xuanj 1919 - 1949" (Readings from Chinese writers 1919-1949)*, published by the Foreign Languages Press, 1982, Beijing, p. 69.

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[15] Liu, Xianbiao, ed. *"Zhongguo xiandai wenxue shouce" (Handbook of China's contemporary literature)*, China Cultural Federation Press, Beijing, 1987, pp. 307-308.

[16] Liu, Xianbiao, ed. *"Zhongguo xiandai wenxue shouce" (Handbook of China's contemporary literature)*, China Cultural Federation Press, Beijing, 1987, pp. 731-735.

Liu, Shousong, *"Zhongguo xinwenxueshi chugao" (History of China's new literature)*, People's Literature Press, Beijing, 1985, pp. 195-207.
[17] Luo Qing, *"Cong Xu Zhino dao Yu Guangzhong" (From Xu Zhimo to Yu Guangzhong)*, Eryia Press, Taipei, 1979, p. 211.

[18] Luo Qing, *"Cong Xu Zhino dao Yu Guangzhong" (From Xu Zhimo to Yu Guangzhong)*, Eryia Press, Taipei, 1979, p. 211.

[19] Luo Qing, *"Cong Xu Zhino dao Yu Guangzhong" (From Xu Zhimo to Yu Guangzhong)*, Eryia Press, Taipei, 1979, pp. 116-117.

[20] Edited by Bai Zhongyi, *"Tian Jian - Zhongguo dangdai zuojia xuanji" (Tian Jian - a selection of Chinese modern writers)*, Sanlian (HK) Press in association with the People's Literature Press, 1988, Hong Kong, p. 12.

[21] Niu Han, Chief Editor, *"Xin wenxue shilaioiao" (The historical records of new literature)*, The People's Literature Press, 1982, Beijing.

[22] John Gitting, *China Changes Face*, Oxford University Press, 1989, p. 32.

[23] John Gitting, *China Changes Face*, Oxford University Press, 1989, p. 32.

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[27] Zheng Xian, *"Weiwancheng de pianzheng" (An uncompleted chapter)*, Today, Oxford University Press (Hong Kong) Ltd, Hong Kong, 1994, p. 4-8.

[28] Qu, Leilei, one of the Star artists of the Beijing Spring movement. (1994) Personal communication.

[29] Liu Shengyiu, *"Beijing zhi chun" (The Spring of Beijing)*, published by Youshi wenhua chubanshe Press, 1984, Taipei, p. 163.

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[31] Translated and introduced by Bonnie S. Mcdougall, *Bei Dao, The August Sleepwalker*, Anvil Press Poetry Ltd., in 1988, London, p. 33.

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[40] Bei Ling, *"Zhongguo zuojia de zhengzhi sucai" (The political talents of Chinese writers)*, Open Monthly, October, 1990, Celeluck Co., Ltd., Hong Kong, pp. 91-93.

[41] Liu Shengyiu, *"Beijing zhi chun" (The Spring of Beijing)*, Youshe wenhua chubanshe Press, 1984, Taipei, p. 162.

[42] Deng Xiaoping, *"Deng Xiaoping lun wenyi" (Deng Xiaoping on literature and art)*, the People's Literature Press, 1989, Beijing, pp. 3-5, pp. 48-54.

[43] Bei Ling, *"Zhongguo zuojia de zhengzhi sucai" (The political talents of Chinese writers)*, Open Monthly, October, 1990, Celeluck Co., Ltd., Hong Kong, pp. 91-93.

[44] Bei Dao, *"Zhishifenzi he wenxue heishehui" (Intellectuals and the literary triads)*, Open Monthly, December, 1990, Celeluck Co., Ltd., Hong Kong, pp. 88-90.

[45] Luo Qing, *"Cong Xu Zhino dao Yu Guangzhong" (From Xu Zhimo to Yu Guangzhong)*, Eryia Press, Taipei, 1979, pp. 221-224.

[46] Bei Dao, *"Zhishifenzi he wenxue heishehui" (Intellectuals and the literary triads)*, Open Monthly, December, 1990, Celeluck Co., Ltd., Hong Kong, pp. 88-90.

Chapter 4. Dangers Inherent in the "Indirect Leadership" Policy

4.1 Introduction

China's politics between 1976 and 1979 were dominated by power struggles among three groups: the radical revolutionaries who gained power during the Cultural Revolution, the senior communists who lost most of the power during the Cultural Revolution, and those who stood in the middle. First, the Gang of Four - close followers of Mao Zedong, were arrested in 1976 by Hua Guofeng , the nominated successor, and other senior communists, such as Ye Jianying, Wang Dongxing. Then, Hua Guofeng was gradually removed from his post of Premier of State and Chairman of the Communist Party by Zhao Ziyang and Hu Yaobang respectively, two strong supporters of Deng Xiaoping, between 1979 and 1981.[1] Wang Dongxing was forced to resign. So did other communists associated with the Gang of Four such as Wu De, Mayor of Beijing. Ye Jianying was later given an honourable but unimportant role to play. Supporters of Deng Xiaoping were gradually put into key positions throughout the country. Though holding no substantive official and constitutional position until 1979, Deng Xiaoping, one of the political opponents of Mao Zedong during the Cultural Revolution, had already begun to lead China, a country that once worshipped Mao blindly and fanatically for nearly thirty years.

Deng Xiaoping's pragmatic politics turned out to be greatly welcomed by the Chinese people at large who had suffered a great deal from the Cultural Revolution. However, there existed a considerable number of cadres at central, provincial and county levels who were quite suspicious of Deng Xiaoping's pragamatism. Though criticism of Mao Zedong seemed to be overwhelming and unanswerable at the time, they were aware of the damage Deng Xiaoping's politics could do to communist ideology, and which might in the end affect the social privileges of party officials at all levels.

How to review Mao Zedong's role in the Chinese communist history became a key issue in China in 1979. After fierce arguments among Chinese communists, Deng Xiaoping decided to insist on the value and continuing primacy of Mao Zedong's thoughts overall, while abandoning parts of his ideas, particularly those which had caused disasters both for Chinese society overall and to the Chinese state bureaucracy headed by Liu Shaoqi (Chairman of State who was persecuted to death in 1968) and to Deng Xiaoping himself during the Cultural Revolution. Deng Xiaoping announced that insisting on Mao Zedong's thoughts was to remain one of the four guiding principles in the development of China's modernisation. This decision was re-confirmed at the sixth plenum of the Central

Committee in 1981.[2] Overall, Mao Zedong's comrades judged him as a great leader of the Communist Party of China, but who made serious mistakes in his later life. The Great Leap Forward campaign of 1958 and the Cultural Revolution of 1966 to 1976 were condemned as disastrous campaigns. However, the Anti-Rightist campaign of 1957 was still supported as necessary. Although led by Mao Zedong, the Anti-Rightist campaign had been strongly supported by Deng Xiaoping and other senior communists who had later suffered in the Cultural Revolution. While it was admitted that the Anti-Rightist campaign made errors and hurt some comrades the official position was to insist that this was a necessary task. It was this difference that contributed to the complexity of China's politics: on the one hand Deng Xiaoping had to lead the criticism of Mao Zedong in order to re-establish his own authority which was almost destroyed during the Cultural Revolution, but on the other hand he had to make sure that criticism of Mao Zedong would not go so far as to damage or even destroy the communist system itself.[3] As Deng Xiaoping consolidated his position, China's politics kept shifting backwards and forwards in trying to achieve this balance, and affected the official policy towards the arts accordingly.

As far as the Chinese economy was concerned, this was managed under Deng Xiaoping's pragmatic principle of "the white cat and the black cat" based on a popular saying from Deng's home province Sichuan. It went as follows: "No matter whether it is a white cat or a black cat, it is a good cat as long as it catches mice". This "ends justifies the means" approach worked to break through the communist doctrines which were strongly believed in by Mao Zedong's followers and provided great flexibility in absorbing Western investment and technology during Deng Xiaoping's reform period. Generally speaking, the Chinese public had become quite indifferent to politics after thirty years of communism. Mention of the Cultural Revolution brought back to them bitter memories that many people wanted to forget. Deng Xiaoping's modernisation plans provided them an escape route from politics. His open door policy promised opportunities to improve their quality of life. The promise of access to consumer goods, such as a television sets, refrigerators, washing machines, fashion clothes, offered by the developed Western world, was much more attractive in contrast with the endless ideological struggles of the Communist Party of China, though these had often been fermented by patriotism. When Wei Jingsheng warned the Chinese in 1979 that their pursuit of a better life could not be assured without democratic supervision over the communist system and that Deng Xiaoping was becoming the new dictator after Mao Zedong, he seemed to be a dangerous agitator to the majority of Chinese. When Deng Xiaoping ordered the imprisonment of Wei Jingsheng and his fellow democrats, most chose to ignore it, and instead welcomed opportunities brought forward by Deng

Xiaoping's reforms.[4]

In the cultural field, Chinese intellectuals, writers and artists held a similarly optimistic attitude. They thought that the nightmare of the Cultural Revolution was over and they seemed to assume that it was gone forever under Deng Xiaoping's leadership with its focus on the Chinese economy rather than politics. Some of them were grateful to be given back the right to write, of which they had been deprived during the Cultural Revolution, and felt that they must write much more in order to make up the time which they had lost. They were overjoyed to continue the practice of socialist realism in literature, for which they had been sent to camps of "ideological education" when Mao Zedong felt dissatisfied with their interpretation of his policy towards the arts. Others were amazed and shocked by Western art forms to which they now had access, but the majority were also very excited by the Western world when the bamboo curtain was pushed open. Various Western schools of literature and art appeared so fresh to them that they decided to follow their styles straight away.

Most of this majority had previously been official artists: their social prestige was once again guaranteed, their right of artistic creation had been returned, and their rights as writers and artists rather than agricultural labourers re-confirmed under Deng Xiaoping's leadership. When Deng Xiaoping announced his new policy of indirect leadership over the arts in 1979, they therefore welcomed it with open arms. When the Beijing Spring movement was banned by Deng Xiaoping's administration in 1979, most chose to stay silent. To them, the indirect leadership over the arts was much better than Mao Zedong's direct of control of the arts. They had been promised that there would be no more direct interference from arts officers, that they would not have to write for political campaigns. More importantly, that they had been given freedom of creation as long as they did not threaten the communist system, which most of them had no intention of doing. So Deng Xiaoping's 1979 reform in the arts immediately gained support from official Chinese writers and artists, and from those unofficial writers and artists who, with reservation, intended to give their support to Deng Xiaoping's reforms. Compared with them, Bai Hua was different. He pointed out the danger behind Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership over the arts in public.

4.2 The Vicious Circle of Direct Control and "Indirect Leadership"

Compared with the radical demands put forward during the Beijing Spring movement in 1979, some writers took a conformist approach in their creative writing, and had no intention to challenge the official policy nor the leadership of the Communist Party over the arts. Instead, they were content to continue the so

called literature of socialist realism as regulated in Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts. What they expected to achieve was a reversal of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts during the Cultural Revolution and a restoration of his approach to the arts during the 1950s. In this sense, their attempts were not quite out of tune with Deng Xiaoping's policies of reforms. In their writings, revolutionary heroes were giving way to ordinary people and propaganda slogans were being replaced with sorrows, sufferings and romance, which were all once banned themes. Their works were described by Chinese critics as *Literature of the Scar.*[5] Among them, Lu Xinhua, Liu Xinwu and Bai Hua were the most influential.

Lu Xinhua, a writer from Shanghai, published his short story *The Scar* in *Wenhui Bao* on 11th August, 1978.[6] Liu Xinwu, a writer from Beijing, published his short story *Our Class Teacher* in *the People's Literature* in October, 1977.[7] Bai Hua, a poet and writer from Shanghai, published his poem *The Road Stretching beneath his Feet* in *October* magazine in 1978, which was made into a film *The Bitter Love*, but which banned by the authorities due to its sharp and direct criticism of the Cultural Revolution. Both Lu Xinhua and Liu Xinwu first wrote the love story of young people after the Cultural Revolution, and became the best known writers overnight. Their works were also broadcast on both radio and loudspeakers, the most popular means of communicating official propaganda after the Cultural Revolution.

The *Almanac of China's Broadcasting and Television 1988* shows that both radio broadcasting and loudspeaker broadcasting were already well-established during the Cultural Revolution. By 1980 there were 106 broadcasting stations, 480 medium wave and short wave transmitting stations. The statistics show a ratio of 12.1 radio sets per 100 people and a total of 119,100,000 radio sets in China. In terms of loudspeaker broadcasting, there were 2,610 city and county broadcasting stations, 49,302 district stations, 9,856 loudspeakers, giving an average coverage of 49.5% of peasant households.[8]

In China, programmes broadcast through radio and loudspeakers used to be full of revolutionary slogans and official literature. Suddenly in 1978, the Chinese began to hear a more human voice telling a love story prohibited but shared by thousands. Indirect criticism of the consequences of the Cultural Revolution was also revealed through those stories. The impact was enormous.[9] For example, two thousand readers' letters were received when Liu Xinwu's *Our Class Teacher* was broadcasted on radio.[10] His short story *The Position of Love* was responded with more enthusiasm. Within only ten days after its broadcasting, the author received over one thousand letters.[11] There were four factors which contributed to such impact: (a) works of *the Literature of the Scar* were the first to reflect sufferings

caused by the Cultural Revolution, (b) it touched upon the experience of the people who had gone through the Cultural Revolution,[12] (c) they created some characters who were different to those demanded by Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts,[13] and (d) most of these works were useful to Deng Xiaoping's supporters who tried to engage in a reform in the administration of the arts, and they therefore mobilised all the media as well as award-giving bodies to spread their impact nationally.[14]

However, arts officers who favour Mao Zedong's control of the arts saw all this as a threat to official ideology, and responded to it with severe criticism. Some of them suppressed their anger for the time being due to the massive demand for reforms. Others burst out in rage. With the support of Li Ji, Chairman of Hebei Association of Writers, an article entitled *Heroes or Villains* was published in *Hebei Literature* under a pen name "In Praise of Virtue" in 1979.[15] In this article, the author demanded that Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts must be insisted on and that, in particular, literature and art must serve the Communist Party and the workers, peasants and soldiers. He also warned that, first and foremost, the continuation of Mao Zedong's policies was one of Deng Xiaoping's four principles. Artistic creation must consequently be in praise of the proletarians and must focus on heroes and heroines of China's modernisation. In a statement typical of the position of arts officers under Mao Zedong, he questioned: "What is the use of these writers if they don't praise the virtue of the people?"[16] The anonymous author claimed that there was only a bright side and no dark side in the communist China: the Chinese did not have to worry about unemployment, education, starvation, robbery and burglary and that there was bright sunshine everywhere. He also asked: " How couldn't you praise such virtue of socialism in today's world?"[17] He warned Chinese writers not to step into the forbidden areas as laid down by Mao Zedong. He demanded that they must always stick to their enforced role as servants of the workers, peasants and soldiers.[18]

This article caused great anger as well as fear among Chinese artists. To them, it was a similar voice to that which committed crimes against the Chinese writers and artists between 1966 to 1976. If this type of threat represented the official message, there could hardly be any real progress in the argued arts development in China. There was widespread fear that writers and artists would continue to be persecuted for their artistic expression even though the Culture Revolution was over.[19] It was with such a background that the Fourth National Congress of Chinese Writers and Artists was called, during which Deng Xiaoping formally announced his policy for reforms in the arts.

In October, 1979 Deng Xiaoping attended "the Fourth Plenary of the Conference

of Chinese Literary and Art Workers". On behalf of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, he told Chinese writers and artists that the principle of "a hundred flowers blooming and a hundred schools of thought contending" would be implemented, that Chinese writers and artists were being given freedom over what and how to create , and that no intervention from party secretaries would be allowed.[20] The "hundred flowers" was a principle that had been put forward by Mao Zedong in 1956 and while the second part of his promise later became known as Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership over the arts.

With Khrushchev's criticism of Stalin and the Hungarian Uprising in 1956, Mao Zedong may well have been worried about the future of the Chinese Communist Party. He might also have believed, as some wise Chinese emperors did in history, that criticism could be used constructively for the state. One part of his dictum was in fact quoting a famous classical Chinese aphorism of "a hundred schools of thought contending", but to which he added his own saying of "a hundred flowers blooming". He thus encouraged criticism of the communist administration from all walks of life. However, when such criticism was put forward, particularly when the scale and depth of criticism of the communist system was made public by Chinese intellectuals, it shocked the authorities. The superficial "flowers" and "thoughts" were short lived and the "hundred flowers" period was soon brought to an end and followed by the "Anti-Rightist movement" in 1957. It was estimated that over 800,000 intellectuals, writers and artists were sent to labour camps in the countryside in the ensuing purges and Bai Hua was one of them.[21]

Perhaps it was this earlier experience that made Bai Hua less trustful towards the Party's policy or slogans of the 1979 4th Congress compared with other communist writers. Though he was extremely encouraged by the opportunity offered by the new policy of indirect leadership over the arts, Bai Hua was aware of the difficulties facing implementation. First, he warned Chinese writers and artists that there existed a crisis of direct control behind the indirect leadership. Bai Hua first argued that it was far from enough to be simply offered a policy of indirect leadership over the arts. There were a very large number of arts officers of the Communist Party used to giving orders to writers and artists: they had no other skills, simply the power to control all cultural affairs. With such a long tradition, it was going to be difficult for them to stop interfering with the arts. Secondly, Bai Hua pointed out that there was no mechanism or law ensuring the implementation of Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership. Non-interference could neither be supervised nor monitored by an independent body for there was simply no such a thing. Experience showed that arts officers who persecuted

writers and artists on ideological or personal grounds were never punished, whether by dismissal from office, or demotion, let alone faced legal punishments.[22] Bai Hua concluded that the crisis of direct control always lay behind a given freedom. Whenever you were allowed to criticise, you were already subject to direct control, so whenever you began to criticise, you were already subject to imprisonment. This was a lesson that Chinese intellectuals had learned from their own experience.[23] Finally, Bai Hua made three suggestions for reforms as follows: the Federation of Chinese Writers and Artists and the Association of Chinese Writers should not be managed as departments and bureaux of the Ministry of Culture, arts officers of the Federation of Chinese Writers and Artists and the Association of Chinese Writers should seek to make friends rather than enemies of with writers and artists, and arts officers of these two organisations should communicate the needs of writers and artists to the Communist Party rather than seek to control them in the name of the Party.[24]

In 1980, Bai Hua went further and began to question one of the key issues of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts: the principle that literature and art must serve politics. Having examined the actual implementation of this, Bai Hua argued that in practice politics had always been interpolated into various policies at different periods of time. As a result, literature and art had been used to serve either correct or incorrect policies according to the political climate and judgement of the time. No matter how talented an artist could be, he was bound to fall behind the often rapid and un-announced changes of Party policies. That was why almost all the writers and artists were excluded from the revolutionary team during the Cultural Revolution and were sent to the countryside for re-education.[25] Then he further explained why both new and established writers failed to follow Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts despite making great efforts. Bai Hua believed this was due to the fact that

> "writers had to give up their personal experiences to serve politics. They lost ground of creation by following politics, which was something they would never be able to follow. Consequently, their time and talents were wasted."[26]

Bai Hua was fully aware of the consequences of his criticism of the official policy towards the arts, so he carefully defended himself as follows:

> "having said that, will someone accuse me of believing that literature and art should have nothing to do with politics? Or will someone accuse me of

advocating disagreements to the politics of various periods? I therefore must make it clear in advance that I have no such intentions at all. Generally speaking, the success or failure of literary and art creation is not due to serving or not serving certain politics."[27]

"I believe," he continued, "political ideologies or theories will certainly affect the ideology of a writer. There is no difference between a writer and a common individual in this case. In the process of experiencing life and creative writing, writers will undoubtedly be constrained by his or her ideology. But politics should not be the object that literature and art must serve."[28]

Bai Hua became the most popular subject for debate among Chinese writers and readers as well as arts officers of Deng Xiaoping's administration at the time. But before discussing in detail Bai Hua's criticism of the official policy towards the arts and the response from the government, it is important to examine his earlier experience as a communist writer as well as his creative writing.

4.3 A Communist Writer and his Loyalty

As a communist writer in the Army, Bai Hua had always been proud of his experience of revolutionary activities. In 1952, he had been promoted as Section Chief in charge of creative writing in the Kunming Military Region. As a young but veteran communist, he felt that he was in strong position to make suggestions as well as to criticise the Communist government. When Mao Zedong announced his principle of letting a hundred school of thoughts contending and a hundred flowers blooming in 1956, Bai Hua came out and criticised the government but with the aim of improving it. As a result, he was quickly denounced as a Rightist, an enemy of the Leftist communists, and was deprived of right of to write. Fifteen years later in 1961, he was allowed to start writing again but not to publish. During the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976, he was again deprived of his freedom to write. When he resumed writing in 1977, Bai Hua was still a communist who firmly held to its beliefs. In his poem - *The Wind*, Bai Hua wrote:

never be a revolutionary without faith
if you worry about the fate of China
even if we were broken down
as higher trees

by the wind
we would not feel ashamed to our future generations

seeds were blown away from our bodies by the wind
they would grow higher than us
they would grow healthier than us
they would grow better than us

the world could only become better
China must move forward
continuous rains and winds could only make
the landscape nicer
and the air fresher[29]

In his poem *The Road Is Stretching under His Feet*, written in 1979, Bai Hua wrote about his worries in detail. This long poem was later rewritten into a film script under the name of *The Unrequited Love* in co-operation with Peng Ning, but when the completed film, entitled *The Sun and the Man*, was submitted to the official censors, Zhou Yang, Head of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, decided to prohibit it.

This poem was about the experiences of an artist during the Cultural Revolution. The artist loved his motherland which was governed by the Communist Party. He devoted all to his country, but he was persecuted to death by his own motherland. Before he died, the artist was questioned by his daughter: "You love this country. But does this country love you?"[30] That was the unrequited love Bai Hua wrote about. There were a lot of communist writers like Bai Hua who criticised their own Party with the aim of improving it, but their constructive efforts were interpreted as destructive actions: that was why Bai Hua was sent to the labour camp in 1957. Whatever he suffered, Bai Hua's faith in the revolutionary course remained the same. This was also why Bai Hua continued to criticise the Communist Party for its mistakes when he was given back his right to write again in 1977. However, his new criticism made the official arts officers panic once again. They began to question the intentions of Bai Hua and writers who shared similar views. Bai Hua replied in his article - *No Breakthrough No Literature* as follows:

"We want to restore the tradition of realism in the literature and art field! We want to restore the basic function that literature should reflect life! We want

people to remember the painful and historical lesson (of the Cultural Revolution)! We want people to be able to tell what is right and what is wrong! We want to restore the faith of socialist revolution in the heart of the people. We want people to realise the present state of China and its bright future as well as its difficulties."[31]

From this quotation, we can see that Bai Hua was still a committed communist despite many years of persecution by his own Party. It did not seem that there should have been, theoretically, contradictions between his intentions and the interests of the Party. First of all, Bai Hua only intended to restore socialist realism, which had been imported from the Soviet Union. Unlike many young writers, he was not involved in the schools of modernism from the West. Secondly, he wanted literature to reflect real life rather than tell optimistic illusions according to the Party's current outlook. Thirdly, he intended to record suffering caused by the mistakes of the Communist Party through literature in order to make sure that this would not happen again. He also expected that literature could and should work to rebuild people's faith in the Chinese revolution, which was largely scattered by the Cultural Revolution. Finally, he demanded that literature should have the right to write about the bright as well as the dark side.[32]

Though his argument did not contradict Party policy, the effect might well have worried the authorities. If many writers began to search through their literary works for the reasons behind the suffering created by the Communist Party this could be disastrous for its system. Also if writers began to publiscise this criticise of corruption, bureaucracy, and bribery within the communist government, the consequences might contribute to the collapse of communist authority. The Communist Party always demanded that solutions to such problems be found within its system rather than by force from outside. These were the difficulties and dangers that the government did not want to discuss in public. Even in 1985, Hu Yaobang, one of the most liberal communists of the leadership and General Secretary of the Communist Party could only agree to a maximum of 20% of the arts and media time and space being given to coverage of "the dark side".[33] That was the dilemma of the Chinese writers and artists, or "unrequited love" to use Bai Hua's words. These loyal writers and artists firmly believed in communism though they were aware of its problems. They wanted to improve this system through their constructive criticism, but this kind of loyalty was always rejected.

4.4 The Official Response and its Impact on Creative Writing

In 1981, the first "Anti-Bourgeois Liberalisation" campaign began with two articles in *The People's Liberation Army Daily*. One of them was entitled *The Four Principles Must Not Be Allowed To Be Disobeyed — Comments on the Unrequited Love* and the other *The Problems and Lessons Drawn from the Unrequited Love*.[34] The articles presented Bai Hua's *Unrequited Love* as an attack on Deng Xiaoping's Four Principles. Not only did it ignore them, it also went as far as attacking patriotism, they concluded. Both authors believed that Bai Hua's criticism was not an isolated phenomenon, concluding that it reflected anarchism, extreme individualism, bourgeois liberalisation and other anti-Four Principles ideologies. Led by Zhou Yang and Deng Liqun, Director and Deputy Director of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, criticism of Bai Hua was organised through *The Beijing Daily*, too.[35]

The implication of the word "criticism" is very different in China compared with the meaning of the term in the West. Usually, this consists of three phases. Firstly, there are meetings organised to criticise an individual, who is not given the right to defend himself but only to confess. Secondly, official propaganda is mobilised to demolish the influence of the individual with the scale of official criticism varies according to his estimated influence in the community at large. The third stage moves to punishments such as decrease in salary, demotion, dismissal from the Party or dismissal from office, hard labour, or even imprisonment.

As a consequence of his writing, Bai Hua was put under strict control in the army and was not even allowed to spend the Chinese New Year with his family in 1981. He also continued to suffer from the consequences of his 1977 and later criticisms. When the so-called Anti-Spiritual Pollution campaign started in 1983, he lost his right to spend the Spring Festival with his family again. In 1984, not only was he prohibited from going home for the Spring Festival, he was placed under what was almost house arrest.[36] Bai Hua's creative writing was greatly disrupted by all this and he wrote:

> "Some writers believe that such experience would not affect one's creative writing. It may be true to them, but certainly not to me. It disturbed my mind to such a large extent that I could hardly write in most of the time. Say, there were meetings organised to criticise you on a daily basis, how could you possibly create? ... In 1981, the film script of *the Unrequited Love* had been criticised throughout the year and I only wrote one single play. My play of *King Wu and King Yue* was staged in 1983, but it was soon banned."[37]

Though he was actually unable to write, Bai Hua continued to love both the Communist Party and his country. Describing the younger generation who described Bai Hua's generation as "so stupid", Bai Hua replied, "I am one of those who are so stupid. That's the difference between me and the young people."[38]

Bai Hua understood the response to his arguments. He believed that the official criticism of him was promoted by several factors including two of his speeches as well as the sensitive title of his film. In 1979, he was strongly opposed by some arts officers when he suggested to the poets that they should praise a brick in the Democracy Wall rather than sing paeans to the Saviour, as Mao Zedong was always termed.[39] At the National Conference of Chinese Writers in 1979, he made the speech of *No Breakthrough No Literature*, which hit a raw nerve with many arts officers. The proposed name for his 1981 film was *The Sun and the Man* when submitted for official censorship. This proved to be too sensitive because Mao Zedong was always referred to as the Sun.[40] Though he was under great pressure from the authorities, Bai Hua received much support from Chinese writers and readers. When he was selected as an official target in 1981 during the first Anti-Bourgeois Liberalisation campaign, the China's Writers' Association, an official organisation funded and controlled by the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, awarded him the award as one of the best poets.

4.5 Conclusion

The experience of the early experiment of Deng Xiaoping's policy based on indirect leadership over the arts suggests that it could be and was easily turned into direct intervention. Arts officers who were expected to implement this new principle were used to giving orders to writers and artists in Mao Zedong's era. They knew what they wanted from the writers and artists and they had the power to tell them what to do. The consequences were not their problem in terms of what happened afterwards. It was hard to change the influence of Mao Zedong's thoughts in a short period of time. Secondly, most arts officers of Mao Zedong's era were still in power and as they had no other profession or talents, it was difficult for them to remain indifferent to the arts world and the threat to their position for long. By 1981, Deng Xiaoping's administration had not had the time to replace them with new arts officers who either supported the policy of indirect leadership or who had literary or artistic skills. As a result, most existing arts officers were inclined to try to control writers and artiststs. Thirdly, the stated

policy of the Deng Xiaoping's administration toward Mao Zedong left room for debate and confusion. Deng Xiaoping's contradiction lay in the fact that he had to insist on the primacy of Mao Zedong's thoughts on the one hand while trying to change it to quite a significant extent on the other. The same applied to Deng Xiaoping's ambiguous attitude towards Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts. He felt that he could not publicly abandon it even though he recognised that it had not worked. Instead he expected that he could make the policy work in a different way. Therefore Deng Xiaoping's principle faced resistance from both the arts officers appointed in Mao Zedong's period and from those writers who expected more freedom because of the reforms. Last but not least, the principle Deng Xiaoping expressed in the 4th Writers' Congress speech was never given either administrative or legal support. Bai Hua worried correctly that those arts officers who persecuted writers were never punished, but on the contrary, were often promoted as a reward for their vigilance against Western influences in terms of freedom and democracy.

From Bai Hua's experience, it seemed that no criticism was acceptable to the Chinese government even when it was made by a loyal communist, such as Bai Hua trying his best to improve the communist system which he believed in. However, his criticism of obedience to the authority, his attempts to find the reasons behind disasters brought about by the so-called wrong policies of the communist system, and his persistence in reflecting the dark side the communist administration made him a serious threat to the government. When Bai Hua made his comments in public, the government was in a panic over his intentions, but could not think of a way to divert him. However, when Bai Hua came up with his film, which would have had a much wider impact, the arts authorities decided to ban it and act against him as well as others who shared similar ideas.

The first Anti-Bourgeois-Liberalisation campaign of 1981 frustrated those communist writers who aimed to improve the Communist Party through either constructive criticism or critical artistic expression. The government made it clear in response that it would discourage attempts which challenged its policies from the arts world even though freedom of expression had been promised to Chinese writers and artists. On the other hand, it encouraged artists who did not want to get involved with politics, making them believe that they could enjoy freedom to create as long as they did not challenge the politics of the time. In other words, so far as writers did not get involved in a few sensitive areas such as criticism of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts, Mao Zedong's thoughts, criticism of "the dark side" of communism, there was some room for them to test their new freedom. However, the arts in China were in reality constrained within the framework of the Chinese politics. Once the writers or artists moved into sensitive areas, they

were pushed back by force. For instance, the Anti-Bourgeois-Liberalisation campaign in 1981 fought against liberalism in the ideological field on the one hand and confirmed Mao Zedong's thoughts on the other. Deng Xiaoping administration told the Chinese writers and artists that they had the freedom of creation, but that should not get into a few forbidden areas regulated by China's politics. If they did administrative intervention would be enforced to stop it as in Bai Hua's case. "Freedom" in creative writing therefore depended on how the freedom was exercised.

A distinction also began to emerge between Deng Xiaoping's own ideas towards Mao Zedong's policy for the arts. The hundred flowers principle drew a line in terms of Mao Zedong's heritage. It seems that some of Mao Zedong's extreme arts ideologies of the Cultural Revolution were to be abandoned, but Mao's principles remained as guide-lines. Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership over the arts was intended to encourage more and better works by giving more freedom to the arts and was ready to allow different ideas and opinions in terms of artistic expression. However, Deng Xiaoping's administration would not accept any criticism similar to that of 1957 from the arts circle. It might have been this bottom line that made Bai Hua aware of the crisis behind Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership over the arts. He foresaw that this new freedom might have fallen into the same vicious circle of a given freedom then imposing direct control again. Perhaps that was why Bai Hua pointed it out and called people's attention to such a danger.

This hypothesis suggests that the Deng Xiaoping's administration was prepared to give more freedom to Chinese writers and artists than that of Mao Zedong, but that this new freedom seemed to be primarily in terms of freedom of literary technique not content. Most importantly, this chapter suggests that a crisis behind the indirect leadership over the arts did exist. The crisis began to develop when Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership over the arts met with new problems. Three conflicting factors, the strength of Mao Zedong's followers, Deng Xiaoping's pragmatic attitude towards Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts, and the pursuit of freedom for artists, kept this crisis at a high level. Later, the participation of new arts officers, this time selected from established writers and artists, contributed to its complexity. Failure to adjust to a balance among these three factors would very likely lead to panic in government, which is inclined to intervene again and repeat the vicious circle of indirect leadership and direct control over the arts.

Notes to Chapter 4

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[2] Deng Xiaoping, *"Deng Xiaoping wenxuan 1975 - 1982" (Deng Xiaoping's collections 1975 - 1982)*, the People's Literature Press, 1983, Beijing, pp. 179 -86.

[3] Deng Xiaoping, *"Deng Xiaoping wenxuan 1975 - 1982" (Deng Xiaoping's collections 1975 - 1982)*, the People's Literature Press, 1983, Beijing, pp. 150-159.

[4] Qu, Leilei, one of the Star artists of the Beijing Spring movement. (1994) Personal communication.

[5] Yang, Shumao, *"Xinshiqi wenxueshi" (History of literature of the new period)*, Huacheng Press, Guangzhou, 1989, pp. 6-10.

[6] He Xilai, *"Lun xinshiqi wenxue" (On literature of the new period)*, Jiangsu Literature and Art Press, Jiangsu, 1985, pp. 84-94.

[7] Yang Shumao, *"Xinshiqi wenxueshi" (History of literature of the new period)*, Huacheng Press, Guangzhou, 1989, p.11.

[8] Edited by Editing Committee of Almanac of China's Broadcasting and Television, *"Zhongguo guangbo dianshi nianjian 1988" (Almanac of China's broadcasting and television 1988)*, published by Almanac of China's Broadcasting and Television, Beijing, 1989, p. 857.

[9] Yang Shumao, *"Xinshiqi wenxueshi" (History of literature of the new period)*, Huacheng Press, Guangzhou, 1989, p.13.
He Xilai, *"Lun xinshiqi wenxue" (On literature of the new period)*, Jiangsu Literature and Art Press, Jiangsu, 1985, p. 77.

[10] Yang Shumao, *"Xinshiqi wenxueshi" (History of literature of the new period)*, Huacheng Press, Guangzhou, 1989, p.13.

[11] Yang Shumao, *"Xinshiqi wenxueshi" (History of literature of the new period)*, Huacheng Press, Guangzhou, 1989, pp. 13-14.

[12] He Xilai, *"Lun xinshiqi wenxue" (On literature of the new period)*, Jiangsu Literature and Art Press, Jiangsu, 1985, pp. 79-95.

[13] He Xilai, *"Lun xinshiqi wenxue" (On literature of the new period)*, Jiangsu Literature and Art Press, Jiangsu, 1985, p. 96.

[14] Kong Jiesheng, *"Dangpiao" (The party voucher)*, Cheng Ming, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, Issue 158, December, 1990, p. 158.

[15] Zhao, Y H. (1983) Personal communication.

[16] Wang Ruoshui, *"Chuntian li de yigu lengfeng" (A cold wind in the Spring)*, Guangming Daily, Guangming Daily Press, Beijing, 20 July, 1979.

[17] Wang Ruoshui, *"Chuntien li de yigu lengfeng" (A cold wind in the Spring)*, Guangming Daily, Guangming Daily Press, Beijing, 20 July, 1979.

[18] Wang Ruoshui, *"Chuntien li de yigu lengfeng"(A cold wind in the Spring)*, Guangming Daily, Guangming Daily Press, Beijing, 20 July, 1979.

[19] Ba Jin, *"Ba Jin jinzuo dierji" (Ba Jin's recent works II)*, Sichuan People's Press, Chengdu, 1980, pp. 245-247.

[20] Dong Hu, *"Kuansong hexie de zhengce shi baochunhua ma?" (Is the policy of relaxation and harmony a flower of Spring?)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 107, September, 1986, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 12-13.

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[22] Bai Hua, Edited by Ye Hongsheng, *"Meiyou tupo jiu meiyou wenxue: Bai Hua de kulian" (No breakthrough no literature: the unrequited love of Bai Hua)*, Caifeng Press, Taipei, 1982, pp. 167-168.

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[25] Bai Hua, Edited by Ye Hongsheng, *"Meiyou tupo jiu meiyou wenxue: Bai Hua de kulian" (No breakthrough no literature: the unrequited love of Bai Hua)*, Caifeng Press, Taipei, 1982, p. 172.

[26] Bai Hua, Edited by Ye Hongsheng, *"Meiyou tupo jiu meiyou wenxue: Bai Hua de kulian"(No breakthrough no literature: the unrequited love of Bai Hua)*, Caifeng Press, Taipei, 1982, p.173.

[27] Bai Hua, Edited by Ye Hongsheng, *"Meiyou tupo jiu meiyou wenxue: Bai Hua de kulian" (No breakthrough no literature: the unrequited love of Bai Hua)*, Caifeng Press, Taipei, 1982, pp. 177-178.

[28] Bai Hua, Edited by Ye Hongsheng, *"Meiyou tupo jiu meiyou wenxue: Bai Hua de kulian" (No breakthrough no literature: the unrequited love of Bai Hua)*, Caifeng Press, Taipei, 1982, pp. 177-178.

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[31] Bai Hua, Edited by Ye Hongsheng, *"Meiyou tupo jiu meiyou wenxue: Bai Hua de kulian"(No breakthrough no literature: the unrequited love of Bai Hua)*, Caifeng Press, Taipei, 1982, p. 23.

[32] Bai Hua, Edited by Ye Hongsheng, *"Meiyou tupo jiu meiyou wenxue: Bai Hua de kulian" (No breakthrough no literature: the unrequited love of Bai Hua)*,Caifeng Press, Taipei, 1982, p. 23.

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[34] Bai Hua, Edited by Ye Hongsheng, *"Meiyou tupo jiu meiyou wenxue: Bai Hua de kulian" (No breakthrough no literature: the unrequited love of Bai Hua)*, Caifeng Press, Taipei, 1982, pp. 177-178.

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[36] Li Yi and Lin Si, *"Bai Hua huan kulian ta de zuguo ma?" (Does Bai Hua continue to love his country with his unrequited love?)*, The Nineties, Issue 216, January, 1988, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, pp. 90-91.

[37] Li Yi and Lin Si, *"Bai Hua huan kulian ta de zuguo ma?" (Does Bai Hua continue to love his country with his unrequited love?)*, The Nineties, Issue 216, January, 1988, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, pp. 90-91.

[38] Li Yi and Lin Si, *"Bai Hua huan kulian ta de zuguo ma?" (Does Bai Hua continue to love his country with his unrequited love?)*, The Nineties, Issue 216, January, 1988, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, pp. 90-91.

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[40] Li Yi and Lin Si, *"Bai Hua huan kulian ta de zuguo ma?" (Does Bai Hua continue to love his country with his unrequited love?)*, The Nineties, Issue 216, January, 1988, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, pp. 90-91.

Chapter 5: The Vulnerability of Assumed Legal Right to Freedom of Expression

5.1 The Anti-Spiritual Pollution Campaign

The policies of the Communist Party of China in 1983 strongly emphasised the defence of official ideology against various Western influences in the ideological and art fields. At Plenary Session II of the Twelfth Conference of the Communist Party of China, Deng Xiaoping announced that the political priority was to fight againt spiritual pollution, by which he meant to fight against the rapidly increasing influence of Western ideologies.[1] As always he set only the basic agenda and left the details of this campaign to his supporters.

It was generally assumed that Deng Liqun, now Head of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, and Hu Qiaomu, member of the Politburo at the time, played an important role. Both of them represented the official theoretical authority of communism and it was believed that they advised Deng Xiaoping about the danger of the introduction of Western ideologies and persuaded him to launch the Anti-Spiritual Pollution campaign. Alternatively it could be regarded as part of Deng Xiaoping's strategy of modernisation. Both Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping tried very hard to build China into a world power, but they differed in methods. Mao Zedong emphasised the ideological approach while Deng Xiaoping took the economic approach. Apparently Deng Xiaoping believed that a communist state could not be well developed without a strong economy. He therefore put forward his pragmatic principle of "a white cat and a black cat" previously discussed, which put economy as a priority. His pragmatic and flexible abilities had for many years been highly appreciated by the Communist Party of China, and indeed Mao Zedong himself, who commented that Deng Xiaoping was "a rare talent."[2] When he was asked by Khrushchev about who was going to be the next powerful man in China, Mao Zedong pointed at Deng Xiaoping and said: "That short man has great expectations!"[3] However, Mao Zedong saw a underlying danger behind Deng Xiaoping's revisionist approach, which Mao believed would lead to capitalism rather than communism. That was why Mao Zedong first decided to expel Deng Xiaoping from his post as Vice-Chairman of State in 1966, and later expelled him from his post as Acting Premier in 1976. This might also have been the reason why Deng Xiaoping insisted on defending communism from Western influences. He himself might also have been aware of the danger inherent in his economic approach, and may have believed that he would be able to achieve economic success in co-operation with the West on the one hand while maintaining communist purity by resisting Western influence on the other.

Alternatively he might have believed that there was another way. This was something he had to work out while he was doing it: as he once put it, he was "crossing a river by touching the stone at the bottom." That was why he excluded Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang, whom Deng described as his left and right arms, from the Chinese political scene, when they ignored such danger.[4]

The rhythm of Deng Xiaoping's open door policy could therefore be divided into two steps. The first step forwards was to absorb Western science and technology while the second step was one backwards to maintain balance, excluding the Western ideological influences which came with Western science and technology when the bamboo curtain opened, before starting the next step again. In 1983, Deng Xiaoping might have felt that it was time to step back and eliminate a certain amount of Western influences in order to assure the steady and gradual progress of his reforms and to achieve a balance among his supporters. His supporters at the time could be divided into three groups headed by Hu Yaobang, General Secretary of the Communist Party and a strong promoter of Deng's reforms, Zhao Ziyang, Premier of State and like Deng Xiaoping himself a pragmatist with regard to economic priority, Deng Liqun and Hu Qiaomu, who, though intimate friends of Deng, were often pictured as his political opponents rather than supporters. The balance swung to the Anti- Spiritual Pollution campaign which was to be implemented by Deng Liqun. However, after debating among the three groups, a compromise was agreed that the campaign was not going to involve the economic field which was Zhao Ziyang's responsibility, nor was it to be expanded to the cultural sector in general. It was supposed to be limited to a small scale movement within the Communist Party. In short, this campaign was aimed at the liberal communists who promoted Western influences.

Deng Liqun and his Propaganda Department of the Central Committee appeared to be in charge of the progress of the Anti-Spiritual Pollution campaign. On 4th June, 1983, Deng Liqun gave a talk at the Central Academy of the Communist Party in Beijing. In this, Deng Liqun argued that there existed two major problems in the so-called "battlefields of ideology and the arts": (a) a few communists were against Marxism and Mao Zedong's thoughts, the socialist system, the leadership of the Party and the dictatorship of the People's democracy and were seeking complete ideological liberation, (b) the introduction of new ideologies from the West had greatly damaged the construction of the socialist material and spiritual civilisation and had polluted the soul of the people. In his mind, the debate about Marxist humanism and socialist alienation was a case in point and had produced enormously negative impact, particularly among the Chinese students. Finally, Deng Liqun demanded

that

> "all our comrades in the field of propaganda are responsible for adopting the attitudes of Marxism and Leninism, to analyse various erroneous ideologies seriously, and to abolish spiritual pollution with great efforts, so our youth and other members of our society could gradually become socialist labourers with ideals, morality, culture and discipline."[5]

Deng Liqun's speech shows that he addressed four basic issues on behalf of the Chinese authorities. In the first place, they believed that there existed serious problems in the ideological and arts fields. When Western science and technology were introduced to China, various Western ideologies also came with them which became a threat to official ideology. Secondly, the Chinese authorities realised that even some communists demanded further ideological liberation which, in their eyes, was aimed at challenging rather than improving the communist system. Ideological liberation had been first used by Deng Xiaoping and his supporters to establish their authority out of Mao Zedong's criticism of them before his death in 1976 and to make way for Deng's open door policy. To implement Deng Xiaoping's reforms, the Chinese authorities needed a certain amount of ideological liberation in order to break through some of Mao Zedong's doctrines, though Deng Xiaoping's administration had to control such exploration tightly otherwise it might continue to further challenge the communist system. It seemed that Deng Xiaoping's administration was fully aware of the danger that some other people might want to use the ideological liberation for a different reason and they believed that such a prospect should undoubtedly be avoided.

The authorities were also greatly worried that Western ideas seemed to have a particularly strong impact among the Chinese students, a young generation they could not afford to lose. When Western ideas came into China, they were most popular among Chinese students. They were eager to abandon the official education of communism compared with the older generation. Though both generations felt disillusioned by it, but the older generation tried to improve the communist system while the young sought other alternatives. Whatever was new compared with communist doctrines was almost certain to find a market among young students who had both the time and eagerness to learn. Just as the young Chinese were amazed by the television sets, refrigerators, T-shirts, Coca Cola provided by the Western market, they were also excited by various theories offered by the Western Intellectual world, with both the consumer market and non-communist ideologies kept out of China for over thirty years. It was no

surprise that various Western ideologies became the most fashionable topics, and that very soon Existentialism, Dadaism, Surrealism had thousands of followers throughout the country. While various top Western products were consumed by the privileged Chinese officials, they regarded Western ideologies as spiritual pollution. It was this type of Western influence that they attempted to keep out of the open door policy.

The government concluded that attempts to give new interpretations to Marxism or socialism produced negative impacts and therefore decided that all the party propaganda sections were to be engaged in a campaign of abolishing spiritual pollution in order to protect the purity of the official interpretation of Marxism and Leninism. The direct result of this campaign was that four famous communists were expelled from their important posts. They were Zhou Yang, vice-head of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee, Hu Jiwei, active promoter of freedom of the press, Liu Binyan and Wang Ruoshui, both Deputy Chief-Editors of *the People's Daily*. Wang Ruoshui, the new interpreter of humanism and Marxist alienation, was one of the communists who was especially criticised by Deng Liqun.[6] As a result, Wang Ruoshui was dismissed from his post of Deputy Chief Editor of *the People's Daily* (the communist government's official voice) in 1983. However, he continued to further develop his ideas and was therefore expelled from the Communist Party in 1987. It was these later arguments which created a challenge to the official policies on the administration of the arts.

5.2 The Boundaries of Freedom of Creativity

After being dismissed from the Deputy Chief Editorship of *the People's Daily*, Wang Ruoshui shifted his focus from politics to the relationship between China's politics and the arts, and began to argue for freedom of creativity. An article under the name of "Commentator" was published in *the Literature and Art Daily* in 1986. The author insisted on the official argument that there did not exist a kind of absolute, unconditional and abstract freedom of creativity. Wang Ruoshui replied in an article entitled *Freedom of Literature and the Free Literature* in *the Liberation Daily* on 4th June, 1986. He proposed the following three arguments. First, he discussed the concept of the boundaries of freedom and creativity. If the Chinese authorities believed that there was no absolute freedom, there must be a boundary which warned artists not to go beyond. To Wang Ruoshui, the problem did not lie in whether there was such a boundary or not, but rather where it was drawn, arguing that it was most important to see the boundary rather than hide it in the dark. Secondly, he discussed where the authority lay for deciding such a boundary. Was it to be regulated by the Constitution and Law? Or was it to be

decided by the will of officials ? That was the key question to be answered, otherwise it did not mean anything, in Wang' opinion, to talk about freedom of creativity. Then he argued that it was meaningless to make empty promises, if the government interfered with the arts without reaching an agreement in this respect. Thirdly, Wang Ruoshui explained that Chinese writers were not demanding privileges that were beyond the law. What they rejected were the illegal and arbitrary interventions of arts officers.[7]

It seemed that there was not much difference between Wang Ruoshui's belief and the declared aims and objectives of Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership policy. The two seemed to have more to agree than disagree about. For example, an aim of Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership policy was to prevent arts officers from arbitrarily intervening in the arts. Deng Xiaoping declared that he wanted a systematic management of the arts, which he believed would serve socialism better compared to the revolutionary committee type of control seen during the Cultural Revolution. Those arts officers who preferred to exercise control through political demands were gradually replaced by those who favoured the use of legal proceedings where necessary, showing Deng Xiaoping's efforts to keep his promise to the Chinese writers and artists. Figures such as Deng Liqun, former head of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee, Zhu Muzhi, former Cultural Minister, and many other arts officers at various levels were gradually replaced, in particular, by, Zhu Houze, Head of the Propaganda Department in 1984, Wang Meng, Cultural Minister from 1985 to 1989, Ying Ruocheng, Deputy Cultural Minister from 1985 to 1990.[8]

In terms of where the boundary of freedom and creativity was to be drawn, Deng Xiaoping first made it very clear in 1978 with his four guiding principles, which were defined as Marxism and Mao Zedong's thoughts, the Socialist Road, the Dictatorship of the People's Democracy and the Leadership of the Communist Party of China. At the 4th Conference of Chinese Writers and Artists in 1979, Deng Xiaoping had stressed that Chinese writers and artists were to be given freedom of creativity as long as they did not intend to work against the Communist Party and socialism. Certainly, it was another issue whether Chinese writers and artists agreed to accepted this boundary line. In fact, Deng Xiaoping himself already presented a contradiction in his own theory. He modified Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts of direct control with his indirect leadership policy on the one hand, while demanding that others follow Mao Zedong's thoughts on the other. However, this contradiction in Deng Xiaoping's interpretation of Mao Zedong's thoughts was seen as an opportunity for other possible interpretations too, and he could hardly prevent others from suggesting various alternatives.

On 8th August, 1986 Wang Ruoshui wrote another article entitled *the Double Hundred Principle and Citizen's Rights*. In this article, he discussed the relationship between the Party policies and the National Constitution. The "hundred flowers" principle was set out by Mao Zedong at the Supreme State Council in 1956, when he called for a hundred school of thoughts to contend and a hundred flowers to bloom.[9] There had been two popular assumptions about this aphorism: (a)it was intended to encourage the development of Chinese art and literature, but (b) it was used as a means to target intellectuals who held a critical view of the communist administration, or "to seduce the snake from its hole" to use Mao Zedong's words.[10]

The first assumption was made from an examination of the aims of the Communist Party. After the Anti-Hu Feng movement in 1953, Hu Feng and some leading Chinese poets, writers and literary critic were sent to prison. The majority of Chinese writers suffered from both official and self-censorship, and valuable works were rarely produced. It was believed that the government intended to change this situation and therefore offered more freedom to Chinese artists. The second assumption was based on Mao Zedong's stated motive and its consequences. Chinese writers and artists were greatly encouraged by this principle of a new diversity in the arts implied by Mao Zedong's principle of "a hundred flowers blooming and a hundred schools of thoughts contending". They welcomed it, though with various criticisms and suggestions which shocked the government. The communists were in panic over the amount of criticism they received from various fields of society, which they eventually decided to suppress through the Anti-Rightists' campaign in 1957. As a direct consequence, 800,000 people were sent to labour camps for "re-education".[11] Mao Zedong then modified his principle to "freedom with leadership and democracy under centralised guidance" while explaining his original motive of 1956 as a plot to draw the enemy out of its hidden corner so that it could be identified and suppressed. [12]

However, I believe that there was also an important question about the interpretation of the second half of Mao Zedong's principle involved. The phrase "a hundred school of thoughts contending" referred to the freedom of philosophy in the East Zhou Dynasty (722-221 BC), which was a period of philosophical debate, and which was greatly admired by Chinese intellectuals. When Mao Zedong suggested the widened version of "a hundred flowers blooming and a hundred schools of thoughts contending", the Chinese intellectuals and writers and artists were excited by the potential liberty offered to philosophy and the arts. However, this was not an interpretation that Mao Zedong wanted and in 1957 he made it very clear at the National Conference of Propaganda that "all

erroneous ideas, all poisonous weeds, and all ghosts and monsters must be subject to criticism; in no circumstances should they be allowed to spread unchecked."[13] It was this difference in the interpretation of the principle of "a hundred schools of thoughts contending" that led to the disastrous Anti-Rightist campaign in 1957. It was also this difference that gave Mao Zedong's principle of "a hundred flowers and a hundred schools" such wide-ranging flexibility of interpretation by different political, social and cultural groups in Chinese society.

5.3 Party Policies and the National Constitution

From 1931 to 1937, the Communist Party of China used as its first constitution of the Jiangxi Soviet Regional Government. Then came the constitution that of the Yanan Communist government which applied from 1937 to 1949. After the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the first national constitution made by the Communist Party of China was launched in 1954 , and modified in 1975, 1978 and 1982. According to Article 35 "The Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens" of the National Constitution of 1982, "Citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of association, of procession and of demonstration."[14] But this freedom was subject to two essential conditions. First, treasonable and other counter-revolutionary activities were to be suppressed, which effectively curtailed freedom of speech, the press and even ideological differences.[15] Secondly, the People's Republic of China was declared to be a socialist state under the people's dictatorship, which was in turn under the leadership of the Communist Party of China and the guidance of Marxism, Leninism and Mao Zedong's thoughts.[16] When the Communist Party of China took over national power, it began to establish a national constitution for its purposes, and in particular to legalise its party policies. Subsequently when the party policies changed, the constitution followed it. Anyone who held a critical opinion towards party policies was considered an anti-party element. He or she therefore became the enemy of the state and was to lose his or her freedom of speech, even though it was granted by the constitution.

Wang Ruoshui pointed out two plain but important facts about China. First, he wrote that the policies of the Communist Party of China were regarded as superior to those laid down in the National Constitution of the People's Republic of China. Policies of the Party were the real laws that ruled the country, Wang Ruoshui argued, rather than the National Constitution. For example, the art circle hardly responded at all to the confirmation of the right of freedom of speech, freedom of creativity, and freedom of the press offered in the National Constitution in 1982. However, they were overjoyed when Hu Qili, Executive

Secretary of the Secretarial Department reconfirmed, on behalf of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, that freedom of creativity would be given to the Chinese writers at the Fourth Conference of Chinese Writers in 1985.[17] It had been the same when Mao Zedong put forward his " hundred flowers" principle in 1956: each produced a much deeper impact upon the Chinese art circle than the National Constitution.[18]

Wang Ruoshui concluded that the "law" of the Communist Party was more effective than the National Constitution, and that even statements of some communist leaders were more effective than the National Constitution, which was often ignored.[19]This phenomenon suggested that either the public had more faith in party policies than the National Constitution, or that party policies had more power than the National Constitution. Wang Ruoshui also argued that it was far from sufficient simply to take the "hundred flowers" principle as the party's policy, because freedom of speech, freedom of scientific research and freedom of creativity were all basic rights set by the National Constitution. It should have been stressed that the right of freedom of creativity was given by the National Constitution, not by some speeches of individuals. If writers, just passively, waited and waited for someone to come and give them freedom of creativity, they could just as easily lose what they already enjoyed or never attained. They might find that one day they were allowed to speak, but another day they had to keep their mouths shut depending on party speeches or statements, and would never escape the vicious circle of gain and loss of freedom.[20] Wang Ruoshui had learned from personal experience that party policies were always changeable. They could give people the right to debate and they could also withdraw such promises, therefore the public would feel that was a royal favour given by the Communist Party not a constitutional right. That was also the reason why people always worried about the consistency of party policies. He suggested that the concept of no interference with the arts be legalised within the Constitution. Once they knew that their freedom of creativity was assured by the National Constitution, writers and artists might use it to defend themselves and to address the issue of deprivation of citizen's rights.[21]

Wang Ruoshui also gave examples of how the Communist Party had violated the Constitution under Mao Zedong's administration as with the Cultural Revolution, while, he said, it had been expected that such violations of law were to be stopped by the National People's Congress. He suggested a legal standard should be applied to the Communist Party, that the leadership of the Communist Party is only legal when it conformed to the Constitution.[22] In his discussion of the relationship between party policies and the National Constitution, Wang Ruoshui raised two major issues. First, Wang Ruoshui promoted a debate on the

basic rights of Chinese citizens. Just as with freedom of creativity, many other basic rights were denied by China's political reality even though they were written under the National Constitution. He believed that people should rely on their legal rights rather than promises by some communist leaders or Party policies for variable period of time. The Communist Party always demanded that its followers be the obedient tools of the revolutionary course. In the arts, writers and artists were expected to be 'cogs and wheels' of the revolutionary machine. Their problem with Mao Zedong's arts officers had always been the official interpretation of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts rather than questioning its legal right, let alone defending their own legal rights set by the Constitution. Now Wang Ruoshui suggested the different approach of defending citizens' basic rights, something certainly appeared alarming to the communist arts officers. Secondly, he suggested that the leadership of the Communist Party should be legitimated within the confines of the National Constitution with the right for the National People's Congress to stop the leadership if it violated the National Constitution. This involved a fundamental issue of the method of operation and of the legitimacy of the communist government in China. When the Communist Party gave itself a supreme position, higher that the National People's Congress and the National Constitution, a parallel structure was built according to this principle in its leadership, with individual leaders in turn placed above the Party. Such a structure gave both individual leaders and the Party collectively the power to intervene in the normal operations of either the Party itself or the state. It was for this reason that the Communist Party and China suffered continually from various political campaigns such as the Great Leap Forward movement in 1958 and the Cultural Revolution in 1966. Deng Xiaoping and his followers had tried very hard to normalise the operations of both the Party and the state, but this problem would remain unresolved as long as the Communist Party was not prepared to give up its dictatorship over the state. It was also impossible for Deng Xiaoping not to exercise his personal authority over Party and state affairs, just as Mao Zedong had done.

Wang Ruoshui's attempts to prevent interference from arts officers through legal constitutions did not seem to contradict what Deng Xiaoping and his reformers aimed to achieve. However, when he argued for the supervision of the Communist Party by the National People's Congress, Wang Ruoshui presented a similar danger to the communist system as that of Wei Jingsheng during the Beijing Spring movement, when he had similarly demanded the democratic supervision of the Communist Party. Neither of them could possibly be tolerated by the authorities. Wang Ruoshui must have been aware of the challenge of his argument. He suggested that people should insist on their legal rights while he was pointing out that party policies were in reality more powerful than the

National Constitution. Therefore he proposed that such contradictions be resolved through the strengthening of the Constitution and the supervision of the Communist Party by the National People's Congress. It seemed that Wang Ruoshui was also fully aware of the wider consequences of his argument, carefully modifying his demands at the end of his article: "It is not to deny the leadership of the Communist Party. On the contrary, it is what is demanded by the leadership of the Party."[23] He drew support from a speech made by Hu Yaobang at the celebration of the Sixtieth Anniversary of the Communist Party of China in 1981, which went: "The leadership of the Party over the state, essentially speaking, is to organise and support the people to become masters of the state and construct the socialist new life."[24]

5.4 Conclusion

Wang Ruoshui's arguments pointed out the vulnerability of the assumed legal rights of the Chinese citizens to freedom of expression. He suggested three areas of improvement in terms of the development of the indirect leadership policy: freedom of creativity as a citizens' right, the legalisation of party policies, and to make the visible boundary of freedom and creativity. However, these were all rejected by the Deng Xiaoping's administration.

First, freedom of creativity was something ought to be taken for granted if it was written in the constitution. It should be enjoyed by every citizen of the People's Republic of China rather than be a gift from some party officials or the party itself. What the indirect leadership policy promised were in fact basic rights of which Chinese writers and artists had been deprived for decades, and the writers and artists should insist on such rights rather than wait for a favour given from the above. Secondly, they should use the constitution to defend such rights when arts officers began to interfere with the exercise of their creativity. Instead of worrying about changes in party policies, their awareness of legal rights should be strengthened. When arts officers began to act against the constitution, their attempts should be viewed as illegal and rejected. Thirdly, Wang Ruoshui was not arguing for a kind of absolute freedom of creativity free of any obligations. On the contrary, he suggested such freedom should be constrained within the communist system. In his view, it was only those illegal and arbitrary interventions of the arts officers that should be stopped. In terms of the definition of such intervention, Wang Ruoshui wished to distinguish between the official will and proper legal proceedings.

On the one hand, Wang Ruoshui aimed to stabilise party policies through the constitution and therefore to stop arbitrary interference by individual arts

officers. On the other hand, his argument was part of the reforms, in his opinion, needed to give more authority to the constitution and to decrease the power of the party. When a conflict occurred, it was to be resolved through the National People's Congress rather than by the decision of one or a few senior party veterans.

What Wang Ruoshui also criticised were the practical problems occurring in the implementation of Deng Xiaoping's policy of indirect leadership of the arts. It suffered from frequent interference from arts officers at various levels, but it failed to provide legal support for writers and artists to defend their interest: these factors made the promise of not interfering with artists' creativity utopian. The principle also suffered from ambiguity in terms of the definition of indirect leadership. For instance, it did not draw a clear line between what to prohibit and what not to be prohibited, leading to confusion for both arts officers and writers and artists. Finally, it seemed that the indirect leadership policy did not intend that there should be serious debate about its practice and it failed to face any criticism. As a result, Deng Xiaoping's administration moved to suppression when such debates became public.

Wang Ruoshui had of course addressed a fundamental issue of the communist system, which was its legal authority. The Communist Party viewed itself as a natural and legal symbol of the state, and it put the state under its unquestionable leadership and created all the constitution and laws to protect its interest. Wang Ruoshui's argument for the legalisation of the Communist Party within the constitution seemed to be an issue that could hardly be expected to be resolved from within such a system. Therefore, not only was he dismissed from his post as Deputy Chief Editor of the party's propaganda machine, but he was also expelled from the Communist Party. As for how far it was for the communist system to improve from within its administration of the arts, this will be discussed further in my study of the constructive criticism presented by Liu Binyan, one of the most famous communist writers (see Chapter 6 below).

Notes to Chapter 5

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[2] Cai Chongguo, *"Lun Deng Xiaoping" (On Deng Xiaoping)*, Minxzhu Zhongguo Monthly, Issue 2, June, 1990, Minzhu Zhongguo Press, Paris, pp. 90-112.

[3] Cai Chongguo, *"Lun Deng Xiaoping" (On Deng Xiaoping)*, Minxzhu Zhongguo Monthly, Issue 2, June, 1990, Minzhu Zhongguo Press, Paris, pp. 90-112.

[4] Li, Gucheng, *"Zhonggong dangzhengjun jiegou" (Structure of the Communist Party of China, its government and military forces)*, Ming Bao Press, Hong Kong, 1990, pp. 90-112.

[5] Huai Bing, *"Wei chuangzuo ziyou yiqi nahan" (To shout for freedom of creativity)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 108, October, 1986, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 65-66.

[6] Huai Bing, *"Wei chuangzuo ziyou yiqi nahan" (To shout for freedom of creativity)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 108, October, 1986, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 65-66.

[7] Huai Bing, *"Wei chuangzuo ziyou yiqi nahan" (To shout for freedom of creativity)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 108, October, 1986, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 65-66.

[8] Personal experience of working for the Ministry of Culture of China between 1982 and 1988.

[9] Mao Zedong, *"Guanyu baihua jifang, baijiazhengming" (On letting a hundred flowers bloom and a hundred schools of thought contend)*, *"Mao Zedong xuanji diwujuan", (Selection of Mao Zedong's works vi)*, the People's Press, Beijing, 1977, pp. 388- 395.

[10] Mao Zedong, *"Mao Zedong xuanji diwujuan", (Selection of Mao Zedong's works vi)*, the People's Press, Beijing, 1977, pp. 440-455.
Han Shan Bi, *"Pingzhuan Deng Xiaoping" (On Deng Xiaoping)*, East & West Culture Publishing Co., Hong Kong, 1988, pp. 298-300.

[11] Collins Bown, *China 1949-1976*, Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., London, 1977, pp. 54-68.

[12] Collins Bown, *China 1949-1976*, Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., London, 1977, pp. 54-68.

[13] Collins Bown, *China 1949-1976*, Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., London, 1977, pp. 54-68.

[14] Quo Liang, Chief Editor, Article 35 the Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens, the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, Encyclopaedia of New China, Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1987, p. 692.

[15] Quo Liang, Chief Editor, Article 28 General Principle, the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, Encyclopaedia of New China, Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1987, P. 689.

[16] Luo Liang, ed. *Preamble The Constitution of the People's Republic of China, Encyclopaedia of New China*, Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1987, p. 689.

[17] Nie Hualing, *"Disijie zhongguo zuoxxie daibiao dahui" (The fourth conference of the China writers' association)*, The Nineties, Issue 181, February, 1985, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, p. 25.

[18] Wang Ruoshui, *"Shuangbai fangzhen he gongmin quanli" (The "double hundred" principle and citizen's right)*, The Chinese Voice Post, 8th August, 1986, Shanghai.

[19] Huai Bing, *"Wei chuangzuo ziyou yiqi nahan" (To shout for freedom of creativity)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 108, October, 1986, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 65-66.

[20] Wang Ruoshui, *"Shuangbai fangzhen he gongmin quanli" (The "double hundred" principle and citizen's right)*, The Chinese Voice Post, 8th August, 1986, Shanghai.

[21] Huai Bing, *"Wei chuangzuo ziyou yiqi nahan" (To shout for freedom of creativity)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 108, October, 1986, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 65-66.

[22] Huai Bing, *"Wei chuangzuo ziyou yiqi nahan" (To shout for freedom of creativity)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 108, October, 1986, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 65-66.

[23] Wang Ruoshui, *"Shuangbai fangzhen he gongmin quanli" (The "double hundred" principle and citizen's right)*, The Chinese Voice Post, 8th August, 1986, Shanghai.

[24] Huai Bing, *"Wei chuangzuo ziyou yiqi nahan" (To shout for freedom of creativity)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 108, October, 1986, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 65-66.

Chapter 6: The Concept of Constructive Criticism

6.1 Introduction

1985 witnessed both great optimism and frustration among Chinese writers. The 4th Conference of the China Writers' Association was held from 29th December, 1984 to 5th January, 1985. Hu Qili, Executive Secretary of the Secretary Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, attended the conference and confirmed that freedom of creativity to writers was assured. It was reported that his speech was warmly applauded by over eight hundred delegates and many writers, in tears, believed that the day of freedom finally arrived.[1]

On behalf of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, Hu Qili first criticised the fact that some arts officers who had no knowledge of the arts continued to persecuted the writers and artists. Secondly, he indicated that full freedom was to be given to the writers and artists. Thirdly, he proposed that the arts administration in China was to be put on a legal basis. Consequently, the Chinese writers and artists would not in future suffer from either political discrimination or administrative punishments if they were exposed to official criticism.[2]

His speech indicated five developments derived from Deng Xiaoping's speech at the 4th Conference of the Chinese Writers and Artists in 1979. Firstly, Hu Qili said that "the team of Chinese writers can be trusted completely" while Deng Xiaoping had only believed that "on the whole, this team was good." Secondly, Hu Qili modified Mao Zedong's slogan of "the arts must serve the worker, peasants and soldiers" to one of "the arts for the people." Then he criticised arts officers who interfered with the arts and suggested that the society as a whole, not the arts officers, should assure freedom of creativity of the Chinese writers. Last but not least, Hu Qili did not mention Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts as the official common practice.[3]

Though Deng Xiaoping had promised freedom of creativity and no interference from arts officers more than five years ago, the Chinese writers had continuously suffered from the administrative orders of the authorities. They were greatly disturbed by both the first Anti-bourgeois Liberalism campaign in 1981 and the Anti-Spiritual Pollution campaign in 1983. They had been constantly subject to either official censorship or self-censorship and their fear of political persecution kept at a high level. However in the mean time, the situation did not look as bad as it appeared to be. Supporters of Deng Xiaoping's reforms in the arts were

gradually promoted to key positions over the five years. For example, Zhu Houzhe had replaced Deng Liqun as Head of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee. Wang Meng, former Deputy Chairman of the China Writers' Association, succeeded Zhu Muzhi as Cultural Minister, while Ying Ruocheng, a famous actor from the Beijing People's Theatre, was made Deputy Cultural Minister. It was apparent that writers and artists had begun to replace the traditional model of communist arts officers, in particular during the period of the Cultural Revolution, who were ignorant of the arts, and the same process was also happened at provincial, urban and county levels.[4] It seemed that there were more and more experienced writers and artists who were promoted to manage the arts affairs despite continuous interruptions from the authorities.

Hu Qili's speech encouraged the Chinese writers in two ways. First, he represented the more liberal type of communist who favoured more freedom for the arts and his rise in power suggested that they, the radical reformers, might make it impossible, in the mind of most Chinese writers. Secondly, he carefully though indirectly criticised both the first Anti-bourgeois Liberalism campaign and the subsequent Anti-Spiritual Pollution campaign, the two main political persecutions against the Chinese writers and artists subsequent to the Cultural Revolution.

The China Writers' Association, one of the eleven associations within the China Writers and Artists Federation, was founded in 1949. It was suppressed during the Cultural Revolution but began to function again in 1978. The China Writers and Artists Federation was funded by and under the direct control of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee. In 1981, the Federation consisted of one honorary chairman, one chairman, 11 vice-chairmen, and 456 directors. The China Writers' Association consisted of one honorary chairman, one chairman, 12 vice-chairmen, 10 secretaries, and 140 directors.[5] Its members were organised under three categories: national, provincial and amateur. By 1984, it was registered with over 2,200 national writers, 10,000 provincial writers, and 26,000 amateur writers. Excited by Hu Qili's speech, the China Writers' Association put forward a slogan of "producing the contemporary Cao Xueqin (the author of the Chinese novel *Dream of the Red Mansion* of the Qing Dynasty) and Shakespeare."[6]

As one of the twelve vice-chairmen of the China Writers' Association, Liu Binyan also emphasised the importance of freedom for writers at the 4th Conference of the China Writers' Association. He argued that a lot of works of no literary value were still produced following the Cultural Revolution and that there was no freedom of creativity for Chinese writers. He believed that freedom of creativity

was a matter of life and death to writers. To experiment with his freedom, Liu Binyan published one of his most controversial works *The Second Type of Loyalty* in March, 1985. It was published in the first issue of *Exploration* and this was re-published in over eleven magazines and journals throughout China, but soon it was prohibited from further circulation. Both its continuation and *Exploration* were banned by the authorities.[7] The official prohibition of Liu Binyan's work shocked Chinese writers and they became more careful about what to write and began to exercise more self-censorship. As Liu Binyan later pointed out in 1987 that China's literature began to escape from reality.[8]

Actually, the freedom of creativity demanded by Liu Binyan was quite different from that called for by the Star artists did in 1979. What Liu Binyan demanded was a kind of freedom, which was to allow writers to improve the communist system through an honest description of the reality in China, an aim that was shared by many Chinese communist writers. In this chapter, I shall take Liu Binyan as an example and examine how he tried to improve or save the communist system in China through his constructive criticism, and why he became a threat to it and finally lost the trust of his own Party.

6.2 The Choice between a Fiction Writer and a Journalist

Like Wang Ruoshui, Liu Binyan was also Deputy Chief Editor of *People's Daily.* He was expelled from his post together with Wang Ruoshui during the second Anti-Bourgeois Liberalism campaign in 1985. However, he was much better known in China due to his series of "reportage literature" (a form of writing between journalism and literature), revealing the corruption in the communist system. His sharp criticism of some of the communist officials not only provoked a great deal of hatred from the authorities, but also won him great respect from the Chinese people. He also won a reputation as today's Lord Bao Gong, a minister of the Song Dynasty (960 - 1278) who was very renowned for his courage of helping the poor and the innocent and his fight against the evil.

Liu Binyan was sentenced as a Rightist who had attacked the Communist Party through his writing during the Anti-Rightist movement of 1957. He resumed writing after 1979 and continued to criticise the dark side of the authorities. The first of his "reportage literature" was entitled *Between the Person and the Devil,* in which he exposed how a communist official bribed other officials at various levels for her own interest through her power. Liu Binyan became known overnight and his worries at the widespread corruption of the communist officials during Deng Xiaoping's reforms were shared by hundreds and thousands of his readers. He continued to write "reportage literature" and began

to receive more and more pressure from the authorities. No sooner had he published a new series of "reportage literature" than various of official reports from the provincial party committee were made to the Central Committee in Beijing demanding immediate and severe punishments against him.

Led by Hu Yaobang, General Secretary of the Central Committee, officials of the Party Propaganda and the arts departments could be mainly put into two categories. Some believed that Liu Binyan's criticism might be diverted into positive solutions and therefore he should not be punished. Others insisted on that Liu Binyan was still a Rightist who continued to damage the interest of the Communist Party through his writing and therefore his "reportage literature" should be banned. The first group was supported by Hu Yaobang and the latter by Deng Xiaoping, Chen Yun, Deng Liqun etc.. These two arguments became tense as Liu Binyan continued his "reportage literature" with more and exposure of the dark side of the communist system. Finally, the authorities could not tolerate his criticism and decided to expel him from his important and influential post at *People's Daily* in 1985.[9] However, he did not lose his right of writing completely as had happened in 1957, nor did he lose his post as Vice-Chairman of the official China Writers' Association. Liu Binyan was instead advised by the authorities to concentrate on fiction rather than "reportage literature".[10] It seemed that the authorities preferred him to be a professional fiction writer rather than a journalist who kept reporting on current affairs. But Liu Binyan persisted in his role of as a journalist. In his opinion, the Chinese literature had escaped from the reality in China as encouraged by both the critics and the government. He suggested that literature should embrace reality rather than ignore it, and believed that only those writers who wrote about the real life in China were able to produce great works.[11]

During Deng Xiaoping's reforms, the official control over the arts was considerably less than that over the press. While writers were promised to be given the freedom of creativity, journalists were constantly under severe control of the Party, which seemed to be much more strict with the media for its immediate and straight-forward messages. Though known as the most liberal official reformer, Hu Yaobang could only allow the press 20% of its space to criticise the dark side in Chinese society and demanded that conversely 80% of its writing must praise its bright side.[12] Under such policies, it was difficult for journalists to report true stories in China. But Liu Binyan was not keen to be a fiction writer, so he created a writing style between journalism and literature. It was a kind of writing bridging journalism and literature, which he used to write about the dark side of life in China and to avoid the official censorship on media. His writing was always published in literary journals and magazines and was

highly appreciated by the Chinese public for its bold truth and depth in depicting the real picture of China.

In his "reportage literature", Liu Binyan usually took a journalist approach to write about the real people rather than creating a certain fictional characters, and took readers deep into a hidden story and challenged the communist system with the experience of his heroes. However, his criticism went beyond the limit of tolerance of the authorities, and this led to his expulsion from *People's Daily*. As discussed above, Liu Binyan was not deprived of his right to write though he faced a choice between self-censorship or the state censorship, as either a professional fiction writer, a journalist as the voice of the Party, or a "reportage literature" writer. Liu chose the last and continued to write *The Second Type of Loyalty*, which was published in the first issue of *Exploration*, a magazine produced by the China Union of Workers, in March, 1985.[13] His bold writing was again welcomed by the Chinese public and reprinted in eleven other journals and magazines in China. This time the authorities intervened and the Party Committee of the China Union of Workers instructed that the first Issue of *Exploration* was prohibited from circulation and Liu Binyan's continuation of *The Second Type of Loyalty* was to be banned from further publication. *Exploration* was therefore stopped and Liu Binyan forced into silence.

6.3 The Second Type of Loyalty

In *The Second Type of Loyalty*, Liu wrote about two individuals, Chen Shizhong and Ni Yuxian, as typical examples of the "second type of loyalty" to communism. Chen Shizhong had been a student sponsored by the Communist Party to study in the Soviet Union, where he experienced the Soviet criticism of the worship to Stalin. He finished his studies in 1960 and returned home. Back in China, he saw various kinds of similar worship to Mao Zedong and began to worry about its potential danger.[14]

In 1964, he had written an article entitled *Remonstration upon the Party* of 30,000 words to Mao Zedong. First, he wrote about the worship of Mao Zedong and suggested that it was bound to lead to the individual's dictatorship, which in turn was to bring disaster to both the Communist Party of China and the state. Secondly, he criticised Lei Feng, an example set by Mao Zedong for the whole country to follow in the 1960s. Chen Shizhong pointed out that Lei Feng had a vital weakness, which was his blind obedience to the Party. Lei Feng had a popular saying which went: " I'll do whatever Chairman Mao asked me to do." Chen Shizhong argued that there were two kinds of risks with the example of Lei Feng. On the one hand, Lei Feng regarded Mao Zedong and the Communist Party

as the same thing. On the other hand, Lei Feng believed that whatever Mao Zedong said was truth that was to be obeyed. Chen Shizhong concluded that it would be a disaster if all the Chinese were to follow Lei Feng's blind loyalty to Mao Zedong. Finally, Chen Shizhong made a comparison between himself and Lei Feng. He believed that he had all the good qualities that Lei Feng had, but the difference between himself and Lei Feng was that he had the ability to make his own judgements and the courage to make critical comments. It was therefore no surprise that his fate was also different from that of Lei Feng. Chen Shizhong was sentenced to eight years of imprisonment and was deprived of citizen's right for two years.[15]

Ni Yuxian was a similar type of person to Chen Shizhong: both were not afraid of making criticism of authority. In 1963, he wrote a letter of about 10,000 words to Mao Zedong, in which he indirectly criticised Mao Zedong's economic policies. He hinted that it was Mao Zedong's radical economic policies of the Great Leap Forward movement that led to the disastrous collapse of the people's livelihood from 1959 to 1962. He suggested that Mao's type of communes be replaced by the traditional type of agricultural operation. As a result, Ni Yuxian was dismissed from the army.[16] During the Cultural Revolution, Ni Yuxian argued with Zhang Chunqiao, a key member of the Gang of Four and Vice-Chairman of State at the time, that

> "the disaster of China lay in the fact that no one dares to speak out the truth. Everyone is afraid of death. Everyone is silent. Day by day, China is becoming more and more dangerous and China's politics are becoming darker and darker. Let me speak out first."[17]

Ni Yuxian seemed to be very lucky compared with Chen Shizhong. Surprisingly, he did not suffer much from his letter to Mao Zedong and he even got away from arguing with Zhang Chunqiao during the Cultural Revolution, but when he spoke for Deng Xiaoping in 1977, Ni Yuxian almost lost his life. The Gang of Four were arrested in 1976 by Hua Guofeng, the appointed successor of Mao Zedong. However, Deng Xiaoping's political fate was not very clear. Ni Yuxian originated a campaign in support of Deng Xiaoping's return to Chinese politics. He suggested to the Central Committee that Deng Xiaoping should resume his power and that China should progress under Deng's leadership. When he pasted a poster on this in Huai Hai Road, the main street in Shanghai, Ni Yuxian was sent to the prison by the Shanghai City government, where he was to be executed together with some other political prisoners. However, his execution was delayed

with the rapid, growing influence of Deng Xiaoping in the Central government. Finally, he was released in 1979.[18]

Under Deng Xiaoping's administration, both Chen Shizhong and Ni Yuxian were freed from previous political persecutions. However, life in the prison did neither changed their belief nor reduced their courage of criticising authority. Therefore both of them were regarded as dangerous people by communist officials. For example, Chen Shizhong wrote to the *Red Flag*, the Party's Journal based in Beijing, and demanded that a slogan on Mao Zedong's statue in Harbin, a city in the Northeast of China, was to be removed. The slogan was "Long live the victory of Mao Zedong's proletarian and revolutionary line": he argued that the disaster of the Cultural Revolution was caused by Mao Zedong's polices, and he also criticised local official policies towards Chinese intellectuals as well as corruption in the distribution of state houses within the local government. In comparison, Ni Yuxian was engaged in something more threatening to the communist system. He campaigned for local elections and fought against the existing system that all were appointed by the Party from above. Naturally, they were regarded by the authorities as attackers to the Party and trouble-makers threatening state stability and the unity. Consequently, they became targets of the Anti-Bourgeois Liberalism campaign and continued to suffer from new political persecutions.[19]

Both of them shared a quality that Lei Feng, Mao Zedong's model of the 1960s, did not have. Their loyalty to communism was of a different kind, which was based on their intellectual judgement rather than blind obedience. Whenever they saw something wrong of the communist system, they criticised it in an attempt to improve it. Though they suffered from and were nearly executed for their frank criticism, their faith to the Communist Party remained unchanged. It was this "second type of loyalty" that Liu Binyan wrote about. In his "reportage literature", Liu Binyan divided loyalty to communism into three categories. The first loyalty was that of Lei Feng's, which was to worship the Party blindly, which had always been favoured and encouraged by the authority. The second loyalty was to be loyal to communism while retaining an ability to criticise its faults. This attitude had been persecuted all the time by the authorities so that it was a kind of endangered species. Liu Binyan believed that the third type of loyalty would rise once the second loyalty disappeared. In his mind, the third was referred to those who wanted to make the most out of the communist control of China for their personal interest.[20]

6.4 The Vision of the Communist Harmony

In the Chinese tradition, it was always believed that the harmony of China was

balanced between the "yin and yang", and problems and disasters would occur once the balance was lost. In the Chinese minds, a wise emperor would not only favour positive reports of his reign but also listen to criticism of his faults. Ministers of bold courage who criticised the emperor were always highly praised by Chinese historians. This was simply because the risk of making a criticism was too high: to criticise the authorities in feudal China almost equalled sending you and your family to prison or death. In the communist China, it was a similarly common practice to imprison a person for just making a criticism of authority. Hu Feng, a famous literary critic is a good example: he was imprisoned for over twenty years after he criticised Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts in 1953. Most of his literary friends such Lu Leng, Lu Yuan, Niu Han etc. were all sentenced to over ten years of imprisonment as members of the Hu Feng Anti-Party group.[21] As discussed in Chapter 4, over 800,000 of Chinese intellectuals, writers and artists were in total sent to either prison or labour camps for their criticism of the communist officials. Obviously, presenting a criticism of the authorities in China did need a lot of courage.

Having examined several major events under his administration, it can be seen that Mao Zedong at time attempted to encourage criticism of the authorities. In 1956, Mao Zedong asked the Chinese intellectuals and democratic parties and organisations to criticise the communist administration of China, promising them that "a hundred of schools of thoughts were let to contend and a hundred flowers to bloom". However, he quickly suppressed this criticism with the Anti-Rightist movement. In 1958, he urged Chinese peasants to challenge the traditional type of agricultural production, leading the Great Leap Forward movement and strongly supporting the popular concept at the time that "the land will produce whatever you dare to imagine". When Peng Dehuai, Defence Minister and a senior conservative communists criticised Mao's policy, he was dismissed from his post with those who shared his ideas and were replaced by more radical officials, which led to a three years disaster in China's agriculture between 1958 and 1961. In 1966, he called all Chinese, particularly the Red Guards, to criticise the communist bureaucracy represented by Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping. Mao Zedong insisted that the ordinary people should have the right to criticise authority and bureaucracy, and he used this to destroy Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping's basis of power, but when the military struggle, the criticism and debates of the Red Guards went beyond his tolerance, Mao Zedong ordered them to stop and sent them into the vast, isolated countryside. All his attempts to encourage criticism for the common good failed to reach his expectation and he had to suppress it himself. This type of criticism was encouraged by an order from above and so it hardly had any roots. Most importantly, his campaigns to encourage criticism had legal support and supervision for its operation and

always diverted to trap those who dared to speak out.

Looking at Deng Xiaoping's administration, we can easily recognise that it was dominated by a series of pragmatic policies, which all centred around China's economy. Ideological debates were not in Deng's interest and it seemed that Deng Xiaoping always aimed to achieve and assure the stable environment for China's economy which was his priority. In 1979, Wei Jingsheng criticised his efforts as lacking a political reform of the communist system, pointing out the danger of Deng Xiaoping becoming the new dictator following Mao Zedong. Deng Xiaoping did not allow such criticism and imprisoned Wei Jingsheng and other Chinese dissidents. Wang Ruoshui challenged Deng's reforms with his own interpretation of Marxism and Liu Binyan criticised the problems occurred during Deng's reforms. Deng Xiaoping did not tolerate these communists either, and suppressed them with the Anti-Bourgeois Liberalism campaigns. He first ordered them dismissed from their posts and later to expel them from the Communist Party of China.

However, Liu Binyan's criticism was quite different from that of Wang Ruoshui. While Wang Ruoshui was writing about the alienation under socialism, Liu Binyan was only demanding a little liberty to criticise, believing that such criticism could only do good rather than damage to the communist system. In his Report to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in 1985, Liu Binyan cautiously argued that

> "It is proved from twenty years experience that it might not be an effective way to achieve our aims by demanding writers and journalists to sing the same tune as the Party and the government organisations. It might not damage the authority of the Party if journalists were allowed to exercise a little function of supervision."[22]

As discussed above, Chinese journalists were requested to fill 80% of their reports with bright stories of communist success, but they usually found it extremely difficult to write about the dark side of its failures. First of all, it was hardly possibly to define how many percentage in one's writing was about the "bright" or the "dark". Secondly, this involved the question of who had the authority to make such judgement. Liu Binyan believed that a comparison could be drawn between the administration of the state and the performance of a symphony orchestra. A nice piece of music could not be well-played unless different musical instruments played a different tune at a different time.[23] However, the party

policies always demanded absolute obedience from its members to the Central Committee, which made it impossible for journalists to even touch the dark side. Liu Binyan explained his problems by quoting the instruction of the Party Secretary of Xian City Party Committee, which stated : "What's the use of these editors and journalists if they don't take the same side of the City Party Committee?"[24] Liu Binyan believed that such kinds of attitude were popular among the communist leaders at various levels and that this prevented the Communist Party from learning from its mistakes.[25]

6.5 Conclusion

This examination of Liu Binyan's constructive criticism has shown that all the efforts of Liu Binyan and similar communist writers were in fact aimed at improving the communist system as well as upholding the authority of the government rather that damage it. However, their efforts were regarded as a threat rather than a contribution by the authorities, and consequently, they were excluded from the communist system which they devoted to.

Liu Binyan was once a firm believer in communism and he never questioned its legitimacy in China. However, he was aware of its defects and of the disaster caused by its practice. He blamed the system for the lack of criticism and supervision. He believed that the communist system could be improved through his constructive criticism and tried extremely hard to achieve it. He demanded that journalists and writers be allowed to sing a different tune to that of the Party and government officials: this, in his opinion, could only be conducive to the communist course. Like many other senior writers, he welcomed Deng Xiaoping's policy of indirect leadership over the arts, but he was also aware of its problems such as its inadequacy in carrying out its promises and intended to improve it through a kind of constructive criticism.

As discussed above, Liu Binyan's second type of loyalty was popular phenomenon rooted in the Chinese tradition. It was based on the assumption that the "Emperor" or the system was ideal and that it was those who were below who made the mistakes. In other words, the party policies were correct but those who carried them out did not do it properly. Therefore, journalists and writers should play a role to reflect those errors so that they could be put right. If the "Emperor" was wrong, those who belonged to second type of loyalty could hardly do anything but to wait and suffer from its consequences. That was Liu Binyan's tragedy: though he believed that he was writing for the communist good, he was not only prohibited from publishing his writing but also expelled from the Communist Party. The Chinese ruler had always tried to adjust the balance

between blind loyalty and critical loyalty. On the one hand, he wanted people who were so obedient to him that they would do whatever he said. On the other hand, he also needed people who were not only loyal to him but also were able to put his faults right.

It seemed that Deng Xiaoping was also playing a similar game. Having enjoyed his "regency" as Vice-Chairman of the Central Committee of the Military Forces since 1978 and replaced Hua Guofeng, Chairman only in name, in 1981, Deng Xiaoping held the real power in China but refused to accept the "thorn" of the official position as Chairman of the Communist Party of China. He needed communists who were loyal to the communist system whatever it was, but also needed communists who were aware the system's problems and were capable of changing it. He balanced the former with the later and vice-versa. When the former prevented progress of his reforms, he replaced them with latter and when the latter became too radical to his reforms, he then replaced them with the former. If this were the case, it might also be a tragedy of the Chinese Communist Party for it excluded its members like Liu Binyan and many others who might sustain, if not possible to save, its rule in China. This would mean that it had failed to improve its system from within. When the Chinese emperor began to expel people representing the second type of loyalty, his end was near. That was the case in the Chinese history and that was also Liu Binyan's fear for the communist system, but if we look at Liu Binyan's demands of freedom to criticise from another angle, it might suggest a different story. The constructive criticism that Liu Binyan represented caused great fear and worries among the communist leadership and that they decided to stop it immediately by forcing the critics into silence. There might have been two direct reasons for their reaction. First, Liu Binyan's criticism of the wide-spread corruption and social injustice among the lower and middle levels of the communist system damaged the Party's reputation. Deng Xiaoping's administration was inadequate to solve these problems and therefore it could not face up to Liu Binyan's challenge. If the Chinese public were informed how serious those problems were, it was feared that the people would question the legitimacy of the government. As it happened later during the student movement of 1989, the fight against corruption and social injustice and the demands for democracy seemed to come very close to bring down Deng Xiaoping's administration. Secondly, Liu Binyan and the Chinese authorities varied in approach to solving such problems. The authorities still insisted on correcting its mistakes through the Central Discipline and Supervision Committee though this did not work. Having seen that it could not deal with corruption and social injustice, Liu Binyan suggested public supervision through journalism and literature as an alternative. What the authorities wanted was a closed and dictated solution, while what Liu Binyan

demanded was an open and public approach, which was bound to lead to freedom of press and of speech. In the short term they might sustain the communist system or contribute to its peaceful transformation into a less dictated state, but in the long run, they were bound to bring the collapse of the dictatorship of a communist government. Both the damage to the reputation and the possibility of collapse of the communist system were things that the Chinese authorities could not afford to compromise over. If this were the case, it was then not a mistake from the Chinese government point of view to silence Liu Binyan's argument. Though its future was much to be questioned, at least it put such challenge off to later years and forced Chinese writers and artists into a more indirect approach in their struggle for freedom. From then on, they avoided challenging the communist system directly. Instead, some of them began to attack the Chinese tradition so that the faults of the Chinese government were made obvious through their analysis of the Chinese culture. This is further discussed in the following chapter about Liu Xiaobo, a lecturer of literature at the Beijing Normal University.

Notes to Chapter 6

[1] Nie Hualing, *"Disijie zhongguo zuoxie daibiao dahui" (The fourth conference of the China writers' association)*, The Nineties, Issue 181, February, 1985, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, p. 25.

[2] Nie Hualing, *"Disijie zhongguo zuoxxie daibiao dahui" (The fourth conference of the China writers' association)*, The Nineties, Issue 181, February, 1985, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, p. 25.

[3] Mu Fu, *"Disijie zhongguo zuojia daibiao dahui he ziyou" (Freedom and the conference of the China writers' association)*, The Nineties, Issue 181, February, 1985, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, p. 52.

[4] Data obtained through on my working experience at the China Performing Arts Agency, the Ministry of Culture between 1982 and 1988.

[5] Editing Committee of Almanac of China's Literature and Arts, *"Zhongguo wenyi nianjian" (Almanac of China's literature and art)*, The People's Literature and Arts Press, Beijing, 1981.

[6] Mu Fu, *"Disijie zhongguo zuojia daibiao dahui he ziyou" (Freedom and the conference of the China writers' association)*,The Nineties, Issue 181, February, 1985, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, p. 52.

[7] Mu Fu, *"Disijie zhongguo zuojia daibiao dahui he ziyou" (Freedom and the conference of the China writers' association)*, The Nineties, Issue 181, February, 1985, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, p. 52.
Shi Shuqing, *"Zhongguo wenxue de huigu yu qinazhan" (The past and future of China's literature)*, Ming Pao Press, 1989, Hong Kong, p. 25.

[8] Bi Hua, *"Liu Bingyan de wenzhang bei si" (Liu Binyan's article was torn)*, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, p. 104.

[9] Li Yi, *"Liu Binyan he tade gaobie zhi zuo" (Liu Binyan and his farewell to Writing)*, The Nineties, Issue 190, November, 1985, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, p. 81.

[10] Bi Hua, *"Liu Bingyan de wenzhang bei si" (Liu Binyan's article was torn)*, The Nineties, Issue 207, April 1987, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, p.104.

[11] Bi Hua, *"Liu Bingyan de wenzhang bei si"(Liu Binyan's article was torn)*, The

Nineties, Issue 207, April 1987, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, p.104.

[12] Li Yi, *Liu Binyan he tade gaobie zhi zuo" (Liu Binyan and his farewell to Writing)*, The Nineties, Issue 190, November, 1985, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, p. 80.

[13] Liu Binyan, *"Liu Binyan de baogaowenxue he wenxue" (Liu Binyan's reportage and literature)*, Mingchuang Press, 1987, Hong Kong, pp. 2-65.

[14] Liu Binyan, *"Liu Binyan zuopinjingxuan" (Liu Binyan's selected works)*, Literature Research Press, 1990, Hong Kong, pp. 333-370.

[15] Liu Binyan, *"Liu Binyan de baogaowenxue he wenxue" (Liu Binyan's reportage and literature)*, Mingchuang Press, 1987, Hong Kong, pp. 2-65.

[16] Liu Binyan, *"Liu Binyan de baogaowenxue he wenxue" (Liu Binyan's reportage and literature)*, Mingchuang Press, 1987, Hong Kong, pp. 2-65.

[17] Liu Binyan, *"Liu Binyan de baogaowenxue he wenxue" (Liu Binyan's reportage and literature)*, Mingchuang Press, 1987, Hong Kong, pp. 2-65.

[18] Liu Binyan, *"Liu Binyan zuopinjingxuan" (Liu Binyan's selected works)*, Literature Research Press, 1990, Hong Kong, pp. 333-370.

[19] Liu Binyan, *"Liu Binyan zuopinjingxuan" (Liu Binyan's selected works)*, Literature Research Press, 1990, Hong Kong, pp. 333-370.

[20] Liu Binyan, *"Liu Binyan de baogaowenxue he wenxue" (Liu Binyan's reportage and literature)*, Mingchuang Press, 1987, Hong Kong, pp. 2-65.

[21] Lu Yuan, Niu Han. (1983) Personal communication.

[22] Liu Binyan, *"Wo de ziwo piping" (My self-criticism)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 108, October 1987, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 70-74.

[23] Liu Binyan, *"Wo de ziwo piping" (My self-criticism)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 108, October 1987, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 70-74.

[24] Liu Binyan, *"Wo de ziwo piping" (My self-criticism)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 108, October 1987, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 70-74.

[25] Liu Binyan, *"Wo de ziwo piping" (My self-criticism)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 108, October 1987, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 70-74.

Chapter 7: Censorship

7.1 Censorship, A Tool in the Implementation of the "Indirect Leadership"

Censorship in China had existed as long as her culture and the arts. It always appeared in one of two forms: either censorship leading to direct and brutal treatment of the writers and artists, or censorship that merely prohibited works of art from being presented to the public. In China, it was broadly believed that literature and art could reflect "the Way", or, in other words, the reality of society. That was why Chinese governments, from the feudal to the communist, all used censorship to control literature and the arts for their own purposes over the millennia.

Confucius was known to favour censorship leading to severe punishments to those who produced anti-ritual works of art. On the one hand, he believed that music could foster the human nature and attempted to achieve this aim through his interpretation of music. On the other hand, he also believed that music could do great harm to the interests of the state if it was wrongly used.[1] However, not all the feudal governors had such extreme fear of the arts. During the Han (BC 206 - 220 AD) and Tang (618 - 907) dynasties for example, the emperors rarely went to these extremes. Though their censors were similarly concerned about what was expressed by the writers and artists, they just censored what were not favoured and usually let the writers and artists free.

In the communist regime under Mao Zedong's administration, censorship led thousands to prison or labour camps. During the Anti-Rightists' campaign, over 800,000 people were punished for their liberal speeches. Apart from inheriting the feudal tradition of censorship and brutal punishment, Mao Zedong's administration also made a new contribution to censorship. It systematically divided literary works into two categories of distribution: the public and interior circulation once they had been assessed. In this way it prohibited what were regarded as the most controversial works of art while keeping more arguable works at a controlled level, limited to senior officials, only allowing what was there were in favour of current official policies into public circulation.[2]

In contrast with this, Deng Xiaoping's administration did not seem to have adopted Mao Zedong's most extreme ideas about censorship. Though he chose a much tougher approach against the democrats and dissidents, as in Wei Jingsheng's case during the first six years of his reforms between 1979 to 1985, Deng Xiaoping's censorship of the arts seemed was restricted to the works of art themselves rather than extending censorship to include brutal treatments against

the writers or artists. However, the importance of censorship was emphasised from 1985 onwards and Deng Xiaoping's administration began to choose censorship to cope with Chinese writers and artists who showed independent tendencies in the implementation of his policy of the indirect leadership of the arts. From 1985 there was an obvious change in the official policy towards the administration of the arts in China, with censorship being once again widely used against Chinese writers by the authorities. There have been two main reasons for this. On the one hand, the implementation of the concept of indirect leadership of the arts proved a failure due to its lack of either legal foundation or lack of administrative support. The artistic creation of the writers was interfered with by the arts officers who continually launched political campaigns to tighten their control. On the other hand, Deng Xiaoping's administration refused to return to Mao Zedong's type of arts administration and attempted to continue its experiment with the indirect leadership of the arts. However, when the initial implementation of this policy failed to produce creative works favoured by the authorities, Deng Xiaoping's administration decided to exercise more control through censorship.

After a debate in the Central Committee of the Communist Party regard the issue of freedom in the arts, Hu Yaobang, General Party Secretary made it clear to the Chinese writers that they were to retain their freedom of writing but that the government was to hold on its control over publishing. The writers could decide what to writer but the government was to decided what to publish.[3] Zhao Ziyang, Prime Minister, also laid down five standards in terms of censorship in 1985: all works could be published as long as they were not anti-Communist Party, anti-socialism, anti-constitution, anti-government, and were not pornographic.[4] The underlying message of this new policy was clear to the Chinese writers: they were still promised freedom of creation, but they were not to produce works which were contrary to Deng Xiaoping's reforms. If they did, they would be subject to official censorship and the works would not be published.

This change in policy produced a wide range of important and direct consequences. To begin with, censorship was widely applied by arts officers as a means to control the works of the writers. Some writers were so frustrated by this that they might give up writing, as in Liu Binyan's case. In May 1985, *Exploration* magazine was censored for publishing Liu Binyan's *The Second Type of Loyalty* and its Editor He Jiadong was dismissed from his post. From then on, official censorship of publications was applied nation-wide and it was estimated that in Beijing alone there were over 180 publications were filed to the central authorities for censorship because of various contents to which the local authorities objected.[5]

In practice the change led to self-censorship of the Chinese artists. Before submitting their work to the official censors, Chinese writers began to apply a self-censorship in the hope of continuing their writing career, writing what they believed could be accepted by the authorities and avoiding to write what might be banned. *The Ten Year History of the Cultural Revolution* was a good point in case. This book was written by Gao Gao and her husband Yan Jiaqi, Director of the Political Research Institute of the Central Social Science Academy. They began writing this in 1979 and completed it in 1985. It was commissioned by the Tianjin People's Press and was ready for printing in 1986, but its publication was stopped by the censors of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee. Finally, Hu Yaobang decided to permit printing but that it should be restricted from public circulation.[6]

When they were writing *Ten Year History of the Cultural Revolution*, Gao Gao and Yan Jiaqi were fully aware of the possibility of being censored by the authorities and they intentionally avoided areas which in their belief would upset the official censors. As Gao Gao recalled that

> "due to various constraints in both writing and publishing, ... we only wrote what we wanted to and could be said. When we were writing, we did not know the possibility of publishing it in Hong Kong, Taiwan, or abroad. We did not write what we did not want to say but what could be said. Of course, it was a great pity that we did not write what we wanted to say but could not be said at that time. "[7]

Yan Jiaqi also wrote that

> "due to the conditions at that time, many things could not said. If they had been written in a direct way, there was no hope of publication. Therefore, we did not mention (or did not mention in depth) the analysis of historical materials. As for the method of writing, we emphasised facts and avoided analysis. We let facts speak for themselves, expecting readers to understand what the author wanted to say but did not say. Naturally, they could reach their own conclusions."[8]

This change in policy shattered the illusion that some writers and artists had

chosen to co-operate with the indirect leadership and to work with the government. In fact, writers in particular began to withdraw their support from Deng Xiaoping's reforms. As mentioned in Chapter 3, most of the *Today* poets finally gave up the idea of working with Deng Xiaoping's reformers and one after the other began their search for freedom in the West. The new policy on censorship also strengthened the distrust of Chinese writers and artists towards the government. Many consequently decided not to bother with publishing their works but to continue to escape further from the political reality of China, which I shall discuss in Chapter 9 below.

Finally, a few writers began to challenge the official censorship directly and demanded an end to its practices. Consequently they themselves were banned temporary due to political argument rather than the content of their works. This suggested that the characteristic of this new censorship policy was mainly aimed at those who were regarded by the authorities as a threat to the communist ideology. To illustrate this, I have taken Wu Zuguang, a playwright, and Zhang Xianliang, a novelist, as examples to explore this hypothesis. I also examine further the practice of this official censorship against the background of the Anti-Bourgeois Liberalisation campaign of 1987.

7.2 Wu Zuguang's Demand for the Abandoning of Censorship of the Theatre

Wu Zuguang criticised Deng Xiaoping's administration from two angles. First, he condemned the damage to the Chinese theatre caused by censorship and strongly demanded the policy be cancelled. Secondly, he pointed out the damaging psychological impact on Chinese writers caused by the lack of freedom of creativity.

Wu Zuguang was a famous playwright of Beijing Opera. He had always been a close friend to many senior communists, and in 1980, he joined the Communist Party, persuaded by one of his communist friends.[9] However, this did not prevent him from criticising the disastrous consequences caused by the communist system. In 1986 Wu Zuguang concentrated on two points in his article *Censorship on Theatre Should Be Cancelled*. First, censorship of the arts at various levels was due to fear on the part of the authorities, which he believed was unjustified. Secondly, the richness of creation was impossible as long as censorship was still practised. He then continued by arguing that freedom could not be assured as long as censorship continued. He wrote that

"no government has ever overthrown by a literal piece of work. It has never

happened. Everyone knows it is impossible. It is a matter of confidence of a political party whether to allow freedom or not. In fact, it was also a matter of confidence whether or not to permit the publication of a literary work. In my mind, the Communist Party of China should be a party with full confidence and should not be afraid of criticism."[10]

Wu Zuguang also drew examples from the production of some Beijing Opera companies and condemned the damage caused by censorship. He wrote:

"It took great amount of efforts and money to rehearse a new play. After it was submitted to the censors, nothing could be seen from their faces. The censors did not agree nor did they disagree. They nodded their heads and then shook their heads. Then everything was turned to waste."[11]

In his criticism of the lack of freedom, Wu Zuguang took a humorous approach. He was also famous for his play *Taming of the Husband* (*Sanda taosanchun*), which also toured the U. K. at the invitation of the Cardiff Laboratory Theatre in 1985. When he pointed out the psychological impact of official censorship, Wu Zuguang told a story of "A Man Who Was Afraid of His Wife" at the International PEN Scheme at Iowa University, the United States in 1987 during their discussion on the freedom of creation, which went as follows:

Once there was a little town. There was a long tradition that every man was afraid of his wife. One day, the Mayor wanted to check whether it was true or not. Then he called all his staff.

"Those who was afraid of his wife stand on the right, " he commanded.

All of them except one stood onto the right. The Mayor really admired the courage of the only man who remained still for he had never heard of a man who was not afraid of his wife.

"Aren't you afraid of your wife? " the Mayor asked the man.

The man replied, " my wife told me ' never go to a place where there is a crowd. '"

Wu Zuguang said that

> "I am just like that man who was not only afraid of his wife but also was scared by her. I don't dare to go to a place where there is a crowd either. We come from a country where every man is afraid of his wife. So our fear of the wife is the same. Therefore we all long for freedom. Why is there a fear? " He questioned, "Because there is someone who controls you. I hope there is a place where there is no control. To me, that is freedom ... When I first came to Iowa University in 1983, I met Nieh Hualing (who invited Wu Zuguang). 'You have absolute freedom here. You can say whatever you like to say. You can go to any place you like to go. If you don't like to do anything, you don't need to do nothing.' That was the first thing she said to me. I have never heard such a thing before. So I was very touched. I was also very much impressed."[12]

When he returned to China, Wu Zuguang devoted to the fight for the freedom of Chinese writers and artists. He announced in public that

> " ... I shall mention freedom again. I shall shout freedom again. Freedom of the citizen is granted by the National Constitution. Both Deng Xiaoping and Hu Qili emphasised on freedom. I demand that censorship be abandoned. That is to assure freedom."[13]

In his criticism of Deng Xiaoping's arts administration, Wu Zuguang made three basic points. First, he talked about the fear of the authorities towards the writers and artists. In his mind, this was not necessary since Wu Zuguang and most of Chinese writers and artists were supportive of the Communist Party, which was supposed to have its confidence in itself. Secondly, censorship prevented any real development of the arts in China: no matter how hard the writers and artists tried in their creative activities, they could not achieve anything as long as they were subject to official censorship. Thirdly, he talked about the fear of the Chinese artists towards the authorities. In his symbolic story, Wu Zuguang not only pointed out the fact that there was no freedom under Deng Xiaoping's administration though it had been promised, he also expressed the deeply rooted fear in the mind of Chinese writers and artists towards the oppression of the

authorities. The impact of official control was so great that the writers and artists did not dare to exercise their right to freedom even when the official control became invisible. That message also suggested that the writers and artists were still suffering from a fear in their psychology even after Mao Zedong's direct control was shifted into Deng Xiaoping's indirect control.

As a resolution to such a harmful situation, Wu Zuguang suggested a guaranteed right of freedom on the one hand and the abandonment of official censorship on the other. However, his suggestion was rejected by the authorities. In 1987, he was asked to quit from the Communist Party of China. Hu Qiaomu, member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and a person respected by Wu Zuguang, paid a visit to him and told him to leave the Party for six reasons, of which three were made public. The public reasons were: Wu Zuguang was against the leadership of the Communist Party of China during the Anti-Rightists' campaign in 1957, he was against the Anti-Spiritual Pollution campaign in 1983, and he demanded the abolition of official censorship of theatre, but Wu Zuguang believed that there was only one reason: his persistence in demanding freedom.

7.3 Zhang Xianliang's Argument of the "Hundred Flower" Policy

Zhang Xianliang was one of the most popular communist novelists under Deng Xiaoping's administration. He had been a Rightist and was forced to re-education in labour camps from 1957 to 1979. In 1979 he was allowed to write again and won the National Short Story Award three times up to 1985. He was best known with his novel *Half of A Man Is A Woman*, which was first published in *Harvest* magazine in May, 1985 and its separate edition was published by the China Literature Federation Press in December, 1985. This edition was re-printed three times within half a year with a sale of approximately 600,000 copies. It was also re-printed in several national literary magazines with over 200,000 sales. It was estimated that this novel reached a readership of over several millions in Mainland China.[14]

In his *Half A Man Is A Woman*, Zhang Xianliang wrote about the forbidden subject of sex against the political background of the Chinese society from the 1950s to 1970s. At the same time, there were many other writers who also moved into this prohibited area. For instance, in the medical field, a book entitled *Knowledge of Sex* was published by the China Scientific and Technological Documents Press. The first print reached 200,000 and was soon sold out. However, due to the political and social pressure, its Chief Editor Ruan Fangbin had to explain in the introduction that "its aim was to make a little contribution to the construction of

the Chinese Socialist Civilisation." In the literary field, *The Tune of Winter, Summer and Spring -- One Side of Love,* a novel by Zu Wei was published in *Short Stories* magazine in February, 1985, and *Heishi*, a novel by Jia Pingao, was published in *People's Literature* in October, 1985. These creative writings all shared one characteristic, which was to explore the inter impact between sex and politics.[15]

These works arouse great response in the Chinese society because of the detailed descriptions of sexual life, revealed something which had always been prohibited by both the feudal and the communist governments, and they all portrayed distortion of sexual life caused by the politics of the Communist Party. These works also deeply disturbed the authorities for two other reasons: they challenged the communist ideology from a new angle, which the authorities never had experience to cope with, and their popularity and social impact scared the authorities.

At the working meeting of the Department of Party Secretaries of the China Writers' Association held on 30 October, 1985, Wang Meng, Cultural Minister and Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Association expressed both his worries and attitude. He said that

> "Some magazines are competing to publish those works which write of the sexual instincts. That is the phenomenon in recent months. I believe that the motives of some writers were to explore the human nature in a serious manner. However, I must point out that some of the writing was produced to meet the low tastes of readers. They were of a low taste and could hardly be read."[16]

Arts officers of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee were also worried about this new trend. They decided to criticise Zhang Xianliang's *Half A Man Is A Woman* at the national level. However, this was stopped by a small interlude. After knowing the intention of arts officers of the Propaganda Department, Li Xiannian, Chairman of State in 1986, asked Liu Yazhou, his daughter-in-law and a writer, about the content of the book. Liu Yazhou told Li Xiannian that the book was in praise of Deng Xiaoping's reforms. After Li Xiannian consulted with Deng Xiaoping, the arts officers of the Propaganda Department withdrew their plan.[17] It seemed like a joke, but that was how arts administration was often operated in China. Though it seemed to have worked in favour of Zhang Xianliang this time, it proved the worries of Bai Hua and Wang Ruoshui that interventions by arts officers was always a real and high risk. That

was why they both turned to legal support and expected it to provide a sound and stable assurance of freedom.

Facing the rise of literature with a sexual content, the authorities decided not to take immediate action against it though they were greatly concerned about it. There may have been four possible reasons for this. Perhaps they were not sure about what action to take, or could not reach an agreement among themselves on whether or not to exercise censorship. Alternatively they might allow publications of works written in "a serious manner", but decided to work out measures to prohibit works written in "a low taste" according to their judgement, or they might have agreed that they should not ban a work unless the author's political beliefs went beyond the limits of official tolerance.

During the Anti-Bourgeois Liberalisation campaign in 1987, Zhang Xianliang was again criticised at a national level by the authorities. His novel *Good Morning, Friends!* was banned. The print run of this book was 140,000, costing *100,000 yuan RMB* which approximately equalled to the weekly wages of 3,333 people at the time.[18] The ban must have been due to his political differences rather than the contents of the book for it was no more controversial than his novel *Half A Man Is A Woman.*[19]

On 28th August, 1986, Zhang Xianliang published his *Social Reforms and Literary Prosperity* in *Literature and Art Post*. Zhang Xianliang presented two controversial arguments. First, he demanded that "speakers in favour of capitalism" should be given the right to make their arguments in the public life of China. He suggested that Mao Zedong's principle of "a hundred schools of thoughts contending and a hundred flowers blooming" should be further developed. He argued that the so-called a "hundred schools" were only a hundred schools of socialism, that the quarrels were over minor differences and their ideas could not be regarded as "different schools of thoughts contending". This was just like members of one family quarreling with each other. Zhang Xianliang demanded that "speakers for capitalism" be given the right to contend their beliefs as long as their speeches did not incite rebellions, violence or disintegration of the country. He believed that a genuine Marxist should allow his opponent the right to speak, otherwise it was an affront to Marxism. He further explained that what he meant by "speakers for capitalism" were the genuine speakers, not those who were regarded as "speakers for capitalism" in the eyes of the communists such as the Rightists during the Anti-Rightists campaign of 1957 or the so-called "Agents of Capitalism" during the Cultural Revolution of 1966. Zhang Xianliang also drew support from Deng Xiaoping's theory of "one country with two systems", a principle Deng Xiaoping suggested to solve the Hong Kong problem before 1997.

He suggested that literature, art, and ideologies from capitalist countries were to be allowed free in socialist China.[20]

Secondly, Zhang Xianliang proposed expanding Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms into the political field. He believed that all the difficulties and frustration in the construction of society were due to the fact that China had not experienced the stage of capitalism. He questioned that "What is socialism? We don't have a successful model. What is capitalism? We have many examples in front of us." He demanded that

> "our priority is to reform our political structure in accord with legal system, management of state administration, personnel system and economic system of the West while developing our commodity economy and productivity."[21]

In his article, Zhang Xianliang also raised the question of changing the human concept before the change of society or reforming society before the change of man. In his first argument, Zhang Xianliang suggested change the human concept as a priority through exercising full freedom for all. In his second argument, Zhang Xianliang proposed reform of society as another priority through an immediate reform of the political structure of the communist system in China.[22] To the Chinese authorities, Zhang Xianliang made three clear proposals: (a) to allow speakers for capitalism freedom in China, (b) to allow literature, art, and ideologies from capitalist countries into China without censorship, and (c) to change the existing political structure according to capitalist models. Though none of these changes were permitted in the communist Constitution, they were all things which could be just done but not be said. In this he was the proposing action typically characteristic of the pragmatic politics of Deng Xiaoping's reforms. Though Deng Xiaoping sought ways and methods which were not available in any communist doctrines to assure the success of his reforms, he had to maintain a balance with other loyal and doctrinal communists by exercising censorship over radical ideas, otherwise Deng Xiaoping might have believed that he could achieve economic success by drawing Western capital while simultaneously rejecting capitalist ideologies. Whatever the reason given, Zhang Xianliang was bound to be banned by the authorities.

Though both Wu Zuguang and Zhang Xianliang were communists and supporters of Deng Xiaoping's reforms, their suggestions were also rejected by

the authorities. The same was true of many other writers. Deng Xiaoping's administration was upset by their works and their demands, but the authorities had no intention of sending them to labour camps as would have happened under Mao Zedong's administration. The Chinese authorities finally decided to stop these trends and to direct things in the direction the government expected them to follow, which led to national scale censorship in 1987.

7.4 The Anti-Bourgeois Liberalisation Campaign II

Students demonstrations spread over twenty-nine large cities in China between December 1986 and January, 1987, and it was estimated that there were over 1.5 million students participated. They demanded a political reform of the government in terms of the modernisation of democracy in addition to Deng Xiaoping's four objectives of China's modernisation.[23]

The movement originated from the University of China's Science and Technology located in Anhui province, and it was believed that Fang Lizhi, Professor of Astrophysics and Vice-President of the University, played a key role. On 13th November, Fang Lizhi had a discussion with Wan Li, Vice-Premier of State and former governor of Anhui Province regarding democracy. Wan Li insisted that democracy was granted by the state and constitution. Fang Lizhi argued that democracy was a right endowed by nature and that democracy was not dependent on the royal kindness of some senior officials. It was a right that the people had to fight for. After his debate with Wan Li, Fang Lizhi gave several lectures on democracy to his students in Anhui as well as students in Shanghai. On 5th December, students from universities in Anhui held a demonstration demanding democracy, and from then on, students all over China went onto the streets in support.[24]

The Anti-Bourgeois Liberalism campaign was launched and the Chinese authorities took immediate action and forced the students back to school. They believed that the student demonstration was caused by the increasing influence of liberalism. Hu Yaobang, General Secretary of the Party and one of the two chief supporters of Deng Xiaoping, was blamed for it and was forced to resign. The reported for reasons for this were: (a) his objection to the Anti-Spiritual Pollution campaign of 1983, (b) Hu's alleged support for the spread of bourgeois liberalism, (c) he was accused of acting beyond the legal system and violating the principle of collective leadership, and for violating the discipline of the Communist Party, in that no interior contradiction was to be leaked to the public.[25]

The Chinese authorities took three measures in their fight against the spread of

liberalism. First, they excluded Liu Binyan, Fang Lizhi, and Wang Ruoshui, who were regarded as chief promoters of liberalism, from the Communist Party. They also told Wu Zuguang, Wu Zuqiang and Zhang Xianliang to quit the Party. Finally, Zhang Xianliang was allowed to remain in the Party due to his self-criticism, in which he accepted all the blame and agreed to change his stance. Secondly, the power of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee was restored and again the Ministry of Culture and all the literary and art associations were put under its direct control.[26] Thirdly, the National Press and Publication Bureau was set up to be responsible for the exercise of censorship throughout China, though even before its establishment, some censorship was already exercised by some arts officers. For instance, the magazine *China* was closed down in 1986 due to a series of controversial articles including two of Liu Xiaopo's articles, which made severe criticism of Chinese literature under Deng Xiaoping's administration.

China Information Daily was also closed for similar reasons in the same year. After the students' demonstration of 1987, the authorities set up a national body in charge of the exercise of censorship throughout the country under centralised control, and within one year, over 600 newspapers and magazines were ordered to stop publication, and among these, 42 were closed down permanently. Those which were most controversial and were banned from publication included *Social Science Daily* and *Youth Forum*, both were from Wuhan city, Hubei province, *Contemporary, Shenzhen Workers' Daily* and *Shenzhen Youth*, all were from Shenzhen city, Guangdong province, *Exploration of Contemporary Literature* from Fujian province, *Ideological Trend of Contemporary Literature and Art* from Gansu province. Those were banned from circulation included Issue 1 and Issue 2 of *People's Literature* from Beijing, *The Ugly Chinese*, a book by Bai Yang, a Taiwanese writer, *Ten Year History of the Cultural Revolution* by Gao Gao and Yan Jiaqi, and *Good Morning! Friends!*, a novel by Zhang Xianliang. Those ordered to change their contents and pages included *People's Pictorial* and *China Construct*, both were from Beijing.[27]

In addition to censorship existing publications, the National Press and Publication Bureau also took two measures to prevent any controversial contents from getting into circulation. It warned Chinese writers what was not to be written, and in 1987 announced that any publications about the Anti-Rightists' campaign, the Cultural Revolution and sex would not be permitted. The Bureau also exercised tight control over the application for book registration numbers, essential requirements for publishing. For example, even a loose-leaf selection was not allowed to be printed without an official book registration number.[28]

The Anti-Bourgeois Liberalism campaign also caused changes in the administration of the arts in China. First, some senior supporters of Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership were dismissed and their key positions were filled by arts officers who had reservations about Deng Xiaoping's approach towards the administration of the arts. For instance, Zhu Houzhe, Director of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee was replaced by Wang Renzhi, a firm believer in Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts. Secondly, those who did not lose their job such as Hu Qili, Executive Secretary in charge of culture and the arts and propaganda, in the Secretary's Department of the Central Committee, and even Wang Meng, the Cultural Minister himself had to be more tactful in their interpretations of and experiments of the indirect leadership, and the same was true of other supporters of this principle at middle and lower levels.

7.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined the exercised of censorship by the authorities from 1985 to 1987, and have identified five major findings. First, Deng Xiaoping's administration was determined to apply censorship as a means of controlling the growing trend of liberalism or the trend of moving from official ideologies. When they realised that the indirect leadership of the arts did not direct the Chinese writer and artists to produce works which contributed to the construction of socialism, they decided to intervene the arts through censorship.

Secondly, official censorship appeared gradually at the beginning and it took the authorities two years to experiment with it. However, the shock of the students' demonstrations in 1987 led to a sudden change in the policy towards the arts, with the decision to apply strict censorship on a national scale immediately in order to deal with the widespread challenges against the government.

Thirdly, the nation-wide censorship shattered illusions that Deng Xiaoping's arts officers would not to interfere with the arts. It also proved that Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership of the arts was not feasible in practice without at least some legal and constitutional support as Wang Ruoshui had argued.

Fourthly, censorship by Deng Xiaoping's administration did not follow Mao Zedong's practice in the exercise of censorship. It banned works of art but by and large did not impose brutal punishments against the writers and artists that were the hallmark of the Mao Zedong era.

Finally, Deng Xiaoping's administration could not accept criticism from its liberal supporters, but instead, it chose to suppress their voices through censorship. It

also excluded from office those senior officers who were sympathetic with the liberals from the core of decision-making of the arts in China. It also suggested that a potential confrontation between the writers and artists and the authorities was inevitable.

Notes to Chapter 7

[1] Cai, Shangsi, *"Kongzi sixiangtixi" (The ideology of Confucius)*, Shanghai People's Press, Shanghai, 1982, pp. 139-140.

[2] Personal experience and observation gained through living in China until 1988.

[3] Dong Hu, *"Kuansong hexie de zhengce shi baochunhua ma?" (Is the policy of relaxation the flower of Spring?)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 107, September, 1986, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 12-13.

[4] Dong Hu, *"Kuansong hexie de zhengce shi baochunhua ma?" (Is the policy of relaxation the flower of Spring?)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 107, September, 1986, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 12-13.

[5] Dong Hu, *"Kuansong hexie de zhengce shi baochunhua ma?" (Is the policy of relaxation the flower of Spring?)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 107, September, 1986, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 12-13.

[6] Yan Jiaqi, *"Xie wenge shinian shi" (The writing of the ten year history of the Cultural Revolution)*, Contemporary News Weekly, Issue 51, November, 1990, Xin Mei Jia Ltd., p. 25.

[7] Yan Jiaqi, *"Xie wenge shinian shi" (The writing of the ten year history of the Cultural Revolution)*, Contemporary News Weekly, Issue 51, November, 1990, Xin Mei Jia Ltd., p. 25.

[8] Yan Jiaqi, *"Xie wenge shinian shi" (The writing of the ten year history of the Cultural Revolution)*, Contemporary News Weekly, Issue 51, November, 1990, Xin Mei Jia Ltd., p. 25.

[9] Wang Yunrong, *"Wu Zuguang chengqing jidian shishi" (Wu Zuguang's explanation on certain facts)*, Emancipation Monthly, Issue 114, January, 1988, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, pp. 18-20.

[10] Wu Zuguang, *"Liying quxiao xiju shencha" (Censorship of theatre should be abandoned)*, Yangcheng Evening Daily, 11 November, 1986, Guangzhou.

[11] Ou Dong, *"Wugu shoudao qingsuan de Wu, Wang, Su" (The punishment of Wu , Wang and Su)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 119, September, 1989, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, p. 26.

[12] Xia Yun, *"Wo wei shenmo xiezuo?" (Why do i write?)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 122, December, 1987, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, p. 65.

[13] Wang Yunrong, *Wu Zuguang chengqing jidian shishi" (Wu Zuguang's explanation on certain facts)*, Emancipation Monthly, Issue 114, January, 1988, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, pp. 18-20.

[14] Zhang Xianliang, *"Nanren de yiban shi Nueren" (Half a man is a woman)*, by Zhang Ming Chuang Press, Hong Kong, 1988, page ii.

[15] Bi Hua, *"Xing kumen he renxing de fusu" (Sex problems and human nature)*, The Nineties, Issue 193, February, 1986, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, p. 88.

[16] Bi Hua, *"Xing kumen he renxing de fusu" (Sex problems and human nature)*, The Nineties, Issue 193, February, 1986, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, p. 88.

[17] Xu Xing, *"Yishi zhuanbian de jueqi" (The rise of ideological transformation)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 108, October, 1986, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, p. 12.

[18] Lu Shi, *"Wentan de saoluan" (The Disturbance of the Forum of Literature)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 133, November, 1988, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, p. 54.

[19] Zhang Xianliang, *"Shehui gaige he wenyi fangrong" (Social reforms and prosperity of literature)*, Culture and Art Daily, 23 August, 1986, Beijing.
Xu Xing, *"Yishi zhuanbian de jueqi" (The rise of ideological transformation)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 108, October, 1986, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong, Kong, pp. 21 - 22.

[20] Zhang Xianliang, *"Shehui gaige he wenyi fangrong" (Social reforms and prosperity of literature)*, Culture and Art Daily, 23 August, 1986, Beijing.
Xu Xing, *"Yishi zhuanbian de jueqi" (The rise of ideological transformation)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 108, October, 1986, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong, Kong, pp. 21 - 22.

[21] Zhang Xianliang, *"Shehui gaige he wenyi fangrong" (Social reforms and prosperity of literature)*, Culture and Art Daily, 23 August, 1986, Beijing.
Xu Xing, *"Yishi zhuanbian de jueqi" (The rise of ideological transformation)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 108, October, 1986, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong, Kong, pp. 21 - 22.

[22] Huai Bing, *"Wei xinwen ziyou nahan" (To shout for freedom of press)*, Cheng Ming

Monthly, Issue 108, October, 1986, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, p. 66.

[23] Library of Emancipation Monthly, *"Shieryue minzhu fengbao jishi" (Records of the democratic gales in December 1986)*, Emancipation Monthly, Issue 1, January, 1987, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, pp. 19-22.

[24] Library of Emancipation Monthly, *"Shieryue minzhu fengbao jishi" (Records of the democratic gales in December 1986)*, Emancipation Monthly, Issue 1, January, 1987, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, pp. 19-22.

[25] Dong Fanglong, *"Hu Yaobang xiatai bingfei huanshi" (Hu Yaobang's fall was not a bad thing)*, by Dong Fanglong, Emancipation Monthly, Issue 3, March, 1987, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, pp. 30-33.

[26] Mu Fu, *"Laorenbang de shengli" (Victory of the old gang)*, Emancipation Monthly, Issue 2, February, 1987, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, pp. 16-19.

[27] Wen Kuang, *"Liubai duozhong kanwu beijin" (Over six hundred publications were banned)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 127, May, 1988, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, p. 69.
Luo Bing, *"Liu xinwu biezheng neimu" (Inside the punishment of Liu Xinwu)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 113, March, 1987, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 10-12.
Lu Shi, *"Wentan de saoluan" (The disturbance of the forum of literature)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 133, November, 1988, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, p. 54.
He Pin, *"Dalu xinwenjie de miandingzhizai" (The disaster of the China press)*, Emancipation Monthly, Issue 102/101, January/February, 1989, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, pp. 18-19.

[28] Liu Binyan, *"Wo de yixie kanfa" (Some of my comments)*, Emancipation Monthly, Issue 14, February, 1988, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, p. 31.

Chapter 8: Controversial Criticism of Literature under Deng Xiaoping's Administration

8.1 Introduction

Inspired by Western concepts of freedom and democracy during Deng Xiaoping's reforms, young Chinese intellectuals began to question the definition of the intellectual in the Chinese tradition. They believed that traditional Chinese intellectuals never thought independently, but instead they had always been attached to the Chinese authorities, with an ideology based on how to serve society through the support of the authorities, rather than an independent intelligence. That was seen as the problem of Chinese civilisation both past and present. In their opinion, Chinese intellectuals who criticised the communist system, such as Wang Ruoshui and Liu Binyan, were greatly affected and controlled by the inner struggles among various power groups within the communist regime, and were therefore unable to contribute to independent thought in Chinese society. These young Chinese intellectuals such as Liu Xiaobo and Chen Jun believed that the genuine independence could only be achieved by a new generation of Chinese intellectuals who considered themselves as liberals, not otherwise. They therefore intended to form the voice of a new generation of intellectuals.[1]

Before we discuss the arguments of these young intellectuals, it is important to examine the definition of the word *shi* in Chinese, its common interpretation as *the intellectual* and the different understandings of it. In ancient China, the word *shi* usually embraced three meanings: (a) a bachelor, (b) a social stratum between senior officials and the common people, and (c) a scholar. As a result of the Confucian influence in Chinese politics, a scholar could be promoted to state official through the Confucian educational system. This developed into a civil service examination system, which was divided into imperial, provincial and county levels. Candidates who passed the imperial examination had then to wait for an official appointment, after which the scholar became part of the *literati and officialdom*. The main difference between *shi* in the Chinese concept and intellectual in the Western concept was that in China *shi* were part of officialdom while intellectuals in the West were not. Another equivalent to *shi* was *wenren*, meaning *the literary man*. With the introduction of Western Civilisation in the nineteenth century, both *shi* and *wenren* were gradually replaced by a new expression *zhishifenzi*, the intellectual or *element of knowledge*. The emphasis here was on the person who possessed knowledge.

In the Chinese tradition, citizens were usually divided into nine grades within

three groups, though the details certainly varied from one dynasty to another. According to the three groups of nine grades in the Tang Dynasty, the three grades in the top group were intellectuals, farmer and workers. Merchants were the first in the middle group while prostitutes and actors or actresses were in the lower group. In the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), Chinese were divided into twenty-seven grades in three groups. In the top group were the Buddha, the immortal, the emperor, the official, the local gentry, the merchant, the handicraftsman, the money lender, and the landlord. In the middle group were *juzi* (a candidate of scholar for provincial civil service examination), doctors, property fortune tellers, birthday fortune tellers, artists, workers, monks, Taoists, chess players and *qin* (a type of stringed musical instrument) musicians. In the lower group were foot-doctors, barbers, servants, office administrators, restaurateurs, street performers, prostitutes, actors and trumpeters. It can been seen that there were two important phenomena to be noticed. First, *shi* was always high at the top of the Chinese social classes, while performing artists were usually lower at the bottom end of Chinese society.

In modern China, social grading was always affected by the social changes of the time. After the Qing Dynasty was replaced by the Republic of China in 1911, the social status of artists, musicians of western music, actors and actresses of theatre or film began to rise. The concept of the citizen began to change traditional social groupings, and intellectuals took a leading role in the transformation of Chinese society. However, much more dramatic changes have taken place since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. Mao Zedong's class struggle changed the social structure of China completely, and the Chinese were grouped into just two categories, one positive: workers, peasants and soldiers, revolutionaries, and the other negative: landlords, rich peasants, reactionaries, villains and Rightists. Chinese intellectuals lost their social status as such and were either to be converted into revolutionaries or mostly likely find themselves classified with the Rightists as was the case in 1957.

The word "intellectual" began to include those who had a better education than workers, peasants, or soldiers. For instance, professors and lecturers, doctors, artists, musicians of Western music, actors and actresses of theatre or film, university students, teachers in elementary and high schools were all categorised as *zhishifenzi, person of knowledge*. However, during the Cultural Revolution, from 1966 to 1976, they were given a nickname *the Stinking Ninth*, even lower than the category of the landlords etc., though after the Cultural Revolution intellectuals regained their "social status". Some were appointed senior officials of state while others returned to their own trade. According to an official announcement of Deng Xiaoping's administration, intellectuals were accepted as part of the team of

the working class, the leading class of the People's Republic of China. However, in the official terminology, the word intellectual is mostly used for professors, lecturers, and scholars, particularly in the case of the democracy movement of 1989.

It can be seen that in the recent Chinese concept of the word intellectual contains two meanings: (a) a person with knowledge, and (b) a person who serves the authorities through that knowledge, so the Chinese intellectuals did not have an independent social status. That was the taboo Liu Xiaobo and other young intellectuals aimed to change. It can also be seen that the word intellectual in Chinese to a large extent emphasised the person who writes, or *literal man*, who seems to feel more responsible for and participate in Chinese political and social affairs. In this chapter, I shall examine both Liu Xiaobo's criticism of Chinese intellectuals and the change in official policies toward dissident voices.

8.2 Criticism of China's Literature under Deng Xiaoping's Administration

The Conference of China's Literature of the New Era was held from the 7th to 12th September, 1986. At the conference, it was overwhelmingly believed by most delegates that China's literature under Deng Xiaoping's administration, the so called New Period, had made great achievements. In their opinion, China's literature had begun to enjoy its most liberal period during Deng Xiaoping's reforms.

However, Liu Xiaobo, Lecturer in Literature at the Beijing Normal College, made a controversial criticism of such achievements. His criticism was entitled *Crisis! China's Literature in the New Period Is Facing Crisis!* In his view, the so called great achievement was nothing but an illusion, along the lines of an old Chinese saying about a frog watching the sky from its well. The sky was only as big as the frog could see from its well: this only proved the ignorance of the frog and how much it was limited by its environment. That was the state of China's literature of the New Period in Liu Xiaobo's opinion.

At the conference, he argued that the assumed achievements of China's literature were based on two comparisons, first, it was by comparison between the present state of China's literature and its previous state under Mao Zedong's administration, and secondly, by a comparison between its present state and its tradition in the past. Both of these were insular comparisons and he suggested that Chinese writers should compare China's literature with international literature. When they reviewed the development of China's literature, they should replace the lower standards of the previous Chinese literature with the

high standards of the international literature. Otherwise, Chinese writers were just like the frog in the well, believing in the achievement of China's literature. Liu Xiaobo believed that the Chinese would be unable to be free from the chains of doctrine if they did not abandon the Chinese tradition as completely as the Chinese intellectuals had done during the 4th May movement in 1919. He concluded that China's literature was unable to achieve real development without breaking away from the Chinese tradition. That was the crisis, Liu Xiaobo believed, faced by China's literature under Deng Xiaoping's administration.[2]

Liu Xiaobo's argument involved two contentious areas. First, that literature was different from sport. Neither a comparison with the past nor a comparison with the international present could have some significant meaning, and since it was very dangerous to apply the concept of better or worse in comparison between literature of different periods. Secondly, the relationship between literature and its tradition was a complicated issue. There was the question of whether or not the Chinese intellectuals had abandoned the Chinese tradition completely, and also whether it was right to do so. However, this involved arguments from various sides. But the importance of Liu Xiaobo's argument was that a comparison between literature under Deng Xiaoping's administration and literature under Mao Zedong had not led to a fundamental change in the development of China's literature. However, he generated discussion on the Chinese intellectuals of 4th May movement of 1919, which led to the debate on the independence or dependence of the Chinese intellectuals as well as a comparison between the Chinese intellectuals of 4th May movement and the Chinese intellectuals under the communist regime.

Though his argument was a shock to both senior Chinese writers and arts officers of Deng Xiaoping's administration, Liu Xiaobo's criticism of China's literature during Deng Xiaoping's reforms was received with silence. He only managed to publish his article at *Shenzhen Youth Post*, a newspaper of a small but liberal city in the far south of China. The editor of this paper was Xu Jingyia, a close friend and former classmate of Liu Xiaobo in the Department of Literature at Jilin University. Xu Jingyia used to argue for the breakthrough made by the contemporary Chinese poetry represented by the Today poets. In his article, Xu Jingyia praised the suspicious attitude towards any authority of the contemporary Chinese poets, but he was forced under the official pressure to admit that he made serious mistakes in his criticism of the contemporary Chinese poetry during the Anti-Spiritual Pollution movement in 1983. In his self-criticism published in *People's Daily* on 5th March, 1984, Xu Jingyia blamed himself for denying the tradition of Chinese classical and revolutionary poetry and for his blind promotion of

Western contemporary poetry and Western arts theories. When he published Liu Xiaobo's article in *Shenzhen Youth Post* on 3rd October, 1986, Xu Jingyia described Liu Xiaobo as a black horse of China's literature.[3] However, knowledge of their efforts were limited to a small circle in China, while the authorities responded to Liu Xiaobo's argument with great caution. In the past, as for example with Bai Hua, Wang Ruoshui, or Xu Jingyia, arts officers of Deng Xiaoping's administration would organise an official criticism of such challenges throughout the country, but this time, they did not do so.

It seemed that the authorities intentionally excluded the possibility of any public debate over controversial issues so that the influence of the arguments would not spread. The reason might have been that the authorities had learned from their previous experience, which was that whoever was currently under official criticism always became more popular than ever before. Therefore they decided to restrain such challenges to the minimum by exercising harsher censorship of the press on the one hand and enforcing communist ideological education on its members on the other. Those who were not following the official policies were banned and *Shenzhen Youth Post* was shut down during the second Anti-bourgeois Liberalism movement in 1986 for its publication of a series of controversial articles including Liu Xiaobo's *Crisis! China's Literature in the New Period Is Facing Crisis!*[4]

8.3 Criticism of Mao Zedong and the Chinese Intellectuals

Later Liu Xiaobo developed his ideas in two articles: *Mao Zedong, the Monster*, and *Chinese Intellectuals and Politics*. Both further explained how writers were limited by Chinese tradition and why they failed to produce literature of real value. Since it was almost impossible for him to publish such articles in China, Liu Xiaobo published both of them in Hong Kong, the former was published in *Emancipation* in November, 1988 and the latter in *Cheng Ming Monthly* in 1990.

In his article, *Mao Zedong, the Monster*, Liu Xiaobo made six major points. Firstly, Mao Zedong maximised his power as a dictator, in a way which no Chinese emperor in history could compare. At the same time, Mao Zedong also took the ignorance of the Chinese to greater extremes than ever before. His success lay in his knowledge of the weakness of the Chinese and he made full use of it. In particular, it was the weakness of the Chinese intellectual, which was their dependence on the authorities. As a popular Chinese saying went: what could the hair be attached to if the skin disappeared? Chinese intellectuals had always regarded themselves as hair attached to the skin. Therefore there had never been genuine intellectuals in China but the *shi* or *person with knowledge* attached to the

authorities.

Secondly, Liu Xiaobo argued that Mao Zedong did not affect the historical progress of the world. He failed to bring China and the world together. Instead, Mao Zedong further isolated China from the outside world and advanced civilisation. He only repeated the history of China, which was an endless circular replacement of the feudal dynasty by another. All his deeds were restrained by and accorded with Chinese tradition. So he stayed in the well of China and exercised his power.

Thirdly, Mao Zedong had succeeded in making the Chinese into his slaves and in this respect the Cultural Revolution was his masterpiece. Not only did Mao benefit from the ignorance of the Chinese but also he made the full use of the Chinese desire to attack and destroy, which had long been restrained by tradition. Mao's revolution had not been constructive but destructive and he had been a criminal against the Chinese people. Since his Cultural Revolution had already been condemned by Deng Xiaoping's administration, the condemnation of Mao Zedong was a natural and historical step forward.

Liu Xiaobo then argued that it was traditional for the Chinese to fight against corrupt officials and ministers but not the autocracy from which they drew their power, and the Chinese criticism of the Cultural Revolution was still kept at this level. Liu Xiaobo emphasised that any person in power was bound to become a dictator unless working within the guarantee of a democratic system. It was therefore most important to criticise Mao Zedong as a representative of Chinese autocracy rather than criticising him as an individual or an "emperor" with a bad name.

Following that, Liu Xiaobo proposed a criticism of every individual Chinese intellectual, without which he argued it was impossible to engage a thorough criticism of Mao Zedong. In his opinion, autocracy was based on both the dictatorship of the rulers and the ignorance and weakness of those ruled. Liu Xiaobo believed that criticism of Chinese tradition should begin with each individual. Mao Zedong could not have exercised such power without the support of the Chinese. For example, the Chinese intellectuals had willingly written articles criticising the official targets of the Cultural Revolution. But after the Cultural Revolution, all claimed that they had been either victims or heroes of the movement, never participants or collaborators.

Finally, Liu Xiaobo stressed the importance of criticising Chinese ignorance as a whole. This existed in each individual and was part of, rather than the opposite

of, Chinese autocracy. Though contemporary Chinese intellectuals had fought against the autocratic monarchy, they all compromised themselves through their ignorance of the masses. Liu Xiaobo suggested that they should follow the Chinese intellectuals such as Lu Shun (born in 1881, one of the most important intellectuals during the 4th May movement of 1919 and renowned for his sharp criticism of Chinese traditional culture) during 4th May movement who criticised the deeply rooted evil habits among the Chinese as a whole.[5]

In terms of the future of China, Liu Xiaobo suggested four solutions. Politically speaking, the one party dictatorship should be replaced by a democratic, multi-party system and the fight against dictatorship should be engaged by forces outside the autocracy. Economically speaking, central planning should be replaced by the market economy, while ideologically speaking, the monopoly of Chinese official ideology should give place to freedom of speech, of press, and of ideology. Finally but not least, Chinese traditional culture should be replaced by Western contemporary culture.[6]

In his *Chinese Intellectuals and Politics*, Liu Xiaobo continued his criticism of intellectuals. Methodologically speaking, he argued, Chinese intellectuals lacked logic, and scientific thinking in their theories. They were used to vague explanations of traditional theories such as "Yijing" or "Yin and Yang", which in reality, were typical examples of utilitarianism, and hence they lacked the independence of a genuine intellectual. In academic discussions, they made their political future or career the first priority rather than the concept of right or wrong. They were dependent on the authorities and regarded themselves as the "hair attached to the skin". Secondly, Liu Xiaobo argued that there existed a tradition in Chinese culture that literature should reflect the society, which led to a doctrine that the arts served politics. Compared to intellectuals in the West, those in China did not have the spirit of pursuit of pure academic study, whether in the arts or science.

Then Liu Xiaobo criticised Chinese intellectuals for having held a similarly typically utilitarian and selfish attitude in their absorption of Western culture during Deng Xiaoping's reforms. They had hurried through the history of Western civilisation from Ancient Greece, Renaissance, to contemporary or even post-modern culture, he argued, in just ten years, and were satisfied with their limited understanding of it rather than undertake steady and long term research. In their search of Western civilisation, Chinese intellectuals failed to produce works of depth, let alone make a solid analysis of Chinese reality through Western contemporary and academic methods. To Chinese intellectuals, various Western theories were treated as fashionable ornaments such as sun-glasses, Nike

shoes, or jeans, particularly popular among Chinese youth during Deng Xiaoping's reforms, and Western theories were used as a short cut to fame and authority. Liu Xiaobo believed that contemporary intellectuals were making the same mistakes as the earlier Chinese intellectuals of 4th May movement: both failed to make a deep and complete research of Western culture and simply embraced certain types of Western theory fitting the convenience of the Chinese reality of the time.

Liu Xiaobo also criticised Chinese intellectuals for always compromising their principles. Greatly influenced by Confucianism, they followed the Confucian philosophy of serving society with their knowledge under a healthy politics. However, they quickly retreated when the Chinese politics became corrupted so that they could retain their purity. This meant that they had given up their initial aims and become cowards in the face of Chinese society. Regarding the struggle for freedom of speech, of press, and of ideology, the Chinese intellectuals were bound unless they began to establish an independent way of thinking and shape this awareness as a whole.[7]

Following that, Liu Xiaobo pointed out that the authorities had always used intellectuals to criticise and persecute follow intellectuals in every political campaign engaged in by the Chinese communists, so it was common to see Chinese intellectuals persecuting each other, due to their dependence on the authorities. In Chinese tradition, it was a common practice for intellectuals to sell their knowledge to the royal family in turn for official status. As a famous Confucian saying went, "famous scholars become high officials." Chinese intellectuals sought to get into the court through their pursuit of knowledge. Once they became a scholar, they either took state civil examination to become officials or waited for a royal appointment to be made. In communist China, various associations of scientists, associations of writers, or federations of writers and artists were neither independent organisations, nor academic associations. Instead, they all constituted part of officialdom.[8]

Last but not least, Liu Xiaobo suggested that a new cultural elite had been formed in the world of China's literature, consisting mainly writers who suffered from the Anti-Rightists' movement of 1957, including Wang Meng, the Cultural Minister, Li Zehou, authority on Chinese aesthetics, Liu Zifu, authority on literary criticism, and Deng Youmei, Secretary of the Party Committee of China Writers' Association. Some of these became senior arts officers under Deng Xiaoping's administration, while others enjoyed various social privileges to which ordinary writers were not entitled to. In academic debates, they refused to argue against different opinions on an equal basis. On the contrary, they were just

like politicians, giving instructions and making decisions from above.[9]

An interesting phenomenon occurred in Chinese literature under Deng Xiaoping. After the Cultural Revolution, most public breakthroughs in literature had been made by two groups of writers: elder writers who were Rightists during the Anti-Rightists campaign of 1957 and younger writers who either took part in or suffered from the Cultural Revolution. In contrast, most senior writers who were persecuted during the Cultural Revolution failed to produce influential works subsequently. Two possible reasons for this are suggested: some of the senior writers were persecuted to a point of at least physical disability, while others were persecuted to death or committed suicide. Consequently many still lived in fear so that they were unable to write effectively. In comparison, the Rightists suffered less physical torture in 1957 and were not the main targets during the Cultural Revolution. Moreover, their experience of toiling in either the labour camps or the fields provided a resource of inspiration and understanding of Chinese society. They were thus able to convey their understanding of Chinese society through their literary works. Furthermore, their understanding of the Chinese society and its politics enabled them to play political games more skillfully.

That was why Liu Xiaobo argued that the leadership of the writers by the illiterate led to the destruction of knowledge, with a cultural desert as its consequence. However, it was more dangerous if writers were put under the leadership of other writers, who had also led to the destruction of knowledge. But the difference lay in the fact that the illiterate were only able to use crude measures to persecute writers while the experienced writers knew how to use their knowledge to persecute their follow writers more effectively. The former used politics to destroy knowledge directly, while the latter, drawing authority from political power, used knowledge to destroy knowledge. Liu Xiaobo believed that the only solution was to change the autocratic system. In other words, he suggested that both the leadership of the writers by the illiterate and the leadership of writers by official writers should be replaced by a democratic system, believing this was the only way to de-politicise of Chinese intellectuals.[5] Liu Xiaobo concluded that both the constraints of Chinese politics and the weakness of the Chinese intellectuals supplemented each other, making it impossible for contemporary Chinese literature to produce works of real value.

8.4 Conclusion

This examination of Liu Xiaobo's argument has shown that the Chinese young intellectuals of the post Cultural Revolution period were different in two ways compared to their elders such as Bai Hua, Wang Ruoshui, Wu Zuguang, Zhang

Xianliang, Liu Binyan, who were all members of the Communist Party of China. First, Liu Xiaobo urged that the young Chinese intellectuals should be independent of the authorities rather than being part of officialdom. What he aimed at was to form a generation of new Chinese intellectuals who would contribute their knowledge and opinions to the Chinese society without the influence of the authorities. This therefore excluded both reformers who believed in saving Communist China through their reforms, and hard-liners who intended to retain the purity of Chinese communism.

Secondly, Liu Xiaobo challenged the communist system as a whole rather than just a minority of high officials who operated the system. He argued that the collapse of Chinese civilisation was not just caused by a few dictators: instead, it was contributed to by every Chinese, and in particular, by every Chinese intellectual. The Chinese system of dictatorship was shaped by all the Chinese. Therefore, it was the system, not just a few dictators, that had to be changed and replaced, and this should be achieved through the efforts of every Chinese individual. That was the main difference between Liu Xiaobo and the older Chinese intellectuals. To the latter, the communist system in China was good and most communists were good: it was only a minority of communists who exceeded their power due to the lack of effective supervision by the majority. In the case of the Anti-Bourgeois Liberalism and Anti-Spiritual Pollution campaigns during Deng Xiaoping's reforms, just a few arts officers who censored, banned or persecuted writers and artists were blamed rather than the system which granted them the authority to carry out such policies. They believed that they could change it by introducing press supervision and by applying the pressure of public criticism. In Liu Xiaobo's opinion all these efforts would be in vain if a fundamental transformation of the autocratic system was not to take place.

In his speech *China's Literature of the New Period Is Facing A Crisis* at the conference in Beijing in 1986, Liu Xiaobo argued that China's literature must be free from its tradition and compare itself to the literature of the Western world to achieve further development, otherwise China's literature was getting into a crisis without realising it. It seemed to him that the crisis of China's literature was its failure to be unable to be free from tradition. Liu Xiaobo later further explained his attitude towards Chinese tradition in his article *Mao Zedong, the Monster*, published in Hong Kong in 1988. He announced that he was in favour of a complete westernisation of China and a replacement of Chinese culture by Western culture.[10]

In discussing Chinese tradition in Liu Xiaobo's terms, there are two factors to be taken into account. First, many intellectuals of 4th May movement intended to

give up Chinese culture and replace it with Western culture, an intention that was shaped due to the failure of Chinese modernisation in the 19th century. The Chinese intellectuals at the time believed that it was not only the introduction of Western science and technology that was important to the modernisation of China, but also the replacement of Chinese tradition by Western culture. Tradition was viewed as an obstacle in the progress of China's modernisation.

Secondly, there was the impact of tradition as used and promoted by the communists. Mao Zedong did not believe that Chinese tradition should be abandoned, but instead argued that a dialectical analysis should be applied in the debate on tradition. In theory, he suggested that the essence of the Chinese tradition be kept and assimilated while its dross should be rejected. In practice, Mao Zedong destroyed what he chose to identify as dross and kept whatever was useful to the communists. Chinese tradition was mostly used to eliminate various Western influences including partly communism from the Soviet Union and socialism from Europe. During Deng Xiaoping's reforms, the use of Chinese tradition to resist Western cultural influence became even more important. The authority of communism had almost been destroyed during the Cultural Revolution and was further damaged by Deng Xiaoping's reforms from 1979. Therefore the Chinese authorities began to rely more and more on tradition to mobilise the Chinese to follow its policy of introducing Western technology on the one hand while rejecting Western culture on the other. When he suggested that a complete rejection of Chinese tradition should be made, Liu Xiaobo was rejecting both the tradition followed by society at large and the political use of tradition by the authorities. That rejection, which was shared by many Chinese intellectuals under the communist regime, also showed partly their fear of the weight of the Chinese tradition, partly their lack of understanding of the Chinese culture, and partly their ignorance of Western culture. In this way, they differed from the Chinese intellectuals of 4th May movement in 1919. However, it seems that the importance of Liu Xiaobo's argument lay more in his further development of arguments in respect of arts administration in China.

In his criticism of Mao Zedong, Liu Xiaobo chose the communist system as his target rather than individual dictators. He argued that the modernisation of China could not be achieved through a reform by an autocratic state system: instead it was be achieved by a democratic system consisting of various forces within Chinese society. As discussed in previous chapters, most Chinese intellectuals and reformers of Deng Xiaoping's administration intended to reform the communist system through the opening of it to public criticism. However, their efforts were regarded as a danger to the security of communism and were frustrated by the authorities during the Anti-bourgeois Liberalism and Anti-

Spiritual Pollution movements.

In terms of arts administration, his argument suggested that the indirect leadership policy of Deng Xiaoping was not able to lead China's literature to its true development. On the contrary, the principle could only encourage the dependence of Chinese intellectuals on the authorities because of the nature of the Chinese autocracy and the ignorance of the Chinese as a whole. It seemed that his belief was shaped and strengthened by the impossibility of Deng Xiaoping's arts officers assuring freedom of creativity and the incapability of the Chinese intellectuals to fight for such freedom due to their dependence on the authorities, which was deeply rooted in tradition.

In his criticism of the Chinese intellectuals, Liu Xiaobo made two important contributions. On the one hand, he emphasised the need for independence, which was vital in his opinion to assure of freedom of speech, media and of creativity. Without such independence, Chinese intellectuals were bound to trade in their freedom to officialdom and in particular most were likely to compromise their principles for the sake of privileged positions in the various official associations of literature, arts, science, etc.. This argument naturally led to the discussion of the legal right of Deng Xiaoping to exercise his "indirect leadership" over the arts, in which freedom was granted to writers and artists from above rather than be theirs by right. A cultural elite consisting of arts officers and seniors writers and critics was taking over the role of Mao Zedong's arts officers and exercised a similar coercive leadership.

Liu Xiaobo also pointed out the underlying danger behind Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership over the arts, the leadership of writers by the writers as Liu Xiaobo put it. He believed that such leadership would lead to another destruction of culture, arguing that from long experience Chinese intellectuals knew only too well how to use their knowledge to exclude theories and art works that differed from current official policies. Compared with Mao Zedong's direct control of the arts during the Cultural Revolution which was carried out by arts officers who had no or poor knowledge of the arts, Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership of the arts was equally dangerous for it was now being implemented by arts officers who had sold their knowledge to the authorities in exchange for personal benefits and privileges. Liu Xiaobo seemed to fear that Chinese writers would lose their future ground in their struggle against official control and censorship because of the appointment of arts officers who themselves were writers and therefore knew the mechanisms of underground creative activities, and hence how these could be subverted and controlled.

That was the challenge Liu Xiaobo posed to Deng Xiaobo's policy of indirect leadership over the arts. In view of the importance of his proposals it is surprising that Liu Xiaobo did not come under official attack until 1989, and even then only because of his involvement in the students' demonstration and leadership of the democratic movement in Tiananmen Square. Three possible factors need to be taken into consideration. Firstly, Liu Xiaobo's argument at the Conference of China's Literature in the New Period in 1986 had been met with silence from both the Chinese literary world and the authorities. This may indicate a new official policy of ignoring such attacks and hence excluding any possibility of public debate of controversial issues, including official criticism of policy as discussed above. Secondly, Liu Xiaobo's criticism of Mao Zedong and the Chinese intellectuals was actually published in Hong Kong while he was abroad, so he managed to avoid any direct punishment by the authorities. Thirdly, the increasingly obvious collapse of ideological control in the Mainland might have also played a part. Through Deng Xiaoping's reforms, communist ideology was giving way to pragmatism, while the decentralisation of economic policy-making was weakening political control by the authorities throughout China. The public, including the majority of members of the Communist Party, were more concerned with the security of their monthly income than with ideological struggles. Those officials who were still worried about the purity of communism found it harder and harder to engage in a new campaign to fight against such trends. Every time they tried it, they found that they had fewer and fewer supporters even within the Party structure. More importantly, discontent with communism grew at an incalculable rate. As can be seen with the impact of the democratic movement in 1989, such discontent almost brought down Deng Xiaoping's administration. The authorities perhaps felt incapable of coping with such increasing criticism ideologically, so they waited and waited until it was at last decided to impose military control, as in Tiananmen Square against the students democracy movement in 1989.

Actually the authorities might have feared more the criticism made by Party members who considered themselves true communist loyalists. Their criticism of corruption and social injustice could be easily shared and supported by the majority of Chinese society. The authorities realised that such criticism might lead to a public exposure of the defects of the communist system, something the authorities could not afford, and so insisted on seeking to make improvements within the system. In contrast, Liu Xiaobo's criticism of the Chinese autocracy probably seemed to be removed from the minds of the ordinary Chinese population and his demand that Chinese culture be replaced with Western culture too difficult for the population to accepted.

The authorities seemed to have had a different policy around this time for dealing with criticism from intellectuals who believed in communism but disagreed with the way it was implemented compared with criticism of independent young intellectuals. The former were put under official criticism and ideological education in an attempt to change their opinions. Though some were expelled from the Party, as was the case during the Second Anti-bourgeois Liberalism campaign of 1987, they continue to enjoy most of the social privileges granted by the Party. In contrast, independent intellectuals were regarded as a threat to the communist system of China, and therefore were simply forced into silence, or put in prison. For example, when Wei Jingsheng had demanded democracy to replace Chinese autocracy in the Beijing Spring movement in 1979, he was arrested by the authorities. Similarly when Liu Xiaobo finally returned to China to spread his ideas during the democratic movement in 1989, he was also arrested.

Liu Xiaobo's theories contained much to be debated, but the importance of his argument lay in the fact that he not only challenged Deng Xiaoping's policy of indirect leadership, but also the communist system that Deng represented and tried to improve. Such a challenge was repeated by more independent Chinese intellectuals, as I shall further discuss in examining the use of the media by both the intellectuals and the authorities.

Notes to Chapter 8

[1] Chen Jun, *"Yu Liu Xiaobo zai yiqi de rizi" (The days that i spent with Liu Xiaobo)*, Emancipation Monthly, July 1990, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, p. 63.

[2] Huai Bing, *"Liu Xiaobo xuanfeng guohou" (After the strong gale of Liu Xiaobo)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, March, 1987, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 52-54.

[3] Huai Bing, *"Xu Jingyia de ziwo piping" (The self-criticism of Xu Jingyia)*, The Nineties, Issue 171, April, 1984, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, p. 7.

[4] Huai Bing, *"Xu Jingyia de ziwo piping" (The self-criticism of Xu Jingyia)*, The Nineties, Issue 171, April, 1984, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, p. 7.
He Pin, *"Dalu xinwenjie de miedingzhizai" (The disaster of the Chinese press)*, Emancipation Monthly, Issue 101/102, January/February, 1989, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, pp. 18-19.

[5] Liu, Shousong, "Zhongguo xinwenxueshi chugao" (History of Chinese new literature), People's Literature Press, Beijing, 1985, pp. 37-50.

[6] Liu Xiaobo, *"Hunshimowang Mao Zedong" (Mao Zedong - the monster)*, Emancipation Monthly, Issue 104, November, 1988, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, p. 31.

[7] Liu Xiaobo, *"Zhongguo zhishifenzi he zhengzhi" (The Chinese intellectuals and politics)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 143, September, 1990, pp. 88-90; Issue 144, October, 1989, pp. 68-70; Issue 148, February, 1990; Issue 153, July, 1990, pp. 75-77; Issue 154, August, 1990, pp. 89-90; Issue 155, September, 1990, pp. 74-76; Issue 156, October, 1990, pp. 56-58; Issue 158, December 1990, pp. 73-75; Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong.

[8] Liu Xiaobo, *"Zhongguo zhishifenzi he zhengzhi" (The Chinese intellectuals and politics)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 143, September, 1990, pp. 88-90; Issue 144, October, 1989, pp. 68-70; Issue 148, February, 1990; Issue 153, July, 1990, pp. 75-77; Issue 154, August, 1990, pp. 89-90; Issue 155, September, 1990, pp. 74-76; Issue 156, October, 1990, pp. 56-58; Issue 158, December 1990, pp. 73-75; Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong.

[9] Liu Xiaobo, *"Zhongguo zhishifenzi he zhengzhi" (The Chinese intellectuals and politics)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 143, September, 1990, pp. 88-90; Issue 144,

October, 1989, pp. 68-70; Issue 148, February, 1990; Issue 153, July, 1990, pp. 75-77; Issue 154, August, 1990, pp. 89-90; Issue 155, September, 1990, pp. 74-76; Issue 156, October, 1990, pp. 56-58; Issue 158, December 1990, pp. 73-75; Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong.

[10] Liu Xiaobo, *"Hunshimowang Mao Zedong" (Mao Zedong - the monster)*, Emancipation Monthly, Issue 104, November, 1988, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, p. 31.

Chapter 9: Refusal of Socialist Tasks

9.1 Introduction

From 1985 some Chinese writers and artists can be seen attempting to move away from official politics instead of struggling within its limited freedom, turning away from both Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts and Deng Xiaoping's reforms in the administration of the arts and they began to explore possibility of other alternatives for four reasons.

First, they were tired of politics, due to the continuous political campaigns under Deng Xiaoping's administration which kept interrupting the development of the arts in China. As discussed in previous chapters, these political campaigns stopped various artistic experiments as they began to take shape. Having seen how those writers and artists who tried to explore new areas of artistic expression within official ideologies were persecuted by the authorities, others were so disappointed that they felt it was not worthwhile to try to get their works into the public eye. These decided to continue their work but not to get it published. Some of them refused to join official associations of the arts and tried to make a living by working in professions relating or not relating with the arts. A good example can be drawn from two of my friends: Dong Lin, an experimental photographer from Beijing, and Yi Wei, an avant-garde writer based Shenzhen city. Dong Lin refused to follow the old route of receiving a stable salary through joining an official photographers' association. Instead he first worked for a computer company in 1982 and later in 1986 concentrated on exchanging his photography for food, accommodation and travel etc.. He believed that he enjoyed much more freedom by contacting the real people directly rather than be bound within the censorship and leadership of an official arts association. Yi Wei told me that he could easily make a living from doing business and later from trading in the stock market in the late 1980s and 1990s so that he could continue his avant-garde writings without worrying about getting them through the official censorship in exchange for his living expenses. They regarded themselves as avant-garde writers and artists and did not care about the response from their audience, nor the recognition from the authorities. This trend appeared as: an escape from reality of the communist control of China, and a search for the independence by Chinese writers and artists.

Secondly, the introduction of contemporary schools of Western art provided an immediate alternative for those who were keen to explore the psychological world. Chinese writers and artists began to use Existentialism, Surrealism, and Magical-realism to express their interpretation of life. As a result, their work

appeared incomprehensible, in contrast to the so-called socialist realism favoured under Deng Xiaoping's reforms. Both the public and official censors were confused and unsure about what the writers and artists intended to say. This type of art was allowed up to a certain level of freedom, due to the hesitation of the authorities and consequently did not suffer from direct censorship.

Official policies had also played an important role in the early development of this trend from 1981. Under Mao Zedong's administration, writers and artists were not only censored and persecuted for their non-official expressions, but also forced to leave their ivory tower to serve the proletarian politics. By comparison, Deng Xiaoping's administration only concentrated on what challenged official policies and certain vague, subtle, or absurd works were allowed to be published. The authorities seemed to have sent a clear message that Chinese writers and artists could experiment with whatever they liked as long as they did not threaten the current official policies for Chinese writers and artists began to avoid controversial issues.

However, a different generation of Chinese writers and artists was also taking shape, who did not share the communist ideals of Bai Hua, Wang Ruoshui and Liu Binyan, and nor did they appear to care about the reforms under Deng Xiaoping's administration. Compared with the Today poets, they did not share either their sense of responsibility to the Chinese nation, or their belief in achievement under a more liberal communist regime. The Today poets and the Star artists were a lost generation of the Cultural Revolution, and they also felt disillusioned in the process of China's modernisation undertaken by Deng Xiaoping's administration after 1979. Therefore their depression went beyond the accusations against the Chinese communist system. Instead, they questioned the process of modernisation and concluded that the demoralisation of human society was an inevitable consequence of human development.[1] They created arts only for themselves and the arts were just a compensation to their spiritual world. They treated Chinese communism with such disdain that they did not think it worth their time doing anything about it in terms of either improvement or significant change. They just wanted to be left alone to do their own things.[2] They decided to keep their artistic expressions only to themselves and their friends. However, occasionally they were exposed and their ideas were made public: Ma Jian, a versatile artist, was a good example.

9.2 Rejection of the Human Spiritual Engineers

Ma Jian was a travelling artist, photographer, novelist and poet. His short story *Reaching Out Your Tongue - Nothing But Emptiness*, was criticised by the official

propaganda machine during the Anti-Bourgeois-Liberalisation campaign of 1987. Then he became known to the media in Mainland China, and then the media in Hong Kong where he expressed his ideas on arts and life in detail.

Ma Jian was pessimistic about the arts in Mainland China, and believed that there was a crisis in its development. He pointed out that there were two problems: Chinese writers and artists were always influenced and controlled by others and could find no way to search for independence, and though they realised the value of Western culture, they could do nothing to promote their values in their own words.[3]

Ma Jian also made three points about his own writing. First, he said that

> "fundamentally speaking, I was not writing a story. I was only writing a process of thinking and visual reception. If I had any aims in my writing, that was to show the unbelievable existence of mankind, expecting to arouse some shock so that the present situation can be changed. People couldn't understand my stories and this suggested that the public were unable to communicate with my stories, which proved the motive of my writing, which was: I was writing for the masses, or the class of citizen, whom were just the materialised objects. They were just to be observed like a chair or a tea cup. Occasionally, some had a human soul and communicated with me for an instant. But I would realise immediately that I must keep distance. ... My stories had nothing to do with the acceptance of others. Nor did I expect any achievement. What I wanted to do was only to walk around in a room where there were a few hand-crafts and a thousand books on book shelves..."[4]

Secondly, Ma Jian said that

> "I feel disgusted when writers become moralists, or charity organisers. It was irrelevant to go to the streets and save others. As a matter of fact, what can a writer do apart from observing the human soul and then expressing what is seen? In terms of the art of literature, *Reaching out your Tongue* went a step further. Other people always talked morality with me. That was the evil of the Orientals. They always set a limit, a prison, a prohibited area. When I was writing, I only demanded accuracy and hit the point hard. In terms of its effect, or others' response, I cannot do anything. I think I am able to express

sympathy for the weak. I am able to analyse people including myself and criticise the dark side of the noble soul. I don't care about my reputation. Why should a writer be purified? "[5]

Thirdly, Ma Jian explained why he had to leave the city and travel. He said that:

"I travel because I just can't stand it. I have to go away. Wherever I go, wherever I die, it is more comfortable. If I had love or warmth, I might also have stayed and lived. Otherwise, I have to travel. Travel forever."[6]

From the above comments, four points can be recognised in relation to the arts administration in China. First, Ma Jian shared Liu Xiaopo's views: they both believed that there was a crisis rather than progress, and Ma Jian believed that it was caused by both the lack of independence and the political and social constraints of the Chinese society. Deng Xiaoping's hollow promise of freedom proved to be no different than Mao Zedong's direct control in practice, preventing artistic experiment and any real progress in the arts. Secondly, Ma Jian clearly expressed the view that he was only interested in writing for himself and he wanted to stay in his "ivory tower of art", this challenged the idea of art serving the people, a principle believed in by both the authorities and many senior Chinese writers and artists. Thirdly, he rejected the argument that official task of the arts was to educate the people and be conducive to the modernisation of China. Censorship was often exercised under that the "moral obligation" to promote so-called healthy works and exclude the unhealthy. Chinese writers and artists were given the obligation to work as "human spiritual engineers" by the authorities, but Ma Jian's reply to that was "damn the spiritual engineers." In the Chinese tradition, writers and artists were also supposed to play a moral role in their creation in terms of promoting good and criticising evil, providing an excuse to both feudal and communist censors to exercise their power in the name of morality. Ma Jian on the other hand believed that writers and artists should keep a distance from their works. He argued:

"I made a breakthrough from the traditional form of literature by not involving my personal feelings and judgements, which I would say was immoral. I don't mess around my story with personal sentiments. Give me a

hundred dollars a day, I still would not read those works written by the senior writers. I simply can't bear them. .. I never read those writers who propagate justice. "[7]

In short, Ma Jian refused to join the team of writers who used their works to promote morality and social justice, which in China often meant to promote the official version of morality and justice.

Finally, Ma Jian said that he could not bear life in China. There were three likely reasons for this disillusionment: (a) the political constraints imposed by the Chinese authorities, (b) the imbalance brought about by the transformation of an agricultural society to an industrial society, and (c) the uncompromising contradiction between art and reality. Ma Jian believed in Buddhism, and to him, mankind in any modern society was helpless. Mankind had lost its relationship with nature: if man returned to nature, he would die within days, and only knew how to fool himself by material wealth. Ma Jian believed that the enemy of mankind was not AIDS, earthquakes, or cancer, but their helpless soul and the destruction of mankind lay in the relationship among themselves.[8] Therefore, Ma Jian and others like him decided to travel a different road.

9.3 Complexity of Chinese Politics

In the Chinese tradition, it was not unusual for writers and artists to choose exile in solitude. The Taoists believed that one should see through the reality and save oneself by returning to nature. The Confucians also believed that one should withdraw when a bad government was in control rather than dirtying oneself by co-operating with it, though obviously this was not easy for most of the people in practical and financial terms. Ma Jian travelled across most of China on foot but he sometimes had to return to the city. When his talent was appreciated by editors of *People's Literature*, an official literary journal, Ma Jian got into trouble and was chosen as a target during the second Anti-Bourgeois Liberalisation campaign by the authorities.

In February, 1987, Ma Jian's short story *Reaching Out Your Tongue - Nothing But Emptiness* was published in the January issue of *People's Literature*.[9] In his story, Ma Jian wrote about his experience of travelling in Tibet. He touched subjects such as "heaven funeral" (a Tibetan way of funeral, in which the dead is carried to the top of a mountain and fed to the eagles, believing that in this way the dead is taken to heaven), the sharing of one wife by two brothers, sexual descriptions and ritual ceremonies, all of which were considered backwards in the Chinese eyes.

As soon as it was published, immediate responses came from various concerned departments of the Central government and the Tibetans. On 6th February, the Central Department of the United Front wrote a report to the Secretarial Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, in which they expressed their concerns: Ma Jian's story was an insult to the Tibetans and breached the official policies towards ethnic minorities in China, and Ma Jian's story was so controversial that it might meet with extreme anger from the Tibetans and that those in favour of the Tibetan independence might consequently take this opportunity to strengthen their demand.[10]

The Central Committee of the Communist Party ordered that editors of *People's Literature* must take this issue seriously and submit a critical report regarding their mistakes in publishing the story. The National Committee of Ethnic Affairs suggested that the China Writers' Association should stop the distribution of Ma Jian's short story though this was rejected. Being dissatisfied with decision made relating to this issue, Tibetan students of the Central Academy of Ethnic Groups in Beijing applied to hold a street demonstration to express their anger.[11]

In their *Report on People's Literature which published Ma Jian's Insulting Story of the Tibetans* on 12th February, officers of the Propaganda Department suggested to the Central Committee that tough action must be taken in order to calm down the tense situation. On the same day, this was followed by four moves from the China Writers' Association: the sale of the January issue was to be stopped and withdrawn at once, an article of apology from editors of *the People's Literature* was to be published in *Literature and Art Post*, the editorial policy of *People's Literature* was to be investigated, and disciplinary action was to be considered against persons involved, depending on their attitudes towards admitting their mistakes.[12]

On 13th February, an official agreement was reached and six representatives from the Central Academy of Ethnic Groups went to the office of *People's Literature* to lodge their protest and discuss how editors of the magazine were to make their apologies in public. Liu Xinwu, General Editor and three other Deputy General Editors immediately expressed their apologies to the representatives of the Central Academy of Ethnic Groups.[13] On 15th February, the Educational Department of the Beijing Party Committee wrote to the Central Office of the Communist Party, in which they reported that Tibetan students of the Central Academy were not satisfied and demanded much more severe action. In their *Notice of Protest*, they requested: (a) legal action to be taken against Ma Jian and the editors, all the copies of January issue to be handed over to the Central Academy and burned in public, (c) Liu Xinwu was to resign from his post as

General Editor, and (d) Liu Xinwu was to admit his crime to three million Tibetans through *Central People's Radio, Central People's Television* and *People's Daily*. If no satisfactory replies were made within five days, they were going to hold a street demonstration.[14]

On 16th February, the Propaganda Department arranged an urgent meeting with the Central Department of United Front, the National Committee of Education, the National Committee of Ethnic Affairs, the Central Academy of Ethnic Groups, the Beijing Party Committee, the Party Committee of the China Writers' Association and the Ministry of Central Broadcasting and Television. They concluded that Ma Jian's short story was a product of the so called bourgeois liberalisation and Liu Xinwu was to be dismissed from his post of General Editor. Disciplinary actions against him would depend on his attitude and his self-criticism.[15] This was followed by a notice issued by the National Press and Publication Bureau and the Distribution Bureau of Newspapers and Magazines of the China Post Office, announcing two explicit instructions: all copies of the January 1987 issue of *People's Literature* must be withdrawn and all the sales must be stopped at once, and Ma Jian's short story must not be reprinted in any publications.[16]

There are four factors which should be taken into account in the examination of the official decisions in regard of Ma Jian's issue: the relationship between Tibet and the Central Government, official policies towards the Tibetans, Chinese literature and the Tibetans, and the progress of the second Anti-Bourgeois-Liberalisation campaign in 1987. First, the Chinese government had always claimed that Tibet was an integral part of China, but the Tibetans argued that they had been invaded and occupied by the Chinese and were determined to fight for the restoration of their independence. The issue of the Tibetan independence was important in Chinese politics, particularly as this was put on the public agenda by Western countries after Deng Xiaoping open-door policy was implemented in 1979. On the other hand, the Chinese authorities were ready to take any measure needed to eliminate factors which might challenge their policies towards Tibet; while the Tibetans were also ready to take every opportunity to regain their independence. Therefore anything which intervened in this fight was bound to be affected by the official policies at the time.

The issue of independence was also further complicated by the role of the Tibetan communists. They were promoted by the Chinese authorities after the Dalai Lama was driven to India in 1959. On the one hand, they demanded more autonomy from the Central government. On the other hand, they carefully suppressed Tibetan demands for independence because they knew that they

would be the first to lose power once that independence was gained with Dalai Lama returned to Tibet. Therefore Tibetan communists always negotiated with the Central government by claiming to speak in the name of the Tibetan people.[17]

Considering the wider issue of ethnic minorities and groups, China is a nation consisting of at least 56 "nationalities" with the Han Chinese inhabiting less than 50% of the territory though with about 93.3% of the population. Other nationalities predominated over half of China's 9.6 million sq. km though they have approximately only 6.7% of the total population.[18] Chinese policies towards ethnic minorities over the centuries fluctuated between the hard and the soft, and at times a mixture of both, according to the requirements of the current political climate. For example, Mao Zedong's administration took the hardest measures against the Tibetans in Chinese history, not just in the 1952 occupation but particularly during the Cultural Revolution, when monks were driven out of their by the Red Guards, statues of Buddha were replaced by Mao Zedong's portraits and a unknown number of temples were destroyed. By comparison, Deng Xiaoping's administration took a mixture of hard and soft approach in its policies towards Tibet. While it followed Mao Zedong's policy of promoting Tibetan communists to national power as symbols, and rewarding those who demonstrated loyalty to the Central government, Deng Xiaoping's administration also kept investing central funds in the construction of the infrastructure in Tibet as a means of further control: from 1952 to 1987, the central government invested 3.43 billion yuan in Tibet and provided over 12 billion yuan in financial subsidies (from 1952 to 1986). From 1979 to 1986, 5.91 billion yuan of various other kinds of subsidies were injected into the Tibetan economy by Deng Xiaoping's administration.[19]

A lot of Tibetan communists who supported Deng Xiaoping had a share in this direct funding from the Central government, the position of which was further strengthened when Hu Yaobang, the General Secretary, visited Tibet in 1985 and many Tibetan communists were promoted to important but not the key posts in the local government on his instructions.[20] These were allowed to play the honourable but always the deputy role in decision-making. The experience of the Panchen Lama provided a good case in point. The Panchen Lama was one of the two top leaders of Tibetan Buddhism, second only to the Dalai Lama. He was made Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in 1954 when Tibet was under the Chinese control. However, he was then called to Beijing and put under house arrest due to his disagreement with Mao Zedong's policies towards Tibet. Only in 1979 was he fully rehabilitated and regained his former position, following his support for Deng Xiaoping's reforms.[21]

In addition to the use of military force, the Chinese communists also used the arts to strengthen their control of Tibet. On the one hand, Tibetan writers and artists were given great social privilege for singing paeans in praise of the communist government. For example, Caidanzuoma, an excellent folk singer, was made a Representative of the National People's Congress for her famous song of "the Communist Party is like my Mother" and troupes of Tibetan art were extremely popular even during the Cultural Revolution. Under Deng Xiaoping's administration, the Tibetan visual and performing artists were given new tasks in addition to the previous ones: to attract tourists to Tibet and to tour abroad for the purposes of gaining foreign currency and the Chinese national glory. On the other hand, Chinese literature continued to defame the Tibetan image due to either the direct encouragement of the authorities or due to the general ignorance of Tibetan culture. Tibetans were typically pictured as cruel, backward, barbarian and uncivilised so that the enforced introduction of the Chinese culture became a legitimate act. From the Tibetan viewpoint, Ma Jian's story of Tibetans, was another example of vilification of the Tibetan people in Chinese literature.

In the end the second Anti-Bourgeois Liberalisation campaign did not develop in the way as some enthusiasts of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts in the Central Propaganda Department expected. After succeeding Hu Yaobang as General Secretary, Zhao Ziyang not only refused to expand this campaign into his economic field, but also restricted its impact in the cultural field. Under his leadership, the Central Committee of the Communist Party issued *Notice on Several Principles of the Current Anti-Bourgeois Liberalisation* on 28th January, 1987. This statement claimed that this was not a political campaign and was to be restricted to within the Communist Party. It also demanded that criticism was to be aimed at the "erroneous ideas" rather than aiming at against individuals (other than Fang Lizhi, Wang Ruowang and Liu Binyan.)[22] It was believed that arts officers of the Propaganda Department did not however give up their original aim of eliminating liberal influences in the arts world though they were certainly frustrated by Zhao Ziyang's decision.

Apart from these four factors, Liu Xinwu's disagreement with some of the official policies has also to be considered. Liu Xinwu became famous in 1979 for his short stories on love themes, which won him a national acclaim. He was made General Editor of *People's Literature* in 1985 due to his talent, liberal attitude and the need to improve the declining reputation this official magazine. It was believed that there were two factors which led to Liu Xinwu's dismissal apart from Ma Jian's 1987 short story. First, his public criticism of some key arts officers angered the authorities. During his visit to Hong Kong in April 1985 as an official delegate,

Liu Xinwu was considered to have breached the discipline of the Communist Party by exposing the inner contradictions of the Party to the Western media in terms of expressing his disagreements with Lin Mohan, Chen Yong and Deng Liqun, authoritative interpreters of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts and strong supporters of the Anti-Bourgeois Liberalisation campaigns. Liu Xinwu also criticised Deng Xiaoping's policies towards Hong Kong. Secondly, Liu Xinwu had allowed the publication of a story in the same January 1987 issue in *People's Literature*, exposing corruption and breaches of law by communists, causing hatred among some senior leaders such as Wang Zhen, Vice- Chairman of State.[23] Therefore it was more than his editorial policy that was questioned by the authorities and hence he was regarded as unfit for this key post in the development of Chinese literature.

9.4 Conclusion

Ma Jian's case show that the factor of Tibetan independence played an important role in the arts and arts officers in the Central Propaganda Department's decision to ban Ma Jian's short story and to dismiss Liu Xinwu mainly in response to the concern about the Tibetan protest. They responded to this issue with unexpected efficiency and speed due to the growing demand for independence by the Tibetans, and the continuous demonstrations and riots in Lhasa as well as the Western support of the Tibetans. They re-adjusted their actions against Liu Xinwu not in the interests of the Tibetan people nor those of the Chinese writers and artists: they did it only out of political concern, and the actions against *People's Literature* were agreed through negotiations between the Central government and communist Tibetan leaders.

The long standing problem of the way Tibetans were vilified Tibetans in Chinese literature was kept invisible during the whole process. Though Ma Jian's short story was denounced as defaming the Tibetans by both Chinese authorities and Tibetan officials, neither group had any intention of examining this issue further. On the contrary, both encouraged literature promoting official propaganda, insisting that the Communist Party was the saviour of the Tibetan serfs. Though Ma Jian's short story was prohibited other literature and forms of art which continued to vilify the Tibetans in accordance with official policies remained untouched.

Decisions made by arts officers of Deng Xiaoping's administration proved that it was not feasible to implement his indirect policy of arts without a fundamental change in the structure of government. When writers and artists produced works which were not in accordance with the official policies, arts officers would

interfere with the process by replacing their indirect leadership by direct control.

It can also be seen that both freedom of artistic expression and its relation with ethnic groups put forward a new challenge to reformers in Deng Xiaoping's administration. They did not have either the experience or legal structure to deal with such complicated issues. Though the pro Deng Xiaoping reformers did not agree with decisions made by the arts officers of the Central Propaganda Department, those of the China Writers' Association did not defend their position but instead chose to follow instructions from above. Liu Xinwu's dismissal confirmed once again that despite Deng Xiaoping's policy of indirect leadership the communist system was prepared to eliminate any significant challenges against its authority. There was no hesitation, when it was believed necessary, to take direct administrative actions against Chinese writers and artists and writers as well as prohibiting their work from getting to the public.

To a certain extent, Liu Xinwu's dismissal also illustrated the internal disagreements among arts officers of Deng Xiaoping's administration. Some of them were very much alarmed by the liberal influences brought out into the open by Deng Xiaoping's reforms of the communist system, particularly their impact on official ideology and culture. These were also strong supporters of Anti-Bourgeois Liberalism campaigns and attempted to maintain the purity of communism. Having seen the failures of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts and their incompetence in producing valuable works welcomed by the public, others were keen to experiment with the potential of Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership over the arts, expecting that writers and artists would come up with "positive" results. Liu Xinwu's promotion to the post of General Editor of *People's Literature* reflected the current balance of the two sides, be also became a sacrifice due to his frank remarks.

Ma Jian's case suggests that it was difficult for writers and artists to be isolated from the complexity of Chinese politics. Sometimes they might have been encouraged to stay in the arts in the narrow sense and not to care about politics. At times they might be promoted to suit the purpose of the communist reformers. However, as long as they lived under the control of the communist system, as long as they continued to express their interpretations of the world around them, it was inevitable that they would be affected by swings and reverses of the official policies from time to time. However, it seems that Ma Jian's case was an exceptional instance. Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership over the arts did appear to encourage writers and artists not to become involved in politics. Neither would the system worry about what writers and artists believed as long as their ideas did not get to the public. Had it not been a Tibetan issue, Ma Jian

might have been allowed to continue his writing experiments as he himself did not intend to communicate to the public.

More importantly, this study suggests that there was a complete rejection of official ideology by some Chinese writers and artists in terms of either a search for independence or escape from the Chinese reality. They neither shared the positive criticism made by those senior communist writers, nor did they have the expectations of the lost generation of the Cultural Revolution. They just wanted to be left alone to do their own thing rather than side with either supporters of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts or the reformers of Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership. The significance of such writers and artists lay in a complete distrust of government policy towards the arts, something which never before happened on such a scale during the rule of the communist regime.

Having been the victim of this political campaign, Ma Jian decided to leave Mainland China for Hong Kong, to be further away from obligations of Chinese politics. However, those who did not have similar access to Hong Kong, or further afield, had to stay within the political struggles of the Chinese government and remained subject to its consequences. The number of writers and artists who attempted to ignore Chinese politics began to grow, particularly with the political suppression after 4th June Massacre of 1989. Various writers and artists joined them and a new form of "negative resistance", known as "literature of drawers", referring to those who continued to create but to keep them in their drawers, took shape.

Notes to Chapter 9

[1] Jin Zhong, *"Renlei shi wukejiuyao de -- Ma Jian tan wenxue yu rensheng" (The human being is helpless - Ma Jian's talk on literature and life)*, Emancipation Monthly, Issue 4, April, 1987, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, pp. 55 - 59.

[2] Jin Zhong, *"Renlei shi wukejiuyao de -- Ma Jian tan wenxue yu rensheng" (The human being is helpless - Ma Jian's talk on literature and life)*, Emancipation Monthly, Issue 4, April, 1987, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, pp. 55 - 59.

[3] Jin Zhong, *"Renlei shi wukejiuyao de -- Ma Jian tan wenxue yu rensheng" (The human being is helpless - Ma Jian's talk on literature and life)*, Emancipation Monthly, Issue 4, April, 1987, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, pp. 55 - 59.

[4] Jin Zhong, *"Renlei shi wukejiuyao de -- Ma Jian tan wenxue yu rensheng" (The human being is helpless - Ma Jian's talk on literature and life)*, Emancipation Monthly, Issue 4, April, 1987, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, pp. 55 - 59.

[5] Jin Zhong, *"Renlei shi wukejiuyao de -- Ma Jian tan wenxue yu rensheng" (The human being is helpless - Ma Jian's talk on literature and life)*, Emancipation Monthly, Issue 4, April, 1987, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, pp. 55 - 59.

[6] Jin Zhong, *"Renlei shi wukejiuyao de -- Ma Jian tan wenxue yu rensheng" (The human being is helpless - Ma Jian's talk on literature and life)*, Emancipation Monthly, Issue 4, April, 1987, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, pp. 55 - 59.

[7] Jin Zhong, *"Renlei shi wukejiuyao de -- Ma Jian tan wenxue yu rensheng" (The human being is helpless - Ma Jian's talk on literature and life)*, Emancipation Monthly, Issue 4, April, 1987, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, pp. 55 - 59.

[8] Jin Zhong, *"Renlei shi wukejiuyao de -- Ma Jian tan wenxue yu rensheng" (The human being is helpless - Ma Jian's talk on literature and life)*, Emancipation Monthly, Issue 4, April, 1987, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, pp. 55 - 59.

[9] Huai Bing, *"Zuowang benxingnanyi" (Nature of the leftists)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 153, July 1990, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 78 - 79.

[10] Huai Bing, *"Zuowaang benxingnanyi" (Nature of the leftists)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 153, July 1990, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 78 - 79.

[11] Huai Bing, *"Zuowaang benxingnanyi" (Nature of the leftists)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 153, July 1990, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 78 - 79.

[12] Huai Bing, *"Zuowaang benxingnanyi" (Nature of the leftists)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 153, July 1990, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 78 - 79.

[13] Huai Bing, *"Zuowaang benxingnanyi" (Nature of the leftists)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 153, July 1990, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 78 - 79.

[14] Huai Bing, *"Zuowaang benxingnanyi" (Nature of the leftists)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 153, July 1990, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 78 - 79.

[15] Jin Sheng, *"Shenchu nide shetai - kongkong tangtang beiwanglu" (Profile of reaching out your tongue - nothing but emptiness)*, The Mid-Stream, Issue 4, 1990.
Huai Bing, *"Zuowaang benxingnanyi" (Nature of the leftists)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 153, July 1990, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 78 - 79.

[16] Li Sihua, *"Zhongguo zuoxie de neidou" (The inner fight within the China writers' Association)*, Emancipation Monthly, Issue 4, April 1987, p.12.

[17] First hand data obtained during my trip to Tibet in 1986 in organising tour of the Tibetan Court Music Ensemble to participate the Court Music Festival in London in 1987.

[18] *"Zhongguo shaoshu minzu" (China's minority nationalities)*, published by China Reconstructs, Beijing, 1984, p. 5.

[19] Jing Wei, *"Xizang yibai wen" (100 questions about Tibet)*, Beijing Review Press, Beijing, 1989, pp. 83 - 90.

[20] Data obtained through my interviews with Tibetan government officials in 1986.

[21] *"Zhongguo shaoshu minzu" (China's minority nationalities)*, published by China Reconstructs, Beijing, 1984, p. 10.

[22] Yiren, *"Suishou huiyi de qianqianhouhou" (On Sui Zhou conference)*, The Art Theory and Criticism, Issue 1, Beijing, 1990.
Huai Bing, *"Zuowang benxingnanyi" (Nature of the leftists)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 153, July 1987, pp. 78 - 79.

[23] Huai Bing, *"Zuowang benxingnanyi" (Nature of the leftists)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 153, July 1987, pp. 78 - 79.

Chapter 10: Criticism of Chinese Culture in Relation to Official Ideology

10.1 Introduction

The Chinese authorities were challenged by *The River Elegy*, a television series in 1988. Throughout this television series Su Xiaokang, General Editor of the production, criticised Chinese culture which he regarded as the origin of the fall of Chinese civilisation, concluding that Chinese culture should be replaced by Western culture in the process of China's modernisation. This was received with strong responses from both the authorities and the public when it was broadcasted on 1st June, 1988. However, it is important to review various earlier criticism of Chinese culture from 1985 onwards.

Some Chinese intellectuals chose Chinese culture as a target to express their discontent with the wider situation in China for three reasons. First, having suffered from increasing persecution and censorship by the authorities, they felt that they had to express themselves more cautiously in order to get their message across to the public without being banned by the authorities. Secondly, they believed that the Chinese communist system had a lot of similarities to the traditional Chinese feudal systems. So Chinese feudalism had to be criticised and condemned before making real progress in the criticism of the current Chinese official ideology. Thirdly, they shared the views of their predecessors of 4th May Movement of 1919 that Chinese culture, particularly the dominating Confucian culture, prevented the development of Chinese civilisation.

It was in these circumstances that the mid-1980s criticism of Chinese culture arose. It began in Chengdu, capital of Sichuan province, in form of a series of books entitled *Walking towards Future* by Jin Guantao and Liu Qingfeng. They refused to adopt the dialectical theory of Marxism as always demanded by the Chinese authorities, but inspired by Western theories of system engineering and control, they began to research Chinese history. They believed that there existed a super-stable structure in the Chinese society, which prevented further progress of Chinese civilisation, and blamed Confucian ideology for this structure. They concluded that the super-stable structure no longer fits the modern world and should be replaced through a transformation of the Chinese society. They published a series of books of this kind, which greatly stimulated the Chinese public, particularly the writers and artists, intellectuals and students.[1]

In contrast, senior scholars represented by Tang Yijie took a much more modest approach. They formed the Conservatory of Culture in Beijing and began their

study of Chinese culture. Compared with some radical intellectuals who took a great risk and declared in public that Marxism was out of date, Tang Yijie claimed that they intended to develop Marxism, just as they intended to develop the Chinese tradition. In their mind, the dross of tradition was to be rejected while the essence of tradition was certainly to be inherited. For instance, they attached great importance to the Confucian principle of harmony of mankind and nature in the modern world, which was believed to have largely destroyed the equilibrium of nature. They argued that Marxism was not out of date otherwise Confucian was even more out of date: both therefore needed to be developed. Within three years, there were over 10,000 students who were registered at their Conservatory of Culture. They tried very hard to avoid any arguments which might offend the authorities while they carefully examined what was the dross in both Confucian and Marxism. However, the authorities were very suspicious about their intentions and initially refused their application to publish their book which was entitle *The Study of China* in 1983 until a few years later in 1987 when they re-titled it as *Chinese Culture and Philosophy*.[2]

The third type of criticism was presented by Gan Yang and some other young intellectuals. They translated a series of books entitled *Contemporary Western Academic Books* including *On Mankind* by Ernst Cassirer, and *Existence and Time* by Heideger. They also published a magazine entitled *Culture: China and the World*. They believed that the Chinese tradition proved to be nothing but a block on China's development, and regarded Western culture as an alternative, and therefore they felt an urgent need to introduce contemporary Western ideologies. They also chose not to confront the Chinese authorities and avoided the sensitive concept of a complete westernisation of China. Having made great efforts to go through the official censorship, their books sold over 200,000 copies in China.[3]

It was these criticisms of Chinese culture that provided the ideologies behind *The River Elegy*, the television series of 1988. Apart from these criticisms, the official promotion of *the Third Wave* and *the Challenge of the Future*, by Alvin Toffler, the American author, also inspired the production of *The River Elegy*. With the direct support of Zhao Ziyang, Premier of China, Toffler's theory was introduced to senior officials of the Chinese government and videotapes of this production were distributed throughout China in 1986. Toffler's arguments about the transformation of the agricultural and industrial societies to the information society, and the rise of the Pacific region, were used by Deng Xiaoping's reformers to strengthen the Chinese awareness of a new crisis faced by the Chinese nation and to support their further and more radical reforms, particularly in the coastal economic zones of South China. *The Third Wave* not only worked as an ideological

inspiration but also provided a ready example of using television as a powerful media to promote such concept.

10.2 The River Elegy

The River Elegy consisted of six parts and was in turn broadcast by the Central Television from 1 June, 1988. To a certain extent, *The River Elegy* was only a visual and popular interpretation of those criticisms of Chinese culture already outlined above.

According to Su Xiaokang, its aims were: (a) to analyse Chinese culture through a magazine programme rather than a travel type of description of the Yellow River, and to select historical themes which were relevant to the Chinese society, (b) to give ideological arguments a dominant position with the support of visual images rather than using language to explain the picture, and (c) to challenge the worship of Chinese civilisation through an introduction of the various criticisms of Chinese culture held by some of the Chinese scholars and to involve the audience in re-valuing such worship.[4]

Part I was entitled *Looking for A Dream* and chose the Yellow River, the symbol of the cradle of Chinese civilisation, as its topic. It pointed out that the civilisation of the Yellow River has already declined as had other similar civilisations. It cited the argument of Phillip Toynbee, the English historian, that there had been twenty-one civilisations in the human history. Fourteen of them had disappeared and six were declining. Only the Greek civilisation transformed into an industrial civilisation. It concluded that the Chinese agricultural civilisation proved to be inferior to and was defeated by the industrial civilisation represented by Western imperial countries and that Chinese civilisation had sediment and dregs just like the Yellow River: both were to be abandoned, and it was suggested that the Chinese should reach out their arms to embrace Western industrial civilisation.[5]

Part II was entitled *Fate* and focused on the Great Wall, the pride of the Chinese nation. It cited the argument of Geographical Determinism and suggested that the Chinese super-stable structure was determined by Chinese geography. Instead of conquering the blue ocean like the western colonialists, the Chinese were bounded to the yellow earth and continued to build walls, symbolising a closed rather than open type of culture. It also gave the example of Zheng He's expedition around the Pacific Ocean from 1405 to 1433, commanding the world's greatest fleet of the time and reaching South-East Asia, the Indian Ocean and as far as the Eastern Coast of Africa. The programme concluded that the Chinese were unable to explore further their way of thinking, or to expand their self-

sufficient agricultural society into an expanding colonialist one, due to Confucianism. The Chinese lost that golden opportunity to lead the world and were therefore unable to escape the fate of being defeated by the European imperial countries. It suggested that the Chinese had to change their way of thinking and walk towards the blue ocean which symbolised Western civilisation.[6]

Entitled *Spiritual Light*, Part III discussed two things: the self-confidence of Chinese civilisation and the cultural constraints to scientific and technological development. It pointed out that the Chinese had been self-confident when Chinese civilisation met the Indian civilisation in 65 AD. The Chinese sent special envoys to India to learn from Indian culture and to enrich Chinese culture through such cultural exchanges. However, the Chinese no longer had that confidence in themselves due to the decline of Chinese civilisation by the time when Western civilisation came into contact with China in 1585. The programme concluded that Chinese culture, particularly its philosophy and moral principles, restricted the development of China's science and technology.[7]

Part IV was entitled *New Century* and examined the crisis faced by China today. It presented three controversial statistics: (a) in a commune 40 kilometres away from Lanzhou, capital of Gansu province in 1980, two- thirds of the Chinese families did not have a "grass sheet" (a sheet made out of a type of dried grass) in their "clay bed" (a bed made from clay instead of wood) and over 60% of peasants did not have cotton overcoats for the winter, (b) according to the annual report of World Bank in 1987, China was one of the world's poorest thirty countries out of 128, and (c) though China's GNP was similar to that of Japan in 1960, it was only one-fifth of Japan's by 1985. The programme concluded that China was facing a crisis due to the risk of being excluded from the global powers. It suggested full participation in the global economic circulation as a solution to the renaissance of Chinese civilisation.[8]

Entitled *Worries*, Part V further discussed Jin Guantao's theory of super- stable structure, which believed that there had always been two factors in the transformation of the Chinese society: a progressive and organised change and a non-constructive and un-organised change. It emphasised that China had to avoid any destructive disturbance in her reforms. Great importance was to be attached to the development of the progressive force in the course of the transformation of the old social structure, otherwise, it was very likely that the non-constructive force would play a dominant role in such process. Part V then listed three major problems confronted Deng Xiaoping's reformers: widespread corruption among communist officials, increasing official prestige, and

bureaucracy. It saw a reform of the political system launched by Deng Xiaoping's administration as the only and last resort to solve those problems. However, it was deeply worried about possible social unrest caused by such reforms as had happened repeatedly during such periods of change in Chinese history. It suggested that the political reforms had to be carried out and there was no other way. Even if they failed, it might provide a lesson for others.[9]

Part VI was entitled *The Blue* and believed that Chinese civilisation, dominated and represented by Confucianism, failed to form a structure which could continue its development. Instead, its structure proved to be a mechanism which had constantly destroyed any possibility which might lead in the direction of development. For example, successive systems kept excluding people who made constructive criticism of their structure from generation to generation. It concluded that China's present approach to modernisation could only lead to limited technological achievements such as the launch of satellites. However, it was impossible to revive Chinese civilisation unless China's traditional social structure was replaced, proposing Western civilisation in terms of her democracy and science as an alternative.[10]

In relation to *The River Elegy*, three important points should be made. First, it used a visual and popular interpretation of the criticisms of Chinese culture by contemporary Chinese scholars, particularly that of Jin Guantao. On the one hand, the television series spread those criticisms through its huge impact of visual images. On the other hand, some conclusions of those criticism remained arguable and its approach made those points more vulnerable due to its length of air time and method of editing. Its analysis of Chinese civilisation, crisis of modern China, the Chinese self-confidence, China's participation in the global economic circulation, and of Chinese culture in terms of Confucianism all needed further discussion. There were various arguments held by Chinese scholars, television producers of *The River Elegy* selected a few of them for their own purposes. Secondly, it appeared to be a piece of propaganda in support of those of Deng Xiaoping's reformers who were eager to carry out more radical reforms both in China's political system and in the development of coastal economic zones of South China.

By 1988, fourteen major coastal cities had been opened to Western investors and companies under special policies regulated by the Central government. The development of Hainan Island was also put on an urgent agenda, supported with liberal policies which gave more power to its local government in decision-making. China's modernisation was concentrating on its development of the South to meet the widely believed rise of the Pacific Region. All such measures

required an immediate reform of the existing political system.

Thirdly, *The River Elegy* also chose to avoid a confrontation with the communist system in China. Instead of denouncing the Communist Party for its administration of China since the 1950s, it chose to blame Chinese civilisation, both past and present, for preventing any significant progress. Finally, it might also have expected to push for a reform within the communist system through a cultural approach rather than by confrontation with it which had always suppressed by the authorities. In their mind, a criticism of Chinese culture would have indirectly led to a criticism of the communist system in the end. They might have believed that such an approach could act as a constructive measures in the transformation of the Chinese society and that it could avoid widespread disorder in China.

10.3 The Official Promotion of Chinese Culture

Chinese culture had always remained a sensitive topic in the politics of the Communist Party. Mao Zedong believed that there was a great amount of feudal dross in the Chinese tradition which had to be eliminated although he also emphasised the importance of inheriting its essence in the meantime. However, Mao Zedong's approach appeared to be strongly anti-tradition in the process of tearing the dross from the essence. Particularly, the implementation of his arts policies proved to be destructive to Chinese culture and the arts. For example, his analysis of the feudal and counter-revolutionary arts, his reform of Peking opera and other Chinese operas as well as his launch of the Cultural Revolution all brought disasters to Chinese culture. He had continually started ideological struggles against communists who did not share his views. To him, Chinese traditional culture appeared to be an obstacle to his revolution and must be further developed.

In contrast, Deng Xiaoping's attitude towards Chinese culture was more complicated. First, Deng Xiaoping seemed to share Mao's analysis though he disagreed with Mao's attempts to re-shape Chinese culture. Secondly, he was much less concerned with culture compared with his priority of the economic development. Thirdly, he seemed to be well-pleased with the existing state of the arts. Deng Xiaoping and many of his supporters seemed to be part of the audience of the traditional arts while Mao Zedong regarded himself as a leader of the arts.

More importantly, Chinese culture played an important role in Deng Xiaoping's open door policy for three main reasons: (a) it became an alternative to

communist ideology due to the widespread disillusion and distrust of any official propaganda, therefore the glory of Chinese culture was used as a drive to encourage the public participation in the officially launched modernisation of China, (b) cultural diplomacy with an emphasis on the Chinese tradition was applied by Deng Xiaoping's administration in terms of promoting his reforms to the West in order to attract foreign investments, and (c) Chinese culture became an vital part of China's tourist industry: Confucian temples, Taoist music and ritual ceremonies were all restored and opened to Western tourists. There was another factor to be taken into account. In return popular Western appreciation of Chinese culture was used by the authorities as evidence for the rejection of demands for Western democracy and life style.

It was under these circumstances that Chinese intellectuals, particularly the young, took a radical and extremely critical attitude towards Chinese culture. To change the Chinese society, they decided to focus their criticism on Chinese culture as the first step. In this sense, some of their criticisms was only aimed at part of the Chinese culture that was promoted by the authorities. This was also the type of criticism that provoked a challenge to communist ideology and alerted some of the senior communists to the dangers of the situation.

10.4 Official Responses to *The River Elegy*

It was assumed that *The River Elegy* would arouse controversial responses from various sides, therefore it was sent in advance to Chen Fusu, Deputy Minister of Television and Broadcasting, asking permission to broadcast it. After careful consideration, Chen Fusu, a liberal communist, decided to issue the permit.

When it was shown, it received two types of responses from the Chinese authorities. Obviously it angered some senior communists such as Wang Zhen, Vice-Chairman of State, Bo Yipo, Deputy Director of the Central Consultative Committee, and Deng Liqun. They suggested an immediate ban and official criticism of the production. They argued that *The River Elegy* attacked the Communist Party and promoted bourgeois liberalisation in China. Wang Zhen demanded to stop its further broadcasts and to expel Su Xiaokang out of China.[11] Bo Yipo also criticised Chen Fusu for making a serious mistake in allowing the broadcast. He believed that it would do great harm to the younger generation who lacked of knowledge of Chinese history and the history of the Communist Party. He also suggested that censorship must be efficiently applied.[12] However, Yang Shangkun, Chairman of State, and Li Xiannian, Vice-Chairman of State, did not agree with them. Both of them were in favour of Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership over the arts and advised Wang Zhen not to take the arts too seriously

and forget about official criticism.[13] While Wang Zhen pushed hard to organise official criticism of *The River Elegy*, Zhao Ziyang, General Secretary of the Party symbolically presented a copy of its videotape as a gift during his meeting with Li Guangyao, Premier of Singapore.[14]

The disagreement at the top levels of the government seemed uncompromising. Finally, Zhao Ziyang made three decisions in regard of this dispute. First, it was a normal phenomenon that *The River Elegy* had generated different arguments and both sides were allowed to express their views. Second, equal opportunities were to be given to both sides in the course of their arguments, and it was not permitted to organise official criticism as had happened in the past.[15]

The responses of the Chinese authorities suggested that some Chinese senior officials were still keen to exercise administrative order to interfere with the arts. They also saw official criticism as an immediate measure to exclude arts works, which in their view, were against official ideology. Other senior officials were more assertive in their support of the principle of not interfering with the arts. They held a comparatively liberal attitudes towards the arts and a conservative estimate of the impact produced by the arts. Others in the leadership might have seen an opportunity here to take advantage of *The River Elegy* in the promotion of their own radical reform ideas. Support of this production would in such cases be just an excuse to promote their positions in their political struggles against those who were more conservative in their approach of China's modernisation. In fact, a compromise was finally reached between the two sides at the time. On the one hand, no official criticism was organised until 1989 after 4th June Massacre in Tiananmen Square, but on the other hand, all further broadcasting, discussion, and distribution of videotapes of *The River Elegy* was stopped.

10.5 The Fear of the Impact of Television

Behind this compromise reached within the authorities, there might have existed another important factor, that was the fear of the impact of television, as projected by the Central Television Station. The Central Television was based in Beijing. It started its initial broadcasting in 1958 and began its colour broadcasting in 1973. By 1987, it had established business relations with over 120 foreign television companies in 84 countries. By 1987, its overseas distribution of videotapes alone had reached over 10,000.[16] In 1988, domestic distribution of videotapes reached 331,800, including 59,600 products of the Chinese Central Television, 15,100 distributed by China Records Company, 44,500 by China Television International Service Company and 272,200 by regional video distributors.[17] (See Figure 10.1) According to the census carried out at the end of 1987, the Central Television had

an audience of over 600 million.[18]

The Central Television offered three set of programmes: news, economy, culture and the arts. In 1987, its broadcasting hours was 10,605 with an average of 30 hours a day.[19] In 1988, the national budget of television was 27.40 billion yuan (RMB)[20] with an increase of 4.60 billion yuan compared with 1987.[21] (See Figure 10.2) It employed a staff of 234,071, of which 17.5% were administrators and 2.3% were arts personnel.[22] (See Figure 10.3) There were 38 television stations in 1980 and 93 stations in 1984. By 1985, there were 202 television stations throughout the country.[23] (See Figure 10.4 and 10.5) In the same year, 72 types of television and broadcasting related newspapers were published with a total circulation of 117,597 copies per issue.[24]

Both the television coverage of the population and the social possession of television sets are interesting statistics. By 1988, television coverage reached 75.4% out of a population of approximately 1.2 billion with an annual increase of 3.3 %. State possession of television sets also reached over 143 million with an increase of 23.6% compared with 1987 in just one year.[25] (See Figure 10.6) In contrast to this massive growth in television was the similarly massive levels of illiteracy and the low level of education of the Chinese population. In 1985, 6.9 million received primary school education only, while those who received or were still receiving higher education totalled only 92,000 among the total population of approximately 1.2 billion.[26] These two factors contributed to the fact that television had the largest influence in shaping people's way of thinking. One of the main reasons that the Chinese authorities established the Ministry of Broadcasting, Film and Television was to strengthen its control of the increasingly influential television media in 1985. This may also have been the reason why the Chinese authorities allowed criticisms of Chinese culture in the written press to a certain extent but finally decided to ban such criticisms from spreading more widely through television.

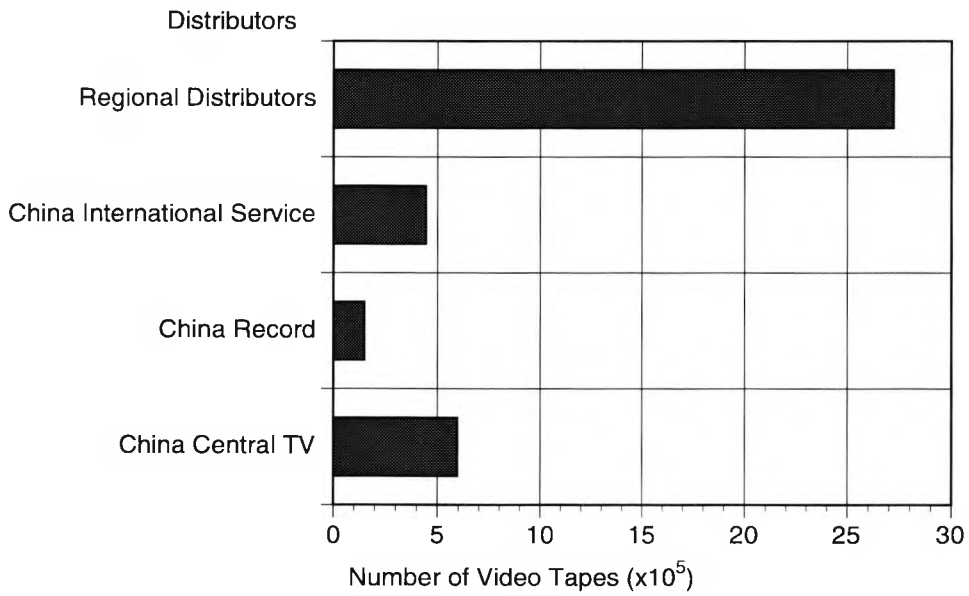

Figure 10.1 National Distribution of Video Tapes

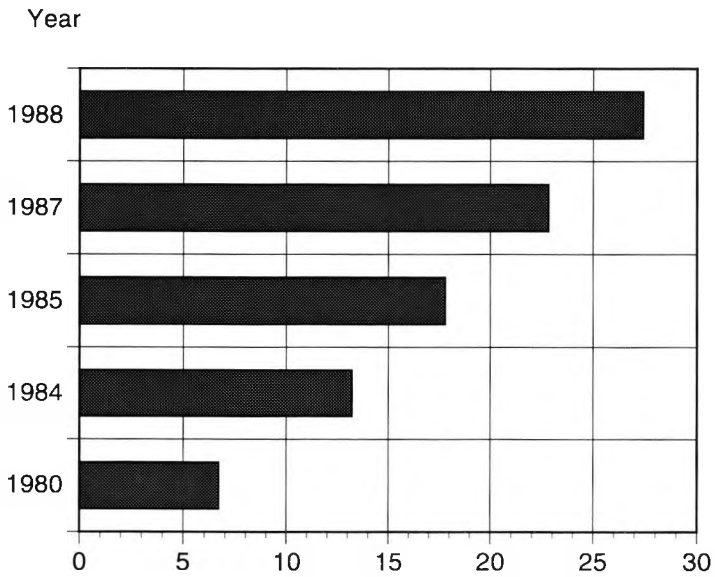

Figure 10.2 Increase of National Budget for Television from 1980 to 1988

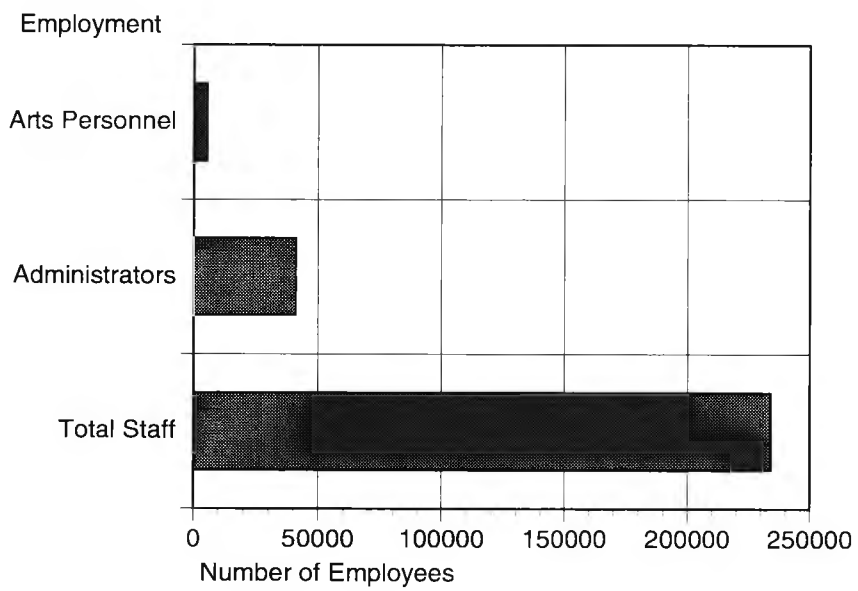

Figure 10.3 Composition of Employees in the National Television Industry

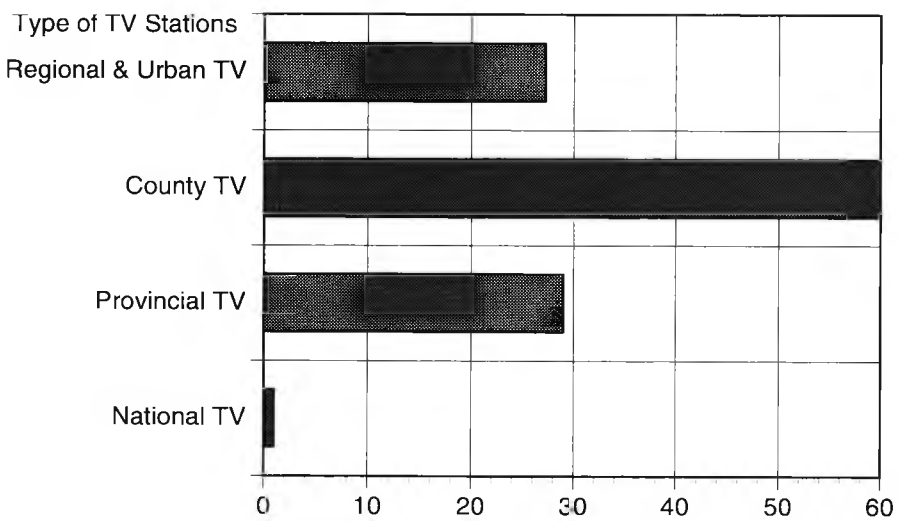

Figure 10.4 National Spread of Television Stations

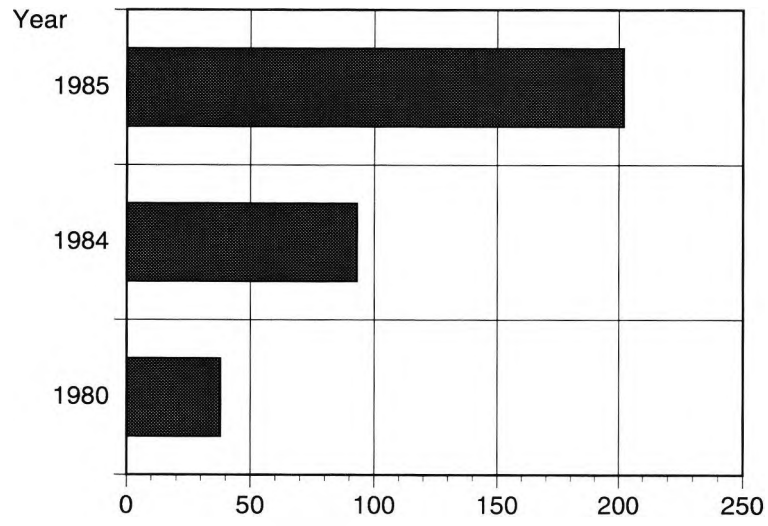

Figure 10.5 Increase of Television from 1980 to 1985

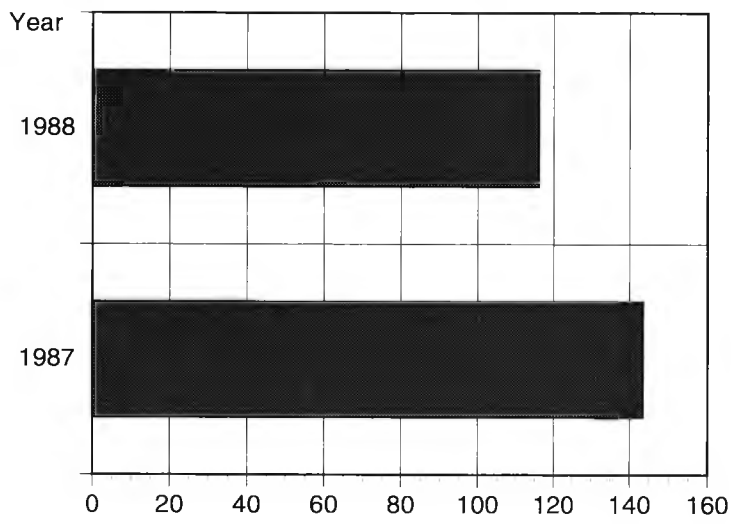

Figure 10.6 Increase of Social Possession of Television Sets from 1987 to 1988

10.6 Conclusion

This analysis of *The River Elegy* case highlights five points. First, criticism of Chinese culture seemed to have provided an alternative forum in which Chinese intellectuals, television directors, writers and artists could attempt to express their views due to the constant suppression in the arts by the Chinese authorities. They began to choose a different approach to express their critical opinions of Chinese society ruled by the Communist Party to avoid official persecution. They cautiously put their message across and managed to get through official censorship despite of official suspicions. It seemed that such criticism was allowed to a certain extent within the intellectual and arts circles, but that the authorities intervened quickly to stop this trend when it began to grow rapidly, especial when it was conveyed to a wider public through television media.

This study also suggests that the close similarities between Chinese communism and the feudal past provided a strong argument for such criticisms since 1985: in many ways, the Chinese communists shared many characteristics of the feudalists. Dictatorship, censorship of dissident voices, and suppression and persecutions of writers and artists were all examples for the Chinese communists to follow in their administration of the arts. Criticism of Chinese culture, as nurtured under feudalism, therefore became a means to deny the legitimacy of the existing system, and it was no surprise that the Chinese writers and artists attempted to inherit the critical view held by those who launched 4th May movement in 1919 with their attacks of feudalism.

Official promotion of traditional Chinese culture contributed to the complexity of this criticism. Obviously, the authorities saw good reason for its promotion and made full use of cultural diplomacy to serve its purposes. It helped to divert the public focus from the existing and increasing problems in its implementation of its arts policies. Therefore, a critical review of Chinese culture became necessary.

The fear of the growing impact of television was another important factor in the official suppression of such criticism. The rapid increase in public access to television media and the growth in its audience suggested a new challenge to the communist ideology. The potential impact of television coupled with the sheer size of illiteracy in the Chinese population could possibly lead to the overnight collapse of official ideology, which had been propagandised by the authorities ever since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. It was due to this fear that some senior communists were deeply concerned by liberal trends in television and acted bluntly in an attempt to stop these.

Finally, the official responses revealed in this study further exposed the wide differences within the Chinese authorities themselves. Those leaders who were in favour of such criticism not only tried very hard to continue their experiments with Deng Xiaoping's policy of indirect leadership over the arts, but also saw it as a good opportunity to use it in strengthening their demands for further reforms. Those who were deeply worried about such criticisms, on the other hand, saw the danger behind it in terms of the potential grave damage to communist ideology and demanded an immediate prohibition of it. Though temporary compromises were reached between the two sides from time to time, the challenges remained and the problems were unresolved. As long as the political system remained unchanged, the Chinese writers and artists were bound to be affected by restrictions and control within the changing politics in China. However, criticism of Chinese culture greatly contributed to the public awareness of the far wider problems, particularly the deep ideological and cultural problems faced by China and further exposed the incapability of the Chinese authorities in finding a resolution to them.

Notes to Chapter 10

[1] Li Yi, *"Yishi wenhua de weiji huan shi xianshi de weiji - Liu Shuxian dui zhongguo chuantong wenhua he zhengzhi xianshi de kanfa" (A crisis of ideology and culture or a crisis of reality: Liu Shuxian's view on Chinese traditional culture and the political system)*, The Nineties, Issue 219, April, 1988, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, pp. 82-91.

[2] Li Yi, *"Yishi wenhua de weiji huan shi xianshi de weiji - Liu Shuxian dui zhongguo chuantong wenhua he zhengzhi xianshi de kanfa" (A crisis of ideology and culture or a crisis of reality: Liu Shuxian's view on Chinese traditional culture and the political system)*, The Nineties, Issue 219, April, 1988, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, pp. 82-91.

[3] Li Yi, *"Yishi wenhua de weiji huan shi xianshi de weiji - Liu Shuxian dui zhongguo chuantong wenhua he zhengzhi xianshi de kanfa" (A crisis of ideology and culture or a crisis of reality: Liu Shuxian's view on Chinese traditional culture and the political system)*, The Nineties, Issue 219, April, 1988, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, pp. 82-91.

[4] Su, Xiaokang, Wang, Luxiang, *"Heshang" (The river elegy)*, Feng yun shi dai Press. & Jin feng Press, Bei Shi, Taiwan, 1988, pp. 1-6.

[5] Su, Xiaokang, Wang, Luxiang, *"Heshang" (The river elegy)*, Feng yun shi dai Press. & Jin feng Press, Bei Shi, Taiwan, 1988, pp. 7-21.

[6] Su, Xiaokang, Wang, Luxiang, *"Heshang" (The river elegy)*, Feng yun shi dai Press. & Jin feng Press, Bei Shi, Taiwan, 1988, pp. 22-37.

[7] Su, Xiaokang, Wang, Luxiang, *"Heshang" (The river elegy)*, Feng yun shi dai Press. & Jin feng Press, Bei Shi, Taiwan, 1988, pp. 38-53.

[8] Su, Xiaokang, Wang, Luxiang, *"Heshang" (The river elegy)*, Feng yun shi dai Press. & Jin feng Press, Bei Shi, Taiwan, 1988, pp. 54-70.

[9] Su, Xiaokang, Wang, Luxiang, *"Heshang" (The river elegy)*, Feng yun shi dai Press. & Jin feng Press, Bei Shi, Taiwan, 1988, pp. 71-85.

[10] Su, Xiaokang, Wang, Luxiang, *"Heshang" (The river elegy)*, Feng yun shi dai Press. & Jin feng Press, Bei Shi, Taiwan, 1988, pp. 86-101.

Chapter 11: Chinese Writers and Artists and the Democracy Movement of 1989

11.1 Demands for Release of Political Prisoners and Respect for Human Rights

1989 had been expected to be a year of social unrest, with the 70th anniversary of 4th May movement and 10th anniversary of Wei Jingsheng's demands for a reform in the Chinese communist system. Wei Jingsheng was still in prison following his condemnation of Deng Xiaoping's dictatorship in 1979. Having seen no further progress in official reforms, both intellectuals and students began to search for ways of breaking new ground in the Chinese society in order to push forward Deng Xiaoping's reforms. It became obvious and necessary to launch a reform in the communist political system as Wei Jingsheng pointed out in 1979.

At the beginning of 1989, the authorities were challenged by three groups of Chinese intellectuals: (a) Fang Lizhi, an independent scholar, (b) Chinese poets, novelists and critics, and (c) Ren Wanding, a democrat, all demanding the release of political prisoners and respect for human rights. On 6th January, Fang Lizhi, Professor of Astrophysics at Anhui University of Science and Technology, wrote a public letter to Deng Xiaoping, in which he requested the release of Wei Jingsheng, who he regarded as a political prisoner. Fang Lizhi took a very moderate tone and intentionally tried to avoid any confrontation with the authorities. He wrote:

> "Disregarding how Wei Jingsheng should be judged, I think that it is humane to release him. He has already served ten years in prison. Moreover, it will be conducive to gaining the support of our people."[1]

In a later interview with Hong Kong journalists, Fang Lizhi later explained why he did not point out in the public letter that Wei Jingsheng was innocent, saying that on many occasions he had already made clear his view on Wei Jingsheng's innocence. To him, Wei Jingsheng had made great contribution to China's reforms, but Fang Lizhi deliberately did not mention this again in order to make his letter more acceptable to the authorities.[2]

Following Fang Lizhi's request to Deng Xiaoping, 33 Chinese intellectuals also signed a letter to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress: Bei Dao (poet), Shao Yanxiang (poet), Niu Han (poet), Lao Mu (poet), Wu Zuguang (playwright), Li Tuo (novelist), Bing Xin (prose writer), Zhang Jie (novelist),

Zhong Pu (novelist), Wu Zuqiang (composer), Tang Yijie (critic), Yue Daiyun, Huang Ziping, Zhang Dai, Chen Pingyuan, Yan Wenjing (novelist), Liu Dong (critic), Feng Yidai (poet), Xiaoqian (novelist), Su Xiaokang (novelist), Jin Guantao (critic), Li Zehou (critic), Pang Pu, Zhu Wei, Wang Yan, Bao Zhunxin (critic), Tian Zhuangzhuang (film director), Liu Qingfeng (critic), Mang Ke (poet), Gao Gao (writer), Su Shaozhi (reform theorist), Wang Ruoshui (journalist), and Chen Jun (democrat). Their letter made three requests: (a) the release of Wei Jingsheng and other political prisoners, (b) that the authorities respect human rights, and (c) the abolition of regulations regarding counter-revolution in the National Constitution. In their letter, they emphasised that

> "Amnesty, particularly the release of Wei Jingsheng and other political prisoners, would help create a harmonic environment, which will be conducive to China's reforms. Meanwhile, it would also be accordance with the increasing international trend of respect for human rights. "[3]

Su Shaozhi and other Chinese intellectuals such as Yan Jiaqi (scholar in political science), Yi Yang (writer) and Yu Haocheng (jurist) also wrote a series of articles, criticising the Anti-Bourgeois-Liberalism campaigns and demanding respect for human rights.[4]

An unofficial magazine called *New Enlightenment* was also published on 28th January, 1989. It was the first magazine of its kind since the unofficial magazines were suppressed during the Beijing Spring movement ten years previously. Wang Yuanhua, a literary critic and former Director of the Propaganda Department of the Party Committee of Shanghai in 1985, was appointed Editor, and *New Enlightenment* was distributed through Dule Book Store, sponsored by Chen Jun, a young intellectual. Its aim was stated to be to educate the public with new ideologies and theories, but in fact its lengthy and academic articles could only reach students and intellectuals.[5]

Shortly before the two letters mentioned above were written, Ren Wanding, one of the key members of the China Human Rights Alliance, had sent at the end of 1988 a letter to the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations, demanding the international community investigate the state of political prisoners in China. In his letter, Ren Wanding wrote: "I have myself been imprisoned in China and I am deeply aware of the pains of staying in prison."[6] Ren Wanding had established the China Human Rights Alliance on 1 January, 1979 and was the author of *Declaration of Human Rights in China*. He demanded freedom of ideology, speech and respect for human rights. He was arrested on 4th April in 1979 and sentenced

to four years in prison.[7]

11.2 Responses from the Authorities

Some senior communists saw the two letters and the approach to the United Nations as serious threats. They believed that they were facing another attack attempting to weaken official ideology under Deng Xiaoping's reforms, and therefore such tendencies must be stopped immediately. Chen Yun, Director of the Advisory Committee to the Central Committee of the Communist Party, wrote a report on the situation to the Central Committee of the Communist Party. He believed that the Chinese ideological field was completely occupied by the bourgeoisie and that nothing was left for the proletariat, and warned that the communist regime was likely to be overthrown if ideology and publicity were not strictly controlled by the authorities. The ideological battlefield must therefore be regained without delay.[8] Bo Yibo shared Chen Yun's fears, believing that the demands for the release of political prisoners and respect for human rights was a signal for an intellectual attack on the Communist Party. He proposed an immediate campaign be launched, counter-attacking against the trends of anti-party and anti-Mao Zedong's thoughts.[9]

However, other senior communists did not agree. Zhao Ziyang, General Party Secretary, suggested a moderate approach towards the increasing demands for political reforms, and also saw the situation as an opportunity to push Deng Xiaoping's reforms forward. Zhao Ziyang believed that there were currently two trends in Chinese politics: facing various difficulties, some people wanted to withdraw from reforms and return to the same old socialist road, but others wanted to take the opportunity of the current hard times to promote western models of politics like an elected parliament and a multi-party system. Zhao Ziyang did not support either of these, though he hoped to continue Deng Xiaoping's reforms while rejecting these two extreme options at the same time. Zhao Ziyang made two important decisions: to reject the possibility of any political campaigns against the intellectuals, rejecting Chen Yun and Bo Yipo's requests, but to ignore the intellectuals' demands while controlling them through censorship in the media.[10]

A compromise therefore seemed to have been reached between the two sides within the communist authorities. While the majority of intellectuals remained untouched, Chen Jun was chosen as a target by the authorities, and official propaganda machine was mobilised to accuse Chen Jun of using other intellectuals for his purposes. Both *New Enlightenment* magazine and Dule Book Store were closed down on 28th February, 1989.[11]

Facing official pressure, it seemed that the intellectuals were afraid of any confrontation with the authorities and most decided to withdraw from their initial stand, explaining that they only wanted to express their wishes to the authorities and had no intention to make a public and fundamental issue of it, though some individuals such as Fang Lizhi and Ren Wanding were known to remain persistent. This rapid retreat was presumably for two reasons: fears based on previous experience of official political persecution, and rejection of any kind of politics including politics in the name of democracy. When it was obvious through this climb-down that intellectuals as a whole were unable and unwilling to take on the social task of pushing for a reform in the political system of China, this role was then taken over by the generation of Chinese students who had been inspired by those same intellectuals.[12]

11.3 The Course of the Democracy Movement of 1989

The terms "Democracy Movement" and "Student Movement" were often used interchangeably to describe the social upheaval that happened in China in 1989, so it is important to establish definitions before entering into a discussion of the significance of structure and events.

A close examination of the course of the democracy movement in 1989 suggests to me that there were three distinct factors. First, the movement involved the requests for the release of political prisoners in China as discussed above. This aspect has often been ignored in the subsequent examinations of the democracy movement of 1989. Generally the intellectuals were hesitant and had deep reservations about the recent student demonstrations of 1985 and 1989, while they rejected involvement in any political struggle occurring within the communist system in terms of either support and opposition, unlike the role of young intellectuals during Beijing Spring movement of 1979. Secondly, initially at least the main contribution was restricted to the students' movement in Beijing. Thirdly, at a large stage it was participated in by hundreds and thousands of workers and citizens as well as students throughout the country, so it therefore became a great social movement across China. However, for the purpose of this study I shall only concentrate on the Chinese intellectuals in the context of the role they played in the democracy movement and the consequences they were subjected to. In this sense, the course of the democracy movement only serves as a background rather than a study of the 1989 democracy movement as a whole - something that would require more than one thesis on its own.

Chinese intellectuals had two theoretical views regarding the course of the

democracy movement in early 1989. Some believed that it was a movement independent of official influence in contrast with other reforms which had been encouraged by at least some factions of the authorities. The movement grew out of the students' disappointment with the government in their failure to introduce further reform, with the apparent impossibility of resolving various crises caused by the operation of the communist system and the system's apparent inability to create a relatively fair distribution of wealth among different interest groups in the Chinese society.[13] Senior Communist Party and government officials at all levels were known to be living in great luxury, and new wealthy businessmen and rich farmer classes were emerging, all with access to unlimited Western luxuries, while the condition of the great mass of the people seemed to get worse. Racketeering and political decisions to redistribute food created successive panics, as over the winter cabbage supply in November 1988.[14] Others argued that the widespread resentment of the Chinese public about the new inequality created by with the communist system, and their participation in the protests were the driving force behind the democracy movement, which was shown not only by their support to the students' movement of 1989, but also expressed in the rioting against the government in the previous years. For example, there were very large scale peasants riots both in Shandong and Sichuan provinces in 1986 and there was a street demonstration of 200,000 people in Yueyang city, Hunan province in 1987.[15]

On the other hand, until it was almost too late the authorities believed that it was the intellectuals who not only provided a theoretical basis and publicity for the democracy movement, but that they used students in their attempts to overthrow the communist regime. The intellectuals were regarded as a real threat to the communist ideology and listed them as top "criminals" to be arrested. However, most scholars and students themselves agreed that the Chinese government greatly exaggerated the role of the intellectuals and mis-interpreted their attempts to co-operate with the government as an attempt to destroy it.

Hua Yue, Lecturer at Beijing University, summed up the role of Chinese intellectuals in the democracy movement. First, they certainly provided theories and publicity for the movement through various books and articles they wrote, though in fact they did not involve themselves in organising the movement. Fang Lizhi shared this view: he argued that the role of intellectuals on the whole was restricted to ideological influences such as academic discussions and demands for the release of political prisoners. Secondly, they only real support of the students' movement prior to the announcement of military control on 19th May, 1989 was through the establishment of the Association of Intellectuals' Support, followed by the organising of the Federation of Beijing Intellectuals on 22nd May.

They did not in fact take a leading role in this movement though they were widely expected to do so by the students. Thirdly, intellectuals in fact attempted to co-ordinate and reduce potential confrontation between the students and the government in order to head off a more violent reaction by the government, advising the students to be restrained and strategic in their struggle against the government, while trying to decrease the government's fear and hostility of this massive movement by demonstrating their loyalty through constructive approach to the criticism of the authorities.[16]

The best interpretation of this behaviour is that, first, the Chinese intellectuals over all generally believed in the reforms launched by the government, which created an attitude of co-operation and co-ordination rather than confrontation. Secondly, they were themselves suspicious of the student movement as well as its potential consequences and therefore took an attitude of reservation rather than leadership or direct participation. The memories of the Red Guards and chaos caused by them during the Cultural Revolution between 1966 and 1976 might also have contributed to their perplex attitudes towards the students' movement. Thirdly, the intellectuals were not prepared for, and indeed were confused by the great social impact caused by the students movement, which they not only expected but also had called for with enthusiasm in their books and studies.[17]

11.4 The Support of Students' Demonstrations from the Writers and Artists

It was 70th anniversary of the 4th May movement in 1989 and it was to be expected that students in Beijing would go into streets to celebrate this, but Hu Yaobang's sudden death on 16th April brought forward the student demonstrations. Hu Yaobang had been forced to resign due to the burst of students' demonstrations at the end of 1987, accused of failing to control the political situation in China. The students took the opportunity offered by his death and went to Tiananmen Square to pay their respect to this strong supporter of Deng Xiaoping's reforms. Once there, the students demanded democracy, and punishment of the widespread corruption among government and the Party officials. They tried to start a dialogue with the authorities, but were disappointed with the responses. Refusing to leave Tiananmen Square, they held hunger strikes to demonstrate their determination to fight for democracy and freedom. On 19th May, the Chinese authorities decided to take action and proclaimed martial law throughout Beijing, greatly angering the general public in addition to the students. Thousands of Beijing citizens and workers took to the streets and prevented tanks and trucks, loaded with soldiers, from entering into the Tiananmen Square. In the meantime, street demonstrations spread over the whole country. The authorities were shocked by the reaction of the Chinese

general public and revised their strategy. Two weeks later on the night of 3rd June, soldiers forced their way through the defending masses and 4th June Massacre happened.

During the progress of the democracy movement, many Chinese writers and artists also took to the streets and supported the students in various ways, though it was difficult to estimate how many of them were actually involved. First, it could be seen that many senior writers joined the students on the streets. They had all at one time or another tried very hard to improve the communist system through their constructive criticism, but now they switched to street demonstrations to express their views. Secondly, writers and poets who used to be underground but later became accepted and authorised by the authorities gave up trying to work within official reforms and demanded more freedom. Thirdly, some young avant-garde poets and artists came out of their isolated world and used their artistic expressions and poetry in praise of freedom and democracy. Finally, a few independent critics and musicians, such as Liu Xiaopo and Hou Dejian, not only joined student demonstrations but also tried to lead the students' movement in order to carry the movement to a further stage in terms of negotiating with the government through democratic principles, rather than staying blindly in street based struggles.

The support of the democracy movement among intellectuals, writers and artists was so varied in nature that it was difficult to summarise any collective position on what their demands were. The number of individuals pursuing their interests were so diverse that it is dangerous to generalise their objectives, but on the evidence, the best hypothesis appeared to be that most expected the authorities to continue their reforms and respond positively to the three key demands: the release of political prisoners and abolition of the laws against counter-revolutionaries in the National Constitution, the establishment of a dialogue with the students on an equal basis, and the acceptance of independent literary and arts organisations in addition to official arts associations.

11.5 The Official Suppression of Writers and Artists

After the military defeat of the democracy movement of 1989, the imposition of intellectual control was strongly reinforced, since the authorities believed that the student movement had been caused by the slackening of ideological control in China. Having learned this lesson, the authorities also demanded the promotion of Mao Zedong's theory of class struggle in the arts, the need to take back "strongholds" which it was argued, had been lost to the bourgeoisie, the launching of initiatives using the arts as a weapon in the fight against liberalism,

and the waging of an absolute and complete fight against anti-communist ideologies throughout the country.[18]

With these aims, the authorities strengthened the mind control of the Chinese public in several ways. Demands for freedom were suppressed by putting writers or artists into prison. From information revealed to the public and the other evidence gathered so far, it can confirmed that there were at least 38 writers, poets, journalists, editors, critics, composers etc. who were arrested by 1990. (See Table 11.1 below) As a direct result of these purges, Chinese writers and artists began to flee to the West in large numbers and those who were already in Western countries refused to return to China and also chose exile for the time being. At least 42 more writers or artists can be listed in this category. (See Table 11.2)

The authorities also banned publications which they believed spread anti-communist ideologies, particularly those which had refused to act as the voice of the Party during the democracy movement. For instance, the sale of *New Observer* magazine rose sharply from 147,000 to 1.27 million due to its independent coverage of the movement. According to Xiaochong's article published in *Emancipation*, over 300 publications were banned between June 1989 and August, 1990. However, the reasons for the official ban is not always clear: many of them might have been banned, for example as pornography.[21] In my examination of the cases, it was clear that the fear of media impact led to the censorship or total banning of at least twelve publication for political reasons by 1990. (See Table 11.3)

This policy was applied on a national scale and led to massive censorship of the arts. For example, 239 publications had been sent to the National Press and Publication Bureau from just four provinces for cancellation by the end of 1989, though the Bureau decided that 166 of them were not in accordance with their censorship standards and were to be allowed in circulation (69% of the 239 publications sent to Beijing for censorship were in fact authorised).[22]

Early in 1990, the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee issued six "disciplines" to clarify and reinforce the censorship of the media and publications. These were: (a) articles promoting bourgeois-liberalism and values as well as other counter-revolutionary writing were absolutely prohibited, (b) articles which were pornographic, feudal, immoral, presented violence leading to crimes were absolutely prohibited; c) articles relating to the Nationalist Party of China (Kuomintang) and the Cultural Revolution were to be submitted for provincial censorship, and articles about the political changes and collapse of communism in the USSR and Eastern European countries were not to be published, (d) strict

censorship was to be applied to Western literature and Chinese popular literature, and works of low, poor or even pornographic nature were not to be published for money-making purposes, (e) articles about prostitution were not allowed to be published in any publications (referring to its coverage by some legal or police magazines in order to attract readers), and (f) articles about sexual knowledge were to be sent to official censors before going to print.[23]

The propaganda machine was fully mobilised to promote official ideology. Between July 1989 and February 1991, the authorities published over 50 publications totalling 2.5 million copies, either official explanations of the 4th June Massacre or accusations of Chinese intellectuals. For example, in this seven months period there were five books published in criticism of Su Xiaokang's *The River Elegy* , the television series: *Criticism of the River Elegy, On the River Elegy Again, A Hundred Mistakes of the River Elegy, the Trap of the River Elegy, What Has the River Elegy Promoted.*[25]

As the same time as exercising censorship over existing publications, the authorities established three national literary and theoretical magazines in their efforts to fight against the spread of anti-official ideologies on a long term basis. These were *Midstream, Contemporary Ideologies,* and *Pursuit of Truth,* the contents of which gave a valuable insight into the official position on the controversies. Followers of official ideology were promoted to be responsible for these new magazines and they began to act as the immediate voice of party policies towards the arts.[26] It seemed that the authorities also fully appreciated the impact of TV media on the wider public, apart from their fear of losing television to their potential opponents. They tried their best to criticise the TV series *The River Elegy,* and also made a pro government TV series entitled *Tour of the Century* as a counter to *The River Elegy.* Wang Zhen, Vice Chairman of State, and Deng Liqun, former Director of the Central Propaganda Department, ordered the production of this series, expecting that it would educate young people in the glory of the Communist Party of China.

To ensure the rapid and complete implementation of the new policy direction in the arts, replacement of senior arts officers was carried out in the second half of 1989. Those who were believed to be liberals were dismissed and replaced by believers in Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts or those who were not radicals in support of Deng Xiaoping's policy of indirect leadership over the arts. These replacements spread through three levels of government and the Party system: directors of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the provincial and city Party Committees, directors of Media and Educational Departments, ministers and directors of the Ministry of

Culture, Provincial Bureaux of Culture, and National and Provincial Arts Associations were replaced in variable numbers. (See Table 11.4 & Table 11.5)

Due to the massive participation of the writers and artists in the democracy movement, the National Writers' and Artists' Federation and the National Writers' Association were decentralised. Instead of belonging to the national association, all the local branches were put under direct control of the local government departments of culture and the local propaganda departments of the party.

Table 11. 1 Writers and Poets Arrested 1989/90 [19]

No	Name	Description	Year of Arrest
1.	Bao Zunxin	writer	1989
2.	Ba Tie	poet	1990
3.	Dai Qing	senior journalist	1989
4.	Feng Chuan	poet	1989
5.	Gao Ertai	critic	1989
6.	Gao Xin	senior editor	1989
7.	Gao Yu	journalist	1989
8.	Gou Mingjun	poet	1990
9.	Hou Dejian	composer, song writer	1989
10.	Ke Yunlu	writer	1989
11.	Li Dan	senior reporter	1989
12.	Li Guiren	senior editor	1989
13.	Li Yiawei	poet	1989
14.	Liao Yiwu	poet	1989
15.	Liu Taiheng	poet	1990
16.	Liu Xiaobo	lecturer	1989
17.	Lu Jiamin	lecturer	1989
18.	Pan Jiazhu	poet	1990
19.	Sun Changjiang	senior editor	1989
20.	Wan Xia	poet	1990
21.	Wang Juntao	senior editor	1989
22.	Wang Peigong	writer	1989
23.	Wang Ruowang	senior editor	1989
24.	Wu Jiaxiang	writer	1989
25.	Xu Xiaowei	journalist	1989
26.	Yang Hong	journalist	1989
27.	Yang Lang	senior journalist	1989
28.	Ye Niu	poet	1990
29.	Ye Wenfu	poet	1989
30.	Yu Haocheng	critic	1989
31.	Zhang Shu	journalist	1989
32.	Zhang Weiguo	senior journalist	1989
33.	Zhang Xizhi	journalist	1989
34.	Zhao Yu	writer	1989
35.	Zhou Lunyou	poet	1989
36.	Zhou Tuo	lecturer	1989

Table 11.2 Intellectuals in Exile 1989 [20]

No	Name	Description	Year of Exile
1.	Ai Ruanwu	senior editor	1989
2.	Bei Dao	poet	1989
3.	Bei Meng	writer	1989
4.	Bei Ling	poet	1989
5.	Cai Chongguo	writer	1989
6.	Chen Anqi	editor	1989
7.	Chen Kaige	film director	1989
8.	Dai Houying	writer	1989
9.	Duo Duo	poet	1989
10.	Gao Gao	writer	1989
11.	He Liwei	writer	1989
12.	He Ping	senior editor	1989
13.	Hu Chengwei	journalist	1989
14.	Hua Wenyi	actress	1989
15.	Hua Wu	lecturer	1989
16.	Kong Jiesheng	writer	1989
17.	Lao Gui	writer	1989
18.	Lao Mu	writer	1989
19.	Liu Binyan	senior journalist	1989
20.	Liu Hongbin	poet	1989
21.	Liu Zaifu	critic	1989
22.	Ruan Ming	critic	1989
23.	Su Wei	critic	1989
24.	Su Shaozhi	writer	1989
25.	Su Xiaokang	writer	1989
26.	Tian Fen	writer	1989
27.	Wang Rensheng	writer	1989
28.	Xu Gang	poet	1989
29.	Yan Jiaqi	writer	1989
30.	Yan Tingting	writer	1989
31.	Zhang Boli	writer	1989
32.	Zhang Dai	journalist	1989
33.	Zhang Lun	writer	1989
34.	Zhang Minyi	journalist	1989
35.	Zhang Tielin	film director	1989
36.	Zhao Fushan	professor	1989
37.	Zhao Wei	writer	1989
38.	Zu Wei	writer	1989

Table 11.3 Official Ban of Publications 1989/1990 [24]

No	Name	Type of Publication	Year of Ban
1.	Chinese World	magazine	1989
2.	Economist	magazine	1989
3.	Hainan Report	magazine	1989
4.	Hundred Schools	magazine	1990
5.	Intellectuals	magazine	1989
6.	Literary Critic	magazine	1990
7.	New Century	magazine	1989
8.	New Observer	magazine	1989
9.	Shekou Report	newspaper	1989
10.	White Snow & Red Blood	Book	1990
11.	Thinkers	magazine	1989
12.	World Economist	magazine	1989

Table 11.4 Dismissals of Senior Arts Officers 1989/1990 [27]

No	Name	Post	Year of Dismissal
1.	Cheng Kai	Chief Editor, Hainan Daily	1989
2.	Du Dao	Director, Bureau of Media and Publication	1989
3.	Hu Qili	Secretary of the Central Committee	1989
4.	Luo Zhengqi	Principal, Shenzhen University	1989
5.	Mu Qing	Director, Xinhua New Agency	1989
6.	Qian Benli	Chief Editor, World Economist	1989
7.	Qian Liren	Director, People's Daily	1989
8.	Tan Wenrui	Chief Editor, People's Daily	1989
9.	Wang Jifu	Deputy Minister of Culture	1990
10.	Wang Meng	Minister of Culture	1989
11.	Wu Xiaoyong	Director, Central TV Station	1989
12.	Yao Xihua	Chief Editor, Guangming Daily	1989
13.	Ying Ruocheng	Deputy Minister of Culture	1990
14.	Zhang Mengfei	Chief Editor, Shekou Report	1989

Table 11.5 Appointments of Senior Arts Officers 1989 [28]

No	Name	Post	Year of Appointment
1.	Ding Zhenhai	Arts Editor, People's Daily	1989
2.	Gao Di	Chief Editor, People's Daily	1989
3.	He Jingzhi	Acting Minister of Culture	1989
4.	Hou Minze	Arts Editor, Literature & Arts Post	1989
5.	Le Huiming	Director, Central Bureau of Theory	1989
6.	Li Zhun	Director, Central Bureau of the Arts	1989
7.	Ma Feng	Party Secretary, China Writers' Association	1989
8.	Ma Weian	Chief Editor, China Cultural Post	1989
9.	Wang Furu	Director, Central Bureau of Media	1989
10.	Wu Shuqing	Principal, Beijing University	1989
11.	Xing Fensi	Vice-Chancellor, Senior Univ. of the Party	1989
12.	Xu Feiguang	Chief Editor, Zhongliu	1989
13.	Xu Weicheng	Deputy Director, Central Propaganda Dept.	1989
14.	Yu Wen	Party Secretary, Academy of Social Science	1989
15.	Zheng Bonong	Chief Editor, Literature & Arts Post	1989

11.6 Promotion of Mao Zedong's Thoughts

Apart from replacing arts administrators who were supporters of Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership with believers in Mao Zedong's policy of direct control of the arts, the thoughts of Mao Zedong were again promoted by the authorities, though this led to complications which confused both the observers of China's politics and the Chinese authorities themselves.

Ideologies of anti-Mao Zedong's thoughts came under severe official criticism. For example, there had been a series of articles which cautiously modified Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts between 1987 and 1988.[29] They argued that the policy had been essential during the wars of the 1940s, but it required modification after peace was achieved in 1949. A dialectical analysis was therefore necessary. In 1989 this trend of revising Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts was stopped by the authorities and Mao Zedong's view of the arts such as his principle of the arts weapon in the fight against the bourgeoisie, the arts as cogs and wheels of the revolutionary machine were all re-established and reinforced in ideological education.

Mao Zedong's works, portraits, records of revolutionary songs of his period and his memorials were again promoted. For example, over 11 million portraits of

Mao were printed between 1989 and 1992, and students and government officials were once again being forced to study Mao Zedong's thoughts. There were two main reasons for this. First, the authorities believed that there was a lack of ideological control in Deng Xiaoping's reforms which had led to continuous social unrest in China, and sought a return to the acceptance of Mao Zedong's direct control of Chinese society through strengthening the study of Mao Zedong's thoughts. Particularly, their fear of a peaceful transformation, as Mao Zedong had warned, increased drastically after the collapse of the communist regime in Romania, followed by other Eastern European countries, and finally the USSR. Secondly, some of the senior communists who disagreed with Deng Xiaoping's policies took advantage of the situation, regarding the student unrest as an opportunity to regain the power they had lost during the ten year period of Deng Xiaoping's reforms.[30]

The Chinese public reacted to this sudden renewal of official promotion of Mao Zedong with fascination: Mao Zedong's works and his memorials became best sellers on the book shelves, and his portraits not only were worshipped as "God of Protector"(because he had been such a fierce character that he scared way all evils and monsters) of the family in the Chinese countryside, particularly in his home province of Hunan, but also appeared in rock concerts full of excited young people. Chinese students, similar to their predecessors, the Red Guards of the Cultural Revolution, showed great interest in his "Little Red Book", though they read it in an attempt to learn his tactics in their struggle against the communist government rather than worship it.

What explanations can be offered for this astonishing change in public attitude? First, the Chinese public, particularly the peasants, focused and expressed their dissatisfaction with Deng Xiaoping's administration by showing a renewed interest in Mao Zedong. They felt deprived and excluded in the re-distribution of social wealth brought about by Deng Xiaoping's reforms. The incapability to control inflation by Deng Xiaoping's administration, widespread corruption and racketeering among government and the Party officials, and increasing feelings of social injustice and inequality all contributed to the public disappointment and criticism of the authorities. They began to recall by comparison Mao Zedong's tight control of inflation and corruption, while ignoring at the same time various injustice and crimes caused by Mao. Secondly, the students' illusions about Deng Xiaoping's reforms were shattered by the 4th June Massacre. Having been frustrated in their hope of reforming China through democratic principles, some of them saw Mao's theory on the use of military force to correct injustice as an alternative. They therefore began to study Mao Zedong's works in a different way from the Red Guards and re-interpreted Mao according to their purposes. For

example, Mao Zedong's slogan of "whoever suppresses the students would not have a good end" curiously contributed to his popularity among the Chinese students who rebelled against the system Mao himself created.

However, the Chinese authorities seemed to have failed in their promotion of Mao Zedong's thoughts, particularly his policies towards the arts among officials of ideological control. It was this dilemma that soon led to the promotion of Deng Xiaoping's thoughts on the arts again, though it was now claimed to be part of and a continuation of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts. Although some of the national key positions in the arts were now filled by firm believers of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts, many less senior and most junior arts officers who had been promoted during Deng Xiaoping's reforms between 1979 and 1987 were still in power. Gradually, the reformers started to renew the principle of indirect arts leadership again. Despite censorship, they also began to further experiment with the implementation of a cultural market, of arts legalisation and the concept of arts funding as alternatives to both Mao Zedong's direct control and the previous experiments under Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership over the arts.

11.7 Conclusion

This study of the writers and artists' participation in the democracy movement of 1989 suggests that Chinese writers and artists cautiously began to challenge the political system by demanding the release of political prisoners and the abolition of the laws against counter-revolutionaries in the National Constitution, though they tried to avoid any confrontation with the authorities in their approach. When confrontation became inevitable, it seemed that most of them chose to withdraw rather than defending their beliefs, because of a combination of constant suppression and persecution by the authorities, and the lack of independence which had been destroyed by the communist regime or by the Chinese feudal culture.

During the student movement, Chinese writers and artists attempted to play a role of co-ordination and communication between the students and the government. The students who expected leading intellectuals to be their leaders were disappointed with their inaction in the democracy movement. The authorities were extremely suspicious of their intentions due to their fear of their influence among the Chinese public, particularly the young. These two factors together led to their failure in the movement. However, it can be seen that Chinese writers and artists, for the first time, attempted to act as an independent group in exercising certain influence on official policy-making. Though their

participation in the democracy movement was limited and somewhat reserved, this independent voice made it very clear that academies were no long contented to be a cog of the revolutionary machine and decided to speak out for themselves. Independent Chinese arts organisations in opposition to the authorities therefore began to take shape.

The Chinese authorities were shocked by the massive, wide-ranging demands for reform of the political system, and chose to suppress those demands with military force. They believed that the democracy movement that originated with the spread of ideologies by intellectuals, and writers and artists, and therefore the authorities needed to take tough actions against them through imprisonment, censorship and reinforcement of ideological control. Consequently, Chinese writers and artists greatly suffered from this official suppression. Some of them were arrested, dismissed and persecuted, while chose to seek political asylum in Western countries despite of the effect of cultural conflict in terms of language, audience or readers, and social values. However, those who stayed in China found it difficult to continue their artistic creation under its political environment: though they continued their artistic experiments, some of them did not expect to communicate them to the public and began to form a kind of "literature of the drawer" - keeping their writings in their desk drawers rather than try to publish them.[31]

Some of the Chinese writers and artist began to question the legitimacy of the communist regime, refusing further co-operation with the government and beginning to fight against the communist system in their own ways. In the past, they had always tried to find possibilities for working with the government in the development of a modern China, despite various political persecutions launched by the authorities. Deng Xiaoping's reforms had provided a good opportunity for them to work with the government, but they were greatly frustrated again due to the nature of the communist regime. The Tiananmen Square Massacre of the 4th June became a turning point for them and many began to express their rejection of the Chinese government in their speeches or works, including Wu Zuguang, Liu Binyan, Su Xiaokang as discussed in this dissertation,.

This study also suggests that Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts was resurrected and promoted again as official policy for the time being and firmer believers of Mao Zedong who had previous been demoted were put to some of the key positions in the arts again. These then attempted to impose Mao Zedong's direct control over the arts, though this was met with strong resistance from various sides within Chinese society. The explanation seems simple: Deng Xiaoping's reforms had brought a lot of changes to Chinese society and it was

now almost impossible to turn the clock back, and those involved in the arts were only a minority in Chinese society and had little influence on the Chinese public though they controlled some key positions in the arts and media. Therefore Deng Xiaoping's indirect leadership over the arts was still supported by the authorities and interpreted as a continuation of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts. This suggests that the authorities were not only prepared to ensure the implementation of Deng Xiaoping's policies, but also eager to find possibilities to continue the experiments with this policy. This ambiguity was a dilemma for the Chinese arts officers while offering an opportunity (or perhaps a danger), for the Chinese writers and artists.

Notes to Chapter 11

[1] Information Library of Emancipation Monthly, *"1989 nian dashe" (Amnesty in 1989)*, Emancipation Monthly, March, 1989, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, p. 11.

[2] Jin Zhang, *"Fang Lizhi lun zhongguo de renquan" (Fang Lizhi's talk on the issue of human rights in China)*, Emancipation Monthly, January/February, 1989, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, p. 6.

[3] Special Correspondent for Cheng Ming Monthly, *"Haineiwai zhongguo zhishifenzi de lianhe xingdong" (The united action of Chinese intellectuals both at home and overseas)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, March, 1989, Issue 137, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, p. 22.

[4] Information Library of Emancipation Monthly, *"1989 nian dashe" (Amnesty in 1989)*, Emancipation Monthly, March, 1989, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, p. 11.

[5] Information Library of Emancipation Monthly, *"1989 nian dashe" (Amnesty in 1989)*, Emancipation Monthly, March, 1989, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, p. 11.

[6] Xu Xing, *"Ren Wanding zaici wei zhongguo renquan huyu" (Ren Wanding appealed for human rights in China again)*, Emancipation Monthly, January/February, 1989, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, p. 17.

[7] Xu Xing, *"Ren Wanding zaici wei zhongguo renquan huyu" (Ren Wanding appealed for human rights in China again)*, Emancipation Monthly, January/February, 1989, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, p. 17.

[8] Luo Bing, *"Dui Zhao Ziyang de san da gongji" (Three attacks on Zhao Ziyang)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, March, 1989, Issue 137, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 6-7.

[9] Luo Bing, *"Dui Zhao Ziyang de san da gongji" (Three attacks on Zhao Ziyang)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, March, 1989, Issue 137, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 6-7.

[10] Luo Bing, *"Dui Zhao Ziyang de san da gongji" (Three attacks on Zhao Ziyang)*, Cheng Ming Monthly, March, 1989, Issue 137, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 6-7.

[11] Luo Bing, *"Dui Zhao Ziyang de san da gongji" (Three attacks on Zhao Ziyang)*, Cheng

Ming Monthly, March, 1989, Issue 137, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 6-7.

[12] Special Correspondent in China for Emancipation Monthly, *"Zhao Ziyang de diwei tong renquan yundong" (Zhao Ziyang's position and the human rights movement)*, Emancipation Monthly, March, 1989, Emancipation Monthly Press, Hong Kong, p. 8.

[13] Recorded by Cheng Si, *"Minyun wei women liuxia liao shenmo?" (What has the democracy movement left for us?)* The Nineties, June 1991, Issue 257, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, pp. 48-49.

[14] Boylan, P. (1994) Personal communication from his observations made during his official visit to Beijing and Sichuan province (Chongqing, Chengdu and Zigong) in November-December, 1988.

[15] Recorded by Cheng Si, *"Minyun wei women liuxia liao shenmo?" (What has the democracy movementleft for us?)* The Nineties, June 1991, Issue 257, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, pp. 48-49.

[16] Recorded by Cheng Si, *"Minyun wei women liuxia liao shenmo?" (What has the democracy movementleft for us?)* The Nineties, June 1991, Issue 257, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, pp. 48-49.

[17] Recorded by Cheng Si, *"Minyun wei women liuxia liao shenmo?" (What has the democracy movementleft for us?)* The Nineties, June 1991, Issue 257, Going Fine Ltd., Hong Kong, pp. 48-49.

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Chapter 12: Conclusions

12.1 Motives of Deng Xiaoping's Policy towards the Arts

By the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976, Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts had not only proved to be a failure but also been a disaster for the arts in China. Writers and artists had been deprived of the right to create and had suffered massive persecution. Experienced arts officers had been dismissed from office and sent to labour camps and replaced by a new generation of radicals who were ignorant about the arts, and both traditional Chinese and Western arts had been banned and replaced by the revolutionary arts monopoly. After Mao there was an opportunity for change and Chinese writers and artists were eager to regain their right to create, but on the other hand, Deng Xiaoping and other senior Chinese officials felt an urgent need to launch reforms in both the economic and the arts fields to reinforce the communist regime, so simply freeing the arts and cultural workers was not on the agenda.

There appeared to have been three basic reasons for Deng Xiaoping's reform in the arts. First, Deng Xiaoping recognised that there was widespread disillusion with and criticism of the Communist Party after the Cultural Revolution, which had not only greatly damaged the communist system but also its authority. Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution had proved to be both immensely destructive and a failure in every field, including the arts. Consequently there were great post-Mao demands among the people for reconstruction and reform, and it was obvious new policy had to be worked out quickly to build on what was left by Mao Zedong, and at the same time rescue the communist regime. Secondly, Deng Xiaoping had disagreed with Mao Zedong's extreme pursuit of the ideals of revolution at the cost of gravely damaging the state economy and the people's livelihood, and Deng Xiaoping had several times expelled from core decision-making structures because of his scepticism about Mao Zedong's policies and strategy. After thirty years of power struggles within the Communist Party, Deng Xiaoping had finally emerged victorious and now had the opportunity to put his ideas about the running of the state into practice when he assumed supreme office, even without the top official position in China, namely Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Thirdly, Mao Zedong's "hundred schools" principle had still not been fully implemented and its concept of cultural diversity still remained attractive to the Chinese public, which offering the possibility of further experiments.

When he first initiated reforms in Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts, Deng Xiaoping seemed to have had no intention of criticising Mao's policy as a whole

but simply aimed to revise part of the current policy to suit his needs. To establish his authority and carry through his reforms, Deng Xiaoping launched a criticism of Mao's policies of the period of the Cultural Revolution, but at the same time tried to limit the criticism so as to avoid the risk of damaging the communist system itself. He also dismissed some of the arts officers who were most firmly committed to Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts to assist in imposing his reforms. But on the other hand he also dismissed arts officers who had supported his reforms but then wanted them to be taken much further. The former served to warn Deng Xiaoping of the danger of losing the control over the arts while the latter were a risk to his policies because they believed that such problems could only be solved through further liberalisation and freedom in the arts, which might eventually threaten the stability and even the survival of the communist system.

This study suggests that Deng Xiaoping initially intended to limit criticism to Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts implemented during the period of the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976, and to restoring the arts to the policies of the so-called period of National Construction from 1949 to 1966. However, as the post-1979 reforms continued, demands for wider criticism of Mao Zedong mounted, coupled with demands for more freedom under the "open door" policy, and it was feared that the authority of his administration weakened. Deng Xiaoping's approach to reforms was characterised by his pragmatism, namely to improve and develop through experimentation. At times when he believed that the demands for freedom were exceeding the tolerance of the authorities, Deng Xiaoping launched campaigns to strengthen official control over the arts. However, when he saw that experimentation was stopped, he appointed new supporters of his policy to key official position in order to start innovation again. During the whole process of the implementation of his policy towards the arts, Deng Xiaoping attempted to achieve a balance between returning to the repression and control of Mao Zedong's policies towards the arts and the establishment of more artistic freedom, though the almost inevitable result of all this was a stop-go cycle in the arts.

12.2 The Shift from Direct to Indirect Control over the Arts

Having experienced the failure of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts during the period of the Cultural Revolution, Deng Xiaoping decided on an indirect approach to the control of Chinese writers and artists, but it is clear that this shift from direct to indirect control over the arts caused confusion and misinterpretations among both Chinese writers and artists and arts officers. When Deng Xiaoping announced that he was genuinely committed to

implementing Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts of "letting a hundred flowers bloom and a hundred schools of thought contend" and that writers and artists would enjoy freedom of creation without the interference of arts officers, this was interpreted in very different ways by Maoists and reformers in the arts world.

Arts officers who were more in favour of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts assumed that the arts administration in China would revert from that of the Cultural Revolution period to that of the earlier period of the National Construction. These arts officers believed that the arts were to serve the workers, peasants and soldiers by praising the achievements of these three group in the "socialist construction", and they did not want to see artistic products which exposed the dark side of life under the communist leadership. Though Deng Xiaoping claimed that the arts no longer had to serve politics, they refused to publish works which provoked a challenge to the political hierarchy. Nor did the officers accept the fact that writers and artists should now be free to create work without the permission of arts officers. To these, Deng Xiaoping's "indirect leadership" over the arts was regarded as just another name for continuing with Mao Zedong's successive policies of control over the arts except for the greatest excesses of the Cultural Revolution.

In contrast, supporters of Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts appeared to be more in favour of taking Deng's policy forward to the future rather than look backwards to past periods coupled with demands for further reforms in terms of the introduction of Western science, technology, culture and changes to the political and economic system. These reformers seemed to believe that Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts must be re-interpreted through the implementation of Deng Xiaoping's policy of "indirect leadership" over the arts. Though they would prefer writers and artists to create work in praise of Deng Xiaoping's reforms, they did not believe any criticisms by writers and artists could do much harm to the cause. The reformers (and perhaps Deng Xiaoping himself) expected that the writers and artists, once given a certain amount of freedom, would produce better and supportive work without receiving detailed instructions from arts officers. They were content as long as the creative products of writers and artists could bring credit to the reforms overall, and did not insist on the arts directly serving the politics of a particular period.

In marked contrast, believers in Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts always saw the arts as a potential danger to the authorities. When new forms of artistic expression appeared or new subjects were involved following Deng Xiaoping's assumption of full power in 1979, they began to panic and demanded tight

control over the arts through political campaigns. In 1981, they supported the first Anti-Bourgeois Liberalisation campaign to suppress the growing demands for further freedom of expression. In 1983, the Anti-Spiritual Pollution campaign was launched to stop controversial debate among intellectuals and writers and artists, which banned works relating to alienation of socialism and human rights. In 1985, anti-reformers launched the second Anti-Bourgeois Liberalisation campaign to suppress the growing fight against censorship of the arts. In 1989, they supported the massacre in Tiananmen Square suppressing the demands for reform in the political system of China. Throughout the period studied they were always reluctant to shift from direct to indirect control, and were always ready to slow down the pace of reform, choosing direct control to cope with crises faced by the authorities whenever these arose.

In contrast with these, supporters of Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts concentrated more on experiments in indirect control, letting writers and artists decide what to create or write and how to exercise their art. When the demands of writers and artists exceeded what was expected, they refused to take brutal measures and instead tried to keep the crisis of authority at a tolerable level and to solve problems by introducing new and less repressive methods of control. Between 1986 and 1989, Deng Xiaoping's administration gradually established a new cultural elite consisting of famous writers and artists appointed to various levels in arts administration. However, when appointed, most if not all worked together to ensure that constructive criticism remain under control, that the radical voice was unheard, but that the "indirect leadership" experiment was taken further.

12.3 The Three Stages in the Implementation of Deng Xiaoping's Policy towards the Arts

The implementation of Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts between 1979 and 1989 can be divided into three periods. The first period, from 1979 to 1981, was very short-lived. During this period, Deng Xiaoping made his announcement of "indirect leadership" over the arts: something which was greatly welcomed by Chinese writers and artists. It seemed that Deng Xiaoping was reforming Mao Zedong's pattern of arts administration greatly. However, he expected writers and artists to be satisfied with the amount of freedom granted and that they would therefore produce works according to the on-going needs of Deng's socialist construction. Between 1979 and 1981, Deng Xiaoping's administration also started to appoint some writers and artists to government posts in replacement of career communist party officials to carry out the reform in the arts while at the same time isolating others who made stronger demands for

freedom of expression.

The second period lasted from 1981 to 1985. During this Deng Xiaoping continued to modify his policy in the direction of restriction of freedom of expression, after having observed the increasing trend to liberalism. Deng Xiaoping kept warning his arts officers to be aware of the danger that growing dissident voices might in the end destroy the authority of the communist system. There were three major modifications in his policy towards the arts: the arts were not allowed to be independent from politics though the arts did not have to directing belong to or be subordinated to politics, writers and artists must take the interests of the people and the Communist Party into consideration in their creative work, but that censorship was to be applied against both unofficial publications and the introduction of contemporary Western culture. However, Deng Xiaoping's administration did not abandon his "indirect leadership" over the arts and they continued to appoint some writers and artists as key arts officers while at the same time implementing wider censorship against controversial art forms and works.

During the third period from 1986 to 1989, the implementation of Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts was put on hold. Promotions of writers and artists to key posts ceased and interference in the development of the arts by arts officers intensified. However, demands for independence, freedom, and the fight against censorship were still growing. Deng Xiaoping's administration failed to resolve this conflict between the writers and artists and arts officers, and responded with direct control of the arts, which was greatly strengthened after 4th June Tiananmen Square Massacre in 1989. Some key arts officers who had been recruited from the artistic community were dismissed from office and replaced by arts officers who were mainly followers of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts or less radical reformers. However, this process failed to spread down into the middle and lower levels for four reasons: (a) after ten years of reforms, it was impossible to return to the old times of Mao Zedong at the practical level, (b) there were not enough young arts officers around who still believed in Mao Zedong's direct control over the arts, (c) just as it had been difficult for Deng Xiaoping to replace established cadres at the middle and lower levels when he first initiated his reforms, it was now difficult to replace reformers who were already promoted to various posts in a large country like China, and (d) Deng Xiaoping had no intention of filling all the key posts in arts administration to arts officers who were unenthusiastic about, if not positively hostile to, his approach of indirect control of the arts.

Deng Xiaoping concluded that the biggest mistake his administration had made

during his reforms between 1979 and 1989 were the failures to achieve ideological control and the inconsistency of the fight against liberalism and spiritual pollution, and he blamed his reformers for these from his regent post. He therefore made it clear that hard measures were to be applied in the fight against liberalism and that education in political ideology must be strengthened. However, this change in policy did not mean that Deng Xiaoping was replacing his policy of "indirect leadership" over the arts with direct control. In fact, Deng Xiaoping's administration generally chose to appoint arts officers who were neither radical reformers nor those who were keen to resume the extreme part of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts. Therefore, he hoped, his reforms were guaranteed of further implementation and progress.

Throughout the implementation of Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts between 1979 and 1989, there had consistently six main challenges from Chinese writers and artists in response. They are: criticism over the lack of legal basis for the policy, demands for further freedom of expression, constructive criticism and the fight against censorship, the pursuit of independence for writers and artists, criticism of Chinese culture and its philosophical basis, and demands for a reform of the communist system. Each of these is discussed in turn below.

12.4 The Lack of Legal Support for the Implementation of Deng Xiaoping's Policy towards the Arts

When he launched the "indirect leadership" over the arts reform, Deng Xiaoping failed to introduce any legal system or structure to ensure its implementation. There were two obvious consequences of this. First, arts officers were in practice still free to interfere with the artistic creation of writers and artists according to their own interpretations of policies and there was no way of punishing or controlling them through legal proceedings even if their decisions were not in line with the official policies of the time. Secondly, the writers and artists had little or no means to defend their freedom of expression if their artistic creation was disrupted by arts officers. They proved to be vulnerable to the individual officer's manner of implementation and this led to both inconsistency and instability rather than any form of "leadership" of the arts.

Arts administration in China moved around a vicious circle between 1979 and 1989. Once the writers and artists experimented in their works, the arts officers almost always intervened to stop or ban them. Deng Xiaoping's administration still claimed that writers and artists could enjoy freedom of expression without the interference of arts officers and there were periods of relative toleration. However, their work was continuously interrupted and writers and artists were

subjected to various political campaigns by arts officers who wanted to return to Mao Zedong's policy of requiring the arts to serve the political and social system, enforced by direct control of all parts of the arts system and production while on the other hand there were also arts officers who supported Deng Xiaoping's "indirect leadership". During ten years this cycle repeated four times on a national scale and the instability greatly damaged the initiatives of the writers and artists, hence the demands for legal protection to prevent the arts officers from interfering in the traditional way.

The results of this study suggests that Deng Xiaoping's administration had failed to foresee the complexity of the planned reform in the arts and did not have the experience to establish and use arts legislation as an aid in arts administration. In 1979, the new leadership inherited the huge arts army established by Mao Zedong to control the arts, but this was soon deeply divided as Deng Xiaoping's "open door" policy was introduced. Though Deng Xiaoping's new policy towards the arts was welcomed by the majority of China's creative community, it soon proved inadequate to cope with the various challenges made by the writers and artists themselves particularly their demands for legal protection for their right of creativity.

As his policy towards the arts was further developed over the following years, it seemed that the most Deng Xiaoping's administration had been able to do was to appoint new arts officers to key position who were writers or artists themselves and had a keen interest in the development of the arts rather than the traditional type of political arts officers. However, no one concerned had experience of using arts legislation to ensure such developments remained free from political interference and censorship by the old-style arts officers of the Mao Zedong era, who continued to be in much of the key positions in the administration of the arts in China.

12.5 Demands for Further Freedom of Expression

This research shows that demands for freedom of expression have been a major priority of Chinese writers and artists since 1979. As presented in Chapters 3 and 4, it was recognised that freedom of expression was vital to their artistic creation. During the implementation of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts between 1942 and 1976, the writers and artists had been deprived of such freedom, but with Deng Xiaoping's reforms of 1979 they began to demand it. Some writers and poets and other artists chose to gain freedom of expression while working within the framework of Deng Xiaoping's reform in the arts, but as Deng Xiaoping's "indirect leadership" over the arts failed to meet their demands and hopes over

the following years, they were deeply disappointed and continued to fight ever more openly for freedom of expression in China. Others decided to leave China for the West in search for new opportunities after their radical views were suppressed by Deng Xiaoping's administration in the first of few cycles of repression in 1981.

In general, the demands for freedom of expression during the early period of implementation of Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts focused on Mao Zedong's often broken promise of "letting a hundred flowers bloom and a hundred school of thought contending". Though criticism of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts during the Wartime period and the Cultural Revolution period was voiced in 1985 and 1986, all criticism of Mao's policy towards the arts during the National Construction period of 1949 and 1966, Deng Xiaoping's "indirect leadership" sought to re-establish, was still prohibited in China.

12.6 Constructive Criticism and the Fight against Censorship

In this study of Deng Xiaoping's reform in the arts, I have examined a number of cases where Chinese writers and artists supported Deng's aim and attempted to make it work better through their own contribution to it. However, Deng Xiaoping's administration failed to accept their suggestions and on the contrary chose to expel them from the arts system.

For example as discussed in Chapter 4: Dangers Inherent in the "indirect leadership" policy, Bai Hua's aim was to improve the communist system when he pointed out the crisis behind Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts, but his criticism of the obedience of writers and artists to the authorities, his attempts finding reasons behind the disasters brought about by the communist system, and his persistence in reflecting the dark side of the Communist Party combined to make him a threat to the government, and consequently some of his controversial works were banned by the authorities. This case suggests that the crisis behind the "indirect leadership" over the arts was not only a theoretical danger but also a reality. Problems arose whenever the "indirect leadership" over the arts policy met new challenges. Three factors, the strength of Mao Zedong's followers, Deng Xiaoping's pragmatic attitude towards Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts, and the pursuit of freedom of writers and artists kept this crisis at a high level. Later, the participation of new arts officers, selected from established writers and artists, contributed to its complexity. Failure to keep the balance between the four factors would lead to the panic of the government, which was inclined to intervene again, repeating the vicious circle of swings between "indirect leadership" and direct control over the arts.

As discussed in Chapter 5: The Vulnerability of Assumed Legal Right to Freedom of Expression, Wang Ruoshui identified the vulnerability of the presumed and implied legal right of Chinese citizens to freedom of expression. His solution focused on three areas for improvement in the development of the "indirect leadership" principle: freedom of creativity legally guaranteed as a citizens' right, the legalisation of party policies, and the regulation of the boundaries of freedom and creativity. However, all his suggestions were also rejected by Deng Xiaoping's administration.

Chapter 6: Constructive Criticism shows that, like many other senior writers, Liu Binyan welcomed Deng Xiaoping's principle of "indirect leadership" over the arts, but was also aware of problems such as its inadequacy in carrying out its promises and intended to improve it through constructive criticism. The loyalty of Liu Binyan and his associates to the communist system was based on the assumption the system itself was healthy, but could be improved. However, their efforts, though intended to be very positive, appeared to be threatening rather than constructive in the eyes of the authorities.

As discussed in Chapter 7: Censorship, Deng Xiaoping's administration seemed determined to apply censorship as a means to control the growing trend towards liberalism and moves away from official ideologies. When they realised that the "indirect leadership" over the arts had failed to direct Chinese writers and artists to the production of works which contributed to the construction of socialism, the authorities decided to intervene and instead control the development of the arts through censorship.

These cases suggest that the result was a tragedy for both Deng Xiaoping's administration and various writers affected. The former kept excluding the most constructive members of the arts community from its system while the latter had failed to improve the communist system which they believed in.

12.7 The Quest for the Independence

This study of the quest for the independence recommended by Ma Jian and Liu Xiaobo, as discussed in Chapters 8 and 9, suggests that it was impossible for writers and artists to be isolated from the complexity of Chinese politics. As long as they lived in the Chinese society ruled by the Communist Party, as long as they continued to express their artistic interpretations of the world around them, it was inevitable that they became subject to official suppression if their creative output was seen as threatening, or even simply unorthodox.

It seems that a new generation of Chinese writers and artists was taking shape. Liu Xiaobo and their associates regarded official policy towards the arts only as a new alternative to control writers and artists and they did not believe that the "indirect leadership" policy of Deng Xiaoping could lead the arts to true development. Such beliefs were shaped and strengthened by both the impossibility of Deng Xiaoping's arts officers assuring freedom of creativity and the inability of Chinese writers and artists to fight for such freedom due to their almost total economic and social dependence on the authorities. This generation therefore attempted to search for real independence, not the sham autonomy promised in Deng Xiaoping's "indirect leadership" speech of 1979.

Liu Xiaobo also pointed out the dangers behind Deng Xiaoping's "indirect leadership" over the arts: in essence this sought the control of writers and artists by other writers and artists. Liu Xiaobo believed that such control would lead to another destruction of Chinese culture because Chinese intellectuals knew better than anyone else how to use their knowledge to exclude controversial theories and art works that differed from official policies. Compared with Mao Zedong's direct control of the writers and artists which was at last carried out openly by arts officers who had little or no knowledge of the arts, Deng Xiaoping's "indirect leadership" over the arts was in Liu Xiaobo's view more dangerous for it was to be implemented by arts officers who had sold out their specialised knowledge to the authorities.

12.8 Criticism of Chinese Culture

In Chapter 10's study of Criticism of Chinese Culture in Relation to Official Ideology, we can see that writers and artists chose criticism of Chinese culture itself as an alternative forum in their search of freedom for two main reasons. First, their previous attempts to carry out reforms in the arts were suppressed by the authorities through censorship. In order to avoid official persecution, they now continued to fight for their freedom through an indirect approach. Secondly, criticism of Chinese culture quickly turned into criticism of some of the foundation of the communist system in China. Since the current official ideology was at least partly based on traditional Chinese feudal culture and used the same methods in the attempt to stop further infiltration of Western ideology , these intellectuals believed that it was necessary to re-examine the history of Chinese culture and engage in a critical analysis of the communist system in a historical context. In their view, a better understanding of the problems caused by Deng Xiaoping's administration could not be achieved simply through a criticism of the communist system but that a criticism of Chinese culture which provided its basis

was equally essential. It is also suggested that the impact of television media, one of the key propaganda machines used by the authorities, played an important role in this case. When the producers began to express their voice through television, they reached a much wider audience, creating a new challenge to the communist ideology.

Official reaction to these criticisms was divided. Supporters of Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts saw this as another opportunity to break new ground in their reform of the arts and encouraged the writers to continue their criticism of Chinese culture. However, believers of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts regarded such discussion as a threat to the communist ideology and pushed to tighten the censorship of mass media.

12.9 Demands for Reform of the Communist System

The detailed examination of The Chinese Writers and Artists and the Democracy Movement of 1989 in Chapter 11 suggests that there were two important changes in the relationship between the writers and artists and the government. First, writers and artists began to act as an independent group to exercise influence on Chinese policy-making and refused to be used as tools of Deng Xiaoping's administration. Secondly, they believed that the future of the arts depended on further reforms of the communist system. They therefore began to challenge the political system and to question the legitimacy of the communist regime itself though with great caution, thus avoiding any serious confrontation with the authorities.

The study also suggests that Chinese writers and artists still had a long way to go in their search for freedom of expression. When the Chinese government continued with its experiments in the "indirect leadership" over the arts, it was still possible for writers and artists to compromise themselves with the authorities for two reasons: (a) giving in to the constant suppression and persecution by the authorities, and (b) their lack of independence which was destroyed by both the communist regime and Chinese feudal culture.

12.10 The Fundamental Changes in the Arts

This examination of the challenges to Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts finally concludes that Deng Xiaoping's "indirect leadership" over the arts produced two fundamental and almost irreversible changes to the arts in China. First, there was a shift from the direct control of the arts under Mao Zedong's regime to the indirect control of Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts. This

changed the role of the arts to one of the serving the development of the economy rather than politics. From 1979, Deng Xiaoping developed that part of Mao Zedong's policy towards the arts which had been implemented during the National Construction period but abandoned both earlier and later policies. The "indirect leadership" was successful in promoting a spectrum of arts officers who had an arts background and who supported Deng's policy to positions at all levels of arts administration. The arts benefited in several ways: massive physical persecution of writers and artists in general was changed into persecution of only those writers and artists who challenged the official policy, imprisonment of writers and artists was replaced by forcing them into exile abroad, public defaming of writers and artists was replaced by silencing them and ignoring their challenge so that their influence was kept at a minimum, the delegation of arts tasks was replaced by the promotion of writers and artists who supported official policies and the suppression of controversial writers and artists through censorship, while communist ideology was kept at a low key within the arts: the new ideological focus was on the official promotion of traditional culture.

The changes also provided an opportunity for Chinese writers and artists to exercise relatively more freedom in their artistic creation and quest for independence compared with their harsh experience under Mao Zedong's regime. However, this led to the periodic crises in the authority relating to its administration of the arts. Such changes appeared in several ways. More varieties of arts forms and some of traditional and Western art forms were allowed, and official heroes and heroines continued to be promoted and glorified, and other descriptions of human nature were allowed to a certain extent. Though works conducive to the socialist construction were not officially demand, the writers and artists were allowed to carry out experiments according to their own interests, while the writers and artists became more aware of the importance of gaining independence for the arts and therefore actively fighting for freedom from official control.

These changes reflected the increasing demands for democracy by the Chinese public, the gradual but constant demands for freedom of expression by writers and artists, and Deng Xiaoping's pragmatic (though contradictory) approach: seeking simultaneously to political control of the communist regime while developing an economy which was a mixture of the residue of socialist central planning and an ultra-capitalist free market. Therefore, at the end of the 1980s the arts and the Chinese society in general were undergoing an evolutionary process rather than a drastic change that occurred in the arts of the former USSR and Eastern European socialist states with the overthrows or abandonments of the communist system.

Chapter 13: Postscript

13.1 Popular Arts and the Gradual Collapse of Communist Ideology in China

Apart from the specific question of the challenge to Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts as discussed in this dissertation, there was also a significant movement going on within the arts generally in China, namely a gradual and consistent collapse of official ideology, contributed to by the arts as well as the democratic movement, the spread of liberalism, the influence of Western culture and commercialisation.

While the Chinese authorities tried their best to control the mass media in order to influence public opinion, the arts enjoyed relatively more freedom of expression under Deng Xiaoping's administration compared with that of Mao Zedong. Instead of challenging Deng Xiaoping's policy towards the arts, some writers and artists chose to avoid confrontation with the authorities. To them, survival was victory, which meant to get their voices heard by the public concerned.[1] They did not mind making compromises in order to get through official censorship and they chose to concentrate on finding ways of developing of their artistic expression rather than directly criticising the environment which prevented such development. Pop singers and film directors stood in the forefront of this group.

When the arts army of Mao Zedong was still chanting revolutionary songs in 1977, pop music began to spread from Hong Kong to South China, and soon it spread all over China and conquered the Chinese general public. The monotonous, high-pitched revolutionary songs were easily beaten by everyday stories of love and sorrow, sung by a friendly voice. In 1979, there was only one national distributor of cassette tapes. By 1991, this had increased to 180 with an annual distribution figure of over one billion tapes.[2] Later, Western pop singers also arrived, contributing to the Chinese pop music scene. Chinese pop singers who followed the Western style and music found themselves famous overnight, but gradually they found their own voice and began to express their feelings in their own songs.

When Deng Lijun's cassettes (a pop singer from Taiwan whose records came into China through Hong Kong) were played in China in the 1980s, she proved to be so popular that there was a saying which went as "the day is under Old Deng's control [referring to Deng Xiaoping] but the night belongs to Little Deng". So Deng Lijun's songs were banned and both the

cassettes and the tape-recorders used to play her songs were confiscated by the authorities during the first Anti-Bourgeois-Liberalisation Campaign in 1981.

Soon two important Chinese pop singers emerged. One of them was called Li Guyi, a former local opera singer, and the other was Su Xiaoming, a singer from the Arts Troupe of the Chinese Navy. The former was attacked by the communist hard-liners for her so called "vulgar taste" way of pop singing. The latter was criticised for having destroyed the revolutionary will of the military forces with her 'cradle-style' "*The Night of the Military Harbour*". Later, Cui Jian, the first Chinese rock singer to emerge, could play only at a few semi-underground venues due to official censorship, though his style of mixing Western rock and Northern Chinese folk rhythm appeared extremely popular with the Chinese youth. Further more, he used some revolutionary songs and changed into his rock and dropped the so called "revolutionary spirit", upsetting the Chinese authorities with his satire, anger, frankness and presentation of absurdity of the changing China. His popularity gradually went beyond official control and finally peaked in 1990 in his campaign to raise fund for the Asian Games hosted by China, one year after the Tiananmen Massacre. While many Chinese writers and artists, particularly those in exile, refused to support the Asian Games in 1990, Cui Jian proposed to support it with a series of concerts throughout China. By doing so, he gathered the Chinese youth in large crowds again, singing his song of "*The Last Bullet*", which, he insisted, had no relevance to the Tiananmen Massacre. Arts officers were confused by Cui Jian's approach: while they hesitated on whether or not to ban him, Cui Jian's appeal continued to increase amongst Chinese youth.

In general, pop singers made three contributions towards the gradual collapse of official ideology. First, they destroyed the dominant position of revolutionary songs and replaced revolutionary ideals with the feelings of the real and common people. Secondly, they contributed to a new variety of Chinese musical expression, ending the dictatorship of revolutionary songs. Thirdly, their popular appeal out-matched the impact of revolutionary songs and inspired the collapse of official ideology in a massive scale .

A further popular art and entertainment form, film-making, revived by the Fifth Generation of directors, most of whom were graduates from the Beijing Film Academy in the early 1980s, including Chen Kaige, Tian Zhuangzhuang, Zhang Zhuchao, and Zhang Yimo were among the most

famous. In China, there are 16 feature film studios, which formed the backbone of the film industry. In terms of the number of cinema venues, a word about its general spread can be useful. Cinema venues in China are usually divided into two categories: cinemas in urban and county areas, and in-house and out-door cinema points in rural areas. For example, there were 561 cinemas and over 2,000 cinema points in Hunan province by 1991. They provided access for the Chinese public to films produced by the above film studios.

The Chinese authorities applied a type of intermediate censorship on the film industry which was tighter than that for the general arts and looser than that for television and radio industry. the massive production of film and the structure and the state funding system also made it more difficult for directors to exercise their freedom of expression. Perhaps, it was due to these two reasons that film directors chose an approach which differed from others, such as those writers who challenged the official policy towards the arts. However, despite the problems many managed to shape the new films with their own experimentation.

In 1984, two particularly significant films were completed for public screening: *The One and the Eight* directed by Chen Kaige and *The Yellow Earth* directed by Zhang Zhuchao, both filmed by Zhang Yimo. Later, Zhang Yimo himself directed *Old Well*, *Red Sorghum*, *Judou* and *Raise the Red Lantern*. These films were all acclaimed abroad and most of them won important international film awards. Some of them confused the Chinese general public but they were appreciated by a special fringe audience in the case of *The One and the Eight*, *The Yellow Earth*, and *Old Well*, while others were popular with both the public and the critics. However, all were disliked by the authorities and subjected to various kinds of censorship from time to time according to the changes of political climate.

These films also shared three common characteristics: (a) innovative film techniques were applied, (b) there was a relative absence of dialogue and the emphasis was on environment and atmosphere rather than plot and characterisation, and (c) all had true depiction of real life and poverty. As with the gradual collapse of official ideology contributed to by pop music, these three characteristics of the films of the Fifth Generation directors also contributed to that process. In particular, they presented an alternative film language to the eyes of the Chinese public which were used to seeing only official propaganda in films, they showed realistically the poverty and backwardness of communist China and contradicted the glamorised

characters and plots depicted in other officially approved films, some of them even beat the audience figures of official, much more accessible, films.

13.2 The Arts and Commercialism

The rapid spread of commercialism in the arts, begun in the late 1980s, has been a most astonishing phenomenon in China, particularly so since Deng Xiaoping's tour of South China in early 1992. We can now see a clear and further shift in the official policy towards the arts: art now serves the economy rather than politics. The government has at last began to speed up its process of arts legislation, but primarily in the direction of the development the arts market within the communist system, accompanied by a growing loss of control of the arts by the government in the face of the general trend of commercialism.

The Massacre in Tiananmen Square of 1989 seemed to put Deng Xiaoping's reform programme on hold from 1989 to 1991, in most of areas of life, first economic reform gave away to political rectification and central planning, and many of Deng Xiaoping's own supporters were dismissed from office. Ideological education was also re-emphasised to reinforce the communist regime. However, Deng Xiaoping managed to re-launch his reforms again in early 1992 after his tour of southern China, and since then the arts in China have entered an era of commercialism at an even faster pace.

During the 1992 tour Deng Xiaoping made a series of speeches in Wu Chang, Shenzhen, Zhuhai and Shanghai, which were later issued as Document No. 2 of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. In these he called for more daring reforms and more experiments in implementing his reforms, the placed economic development as a priority, but coupled with the prevention of social disorder and continued fights against bourgeois liberalisation while also proposing the selection of a younger generation of reliable communist successors throughout the official system.[6]

Deng Xiaoping clearly believed that only economic prosperity could ensure the legitimacy of communist China, and that he needed to prevent interference from both left and right extremists to achieve the objectives of his reforms as well as avoiding the collapse of the communist regime as had happened in the former USSR ad Eastern European socialist countries. Both imperatives were also emphasised in his speeches during his South

China tour of 1992.

Even before he launched his reforms in 1978, Deng Xiaoping was already well-known for putting the economy before politics. As his reforms developed, his emphasis on economic development has become more and more insistent, winning him great popularity among the Chinese population at large. The same has been true with his re-launch of reforms in 1992: most of Chinese were fed up with politics and were only concerned with their own economic welfare. Commercialism soon spread all over China, and "business" became the most popular topic in the Chinese families .

The arts also began to face the challenge of the commercial market. Regarding the implementation of arts reforms in 1992, Qu Runhai, Director of the Arts Bureau of the Culture Ministry proposed four developments: (a) good works are needed to meet the demands of the time, (b) a generation of creative, managerial talents is needed, (c) investments into the arts and the establishment of a system which provides financial rewards to writers and artists are also required, and (d) both social and the financial benefits should be examined in the assessment of artistic works.

In 1942, Mao Zedong had insistent that art must serve politics. In 1978, Deng Xiaoping instructed that art did not have to serve politics directly. In the early 1980s, arts commercialism emerged and was experimented with companies set by the government in order to earn foreign currency. This trend was further encouraged and took shape in the mid 1980s by the direct involvement of Hu Yaobang, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the time, it was wide-spread in the late 1980s. By 1992, the shift from art serving politics to art serving the economy was completed. The value and quality of art was now to be accessed by its contribution to the economy rather than its own merits. Arts enterprises were, at an even faster speed, set up with the strong encouragement of the government and the artists to be directly involved in the sale of arts commodities. For example, the Central Experimental Theatre was determined to make itself a limited company, which then not only set up its own Culture and Arts Development Agency but also applied for permission to form its own taxi company to raise funds to support its artistic development. Yang Zhongjing and Hu Zuodong, Deputy Directors of the Central Experimental Theatre explained that the arts were no exception in the process of forming an economic market: they would no longer rely on the

Ministry of Culture but planned to make the Theatre a corporation and rely on its own capital.[8] Even within the system of state subsidy major changes were happening. for example, the Chengdu Cultural Bureau decided to reward arts groups which performed more than their set targets at 100 *yuan RMB* per extra performance, with a 100 *yuan RMB* penalty for those who failed to achieve the contractual level. Under such new regulations, the Chengdu Theatre started to market its repertoire to popular venues such as night clubs, karaoke halls and restaurants.[9]

Secondly, arts commodities were produced in massive quantities to meet the demands of the growing arts markets and tourist industry. Paper-cut, embroidery hats, shoes, brush paintings and calligraphy filled the market, earning foreign currency from Western tourists and exports. Some folk artists were said to be able to understand four languages - English, Japanese, German, French, but only one phrase in each: "how much?". Quality also dropped: a panda in every picture seemed to be the rallying cry of artists of all kinds as they produced work for tourists and exports.[10] Peking Opera was another case in point. Facing the rise of pop music and karaoke, Peking Opera saw a sudden drop in audience, particularly among young people. For example, there were only a few venues for karaoke in 1986. By 1990, there were over 330 karaoke venues in Beijing which obtained permits for business from the authorities. In March 1991 the Central Department of Propaganda of the Central Committee of the Communist Party also recognised the impact of karaoke, particularly its influence on the young people, and decided to organise seven major records companies to produce an official version of Chinese karaoke in form of video tapes, cassette and CD, consisting of 1,000 songs.[11] To cope with the competition and maintain its box office income, Peking Opera had to drop much of its traditional repertoire and instead staged repertoire with heavy acrobatic acts to attract both the younger audience and foreign tourists. Thirdly, exports of Chinese arts of all kinds were expanded in order to earn foreign currency for both domestic investment and for the benefit of the arts organisations themselves, and even secondary schools were allowed to build up foreign currency accounts from Chinese trading with foreign tourists and abroad.[12] For example, the China Performing Arts Agency, an executive agency under the Ministry of Culture, played a key role in the exports of China's performing arts to Western countries. In 1992 and 1993, it promoted a tour of the China State Circus, consisting of forty acrobats and five musicians, in the UK charging only 1,000 *dollar USD* per performance.[13] All these activities were carried out primarily to serve the aim of developing the economy through the arts and developing the arts

by commercial exploitation, above all to earn foreign exchange for the arts organisations.

In 1993, the Ministry of Culture issued thirty-one pieces of legislation for the arts, aiming to ensure: the co-ordination of policy towards the arts and the arts market, the efficiency of government management of the arts, and to further reform arts administration in terms of the shift from restriction and control to serving the commercial development of arts.[14] These regulations mainly involve three areas. First, they were intended to contribute to the development of an arts market in China, particularly the rise of the arts in the leisure and entertainment industry such as dance halls, karaoke, fashion shows, the video industry, computer games etc.. For example, there were over 800 dance halls in Chengdu alone and it was estimated that over 200,000 people went to them everyday in 1990.[15] Secondly, new laws were issued to regulate the arts industry in relation to the international arts market, for example, overseas tours by Chinese artists and Chinese tours by foreign artists, aiming to earn foreign currency for Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms. Thirdly, there were wage system reforms in arts administration, including royalties and awards for writers and artists, sponsorship for the arts and joint-ventures in the arts industry through foreign investment.

Today China has over 170 pieces of legislation relating to the arts, most of them issued since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. In the past in legal matters, Chinese writers and artists mainly suffered from three phenomena: the failure to implement those arts legislation, violation of the arts legislation by arts officers, and government control in terms of restriction of freedom of expression through arts legislation. It is ironic that when Chinese writers and artists argued for more than ten years that they needed new arts legislation to legitimise Deng Xiaoping's "indirect leadership" policy, they were ignored, but when new laws were needed to serve the arts market they were introduced with little delay. It seems that Chinese writers and artists are now facing two major consequences of Deng Xiaoping's attempts to reform the arts administration through much new arts legislation: there is now much more effective control of the arts following the reinforcement of arts legislation by Deng Xiaoping's administration, and the rising dominance and chaos of the arts market, which is now controlled by the invisible, instead of visible, hand of the government.

In China over the last ten years the arts have witnessed a general collapse

of government control, reflecting the following: direct control of the arts had proved to be a failure, "indirect control" of the arts as proposed by Deng Xiaoping has met with continuous criticism and challenges from within the arts world, most communist regimes have already collapsed and most expect this will sooner or later happen in China as well, Deng Xiaoping's reforms, though having postponed the total collapse of the communist regime in China, have prepared its tomb: instead of a sudden destruction as in the former USSR and other countries, the Chinese communist system is likely to collapse through a gradual process, and the Chinese writers and artists have become more aware of the importance of freedom of expression in their artistic creation and have consequently begun to fight for their own independence.

Though Deng Xiaoping's administration has been trying in various ways to prevent their loss of control over the arts, it is already happening all over China. This has manifested itself in three ways: official ideology has been increasingly ignored and abandoned by writers and artists, arts officers have lost confidence in official ideology and are only concerned to make the most for themselves out of Deng Xiaoping's reforms, and the widespread commercialism of the arts has greatly reduced government influence: the market has begun to replace government control over the arts.

In relation to the arts, they now have the best opportunity for development since the communist regime came into power, and the arts should benefit from the general loss of government power. On the other hand, the arts are still likely to suffer from both the government's last ditch attempts to reinforce its control over the arts and the coming chaotic consequences of the eventual collapse of the Chinese communist empire. We seem likely to see a division in the development of the arts in China. On the one hand, the art market is going to play a more and more important role and contribute to the commercialising of the arts even under the communist regime. On the other hand, the importance of the arts within the political system has been reduced with the decline of official ideology and, therefore, the arts should have more freedom to develop according to their own natural laws. As discussed in his thesis *In Victory, the Arts Are Walking towards the Fringe*, Dr. Henry Zhao, Senior Lecturer in Modern Chinese Literature at School of Oriental and African Studies, London University, suggested that the arts in China are moving towards the fringe of both the government control and the arts market. Also the arts may eventually have an opportunity to operate in an environment similar to the Western models of arts

administration according to the progress of reform of the Chinese political system.

13.3 The Future for the Arts in China After Deng Xiaoping

Mao Zedong's death in 1976 was a turning point for China. After a transitional period Deng Xiaoping launched his reforms and brought forward great changes in China, particularly moves towards a market economy. However, Deng Xiaoping is already 90 years old and last summer he stopped his usual swimming in Beidaihe, leading to a lot of speculations about his state of heath. Between 1992 and 1993 China also saw the death of other two senior state leaders: Deng Yingchao, Chairman of the National People's Congress and Wang Zhen, Vice-Chairman of State. The other senior ageing communist leaders such as Chen Yun and Yang Shangkun are also not far away from "meeting with Karl Marx" (a popular phrase used by the communists referring to death). Therefore, the health of Deng Xiaoping and other senior communist leaders has attracted public attention and it is natural for people to ask what will happen after Deng Xiaoping's death. Will China move towards a democratic and liberal state? Or will China collapse into civil war, a danger close to the top of Chinese politics for hundreds of years? These are the two main questions often discussed and debated among those who are concerned about the future of China.

Deng Xiaoping's reforms can be seen as a general process of decentralisation of state power in the decision-making over both the economy and politics. The local governments of provinces and autonomous regions have gained much more power in the most recent communist history. When Mao Zedong died in 1976, Deng Xiaoping was the only person among the communist leadership who could manage to exercise personal authority in the decision-making of Chinese state affairs. However, his authority has never matched that of Mao Zedong and was gradually weakened during the progress of his reforms, with the challenge from democrats, dissidents, liberals, writers, poets and artists, new entrepreneurs as well as the emerging relatively younger communist leadership both in the central and local governments. Deng Xiaoping had to rely on alliances with other senior communist leaders such as Chen Yun, Wang Zhen, Yang Shangkun and Deng Yingchao etc. to carry out his reforms. However, certainly no other communist leader can match his authority in the shaping of Chinese politics, and the decentralisation of power will continue to take place even when Deng Xiaoping still remains

in charge.

There are two major hypotheses about the future of China after Deng Xiaoping's death. The first hypothesis is that China will move towards becoming a democratic and liberal state, in one of three possible ways: (a) democratic and liberal forces will play a key role in transforming the communist system and in shaping future Chinese politics, (b) the market economy will replace the central-planned economy and play a key role in the development of China's modernisation and dominant the Chinese politics to serve its needs, and (c) China will, still under the control of the Communist Party, continue with a more liberal or pragmatic "open-door" policy and eventually integrate into the international community.

The alternative hypothesis is that China will disintegrate, and struggle on the edge of civil war, possibly leading to an authoritarian state. Three scenarios are: the gaining of independence of the ethnic minorities in China. For example, Tibet might gain its independence with Western support, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and Ningxia Muslim Autonomous Region with Russian and international Muslim support, Inner-Mongolia Autonomous Region with Mongolian support, and regionalism continues to spread over the rest of China with demands of more and more power to be decentralised from Beijing. Another possibility is that the difference between the rich south and the poor north, the gap between the rich and the poor within China will continue to increase, causing growing dissatisfaction and instability within Chinese society. A third possibility is that an elite consisting of the younger generation of communist leaders and the rich businessmen who are only concerned about the ensuring of their own interests through a transformation from communist state to a capitalised state instead of rescuing the communist ideology and control, will dictate the development of both Chinese politics and economy, with the problems of corruption and social injustice at a high level.

The danger of civil war in China derives from four significant factors. First, the return of Hong Kong to China in 1997 presents a challenge to the Chinese authorities. If China fails to sustain both the economic and political system of Hong Kong, chaos will occur in Hong Kong, with the possibility of intervention of the international community. Secondly, Taiwan, Republic of China, continues to be a challenge to communist China, the People's Republic of China. If its trend towards independence continues to develop, and Taiwan declares independence, or the

Kuomingtang government assists the Chinese democratic forces in its attempt to recover Mainland China, Taiwan faces a confrontation with the communist military power. Thirdly, both the demand for independence of the ethnic minorities and regionalism present a threat to the concept of the unified Great China. If Tibet gains its independence or the rich south, particularly Guangdong province continues to fight for more power from the central government and merges more with the Hong Kong economy, and Fujian province blends into the Taiwanese economy, each would equally face the confrontation with Chinese military forces. Pressure from all three would not only cause a confrontation with Chinese military power, but also might contribute to splits and conflicts within the Chinese military forces and lead to a civil war. Finally, the Chinese authorities themselves might also use these factors as a pretext to launch a civil war as an alternative and temporary solution to their authority crisis. Indeed, if the Chinese authorities fail to solve domestic problems, it is very likely that they will deliberately provoke a civil war to shift the public focus from its failures to an urgent military demand under the name of defending national integrity.

In relation to the arts, increasing chaos in the arts administration in China can be foreseen. In general, the arts in China will continue to experience a gradual and evolutionary process of development, different from the sudden changes that appeared in the former USSR and Eastern Europe. Deng Xiaoping's reforms have largely improved the livelihood of both Chinese writers and artists and the general public, and the Chinese have begun to gain more freedom and democracy through both Deng's economic reforms and his political compromises. Also the influence and dominance of communist ideology has been gradually weakened and destroyed rather than being abandoned overnight. These three factors have together kept the risk of government collapse at a relatively low level. If we can argue that the "Great Wall" of the communist regime was doomed to collapse since Mao Zedong launched the self-destructive Cultural Revolution and this was further contributed to by Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms, we have to say that Deng Xiaoping has mended that wall for the time being and managed to postpone its final collapse. Consequently, China is better prepared for change and worse destruction may possibly have been avoided.

However, the arts administration of the communist regime is on an irreversible path from direct control to indirect control and now from

indirect control to complete loss of control. During the progress of Deng Xiaoping's reforms, we can see that Mao Zedong's policies towards the arts were first abandoned and then gradually criticised though that criticism was under continuous control by Deng Xiaoping's administration. We can also see that Deng Xiaoping's developing policies towards the arts have been challenged and criticised by the Chinese writers and artists. On the one hand, the arts army of Mao Zedong has certainly been mobilised to serve economic development instead of politics, and the present structure of arts administration has been shaped by a new generation of arts officers who have a better knowledge of the arts or are writers or artists themselves rather Communist Party officials who know little about the arts. On the other hand, the control over the arts by the arts officers is now being shifted rapidly to an arts market which has neither adequate regulations nor the experience needed to ensure the normal functioning of the arts.

If China develops in the direction suggested by the first hypothesis, the arts would gain independence from politics and from the imposed political significance by the authorities. The writers and artists will then have more freedom in what to create and how they want to develop their artistic expression, and it is likely that a democratic and liberal model of arts administration will be experimented with and then implemented in China. However, the writers and artists might lose most or all their state funding as they get away from state control and have to rely on and be restricted by the arts market, flourishes only on the commercialised arts, creating a difficult situation for serious and innovative arts as is experienced by the Western arts. However, the arts will also be subject to more beneficial international cultural exchanges coupled with exploitation by the international arts market.

If China develops in the direction as suggested by the second hypothesis, the arts will suffer from a set-back and, very likely, further destruction in terms of the physical cultural heritage, a shift of resources from the arts to war preparation, and the death of writers and artists themselves in the ensuing civil wars, though the arts of ethnic minorities in China could see a true liberation from communist policy towards the arts if their regions or religions gain true independence. Not only will they be free from the legacy of Mao Zedong's use of ethnic arts as revolutionary weapons, but they would also be free from Deng Xiaoping's promotion of the ethnic arts for the purpose of the imperial Chinese national glory and cultural diplomacy, and achieve artistic varieties according to the natural flow of

their cultural traditions. The arts in China as a whole might also benefit from the disintegration of China and achieve both variety and renaissance without the control of a centralised government.

Therefore, I suggest further research is needed, not only to monitor the effect on the arts of the current gradual collapse of official ideology, but on the impact on the arts of commercialisation, and the nature and development of the arts in China after Deng Xiaoping.

Notes to Chapter 13

[1] Notes taken from BBC Interviews with Zhang Yimo and Cui Jian broadcasted in 1991 and 1992.

[2] People's Daily, Overseas Edition, 9th May, 1991, Beijing.

[3] Editorial Committee of 1988 Almanac of Chinese Films, *"Zhongguo dianying nianjian" (1988 Almanac of Chinese Films)*, Chinese Film Press, Beijing, 1989, pp. 383-395.

[4] People's Daily, Overseas Edition, 17th October, 1991, Beijing.

[5] McDougall, Bonnie S., *Breaking Through: Literature and the Arts in China, 1976-1986*, Copenhagen Papers 1988 , p. 52.

[6] Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 150, April, 1990, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, pp. 23-27.

[7] Commentator, *"Jihui yu tiaozhan - dui wenyi jin yibu gaige de tantao" (Opportunity and challenge: the exploration of further reforms in the arts)*, China Theatre, Issue 427, December, 1992, PP. 2-5.

[8] Commentator, *"Jihui yu tiaozhan - dui wenyi jin yibu gaige de tantao" (Opportunity and challenge: the exploration of further reforms in the arts)*, China Theatre, Issue 427, December, 1992, P. 6.

[9] Wu Xiaofei and Tao Yuanju, *"Kaituo biaoyanshichang he xijugaige" (The expansion of performing market and the heatre reforms)*, China Theatre, 1993 July, pp. 36- 37.

[10] Boylan, P. (1994) Personal communication from his observations made during his official visit to Beijing and Sichuan province (Chongqing, Chengdu and Zigong) in November-December, 1988.

[11] Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 154, August, 1990, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, p.25.
People's Daily, Overseas Edition, 29th May, 1991, Beijing.

[12] Boylan P. (1994) Personal communication from his visit to Chongqing, Sichuan province in 1988.

[13] Data obtained from my interview with the China State Circus in Manchester in 1992.

[14] Han, Song, *"Yishu lifa jijiang chutai" (Arts legislations will be launched)*, Theatre and Film Daily, Beijing, 1993.

[15] Cheng Ming Monthly, Issue 155, September, 1990, Pak Ka Publisher, Hong Kong, p. 25.

[16] Zhao Yiheng, *The Lost* Boat, Wellsweep, London, 1993, pp. 9-18.

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