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MINKAN IN CHINA: 1949–89

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Abstract

This paper presents the first panoramic study of *minkan* (citizen publications) in China from the 1950s until the 1980s. The purpose of doing so is to recover the thoughts and practice obliterated by state power by examining unofficial magazines as having social, political and historical functions. Moreover, it attempts to examine this recent history against the backdrop of the much older history of Chinese print culture and its renaissance. The study of unofficial magazine in post-1949 China contributes to the recovery of a lost past resistance. It is an exercise in remembering in the context of marginalisation and exclusion by official history. Furthermore, it examines the reconstruction of the narrative of Chinese modern history, and the building up of a civil society that is independent of both the state elite and the new apolitical bourgeoisie in Mainland China.

Minkan in this thesis has multiple connotations: as unofficial magazine, as civic expression, and as a way of resistance. The media of *minkan* take in various formats: public squares, posters, walls, book series and so on. By researching the lifespan of a *minkan* I attempt to make transparent both the idea and the concrete dynamics of its practice. Drawing on the theories of civil society and the public sphere, this study explores the creative practice of *minkan* as a revival of the concept of ‘moveable words’ in the Chinese print tradition.

Preface

It was in the late 1970s as a primary pupil in Hohhot, the capital of Inner Mongolia, that I first had access to unofficial publications. We were tired of and bored with the limited selection of works of literature that were available, and the limited types of the entertainment in official media. This consisted of only eight *geming yanbanxi* (革命样板戏, Revolutionary Beijing Operas) and a few films every year. The *shouchaoben* (手抄本, hand-copied volumes) attracted teenagers and youngsters in my city. Reflecting back on the stories I then read in those hand-copied materials, they seldom covered sensitive political issues. I would not have found the stories in the hand copies inspiring if I had had a fuller choice of reading materials. However the materials were less stereotypical and didactic than the short stories in the official media. After two years, in the summer of 1978, I saw mimeographed copies of publications such as the 1976 *Tiananmen Square Selected Poems*, *Zhou Enlai in 1935 Zunyi Conference* and *Hongdu Nühuang* (a gossipy story about Mrs Mao), most of which were published by the insider clique that opposed the Gang of Four and Mao's hard line and who supported the CCP veterans who had been dismissed from their office. After all these years, many urban youngsters of that time still remember those materials.

After reading big-character posters claiming that there were 'miserable stories' such as the persecution of the Mongols since 1979, while attending a secondary school in Hohhot I began to have serious doubts about the sources and arguments of the official media. Meanwhile I had also become aware of sharp narrative divisions between the unofficial media and official media. This prompted me to ask who wrote these articles and why, and what versions might be closer to the truth.

As a student in Beijing University from 1985 to 1989 I had more opportunities to read unofficial publications and Chinese overseas magazines published in Hong Kong and the US. I also became a regular reader of unofficial publications as well as a disseminator, sometimes writing articles for unofficial magazines about the student movements. After having reflected on my reading experience in 1979, the unofficial publications of the 1980s inspired me to think about sensitive social and political issues.

Thanks to personal networks in the late 1980s, I often received publications from and circulated the magazines to my colleagues and friends. In addition, I got to know some participants in the production of unofficial magazines when I became a student activist and began to organise public seminars and directly to invite several of them.¹

Due to my involvement in the 1989 Pro-Democracy Movement, I met people active in unofficial magazines from different generations and different areas. I was imprisoned soon after the Beijing Massacre. After my release in 1991, I regularly contacted them, and got to know new underground publishers when I worked in Guangzhou. There I had more chances to meet publishers who worked in Hong Kong, so I regularly received their magazines and circulated them to human rights defenders and pro-democracy activists in other cities within China. Meanwhile I reported on human rights violation and sent some articles written by other participants in underground publications to overseas Chinese magazines.² During that period between 1991 and 1997, I was continually harassed, put under house arrest or detained, until I escaped from mainland China in March 1997.³

When I moved to London in 2003, I began to collect materials pertaining to unofficial magazines from my networks and from online sources. My study benefited greatly from the encouragement of the participants of underground magazines from different generations both inside and outside China. During this research, I have accumulated numerous debts to people for their generous support in many ways. First, I thank the friends who provided contacts and made arrangement that have allowed me to conduct interviews with the people active in underground magazines. I did not know some of them until my friends introduced them to me. I deeply regret that I cannot name those who helped me to communicate, passed my questions to the participants of underground publications and sent valuable materials. Without help and communication, it is impossible to complete this kind of research. There are participants in the unofficial

¹ In 1988, I knew Ren Wanding, editor-in-chief of *Human rights in China* (chapter 4) and Huang Xiang, editor-in-chief of *Enlightenment* (chapter 4) after the co-organized weekly seminar series “Grass Lawn Salon,” in Beijing University. Hu Ping, Dialogue of Liu Gang and Hu Ping, *Beijing Spring*, June 1996,

² See case of ‘China Liberal Democratic Party’ and ‘China Liberal Trade Union: Hu Shigen, Kang Yuchun, Liu Jingsheng and over thirty activists were arrested’, Prisoners of Conscience, Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements of China. Shao Jiang, Open Letter to the National People’s Congress, *Beijing Spring*, May 1994.

³ Shao Jiang Escaped China. Radio Free Asia (RFA) 20 June 1997. *xin dao ri bao* (singtao newspaper) 20 June 1997.

magazine to whom I am much obliged for contributing to the research. Please see the list of people who were interviewed in the appendices.

I am very grateful to my supervision team including Prof. John Keane, Dr. Mark Harrison, Dr. Stefan Szczelkun, Prof. Debra Kelly and Dr. Gerda Wielander for their consistent and invaluable instructions. Many thanks also go to Prof. Fang Lizhi for recommending me to this PhD research. I would like to thank the organizers of the Chinese Democracy and Civil Society Conference for the Chinese Diaspora Communities for inviting me to many inspiring discussions and conferences which helped me better define my chosen topic and stimulated me to do further research. Deep thanks to my parents in China, for their steadfastness and perseverance in the face of illness. I am also grateful to my wife, Xiaohong, for being the first reader of every section, for her invaluable suggestions and for her love and support throughout the years.

I remain indebted to the innumerable people who have contributed to the resistance in China and Tibet, whose passion, drive, dedication and persistence encourage my work and give me the energy to continue.

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1. *Minkan* as a Way of Resistance

1.1. General Introduction

*'Wildfire never quite consumes grass,
They are tall once more in the spring wind.'*⁴

The aim of this thesis is to present the first panoramic study of *minkan* (民刊, citizen publications) in China from the 1950s until the 1980s. The purpose of doing so is to recover the thoughts and practice obliterated by state power by examining unofficial publications as having social, political and historical functions. Moreover, it attempts to examine this recent history against the backdrop of the much older history of Chinese print culture and its renaissance. The significance of my dissertation is that it reveals how *minkan* stimulated social resistance from 1957 onwards. The reason I chose unofficial publication in post-1949 China, is to contribute to the recovery of a long-gone resistance. It is an exercise in remembering in the context of marginalisation and exclusion by official history. Furthermore, it examines the struggle to build a civil society that is independent of both the state elite and since the economic openness and reform, also different from the new apolitical bourgeoisie in mainland China.⁵

The term *Minkan* in this thesis has multiple connotations. First of all, it can be simply understood as 'citizen magazines' or 'unofficial magazines'. As for the usage of the term in my research in this particular historical context, we can use the Chinese word

⁴ Bai Juyi, Grasses in 'Wengu: Tang Shi – 300 Tang Poems', Tangshi V. 1. (152) <http://wengu.tartarie.com/wg/wengu.php?l=Tangshi&no=152> [accessed 7 August 2010].

⁵ Independent societies or resistance in the Mainland started to re-emerge under Communist rule. But it still suffers from institutional repression. Unofficial magazines provide one version of how the civil society began from underground publications and expanded into other forms of resistance, such as underground labour trade unions, family churches and other activities defending human rights such as petitions, protests and strikes. On resistance, see *China Labour Bulletin*, <http://www.clb.org.hk/en/> [accessed 26 Jan 2011], Ching Kwan Lee, *Against the Law: Labor Protests in China's Rustbelt and Sunbelt*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2007, 77-122, and 157-221, Daniel L. Overmyer, ed., *Religion in China Today* (The China Quarterly Special Issues), Cambridge University Press, 2003, 32-66, 107-214 and *China Human Rights Briefing Weekly*, <http://chrnet.org/> [accessed 22 Jan 2011].

minkan, translated into English as ‘unofficial magazine’. Literally, *minkan* consists of two Chinese characters: *min* (民, people, citizen) and *kan* (刊, magazine, publication, print). The term *minkan* refers to those print publications with autonomous organizational and editorial policies, whose production and distribution are independent from any authorities. *Minkan* participants and readers make a cash donation toward the cost of publication in almost all cases. Under the Communist regime, *minkan* endeavoured not only to make available to the public sensitive news otherwise controlled by the Party, but also to give alternative comments and independent criticism. *Minkan* in my research refers to those publications that existed outside of the Party-state institutions. The specificities of *minkan* are clearly different from the official publications.

The term *minkan* first appeared in the 1910s to describe non-state publications.⁶ *Minkan* not controlled by the ruling party and state had not existed from 1949 to 1956 until several independent student magazines reappeared in 1957. *Minkan* were a popular phenomenon, to be used during the Democracy Wall period from 1978 to 1981 and afterwards. Because it researches unofficial or citizen magazines since 1949, this dissertation will pay some attention to the historical emergence of the magazine genre and unofficial publications before 1949 in Chinese print history.

The research is urgent because many people involved in the production and publication of *minkan* have been executed or have passed away after years of imprisonment. The actors who played an important role in the history of unofficial publications are now literally disappearing. Those who survived the persecution of the late 1950s and early 1960s are today already in their seventies or older. Moreover, most of the original print and handwritten copies of the magazines have been destroyed and the rare copies that have escaped this fate are far from being well preserved, and are at risk of fading into obscurity. In this sense, my research can also be viewed as a project of rescuing crucial historical materials. In addition, research on unofficial publications is still categorised as a political taboo inside mainland China, making it safer to conduct such research from outside.

⁶See Yu P. K., Li Yu-ning and Chang Yu-fa, *The Revolutionary Movement during the late Ch'ing: A Guide to Chinese Periodicals* [Centre For Chinese Research Materials Association of Research Libraries, Washington, DC, 1970].

Minkan could be a ‘social barometer of political and social interaction’.⁷ In addition, it has a rather hybrid format as a genre. I have identified the following common characteristics of minkan: 1) An ‘open text’⁸, i.e., a collection of miscellaneous texts or images that encourage the reader not only to understand but also to ‘overstand’ what is written. The ‘overstanding’ means that readers can interpret more and explore further than the content of the text itself, especially under strict censorship.⁹ 2) Aiming to influence public views. 3) Attempting to publish at regular intervals until being shut down.¹⁰ 4) Comments on events rather than simple reports. 5) Reproduction in multiple copies. 6) A mode of organization under conditions of restricted freedom of association. 7) A publication within the relatively closed network of a student or a pro-democracy movement.

Based on these descriptions, the term ‘minkan’ can be expanded to incorporate various formats of civic expression in the Chinese context, for example, the format of the minkan for my research period sometimes manifests itself in the form of a wall fully pasted with big character posters (wall posters). From 1949 to 1989, many minkan republished parts of their content as big character posters. Minkan became the source of wall posters to some extent. Meanwhile, the articles in the minkan are regarded as a continuous brick or stone construction built in the space of public expression. Some magazines are directly named *The Democracy wall*, *Democracy Brick* or are an actual *Anthology of Big Character Posters*.¹¹ Striking articles and sensitive news first appeared in minkan and then were turned into big character posters.

In its broadest sense, ‘minkan’ can be understood as a method of civil resistance. In the Chinese totalitarian system, public space had been effectively destroyed or turned into an official propaganda space by means of indoctrination and the direct violence of the power-holders. Unofficial magazines, which in such a society have represented a

⁷ Sammie Johnson, Patricia Prijatel, *The magazine from cover to cover* [New York: Oxford University Press, 2006], 88-125.

⁸ I borrow Eco’s term, ‘open text’. See Peter Bondanella, *Umberto Eco and the Open Text: Semiotics, Fiction, Popular Culture*, [Cambridge University Press, 1997], 93-126.

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ Minkan is a synonym for ‘periodical’, ‘journal’, ‘review’, ‘serial’, ‘daily’, ‘weekly’, ‘monthly’, ‘quarterly’, and ‘annual’.

¹¹ See Chapter 4.

different thinking divergent from totalitarian ideology and propaganda, have carried out an important mission of creating public forums, educating, enlightening and cultivating citizens and laying a foundation for a future civil society in mainland China.

Regarding minkan's functions in China, further questions need examining in my own work. For example, what is the specific role of minkan in the context of Chinese print culture and what role did it play in the transition to civil society? To what extent did minkan influence social movements and social discourse and finally lead to social and structural change? How did minkan develop and influence contemporary political forms and the future of media since the 1990s? From the review above, the main questions the study attempts to answer and include are: Was minkan a passive recipient or reactor of the political institutions or was it a subjectivity consciousness creator in Chinese society? What has fertilized underground publications in Mainland China since 1949? What is the relation between minkan and Chinese society, and between minkan and resistance? How do they engage with the state and the society? How has this form of minkan and resistance managed to survive? Has there been any accumulation of resistance subjectivity from one generation to the next? What limitations do these publications embody? Do they have any enduring legacy?

1.2 Minkan Review and Meaning

The review of the existing literature shows that there is no previous detailed study of the evolution of unofficial publications published in mainland China from 1949 to 1980s. Although recent studies have noticed relations between media and politics in mainland China, most of them focus on official media. Among the existing research on unofficial magazines in mainland China, a substantial amount traces the history *before* 1949. For example, *History of China's Newspapers* by Ge Gongzhen (戈公振) from *dibao* or *zabao* (official gazette) in the early Eighth Century to the early Twentieth Century, as

well as the study of *Observation* (1946-48) by Xie Yong (谢泳).¹² I will review their studies on Historical Overview (1.3), which cover the publication history before 1949.

Of the few studies on post-1949 unofficial magazines, the research I have come across either focuses on case studies of a particular magazine—for example, Qian Liqun (钱理群) who studies the magazine *Square* (19 May 1957 to 20 July 1957)—or Liu Shengqi (刘胜骐) and Claude Widor studied the *minkan* from 1978 to the early 1980s, based on a collection of magazine contents during the period.¹³

Qian examined three magazines produced by students at Beijing University in 1957. Two of them, *Honglou* (红楼, Red Mansion) and *Langtaosha* (浪淘沙, Ripples Sifting Sand), were funded and supervised by the university authority; whilst the third one, *Guangchang* (广场, Square), was funded by students themselves. *Red Mansion*, a literary magazine, published in the beginning of the 1957, showed ‘students’ spiritual awakening’ at the time, but soon enough was turned into an official tool to criticise *Square*.¹⁴ Qian compares the contents of these three magazines, which demonstrate significant distinction between official and unofficial magazines. For example, *Square* challenged official ideology and opposed political repression while these two official magazines strictly followed official ideology and supported any oppression by the party. Qian’s innovative investigation into the period inspired quite a few *minkan* participants

¹² Ge Gongzhen, *zhongguo bao xue shi* (Newspaper History in China《中国报学史》), Shanghai: Sanlian, 1927. Xie Yong, *Chu Anping and Observation*, zhongguo shehui publisher, 2005.

¹³ Qian Liqun, *san fan xuesheng kanwu* (Three student magazines in 1957) <http://www.aisixiang.com/data/16360.html>, [accessed 7 August 2010]. Claude Widor, *The Samizdat Press in China's Provinces, 1979-1981: An Annotated Guide*. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution, Stanford University, 1987. Widor’s other book, *Documents on the Chinese Democratic Movement 1978-1980*, Observer Publisher 1981, collects most contents of several *minkan* and contains these *minkan* introductions. The twenty volumes, *Da lu di xia kan wu hui bian* (Collection of underground publications circulated on Chinese mainland) present the contents of tens of underground magazines from 1978-1980, Tianwan, 1985. Liu Shengqi, *Underground Journal Research in Mainland China 1978-1982*, Tianwan, 1985. Liu Shengqi, content and form analysis of unofficial publications in mainland China, Taiwan, 1984. My own work will not only present the first panoramic study of *minkan* in China from the 1950s until the 1980s but also link the publication and circulation of *minkan* to wider political, economic and social environment.

¹⁴ Qian Liqun, *san fan xuesheng kanwu* (Three student magazines in 1957) <http://www.aisixiang.com/data/16360.html>, [accessed 7 August 2010].

to publish their own memoirs and reflections on these magazines.¹⁵ My own research is based partly on Qian's contribution and mostly on the new materials unveiled by the *Square* participants. Interviews and correspondence with these survivors form a significant component of my research methods (see 1.4). It is also based on these materials that I am able to go beyond the contents to study minkan's formats, circulation, network, which in turn helps the study of minkan as a self-conscious contribution to formation of an independent political culture. Qian's research, mainly referring to the contents of these magazines, lacks investigation into the context of minkan: how were these magazines produced and circulated? How did minkan network formed and evolved? These are the questions that my research intends to explore.

Both Wider's and Liu's studies focused on minkan publications from 1978 to the early 1980s. Widor's *Samizdat Press in China's Provinces 1979-1981* archived publication records with 88 magazines, of which are provided with basic publication information on their background, issue number, circulation.¹⁶ His other book further brought together both contents of seven magazines and their detailed introductions on relevant activities.¹⁷ It was during the reading of these stories when I first realized that minkan went beyond the publication of magazines: it developed into a resistance network. Liu Shengqi's parallel study of a dozen of magazines of the same period provided a perspective that involved overseas magazines into the study of domestic publications, supported by references to reports by media and casual conversations with a couple of participants of overseas minkan. Liu also attempted to map out different political stands among the minkan; radical, moderate, literary, dissimilated (dissident inside the political institutions). Although it is laudable to find a plurality and difference of minkan, the first approach in Liu's studies makes me aware of its limit. Liu's categorisation of minkan, exclude literary minkan, lacked definition or explanation on radical, moderate, or dissimilated minkan. Instead, it seems that the classification was based on his

¹⁵ Shen Zheyi, a deputy editor of *Square*, finished his book on the magazine, *Beida* on May Nineteenth 1957 but he did not find any publisher. Wang Youqing, a Chinese exile scholar, investigated victims during the Cultural Revolution, which traced the death concerning participants of *Square*.

¹⁶ Claude Widor, *The Samizdat Press in China's Provinces, 1979-1981: An Annotated Guide*. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution, Stanford University, 1987

¹⁷ Claude Widor, *Documents on the Chinese Democratic Movement 1978-1980*, Observer Publisher 1981 and *The Samizdat Press in China's Provinces, 1979-1981: An Annotated Guide*. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution, Stanford University, 1987

political stand, ‘unifying China with the Three Principles of the People’¹⁸ and calculation of word frequency such as criticising the CCP and supporting democracy.¹⁹ However, the categorisation ignores the complexity and reality that the political stands of minkan cannot be demonstrated by examining closer to or far away from the political stand of ‘Unifying China with the Three Principles of the People’. In addition, word frequency in minkan cannot represent political stand of minkan because the method excludes minkan context. Minkan not only use punning, allusion, indirect speech, irony but also explore different sensitive issues relevant to democracy in spite of directly not using it. Moreover, mixed political stands often co-existed in the same publication and all these publications shared similar political positions, especially when facing the same experience of repression. Furthermore, Liu’s classification of minkan ignores that minkan began to create various formats and spheres to form new features since 1980 onwards so that he considered overseas minkan simply inheriting domestic minkan. The part reason might be because Liu did not recognize the election magazine in 1980 (see chapter 5), a format of minkan in mainland China since 1980 onward.²⁰ For theoretic approach, Liu examined the minkan from 1978 to 1982, referring to David Easton’s *A Framework for Political Analysis* and concluded that minkan activists are idealists and reformists inside the political institutions.²¹ Easton’s theory, which only focuses on interaction of different actors in the established political system, is not equipped to offer sufficient interpretation of minkan as self-conscious organization struggling for autonomous space rather than merely echoing open-minded reformers inside the establishment.

Liu’s and Wider’s studies of minkan focused on the period when the pro-democracy movement was in its upsurge phase. However, it is most significant that minkan during

¹⁸ The political stand is broadly described as Sun Yatsen’s Three Principles of the People which is concerned with opposing the communists and restoring the nation and state (Republic of China). Liu Shengqi, *Dalu minban kanwu neirong he xingshi fenxi* (Content and form analysis of unofficial publications in mainland China), Tianwan: Liuxue Publisher, 1984. Also see Liu, 1985, 372-3. See also Li Fuchung, ‘Unifying China with the Three Principles of the People’, <http://taiwanpedia.culture.tw/en/content?ID=3904#> [accessed 15 Oct 2011]

¹⁹ Liu Shengqi, *Dalu minban kanwu neirong he xingshi fenxi* (Content and form analysis of unofficial publications in mainland China), Tianwan: Liuxue Publisher, 1984. Also see Liu, 1985, 372-3

²⁰ Liu, 1985, 349. See *Beijing Spring* and *April Fifth Tribune* in Chapter five.. However, he had the similar classification tendency to Liu’s although he did not spread out them. He labeled *April Fifth Tribune* as a mild minkan. See Liu, 132 and Widor, vol. 22.

²¹ Liu, 1985, 363.

the four decades from 1949 to 1989, even the minkan of their studies, showed persistent resistance to consistent harsh repression, which for many minkan not only in upsurge (usually around five hundred copies) and over-ground status but experienced the different stages, birth, growth, coordination, shutdown, rebirth or transformation, their existing underground status in many times. Such dynamic process of minkan often illustrated different stages of the pro-democracy movement. Qian focused on civil thoughts (dissident thoughts) after he researched three magazines in 1957. However civil thoughts must depend on the carrier that keeps thoughts in circulation and on communication functions. Moreover, minkan as a carrier created elastic formats to form both a mental sphere and a physical sphere, effectively and directly communicating with the public at that time, facilitating greater participation and surviving repression. My research of minkan over the span of four decades attempts to reveal the minkan dynamics in the light of its own coherence and unity below but also to assess the prospective growing from which an independent political culture may evolve. The research not only examines minkan conceptually but also contextually explores their social spheres, and formats as modes of resistance. Of all the aspects of minkan during the period from 1949 to 1989, the most significant and yet least understood is its flexibility, which I will explain in the following paragraphs borrowing the concept of ‘moveable words’.

Minkan has inherited the most valuable tradition in the Chinese print culture: moveable type. Moveable type printing was invented in China by Bi Sheng at the beginning of the second millennium. The association of minkan with moveable-type printing is not to be taken literally though, as minkan, in most cases during the period from 1949-1989, were not even letter-printed, but handwritten or mimeographed. In the Chinese language, moveable-type is rendered with two characters: *huo* (活, moveable, living) and *zi* (字, word). The concept of ‘moveable words’, however, is well suited to be used as a paradigm to describe the flexibility and mobility of minkan. By contrast with the official media, which is overwhelming but rigid, minkan’s survival depended on their elasticity and flexibility.

The production of minkan in the span of four decades from 1949 to 1989 is closely related to the phenomenon of wall posters. Wall posters themselves are a direct reaction

against the wall culture in China. Whilst those in power used walls to restrict movement and the spread of information, the powerless turned the walls into ‘bulletin boards’ where they can share ideas and criticise the regime in public. The production and presentation of wall posters has a lot in common with the printing process. First of all, the individual posters can be viewed as moveable type words, and the wall itself as the plate where the words are to be assembled to produce a page. Although the walls themselves cannot be moved, posters can be copied by the viewers and pasted up onto other walls. Such recycling of posters to form various editions of wall readings in different cities creates the unique phenomena of moveable-type minkan in China.

However, the fixed wall itself as a plate or woodblock for printing can be questioned. When a *dazibao* (大字报, big-character-poster) is reproduced in normal printing size as *shouchaoben* (手抄本, hand copies or manuscripts), *youyin xiao chezi* (油印小册子, mimeographed bulletin) and magazines, the rigidity of the wall is broken. When individual articles are pasted or scribbled onto a fixed wall, their circulation is controlled through access to the physical wall. When the huge wall magazine is transformed into the portable print magazine or hand copies, the articles enjoy a much wider and more mobile readership. There is also another sense in which the concept of ‘moveable words’ applies to the Chinese minkan. Wall posters can be pasted onto all kinds of surfaces in public places, not just brick walls. For example, posters are pasted onto wooden planks encircling construction sites, onto road surfaces and fences in residential areas, onto dividers in work units, conceptually turning the barriers into the carriers. Posters were even pasted onto the outside of train cars, to be able to move as the train travels.²²

Minkan can also be regarded as a form of guerrilla media.²³ Its mobility relies on the strategy of breaking up the whole into parts for the production and distribution of

²² See the *Square* and *Spark* in Ch.2, Circulation of Thoughts in Ch 3 and Democracy Wall in Ch4. In March 1976, some posters were pasted onto the outside of the train cars to oppose Gang of Four. See Zhu Qinghua, ‘The People’s Daily: It Is Too Heavy To Call Comrade’ <http://www.chinaelections.org/newsinfo.asp?newsid=176657> [accessed 15/3/11].

²³ In Taiwan, the term ‘guerrilla media’ was used to mean ‘outside the party magazines’ in the 1980, See Lee Chin-Chuan, *Liberalization without Full Democracy: Guerrilla Media and Political Movement in Taiwan*, ed. Nick Couldry and James Curran [Rowman & Littlefield, 2003].

minkan. For example, many of them have had their editorial board, production and distribution located in separate cities since 1979, a practice which still continues today. *China Spring* (see chapter 5) for instance, has both its editorial board and production overseas.²⁴ Copies were then smuggled into China and circulated through domestic underground distribution networks such as the network of alternative news and comments. Compared with sophisticated official control institutions, minkan formed key networks including editors and readers but also more flexible, dynamic multiplication and circulation, spreading and increasing the scope of the moveable process by this expanding network. In addition, other participants in the same minkan formed further parallel networks. During episodes of harsh repression, minkan were produced in one or several areas while not necessarily being circulated in the same areas. The activities of underground groups were based on a tacit understanding between their members and sophisticated communication among the whole group, whereas big-character posters depended on physical surfaces. By contrast, the divided production and circulation process of minkan could effectively survive because it was a lot more difficult for the authorities to know how the minkan were produced, who made and how minkan were circulated.

Moveable minkan can reduce the control capability of the regime by setting up alternative dynamic production and circulation networks. Minkan includes both wall posters with the lowest cost of production and circulation, and book series, one of the most significant minkan formats that replaced magazines (see chapter 5). The minkan book format not only improved minkan printing quality but also created a dynamic process that secretly made use of equipment and invaded conventional circulation channels— such as semi-official channels supervised by the authorities— and enlivened alternative channels via private bookshops or bookstalls.²⁵ As a result, the interaction of unofficial circulations and the infiltration of official channels directly reduced the influence of the authorities. Thus, it was more difficult for the regime to crack down on such an expansion of minkan when they had won widespread support.

²⁴ See Qiaokan in Chapter 5.

²⁵ The Book series and Economics Magazines in Chapter 5.

Formats of moveable minkan present several significant features: flexibility, quickness, and multi-formats. Different formats of minkan display various properties: easy to save, portable, changeable and transportable. This ensured that minkan survived a range of repressive mechanisms. The ways in which minkan interacted with wall poster productions further created new flexible forms of moveable minkan such as minkan lianxihui (Joint conference of minkan), study groups, literature associations, poetry societies, correspondence education, and discussion salons.²⁶ Thus, moveable-word minkan culture effectively circulated alternative messages and critical thinking through society, not simply through the printed content or handmade copies but also through these related activities.

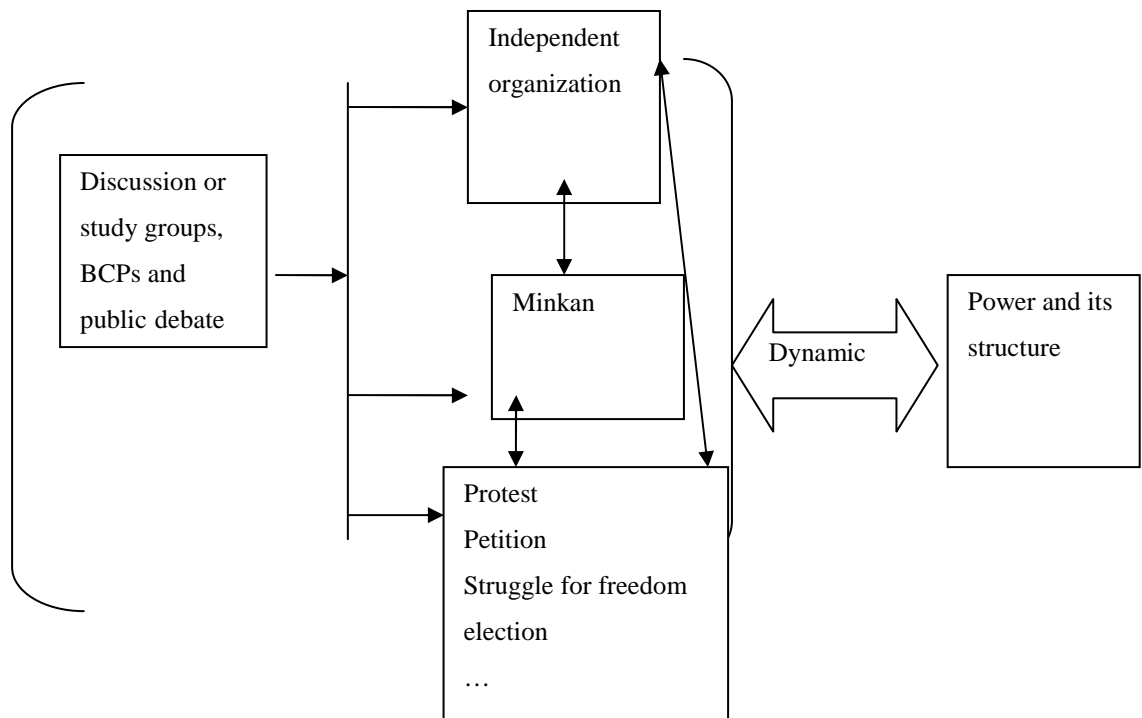


Diagram 1: Dynamic relations between the powerless and the power

The dynamic process of moveable words is presented in Diagram 1. Minkan survived under state power and its repressive mechanisms, it went beyond the authorities' control.

²⁶ Joint conference of minkan refers to Coalitions in Chapter 4, study groups, literature association, poetry society, can see Hand copies, *X-society* and *Solar Brigade* in Chapter 3, correspondence education, and discussion salon in Chapter 5.

The recovery of specific minkan histories in the chapters from from 2 to 5 should not be regarded as a simple description, but by researching the lifespan of a minkan I make transparent both the idea and the concrete dynamics of moveable minkan. The dynamic process of minkan formed changeable public forums to make independent public connections between divided social groups. It identified problems in politics and social life, reflected individual way of thinking and activities under political institutions, and explored the citizens' sense and public consensus, to contract the functions of state power within the society and to increase social forces. The aim was to gradually decrease social control and for an independent society to develop from the idea and concrete dynamics of moveable minkan. This was a bottom-up process; to create a mobile forum that the public audiences have access to.

According to the diagram, the origin of minkan in most cases resulted from public discussion, a study group, or big character posters, which touched on sensitive issues such as profound political, economic and social problems. Before the advent of minkan, potential activists of minkan directly experienced events of significance which led them to doubt the official version, which often diverges from fact in order to serve the current power or power struggle. When airing their dissent orally, among a closed circle of trusted friends, or directly posting big-character posters, they were only heard or seen by a limited audience for a short time. The study group had fixed discussion members and its communication and publicity were limited to audience engagement. Minkan groups and their networks would have access to the public that gave them a wider influence in the long run or on a larger scale. When events of significance were highlighted, activists directly began their minkan, sometimes together with other communication forums, connect to them to the public. In addition, the minkan, even though not named as an organisation functioned as a self-organisation and initially helped to share ideas with like-minded people and then with the public, so going beyond the scope of a pure underground organisation. By contrast, a pure underground organization was more easily repressed because of a lack of connection with the public. Even when the minkan were suppressed or prohibited, minkan members could keep up the link with their audience via moveable words (the flow of sensitive information) in public, a phenomenon which was more difficult for the authorities to control.

After their publication and distribution, minkan became central sites of communication with the public, and active participants used them as public forums to connect them to other social groups. As the agenda of minkan become a ‘brain of the resistance which gave a direction of movement’.²⁷ When they promoted or were involved in social movements, minkan avoided the tendency to Brownian movement—a syndrome social movements sometimes suffer from.²⁸ Big-character posters even on the same wall at the same time, in many cases could not concentrate the fundamental political and social issues, which would be continuously and further explored in discussion amongst the readers. In contrast, minkan could concentrate on these issues by the practice of a moveable-type process orientated to different generations, social groups and areas so that the audience easily interacted with comments and direct participation. Minkan not only connected big-character posters which, with their authors were scattered in different areas, but also associated with each other to form sophisticated networks of different minkan as different decentralised nodes, which could gradually evolve into an independent society.

Moreover, some minkan participants had a strong sense of citizenship to develop independent thought and practice in society, so that minkan went in the direction of social and political transformation through their discussion and debates. The process of discussion, practice and public exposure of moveable minkan gradually formed agreements on fundamental public concerns and further boosted the dynamics of social movement. Some minkan connected other scattered social groups and networks and formed “‘collective processes of interpretation, attribution, and social construction that mediate between opportunity and action’”.²⁹ In addition, moveable minkan directly coordinated resistance activities such as petition, protest and other social activities that

²⁷ Chen Fengxiaios interview by author 17/11/2006.

²⁸ Social movements lack organizations and coordination so that they do not concentrate on their purpose and realize aims.

²⁹ Minkan plays at least in similar role to social organization in Western social organization during the social movement, which forms ‘collective processes of interpretation, attribution, and social construction that mediate between opportunity and action’ See Patrick Burke, ‘EUROPEAN NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT: A study of transnational social movement strategy’ [PhD Dissertation University of Westminster, 2004], 9.

Some minkan having connected other social groups and actively involved in Democracy Wall Movement and Pro-democracy movement played a semi-organization role like Burke’s discussion. See minkan in chapter 4 and 5.

in themselves effectively promoted the minkan to have more chance of their communicating with the public. They stimulated the birth or persistence of other minkan, forming their own moveable features to set up their networks and forums in public. Furthermore, the minkan linked other different social groups that inspired their own subjectivity as citizens and promoted their potential organizations in the future by recourse to moveable minkan. Moveable minkan provided a space and forum for their participants to leave behind the social hierarchy proposed by the party. Participants ranged from students and teachers to workers and peasants.

To fight for the survival of minkan as an autonomous and independent element in society, the moveable words connected different minkan and their derivatives through their networks, Minkan communicated with other oppressed groups with moveable words targeting centralised power in all its forms. 'Minkan acted as the brains or headquarters' of resistance in different areas, coordinating and cooperating to create independent societies and communication forums and channels for other social groups so as to weaken the control of state power.³⁰ The reaction in society directly reduced the repressive functions of the monopolised power of the party, even going so far as to temporarily paralyse the apparatus of control and bureaucratic institutions. This inspired more people to develop a sense of citizenship, leading them to doubt and question the authority and credibility of the ruling power. This had implications for accountability and scrutiny and prepared the ground for social and institutional transformation toward civil society and democratisation.

In spite of the crackdown on current minkan, the minkan of the next generation soon began their exploration. Often, former minkan participants and their former materials as moveable words would start a new agenda of moveable minkan the next time around. In most cases after 1981, different generations and different social groups gradually formed an underground community of moveable minkan. Moveable minkan formed and continuously re-formed, beyond the limitation of geography and time.

One of the most significant differences between official magazines and unofficial ones is that unofficial magazines never accept official control and supervision. In other words,

³⁰ Chen Fengxiao, interview by author, 14 Nov. 2006

unofficial magazines are independent from party-state institutions, and exist outside the political institutions. Many overlapping keywords with overlapping meanings between official and minkan need to be actively analysed to understand the limits of participants with regard to ways of thinking and on information restriction. I will examine a number of ways that have helped unofficial magazines to survive such as punning, allusion, indirect speech, irony, and symbols.

1.3. Historical Overview

In dealing with unofficial magazines in the period 1950s-80s, it is important to understand that there is a much older history of print culture and magazines in China. The paradox is that China was the first place in the world to develop print culture, but it did not develop the production of unofficial publications, a form of public communication, which only arrived in the late nineteenth century.³¹

The development of the magazine genre in China before my study period can be classified into four periods.³² In the first period (206BC–1819), the imperial authority monopolised the production and circulation of news. During the Han dynasty (206BC–219AD), a postal network was used to transmit announcements, messages and news in handwritten copies between the emperor and officials. Official announcements were also posted on city walls available to the common people.³³ The earliest recorded use of the term *dibao*, ‘official newspaper’, appeared in the Tang dynasty (619–917), produced in either hand-copied format or woodblock printing.³⁴ During the Song dynasty (960–

³¹ Ge Gongzhen, *zhongguo bao xue shi* (Newspapers History in China 《中国报学史》), Shanghai: Sanlian, 1927, 1-13.

³² Ge Gongzhen introduced three stages (from 887 to the 1920s) of publication in *zhongguo bao xue shi* (Newspapers History in China 《中国报学史》), Shanghai: Sanlian, 1927, 20-1. Huang Tianpeng had similar divisions in his book, *zhongguo xinwen shiye* (the business of news), xiandai shuju publisher, 1932, 27-52. In the dissertation, I use Ge’s division on the first two stages. I divided Ge’s third stage (1874–1920) into two stages: the period from 1874 to 1910 and the other period from 1911 to 1948. The fourth stage has its own characteristics against a backdrop of increasing social, political and cultural activity.

³³ Ge Gongzhen, *zhongguo bao xue shi* (Newspapers History in China 《中国报学史》), [Shanghai: Sanlian, 1927], 3-8.

³⁴ Immanuel C. Y Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China* [Oxford University Press, 1999], 890.

1278), *dibao*, produced in moveable type became available to limited numbers of selected scholars and literati, but was strictly censored for sensitive news such as catastrophes, military information, and governmental secrets.³⁵

The woodblock printing and moveable type printing had not brought about a public consciousness in Chinese society. Literati and scholars exchanged their works in their own closed circles and afterwards these works were carefully selected by the authorities to circulate among the society. The literati or scholars either climbed the power ladder or criticised the special authorities or even the emperor, but lacked any interaction with society via a communication forum, so that the critical individuals either were punished or hid themselves from society. Print culture did not provide an effective and sustainable communication forum to reflect on current public affairs. Without a print format and a frame for public communication and public awareness, print culture only became an effective means of control and established the centralization of intricate autocratic institutions so that independent society could not develop via public communication.³⁶

The second stage (1815–74) saw continuous struggles between the Qing regime and Western powers. Newspapers and magazines in foreign languages initiated by Western missionaries and businessmen began to appear in China in the 1800s.³⁷ At first, publications by Westerners were often confiscated or destroyed and their publishers suppressed. After the Opium Wars and the Taiping Movement, the power of the Qing regime began to decrease, paralleling an increased influence and circulation of magazines by Western publishers. The first modern magazine published in China was written in English entitled the *Chinese Monthly Magazine*. It appeared in Macau in 1820s, and contained mainly articles on Christianity, news and science.

From 1820 to 1870, magazines in various foreign languages were published and circulated in colonies and treaty ports along the coasts. These magazines found their readership among foreign missionaries and businessmen and later on attracted some

³⁵ Ge Gongzhen, 25-32.

³⁶ Fu Zhengyuan, *Autocratic Tradition and Chinese Politics* [Cambridge University Press, 1993], 47-147.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 30-9.

Chinese Christians and students. Such publications provided a model for future Chinese language newspapers and magazines, and also became the main source for foreign news for the Chinese presses. In 1858, the English magazine *China Mail* published a supplement in Chinese. During that period, ‘most of the key players (or publishers) were either bona-fide foreigners or Chinese with strong links to and protection by the outside world’.³⁸

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the authorities’ ability to control society was diminished as a result of increasing pressures from foreign powers, rebel groups and their publications. This lack of independent development began to change when the third stage (1874–1910) saw the birth and development of unofficial newspapers and magazines founded by the Chinese. They shared a commitment to national fortification and the constriction of a modern Chinese identity, offering comments on current affairs. In this stage, magazine and newspapers changed people’s reading habits, and became the most important source for people to obtain current news as well as competing and distinct opinions. These publications were financially supported by personal patrons, governments, or foreign funds.³⁹ The birth of the first unofficial newspapers produced and published by Chinese people took place in the 1870s. Wang Tao, a Chinese scholar who had worked for an English newspaper, started one of the earliest unofficial newspapers, the daily *Xun Huan Ri Bao* in Hong Kong, funded by Chinese entrepreneurs. Another two similar newspapers were founded in other two ports: Hankou and Shanghai.⁴⁰

The first unofficial magazines appeared in 1896 after China had been defeated in the Sino-Japanese War. Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao organized the *Society for National Strengthening* and published two issues of a magazine called *National Srengthening*

³⁸ Rudolf G. Wagner, *Joining the Global Public: Word, Image, and City in Early Chinese Newspapers, 1870-1910* [State University of New York Press, 2007], 5. Wang Tao was an editor of the *Journal Jinshi Bianlu* (Contemporary Affairs 近事编录) in Hong Kong where he went into exile. See Rudolf G. Wagner, *Joining the Global Public: Word, Image, and City in Early Chinese Newspapers, 1870-1910*, 57.

³⁹ Ge Gongzhen, 23-364. Zeng Xubai, *zhongguo xinwenshi* (《中国新闻史》, History of the Chinese Press) [Taipei: Sanmin shuju, 1984], 125-500. Liang Jialu, *Zhong Zhi* (《中国新闻业史》, History of the Chinese Press) [guangxi renmin publisher], 1984, 61-483.

⁴⁰ Sinica in Tianwan, Beijing Library and the British Library provide access to the content of *Xun Huan Ri Bao* and *Han Kou Zhao Zao Bao* in hard copies.

Paper (强国报, Qiang Xue Bao). Both Kang and Liang advocated constitutional monarchy and published a petition to Emperor Guangxu in the magazine, signed by a group of Chinese scholars calling for governmental reform. During the same year, another magazine *Su Bao*, later taken over by Zhang Taiyan, supported the ideology of revolution and the overthrow of the Qing dynasty.⁴¹ The year 1896 saw the beginning of a golden age for Chinese unofficial magazines, which boomed during the Wuxu Reform in 1898 and afterwards. The success of the Xinhai Revolution in 1911, which ended imperial rule, was based on the publication and circulation of unofficial publications, that provided a forum for debate on reform versus revolution, pushing for political and social changes, as well as playing the role of organizing political groups.

In the fourth period between 1911 and 1948, unofficial magazines played a role in constructing an independent society.⁴² After the Xinhai Revolution in 1911, the number of magazines and newspapers continued to increase despite stricter censorship from the regime. During the New Literature Movement, *New Youth* (新青年, *Xin Qingnian*) and *New Wave* (新潮, *Xinchao*) were the two most influential magazines spreading ideas such as science, democracy, liberalism, and cosmopolitanism.⁴³ *Xinchao* magazine was accompanied by the Xinchao Society, which prepared public discussion forums and set up a network for the May Fourth Movement and a series of other movements that followed. The challenge from the unofficial magazines incensed the authorities, who attempted to suppress them by bribing, imprisoning or even assassinating the writers and editors, and closing down the publishers.⁴⁴ However, such threats only increased the support and protests from the public, which created pressure on the rulers who had then

⁴¹ Ge Gongzhen, *zhongguo bao xue shi* (*Newspapers History in China* 《中国报学史》) [Shanghai: Sanlian, 1927], p115 and Zhou, Nansheng, *zhongguo jin dai bao ye fazhan shi* (*Development history of the Newspapers industry 中国近代报业发展史*), [zhongguo zhehui kexue publisher, 2002], 220.

⁴² Yu P. K., Li Yu-ning and Chang Yu-fa, *The Revolutionary Movement during the late Ch'ing: A Guide to Chinese Periodicals* [Centre For Chinese Research Materials Association of Research Libraries, Washington, DC, 1970], iii-x.

⁴³ *Xin Qingnian* (*New Youth*), Foreword and articles from 1917 to 1921.

⁴⁴ The killed journalists and editors included: Shen Jin (沈荃)、Bei Xiaowu (卞小吾)、Shao Piaoping (邵飘萍)、Lin Baishui (林白水)、Shi Liangcai (史量才), in Fu Guoyong, *zhuxun shiqu de chuandong* (*Pursue the lost tradition, 《追寻失去的传统》*), [Hunan Wenyi Publisher, 2004], vol.1.

to compromise on many occasions.⁴⁵ As a result of weak governmental control of the circulation, unofficial magazines started to enjoy increased popularity among the public. During this time, unofficial magazines started to address other aspects of life such as art, literature, entertainment, fashion and lifestyle. The boom of unofficial magazines also promoted a reform of literature. From the 1920s *Baihua* (白话, Vernacular Chinese) replaced Classical Chinese as the written language in mainland China.⁴⁶

Magazines are described by editors in the New Cultural Movement (1917-1923) as a ‘field’ where thoughts are stored and further disseminated.⁴⁷ ‘Thought weapons’ was also a term used to describe minkan in the Chinese context.⁴⁸ Before 1949, publishers could publish their material with limited censorship. In the totalitarian system after 1949, propaganda and censorship destroyed almost all free communication space, leading to a situation where it was much more difficult for people to form an independent and collective consciousness to protect their rights. In contemporary China, many unofficial and underground magazines play a role in recording a generally forgotten history and promoting forbidden thoughts and practices⁴⁹.

1.4 Sources and Methods

Besides the analysis of minkan as moveable words, the study’s methodology is based on empirical research to recover the contents and activities of minkan. This empirical research includes collection and analysis of documents, oral history (interview),

⁴⁵ Ibid, *Peking Gazette* was shut down many times. After the regimes caved in to huge social pressure and changed their decision, the magazine was republished.

⁴⁶ Chen Pingyuan, *wenxue de zhoubian* (Literary Margins 《文学的周边》), [Qin Shijie Publisher, 2004], 83-115.

⁴⁷ Chen Pingyuan, *wenxue de zhoubian* (文学的周边 Literary Margins), Qin Shijie Publisher, 2004, 100-101. Cf. The English word ‘magazine’ comes from the Arabic ‘makzan’, meaning ‘storehouse’. Oxford dictionary and Penguin English, AskOxford, http://www.askoxford.com/concise_oed/magazine?view=uk [accessed 7 August 2010].

⁴⁸ Some editors such as Liang Qichao and Chen Duxiu in the earlier 20th century regarded publishing newspapers and magazines as thought weapons for enlightening people and storing thoughts. See *New Youths* 1916-1920. Please refer to interview with Zhang Yuanxun and Chen Fengxiao in May 2007.

⁴⁹ Unofficial magazines bear a role on ‘Forbidden Memory, Unwritten History: The Difficulty of Structuring an Opposition Movement in the PRC’, <http://www.ncn.org/asp/english/da-en.asp?ID=54028> [accessed 1/08/10].

resistance study and keyword study. I will address research sources and methods in the following three aspects: data collection, interview and data analysis.

I have confined my current research to unofficial magazines or publications with subversive and political tendencies. I also restricted the selection to Chinese-language minkan, not including other languages such as Tibetan, Uighur or Mongolian. I will cover the period I research according to a chronological structure. There was little material to be found for some periods, whereas I have selected almost all the magazines I could find in the other periods. In the two short periods between August 1966 and May 1967 and between 1978 and 1980, many unofficial magazines sprang into being almost simultaneously. Thus I selected several magazines I considered most significant in terms of influences on resistance, separately analysed in the chapters 3 and 4. Some magazines I have described more fully in terms of features, format and the political culture of minkan.

From collected materials and interviews, the research approaches the minkan where I have been able to find original and relevant materials, including evidence of their representation and influence and recover the destroyed minkan. The research has analysed relevant materials in official media in order to understand censorship mechanisms and minkan conditions. Moreover, the interview with minkan participants is the most significant methods to approach other minkan activities and networks beyond publications and provide an alternative history of the destroyed minkan. For no complete copy existing or inadequate materials of minkan, I interview minkan participants or relevant activists after I examine relevant minkan documents in my personal and library collections as well as trace official documents in order to frame questions.

My primary sources are magazines, newspapers, books, tapes, videos, CDs, and websites which have been partly collected through my personal networks and are partly accessible via various libraries and databases. Sources collected through my personal networks include interviews with people who were directly involved in underground publications in mainland China. Such interviews have been conducted in person, by telephone, or via online communication. Regarding libraries and databases, I have accessed collections of Chinese books and journals in SOAS, the British Library, and

via the Infolink databases of the University of Westminster in the UK, Academic Sinica in Taipei and the library of the Chinese University of Hong Kong which holds the most comprehensive collection of sources on the Cultural Revolution.⁵⁰

I have also collected photocopies or digital archives of forty-five unofficial magazines from 1957 to 1989. Although several scholars have used some of these materials, they seldom researched the detailed format of minkan and did not study them from the historical perspective of unofficial publications.⁵¹ Based on this material research, I designed questionnaires on minkan and also specific questions on the participants' experiences.⁵² I interviewed around twenty-six key figures who were involved in minkan, most of them either as chief editors or organisers. I also interviewed around fifty people closely related to persons directly participating in unofficial publications or circulations by telephone, face-to-face, email, Skype and/or Facebook. I have collected over 200-hours-of digital-audio & video-interview recordings since 2006.⁵³

Based on the materials collected, I have divided my study of the minkan in the pre-1989 era into four stages: 1957-61, 1962-68, 1977-80, and 1980-89. Each period has features in common with others, as well as its own distinct characteristics. During my research, I did not find any unofficial publication produced during the period from 1949 to 1956. Meanwhile unofficial publications from 1969 to 1976 mainly existed underground and their formats were restricted to underground correspondence and hand copies like those in the period from 1962 to 1968. These underground activities in the early 1970s were mentioned in Chapter 4 where several participants of the Democracy Wall attributed the formation of their networks to these activities. In addition, my four-stage periodization also attempts to study the relations between minkan and social movements. Each studied period witnessed a large-scale social movement: the May Nineteenth Democracy Movement in 1957, the equality movement in 1967, the Democracy Wall

⁵⁰ I traced any news on unofficial publication in Mainland China by reading relevant magazines, newspapers and books and tried to find copies of the originals. If copies of the originals were not found, I checked the authenticity of the message by crossing reference in different ways.

⁵¹ Qian Liqun used part of the 1957 materials to study unofficial ideas. Lu Shengqi, Robin Munro used part of the materials to examine the Democracy Movements. Claude Widor collected unofficial magazines from 1978 to 1980 and introduced six magazines. See their works in the Bibliography.

⁵² See Appendices.

⁵³ See Appendices.

Movement in the late 1970s, the student movements in the 1980s and the Pro-democracy Movement in 1989. Linking minkan with social movements helps explore the role that an enlivened print culture can play in the transformation of the Chinese society.

This research creates a chronology for almost all the minkan I have identified, especially destroyed magazines, of which I have recorded memories of their content and their relevant materials.⁵⁴ I have interviewed key and relevant participators and have cross-referenced the resulting transcripts to official critical materials and other relevant materials in order to document the magazines and analyse them comparatively and identifiably. The key participators in unofficial magazines are their initiators, editors, organisers, writers and distributors. For the minkan selections in the chapters 2 to 5, I attempted to interview almost all of those still alive. If they were deceased, I have traced back their activity to the relevant magazines, materials and other participants. I have also recorded interviews with participants who suffered due to their involvement with the magazines. (See appendices)

The interviews in this study contained sensitive information and a potential risk for underground publication participants inside mainland China. Using different communication techniques allows me to dodge the regime control and protects the participants. I always take care not to compromise the identities of vulnerable individuals who provided contacts and made arrangement for me conduct interviews. I use phone interview or email interview as the preliminary survey stage. But the interview with minkan participants who have a landline telephone or cell phone in mainland China is not convenient because of phone taps. MSN or Skype interview becomes an effective option in some cases. This interview method not only requires synchronous communication but also demands that interviewees are familiar to online communication tools. Most of my interviewees were familiar with online

⁵⁴ When I interviewed them, participants of unofficial magazines sometime mentioned destroyed materials. I further interviewed other participants who remembered the content. Meanwhile, I searched related materials that the participants were accused of counterrevolutionaries or bad elements in official publications. I discussed on these related to materials including official publications, accusation or rehabilitation files of participants in order to help to recover the content of the destroyed materials. Some related official secret files were sometimes sold out in special places. My friends bought these files and shared them with me. I distinguished between what was accused by the authorities and what participants really did in the files.

communications. In the case of a few exceptions, the interview questions were passed on to them through. I also asked my personal networks to use a secure email client (at least not managed by Chinese company in mainland China) or online communication (not simply Chinese version) which my contacts and I keep studying advanced anticensorship skills to bypass the Great Fire Wall and other Internet censorships to conduct the interview process. When interviewees and interviewers cannot meet in a secure environment, the secure email is one of the best alternative interview solutions that bypass the authority monitor. In addition, the email interview is helpful and effective to respond the questions by providing a complete introduction and a list of questions in advance. I always attempt directly to interview some participants when they live in exile or temporarily travel abroad by telephone or Skype, and where there are no specific risks. When I presented my research papers on Chinese Democracy and Civil Society Conferences outside China from 2007 to 2009, I had chance to do face-to-face interviews with eighteen minkan participants so that I collected significant unwritten records of minkan. In most cases, several interview techniques including email, telephone and MSN or Skype interview, are used simultaneously to finish a special interview process while almost all interviewees have been surveyed a couple of times. In any case, these are facts that the study will seek to ascertain, and the project proceeds with caution.

One of the objectives of this dissertation is to recover the contents and context of the underground magazines in mainland China from the 1950s to the 1980s. Who was involved in the editorial boards? Who contributed to the magazines? What did they write about? In what style did they write? What did the genre of magazine mean to them? What immediately triggered their writings? What cultural traditions did they inherit? How did they relate to unofficial magazines before 1949? How were the magazines produced and circulated? What was their readership? How were they related to other unofficial media such as *dazibao* (big-character posters)? What role did they play in social movements? What did they interact with official institutions? Were these magazines limited by their historical time and physical location? How did they survive repression and censorship? What was the fate of individual editors and key writers?

Therefore, the subsequent chapters address the chosen minkan as an important form of resistance and explore their agenda and their spirit of political independence. All my

interviews were guided by a set of prepared questions. The interviews also aimed to find out more about the control mechanisms which might explain how the authorities were able to control and manipulate sensitive information and crack down on minkan. These questions were chosen on the basis of my analytic methodology on the power structure and minkan conditions and the ethical standards required in conducting the interviews.⁵⁵ My questions fell into three parts (see Appendices): the factual dimension (part A), the mentality and language of the magazines, their self-perception (part B) and specific questions regarding time and magazine including political debates of the time (part C).

In part A of the interview questions, the study serves the purpose of recovering the original materials that have been destroyed or others that are unobtainable. Some magazine originals are illegible because of poor quality papers and fading of mimeograph copies or handwriting. Some originals which had been confiscated were secretly copied or handed over to the minkan participants or their family by sympathisers. When the interviewees' narratives differed from these originals, I cross referenced other participants' narratives to determine the most accurate account. Part B can stimulate the interviewees' own vivid memory of resistance as well as their thinking about those publications and methods of circulations by choosing suitable forms of communications and follow-up questions. For the questions on the mentality and language of minkan and their self-perception for the part of interview questions, the study mainly examines the features of minkan as a 'moveable word', participants' reading materials and way of thinking in order to probe the dynamic relations between the resistance and the state authorities. In part C of the interview questions, the project attempts to evaluate how in practice the minkan overcame their own limitations.

To explore minkan as a practice of resistance, I refer to the discourse on civil resistance under authoritarian and totalitarian institutions. In the two important studies, Gene Sharp summarized 198 methods of nonviolent action, and Ackerman and DuVall

⁵⁵ Interview questions on genre of magazine (part 1) are designed into similar questions so as to explore the magazine's functions and role. The part 2 of interview questions consists of the special questions based on the minkan. I am well-environmentally aware of interviewees' safety because the interview content are still very sensitive in Mainland China.

examined widespread cases of resistance in the twentieth century.⁵⁶ Stephen Duncombe found that ‘zines seemed to form a true culture of resistance’ throughout the twentieth century.⁵⁷ Minkan site research, inspired by the scholars’ works, focuses on spheres and networks of minkan via studying production, organization, circulation, other social activities and networks of minkan representation in different areas and periods as well as cooperation between minkan and with other social groups. I also examine the physical spheres which minkan created or were by means of. Minkan activities created various resistance methods that formed forums primarily outside of institutional political channels in public spheres that help both establish minkan communities and interacted with public, different people and different social groups. In minkan selection in chapter 2 to chapter 5, I examine minkan formats and participants’ networks in order to find how the formats and networks helped minkan develop and resist. The birth and evolution of underground culture in different cases provided different visions and methods in history and development, which not only examines special cases and phenomena, but also speculated on current social structures and changes.⁵⁸

With the resistance studies, I will examine how minkan networks functioned and how they set up communications with the public.⁵⁹ By examining the minkan agenda I will explore the meaning of their politics and their way of existence as resistance.⁶⁰ My research, therefore, contributes to the scholarly debates on democracy, civil resistance, alternative journalism and underground culture, with the Chinese example providing both particularities and universalities. Moreover, the birth, richness and development of minkan go beyond the established theory. Thus, my study does not simply refer to the civil society and public sphere theory; I mobilise aspects of these concepts in order to

⁵⁶ Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, Vol. 2: *The Methods of Nonviolent Action* [Boston: Porter Sargent Publishers, 1973], See also Ackerman and DuVall, *A Force More Powerful: A Century of Non-Violent Conflict* [Saint Martin's Press Inc., 2001] and John D. H. Downing, *Radical Media: Rebellious Communication And Social Movement* [Sage Publications, Inc., 2000].

⁵⁷ Stephen Duncombe, *Notes from underground. Zines and the Politics of Alternative Culture* [London, New York: Verso, 1997], 3.

⁵⁸ Theda Skocpol, *Visions And Methods In Historical Sociology* [Cambridge University Press, 1984].

⁵⁹ Media studies refer to Chris Atton and J.F. Hamilton. *Alternative Journalism*. [London: Sage, 2008] .

Chris Atton, *An alternative Internet* [Edinburgh : Edinburgh University Press, 2004] and Duncombe, Stephen, *Notes from underground. Zines and the Politics of Alternative Culture* [London, New York, 1997].

⁶⁰ The power of media sees ‘media’ in Ackerman and DuVall’s book and refers to media relevant to non-violence strategies in Gene Sharp’s book.

synthesize my own analytic framework with relation to the specifics of Chinese society and politics.⁶¹ Citizen involvement in independent magazines' activities forms a basic concept of minkan. This citizen practice constitutes a possibility of civil society and creates a forum, space or sphere (the magazine and its development and transformation), independent of a bourgeoisie or a free market as preconditions or background.

The studies of Chinese minkan mainly analyses, with reference to media studies, key words in minkan and other relevant unofficial discourses. As I have already pointed out, after the CCP came into power in 1949, it established an advanced mechanism to strengthen the propaganda of its own ideology and to root out unofficial heresies, to prevent the budding of any independent political consciousness. Many key words chosen here had been used by state media and imposed onto the masses through their repeated use. Under such circumstances, key words such as democracy, freedom, equality, rule of law are used to highlight the explorative processes that minkan engaged in, from criticising official versions or ambiguous versions to the process of searching and researching facts, reviewing sensitive ideas and struggling over real meaning. I will refer to research on Chinese print culture, especially newspapers and magazines, examining and comparing minkan with the official media in the period from the 1950s through 1980s.

Key words or significant words are one of the most important tools for moveable minkan, both to explore fundamental political and social issues for their participants, and to communicate with the public. In Journalism Studies, keywords or Key Texts constitute one of the most important analytic methods. According to Atton, 'Key Texts explore alternative journalism by focusing not on the accumulation of microscopic detail but, first on the identification of broad currents in the field (such as those found in history and political economy) and second, case studies that illuminate these currents through their ideologies, practices, and specific locales. In this way, we aim to present a study of alternative journalism that is wide-ranging (though with no pretension to comprehensiveness), theoretically coherent and sensitive to the many contexts in which

⁶¹ Only using the established theories such as civil society and public sphere has limitations to examine minkan. To overcome these limitations, the analytic framework consists of the established theories, which can conceptually interpret minkan in Chinese context and my own research methods such as moveable minkan, which the established theories cannot work in Chinese society and politics.

alternative journalism's challenges to media power take place.'⁶² The present project borrows this terminology to address the central consideration of the minkan that flourished during the period of my study.

The concept of key words is mainly used to analyse the words that presented thought of independent political culture. Because the key words in the periods from 1977 to 1989 frequently appeared among abundant and various minkan, a separate section in chapter 4 and chapter 5 is formed. There is no separate section for key words in the Chapter 2 because I only find four minkan during the period from 1957 to 1961. In Chapter 3, there is also no separate section for key words because frequent words of many unofficial publications only repeated official narrative or arguments in the period from 1966 to 1968 that did not represent the independent political culture. However, the last section in the two chapters consists of several key words that identified independent thoughts during that period. In addition, I expand the concept in the analysis on main tendency or concern priority through statistics of topics, subjects, contents in the same minkan or a group of minkan in Chapter 5, which materials of selected each minkan are abundant.

Despite all the efforts, there are inevitably many limitations in terms of sources and methods of this research. First of all, it is impossible for me to collect all minkan materials from 1949 to 1989 mainly because the strict censorship still exists. Thus the project will not reflect a complete panoramic image of minkan during the four decades. Second, during my research, there were a few key players of minkan with whom I would much prefer to have face-to-face interviews to explore much deeper underground resistance networks and connections to other social groups. The interview did not take place due to the fact that some of them deceased and some were unable to travel outside of China. Third, although through analysis of audience numbers through congregations in physical sphere, circulation study is most difficult how many people were exactly involved and how many people read. Finally, because my research focuses on Chinese urban areas, I lacked a comparison group in rural areas and other nationality areas.

⁶² Chris, Atton and J.F. Hamilton, *Alternative Journalism* [London: Sage, 2008], 3.

1.5 Theories and Concepts

My research will not only provide historical consistency and flow chronologically, but also examine Chinese unofficial magazines from a global perspective. The contents and format changes of underground publications can be compared with international parallels such as samizdat in the Soviet bloc, or the underground media in other authoritarian systems in Taiwan from the 1950s to the end of martial law in the 1980s. For example, underground publications in China like their counterparts covered more contents in international politics as interactive communication created more forms beyond geographical limitations.⁶³ Based on its multiple connotations, minkan conceptually refers to two theories: civil society and public sphere.

1.5.1 Civil Society

Minkan under the rule of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has played a role in trying to assist the birth of an independent society, whose capacity is resistance to the totalitarian institutions of the party. In the Chinese context, the terms ‘independent society’ or ‘parallel politics’ may be a better term to describe minkan than ‘civil society’. Civil society as an established theory and fixed discourse tends to address the society in democratic systems. ‘Independent society’ or ‘parallel politics’ can refer to some concepts of civil society while emphasising the possibility of independent activities or autonomous processes in society, in the face of totalitarian institutions, out of whose control society is trying to break.⁶⁴

⁶³ See chapters from 2 to 5, which consisted of international politics and interactive communication. For underground publications in Central and Eastern Europe, see H. Gordon Skilling, *Samizdat and an Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe* Ohio State Univ Press, 1989. For underground publications in Taiwan, see C. L. Chiou, *Democratizing Oriental Despotism: China from 4 May 1919 to 4 June 1989 and Taiwan from 28 February 1947 to 28 June 1990*, Palgrave Macmillan, 1995.

⁶⁴ Independent society or parallel politics is frequently used as a description of independent activity or organization, social movement in Central and Eastern Europe that ‘the society remain alive and vibrant, frustrating the efforts to (re)-establish total control (by the Communist power) since the 1960s. After dialogue and communication between activists or scholars in Central and Eastern Europe and scholars in Western Europe in the early 1980s onward, many activists or scholars in Central and Eastern Europe tended to use rebirth of civil society while others still used Independent society or parallel society, telling the difference under political institutions from the counterpart in

According to John Keane, civil society as a topic in Western political discourse appeared at the end of the eighteenth century and disappeared in the second half of the nineteenth century.⁶⁵ The theory addresses the relationship between the state and society, interpreting a historical process in which civil society is seen as a social power and forum vs the state power. The transformation of society gradually leads to a break from state 'absolutism' and the development of a non-state realm⁶⁶. Civil society discourse began anew from the 1960s.⁶⁷ Communist rule in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union attempted systematically 'to integrate the whole of civil society forcibly' into totalitarian systems, and to repress any tendency towards autonomy in its societies.⁶⁸ Meanwhile, 'the complexity of the arrangements of modern civil society is not to suppose that they are havens of democratic pluralism in a heartless world of capitalist enterprises and bureaucratic states. To this point in modern times, civil society cannot be thought of accurately as an inclusive domain in which every citizen can hope to attain freedom, and social justice'.⁶⁹ Thus, Eastern and Western European concepts of 'civil society' were developed at a different stage. The question is how civil societies under Communist rule in Eastern European countries became possible in the context of unlimited state power. Meanwhile, their counterparts in democratic Western European countries presented as spheres of 'freedom and equality' according to Keane, are faced with the question of how to overcome the 'heartless world capitalist enterprises, bureaucratic states', and the inequality of arrangements and social codes.⁷⁰ One of the most significant principles of the 'civil society' is that it is not a part of the state, nor is it necessarily subordinate to the state. In other words, the democratic state is meant to be limited and regulated by legal institutions which must guarantee a framework of 'legal equality, plurality and unrestricted public spheres in which social interests and political

Western Europe. H. Gordon Skilling, *Samizdat and An Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe* [Ohio State Univ Press, 1989], 158-160, 164.

⁶⁵ John Keane, *Civil Society and State* [University of Westminster, 1998] 1-2.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 2 and 16 in Keane, *Civil Society and State*. In fact, the state power had less absolutism capability for social control in the nineteenth century in Central and Eastern Europe than in most time during the Communist rule. Jacques Rupnik, *Totalitarianism Revisited* in Keane, *Civil Society and State*, University of Westminster, 1998, 268-81

⁶⁷ John Keane, *Democracy and Civil Society* [Westminster, 1998], xvii.

⁶⁸ John Keane, *Civil Society and State* [University of Westminster, 1998] 26-7.

⁶⁹ *ibid.*, 20-1.

⁷⁰ *ibid.*

norms can be communicated and tested'.⁷¹ Under absolutist state power, civil society only became a possibility through independent citizen consciousness and underground practice and further through the 'cultivation of solidarity among a plurality of self-governing civil associations' such as Charter 77 and Solidarity, so as to reduce the state control capability and to realize a transition toward a limitation of state action.⁷² In addition, through the work of scholars such as Paine, Locke and Montesquieu ideals of democracy, freedom, human rights and justice have been embedded into civil society.⁷³

Chinese autocratic institutions have a much longer history than in Eastern Europe. They have entrenched and advanced institutional forms and practices as well as the culture of statecraft to effectively control society and maintain key elements of such bureaucratic structures, political centralization and social hierarchy as may protect the power of the privileged ruling group and the power monopoly of the top leader. In addition, the CCP attempted to eliminate legitimacy outside the party-state and to establish its own social hierarchy and political structures reaching to grass-roots level in order to extirpate any possibility of resistance. While it existed before 1949, the possibility of the emergence of civil society did not survive CCP rule (the party term 'the Communist Revolution'),

⁷¹ *ibid.*, 20.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 28-9.

⁷³ John Keane, *Civil Society and State* [University of Westminster], 1998, 35-66. For the relations between democracy and civil society, 'the political languages of democracy and civil society have become conjoined. Democracy has come to mean a special type of political system and way of life in which civil society and government tend to function as two necessary moments, separate but contiguous, distinct but interdependent, internal articulations of a system in which the exercise of power, whether in the spheres of civil society or government, is subject to public monitoring, compromise, and agreement. Seen in this novel way, democratization is defined as neither the extension of state power into the non-state sphere of civil society nor the abolition of government and the building of spontaneous agreement among citizens living within civil society. The unending quest for democracy, so it is claimed, must instead steer a course between these two unworkable and undesirable extremes. Democracy is seen as a never-ending process of apportioning and publicly monitoring the exercise of power by citizens within polities marked by the institutionally distinct – but always mediated – realms of civil society and government institutions. See Keane, 1988a, 1998 and John Keane, 'Civil Society, Definitions and Approaches', http://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:nai0Oc1uh9cJ:johnkeane.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/jk_civil_society_definitions_encyclopedia.pdf+John+Keane,+%E2%80%98Civil+Society,+Definitions+and+Approaches%E2%80%99&hl=en&gl=uk&pid=bl&srcid=ADGEESid4Mt6WENYgT_FQV_ffUlwSL6ffydFQf9LhZq77AF9b2s2MfKD_BDWuETsjPvKoP_wAApOZhNfLt9ynXARKzj2YWUXahFimctuL6GvgIIBGaz5T8vT100gndrlSR0_EyE4Ye&sig=AHIEtbTQANAMAOfFr_PC23EWh376O-CZgA. [accessed 24 September 2011]

and was more difficult to resume than in Eastern Europe. Traditions of citizens' independent consciousness and practice of freedom constitute one of the most significant elements of civil society in a Europe that had experienced the Renaissance, Reformation and Enlightenment. Over the course of several centuries of social evolution and the building of social foundations, a resistance mentality rose up against unlimited state power thereby realising the capability of civil society to limit state power to a relatively large extent. Even though Communist Eastern Europe still communicated with the West due to its adjacent geography, cultural and other ties were limited. However, the Chinese political system only experienced a dynastic transformation without fundamental political change. In addition, the Chinese only experienced a short-term New Culture Movement from 1917 to 1923, though this is often compared to the Enlightenment.⁷⁴ After the Sino-Soviet split in the early 1960s, Chinese society became even more closed, isolated from the outside world to a much greater extent than the societies of Eastern Europe during the cold war. Therefore, minkan might only be understood as an approach to the possibility of a future civil society, and we need to find a new analytic framework to fully examine their unique status.

Because of the strict control of the party-state in Chinese society, I will deal with some of the paradoxes of the division between official and unofficial magazines in this research. I have noticed that unofficial magazines sometimes use the same style of writing as official ones. In addition, editors and contributors of official magazines sometimes write for unofficial magazines too. In some cases, an article is first published in an official press, but after being censored, it appears in unofficial magazines in its uncensored form. One of the most significant differences between official magazines and unofficial ones is that unofficial magazines never accept official control and supervision. In other words, unofficial magazines are independent from party-state institutions, and exist outside the political institutions. During the period from 1949 to 1989, financial backing for most minkan came from collecting cash from their members or supporters, who sometimes secretly borrowed mimeograph machines or took some papers to their work units.⁷⁵ When they had a chance selling copies, the minkan

⁷⁴ For the New Culture Movement, see Vera Schwarz, *The Chinese enlightenment: intellectuals and the legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.

⁷⁵ See ch2 to ch4.

temporarily made ends meet. For example, *China's Spring* (from 1982 — 2003) got a small amount of funding from the overseas Chinese community and mainly survived by selling its magazines and asking for supporters' donations. Book series sometimes received modest funding from People's Publishing Houses on the provincial level, and then they returned the money to sponsors and survived by selling their publications.⁷⁶

1.5.2. The Public Sphere

In Chinese, the word for magazine 'zazhi' consists of two characters: *za* and *zhi*. According to the Han Dynasty etymology *shuo wen jie zi*, *za* means 'five colours mingled together' and *zhi* 'records'. The literal meaning of the Chinese word *Zazhi* is thus 'miscellaneous records'.

If 'min' (people, citizen) refers to citizen and further refers to the concept of civil society, 'kan' (magazine) is both a physical sphere and a mental sphere of citizen consciousness and practice, which we might understand by using the Western concept of the public sphere. Habermas, through examining bourgeois society of the seventeenth century, proposes that the concept of the public sphere consists of three features. First, the concept addresses 'the idea of the public' through presupposing the existence of physical spaces such as coffee houses, salons and societies, which become 'institutionalized and thereby stated as an objective claim. If not realized, it was at least consequential.'⁷⁷ Second, Habermas points out that: 'The domain of "common concern" which was the object of public critical attention remained a preserve in which church and state authorities had the monopoly of interpretation ... the development of capitalism already demanded a behaviour whose rational orientation required ever more information.'⁷⁸ Third, the public sphere is 'immersed within a more inclusive public of all private persons...the issues discussed became "general" not merely in their significance but also in their accessibility: everyone had to be able to participate'.⁷⁹ Habermas emphasises that 'a political consciousness devolved in the public sphere of

⁷⁶ See ch5.

⁷⁷ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* [Cambridge, Polity, 1989], 36.

⁷⁸ *ibid.*

⁷⁹ *ibid.*, 37.

civil society which, in opposition to absolute sovereignty, articulated the concept of and demand for general and abstract laws and which ultimately came to assert itself as the only legitimate source of this law'.⁸⁰ Habermas further examines the subsequent 'refeudalisation' of the public sphere in the current world: 'For the criteria of rationality are completely lacking in a consensus created by sophisticated opinion-moulding services under the aegis of a sham public interest' and 'the large-scale organizers in state and society "manage the propagation of their positions"'.⁸¹

In the Chinese context, I see the 'public sphere' reflected in the names and forms the various minkan adopt over time. Using Habermas' concept of the public sphere, I will especially explore the public spirit and common interest as evident in minkan, their approach to communication with the public via minkan networks, the circulation of the publications and the activities relevant to minkan beyond these networks.

However, Habermas's public sphere assumed the pre-existence of a bourgeois society, which was granted civil rights and a free market by the development of capitalism. In China, the existence of minkan from 1949 to 1989 neither depended on a bourgeois society, nor did it have the condition of a free market. The classical form of public sphere existed in China during the Republican period from 1911 to 1948, when social organizations and even opposition parties were legally sanctioned and practised a certain degree of media freedom despite repression. The trading of information was more comparable to the business of exchanging ideas practised in Europe in the 17th century. By contrast, minkan existed within a strictly controlled command economy during most of the time of my study period. The production and distribution of minkan did not aim to make a profit but to break through official censorship and explore fundamental political, social and economic issues.

Habermas' theory cannot explain how the independent public space via samizdat or minkan was born, and 'public' communication transformed in the Soviet bloc or in China. The political institutions in these countries systematically and viciously eliminated independent expression and space and strengthened state control of the social

⁸⁰ *ibid.*, 54.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 195 and 200.

sphere in China after 1949. This cannot simply be classified as the issue of feudalisation or 'refeudalisation'. Minkan had to find or create the spaces and communication networks so as to reach the public despite tight surveillance and repression by the state institutions. Minkan had to survive in an *underground* sphere for most of the four decades from 1949 to 1989.

Moreover, it is difficult to tell the public space apart from the private because many people involved in minkan used their 'private' home to set up public discussion, to produce a magazine and to store minkan and its related documents. After such participants had been arrested and their apartments were searched, these independent spaces and networks were systematically destroyed. Producers of the next generation of minkan had to find or create new and flexible spaces and networks in order to communicate with the public, because the authorities developed methods of monitoring and control to prevent the existence and development of independent communication media and spaces.

Habermas's public sphere theory is derived from the situation in the eighteenth century and afterwards in democratic institutions, and does not study the possibility of a public sphere in totalitarian situations. In terms of its historical practice, the making, distribution, publicising and proliferation of minkan is similar to those of samizdat in the Soviet bloc. The relevance of my research in a global perspective lies in its relation to the post WW2 samizdat discourse in Eastern and Central European countries, which talks of 'the distribution of uncensored writings on one's own, without the medium of a publishing house and without permission of authorities'.⁸² Samizdat and tamizdat were among the most significant resistance forums and networks in the period of Communist rule. Samizdat referred to underground publications which were printed inside the Soviet bloc, whilst *tamizdat* referred to those which were printed outside, for example in Western European countries, Japan or even Taiwan, and which were later smuggled into Eastern and Central European countries. These underground publications formed an irreplaceable source of information that found a broad audience and had a wide-ranging

⁸² H. Gordon, *Skiling, Samizdat and An Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe* [Ohio State Univ Press, 1989], 3.

influence in spite of their format as often very small hand-made editions.⁸³ From the mid-70s onwards, exiles and inside activists set up collaborative support networks that formed multiple centres from which to practice resistance. The networks provided dismantled mimeographs or equipment parts that could be smuggled into the countries and then reassembled. Special libraries for collecting these samizdat and tamizdat were set up in Germany and Austria. In Czechoslovakia, Poland and Eastern Germany, underground libraries were set up for the same purpose. These libraries further expanded the distribution networks of underground publications and made it more efficient to disseminate them across the borders of the Central and Eastern European countries. The libraries and circulation networks of samizdat and tamizdat formed a parallel matrix outside the official institutions, from which an independent underground society eventually evolved. The independent society developed multiple centres, some of which were supported by overseas communities. The strategy of relying on multiple hubs made it difficult, if not impossible, for the regimes to destroy the entire matrix of samizdat and tamizdat communities. An example was the case of East German youths who refused military service. When the Berlin Wall was constructed in 1962, compulsory military service was introduced in the GDR (German Democratic Republic). Some youths refused to be drafted in an action co-ordinated by an underground publication network, but ended up in jail due to lack of support from other communities.⁸⁴ In the 1980s, more youths in the GDR refused compulsory military service and this time many of them managed to escape the country thanks to the comprehensive support networks. Underground publication networks including Charter 77 and KOR (the Committee for Social Self-Defence) coordinated civil rights movements in the 1980s. Meanwhile unofficial publications in these countries in the mid and late 1980s published information on peace movements in democratic countries in Western Europe, gradually establishing a forum for dialogue and cooperation with civil society in the West.⁸⁵ Long-term independent publication and dissemination

⁸³ Ibid. There are samizdat original materials in Prohibit Library of Prague. The library collection mainly included underground literature in Soviet bloc. Samizdat appeared in the mid-nineteen century in Russia. Under Communist rule in Eastern and Central European Countries, samizdat and tamizdat still existed and lasted until the regime collapsed.

⁸⁴ 'Wehrdienstverweigerung in der DDR – Dienen, bauen oder sitzen'
<http://www.jugendopposition.de/index.php?id=2889> [date accessed 7 August 2010].

⁸⁵ H. Gordon, Skilling, Samizdat and An Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe [Ohio State Univ Press, 1989], 55-69 and 227.

projects aided the construction of a future autonomous civil society, which was finally to become one of the most significant forces to make possible the transformation of the totalitarian political system.⁸⁶

The features of samizdat and tamizdat are similar features to minkan's partly because many important properties of the Chinese party state imitate political institutions in the Soviet bloc. Moreover, the studies of samizdat and tamizdat help explore the fundamental questions of minkan conditions in Chinese political institution. Although both studies of samizdat and minkan present theoretical limits of civil society and public sphere, these concepts as 'the development of a conceptual system can, in fact, best be seen as the development of a new language'.⁸⁷ Therefore, the concepts of these two theories not only integrate themselves with verbal definitions of minkan concept but also elaborate theoretical approaches to minkan studies. Meanwhile, minkan revises and develops concepts of civil society and public sphere by examining its main feature as a moveable word, from physical locations (formats and communications) or independent communities to virtual spheres. From the development of a conceptual system, minkan as a moveable word is dynamics of civil society and public sphere.

1.6 The Structure of the Dissertation

It is helpful to understand that minkan during the period 1949–89 represented a dynamic development in society, experiencing death and rebirth, fighting for survival, flourishing and evolving against a backdrop of the strengthening of Chinese totalitarian institutions. According to the reason for periodization given in the section of Sources and Methods (1.4), the thesis is divided into four main chapters from Chapter 2 to Chapter 5.

Chapter two, 'Re-Emergence' (1957-61), investigates two exemplars of the 1950s, *Square* (*guangchang* 广场) and *Spark* (*Xinghuo* 星火), which were among the first minkan published since the Communist takeover in Mainland China. *Square* only

⁸⁶ H. Gordon, Skilling, *Samizdat and An Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe*. See also samizdat materials in Prohibit Library of Prague.

⁸⁷ William Goode, Paul Hatt: *Methods In Social Research* [Tokyo: Mcgraw-hill Book Company, INC., 1952], 44

brought out one issue before being closed down. It took its name from a square in Beijing University. It is a very interesting publication because it clearly claimed the legacy of the May Fourth Movement and socialism. Four members of the editorial board were executed in the 1960s. I have interviewed three key figures involved with the magazine, the initiator and the chief and deputy editors, and have also obtained a recently published book by the editor, of which a whole chapter is dedicated to *Square*.⁸⁸ Another magazine *Spark*, also with two issues produced, has no complete copy existing but only the table of contents, thirteen articles and two poems. The chief editor and the poet were both executed in the 1960s.

Chapter three, 'Polarities' (1962-68), examines three magazines: *X-Society* of which no copy exists, *Solar Brigade* and *Middle-School Paper*, exploring the complexity of unofficial magazines. The chapter attempts to tackle the relations between unofficial magazines and underground study groups, trends of thought, social movements and official political campaigns.

Chapter four, 'The Democracy Wall' (Minkan Flourishes in 1977-1980), examines minkan from 1977 to 1980, when independent magazines flourished and matured. Even though unofficial magazines were frequently shut down, the world of magazines changed after 1978. Unofficial magazines experienced flourishing, crackdown, and re-publication, transforming their underground status. I will be discussing *Enlightenment*, *Exploration*, *Beijing Spring* and *April Fifth Tribune*.

Chapter five, 'Humanism and Liberty: Development and Transformation (1980-89)' examines minkan in the 1980s, the decade that saw the transformation of unofficial magazines and the development of society. Although the Democracy Wall movement had been effectively repressed, the issues it gave rise to became widely debated and practiced in the following decade. The opening of the nation to the outside world stimulated the imagining of other possible ways of life. For many, this was a decade of liberation and vigour as shown by election magazines and pamphlets, book series (*Towards the Future*), *Beijing Economics Weekly* and *China Spring*.

⁸⁸ Zhang, *Yuanxun, Beida 1957* (Peking University in 1957) [Hong Kong: Minbo Publisher, 2004].

The final chapter draws together various threads of the previous chapters to restate the thesis and to point out the implications of the research. Moveable Words in Chinese history provide contextual clues and a conceptual map to further understand the development of the minkan form from the past to the present and into the future.

2. RE-EMERGENCE

This chapter examines minkan in the 1950s. With its reemergence in 1957, minkan offered a fundamentally different view of ‘magazines’ or ‘publications’. For the Chinese Communist Party, ‘magazines’ or ‘publications’ are an instrument to spread ideology. Mao regarded magazines as *bi ganzi* (笔杆子, pen barrel, the literary media), one of the two most effective weapons to achieve and maintain power, the other being *qiang ganzi* (枪杆子, gun barrel, violence).⁸⁹ Magazines helped the CCP create its alliance to oppose the Kuomintang (KMT) and finally defeat the latter.⁹⁰ The word ‘magazine’ for the CCP implies a violent mentality, while for minkan it is a way of networking, a periodical inquisition of the establishment, a source of alternative information and a way to influence the society, especially urban youth, to realise self-conscious practice. The CCP had no particular understanding of the magazine format, except as a useful propaganda tool to persuade the masses to support the Party. But for minkan, the magazine format went far beyond print media. Its emergence and survival to a large extent relied on its creative interpretation of this format. In 1957, magazine manifested itself first of all as a forum or ‘public square’. In many university campuses around the country, squares were created to hold public debates by covering the surrounding walls of student dormitory buildings with big-character posters. These debates touched upon political taboos, social and economic issues that challenged the official ideology from different angles.

2.1 Power and Minkan Conditions

During the Civil War period (1945-9) and the initial period of CCP power, the CCP not only eliminated or arrested KMT members and the people who were considered dangerous but also implemented strict social and media control. With its military victory in 1948, the CCP first set up Military Administration Committees (MACs)

⁸⁹ Yanan’s talk and political power grows out of the barrel of a gun (Mao 1938) in Mao’s selected works Peking Foreign Languages Press. 1966. Vol. II, 224. See also Ma Guangren, *Shanghai dang dai xin wen shi* (Shanghai Modern Journalism History 《上海当代新闻史》), Shanghai: Fu dan da xue chu ban she, 2001.

⁹⁰ *ibid*,

wherever the PLA (People's Liberation Army) had taken over from KMT control. The top PLA leader in the area, as the director of the MAC, became the highest official between 1948 and 1953.⁹¹ Although the military committees sometimes included a few members of allied parties, they played minor roles under CCP control and were subordinate to the CCP branches and the director⁹².

To consolidate power, the CCP carried out the following further measures. First, the MACs took over the cultural sectors, including schools and publishers, as well as KMT governments, police bureaus, military bases, and financial departments including banks and factories⁹³. Second, all the non-communist magazines were confiscated and newspapers agencies were strictly instructed or monitored by the MAC branches. Soon afterwards they had to get licences from their local MACs if they hoped to re-publish at all. Third, most of the foreign media and journalists, according to orders from the MAC, had to stop all publications.⁹⁴ In addition, the MACs only allowed some selected foreign publications and news agencies inside these areas to operate for the benefit of CCP public propaganda on the international scene, in terms of exporting its influence outside. In such cases, the CCP then imported the reports to strengthen its propaganda effects inside. For example, four journalists from foreign countries were allowed to report on the celebration of the establishment of the PRC: one journalist was from the USSR, one from Italy (*L'Unità*), and two from North Korea⁹⁵. During the Korean War, UK (Alan Winnington from *Daily Worker*) and Soviet journalists were permitted to

⁹¹ Some areas were administrated by MAC earlier than 1949, like the Northeast area; other areas were taken over by the CCP administration in 1952. See the CCP central committee on military administration instruction (中共中央关于军事管制问题的指示): http://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2004-12/06/content_2300870.htm [accessed 1 February 2011] Martial law twice in PRC history (建国后的两次军事管制), http://www.chinamil.com.cn/site1/jssdj/2005-10/11/content_311579.htm [accessed 1 February 2011].

⁹² For members of Mac around the country, see the *People's Daily* between 1948 and 1951 and Fairbank and Goldman, *China*, 2002, 345-8 The non communist parties' members in MAC played a less role than their colleagues in the CCP's 'Central United Government' in 1949. 'United Government' included other parties against the KMT. But the CCP members occupied all the most significant administration sectors such as the military, the media, foreign relations, finance etc. After 1957, almost all the members of other parties in the CCP government disappeared. Zhang, Yihe and Xie Yong, other parties in China after 1949 <http://www.ncn.org/asp/zwginfo/dakay.asp?ID=71449&ad=4/26/2007> [accessed 1 February 2011].

⁹³ Chen Yi, *Report on taking over Shanghai* <http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/69112/69114/69126/4742113.html> and structure of Hongzhou MAC, http://www.zjda.gov.cn/show_hdr.php?xname=CP0GHU0&dname=ESNAIU0&xpos=24 [accessed 1 February 2011].

⁹⁴ *People's Daily*, 27 Feb 1949, 'the Beiping MAC Order, Stop the activities of foreign news agencies and journalists' (北平军管会发出通令: 停止外国通讯社及记者活动) and see the *People's Daily* between 1948 and 1951.

⁹⁵ *People's Daily*, 22, September, 1949, also Fang Hanqi, *China's media history*, vol. 3 p55.

follow and report when the journalist representatives group was organised by the CCP and they visited North Korea.⁹⁶

During the 1940s it was very difficult for small companies and individuals to found unofficial radio stations because of the limits of financial investment and technology. But there existed some unofficial radio stations before 1949 in the KMT-controlled area. After 1949, the CCP confiscated all unofficial radio stations. In addition, the Party smothered the revolutionary functions and strategies of newspapers and magazines and prevented the relaunch of unofficial magazines which would challenge its power. The CCP media often took over the KMT media office under MAC instruction. For example, *Jie Fang Ri bao* (*Liberation Daily*, the CCP organ in Shanghai), took over the office of *Shen Dao*, the longest-running newspaper in modern Chinese history⁹⁷. Before the PLA took over an area, the local underground CCP branch judged and catalogued all the local media so that the MAC could swiftly deal with them as soon as they had control of the area.⁹⁸

In November 1949, the CCP set up a General Press Administration of the PRC⁹⁹ with agents for the central, provincial and local areas to assist and monitor different media and report on them to the MAC. In July and August 1952 three regulations were introduced: a 'temporary administrative regulation on books, magazines and publishing'; a method of registering temporary magazines; lastly provisions for dealing with prohibited books and magazines.¹⁰⁰ Both the first and the second regulations required all the magazines to get a license from their authority, while the ideological trends of the publications were directly monitored by the CCP propaganda departments and the public security departments from the central, provincial and local areas. The third

⁹⁶ Fang Hanqi, vol. 3, 65.

⁹⁷ Ma Guangren, *Shanghai dang dai xin wen shi* (Shanghai Modern Journalism History 《上海当代新闻史》), Shanghai: Fu dan da xue chu ban she, 2001, 1089.

⁹⁸ Fang, Hanqi, *Xin hua shu dian jing xiao* (《中国新闻事业通史》 china's news industry history), Zhongguo ren min da xue chu ban she, 978-1120, vol. 2, 1992.

⁹⁹ History of the General Administration of the Press of the PRC, http://news.xinhuanet.com/zhengfu/2003-02/26/content_746710.htm [accessed 1 February 2011].

¹⁰⁰ The Centre People government included some non-s members but the government dominated by the CCP. 'Registration of Newspapers and Magazines (draft)' (《全国报纸杂志登记办法(草案)》) Xinhua Yuebao, issue 9, 1952, 184 and other regulations see Xinhua Yuebao issue 3, 1950, and, issue 3 and 4, 1951.

regulation was used to prohibit anti-revolutionary books and magazines. In addition, the monitoring rule about magazines and books was declared in October 1952.¹⁰¹ Furthermore, there were regular occurrences of ‘the ‘invisible’ control mechanism in Chinese media’¹⁰². After 1952, the MACs were eliminated and the Propaganda Departments took direct charge of controlling and monitoring the magazines. The diagram below illustrates the control strategy of the Party.

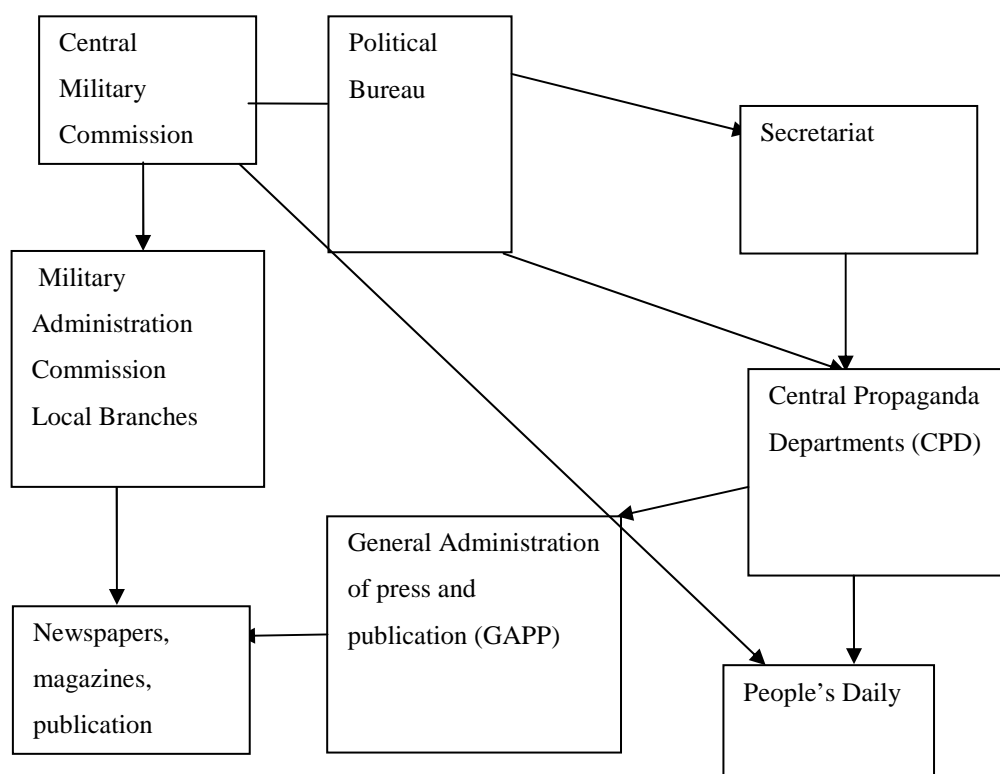


Diagram 2. The media control strategy of the CCP in the power structure. Arrows indicate the actual general direction of the authority.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Ren Bumei, 50-year publication control history: http://www.boxun.com/hero/renbm/13_1.shtml [accessed 1 February 2011].

¹⁰² The ‘Invisible’ Control Mechanism in Chinese Media, http://chinadigitaltimes.net/2004/06/the_invisible_c.php?show_all=1, there is a regular control regulation: http://www7.chinesenewsnet.com/gb/MainNews/Forums/BackStage/2007_4_20_8_7_57_790.html. In terms of inside CCP structure and the state and society under the control of the party, see McGregor, Richard. *The Party: The Secret World Of China's Communist Rulers*, London: Allen Lane, 2010, 11-23.

¹⁰³ GAPP was formed in November 1949 was repealed in 1954, based on the committee of the Propaganda Department of CCP Central Committee. From 1954 to 1985, the CCP Propaganda Departments took direct charge of controlling and monitoring the magazines and newspapers. Since 1985, GAPP has been re-established. See Xinhua Yubao 1949, 1954, 1987 and He Qinglian's book, 2006.

From 1949 to 1952, the MACs and their local branches controlled all the media such as newspapers, magazines, books and radios, with the advice, monitoring and aid administration of GAPP. Between 1952 and 1982, the CPDs and their local branches controlled the media directly. Since 1982, the CPDs and their local branches have provided guidelines, with the advice and control of the GAPP and its local branches. Then, the GAPP and its branches implement the guidelines. The *People's Daily* was and still is the central CCP committee's organ and the propaganda model for all other official newspapers.¹⁰⁴

The CCP's main control methods between 1949 and 1957 included not only militarising the administration of the media mentioned above, but also the control of circulation, the transformation of private publishers (see the section below), and direct control of the media as detailed above. Thus it formed the CCP propaganda prototype. Propaganda and censorship are two sides of the same coin in the construction of a totalitarian media system and the subsequent control of society.

Whereas before 1949, publishers could publish their material with limited censorship, after 1949, in the totalitarian system in China, any public sphere was effectively obliterated by indoctrination and violence.¹⁰⁵ In a totalitarian system, propaganda and censorship create a situation where people cannot form any independent and collective consciousness as citizens. The CCP carried out continuous campaigns designed to force people to make their very memories conform, in terms of what to forget and what to remember. That is, to forget any accounts of civil resistance and citizen's consciousness, while current official ideology should be remembered at all times. Censorship blocked any heretical thoughts, while relentless propagandas strengthened the current ideology.

¹⁰⁴ The *People's Daily* as the "mouth and tongue" of the party provides direct information on the policies and viewpoints of the Party. See Fang, Hanqi, *Xin hua shu dian jing xiao* (《中国新闻事业通史》 china's news industry history), Zhongguo ren min da xue chu ban she, 1992.

¹⁰⁵ See chapter 1.

The CCP had used unofficial magazines to climb its way to power, only to abolish them once it was on top. All other magazines had been founded by the CCP or its allies in the early 1950s.¹⁰⁶ Soon afterwards, even magazines run by the CCP's allies were closed down, confiscated or transformed into a Party's mouthpiece.¹⁰⁷

From the mid-1950s, the number of official magazines began to increase. The CCP also used the *dibao* model called *Neibu Cankao* (Insider Reference) whose distribution was strictly limited to high CCP officials after 1957.¹⁰⁸ From the downfall of the Qing dynasty and the KMT, the CCP learnt that it could never have come to power had the KMT strictly controlled the press. The CCP has always regarded the people involved in unofficial magazines as inherently anti-CCP, persecuting them ruthlessly and labelling them 'anti-revolution groups' or 'groups endangering state security'.¹⁰⁹ As a result, thousands of editors, participants and supporters of unofficial magazines were executed, imprisoned or sent to labour camps from the 1950s to the 1980s.¹¹⁰ Therefore, in most cases unofficial magazines have had to exist secretly as underground media.¹¹¹ In addition, the CCP continuously purges even party members who show a spark of dissent or are imagined to be enemies of the party, to avoid any potential alliances of thought between official magazines and unofficial magazines.¹¹²

Besides military and financial control, and the monitoring process, the CCP controlled the circulation of magazines through its tight grip on the postal service and paper suppliers. All publications mainly circulated through Xinhua Shudian,¹¹³ supervised by the CCP branches and the General Administration of the Press, and any sensitive

¹⁰⁶ Chinese News history, 1985 edited by News department of Fudan University, Peer Magazines discourse in the early 1950s http://www.usc.cuhk.edu.hk/wk_wzdetais.asp?id=4740 [accessed 1 March 2011].

¹⁰⁷ He Qinglian, 'How does China's Government control media', <http://www.peacehall.com/news/gb/china/2004/10/200410262324.shtml> [accessed 1 March 2011].

¹⁰⁸ See 'Insider Reference system' in Chapter 3.

¹⁰⁹ In 1997, 'China has merely replaced the term 'counterrevolution' with the equally elastic notion of 'endangering state security'' See Criminal Law in PRC in 1979 and 1997.

¹¹⁰ see the following contents in the chapter and chapters 3 to chapter 5.

¹¹¹ Book series and Economics Magazines were exceptions. See Chapter 5.

¹¹² Liu Binyan, 'I and Hu Yaobang', <http://200866.2000y.net/index.asp?xAction=xReadNews&NewsID=4426> [accessed February 2011] Wang Ruoshui, a deputy editor of *People's Daily* was dismissed after he wrote articles on Humanism and alienation and Xu Weili, an editor of unofficial magazine directly contacted him. Hu Jiwei, a editor-in-chief of *People's Daily* was also dismissed because he supported Wang Ruoshui. See Wang Ruoshui, 'See Hu Yaobang from my experience during the Democracy wall' <http://muzi.com/cc/fanti/10775.19931.shtml?q=1416130&cc=40653> [accessed 2 February 2011].

¹¹³ History of Xinhua Shudian, <http://www.xinhuabookstores.cn/show.php?id=578> [accessed February 2011].

contents of the official magazines was censored under the magazine monitoring process. Circulation of publications by the few private publishers that were allowed was controlled by the state-owned Sanlian (三联) Publisher, monitored by the CCP branches.¹¹⁴ Magazines friendly to the CCP were allowed to exist, but even these could not continue after 1949 because their circulation was controlled by the CCP which refused to circulate any unofficial magazines.

Between 1949 and 1951, all the non-Communist party media founded before 1949 were taken over, their back catalogue confiscated and reorganized, and then they had to re-register, in order that the MAC could directly control them according to the totalitarian rules on education, culture and publishing. In 1948, the CCP had announced an 'administrative regulation about Chinese and Foreign newspapers, media and news agents'.¹¹⁵ According to this regulation, the administration of the media should not follow the model of other private companies but should be taken over and controlled by the state. Generally, other private companies could stay in business if the CCP thought they had nothing to do with the KMT from 1949 to 1952. But all the private media were taken over by the MAC, regardless of whether their publications were relevant to the KMT. Not all of these private investments were confiscated. When such exceptions were made, however, the private investors had not had any influence on content, editions, editorial, or circulation. After 1956, investments in publications and other private companies were compulsorily sold to the state.¹¹⁶

For the few magazines labelled as CCP allies, their editorial boards were controlled and monitored by the CCP branches. Meanwhile, all the printing factories, paper supplies and magazine circulation organisations were controlled by official publication agents.

¹¹⁴ See Fang Hanqi's book. These publication only served the CCP propaganda. To take Hu Feng as an example, his *Qidian* (Beginning) was allowed to register but had to stop publication after three issues because its circulation was refused. Although Hu Feng and his peers resisted the KMT's press control before 1949. See also Chen Weijun, 'The discourse was marginalized' <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/ics/21c/supplem/essay/0507060.htm> [accessed February 2011]

¹¹⁵ See Fang Hanqi, vol1, also see *People's Daily*, October to December 1948

¹¹⁶ After the Socialist Transformation, all publishing house and media facilities including theaters, cinemas, film studios and broadcasting stations were turned over to the party state. See Fu Zhengyuan, 229. see Wei Chengsi, 70-4

The CCP not only shut down or seized control of all the private magazine agencies, it also repatriated, arrested or even killed the majority of the reporters and editors who had operated before 1949.¹¹⁷ In 1945, there were 1,848 magazines (146 state-owned).¹¹⁸ Between 1949 and 1950, there were 295 magazines.¹¹⁹ The number of media reporters trained by the CCP was 99.3% of a total 10,000, according to statistical studies in 1950. Only 12% of editors who used to work in unofficial publishers before 1949 were strictly examined before being allowed to continue to work.¹²⁰ The CCP kept controlling and monitoring all the media. In my research I could not trace any unofficial magazines earlier than 1957, after the CCP came to power.

Chu Anping (储安平) was one editor who survived after 1949. In 1957, he was labelled as a rightist and then disappeared. In early 1957, he criticised the CCP as an ‘empire party’. He is famous for the statement: ‘under KMT rule the question is whether there is *enough* freedom; under CCP rule the question is whether there *is* freedom’.¹²¹ For the CCP, the function of magazines, like newspapers, is to control information circulation and to propagate totalitarian language to force the ‘individual (to) become an automaton, a walking corpse’ and society to become ‘Homo Sovieticus’.¹²² Thus, the existence of a philosophy of the individual under totalitarian power ‘prefers internalized self-censorship to institutionalized censorship.’¹²³

Political campaigns

Between 1950 and 1953, the CCP began a series of campaigns such as ‘*Suppression of Counterrevolutionaries*’, ‘*Land Reform*’ and ‘*Oppose America, Aid Korea*’ helped the CCP to form and consolidate its international alliances, while advocating nationalism

¹¹⁷ Wei, Chengsi, *zhongguo zhishi fanzi de chen fu* (Chinese Intellectuals 魏承思, 《中国知识份子的沉浮》), Hong Kong, Oxford Publisher, 2004, 81, but there were no exact death figures.

See also Cao Changqing, ‘Zhang Xueliang talks about Xian’s incidents’ http://www.aboluowang.com/news/data/2008/1125/article_64270.html [accessed 1 February 2011].

¹¹⁸ Chinese Ministry of Information *China Handbook* 1937-1945, New York: Macmillan, 1947, 508. See also Fu Zhengyuan, p164, *Zhongguo Baokan dougao zhinan* (submission direction in Chinese newspapers and magazines 中国报刊投稿指南), 1952, 3-69.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Feng Hanqi, Vol 3, p53.

¹²¹ Chu Anping, ‘China’s Political Situation’, *Guancha* 《观察》 Vol.2, Iss. 2, 1947.

¹²² Jacques Rupnik, *Totalitarianism Revisited in Civil Society and State*, ed. John Keane, 273-4.

¹²³ *ibid.*, 277.

and mass cohesion in order to strengthen its power.¹²⁴ Such campaigns combined persuasion and threats to pressurise, brainwash and terrorise individuals who voiced any criticism of the state. Moreover, the CCP formed an official work union controlled by CCP branches in the cities, to enforce the Party line and monitor employees' thoughts and control all personal income.¹²⁵ The professionals in the fields of publishing, education, culture and health were, likewise, put into different units ruled by CCP branches. Personal income and political opinion were controlled under the units system.¹²⁶ Thus, freelance writers and publishers that were independent from government before 1949 had to work within the units controlled by the authority. In this way the CCP constructed its totalitarian system.

Mao's policy toward intellectuals was to 'use, restrict and reform' them to strengthen his power. The CCP waged a '*Thoughts Reform Campaign*' in 1951-2, with stringent administrations and media regulations to force all professionals in the fields of publishing, education, culture and health to follow the party ideology in everything they taught, researched, wrote and presented.¹²⁷ All the professionals had to study the official ideology and criticise themselves and the criticism process had to be accepted by their CCP branch.

The *Thoughts Reform* campaign was succeeded by a series of campaigns against the professional intellectuals, targeting the film *Wu Xun Biography*¹²⁸ as well as two famous scholars: Hu Shi and Yu Pingbo (1954-5).¹²⁹ The purpose of these campaigns

¹²⁴ In some CCP-controlled area the Land reform took place earlier than 1949. See Fu, Zhengyuan. *Autocratic Tradition and Chinese Politics* [Cambridge University Press, 1993], 274-5. See also Land reform in Philip Short, *Mao: A Life* [Paperbacks, 2001].

¹²⁵ The employee had to report their political thoughts to the CCP branches regularly. See Fu, Zhengyuan. *Autocratic Tradition and Chinese Politics*. Cambridge University Press, 1993, 276-7.

¹²⁶ See different organizations of scholars and professionals in Wei Chengsi, *zhongguo zhishi fanzi de chen fu* (Chinese Intellectuals 魏承思, 《中国知识份子的沉浮》) [Hong Kong, Oxford Publisher, 2004], 60-9.

¹²⁷ Xie Yong, *Origin of Thoughts Reform Campaign and its influence on intellectuals*, Cases refers to '*Thoughts Reform Campaign*' in Wei Chengsi and Xie Yong, 'Origin of Thought Reform and the impact on Chinese intellectuals' http://www.boxun.com/hero/xieyongwenji/17_1.shtml, [accessed 2 February 2011] or <http://www.chinese-thought.org/zwsx/006050.htm> [accessed 2 February 2011].

¹²⁸ Mao declared that Wu Xun was a counterrevolution propagandist. http://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2004-12/16/content_2342492.htm [accessed 2 February 2011].

¹²⁹ The CCP targeted influential scholars of social science and humanities as representative of feudal and bourgeois thoughts in order to force all scholars to follow the party line. See the CCP 'On the ideological transformation in schools and organizations in the clean-up work instructions' (《关于在学校中进行思想改造和组织清理工作的指示》) in Xinhua Yubao 1952, issue 2-8.

was to cut off and wash out the influence of non-communist ideological and political thinking (or ‘bourgeois ideology’), in order to establish the norm and model of Communist ideology. The propaganda became increasingly subtle and influenced the political ideas of many Chinese.¹³⁰ These campaigns caused anxiety among professionals who had been labelled as pursuing bourgeois ideas in opposition to the official ideology, and who now worried about becoming the target of criticism and not being able to keep up with the times¹³¹. In addition, the CCP advocated training ‘new socialist intellectuals’ in order to take over from the former bourgeois scholars¹³². The propaganda model became an effective and common strategy of government: the CCP’s continuous campaigns made promises to different groups, labelling them as privileged social groups or class, and mobilised them against whatever group the CCP needed to crack down on at any given time. Thus the CCP effectively controlled the media and monitored heretical thinking.¹³³

The *Purge Counterrevolutionaries* campaign of 1955-6 continued to carry out the strategy for the elimination of the enemies of the CCP. However, this time it mainly focused on the enemy inside the CCP and organisations that allied to the CCP before 1949. The Hu Feng ‘counter-revolutionary’ group was one of many targets of this campaign¹³⁴. Hu Feng and his associates were sentenced to prison by Mao and put into a labour camp for more than twenty years, because he petitioned Mao criticising the CCP cultural policy. The Party had regarded Hu Feng as one of its close friends, when the KMT was in power in mainland China. Hu Feng used to publish magazines which tended to support the CCP ideology before 1949 and wrote some poems in praise of the CCP and Mao immediately after the establishment of the PRC. According to the principle that counter-revolutionaries had to be suppressed whenever they were found,

¹³⁰ Wei, Chengsi, *zhongguo zhishi fanzi de chen fu* (Chinese Intellectuals 魏承思, 《中国知识份子的沉浮》), [Hong Kong, Oxford Publisher, 2004], 90-102.

¹³¹ Zhun Ming, Who judges history? ---criticizing the Yu Pingbo movement, http://www.usc.cuhk.edu.hk/wk_wzdetails.asp?id=2228 [accessed 2 February 2011]

¹³² Thoughts reform and training new socialist intellectuals on *People’s daily*, 1952 and 1953, See also interview with Fang Lizhi.

¹³³ See Wei Chengsi, 53-103.

¹³⁴ Ding Shu, *yangmou: fanyou qianhou* (open conspiracy: a complete history of Anti-rightist Campaign 《阳谋：“反右”前后》), Hongkon, Kaifang, 1991 67-82.

the CCP and Mao took the opportunity to expand the suppression in society including some innocents who had sympathised with Hu Feng.¹³⁵

Domestic and International Environments

Soon after 1949, many countries established diplomatic relations with the PRC, however significant numbers including the USA insisted on the ROC as the sole legitimate government of China. The PRC kept mainly diplomatic relations with the Soviet bloc and the UK, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Switzerland and the Netherlands recognized the PRC in the early 1950s.¹³⁶ As public relations activity strengthened international relations, and in particular the close relationship between mainland China and the Soviet bloc countries, China attempted to maintain its influence in the West but at the same time to prevent and block democratic thoughts from the West.¹³⁷ Thus, the ideology of the CCP only adjusted and imported certain aspects of official ideology from the Soviet bloc, which were reconstructed and formed into Chinese thoughts.¹³⁸

In 1956, Khrushchev's Special Report to the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in February, and the Hungarian civil resistance in October, unleashed a domino effect among totalitarian states worldwide. In China, though the circulation of Khrushchev's 'secret speech' had been carefully restricted to the Party elites, it leaked into universities where students and staff were more informed than the average Chinese. It was possible for some students and teachers to read newspapers and magazines in English such as the *New York Times* and the *Times* in April 1956 which first divulged

¹³⁵ Hu Feng spent his last years fighting sickness after he spent for 24 years in labour camps. Thousand of scholars during that had similar experience to Hu. See Wei, Chengsi, *zhongguo zhishi fanzi de chen fu* (Chinese Intellectuals 《中国知识份子的沉浮》), Hong Kong, Oxford Publisher, 2004, p104.

¹³⁶ Françoise Mengin, 'A Functional Relationship: Political Extensions to Europe-Taiwan Economic Ties', <http://journals.cambridge.org/download.php?file=%2FCQY%2FCQY169%2FS0009443902000098a.pdf&code=9df99ffa7165be4915bc15f69c7fae16> [accessed 3 February 2011].

¹³⁷ See western democratic thoughts in Fang Hanqi, vol. 1 and vol.2.

¹³⁸ The CCP emphasised that there were the obvious discrepancies between theory and practice as well as rhetoric and action. Meanwhile centralized hierarchy and cult of personality (Mao) became parts of ruling institutions. See 'Ideology and authority under the CCP' and the Structure and process of the PRC political system in Fu Zhengyuan, 170-219. Shen Zihua, *History of Sino-Soviet relations* <http://www.mmmppp333.com/text/jishi/shenzhijhua.htm> [accessed 2/ February 2011].

Khrushchev's secret report. It was explosive news that ignited enthusiastic discussions among students in the major cities on the censored issues.¹³⁹

The Hungarian uprising had initially forced the Soviet tanks to withdraw from Budapest by the end of October, before the city was occupied again by the Soviet troops eleven days after. According to a recent memoir by a secretary of Liu Shaoqi, vice chairman of the Party at the time, the Chinese Communist leaders had urged Khrushchev to crack down on the Hungarian resistance.¹⁴⁰ According to Chen Fengxiao, the news of the Hungarians penetrated the media blackout imposed by the Party and spread among some students in Beida, who paid close attention to the debates between the Soviet students and those from the Central and Eastern European countries. Soon after, some students and teachers had opportunities to read the story of the Hungarian civil resistance and massacre in Western magazines and newspapers such as *Times* in December 1956 in Beijing university libraries.¹⁴¹ Many of these Chinese students sympathised with the Hungarian protest, and were inspired to reflect on the political institutions in China. The timing of the launch of the *Square* and the methods by which it was suppressed bore a striking parallel to the Hungarian events. The ethos of the Hungarian revolt was somehow manifested in this magazine, which advocated freedom of speech and the abolishment of censorship, which were also the basic demands of the Hungarians. '*Justice for the innocents in the Purge of Counterrevolutionaries Campaign. Democracy must be realized ... otherwise the revolution like the Hungarian revolution will arise (here)*'.¹⁴²

If the change of the political climate in the Soviet bloc planted a seed, resentment at the violence of the Party certainly fertilized the soil for dissident opinions and protests. In 1956-7, there were increasing social dissatisfactions and protests against the tyranny of the CCP bureaucracy.¹⁴³ In 1954, the first constitution was published under CCP rule.

¹³⁹ Interview with Lin Xiling in June 2007 and Interview with Chen Fengxiao in November 2006

¹⁴⁰ Han Shan, 'The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution', <http://www.rfa.org/cantonese/zhuanti/jinshizuofei/2006/10/26/history/> [accessed 11 February 2011].

¹⁴¹ Interview with Fang Lizhi and Fang, 'The End of Liberalism and Ebb of Communism' <http://beijingspring.com/bj2/2007/220/2007725132106.htm>, [accessed 11 February 2011].

¹⁴² See Liu Qidi, Injustice of Bai Maonu and also see interview with Chen Fengxiao

¹⁴³ Qian Liqun, 'Chinese villages, factories and schools in 1956 and 1957' (1956、1957年中国的农村、工厂与学校), <http://www.aisixiang.com/data/detail.php?id=5697> [accessed 11 February 2011] On the strike, see also Ching Kwan Lee, *Against the Law: Labor Protests in China's Rustbelt and Sunbelt*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2007, 37 and Elizabeth J. Perry, 'Shanghai's Strike Wave of 1957'. *The China Quarterly*, 137, (1994). pp 1-27.

The constitution, like its counterpart in the Soviet Union, guaranteed the Communist Party a monopoly power as the sole ruling party without condition. At the same time, the constitution claimed to safeguard freedom of expression, association and publication.¹⁴⁴ In real politics, the constitution protects the monopoly power of the party and the Chairman of the CCP Central Military Commission has the final say, while protecting civil rights was no more than an empty promise¹⁴⁵. Civil resistance in Poland and Hungary in 1956 began to practice citizens' political rights literally, as they were written in the constitution which developed into civil resistance against the totalitarian regime. Such civil resistance was too remarkable and too strong for the CCP to ignore. Moreover, the CCP generally regarded the Soviet Union as the Big Brother in 'socialism' and often used the following slogan: 'The Soviet Union of today is tomorrow's China'.¹⁴⁶

When Mao and other the CCP leaders urged Khrushchev to suppress the Hungarian Uprising, he made another suggestion: expose the counter-revolutionists before weeding them out.¹⁴⁷ In early 1957, Mao started Zhengfeng Yundong (整风运动, Rectification Campaign, literally, speak publicly), encouraging people to speak up to help the Party improve. Mao's well-known slogan, 'Let a hundred flowers bloom', was coined during this period, and the Rectification Campaign was also called as the Hundred Flowers Campaign. However, the campaign proved to be an 'open conspiracy',¹⁴⁸ or cunning ploy by Mao, as was revealed when he delivered a speech to Party leaders in every work unit. In his speech, Mao clarified the purpose of this campaign: 'letting cow ghosts and

¹⁴⁴ See the PRC constitution in 1954, <http://zh.wikisource.org/zh/%E4%B8%AD%E8%8F%AF%E4%BA%BA%E6%B0%91%E5%85%B1%E5%92%8C%E5%9C%8B%E6%86%B2%E6%B3%95%281954%E5%B9%B4%29> [accessed 2 February 2011].

¹⁴⁵ See PRC constitutions in 1954, 1975, 1978, 1982, every constitution is 'Norminal and Semantic constitution': 'Its (constitutional) onological reality is nothing but the formalization of the existing location of political power for exclusive benefit of the actual power holders in control of the enforcement machinery of the the state ... The power configuration is frozen in the interest of the Powers that be, be it an individual person, a junta, acomittee, an assembly, or a party.' Karl Loewenstein, *Political Power and the Governmental Process* [University of Chicago Press, 1965] 147-150. Every revision of the PRC constitution was based on the Party constitution that was revised after one or two years. The revision resulted from the party power struggle. Who held the CCP Central Military Commission won the final say. For the military role, see Fu Zhengyuan, 207-8, also see Yin Xiaohu and Fang Baoguo, 'On the current "Policy Revised Constitution" model limitations' (论我国现行“政策性修宪法”模式的局限性), <http://www.docin.com/p-54483423.html> [accessed 11 August 2010].

¹⁴⁶ After CCP got power, there were many official political campaigns in China, like those in Soviet Union in 1920s and 1930s. However, the political campaigns in Soviet Union did not prevent from trend of De-Stalinism. The CCP and Mao remained on the alert, which the De-Stalinism harmed totalitarian institutions of the CCP in Mainland China

¹⁴⁷ See also 'China's Role in Hungarian Incident', <http://www.coldwarchina.com/zwxz/zgxz/szh/001954.html> [accessed 2 February 2011] Mao's delicate trick was exactly what he applied in the Anti-Rightist Campaign.

¹⁴⁸ See Ding Shu, *Overt conspiracy*, <https://zhenxiang.wordpress.com/%E4%B8%81%E6%8A%92%E3%80%8A%E9%98%B3%E8%B0%8B%E3%80%8B/> [accessed 2 February 2011].

snake spirits come out of their hiding places makes it easier to annihilate them; letting poisonous weeds break through the earth makes it more convenient to wipe them out'.¹⁴⁹ Mao conducted two continuous campaigns for this purpose, the Rectification Campaign and Anti-Rightist Campaign to trap the CCP allies who cooperated with the CCP during the KMT regime. After 1949, the allies played a major role in covering up the CCP monopoly of power while their key members were Party members. Finally, Mao's two political campaigns became two faces of one campaign to strengthen totalitarianism principles, threaten his rival partners in the CCP and their allies, and finally to erase potential rivals.¹⁵⁰ This campaign uncovered a potentially collective and expanding force of civil resistance in society that threatened to challenge the monopoly power of Mao and the CCP. Mao and the CCP directed the Anti-rightist campaign mainly towards young resistant activist and intellectual circles. After this experience, Mao became familiar with stirring up fights between his power rivals, all of most of whom were inside the CCP, in order to maintain his hegemonic power over society, state and the Party itself.

Moreover, during the Anti-rightist Campaign, the CCP systematically labelled people as the people as 'rightist' according to its own definition, institutionally to repress dissenting voices.¹⁵¹ All the students who participated in creating *minkan* and *dazibao*

¹⁴⁹ Fu Guoyong, 'On Overt conspiracy', <http://www.chinaelections.org/newsinfo.asp?newsid=194014>, [accessed 16 March 2011].

¹⁵⁰ Wu Guoguan, 'The 8th CCP National Congress and Anti-rightists Campaign' Ding Shu ed. "fan you": Zhongguo dang dai zhi shi fen zi de ming yun / Ding Shu zhu bian = Re-examination of the Anti-rightists Campaign after 50 years : the course of contemporary Chinese intellectuals, Hong Kong: Tian yuan shu wu, 2007, 78-94

¹⁵¹ CCP Central Committee on 'division of rightist elements of the standard' Notice <http://www.observechina.net/Data/Editors/fanyou/fy0035.htm> According to the CCP's six criteria on "rightist below, which it announced in October 1957: 1) Oppose the socialist system, oppose socialist revolution in the city and the countryside, oppose the CCP rule and the people's government on basic social and economical policies (for example industrialization, the state monopoly market for purchase and sold so on); Negate socialist revolution, socialist construction and achievement; Persisted with taking the capitalism stand, publicize the capitalist system and the bourgeois exploitation; 2) Oppose the proletariat dictatorship and democratic centralism, attack anti imperialism struggle and foreign policy of the people's government; attack *Suppression* and *Purge of Counterrevolutionaries* campaigns; negate the achievement of "five big campaigns" (*Suppression of Counterrevolutionaries*, *Land Reform*, *Oppose America*, *Aid Korea*, *Purge of Counterrevolutionaries Campaign* and *Socialist reform on industry and commerce*); Oppose transformation of bourgeois elements and Bourgeois; Attack personnel system and cadre policy of the CCP and people's government; Request bourgeoisie's politics, law, culture and education instead of ones of socialism; 3) Oppose communist party's leadership status on national politics, economical enterprise and the cultural establishment; maliciously attack leaders of the CCP and the people's government, oppose the socialism and the CCP, slander the worker and peasant cadres and the revolutionary activists, slander organizing principles of the CCP; 4) Split people's unity in order to oppose the socialism and the CCP, incite the masses against the CCP and the people's government; Incite separatism of workers and peasants; incite ethnic separatism; Slander the socialist bloc: Incite people separatism in different states of socialist bloc; 5) Organize and positively participates in clique of the opposition to socialism and the CCP; premeditate to overthrow the CCP leadership of some department or some basic units; instigate disturbance in opposition to the CCP and the people's government; 6) Offer the advice to the criminals from the five catalogues above, establish a relations with the criminals, give them secret information on the

in 1957 were labelled ‘rightist’ and were catalogued as a kind of new enemy of the CCP. Rightists, together with landlords, rich peasants, anti-revolutionists and other ‘bad elements’ who were criticised as opposed to the CCP’s former campaigns, were branded enemies of the people and the state and the subaltern in society. They were arrested, sent to labour concentration camps (*laogai or laojiao*) or forced to reform by hard labour under surveillance during and after the CCP Anti-rightists Campaign.¹⁵²

2.2 Formation of Squares



Figure 1. Big Character Posters in Beijing University in 1957.

Source: Ding Shu ed. *Re-examination of the Anti-rightists Campaign after 50 years*

The birth of *minkan* in the 1950s was closely related to the *dazibao* activities in university campuses.¹⁵³ In response to the official political campaigns, university students spontaneously produced big-character posters usually written with brush and ink and posted them on the walls outside their dormitory buildings and the nearby

revolutionary organizations (notes: all the organizations of the CCP or all the organizations including ‘peoples authorities’ controlled by the CCP) to the criminals.

¹⁵² Ding Shu, 1.8 million people were labeled as ‘rightist’, Ding Shu, ed., p194-203, also see Partial List of Rightists, <http://www.ziyouren.org/index1.htm> [accessed 8/2/11] For *laogai* and *laojiao*, see James D. Seymour and Richard Anderson, *New Ghosts, Old Ghosts: Prisons and Labor Reform Camps in China*, M E Sharpe Inc; 2nd edition, 1998 and Nicole Kempton and Nan Richardson, *Laogai: The Machinery of Repression in China*, Umbrage Editions; Har/Cdr edition, 2009.

¹⁵³ Participants of *dazibao* in universities interviewed by the author in Appendix I. See Ding Shu ed. “fan you”: *Zhongguo dang dai zhi shi fen zi de ming yun / Ding Shu zhu bian = Re-examination of the Anti-rightists Campaign after 50 years : the course of contemporary Chinese intellectuals*, Hong Kong: Tian yuan shu wu, 2007, 194-6.

dining halls. When onlookers gathered in front of these walls, without knowing it they created a ‘public square’ and filled its space surrounded by the sea of the wall posters. Living a collective life, students could easily gather in the square and communicate with each other. Their activities of reading the posters, debating and exchanging ideas animated the space. The square was stretched and expanded when the posters were copied and mimeographed as leaflets, which were further circulated to a much wider audience all over the country. The square provided a platform to meet strangers and saw strangers become friends, private communications on public affairs and public communications by the process of questioning, debating and reflecting ideas. Even on the occasions when the square was occupied by the authorities, holding ‘struggle sessions’ to attack poster-writers, students managed to turn such sessions into public debates.

One square was transformed into a theatre when students set up a broadcast station on a neighbouring dormitory building and read out the contents of the wall posters from the window using a borrowed loud speaker.¹⁵⁴ Eventually the square witnessed the birth of an unofficial magazine bearing its name, which added to its physical existence an intangible but equally valid virtual sphere that prompted its replication around the country. The square thus assumed an identity similar to that of multiple prints. The square became a web of squares, a strengthened network of resistance for the years to come.

2.3 Minkan Selections

During my research, I heard about four distinctive minkan that were mimeographed and published in the 1950s. They differed entirely from the official magazines in their interpretation of the medium. While the latter meant the instrument of propaganda for the ruling party, the former provided an arena for free expression on public affairs. The concept of the magazine was clearly epitomised by one of these minkan, *Square*,

¹⁵⁴ *Voice of Social Disadvantaged Strata* set up radio broadcast equipments in room 415, Northwest Building in Beijing Normal Universal, regularly to broadcast diazibao and some sensitive news by loudspeakers in June 1957. Yu, Anguo and Lei, Yining. *Bi ken chen shui de jiyi* (memory refuses to sleep, 《不肯沉睡的记忆》) zhongguo wenshi publisher, 2006, 4-6.

founded in May 1957 by a group of students in Beijing University. In other universities, there appeared similar magazines such as *Diceng zhi Sheng* (底层之声, Voice of the Disadvantaged Strata) in Beijing Normal University and *Shumin Bao* (庶民报, Common People Newspapers) in Qinghua University.¹⁵⁵ A fourth venture, *Spark* was initiated by a group of university students who were labelled ‘rightists’ and sent to Gansu province for ‘re-education’.

The birth of these magazines was against the backdrop of a series of official political campaigns. For example, *Diceng zhi Sheng* was founded in June 1957 under the influence of the Party’s Rectification Campaign, expressing its intention help the Party curtail the Three Calamities (bureaucracy, dogmatism, and factionalism).¹⁵⁶ Several professors in the university were invited to attend the discussion at a conference organized by the United Front Department of the Party Central Committee that was charged with monitoring and assisting the control of non-Communist organizations, religious issues and scholars. The professors criticized education policies and their speeches were published in official media on 22 May.¹⁵⁷ Several students in the university began to visit the professors after finding about their speeches. The students started to post dazibao from 23 May onwards.¹⁵⁸ Dazibao activists, mainly from the Chinese Literature department, then formed into an editorial board and started to mimeograph posters and eventually a magazine.¹⁵⁹

No extant copies of the *Shimin Bao* were found and participants in the magazine have all passed away.¹⁶⁰ As for the *Diceng zhi Sheng*, I managed to track down its participants and interviewed two of them, but was not able to find any original materials.¹⁶¹ The recovery of the minkan history in the 1950s is therefore built upon the materials related to the *Square* and the *Spark*. With the first issue of the *Square* able to be consulted, and its main actors interviewed and contributing abundant first-hand materials, the story of the *Square* at last emerged.

¹⁵⁵ Indictment of Chen Fengxiao, <http://www.laogai.org/news2/newsdetail.php?id=1214> [accessed 10 August 2008]

¹⁵⁶ Interview with Lei Yining and letter of Lei, See Interview Yu Anguo and Li yining 8/9/07.

¹⁵⁷ *Guangming Daily*, 22 May 1957, also see <http://www.eywedu.com/wenxueyuedu/sywc/043.htm> [accessed 10 August 2008].

¹⁵⁸ Luo Zhongyi, *Unusual Spring*, 1-8 ed. Yu, Anguo and Lei, Yining.

¹⁵⁹ See Li Shousan and Li Yining interview by author.

¹⁶⁰ Feng Guojiang interview 60/7/07. Feng is a survived dazibao writer in Qinghua University.

¹⁶¹ Interview Yu Anguo and Li yining, 2/7/07 and 8/9/07 by author.

2.3.1 Square



Figure 2. *Square: Beida Democracy Wall Selection.* Source: photocopy of the original, provided by Wang Youqin

The birth of the magazine *Square* was expedited by both domestic discontent and overseas instabilities. From 28 May 1957 when fifty students in Beijing University formed the editorial board until 22 June when they were forced to declare the magazine's closedown, *Square* successfully published 500 copies of one mimeographed issue as well as thousands of mimeographed leaflets of wall posters. The preparation of the magazine can be traced back to a year earlier. In September 1956, Khrushchev's explosive report started to spread through the campus of Beijing University (Beida) via multiple channels. Chen Fengxiao (陈奉孝), a mathematics student acquired a copy of the report in Russian from Soviet students studying in Beida at the time, who had access to copies through the Soviet embassy in Beijing.¹⁶² Ren Daxiong (任大熊), a lecturer from the same faculty, read the report in English as published in the British *Worker's Newspaper*, stocked by the library. Ren translated the summary of the report into Chinese and posted his translation onto the bulletin boards inside and outside the library.

¹⁶² Chen Fengxiao interview by author.

¹⁶³ A month later, the news of the Hungarian revolution came to the campus and led to more debates among students.

Beijing University had been the main forum of the exchanges of thoughts that occurred between the West and China, and between traditional and modern views, since the May Fourth Movement. Although the CCP had launched a series of campaigns and its ideology dominated the Beida campus after it came to power, the thinking of the May Fourth New Culture Movement on topics such as science, liberalism, universalism and democracy had not been entirely rooted out. Many students regarded Marxism and liberalism as the same. For example, the *Communist Manifesto* and the poems of Heine and Petőfi were considered to express identical ideals.¹⁶⁴ When the CCP launched the Rectification Campaign in March 1957 to entice individuals into offering suggestions to the Party, Beida students expressed their dissatisfaction with the Party's way of censoring real criticisms and selecting harmless opinions. On 19 May, a very first *daziba* appeared at lunchtime on the outside wall of the main dining hall, inquiring how Beida representatives for the National Conference of the Communist Youth League had been chosen. By four o'clock in the afternoon, another three posters had appeared on the walls of the nearby student dormitory buildings. One poster requested Party Committees to withdraw from universities and appealed for 'freedom of speech', 'freedom of assembly', 'freedom of publication', 'freedom of association' and 'freedom of demonstration'. One poster suggested students create a permanent 'democracy field' for themselves to post more posters. The fourth poster was a poem with the title *Now Is Time*, calling for young people to 'sing out loud' of their 'love and pain'.¹⁶⁵

By the end of the following day, as many as 162 *dazibao* were posted on the outside walls of the dormitory buildings and the nearby dining halls which had formed several small squares in the campus. In these posters, students expressed their confusion about the contradiction between the reality and the utopian ideal promoted by the Party's ideology. One poster raised an ironic question: 'Where long ago democracy bore a sage

¹⁶³ Wang Youqin, 'Three Related Victims in the Cultural Revolution', <http://peacehall.com/forum/lishi/516.shtml> [accessed 10 August 2008].

¹⁶⁴ Interview with Fang Lizhi and Fang's presentation on 30 June 2007. Fang was a physics student from 1952 to 1957 in Beijing University. He examined the main influence on students during his study. Christian Johann Heinrich Heine (13 December 1797 – 17 February 1856) was one of the most significant German poets. Sándor Petőfi (1823 – 1849) was a Hungarian poet and revolutionary.

¹⁶⁵ Zhang Yuanxun, *Beida 1957* (Peking University in 1957), Hong Kong: Minbo Publisher, 2004, 26-30.

to heaven, nothing is left now but a democratic terrace'.¹⁶⁶ At the same time, students renamed some paths in the campus 'democracy road' or 'freedom roads' and repainted the signs in limewash.¹⁶⁷ The number of *dazibao* was increasing dramatically, but they had also attracted attacks from the official media, which declared that Beida had fallen into the hands of a group of counter-revolutionaries. The university authorities punished the students who produced the posters and forbade any media to report on students' activities. In the evening of 21 May, the authorities organised a struggle session on the square in front of the dining hall in an attempt to condemn the poster writers. However, the struggle session quickly turned into heated debates questioning the monopoly power of the Party.¹⁶⁸ The debates lasted for four days, each day the square packed with enthusiastic students until midnight. The poster writers who did not know each other before became friends now, exploring opportunities together to resist official backlash.¹⁶⁹ They realized that their wall posters could too easily be covered by new ones which pro-CCP mass would put up, so they turned to mimeographing. They used university mimeograph machines secretly and produced thousands of leaflets of selected posters that had appeared over the week.¹⁷⁰ Instead of posting them onto the walls, they took them to a dozen neighbouring universities including Qinghua University, The People's University and Beijing Normal University, spreading further the news from Beida.

The students who were involved in mimeographing the leaflets went one step further: they saw the opportunity of producing a magazine. For them, a magazine would not only form the 'brain or headquarters of collective civil resistance' but would also become 'an effective means of preserving and circulating pluralistic thoughts'.¹⁷¹ The process of producing the magazine later proved that it had also united these young people and multiplied their networks.¹⁷² On 28 May, some fifty students from different departments gathered on the lawn outside an empty temple in the western part of the campus. After three hours' discussion, they decided to publish a magazine and selected

¹⁶⁶ The writer revised the Tang Poetry written by Cui Hao 'Where long ago a yellow crane bore a sage to heaven, Nothing is left now but the Yellow Crane Terrace.' Democracy Terrace was a building in Beida named after the ideal of the May Fourth Movement.

¹⁶⁷ Zhang Yuanxun, *Beida 1957* (Peking University in 1957), Hong Kong: Minbo Publisher, 2004, 73. Also see Chen Fengxiao, 'The History in Beida should not be forgotten', <http://aisixiang.com/data/18704.html> [accessed 2/2/11].

¹⁶⁸ Zhang, *Yuanxun, beida 1957* (Peking University in 1957), Hong Kong: Minbo Publisher, 2004, 46-57.

¹⁶⁹ Chen Fangxiao interview by author and see Zhang Yuanxun, *Beida 1957*.

¹⁷⁰ Interview Chen Fengxiao, Shen Zeyi, also see *Past micro-mark Beida's 1957*, 38.

¹⁷¹ Chen Fengxiaios interview by author 17/11/2006.

¹⁷² Chen Fengxiao interview by author.

among themselves a dozen writers to form the editorial board of the magazine. They also formed the Baihua Society (Hundred Flowers).¹⁷³ Two days later, at the first editorial board meeting, Zhang Yuanxun (张元勋) from the Chinese Literature department was elected as the chief editor. Zhang was one of the four poets who had started to refer to the areas for posting dazibao as ‘squares’. For them, the word ‘square’ encapsulated the real legacy of the May Fourth Movement. In the old campus of Beida in Bei Shatan, there were two historical sites directly related to the May Fourth Movement. One was a building called the Red Chamber, which had witnessed the founding of the first Marxist-Leninist reading group—the forerunner of the Chinese Communist Party. The building itself had become a sacred site for the Party and the name ‘Red Chamber’ had been adopted as the title for the officially funded magazine published regularly by the student union. In front of the building was another symbolic site, Democracy Square. Although less known, it used to be the assembly point of the student demonstrations in 1919.¹⁷⁴ Zhang suggested *Square* as the title for their unofficial magazine, in opposition to the official *Red Chamber*. All the editors agreed.

The editorial board started to get in touch with poster writers and asked them to develop their pieces to be published in *Square*. Meanwhile, they mimeographed more leaflets from wall posters mainly to be mailed to universities in Beijing and in other provinces. In the post office, they had to roll the leaflets into a tube, which was a standard requirement of the Chinese postal system for mailing print materials. Thus, they started to call these tube-shaped leaflets ‘democracy relay batons’ and added one line on the mail: pass the relay baton to the next reader.¹⁷⁵ The relay indeed took place. In Nankai University in Tianjin, after such a ‘democracy relay baton’ was posted in the campus, it was no time before the students covered the walls with their own dazibao.¹⁷⁶ The Square members went to Tianjin to introduce the Beida student movement in a series of

¹⁷³ Hundred Flowers refer to hundred of schools of philosophers during Spring Autumn & Warring States Periods (c. 800 BC-221 BC) and also cited from Mao’s speech in 10 March 1957, see Mao’s selected.

¹⁷⁴ For the May Fourth Movement, see Chow Tsetung, *The May Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China*, Harvard University Press, 1960, Lin Yu-sheng, *The Crisis of Chinese Consciousness: Radical Antitraditionalism in the May Fourth Era*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1979, Chen, Joseph. 1971. *The May Fourth Movement in Shanghai: The Making of a Social Movement in Modern China*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971, Rana Mitter, *A Bitter Revolution China’s Struggle with the Modern World*, Oxford University Press, 2004.

¹⁷⁵ *Democratic Baton* was mainly circulated by person to person and post through students’ networks. See Yan Dunfu, ‘*Square*, the complete story.’ in wang shi wei hen, Also see Yu, Anguo and Lei, Yining. *Bi ken chen shui de jiyi* (memory refuses to sleep, 《不肯沉睡的记忆》) zhongguo wenshi publisher, 2006, 7.

¹⁷⁶ Liu Weijun, ‘Benqiao Spring and Autumn’, <http://www.peacehall.com/news/gb/lianzai/2007/05/200705290158.shtml> [accessed 2 February 2011].
Xiao Zhenyi, *Old rightist, New Human Rights Defenders*, <http://www.peacehall.com/news/gb/pubvp/2007/05/200705191249.shtml> [accessed 2 February 2011].

seminars among the local universities. Supporters in Tianjin even founded a local branch of the *Square* magazine. At that time Qinghua University in Beijing was hosting the Beijing Colleges Games. During the opening ceremony, the *Square* editors broke into the stadium to deliver a public speech, but were immediately removed by security personnel. Their action and the mimeographed leaflets they had left inspired Qinghua students to produce their own leaflets.¹⁷⁷

Back in Beida, the editors had designed the cover for the first issue. It featured an ink drawing of a torch that symbolized the spark of May Fourth. The two characters of the title were photocopied and enlarged from the handwriting of Lu Xun, the most famous iconoclastic writer during the time of the May Fourth Movement. By referencing Lu Xun, the editors made an effort to challenge the official line on the legacy of the May Fourth Movement. The editors believed that the official interpretation had seen the May Fourth as a movement led by those who supported the communist ideology to oppose imperialism and feudalism. For the editors of *Square*, May Fourth was a ‘rebellion’ against authority, which was manifested by the highly radical writer Lu Xun. They also believed that the movement aimed to provide an open platform ‘embracing all different opinions’, which echoed their own intention with the *Square*.¹⁷⁸ The design also emphasised another meaning of the title ‘square’. Since 1949, town squares had been used as arenas by the authorities to show off their power and efficiency in mobilising the masses to show their loyalty to the Party. The name, symbol and goal of the magazine *Square* subverted the meaning of square given by the Party. They would turn the ‘square’ into a forum in which ‘all flowers were to bloom together’.¹⁷⁹

To publicise the magazine before its launch, the *Square* members organised a series of conferences at which victims of the official Purge of Counter-Revolutionaries spoke about their sufferings. Among the speakers was Gu Wenxuan (顾文选), who used to work in the Public Security Bureau in Hangzhou but was arrested for showing sympathy towards the victims and became a victim of police torture himself. Many listeners, especially people who held positive views about the CCP or lacked such experiences, were shocked at Gu’s ordeal and the account of his torture and other

¹⁷⁷ Zhang Yuanxun, Beida 1957, 84-6. Feng Guojiang interview by the author.

¹⁷⁸ Zhang Yuanxun interview and Chen Fengxiao interview by author.

¹⁷⁹ *Square* Foreword, issue 1.

abuses of power. The Square members also invited Lin Xiling (林希翎), a law student from the People's University, to give a series of public speeches in Beida. Lin publically criticized Mao for violating procedural justice in charging Hu Feng with the crime of counter-revolution.¹⁸⁰

To attract potential readers, the editorial committee decided to publish Khrushchev's special report as a supplement to their first issue.¹⁸¹ They divided the labour among themselves of copying and translating the English version of the report published in *Workers' Newspaper*.¹⁸² While they were translating the report, Lin Xiling brought them an unexpected gift: a Chinese version of the report. Lin's fiancé Cao Mengfei (曹梦飞) was a secretary of Hu Yaobang, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League of China in the 1950s. Lin got hold of a copy through Cao and organized her roommates to handcopy the report overnight before returning the original document the next day.¹⁸³ The editors compared their translation with Lin's copy and finalized the Chinese version of the report.¹⁸⁴

The contents of the first issue made the editors excited, their ambition for the print run also increased. They wanted to print 10,000 copies, which went far beyond the capacity of mimeograph machines. Letterpressing was the only choice, but that would cost 2,000 yuan. Members of *Square* sold their personal belongings such as books, clothes and valuable items such as watches. But the money they collected was hardly enough to pay for paper let alone for printing. The editors went to seek help from Ma Yinchu (马寅初), the president of Beida and an open-minded anthropologist. Ma promised to donate 500 yuan but was not able to carry this through as he himself was removed from the post after his secretary reported the plan to the Party Committee. Under such circumstances, on 3 June the members of *Square* posted a dazibao onto the bulletin board in Beida Triangle Area (三角地), the triangle square near the main dining hall,

¹⁸⁰ Fang Lizhi and Li Shuxian, 'Remembering Lin Xiling', <http://www.chinainperspective.org/ArtShow.aspx?AID=3012> [accessed 18 April 2011].

¹⁸¹ Chen Qinglin interview, Chen Fengxiao, 'I knew Lin Xiling', http://www.rfi.fr/actu/n/articles/117/article_16363.asp [accessed 2 February 2011].

¹⁸² The three translators were Ren Daxiong, Chen Fengxiao and Tao Maoqi (陶懋启). See Chen Fengxiao interview by author.

¹⁸³ Lin Xiling interview by the author, 5/6/2007. Cao was sentenced to 7 years as counter-revolutionary. Lin was named by Mao as one of the most 'viscious rightists' and sentenced to 15 years in prison in 1958. She was released in 1973 and went exile in France since 1984 until she passed away in 2009. A month before she died, she provided me with a photocopy of the original complete mimeograph edition of the first issue of *Square*.

¹⁸⁴ Chen Fengxiao, interview by the author, 3/2007. The original summary of the report cannot be found.

explaining the predicament of *Square*. Qiu Qixiang, a Chinese-Malaysian student studying meteorology in Beida, donated 500 yuan which he had inherited from his father. Many students donated their pocket money and ordered the first issue. To everyone's surprise, the editors managed to collect 2,000 yuan within an hour. They left before the Party Committee arrived.¹⁸⁵ By 5 June the editors had pulled together about 40 articles. They took the cover design, the handcopied articles and the newly purchased 30 reams of printing paper to Beijing No. 1 Printing Factory, with the dream of seeing their first issue letterpressed. The factory took the money and pledged to get the job done by 10 June.

On 8 June, the official Anti-Rightist Campaign was formally launched. The university authorities began to suppress dazibao, and a few members of *Square* were assaulted while posting dazibao. After two days, four editors went to the printing factory to collect the issue, only to find out that the factory had confiscated all their materials, and they themselves were to be welcomed by a well-set-up struggle session packed with angry workers accusing them of 'counter revolution'. After hours of interrogation, the editors went back to the campus reporting their experience to other members of the magazine. In the next few days, the *Square* members were bombarded with attacks at struggle sessions organised by the university authorities who were fabricating evidence of the editors assaulting workers in the factory.¹⁸⁶ The dream of letterpressing the first issue came to an end. According to Chen Fengxiao, they knew the risk of letterpressing since all printing factories were controlled by the Party—but they thought it worth trying even the slightest possibility to print 10,000 copies at short notice, in order to influence more readers all over the country.¹⁸⁷

All members and supporters of *Square* were facing huge pressures from their families, classmates and colleagues. *Square* lost half of its members and Baihua Society closed down. Despite all this, the remaining members and some new supporters started to mimeograph the first issue secretly, in room 426 of dormitory building no. 28. As *Square* had been blacklisted by the authorities, they changed the cover title to *Beida Democracy Wall Selections* edited by the *Square* editorial committee.¹⁸⁸ At noon of 21

¹⁸⁵Zhang Yuanxun, 114, Chen Fengxiao and Li Shuxian, interview by author.

¹⁸⁶*ibid.*

¹⁸⁷Zhang Yanxun, p83-110.

¹⁸⁸*ibid.*

June, 500 copies of mimeographed *Square* were brought into the Triangle Area in front of the dining hall. The editorial board distributed the magazine. At the same time, the Party Committee organized its own people to buy up many copies. Later on, the official broadcast began to announce: come to the dining hall and burn *Square*. In this way many copies were burnt. Afterwards, CCP organisations were deployed to ferret out any holders of the magazine; some people were forced to hand over their copies.

Though the government attempted to destroy all the mimeographed copies, at least three original copies have survived. From these, we knew that the issue started with an editorial, which emphasised the inheritance of the May Fourth Movement and set the goals of the magazine as ‘promoting the formation of a legal system, transformation and socialist democracy’. At the same time, the magazine advocated ‘freedom of public opinion’, ‘abolishing censorship for publications’ and a ‘guarantee of freedom of speech’.¹⁸⁹ The editors also announced that the magazine would lead the current democratic movement and extend its influence outside the campus and all round the country.¹⁹⁰ There were seven articles exploring the pressing political issues of the time such as the Three Calamities (三害, referring to bureaucracy, dogmatism and factionalism). The editors proposed concrete steps ‘to expose fully the evidence of the Three Calamities’, and argued that the question was ‘not merely an attitude’ but involved the ‘political institutions’.¹⁹¹ There were two essays and a poem on the May Nineteen Movement, one article on social hierarchy, one on democracy and a personal account by Gu Wenxuan of his sufferings during the Purge Counter-Revolutionaries Campaign.

On 23 June the editorial board of *Square* was forced to declare closure. It was no longer possible to mimeograph the magazine as the university authorities were watching closely all the mimeograph machines. Supporters persisted in posting dazibao onto the walls despite being frequently assaulted. Some members attempted to construct an underground network or even to get support from the international community. Thus Chen Fengxiao sought help from the British embassy in Beijing without success. He also jumped into the Yugoslav embassy, but his asylum request was rejected. Chen was

¹⁸⁹ *ibid.*

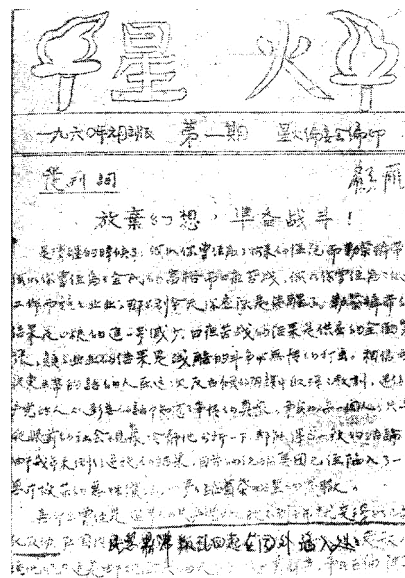
¹⁹⁰ Qian Liqun, ‘Three student magazines in 1957’.

¹⁹¹ Foreword, *Square*.

arrested at Tianjin New Port before he had a chance to jump into the sea and swim onto a foreign cargo ship. Seven members of Square including Gu Wenxuan, He Yongzeng (贺永增), Liu Qidi (刘奇弟), Ren Daxiong and Zhang Xikun were either executed or died from torture in labour camps. All other participants were sent into prisons or labour camps for an average of twenty years. Over eight hundred students and teachers involved into *daozibao* activities were sent into labour camps for ten to twenty years, three of whom were executed and eighteen died of unknown causes.¹⁹²

As the first unofficial publication, the *Square* magazine stood in antagonistic relation with the official magazines. It made a valuable attempt to recover the origin of the magazine genre: the structure of the collage, an internal pluralism. This is also reflected in its contents: a poem, an observer's report, essays on politics and society, and so on, all under the same roof. In this way, it re-presented the mosaic of the society at the time. It proved that the magazine form had the potential to become an effective medium to record the struggles of the powerless and to cultivate an independent political culture.

2.3.2 Spark



¹⁹²Huang Lizhong (黄立众), Wu Sihui (吴思慧) and Shen Yuan (沈元) were executed. Wang Youqing, 'The seventh rightist students in Beida was executed' <http://www.fireofliberty.org/article/12839.asp>, Chen Fengxiao, 'Beida's victims during the Anti-rightists Campaign', <http://www.zonghexinwen.net/news/1150003386/>, Wang Shuyao, Partial List of Beida Rightists — has the CCP given up the rule of man? <http://www.minzhuzhongguo.org/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=15292> [accessed 2 February 2011].

Figure 3. *Spark*, issue 1, 1960

The unofficial magazine *Spark* was a consciously underground magazine that developed a cross-region and cross-class network at the turn of the 1950s. The magazine was initiated by rightists of Lanzhou University, who were sent to remote villages for labour under surveillance. During the Anti-Rightist campaign, around 200 students and teachers who had criticised the party were labelled as ‘rightists’ in Lanzhou University (Landa), which was the most comprehensive university in Gansu province. In July 1958, forty of them were sent down to remote villages in Wushan and Tianshui counties. Unlike those rightists who were sent to labour camps, these Lanzhou rightists, condemned to labour under surveillance, enjoyed a certain degree of freedom. They stayed in villagers’ homes, and had opportunities to visit each other’s villages at the weekends. Zhang Chunyuan (张春元), a second-year history major, was sent to a tractor station in Wushan county. The 26-year-old young man had taken part in the Korean War driving vehicles in the Chinese army. He left the army after being wounded in one leg and later enrolled to study history in Lanzhou University. The tractor station, which was situated at the transportation line, soon became a meeting place for dissidents who had been labelled rightists, and Zhang became a messenger for his fellow rightists driving the tractor between the villages.¹⁹³

These rightists exchanged observations on villagers’ life in the heat of the Great Leap Forward campaign. According to Tan Chanxue’s (谭蝉雪) memoir, the local authorities often resorted to misreporting on the yields in order to please the higher-level authorities. She remembered vividly the autumn of 1958:

One day the leaders notified the members of the commune to go to the field in the evening. They moved flourishing crops from each production team to the designated fields next to the road where the old crops had all been removed. These special fields were transformed overnight into green scenery. Next to them stood huge wooden signboards such as ‘golden queen high yield field’ and ‘white ivory satellite field’, as if a good harvest were in sight.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹³ Tan Chanxue, *qiu shuo—lanzhou daxue ‘youpai fangeming jituan’ jishi* (Exploring —‘Rightist Counterrevolution group’ record) [Hong Kong: Tianma Publisher, 2010], 19-22.

¹⁹⁴ *ibid.*, 8.

In reality, however, there was famine on their very doorstep. Peasants had started to eat bark grass, and even fellow humans.¹⁹⁵ Filled with indignation, Sun Ziyun (孙自筠), a third-year literature student rightist who was also a party member, wrote down what he had seen in Wushan and sent it to *Red Flag*, an official theoretical magazine affiliated directly to the Central Committee of the CCP in July 1959. A month later, Sun was arrested while working in the field, sentenced to ten years on charge of ‘viciously attacking the party’.¹⁹⁶

Sun’s misfortune was a wakeup call for other rightists. Their illusions about Mao and the party were completely shattered. They realised the necessity of setting up an underground network to publish and circulate their writings so that they could increase their influence on society. At the time, Sun He (孙和), a second-year student rightist from the history department, received a letter from his sister who had been sent to Qinghai province as a student rightist. In the letter, there was a poem by Lin Zhao (林昭), one of her classmates from the Chinese literature department at Beijing University. Lin had been labelled as a rightist subject to labour under surveillance since 1957 for openly showing her sympathy towards the unofficial magazine *Square*. In 1958, she was temporarily allowed to return to her parents’ home in Jiangsu province after being diagnosed with pulmonary tuberculosis. Instead of staying in bed, Lin took the opportunity to expand her network. She reached out to look for comrades around the country by writing to other rightists and visiting their families.¹⁹⁷ Lin’s rousing poem, titled ‘Seagull: Liberty or Death’, and calling on people to fight for freedom, spread widely through her network.¹⁹⁸ When Zhang Chunyuan read the poem, he went to see a graduate rightist Gu Yan (顾雁) in Wushan, who had known Lin when he studied

¹⁹⁵Tan, 10. The official figure of the death in the Great Famine is 20 million. According to Yang Jisheng, 36 million died. See Yang Jisheng, *yongjiu de mubei—zhongguo liushi niandai da jihuang jishi* (Permanent tombstone - the great famine of the sixties documentary 《永久的墓碑——中国六十年代大饥荒纪实》) [Hong Kong: diandi dushu publisher, 2008], 1-10.

Jasper Becker, *Hungry Ghosts: Mao's Secret Famine*, 58. ‘Summary and Explanation of “Non-normal Death” during China’s great famine’ <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/ics/21c/supplem/essay/0805050g.htm>. The death rate of Rightists in Ganshu kept very high during the famine from 1959 to 1961. In Jiangbiangou, a labour camp, there were 2,400 rightists. All but 1,100 of them would perish there, mostly of starvation. In Ganshu, one million people out of 12 to 13 million died of starvation. He fengming, *jinli--ou de 1957 nian* (my experience in 1957 《经历--我的1957年》) dunhuang wenyi publisher, 2006. See online book.

<http://www.qidian.com/BookReader/7223.aspx> [accessed 2/2/11].

¹⁹⁶Tan Chanxue, *qiu shuo—lanzhou daxue ‘youpai fangeming jituan’ jishi* (Exploring —‘Rightist Counterrevolution group’ record) [Hong Kong: Tianma Publisher, 2010], 14 and 238.

¹⁹⁷Zhang Yuanxun, 252-4 ed. Tan Chanxue and Lin Zhao collection of original prison diaries and letters, also see Liu Faqing, in Hu Jie’s documentary, ‘In Search Of Lin Zhao’s Soul’,

¹⁹⁸The poem still exists. See Tan Chanxue, *qiu shuo—lanzhou daxue ‘youpai fangeming jituan’ jishi* (Exploring —‘Rightist Counterrevolution group’ record) [Hong Kong: Tianma Publisher, 2010], 85-94.

undergraduate physics in Beijing University. Gu took the opportunity of visiting his relatives in Shanghai to visit Lin Zhao in Suzhou, which was only 80 kilometres away. A few days later Zhang found an opportunity and joined them. Lin recounted the production and distribution of *Square*, emphasising the importance of unofficial publications. She gave them her new poem, ‘A Day of Suffering for Prometheus’, and a booklet she acquired, ‘Draft Program of the Yugoslavia League of Communists’. Inspired by Lin Zhao, Zhang and Gu each wrote an article when they went back to Gu’s grandparents’ home.¹⁹⁹

When Zhang and Gu travelled back to Gansu in September, with Lin’s poem, the Yugoslavia document and their own articles in the luggage, they were ready to start their own magazine. In the tractor station, a dozen of rightists from Wushan and Tianshui agreed to publish a regular magazine to ‘exchange ideas, expand influence and unite comrades’ and to break through the circles of Lanzhou University.²⁰⁰ They decided to keep the magazine underground, to be shared internally among trusty members. Gu suggested the title ‘Spark’ for the magazine, referring to an old Chinese saying: ‘A single spark can start a prairie fire’. The printing task was taken by Xiang Chengjian (向承鉴) and Miao Xinjiu (苗庆久), both science students who were allocated a bungalow to be used as the lab to prepare for the building of a sulphuric acid plant and a fertilizer plant for the county. There happened to be an old mimeograph machine in the lab. In November, Xiang and Miao announced that they had to shut the lab for a week in order to disinfect and sterilize the fertilizers, allowing nobody to enter the room. During that week, the entire issue was scratched onto waxed paper, mimeographed and bound. More than thirty copies of the first issue came out in December. Twenty copies were circulated among the underground group. The remaining copies were hidden in the homes of two local peasants, who had also become members of the group.²⁰¹

The issue consisted of an inaugural statement, seven political essays, news and Lin Zhao’s metaphorical poem about Prometheus. The inaugural statement, ‘Give Up

¹⁹⁹ Tan Chanxue, 62 and 92, also see Gu Mi, Memories on Lin Zhao http://www.360doc.com/content/09/0204/21/26982_2459835.shtml

²⁰⁰ Tan, 20 and 26.

²⁰¹ Tan Chanxue, qiu shuo—lanzhou daxue ‘youpai fangeming jituan’ jishi (Exploring —‘Rightist Counterrevolution group’ record)[Hong Kong: Tianma Publisher, 2010], 22, 114-5, 238-9, 252-6.

Illusion and Prepare to Fight’, was the article that Gu Yan wrote after the meeting with Lin Zhao. In this article, Gu pointed out that the Chinese Communist Party had turned what belonged to the whole nation into the party’s own private property. He regarded China’s ‘socialism’ not as genuine socialism but as a dictatorial version, comparable to the Nazi ‘national socialism’. He called for his comrades to unite and fight for ‘democratic socialism’ and ‘scientific socialism’. The article by Xiang Chengjian examined the situations of different classes such as peasants, the working class, intellectuals, the army and the rising bureaucratic ruling class. Zhang Chunyuan wrote on peasants and rural issues. His article entitled ‘Peasant, Serf and Slave’ held that ‘one of the most immense transformation in today’s rural areas is the poverty and bankruptcy of peasants’, which had led to ‘the emergence of a new class—the rural proletariat’. Zhang argued:

Under the slogan of agricultural collectivism, peasants’ means of production such as land, farm animals, farm tools and seeds have been controlled, their production outcome such as grain, oil plant and cotton have been ripped off. The People’s Commune, in particular, has accelerated the transition of the vast majority of peasants into becoming rural proletarians ... Meanwhile, today’s rulers have disguised themselves as the only, genuine representative for peasants ... and organised the peasants into military organisations for their own purpose of ruling, which has made it impossible for peasants to move around, seek employment and make a living outside their hometown ... Civil rights such as voting, assembly and association, demonstration, and freedom of speech are nothing but lies for peasants.²⁰²

The publication of the first issue, in January 1960, attracted more than forty new members into the Spark group, which now had more than sixty members in all including 12 peasants, 3 county-level party cadres, and 7 members from provinces outside Gansu. Du Yinghua (杜映华), a deputy secretary of the party’s committee in Wushan county, had been labelled as rightist deviationist for criticizing the party’s rural policy during the Great Leap Forward, though he was not removed from his post. He became a member of the Spark group after reading the Draft Program of the Yugoslavia

²⁰² *Spark*, issue 1, see Tan Chanxue, qiu shuo—lanzhou daxue ‘youpai fangeming jituan’ jishi (Exploring — ‘Rightist Counterrevolution group’ record) [Hong Kong: Tianma Publisher, 2010], 55-7

For militarization of organization, see ‘CCP Central Committee on the establishment of communes in rural areas the problem of resolution on 29 September 1958’: ‘militarization of organization, militarization of action, collectivization of life would become the mass movement.’ (中共中央关于在农村建立人民公社问题的决议). http://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2005-01/06/content_2422854.htm • [accessed 8 February 2011]

League of Communists. He provided Zhang Chunyuan with a recommendation letter in the name of the county authority, with which Zhang went to Beijing and bought a new mimeograph machine and printing paper. These were later transported to Gu Yan's grandparents' home in Shanghai, where they set up a second printing 'lab'.²⁰³

In April, Spark members started to prepare for the second issue in Shanghai and Wushan. In Shanghai, five pieces—one article by Zhang, three articles by Gu and one poem by Lin—were mimeographed.²⁰⁴ Twenty copies of three pieces—Zhang's 'On the People's Commune', Lin's poem 'Seagull' and Gu's analysis of the poem—were taken back to Wushan. They kept the rest of the mimeographed materials in Shanghai, planning to send them anonymously to CCP officials and the CCP affiliated organisations in order to educate party officials and also to test their reactions.²⁰⁵ In Wushan, six articles, including an oral account of a peasant during the famine, were hand-copied to make a dozen of copies.²⁰⁶ The three mimeographed Shanghai pieces and the six handwritten Wushan pieces were bound into a dozen copies as the second issue of *Spark*, and circulated through their reliable network.

After the publication of the second issue, the Spark members held a meeting in Wushan and discussed the magazine's direction for the future. They agreed to expand the membership among workers, peasants and soldiers, and to prepare to formalise the organisation. Zhang had travelled to a dozen provinces including Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Guangdong, Hubei and Henan to expand their network. The meeting also decided to send Tan Chanxue to appeal for foreign aid. In June, Tan travelled to Guangzhou to visit a relative, seeking a chance to escape to Hong Kong. However, she was caught near the border and detained in Kaiping where her real identity was revealed. Zhang, who was Tan's fiancé, was arrested when he tried to save Tan on a forged police document. In September, another 41 members in Wushan and Tianshui were arrested. The mimeograph machine in Miao and Xiang's lab was confiscated and ten copies of the magazine were confiscated from peasants' homes.

²⁰³ Tan, 22,

²⁰⁴ The article, 'On the People's Commune', was published in the second issue, The other two articles written by Gu Yan were 'On Oligarchy' and 'On Reverse the verdict for the First emperor'. These two articles had not been circulated.

²⁰⁵ Tan, 62 and 99

²⁰⁶ Tan, 63-95, Case of Duyinghua, <http://www.observechina.net/info/ArtShow.asp?ID=43624> [accessed 8 February 2011]

In Shanghai, Gu and Lin began to destroy sensitive materials after learning of Zhang's arrest. Lin had set up another underground group with seven members in Suzhou and Shanghai after her meeting with Zhang and Gu. The group was named Coalition of Chinese Free Youths in Combat. Lin's membership of both groups made the coalition a de facto extension of *Spark*. Lin mimeographed the coalition's manifesto, proposing a series of political changes for the country including federation, nationalisation of the army and permission for peasants to own agricultural land.²⁰⁷ In October, Lin was arrested and detained for 18 months. In 1962, during her temporary release on medical parole, Lin asked a foreign sailor to take copies of their writings, including the coalition's manifesto, the first issue of *Spark* and 'On People's Commune', out of China and send them to foreign media.²⁰⁸ When the sailor was caught, Lin was thrown into prison again, where she wrote thousands of poems and articles with her blood onto the wall and on paper. Her prison texts, some of which were smuggled out of prison later, examined the ruling strategies of the CCP and their propaganda patterns.²⁰⁹

Lin Zhao was executed on 28 April 1968. Zhang Chunyuan and Du Yinghua were executed in 1970. Wang Fengqi (王凤岐), the peasant member of *Spark* who helped the group keep copies of mimeographed writings, was allegedly tortured to death in prison in the late 1960. Other arrested members of the Spark group were kept in prisons or labour camps for fifteen to twenty years.²¹⁰

2.4 Minkan as Self-Identity

A kind of public sphere reemerged in 1957 after the CCP came into power. This space manifested itself through the squares that were created spontaneously alongside the *dazibao* activities in university campuses. The creation of this public space showed the strong desire of its actors to construct a self-conscious identity, independent from the

²⁰⁷ Qian Liqun, Martyr Lin Zhao, <http://www.newcenturynews.com/Article/gd/200705/20070526042751.html> [accessed 8 February 2011].

²⁰⁸ See Lin's indictment and Lin's writings in prison.

²⁰⁹ Lin's writings in prison and Interview Hu Jie, 26/10/06, 13/03/07.

²¹⁰ Deng Deyin (邓得银), a member of the magazine, was tortured to death in the late 1960s. Tan Chanxue qiu shuo—lanzhou daxue 'youpai fangeming jituan' jishi (Exploring —'Rightist Counterrevolution group' record), Hong Kong: Tianma Publisher, 2010, 114-5,132. In the book, Xiang Chengzhi's memoirs, 263-4 See also Ding Shu, 'Lin Zhao and Spark'.

spaces occupied by the official media. Under a totalitarian regime, words are frequently distorted by the ruling party to control the ideology. To subvert such ideology, the *minkan* groups adopted two strategies: to create new concepts as well as to re-interpret the old notions. For example, the short period of freer public speech referred to by the Party as the Rectification Campaign, was re-coined by the editors of the *Square* as the ‘May 19 Democratic Movement’. For the editors, the day became a symbol when hundreds of students created a new medium—Big-Character Posters—to speak out loudly and freely about public affairs. Yang Lu, an editor of the *Square*, made it clear in his poster that the purpose of the students was not to ‘help the Party rectify’ but to ‘strive for democracy and freedom’. Since its birth, the movement had itself conceived of itself as an independent civil power rather than an instrument of the Party.²¹¹

Notions such as ‘democracy’ and ‘socialism’ were fashionable in this period, but what the editors of the *Square* did was to re-interpret them. Even when they used the same words, they meant something completely different. The Party had always insisted that ‘democracy’ meant the democratic centrism under the Party’s leadership and that ‘democracy’ was restricted to the proletarian class. The *Square* and the *dazibao* departed clearly from the Party’s view. They argued that democracy would never be granted by the power holder but only realized through a struggle from below.²¹² In the magazine, Wang Guoxiang spoke out loudly: ‘Don’t assume that today’s democracy was granted. No, it was fought for by us—and mixed with the blood of the Hungarians.’²¹³ Another editor Ye Yusheng (叶于泮) questioned the legitimacy of the ruling power and claimed that public elections were a key manifestation of democracy. He also emphasised that democracy requested independent thinking and self-awareness, rather than following the leaders’ will.²¹⁴ Yang Lu pointed out that democracy was beyond the restriction of classes. Democracy should not be distinguished between Proletariat democracy and Capitalist democracy.²¹⁵ In addition, the *Square* and its

²¹¹ See the articles of Zhang Yuanxun, Tan Dianrong, Zhang Xikun, Wang Shuyao, Yang Lu, Yan Zhongqiang in *Yuan shang chao*. Also see <http://www.eywedu.com/wenxueyuedu/sywc/index.html>, [accessed 2/2/11].

²¹² Yang Lu, Chen Fengxiao, Shen Zheyi’ speech and, interview, by author.

²¹³ Wang Guoxiang, ‘Man with a Brain Does not Think in That Way’ in *Yuanshangcao*, 150.

²¹⁴ The CCP argued that China’s Proletariat democracy was different from Capitalist democracy in the West. See Ye Yusheng, ‘I see Democracy’ in *Yuanshangcao*, 149.

²¹⁵ Yang Lu, ‘My Final Declaration’. <http://www.eywedu.com/wenxueyuedu/sywc/183.htm> [accessed 2/2/11] Also see *Reprinting Square*, issue 2 in wang shi wei hen .

supporters argued that the freedom to publish was a political right of citizens and that the exercise of such right was an integral part of the practice of democracy.²¹⁶

The notion of socialism had been made sacred at the time. Mao instructed: ‘all words and deeds which deviate from socialism are basically wrong’.²¹⁷ Many of the *minkan* editors did not question the sacredness of the notion. Zhang Yuanxun explained in a recent interview, ‘We did not suspect the notion. At that time, most of us still believed that there was not a fundamental problem with socialism, but only with its implementation. It was later, when life educated us, that we realized its nature.’²¹⁸ What the editors contributed to the notion was humanism. They believed that a more humane, open, and democratic socialism was possible. However, there was indeed one voice that challenged the notion of socialism. Zhang Xikun (张锡镨), a member of the *Square*, believed that the root of the Three Calamities was the political system. He argued that the propaganda about capitalism and socialism had been one-sided. Socialism was not heaven, and nor was capitalism completely wrong. He further argued that the concept of proletarian dictatorship was not sacrosanct.

Zhang Xikun and some critics also explored the relation between the totalitarian institutions and the masses. They argued that the totalitarian principles depended on the very notion of ‘masses’: ‘a population that lacked the capacity for independent thinking or self-consciousness, and simply submitted to or was loyal to the rulers without any condition. Thus, the totalitarian system was bolstered by the masses and some people in the system climbed the power ladder that was built upon victims. To destroy such power and institutions, it was essential to construct civil force to resist against the institutions and their social base.’²¹⁹ The purpose of resistance was to establish and perfect the political system, and people had the right to control the power of the government while their political rights were protected by the Constitution²²⁰. This

²¹⁶ *ibid*, and See Yang Zhongqiang’s article, *Reprinting Square*, issue 1 in wang shi wei hen.

²¹⁷ Mao Zedong’s Speech in http://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2004-10/15/content_2094224.htm [accessed 2/2/11].

²¹⁸ Zhang Yuanxun, interview by author 14/11/2006.

²¹⁹ Zhang Xikun, root of Three Calamities, *Reprinting Square*, issue 1 in wang shi wei hen.

²²⁰ Zhang XiKun, root of Three Calamities, Yan Zhongqiang, speech of the mad, *Reprinting Square*, issue 1 in wang shi wei hen.

stimulated people to think about the intertwined relation between the political system and ways of human existence as one of the most significant problems in China, and to reflect on how to shake off the enslaved frame of mind.²²¹

In the 1950s the scope of minkan networks was mainly restricted to urban areas, particularly in universities. The squares in the universities were not accessible to other social groups such as workers or peasants, who lived in entirely different domains. Such social stratification reflected the Party's strategy of preventing the building of self-awareness within different social groups. The *Square* group, although there were strikes in several provinces, did not address workers' issues or communicate with workers in factories.²²² On the other hand, the factory workers regarded these university students as nothing but 'counterrevolutionaries'. Thus, the minkan movement in 1957 lacked the momentum and power of workers, unlike in the May Fourth Movement. Furthermore, these squares hardly influenced the vast territory of rural areas. Not until the university students were sent to the remote villages branded as 'rightists', did they have a chance to encounter peasants in the rural areas. Distinct from the minkan groups in the universities, the *Spark* group consisted of a much wider social spectrum including also peasants, county-level party cadres, and former PLA soldiers. However, the group was formed not because its members shared the same social identity but because the majority of them were treated as politically subaltern, under surveillance.²²³ In contrast to the *Square*, the cautious circulation of *Spark* was restricted to a limited audience rather than disseminated openly to a range of readers.²²⁴

The difference between these two modes of minkan existence raises an important question regarding the strategies of civic resistance. Does 'unofficial' mean 'underground' in a totalitarian society? Is an underground status a necessary

²²¹ Foreword, *Reprinting Square*, issue 1 in wang shi wei hen.

²²² There were strikes in Jiangsu and Shanghai from 1956 to 1957. Qian, Liqun, 'Chinese villages, factories and schools in 1956 and 1957' (1956、1957年中国的农村、工厂与学校), <http://www.aisixiang.com/data/detail.php?id=5697> [accessed 2 February 2011]. Ching Kwan Lee, *Against the Law: Labor Protests in China's Rustbelt and Sunbelt*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2007, 37.

²²³ Xiang Changzhi, My memoris ed. Tan Chanxue, qiu shuo—lanzhou daxue 'youpai fangeming jituan' jishi (Exploring —'Rightist Counterrevolution group' record), Hong Kong: Tianma Publisher, 2010, 198-2000.

²²⁴ Peasants grabbed food in train on a small scale. See Tan Shanxue, 102 and Yang Jisheng, 'Great Famine from 1958 to 1962' <http://chinadigitaltimes.net/chinese/2010/09/%E6%9D%A8%E7%BB%A7%E7%BB%B3-1958-1962%E2%80%94%E4%B8%AD%E5%9B%BD%E5%A4%A7%E9%A5%A5%E8%8D%92> [accessed 2/2/11].

requirement for minkan to survive or at least to avoid an immediate crackdown in its infant stage? But then, how can minkan grow without publicizing itself and communicating with new audiences? The dilemma between overt and secret was bound to haunt the minkan in the years to come.

3. Polarities

This chapter examines minkan in the 1960s, a turbulent decade when the issues of privilege and class dominated almost every aspect of social activities. Social stratification was reinforced through officially launched class struggles and political campaigns against various ‘enemies’ and ‘black elements’ labelled according to political behaviours and family origins. Minkan from this decade reflect political discriminations and social conflicts. Magazines produced by young people from privileged backgrounds were inspired by internally accessible reading materials such as the grey-covered and yellow-covered books. These magazines were normally circulated within the elite circles. By contrast, magazines founded by youths from the oppressed groups were concerned about social inequalities. The distribution of their magazines took the advantage of the *da chuanlian* (大串联, great networking) during the early Cultural Revolution. As mimeograph and letterpress facilities were strictly controlled by the authorities, handcopying became the main method of producing unofficial magazines. The political consciousness and features of independent culture as manifested and fostered by these magazines projected the potentialities as well as the clear limitations of the minkan.

3.1 Power and Minkan Conditions

The beginning of the decade witnessed economic depression and widespread famine following the Great Leap Forward campaign.²²⁵ The continuous economic crisis did not provide job opportunities for youths in cities so that the authorities began to encourage urban young people to move to the villages.²²⁶ To prevent social upheavals, a series of control mechanisms had been put into place since the late 1950s. These included the

²²⁵Yang Jisheng, *yongjiu de mubei—zhongguo liushi niandai da jihuang jishi* (Permanent tombstone - the great famine of the sixties documentary 《永恒的墓碑——中国六十年代大饥荒纪实》) [Hong Kong: diandi dushu publisher, 2008] Becker, Jasper, *Hungry Ghosts: Mao's Secret Famine* [Holt Paperbacks, 1998] and Dikötter, Frank. *Mao's great famine* [London: Bloomsbury, 2010].

²²⁶Ding Yizhuang. *Zhongguo zhiqing shi* (The history of the Chinese educated youth 《中国知青史：初澜（1953-1968年）》) [Dangdai zhongguo Publisher, 2009], 1-110.

household registration system, the supply system and the custody and repatriation system.²²⁷ The famine also triggered factional conflicts within the party. At that time, Liu Shaoqi further strengthened his clique as the second top leader of the CCP, the position of the president of the P.R. China taking over from Mao, after playing a crucial role in dethroning Peng Dehuai, the former minister of national defence who had criticized the Great Leap Forward. Now Liu changed his mind and blamed Mao's mistaken policies in the Great Leap Forward for causing the great famine. In January 1962, Mao was forced to conduct self-criticism in front of 7,000 party members at an enlarged party conference held by the Central Committee.²²⁸ Liu altered Mao's economic policies by allowing peasants to lease land from the commune in several provinces. When the rural economy began to improve, Liu seemed to have gained an upper hand within the party, though Mao was still the supreme commander of the armed forces.²²⁹

The power struggle within the party was accompanied by instability in China's foreign affairs. From 1960 to 1963, disputes between the Soviet Union and China kept growing and finally caused the Sino-Soviet rupture, after which China became more isolated from the rest of the Western world. The Sino-Soviet split enabled Mao to proclaim that the withdrawal of Soviet aid had caused the abortion of the Great Leap Forward, and subsequently the famine, turning the dissatisfaction towards himself into discontent with the Soviet Union.²³⁰ In addition, Mao constructed the doctrine on Anti-Revisionism and Permanent Revolution, which helped him regain ideological power. In late 1962, Mao reiterated the importance of class struggle, warning his followers not to allow the 'class enemy' to 'seize power' and 'destroy the socialist construction'.²³¹ He launched the Socialist Education Campaign (also known as the Four Clean-Ups

²²⁷ According to C& R system, if people traveled to other other places or peasants in rural areas traveled to cities, the police could arbitrarily arrest people and held them for several months or longer. Also See Guo Luoji, 'On the "Custody and Repatriation System"', <http://www.tsquare.tv/chinese/democracy/gshuorong.html> [accessed 1 July 2008]

²²⁸ Gao, Hua, *Origin of China's famine and Shiqing Campaign* (《大灾荒与四清运动的起源》) or see <http://www.cnd.org/cr/ZK01/cr113.hz8.html>, [accessed 1 July 2008]. Also see Short, Philip, *Mao : a life*, London : John Murray, 2004, 517- 26 and Jung Chang, Jung and Halliday Jon, *Mao: The Unknown Story*, [Jonathan Cape, 2005] 496-7. Wang Yonghua, 'Reviews on Shiqing Campaign', <http://www.aisixiang.com/data/25562.html> [accessed 1 July 2008].

²²⁹ Gao, Hua *Origin of China's famine and Shiqing Campaign* 《大灾荒与四清运动的起源》 <http://www.cnd.org/cr/ZK01/cr113.hz8.html> [accessed 1 July 2008]. Also see Also see Short, Philip, *Mao : a life*, London : John Murray, 2004, 517- 26 and Jung Chang, *Mao The unknown story*, 494-499, Philip Short, *Mao: a life*, London : John Murray, 2004, 509-12.

²³⁰ Mao denounced that withdrawing all Soviet technical experts and aid from China caused failure of the Great Leap Forward. See Shen Zihua, 'The Great Leap Forward, the People's Communes and the Rupture of the Sino-Soviet Alliance' ('中苏同盟破裂的原因和结果'), *Social Sciences in China*, Vol.26, №2, Spring 2005.

²³¹ Zhengyuan Fu, *Autocratic Tradition and Chinese Politics* [Cambridge University Press, 1993], 306.

Campaign), sending work teams to the countryside. The work teams mobilised peasants to inform on their corrupt cadres but peasants hardly dared to complain about the cadres for fear of reprisals once the work team left. In 1964, Liu took over to supervise the campaign and changed its direction to target those he labelled as the ‘black five’: landlords, rich peasants, counterrevolutionaries, bad elements and rightists. Under Liu’s direction, most party cadres remained untouched, with only a few low-ranking cadres sacrificed as examples of officials corrupted by the black five categories.²³² When Liu’s increasing popularity inside the party became more and more a threat to Mao’s supreme power, Mao stopped the campaign and started to prepare a more political campaign.²³³

The purpose of Mao’s new campaign was to eliminate cultural and ideological cadres who had supported or who were likely to support Liu’s line. In this new round of political persecution, Wu Han became one of the earliest victims. Wu was a leading historian of the Ming Dynasty and a member of the Democratic League. He was appointed as one of the vice mayors of Beijing as a symbol of the ‘united front’ of the party. Wu had published a series of research papers on Hai Rui, a Ming prime minister who had been documented as honest and upright, but was dismissed from his official position for criticising the emperor. A few years back, Mao had encouraged Wu to write a historical play ‘Hai Rui Dismissed from Office’, and praised the play at its premiere. However, the play now seemed to Mao something that he could use as the prologue of his new campaign. In July 1964, the Central Cultural Revolution Group (CCRG) was set up under Mao’s instructions to lead government departments in the areas of ideology and culture. But Peng Zhen, the chief of the group and the mayor of Beijing, stopped the attacks against Wu Han. The following year, Mao’s wife Jiang Qing instructed Yao Wenyuan, one of the main party propagandists in Shanghai, to attack Wu’s play in the local media. In November 1965, Yao published a heated article in Shanghai’s *Wenhui Paper*, denouncing Hai Rui as a defender of feudalism and landlord interests and attacking Wu’s play for alluding to party policies concerning the People’s Commune and the black five categories. Yao’s article was re-published in Beijing in the

²³²The Taoyuan Experience by Wang Guangmei, Liu’s wife. Kenneth Lieberthal and Bruce Dickson, *A Research Guide To Central Party And Government Meetings In China, 1949-1986*, [M. E. Sharpe, 1989], 157-67.

²³³Mao further feared his opposition in the party united and opposed him from his knowledge on the dismissal of Khrushchev. See Roderick MacFarquhar and Michael Schoenhals, *Mao's last revolution* [Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006], 10-11, Fu, Zhengyuan. *Autocratic Tradition and Chinese Politics*. Cambridge University Press, 1993, 306-7.

People's Daily in early November. Within months, Wu was dismissed from his official position.²³⁴

On 16 May 1966, the enlarged meeting of the Politburo approved the Notice on the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. The circular declared:

'The whole party must follow Comrade Mao Zedong's instructions, hold high the great banner of the proletarian Cultural Revolution, thoroughly expose the reactionary bourgeois stand of those so-called 'academic authorities' who oppose the party and socialism, thoroughly criticize and repudiate the reactionary bourgeois ideas in the sphere of academic work, education, journalism, literature and art, and publishing, and seize the leadership in these cultural spheres. To achieve this, it is necessary at the same time to criticize and repudiate those representatives of the bourgeoisie who have sneaked into the party, the government, the army, and all spheres of culture, to clear them out or transfer some of them to other positions'.²³⁵

As a result of the Notice, several officials including Peng Zhen were relieved of all posts. Chen Boda, Mao's personal secretary, was appointed chief of the CCRG and Jiang Qing as the deputy chief.²³⁶ The CCRG had now become Mao's weapon against whoever dared to disobey his orders. Mao's henchmen were promoted to lead the most influential propaganda media such as the *People's Daily*, the *PLA Daily* and the *Red Flag*, referred to as the central 'two newspapers and one journal'.

The Notification called for a purge of capitalist representatives from the Party, governments, and cultural organizations at all levels. In the early period of the Cultural Revolution (CR), students in universities criticised party officials through the 'four bigs' (speaking out, airing views fully, writing big-character posters, and holding great debates).²³⁷ The big-character posters aroused much political ferment in the cities. With Mao's consent, Liu Shaoqi sent work teams down to universities, schools and factories in major cities, preventing students from 'black' categories attacking party officials. The

²³⁴ Wei Chengsi, *zhongguo zhishi fanzi de chen fu* (Chinese Intellectuals 魏承思, 《中国知识份子的沉浮》) [Hong Kong: Oxford Publisher, 2004], 170-1, Yao Wenyuan, 'On The New Historial Play Hai Rui Dismissed From Office', Also see Roderick MacFarquhar and Michael Schoenhals, *Mao's last revolution* [Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006]15-18.

²³⁵ For 'the Notice' in English, see <http://my.opera.com/PRC/blog/show.dml/456476> [accessed 1 August 2010] Please refer to it in the Chinese version: http://www.stnn.cc/global/wg/wg10/t20060512_211134.html and http://www.360doc.com/content/07/0321/08/19446_406572.shtml[accessed 1 August 2010]

²³⁶ Zhengyuan Fu, *Autocratic Tradition and Chinese Politics* [Cambridge University Press, 1993], 315.

²³⁷ Zhengyuan Fu, *Autocratic Tradition and Chinese Politics* [Cambridge University Press, 1993], 306. Nie Yanzi, interview by BBC, http://news.bbc.co.uk/chinese/trad/hi/newsid_4980000/newsid_4987600/4987636.stm [accessed 1 Aug 2010].

work teams reinforced the class origin theory, according to which a person was judged by his family background rather than his own political behaviour. By the end of May, the first Red Guard organisations were established in middle schools, which took an oath to fight to the death to defend Mao Zedong's Thoughts.²³⁸ Mao and the CCRG supported them immediately. During the first two months, the vast majority of Red Guards came from the born-red families, most of whom were offspring of high-ranking party cadres. They not only attacked their classmates from black categories but also criticised their teachers and party secretaries who came from non-red families. But work teams in many schools managed to block the attacks against the party secretaries. As a result, the campaign formed complex tensions and antagonistic relations among four actors: the red guards, the students from non-red families, the work unit authority and the work team.²³⁹

At the end of July, Mao ordered the withdrawal of work teams from schools and factories. Without the dominance of the work teams, the red guards could now directly interpret the class origin theory, as demonstrated by a notorious couplet: 'a hero father reproduces a brave son; a reactionary father, a bad-egg son—which is basically true'. Meanwhile, they travelled to other cities to spread their activities. This was called *da chuanlian* (the great networking). Under the instructions and protection of the CCP high officials and with the help from Public Security Bureaus and the CCP branches, the Red Guard organizations began to systematically murder and torture the people who were labelled as black categories. During the last week of August 1966, an average of 200 people thus labelled were tortured to death every day in Beijing.²⁴⁰ After that, the black categories were constantly interrogated, attacked, arrested, looted, deported, and tortured to death.²⁴¹

²³⁸ Ying Hongbiao, 'The Origins and Divisions of the Red Guard Movement' and also see Zheng Xiaowei, 'A Critique: The Origins and Divisions of the Red Guard Movement, 1966-1968' <http://orpheus.ucsd.edu/chinesehistory/cr/xiaowei.htm> [accessed 1 August 2010].

²³⁹ Joel Anderas, *Rise of the Red Engineers* [Stanford University Press, 2009], 95.

²⁴⁰ Wang Youqin, 'Red August and Red Guard', <http://www.google.com/search?q=london+meth+university&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&aq=t&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&client=firefox-a> [accessed 1 August 2010]

²⁴¹ Yongyi, Song ed, *Massacres During the Cultural Revolution*, Kaifang Publisher, 2002, 3-36. Fu Zhengyuan, 316-8. See Wang Youqing, Chinese Holocaust Memorial in the Cultural Revolution <http://humanities.uchicago.edu/faculty/ywang/history/> [accessed 1 August 2010] Also see MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao's last revolution*, 128, Also see <https://dongtaiwang.com/dmirror/http/en.epochtimes.com/news/4-12-13/24939.html> [accessed 1 August 2010].

See http://www.indiana.edu/~easc/resources/working_paper/noframe_4a_peopl.htm#N_56_, [accessed 1 August 2010] <http://www.tecn.cn/data/detail.php?id=17037>, http://news.cn.yahoo.com/051219/346/2gh8t_1.html [accessed 1 August 2010]. See Source List and Detailed Death Tolls for the Twentieth Century Hemoclysm. The total number of victims from 1966 to 1976 is estimated over two million. <http://users.erols.com/mwhite28/warstat1.htm> [accessed 1 August 2010].

Now one of Mao's main purposes in launching the CR became much clearer: Liu Shaoqi and his allies inside the CCP could be deposed from their positions through the mass campaign as the biggest Khrushchevist revisionist group.²⁴² But the first Red Guards came from a privileged background and would not target Liu and other high-ranking officials. Thus, Mao mobilised the offspring of lower classes such as workers and peasants to join in the campaign in order to cancel out the royalist Red Guards' protection of their parents and the like.²⁴³ On 16 December 1966, the CCRG organised a campaign conference against the revisionists' blood lineage theory in the Worker's Stadium. Premier Zhou Enlai attended the conference. Speeches were given on 'The Death Sentence For Bourgeois Reactionary Couplets' and 'Dissolution of the Xicheng District Pickets' (a notorious Royalist Red Guard organization who tortured people labelled as black categories to death). It was during this conference that the story of Mou Zhijing (牟志京) surfaced. Mou was a student from Beijing No. 4 secondary school, who had been assaulted by royalist red guards and prohibited from joining in *da chuanlian* due to the fact that his parents were technicians. After Zhou Enlai expressed his sympathy, Mou became famous overnight.

With an expanded battle array of belligerent Red Guards, Mao became aware of the possibility of losing control. On 13 January 1967, the CCP issued Six Regulations of Public Security, strictly prohibiting any black categories from participating in any mass organizations.²⁴⁴ Mao also sent workers' propaganda teams and army propaganda teams to control society. However, these different forces—the mobilised masses, the party organs, the CCRG, and the propaganda teams—cancelled each other out to some extent. During a year and a half between 1967 and 1968, there emerged over 8,000

²⁴² Mao attempted to set up different organs such as the Worker's propaganda teams, the PLA propaganda teams and revolutionary committees in different levels almost chronologically that replaced the party organs during the CR. Please refer to Tang Shaojie, On Worker's propaganda teams in Qinghua University, <http://www.usc.cuhk.edu.hk/wk.asp> [accessed 1 August 2010] Chen Zhao, 'the PLA propaganda teams during the CR', <http://www.usc.cuhk.edu.hk/wk.asp> [accessed 1 August 2010]. Lu Yang, Formation and Initial process of the revolutionary committees <http://www.usc.cuhk.edu.hk/wk.asp> [accessed 1 August 2010] Also see MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao's last Revolution*, 249-252 and Fu, p319, The speeches of Zhou Enlai, the CCRG leaders, PLA leaders <http://www.chinaelections.org/NewsInfo.asp?NewsID=132901> [accessed 1 August 2010]. *Rise of the Red Engineers*, 139-143.

²⁴³ Ying Dongbiao, 'Major factions of Red Guards During the Cultural Revolution' <http://www.usc.cuhk.edu.hk/wk.asp> [accessed 1 August 2010] The royalist Red Guard groups mainly consist of people from a privileged background of the CCP.

²⁴⁴ 公安六条 Gong'an Liu Diao (Six regulations in Public Security) <http://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E5%85%AC%E5%AE%89%E5%85%AD%E6%9D%A1>, or http://www.360doc.com/content/08/1027/23/39427_1836040.shtml [accessed 1 August 2010].

mimeographed magazines outside the official publishers, but most were funded by the authorities of different levels and supported one of the cliques inside the power structure.²⁴⁵ Dozens of self-funded, independent magazines appeared. They tended to adopt the strategy of using Marxist and Maoist rhetoric to criticise party organs or even challenge Mao's campaign.²⁴⁶ Among these magazines, the *Journal of Secondary-School Cultural Revolution* (JSSCR) stood out as the one that challenged the validity of the class origin theory, encouraging people of non-red family background to fight for their equal rights.²⁴⁷

The mass movements paralysed half of the party-state organs by the end of 1967. New revolutionary committees were set up to replace party organs at provincial level in May 1968. By October, three quarters of the members of the CCP Central Committee had been purged as counterrevolutionaries or traitors. Liu Shaoqi, under house arrest for more than a year now, was formally labelled as China's biggest Khrushchev and removed from all official positions. He died in the following months. As the mass movements went beyond the control of the newly established revolutionary committees, nationwide martial law was imposed in mid 1968.²⁴⁸ In autumn that year, over one million urban youths were sent out to the countryside.²⁴⁹

3.2 Class and Blood Lineage

Class struggle was one of the key ideologies of the CCP from 1949 to 1978, designed to control the whole of society. It penetrated into the daily life of every individual during

²⁴⁵ Zhou Yuan, 'Overview Of The Cultural Revolution Of Historical Materials And Historical Materials' <http://www.hxwz.com/HXWZ/ZK07/zk583.gb.html> [accessed 1 August 2010].

²⁴⁶ Jin Dalu, 'Mass's Newspapers And Journal In Shanghai During Cultural Revolution', http://www.usc.cuhk.edu.hk/wk_wzdetails.asp?id=5664 [accessed 1 August 2010].

²⁴⁷ See JSSCR.

²⁴⁸ Martial Law in some areas started in the end of 1967. See Chen Zhao, 'PLA Propaganda Teams in CR', http://www.usc.cuhk.edu.hk/wk_wzdetails.asp?id=5492 [accessed 1 August 2010] Mao consolidated his power by using different militant forces so that he secured by the purge of his political rivals and prevented the potential attack from the society. See MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*, 48-51, 273-6. Also see Xinhua, Memorabilia in 1968 http://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2004-10/15/content_2094127.htm, [accessed 1 August 2010]. See Fu, p319.

²⁴⁹ Fu Zhengyuan, *Autocratic Tradition and Chinese Politics*. [Cambridge University Press, 1993] 319. From 1968 to 1978, the total of 13,230,000 urban youths were sent to the countryside.

that time.²⁵⁰ A series of sophisticated class theories was developed. First of all, the party divided the whole society into two opposing categories: ‘the people’ versus ‘the enemy’, one ‘inclusive’, the other ‘exclusive’. According to the official doctrine, ‘contradictions among the people’ were to be distinguished from ‘contradictions between the people and the enemy’. The former were supposed to be resolved through ‘democratic methods’ including ‘administrative regulations’, ‘persuasion’ and ‘education’, whilst the latter were subject to ‘dictatorship’. The ruling class had the power to declare arbitrarily who were ‘people’ and who the ‘enemies’, depending on the need of the situation at any time.²⁵¹

During the Cultural Revolution, colours such as red and black conveyed strong symbolic meanings. Red suggested good; black indicated evil. The red class consisted of five categories, denoted as the Red Five Categories, which included revolutionary cadres, revolutionary soldiers, revolutionary martyrs, workers, and peasants. By contrast, the Black Five Categories referred to landlords, rich peasants, counterrevolutionaries, bad elements, and rightists. The Black Five Categories were expanded to become the Black Seven, including two new types: capitalists and intelligentsia, and then to the Black Nine, to include yet another two: bourgeoisie, and capitalist-roaders within the party.²⁵² Those who belonged neither to the red nor the black categories were in a grey area, considered to be part of ‘the people’— though such an identity was by no means permanent and was subject to swing to either pole depending on the party’s need. Although workers and peasants were theoretically categorised as red class, only a limited number of people from worker and peasant families had a chance to climb up to higher positions in the social hierarchy. The biggest beneficiaries were of course the CCP officials, the self-claimed vanguard and representatives of the leading class, as well as their offspring, who enjoyed the privilege of joining the army, going to

²⁵⁰ Class struggle and label was based Mao’s works. Also see Wenhui Cai & Wen-Hui Tsai. *Class Struggle and Deviant Labeling in Mao’s China: Becoming Enemies of the People*. See Mao’s class struggle theory. Fu, 177-80 and 265-7, Wang Shaoguang, *Failure of Charisma*, 31-2. See also Yu Luowen, interview by author, Princeton, USA, 5/6/07, and by phone, 26/09/07, Zhang Langlang, interview by author, New York, 25/6/09.

²⁵¹ Mao Zedong. "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People," February 27, 1957, Harold C. Hinton, ed. *The People’s Republic of China, 1949–1979: A Documentary Survey. Volume I, 1949–1957*. Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1980, 534–551.

²⁵² The black categories in the CR were labeled dynamically according to different demand of the power winner in different time. Also see <http://www.recordhistory.org/mediawiki/index.php/%E9%BB%91%E4%BA%94%E7%B1%BB> [accessed 1 August 2010].

university without entrance examination, and eventually climbing up the ladder of the power elite.²⁵³ This led to widespread discontent in society.

The core of the CCP's class theory was the blood lineage theory, which emphasis identified family background as one's class origin. In practice, class origin became the decisive factor in the fate of common people, determining their chances in education, employment, marriage, or punishment.²⁵⁴ A person's class was referred to as *chengfen*, which literally means element; whilst a person's class origin was termed as *chushen*, which means extraction or family background. In the first several years of the CCP's rule, *chengfen* was used as the principal criterion to wipe out the immediate oppositional forces such as KMT members, landowners and missionaries. After the so-called 'counter-revolutionaries' were suppressed in the mid-1950s, *chushen* became the keyword for the ruling group to strengthen their power and control society. During the CR, youngsters whose parents had been relegated to the black categories were called *heichushen* (born-black), while those whose parents belonged to the red categories were call *zilaihong* (born-red). The couplet was welcomed by scions of high CCP officials, among whom was Tan Lifu²⁵⁵, son of the Supreme Procuratorate Deputy Procurator General, who propagandized the couplet systematically.

In practice, class categories and blood lineage were simply used as effective weapons for the ruling party to eliminate all oppositions. According to Mao's theory, class struggle during the CR was a process where the red categories as the leading class, with the help of mobilised 'people', would implement the dictatorship over the black categories as the enemies. In each campaign, a limited number of 'enemies' were identified and suppressed through concentrated monitor and control institutions, repressive measures and maximised support from the not-yet-excluded but terrified populace. The class labelling changed according to the need of the power holder. For example, when the CR started, some high-ranking party officials including Liu Shaoqi were considered a member of the red categories. Liu played a key role in deploying the

²⁵³ The official media such as *People's Daily*, dominated per cent from good family backgrounds occupied in good careers without examination or other selections, August to December 1962. Also see Mao's Beidaihe speech in 1962, Mao Zedong Sixiang Shengli Wansui, version 2, 270-7, also see Wang Shaoguang, *Failure Of Charisma*, 45.

²⁵⁴ Ren Xin, *Tradition Of The Law And Law Of The Tradition : Law, State, And Social Control In China*, [Praeger, 1997], 1-9.

²⁵⁵ The blood lineage theory was epitomized by the notorious couplet: 'a hero father reproduces a brave son; a reactionary father, a bad-egg son—which is basically true'. After the CR, Tan Lifu changed his name to Tan Bing. He went to PLA and became PLA official, the Party secretary of Beijing Library and Palace Museum.

working teams to universities and schools to repress the Black Fives and the Black Sevens. However, soon enough Liu himself was labelled by Mao and the CCRG as the biggest capitalist-roader within the Party and became a new victim.²⁵⁶

During the CR, the blood lineage theory was first promoted to mobilise the born-red youngsters to suppress born-black youngsters. The first red guards were the children of high party officials. They were called the ‘royalist’ red guards, and considered themselves heroes by heritage. Later, the Central Cultural Revolution Group (CCRG) modified the royalists’ couplet to ‘a revolutionary father, a successor son; a reactionary father, a rebel son—as it should be’ in order to incite descendants of the oppositional groups to betray their parents.²⁵⁷ Some of the born-black youths blamed their parents for the suffering and declared in public that they had drawn a clear line and broken with their family. They hoped that their personal *biaoxian* (political behaviour) would change their status.

The damage of the class labelling on the whole society was devastating. According to official statistics, the number of those labelled into the black categories reached over 100 million people, more than one seventh of the population at the time.²⁵⁸ Indubitably, the actual number of victims, including relatives and friends that had been affected, was far greater than the official figure. Class labelling had reinforced social hierarchies and intensified tensions between social groups.

3.3 Circulation of Thoughts

²⁵⁶ Song Yongyi, ‘Fate and Choice The Enduring Legacy of Blood Lineage Theory’, note 35, http://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:ju54Nr-UGWMJ:hrichtina.org/public/PDFs/EnduringLegacy4-2004.pdf+Fate+and+Choice+The+Enduring+Legacy+of+Blood+Lineage+Theory&hl=en&pid=bl&srcid=ADGEEsgv2FSvXSVssZA9c5DuTp_GHHqCxi6dZ17UmQ-0s6W7vib9HXoRw9TtaOvqzO-rDAQAL49bOWQe6sOhywshnAeX_HAxtDMNTJTolpPOJSaKIRtjv6YEMrgjPsZzkb8iSmtBO&sig=AHIEtbQna9gDn695A5klXU1fbHiRfSGnFg [accessed 8 August 2010].

²⁵⁷ Jiang Qing’s speech at meeting members of the Red Guard initiators, She began to support the couplet and then denied that she had supported the couplet. Li Shu, ‘Blood Lineage and Family Background’ (血统论和出身论) <http://www.voanews.com/chinese/news/a-21-w2007-04-06-voa42-63065397.html> [accessed 1/8/10].

, See Chen Boda’s speech in Zhou Liang and Guo Juying ed. Leaders speeches during the Cultural Revolution.

²⁵⁸ Li Shu, ‘Blood Lineage and Family Background (血统论和出身论)’ <http://www.voanews.com/chinese/news/a-21-w2007-04-06-voa42-63065397.html> [accessed a August 2010].

In this chapter I will examine some of the media influences and the formats of unofficial publications in order to contextualize the political expressions and intellectual adventures of urban youth in the 1960s.

3.3.1 Grey and Yellow



Figure 4. *On Trotskyism* (an example of the grey-covered book)

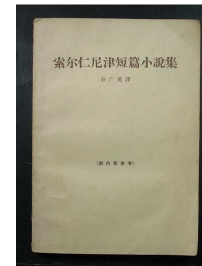


Figure 5. *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (an example of the yellow-covered book)

This generation of minkan participants had their entire schooling under the CCP education system. The party's monopoly of media made Maoism the supreme doctrine for the whole society. References to Maoist Thoughts dominated public expression. Even unofficial publications tended to insert Mao's citations when criticising a particular policy of the authorities, not only because these quotes served as a kind of protection but also because of their limited reading experiences. As the party effectively controlled the printing and circulation of books, access to alternative sources and ideologies became a privilege depending on one's social status. The lower-down the social ladder a person was, the more restricted his references. For the more privileged social groups such as the offspring of top party officials, internal references and foreign media provided important sources for understand the society and learning about themselves.

After 1958, the *neibu cankao* system (internal references and archives) was officially gradually established. Materials including newspapers, magazines and films in foreign languages, translated foreign literature and publications from the pre-1949 era were taken off the bookshelves in public libraries and transmitted to internal libraries for the

party authorities, available only to those holding valid internal reference cards. These cards were marked with different levels of privileges, mapping the status of the party cadres within the party hierarchy, as well as the levels of ‘confidentiality’ of the censored materials.²⁵⁹ For example, the memoirs of the founders of the Chinese Communist Party including Chen Duxiu and Zhang Guotao were only accessible to the current top leaders of the party.

The most popular reading materials within the *neibu cankao* system were two types of books: grey-covered and yellow-covered paperbacks published from 1961 to 1965. The grey-covered books focused on politics and philosophy, as the party used the colour grey to indicate ambiguous or incorrect ideological stances. The colour yellow was used to suggest decadence, so that controversial literatures were printed with yellow covers. The paperbacks were printed in several hundred copies each in order to restrict circulation, and made available only in internal libraries, internal bookshops, and as internal reference materials in the largest public libraries in central cities. In the early 1960s, family members of high officials were allowed to borrow or purchase them by using internal reference cards, whilst the majority of the society had no access to these books at all. During the Sino-Soviet debates, around forty grey-covered books were printed to serve the criticism against revisionism. The choice of titles was largely inspired by the private collections that the party had confiscated from senior scholars and party dissidents previously labelled as Trotskyists and rightists during the party’s purging campaigns. Those Trotskyists and rightists who were serving sentences in prison and labour camps were asked to translate the books into Chinese. The translations included works of various ‘revisionists’ and ‘opportunists’: Proudhon, La Salle, Bakunin, Bernstein, Kautsky, Vollmar, Adler, Colin Powell, Hilferding, Rao Terrace, Millerand, Vandervelde, Plekhanov, Trotsky, Bukharin, Zinoviev.²⁶⁰ Among the grey-covered books were also a collection of Khrushchev’s speeches and books on current theoretical trends in the Soviet bloc and Yugoslavia such as Djilas’s *The New Class* (1963).

²⁵⁹ Qinglian He, *zhongguo dalu kongzhi meidi da jiemi* (Secret of Media control in Mainland China 《雾锁中国——中国大陆控制媒体大揭秘》 [Liming Wenhua, 2006],154-62 Also see Qinglian He, *Dalu Mindi Kongzhi* <http://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E5%8F%82%E8%80%83%E8%B5%84%E6%96%99> [accessed 1 August 2010].

²⁶⁰ Shen, Zhanyun, *hui pi shu yuang pi shu* (grey-covered book yellow-covered book 《灰皮书, 黄皮书》) [Hucheng, 2007], 13–200.

The yellow-covered books on literature served to criticise revisionism and the bourgeoisie.²⁶¹ During that period, around seventy yellow-covered paperbacks were printed, mainly on the controversial writings from the Soviet bloc. There were short story collections such as *Bitter Pills*, *War and the Echo*, and *Soldiers Were Not Born*, and works by Ehrenburg (*People, Years, Life and Thaw*), Simonov (*The Living and the Dead*), Aksyonov (*Ticket to the Stars*), Solzhenitsyn (*One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*). A dozen titles of Western literature were also printed, which included *Les Chaises*, *Climb Up*, *The Catcher in the Rye*, *On the Road*, *Waiting for Godot*, and Lefebvre's *Key Writings in Culture and Art*.²⁶² Printing of these grey- and yellow-covered paperbacks was suspended between 1966 and 1972. In the early years of the Cultural Revolution when the party's bureaucratic system was temporarily paralysed, public libraries were partially out of control so that youths from lower social strata had the chance to take home some of the restricted reading materials.²⁶³ The influence of the grey- and yellow-covered books extended to a wider society and became the most important alternative source for the young generation.²⁶⁴

Another source of alternative information for urban youth was the Chinese programmes of the overseas shortwave radio broadcasters such as VOA, BBC, NHK, Radio of Moscow and Radio of ROC. As almost all radio receivers were sold with fixed frequencies during that time, very few Chinese youths were able to listen to foreign broadcasts. Such an activity became even rarer as the authorities made every effort to disturb the signals and imposed severe punishment on those found 'listening to the enemy's radio broadcast'.²⁶⁵ Up to the early Cultural Revolution, unofficial publications

²⁶¹ Zhang Fusheng, 'huang pi shu: zhong shu wenxue shi shang yiduan deshu suiyue' (Yellow-covered book: A special period during Sino-Soviet' cultural communication "黄皮书": 中苏文学交流史上一段特殊岁月') http://www.china.com.cn/international/txt/2006-09/08/content_7431021.htm [accessed 1 August 2010] Lin Xianzhi, Grey covered books and Yellow covered books, See Covered books, <http://book.douban.com/subject/2266281/> and <http://www.booyee.com.cn/bbs/thread.jsp?threadid=621160&forumid=0&get=1> [accessed 1 August 2010]. Yan Jiaqi, interview by author, New York 11/6/07.

²⁶² *ibid.*

²⁶³ Roderick MacFarquhar and Michael Schoenhals, *Mao's last revolution*, 119, 123-4

²⁶⁴ Yu Luowen, interview by author, Princeton, 05/06/07. Yan Jiaqi interview by author, NY 9/6/07. Song Yongyi, 'Underground Reading Movement During CR', http://www.usc.cuhk.edu.hk/wk_wzdetails.asp?id=1259 [accessed 1/8/10].

²⁶⁵ Yu Luowen: interview by author, Princeton, 05/06/07. The people who were found 'listening to the enemy's radio broadcast' were tortured to death or were sentenced to death, life and long-term imprisonment. See also 左树棠 (Zhuo Shutang) case in List of Victims In the CR written by Wang Youqing <http://www.chinese-memorial.org/> [accessed 1/8/10]. Also see Chen Wenli (陈文立), cangsang suiyue (A Glimpse of Sorrowful Years 《沧桑岁月》) [Laogai Foundation, 2002], 28-35 Yu Luowen interview 05/06/07, Lao Humiao, 'Censored Blog And Listening To Enemy's Radio Broadcast' <http://24hour.blogbus.com/logs/1849608.html> [accessed 1/8/10], A Cheng, 'Listening To Enemy's Radio Broadcast', http://www.edubridge.com/erxiantang/12/acheng_ditai.htm [accessed 1 August 2010].

thus showed little influence from foreign broadcasts. After 1967, urban youths were sent to the countryside where they had the opportunity to listen to foreign broadcasts, as the technology of the time was not advanced enough for the authorities to jam the radio signals in remote areas. From then on, references to foreign broadcasts started to grow in underground discussions among educated urban youths.

3.3.2 Hand Copies

Roughly speaking, there were four types of print media for unofficial expressions in the 1960s: *dazibao* (big-character poster), mimeographed bulletins, letterpress materials and handwritten copies. *Dazibao* were posted not only on the walls of public buildings but also on such surfaces as doors, wire poles and transport vehicles.²⁶⁶ *Dazibao* also appeared as wall newspaper written on blackboards using chalks in schools and factories. Mimeograph and letterpress machines had been strictly controlled by the authorities at all levels since the Anti-Rightists Campaign. Access to mimeograph and letterpress machines required recommendations from county-level and province-level authorities respectively. The only time that ordinary people had access to letterpress machines was during the *dachanlian* in 1967 when official organs were paralysed.²⁶⁷ At other times, hand copying was the only available option for underground information production.²⁶⁸

The Chinese hand copying tradition can be traced back to popular story-telling scripts in the folk literature of the Tang and Song dynasties. The Qing dynasty novel *The Dream of Red Mansions* was also well known for its different hand-copied versions with comments in the margins. Under CCP rule, the hand-copying tradition was revived in the underground media. One of the earliest examples of hand-copied underground literature was *The Experience of Escape* by Zhang Zhihua, a former editor of the

²⁶⁶ Old pictures during the CR, Also See History and Figures in 1966(【历史与人物1966】) <http://www.northgreatwall.com/tpls1966.html> [accessed 1 March 2011]. 铺天盖地大字报——文革时期的人们，· <http://asiastudio.blog.163.com/blog/static/11793457120101166936676/?fromHistory> , *Dazibao* on the ground surface, <http://www.foto.cn/photo/fetopic60.do?method=sphoto&yname=1967&pid=14846> [accessed 1 August 2010]]and Li Zhensheng (李振盛) Cultural Revolution Photos (文革照片).

²⁶⁷ Rebel group in mass movements occupied printing factories or got licences which they chanced letterpress. See Luo Luwen interview and Bei Dao interview by author .

²⁶⁸ Yu Luoke telephon interview by author 30/09/2007.

unofficial magazine *Square*, who escaped from a labour camp and roamed over most of China from 1959 to 1960.²⁶⁹ When he was re-arrested and sent back to the labour camp, he wrote about his wanderings in text which was reproduced into a dozen handwritten copies, which circulated in labour camps and were even smuggled into cities.

Hand-copying exercises had formed an essential component of the Chinese education system since 1949. Schoolchildren were requested to copy down whatever their teachers had written on the blackboard, usually ideological messages conveyed through stereotypical and didactic stories. A flood of ideological expressions and censorship of literary works prompted the emergence of an underground literature. Unlike the public expressions, these clandestine writings scarcely ever quoted Maoist Thoughts or referenced the official ideology. Their political implications were expressed through the plot of the stories usually based on current affairs and re-imagined rumours about political leaders. The most popular genres included poetry, satires, detective stories and romance stories. Some of the stories were illustrated with linear drawings.²⁷⁰

Well-educated youths with a certain degree of political and social experience were the main creators of these underground writings, which were hand-copied and multiplied by their fellows and middle school students. Loose-leaf notebook pages were often used for the convenience of binding as well as multiplication. In the process of repeated hand-copying, the original work was often rewritten, edited, and had comments inserted. Sometimes a story could have up to a hundred versions produced as handwritten copies.²⁷¹ A copy could also contain several styles of handwriting from different copies. Some youths copied the work as a way of improving their calligraphy. Carbon paper was also used to produce multiple copies.²⁷² Circulation of this hand-copied literature was strictly clandestine. Once detected by the police, the creator, copiers, distributors

²⁶⁹ Du Gao Interview by author, Los Angeles 1/7/07, Also see Du Gao, *A Forgotten Document*, (又见一册遗落的档案) http://www.edubridge.com/muzangyanjiu/library/dugao_2.htm [accessed 1 August 2010].

²⁷⁰ Shihong Bai, *anliu: wenge shouchaoben wenchun* (undercurrent: hand copies during the Cultural Revolution 《暗流: “文革”手抄文存》) [wenxu yishu publisher, 2001] 2-17.

²⁷¹ Shihong Bai, *anliu: wenge shouchaoben wenchun* (undercurrent: hand copies during the Cultural Revolution 《暗流: “文革”手抄文存》) [wenxu yishu publisher, 2001] 17.

²⁷² Langlang Zhang, email message to author, 21/8/10. See also Shihong Bai, *anliu: wenge shouchaoben wenchun* (undercurrent: hand copies during the Cultural Revolution 《暗流: “文革”手抄文存》) [wenxu yishu publisher, 2001] 30-9.

and collectors could all be punished.²⁷³ For example, over a thousand youths were arrested and put into prison for circulating *The Second Handshake*.²⁷⁴

3.4 Minkan Selections

The selection of unofficial magazines in this chapter is intended to reflect the reading scopes and social experiences of the first generation educated under the CCP's schooling system. The *X-Society* and the *Solar Brigade* were both organized by well-informed youths, most of whom were descendants of high-ranking party cadres and senior members of intelligentsia. They maintained regular meetings to exchange ideas. They produced hand-copied magazines that were circulated among a closed circle of readers. The writings in *X-Society* expressed discontent towards political leaders, and their heretical thoughts referenced the grey-covered books that were available to the privileged social groups. *Solar Brigade*, on the other hand, explored unorthodox expressions in art and literature, often inspired by the yellow-covered books and restricted Western films. By contrast, the *Journal of Secondary School Cultural Revolution (JSSCR)* was initiated by disadvantaged youths who fell into the black categories. The production of their magazine went through different stages of hand copying, mimeographing and letterpress, and became the most widely circulated unofficial magazine in this research. *JSSCR*'s writings and activities shook the foundation of the most dominant ideology of the time: blood lineage theory.²⁷⁵

3.4.1 X-Society

²⁷³ See underground groups in Yang, Jiang, *wenhua da geming de dixia wenxue* (Underground Literature during the Cultural Revolution 《文化大革命中的地下文学》). [Chaohua Publisher, 1993], See also Yang's online book http://www.360doc.com/content/07/0731/20/13012_646205.shtml [accessed 1 August 2010].

²⁷⁴ Over thousand youths were arrested in circulation of Shaking Hands At Second Time, <http://shszx.eastday.com/node2/node4810/node4851/node4864/userobject1ai37894.html>, [accessed 1 August 2010]] Also see 《暗流——“文革”手抄文存》 p86-88. See also Xu Xiao, *No Name*, ed. He Liu, *chi deng de shizhe* (Memoirs in Messengers Holding Light 《持灯的使者》) [Oxford, 2001] 253-266.

²⁷⁵ See *JSSCR*.

X-Society was a handwritten magazine initiated by four Beijing youths who tried to reveal political discontent within the party and among scholars. The four youths came from families of either high-level party cadres or high-level intellectuals, and enjoyed privileges that were far beyond the reach of the vast majority of their generation. While most Chinese youths could only read the Chinese version of Marxist theory adapted by the CCP, these youths had access to censored Western literature and were often among the first to know about factional conflicts within the Party.²⁷⁶

The four youths studied in the same class at the No. 101 Secondary School from 1958 to 1961. The school was founded by the CCP in 1946 in their headquarters in Yanan, and was relocated to Beijing three years later after the CCP came to power. The new location was chosen to be near well-known universities such as Beijing University and Qinghua University, providing a convenient environment for the preparatory training of future generations of high-level party officials and top scholars. Although it was open to the public, children of workers and peasants stood scarcely any chance of getting in. The school was administered by quasi-military rules, its graduates enrolling in PLA Military Engineering Institute and becoming members of the so-called ‘Crown Prince Party’, a reservoir of highest party leaders.²⁷⁷

The central figure of the group was Zhang Heci (张鹤慈), grandson of Zhang Dongsun, one of the most well-known scholars that had introduced Western liberalism to China during the May Fourth New Culture Movement. During the Civil War, it was Zhang Dongsun who persuaded the KMT commander in Beijing to surrender after the Communist army had besieged the city. For this, he was treated by the CCP as an important symbol of their united front. Although he was labelled as a running dog of American imperialism’ during the Thoughts Reform Campaign in 1952 following an attempt to mediate between the powers to end the Korean War, no severe punishment fell on him until 1968.²⁷⁸ In school, Zhang Heci made friends with three of his

²⁷⁶ Interview, Zhang Heci by Song Yongyi, http://www.boxun.com/hero/lushan/76_1.shtml [accessed 1 August 2010]] and Zhang Heci, telephone interview by author, 30/9/7.

²⁷⁷ Geremie R. Barmé, ‘Beijing’s Bloody August’ http://www.danwei.org/scholarship_and_education/beijings_bloody_august_by_gere.php, [accessed 1 August 2010]]

²⁷⁸ Zhang Dongsun was arrested in 1968 and died in Qincheng Prison in 1972. Zhang Heci telephone interview by author, 20/09/07 See also Gerry Groot, *Managing Transitions: The Chinese Communist Party, United Front Work, Corporatism and Hegemony*, [Routledge, 2004] 65. See Dai Qing, 1948: ‘How Peaceful was the Liberation of Beijing?’ http://www.chinaheritagequarterly.org/features.php?searchterm=014_daiqing.inc&issue=014 [accessed 1 August 2010]].

classmates: Guo Shiyong (郭世英), Sun Junwu (孙经武) and Ye Rongqing (叶蓉青). Guo's father, as one of the most senior party culture officials, was a well-known poet, whose work had been enshrined by the CCP as one of the highest achievements in contemporary Chinese literature. Sun's father was the minister of the medical departments of the People's Liberation Army. When the Sino-Soviet relation deteriorated in 1960, Sun attempted to go to the Soviet Union where he believed that real socialism was being practiced. He walked as far as to the border between China and Mongolia before giving up the hope to cross the desert and going home.²⁷⁹ Ye was Sun's girlfriend, who also came from a prominent intellectuals family.

Thanks to his grandfather's private collection, Zhang read a substantial amount of Western literature and philosophy published before 1949 including one of the most critical Chinese magazines *guan cha* (observation).²⁸⁰ He lent these books and magazines to his close friends in exchange for books from collections/ internal libraries of their parents. They exchanged ideas and had regular meetings to discuss sensitive political issues. They also wrote articles for the school, which were posted on the public bulletin board. It was not long before the school authority warned them and forbade them from posting any more articles in public. In secret, they were starting to think about forming their own magazine. Zhang had known about the *Square* magazine and the Baihua (a hundred flowers) society in Beijing University (the chapter 2); his earliest political formation came from those big-character posters and heated open debates.²⁸¹

In 1961, the four youths graduated from the school. Apart from Sun who joined the army, the other three all went to universities. Zhang was accepted by the Mathematics Department in Beijing Normal College, Ye by Beijing No. 2 Medical College. Guo enrolled in Beijing Foreign Affairs College to study diplomacy. They kept their friendship and wrote frequently to each other, sharing news and reading experiences. Their reading lists had now expanded to include Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom*, Djilas's *New Class*, Sigmund Freud on psychoanalysis, Nietzsche's *Ein Buch für Alle und*

http://www.chinaheritagequarterly.org/features.php?searchterm=014_daiqing.inc&issue=014 [accessed 1 August 2010]].

²⁷⁹ Zhang Yici, Zhang Heci's elder brother, telephone interview by Song Yongyi, <http://www.edubridge.com/erxiantang/12/zhangheci.htm> [accessed 1 August 2010]].

²⁸⁰ Some articles in *Guangcha* criticized that the CCP rule eliminated freedom. See Chu Anping's comments in Chapter 2.

²⁸¹ Zhang Heci, 'Martyr's blood, who censored?' <http://www.epochtimes.com/b5/6/5/1/n1304703.htm> [accessed 1 August 2011].

Keinen, and translations of Western literature such as *Les Chaises*, *Climb Up* and *The Catcher in the Rye*.²⁸² None of these titles was available in university libraries. Zhang and Guo purchased them from a two-storey building hidden in an alley near Wangfujing Xinhua Bookshop. The secret building was open only to those holding an internal reading pass for high-level party officials. Here their family background became a convenience. In 1962 the police intercepted and confiscated their correspondence discussing Khrushchev's Report. The punishments were most severe for Zhang and Sun: one was expelled from the college, the other from the army. Guo was forced to leave the Foreign Affairs College and transferred to Beijing University to study philosophy thanks to his father's influence and position. Ye was the least affected. Instead of spending idle hours at home, Zhang and Sun went to visit Peng Dehuai in a suburb in Beijing where the dethroned national defence minister had been detained for criticising Mao. Although they were not able to see Peng due to heavy surveillance, their doubts about Mao and his policies increased.

When the four friends met again on 12 February 1963 at Zhang Heci's apartment at No. 153 Zhongguanyuan inside the campus of Beijing University, they made up their mind and formed *X-Society* to 'publish reading experiences and creative writings'. For them, 'X' had profound meanings. First, this common mathematical sign representing an unknown number symbolized their sceptical attitudes. Second, 'X' could be read as a cross denoting their denial of imposed ideologies. Third, 'X' suggested a crossroad, which meant exploration for them. Last but not least, 'X' stood for their four hands stretching out to shake.²⁸³ The first issue included their own poems, satirical essays on current affairs and book reviews of Western literature. Without access to a printing machine, they hand-copied the articles onto paper used for loose-leaf notebooks. This method allowed more than one person to work at the same time. The loose-leaf pages were later collected and reorganized into a magazine. The cover had the sign of 'X' on it. They used carbon paper to produce a dozen copies, circulated among a handful of close friends.

²⁸² Interview of Zhang Heci by Song Yongyi, http://www.boxun.com/hero/lushan/76_1.shtml [accessed 1 August 2010].

²⁸³ See Interview, Zhang by Song, http://www.boxun.com/hero/lushan/76_1.shtml [accessed 1 August 2010]].

Zhang was the main contributor to the magazine. Many of his articles were based on the discussions of the group. Quite often he would discuss their ideas with his grandfather to get his perspectives before writing an article. One day, Zhang was discussing with Sun why Mao had not killed many of his high officials and generals as Stalin had done in Soviet Union. They both believed that Mao had more self-confidence than Stalin. But later Zhang's grandfather explained that Mao's strategy had been to kill nameless soldiers instead of noted generals, which in reality was more effective in controlling the society by fear. He also told the young men that Mao had once told Khrushchev that he would not fear a third world war should there be one because China would still have 200 million people even if half of its population were wiped out.²⁸⁴ Zhang was also influenced by his father, who had a Cornell PhD from the 1930s and was now teaching biology at Beijing University. He believed that Marxism was not science but metaphysics.²⁸⁵ Influenced by a preference for science, Guo, who studied Western philosophy at Beijing University, introduced the group to Dewey's pragmatism. They started to apply pragmatism to their analysis of current social and political issues and published another two issues of *X-Society*.

In May 1962, a quarrel happened between Guo Shiyong and his classmates. Guo had attempted to expand X-Society by getting his classmates interested. However, his classmates explained that they wanted to stick to the career of academia instead of getting into politics. They believed firmly in Marxism and opposed the political tendency of the group. The debates between Guo and his classmates caught the attention of the headmaster of the class, who reported this to the police. In fact, the police had been monitoring correspondences between the *X-society* members since early 1962.²⁸⁶ The group was now alerted and started to burn any handwritten magazines and letters that discussed sensitive political issues. Now no original copy survives. Guo's parents informed the police of their son's activities in X-society, hoping that he would thus receive a lesser punishment. The group was soon labelled counterrevolutionary. Zhang and Sun were arrested and subjected to re-education through labour. Ye and Guo were condemned to labour under surveillance for one year. In 1964, Guo was allowed to

²⁸⁴ Zhang Heci, telephone interview by author, 30/9/7. See also interview of Zhang by Song Yongyi, http://www.boxun.com/hero/lushan/76_1.shtml [accessed 1 August 2010].

²⁸⁵ Sun Jingwu, 'Zhou Guoping and Cao Tianyu', <http://www.observechina.net/info/ArtShow.asp?ID=41767> [accessed 1 August 2010] See all the CCP secret archive, 'X-Society Counterrevolutionary Group'

²⁸⁶ Zhang Heci, telephone interview by author. See also interview, Zhang by Song http://www.boxun.com/hero/lushan/76_1.shtml [accessed 1 August 2010].

transfer to Beijing Agricultural University.²⁸⁷ Zhang's grandfather was labelled as the black hand of the X-society. During the CR, Guo died in his new college in 1968. Zhang was transferred to a labour camp and subjected to hard labour for thirteen years.

²⁸⁷ *ibid*

3.4.2 Solar Brigade



Figure 6. Cover Image of the last issue



Figure 7. Image of the Last issue

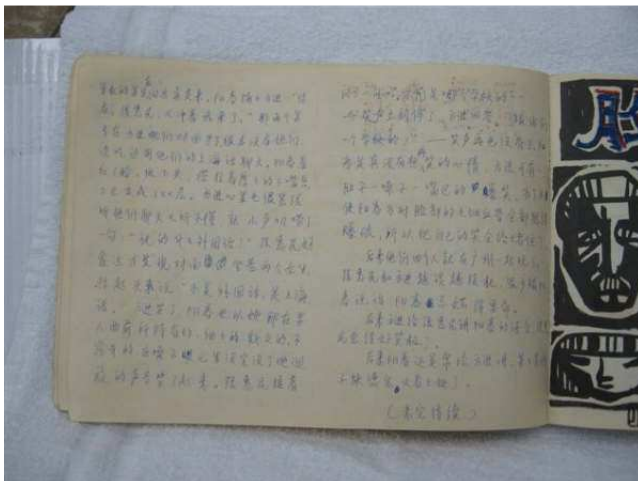


Figure 8. *Snow of Spring Festival*

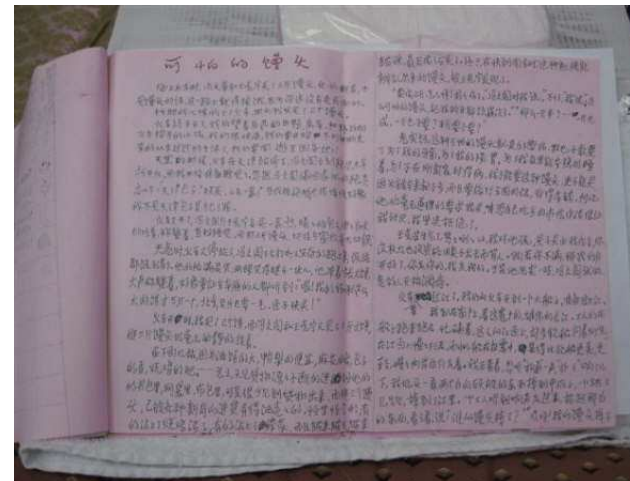


Figure 9. *Come to the Sea*

Solar Brigade was an unofficial magazine that existed in Beijing from 1962 to 1967. Its participants were mainly middle school and university students whose parents occupied important positions in the disciplines of humanities in higher education, or in the cultural departments of the party. They were influenced heavily by the yellow-covered books on arts and literature, which were accessible only to the privileged class. Poetry recitation was one of the main activities in their gatherings. In between the literature events, they also discussed political topics and spread scandals about party leaders.

Their way of combining a magazine with a salon influenced future generations of youths who would be interested in arts and literature with a concern for politics.

Zhang Langlang (张郎郎) was one of the initiators of *Solar Brigade*. Both of his parents had been teaching at the Chinese Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing since the early 1950s. Zhang's father was an artist who joined the Chinese League of Left-Wing Literature and Arts that supported the CCP in the mid 1930s, for which he had been detained by the KMT for a few months. Zhang's mother was a student of Lu Xun, one of the most radical writers in modern Chinese literature. In the late 1930s, the couple believed that the CCP represented the progressive force in China, so they joined the communist headquarter at Yanan. During the party's 1942 Rectification Campaign, the husband was criticized for organizing a 'bourgeois' salon of artists and writers which was considered discordant with Mao's cultural and ideological standards. However, the couple were spared severe punishment because the wife worked as a secretary of Zhou Enlai, the vice chairman of the CCP's Central Committee. As well as that in 1945 the husband was chosen to paint the propaganda poster 'Advance under The Banner of Mao Zedong'. He also designed the national emblem for the People's Republic of China in 1949.²⁸⁸

When the Great Leap Forward was launched in 1958, the fourteen-year-old Zhang Langlang was a pupil at Yucai Junior Middle School in Beijing. Like everywhere else, classes were stopped and students were organized to build steel furnaces and cultivate high-yield crops. One evening the school organized a poetry competition as a kind of cultural great leap forward to promote the official campaign, and Zhang recited his own poem: 'Like an avalanche, / like torrents, / actively, forcefully and quickly / rolling the wheel of history. / Who are they? / We! / The symbol of the youth. / The vanguard of the revolution.'²⁸⁹ Zhang's poem was criticised by the ideological director of the school for not mentioning the 'three red flags', i.e., the 'General Line', the 'Great Leap Forward', and the 'People's Commune'.²⁹⁰ This episode made Zhang realise the

²⁸⁸ Zhang Ding's posters, <http://www.mslm.com.cn/yishuwenlun/show.php?itemid-8.html>, <http://myx6012.blog.163.com/blog/static/137513452201063015343539/> [accessed 1 August 2010].

²⁸⁹ '像雪崩/像山洪/积极地有力地快速地/滚动着历史的巨轮/这是谁?/我们!/青春的象征/革命的先锋.....'Zhang Liangliang, 'Solar Brigade', http://www.boxun.com/hero/zhangll/2_1.shtml [accessed 1 August 2010].

²⁹⁰ The image of Three Red Flags <http://brian.hoffert.faculty.noctrl.edu/HST265/21.DeepeningTheRevolution.html> China: Demographic Transition: <http://geographyfieldwork.com/ChinaDemographicTransition.htm> [accessed 5/2/11].

necessity of avoiding political issues for his public expression. For a while, Zhang and his friends felt a spiritual depression until they came across the Soviet poet Mayakovsky whose work was still allowed in China's official media. They imitated Mayakovsky's outfit by shaving their heads, wearing army uniforms and tying a wire around their waist.²⁹¹ They recited Mayakovsky's poem tirelessly: 'I'd tear like a wolf at bureaucracy / For mandates/ my respect's but the slightest. / To the devil himself I'd chuck without mercy every red-taped paper.'²⁹² They published a wall newspaper in the school, naming it the Wasp. The school authority was furious, denouncing the paper for 'maliciously attacking members of the Communist Youth League'. The ideological director warned that they could have been categorized as rightists if they had been one or two years older.

In 1960, Zhang Langlang enrolled in No. 101 Secondary School and was transferred to the Affiliated Middle School of Foreign Language College because the school had a relatively looser control on ideology. During that time, most residents in Beijing began to suffer from starvation and during this crisis the authorities were less able to monitor and control unorthodox activities. In the following eight years, Zhang and his friends met regularly, discussing arts and literature, listening to western music, an experience he described as 'an underground game'.²⁹³ It was during that period when the group of youths broadened their horizons. Like the 'X-Society', they were able to borrow books using their parents' internal cards or by directly buying from internal bookshops. They also had access to the grey-covered books and yellow-covered books. They were more interested in the yellow-covered books, which were mainly on arts and literature. The grey-covered books on politics always remained a side dish for their taste. They drew inspiration from pre-1949 literature magazines such as *The Analects of Confucius*, *Universe Wind*, *Tai Bai* and *Novels Daily*.²⁹⁴

²⁹¹ Zhou Dingfang and Zhu Xueke (周定舫 朱学科)(1957年8月25日《人民日报》) 'Doing A Socialism University Student ---- An Important Lesson During Anti-Rightist Campaign In Beijing University', *the People's Daily*, 25/8/1957 (1957年8月25日《人民日报》) Also see <http://www.hjclub.info/bbs/viewtopic.php?t=496298&view=next&sid=978e5d526a30ae442e2898980a16cf30> [accessed 1 August 2010].

²⁹² Vladimir Mayakovsky, 'My Soviet Passport' <http://www.marxists.org/subject/art/literature/mayakovsky/1929/my-soviet-passport.htm> [accessed 1 August 2010].

²⁹³ Zhang Langlang, interview by author, New York, 24/06/09

²⁹⁴ Zhang Langlang, interview by author, New York 25/06/09 Please also see: <http://archives.cnd.org/HXWK/author/ZHANG-Langlang/cm0803a-2.gb.html> [accessed 1 August 2010].

Zhang also invited writer Hai Mo (海默) to join their discussions. Hai had worked for the army propaganda teams in the early 1940s and had been a screenwriter with Beijing Film Production since 1949. During the Anti-Rightist Deviation Campaign, he was labelled a ‘rightist deviation opportunist’ and sent into a labour camp for two years before being allowed to return Beijing due to medical conditions.²⁹⁵ Hai was amazed by the younger generation’s enthusiasm for arts and literature, their deviation from the official doctrines and their sharp criticism of propagandist leaders including Jiang Qing. For the youngsters, Hai’s rich experience, his sense of humour and his eloquence made the discussions more interesting and thought provoking. Through Hai Mo, the youths watched European films such as *Le Rouge et le Noir* starring Gerard Philipe, De Sica’s *Ladri di biciclette* and Fellini’s *Le Notti di Cabiria*.²⁹⁶

At the end of 1962, Zhang’s mother, with the help of the official student union, organized a poem recitation in the Chinese Central Academy of Fine Arts. The programme was divided into two parts: the recitation of Chinese classical poems and Russian poems in the first half, and the recitation of students poems in the second half. Zhang Langlang, still a secondary school student invited as a guest, was the last one up on stage. He recited a new poem he had written: *Burning Heart*. The poem ended with an exclamation: ‘We, the solar brigade!’ The audience praised Zhang’s performance with rapturous applause. On the way back home, Zhang and his friends were immersed in the blissful experience of success. Under the clear starry sky, nothing seemed impossible for these thirty secondary school youngsters. They decided to form their own magazine *Solar Brigade*.²⁹⁷

The first issue came out in the next year, during the last few months of Zhang’s secondary education in 1963. He designed the cover for the magazine: a trident symbolizing China’s cultural renaissance, its three-pronged representing poetry, music and art.²⁹⁸ The inaugural statement referred to Lu Xun and the May Fourth movement and expressed the young generation’s desire to ‘hold high the burning heart like Danko

²⁹⁵ Zhang Langlang, *Solar Brigade* http://www.boxun.com/hero/zhangll/2_1.shtml [accessed 1 August 2010]

²⁹⁶ Hai Mo had access to the European films after he returned to Beijing Film Production. Sometimes he brought the youths to watch the film in internal studios.

²⁹⁷ Zhang Langlang interview by author and Jiang Dingyue interview by CND, <http://archives.cnd.org/HXWK/author/ZHANG-Min/kd001005-2.gb.html> [accessed 1 August 2010].

²⁹⁸ Zhang Langlang, email message to author, 10 / 08 / 10 纵队的标志：一柄剑，顶端分出三支剑头，分别代表——诗歌、音乐、美术。这柄剑象征着中国文艺的全面复兴。Also see 杨健 (2002) 《中国知青文学史》

in order to walk out of the darkness’.²⁹⁹ The first issue was more or less a collection of poems written by seven or eight group members. Each contributor wrote or illustrated on one or two A4-sized loose-leaf notebook pages, leaving a wide margin for binding. These were then bound using sewing thread. The issue was produced as a mono-copy, which was circulated among a closed circle of trustworthy readers. Those who liked the issue would copy out all or part of the contents, and bind their own copy of the magazine. They talked enthusiastically about future issues, planning to take turns to edit the issues and publish works such as one-act plays, film scripts, and political satires.³⁰⁰

However, their dream was interrupted by an incident in July. One of their members, Mou Xiaobai, a student from Beijing No. 101 Secondary School, was interrogated by the police about his alleged involvement in X-Society. Thus *Solar Brigade* suspended their meetings and publications for half a year and resolved to give up production of mimeographed magazines in the future in order to avoid attracting the attention of the authorities. When the magazine re-started in 1964, Zhang was already a university student at the Chinese Central Academy of Fine Arts, where his father had been promoted as the principal. The group exercised a more secretive organization, restricting the readers to themselves.³⁰¹ The magazine positioned itself as ‘not a political organization but a secret poetry society’, its members ‘neither revolutionaries nor counter-revolutionaries but non-revolutionaries’. They had two systems: one to deal with the society when they had to speak and behave in a way accepted by the authorities; the other, a game of their own, which they held dear and would not let others touch. In the two years that followed, they produced two to three issues each year, with various literary writings, hand-copied and circulated among themselves.³⁰²

As the Cultural Revolution started and their parents were sidelined, their attitude towards political leaders underwent a dramatic change. They had regarded Mao as a ‘poet’ and Zhou as a ‘wise man’ who however was not able to change the entire bureaucratic system. But now they started to doubt Mao. When asked by Hai Mo

²⁹⁹ Zhan Langlang, *Death penalty and I, 五四* “过去这么多年只出了一个鲁迅。当时认为“五四”出了不少盗火者，现在不知去向。我们也是心中有魔鬼在燃烧，我们也要象高举燃烧的心丹柯一样，走出黑暗和泥沼。Zhang referred to Danko's burning heart by Maxim Gorky http://www.boxun.com/hero/zhangll/11_2.shtml , [accessed 1 August 2010].

³⁰⁰ Interview of Zhang Langlang (24/06/09) and Mu Dunbai (30/09/07) by author.

³⁰¹ Interview of Zhang Langlang 24/6/09 by author.

³⁰² There were no original copies. The contents included poems and film scripts according to the Interview of Zhang Langlang (24/06/09).

whether they still believed in ‘Chairman Mao’, the youngsters said either ‘I don’t believe in him’ or ‘I don’t know’. In their secret meetings, they informed each other of scandals involving high party officials including Mao’s wife Jiang Qing. In August 1966, Zhang’s father was labelled a revisionist and a member of the black categories. One day, he was subjected to a struggle session, when he was kicked and fell off the stage. The son was also punished, forced to stand next to his father at the class struggle sessions. Zhang realised that the revolution had nothing in common with what he had romantically imagined. It was a nothing but a fascist act. When he came back home from the struggle sessions, he designed the cover image for another issue: two red Chinese characters, *ziyou* (freedom), with black bars on all four sides.³⁰³ The last two issues of the *Solar Brigade* came out in 1967. The titles of the issues were changed to reduce the risk. The one that came out in January was called *Flying Snow Welcoming the Spring*. It had a satirical article about political instructors in schools. It also had a series of illustrations of political masks representing the facial expressions permitted by the authorities.³⁰⁴ The last issue came out in the late spring. Its title *Come to the Sea* was borrowed from an Italian folk song. The content included a survey among their friends on their favourite literary figures, artistic schools and musical instruments. The issue also cited Lu Xun’s statement: ‘Without the pioneers that dare to break with all the traditional ideas and practices, China will not have new arts.’³⁰⁵ It was not long before the interrogators came for the members of the *Solar Brigade*. They burned all magazines beforehand except the last two issues which survived until today. A few members including Hai Mo died from torture.³⁰⁶ Zhang was sentenced to death, a penalty, which was commuted to life imprisonment in 1970.³⁰⁷

³⁰³ Interview of Zhang Langlang by author, New York, 25/6/09. See also ‘Who knew Zhang Langlang’ http://www.360doc.com/content/10/0408/20/106843_22150698.shtml [accessed 1 August 2010].

³⁰⁴ See the issue *Flying Snow*.

³⁰⁵ The last issue of *Solar Brigade* 没有冲破一切传统思想和手法的闯将，中国不会有真的新文艺。

³⁰⁶ Also See different narratives of Lao Gui, <http://book.sina.com.cn/nzt/cha/yangmo/35.shtml>, Zhang’s memoirs approaches the truth story on Hai Mo’s suffer from Zhang’s interview by author, NY, 25/6/09.

³⁰⁷ Interview of Zhang Langlang by author, NY, 25/6/09. Also see Zhang’s The Death penalty and I, <http://www.cnd.org/CR/ZK99/zk177.hz8.html#2> [accessed 1 August 2010].

3.4.3 Journal of Secondary School Cultural Revolution



Figure 10. On Class Origins, the Special issue,
Journal of Secondary School Cultural Revolution (JSSCR), February 1967

Yu Luohe (遇罗克) was born in 1942 in Beijing to a family of engineers. His parents had both studied in Japan and both were labelled rightists in the Anti-Rightists campaign. At the age of seventeen, Yu graduated from secondary school with high scores but was not allowed to go to university due to his family background.³⁰⁸ Unable to find employment in the city, Yu went farming in a village in Daxing county in Beijing in 1960. He soon noticed that inequality in the countryside was even more severe than in the city: a child whose parents had been labelled as one of the 'black five elements' might not even be allowed to go to primary school. He started to think about social inequalities. With the help of a friend, he acquired a reading pass to Beijing Library, where he could find translations of European Enlightenment thinkers including French philosopher Rousseau. In 1964, Yu Luohe left the village and returned to his parents' home in the city. He worked as a contract research associate for three months,

³⁰⁸ Victims of China's Cultural Revolution: The Invisible Wound, *Pacific Affairs* 57 (1984–1985), 599–620.

at the end of which he was not able to get a permanent position due to his family background. He found a job in a primary school as a provisional teacher.³⁰⁹

During that time, he wrote a series of articles refuting Yao Wenyan's attack on the historical play, *Hai Rui Dismissed from Office*. Yu argued in his article 'Do People Need Hai Rui?' that Hai Rui had betrayed his own class and redressed people's grievances. Yu's article was rejected by official publications such as *Beijing Daily* and *Red Flag*, but was published partially and with a new title. 'It Is Time To Struggle against Mechanical Materialism, by Shanghai's *Wenhui Daily* on 13 February 1966 as a negative example on the issue. For this, Yu was fired by the school and became an apprentice at the People's Machinery Factory of Beijing in May.³¹⁰

As the Cultural Revolution broke out after the May 16 Notice, Yu questioned the official media's account of 'workers, peasants and soldiers participating in debates' and noted down in his diary: 'whoever controls newspapers and magazines control workers, peasants and soldiers.' Unlike the majority of youths who worshipped Mao and Maoism, Yu believed such worship was nonsense and that any theory had its limits.³¹¹ He observed that the so-called Cultural Revolution was not about 'class struggle' but about 'contradictions between the leaders and the masses'. Yu believed that it had 'nothing to do with culture nor class'. Yu also became alerted by the family backgrounds of the Red Guards and recorded in his diary on 5 August: 'It has been said recently that the "Red Guards"—secondary school students, wearing military uniforms and scarves—are children of revolutionary cadres. Today they sent us a big-character poster, in which they used the phrase "bourgeois curs" in several places.' Soon enough, Yu's family was looted by Red Guards. He also learned that in Daxing county where he had stayed, the Red Guards had killed those who had been labelled as 'black five' and their children.

³⁰⁹ Interview of Yu Luowen by author, Princeton, 26/09/07 Also see 遇罗文 (2000) 《我家》 and 《我家》出版时被删去的内容 <http://humanities.uchicago.edu/faculty/ywang/history/yuluoke.htm> [accessed 1 August 2010]. and <http://members.multimania.co.uk/sixiang000/author/Y/YuLuoWen/YuLuoWen004.txt> [accessed 1 August 2010].

³¹⁰ Yu, Luowen, *wu jia (My family)*, Beijing, Social Science Press., 1999. See also Yu Luowen, 'My Family' <http://humanities.uchicago.edu/faculty/ywang/history/yuluoke.htm> [accessed 1 August 2010].

³¹¹ Yu Luoke, Diary, 2nd May 1966, <http://www.cnd.org/HXWZExpress/02/08/020813-5.gb.html>. [accessed 1 August 2010]. Also see Yu Luoke, 'On the Family Background, process of debating the couplet' and Hu Ping, 'Couplet and On the Family Background', Hu Ping, 'Couplet, Class Origin and The Secondary School Newspaper report', http://www.aboluowang.com/comment/data/2006/0719/article_646.html [accessed 1 August 2010].

Infuriated by these events, Yu conceived one of the most challenging writings in Chinese in the 1960s: *On Class Origins*.³¹²

In this 10,000-word essay, Yu claimed that the class origin theory had victimized offspring of the ‘black seven’ and made them the targets of social discrimination and political persecution. He argued that ‘social influence far exceeds family influence’ and that ‘family origin and family influence have no necessary connection’. Yu pointed out the difference between origin and *chengfen* (class): ‘the father’s *chengfen* is the son’s origin’. He gave an example of a satirical dialogue to make his point:

A (a student): What origin are you?

B: What about you?

A: I’m a five red; my father is a worker.

B: Well. I’m far well ahead of you. I *am* a worker.

He also differentiated origins from personal political behaviour. He revealed that the class origin theory had served the purposes of ‘setting one part of the masses against another’. He warned against the emergence of a new privileged class, those inheriting power from the ruling class.

In November, Yu Luowen, Yu Luoke’s younger brother who was a secondary school student, participated in *chuanlian* (revolutionary networking) and went to Guangzhou lodging at Tongfu Primary School. Next to the school there was a printing workshop. He visited the workshop by chance and noticed that the workers were able to print without using a mimeograph machine. Their technique was quite simple: they fixed a sheet of wax paper onto a hard flat surface (for example a metal plate or a glass plate) and scratched the articles onto the wax paper with an iron-tipped pen or even a ball-point. Then they stretched the wax paper with clips and applied black oil ink onto it. The most critical step was to use a homemade squeegee (a rubber-edged wood blade) to scrape the ink off the wax paper before covering it with printing paper. With this newly acquired printing technique, Yu Luowen printed hundreds of copies of his brother’s *On Class Origin* which he recollected and condensed into 3,000 words. He signed them with the pseudonym ‘Beijing Battle-Cry Combat Team’ and posted them in the busiest

³¹² Ibid.

streets. Although the shortened article was not as sharp as the original version, it provoked heated debates among the onlookers, who either praised it as ‘spectacular’ or saw it as ‘an extremely poisonous weed’.³¹³

Yu Luowen sent a copy to his brother in Beijing, explaining in detail the printing technique used. Yu Luohe wrote back very soon, pointing out the shortcomings of the summarized article. He also suggested changing the pseudonym to ‘Beijing Research Team on The Issue of Class Origin’, explaining that battle-crying was necessary but it would be more important to investigate the problem with scientific methods, hoping that every family in China would form a research team to look into the problems of class origin. In Beijing, Yu Luohe bought wax papers and ink, made a squeegee, and printed hundreds of copies of his article with the help of his younger sister.³¹⁴ On Class Origin appeared on the walls in universities and work units as well as on wire poles along the streets. They also organized seminars to expand further the influence of the article.

Yu’s article caught the attention of Mou Zhijing (牟志京) and Wang Jianfu (王建复), two students from Beijing No. 4 Secondary School. Mou and Wang were both of working-class origin. However, their ‘good’ family origins were no guarantee against discrimination. They were not allowed to join the Red Guard or go networking (*chuanlian*), which were still privileges of offspring of high-ranking party cadres. At the debate seminar, Mou lost a tooth after being hit by a group of Royalist Red Guards who called themselves Xicheng District Pickets.³¹⁵ Mou staged a sit-in in front of Zhongnanhai, the CCP headquarters, appealing for equal rights to those of the Royalist Red Guards. Not getting a responses, he went networking by himself visiting sacred revolutionary places such as Yan’an and the site of the Zunyi Conference.³¹⁶ When Mou came back to Beijing in December, the political trend had changed. Class origin theory was being criticized by Premier Zhou Enlai, and Mou was upheld as a good example for opposing the class origin theory.

³¹³ Telephone interview of Yu Kuowen by author, 26/09/07, Also see *My Family* by Yu Luowen.

³¹⁴ Interview of Yu Luowen by author, 26/09/07, See also *Yu, Luowen, wu jia (My family)* [Beijing, Social Science Press, 1999].

³¹⁵ Interview of Mo Zhijing by Ya Yi, <http://www.cnd.org/cr/ZK96/zk103.hz8.html#3> [accessed 1 August 2010].

³¹⁶ *ibid*, <http://pm.cangdian.com/Data/2005/PMH00659/CD001889/html/CD001889-0720.html> [accessed 1 August 2010].

When Mou and Wang read On Class Origin on a telegraph pole, they contacted the Yu brothers suggesting reprinting the article by letterpress. The Yu brothers agreed. Mou and Wang borrowed 500 yuan from their school and bought printing paper³¹⁷. A local printing factory accepted the job after seeing an official letter that Mou had acquired through a friend. After laying out the article onto two A3-sized plates, the printing staff told the youths that the article would take up three A4 pages leaving the last page blank. This was when the young men decided to turn the article into a magazine. They were going to add a title that Mou came up with: *Journal of Secondary School Cultural Revolution*. Also on the front page would be a 300-word introduction to On Class Origin and quotes from Mao: ‘The world is yours, as well as ours, but in the last analysis, it is yours. You young people, full of vigour and vitality, are in the bloom of life, like the sun at eight or nine in the morning. Our hope is placed in you. The world belongs to you. China’s future belongs to you.’³¹⁸ On the fourth page, which would be the back cover, they were going to print four articles they had found that were relevant to the debates on class origin.³¹⁹

On 18 January 1967, the first issue of *JSSCR* came out with 30,000 copies. These were sold out within hours at two cents per copy. In the following days, Yu Luowen, whose address was published as the contact for the journal, was told by the post office to pick up the letters himself, as it was impossible for postmen to deliver such an avalanche of readers’ responses. Yu borrowed a tricycle and fetched thousands of letters every day. Those who did not get hold of the article asked for a reprint, which came out in February, with 80,000 copies sold out again within days. From morning to night, Yu’s home received keen readers from all over the country. They told the editors how they had suffered because of the blood lineage theory. They also took the risk and volunteered to help reproduce and circulate the magazine. It is likely that the article On Class Origin had over one million copies around the country reproduced during the Cultural Revolution. From time to time, they still had to face harassment from Royalist

³¹⁷ Yu Luowen recalled Wang Jianfu borrowed money from the school authority. Yu Luowen telephone interview by author, 26/09/07 See also <http://humanities.uchicago.edu/faculty/ywang/history/yuluoke.htm> [accessed 1 August 2010].

³¹⁸ Song Yongyi, ‘On the Family Background—Human Rights Declaration In The Dark’ <http://archives.cnd.org/HXWK/author/SONG-Yongyi/zk9806c-2.gb.html>, [accessed 1 August 2010] <http://www.cnd.org/CR/ZK96/zk103.hz8.html#1>, The Other Papers In The Schools, <http://www.edubridge.com/stories/yuhai.htm> [accessed 1 August 2010].

³¹⁹ Yu, Luowen, *wu jia (My family)*, Beijing, Social Science Press., 1999. See also Yu Luowen, ‘My Family’ <http://humanities.uchicago.edu/faculty/ywang/history/yuluoke.htm> [accessed 1 August 2010].

Red Guards, who nonetheless had stepped back due to the widespread public support for the journal.³²⁰

The editorial board expanded, with another twenty people with writing talents recruited. They organized seminars and open debates. Hao Zhi, the only university student on the editorial board and an eloquent speaker with a sense of humour, spoke frequently on behalf of the group in readers' meetings.³²¹ Despite verbal warnings from the authority, the group published three four-page issues in February, one in March and one in April, each with 10,000 copies printed by letterpress.³²² About three quarters of the contents in each issue were contributed by Yu Luoke, using the pseudonym Beijing Research Group on Family Origin, criticizing blood lineage theory and promoting equality for all. The authority mobilized dozens of magazines to attack the journal, which in a way helped publicize the journal further.³²³ On 14 April, *JSSCR* was closed down after the CCRG declared it to be was 'a very poisonous weed'.³²⁴ The group continued to expand their network and Yu started to think about the economic basis of social inequality. However, on 5 January 1968, before he could finish his new article 'On Wages', Yu was arrested as 'a vicious attacker against Mao' and 'a leading organizer of a counter-revolutionary group'.³²⁵ The country was soon under nationwide martial law.

In prison, Yu soon gained the respect of other inmates, helping them analyze their cases and writing appeals for them. Yu also met Zhang Langlang, editor of 'Solar Brigade', in prison. The two editors, despite their different family origins, finally met in the same cell. Over six months, they exchanged views on social issues and edited together a collection of poems that they remembered after Yu got hold of some pieces of paper. One day, Yu borrowed from an inmate an old version of *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* published in Yanan in 1942. After comparing it with the newly published version sentence by sentence, Yu told Zhang secretly that it would be really interesting to collect various versions of Mao works and compare them. He explained: 'They [Mao

³²⁰ Phone interview of Yu luowen by author, 30/9/07, See also THE FIRST CONFERENCE OF LIANDONG, <http://www.cnd.org/HXWZ/ZK98/zk156.hz8.html> [accessed 1 August 2010].

³²¹ Phone interview of Yu luowen by author, 30/9/07, also see 'Mass Dictatorship' <http://www.gmw.cn/01ds/2000-07/05/GB/2000%5E307%5E0%5EDS1005.htm> [accessed 1 August 2010].

³²² Interview of Mou Zhijing by Ya Yi, <http://archives.cnd.org/HXWK/column/History/zk9610c-2.gb.html> [accessed 1 August 2010].

³²³ Interview, Yu luowen by author, 30/9/07.

³²⁴ Phone interview, by Yu luowen by author, 30/9/07.

³²⁵ Phone interview, Yu luowen by author, 30/9/07.

and the CCP] are very confused about theories, and they are anti-Marxist. To defeat them, the people will need a powerful ideological weapon. The only such weapon is Marxism itself!’

After two years imprisonment, Yu Luo ke was executed on 5 March 1970 during the One Blow Three Oppositions campaign (*yi da san fan*) which was aimed at eliminating various counterrevolutionaries.³²⁶ All those who had been involved in publishing the journal were punished, either beaten or put into prison. Zheng Xiaodan, one of the supporters who circulated many copies of the journal, mimeographed a leaflet of eighteen questions challenging the CCRG after the journal was pronounced as counter-revolutionary and closed down.³²⁷ For this, she was arrested and tortured to death.³²⁸ Her parents took a huge risk and saved a copy of JSSCR by using it to wrap peppercorns.³²⁹

3.5 Resistance Momentum

Minkan in the 1960s reflected the political consciousness of urban youth at that time. Resistance experience from the previous decade remained unknown to most of the minkan participants in the 1960s. In the previous decade, unofficial magazines and wall posters examined a wide range of topics such as democracy, rule of law, human rights, freedom, peasants issues and analysis of power structure. In the 1960s, Paris Commune principles and Mao’s theories of class and continuous revolution became dominant references applied in the analysis and discourses of most minkan.³³⁰ The Party manipulated the class theory to create barriers between social groups. This was reflected in the division of minkan groups. The privileged reading groups such as *X-Society*

³²⁶ See Ding Shu, Stormy Years 1970 – Recording *Yi Da San Fan* in 1970, http://www.boxun.com/hero/dings/44_2.shtml. See also Zhang Langlang, Yu Luo ke in prison, http://www.boxun.com/hero/zhangll/17_3.shtml [accessed 1 August 2010]. Reflection of Yu Luo ke’s phenomenon, http://www.boxun.com/hero/zhangll/15_1.shtml [accessed 1 August 2010].

³²⁷ Yan Jiaqi and David S. K. Hong, *Toward a Democratic China: The Intellectual Autobiography of Yan Jiaqi*, [University of Hawaii Press], 1992, 105-6.

³²⁸ Wang Youqing, Chinese Holocaust Memorial in the Cultural Revolution <http://humanities.uchicago.edu/faculty/ywang/history/yuluoke.htm> [accessed 1 August 2010].

³²⁹ Yu, Luowen, *wu jia (My family)*, Beijing, Social Science Press., 1999 and Wang Youqing, <http://humanities.uchicago.edu/faculty/ywang/history/yuluoke.htm>. Also see Interview with Xu Xiao [accessed 1 August 2010]] Xu Xiao, interview by Jiang Xun, http://www.yzzk.com/cfm/Content_Archive.cfm?Channel=ae&Path=3522225462/18ae3a.cfm [accessed 1 August 2010]].

³³⁰ See *Journal of Secondary School Cultural Revolution* and *Xiangjiang Review*.

questioned the official doctrines of Marxism with references to Marxist revisionism and Western liberalism. The socially deprived groups such as *Journal of Secondary School Cultural Revolution* examined the origins of social inequalities. In her reflection on Habermas's original concept of 'public sphere', Nancy Fraser points out that the term should not be singular but plural, 'public spheres'.³³¹ *X-society* and *JSSCR* represented different spheres, and addressed the concerns of different social groups that were separated by the political institutions.

The two minkan spheres in the 1960s seldom overlapped, either in their contents or physical spaces. The elite youths enjoyed their advantaged positions in obtaining censored information and confined such reading materials and their reflections to their own closed circles. The grassroots youths in their responses to the discrimination policies were limited to re-interpreting the official ideology and ignored more fundamental issues: how to identify the ruling power's creation of social divisions and its manipulation of social conflicts. Lack of communication and understanding between the two spheres made them both vulnerable to state repression. The crackdown on the elite youths was hardly known to the public.

The issue of inequality raised by *JSSCR* proved that the momentum to realize social equality came from the disadvantaged groups, which not only had to strive for civil and political rights like other social groups, but also to overcome obstacles established by the authorities and reinforced through social conventions. When the majority of unofficial magazines were engaged fervently in speculation about the power struggles, *JSSCR* was among very few minkan that revealed the massacres of 'black elements' in August 1966. In the early Cultural Revolution, those who had been labelled as 'black elements' encountered discriminations in their study, work and daily lives and had to fight for survival. Therefore, the disadvantaged groups needed 'participatory parity' to construct their own public sphere, in order to communicate with spheres created by other social groups located in higher positions in the social hierarchy.³³² In addition, social equality cannot be achieved without the growth of independent societies, which

³³¹ Nancy Fraser, 'Rethinking the Public Sphere: A contribution to Critique of Actually Existing Democracy', *Social Text*, No 25/26, 1990, 56-80.

³³² The terms, 'participatory parity' comes from Nancy Fraser, 'Rethinking the Public Sphere: A contribution to Critique of Actually Existing Democracy', *Social Text*, No 25/26, 1990, 56-80.

in turn relies on to what extent different social groups coordinate with one another and sustain the momentum of resistance.

Despite all the limitations, minkan in this decade accumulated valuable experiences for the resistance movements. They contributed to the Chinese printing culture with a new way of mimeographing magazines. Through this invention, they kept the ‘movable words’ tradition alive. They made minkan more accessible to the general public. In the 1950s, when minkan reemerged, they were mainly circulated inside university campuses or among closed underground groups. In the 1960s, posters were seen everywhere in the cities: on the wire poles along the streets, on the walls surrounding work units and outside grocery stores. The circulation of minkan took advantage of the ‘great networking’ to reach the majority of urban areas around the country.

The spaces created in the 1960s did not collapse with the suppression of various minkan groups. Punitive institutions like prisons became loci of communication between different social groups. The editor of *Solar Brigade* was locked in the same cell as the editor of *JSSCR*. Their communication implied a potential of participatory parity, to be practised by future generations of resistance. It was also in prison and labour camps where Yang Xiaokai, an editor of *Xiangjiang Review*, came in contact with all kinds of repressed groups identified as ‘black elements’ including ‘counterrevolutionaries’ and underground religious practitioners as well as ‘rightists’ from the previous decade.³³³ Although the influence was very limited at the time, the prisoners did go beyond their own social groups and explored fundamental political and social issues – issues emerging from below in response to local socio-economic and political conditions and to fundamental problems with political institutions, which had further repercussions that would play out over the coming years and decades.

³³³ Unofficial magazine *Xiangjiang Review* existed in Changsha from October 1967 to January 1968. It advocated Paris Commune principles to challenge the CCP bureaucracy. Its editor Yang Xiaokai served ten years in prison and labour camps after his magazine group was shut down as a counterrevolutionary organization. See Yang Xiaokai, *Niu gui she shen lu* (《牛鬼蛇神录》 Captive Spirits: Prisoners of the Cultural Revolution) Hong Kong, Oxford Press, 1994, See also Lin Zhao’s experience in prison in Chapter two.

4. The Democracy Wall

This chapter examines minkan in the late 1970s, when independent magazines thrived and matured. The world of magazines changed after 1978. Minkan experienced a flourishing following by a crackdown, then re-publication and a transformation of their underground status. During this period, the wall itself started to gain an identity as a magazine. It was no longer merely a background or a place where posters are affixed, like for example a lamp post. Now the wall became the unique format of the magazine: it has a 'spine' where editors sold copies of their journals; it had pages where posters were changed regularly.³³⁴ Such an identity was clearly manifested through the name, 'Democracy Wall'. This chapter looks at the various formats of magazines during this time, introduces a selection of magazines and offers an analysis of certain key words such as democracy, human rights and rule of law. The exploration includes reference to the discourses from before 1949 and abroad which were prohibited. During the period between 1978 and 1980, minkan were available as public communication platform, connecting with global networks, social movements, and independent associations, and forming the embryo of an oppositional party.

4.1 Power and Minkan Conditions

Towards the end of the Cultural Revolution, China found itself in the middle of a profound political and social crisis, worsened by a collapsing national economy. More and more ordinary Chinese had access to foreign broadcasts, including VOA, BBC, NHK and programmes from Taiwan (The Republic of China) as well as print publications such as *The Times*, or *New York Times*, and magazines from Hong Kong and Taiwan.³³⁵ Chinese youths learnt about the Universal Declaration of Human

³³⁴ See pictures of the Democracy Wall, <http://cck-isc.ff.cuni.cz/1confs/081205DemWallFoto.htm> [accessed 10 December 2010].

³³⁵ A Cheng, Listen to enemy radios, <http://www.bullogger.com/blogs/yangzheng/archives/252406.aspx> [accessed 10 December 2010] See Widor, Claude. 1987. *The Samizdat Press in China's Provinces, 1979-1981: An Annotated Guide*. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

Rights,³³⁶ the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, Charter 77 and the Polish Solidarity movement.³³⁷ Within the Party, Mao, still the holder of supreme power, encouraged the ‘Gang of Four’ to dislodge his opponents in the top echelons of the bureaucracy.³³⁸ The overthrown bureaucrats placed their hopes in Premier Zhou Enlai, the second top leader after Mao, who they believed sympathized with their sufferings and would eventually help to restore them to power. The popularity of Zhou within the Party was echoed by a similar sentiment among society. Many people blamed the Gang of Four for the atrocities committed against innocent people in political persecutions during the Cultural Revolution, whilst they imagined Zhou to be an honest Party cadre who fulfilled the role of traditional upright officials, especially after Zhou declared in 1975 the realization of the Four Modernizations as the goal of the Party.

Zhou’s death in January 1976 triggered mass mourning 5 April, the day of mourning according to the Chinese tradition. Nearly half a million people demonstrated on Tiananmen Square. The April Fifth Movement was repressed within days by order of Mao, assisted by the Gang of Four and Hua Guofeng, the newly promoted Premier to succeed Zhou. The Gang of Four further denounced Deng Xiaoping as the instigator behind the incident and had him removed from the Party leadership. Hardly had the storm aroused by the April Fifth Movement subsided when the Great Tangshan Earthquake occurred in July, its epicentre only 150 kilometres away from Beijing. The earthquake not only cost 250,000 lives but aggravated the already seriously deteriorated political and economic ecology of the country. The aftermath of the earthquake saw the death of Mao in September, followed by a coup d’etat executed by Hua Guofeng with help of veteran Party officials a month later, when the Gang of Four were arrested and purged from the political stage.

As the heir appointed by Mao and the winner of the power struggles, Hua proved true to the classical phenomenon of totalitarian institutions. The ruler, as the winner, would take all when he succeeded as Chairman of the Central Military Commission of the Communist Party, Chairman of the Party and Prime minister. Aware of the fact that his own political legitimacy resulted from his loyalty to Mao, Hua gave the order to begin

³³⁶ Wei Jingsheng interview 9/6/08, *Human Right in China*, Issue 1 - 3 and *April Fifth Tribune* issue 14-16.

³³⁷ Wei Jingsheng interview by author.

³³⁸ MacFarquhar, Roderick and Schoenhals, Michael. *Mao's last revolution*, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006, 301-460.

construction of a mausoleum for Mao two months after Mao's death. The mausoleum was to be located right in the middle of Tiananmen Square to the south of the Monument to the People's Heroes. The construction site was enclosed with walls made out of planks. Also enclosed was the Monument, which was once covered with posters during the April Fifth demonstrations. Contrary to the wishes of the Party leader, however, the plank walls, which extended to the Changan Avenue, would soon enough turn into a historical stage where big character posters proliferated.

In November 1976, a month after the purge of the Gang of Four, big character posters appeared in the campus of Beijing University demanding redress for the April Fifth Movement. The posters were also reproduced in multiples as mimeographed leaflets, spreading across the capital.³³⁹ By January 1977, wall posters had covered the wooden planks enclosing the construction site of Mao's mausoleum. Among the requests was the rehabilitation of Deng Xiaoping³⁴⁰. The majority of the posters were posted at night, with the most sensitive ones destroyed the following morning and others lasting for a couple of days. Some participants had a chance to deliver speeches to the onlookers, whilst some were arrested secretly after posting their writings.³⁴¹ Alerted to the challenges from the posters, the regime finally cleared all posters off the plank walls by the end of the month, arresting two dozen key writers such as Li Dongmin (李冬民) and labelling them counterrevolutionary cliques.³⁴² The authorities further forbade any posters in Tiananmen Square and eventually demolished the plank walls after building Mao's memorial hall. However, posters had found new homes on walls across the city, the most popular locations including Changan Avenue, Wangfujing shopping centres and Xidan, as well as the walls surrounding the buildings of governmental offices and official newspapers such as People's Daily. Wall posters had again become a symbol of freedom of speech.³⁴³

³³⁹ Chen Ziming, Continuity of April 5th Movement of continuity: the struggle to seek redress, <http://www.xschina.org/show.php?id=11630>, [accessed 10 December 2010].

³⁴⁰ some participants posted many big character posters and organized a public speech. See Chen Zimin interview and Gao Yu <http://www.chinesepen.org/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=10532> [accessed 10 December 2010].

³⁴¹ Bi Yiming was arrested after several days when he had public speech, see Chen Ziming Interview by author and his article: the April 5th Movement in Historical Perspective .

³⁴² Beijing authority carried out six forbiddance regulations including posting BCP in wood wall around the Mao Memorial, see Chen Ziming interview.

³⁴³ Chen Ziming interview 内部规定, 北京市规定 六不准 1977年3月 大字报, See Chen Ziming interview and Liu Shengji, 190.

To ease pressures from the Party and the society, Hua had to rehabilitate a small number of veteran Party officials including Chen Yun and Deng Xiaoping. In August 1977, Deng resumed his position as the vice Premier. However, aware of the fact that Maoism still played a critical role in legitimizing the Party's monopoly of power, the leaders of the reshuffled power centre agreed not to push a de-Maoisation movement as the Soviet Union did in its de-Stalinisation efforts. The establishment of the Mao Zedong Memorial Hall in September 1977, on the first anniversary of Mao's death, became a symbol of political consensus between the new bureaucrats and the old ones.³⁴⁴ Despite eased pressure within the Party, the Party leaders still had to face the accumulated dissatisfactions of the society and the challenge from dissident voices.

By the end of 1977, millions of educated youths—urban youngsters who were sent to the countryside during the Cultural Revolution—had returned to the cities, trying by every means to recover their urban status in household registrations in order to continue their education and seek jobs. They spread messages and mobilized themselves quickly to post their petitions on the walls. Next to their petitions were requests posted by other social groups who had travelled to the central cities to petition against the abuse of power by local governments. Furthermore, victims of political persecutions, who had been labelled as 'bad elements' in various official campaigns, demonstrated outside government buildings asking for rehabilitation and posted accounts of their ordeals on the walls in the cities.³⁴⁵ The scale and scope of these social movements increased quickly, which posed a new wave of threats to the Party.³⁴⁶

The social discontent was seized on by Deng as an opportunity to wipe out Hua's clique. Deng's rivalry against Hua gained support from Hu Yaobang, the vice president of the Central Party School at the time, who launched a series of public debates on a special commentator's article entitled 'Practice Is The Sole Criterion for Testing Truth' published on the official newspaper *Guangming Daily* on 11 May 1978.³⁴⁷ The debates greatly challenged Hua Guofeng, who had dogmatically regarded Maoism as the only

³⁴⁴ Gradually, Mao Zedong Memorial divided some rooms for other leaders so that all top CCP leaders agree to keep the Memorial to avoid the fate of Stalin Memorial.

³⁴⁵ See Li Shengping and participants's posters written by Chen Ziming, also refers to *Chinese posters and Democracy Wall*.

³⁴⁶ Liu, Xiaomeng, *zhongguo zhiqing shi* (History of China's educated youths 《中国知青史——大潮》), dangdai zhongguo chubanshe, 2009. See also http://book.ifeng.com/lianzai/detail_2009_03/03/291182_91.shtml [accessed 11 December 2010].

³⁴⁷ See *Guangming Daily*, 'Practice Is The Sole Criterion for Testing Truth', 11 May 1978.

criterion for the truth. In August, Hu Yaobang further resumed the publication of *China's Youth Daily*, an official newspaper that had been shut down in the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, and published an article co-written by two participants in the April Fifth Movement. The publication of the article resulted in the shutdown of the newspaper once more, ordered by a key member of Hua's alliance Wang Dongxing, the military commander of Zhongnanhai guards Unit 8341 who was also in charge of monitoring the Party's propaganda organs. The article, however, was posted onto one of the Xidan walls, page by page, within days after the closure of the newspaper. These posters triggered widespread discussions and invited commentary posters to be put up next to them in the following months protesting against the official suppression of the April Fifth Movement.³⁴⁸

On 10 October 1978, four poets from Guizhou province arrived in Beijing and posted their writings and poems onto a wall in Wangfujing shopping centres. They recited their poems and delivered speeches in front of the wall, advocating freedom and democracy and denouncing the idolization of Mao. Mimeographed copies of these posters were distributed to the audience.³⁴⁹ A month later, these Guizhou poets founded a poetry society, *Enlightenment Society*, the very first association at the time. On 16 November, Lü Pu (吕朴), a participant of the April Fifth Movement, stuck a poster onto one of the Xidan walls, signed with his real name and address. His poster challenged *Yu Wu Sheng Chu*, an Opera that attributed the April Fifth Movement to the feelings of people who loved Premier Zhao Enlai and hated the Gang of Four. He argued that the Movement was instead triggered by people's discontent with economic stagnation, poverty and restriction of thought.³⁵⁰ Inspired by this action, more and more writers and readers started to associate with each other, holding regular discussions.³⁵¹ The group of walls in Xidan gradually turned into the most popular location for posters, and people started to call it the Democracy Wall. On 26 November 1978, thousands of poster activists marched from Xidan along Changan Avenue to Tiananmen Square and gathered around

³⁴⁸ Chen Ziming interview 24/9/08 Wang Sirui (Chen Ziming), 'Continuation of April Fifth Movement: the struggle for redress' <http://www.xschina.org/show.php?id=11630> [accessed 11 December 2010].

³⁴⁹ Chen Ziming interview 24/9/08, also see Huang Xiang, 'Democracy Wall and the Chinese New Poems Movement' <http://www.fireofliberty.org/article/1641.asp> [accessed 11 December 2010].

³⁵⁰ Lü Pu's poster, also see Liu Qing's article in *Da lu di xia kan wu hui bian* (Collection of underground magazines in Mainland China 1978-1980). Taipei, 1985 vol. 6, 317.

³⁵¹ Huang Xiang, 'Symol of Rebellion and Awakening' <http://asiademo.org/gb/1998/10/19981004a.htm>, Ma Wendu's bio., http://www.boxun.com/hero/mwd/16_1.shtml Li Weiping, Ma Wendu, A Veteran During the Democracy wall, <http://www.epochtimes.com/gb/4/6/14/n567568.htm> [accessed 11 December 2010]

the Monument to the Heroes of the People.³⁵² The speakers called for de-Maoisation and denounced the newly built Mao Zedong Memorial Hall. A speaker from Nanjing reflected on the lessons to be learnt from the Cultural Revolution and advocated the principles of the Paris Commune.³⁵³

The dramatic increase in the number of free speeches and assemblies in society intensified power struggles inside the Party between the two factions led by Deng Xiaoping and Hua Guofeng respectively. Deng's faction published positive reviews of the April Fifth Movement in official newspapers such as *China Youth Daily* and *People's Daily*, pressing Hua Guofeng to reassess the movement.³⁵⁴ On 18 November, Hua had to agree to an official statement rehabilitating the movement, announced in the name of the Central Committee of the CCP.³⁵⁵ On 26 November 1978, Jim Novak, an American journalist and political commenter for the *Washington Post* who had met with participants of the Democracy Wall, passed on twenty questions from the activists to Deng Xiaoping in an interview.³⁵⁶ The next day, Novak asked his colleague John Fraser, a Toronto journalist for *The Globe and Mail*, to convey Deng's reply to the activists waiting in front of the Democracy Wall.³⁵⁷ In this well-known reply Deng said, 'The Democracy Wall is very good ... 99 per cent of the Wall is good ... let the masses speak out their grievance...posters are protected by the constitution...this is a kind of democracy.'³⁵⁸ Deng's message was widely reported by foreign media including Japan's Kyodo News, which had greatly publicized the Democracy Wall.³⁵⁹ With widespread social support, Deng Xiaoping started to win the upper hand in the power

³⁵² They attracted thousands of readers and then organised this event. The speakers with the microphone and attracted more people to join in the demonstration. See Widor, 181 Map: http://maps.google.com/maps?q=Xidan+along+Changan+Avenue+to+Tiananmen+Square+&oe=utf-8&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&client=firefox-a&um=1&ie=UTF-8&ei=T8FFTM3bJJCQjAfoW5X1Bg&sa=X&oi=mode_link&ct=mode&ved=0CAkQ_AU [accessed 11 December 2010]

³⁵³ *ibid*

³⁵⁴ See Chen Ziming, <http://www.xschina.org/show.php?id=11630> and *People Daily*, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/dengxp/vol3/note/C0970.html> [accessed 11 December 2010].

In December of 1978, at its Third Plenary Session, the Eleventh Central Committee (see note 3) decided to cancel the documents issued by the Central Committee on the movement to "criticize Deng Xiaoping and counter the Right deviationist tendency to reverse correct verdicts" and on the Tiananmen Incident, proclaiming the rehabilitation of Deng and reversing the official assessment of the incident.

³⁵⁵ See Hua Guofeng's statement on 18 November, <http://www.xschina.org/show.php?id=11630> [accessed 11 December 2010].

³⁵⁶ See Liu Qing, <http://www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/Bay/5598/97/sd9711d.txt> See <http://www.people.com.cn/GB/shizheng/252/4750/4751/20010319/420362.html> [accessed 11 December 2010]

³⁵⁷ See Widor, Some participators said the next day, see Widor, vol.1, 358-360.

³⁵⁸ *Ibid*.

³⁵⁹ See Huang Mab, p12, NYT, 27, November, 1978.

truggles. By the end of the year, Wu De, the mayor of Beijing and an important figure in Hua's clique, was dismissed.³⁶⁰

The increased popularity of the Democracy Wall made many participants realise the limit of the wall posters in the distribution of their writings. Those who had known the unofficial publications during the Cultural Revolution decided to restart the publication of such magazines.³⁶¹ The first minkan in this period was *Enlightenment*, founded by Huang Xiang and Li Jiahua in Guizhou on 10 October 1978. In Beijing, Xu Wenli and Liu Qing founded a fortnightly magazine *April Fifth Tribune*.³⁶² Wei Jingsheng launched *Exploration*, and published the most powerful essay of the time, 'The Fifth Modernization' in its opening issue, which immediately stirred up debates across the city. The most widely distributed magazine was *Beijing Spring*, its name clearly inspired by the 1968 Prague Spring. The publications also included literary magazines, the most famous of which was *Today*, initiated by a group of dissenting artists and writers. At the same time, Fu Shenqi started *Voice of Democracy* in Shanghai and Liu Guokai founded the *Voice of People* in Guangzhou.³⁶³ These cities became centres of minkan networks.³⁶⁴

By the end of the 1970s, the People's Republic of China had established diplomatic relations with the US and adopted an open door policy to modernise in the areas of agriculture, industry, science & technology and martial defence, in an attempt to tackle the country's social and economic crisis. With his position inside the Party greatly enhanced, Deng Xiaoping started to crackdown on the Democracy Wall. In January 1979, a dozen Beijing petitioners including Fu Yuehua were arrested.³⁶⁵ In March, a couple of minkan were shut down and scores of initiators, including Wei Jingsheng,

³⁶⁰ See Hu Jiwei, Hu Yaobang and Democracy wall, <http://www22.brinkster.com/sltao/hyb0078.htm> [accessed 11 December 2010].

³⁶¹ Ya Yi, Liu Qing interview in Ya Yi, *liuwang zhe fang tan lu* (Exile interview 《流亡者访谈录》), Hong Kong: xia fei er publisher, 2005.

³⁶² http://www.chinesepen.org/Article/hyxz/200807/Article_20080715125434.shtml [accessed 11 December 2010].

³⁶³ See the democracy wall in Shanghai, minkans, Vol. 5 Taiwan, also see Liu Guokai, and Lin Mucheng, <http://asiademo.org/gb/author/linmucheng.htm>, also see minkan in Guangzhou, Guiyang, Chengdu, Wuhan, Changsha, Shanghai, Hangzhou, Qingdao, Tianjin etc.

³⁶⁴ There were around fifty minkan from December 1978 to January 1979 around the country. See Widor, Claude. *The Samizdat Press in China's Provinces, 1979-1981: An Annotated Guide*. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution, Stanford University, 1987 and Chen Ziming, *Collected Works, Independent Candidate Campaign in 1980 and Beijing Social and Economic Science Institute*.

³⁶⁵ Fu Yuehua, a long-term petitioner, raped by her work unit leader, petitioned the Party-state instructions for justice. But no authority dealt with her petition. The leader of her unit continued more brutally to persecute. As the result, she was laid off and her household registration in Beijing was revoked.

were arrested.³⁶⁶ By the end of the month, Deng Xiaoping put forward the Four Cardinal Principles (upholding the socialist path, upholding the people's democratic dictatorship, upholding the leadership of the Communist Party of China, and upholding Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong thought) at the Theory Conference of the Party.³⁶⁷ In October 1979, Wei was tried and sentenced to fifteen years, when more magazines were closed and activists arrested. A month later, the Democracy wall was forced to move from Xidan to a more remote place (Yuetan Park), before being completely closed down. In April 1980, the Party abolished Article 45 of the constitution and rescinded the so-called Four Great Rights—the rights to speak out freely, to air views fully, to hold great debates and to write big character posters. Deng Xiaoping also wrote the Four Cardinal Principles into the constitution. Between August 1980 and February 1981, tens of minkan were shut down and hundreds of editors and organizers were arrested across the country.³⁶⁸ The Democracy Wall, which lasted for three years and once saw as many as over a hundred minkan in nearly thirty cities, was now closed down, with the remaining magazines either going underground or transforming into other formats.

4.2 Democracy Wall

The wall culture in the Chinese context is a rather interesting phenomenon. The earliest walls built as fortifications to defend state borders were developed during the Warring States Period (480–221 BC). These defensive walls on the northern borders were connected and reinforced by emperor Qinshishuang after he had conquered several

³⁶⁶ On March 16, in a secret speech to senior government officials, which the message quickly became known throughout Beijing, Deng reportedly endorsed a limited crackdown. Three days later, regulations to restrict the movement were issued in the city. "Slogans, posters, books, magazines, photographs, and other materials which oppose socialism, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the leadership of the Communist Party, Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought are formally prohibited." <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:uYpDHy6ohgAJ:weijingsheng.org/wei/biographybywoodmian.doc+wei+jingsheng+united+action&cd=4&hl=en&ct=clnk&client=firefox-a> [accessed 11 December 2010]. On March 29, the Beijing Municipal Government announced the ban of all forms of posters and publications for "hostile to socialism, to the leadership of the Communist Party dictatorship of the proletariat and Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought," <http://chinainperspective.net/ArtShow.aspx?AID=1177> [accessed 12/12/2008].

³⁶⁷ SELECTED WORKS OF DENG XIAOPING, Vol. II UPHOLD THE FOUR CARDINAL PRINCIPLES <http://web.peopledaily.com.cn/english/dengxp/vol2/text/b1290.html> [accessed 11 December 2010].

³⁶⁸ See Chen Ziming interview by author 24/8/08, 'In (the Spring)1981, they (the CCP) formulated The Document Nine — the CCP Central Committee and State Council on the handling of illegal publications and organizations and related issues instructions, prohibiting chuanlian (networks) between units, departments, regions to use tandem organizations and actions "; abolishing four big rights and strike right in the constitution, amending in favour of the terms of Election for independent candidates.' Also see Chen Ziming, 'Realization of constitutional democracy in China' <http://www.chinaelections.org/NewsInfo.asp?NewsID=145716> [accessed 11 December 2010].

other states and unified China in 221 BC. The new wall, well known as the Great Wall, has become a symbol of centralized state power. The emperors of the dynasties gradually realised that walls not only served to defend the country against foreign attacks but could also be used as partitions to divide up internal oppositions, which if united could challenge the existing state power. The partitions were not only physical but also mental once the walls also became an analogy of censorship. *Fenshu kengru* (burning of books and burying of scholars) as well as *wenziyu* (literary persecution and imprisonment) were classical examples of censorship that repeated throughout Chinese history.³⁶⁹ Under the communists, the wall culture developed further through the systems of household registration and work units. In the urban areas, almost every work unit was encircled by walls.

In contrast to the barrier wall built by the state as a repressive mechanism stands the democracy wall covered with wall posters, best known as *dazibao* (big-character poster), that effectively offered alternative sources and views on public affairs and hence helped develop civic consciousness. The most famous poster walls were three discontinuous grey-brick walls, around 200 metres long altogether, located along the pavement close to the Xidan crossroads, north of West Changan Avenue and east of Xidan North Street. The walls were right behind several bus terminals at a road transportation junction in central Beijing city. The site was also within walking distance from Tiananmen Square, the largest square in the world, and Zhongnanhai, the headquarter of the Communist Party and the central government.³⁷⁰

These walls in Xidan had gradually acquired the name Democracy Wall since November 1978 when democracy-related issues fuelled the discussions in many *dazibao* posted here.³⁷¹ The model of the Democracy Wall spread around the country at the turn of the decade: it was replicated, for example, in the People's Square in Shanghai after December 1978 and in Zhongshan No. 5 Road in Guangzhou from the beginning of the 1979.³⁷²

³⁶⁹ Literary Persecution see Ku Chieh-Kang, 'During The Qing, A Study of Literary Persecution During The Ming' Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, Vol. 3, No. 3/4 (Dec., 1938), 254-311.

³⁷⁰ See Widor, 《中国民办刊物汇编》, p 358-60, 'Examining origin of the Democracy Wall' (vol. 15), 50 <http://history-record.blogspot.com/>, <http://www.bignews.org/20020429.txt> [accessed 16 December 2010].

³⁷¹ See Picture' <http://24hour.blogbus.com/logs/5433902.html> [accessed 16 December 2010].

³⁷² Chen Ziming interview, Liu Guokai, Fu Shenqi talked democratic wall and minkans in Guangzhou and Shanghai. Also referred to other cities. 8 January 1979, some minkans were posted in the Democracy Wall in same

The *dazibao* movement and publication of *minkan* in Beijing in November 1978 triggered a counterpart in Shanghai that came at the same time as the one-year returning home campaign of the educated youths there. Thanks to students in Beijing returning youths in Shanghai were passed some *minkan* and mimeographed bulletins of *dazibao* at the end of November, and many educated youths and workers in Shanghai began their own *dazibao* campaign after that.³⁷³ A report in the unofficial magazine *Shanghai's April* documented the protest:

On the evening of 24 November 1978, university students from Beijing travelled to Shanghai and went to the People's Square, telling people about the public discussion on calling for democracy and rule of law - the news spread immediately through the streets in Shanghai ... a massive pro-democracy movement began in Shanghai in the following week. A democracy wall started with the posting of thousands of *dazibao* onto the walls along Tibet Road around the Square. It is west of the road called Nanjing East Road which is People's Square on its western entrance. There were heated debates, from morning to night, from night to dawn. Every debate included two scores of people to form a small circle which was encircled by a big one made by hundreds of people listening to the debate.³⁷⁴ We sometimes sat on the floor at night. The square was crowded and heated debates prevailed into the bitter winter. The Democracy Wall in Shanghai lasted about 100 days when an estimated one million people looked at *dazibao*.³⁷⁵

4.2.1 Space for Public Expression

Since early 1978, over 100,000 people (700,000 at the peak) had gathered in the capital every day to lodge petitions with various government authorities and official media.³⁷⁶ However, their grievances were seldom redressed by the authorities and their stories were neglected by the official media. Consequently, the petitioners had no other way to

time. Later more magazines were frequently posted in the wall after they were mimeographed. See also the 5th April, Taiwan, iss.13, vol. 8, 61.

³⁷³ Michel Bonnin (Pan Mingxiao), *shi luo de yi dai: zhongguo de zhangsanxiaxiang yundong* (Lost Generation: sent educated youths movement 1968-1980 《失落的一代：中国的上山下乡运动 1968-1980》), translated by Ouyang Yin, Chinese University Publisher in Hong Kong, 2009, 144.

³⁷⁴ Ibid, See also *Beijing Spring* iss1 to 6, *Exploration*, issue 1-4, ed. Wider.

³⁷⁵ Science Democracy and Rule of Law, issue. 10, republished *April in Shanghai* 《上海四月》, 载民刊《科学民主法制》, 第10期(1979年5月1日)。

³⁷⁶ Only the number of educated youth who asked to return home was around 17 millions in 1978. Please referred to *Educated Youths Returned Home* (Dachao) and *The end of the Chinese Educated Youth*, <http://www.dangdaizazhi.com/dangdaizazhi/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=7634>, [accessed 16 December 2010]. http://book.ifeng.com/lianzai/detail_2009_03/03/291182_102.shtml [accessed 16 December 2010].

air their grievances but to post them in form of *dazibao* on the walls across the city.³⁷⁷ These wall posters vividly illustrated the unfair treatments experienced by different social groups. By the end of 1978, many posters went beyond merely exposing the grievances and started to question the cause of the calamities. In this sense, the democracy wall had functioned both as a newspaper and as a magazine for public expression. In reality, it accommodated both *dazibao* and *minkan*. Whilst *dazibao* had the advantage of being a daily newspaper that offered timely coverage on a wide range of specific issues of public interest, *minkan* complemented the rolling news coverage with more elaborate commentary and in-depth analysis on these issues. At the time, most *minkan* would post their table of contents and a selection of important articles onto the wall, offering free access to those whose financial situation would not allow a regular subscription.³⁷⁸ The democracy wall as a free press greatly publicised *minkan* and increased their influence on the contemporary political scene.

The democracy wall provided a physical platform for open debates. Public expression had been largely suppressed under communist rule through self-censorship as much as censorship. Most people simply repeated the official propaganda. Those who did not toe the official line also knew the boundaries well enough to speak ambiguously. Even underground heretic expressions were, in many cases, implicit and equivocal. However, when these heresies were put up on the wall, they were gradually transformed. Encouraged by public expectation and stimulated by one another, these dissident voices became more direct and clear. A good example is the debate on the idea of modernization. The popular view on modernization took for granted the official definition of the so-called ‘four modernizations’. When Wei Jingsheng, the editor of *Exploration*, advocated for a ‘fifth modernization’ – i.e. democracy – the taboo on questioning legitimacy of the supreme power was broken.

The democracy wall not only broached taboo issues, but also recovered reports censored by the official media. The official media were always cautious about redressing past grievances. The strategy they had adopted was to blame those who had already lost in the power struggle, while playing down the elements that might invite questions

³⁷⁷ Lin Zonghua, *Da lu tong bao de hou sheng : da zi bao, chuan dan, di xia kan wu xuan ji* (selection of *Dazibao*, bulletins and underground magazines) Taipei : Li ming wen hua shi ye gong si, Minguo 69 [1980].

³⁷⁸ Price of every copy of *minkan* was from RMB 10 cents to 150 cents. In Beijing, there were almost fifty magazines at their peak.

directed at the existing power holders and all fundamental issues regarding the institution of power as such. For example, on 4 April 1979 *China's Youth Daily* published a story about the death of Zhang Zhixin, a young communist who, according to the report, had been executed in 1975 for criticizing Lin Biao and the Gang of Four. Careful readers phoned up the paper and asked how exactly Zhang had been tortured before she died. In the end, they uncovered a sensational detail: the 45-year-old woman was killed by cutting her throat. Another detail unmentioned by the official paper was that Zhang's criticism was actually directed at Mao himself. A couple of minkan, including *Zhixin* and the *April Fifth Tribune*, published the investigation of these censored details and further posted them on the walls.³⁷⁹ More and more readers of the democracy wall became aware of the role of the official media and started to appreciate the alternative sources and critical comments offered by the democracy wall. They gradually got used to comparing different versions of the same story, judging for themselves what had been distorted and what had been left out and deducing the reasons behind such manipulations.

Besides sensitive social and political issues, the Democracy Wall also encouraged expression of prohibited literature and avant-garde art that departed from the official standards defined and prescribed by Mao Zedong's 'Talks at the Yanan Conference on Literature and Art' since 1942.³⁸⁰ Underground literature groups and poetry societies that had existed for over a decade finally found their outlet through the Democracy Wall. Extracts of novels and experimental poems congregated on the wall next to the political essays. The concept of the democracy wall extended to other public spaces such as squares and parks where art exhibitions, street theatres, musical performances and poetry readings developed quickly across the country.³⁸¹

4.2.2 Civic Movement

³⁷⁹ *ZhiXin*, based on investigating Zhang Zhixin and carrying forward her spirit, was published, See vol 15, Taiwan.

³⁸⁰ The CCP constructed the model of literature and art works. See Barne, Geremie R. *In the Red: On Contemporary Chinese Culture*, Columbia University Press, 2000. Paul Clark, *A History of the Chinese Cultural Revolution*, Cambridge University Press, 2008.

³⁸¹ Taiwan vol.15, p45-8.

Xue Mingde exhibited his works in Democracy Wall in Beijing and Eling Park in Chongqing. http://www.boxun.com/hero/200902/xuwl/1_1.shtml [accessed 16 December 2010] http://www.boxun.com/hero/200906/beijingxidanminzhuqiang/1_1.shtml [accessed 16 December 2010].

At the turn of the decade, the democracy walls in central cities across the country created a forum that attracted people from all walks of life. A reader standing in front of the Xidan Democracy Wall might have travelled all the way from southern provinces as far as Sichuan or Guizhou. A *zhiqing* (educated youth) who had been sent to a remote village in Yunnan province during the Cultural Revolution and who had finally managed to resettle in Beijing might find himself looking at a poster over the shoulder of a middle-aged rightist who had recently been released after spending twenty years in a labour camp. A woman peasant petitioner might listen carefully to a long-hair Beijinger recite his poem, before the poet found himself struck by the story that the petitioner had to tell. A foreign language student might observe an electrician arguing fervently with an old CCP cadre over whether the political institution itself was to blame for the miseries that people had experienced over the past three decades.

Before the CCP headquarters reached the consensus to clamp down the new civil movement, the walls witnessed fervent crowds even in early mornings and late nights from winter 1978 to spring 1979. Public bureau officers could hardly find a time to tear off those posters they regarded as subversive without being seen and stopped. They knew well enough that their action, if they were spotted or caught red-handed, would cause more public fury. Face-to-face communication stripped down social barriers between poster readers. Public debates challenged the official ideology and enabled dissenting voices to spread out quickly. The writing and reading of the posters started to take the shape of a civic movement. By December 1978, a coalition of petitioners and *zhiqing* was formed. Ten thousand participants marched from the Xidan Democracy Wall to Xinhua and Tiananmen Square, their slogan 'Against Persecution and Hunger, For Human Rights'. A second march was held on 8 January 1979, the third anniversary of the death of former Premier Zhou Enlai. Ten days later, the main organizer Fu Yuehua, together with scores of demonstrators, was arrested secretly and put into a detention centre.³⁸² By the end of the month, Fu's arrest was found out by some *minkan* editors who assembled in front of the Democracy Wall to discuss how to rescue their comrade. They reached two decisions: trace the whereabouts of Fu, and

³⁸² Fu Yuehua petitioned authorities for her charge that she was raped by the Party Secretary at her work. Her demand was ignored and she was fired and threatened by police for several times. She was subjected to brutal torture during interrogation sessions and was forced to serve three years of Reeducation Through Labour. Widor, 43, also see Fu Yuehua interview by Pan Jingban, <http://www.peacehall.com/news/gb/pubvp/2008/12/200812151923.shtml>, [accessed 16 December 2010].

form a coalition of minkan in Beijing. They believed that a coalition would strengthen each of them and enable themselves as well as the Democracy Wall to survive. The model of their initiative was soon taken up by minkan groups in other cities across the country.

On 5 February 1979, minkan groups in Shanghai co-organized an assembly in the People's Square. Tens of thousands of educated youths travelled from other provinces to Shanghai Railway Station. They blocked the railway tracks, demanding the transfer of their household registrations back to Shanghai. The protest lasted for twelve hours before the police dispersed the crowd in the early next morning.³⁸³

4.2.3 The Wall as Magazine

In many respects, the democracy walls resemble minkan. Arguably a wall has the physical look of a magazine with the spine facing upward. Like a plain, stapled magazine, the spine of the wall is too narrow to accommodate any texts. However, it is wide enough to allow passionate youths to stand on it speaking to the public or selling their own minkan copies. This action itself, echoing the posters pasted underneath, gives a section of the wall a certain identity, much like the title printed on a booklet magazine. As in a magazine, the spine of the wall joins all its pages together, though here they are presented all at once.³⁸⁴

Following negotiation between participants in minkan and big character posters, items on the Democracy Wall were changed with varying regularity. Because they were limited to the surface area of the wall, it needed to be decided which old big character posters should remain and which should be covered by new posters. Wei Jingsheng remembered vividly in an interview:

‘We [editors of various minkan] took turns to decide what articles to put up onto the Democracy Wall and how long an article should be kept on the wall without being covered by new posters. I noticed that many readers were keen to see articles on general principles of democracy instead of focusing

³⁸³ Science Democracy and Rule of Law, issue. 10, republished *Shanghai April* 《上海四月》，载民刊《科学民主法制》，第10期（1979年5月1日）。

³⁸⁴ see images of minkan from presentation of PowerPoint, <http://wangrui.blshe.com/post/37/89720> [accessed 18 December 2010].

merely on the model of the Paris Commune, and they hoped that posters on democracy could stay uncovered for a longer period of time.’

Many participants of minkan, writers of big character posters and readers advised some editors of minkan to conduct voice voting on the spot, to determine the majority choice of the crowd.³⁸⁵ Many big character posters were placed and concentrated on fixed walls, which were often located in the central districts of big cities and lasted longer than at any other period during CCP rule.

First, the Democracy Walls as a minkan was an ‘open text’ for readers, i.e., a collection of miscellaneous texts or/or images. The open, effective and direct communication in front of the wall that linking the intention of the author to the interpretation of the reader, encouraged the participants not only to interpret wall posters through discussion but also further to explore and ‘complete’ the contents of some unfinished or self-censored articles.³⁸⁶

Second, the Wall became one of the centres for distribution of minkan. Some minkans such as *Democracy Brick*, *Science, Democracy and Rule of Law—A Selection of Poems and Essays* and *Mass Reference* republished big character posters originally posted on the Democracy Wall in their pages, reaching many more readers who either lived far away from Beijing or had not had time to read the texts on the wall then had access to these articles. After reading an article on the Democracy Wall in Beijing and the parallel publication of minkan, activists in other cities across China began their own minkan.³⁸⁷ They posted these minkan on the walls. Some participants of the Democracy wall³⁸⁸ in the biggest cities also helped to publish minkan in middling cities, and formed distribution networks linking the Wall and minkan. Minkan circulation via the Wall also triggered the publication of new minkan.³⁸⁹

The Wall promoted minkan circulation as many minkan usually posted a notice to announce forthcoming publication. Its publication day in front of the Democracy Wall

³⁸⁵ Wei Jingsheng interview by author 10/6/07.

³⁸⁶ Umberto Eco argued that “the intention of the author and the intention of the reader and the intention of text formed open work and textual interpretation between them”. Peter Bondanella, *Umberto Eco And Open Text*, 129.

³⁸⁷ See the Democracy Wall in Tianjin, Hangzhou, Xian, Anyang in *Beijing Spring* news issues 1-9.

³⁸⁸ Fu Shengqi inview by author.

³⁸⁹ vol. 14, Beijing Spring circulation in Shanghai.

became a public event that people would come to attend, while the issue was also posted-up on the Democracy Wall. Thus readers immediately began to discuss relevant topics further. In addition, many wall poster left spaces (like margins on a page) in which readers could leave their comments on the wall. Contact information of wall-posters' writers and minkan were also often left on the wall. Many readers corresponded with the minkan or the writers and some readers even contributed their own articles so that a network of wall minkan was established. Thus the Wall and minkan – interweaving writers of wall-posters and minkan and their readers formed – networks that survived the brutal crackdown on the actual public space of the Democracy Wall.³⁹⁰

4.3 Minkan Selections

From the end of 1978 to the beginning of 1981, there were 127 minkan in 26 cities around the country. In Beijing alone, there existed over 50 minkan.³⁹¹ It is difficult to choose one or even several magazines as prime examples without being unfair to other magazines. But there were typical models which created and expanded the features of magazines from different dimensions. The political tone of most minkan was a dissident voice. In what follows, I will look at a selection of those minkan which held distinctive political stances. These minkan not only polished rich contents, but also presented innovative features that enriched the format of minkan.

4.3.1 Enlightenment

The first minkan that appeared during the Democracy Wall period was *Enlightenment* (qimeng 启蒙), founded in October 1978 by a group of young workers in Guizhou province. The name of the magazine referred directly to the 18th century European thought on equality, social contracts and the restriction of state power. This influence

³⁹⁰ Yang Jisheng, *zhongguo gaige niandai de zhengzhe douzheng* (Political struggle in China's reform era 《中国改革年代的政治斗争》) Hong Kong: Excellent Culture Press 2004, 137-140.

³⁹¹ Chen, Yan. *Zhongguo zhi jue xing: Wen ge hou Zhongguo si xiang yan bian li cheng 1976-2002* (Awakening China: Evolution of Thought in China after the Cultural Revolution 1976-2002), Hong Kong: Tianyuan Publisher, 2006, 45, See also Widor, Claude. 1987. *The Samizdat Press in China's Provinces, 1979-1981: An Annotated Guide*. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

deserves some explanation here. Guizhou was one of the three southwest provinces regarded as the Great Rear during the Japanese Invasion (1931-1945). Right before Japan occupied the eastern and central lands of China, the KMT government transferred many cultural establishments—universities, libraries, historical documents, antiquities and so on—to the Great Rear provinces. After 1949, many of these cultural facilities remained. That is why an enthusiastic youngster during the Cultural Revolution might still encounter pre-1949 magazines such as *Panorama* (wanxiang 万象) and *Observation* (guangcha 观察). Even in a county-level public library, one could find Rousseau's *Origin of Inequality* and *The Social Contract Discourses*, both translated into Chinese in the 1910s.³⁹² In the early 1960s, there already existed various underground literature groups in Guizhou, some members of which turned to political discussions in the early 1970s.³⁹³ They met regularly to discuss politics, play musical instruments, create drawings and paintings, exchange novels and share their own writings. Their meeting places included their own apartments, the remote outdoors, and even a local church which had been destroyed during a series of Party campaigns against religious practice.³⁹⁴

Huang Xiang (黄翔), a 37-year-old poet when *Enlightenment* was founded, was a key figure of the group, whose experience many young people identified with. Born in 1941 to a KMT military official, Huang suffered discrimination in adolescence, especially after his father was executed in the early 1950s. After finishing primary education at the age of fifteen, Huang was not barred from secondary education due to his family origin. The local village leader even threatened to send him to a labour camp. Consequently, his uncle took him to Guiyang City, the capital of Guizhou province, where he became an apprentice in the Mine Machinery Factory.³⁹⁵ These misfortunes found an outlet in writing poems. However, his dissident poems cost him two labour-camp punishments in the 1960s. In the early 1970s, Huang Xiang and his fellow workers including Li Jiahua (李家华), Mo Jiangang (莫建刚), Fang Jiahua (方家华) and Yang Zaihang (杨在行) formed their own underground literature group. The group had about a dozen of members in the late 1970s.

³⁹² Mo Jiangang interview by author 010410.

³⁹³ Mo Jiangang interview 010410.

³⁹⁴ Gu Chunling, *Poetry Kindling in 1970s* (古春陵：70年代的诗歌火种) on Huang Xiang.

³⁹⁵ Huang Xiang's Readme, Candle in the half century, http://www.boxun.com/hero/huangxiang/1_1.shtml, [accessed 18 December 2010].

In September 1978, Huang and his friends decided to express their discontent with China's political stagnation in public in the form of a dazibao. They copied Huang's 4,000-word poem, *the Symphony of The Fire God*, onto large sheets of paper. These wild verses reflected Huang's anger with a cruel reality. Aware of the fact that the posters, if exhibited only locally, would hardly have a chance to reach a wider public before being taken down, the group decided to take them to Beijing. Apart from Yang who stayed at home (his name and address printed on the posters as the contact person), the other four rolled the posters into several paper tubes and carried them onto the train. The four tickets were contributed by Mo, who had sold his watch and bicycle and used up all his savings. On the train, they came up with the title Enlightenment for the group and the posters.³⁹⁶

They arrived in Beijing on 10 October and stayed with a friend of Mo's brother who provided free accommodation and food. The next day, they went out with a big bucket of flour paste, throwing up their posters on the walls of central Beijing. Both sides of the entrance alley to the building of *People's Daily* in Wangfujing were covered with passionate verses, every sheet carrying the signature of 'enlightenment'.³⁹⁷ Huang also posted three of his paintings there: one was a full sheet of paper left blank, representing 'emptiness'; one had a dark whirlpool, symbolising the 'black hole' of the universe; the last had red waves and a green upward stroke, suggesting an irrepressible force of life struggling out of the bleak environment. These posters attracted quite a crowd. Encouraged by the audience, Huang recited his long poem. Many of the spectators copied down the poem from the posters and circulated it in the city. Harrassed by plainclothes police, the four Guizhou youth had to leave Beijing on 15 October. Interestingly enough, on the train back home, they made friends with Liang Fuqing (梁福庆), a sympathetic conductor working on the train between Guiyang and Beijing, who himself joined the Enlightenment group and later became a regular helper with communicating messages and exchanging magazines between Beijing and Guizhou.

³⁹⁶ Mo Jiangang's interview, Wu Yuqing, Democracy, Freedom, Human Rights Forum: the 30th anniversary of the Democracy Wall Anniversary http://boxun.com/hero/200908/xwziwj/14_1.shtml [accessed 18 December 2010]. Huang Xiang, *kuang huan bu zhui de shou xing* (Beast Drinking Yet Not Drunk, 1968-1986 《狂饮不醉的兽形 1968-1986》), No place of publication identified.

³⁹⁷ *People's Daily* was located in Wangfujing in 1978. Mo Jiangang interview.

Upon their return to Guiyang, the four young workers, with the help of other underground groups, wasted no time in making new posters and putting them up on the walls of Zilinan, a central area of the city. They also managed to get hold of a mimeographing machine and reproduced their posters in magazine form. These mimeographed copies became the first issue of *Enlightenment*. They printed scores of copies, selling them in front of the poster walls and sending them to readers across the country who had written to or visited them, asking to see the poem they had publicised in Beijing. They also received cash donations. The group went to the local propaganda sector to register their magazine according to the constitution but was rejected.

In mid November, Li Jiahua wrote a review of the *Symphony of the Fire God*. Mimeographed copies of the review made the second issue of *Enlightenment*, with a similar print run to the opening issue. Another trip to Beijing became necessary to publicize the two issues of the magazine. This time, seven members of the Enlightenment group went along including the four founding members of the first trip and three new members. On the train, Li Jiahua proposed that the magazine should declare its founding in public since its registration had been rejected by the local authorities. The group agreed and came up with the ‘Declaration of the Enlightenment Society’. They also decided to challenge the political taboo of the time: the appraisal of Mao and the Cultural Revolution. On 24 November, they came to Tiananmen Square, pasting the Declaration and the 150-sheet posters of Li’s poem review onto the wooden fences of the Mao Zedong Memorial Hall opposite the National Museum of Chinese History.³⁹⁸ There they formally declared the existence of the Enlightenment society.³⁹⁹ The symbol of *Enlightenment and Enlightenment society* was a torch which meant Enlightenment. Right in front of the Memorial Hall, they also set up two large paper banners with two poles gathered from a nearby construction site. Huang dipped his brush in a bucket of black ink and climbed up the ladder, writing in big characters onto the banners: ‘Cultural Revolution Must Be Reappraised’, ‘Mao was 70% wrong and 30% right’. He then shouted to the crowd: ‘An emperor and a rat died, the meaning of

³⁹⁸ Liu Shengqi, 60.

³⁹⁹ Huang Xiang, The Democracy Wall movement and Chinese new Poetry Movement <http://www.fireofliberty.org/article/1641.asp> [accessed 18 December 2010].

their death the same!’⁴⁰⁰ The shocking activities triggered a widespread debate on Mao and the Cultural Revolution. Within the three days that followed, Deng Xiaoping, for fear that the young people’s request might further evoke the question of the legitimacy of the whole political institution, had to reply on different occasions that Mao must not be denied and that China must continue to raise high Mao’s flag.⁴⁰¹

By the end of 1978, *Enlightenment* had become the most influential magazine in the country. In their hometown province, other underground groups followed their example and started their own magazines including *Baihua* (百花, Hundreds of Flowers) and *Shiming* (使命, Commitment).⁴⁰² In the beginning of January 1979, *Enlightenment* published its third issue, in the form of both a mimeographed magazine and 150 sheets of wall posters. The issue consisted of a group of poems commemorating Zhou Enlai, a critical essay on human rights and an open letter to US president Carter in which they celebrated the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries and expressed their yearning for more political freedom.⁴⁰³

On 7 January 1979, the *Enlightenment* group arrived in Beijing and posted the entire third issue on the walls of Xidan. The next day, a member of the group, Mo Jiangang, helped petitioner Fu Yuehua organize the march from the Democracy Wall to Tiananmen Square. Fu’s arrest after a few days made Mo realize the urgency of setting up a branch office in Beijing to cooperate with other dissident groups as well as publicise their own magazine. When the others left Beijing in mid January, Mo stayed on until the end of the month. He set up a branch of *Enlightenment*, which was launched at an assembly in Zhongshan Park. More than 150 people attended the meeting and joined the *Enlightenment* Society. Mo stayed with Chen Lü, editor of the Beijing magazine *Human Rights Alliance*, who introduced Mo to other minkan groups in

⁴⁰⁰ Deng Xiaoping, leader of the CCP, denied the assessment of Mao by the young people on 25 - 27 November. He emphasized that Mao could not be denied at all, and continued to raise Mao’s flag. http://www.china.com.cn/zhuanti2005/txt/2004-08/03/content_5625399.htm [accessed 18 December 2010].

also see, Widor, Vol.1, p563

⁴⁰¹ Deng Xiaoping, leader of the CCP, denied the assessment of Mao by the young people on 25 - 27 November. He emphasized that Mao could not be denied at all, and continued to raise Mao’s flag. http://www.china.com.cn/zhuanti2005/txt/2004-08/03/content_5625399.htm [accessed 18 December 2010].

⁴⁰² Zhang Qing, ‘Memorising the Democracy Wall in Guizhou’, http://www.boxun.com/hero/200907/xwziwj/6_1.shtml [accessed 18 December 2010].

⁴⁰³ It seemed that the US president Carter read the letter. But he did not mention the issue raised by the letter when he met Chinese leaders.

Beijing. They started to plan a coalition of minkan groups. By the end of the month, the Joint Conference of Minkan was formed in Beijing, *Enlightenment* a member of it.

At the end of January 1979, Yang Zaihang, the contact person of the group called for a meeting of its twenty or so Guizhou members. At the meeting, he showed the group copies of the third issue which he had reprinted while the others were in Beijing. The reprint added a foreword, 'Aims of the Enlightenment Society', in which Yang declared on behalf of the group their 'firm support for the Party'. Yang's declaration and his arbitrary decision in reprinting the issue incurred strong opposition from the other four initiators. The Society inevitably broke into two groups: the original *Enlightenment* led by the four initiators, and the new *Enlightenment Editorial* formed by Yang and his followers.⁴⁰⁴ Yang's *Enlightenment Editorial* did not publish any issues of its own, but remained as the contact of the Enlightenment Society all the time. Two weeks later, the old *Enlightenment* broke again: Huang, Mo and Fang carried on the title of *Enlightenment* and published two more issues mainly of Huang's poems, whilst Li Jiahua, the key political essayist of the journal, started his own magazine the *Thaw*, referencing the Thaw period in the Soviet Union. At the end of February, the *Thaw* published a declaration, in which they criticized the monopoly power of the Party, advocated human rights and showcased Sun Yat-sen's ideas of democracy. The declaration insisted that leaders of any political parties and the state must be elected by the public every four years. In a statement that followed the declaration, the *Thaw* claimed the declaration together with Li's long review of Huang's poem, which made up the entire second issue of *Enlightenment*, as the opening issue of the *Thaw*, and Li's essay On Human Rights from the third issue of *Enlightenment* as the second issue of the *Thaw*. The third issue of *Thaw* was published in March, dedicated to 'new poetry'.

The old *Enlightenment* continued to develop their network in Guizhou, Shanghai and Beijing. In mid March, Huang, Mo and Fang made the fourth trip to Beijing. There they met with two poets of *Today*, Bei Bao and Mang Ke. They got in touch with some forty of minkan poets across the country and planned to form an independent national association of literature in Yuanmingyuan Park. The plan was aborted due to strict

⁴⁰⁴ Mo interview, Li Jiahua, http://boxun.com/hero/200810/gzgy2008/2_2.shtml [accessed 18 December 2010]
Liu Qing's Memoirs, Taiwan, Vol. 6, 322.

police surveillance. Meanwhile, Li and his assistant travelled to Chongqing to expand the readership of the *Thaw*.

In April, at least nine members of the *Enlightenment* and the *Thaw* were arrested in different cities. Some were released after two months, and some were detained for six months. The releases were followed by periods under police surveillance. The Democracy Wall in Guiyang was closed. The Enlightenment circle and other minkan groups went underground. In 1980, Yang Zaihang, the contact person of the Enlightenment society, was sentenced to five years in prison for participating in the National Association of Minkan.⁴⁰⁵



Figure 11. *Enlightenment* Issue 4

⁴⁰⁵ Mo was expelled from his work unit in 1984. He travelled to Beijing and stayed there until the crackdown of the Tiananmen movement in 1989, networking with underground dissident groups. In 1986, Mo and Huang initiated the Chinese Constellation Poetry Group, the founding of which was accompanied by a tournament of poems recitation by Huang among Beijing universities. The poetry event was succeeded by a new wave of student demonstrations, though Huang himself was sent to a labour camp in Guizhou for three years. In 1989, Mo helped students to publish their bulletins of the movement and *Tribune of Free Press* during the pro-democracy movement in 1989., and was arrested after the crackdown of the movement. With a friend's help, he was released after a week's detention. He resettled down in Guizhou. In 1993, Liao Shuangyuan, a member of *Enlightenment Editorial*, Chen Xi (陈西) and Lu Yongxiang (卢勇祥), two members of *Commitment*, co-founded an oppositional party, Chinese Democracy Party in Guizhou. Two years later, they were sentenced to four, ten and seven years respectively. In 2007, Mo, Liao, Chen and Luo co-founded the Human Rights Association in Guizhou, which are regularly organising public seminars on the censored issues on social- politics and human rights abuse as well as posting censored articles on walls in central downtown (see Chapter six).

4.3.2 Exploration

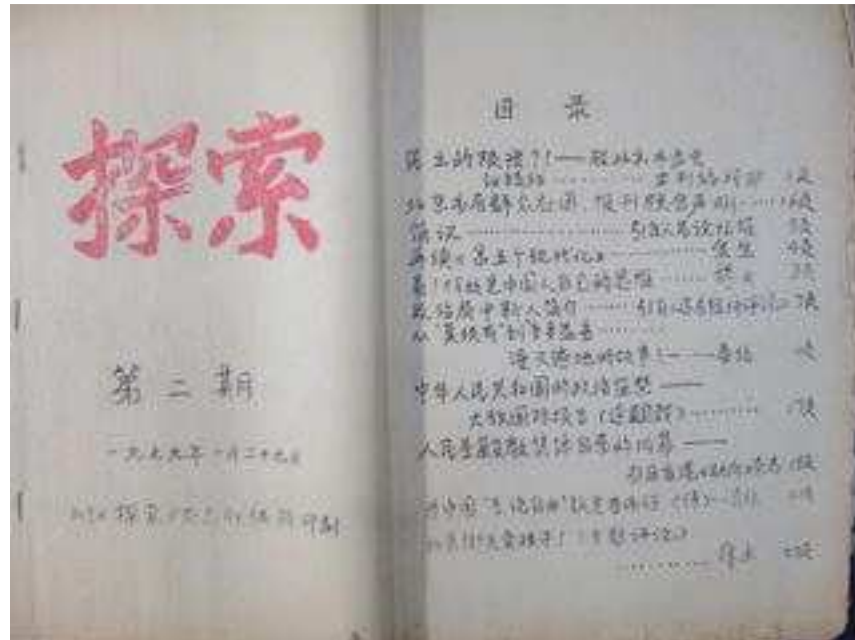


Figure 12. *Exploration* Issue 2

Of all the minkan that sprang up during the Democracy Wall era, *Exploration* was the most uncompromising, with sharp political insights and a sympathy for the deprived classes at the bottom of the social hierarchy. The magazine lasted from January to October 1979, producing five issues and one special edition. The life span of the magazine was short but intense: it challenged the authority of Deng Xiaoping and rejected Marxism as its guidance. The magazine clarified its aims in the foreword of the opening issue:

‘Our discussions shall be based upon the historical facts of China and the world. We shall not consider any theory as absolutely correct, nor any individual as absolutely correct. All theories—including those now in existence and those soon to come about—will be the subjects of our discussions and could become our tools for analysis and study.’⁴⁰⁶

In late November 1978, Xidan Democracy Wall had become a centre for mass political expression. Ten thousand people participated in the marches from the Democracy Wall

⁴⁰⁶ Seymour, *The Fifth Modernization*, 34.

to Tiananmen Square. The democracy forums had attracted thousands of spectators. Towards the end of the month, Deng Xiaoping said in an interview with American journalist Novak:

‘The actions of young people are good. We have a socialist democracy, allowing them to speak up their minds. Now that the political crisis is settled, we should leave the big issues to the hands of the central leaders. Young people should return to their work units.’⁴⁰⁷

After Deng’s speech, the number of wall posters that criticized the government clearly dropped. However, on 5 December a poster with the title ‘The Fifth Modernization’ reignited the enthusiasm of the crowd. The article proposed democracy as ‘the fifth modernization’ and explained: ‘If we want modernized economics, science, military science, and so forth, then there must be modernization of the people and of the social system ... Without this fifth modernization all others are merely another promise.’⁴⁰⁸

The article ended with the contact details of its author Wei Jingsheng (魏京生).

Wei was born in 1949 to a family of high-ranking CCP veterans. When the Cultural Revolution started in 1966, Wei became one of the first Red Guards when the latter were mainly formed by youngsters of a similar family background. Wei joined Liandong (United Action) which derived from the Red Guards and helped publish bulletins called *Preparation* that were hostile to Mao’s wife, Jiang Qing. After Liandong was suppressed in 1967, Wei had to leave Beijing travelling around the country and later taking refuge in his hometown Anhui for a year and a half.⁴⁰⁹ While lying low, he observed the real life of those trapped at the bottom of society. He also became sceptical toward Maoism and China’s political system after reading Marxist theories. Wei spent four years in the army from 1969 to 1973, a privileged experience due to his ‘class origin’, as the majority of the city youths were sent to the countryside. After Wei left the army, he became an electrician at the Beijing Zoo in 1973. Wei’s reading materials included privileged versions of Marxist revisionism and European Enlightenment texts. Books that had helped with his political formation included Djilas’s *The New Class – An Analysis of the Communist System*, Bernstein’s *The*

⁴⁰⁷ Wei Jingsheng interview, 9/6/08, see also Wei Jingsheng’ memoirs: Democracy <http://soundofhope.org/programs/780/54509-1.asp> [accessed 18 December 2010].

⁴⁰⁸ Seymour, *The Fifth Modernization*, 51 and 53.

⁴⁰⁹ Refer to Widor, vol.1, p25 and Moreoless, ‘Wei Jingsheng’ <http://www.moreoless.au.com/heroes/wei.html> [accessed 18 December 2010].

Prerequisites for Socialism and the Tasks of Social Democracy and Locke's *Two Treatises on Government*.⁴¹⁰

Wei's poster brought him many like-minded visitors. They talked about current political affairs. They all agreed with Wei that democracy was a prerequisite for modernisations.⁴¹¹ Inspired by other newly founded minkan, they wanted to start their own publication, although Wei warned his supporters of possible long-term imprisonment or even execution. His cool-minded honesty resulted in the withdrawal of all the visitors except three: Yang Guang (杨光), Lu Lin (路林) and Liu Jingsheng (刘京生). Yang was a 23-year-old sophomore from the Industrial University. He came from a family of engineers and had spent two years in the countryside as an 'educated youth'. Since October 1978, he had become a fervent reader of dazibao posted on the Xidan Wall. Lu, also 23 years old at the time, was born to a family of workers and became a worker himself after finishing junior middle school in 1971. In 1978 he enrolled in a preparation class for university entrance exams near Xidan, but gave it up after reading wall posters. In his own words, 'the best university is still society.' Liu was a 24-year-old bus driver who, like Wei, spent four years in the army from 1969 to 1973. He thought that most posters simply stopped at expressing grievances without further enquiring into the causes of the tragedies.⁴¹²

Wei and his new comrades discussed the aim of their publication. Lu raised a question: 'Is China's misfortune a result of a false Marxism or is Marxism itself false?' Wei said that the problem was with Marxism itself. Yang said that he had not studied Marxism closely and did not want to jump to judge it. In the end, the group decided that they would not use Marxism as their guide but rather adopt an open-minded attitude to all kinds of political theories.⁴¹³ To prepare for the publication of the first issue, Wei sold his bicycle and watch, while Liu, Yang and Ping Ni—Wei's Tibetan girlfriend—donated cash. On 8 January 1979, the first issue of *Exploration* came out. Wei's wall poster 'The Fifth Modernisation' was reproduced here and a sequel of it was also published. On a borrowed mimeograph machine at Ping Ni's apartment, a total of 150 copies were printed: all sold out like hot cakes in front of the Democracy Wall.

⁴¹⁰ Wei Jingsheng interview by author 09/06/08.

⁴¹¹ For democracy, see 'Key words'

⁴¹² Widor, 25-27.

⁴¹³ See Lu's memoir on the founding of *Exploration*, published on the four issue of the magazine. Widor, 181-3.

Greatly encouraged, they published the second issue on 29 January, increasing the print run to 250 copies. Contents included a sequel to *The Fifth Modernization*, a joint statement by mass organizations and minkan of Beijing, and extracts from Amnesty International's annual report on China which they obtained from foreign students who also translated some of their articles into English and French.⁴¹⁴ This was the first time that ordinary people in mainland China had heard of Amnesty International and its work. Copies of the second issue were not only distributed in front of the Xidan Wall, but also in the neighbouring city of Tianjin thanks to a van that Liu Jingsheng managed to get hold of. The story of the van deserves some mention. One of Liu's friends who worked in a state-owned printing factory promised Liu two tons of paper, not an unusual practice for minkan participants at the time. However, transporting the paper from the factory to the editor's home became a serious problem, as none of them had a motor vehicle while the piecemeal transportation by bike had previously alerted the authorities. A van became an urgent necessity. When Liu saw an unlocked van left in a parking lot near his work unit, he drove it to the printing factory immediately.⁴¹⁵ However, Liu's friend had changed his mind and did not provide any paper in the end. Nonetheless, the van became a great help in the following days. Liu used it to deliver magazines and to convey messages between editorial boards of different minkan groups, until he was arrested on 15 March on a charge of stealing the vehicle.

Four days before Liu's arrest, the third issue came out, with the print run now increased to 800 copies. It published investigations on Fu Yuehua's arrest including detailed replies from police officers that minkan activists had secretly recorded on tape. The issue published Wei's 'The Twentieth century Bastille', which for the first time exposed the existence of Qincheng Prison (秦城监狱) and the inhumane treatments of political prisoners inside its walls. Wei's investigation was partly based on the experience of Ping Ni's father Phuntsog Wangyal, who was a CCP leader in Tibet imprisoned since 1961, leaving behind a wife who committed suicide in 1968, two sons who were both

⁴¹⁴ An Ji, Before and after Wei's imprisonment, http://www.boxun.com/hero/anqi/41_1.shtml [accessed 18 December 2010].

⁴¹⁵ Liu Jingsheng's blog http://boxun.com/hero/2007/ljs/2_1.shtml [accessed 18 December 2010].

sent to labour camps, and a daughter Ping Ni.⁴¹⁶ The article on Qincheng prison became the most frequently reprinted article during the period of the Democracy Wall.⁴¹⁷

On 16 March, at an internal Party meeting Deng Xiaoping considered the Democracy Wall 'beyond control' and accused it of 'giving away state secrets'. According to the report, Deng had given the order to clamp down on minkan groups.⁴¹⁸ Wei also learned through his network channels that the authorities had blacklisted 83 key minkan organisers and were planning to arrest at least thirty of them. To forestall the imminent crackdown, Wei adopted a strategy that cost him a 15-year sentence. A lesson that Wei had learned from Fu Yuehua's arrest was that sometimes the best strategy is to push the authorities to respect their own legislations. Wei called his strategy 'attracting flame to yourself', which he explained as follows in an interview:

'Attracting flame to myself was to incite Deng Xiaoping to arrest me, because Deng by nature was a man without patience. I knew the arrest would definitely trigger domestic and international pressure, and possibly criticisms within the Party as well. This would hold Deng back from arresting other minkan activists, and thus buy a key six months or even a year for the Democracy Wall.'⁴¹⁹

Wei's plan was to post a dazibao to criticize Deng Xiaoping directly. However, when he told the Joint Conference about his plan, the majority of the members including the coordinator Liu Qing opposed it. They disagreed with Wei's judgement of Deng Xiaoping. For them, Deng was a reformer who would support the Democracy Wall. But in Wei's eyes, Deng was a new dictator who had fooled the majority of his fellow

⁴¹⁶ Wei interview, also see <http://www.echonyc.com/~wei/Child.html> [accessed 18 December 2010].

⁴¹⁷ Widor, Claude. *Zhongguo min ban kan wu hui bian* (unofficial magazines in China collection 中国民办刊物汇编), Paris : Faguo she hui ke xue gao deng yan jiu yuan ; Hong Kong : Xianggang "Guan cha jia" chu ban she, Vol. 1,139-48.

⁴¹⁸ For Deng 's speech on 16 March 1979, see Widor Vol2. P69. On 30 March, Deng speech, 'the four cardinal principles are the fundamental prerequisite for realizing the four modernizations. Four Cardinal Principles are: First, we must adhere to the socialist road; Second, we must uphold the dictatorship of the proletariat; Third, we must uphold the Party's leadership; Fourth, we must uphold Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought.' Deng emphasize: 'on the one hand we must continue to eliminate the "gang of four" spreading the poison of extreme leftist thought (that thought is from the "left" side against the four cardinal principles); the other hand, struggle with great efforts against the right with to suspect that the four basic principles of thought. Also see Deng's speech on 30 March, "Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles," appears in Selected.

Works of Deng Xiaoping (1975-82) (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1984), 166-91.

⁴¹⁹ Wei interview by author: Publishing 'Democracy or New Dictatorship?' " was that we stuck our neck out so that Deng had no time to arrest participants of other minkan. Deng blew his cool and arrested us which would lead criticism both home and abroad, even criticism within the party. Thus, Deng had no ability arresting other participant in short time so that the Democracy Wall might continue to maintain six months or to a year. Deng carefully planned the crackdown because he attempted to dodge the criticism and pressure. See also Liu Jingsheng, 'Shame in history' <http://www.minzhuzhongguo.org/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=5473>, [accessed 18 December 2010].

activists. In the end, Wei did not win the understanding of the Joint Conference. Liu Qing, however, asked to see Wei's article beforehand so that he could post a dazibao alongside to balance Wei's views.⁴²⁰

Despite the reservations of his Joint Conference colleagues, Wei went through with his plan. On 25 March, his poster 'Democracy or New Dictatorship?' appeared on the Xidan Wall. In the article, Wei called Deng a new dictator and warned of his intention to repress petitioners, minkan and the Democracy Wall.⁴²¹ At the same time, the *Exploration* editors published an exclusive issue dedicated to this article. A total of 1,500 copies were printed and distributed in the city. Some copies were given to foreign journalists and students in Beijing. Wei gave Liu Qing a copy of his article, and arranged with him for Lu Lin to succeed him as the *Exploration* representative in the Joint Conference upon his arrest.⁴²² Wei burned sensitive correspondences, notes, contacts and diaries. He warned his *Exploration* comrades, now only Yang and Lu left, of their own possible arrests and told them to shift responsibilities onto Wei if it could help them clear themselves. For him, the most important thing was to continue to publish the magazine. They even discussed contents of forthcoming issues together.

Four days after the publication of the explosive issue, Wei was on his bicycle passing Fuxingmen underpass when he was blocked by a dozen cyclists. One of the cyclists accused Wei of attacking him, then plain clothes policemen immediately grabbed him trying to press him into their car. Wei struggled and shouted to the crowd: 'I'm an editor of *Exploration* magazine. I don't mind being taken away by them. Please pass the message to people in front of Democracy Wall!' The news of Wei's arrest quickly spread out among minkan participants.

Yang and Lu were both arrested within weeks, but released later: Yang in October and Lu in June. Lu published the last two issues of *Exploration* by himself, on 9 September (three years after Mao's death) and 1 October (30 years after the founding of the PRC)

⁴²⁰ April Fifth Forum posted a response on 28 March 1979 to argue against Wei in judging Deng Xiaoping. See Seymour, p. 201. See also Taiwan, vol. 6, p. 294.

⁴²¹ Wei Jingsheng interview. Wei Jingsheng, I survived, <http://www.ntdtv.com/xtr/gb/2006/11/22/a51809.html>, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQB6gINocI0&feature=related>, Ya, Yi, <http://www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/Bay/5598/97/sd9711d.txt>, See <http://www.echonyc.com/~wei/Voice.html> [accessed 18 December 2010].

⁴²² Wei Jingsheng, *The Courage to Stand Alone: Letters from Prison and Other Writings*, Penguin, 1998, 51-57.

respectively, until he was detained again and later put under house arrest for two years. In these two issues, Lu remained loyal to the original aim of *Exploration*. He called for the release of Democracy Wall activists and continued to criticize the authorities. Wei was put on trial in October and sentenced to 15 years, until he was released on medical parole in 1993 when the PRC first bid for the Olympics. Six months later Wei was arrested again and sentenced to another 14 years. In 1997 Wei was forced to exile into the US. Wei believed that his decision in 1979 had bought his minkan comrades a crucial year and a half before the government's clampdown in 1981.⁴²³

4.3.3 Beijing Spring

The only magazine that managed to publish a letterpress-printed issue was *Beijing Spring*, which demonstrated grey areas in the subtle relations between the magazine and the powers within the official establishment. It was sensitive to power struggles within the Party, and tended to ally itself with the faction of Party veterans who lost power during the Cultural Revolution. It published a total of nine issues from January to October 1979, before it was forced into a voluntary termination. Such relatively complex and reliable messages together with a professional production attracted thousands of readers across the country who supported the magazine with donations and subscriptions. The distinct features of *Beijing Spring* had a longer and continuous political influence through the 1980s, well after its demise.

The editorial board of *Beijing Spring* consisted of some twenty members, all from families of high-level Party cadres or top intellectuals. Compared with other magazines of the period, *Beijing Spring* participants held the highest educational qualifications. Most of them had easily passed university entrance exams since they were re-introduced in 1978. Another distinguishing characteristics shared by the members is that they were all prison or labour camp veterans due to their involvement in one or both of two political activities: the underground correspondence in the early 1970s, and the April Fifth movement in 1976. Those who had been punished for taking part in the underground correspondence were mainly educated youths who, after being sent to the

⁴²³ After this first round crackdown, minkan and the Democracy Wall continued to have great influence upon urban youths in two years.

countryside, wrote to each other to discuss liberal ideas and literature. When their letters were intercepted by the security authority, they were arrested on charges of attempting to form a counterrevolutionary clique and sentenced to over two years on average. This happened to Lü Jiamin (吕嘉民), the contributor of most of the theoretical articles of the magazine. He was sent to Inner Mongolia as an educated youth and was imprisoned for three years in early 1970s after it was found that he was involved in an underground literature group. This explains why *Beijing Spring* was closely connected with literary groups and featured a good number of literary pieces.

Other members of the *Beijing Spring* group had been imprisoned due to their involvement in the April Fifth movement, a mass protest mainly targeting the Gang of Four. When the movement was rehabilitated in October 1978, they were officially acclaimed as ‘April Fifth Heroes’. The chief editor and the two deputy editors of the magazine had even been selected into the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League. The chief editor, an honorary title, was held by Zhou Weiming (周为民), who was also a deputy secretary of the Communist Youth League in Qinghua University. Han Zhixiong (韩志雄), one of the deputy editors, was a worker in the Beijing Housing Corporation. The other deputy editor Wang Juntao (王军涛), was a physics student at Beijing University. Wang was also the main contact person of the magazine.

The person who connected these two groups of participants was Chen Ziming (陈子明). Chen, born in Beijing in 1952, was sent to a remote village in Inner Mongolia as an educated youth during the Cultural Revolution. He returned to Beijing in 1974 and enrolled at the Chemistry College in Beijing. When his personal letters were found to discuss political issues, he was arrested and sent to a labour camp in Hebei Province in 1975. That same year, diagnosed with hepatitis, he was temporarily allowed to leave the labour camp for Beijing. In April 1976 he joined in the protest against the Gang of Four and co-organized the biggest demonstration in the movement. After the authorities clamped down on the protests, he escaped back to the labour camp, luckily enough to avoid more severe punishment.⁴²⁴ When he was released in 1977, he contacted other April Fifth activists and formed a support network, which started to post *dazibao* in different places in central Beijing, demanding the rehabilitation of the April Fifth

⁴²⁴ Chen Ziming, *Rebirth*, and interview., Also see George Black and Robin Munro, 16-17.

movement. The rehabilitation coincided with the reappearance of unofficial magazines. The April Fifth group naturally decided to form their own magazine to push further for an investigation of the repression of the April Fifth movement. Chen also invited his friends with an underground-correspondence background to join them.

A total of 200 copies of the first issue were printed on 8 January 1979. Some of the copies were sent to friends in other cities, the rest sold out in front of the Democracy Wall. The contents included an inaugural statement, political reviews, news items, theoretical discussions and a section on literature and arts. The inaugural statement was written by Yan Jiaqi (严家其), who was a keen researcher on Marxist revisionism from the Academy of Social Sciences. The title of the magazine had been chosen by Yan, in homage to the Prague Spring.⁴²⁵ The inaugural statement positioned the magazine as a ‘comprehensive mass magazine’ that would ‘follow the guidance of Marxism and Leninism’, ‘support the Chinese Communist Party’, ‘insist on the route of Socialism’, and ‘carry out Mao Zedong’s policy of “letting a hundred flowers bloom”’. Its political reviews included a prose piece and several poems in commemoration of the third anniversary of the death of Premier Zhou Enlai, plus a memoir of the April Fifth movement. In the theoretical discussion section, there was an article criticizing bureaucracy and calling for the establishment of a Paris Commune-type democracy. The issue also published a range of sensitive news that covered abuses of police power, devastating stories of petitioners, police surveillance of democracy walls, a sit-in protest of educated youths in Tiananmen Square, and the story of Peng Zhen, a dethroned high official who had now been allowed to return to Beijing. The inaugural and commemoration column showed the tacit survival strategies of the magazine, conciliating toward the power and with signs of self-censorship. Meanwhile the magazine identified different groups within the party, some of which it sympathized with and others it opposed.

After the publication of the first issue, *Beijing Spring* became an observer at the Joint Conference of Minkan at the end of January but it did not plan to become a normal member. It joined the weekly meetings of the organization but was not eligible to vote. It also refused to sign the ‘Joint Statement by Mass Organisations And Minkan In

⁴²⁵ Chen Ziming interview by author 15/2/08, Yang Jiaqi interview by author 07/06/07, also see <http://beijingspring.com/bj2/2010/170/20091230141244.htm> [accessed 18 December 2010].

Beijing' that opposed the arrest of participants in the Democracy Wall. Wang Juntao said that the statement showed a tight organization activity that produced a high risk of further repression, because the security authorities had closely monitored the most prohibited wide networks of minkan.⁴²⁶ Because a hand-written stencil was limited to a maximum of 400 copies, the magazine, generally an edition of 600–800 copies, was sold out on two consecutive Sundays at Democracy Wall.⁴²⁷ Meanwhile one copy was posted onto the Democracy Wall. *Beijing Spring* consisted of news items, political reflections and a literature column including poems and short pieces of political fiction in every issue. The literary editors and contributors were underground poets, artists and novelists of the early 1970.⁴²⁸ The magazine formed a relatively loose editorial board. As Chen Ziming said:

the minkan did not strictly integrate different thoughts of editors. The editorial policy was mainly embodied by three aspects. First, the inaugural statement represented Yan Jiaqi's idea, which most members of the editorial board approved. Second, Lü Jiamin mainly wrote and edited theoretical articles, mainly focusing on socialist democracy and Paris Commune principles. Third, I mainly wrote political commentaries. These three parts were inconsistent'⁴²⁹

Because of the different formats with varied contents and networks of participants, readers from over 20 provinces praised the magazine; and some of them paid a subscription fees for six months. The second and the third issue were published on 27 January and 17 February, with only 300-400 mimeographed copies because of lack of paper. The columns of these issues were similar to the first one. The continuous theoretical articles argued that the bureaucratic system should gradually be abolished and a democratic system established according to genuine Marxist theory and Paris Communes principles of socialist democracy. The political comments argued that the administrative leadership of basic-level Party organizations such as factories, mines and other enterprises should be abolished. The news column reported on the Democracy Walls and minkan in Shanghai and Guangzhou as well as discussing the difficulties of

⁴²⁶ Wang Juntao interview 07/09/2008.

⁴²⁷ *ibid*, see also Widor, vol. 2, 80.

⁴²⁸ Some members of *Beijing Spring* who edited a literature column were also editors of *Today*, a literatural minkan from January 1979 to December 1980. They were underground poets, artists and writers in the early 1970s. Chen Ziming interview and Bei Dao interview by author.

⁴²⁹ Chen Ziming interview by author 11/9/8.

minkan. This column also reported on an unregistered jail in the second issue.⁴³⁰ In the third issue, the article ‘Hao Yaobang – a Hero in the Battle to Eradicate Modern Superstitions’ was signed by Zijing, Chen Ziming’s pseudonym. Chen edited one article published by *Debate*, a monthly Chinese magazine in Hong Kong. *Debate* was one of the main banned magazines in mainland China. Li Shengping (李盛平), studying at the Affiliation College of Beijing University, was a member of the editorial board of the magazine. He made friends with two students in Hong Kong who smuggled some banned Chinese language magazines into China when they were studying in Beijing University. In exchange Li gave these students copies of various minkan from Beijing, which were then taken back to Hong Kong. News items in the third issue covered the Democracy Wall in Wuhan and a student strike in Beijing Normal College due to officials’ misconduct. New sources had come from the correspondence networks since the second issue, which mainly included students studying in other cities. Some correspondence writers became regular contributors to the magazine. They received free issues by post, then made several copies to circulate them and posted them on the democracy walls in their cities.⁴³¹ These two issues cautiously reported some sensitive political matters (corruption of high-rank officials and corruption and abuse of power by police officers), while praising open-minded CCP officials. In this way it inhabited somewhat grey areas, keeping a balance between orthodoxy and taboo contents.

At the request of readers around the country, they decided to increase the print run of the publication. But a hand-written stencil was useless for over 400 copies using a mimeographing machine. Wang Juntao contacted the main editor of the Beijing Foreign Language Institute Press who had made friends with him during the annual conference of Central Committee of the Communist Youth League. As a result, 10,000 copies of its first letterpress-printed number came out, featuring a selection from the first three mimeographed issues and an open letter that demanded the abolition of censorship on 5 March. This was the first time that a minkan was printed by letter press. Within the following two weekends, the 8,000 copies were sold out in front of Democracy Wall leaving 1,970 which were sent to subscription readers.⁴³² Yan Jiaqi attended the Conference known as *lilun gongzuo wuxu hui* (Conference of Guidelines for Theoretical

⁴³⁰ The jail was used to detain the peasants who planted fruits or raised pigs and sold them beyond the command economy of the local authority. *Beijing Spring*, iss.6.

⁴³¹ Chen Ziming interview by author 9/9/09.

⁴³² Wang Juntao interview by author 16/03/07.

Work), and he circulated around 30 copies to other attendees. Many open-minded CCP propaganda officials and researchers joined the official conference that took place from January to early April and was presided by Hu Yaobang, vice chairman of Secretary-General of the CCP Central Committee.⁴³³

Subsequently the Party Committee in the Institute ordered the Foreign Language Institute Press to cease publishing anything without permission from higher authorities, and the main editor was dismissed, *Beijing Spring* was forced to stop its second letterpress issue, and instead borrowed a mimeograph machine again and printed out 800 copies of a fourth issue on 2 April. The contents included an editorial, commemoration and memoirs of the April Fifth Movement. An article entitled 'Table of Price Rises on Certain Products' examined the dramatic increase in the cost of living, which was causing popular discontent in Beijing. The editorial called for the establishment of a popular democratic system rather than qinguan (清官 honest, good and upright officials) while the article argued that the Party leadership should be upheld. In March 1979, the official media mainly portrayed a nostalgic image of stability, equality and happiness with little corruption or abuse of power during the period from 1949 to 1966 while a string of catastrophes caused by Lin Biao and the Gang of Four characterised the period from 1966 to 1977. The political comment in the issue argued that the two periods could not be separated, due to the mistaken leadership of the Party and the personality cult of Mao. It concluded that China should insist on Marxist socialism and progress under the right leadership of the Party. After *Exploration* was shut down and its letter-print was blocked, the magazine worried that it was going to be forced to close under further repressions, so that it applied for registration and regained a legal position.⁴³⁴ In the article, 'the April Fifth Fighters Talk Democracy', the magazine published a selection of interviews with many participants of the Movement promoting democracy, Democracy Wall and rule of law, who warned that the CCP and its great leader might become a Fascist party and a feudal emperor without practicing democracy. Meanwhile the discussion opposed the occupation of railway tracks and

⁴³³ Yan Jiaqi interview 10/6/07, also see Yan Jiaqi, 'Memories' <http://beijingspring.com/bj2/2007/240/2007529205813.htm> [accessed 18 December 2010].

⁴³⁴ Request of Registration in the issue4.

siege of Central Offices by protesters.⁴³⁵ The magazine cautiously reported on the protesters who caused traffic chaos or challenged the central authority wholesale.

Issue 5 was mimeographed in an edition of 600 copies on 16 May. The decrease in number was because it was more difficult to get paper and mimeographing material, as well as find a fixed and safe place to print.⁴³⁶ There was a rare news item in the news column in the issue. Because the authorities intercepted correspondence from other cities with the magazine, the editorial hardly received news from these areas. A political comment in the issue, 'High Walls, and Planks on the Windows' reported that some officials built up the palace for higher officials, which implied corruption in Zhongnanhai. The article argued that the inaccessibility of Zhongnanhai, an opposed to for instance, the White House or the Kremlin, was a symbol of unmonitored and unlimited power. The issue published two poems by Guo Lusheng (郭路生). Guo was an underground poet during the Cultural Revolution, who, together with other clandestine poets and artists started the *minkan Today* at the end of December 1978. *Beijing Spring* had strong ties with *Today* through common authors, editors and friends.

The sixth issue maintained 600 copies and was printed on 17 June. The content columns were the same as the first one. In the news columns, there were several items on prohibited posters on democracy walls in Hangzhou, Tianjin and Xian, thanks to Wang Juntao's fellow students in Beijing University who circulated reader's letters to dodge police and post office vigilance.⁴³⁷ In the theory column, Lü Jiamin wrote about 'The Democracy of Self-Management and the Theory of Withering Away of the State –On the Theoretical Foundations of the Yugoslav System of Self-Management'. In the article, he argued that the Yugoslav self-management model including democracy in economic management and political democracy should be applied in China. The news report, 'They Demand the Right to Rest', gave details of workers' crowded living condition in Beijing. The issue republished the article that had been printed in the second issue of another magazine, *Qiushi*. In the literature section, the magazine republished Wang Keping's play, 'The Judge and the Escapee' that was printed in the third issue of *Wotu* (fertile earth). *Beijing Spring* republished the works from these two

⁴³⁵ See the interview in the issue 4.

⁴³⁶ Chen Ziming interview by author 24/9/08.

⁴³⁷ Wang Juntao interview by author.

magazines to help promote them. Wang Keping (王克平), an underground painter and playwright, was a member of *Today* and an underground artist group called the *Xingxing* (Stars).

The political commentary in this issue was called ‘Who are the Black Sheep?’, written by Chen Ziming. The article was careful neither directly to criticize any top leaders nor to mention the detained participants’ particular minkan. But Chen clearly argued:

‘Never allow the public security organs indefinitely to detain innocent citizens, so that serious political matter is forgotten. Young people not only dare to explore, but also have the courage to correct their mistakes. What they need the most is a good teacher-friend, an egalitarian equality approach to ideological guidance, rather than that the youths were kidnapped in front of the Democracy Wall and put into the prison and guided to the court ... the real danger in our country is the ‘Gang of Four’ resurgence of feudal fascist dictatorship and the social evolution of the Soviet Union. True ‘black sheep’ are those who oppose people’s aspirations, and who worship the feudal autocracy and bureaucratic socialism’.

Chen’s article was based on the failure of Wang Juntao’s demand. At the beginning of June, Wang and Lü Pu, an editor of *the April Fifth Tribune* visited Hu Yaobang at home, asking him to help release Wang Junsheng of *Exploration*, Ren Wanding and Chen Lü of *Human Rights in China*, and other detainees who participated in the activities of the Democracy Wall. During the four hours conversation, Hu Yaobang disagreed with the detention but he kindly advised Wang and Lü to stop their publication. Wang related the conversation to Chen who wrote the political comment. Lü took an increasingly passive role in *April Fifth Tribune* and later departed the magazine. Hu Yaobang boasted of his success, giving a speech in the Party School, that he had won over the son of a high-ranking cadre who had great prestige at Democracy Wall.⁴³⁸

The seventh issue was published in one hundred copies on 10 August. There were two articles in the theory column. The one declared that Marxist state theory should be upheld and the democratic system of the Paris Commune must be practiced. The other argued that the state is not at peace so long as privilege has not been abolished.⁴³⁹ News

⁴³⁸ Liu Qing Memoirs, Taiwan Vol.6, also see Widor, vol.2 , 65.

⁴³⁹ Let Us Remain Faithful to the Marxist Theory of the State and Follow the Way of the Democratic System of the Paris Commune in theory column, The State Will Not Be In Peace As Long As Privilege Has Not Been Abolished. See Widor, vol.2 , 67.

included the topic of the abuse of police power in a story about police who had arbitrarily shot and killed workers in Wuhan and another in which the Public Security Bureau in Pingding County of Shanxi Province carried out mass arrests to force people to construct a house for the police.⁴⁴⁰ The editor also edited and republished Wei Jingsheng's article, the 20th Century Bastille: Qincheng Prison. But the section that criticized Mao was cut. The magazine was cautious not to challenge Maoist fundamentalism that was still sensitive. Therefore, the article circulation was widespread and other minkan republished the version around the country, which drew people's attention to Wei's detainment.⁴⁴¹

Beijing Spring and *Fertile Earth* co-organized a debate conference on the theme: 'Images of the New Man In Literary Creation' in the building of *China's Youth Daily* on 18 July. The seminar challenged Maoist literary dogma.⁴⁴² Almost all important official newspapers and magazines attended the event, thanks to the Communist Youth League network of magazines. Some issues of *Beijing Spring* and *Fertile Earth* were circulated to the official journalists. The contributor of *Beijing Spring* attended the event and wrote 'Reflections on Reading the Play', 'the Judge and the Escapee'.

Because the police always monitored Wang Juntao and forced him to stop communicating with its readers, editors of the magazine handed in the registration application to the National Publications Bureau and published a Request for Registration in the issue again at the end of July. Police also hunted for mimeographing equipments, so that a mimeograph machine, paper and printing material were moved into a warehouse in a factory where one of editorial board members worked. Meanwhile the police and postal officials opened and confiscated packages of the magazine. So *Beijing Spring* used different secret contact networks to parcel out one copy, mixed in with official newspapers and magazines.

In these harsh conditions, hundreds of copies of the eighth issue on 28 September were printed and still sold out within two hours in front of the Democracy Wall. The special column included A Noble Daughter Of The People: What Happened Before And After

⁴⁴⁰ A Policeman In Wuhan Shoots A Worker Point Blank And Kills Him and The Public Security Bureau Carries Out Mass Arrests Of Construction Workers And Force Them To Build A House For The Police. Widor, vol. 2, 451

⁴⁴¹ Chen Ziming interview 24/9/8 and Wang Juntao interview 16/3/8

⁴⁴² Hu Ping interview, also see Widor, vol. 2, 73

Zhang Zhixin's Martyrdom Zhang Zhixin (张志新), A vanguard Fighter in the Struggle against the Personality (Editorial Note). Zhang had criticized the personality cult of Mao in 1969 and was immediately put into prison where she suffered various forms of tortures. In the prison, when political educational meetings were called to criticize Lin Biao, she shouted that Mao should be held responsible for what Lin did. The torture details and Zhang's criticism of Mao were censored in official newspapers such as *China's Youth Daily* on 16 June. The titles of all official media reports on the Zhang incident were A Good Daughter Of The Party and Learning Communist Uprightness. The official media portrayed Zhang as a role model, fighting against the dethroned Gang of Four.

Reference News in the issue reported the repression of the Democracy Walls in Nanjing, Suzhou and Dadong, although it became more difficult for the editorial to correspond with its readers and reporters. In Readers' Letters, a reader recorded her interrogation by the Party leader in her work unit, which traced back how to communicate by correspondence and how to receive the magazine.

The last issue came out on 29 October, maintaining an edition of 600 copies. The theoretical column included The Question of the Socialist Political System and On the Chinese People's Freedom of the Press During the Past Years. The former article argued that the National People's Congress should have the supreme power rather than the Party leaders, and the life tenure of state leaders must be abolished. The latter article examined the censorship system after the CCP came to power and it demanded abolition of the state monopoly of publication systems. An editorial argued that Wei was not a criminal although some opinions in his articles were wrong. Readers Letters included Regarding the Public Trials of Wei Jingsheng and Fu Yuehua. They questioned why the trial was not in public although Deng Xiaoping promised that foreign journalists would be allowed to attend. This was the first time that the magazine had mentioned the names of the detained participants of the Democracy Wall.

Chen wrote an Editorial, defending Wei Jingsheng's political rights for the tenth issue in late October. However, Hu Qili, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League, called members of the editorial board on behalf of Peng

Zhen, then President of the National People's Congress and Deng Yingchao, Zhou Enlai's widow, asking the magazine to stop publication. After the majority of the *minkan* staff agreed, the *minkan* stopped publication. Chen said that the majority of the magazine had been put into jail and were aware of the cruelty of the dictatorship. Chen still posted his editorial and Statement on Stopping Publication on the Democracy Wall although the majority disagreed. After the magazine was closed, police continued to monitor some its key participants.

The magazine tried to keep many editors together who had different ideas. Chen disagreed with Lu's opinions, and argued with him in July. Chen thought that theoretical discussions should not be limited to Marxism and its relevant theories, but should also cover John Locke's thoughts on government. But Lu and other theoretical editors argued that Communist China had not achieved socialism of the Paris Commune model that avoided a bureaucratic society under bourgeois dictatorship in the future. Their opinion was shared by the majority of the editorial board so as to form the main tendency of the *minkan*. But the magazine was open to political comments from Chen and gave columns to other writers who reviewed the current issues relevant to corruption and abuse of power, not limited to the ideology of Marxism.

However, the magazine consistently avoided direct criticism of Deng Xiaoping, because the majority considered Deng as the most important reformist inside the Party.⁴⁴³ After Wei was arrested, the *minkan* became more critical of the repression of democracy walls, mentioning some detained activists including Fu Yuehua and Wei Jingsheng, and promoted political and economic reform—but was still carefully not to target Deng. Following the CCP's stricter control and repression, the *minkan* moved to counter-punch and criticised the new bureaucrats, showing solidarity with other *minkan*. More and more articles were full of irony.⁴⁴⁴ Chen said that most participants in *Beijing Spring* were aware that Deng Xiaoping's honeymoon was short-lived.

In comparison to the prudence shown in the political commentaries, *Beijing Spring* leaked out important sensitive news because participants of the *minkan* not only had

⁴⁴³ Some open-minded scholars inside the CCP were afraid that Wei Jingsheng's critics pushed Deng to go back to Maoism. <http://www.minzhuzhongguo.org/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=4160> [accessed 18 December 2010].

⁴⁴⁴ Widor, vol.2, 75.

their own experiences to report but had also set up firm friendship networks between participants of the April 5th Movement, and between student readers. Although it had more protective colour in comparison to other minkan, the magazine required formal registration when the crisis approached.⁴⁴⁵ The magazine avoided networking with most other minkan but was more active in setting up a network between students. In addition, *Exploration* did, by comparison, fight for justice and democracy without compromise, whilst *Beijing Spring*, because it paid more cautious attention to moderate and concession reforms, kept its articles and network, and thanks to special relations with some CCP leaders, the majority of its team survived to influence society over the next decade.

Some members of *Beijing Spring* built up a widespread student network that later helped organize independent candidate campaigns, initiate semi-official think tanks, institutes and newspapers, set up a series of book publication editorial boards and built up a correspondence school in the 1980s. Moreover, some members were directly involved in the 1989 pro-democracy movement.

4.3.4 April Fifth Tribune



Figure 13. *April Fifth Tribune*, Issue 7



Figure 14. *April Fifth Tribune*, Issue 8, cover

April Fifth Tribune was the magazine that published the largest number of issues during the Democracy Wall era: 18 issues from December 1978 to March 1980, before its suppression. Such a relatively long life span comes as no surprise in light of the magazine's self-conscious pursuit of a democratic management of its own organization

⁴⁴⁵ *Exploration* and *April Fifth Tribune* had earlier sense so as to apply for registration since the first issue.

and finance. The members' pursuit of professionalism meant they were sometimes accused of turning from activists into publishers.⁴⁴⁶

April Fifth Tribune was formed from a merger of *April Fifth Newspaper* and *People's Tribune* in November 1979. The initiator of *April Fifth Newspaper*, Xu Wenli (徐文立), was a 35-year-old railway electrician in the Beijing Railway Bureau. He had participated in the April Fifth Movement in 1976 and witnessed the government's repression. The movement turned Xu into an enthusiastic *dazibao* reader. He was intrigued by the posters that discussed social issues, in particular, those that documented the April Fifth Movement. In November 1978, he wrote a *dazibao* himself, expounding the urgent need to practice democracy in the country. He borrowed a mimeograph machine and printed dozens of copies of his *dazibao* together with a selection of political essays he found on the walls. The mimeographed collection carried the title *April Fifth Newspaper*.⁴⁴⁷ One copy was pasted page by page onto the Democracy Wall on 26 November, with Xu's contact details printed at the bottom. Xu's article caught the attention of Liu Qing, a 33-year-old technician who had been on long-term sick leave since March. A frequent *dazibao* reader himself, Liu was acquainted with many writers including Zhao Nan (赵楠) and Yang Jing (杨靖), both educated youths returning to Beijing, with whom Liu had just teamed up to start a magazine called *People's Tribune*. Upon Liu's initiative, the two magazines joined up and formed a new one, *April Fifth Tribune*, each contributing half of their names.⁴⁴⁸ They also invited Lü Pu on board. Lü was a young worker whose review of the April Fifth movement showed an independent stance, diverging from the official judgement of the movement. The five young comrades divided tasks between themselves: Xu and Lü as chief editors, Liu and Zhao the contacts, and Yang the art editor due to his artistic talent. Xu cleared one room in his bungalow and used it for production and publication. Liu borrowed his brother's bungalow to receive visitors to the magazine.⁴⁴⁹

The first three issues were published at the turn of the year, from 16 December 1978 to 6 January 1979. Each comprised about fifty mimeographed copies, one of them posted

⁴⁴⁶ See readers' comments on the 10th issue.

⁴⁴⁷ Xu Wenli's Interview by author, 26/06/09.

⁴⁴⁸ Xu Wenli Interview 24/6/09, also see Liu Shengqi, Study of minkans between 1978 and 1981, 117.

⁴⁴⁹ Liu Qing's brother, Liu Nianchun, joined another magazine *Today* in February 1979, when the bungalow also became the correspondence address for *Today*.

directly onto the Xidan Democracy Wall. Not a single copy seems to have survived. According to Xu Wenli, these first issues consisted of a selection of poster articles from the Wall, as the *April Fifth Newspaper* had done.⁴⁵⁰ The foreword and three articles from the first three issues were later republished in the fourth and eighth issue.⁴⁵¹

The fourth issue was published on 22 January, with one copy posted on the Democracy Wall and fewer than a hundred of mimeographed copies circulated among friends. The foreword, now reprinted, declared that the aim of the magazine was ‘to practice the right entitled by the constitution to monitor and run the state, and to turn the constitution from a piece of paper into the foundation of social existence and development’.⁴⁵² The magazine also made it clear that it would stand for the voice of the people and would stick to its unofficial position. The issue published AFT’s editorial principles, according to which the choice of articles would be decided by the majority preference of the editorial board. The application for registered status, which was sent to both the Propaganda Department of the CCP and the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau, was printed and published in the issue. An editorial statement criticized the January statement by the CCP Beijing Municipal Committee, which accused participants in the Democracy Wall of inciting social disorder. A political review argued that freedom of speech had disappeared because ‘counter-revolutionary crime’ had been firmly entrenched in the constitution since 1949. The issue reported a public assembly organized by AFT discussing democracy and the rule of law, which had met in Working People’s Cultural Palace in Beijing on 1 January 1979. Hundreds of people had participated. The issue also reported an art exhibition AFT organized in front of the Democracy Wall to show works created by a Sichuan underground artist group.⁴⁵³

The publication of the fourth issue attracted more than 40 new members to the editorial board, who also helped with publication and circulation. Every member donated one yuan every month to support the magazine financially.⁴⁵⁴ Students and teachers in Beijing universities began to write regularly for the magazine. Copies began to be posted to subscribers, mainly city-dwellers, around the country. The popularity of the

⁴⁵⁰ Xu Wenli interview 25/6/09.

⁴⁵¹ Xu Wenli interview 25/6/09, Liu Shengqi, 123.

⁴⁵² Liu Shengqi, 20.

⁴⁵³ Xu Minde http://www.boxun.com/hero/200902/xuwl/1_1.shtml [accessed 18 December 2010]

⁴⁵⁴ Liu Shengqi, 118.

first four issues saw the publication of the fifth issue on 10 February. A total of 500 copies were mimeographed, 400 copies sold out in front of the Democracy Wall and 100 copies distributed to other cities.⁴⁵⁵ The amount of subscribers in Beijing and other cities to following issues maintained the level of output. The issue reported the famine in Xinyang area in Henan province calling for social reform. There were two articles arguing that it was essential to practice the rule of law, because social disasters after 1949 had resulted from rule of man. The issue reported an assembly of the Coalition attended by thousands of people in front of the Democracy Wall on 25 January 1979, opposing the authorities' repression. AFT played an important role in coordinating the Coalition. They were frequently approached by minkan activists from other cities, and formed the widest readers-reporters network around the country. Minkan editors in other cities would often contribute their writings to AFT and would regularly republish selections of AFT articles in their own magazines.

Due to shortage of paper and mimeographing materials, issue six and seven were printed in editions of 400 copies each. The eighth issue came out on 1 April, with a print run of 800 copies. The editorial board decided to change the magazine from fortnightly to monthly from then on. Issue 8 republished Yu Luoke's story, a sensitive article which first appeared in the Hong Kong magazine *Zhengming* (Debate) a month earlier. The article was written by an AFT member, who adopted the strategy of publishing it anonymously in Hong Kong first to avoid being accused of leaking a state secret. He argued that Yu Luoke's murder was a result of the absence of democracy and rule of law, calling for the rehabilitation of the case and for justice to be meted out to those responsible for his death.⁴⁵⁶ The article was widely reprinted by other unofficial magazines around the country.⁴⁵⁷ Discussions around the Yu Luoke case greatly increased the publicity of minkan in the mainland and dissident magazines like *Zhengming* and *The Seventies* in Hong Kong. Under such pressure, official media including *Guangming Daily* had to publish a few articles on Yu Luoke in June and July 1980, in a much milder tone. Other sensitive articles in the eighth issue included a reflection of the investigation into Fu Yuehua's detention conducted by the Joint Conference. The article called for the National People's Congress, the Central

⁴⁵⁵ Xu Wenli interview.

⁴⁵⁶ Yu Luoke's case see chapter 3.

⁴⁵⁷ See publication of *Hai Langhua*, *Puobao Zhibing*, *Zhongsheng*, *Voice of People*, *Zhongsheng* between October 1979 and May 1980.

Commission for Discipline Inspection of the CCP and the Supreme Court to examine the case and demanded that the trial to be open to the public.

The ninth issue, published at the end of April, reported the arrests of Wei Jingsheng and Ren Wandong. An article disagreed with Wei who saw Deng Xiaoping as a new dictator, arguing instead that Deng would support democracy, though the article ended with a warning that ‘whoever repressed the democracy wall would come to no good end’. Clearly, AFT did not interpret the arrest of Wei on 29 March and the raid of Xu Wenli’s home on the same day as a sign against their optimism for Deng. The tenth issue came out on 6 June, published as a book of one very long article, *An Unofficial Manifesto for Proletarian Democracy*, written by the underground political essayist Chen Erjing. Chen promoted proletarian democracy and opposed proletarian dictatorship in the book. All 400 copies of the issue were sold out in front of the Democracy Wall within an hour, attracting more readers to support the Democracy Wall and *minkan*.

The twelfth issue, coming out on 12 September, published the first survey on public opinion conducted by an unofficial organization since the CCP came into power. The survey followed a fierce debate on the magazine’s direction during an editorial meeting between Liu Qing and Xu Wenli after Wei was arrested. Xu believed that Wei’s arrest was a result of his radical criticism of Deng who had supported democracy. Liu maintained that Wei had the right to criticize Deng, and his arrest was against the law. The majority of the members supported Liu’s suggestion to conduct a survey of public opinion in front of the Democracy Wall.⁴⁵⁸ AFT organized a discussion assembly in front of the Xidan Wall, in which over 1,000 readers participated. A random selection of fifty people filled out the survey form. The results showed that 90 per cent of the participants believed that the arrests of Wei Jingsheng, Fu Yuehua and Ren Wandong were illegal, and 80 per cent believed that the control mechanisms of the Beijing Authority on *dazibao* and *minkan* was illegal. The survey results were posted onto the wall and published in the print issue.⁴⁵⁹ In its supplement, the twelfth issue published a collection of articles on Zhang Zhixin. They were confident that a magazine would speak out a thousand times louder than a single person could have done.⁴⁶⁰

⁴⁵⁸ See Liu Shengqi, 132.

⁴⁵⁹ Liu Shengqi, 136.

⁴⁶⁰ Zhixing editorial and voice of People, issue 5.

The thirteenth issue, which came out in October, recorded an art exhibition and two large-scale demonstrations that took place at the time. The exhibition was by an underground artist group *Xingxing* (星星, star), who were not allowed to have public exhibitions. At the end of September, the artists decided to hang their works on the fence outside the National Gallery, which was very close to the Democracy Wall. The exhibition was taken down immediately and the artworks were confiscated by the police. On 1 October, the PRC's national day, thousands of people joined the march from the Democracy Wall to Beijing Public Security Bureau.⁴⁶¹ They staged a four-hour sit-in outside the Public Security Bureau, demanding freedom of artistic expression, with four representatives negotiating with the police about the return of the artworks. The works were eventually returned by the end of the month, though the artists were still not permitted to show their works in public. The other protest took place in front of Zhongnanhai, where students from the People's University demanded the returning of their lecture building that had been occupied by the army. When students staged a class strike on the campus, they broadcast the support they had received from *AFT*.

The fourteenth issue was dedicated to an exclusive report on the secret trial of Wei Jingsheng. The report showed clear evidence of the authorities' manipulation of the case while prohibiting public hearings. The report shocked both insiders and the public when the magazine was circulated and dazibao were posted on the Democracy Wall. When Liu Qing found out about the exact date of Wei's trial, he fortuitously came across Qu Leilei who was going to be actually attending the secret trial. Qu was a painter of the underground group *Xingxing*, whose official job was as a photographer with China Central Television (CCTV), the main propaganda media of the CCP. Liu borrowed a cassette recorder and gave it to Qu, asking him to record the unfolding of the trial. Qu was lucky enough to be able to sit in the front row and recorded the whole process with the recorder hidden in his suitcase. The proceedings were transcribed overnight and hundreds of bulletins were printed within four days. As *minkan* editors from *AFT* and *Today* were distributing copies in front of the Xidan Wall, the police blocked the streets and arrested them. The news came to Liu Qing, who went to Beijing Public Security

⁴⁶¹ The protest was co-organized by *Xingxing*, *Wotu*, *Today* and *AFT* which was in charge of communication and press releases.

Bureau and claimed responsibility for the publication of Wei's trial. Liu was arrested immediately and sent to a labour camp in Shaanxi province.⁴⁶²

The fifteenth issue came out despite a police threat to shut the magazine down. The issue reported Liu Qing's arrest, Fu Yuehua's trial, and an open poem recitation organized by *Today* and AFT in mid November. Another two issues were published in more difficult situations, focusing on publicizing Liu Qing's arrest and calling for his release.⁴⁶³ In March 1980, the majority of the editorial board decided to close down the magazine in a negotiation with the authorities in exchange for Liu Qing's release. They also sent Liu's materials to open-minded officials in *People's Daily* and *China Youth Daily*.⁴⁶⁴ In April, Xu got in touch with AFT contributors in other provinces and started a new magazine, *xue you tongxun* (学友通讯, Schoolmates Correspondence). Two issues were published before it was shut down. Xu was arrested on 19 April 1981 and sentenced to fifteen years.⁴⁶⁵

Although the termination of AFT was agreed by the majority of the editorial board, a few editors including Yang Jing and Chen Erjing restarted the publication in August. They printed the eighteenth issue on 18 November with a print run of 400 copies. The issue reported the first conference held by the National Minkan Association, which AFT had recently joined. The association was initiated by two minkan groups, *Road of People* in Guangzhou and *Voice of Democracy* in Shanghai, involving over 40 magazines around the country. The conference was held on 31 August 1980 in Guangzhou, with the participation of seventeen minkan groups. At this conference a committee was set up to help rescue Liu Qing. The issue also reported the news of

⁴⁶² Liu Qing wrote the article to challenge re-education through-labour system and challenged abuse of police power on his case in Beijing Public Bureau. In 1981, his article was smuggled out of the camp, which was published underground and abroad. He was re-sentenced to ten years. In 1990, he was release in 1990 and then was sent to the USA in 1992. He is one of the board members of Human Rights in China, based in New York.

⁴⁶³ p265, vol.14 Taiwan.

⁴⁶⁴ Xu Wenli interview, see also

<http://56cun.blogsome.com/2006/04/16/%E7%8E%8B%E8%8B%A5%E6%B0%B4%EF%BC%9A%E5%85%B3%E4%BA%8E%E8%83%A1%E8%80%80%E9%82%A6%E5%92%8C%E6%B0%91%E4%B8%BB%E5%A2%99%E7%9A%84%E4%B8%80%E6%AE%B5%E5%BE%80%E4%BA%8B/> [accessed 18 December 2010]

⁴⁶⁵ He was released on medical parole in 1993 due to international pressure. He and Qin Yongmin, chief editor of *Bell* in Wuhan from 1980 to 1981 co-joined in organizing an opposition party, Chinese Democracy Party in Noverbem1998 and sentenced 13 years in the same year. In 2003, he was sent to exile and medical treatment in US. Qin Yongmin was sentenced to twelve years and is still in prison at the end of 2010.

Solidarity in Poland and declared support for that movement.⁴⁶⁶ This turned out to be the last issue of *AFT*. In April 1981, Yang Jing was arrested and sentenced to eight years. Chen Erjing was sentenced to ten years in 1982.

4.4 Keywords

In the aftermath of the Cultural Revolution, there were reflections across the country. The communist leaders who had been rehabilitated and had resumed their power now admitted that the ten-year Cultural Revolution left the country in turmoil and promised that the Party would bring order out of chaos. By order they were referring to the seventeen years from 1949 to 1966, which they depicted nostalgically as a golden age of stability, equality and happiness with little corruption or abuse of power. The official ideology gradually changed its clothes. The official buzzwords now became ‘four cardinal principles’: ‘stability’, ‘strong and prosperous country’ and ‘unity’.

The experiences and observations during the CR provided the population with glaring evidence of the problems afflicting the political system. Many people started to challenge official ideology. Minkan argued against the separation of the first seventeen years and the Cultural Revolution and revealed the link between the two.⁴⁶⁷ While the official media pushed for the Four Modernizations, minkan promoted the concepts of democracy and rule of law, which they believed were the necessary prerequisites for modernization.⁴⁶⁸ Wei Jingsheng argued that democracy was the fifth Modernisation, completing the four modernizations of the official version.⁴⁶⁹ Moreover, *Science, Democracy and Rule of Law (selected from Daozibao)*, argued that modernity included Science, Democracy and Rule of law, and represented the highest achievement of human development, referring to Marxist class and social development theory.⁴⁷⁰

⁴⁶⁶ Vol. 18, news, Taiwan vol. 5, *Fengfan (Wind Against the Waves)* published Chinese translations of the ‘Charter of Worker’ and ‘21 Demands’, orgined from Polish samizdat *Robotnik.*, also see George Black and Munro, *Black Hands of Beijing*, p62.

⁴⁶⁷ An article in Beijing Spring pointed out that the underlining political institution remained unchangeable, which, if not changed, would bring about even more serious disasters. There is now a tendency to separate completely the 17 years from the 11 years [the Cultural Revolution]: one heaven the other hell. This has fragmented the history and covered up the link between the two...By 1966, most people had been fed up with the 17 years, especially with the period between 1957 and 1966. People yearned for something better.

⁴⁶⁸ see Beijing Spring (issue2, Han Zhixiong’s article), Enlightenment and Exploration.

⁴⁶⁹ Huang, Document 12.

⁴⁷⁰ vol.8 , p271 Science Democracy and Rule of Law, issue 3, modernity like Marxism society development stages.

Regarding economic development, some articles in *minkan* stated that a socialist state could be realised without the process of a capitalist state. Some magazines further argued that China had not pass through capitalist stage and had to go back to capitalism⁴⁷¹. For *Jintian* (今天, today), a literature magazine, modernity meant continuous creative practice rather than a doctrine based on ideology.⁴⁷²

Minkan during that period between 1978 and 1981 discussed the wider, sensitive issues of politics, society, and history that were censored by the official media. *Minkan* insisted on independent expression rather than the one that only obeyed the Party's will and line, providing alternative ways of thinking and more diverse content. Participants in *minkan* self-defined their activities including demonstrations and protests against abuse of power, posting *daozibao* publishing and circulating *minkan*, as pro-democracy and Enlightenment movements, *Beijing Spring*, *Road of the People*, *Voice of the People* *Voice of Democracy*, *Wild Grass*, *Little Grass*.⁴⁷³

Democracy

Frequent disasters resulted from the totalitarian institutions, and Communist rule itself prompted a call for a transition to democracy in the country's political system.⁴⁷⁴ More and more people came to realize that democracy would limit the power of the party-state and thus promote individual freedom and human rights. They also believed that democracy would help resolve social conflicts in a more open and effective manner. Moreover, they believed that democracy would ensure that the fruits of the modernizations would be enjoyed by the people not the ruler.⁴⁷⁵ Wei Jingsheng, an editor of *Exploration*, published a series of critical essays examining the tyrannical rule of the communist party and warned people against the unchanged nature of dictatorship under Deng Xiaoping's regime. Wei baptized democracy 'the fifth modernization' and emphasized that, without it, the four officially promoted modernizations would only become castles in the air. However, there were great debates on what democracy was.

⁴⁷¹ Vol. 11, p293, -306, positive moderization.

⁴⁷² Interview with Bei Dao.

⁴⁷³ See Taiwan, vol: 5, 5 14 and 19.

⁴⁷⁴ 'While most of mankind has already awakened from the bad drea of superstition and dictatorship, we are still sound asleep and suffering nightmares' Issue 3, Enlightenment, Huang Mab, 126.

⁴⁷⁵ Issues 3, Enlightenment.

Even the Party attempted to exploit the rhetoric of democracy, only to reinforce its legitimacy and regain the favours of the common people. In response to the popular demand for democracy, the Party returned to the phrase ‘people’s democratic dictatorship’ and played down ‘proletarian dictatorship’, which could revive the memory of the class struggles of the Cultural Revolution.⁴⁷⁶ By emphasizing the ideology of a ‘people’s democratic dictatorship’, the Party made it clear that they would not in fact put into practice any separation of powers and would not tolerate any challenges to its monopoly of power.⁴⁷⁷

By contrast, minkan interpreted democracy in a more direct manner. In Chinese, the word democracy consists of two characters: *min* (people) and *zhu* (master), which, put together, means that people are their own masters. Minkan revealed that the nature of ‘democratic dictatorship’ was a combination of dictatorship and autocracy, which had deprived the people of their civic rights and even interfered with their private life including their marriages.⁴⁷⁸ Many minkan explored the concept of democracy.

An early attempt was made during the first large-scale assembly in front of the Democracy Wall in Xidan on 25 November 1978, when a speaker formulated three principles of democracy by referencing the ideals of the Paris Commune: the right to elect and recall leaders, equality between leaders and the populace, and the elimination of the bureaucratic system.⁴⁷⁹ Some magazines made a distinction between two modes of socialist democracy: the Soviet type which they believed was by nature a dictatorship, versus the Yugoslavian type which allowed the working class a degree of autonomy and participation in the management.⁴⁸⁰

Some magazines went beyond the framework of socialist democracy and referred to Enlightenment thinkers including Montesquieu and Locke advocating the separation of

⁴⁷⁶ See *Fifth Modernization* by Mab, p50 and Widor, Vol p213 and 219. Other minkan addressed the fundamental problems of the current political system like Wei’s vision from different angles. See Mab, 87-92.

⁴⁷⁶ Widor,p181, minkans, vol.5, Ma Wendu interview.

⁴⁷⁷ Mao, <http://www.wellesley.edu/Polisci/wj/China/mao22.html>, [accessed 18 December 2010] and Mao’s four kinds of obedience: "The individual obeys organizations, minorities obey majorities, inferiors obey superiors, and the whole party obeys the central leadership"(The last sentence is the final and real end.)

⁴⁷⁸ See *Fifth Modernization* by Mab, p50 and Widor, Vol p213 and 219. Other minkan addressed the fundamental problems of the current political system like Wei’s vision from different angles. See Mab, 87-92.

⁴⁷⁹ Widor,p181, minkans, vol.5, Ma Wendu interview.

⁴⁸⁰ Vol. 14, 179, Voice of People, issue 7, See Journal, Socialism in issue 11, 1978 and social science journal abroad. Issue 92, Exporation, iss.1, widor, 55.

powers and more limited executive power. They expressed their admiration for the kind of democracy practiced in the UK and the US in which they noticed certain shared features that China lacked. First, a regular, fair and non-compulsory election process to ensure legitimate power origin and power succession. *Beijing Spring* praised George Washington for declining to run for another term, indicating by contrast life tenure of power in the Chinese political institution.⁴⁸¹ They believed that the right to elect should be enjoyed by all citizens not just the working class. *Explorer* and *Enlightenment*, the two most forceful advocates of democracy, argued that democracy would provide a mechanism for monitoring the government, thanks to which the US president Nixon, French president de Gaulle and Japanese prime minister Tanaka had all been recalled.⁴⁸² Second, democracy would protect civil liberties and guarantee civic rights such as freedom of expression, association and assembly, rights to strike and protest.⁴⁸³

For Minkan participants, who had grown up and been educated under the communist regime, the process of exploring the significance of democracy also inspired a keen interest in studying the recent history of China, especially the period between 1911 and 1949. For example, *Voice of the People* and *Human Rights in China* both re-examined Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People: the principles of nationalism, democracy and livelihood. According to Sun's principle of democracy, the three-fold separation of the legislative, judicial, and executive powers widely accepted in Western democratic countries should be extended to include the examining and monitoring powers in order to implement democracy in China.

As for how to realize democracy in China, most of the Minkan participants agreed that democracy is both an end and a means and that the best way to realize democracy would be to practice the principles of democracy.⁴⁸⁴ Indeed, the practice of unofficial publishing was viewed not only as a way of promoting democracy, but as a struggle in itself to bring about the civil liberties and civil rights that are imperative for democracy.⁴⁸⁵ For many, this was the first step to break away from official propaganda

⁴⁸¹ *Beijing Spring*, issue 9.

⁴⁸² The Fifth Modernization in *Explorer* issue 1 and 2 and On Human Rights in *Enlightenment* issue 3.

⁴⁸³ *ibid.*

⁴⁸⁴ (vol.14,p301-26 The regime propaganda claimed democracy just was a way rather than purpose. Minkan counter-argued that democracy was not only a mean but purpose.

⁴⁸⁵ vol.15, 39-44.

and start self-education through alternative source of information.⁴⁸⁶ The more people were involved in unofficial publications that broke away from CCP control, the more powerful an independent society would become.⁴⁸⁷ Bearing this purpose in mind, minkan participants engaged actively in encouraging the mass to practise civil resistance through petitions, demonstrations, and independent associations across the country. In addition, many believed that the existence of minkan set up an example of independent media monitoring, a mechanism to press for greater transparency among political agencies and authorities with a view to realising the rule of law.⁴⁸⁸

Human Rights in China and *Beijing Spring* discussed various measures to transform the political system of the country into a democratic one. *Human Rights in China* argued that the National People's Congress, which was not directly elected, should be replaced by a kind of citizen's parliament, whose members were to be directly chosen by citizens. In comparison to *HRC*, *Beijing Spring* proposed that the current cadres system of the Party-State should be replaced by a more fair and transparent one that would comply with the principles of the Paris Commune in the appointment, promotion, transfer and removal of party leaders and government officials.⁴⁸⁹ Second, censorship on publications should be abolished and unofficial publishing should be allowed. Third, laws against 'thought crime' and 'opinion crime' should be repealed and freedom of thought and expression should be respected.⁴⁹⁰ Fourth, regular and direct elections should be adopted in selecting leaders at all levels.⁴⁹¹ Fifth, the National People's Congress should include other parties and groups other than the communist party.⁴⁹²

Human Rights

Almost all minkan regarded human rights as a universal standard, rather than a privilege enjoyed by a certain class or group. *Enlightenment* argued that the realization of human rights would be a prerequisite for modernisation, and that respecting human rights would enable the nation to avoid further man-made disasters.⁴⁹³ Many minkan stressed

⁴⁸⁶ Wei Jingsheng, 5th Modernization Sequel, Widor, 115.

⁴⁸⁷ Interview Wei Jingsheng and Fu Shengqi.

⁴⁸⁸ Vol. 7, 45, issue 11, 12. See *zhi qing quan* and *AFT*, vol7. 27-36.

⁴⁸⁹ Declaration of Human Rights in China, *Human Rights in China* issue 1 and Lu Min, Beijing Spring, Iss. 1.

⁴⁹⁰ *ibid.*

⁴⁹¹ *ibid* See also Beijing Spring issue 9 and Huang Mab, 84.

⁴⁹² *Ibid.*

⁴⁹³ On Human Rights, *Enlightenment* issue 3.

that recent Chinese history had witnessed enough abuses of power and calamities due to a lack of political rights for common people. Their references and inspirations included Yu Luoke's *On Class Origin* and Rousseau's *On the Origin of Inequality*.⁴⁹⁴ Moreover, minkan explored the relationship between human rights and equality. They concluded that bureaucracy was the cause of inequality, and therefore eliminating privileges would be an urgent political task at the time.⁴⁹⁵ Many of them drew attention to the social inequality that resulted in ordinary people to live in miserable conditions.⁴⁹⁶ They also attempted to define the relation between state and citizen, in order to protect citizens' rights against the abuse of state power.⁴⁹⁷

Many minkan explained what human rights include. Most of them focused on economic rights and civil rights. *Enlightenment* argued that human rights should include the right to vote, freedom of speech, freedom of publication, freedom of demonstration, freedom of religion and freedom of association.⁴⁹⁸ *The April Fifth Tribune* held that human rights should also include access to information and the right to monitor government.⁴⁹⁹ *Human Rights in China* emphasized that people had a right to freedom of expression such as the 'freedom to seek, receive and read alternative information, freedom of privacy and correspondence'. Furthermore, the magazine demanded the end of censorship and of the secret police's violation of citizens' rights, destroying sensitive publication, unlawfully intercepting correspondence, arbitrarily raiding innocent citizens' homes and arresting citizens.⁵⁰⁰ In addition, *Wild Grass* in its first issue pointed out that citizens had a right to show disobedience to the state power.⁵⁰¹

How to realize Human rights? *Enlightenment* discussed the relation between democracy and human rights. Referring to the democratic systems in the US and the UK as good examples to protect human rights, many minkan emphasized that a democratic

⁴⁹⁴ vol. 8 , 45, issue 13, Yu Luoke.

⁴⁹⁵ Theoretic articles, *Beijing Spring*.

⁴⁹⁶ wider, 245-7, Inherit Social quality of People become content of human rights, for example, standard of life decreased due to price rise of products, living conditions (Xiu Shu, issue 2, republished Beijing Spring, 399-403. Democracy reduced ill-treatment and torture by examining political prisoners (documents) who were famous and dominated prominent status and suffered , how difficult it was imagined to ordinary people suffered from even worse

⁴⁹⁷ Declaration of Human Rights in China, *Human Rights in China*.

⁴⁹⁸ p 650-660 Vol.1 French, E, Issue 3.

⁴⁹⁹ ⁴ vol.5 Taiwan (original from iss.7, April 5th Tribune), p27, vol. 7, Taiwan, also see *Science, Democracy, rule of Law*, iss.8 (p11, vol.13, Taiwan).

⁵⁰⁰ Huang Mab, Document 14, Document 19, Beijing Spring, no.1, 9 Jan. 1979, Document 20, 91, 45 form, no.4, 1979, Document 21, Jiu shi bao, February, 1979.

⁵⁰¹ Vol. 7, *Wild Grass*.

system was a necessity for realizing human rights. Minkan like *Enlightenment* and *Exploration* further investigated the relationship between democracy and human rights and concluded that democracy should be the minimal and essential system to protect and promote human rights.⁵⁰² For minkan, freedom of speech and freedom of publication were the most useful weapons to monitor corruption and the abuse of state power. Some magazines republished articles that were originally published in Hong Kong but censored in the mainland, which exposed abuses of power and tyrannical oppression.⁵⁰³ *Exploration* directly quoted and later published “Amnesty International’s 1978 ‘Report on the People’s Republic of China’, which covered issues such as political prisoners, abuse of power, juridical injustice and forced labour, which people should pay close attention to.⁵⁰⁴ Moreover, some magazines pointed out that the party’s control of economic and individual life had blocked the development of democracy as well as constituting a violation of Human Rights.⁵⁰⁵ They argued that economic activities and administration had to be released from the Party’s control. State ownership, controlled by minority bureaucratic groups, should be gradually abolished in a transition to social ownership to protect Human Rights.⁵⁰⁶

Some minkan such as *HRC* and *Enlightenment* used the word ‘citizen’ instead of ‘people’, because the latter was often used as the contrary of ‘enemy’ in PRC discourse. Who belonged to which category, ‘people’ or ‘enemy’, was decided by the regime. Minkan preferred the word ‘citizen’ to emphasize the inalienable rights of everyone.⁵⁰⁷ Moreover, *HRC* argued that the People’s Republic of China was a member of the UN Security Council so that it was obliged to obey the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. *HRC* implied that it displayed an arrogant contempt for the Declaration when the PRC used dictatorial power to interpret laws so as to trample on any democracy and violate human rights.⁵⁰⁸

After 1949, the issue of human rights was considered a bourgeois ideology by the authority, and became a taboo subject. The minkan discussed ‘equality’ and ‘humanism’

⁵⁰² *Enlightenment*, issue 3.

⁵⁰³ For example, *AFT*, iss8 republished editorial comments of *Debate* in Hong Kong, 35, iss.5, Taiwan. *Beijing Spring* rewrote some articles from *Debate* and republished (*Beijing Spring* issue 6 and 8)

⁵⁰⁴ *Exploration*, Iss.2 iss 3, Wildor, 99 and 152-7.

⁵⁰⁵ vol 7. 41.

⁵⁰⁶ *Human Rights in China* iss1 and 3, Widor, 430-3, 469, mab, 84.

⁵⁰⁷ See *Human Rights in China* (1-3) and *Enlightenment*.

⁵⁰⁸ . Commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the Universal Declaration, *HRC* issue 3.

but seldom directly used the term ‘human rights’ before 1978. Human rights became one of the most important key words during the Democracy Wall. *HRC* first published and posted *Human Rights Declaration in China* on the Democracy Wall. The document referred to the PRC constitution as a protection of civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights. In the following months, *HRC* published the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration of Independence of the United States. *Voice of the People* also published The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen emitted during the French Revolution.⁵⁰⁹ The publications traced thoughts and practice of human rights, helping many people extricate themselves from the mind-cage of the CCP’s class and dictatorship ideology.

Rule of Law

At first, most minkans did not distinguish between the rule of law and the rule by law. But some argued that the constitution should limit government and protect civil rights. Wei’s Fifth Modernization attempted to distinguish rule of law from rule of man, arguing that the ruler had been supreme over the law through most of the long history of Chinese politics. Wei stressed ‘enemies of democracy who did not practice the rule of law, replacing rule of law with a fascist regime or adulterating it with abuse of power in the name of stability and unity. The two approaches, no matter how different they might be, aimed ultimately at the destruction of people’s democratic and civil rights.’⁵¹⁰ To realize the rule of law, it was essential to abolish the Party-state model, and protect equal rights for all parties that were elected into the National People Congress or Citizen’s Parliament.⁵¹¹ It was necessary for rule of law to introduce the separation of powers against the monopoly power of the special party and protect civil rights so as to reduce risk of disasters and other human rights violations⁵¹²

⁵⁰⁹ Vol. 14, 152, issue 6

⁵¹⁰ Mab, 68.

⁵¹¹ Vol.18. p47, Road of People, iss. 3.

⁵¹¹ Human Right Declaration in China, *HRC* issue 1.

⁵¹² Vol.18. p47, Road of People, iss. 3.

Human Rights in China argued that legal reform should safeguard civil rights and the rule of law so as to realize political development toward democracy.⁵¹³ On the transition of the political system, some minkan from different historical perspectives in China and the West explained that rule of law involved separating the executive and legislative power.⁵¹⁴ Some magazines discussed the separation of powers through political reform.⁵¹⁵ After *Human Rights in China* directly republished “carrying out of the Three People's Principles throughout the country” by Sun Yatsen, more and more magazines promoted separation of powers, referring to Manistique⁵¹⁶ or Three Principles of the People and Five-Power Constitution System of Government⁵¹⁷. Some magazines argued further that the current law should be amended so that the law would be independent from the CCP and the legal system can safeguard democracy and people's rights.⁵¹⁸

For many magazines, rule of law meant a fair practice of legal procedures. Minkan on Fu Yuehua and Wei Jinghua's cases both pressed the authorities for their obligation to obey current legal procedures. Minkan directly demanded the abolishment of counter-revolution crime and some of them even argued that the PRC constitutional infrastructure should be changed: voters directly elected all the leaders and representatives, who could be recalled and monitored by voters.⁵¹⁹ Under the current circumstances, the police as the tool of the leaders brazenly fabricated evidence. Therefore, a presumption of innocence should be enacted in legal codes and supported by a constitution, and the principle should be enshrined that leaders could not decide or influence whether a person was convicted.⁵²⁰

4.5 Open Space

⁵¹³ For legal reform, see Mab (document23), *HRL*.

⁵¹⁴ On Freedom of Speech, and vol.7, 13.

⁵¹⁵ vol. 7, 26 and 45 vol.10, 29, 45.

⁵¹⁶ In the same issue, *HRL* published “Constitution of New Democracy” by Mao Zedong in 1940. In the article, Mao emphasized that Constitution in China must be implemented and see Vol. 14, 283.

⁵¹⁷ See document 15, Thaw, 79, in Huang and Seymour, see *Voice of People*, see Wang Xizhe, *Towards Darkness*.

⁵¹⁸ See AFT, iss8, 42, vol5, Taiwan

⁵¹⁹ See Vol.18, 47, on Democracy, Road of People, iss.3 and Declaration of Human Rights, HRC iss. 1.

⁵²⁰ Issue 3, Grass Will, Dazibao, Mab, 105, 258.

Unlike the walls in the 1950s which mainly functioned as borders of squares, the democracy walls in the late 1970s reversed the relation between the wall and the sphere: the wall came to the centre and the sphere became boundless. Political debates were no longer confined within university campuses or among elite groups, but made accessible to and participated in by different social groups. Generations of minkan activists were connecting, veterans sharing experiences with youngsters. Citizens gathered around the democracy walls like nomads attracted to pastures. They read the posters and took the magazines away with them to other provinces, which helped create multiple resistance centres. The model of this open-ended space showed the potentiality to break apart the social barriers that the Party had imposed through the construction of work units and the household registration system.

Minkan activists in the Democracy Wall period fought for a legal status for their publications. The editors believed that their activities were protected as one of the basic rights spelled out by the constitution.⁵²¹ They wanted their unofficial magazines to exist on a par with the official ones, without having to assume an underground status. They visited municipal propaganda departments and publishing bureaus demanding to register their magazines, but were told that they were not permitted to register because there was not yet a publications law in China. When they questioned why, in that case, were the official publications allowed to exist without being registered, the officers had nothing to reply. Some editors even went to tax bureaus asking to pay tax for their magazines, but were rejected on the same grounds. After these refusals, their last resort was to publicize their registration requests and the authorities' responses in their magazines and on wall posters.⁵²² By so doing, minkan raised the awareness among the public of the absolute power of the party-state and the necessity of persistence to push for more legal spaces. When they were later accused of illegal publishing and closed down by the public bureaus, they showed all the records of their dealings with various

⁵²¹ Article 35 of the constitution, 'Citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of association, of procession and of demonstration'.

⁵²² Liu Qing, My reflection and perspectives, Taiwan, Vol. 6, 316. Wei Jingsheng Interview 9/6/08. The AFT wrote to Central of Propaganda department, Publishing Bureau, Public Security Bureau. Tax Bureau. to apply for registration since January 1979, 316, vol.6 Taiwan., *Beijing Spring* also wrote and registered in March and April 1979, iss.7. Some minkan editors recognized that the CCP only used PRC constitution as a tool and did not practice rule of law. Meanwhile they criticized that the principle of democratic centralism violated the principle of democracy. Wei Jingsheng interview: 10/6/08.

party-state organs. This action itself announced the illegal nature of the crackdown upon *minkan*.

During the Democracy Wall period, *minkan* formed regional coalitions to support each other. These regional support groups further consolidated into a nationwide resistance network. In January 1979, seven magazines—*April Fifth Tribune*, *Exploration*, *Human Rights in China*, *Mass Reference*, *Enlightenment*, *People's Tribune*, *Today*—initiated the Coalition of *Minkan* and Civic Organizations in Beijing. Within ten days, another twenty local magazines joined in. Each magazine would produce one representative to attend the meetings and one vote for making formal decisions. Liu Qing's bungalow, which had been used as the contact address for *April Fifth Tribune*, became the venue for the weekly meetings of the Coalition. Liu Qing was elected as convener of the Coalition.⁵²³ The Coalition organized an independent inquiry into the arrest of petitioner Fu Yuehua by publicizing the responses from the police and the testimonies of Fu's relatives and friends. The Coalition also helped its membership magazines to organise events. For example, it facilitated HRC to organize a four-day seminar on democracy in Dongdan Park in February.⁵²⁴ When *minkan* editors were arrested, the Coalition played an important role in rescuing them.

Similar coalitions among *minkan* groups existed in other provinces. In central China, a dozen of magazines including *Zhongsheng* (Bell), *New Democracy Wave*, *Minzhu zhi Zhuan* (Bricks of Democracy) and *Xin Shidai* (New Era) formed a coalition in Hubei, Henan and Hunan provinces.⁵²⁵ In the east, there were *Hai Langhua* (Sea Waves) in Qingdao, *Zhejiang zhi Chun* (Zhejiang Spring) in Zhejiang, *Voice of Democracy* in Shanghai and *Bohai* in Tianjin. In the south, there were *Republic* in Changsha, *Renmin zhi Lu* (People's Road), *Xuexi Tongxun* (Study Correspondence) and *Renmin zhi Sheng* (Voice of People) in Guangzhou. Time was now ripe for forming a national coalition.

⁵²³ *April Fifth Tribute*, issue 4, *Exploration* issue 2 and *Mass Reference*, issue 3 Widor, vol1, 96. Liu Qing, JCUOUM-----The fighting banner of the Democracy Wall.

⁵²⁴ Widor, vol1. 458-60.

⁵²⁵ The name of the magazine referred to the 19th century Russian magazine *Bell* by Alexander Herzen. Tianwan, v19, 79.

From February to August 1980, three preliminary meetings were held in Wuhan, Shanghai and Hangzhou.⁵²⁶

In September, a formal conference was held in Guangzhou, hosted by *People's Road*. Around 50 unofficial magazines all over the country intended to attend the conference. However, due to police surveillance, only 33 magazines managed to arrive at Guangzhou, of which only 20 succeeded in attending the conference, the rest intercepted by Guangzhou police and sent back to where they came from. A few Hong Kong organizations including the Alliance in Support of Minkan on the Mainland also attended the conference. After two days, the conference declared the founding of the National Minkan Association (NMA) with a membership of fifty magazines including those who had not been able to appear at the conference. The conference also decided that the NMA would publish its own magazine called *Responsibility*. Minkan groups around the country, according to their geographic locations, would be divided into four sub-associations: East China association, South China association, Northwest association and North China association. Each sub-association would take turns to edit and produce the magazine. The mimeographed copies produced locally would be reprinted in letterpress in Hong Kong and then circulated back in the Mainland. The first two issues of *Responsibility* were produced by the South China association. Around 100 copies each were mimeographed in Guangzhou. Letterpress editions were printed in Hong Kong. The opening issue reported the process of the conference and its decisions, the statement of the association denouncing the official crackdown on minkan. The East China association produced the following six issues in Shanghai and Hangzhou. Each issue produced around 50 mimeographed copies. Hong Kong supporters, who tried to take the magazine out of the mainland, were detained, which made it impossible to reproduce letterpress editions after the fourth issue.⁵²⁷

The NMA's organization illustrated the open space created by the Democracy Wall movement. In this nexus, each magazine became a node and had the potential of functioning as a new centre when other nodes were suppressed. The node could be

⁵²⁶ Fu Shengqi interview 29/01/09 and Xu Wenli interview 24/06/09 . Fu Shengqi, 'Qing Yongmin, Human rights and Democracy Fighter' http://www.boxun.com/hero/201012/fushengqiwenhui/3_1.shtml [accessed 20 February 2011].

⁵²⁷ Fu Shenqi interview, See also Tianwan, vol.19, 93 and Chen Ziming, 'Birth of April Fifth Movement of births: Thought movement and the power of outside the system' <http://www.xschina.org/show.php?id=11632> [accessed 20 February 2011].

replicated and replaced with a new node when it was itself removed. In practice, when one magazine was forced to close down, another new magazine in the same region usually appeared and entered into the coalition. When the NMA was banned after publishing eight issues, thirty NMA representatives from different magazines protested in Beijing. The model of the network made it difficult for the authorities to suppress these magazines individually. In the end the authorities resorted to shutting down all unofficial magazines in one go and arrested up to a thousand editors and supporters.⁵²⁸ Even so, the NMA network survived underground, as other networks did. This matrix of resistance proved to be an irreplaceable force to transform society in years to come.

⁵²⁸ New magazine initiated , counter punch, Counter punch, vol. 15, 75 (anti-revolution crime) and (vol.15, 275-289). See Ni Chuanyan' http://www.boxun.com/hero/mqy/5_1.shtml [accessed 20 February 2011]. Fu Shenqi, <http://www.godblesschina2008.org/bencandy.php?fid=43&id=1417> [accessed 20 February 2011].

5. Development and Transformation

This chapter examines minkan in the 1980s, the decade that saw the transformation of unofficial magazines and the opening up of society. Although the Democracy Wall had been shut down, the issues it raised and anticipated became widely debated and practiced in the following decade. The opening of the country to the outside world stimulated its peoples' imagination of other possible ways of life. For many, this was a decade of liberation and vigour.

The crackdown on the democracy walls and the inclusion of the Four Cardinal Principles into the revised constitution in 1980 foreshadowed a seesaw battle between the state and society, complicated by the power struggles inside the Party. The political line of the Party in the 1980s is best summarized in Deng Xiaoping's 'One Centre, Two Basic Points' policy, that is to say, the Party is going to focus on economic development through reform and opening-up but keep its grip on political power at the same time.⁵²⁹ To keep the whole of society under control, more laws were promulgated to impose restrictions on various aspects of social activities. In addition to legislation, the Party also adopted multi-layered administrative measures to control the development of independent society. Society, in return, struggled for more leeway by finding loopholes avoiding the official establishment as well as creating new spaces.

After the clampdown on the Democracy Wall, the surviving magazines were forced to go underground following the ban on unofficial publications. The influence of these underground magazines dropped significantly compared with the Democracy Wall period. On the other hand, the format of minkan was creatively expanded in the 1980s to include election pamphlets, book series and correspondence education. Some official academic journals developed into semi-official magazines, where the editors had more freedom to decide on the content of the publications. Some politically sensitive magazines moved their editorial and production operations abroad.

⁵²⁹ 'AN Illustrated History of the Communist Party of China' <http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/45961.htm> [accessed 20 February 2011].

5.1 Power and Minkan Conditions

The beginning of 1980s saw PR China as a country where over four fifths of the population resided in rural areas. The system of people's communes and the command economy in Mao's period proved a disaster for the economic life of the countryside, where half of the population still experience regular famines. The rural population's high aspiration to shake off poverty and their expectation of agrarian modernisation called for economic reform. In some villages, where a new economic initiative of 'contracting output to households' had been secretly put into practice two years earlier, villagers were finally able to eat their fill.⁵³⁰ The experiment was finally and officially approved as the 'household responsibility system' and adopted nationwide. This accelerated the disintegration of people's communes.⁵³¹

Whilst the rural economy started to revive, the new decade greeted the urban areas with a soaring unemployment rate. Millions of educated youths who had been sent to the countryside during the Cultural Revolution returned to the cities seeking employment. Although a few of them were lucky enough to step into the posts of their parents after the latter's voluntary retirement, the vast majority of youngsters remained desperate to find ways to support themselves. Meanwhile, the rural economic reform was producing a large number of surplus labourers who now came to the cities to make a living as migrant workers. The old city dwellers, who were hardly able to make ends meet, were more and more unsatisfied with their living standards. The economic pressure reinforced the young generation's frustration with Party ideology and the unpromising future ahead. In May 1980 the *Chinese Youth Daily* published a reader's letter entitled "Ah, the Path of Life, How Is It That It Gets Narrower and Narrower!" which triggered a widespread discussion on possible lifestyles and individual achievements offered by the new decade. Many youngsters decided to cast off the shackles of the institutions and instead to seek their own independent roads and create their own space. They organized literature societies, and threw themselves enthusiastically into adventures such as rafting

⁵³⁰ Peter Ho, *Contesting rural spaces: land disputes, customary tenure and the state*, ed. Elizabeth J. Perry and Mark Selden, *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict and Resistance*. 2003, 103. See also Chen Guidi and Wu Chuntao, *Xiaogang cun de gushi* (Xiaogang cun story 《小岗村的故事》), huawen chubanshe, 2009, 7-28 or <http://data.book.163.com/book/home/009200050012/0000FPDb.html> [accessed 20 February 2011]

⁵³¹ *ibid.*

down the Yellow River and the Yangzi River.⁵³² The number of *getihu* (个体户, small business owners) soared dramatically from 150,000 in 1978 to over 1,010,000 by the end of 1981.⁵³³ Under such circumstances, work units were forced to relax the controls on individual lives.

The Party's attitude towards the new economic activities is best summarized in Deng Xiaoping's pragmatic philosophy of 'crossing the river by feeling for the rocks', put forward as an official slogan by the beginning of 1980. The mass escape of the population in southern provinces to Hong Kong also sped up the establishment of four Special Economic Zones (SEZ) in Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Shantou and Xiamen, to absorb foreign capital investment.⁵³⁴ Four years later these had increased to 14 SEZ along the coastal line. In economic terms, 'opening up' meant an orientation towards the international market.⁵³⁵

The economic relaxation was accompanied by conservative political adjustments, without challenging the fundamental principles of the Party. The CCP Eleventh Fifth Plenary Session in February 1980 and the Politburo Enlarged Meeting in August proclaimed that the standards of political life inside the Party had been raised, that the concentration of power should not be encouraged, and that the arbitrary use of power by individuals should be checked.⁵³⁶ The immediate effect of the newly established principles saw the removal of Hua Guofeng from the three of the most powerful political positions of PR China: Premier, Chairman of the CCP Central Committee, and Chairman of the CCP Central Military Commission. His replacement, Zhao Ziyang, who had gained a reputation for successfully promoting the household-responsibility system in the rural economic reform, succeeded as Premier; Hu Yaobang, who redressed the cases relevant to veteran cadres who had been subjected to persecution in Mao's era, took the position of Chairman of the CCP Central Committee; and Deng

⁵³² Xie Fengzhang, 'Story in the mountains' (一个山里人的《春秋》), <http://hi.baidu.com/xiefengzhang/blog/item/28582f454f637a388694732b.html>, [accessed 22/2/11]

⁵³³ State Statistics Bureau, *zhongguo tongji lianjian* 1983 (China's Statistics 1983, 《中国统计年鉴》(1983)), zhongguo tongji chubenshe, 1983,137. See also Xiao Donglian, 'Crisis and development opportunities' http://www.usc.cuhk.edu.hk/wk_wzdetails.asp?id=6018 [accessed 20 February 2011].

⁵³⁴ The Xindao Daily, 'The Mass Escape of the Population in Southern Provinces to Hong Kong', http://history.stnn.cc/years/201009/t20100909_1412588_3.html [accessed 22/2/11].

⁵³⁵ Brown, Chris, CHINA'S GATT BID: WHY ALL THE FUSS ABOUT CURRENCY CONTROLS, Pacific RIM Law & Policy Journal. 57, 80, 1994.

⁵³⁶ Deng Xiaoping, 'Party and state leadership reform' (《党和国家领导制度的改革》), People's Daily, 8 August 1980. <http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64162/64165/68640/68658/4709791.html> [accessed 20 February 2011].

Xiaoping himself held the ultimate supreme position as Chairman of the CCP Central Military Commission. Ironically, the new rules prevented neither the dismissal of Hu Yaobang nor the house arrest of Zhao Ziyang later, proving themselves to be nothing but the new clothes of the same old tyrant.

In the political life of the PR China, he who controls the army controls the Party and hence the state. Deng succeeded Mao as the supreme power-holder of the military of the Party. The process of PR China's constitutional amendments during Deng's rule was similar to Mao's strategy during his early rule: whoever controls the military controls the Politburo, the Party, the Party Congress and finally the state by rewriting the constitution in line with the change to the Party's constitution. This rewriting of the constitution in sequence becomes the formal and legal recognition of the winner after the power struggle. However, there is a difference between Mao's middle and late rule and Deng's rule, in terms of in their control over the society. Mao inclined to class struggle, mass campaigns and the use of violence. Deng, as the second generation of the Party leader, lacking Mao's charisma and authority, had to rely on legislative procedures to build up his authority, legitimacy and credibility. During Mao's rule of nearly three decades, the constitution was seldom modified once it was established in early 1950s. By contrast, the constitution was revised twice within the first decade of Deng's reign, on top of numerous additional statutes and regulations. He broadcast the trial of Wei Jingsheng in advance of the crackdown on the Democracy Wall. He convinced other veteran Party leaders by holding the trial of "Lin Biao and Jiang Qing Anti-Revolution Clique" in front of the public. On the other hand, in response to constant pressure from a society calling for democracy and legislative reform, Deng and other veteran Party leaders cautiously began legislative reform on county and district levels of the People's Congress, ensuring that no reform would challenge the monopoly power of the Party. Politically sensitive areas such as publication, press and association were subject to administrative measures instead of legislation.⁵³⁷

⁵³⁷ He, Qinglian, *wu shu zhongguo—zhongguo dalu kongzhi meidi da jimi* (Secret of Media control in Mainland China 《雾锁中国——中国大陆控制媒体大揭秘》). See also Wei, Qian 钱蔚 2002. *Zhengzhi, shichang yu dianshi zhidu: Zhongguo dianshi zhidu bianqian yanjiu* 政治, 市场与电视制度: 中国电视制度变迁研究 (Politics, the market and the television system: research on changes in the television system in China). Zhengzhou shi 郑州市 (Zhengzhou city): Henan renmin chubanshe 河南人民出版社 (Henan people's publishing association).

These controlling mechanisms were complemented with inherited political campaigns. In 1983 Deng launched the ‘Anti-Spiritual-Pollution’ campaign and ‘Strike Hard’ campaign to strengthen the Party’s controls over society. In April the same year, an Armed Police Force was established to strengthen mechanisms of internal repression. On 4 June 1985, Deng Xiaoping announced that the People's Liberation Army would be reduced by one million to concentrate on modernization and to contribute to world peace.⁵³⁸ On the same day four years later, around 300,000 PLA troops with state-of-the-art military equipment together with the new Armed Police Force, violently repressed peaceful protesters in Beijing and Chengdu.

Towards the mid-1980s it became clear that the opening-up and modernization advocated by the Party was merely for the purpose of importing advanced technology and management skills from abroad and attracting foreign capital investment. Various administrative reforms were put forward to improve productivity and management effectiveness in factories and work units at all levels. Open-minded as Hu Yaobang was, his political initiative was restricted to redressing the cases in which people had been subject to unjust treatments in Mao’s era. Hu’s loyalty to the Party prevented him from implementing any practical political reforms.⁵³⁹ In 1985, Deng Xiaoping reinstated the political line of the Party on the doctrine of ‘one centre, two basic points’, namely holding economic development as the central task of the Party whilst upholding the four cardinal principles and adhering to the policy of reform and open door.⁵⁴⁰

The lack of political reforms means that the direction of the economic reforms was under the control of Party officials to ensure that the officials themselves and their families would be the ones to benefit.⁵⁴¹ This led to large-scale corruption across the country in the mid-1980s. University students took to the streets in exercise of their

⁵³⁸ Xinhua Net ‘Deng Xiaoping announced that China’s government disarmament 1,000,000’, http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2010-11/14/c_12771942.htm [accessed 20 February 2011].

⁵³⁹ Wu Guoguang interview, also see http://news.bbc.co.uk/chinese/trad/hi/newsid_4270000/newsid_4273100/4273122.stm [accessed 20 February 2011].

⁵⁴⁰ Upholding the four cardinal principles aimed at protecting the monopoly power of the power and forcing people to follow the party ideology while the policy of reform and open door was to build up the authority and legitimacy of the current rule.

⁵⁴¹ The officials controlled economic sources and product licenses without institutional limit and public scrutiny mechanism, which they traded power for money in the 1980s. See also Pei Minxin, *China’s Trapped Transition: The Limits of Developmental Autocracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), and Pei Minxin, ‘The Dark Side of China’s Rise’ <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=18110>. [accessed 20 February 2011].

civil rights, demanding political reforms, and calling for the punishment of corrupt officials. The student movements split the Party. Hu Yaobang who was sympathetic to the students was finally forced to resign in January 1987. An ‘Anti-bourgeois Liberalism’ campaign was launched to suppress open-minded intellectuals and officials. Hu’s successor Zhao Ziyang was open-minded enough to halt the Anti-Bourgeois Liberalism campaign and set up the Office of The CCP Central Committee Political Reform Discussion Group to draft a proposal on political reform. The document included abolition of a series of Party organs such as the Political and Legal Committee that controlled police, court and prosecutors. But it was eventually rejected by Deng Xiaoping who alarmed by its resemblance of the Western separation of powers.⁵⁴²

In 1988 the government launched a price reform, which meant that government pricing of the command economy was partially replaced with market prices to adapt to the market environment. This resulted in a price surge of 20 per cent for most of the daily necessities within the month of July alone.⁵⁴³ In 1989 Hu Yaobang’s death triggered a student movement across the country, supported by city residents from all walks of life. The military crackdown on the mass demonstrations resulted in the Tiananmen Square Massacre, which drew down the curtain on a decade of relative humanism and liberty.⁵⁴⁴

In the 1980s, the CCP top leaders prohibited any legislative changes with regard to the media and publications, in order to avoid any loophole that would bring society practices within the law. Veteran leaders such as Hu Qiaomu and Chen Yun remarked:

⁵⁴² Wu Guoguang, ‘Political reform’, <http://2newcenturynet.blogspot.com/2010/12/2010124.html> [accessed 20 February 2011] also see Bao Pu. Eds. &trans., *Prisoner of the State: The Secret Journal of Premier Zhao Ziyang*, Simon & Schuster, 2009 and Human Rights in China ‘Prisoner of the State Roundtable’ http://www.hrichina.org/public/contents/article?revision_id=172115&item_id=172111 [accessed 20 February 2011].

⁵⁴³ National Statistics Bureau, *zhongguo tongji lianjian* 1988 (China’s Statistics 1988, 《中国统计年鉴》 (1988)), zhongguo tongji chubenshe, 1988,137. Inflation rate 19.3% in July 1988, See also ‘Prices breaks through the barrier’ <http://per.hr33.com/news/newsdetail/123428.html> [accessed 20 February 2011].

⁵⁴⁴ From 1980 to 1989, students and scholars in society gradually formed a consensus on humanism, liberty and democracy through minkan development and transformation, which reverberated in society and jarred the power. After Tiananmen Square Massacre, the consensus began crack in society after dissident groups were repressed or in exile while the open-minded leaders were purged. The different groups in power, if they used to existed, turned into consistent and concerted action to crack down any opposition in society. Wang Chaohua, *One China, Many Paths*, Verso, 2005. See also Wu Guoguang, ‘Political reform’, <http://2newcenturynet.blogspot.com/2010/12/2010124.html> [accessed 20 February 2011] and Qin Hui, Wen Tiejun and Wang Hui talks, <http://recommending.blogspot.com/> [accessed 20 February 2011].

"If we enact a social association law and a publication law to deal with underground organizations and publications and ask them to register, it is likely that the anti-Party elements will drill loopholes but we do not know. We cannot allow all the underground or semi-underground organizations and publications to register in any case, in order to keep them with an illegal status and eliminate their activities."⁵⁴⁵

Deng Xiaoping further abolished the 'four bigs' (to speak out freely, air views fully, hold great debates, and write big-character posters), and instead had the Four Fundamental Principles written into the preamble of the Chinese Constitution which protected the monopoly of the CCP even more than the former constitution did.⁵⁴⁶ Such constitutional principles did not protect civil rights such as freedom of expression and publication; on the contrary, they guaranteed unlimited power to the Party, enabling it to control any practice of free publication and expression. The constitution and other laws also gradually developed a ruling strategy of repression and propaganda with multi-layered administrative measures to control and restrict the growth of any forms of independent society.⁵⁴⁷

An official important document in June 1981 stipulated the official norms and exclusive templates according to which people could write and comment on historical events, so as to restrict access to historical materials and to avoid popular debate of historical events.⁵⁴⁸ Moreover, the CCP Central Committee and State Council carried out an instruction called 'On the treatment of illegal publications and related issues in an illegal organization', to be applied through the institutions of all levels of the Party and State to suppress any 'illegal organizations and publications' (i.e., those not allowed to be registered) between 1980 and 1982. During the campaign, the Central Propaganda Department issued a document asking writers not to produce any more exposes of either the Anti-Rightist Campaign in 1957 or the Cultural Revolution.⁵⁴⁹ Meanwhile the

⁵⁴⁵ Archive 9 and also see Chen Zimin and Wang Xizhe interview, Also see Deng Liqun Memoir, <http://club.backchina.com/main/viewthread.php?tid=589392> [accessed 20 February 2011].

⁵⁴⁶ Please refer to the article. Hu Jiwei, Hu Yaobang and the Xidan Democracy Wall, http://www.peacehall.com/news/gb/z_special/2004/04/200404220644.shtml [accessed 20 February 2011].

⁵⁴⁷ The constitution in 1982 abolished freedom of strike. The Criminal law in 1999 added anti-cult organization (article 300) to justify the crackdown of Falun Gang and other underground organizations. See China's constitution and laws. <http://xfj.jpkc.gdccc.edu.cn/list.aspx?cid=27> and Law interpretation <http://chinalawlib.com/linktop-125-300-sfjs-8-35.html> [accessed 20 February 2011].

⁵⁴⁸ RESOLUTION ON CERTAIN QUESTIONS IN THE HISTORY OF OUR PARTY SINCE THE FOUNDING OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA (from 1949 to 1981) <http://www.marxists.org/subject/china/documents/cpc/history/01.htm> [[accessed 20 February 2011].

⁵⁴⁹ After anti- Kulian (《苦恋》) campaign in 1981, there were more limits on the discussion of post-1949 historical events. See Yang Jisheng, 'Slow down, Criticise Kulian' http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4e5f987f0100jtkg.html

instructions to the press revealed that any critical reports were to be severely restricted. These measures made it more difficult for underground *minkan* to survive than during the Democracy Wall period. After the crackdown on the Democracy Walls and *minkan*, many participants and supporters of unofficial magazines were marginalised within society.

This meant that foreign media attracted a bigger audience. Imported foreign TV series and films began to influence people's lifestyles. Meanwhile, people in coastal areas had the chance to watch TV news and programs from Hong Kong and Taiwan. Smuggled books, magazines, video and audiocassettes were brought or circulated in many areas. Foreign radios such as VOA and BBC became more popular than ever before. There were two reasons for listening to the foreign radios: learning English and access to news. At the same time, underground *minkan* were also still active and often published the most sensitive issues on politics, society, history and economics. Under the circumstances, official media and publication lost more and more spectators and readers. Some open-minded editors of official media changed the style and contents of traditional propaganda in a way that was called 'to hit an edge ball'.⁵⁵⁰ This meant that some contents in official media touched on sensitive issues very close to the taboo 'edge' of the Party. Even official media sometimes rewrote sensitive issues, some of which originated from underground *minkan* or semi-official publications. More and more official media also published commercial issues and simple mass entertainment. Some underground *minkan* and semi-official publications published even more controversial issues to challenge the dominant social and moral norms.

5.2 Formats and Features of Magazines

I will examine different features of magazines in this period: election magazines, book series, unofficial magazines and overseas magazines. Besides underground magazines,

[accessed 20 February 2011] Deng Xiaoping's speech, 'Pay attention to guiding youths' <http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64162/124333/124356/125501/7424950.html> [accessed 20 February 2011].

⁵⁵⁰ Refer to Qin Benli's interview: edge ball, <http://www.nytimes.com/1989/01/16/world/shanghai-journal-at-the-cutting-edge-of-china-s-new-journalism.html> [accessed 20 February 2011] whose term in Ping Pong, referred to a hit on the very edge of the opponent's side which is still a legitimate ball (within bounds) but nearly impossible to defend by opponents since it goes in unpredictable directions.

these products had the features and characteristics of magazines and their derivatives and created parallel and overlapping spaces in society: underground space, grey areas and international space.

5.2.1 Election Law and Minkan

Elections in the PRC have always been strictly controlled by the party. The first draft of the PRC election law, adopted by the central government in 1953, made it clear that only the ‘people’ were entitled to vote while the landlord class, counterrevolutionaries, those who had been deprived of political rights and those with mental health problems were barred from voting. The categories of ‘enemies’ expanded in the years that followed to include ‘bad elements’ labelled as such by the party in various political campaigns. The 1953 draft also divided people’s congresses into five levels, from the lowest level in townships to the highest on the national level, each elected by the next lower level. Between 1953 and 1965, three nation-wide elections for the lowest level people’s congresses were held, where the numbers of the candidates equalled the numbers of the seats available in people’s congresses, and where all candidates were appointed by the party committees. Between 1966 and 1979, no elections were held at all.⁵⁵¹

During the Democracy Wall movement, the unofficial magazine *Human Rights in China (HRC)* was the first advocate for direct elections of people’s congresses at all levels and of leaders of governments at all levels.⁵⁵² This radical stance resulted in the magazine’s early shutdown in the first wave of clampdowns on the Democracy Wall movement, but its position was taken up by surviving magazines such as *Beijing Spring* and *Wotu* which continued to push for electoral reform. They made three demands on the government: 1) invalidate the officially appointed representatives in the current people’s congresses; 2) draft an election law to be debated openly and passed via referendum; 3) cease to punish any kind of speech as a crime.⁵⁵³ Minkan’s demands

⁵⁵¹ Chen Ziming, ‘Open community space, to lay the basis of social change’, <http://www.minzhuzhongguo.org/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=3695> [accessed 20 February 2011].

⁵⁵² Declaration of human rights in China, *HRC*, issue 1, also see Widor, Vol. 1, 430-1.

⁵⁵³ Wang Lishan, Open Letter to Peng Zhen, *Beijing Spring*, iss.6, also see Widor, Vol2 1, 393-7.

resonated through society and fuelled power struggles within the party. Peng Zhen, a party veteran who participated in the drafting of the 1953 election law but had been sidelined during the CR, was now reinstated to lead the Legal Affairs Commission of the National People's Congress and pushed for a new election law to undermine his political rivals. Under such circumstances, the Second Session of the Fifth National People's Congress adopted the PRC Election Law for National People's Congress and Local People's Congresses at All Levels in June 1979. According to Peng Zhen, the law provided a 'vital foundation for the implementation of democratic centralism'.⁵⁵⁴ The aim of the election law was also to control society, with legal mechanisms on top of administrative measures from the 1980s onward.

The 1979 election law inherited the principles and the structure of the 1953 draft, restricting direct elections to the lowest level, that is, people's congresses at district level. The law gave election committees, usually chaired by leaders of the party committees, a monopoly power to control the electoral process.⁵⁵⁵ Election committees were in charge of the registration of voters and candidates when they had the chance to filter out nominees that they disliked in pre-elections. When election committees produced fake ballots and counts, there was no mechanism to monitor them or punish their fraudulence. The interventions from the local authorities were just as frequent. They confiscated challenging posters, destroyed independent bulletins, arrested activists of independent campaigns.⁵⁵⁶ They also secretly supported their favoured student party members to run as independent candidates.⁵⁵⁷ The division of constituencies based on work units was biased. For example, Beijing University was divided into two constituencies, one for student and one for teachers and staff. The student constituency had around 6,000 voters and was allocated two seats. By contrast, Haidian district

⁵⁵⁴ PRC Election Law, <http://zh.wikisource.org/zh/中华人民共和国全国人民代表大会和地方各级人民代表大会选举法/1979年> [access 22/2/11].

see also Peng Zhen, "Explanation of Seven Draft Law, in Editorial Committee on Party Literature of the Central Committee, *Peng Zhen Writings*, renmin wenzue, 1991.

⁵⁵⁵ In many cases, the vice secretary of the party committee became the chairman of the election committee, whilst the secretary himself became a candidate for the election who rarely lost the election.

⁵⁵⁶ See Tao Sen, He Depu and Fu Shenqi's experience. *Changes and Tensions in the Worldviews of Chinese Youth in the 1980s*, University of Michigan Press, 2002, 39-47. He Depu's story and Fu Shenqi's story see 'Factory Elections'.

⁵⁵⁷ Jiang Xiaoyu was a member of the CCP and would be arranged to work in the Propaganda Department of the Party committee in the college after his graduation. The party committee in his college secretly supported him to run as an independent candidate. See Hu Ping and Wang Juntao, *kai tuo—beida xueyun wenxuan* (the pioneer: selected works of student movement in Beijing University 《开拓—北京大学运文选》), Hong Kong: tianyuan publisher, 1990, 345-6.

government, with less than 300 voters, was counted as one constituency, and allocated two representative seats.⁵⁵⁸ In some big factories, around 10,000 worker voters were only allowed to have one representative into the district-level congress.⁵⁵⁹ The election law also entitled the army to make a separate election law, which of course reinforced hierarchy in the army.

There were, however, at least four points where the new election law differed from the old draft, opening up some space for independent candidacy. According to the new law, any voter, with the support of three or more registered voters, was entitled to nominate a candidate; when there were too many nominees, their candidacies were to be decided through pre-elections; the number of candidates must exceed the number of seats; all political parties, groups and voters were entitled to promote their candidates in all kinds of forms.⁵⁶⁰ This was the first time in the PRC's history that people had a chance to nominate their candidates directly and vote for their representatives. Although the elections were only held at district level, the lowest in the hierarchy, the masses showed immense enthusiasm. In Xuanwu district in Beijing there were initially some 10,000 nominees for 316 seats, and in Gulou district in Nanjing 8,486 nominees for 339 seats within two months.⁵⁶¹ The elections were by and large restricted to urban areas. The legislative bias was that the ratio of voters to representatives in the villages was at least four times that of the cities.

Factories Elections

In China, there were 300,000 state-owned enterprises that employed 80 million employees in 1980.⁵⁶² The elections attracted many minkan activists to register as

⁵⁵⁸ Constituencies of the Party district organs in cities could often produce at least three representatives although there were only hundreds of people in the units. The soaring inequality continues. Yao Lifa, 'Election law reform' <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,4828879,00.html> [accessed 22/2/11].

⁵⁵⁹ For example, He Depu's constituency included 10,000 voters in four work units (factories) that one representative was elected. He Depu, 'My experience in the independent candidate campaign' <http://asiademo.org/gb/2000/02/20000205b.htm> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁵⁶⁰ In fact, independent candidates could only run on in district and county level. Please refer to Chen Ziming (Yu Xilai), Election Campaigns in Beijing Universities and Colleges, <http://cjch.bokee.com/control/5846764.html> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁵⁶¹ The number see Luo, Xu, *Searching for Life's Meaning: Changes and Tensions in the Worldviews of Chinese Youth in the 1980s*, 2002, 39.

⁵⁶² Watkins, Thayer, 'The state-owned enterprises in China', <http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/watkins/chinasoes.htm> [accessed 1 March 2011].

independent candidates. Unlike other candidates who often lacked knowledge and understanding of the newly adopted election law, minkan activists were already familiar with the legal system and experienced in disseminating their ideas through publications.⁵⁶³ In April 1980, Fu Shenqi (傅申奇), a Shanghai veteran of the democracy wall movement and a former editor of *Voice of Democracy*, became such an independent candidate in his factory, the Electric Power Machinery Plant in Shanghai. Fu founded *Voice of Democracy* in November 1978 against the backdrop of educated youths returning to the city from the countryside. He published four issues before the magazine was closed down in August 1979, when Fu was interrogated and two hundred copies of the magazine were confiscated at his home.⁵⁶⁴

According to the newly adopted election law, all candidates were entitled to publicize their ideas during the election campaign. With the help of his minkan friends, Fu started to mimeograph again, this time election bulletins. These bulletins were printed on very cheap paper, consisting of three to five pages, folded to make a pamphlet. The content included Fu's election manifesto, exchanges with fellow workers and news on university elections in Shanghai. Fu's campaign won him an increasing popularity among the workers. This alarmed the factory authorities. They spread the rumour that Fu was to become 'the fourteenth arrested' in Shanghai, as thirteen democracy wall activists had already been arrested in the city. The factory authority mobilized Party members and the official union to boycott Fu's election campaign, asking the voters to support the official candidates. Fu and his campaign team published bulletins every other day to combat against the official slurs.⁵⁶⁵

As the polling day was drawing near, the factory leaders planned a gathering of most the voters where they would denounce Fu as a member of an 'illegal organization' involved in 'anti-party and anti-socialist activities'. Thanks to his supporters, Fu found

⁵⁶³ Besides Fu Shenqi and He Depu, other workers editing unofficial magazines during that time became independent candidates in their factories. For example, Zhong Yueqiu, working in Shaoguan Smelting Plant in Guangdong province, was an editor of *Pingming Zhi Sheng (Voice of the Commoner)* and *Beijiang (North River)*. Wang Yifeng in a factory in Baoding, was one writer of several magazines such as *Lilun Qi (Theory Flag)* and *April Fifth Tribune*. Also refer to Qian Liqun, Not forget legacy (notes 4), Ni Chuanyan, Free Road, <http://www.peacehall.com/news/gb/lianzai/2006/07/200607200956.shtml> [accessed 1 March 2011] and Blank and Munro, 350.

⁵⁶⁴ Fu Shenqi interview. See also Ya Yi, 'Fushengqi interview', http://www.boxun.com/hero/201102/minzhuzhisheng/2_1.shtml [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁵⁶⁵ Fu Shenqi interview. See also Ya Yi, 'Fushengqi interview', http://www.boxun.com/hero/201102/minzhuzhisheng/2_1.shtml [accessed 1 March 2011].

out about the meeting in advance. In the middle of the meeting, he walked in and asked the organizer to allow him to speak for five minutes. His request refused, Fu jumped onto the stage and spoke loudly, 'I am a PRC citizen. I was indeed involved in publishing *Voice of Democracy*, which I was entitled to do by law. We applied many times to register our magazine, but were always rejected, for no given reason. And now they call it an illegal organization. I certainly have the right to become a candidate.' To this, the factory leaders had nothing to say.⁵⁶⁶

Fu managed to continue his election campaigns. Three days before the polling day, Fu took his annual leave, spending all his time talking to workers on all shifts. The election bulletins were mimeographed every day now. The day before the polling day, Fu successfully became one of three formal candidates, with nominations from over one hundred voters. On the day, workers cast their ballots and the election committee started to check the votes and count the numbers in public. By the early afternoon, Fu had gained a lead of 600 votes, 20 per cent more than the Party secretary, and 30 per cent more than leader of the official union. Then the election committee announced an unexpected break. When the voting resumed after an hour, a strange thing happened; Fu's votes dried up completely. By contrast, votes for the Party secretary increased dramatically until he ended up top of the poll. The election committee declared that the Party secretary was the only elected candidate who had won more than half of the votes. Fu and his supporters asked the election committee to explain why votes for Fu stopped after the break. The committee replied that Fu had been removed from the list of formal candidates. Fu published an open letter, both in a *dazibao* and in an election bulletin, asking a higher authority for an independent legal investigation on the election committee. Although his open letter was supported by over two hundred signatories, no higher authority answered his request.⁵⁶⁷

Since the factory as a voting district had been allocated two seats and had only managed to elect one representative, there should still be a second-round election for another seat. Many voters signed their names to demand that the election committee formally put Fu's name down as a candidate. But the committee refused again. Some workers started

⁵⁶⁶ Fu Shengqi interview. See also Ya Yi, 'Fushengqi interview', http://www.boxun.com/hero/201102/minzhuzhisheng/2_1.shtml [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁵⁶⁷ Fu Shengqi interview. See also Ya Yi, 'Fushengqi interview', http://www.boxun.com/hero/201102/minzhuzhisheng/2_1.shtml [accessed 1 March 2011].

to plan a strike to express their discontent. However, the strike did not materialize after the factory authority promised to raise salaries and at the same time threatened Fu's supporters.⁵⁶⁸ In the end, Fu was forced to give up his election campaign.⁵⁶⁹

Fu's one-month election campaign nonetheless saw the re-publication of *Voice of Democracy* in May. The new issue comprised a collection of Fu's election bulletins and updated news of ongoing universities elections in Shanghai. By the end of the year, a total of four issues had been published. Copies of the reborn magazine spread widely in major cities around the country, some even sent to Hong Kong.⁵⁷⁰ Through publicizing the election process, Fu built up a network with other underground magazines in East China including cities like Nanjing and Hangzhou. Between late 1980 and early 1981 these magazines joined the National Minkan Association and set up its East China branch. The East China branch produced six issues on behalf of NMA until the editors, Fu included, were arrested in 1981 and sentenced to three to seven years in prison.

He Depu (何德普), a 24-year-old worker in the Beijing Organic Chemical Plant, also had a distinctive experience as an independent candidate. He Depu had been the convener of the unofficial magazine *Beijing Youth* since its foundation in January 1980. In October, he launched his campaign as an independent candidate. His manifesto acknowledged that the fall of the Gang of Four in 1976 had been a turning point for the country, but pointed out that 'the positive changes had mainly resulted from power struggles within the Party rather than from the drive of any legal procedures'.⁵⁷¹ He warned that 'if a system of checks and balances could not be established through legislation and if the law could not represent the people's will', the positive changes could well be undone as a result of inner-party struggles. He believed that it was the responsibility of people's representatives 'to monitor the ruling party':

...Those who are only willing to understand themselves and do not want to understand others are not eligible to be the representatives of the people; those who are responsible

⁵⁶⁸ Election bulletins were published by Fu. Fu Shengqi interview by author, also see <http://cdp1998.org/details.asp?detailsid=2197> [accessed 1 March 2011].

<http://www.hrichina.org/public/contents/article?revision%5fid=2350&item%5fid=2349> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁵⁶⁹ Fu Shengqi interview.

⁵⁷⁰ See collection of Robin Munro and Fan Yidong, http://boxun.com/hero/2007/fansidong/27_4.shtml [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁵⁷¹ He Depu, 'My experience in the independent candidate campaign' <http://asiademo.org/gb/2000/02/20000205b.htm> [accessed 1 March 2011].

only for leaders and lack courage are not eligible to be the representatives; those who stand above the people, those who see representatives as ladder of promotion, those who are only concerned with their own personal gain are not eligible to be the representatives of the people... After all, the seats of people's representatives are fighting positions. They are entrusted by the people to fight for their interests.⁵⁷²

He Depu's election campaign was also impeded by the factory authorities, who prohibited him from visiting voters in other work units. They even tried to cancel He Depu's candidacy, but were opposed by the voters. He Depu came third in the pre-election poll and lost the opportunity to become a formal candidate, due to the fact that the election committee illegally allowed the Party secretary and the factory director to smuggle ballots from other work units. However, He Depu was so popular that many voters wrote down his name on the margin of the ballot paper that had excluded him. He asked the court and higher authorities to investigate the issue but his demand was refused. One month later in the factory's internal election of its standing committee of workers representatives, He Depu won one of the two seats available. Eighteen months later, he was expelled from the committee after the CCP banned minkan.

After the election, *Beijing Youth* published the results of two questionnaires comparing voters' attitudes towards the election before and after the independent campaign;⁵⁷³

	don't care	despise	important	Other
Before	70%	10%	5%	15%
After	5%	5%	80%	10%

Table 1. Voters' attitudes towards the election

According to the results table, 70 per cent of the voters didn't care about the election before; the percentage dropped to 5 after the election. The number of the voters who despised the election dropped from 10 per cent before the election to 5 per cent afterwards. Whilst only 5 per cent of the voters thought the election would be important, a vast majority of 80 per cent agreed that the election was important afterwards. He

⁵⁷² He Depu, 'My experience in the independent candidate campaign' <http://asiademo.org/gb/2000/02/20000205b.htm> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁵⁷³ Source from He Depu, 'My experience in the independent candidate campaign' <http://asiademo.org/gb/2000/02/20000205b.htm> [accessed 1 March 2011].

Depu considered the outcome a modest success and believed that his campaign had helped raise awareness of democracy.⁵⁷⁴

University Elections

As the Party strictly controlled almost all aspects of workers' lives through Party committees and work units, independent activities within factories were extremely vulnerable. In particular, the rise of Solidarity in Poland in the late 1980 alerted the Chinese authorities. They would try every means to ensure that no election campaigns could lead to the formation of independent unions. Under such circumstances, no independent candidates in factory elections ever succeeded in winning a seat to the district-level people's congress.

By contrast, independent candidates in universities had more success in opening up civil spaces, thanks to the different pattern of social life in universities. First of all, most students received their living allowances from their families instead of from school authorities, which made it very difficult for the authorities to penalise students economically. Students also lived and studied collectively and communicated easily, and were inspired by student activism in history, especially the May Fourth movement. Even some university directors themselves had been activists in their youth opposing the Nationalist Party before 1949. Some of them had been mistreated in the CR and started to reflect on the mistakes of the Party with an open mind towards independent candidates.

There were 675 universities in 1980, around-third of which produced independent candidates.⁵⁷⁵ In Shanghai, Tongji University, Fudan University and the Teachers College all launched large-scale election campaigns in the spring of 1980, posting

⁵⁷⁴ In 1998, He Depu fought for an independent candidacy again but his supporters were beaten and arrested when they tried to distribute election bulletins. In the same year, he was involved in organising an opposition party, Democracy Party of China. He was arrested in 2003 on charge of 'inciting subversion of state power' and sentenced to eight years.

⁵⁷⁵ I calculated the number of universities, where there were independent candidates according to Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, and other capitals of provinces. Number of universities in 1980 according to Chinese economy database: 'Statistical Communique of Economic and Social Development. http://database.ce.cn/district/tjgb/nf/80/200901/12/t20090112_17930068_3.shtml [accessed 1 March 2011].

dazibao in campuses to publicize campaign news and the speeches of the candidates, calling for voters' support. In Fudan University, one of the fiercest debates was on whether the statue of Mao Zedong should be removed from the campus. Most students demanded that the statue be removed from the public area, but the school authority refused. Most of the student magazines at the time were funded by the official student union and focused on literature. Nonetheless, they were also interested in the elections and selectively published campaign news and comments on the candidates.⁵⁷⁶ Xu Bangtai (徐邦泰), a third-year student at the Journalism Faculty, had been running such a student magazine, *Undergraduate*, since the end of 1979. He stood as an independent candidate and distributed in the campus 500 copies of questionnaires that he had designed. The responses showed that two-thirds of the students surveyed did not believe in communism, and more than half agreed that privilege was the biggest social issue in China.⁵⁷⁷ Although Xu was forbidden to publish the survey results in the student magazine, he enjoyed an increased popularity. On the polling day in May, Xu easily won a seat in Baoshan District where Fudan University belonged, and became one of the first independent representatives in PRC's history. In Shanghai there were altogether three independent student candidates who succeeded in winning seats in their universities and becoming representatives in their districts.⁵⁷⁸

In the Hunan Normal College, the story was different. The aggressive attitude of the school authority triggered a student movement. The election committee cancelled the pre-election stage that the independent candidates had asked for, and selected all formal candidates in early October 1980. When students demanded an independent investigation into the cancellation, the college authority labelled them as counter-revolutionaries. On 12 October, outraged students marched to the provincial headquarters of the Party, demanding a fair and open pre-election. When their request was rejected by the top Party leaders of Hunan province, students staged a hunger strike and boycotted classes in the university. At the same time, they sent telegrams and campaign briefings to universities in Beijing and Shanghai. A couple of student

⁵⁷⁶ For student magazines, see Widor, *The Samizdat press in China provinces, 1979-81: an annotated guide*, 1987, and Yang Hongwei, 'Memorandum of literary journal in universities 1978-80' · <http://www.shigebao.com/html/articles/12/2767.html> [accessed 1 March 2010].

⁵⁷⁷ *Responsibility*, issue 6. *Observer* in Hong Kong, issue 31, 1980, 12-9, also see Liu Shengqi, 257.

⁵⁷⁸ Chen Ziming interview by author and see Luo Xu, *Searching for Life's Meaning: Changes and Tensions in the Worldviews of Chinese Youth in the 1980s*, University of Michigan Press, 2002, 40-1.

delegates travelled to Beijing and directly petitioned to the top authorities. Their actions had wide repercussion. The National Minkan Association, by and large a workers' association, published a joint statement by its member minkan groups to support the student actions in Hunan Normal College, alongside an open letter from two people's representatives in Shanghai, both of whom had won seats as independent student candidates, demanding that the National People's Congress investigate the case. Overseas media also reported the story, noting the political views of the independent candidates in Hunan Normal College.⁵⁷⁹ Under such circumstances, the Beijing authority sent a team of investigators down to Hunan and condemned the improper practices of the leaders of the college.⁵⁸⁰

News of election campaigns in Shanghai and south China quickly sparked political enthusiasm among universities in Beijing. The most thorough preparations were coordinated by former members of *Beijing Spring* and *Wotu*. Although these two magazines had been forced to close down at the end of 1979, their members had managed to keep having regular meetings. Chen Ziming, one of the *Beijing Spring* editors had been following election news from Shanghai closely through his younger brother who was studying in Tongji University in Shanghai. Chen and his minkan colleagues studied the election manifestos from Shanghai fervently and decided to organize an independent candidate campaign among universities in Beijing. Through their network, eleven students from nine universities stepped up and stood as independent candidate.⁵⁸¹ Minkan veterans further set up guerrilla campaign committees to help independent candidates organize campaigns, write dazibao, and produce and distribute election pamphlets. Some independent candidates in the university ran for positions in the official student union. November 1980 was the first time that the president of an official union was elected by free vote.⁵⁸² The first election pamphlet appeared in Beijing on 16 October. Li Shengping, a former member of *Beijing Spring*, now a third-year student in the History Department of the First Division of Beijing

⁵⁷⁹ Observer, a magazine in Hong Kong, published some news and articles on independent candidates in mid of 1980.

⁵⁸⁰ Luo Xu, 40.

⁵⁸¹ Hu Ping, Elections in 1980s, http://www.renyurenquan.org/ryrq_article.adp?article_id=505 [accessed 1 March 2011], Chen Ziming interview.

Chen Ziming (Yu Xilai), Election Campaigns in Beijing Universities and Colleges, <http://cjch.bokee.com/control/5846764.html> [accessed 1 March 2011].

Qian Liqun, 'Thought can not be forgotten --the 1980 Democratic Movement in Chinese universities' <http://next.chinalabs.com/show.php?id=12277> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁵⁸² vol. 14, 338 and Hu and Wang 1990, 368-371.

University, launched his campaign, running for a seat in the people's congress in Xicheng District. The election pamphlet introduced Li as an April Fifth hero, backed up by two of his former colleagues from *Beijing Spring* who were also members of the central committee of the Communist Youth League (CYL).⁵⁸³

The Beijing Municipal Committee of the CCP issued their instructions on 10th November, two days after the independent campaigns began. The official statement denounced the independent campaign as a bourgeois election and forbade the CCP members to join the campaign. The directive was sent to members of the CCP, even members of the Communist Youth League in Beijing universities. The speech of the Party leader of the First Division of Beijing University showed the authority's effort to reduce the influence of the campaign: 'some of the candidates would not meet the Four Basic Principles, so we should reasonably refute them'.⁵⁸⁴ Later, the school Party committee at all levels mobilized the CCP members to organize a few wall posters, on behalf of some voters that had denounced Li as a violator of the Four Basic Principles. Li Shengping posted his reaction demanding a public debate with the denouncers, while insisting that he supported the Four Basic Principles. Li in public clarified his view on revolutionary and critical Marxism. Because the voters who opposed his opinions did not attend the debate in public, Li won at least another 200 votes after his speech. Finally, Li beat a candidate appointed candidate by the school authority, 70 per cent to 20 per cent, and won a seat in Xicheng District in Beijing.⁵⁸⁵

The Ministry of Education and Beijing Municipal Committee were both deeply disturbed by the development of these independent campaigns, trying different means to manipulate the elections. However, Hu Yaobang, the newly appointed General Secretary of CCP Central Committee, adopted a relatively open-minded attitude and allowed some official media like *China Youth Daily* to report positively on the independent campaigns.⁵⁸⁶

⁵⁸³ Hu Ping and Wang Juntao, *kai tuo—beida xueyun wenxuan* (the pioneer: selected works of student movement in Beijing University 《开拓—北大学运文选》), Hong Kong: tianyuan publisher, 1990, 368-71

⁵⁸⁴ *ibid.*

⁵⁸⁵ Hu Ping and Wang Juntao, *kai tuo—beida xueyun wenxuan* (the pioneer: selected works of student movement in Beijing University 《开拓—北大学运文选》), Hong Kong: tianyuan publisher, 1990, 368-71.

⁵⁸⁶ Zhang Wei, *Soul Struggle of Hu Yaoban*, <http://newyht.bokee.com/3679964.html> [accessed 1 March 2011] Hu Ping, Wang Juntao and Chen Ziming interview by author.

Election Magazines

In early November, approximately one hundred and fifty student candidates from about forty universities launched their election campaigns. Their campaigns included speaking in public, meeting with voters and managing poster forums that displayed candidates' positions and comments from voters. There were two types of print publications widely circulated during the campaigns: promotional pamphlets by individual candidates publicizing their manifestos and observer magazines that aimed to 'communicate between voters and candidates', 'report the whole dynamic of the election, reflect the wishes of voters and report all candidates on an equal basis'.⁵⁸⁷ These observer magazines, existing during the last two months of 1980, were mainly organized by students from social sciences and humanities faculties. For example, students from the History Department in the People's University launched *Voice of Election* on 9 November, with eight issues published in two months. In Beijing Normal University, students from the Chinese Department published 30,000-word news materials and 16 election photographs in their magazine *Journalists Corps*. Beijing University published the largest selection of election magazines: *Campaign Dynamics* by the Philosophy Department, *Election Wave* and *Anonymous* by the Chinese Department, *Citizens* by the Economics Department, *A Page of History* by the History Department, and *Observation* by the International Politics Department. These magazines usually printed six to eight issues, 400-500 copies of each issue, distributed mainly to students and teachers. Every student dorm housing eight to ten students shared one copy of these magazines in Beijing University.⁵⁸⁸

These election magazines not only offered timely updates of election news and in-depth analysis of election procedures, they also provided an unprecedented platform where candidates' profiles were scrutinized and their different political positions were compared and challenged by the voters. These magazines organized numerous debates between independent candidates inside the universities: thirteen such meetings took place in Beijing University, three in Beijing Normal University and two in the People's

⁵⁸⁷ Editor's statement in Hu Ping and Wang Juntao, ed. *kai tuo—beida xueyun wenxuan* (the pioneer: selected works of student movement in Beijing University 《开拓—北京大学运文选》), Hong Kong: tianyuan publisher, 1990, 326-7.

⁵⁸⁸ Hu Ping and Wang Juntao interview by author.

University.⁵⁸⁹ The election magazines also conducted surveys of candidates' political views on a range of carefully chosen issues based on the questions they collected from the voters. Five universities collected questions from the voters. In Beijing University, the questions raised fell into roughly four categories: 1) issues related to the politics and economics, which included questions on the nature of the current society, democracy and rule of law, the CCP leadership, the reform, the bureaucratic system, the practice of Marxism–Leninism; 2) issues immediately relevant to this election such as the background of the candidates and voters' views on the election; 3) evaluation of the contemporary history of the PRC, for example, assessments of Mao and other CCP leaders, the Cultural Revolution and other official campaigns, the Democracy Wall and Wei Jingsheng's trial; 4) other topics such as women's issues, education and international affairs.⁵⁹⁰ In the Central Institute for Nationalities, candidates and voters also exchanged views on nationality issues and emphasized equality of nationalities.⁵⁹¹

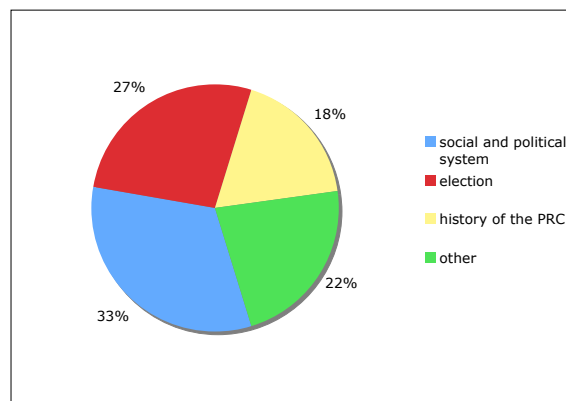


Diagram 3. Voters' Questions to the Candidates in
Beijing University, November 1980
Source: Hu and Wang, *Pioneer*, 291

⁵⁸⁹ Hu Ping and Wang Juntao, ed. *kai tuo—beida xueyun wenxuan* (the pioneer: selected works of student movement in Beijing University 《开拓—北京大学文选》), [Hong Kong: tianyuan publisher,] 1990, 254-66, 330-33 and 316-20.

⁵⁹⁰ Hu Ping and Wang Juntao, ed. *kai tuo—beida xueyun wenxuan* (the pioneer: selected works of student movement in Beijing University 《开拓—北京大学文选》) 1990, 291.

⁵⁹¹ Voters mentioned bloodshed in Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region and Yunnan province during the CR and the visit of the Dalai Lama's envoys in 1980. This was the first time that critical thinking on nationality issues appeared in an unofficial magazine. Hu Ping and Wang Juntao, ed. *kai tuo—beida xueyun wenxuan* (the pioneer: selected works of student movement in Beijing University 《开拓—北京大学文选》), 1990, 379-388.

The voters' questions reflected the concerns of educated city youths at the beginning of the 1980s. Based on the voters' responses, two magazines surveyed their independent candidates. The *Journalists Corps* in Beijing Normal University designed 17 questions for their six independent candidates. In Beijing University, *Election Wave* probed their 16 independent candidates with 24 carefully chosen questions.⁵⁹² Candidates' answers to these questions reflected their distinctive departures from the official line on important political issues, their reading habits—mainly Chinese classic novels and Russian literature—and their observations of the society based on their own experience. (most of them having been sent to the countryside during the Cultural Revolution.) Their answers also showed an increasing self-awareness among young people in the cities. The following analysis is based on the answers of the sixteen independent candidates in Beijing University.⁵⁹³

The reform was one of the most popular issues in Beijing University. For political reform and economic reform, there were three opinions. 30 per cent of candidates argued that the political reforms and economic reform should be enacted at the same time. They believed that China's reform was relevant to complicated social systems and had a long historical process: economic reform measures and political reform measures were interdependent and mutually reinforced. Any reform, whether economic or political, should be gradually introduced. 50 per cent of candidates argued that economic reform was the most significant for China. There was no economic reform and no economic freedom under the current command economy, in which citizens had no political freedom and or proper democratic rights. They further argued that political reform and democratisation were entirely dependent on economic reform in the beginning. 20 per cent of candidates argued that political reform took priority over economic reform. They considered that politics was the pilot and commander of the whole system. Based on the experiences in China and other countries, any economic

⁵⁹² For questionnaire for candidates in Beida, see Hu Ping and Wang Juntao, ed. *kai tuo—beida xueyun wenxuan* (the pioneer: selected works of student movement in Beijing University 《开拓—北京大学运文选》), 1990, 297-310. English translation refers to, Black and *Munro*, 64-5.

⁵⁹³ Hu Ping and Wang Juntao, ed. *kai tuo—beida xueyun wenxuan* (the pioneer: selected works of student movement in Beijing University 《开拓—北京大学运文选》), 1990, 11-268, 297-301. See also Chen Ziming (Yu Xilai), *Election Campaigns in Beijing Universities and Colleges*, <http://cjch.bokee.com/control/5846764.html> [accessed 1 March 2011].

Qian Lijun, 'Thought can not be forgotten --the 1980 Democratic Movement in Chinese universities' <http://next.chinalabs.com/show.php?id=12277> [accessed 1 March 2011].

reform and economic development had fallen when not accompanied by political reform. Without political enlightenment, mobilization and reconstitution of the political bodies, no viable economic reform programs would work out. They argued that the single party-state system should be changed into the division of the party and state and that the National People Congress should hold supreme power. Direct election to the People's Congress at all levels should be enacted and lead to transparency in the governments. Furthermore, they argued for an independent court system free from party and government control, and the right of social groups to monitor the authorities. Regardless of the differences, the reforms by most candidates aimed to break political and economic control, which stifled civil and economic rights. But they did not discuss the relation between political and economic democracy and marketisation because of the limits of their experience and knowledge.⁵⁹⁴

Moreover, the candidates argued that political reform and economic reform could not be divided, and considered that political reform took priority over economic reform. 'If political reform does not enter the track of democratic politics with rich flexibility and good self administration regulation, economic reform will inevitably lead to one of the following consequences: 1) failure of economic reforms causing total disorder; 2) difficulty with economic reforms, causing political restoration of the totalitarian forces; 3) temporary success of economic reforms, covering up maladies of the political system, and even strengthening political factors without democracy, which will prepare the next crisis.'⁵⁹⁵

The candidates directly discussed political reform with other candidates, to focus on separation of powers, representative mechanisms and direct election. Especially, Hu Ping, a postgraduate student in philosophy, clarified the separation of powers in the following rubrics: 1) separation of the Party's leading bodies and the supervisory authority; 2) separation of Party and government; 3) separation of the executive,

⁵⁹⁴ Xia Shen, Fang Zhiyuan, and Zhang Wei held the first stand. Zhang Manling, Yang Baikui, Luo Jingli, Yuan Hongbin and Liu Wei the second stand, Hu Ping and Wang Juntao the third. See Hu and Wang, *Pioneer*, 299 and their manifestos and statements.

⁵⁹⁵ Hu Ping, *some of my political view*, 27 ed. Hu and Wang, 1990.

legislative and judicial powers; 4) separation of Government and society, including separation of government and social supervision.⁵⁹⁶

Wang Juntao argued that democracy should be established inside the party. He argued for the separation of party power: directly electing members of the Party congress, abolishing individual dictatorship and setting up three Party agencies comprised of a central committee, a supervisory commission and a central advisory commission. Each would be obliged to respond to the questions from any representative in the People's Congress. But he did not explain how party democracy was possible without democracy in the state and full popular participation. Xia Shen (夏申), a student in economics argued that the Chinese political structure was a pyramid that fused politics, economy and ideology. Key to reform was to cut off the top of the pyramids, which entrenches centralization power. Political reform and decentralization needed to be reinforced by social feedback networks (general elections and popular opinion) and separation of power. For Xia, separation of power meant five divisions including Party, People's congress, administration, judiciary and army. The army would pledge to obey the constitution and answer to the People's Congress. Hu Ping (胡平) emphasised that the army could not directly interfere in politics.

By reforming the mechanism of representation, these candidates emphasized that reform of the People's Congresses was necessary at all levels. Hu Ping suggested: representatives should be directly and regularly elected via competition of candidates; representatives could not become an official of any government service such as administration, or interfere with the judicial process; effectively protecting the right of the representative's speech and publication; except in special circumstances such as wars, convening of the General Assembly should not be altered; the public should have access to Meetings of the Assembly, whose complete minutes should be made public.⁵⁹⁷

On the social nature of the PRC, 15 out of 16 candidates answered 'socialism' or its variations. For most of the candidates, socialism meant public ownership plus democracy, and they believed that China was still in a primary stage of socialism, or a

⁵⁹⁶ Hu Ping, My Political View in Hu Ping and Wang Juntao, ed. kai tuo—beida xueyun wenxuan (the pioneer: selected works of student movement in Beijing University 《开拓—北京大学运文选》), 1990, 21-8.

⁵⁹⁷ Hu Ping, Manifesto in Hu and Wang, 1990, 24.

practical socialism instead of a theoretical socialism. A female candidate argued that China practiced an authoritarian socialism.⁵⁹⁸ A candidate from the Economics Department contended that the social nature of China was ‘state monopolizing society’, with features of feudalism.⁵⁹⁹ When asked what core issues the political life of China faced at the time, 13 out of 16 candidates answered democracy, reform and anti-bureaucracy. Through open debates between the candidates and critical challenges from the voters, the candidates found three common grounds between themselves and the voters: 1) political reform and economic reform should be carried out at the same time; 2) democracy can only be achieved through direct elections of people’s representatives to people’s congresses at all levels, separation of powers, rule of law and protection of civil rights; 3) anti-bureaucracy would require the elimination of privileges.⁶⁰⁰

The most sensitive issue during the election concerned the Party leadership. When asked whether the Party leadership should be upheld, fourteen of sixteen candidates replied ‘yes’ or ‘it should be upheld in principle’: the other two candidates attempted to avoid the question by saying that ‘the question itself is ambiguous’ or ‘it depends on how to uphold the Party leadership’. Half of these answers, however, should be seen as strategic answers. Unlike the official candidates who could only follow Party doctrine, the independent candidates had to weigh their answers carefully. On one hand, they did not want to lose credit among the voters; on the other hand, they worried about an imminent crackdown on the independent campaigns if they spoke too freely.⁶⁰¹ No candidate directly challenged the legitimacy of the CCP in public.⁶⁰² By contrast, voters’ comments on the issue appeared much sharper. A voter argued in a debate meeting that the party leadership would inevitably contradict the principle of democracy.⁶⁰³ Six students posted a *dazibao* in one of the poster forums in the campus entitled ‘The New Ruling Class’, in which they argued that the CCP claimed to represent the interests of the proletariat and the masses, and yet it had in fact turned into a new ruling class overriding the masses and defending nothing but its own special

⁵⁹⁸ See the second survey in Beijing University ed. Hu and Wang, 1990, 298.

⁵⁹⁹ Fang Zhiyuan’s answered voters’ question, also see Qian Liqun, ‘Thought can not be forgotten --the 1980 Democratic Movement in Chinese universities’ <http://next.chinalabs.com/show.php?id=12277> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶⁰⁰ The second survey in Hu and Wang (1990).

⁶⁰¹ Chen Ziming (Yu Xilai), Election Campaigns in Beijing Universities and Colleges, <http://cjch.bokee.com/control/5846764.html> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶⁰² See all candidates’ speeches, Hu and Wang, 1990.

⁶⁰³ Hu and Wang, 1990, 272-278-9.

interests. They further pointed out that such special interests of the CCP would be the fundamental obstacle to reform in China.⁶⁰⁴

The candidate survey not only looked at current political life in China, it also allowed the candidates to clarify their positions on the evaluation of the country's immediate past. On the Cultural Revolution, six of sixteen candidates thought it was reactionary, whilst six considered it a failed revolution: three equated CR to a calamity.⁶⁰⁵ Yang Baikui (杨百揆), an economics student, claimed in his election manifesto that the CR 'exercised politically a feudal fascist dictatorship, economically an agricultural communism, and ideologically a religion of unification'.⁶⁰⁶ The candidates who agreed with Yang denounced the CR completely. By contrast, Fang Zhiyuan, a candidate from the department of international politics, argued that the CR was by nature a 'socialist democratic revolution', driven by 'workers, peasants and other working masses', targeting the 'bureaucratic class'. Fang believed that Mao's motivation in launching the CR was 'mainly good', but that 'his ideology for the revolution was backward' and that 'he himself was one of the origins 'of the 'bureaucratic class', which led to the failure of the revolution.⁶⁰⁷

On Wei Jingsheng's case, whilst the officially appointed candidates all followed the party's line that Wei was a criminal who deserved his punishment, the independent candidates showed more sympathy.⁶⁰⁸ Of the 16 surveyed candidates in Beida, four believed that Wei's sentence was downright wrong. Another six answered that it was excessive, and five admitted that they did not know the case.⁶⁰⁹

Women's issues became a popular topic in Beijing University since four out of a total of eighteen independent candidates were female. The election magazines recorded their

⁶⁰⁴ Zheng Di' and Fang Jue's post in Chen Ziming, *Independent Candidate Campaign in 1980*

See also voters' questions, Hu and Wang, 1990, 278-9.

⁶⁰⁵ Later, the authority basically followed the third evaluation of the CR and repressed other versions and discussion in detail after 1981.

⁶⁰⁶ Yang Baikui, Cultural Revolution, Feudal or Reactionary, Hu and Wang, 1990, 212-4.

⁶⁰⁷ Fang Zhiyuan answered voters' questions in Hu and Wang, 1990, 166-7 and 159. Thanks to Qian Liqun's review, see also: Qian Liqun, 'Thought can not be forgotten --the 1980 Democratic Movement in Chinese universities' <http://next.chinalabs.com/show.php?id=12277> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶⁰⁸ See Beijing Normal College election in Hu Ping and Wang Juntao, ed. *kai tuo—beida xueyun wenxuan* (the pioneer: selected works of student movement in Beijing University 《开拓—北京大学运文选》), 1990, 345-358.

⁶⁰⁹ Hu Ping and Wang Juntao, ed. *kai tuo—beida xueyun wenxuan* (the pioneer: selected works of student movement in Beijing University 《开拓—北京大学运文选》), 1990, 272, Voters also challenged the trial of Gang of Four that lacked law basis, Hu and Wang, 1990, 279.

manifestos that focused on women's liberation, gender equality and human values.⁶¹⁰ Liu Juan, a student candidate from the Department of Journalism, designed a survey and collected responses from 167 female students. The survey showed that 93 per cent of the surveyed were interested in the current election candidates and 44 per cent hoped to see a female candidate win. It also shows that 51 per cent believed that the difference between the genders was due to traditional bias. The survey also showed the increasing confidence of women students in their career choices and ambition for gender equality.⁶¹¹

The election magazines challenged the restrictions on free expression since the abolishment of Four Big Rights earlier in the year. Fang Jue, an economics student and an editor of *Election Wave*, initiated the drafting of a national publication law in November. The draft consisted of 17 articles, aiming to protect freedom of publication. As many as 170,000 signatures were collected within three months through the network of minkan across the country.⁶¹² Students from History Department collected abundant election materials from six election magazines in Beijing and sent them to a printing factory hoping to publish a letter-print book to document the unprecedented elections and share their valuable experience with a much wider public: but the factory authority confiscated the materials and the printing was aborted.⁶¹³

At the end of December, eleven independent student candidates from universities won the district elections in Beijing and became the people's representatives in the district-level people's congress. In Haidian district, seven elected representatives proposed a series of bills including direct election of representatives for people's congresses at all levels and protection of the rights of people's representatives to monitor and criticize governments.⁶¹⁴ However, all these bills were rejected by the board of the congress and none of the independent representatives were re-elected four years later.

⁶¹⁰Liu Juan, Zhang Manling, Xu Xinxin's campaigns in Hu Ping and Wang Juntao, ed. kai tuo—beida xueyun wenxuan (the pioneer: selected works of student movement in Beijing University 《开拓—北京大学文选》), 1990, 245-51, 218-29, 297-31.

⁶¹¹ Ibid.

⁶¹²Chen Ziming, *Independent Candidate Campaign in 1980*.

Ni Chuanheng, http://www.boxun.com/hero/mqy/5_1.shtml [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶¹³ Hu Ping interview by author and see also Hu Ping, 'Introduction of 1980 Election in Beijing universities', http://www.renyurenquan.org/ryrq_article.adp?article_id=505 [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶¹⁴Chen Ziming, Election in Universities and Chen, interview by the author.

Most of the independent candidates were persecuted after the elections.⁶¹⁵ Xu Bangtai, an elected people's representative in Shanghai was deprived of both his representative status and party membership in 1981.⁶¹⁶ Zhang Zhongtian, an independent candidate of Beijing Normal College, was assigned to teach in a middle school in a remote county in Beijing whence he was expelled within months, due to his involvement in organizing an independent teachers' union and was soon enough forced to leave the capital city after organizing a workers' strike. In Henan province where he later resettled, Zhang mobilised the local peasants to boycott public grain contributions as a resistance against IOUs—blank cheques that local authorities wrote to peasants instead of paying money on receiving their public grain contributions. For this he was arrested and sentenced to ten years in 1988 and died in 1998 soon after his release.⁶¹⁷

5.2.2 Book Series

In the 1980s, a derivative format of *minkan* emerged when several projects of book series were launched spontaneously.⁶¹⁸ These book series shared many features of unofficial magazines. They were published at regular intervals, with one to three titles printed every month. The carefully selected titles reflected the intentions of the editorial committees to make indirect comments on contemporary affairs. By introducing alternative thinking paradigms and evaluating different development models, these book series opened up the horizons of a whole generation in their imagination of modernization. Although the book series were published through the official publishing houses, the editorial committees managed to maintain their autonomy in commissioning new titles and in recruiting editorial members. In their own unique way, the editors

⁶¹⁵ For other independent candidates' fate in Beijing, see George, Black and Robin, *Munro. Black Hands of Beijing : Lives of Defiance in China's Democracy Movement*, New York: Wiley, 1993, 70-3.

⁶¹⁶ Several candidates were members of the CCP but they were not controlled by the party organisation and expressed their own view different from the party line, especially supported other independent candidates who opposed the control and suppression the party control.

⁶¹⁷ By contrast, the two officially appointed candidates in Beijing Normal College had completely different fate. Jiang Xiaoyu, a candidate chosen by the school authority, climbed up to the head of the Propaganda Department of Beijing Municipal Committee in 1999 and became in 2001 the head of the Propaganda Department for Beijing Olympics Games. Another official candidate Liu Yuan, whose father Liu Shaoqi had been the Chairman of the PRC from 1956 to 1967, became a PLA Admiral in 2004 and has been Political Commissar of the Academy of Military Sciences in Beijing since 2008. See Zhang Xiaoping, 'My college mate Zhang Zhongtian' <http://asiademo.org/b5/2003/11/20031121a.htm> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶¹⁸ Chen Ziming, Realised way of constitutional democracy in China (陈子明：中国宪政民主的实现途径(下)) http://www.chinesepen.org/Article/hyxz/200906/Article_20090619131130.shtml [accessed 1 March 2011].

practised a progressive mode of organization under the conditions of restricted freedom of association.⁶¹⁹

The most well-known book series of the decade included *March Towards the Future* (1984–89) published by the People’s Publishing House of Sichuan, *Culture: China and the World* (1987–89), Sanlian Publishing House and *Library of the Twentieth Century* (1987–90), Huaxia Publishing House. The *MTF* series published a total of 74 titles exploring science, modernization, methodology and philosophy. The *CCW* series focused on translations of Western theoretical works in humanities including those by Sartre, Barthes, Jung, Fromm and Wittgenstein. The *LTC* titles included translations of Edgar Bodenheimer and Henc van Maarseveen. Between 1985 and 1989, ten million copies of these book series were printed and reached three to five per cent of the entire population through both official distribution channels such as branches of Xinhua Bookshops and semi-official network.⁶²⁰ The phenomenon of this ‘book series craze’ triggered widespread public debates to reflect on political, social and economic issues.

March Towards the Future

Zouxiang Weilai (走向未来, March Towards the Future) was the first series of books functioning as unofficial magazines in the 1980s. It was orchestrated by a group of editors and scholars in Beijing, driven by the desire to break through the official censorship as well as inspired by the French Encyclopaedists and the Japanese *Iwaname Library*.⁶²¹ All members of the editorial committee except one were younger than forty years old.

One of the key initiators of the *MTF* series was Jin Guantao (金观涛), who had worked as an assistant editor for the *Journal of Dialectics of Nature*, sponsored and published by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) since 1978. Jin graduated from the department of chemistry in Beijing University in 1969, and was assigned to work in a

⁶¹⁹ Chen Ziming interview, and see also Chen Zihua, *yihuo chongsheng — Tiananmen heishou beiwang lu* (rebirth — Tiananmen Black Hands’ memoirs 《浴火重生—「天安门黑手」备忘录》), New York: Mingjing, 2004.

⁶²⁰ Chen Fong-Ching and Jin Guantao, *From Youthful Manuscripts to River Elegy* [The Chinese University Press, 1998], 180.

⁶²¹ Chen Fong-Ching and Jin Guantao, *From Youthful Manuscripts to River Elegy*, 1998, 109. The book series were similar to the French Encyclopaedists and the Japanese *Iwaname Library*, making business of enlightenment.

factory in Hangzhou. In the early 1970s, he was involved in underground correspondence activity when he discussed political issues with his friends and exchanged reading notes on Marx and Hegel. In 1976, Jin and his wife Liu Qingfeng (刘青峰) were both offered to teaching posts in Zhengzhou University, where they had the chance to write down their thoughts on the relation between the Chinese society and China's political systems. Two years later, the finalized manuscript, *The Ultra-stable Structure of Chinese Society*, was mimeographed and circulated among friends. In the manuscript, the couple interpreted Chinese history through their proposed theory of 'ultra-stable structure', according to which, the underlying structures of Chinese society had always remained unchanged despite the rise and fall of dynasties.⁶²² In the same year, they were transferred to Beijing to work in CASS, where they came to know other young scholars who had written manuscripts during the CR but had not been able to have them published.

In the early 1980s, the publishing industry was still strictly controlled by the government and contents of publications were monitored by the censorship mechanisms. Works by young scholars were particularly difficult to publish as they lacked the protection of senior officials within the establishment and no publisher would take the risk.⁶²³ Liu Qingfeng's novel based on her husband's experience of underground correspondence could only be published in an unofficial magazine in Hangzhou. In 1982, around thirty scholars and editors who worked for academic journals or official publishing houses in Beijing formed a loose circle of editorial committee and started to select and edit manuscripts by young scholars. As the committees existed outside the official publishing industry, the editors enjoyed complete freedom in deciding the contents.⁶²⁴ The two editors-in-chief were Jin Guantao and his CASS colleague Bao Zunxin (包遵信) who was also the deputy editor-in-chief of *Dushu* (Reading). Bao had previously been involved in publishing a series of books on Chinese philosophy for CASS, so he suggested the young scholars pull together their own proposal for a book series.⁶²⁵ The problem now was how to get the manuscripts published. One option was to have the manuscripts mimeographed and circulated within the underground network,

⁶²² Jin Guantao, 'A Great Idea Movement in 1980s', <http://www.douban.com/group/topic/13298464/> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶²³ Jin Guantao, 'A Great Idea Movement in 1980s', <http://www.douban.com/group/topic/13298464/> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶²⁴ Jin Guantao, A Great Movement of ideas and Chen Fong-Ching and Jin Guantao, 1998, 103-4.

⁶²⁵ Chen Fong-Ching & Jin Guantao, 1998, 110-5.

as mimeograph machines were easily accessible due to the convenience of their official professions. However, the group was eager to let their writings reach a far wider readership.

In 1983, Jin Guantao and Liu Qingfeng finally had their own manuscript *Ultra-stable Structure*, published by the People's Publishing House in Hunan, an official publisher. The publisher even agreed to produce other manuscripts proposed by the couple. However, it was not long before a new round of censorship was launched through the official campaign of Anti-Bourgeois Liberalisation. The Hunan publisher reconsidered the project and demanded to have control over the editorial committee. With such a demand refused, the publisher pulled out and the collaboration was aborted. A year later, they found another publisher, the People's Publishing House in Sichuan, with the help of Liu Qingfeng's uncle, who was the second top leader of the CCP Propaganda Department in Sichuan. The publisher had only one request: the editorial committee should be affiliated to an official work unit. This was fulfilled when the Research Institute on Young People of CASS agreed to take the editorial committee under its wing. The two parties agreed that the profit of the sales should go to the publisher, while royalties went to the editorial committee.

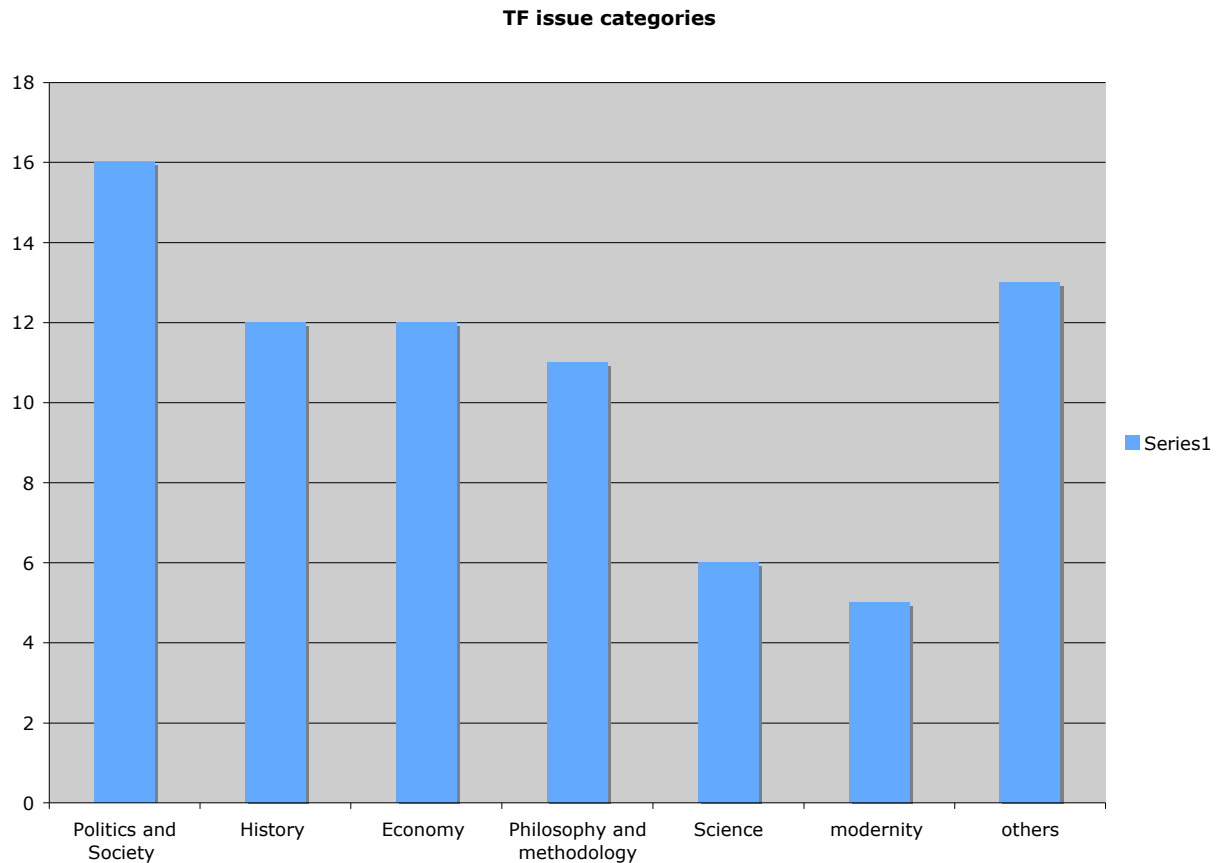


Diagram 4. TF issue categories

Source: MTF booklist⁶²⁶

In 1984, the first twelve books came out, sweeping the entire Chinese publishing industry like a fresh breeze.⁶²⁷ The themes covered politics and society, history, economy, philosophy and methodology, science, modernity and other areas in arts and music, environment and development, religion, law, psychology and cultural studies. The covers, all in black and white, were decorated with modern abstract drawings by young artists from the Central Academy of Fine Arts. The books were all cut in a slim format, pocket sized to be carried around easily.⁶²⁸ Each book had the same foreword:

In the 20th century, the revolution in science and technology is rapidly and profoundly changing the social life and mode of existence of humanity... This series of books attempts

⁶²⁶ MTF booklist: <http://www.docstoc.com/collection/detail/default.aspx?gid=6465&page=0&dir=/collection/6465/> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶²⁷ MTF booklist: <http://www.docstoc.com/collection/detail/default.aspx?gid=6465&page=0&dir=/collection/6465/> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶²⁸ Jin Guantao, 'A Great Idea Movement in 1980s', <http://www.douban.com/group/topic/13298464/> [accessed 1 March 2011].

to introduce the latest achievements of modern science, with a focus on the scientific methods of thinking and new interdisciplinary subjects, as well as China's latest achievements in natural science, social science, arts and literature, in order to promote the combination of natural and social sciences.⁶²⁹

The emphasis on the research of various methodologies was a legacy of the *Ultra-stable Structure*. Jin and Liu each published a new title in the first series, exploring alternative methodologies beyond the scope of Marxist theories of material and historical determinism in the study of Chinese history and culture.⁶³⁰ The selection was imarked not only by systems theory, cybernetics, or information theory, but also by Popper on conjectures and refutations, Kuhn on scientific paradigms, and Lakatos on research methods. In addition, the book series tended to discuss concrete social issues using scientific methodologies rather than present grand narratives referencing ideologies.

The publication of the first twelve *MTF* books extended the network of the editorial committee. In the following years, they also published works of young researchers from the official think-tank institutions such as the Chinese Economic System Reform Research Institute and the Chinese Rural Development Research Centre. Due to high demand, reprints of some titles reached 300,000 copies. The total number of printed copies reached 1,000,000 within five years.⁶³¹ In 1988, a TV documentary series entitled *Heshang* (River Elegy), directly inspired by the *MTF* series, influenced a whole generation of urban youths. The editorial committee planned to publish 100 books but only managed to produce 74 titles before it was forced to stop in 1989 after the Tiananmen Massacre, as Bao Zunxin was arrested and Jin Guangtao went into exile.

5.2.3 Economics Magazines

In the early 1980, former editors in official publishing houses, who had been labelled as rightists during the Anti-Rightist Campaign, were rehabilitated and assigned to work on academic journals supervised by CASS's Economic Research Institutes at local or national level. Up to 1985, these magazines focused solely on economic issues. Later, as

⁶²⁹ TF Foreword.

⁶³⁰ Jin Guantao, *The Ultra-Stable System of Chinese Society*, 23-46, Please refer to Xu Jilin' s article described the book series that promoted science as a way of enlightenment. The fate of the Enlightenment - two decades of Chinese thought, <http://www.xschina.org/show.php?id=6831> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶³¹ Jin Guantao, A Great Movement of Ideas in 1980s.

CASS gradually reduced the funds, they had to look for alternative funding sources from state-owned enterprises and collectively owned companies. In the meantime, they gained more autonomy in publishing articles on political and social issues. Remarkably, a few of these magazines, including *World Economic Herald* in Shanghai and *Economics Weekly* in Beijing, evolved to take on the position of *minkan* to a large extent. These transformed economic magazines combined two generations of dissidents: the old generation of veteran newsmen, who knew the invisible powers behind the institutional papers (PRC's constitution and the party's charter) and the cunning loopholes that enabled the magazines to survive longer; and the youths, participants of *minkan*, had experience in driving their impetuous passion in break censorship and create new expression spaces outside the establishments. Their editorial boards often invited open-minded officials as consultants and recruited the offspring of high officials as assistant editors in order to obtain the latest news on government policy and keep the magazines somewhat protected.⁶³²

Economics Weekly

Economics Weekly was founded in 1982 by the Chinese Union of Economic Societies under the supervision of CASS as an official think tank to focus on the exploration of economic issues including theories, policies, management and technology. Around 5,000 copies were printed each week to circulate among economists and academics. In 1988, the magazine went bankrupt with a huge debt, prompting editor-in-chief Cui Shaolin (崔少林) to ask his friend He Jiadong for financial help. He Jiadong (何家栋) was a veteran newsman who had opposed the KMT before 1949 and had been editor-in-chief for the Worker's Publishing House after 1949 until he was labelled as a rightist in 1957 for publishing two dissenting books. In 1980 He was rehabilitated and resumed his editorship in the official publishing house. He continued to publish alternative views, but was luckily protected by friends who held high positions inside the party.

⁶³² Tyson, James & Tyson, Ann Scott, *Chinese Awakenings: Life Stories From The Unofficial China* [Westview Press, 1995], 320-6, He Jiadong, *Learning from failure*, ed. Chen Zihua, *yihuo chongsheng — Tiananmen heishou beiwang lu* (rebirth — Tiananmen Black Hands' memoirs 《浴火重生—「天安门黑手」备忘录》) [New York: Mingjing, 2004], 13-4.

Through editing a book on the April Fifth Movement, He came in contact with Chen Ziming and his minkan friends who had been involved in *Beijing Spring* and the independent candidates campaigns in the universities. In the mid-1980, a large number of management, finance and accounting professionals were demanded by the quickening pace of economic development as well as by the newly launched cadres system which required a generation of new cadres who would be not only loyal to the party but also better educated and more professional.⁶³³ Under these circumstances, Chen and He founded a school for correspondence education in Beijing, to provide affordable and convenient education for those who wanted to fit into the new professions quickly. Students entering long-distance education only paid 250 yuan every year, for which they received materials such as textbooks, cassettes and test papers.⁶³⁴ There were 230,000 students in the first year 1985. Over the following three years, the total number of students reached over half a million and the total income of the school reached ten million RMB yuan.⁶³⁵

In November 1986, the Beijing Social and Economic Science Institute (BSESI) was founded using the profits from the correspondence education project. The Institute was registered as a collectively owned enterprise affiliated with the human resources centre of the National Science and Technology Commission. The Institute employed 50 full-time staff and 200 part-time and contracted staff, three dozens of whom were lecturers and graduate students from universities or researchers from government-sponsored think tanks.⁶³⁶ In 1987, the Institute set up the China Public Opinion Survey Centre, which was equipped with departments in networking, management, training, sampling, statistics coding and market research. The network of the Institute soon extended to five cities outside Beijing, recruiting more than 30,000 voluntary investigators from students, workers and journalists.⁶³⁷

⁶³³ Deng Xiaoping, 'The 1980s is an important period', <http://www.people.com.cn/GB/34948/34951/36947/36950/2749335.html> [accessed 2/3/11] and George, Black and Robin, *Munro. Black Hands of Beijing : Lives of Defiance in China's Democracy Movement* [New York: Wiley, 1993], 89.

⁶³⁴ Chen Zihua, *Rebirth*, 449, George, Black and Robin, *Munro*, 1993, 89.

⁶³⁵ Chen Ziming interview by author. See also Chen Ziming, *Reform and reflection*, See also Edward X. Gu *Non-Establishment' Intellectuals, Public Space, and the Creation of Non-Governmental Organizations in China: The Chen Ziming-Wang Juntao Saga*. Source: *The China Journal*, No. 39 (Jan., 1998), 39-55.

⁶³⁶ Government-sponsored tanks such as Research Institute for Reform of the Economic Structure, Society of the Yong Economic Scientists and CASS. See also Munro, 111.

⁶³⁷ Chen Ziming, *Collected Works, Independent Candidate Campaign in 1980 and Beijing Social and Economic Science Institute*, see also Chen Ziming, 'Beijing Social and Economic Science Institute', <http://www.duping.net/XHC/show.php?bbs=10&post=667714> [accessed 1 March 2011].

When asked to solve the debt crisis of the *Economics Weekly*, BSESI seized the opportunity to take over the magazine and its official publication licence, something that had been beyond the reach of any unofficial magazine. The two parties came to an agreement: BSESI was to pay off all EW's debts and provide all the funds for its publication after March 1988; the two parties were to form a new board to share the profits; BSESI was to take over the editorship of the magazine.⁶³⁸ Except for Cui Shaolin remaining as the head of the new board (without actual responsibility for any editorial matters), members of BSESI shouldered all the responsibility for editorship and management.⁶³⁹ On 20 March 1988, the new *Economics Weekly* came out, with a print run of 50,000 copies. In the inaugural statement, the editors stated:

The *Economics Weekly* addresses the plight of Chinese modernization and explores the mode of China's socialist modernization via the impact on plural ideas! It will develop Chinese economic theory, trying to widen horizons, standing on the high ground of human civilization and exchanging various disciplines! It also represents process of modernization of the emerging social forces, expressing ideas, protecting rights and providing help! We emphasize intellectual conscience: objectiveness, fairness and efficiency!⁶⁴⁰

According to He Jiadong, the magazine positioned itself as an unofficial magazine, standing with the people, reflecting the views of the people rather than expressing the opinions of the authorities. He emphasized that the intellectuals should not lend themselves to serving as the think tanks for bureaucrats and politicians, but become 'watchmen of society'.⁶⁴¹ The first issue had eight spreads, with six sections: economy, politics, social issues, culture, international affairs, and a miscellaneous section to cover book reviews, readers responses and stories of successful enterprises. Although economy still occupied the majority of the contents, a proportion of economic contents

⁶³⁸ BSESI paid for "Economics Weekly" 100,000 yuan at the first time in the end of February.

⁶³⁹ Editor-in-Chief HJD, Deputy editor Wang Juntao, Vice-director of the Board of Directors, Bi Yiming and Fei Yuan, Manager Chen Ziming, Head of the Office of the Editor Zheng Di, see HJD, Enhancing persistence after failure and Learning from failure in Chen Zihua (ed.) *Rebirth*, p13, English translation refers to Gu Xin.

⁶⁴⁰ Editorial, To Reader, the first issue preface after the takeover on 20 March 1988.

also see Chen Ziming, *The Economics Weekly* in the 1989 Pre-democracy Movement, http://www.chinesepen.org/Article/hyxz/200906/Article_20090602133358.shtml [accessed 1 March 2011]

⁶⁴¹ He Jiadong, Learning from failure, edited by Chen Zihua, *yihuo chongsheng—Tiananmen heishou beiwang lu* (rebirth—Tiananmen Black Hands' memoirs 《浴火重生—「天安门黑手」备忘录》), 2004, 15.

was gradually dropped while critical essays on political, economic and social issues increased. Sales and advertising enabled the magazine to make ends meet.⁶⁴²

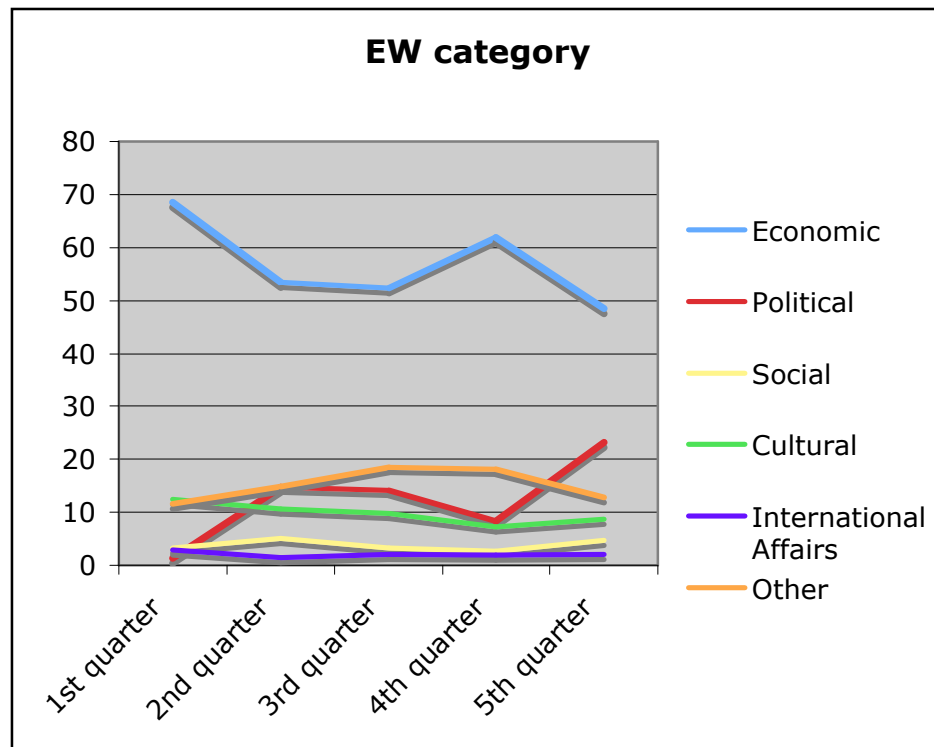


Diagram 5. Five quarters of *Economics Weekly* contents from 20 March 1988 to 18 June 1989.⁶⁴³

After the takeover, key members of the new *Economics Weekly* found themselves put under stricter surveillance. In summer 1988, the leaders of CASS denounced the purchasing of the magazine as illegal. They sent down an investigation team, planning to close the magazine. Due to the intervention of open-minded officials, the magazine was allowed to continue—but had to add an administrative unit that consisting of sympathetic party officials, as a protective umbrella. However, the magazine had to compromise by meeting the requirement of the investigation team to compress non-economy contents and increase contents on corporate culture. As a result, political contents decreased from the end of September. The staff turnover also reflected the pressure from above. Wang Juntao, who had been involved in widening *minkan*

⁶⁴² Chen Ziming, *Collected Works, Independent Candidate Campaign in 1980 and Beijing Social and Economic Science Institute*,

⁶⁴³ All the data about *Economic Weekly* from Edward X. Gu, 'The Economics Weekly, the Public Space and the Voices of Chinese Independent Intellectuals', *The China Quarterly*, No. 147 (September 1996), 860-888. The first quarter is from 20 March to 26 June 1988; the second from 3 July to 25 September 1988; the third from 2 October to 25 December 1988; the fourth from 1 January to 26 March 1989; and the fifth from 2 April to 18 June 1989.

networks, had to resign as the vice-editor in August 1988 in order to reduce surveillance from the security organs, though he continued to write for the magazine under different pseudonyms. The magazine also invited on board Gao Yu, a woman veteran journalist who had worked in the China News Service, and Luo Diandian, daughter of the PLA General Luo Ruiqing, in order to reduce the pressure from the authorities.⁶⁴⁴

To avoid censorship, *Economics Weekly* adopted a series of strategies after September 1988. First, the magazine published interviews of open-minded officials, reform advocates, intellectual and business elites, who promoted a top-down political reform.⁶⁴⁵ Second, the magazine kept the controversial topics to the section of academic information and readers responses, which they claimed did not represent the views of the magazine. Third, the magazine allowed official media to publish the results of the public survey conducted by the magazine in order to reduce its sensitiveness. Fourth, the magazine developed a moderate tone of rhetoric when discussing controversial issues, blurring the line between unofficial and official media.⁶⁴⁶ For a few months, the *Economics Weekly* cautiously avoided reporting the most sensitive news and kept a distance from workers and peasants. They shied away from a populist outlook on democracy but turned to an ‘elitist democracy’.⁶⁴⁷ Most members of the magazine agreed that ‘the elitist democracy should be the short-term goal of China’s democratization, as a stage that cannot be sidestepped in the process of democratization’.⁶⁴⁸

In early 1989, the *Economics Weekly* started to increase its political content. It published a survey conducted by the Institute to investigate 1,077 representatives of the National People’s Congress, examining their qualifications and competence as ‘people’s delegates’. Preliminary analysis of the survey data showed that the majority of the representatives had very limited political awareness and capability, which made them inadequate as people’s representatives. But a comparison of their public speeches with

⁶⁴⁴ He Jiadong, *Learning from failure*, edited by Chen Zihua, *yihuo chongsheng — Tiananmen heishou beiwang lu* (rebirth — Tiananmen Black Hands’ memoirs 《浴火重生—「天安门黑手」备忘录》), New York: Mingjing, 2004, 14 and also see Chen Ziming interview 30/9/08.

⁶⁴⁵ Gao Yu interview by author.

⁶⁴⁶ HJD, ed. Chen Zihua, 15.

⁶⁴⁷ News and editorials and see Chen Ziming’s articles and Sun Liping’s articles, in EW, on 12 March and 26 March 1989. The elitist democracy is that the elitist groups including think tanks, officials, private businesspersons and other powerful social groups work out important political arrangements. It seems that the democracy is similar to the House of Lords in UK before the 20th century.

⁶⁴⁸ See Gu Xin, 881-2.

documented speeches of people's representatives in Mao's period showed that current people's representatives had a better understanding of the functions of the People's Congress. Later, the magazine published another survey on political awareness among ordinary people from different social groups and professions. The results showed that more than half of the university students had lost faith in the party's leadership.⁶⁴⁹

From early May 1989, the *Economics Weekly* began to report the student movement and attempted to communicate with high-level officials to stop the clampdown against the movement. On 21 May, it published an editorial criticizing the current political system for the following characteristics:

(1) pagoda-type one-way relations of power structure, the top of which is a political corps represented by one leader dominating the society; (2) unitary administrative relations controlling every aspect of social life; (3) opportunistic and arbitrary changes of personnel, institutions, procedures, structures and rules; (4) the monolithic ideology that forces every member in society to maintain unconditional loyalty; (5) the system exercises various campaigns as the basic formula, which causes tensions and confrontations with emerging interests in the process of modernization and leads to social unrest and instability; (6) an iron discipline as guaranteed by severe, cruel punishment.

The editorial called for a constitutional democracy to be established according to the following principles:

(1) individuals with inalienable rights as the basic starting point as well as the destination of political activities; (2) representative democracy and universal suffrage; (3) practice of the executive cabinet of the government; (4) separation of powers with checks and balances; (5) political party contests that are open, legalized, regularized and non-violent with freedom of association; (6) diversity of social activities and limited power of the government, (7) freedom of the media and press with open information. In China, it is necessary to redefine the power limits of various political institutions (party, government, enterprises, social organizations, citizens, etc.), adjusting the relationship between them and developing their own operating rules.⁶⁵⁰

⁶⁴⁹ see *People's Daily*, 20 April, 1988, *China's Youth Newspapers*, 30 August and 1 December 1988.

⁶⁵⁰ Chen Ziming, *Collected Works, Independent Candidate Campaign in 1980 and Beijing Social and Economic Science Institute*.

Chen Zimin, "1989 Democracy Movement and *Economics Weekly*" <http://biweekly.hrichina.org/article/18> [accessed 1 March 2011].

In mid-May, most of the key members of the magazine joined the pro-democracy movement initiated by students. They initiated the Joint Liaison Group of All Circles in the Capital to Protect and Uphold the Constitution, forming a coalition of students, scholars, journalists and workers in Beijing. Meanwhile, some members of the magazine contacted PLA generals who later publicized their petition letter against the martial law. Some editors of the magazine got in touch with the standing members of the National People's Congress asking them to hold an urgent meeting against martial law in Beijing. However, these editors were all arrested immediately and the standing members they had contacted were put under house arrest.⁶⁵¹ After the Tiananmen Massacre, the magazine helped two dozens student organizers to hide and escape. He Jiadong alone published the last issue on 14 June, most of the contents written before 4 June. Soon after its publication, both the Economics Weekly and the BSESI were shut down, all properties confiscated. Dozens of their members were arrested.

5.2.4 Qiaokan

Since the second half of 1979 young students, labour activists and journalists in Hong Kong had frequently visited minkan participants in China. Their destinations expanded from major cities such as Guangzhou, Shanghai and Beijing to middle-sized cities to contact inland minkan editors.⁶⁵² They brought with them books and magazines published in Hong Kong and Taiwan, and took unofficial magazines back to Hong Kong. While articles that originally appeared overseas were republished by Chinese minkan, Hong Kong journalists translated insiders' articles into English and reached out for international solidarity, expanding the influence of the Chinese minkan on an unprecedented scale.⁶⁵³ This phenomenon was similar to the *Tamizat* of the Soviet bloc

⁶⁵¹ Wang Juntao interview 10/06/07, see also Chen Ziming, Commemoration of HJD, <http://ccdr.org/index.php/docs/537> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶⁵² See Minutes Of Student Conference In Hong Kong. Some students organised a support group to help minkan in Mainland China. Tens of members of the group visited editors of minkan. After coming back to Hong Long they had regular meeting to forward a proposal for further help minkan survival. Memories of minkan editors such as Chen Ziming, Fu Shenqi, Chen Erjin, Liu Guokai. Also see Chen Ziming, Fu Shenqi and Xu Wenli interview The first visiting people included Zhang Yongqiang, physics students in Hong Kong University. Subsequently Liu San-ching, Liu Yingjie, Wang Chao-wen, Lin Zhaohuan.

⁶⁵³ Chen Ziming interview, see Liu Guokai's memoirs in Democracy Wall. For example, National Unofficial magazine and other magazines. Fan Sidong, http://boxun.com/hero/2007/fansidong/27_1.shtml, <http://asiademo.org/gb/2001/01/20010107b.htm> [accessed 1 March 2011] Liu Guokai, Including the "People's Voice" and we received publications in the provinces). Minkan hoped through them, that the outside world knew the

countries where sensitive issues were published overseas before being smuggled back. I have chosen two Chinese characters, *qiaokan* (侨刊), to describe this derivative form of *minkan*, as *qiao* not only means overseas but also has the same pronunciation as the character meaning ‘bridge’ (桥).

In Hong Kong, a dozen of *qiaokan* existed in the 1980s including *Debates*, *Seventies* and *Frontline*, published in Chinese. In 1981, a monthly bilingual magazine called *Chinese Democratic Movement Express* was founded, to form a bridge between the mainland *minkan* and the international community.⁶⁵⁴ The Chinese version of the magazine was smuggled into the Mainland, while the English version was distributed in Western Europe, North America, Japan and Australia. Its readership included international leftist groups and human rights organizations. They started to support the Chinese *minkan* and petitioned against their suppression.⁶⁵⁵ After the open door policy was adopted in China, Chinese people had the opportunity to study abroad. By the end of 1982, there were over 12,000 Chinese students and scholars in North America.⁶⁵⁶ Among them were dozens of *minkan* participants who managed to leave China in one way or another. They helped found magazines and associations in the overseas Chinese diasporas to echo the voice of *minkan* from inside China.

China Spring

China Spring was the first overseas dissenting magazine founded by Chinese students and scholars from the Mainland. One of its initiators was Wang Bingzhang (王炳章), who was born in 1948 and graduated from Beijing Medical University in 1971. He had practiced medicine for eight years before he was selected as one of the first students under Communist rule who were allowed to study in North America. He studied with a full scholarship at McGill University, where he obtained a medical degree in 1982.

domestic situation. In fact, members in unofficial magazines had chance to read political magazines in Hong Kong. For example, Li Shengping, editor in Beijing Spring, Chen Ziming rewrote some comments after he was stimulated by the comments.

⁶⁵⁴ Chen Chang interview by author

⁶⁵⁵ See *Chinese Democratic Movement Express*, the news in issues 3, 4 and 6. See also Chinese democratic Movement. An Qi, interview, http://www.boxun.com/hero/anqi/41_1.shtml, Wei Jingsheng interview from CND, http://www.boxun.com/hero/anqi/41_1.shtml [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶⁵⁶ See p79, Chinese Students in America: Policies, Issues, and Numbers in 1988 Office of International Affairs (OIA) http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=743&page=87 [accessed 1 March 2011].

After graduation, he found a research job in New York, where he began to network with Chinese students and scholars, who had previously been involved in the Democracy Wall movement and independent candidates campaigns.⁶⁵⁷ They were all deeply concerned with what was happening inside China. The arrest of Wei Jingsheng and other minkan activists shocked them and made them realize the necessity of continuing the democracy wall movement overseas and extending the minkan network outside China. They decided to found a magazine, *China Spring*. Wang created a pen name for himself: 'jingzhe'. The name not only denotes the third of the 24 solar terms in the traditional Chinese calendar heralding the approach of spring, but also combines the names of Wei Jingsheng and Wang Xizhe (王希哲), two imprisoned Democracy Wall veterans whom Wang Bingzhang admired.⁶⁵⁸

In the preparation for the first issue, Wang and his friends toured the costal cities such as New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles where there existed the largest Chinese communities. They held seminars and spoke at press conferences. Wang explained why he had decided to give up his medical career and throw himself into the revolution for China's future. His speeches and his commitment to following Sun Yat-Sen's radical road to change China resonated among Chinese students, many of whom became supporters of the magazine.⁶⁵⁹ The first issue came out in December 1982. The cover bore a list of minkan editors who were currently in Chinese prisons. In its inaugural statement, the magazine positioned itself as a forum to oppose 'feudal autocracy' and 'bureaucratic privileges', committed to realizing 'true democracy' and the 'rule of law' in China and promoting freedom and human rights for the Chinese people. Most of the contributors used pen names as they hoped to return to China to promote the magazine. The first issue turned out to be a huge success. In New York, 700 copies were sold out within three hours. As requested by the readers, another 2,000 copies were reprinted on top of the initial print run of the same number. Apart from 1,000 copies that were smuggled into the Mainland, all the rest were sold out within a month.⁶⁶⁰ By January

⁶⁵⁷ Chen Li and Lu Wei, *A Decade History of the Chinese Alliance for Democracy*, New York, 1993, <http://bjzc.org/bjs/mljs/index.htm> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶⁵⁸ Wang Bingzhang, *For the Motherland's Spring – Declaration*, issue 1, *China Spring*.

⁶⁵⁹ See the foreword of the magazine, issue 1, *China Spring*.

⁶⁶⁰ Chen Li and Lu Wei, *A Decade History of the Chinese Alliance for Democracy*, New York, 1993, <http://bjzc.org/bjs/mljs/index.htm> [accessed 1 March 2011].

or see <http://www.wangbingzhang.us/about/article0001.htm>, [accessed 1 March 2011].

1983, *China Spring* had over a hundred members among the Chinese diasporas in North America.⁶⁶¹

Another three issues were printed at 4,000 copies each until October 1983, when a Taiwanese-owned printing factory in New York agreed to give credit in printing the magazine, which reduced the financial stress on the publication.⁶⁶² The fifth issue increased the print run to 10,000 copies. From then on, the magazine was published regularly in the first half of each month. By the end of 1983, twenty-four branches of *China Spring* had been set up in different cities in North America, Western Europe, Australia and Japan.⁶⁶³ Four branches were set up secretly inside the Mainland and remained underground for years.⁶⁶⁴ New members were accepted through recommendations of two existing members. Each member was required to donate one dollar per month to fund the running of the magazine and the events it organized. To extend its influence, *China Spring* founded the Chinese Alliance for Democracy. A total of fifty representatives from the branches around the world attended its founding conference.⁶⁶⁵

⁶⁶¹ A new member need to be recommended by two founding members. Wang Ming interview, 5/5/06

⁶⁶² See Wang Bingzhang, Annual report of China's Spring Movement in one year and tasks in the future. *China Spring*, the ten issue, February, p 1984 <http://www.wangbingzhang.us/article/article0014.htm> [accessed 1 March 2011] Interview Xue Wei, director of publisher of the magazine, 19/11/1998.

⁶⁶³ Liu Shengqi, 344.

⁶⁶⁴ Chen Li and Lu Wei, *A Decade History of the Chinese Alliance for Democracy*, 1993, <http://bjzc.org/bjs/mljs/index.htm> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶⁶⁵ Chen Li and Lu Wei, *The Brief history of the Chinese Alliance for Democracy* <http://bjzc.org/bjs/mljs/index.htm> or <http://www.wangbingzhang.us/about/article0001.htm> [accessed 1 March 2011].

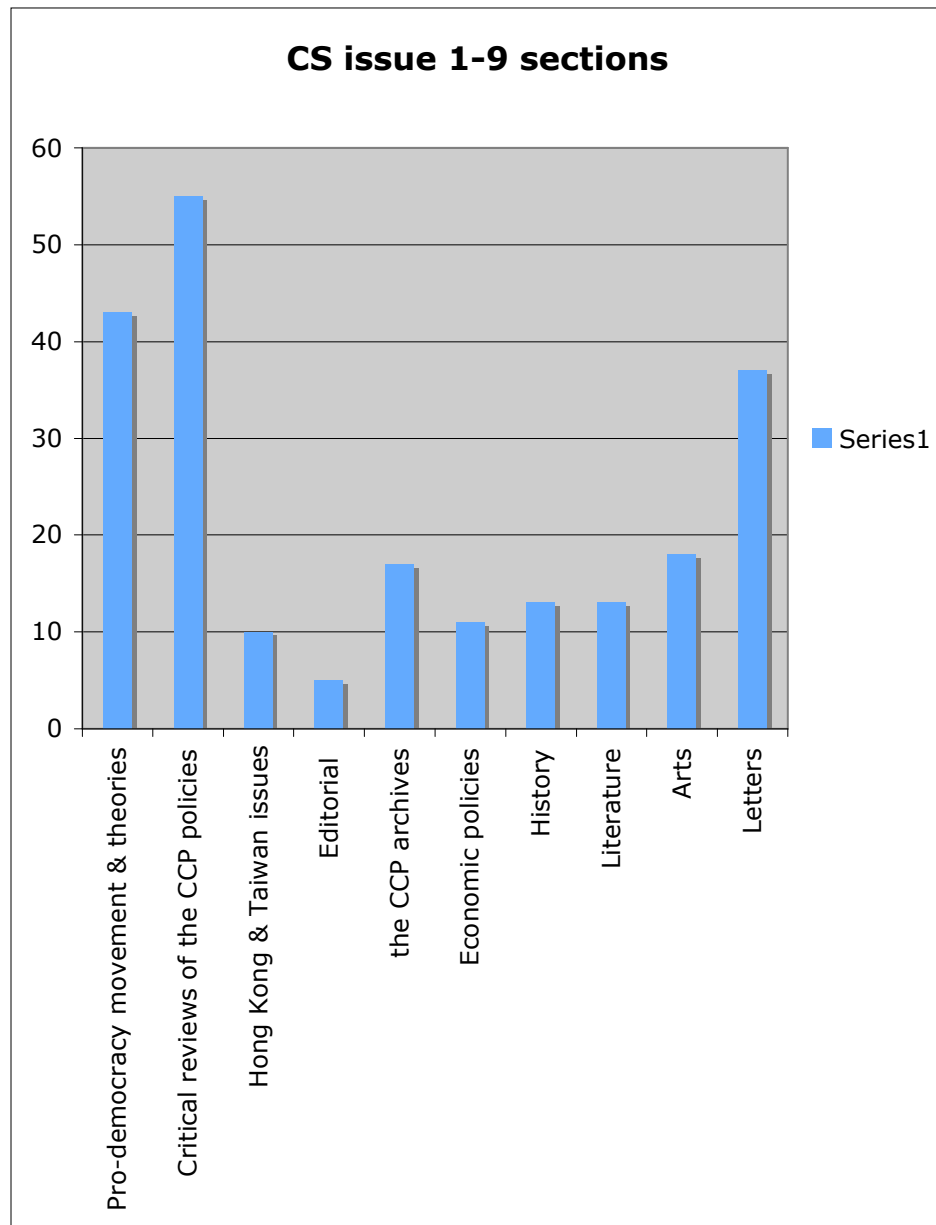


Diagram 6. *China Spring* Contents, Issue 1-9

The contents of *China Spring* fell roughly into ten categories.⁶⁶⁶ The category with the highest number of articles, about a quarter of the total number published, was that of critical reviews of CCP policies. These articles not only examined the policies in theory and in practice, but also exposed secret archives of the party that documented its control mechanisms and its clampdowns on social movements. The editorial made a distinctive critique of the Four Cardinal Principles written into the PRC's constitution, denouncing it as an enormous obstacle to China's progress, blocking democratization in China.

⁶⁶⁶ data from Liu Shengqi, p333.

‘Without abolishing the Four Cardinal Principles,’ it said, ‘China has no hope for democracy.’⁶⁶⁷ The magazine also introduced Western theories on democracy and assessed different democratic models as practised in the countries such as Switzerland, France, the UK and the US.⁶⁶⁸ There were a series of writings looking into state-citizen relations, which exceeded the framework of Marxism that had been the only reference of political theory for the majority of Chinese minkan up to then. Articles on China’s contemporary history recounted the censored stories of political persecutions under the communist rule. These stories provided alternative perspectives for its readers.

It is worth emphasizing that *China Spring* pioneered in the discussions of the sensitive topics of Taiwan and Tibet. Whilst the magazines inside the Mainland had avoided these issues for various reasons, *China Spring* offered rich sources and comparative perspectives on these issues. From 1984, the magazine published a series of articles on the CCP’s military deployment targeting Taiwan, warning the readers of the danger of unification by force. It raised doubts about the sentiment for unification and questioned the legitimacy of the autocratic rules in both regions. The magazine created an opportunity for readers from Taiwan and the Mainland to understand each other’s concerns and break down some ideological barriers. Even more challenging than the topic of the unification was the Tibet problem. In 1985, *China Spring* held the first dialogue between the Chinese diasporas and the Tibetan exile community in New York and Los Angeles. This marked the first attempt by Chinese unofficial magazines to discuss the nationality issues. The joint statement by representatives of *China Spring* and the Tibetan exile government in New York read:

‘Both sides agree that any nation’s rights must be respected, no matter what its size of land and population are; any solution to the Tibet issue must reflect the expectations of the Tibetan people. Self-determination, which is closely related with democracy, must be respected too.’⁶⁶⁹

⁶⁶⁷ Wang Bingzhang, Review of China Spring Movement, issue 10, *China Spring*, <http://www.wangbingzhang.us/article/article0014.htm> [accessed 1 March 2011]. Spring democracy movement in China and the plan for one year, vol. 2 *China Spring*. Also see <http://www.wangbingzhang.us/article/article0014.htm> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶⁶⁸ Selected articles of *China Spring*, <http://beijingspring.com/big5bjs/bjs/zcxw/003.htm> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶⁶⁹ Joint Communique of the Committee for Liberty of Tibet and the Chinese Alliance for Democracy, New York Branches, (1985). *China Spring* 27: 16-17. Translation refers to Zhang Juli, *China Spring and the Chinese Alliance for Democracy*, <http://gaz.sagepub.com/content/45/1/3.abstract>, [accessed 1 March 2011].

China Spring also provided a communication channel between Chinese inside the Mainland and the overseas diasporas. It republished articles that had originally appeared in underground publications such as *Wild Grass* and the *Nameless*. Minkan participants inside the Mainland wrote frequently for the magazine, reporting news on corrupt party officials, workers strikes and persecutions on resistant activists. They also smuggled out the writings of imprisoned activists to be published overseas. Members of *China Spring* contacted inland minkan editors when they visited China on holidays, circulating *China Spring* through their network in Shanghai, Beijing, Guangdong, Sichuan and Guizhou. During the student movements in the second half of the decade, *China Spring* sent its members into the Mainland to provide consultancy and financial support to the activists of the movements.⁶⁷⁰

The monthly publication of *China Spring* was maintained until 1992 when it split into two journals: *Beijing Spring* and *China Spring*. The new *China Spring* published monthly until it closed in 2001 due to financial problems. The majority of the old *China Spring* editors named their new magazine *Beijing Spring*, joined by the exiles after the 1989 movement. It became one of the most influential dissident magazines of the Chinese diaspora, with its website launched in 2003. Wang Bingzhang left *China Spring* in 1989, dedicating himself to the opposition movement. In 1997, he secretly returned back to China to meet with pro-democracy activists in eastern and central China planning to found an opposition party, but was deported in February 1998. In 2002, Wang travelled to Vietnam, where he was abducted by Chinese secret agents and sentenced to life in Guangzhou in 2003.⁶⁷¹

5.3 Key Words

During the 1980s, some of the key words discussed in minkan and their derivatives were similar to the ones discussed during the Democracy Wall period, becoming clearer in their definition. In addition, there were concepts reflecting the concerns in society.

⁶⁷⁰ See March in 1987, and the first six issues in 1989.

⁶⁷¹ BBC, 'Chinese dissident jailed for life', <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/2743445.stm>, [accessed 2/3/11].

These key words produced continuous debates that influenced the following years. The dissidents inside the party were concerned with some issues that were discussed in *minkan*, but they chose a different rhetoric. For example, Wang Ruoshui argued that understanding and solving China's problem reflected Marx's conception of alienation and Marxist humanitarianism⁶⁷². His thoughts were a legacy of the former dissident thinking in 1957 that was expressed in *minkan*. Wang, a deputy editor of *People's Daily*, was expelled from his position due to his opinion in 1983. His argument got some reaction and notice from *minkan* and their derivatives. Some words originated in *minkan* and then started to feature in the official press, or they were debated both in the unofficial and official media. They included 'freedom of speech' and 'humanism'.

Freedom of Speech

In the 1980s, the Party launched two campaigns, against 'Spiritual Pollution' and against 'Bourgeois Liberalism', to denounce liberalism as a 'hypocritical capitalist ideology'. For *minkan*, the liberal concept was closely related to such civil and political rights as free speech and free media, free from repression and persecution. In comparison with relevant discourse, many participants did not get further involved in former activists and scholars' discussions and arguments in China before 1949 and abroad. But the discussions provided a starting point, to make a conscious effort to connect this interrupted thinking and the experiences of dissidents.

Hu Ping's article, *On Freedom of Speech*, was one of the most significant articles for *minkan* in the 1980s. The first version of the article was finished in 1975 and posted in *People's Square* in Chengdu during the April Fifth Movement but few people noticed it at the time. The version was first published on *Wotu* in February 1979. But the article did not receive widespread attention that year. Hu revised the article, a version that was printed in the election magazine and posted on the wall of the election forum in Beijing University during his election campaign in November 1980 but circulation was limited to campuses in Beijing. This version was then republished by *Seventies*, one of the most influential political magazines in Hong Kong. In July and September 1986, this article appeared in *Youth Forum*, an unofficial magazine that was closed in the early 1987. The

⁶⁷² Wang Ruosui: Human is the starting point of Marxism, and To talk about the problem of alienation.

editor of the official Publishing Houses in Hunan had planned to print the article. But this did not happen, because the editor was dismissed during the campaign against bourgeois liberalism in 1987.⁶⁷³

Hu quoted Archimedes's statement: 'Give me a fulcrum, I can lift the Earth',⁶⁷⁴ and suggested that freedom of speech in political life was such a fulcrum. He first clarified the definition of freedom: to be free from external constraints. Any freedom has its limitations: it refers to the thing itself inside the provisions rather than the mandatory coming from outside by invasive means.⁶⁷⁵ The article opposed any division of freedom into bourgeois freedom and proletariat freedom, as the regime was wont to do. In addition, the article emphasized that freedom of speech was different from offering honest advice to the emperor in a feudal society. 'Real freedom of speech can independently exist and be fulfilled when such right does not need to be protected by the open-minded ruler. Meanwhile the rights can be realized when people have learned how to resist the ruler's intervention.'⁶⁷⁶ Moreover, Hu argued that 'freedom of speech did not depend on authorities willing to implement it, but on people willing to insist on it.' Furthermore, the article claimed that both wisdom and courage are necessary to defeat the totalitarian ruler.⁶⁷⁷

In an interview published in *China Spring* in 1988, Hu Ping further explained the importance and urgency of fighting for freedom of speech using the analogy of a strategy in playing the game of Go:

It is necessary and essential to lay a foothold to realize freedom and democracy. The process is to do so first with two 'eyes' created, like playing the game of Go.⁶⁷⁸ Who is not willing immediately to put their stones to cover the entire board while playing? However, we can only go step by step. So the question is not what we want to say, what to do, but what to say first and what to do first. The first 'eye' is to instil the principle of free speech and make it become a common consensus; the second is to fortify the form of unofficial

⁶⁷³ Hu Ping, 'Why do I write "On freedom of speech"', *Beijing Spring*, <http://beijingspring.com/bj2/2009/380/2009930141959.htm> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶⁷⁴ Hu Ping, 'On Freedom of Speech', <http://beijingspring.com/bj2/2003/huping/lylzy.htm> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶⁷⁵ Hu Ping, 'On Freedom of Speech', <http://beijingspring.com/bj2/2003/huping/lylzy.htm> [accessed 1 March 2011]. '自由有其限制，那是指事物本身内在的规定，非指外来的强制。'

⁶⁷⁶ Hu Ping, 'On Freedom of Speech', <http://beijingspring.com/bj2/2003/huping/lylzy.htm> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁸ In the game of Go, an eye is an empty point on the grid of the board surrounded by friendly stones where the opponent is forbidden to play due to the suicide rule. If two such eyes exist, the group of stones becomes alive, free from being captured by the opponent stones.

publication. With these two ‘eyes’ created as in the game of Go, we will have gained an autonomous space.⁶⁷⁹

Inspired by the game of Go in which one builds two *eyes* is to protect oneself from the invasion of the opponent, Hu Ping suggests that society build up its own independent field through practicing freedom of expression and freedom of the press, making it difficult for the authorities to invade and crack down.⁶⁸⁰ In the early 1980s Hu Ping was actively involved in campaigning as an independent candidate in the elections of representatives for district-level people’s congresses. When he realized that the election process would inevitably be intervened by the ruling Party, he turned to unofficial publication.

Humanism and alienation

The humanism discussion attracted students and intellectuals and explored the tragic reasons behind the Cultural Revolution, but was not limited to the CR period. The humanism discussion directly challenged some taboo areas of the updated CCP ideology. Because some editors of official and semi-official magazines supported the humanism discussion, hundreds of articles and several books were published by the dissidents inside the party until the CCP launched the campaign against ‘Spiritual Pollution’ in 1983. Although the party suppressed the discussions and the books and articles on this issue were censored, underground magazines, semi-official magazines and overseas magazines continued to publish the articles that had been censored. As a result, humanism discussions and topics relevant to humanism and alienation kept exerting an influence in the 1980s.⁶⁸¹

Wang Ruoshui was one the most important contributors to the Marxist humanism discussion. He was the deputy editor-in-chief in *People’s Daily* in the early 1980s. Wang studied philosophy in the late 1940s, being influenced by *Marx’s Economic and*

⁶⁷⁹ Hu Ping, ‘Reflecting the Democracy Wall’, <http://beijingspring.com/bj2/2003/huping/200397171346.htm> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶⁸⁰ *ibid.* Also see ‘Discussion on Freedom of Speech’: <http://www.huping.net/works/freespeech/freespeech-2.htm> [accessed 3/3/11] and Chen Ziming, ‘Political Opinions During the Independent Candidate Campaigns’ <http://beijingspring.com/bj2/2007/240/20061230165849.htm> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶⁸¹ Cui Weiping, ‘Debate on Humanism and Alienation’, http://www.peacehall.com/cgi-bin/news/gb_display/print_version.cgi?art=/gb/pubvp/2009/04&link=200904031060.shtml [accessed 1 March 2011].

Philosophical Manuscripts before joining the party and working as an assistant editor of the *People's Daily* in the early 1950. During the conflict between the Soviet Union and the PRC in the early 1960s, he became a member of the writing group that was organized to criticize the revisionism in the Soviet bloc. Wang was asked to write a series of articles on the criticism of humanism giving him access to Marxist Humanist works of the twentieth century. After he read some Western Marxist books such as *Marx's Concept of Man* by Erich From in the mid 1970s, Wang wrote several articles that reflected on the Cultural Revolution for use as official *inside reference* materials, which only the high officials had access to. For this he was forced labour under surveillance until the Gang of Four was ousted.

In 1977, he returned to work at the *People's Daily*. From 1980 onwards, he wrote about humanism for official and semi-official publication, except *People's Daily*. Besides Wang, another important contributor to the discussion on Marxist humanism was Gao Ertai, a writer and painter who was labelled a rightist in 1957. They first published their articles before the Anti-Spiritual Pollution Campaign of 1983. After 1983, their work was published in semi-official magazines, underground magazines and magazines in Hong Kong. The articles examined the relation between Marxism and Humanism.

Humanism advocated the ideal: human should be treated as human. It is said that man himself is his highest purpose while man's value also lies in himself...Marx during his youth was influenced by Feuerbach's humanist view, then borrowed the starting point and later contributed to two great discoveries, historical materialism and surplus value which did not abolish Marx's humanistic ideal, but allowed it to be established as a genuine scientific basis for Marxism.”⁶⁸²

Wang Ruoshui referred mainly to the Marxism of his early works, relevant to the discussions in the Soviet bloc and also reflected on some discussions in China after 1949. Wang Ruoshui remarked, “Intellectuals need critically to review the practice of the communist movement. However, it is impossible to implement such a critical review without fresh understanding of the Marxist theory. Only with the restoration of

⁶⁸² Ru Xin, ‘Humanitarianism is revisionism –Re-understanding of the humanism’, *People's Daily*, 15 August 1980. <http://members.lycos.co.uk/chinatown/author/W/WangRuoShui/WangRuoShui002.txt> [accessed 2 March 2011] The party hard line emphasised that Marx during his youth accepted humanism but growing-up Marxism consisted in the class struggle: humanism was only realised via the class struggle and growing-up Marxism had different version on humanism from his early age. (Hu Qiaomu). Also see Zhang Xianyang, ‘Debate on humanism’, <http://www.open.com.hk/0701p70.html> [[accessed 2 March 2011].

the humanistic nature of Marxism can the theory be used as a weapon to criticize the communist practice of anti-humanism.”⁶⁸³ Wang borrowed Marx's theory of alienation to explain why institutional purpose in the communist movement was turned into anti-humanism.

His series of articles on humanism and alienation from 1979 to 1983 became a target of attacks from Hu Qiaomu's and Deng Liqun. Hu charged him with denying the CCP ideological doctrine and finally pushed Deng Xiaoping to launch the official campaign, against Spiritual Pollution. Wang Ruoshui emphasised that socialist humanism excluded the deification of individuals such as Mao Zedong and Marx. In addition, principles of socialist humanism not only upheld and defended equality but also provided the protection of a citizen's dignity. Why should the humanism be regarded as bizarre, abnormal or evil? 'Furthermore, Gao Ertai first and directly referred to the political reality:

There exists the power of alienation, political alienation and fetishism of power, political fetishism in reality. The power entrusted by the people and the people's own representatives, in turn, becomes alien oppression and enslavement toward the people. 'Master' turned into a 'public servant' while 'servant' turns into a 'master'. To eliminate the causes of alienation became the direct cause of the phenomenon of alienation. This reversal of the typical form of alienation of power was turned into a reactionary form of Marxism and socialism... In (a socialist society) "power of alienation" caused the conditions of the people's position as slump: "abstract people have become God, and concrete people, materialized, became a victim of the God."⁶⁸⁴

Wang Ruoshui further catalogued four kinds of alienation in socialist society: ideological alienation; personality cult; modern superstitions; political alienation. In Marxist theory, people had given leadership to power and the power should serve the people. But the power in reality did not serve the people but served its own purpose, what was how the servants of the people become the lords of the people and economic development turned into an alienation that caused tragedies and environmental problems.⁶⁸⁵ Wang and his fellows like most discussions in election magazines

⁶⁸³ Wang Ruohui' articles, <http://members.lycos.co.uk/chinatown/author/W/WangRuoShui/WangRuoShui004.txt>, <http://members.lycos.co.uk/chinatown/author/W/WangRuoShui/WangRuoShui.htm> [accessed 2 March 2011].

⁶⁸⁴ Gao Ertai, A closer look at the phenomenon of alienation", in *Man is a Marxist point of departure*, also see Cui Weiping, Why did not spring across their land - on the humanitarian and eighties the debate Alienation. http://www.chinesepen.org/Article/sxxy/200802/Article_20080221024312.shtml [accessed 2 March 2011].

⁶⁸⁵ Wang Ruoshui, Talking about alienation questions in *For humanitarian defense*" see also Cui Weiping.

interpreted the PRC political system as a socialist model, mainly based on public ownership (state-owned and collective-owned enterprises). But they did not examine who really controlled the public ownership, how the public ownership was formed and implemented and who benefited from it. They concluded that the fundamental problems resulted from alienation in the system. The writers on humanism did not discuss the issue: how the ruler came to power, what mechanisms and methods help people regain their own power. Moreover, they did not question whether public ownership was only one of several statist systems because they were trapped in a binary opposition between capitalism and socialism, and between humanism and alienation to a larger extent.

5.4 Contending Space

In the 1980s there were mainly three parallel trajectories of minkan development: underground, overground and overseas. Traditional political minkan went underground after 1981 because the authorities reverted to harsh, repressive measures against open oppositions. The lifespans of these underground magazines were short, usually no longer than two years. For example, a Guizhou minkan called *Shiming* (使命, commitment) was cracked down upon after two years' existence and its two main editors were sentenced to five and ten years respectively in 1983.⁶⁸⁶ However, recurrent emergence of new underground minkan consolidated the underground networks and coordination among minkan groups. From 1982 onwards, some participants of underground minkan had the chance to study abroad, where they developed a new form of minkan, for which I have coined the term *qiaokan*. Such *qiaokan* as *China Spring* in the US and *Democracy Movement Journal* in Hong Kong extended the reach of the internal public sphere.⁶⁸⁷ A third group of minkan adopted various strategies in order for their publications to exist overground and hence to influence a wider audience. One of their strategies was to invent new formats of minkan. In place of the conventional form of magazines, they published election pamphlets, survey reports, book series and

⁶⁸⁶ Mo Jiangang interview 11/4/10 and Chen Ziming interview 30/8/08. See also Zhang Qing, 'the 30th anniversary of the birth of the Democracy Wall in Guizhou' <http://www.fireofliberty.org/article/10161.asp> [accessed 2 March 2011].

⁶⁸⁷ Overseas minkan see Liu Shengqi, 1985. *Zhongguo dixia kanwu yanjiu 1978-82* (Underground Journal Research in Mainland China 1978-1982), 1984, 325-356, and collections of Democracy Movement Journals in Hong Kong.

teaching materials for correspondence courses, pushing the boundaries of print publication.

Minkan also developed an overlapping space with official media. In the case of *Economics Weekly*, minkan purchased a bankrupted official medium and turned it into an independent publication. The book series *March Towards the Future* had to affiliate itself to an official work unit under CASS in order to be published and distributed by the official People's Publishing House in Sichuan. There existed a mix of competition and cooperation between official and unofficial media. In order to combat the dwindling of their readership, official media started to report on politically sensitive incidents or simply reprint in a compromised voice what had originally appeared in unofficial publications. The blurring of the boundary between official and unofficial media indeed challenged censorship mechanisms and opened up space for spreading unorthodox ideas and encouraging public debates on political issues.

The success of these strategies relied to some extent on the collaboration of open-minded scholars, journalists, publishers and officials within the establishment. This influenced the political culture of the decade. For some minkan participants, joining with the Party and the government appeared to be a possible way to bring about change more quickly, as the Monkey King in the classical Chinese novel did: jumping inside the belly of the Princess Iron Fan to defeat the latter.⁶⁸⁸ Influential scholars such as Xu Liangying (许良英) and Fang Lizhi (方励之) encouraged ambitious youths to 'join in the Party in order to change the Party'.⁶⁸⁹ All the young scholars in Fang's research group in the University of Science and Technology of China became CCP members in the mid 1980s. The Party welcomed recruits who were professionals or experts, helping the Party not only to strengthen its monopoly power but also to transform the old regimes into a modern party-state structure. In China's party-state structure, CCP membership was the ticket to climbing the ladder of power. The Party bureaucracy developed a sophisticated system to supervise its members to ensure that they would obey instructions and always remain loyal to the Party. Before members had the chance

⁶⁸⁸ Chen Ziming, *Collected Works, Independent Candidate Campaign in 1980 and Beijing Social and Economic Science Institute*. The story, Monkey King makes three attempts to borrow the plantain fan. See Wu Chengen, *Journey To the West*.

⁶⁸⁹ Both Xu and Fang were famous physicists, calling youths for becoming members of the party to change the party. Fang Lizhi, For Xu Liangying's 90th Birthday, <http://www.chinainperspective.com/ArtShow.aspx?AID=10349> [accessed 1 March 2011].

to change the Party, most likely their fate had been changed by the Party. In 1987 Fang and Xu themselves were expelled from the Party.⁶⁹⁰

In the 1980s many non-state-owned enterprises appeared. Most minkan members seized the opportunity to start their own businesses. Many of them believed that in order to build up an independent society outside the established institutions, they would first need to obtain a certain degree of financial independence. Some went further and argued that economic reform should be given top priority in order to expedite the economic independence of minkan groups. From the mid 1980s onwards, many minkan participants began to do business. What they did not realize was that economic independence would not necessarily bring about political autonomy. It was because most of their economic activities, such as patenting new technologies and trading books, relied on finding loopholes in established institutions. As soon as these loopholes were blocked, they had to decide between three options: to give up these activities altogether, to be absorbed into the establishment, or to find another loophole. Their experiences prove that economic independence alone cannot bring about political transformation in China's party-state structure.

⁶⁹⁰ Controlling method of China's bureaucratic politics in the dynasties referred to Wang, Yanan, *zhongguo guanliao zhengzhi yanjiu* (*Research on China's bureaucratic politics*)(王亚南《中国官僚政治研究》), Beijing: Zhongguo Shuke Publisher, 1999, 5-171.

6. Conclusion

Minkan during the period from 1949 to 1989 manifested a resistance culture and independent communities, across different social groups, occurring mainly in urban areas. One of the most significant things about minkan is that it presents the dynamic process of moveable words, linking older history of Chinese print culture and its renaissance, by making various formats, forming different modes of production and circulation, constructing distinctive civil networks and creating changeable physical and mental spheres. Moveable minkan that communicated with the public, influenced social discourse and directly interacted with different social groups. They not only put up a real fight to overcome censorship or repressive institutions but also created conditions for social and political movements or student movements. Minkan forms their self-identifies and communities in plural public spheres, which characterise resistance momentum. Meanwhile minkan created a strong adhesive to bond open physical space and mental sphere together and bridged others in various networks. In addition, development and transformation of minkan brought into various sphere, remaining former minkan spheres, creating new spaces and invading conventional circulation channels, using contending spaces to make the public differentiate and analyze various thoughts. Choosing underground and unofficial publications as the main subject, my research attempts an interpretation that aims to be comprehensive, bringing to light an alternative version of the Chinese society and political culture. In addition, minkan besides other resistance groups sketch out possibilities of social, political, economic and cultural development from below rather than the winner-take-all politics.

A panoramic approach to examine minkan from 1949 to 1989, as presented in chapters two to five allows us to see more clearly what minkan have achieved despite their limitations. If we only consider minkan discussions at particular times, then their references usually appear limited, both in the sense of their theoretical framework and in terms of their access to information due to strict censorship. However, if we look at their explorations across the decades, we will discover the richness and dynamic nature of their achievements. To illustrate this point, let us take the exploration of democracy as an example. Minkan started to discuss democracy in the 1950s by tracing the legacy of the May Fourth Movement in a manner distinct from the CCP version. In the 1970s and

1980s, the debates of democracy focused on elections, rule of law, human rights and freedom of speech. It was during the 1960s that the issue of democracy seemed dormant among key minkan groups, or at least overshadowed by the pressing issue of inequality. However, the social stratification imposed via political institutions and policies was also the very weapon of the regime to maintain its autocracy and incapacitate the civil society. Therefore, the confrontation with the class discrimination was at the same time a combat for democracy. As it proved, the process of democratization in the Chinese context was not only associated with the elections, the separation of powers and the rule of law, but also intertwined with the struggle to limit the scope of bureaucracy and establish equal rights between different groups.

The four decades of minkan development mapped out the potential for forming an independent society in China. The relation between society and the state has always been part of the self-consciousness of minkan. As early as the Republican era, the historian Fu Sinian emphasised independent publication as a tool gradually to reduce state control and to create an independent social realm:

‘If we want to have our own means, we must not enter government. Entering the government is not as effective as forming a party; forming a party is not as effective as publishing a newspaper. If we aim for change, we need to remain inside society. Once we enter government we can no longer struggle.’⁶⁹¹

When Fu made this remark, forming a party and publishing a newspaper were both guaranteed by the KMT legislation. Under the CCP these two activities were equally regarded as threats to the regime and hence strictly forbidden and punished. Therefore forming a party and publishing a magazine were not mutually exclusive in minkan’s struggle against state power. In reality, the evolution of minkan has far exceeded the activity of publishing a magazine. It has indicated four dimensions of forming an independent culture: opposition, scholarly freedom, self-organized communities and independent media. These four areas tend to overlap, with actors of one field often playing important roles in another. As a conclusion to my thesis, this chapter attempts to

⁶⁹¹ Fu Sinian, *Hu Shi lai wang shuxin* (to correspondence of Hu Shi 《胡适来往书信选》, 下册,), Hong Kong: zhonghua shuju, 1983, 172.

sketch out, along these four paths, the development of the minkan form in the post-1989 era.

6.1 Opposition

After the crackdown of Tiananmen in 1989, minkan again went underground, due to the official advanced surveillance mechanisms and a repression strategy designed to nip any resistance in the bud. In the two years following the massacre, there were underground magazines in major cities such as Beijing, which secretly distributed leaflets calling for more protests and general strikes. These leaflets were printed using mimeograph machines that had been used to print bulletins during the pro-democracy movement, and were kept secret and secure after the massacre. These magazines published between two and six issues, existing from two months to twenty months until a large number of the participants were arrested and sentenced to long-term imprisonment in 1992.⁶⁹²

Among the imprisoned were over forty activists who had been involved in forming an opposition party, the Chinese Liberal Democracy Party (CLDP), whose members consisted of teachers, students, workers and doctors who had witnessed the massacre. The CLDP members who were not arrested continued to develop their network in north China. In 1995 activists in Guizhou formed a local Democracy Party, which was soon crushed, with a dozen of its members sentenced to long-term imprisonment.⁶⁹³ A third wave of opposition parties broke in 1998, when the nationwide Chinese Democracy Party (CDP) was founded in June, with branches in twelve provinces. Its members included veterans of the Democracy Wall movement in the 1970s and student activists of the late 1980s, as well as trade unionists and peasants who were discontented with corrupt officials.⁶⁹⁴ In the following months, hundreds of CDP members were arrested

⁶⁹² Sun Liyong, Skype interview by author, 3/10/08, See also Sun Liyong memoir and Chen Ziming, Witness the suffering by freedom of the pen, <http://biweekly.hrichina.org/article/37> [accessed 1 March 2011] The issue number refers to the interviewee.

⁶⁹³ Wang Youcai interview by author, 7/8/07. See also Chen Xi, Why did we organized an opposition party? http://boxun.com/hero/2006/chenxiwenji/24_1.shtml, [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶⁹⁴ Liu Jingsheng, Hu Shigen's political opinion in Free Democracy Party, http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:afyGiVqy6kwJ:www.boxun.com/hero/ljs/11_1.shtml+%E8%83%A1%E7%9F%B3%E6%A0%B9+%E4%B8%AD%E5%9B%BD%E8%87%AA%E7%94%B1%E6%B0%91%E4%B8%BB%E5%85%9A&cd=1&hl=zh-CN&ct=clnk and The Thirty-Third Case In China, http://chinesepen.org/Article/yzzjwvh/201008/Article_20100824172614.shtml [accessed 1 March 2011].

and around 50 key players were sentenced up to 13 years. Despite such harsh punishments, the founding Zhejiang Branch continued to publish their monthly magazine, *the Opposition Party*, for one year.⁶⁹⁵ Its circulation resembled that of *Spark* in late 1950s, that is, strictly among trusted readers.

Alongside the forming of opposition parties, a pronounced opposition culture emerged in 1993 when a group of minkan veterans published their open petition Peace Charter.⁶⁹⁶ According to one of its signatories, this was a ‘confrontation and collective attack’ against the CCP bans on free speech, free press and free association. The charter proposed ten steps as an ‘operable national reconciliation process’ after the Beijing Massacre in 1989. The document can be viewed as a proposed contract between society and the state. It called for the government to obey the UN human rights standards and to embark on a democratization process, and at the same time called on society to ‘cooperate’ if these two premises were satisfied. Although the Peace Charter implied significant compromises for society, such as respecting the current standards of limited rights in order to ‘reduce social turmoil’ and realize a ‘peaceful transition led by the government’, the regime arrested all signatories. However, the repression did not prevent more open letters appearing. Petitions showed increasing social concerns on a wide range of issues, from government corruption to environmental problems. In December 2008, three hundred intellectuals and human rights activists published Charter 08, calling for the end of one-party rule. It endorsed ‘fundamental principles’ of ‘freedom’, ‘human rights’, ‘equality’, ‘republicanism’, ‘democracy’ and ‘constitutional rule’, and listed 19 ‘recommendations on national governance, citizens’ rights, and social development’. The content of Charter 08 showed its inheritance of minkan legacies from the first four decades of the CCP rule.

6.2 Scholarly Journals

⁶⁹⁵ Zhu Yufu, ‘My Practice Toward Democracy’, <http://www.minzhuzhongguo.org/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=13988> [accessed 27/4/11].

⁶⁹⁶ The main drafter of Peace Charter was Qin Yongmin, who was the editor of a Hubei minkan *Bell* from 1979-81. For the content of the Charter, see <http://zyzg.us/thread-151329-1-1.html> [accessed 1 March 2011].

The impact on Chinese intellectuals of the suppression of 1989 pro-democracy movement was huge. In the next decade, most Chinese intellectuals re-oriented themselves toward academic research away from social and political criticism. A number of semi-official scholarly journals emerged, inheriting publishing strategies and editorial features of the 1980s book series of *March Toward the Future*. One of the most influential scholarly journals in the 1990s was the bimonthly *Dongfang* (东方, Orient), which published nineteen issues from 1993 to 1996. Several of its founding members were former editors of MTF. Like MTF, *Dongfang*'s existence relied on the protection of open-minded officials combined with a strategy of finding loopholes within the institutions. The journal was affiliated to a semi-official cultural institute administered by the Culture Ministry. The journal was self-funded and enjoyed a certain degree of editorial autonomy. Contents of its 100-page issues included forums, reports, commentaries on current affairs, arts and book reviews, portraits and interviews. The *Dongfang* organized a series of thematic symposiums including globalization and localization, social justice and rule of law, environment and development, feminism, education, and so on. The journal was closed down in 1996 following its plan to publish a special symposium of the taboo topic of the Cultural Revolution for its 30th anniversary.⁶⁹⁷ After the *Dongfang* was closed down, its former editors contributed regularly to Hong Kong based scholarly journals such as *The Twenty-first Century* and *Chinese Social Sciences Quarterly*.⁶⁹⁸ In 2001, the former *Dongfang* editors and the two Hong Kong journals co-founded a new online journal *Century China*. When its domestic server was shut down in 2006, *Century China* moved its server overseas and changed its domain name to *Academic China*.⁶⁹⁹

6.3 Independent Communities

⁶⁹⁷ Fu Guoyong, *The Orient Story*, <http://canada8.info/bbs/read.php?tid=188&page=e&fpage=1>, [accessed 1 March 2011]. See also Liang Zhiping, 'Civil' and 'Civil Society', <http://www.china-review.com/sao.asp?id=3428>. [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶⁹⁸ *The Twenty-first Century*, <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/ics/21c/> [accessed 1 March 2011]. Yu Shicun, 'Notes on Strategy and Management', <http://www.bullogger.com/blogs/yushicun/> [accessed 1 March 2011]. Catalogue of *Chinese Social Sciences Quarterly* sees <http://www.xschina.org/show.php?id=13141> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁶⁹⁹ *Century China* was closed in 2006 and editors used a new domain name, *Acamdey China*. BBC, 'Century China was closed' http://news.bbc.co.uk/chinese/trad/hi/newsid_5210000/newsid_5216700/5216774.stm [accessed 1 March 2011]. *Acamdey China*, <http://www.xschina.org/> [accessed 1 March 2011].

For many Chinese, the tragic ending of the 1989 protests shattered their illusions of the institutions controlled by the party-state. They turned to developing their own organizations in order to transform society. At the beginning of the 1990s, a handful of international charity organizations such as Oxfam and the Ford Foundation who had opened branches in Beijing. The work of these international organizations was limited to government-approved projects in education and health care. Against this backdrop, domestic non-governmental organizations emerged to tackle social and environmental problems. One such pioneering NGOs, Friends of Nature, was registered in Beijing in 1994 as an organization affiliated to a semi-official cultural institute. Its main founding members were also involved in publishing the unofficial magazine the *Dongfang*.⁷⁰⁰ The self-funded organization set as its mission to raise public awareness of environmental protection and provide a platform for public participation in environmental decision-making. It has campaigned against environmental pollution and undertaken a series of actions to protect endangered species such as the Tibetan antelope and the snub-nosed monkey. Although FON has adopted a survival strategy of shunning away from sensitive political issues, one of its founding member, Wang Lixiong, was forced to resign after experiencing a month's detention during a research trip in Xinjiang.

In 1995 the fourth World Conference on Women was held in Beijing. The conference had a non-governmental forum, which triggered the emergence of a large number of NGOs focused on protecting women's rights and promoting gender equality. One of the newly registered NGOs was the Center for Women's Law Studies and Legal Services of Peking University. The Center dedicated itself to providing free legal aid to women, especially those of disadvantaged backgrounds. After China entered the WTO in 1998, official corruption deepened and social disparity increased. There appeared new social initiatives against corruption. An Jun (安均), a Henan minkan veteran, attempted to set up a national organization to collect information on corrupt officials. However, he was not allowed to register and was arrested after setting up two branches, in Henan and Hubei respectively.⁷⁰¹

⁷⁰⁰ Friend of Nature, <http://www.fon.org.cn/channal.php?cid=616> [[accessed 1 March 2011].

⁷⁰¹ HRIC, 'Democracy Activist Qin Yongmin Released from Prison after 12-Year Sentence' <http://www.hrichina.org/content/4879> [accessed 1 March 2011].

In 2003, the eruption of the SARS epidemic saw new NGOs founded to protect the rights of victims of failed public health policies. The incident of Sun Zhigang, a newly graduated designer who was beaten to death while arbitrarily detained, triggered a nationwide petition to abolish the Custody and Repatriation system. A consensus among many NGOs was that the individual rights that they had been working so hard to promote—women’s rights, patients’ rights, labour rights, land rights and so on—were part of the common struggle for citizens’ rights as a whole. From then on, NGOs became more conscious in promoting legal policy reform. Lawyers defending civil rights united to form independent associations across the country.

Although the rhetoric of the Chinese constitution guarantees freedom of association, there is no formal legislation to protect this particular civil right. What exist are a few administrative regulations promulgated by the State Council to restrict the registration of non-governmental organizations. The high threshold of acquiring registered status means that up to 80 per cent of China’s NGOs remain unregistered. Even the registered NGOs lack legal protection.⁷⁰² The Center for Women’s Law Studies and Legal Services of Peking University was closed down in 2010 after 15 years of existence.

6.4 Independent Media

Before the spread of the Internet, print media were easily censored. In the first half of the 1990s, qiaokan played an important role in spreading dissenting voices in China. Most of these overseas dissenting magazines were produced in North America, where the largest Chinese exile community resided. An example was *Free Press Tribune*, founded in 1990 by a dozen journalists and scholars who went into exile after Tiananmen. The journal was published every two weeks, with an average print run of 5,000 copies. Copies were smuggled back to China via minkan networks in Hong Kong, spreading news and comments on public affairs otherwise censored in China. For the first four years, the magazine was funded by donations of overseas Chinese diasporas who were sympathetic to the pro-democracy movement. As the donations ran out, *Free Press Tribune* had to reduce the number of printed copies and cut down its pay staff to

⁷⁰² Xia Guomei, ‘China’s Current NGOs Need to Step Over Obstacles’, <http://www.chinareform.net/2010/0724/19336.html> [accessed 1 March 2011].

one member. From 1994, *FPT* like many other dissenting magazines in the US, survived on grants from the National Endowment for Democracy to pay for printing and mailing of the issues. Since 2005 when the NED stopped funding most of the dissenting magazines, *FPT* has been reduced to online versions only, circulating its contents by email newsletters.⁷⁰³

Since the mid 1990s, reports of sensitive issues found some space on supplements to official newspapers. For example, the semi-official magazine *Freezing Point* started appearing in 1995 as a weekly supplement to the official newspaper *China Youth Daily*. The magazine received funds allocated by the government through *China Youth Daily*, but enjoyed a certain degree of freedom to report on current affairs and print controvertial commentaries. It was closed down temporarily in 2006, and the editors dismissed for publishing articles challenging the official narrative of modern Chinese history.

Due to the global development of the internet since the late 1990s, more and more online minkan have taken up features of the printed minkan: publishing censored news, providing critical views; organizing online forum associations; building cooperation between rebel generations and setting up communication and coordination with civil society in other countries. From 1998 to the present, online alternative newspapers and magazines edited by dissidents and scholars sent their networks directly to netizens by email. As the authorities have established different online censorship mechanisms, the online editors have created different forms of online resistance against censorship while they organized social movements.⁷⁰⁴ Bloggers using domestic official Internet servers employ various methods to bypass taboo and censored words on the 'Great Firewall' so as to publish their blogs, which in turn leads to further repression and enhanced control mechanisms by the government. When bloggers find it difficult to publish the censored information in local areas, their networks help publish them elsewhere, or even directly abroad.

⁷⁰³ *China Spring*, *Free Information Review*, *Democracy China* stopped printing in 2003. *Beijing Spring* stopped printing in 2010.

⁷⁰⁴ Great FireWall database <http://www.chinagfw.org/> [accessed 1 March 2011] Also see Chen Chen, 'Netizens Bypassing the Great China Firewall' [accessed 1/12/10]. See Richard Taylor, 'The Great Firewall of China, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/click_online/4587622.stm [accessed 1 March 2011]. China news tagged with: anti-censorship tools, <http://chinadigitaltimes.net/china/anti-censorship-tools/> [accessed 1 March 2011]. See Yang, Guobin, *The Power of the Internet in China: Citizen Activism Online*. New York: Columbia University Press. 2009.

Since 2007, bloggers in China have become frequent users of foreign company servers. Many bloggers regularly publish blogs which share many similar features with *minkan*, some of which were called ‘blog magazine’.⁷⁰⁵ In the beginning, they kept regular online publication. Because of frequent crackdowns, the online magazines are simultaneously published via servers both inside and outside China. Han Han, China’s most popular blogger, published his monthly magazine *Party* originally in hard copy in July 2010, but when this was closed, it continued as an online publication.⁷⁰⁶ Whenever bloggers such as *Citizen*, *Memoirs of Black Five* and *Wangshi Wei Hen* (Traces of the Past) publish their magazines on domestic servers, they notify their online networks so that online magazines can be published before they are censored.⁷⁰⁷ Bloggers, like guerrilla media, republish the online magazines on different domestic servers shortly after they have been published. Online magazines show the same flexibility as the moveable word of *minkan*.

Online communities via email, Twitter and Facebook form moveable words that are more difficult for the authorities to control. Using Twitter and blogging to organise social movements, turning virtuality into real activities, formed a public sphere both in the virtual and the actual realm. A Citizen Forum via the Wall like the Democracy Wall (Chapter 4) and a Public Square like the Square (Chapter 2), appeared again.⁷⁰⁸ Virtual communications using online security help the circulation of moveable words and organize social movements as well as preventing an early crackdown by the authorities. They have a chance to set up a channel and forum which the public can join in. In these fora, there are debates and competitive or even antagonistic practices on how the

⁷⁰⁵ See Civil Society and NGO Development in Ran Yunfei blog, <http://www.bullogger.com/blogs/ranyunfei/archives/371115.aspx> [accessed 1 March 2011]. See Toward Civil Society, Laohumiao blog, <http://24hour.blogbus.com/> [accessed 1/12/10]. Minjian by Zhai Minglai <http://www.1bao.org/> [accessed 1 March 2011]. See also CDT Launches the Grass-Mud Horse Lexicon, <http://chinadigitaltimes.net/2010/12/introducing-the-grass-mud-horse-lexicon/> [accessed 1 March 2011]. Wang Bingzhang, “Virtual Democracy Wall” break the CCP censorship: *Great References* Anniversary, http://www.chinagfw.org/2007/02/blog-post_3807.html [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁷⁰⁶ Jonathan Watts, “Han Han, China’s most popular blogger, shuts down new magazine”, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/dec/28/han-han-china-blogger-magazine> [accessed 1 March 2011].

⁷⁰⁷ Zhai Xuelei and his peers who involves in human rights defend activities online published *Citizen* since 2005. *Memoirs of Black Five* was weekly edited by people who had been labelled as *Black Five* since 2009. *Wangshi Wei Hen*, since 2006 has been published weekly by democracy activists in 1957 and afterwards.

⁷⁰⁸ He Yang, ‘Human Rights Defenders Fight in Guizhou for the Right to Freedom of Speech for Publicity’ <http://www.minzhuzhongguo.org/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=18246> [accessed 1 March 2011] Li Mingquan, ‘Professor Sun Wenguang gave a speech in Hero Mountain Plaza’ <http://www.canyu.org/n21540c6.aspx> [accessed 1 March 2011]. See Lu Yineng, Professor Sun Wenguang Was under House Arrest, Many people gave Speeches in the Democracy Square’, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xcm1c0iDkYg> [accessed 1 March 2011].

transformation of social hierarchies and political institutions is to be realised. In addition, it is possible to reconcile alternative society and existing society during the transformation process. Minkan (including online minkan) also deal with the intricate relationship between international capital and global civil society.⁷⁰⁹

In the 20th century's opposition to totalitarianism there emerged a philosophy of 'small acts', famously championed by T.G. Masaryk.⁷¹⁰ According to Masaryk, the way to challenge the stability or the concentration of power and to undermine totalitarian bases is through many small acts. Small initiatives can make a big difference.⁷¹¹ Expressing independent opinion by posting *dazibao*, publishing *minkan*, and founding self-organized societies were a series of small acts set against the totalitarian Leviathan power. These small initiatives not only spread thoughts, but also permeated the official media structure. The official media's part-reporting on unofficial publications or critique of them as negative lessons also made them well-known. The power of the powerless comes from these small deeds. Through small actions (such as magazines) from below, from the margins of power, it is possible to change that power. Publishing a magazine is like the bird Jingwei trying to fill up the sea with pebbles in an old Chinese story.⁷¹² According to the myth, a girl drowned while playing in the sea. She turned into a bird called Jingwei, carrying a pebble in its beak every day, never stopping, in order to fill up the vast sea. The struggle of minkan of different generations from 1957 to 1989 like Jingwei endeavoured to resist the monopoly power of the CCP and build up an independent society.

Even today, the rich legacy of minkan is far from being exhausted. Indeed, there are far more magazines in China today than sixty years ago. However, they are still carefully supervised by the Party, which is fostering politically harmless mass entertainment while suppressing civic consciousness. In contemporary China, the regime encourages people to take no interest in public affairs but to 'cultivate such "private" concerns as career and family life'.⁷¹³ In this sense, the legacy of most unofficial magazines was

⁷⁰⁹ McGregor, Richard. *The Party: The Secret World Of China's Communist Rulers*, London: Allen Lane, 2010, xv-zvi.

⁷¹⁰ John Keane, *Vaclav Havel: A Political Tragedy in Six Acts*, 276.

⁷¹¹ Keane, *Vaclav Havel: A Political Tragedy in Six Acts*, Basic Books, 2001, 276.

⁷¹² Bei Sang Jing 65 in San Hai Jing <http://chinese.dsturgeon.net/dictionary.pl?if=gb&id=83673> [accessed 1 March 2011]. Yang, Lihui, An, Deming, Anderson, Jessica, *Handbook of Chinese mythology*, ABC-CLIO, 2005, 154.

⁷¹³ The phenomena in China are similar to ones in Soviet bloc. See Keane, *Power of Powerless*, 8.

two-fold: it was opposed to totalitarianism, but it was also opposed to this kind of cynicism which many Chinese magazines today cultivate. From today's vantage point, we can see *minkan* as a defender of virtues that are also endangered by the new face of totalitarianism, represented by the Party's propaganda that evokes a harmonious consumer society.⁷¹⁴ The importance of unofficial magazines therefore remains relevant today.

⁷¹⁴ The harmonious society became a new face of the party, the same old stuff with a new label, because most of people have not followed the party's former doctrines, at least in language. Thus, it is one the most important legacies that the *minkan* identify the propaganda technique and directly question who gets what when how under the party's continuous monopoly on power.

Appendices

A.1 Interview questions

In English

A. Factual dimension

1. What was your editorial policy?
2. Who cooperated?
3. When did it begin and end?
4. Why did you stop?
5. How many issues did you make?
6. What content did it include?
7. How did you produce it, printing, hand copy?
8. How did you circulate, and how many readers did you have?

B. Mentality / Language of magazines / Self—perception

9. What does the genre of the magazine mean to you? What is its beauty? Why did you choose it? Is it that something special about it?
10. Did you have any sense of the historical importance of the magazine? Were you aware of the risk of getting involved with the magazine? What made you want to take the risk?
11. power relationships within the magazine itself. Informal de facto power relationships. How did you handle its power relationships?
12. Power influence. In starting this magazine or choosing to be involved with it, did you think of precedents set elsewhere? Did you know someone who had created similar magazines before you did? If yes, were you influenced by those magazines, in what aspects?
13. between your magazine and Big Character poster (da zi bao) were ?

14. Did you read official magazines, what relations between your magazine and official magazines, between your magazine and Big Character poster (da zi bao) were ?
15. What relations between your magazines and social and political movements were?
16. Were you aware of the magazine as a political action? Why this not something else? What else did you do as a formal political action? Did you go to street and protest? Did you write letters? What was the thinking behind this particular choice? (Chinese political actions)

C: Specific questions regarding time and magazine (For example, *Square*)

17. through what kind of languages did they think themselves? Socialism or communism, new China. Do these mean anything?
18. What is difference between you and party on explanation about May Fourth, New Literature Movement and Beijing University's tradition?

In Chinese

A. 事实部分

1. 什么是你们的编辑政策?
2. 谁办?
3. 什么时间?
4. 为何停刊?
5. 多少期?
6. 内容?
7. 如何印刷, 手抄, 油印?
8. 如何发行, 有多少读者?

B. 自我定位, 语言风格

9. 对你们而言，什么是杂志？为什么选择办杂志？杂志这种形式的特点是什么？
10. 杂志历史的重要性是什么？办这份杂志的风险是什么，什么原因促成你们甘冒这种风险？
11. 杂志本身的力量是如何表现的，你们如何对待这种力量，这种力量与社会和政治的关系？
12. 历史的继承，是否知道在你们之前有类似的杂志，如果是，你们受到他们的影响吗？在什么方面？
13. 你们的刊物与大字报的关系？
14. 你们读官方杂志吗，你们的刊物与官方刊物（包含学生会刊物）是什么关系？
15. 你们的刊物与社会政治活动的关系（官方，非官方）？
16. 你们是否意识到办刊物本身是政治活动，为什么选择办刊物，而不是其他活动，也许你们还有其他活动？如抗议或写信？

C. 涉及到时代和杂志的特殊问题（以《广场》为例）

17. 你们使用的语言如社会主义、共产主义、新中国是什么意思？
18. 你们当时如何释义五四，新文化运动，北大传统，和党的释义主要分歧是什么？

A.2 List of interviewees

Video camera recorder: Sony HVR—A1E, HDV 1080i.

Videotapes: Sony mini DV cassettes.

Audio recorder: Olympus digital voice recorder WS—300M.

Square, leaflets and big character posters (19/5/1957 to 20/7/1957)

Interview of Chen Fengxiao, Zhang Yuanxun and Shen Zhiyi by telephone and email correspondence, 14/11/2006 and 17/11/2006, 19—22/04/07

Chen was one of initiators and the convener of the magazine while Zhang was chief-in-editor and Shen was a deputy editor.

Interview of Lin Xiling in NY by video camera, 06/06/2007

Lin, a student at People's University, was an extended member of the magazine and saved one of two original copies of the magazine today. She gave me one copy before she died in Paris on 19 Sept 2009.

Interview of Cheng Qingmin in NY by video camera, 06/06/2007. Chen, a math lecturer, wrote big character posters at Beijing University in 1957.

Interview of Yao Renjie in NY by video camera, 06/06/2007

Yao Renjie, a biology lecturer, wrote big character posters at Beijing University

Interview of Fang Lizhi and Li Shuxian by telephone on 12/12/06 and in LA on 30/07/07 by video camera.

Fang and Li, physics lecturers, were supporters of the magazine, who gave donation.

Voice of Social Disadvantaged Strata leaflets and big character posters (30/5/1957—20/6/1957)

Face to face interview of Lei Yining in LA 30/7/07. Interview of Lei and Li Shoushan from 7/9/2007 to 12/9/2007 by email

Li, a deputy editor and Lei, a member of the Magazine.

Common People Newspaper, leaflets and big character posters (28/5/1957—20/6/1957)

Interview of Feng Guojiang in LA by video camera, 01/07/2007. Feng, a student, wrote big character posters at Qinghua University in 1957.

Spark and leaflets (8/1959—10/1960)

Interview of Tan Chanxue and Gu Yan, 14/6/2006 by telephone.

Gu, one of main contributors of the magazine, Tan, a member of the magazine.

My two friend forwarded interview questions to Tan and Gu in the end of 2006. Tan, collecting original materials and the memoirs including her and the other survival members and published *Exploration — 'Rightist Counterrevolution group' record* in 2010. Please see Bibliography

Interview of Hu Jie 26/10/06 in London by video camera, and 13/03/2007 in Oxford by audio. Hu, an independent Chinese documentary filmmaker, produced the documentary, *Looking for Lin Zhao's Soul*, related to *Square* and *Spark*

X-society and correspondence (12/2/1962—23/5/1962)

Interview of Zhang Heci, Chief-in-editor, from 1/10/06 by phone to 7/9/07 to 27/9/07, and 13/10/10 by email

Interview of Mo Tunbai, member of *X—society* and *Solar Brigade* by phone 30/9/07

See also Zhang's articles in Biography

Solar Brigade and handwritten copies (12/1962—8/1962)

Interview of Zhang Langlang, Chief-in-editor, from 1/10/06 to 13/10/06, from 7/9/07 to 27/9/07, 20/08/10 to 27/08/10 by email

See also Zhang's articles in Biography

Journal of Secondary School Cultural Revolution and mimeographed leaflets (11/1966—10/1967)

Interview of Yu Luowen, convener, and young brother of the main contributor Yu Luowen, by phone, 26/09/07

See also Yu's book and articles in Biography

Enlightenment and big character posters (11/10/1978—4/4/1979)

Interview of Mo Jiangang, an editor and a convener by phone, email, Skype and Facebook on 01/04/10 and afterward.

See also Liu Shengqi's, Seymour's, Gu Chunling's and Huang Xiang's books and articles, ch4, p27 footage

Exploration and big character posters (5/12/1978—1/30/1979)

Interview of Wei Jingsheng, Chief-in-editor by video and audio, 10/6/08, by face to face 3/12/08

See also Seymour's and Underground magazines from 1978 to 82, published in Taiwan, Wei and Liu Jingsheng's articles.

Beijing Spring and big character posters (8/1/1979—24/11/1979), election magazines, big character posters and leaflets (24/10/1980—30/12/1980), Economics Magazine(24/3/1988 —14/6/1989) and Library of the Twentieth Century (book series) (7/1988—6/1989)

Interview of Chen Ziming editor of *Beijing Spring*, independent candidate, manager of *Economics Magazine*, editor of *Library of the Twentieth Century* by Skype 24/09/2008 and afterward

Interview of Wang Juntao, editor of *Beijing Spring*, independent candidate, deputy editor of *Economics Magazine*, by face—face in London on 13/03/07 and Skype 15/06/07 and afterward

Interview of Gao Yu, deputy editor of *Economics Magazine*, by video—camera in LA on 30/06/07

See also Widor's book, vol.2

Book series also refer to Chen Fong Ching and Jin Guanto's book. Ch5, p41

Election magazines also refer to *Pioneer* in bibliography

April Fifth Tribune and big character posters (26/11/1978—11/1980)

Interview of Xu Wenli, the chief-in-editor, by email 28/03/08 and face to face in NY 24/06/09

See also Xu's article

Wotu and big character poster (24/03/1979—11/1979), Election Magazines (24/10/1980—30/12/1980), and China's Spring (11/1982—3/2003)

Interview of Hu Ping, editor and the main contributor of *Wotu*, independent candidate, chief-in-editor of *China's Spring* by phone and email, 16/05/07 and afterward.

Interview of Wang Min, editor of *China's Spring* 03/06/06 by face—to—face in Taipei.

See also Hu's website and Beijing Spring's website

Voice of Democracy and big character posters (12/1978—3/1980) and election magazines (3/1980—5/1980)

Interview of Fu Shenqi, the chief-in-editor *Voice of Democracy* and editor of Election Pamphlets by email and phone 19/01/09 and 29/01/09

Human Rights in China and big character posters (2/1/1979—11/1979)

Ren Wanding, the chief-in-editor and the main contributor, face—face interview, Prague, 05/12/08

Today and big character posters (10/12/1978—11/1980)

Interview of Bei Dao, the chief-in-editor by face—face audio recorder 11/06/07 in NY

Bell and Democracy China and leaflets (8/1989—1/1991)

Interview of Sun Liyong, the chief-in-editor by Skype, 3/10/8 to 20/10/8

Opposition Party (5/1998—9/1999)

Face to face interview of Wang Youcai, one of editors and founders of Chinese Democracy Party 5/8/6

Other interviews:

Interview of Chen Duanzhao in NY, 06/06/07, big character posters in People's University and Ge Peiqi (lecturer and criticized Mao and the party in 1957)

Interview of Lu Fuqing in NY, 06/06/07, big character posters in Yaan county, Sichuan Province in 1957.

Interview of Zhang Xianzhi, in NY, 06/06/07, public speeches of journalists and writers in Sichuan Province in 1957. Zhang was a writer in an official newspaper in Sichuan in 1957.

Interview of Wenche Heen in NY, 06/06/07, big character posters in Shanghai Municipal Drama College

Interview of Zhang Yidong in NY, 06/06/07, public speeches of Chinese Students in Soviet Union in 1957

Interview of Tie Liu in NY, 06/06/07, public speeches of *Chengdu Daily* in 1957. Tie was a journalist in 1957.

Interview of Ren Zhong in NY, 06/06/07, Ren's speech at Beijing Public Security Bureau in 1957. Ren was a policeman in 1957

Interview of in Shen Licheng LA, 29/06/07, public speeches of The People's Liberation Army (PLA) in 1957. Shen joined in PLA in 1955 and was granted the rank of lieutenant of the PLA Navy in 1957

Interview of Yao Jianfu in LA, 30/06/07, big character posters in Harbin Institute of Technology in 1957

Interview of Zhang Chengjue in LA, 28/06/07, big character posters in Shanghai Jiao Tong University in 1957

Interview of Zhang Chengjue in LA, 28/06/07, big character posters in Wuhan University in 1957

Interview of Du Gao in LA, 30/06/07, public speech China Drama Press in 1957. Du was Editor—in—Chief of China Drama Press (official newspaper)

Interview of Wang Youqin in NY, 05/06/07, a scholar specialized in the Cultural Revolution

Interview of Qian Liqun in LA, 29/06/07, a student at Beijing Univ. in 1957, a scholar specialized in thoughts in society after 1949

Interview of Guo Luoji in LA, 29/07/07, a scholar specialized in Chinese Politics

Interview of Song Yongyi and Ding Du, scholars in exile, specialized in the Cultural Revolution and Anti—rightist Campaign, 30/6/07 by face—face and by email 15/03/06 and afterward

A.3 Key players of selected minkan

Square, leaflets and big character posters (19/5/1957 to 20/7/1957)

Chen Fengxiao, a maths student in Beijing University, one of initiators and one of conveners of the magazine, was imprisoned and then sent to labour camps from August 1957s to May 1979. He taught maths in a secondary school and college in Sandong from 1980 to 2000. He joined in the Pro-democracy Movement in 1989. Since the mid 1990s, he has written critical reviews of articles on sensitive political issues and memoirs on his political participation and life in prison while he was a signature of Charter 08.⁷¹⁵ He is not allowed to travel internationally.

Gu Wenxuan, studying French Literature in Beijing University, writer of *dazibao* and contributor of *Square*, was imprisoned and then sent to labour camps in the period from December 1957 onward. He escaped from a labour camps in 1964 and was arrested and executed in 1968.

He Yongzeng, studying Japanese literature in Beijing University, one of initiators and one of conveners of the magazine, was imprisoned and then sent to labour camps in the period from December 1957 onward. He was tortured to death in the mid 1960s.

Ling Xiling, studying law in People's University of China, a contributor of *Square*, was imprisoned for 15 years. She was in exile in France from 1984 and died on 19 September 2009.

Liu Qidi, a physics student in Beijing University, writer of *dazibao* and member of the *Square*, was imprisoned and then sent to labour camps in the period from September 1957 onward. He was tortured to death in the early 1960s.

Ren Daxiong, a maths lecturer in Beijing University, writer of *dazibao* and contributor of *Square*, was imprisoned and then sent to labour camps in the period from December 1957 onward. He, involving in organising a resistance group in prison from the late 1960s, was cut his throat and executed in 1970.

⁷¹⁵ Charter 08, a groundbreaking document demanding human rights and democracy in China, was signed by 300 Chinese scholars and activists in December 2008 and has now garnered over 10,000 signatures with real names.

Shen Zeyi, studying Chinese literature in Beijing University, a deputy editor of the magazine, was sent to labour camps from March 1958 to May 1979. He taught Chinese Literature Huzhou Normal College from 1980 to 2000. He joined in the Pro-democracy Movement in 1989 and was under house arrest for half a year. Since the mid 1990s, he has written his memoirs on his political participation and life in prison.

Zhang XiKun, a chemistry student in Beijing University, writer of *dazibao* and one of members of *Square*, was imprisoned and then sent to labour camps in the period from September 1957 onward. He resisted re-education in prison and was executed in October 1977.

Zhang Yuanxun, studying Chinese literature in Beijing University, chief-in-editor of the magazine, was imprisoned and then sent to labour camps from December 1957s to May 1979. He taught Chinese literature in Huzhou Normal College from 1980 to 2000. He has written his memoirs on his political participation and life in prison.

Voice of Social Disadvantaged Strata leaflets and big character posters (30/5/1957—20/6/1957)

Li Shuosan, studying Chinese literature in Beijing Normal University, a deputy editor of the magazine, was sent to a county in Jinlin, laboured under surveillance from October 1958 to 1978. He taught Chinese Literature Huzhou Normal College from 1980 to 2000.

Spark and leaflets (8/1959—10/1960)

Du Yinghua, a deputy secretary of the party's committee in Wushan county, involving in the publication and circulation of *Spark*, was imprisoned in September 1960 and was executed in 1968.

Gu Yan, a physics graduate in Lanzhou University in 1957, labouring under surveillance in Wushan country during the period of the magazine publication, one of initiators and one of main contacts of the magazine, was imprisoned from September 1960 and sent to labour camps. In 1978, he was released and taught physics in University of Science and Technology of China from 1984.

Lin Zhao, studying Chinese literature in Beijing University in 1957, a supporter of *Square*, laboured under surveillance from 1957 to 1959. She was a contributor of *Spark* and involved in several underground groups from 1958 to 1960. She was thrown into prison in November 1961, where she wrote thousands of poems and articles with her blood onto the wall and on paper. Her articles in prison, some of which were smuggled out of prison later, examined the ruling strategies of the CCP and their propaganda patterns. She was executed on 29 May 1968.

Miao Xinjiu, former PLA soldier, a chemistry student in Linzhou University in 1957, labouring under surveillance in Wushan country during the period of the magazine publication, involving in production of the magazine, was imprisoned in July 1960 and sent to labour camps. He taught chemistry in a secondary school in Lanzhou since 1980.

Tan Chanxue, studying Chinese literature in Linzhou University in 1957, labouring under surveillance in Wushan country during the period of the magazine publication, involving in the circulation of *Spark*, was imprisoned in July 1960 and sent to labour camps. She was released in 1979 and have worked as a research in the Dunhuang Academy from 1984. She wrote and published her memoirs on his political participation and life in prison.

Wang Fengqi, a peasant member of *Spark* who helped the group keep copies of mimeographed writings, was allegedly tortured to death in prison in the late 1960.

Xiang Chengjian, a chemistry student in Linzhou University in 1957, labouring under surveillance in Wushan country during the period of the magazine publication, involving in production of the magazine, was imprisoned in July 1960 and sent to labour camps. He taught chemistry in a secondary school in Lanzhou since 1980. He wrote and published his memoirs on his political participation and life in prison.

Zhang Chunyuan, former PLA soldier, studying history in Lanzhou University in 1957, labouring under surveillance in Wushan country during the period of the magazine publication, one of initiators and one of conveners of the magazine, was imprisoned in August 1960, and escaped in 1961. He was rearrested in 1962 and was executed in 1968.

X-society and correspondence (12/2/1962—23/5/1962)

Zhang Heci, a maths student in Beijing Normal College, chief-in-editor, was imprisoned in May 1963 and sent to labour camps. He was released in 1978. He now lives in Australia and write a blog on Chinese politics.

Guo Shiyong, student in Foreign Affairs College and Beijing University, main reading material supplier for members of the group, was sent to labour camps for two years. After his releasing, he studied in China Agricultural University and was tortured to death in 1968.

Solar Brigade and handwritten copies (12/1962—8/1962)

Zhang Langlang, student in China Central Academy of Fine Arts, chief-in-editor. Zhang was imprisoned in 1968 and sent to labour camps. Zhang was released in 1978. He is teaching Chinese in universities in the USA.

Hai Mo, a writer, main commentator and guider for the group, died of turture in 1968.

Journal of Secondary School Cultural Revolution and mimeographed leaflets (11/1966—10/1967)

Yu Luowen, a student, a convener or circulator of the magazine, was imprisoned in prison for six years. He works in a construction company in the USA.

Yu Luoke, a worker, main contributor of the magazine, was imprisoned in January 1968 and executed on 5 March 1970.

Mou Zhijing, chief-in-editor, student, was detained in a short time. He is teaching computer science in the USA.

Wang Jianfu, member of the magazine, student, was detained in a short time. He lives in the US.

Enlightenment and big character posters (11/10/1978—4/4/1979)

Mo Jiangang, an editor and a convener, was imprisoned from April 1979 to October 1979. Mo was expelled from his work unit in 1984. He travelled to Beijing and stayed there until the crackdown of the Tiananmen movement in 1989, networking with underground dissident groups. In 1986, Mo and Huang initiated the Chinese Constellation Poetry Group, the founding of which was accompanied by a tournament of poems recitation by Huang among Beijing universities. The poetry event was succeeded by a new wave of student demonstrations, though Huang himself was sent to a labour camp in Guizhou for three years. In 1989, Mo helped students to publish their bulletins of the movement and *Tribune of Free Press* during the pro-democracy movement in 1989., and was arrested after the crackdown of the movement. In 2007, Mo with other human rights defenders founded the Human Rights Association in Guizhou, which are regularly organising public seminars on the censored issues on social- politics and human rights abuse as well as posting censored articles on walls in central downtown. He has been ‘criminally’ detained since February 2011.

Huang Xiang, a poet and an editor, was imprisoned from April 1979 to October 1979. Huang was sent to a labour camp in Guizhou for three years from 1986 to 1989 due to his involvement in the Chinese Constellation Poetry Group. He has lived in exile in the USA since 1995.

Yang Zaihang, contact person of the magazine, was imprisoned from 1980 to 1984. Since 1984, he has run his small company in Guizhou.

Li Jiahua, a poet and an editor, was imprisoned from April 1979 to October 1979. Since 1984, he has run his small company in Guizhou.

Exploration and big character posters (5/12/1978—1/30/1979)

Wei Jingsheng, worker, chief-in-editor, had been imprisoned for fourteen years and half from March 1979 and September 1993. Six months later Wei was arrested again and sentenced to another 14 years. In 1997 Wei was forced to exile in the US. He is the

president for the Wei Jingsheng Foundation and write political essays on Radio Free Asia.

Yang Guang, student in Beijing the Industrial University, a deputy editor, was imprisoned for half a year. He lives in Australia.

Lu Lin, worker, member of the magazine, was imprisoned in half a year. Since 1984, he has run his small company in Beijing. Because Lu provided financial support to him after Wei Jingsheng's release, Lu's company was closed. He now lives in Beijing.

Liu Jingsheng, worker, member of the magazine, was imprisoned in half a year. Liu joined in the Pro-democracy Movement in 1989. Due to his involvement in organising an underground trade union and Chinese Liberal Democratic Party, he was imprisoned for fourteen years from 1992 to 2006. Liu is often under house arrest.

Beijing Spring and big character posters (8/1/1979—24/11/1979), election magazines, big character posters and leaflets (24/10/1980—30/12/1980), Economics Magazine(24/3/1988 —14/6/1989) and Library of the Twentieth Century (book series) (7/1988—6/1989)

Chen Ziming editor of *Beijing Spring*, independent candidate, manager of *Economics Magazine*, editor of *Library of the Twentieth Century*, involvement in the 1989 Pro-democracy Movement, was imprisoned and under house arrest for thirteen years from September 1989 to 2002. After his release, he writes several books on Chinese politics and society.

Wang Juntao, editor of *Beijing Spring*, independent candidate, deputy editor of *Economics Magazine*, involvement in the 1989 Pro-democracy Movement, was imprisoned for four years and half from September 1989 to April 1994. During his exile, he obtained a Ph.D. Political Science at Columbia University. He is co-chair of chairman of the China Democracy Party.

Gao Yu, a journalist, deputy editor of *Economics Magazine*, involvement in the 1989 Pro-democracy Movement, was imprisoned from May 1989 to October 1990 and from 1993 to 1999. She is a freelance writer.

April Fifth Tribune and big character posters (26/11/1978—11/1980)

Xu Wenli, worker, the chief-in-editor, was imprisoned for thirteen years from 1981 to 1993. He was imprisoned again from 1998 to 2002 due to involvement in organising Chinese Democracy Party. He is a Senior Fellow at Brown University as well as a convener of the Democratic Party Overseas Exile Headquarters.

Yang Jing, worker, editor of the magazine, was imprisoned for eight years from 1981 to 1989. Yang, a member of the underground Protestant Church, is often under house arrest.

Chen Erjing, a contributor of the magazine, was was imprisoned for eleven years from 1982 to 1993. He lives in exile in Demark and writes a blog on Chinese politics.

Wotu and big character poster (24/03/1979—11/1979), Election Magazines

Hu Ping, editor and the main contributor of *Wotu*, independent candidate, lives in exile in the USA. He used to be a chief-in-editor of *China's Spring* and now is a chief-in-editor of *Beijing Spring*.

Voice of Democracy and big character posters (12/1978—3/1980) and election magazines (3/1980—5/1980)

Fu Shenqi, worker, the chief-in-editor *Voice of Democracy* and editor of Election Pamphlets, independent candidate, was imprisoned from 1981 to 1988 and from 1992 to 1994. He lives in exile in the USA and is the General secretary of Chinese Justice Party and the China Democracy Party.

Beijing Youth and big character posters (10/1979—8/1980) and election magazines (10/1980—11/1980) and (9/2002 — 10/2002)

He Depu, worker and researcher, the chief-in-editor *Beijing Youth* and editor of Election Pamphlets, independent candidate, was imprisoned from November 2002 to November 2010. He is under house arrest.

Human Rights in China and big character posters (2/1/1979—11/1979)

Ren Wanding, the chief-in-editor and the main contributor of the magazine, was imprisoned for four years from 1979 to 1983. He was put into prison for seven years from 1989 to 1996 due to involvement in the 1989 Pro-democracy Movement. He lives in exile in France.

Today and big character posters (10/12/1978—11/1980)

Interview of Bei Dao, the chief-in-editor, lives in exile from the late 1980s. He teaches Chinese in universities outside the Mainland China. He is the chief-in-editor of *Today* republication since 1991.

Bell and Democracy China and leaflets (8/1989—1/1991)

Sun Liyong, a policeman, chief-in-editor, was imprisoned for seven years from 1991 to 1998. He lives in exile in Australia and is Convener of Support Network for Persecuted Political and Religious Dissidents in China, which help prisoners of conscience in China.

Opposition Party (5/1998—9/1999)

Election Pamphlets from October 1980 to December 1980 in Beijing Normal College

Zhang Zhongtian, student in Beijing Normal College, independent candidate and contributor of Election Pamphlets, was assigned to teach in a middle school in a remote county in Beijing where he was expelled within months due to the involvement in organizing an independent teachers' union and was soon enough forced to leave the capital after organizing a workers' strike. In Henan province where he later resettled, Zhang mobilized local peasants to boycott public grain contributions as a resistance

against IOUs, blank cheques that local authorities wrote to peasants instead of paying money at receiving their public grain contributions. For which he was arrested and sentenced to ten years in 1988 and died in 1998 soon after his release.

China's Spring from December 1982 to 2002

Wang Bingzhang, chief-in-editor of *China's Spring*, was sentenced to life in Guangzhou in 2003.

March Towards the Future from March 1984 to June 1989

Bao Zunxing, scholar, chief-in-editor, was imprisoned for two years and half due to involvement in 1989 the Pro-democracy Movement. He was expelled from the CASS and was usually under house arrest. Hed wrote books on Chinese history and political essays after his release. He died from cerebral apoplexy in on 28 October 2007.

Xin Guantao, scholar, chief-in-editor, lives in exile in Hong Kong and Taiwan after Tiananmen Massacre in 1989. He teaches Chinese history in universities in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Liu Qingfeng, deputy editor. lives in exile in Hong Kong and Taiwan after Tiananmen Massacre in 1989. She is the chief-in-editor of the *Twenty-first Century* in Hong Kong.

A.4 Partial List of Minkan

Minkan Titles

Pinyin Titles	Chinese Titles	English Titles
Guangchang	广场	Square
Diceng zhi Sheng	底层之声	Voice of Social Disadvantaged Strata
Shumin Bao	庶民报	Common People Newspapers
Xinghuo	星火	Spark
X-She	X社	X-Society
Taiyang Zongdui	太阳纵队	Solar Brigade
Zhongxuesheng Wenge Bao	中学生文革报	Journal of Secondary School Cultural Revolution
Beidou She	北斗社	Dipper Society
Xiangjiang Pinglun	湘江评论	Xiangjiang Review
Qimeng	启蒙	Enlightenment
Renmin zhi Lu	人民之路	People's Road
Minzhu yu Shidai	民主与时代	Democracy and Time
Beijing zhi Chun	北京之春	Beijing Spring
Jintian	今天	Today
Qiushi	秋实	Harvest
Pugongying	蒲公英	Dandelion
Fengye	枫叶	Maple Leaf
Yishu Xiao Cidian	艺术小辞典	Little Dictionary of Art
Qinggong Mitu	清宫密图	Qing Secret Map
Hua Ci	花刺	Thorns
Huohua	火花	Sparkle
Xin Tiandi	新天地	New Field
Tansuo	探索	Exploration
Zhongguo Renquan	中国人权	Human Right in China
Quanmin Gexu	全民歌曲	People's Songs
Fengfan	风帆	Sailing Ship
Chenzhong	晨钟	Bell
Women	我们	WE

Yue Man Lou	月满楼	Moon House
Remin zhi Sheng	人民之声	Voice of People
Chengdu Xiao Cezi	成都小册子	Chengdu Booklet
Wotu	沃土	Fertile Soil
Qiushi Bao	求实报	Realistic News
Si Wu Luntan	四五论坛	April Fifth Tribune (AFT)
Si yu Chao	思与潮	Thoughts & Trends
Minzhu yu Fazhi	民主与法制	Democracy and Rule of Law
Zhixin	志新	Zhixin
Yuan Shang Cao	原上草	Grass
Bai Hua	百花	The Hundred Flowers
Kexue MinZhu Fazhi: Minzhuqiang Shiwen Xuan	科学民主法制：民主墙诗 文选	Science Democracy and Rule of Law: Selected Articles and Poems from Democracy Wall
Lixiang Tongxun	理想通讯	Correspondence of Ideals
Xueyou Tongxun	学友通讯	Schoolmates Correspondence
Beijing Qingnian	北京青年	Beijing Youth
Minzhu zhi Sheng	民主之声	Voice of Democracy
Zeren	责任	Responsibility
Zou Xiang Weilai	走向未来	March Towards the Future (MTF)
Beijing Jingjixue Zhoubao	北京经济学周报	Economics Weekly
Zhongguo zhi Chun	中国之春	China Spring

Partial List of Minkan

Pinyin Titles	Start	End	Places of production	Iss.	Approximate Numbers of participants
Guangchang	May 1957	Jul 1957	Beijing	1	80
Dic zhi Sheng	May 1957	Jun 1957	Beijing	1	
Shumin Bao	May 1957	Jun 1957	Beijing	1	
Xinghuo	Sep 1959	Jul 1960	Wushan & Shanghai	2	50
X-She	Feb 1963	May 1963	Beijing	4	10
Taiyang Zongdui	Feb 1963	Mar 1967	Beijing	8	40
Zhongxuesheng Wenge Bao	Nov 1966	Apr 1967	Beijing	6	40
Beidou She	Oct 1967	May 1968	Wuhan	3	20

Xiangjiang Pinglun	Oct 1967	Jan 1968	Changsha	1	20
Qimeng	Oct 1978	Apr 1979	Guizhou	5	
Renmin zhi Lu	Sep 1979	Oct 1980	Guizhou	7	10
Minzhu yu Shida	Feb 1979		Beijing	1	
Beijing zhi Chun			Beijing	9	40
Jintian	Dec 1978	Dec 1980	Beijing		40
Qishi	Mar 1979	Oct 1979	Beijing	6	
Puguangying			Beijing		
Fengye	Apr 1979		Beijing		
Yishu Xiao Cidian	Jul 1979				
Qinggong Mitu	Mar 1979			1	
Hua Ci	Apr 1979			1	
Huo Hua	Apr 1979			2	
Xin Tiandi					
Tansuo	Dec 1978	Oct 1980	Beijing	5	
Zhongguo Renquan	Jan 1979	Apr 1979	Beijing	3	
Quanmin Gexu	Feb 1979			2	
Fengfan		Dec 1980	Taiyuan	1	
Chenzhong	Jan 1979	Mar 1979	Hangzhou	2	
Women	Mar 1979	Sep 1979	Hangzhou	3	
Yue Man Lou					
Remin zhi Sheng	Dec 1978	Dec 1979	Guangzhou	13	
Chengdu Xiao Cezi				1	
Wotu	Mar 1979	Oct 1979	Beijing	6	
Qishi Bao	Jan 1979			1	
Si Wu Luntan	Nov 1978	Apr 1981	Beijing	18	
Shi yu Chao					
Minzhu yu Fazhi	Feb 1979	Mar 1979		4	
Zhixin	Feb 1979			2	
Yuan Shang Cao					
Bai Hua					
Kexue MinZhu Fazhi: Minzhuqiang Shi Wen Xuan			Beijing	4	
Lixiang Tongxun	Jan 1980	Dec 1980	Changsa	9	
Xueyou Tongxin	Feb 1980	Nov 1980	Guangzhou	11	
Beijing Qingnian	Feb 1979	Dec 1980	Beijing	7	
Minzhu zhi Sheng	Dec 1978	Dec 1980	Shanghai	7	20
Zeren	Sep 1980	Oct 1981	Guangzhou & Shanghai	7	
Zou Xiang Weilai	Dec 1983	Jun 1989	Beijing	74	40
Beijing Jingjixue Zhoubao	Mar 1988	Jun 1989	Beijing	65	30
Zhongguo zhi Chun	Dec 1982	Feb 2011	New York	210	200

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