Jie Li

China under Zhao Ziyang,
1987–1989

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Jie Li

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This book covers Zhao Ziyang's assumption of acting General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party from the beginning of 1987, to the end of the Tiananmen Incident in 1989, when Zhao's tenure was virtually terminated. Research details the most dramatic social and political events in China, as well as the twist and turn, ebb and flow of Zhao's political career during these turbulent years. This project attempts to challenge the prevailing views that Zhao was a liberal-mind communist, and his downfall in 1989 was owing to his disagreement with the Chinese paramount leader Deng Xiaoping's decision to crack down on the protestors by force. Instead, the investigation argues that Zhao was a circumspect and opportunist politician, rather than an idealistic reformer.

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Notes on Romanization

The thesis uses pinyin romanization throughout, with some exceptions for place names and personal names that are long familiar in the West. Particularly in writing about Chinese developments in Taiwan and about those people closely involved with Republican period (1912–1949), such as Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek, I have used Wade-Giles system.

Abbreviations in the Text

BWAF — Beijing Workers Autonomous Federation
BUSA — Beijing University Students Autonomous Association
CAC — Central Advisory Committee
CASS — Chinese Academy of Social Science
CCP — Chinese Communist Party
CCTV — China Central Television
CDIC — Central Discipline Inspection Commission
CDS — Coastal Development Strategy
CYL — Communist Youth League
FDRS — Factory Director Responsibility System
HRS — Household Responsibility System
KMT — Guomindang Party or Nationalist Party
MAC — Military Affairs Commission
NEP — New Economic Policy
NPC — National People's Congress
PLA — People's Liberation Army
PRC — People's Republic of China
ROC — Republic of China
SEZs — Special Economic Zones
SOEs — State Owned Enterprises
TAR — Tibetan Autonomous Region
TVEs — Township and Village Enterprises

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Acknowledgment/Preface

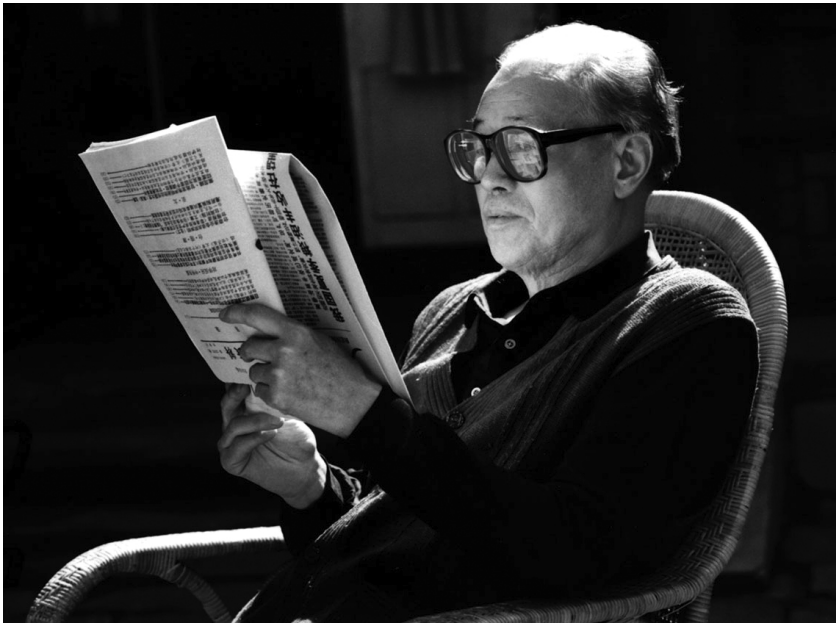
I am a Chinese scholar who is currently residing in Hong Kong. This book — *China under Zhao Ziyang, 1987–1989* — had been completed a few years ago, but many local publishers in Hong Kong consistently refused to publish it. Although those publishers did not give me any reasonable explanations for refusal, I understand that today's Hong Kong — it is somewhat similar to the situation in present-day Ukraine's relation with its mighty and authoritarian neighbor of Russia — is under the tight grip of the powerful Communist Party of China in Beijing. The city could no longer enjoy the kind of academic freedom it cherished and valued when it was under the British colonial rule in pre–1997 time. Particularly considering that this book is about the controversial former Chinese Prime Minister Zhao Ziyang and the notorious Tiananmen massacre in 1989, so the manuscript cannot be published in my city Hong Kong, although it is regrettable, it is still completely understandable.

However, I never thought this book would be published in Ukraine, a place is far away from Hong Kong and it is currently in the midst of a brutal war launched by the Russian invaders. I am so grateful to the Helvetica Publishing House, who bravely decided to publish my book despite its bleak domestic situation and to make my dream come true. I would like to wholeheartedly thank all the Ukrainian colleagues and all the staff in the Helvetica Publishing House. My sincere blessing will particularly go to Dr. Yevheniia Hobova, a China scholar from A. Yu. Krymskiy Institute of Oriental Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and Dr. Oleg Golovko, Director of the Helvetica Publishing House.

Without the generous and selfless assistance from all the people I mentioned above, the book would have probably not been available to the general public forever.

As such, this book is dedicated to the great country of Ukraine and the brave Ukrainian people. The Ukrainian people, just like the Chinese student protesters in Tiananmen Square in the summer of 1989, when they were facing the guns and tanks of the Chinese Communist Party armies, never give up the hope of fighting for freedom while fearlessly confronting the ruthless enemies and massacres. I sincerely wish the country of Ukraine will become stronger and more prosperous after this brutal war, and the Ukrainian people will forever live in the soil of freedom, democracy, peace and love.

This book is also dedicated to the Department of History at Hong Kong Baptist University. When I got my doctorate in History from the University of Edinburgh in 2017, countless universities rejected my job applications, but there was only one exception. The Department of History at Hong Kong Baptist University extended an olive branch to me and appointed me as a lecturer in the Department in 2020. I really enjoy my work in this wonderful and family-like academic department. Without the offer from the History Department at Hong Kong Baptist University, I might have never been able to realize my academic dream and to disseminate the truth of human history and conditions to the world.



Introduction

Background and Objective

Zhao Ziyang (1919–2005) has been recognized as one of the most liberal and open-minded Communist leader in the history of Peoples Republic of China (PRC), and one of the most controversial figures in the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Zhao is characterized as a Party leader like neither Mao Zedong (tyrannical and evil) nor Hu Yaobang (wise and honest) by many Chinese dissidents, but a person lays between those two, somewhat resembling to Deng Xiaoping — the Chinese paramount leader after Mao Zedong. The major difference between Zhao and Deng are the changes of their reputations after the event of June Fourth (or the Beijing Spring movement) in 1989, in which Deng had been badly reappraised in terms of his despotic method in dealing with the demonstrators. However, Zhao was sympathized by many Chinese because his continuous resistance to Deng's approach; he was regarded as a hero-like figure after the incident although having been permanently disgraced from the Party thereafter, and no matter how unwelcome he was for the Chinese prior to the massacre in Tiananmen.

Many scholars mainly attribute Zhao Ziyang's failure to his sudden descent in 1989, as then he was one of the very few Party leaders opposing to Deng, and it was resulted in Deng's retaliation afterwards. The research attempts to change the view and tries to reveal the complexities behind the scene of which few people are aware, that the June Fourth incident was merely one of many causes

for triggering Zhao's final dismissal, and it was far from the most significant one. The thesis has not only confirmed that Zhao would probably be dismissed even without the June Fourth, and the student demonstrations might as well happen no matter who was in charge of China at that time, as well as given an answer of why.

The research dates from Zhao Ziyang's assumption of acting Party General Secretary at the beginning of 1987, to the end of the Beijing Spring movement in 1989, when Zhao's tenure was virtually terminated. This two-year period was the peak time of Zhao's power, and it was covered with the most dramatic events in the 1980s China. From 1987 to 1989 was the best illustration of twist and turn, ebb and flow of Zhao's political career.

The thesis will show the followings step by step: When Zhao Ziyang sided with Deng Xiaoping and the conservatives in aid of his replacement of Hu Yaobang as a new Party head; he had irritated some Party liberalists. Zhao also contracted enmity with the conservatives after their uninformed Zhuozhou conference in the summer of 1987, in which Zhao refused to disperse the conference messages of returning China to Maoist way, and reported it to Deng. During the temporary euphoria of Zhao's victory — the Thirteenth Party Congress in October 1987, Zhao was formalized as a new Party boss. But his position was simultaneously sandwiched between conservative personnel, particularly the confrontation with elders' disciple Li Peng, a newly Premier, and their discord had been fully expressed both in economic issues and the incident of June Fourth. The subsequent political reform of establishing neo-authoritarianism and the price readjustment in the economical realm, both were supervised by Zhao Ziyang, further alienating himself from the reformers and intellectuals, and deteriorating the quality of Chinese life. Up to the advent of the Beijing Spring in 1989, both the students, intellectuals, city inhabitants, as well as the Party conservatives all targeted on Zhao. The dispute in how to end the turmoil in

Tiananmen led to the final showdown between Zhao and his mentor Deng. In 1989, Zhao was considered to be the sin of all Chinese misfortune during the past decade by both the left and the right.[1]

The thesis will try to answer this question: Why Zhao Ziyang had painstakingly criticized the students and Hu Yaobang in the aftermath of 1986–87 demonstration, and ironically Zhao contrasted his role by protecting the students and finding a peaceful solution during the crisis of 1989 summer, which was exactly like the attitude of Hu Yaobang in the late 1986.

Although Zhao Ziyang's goal was a "humanitarian socialism" (not genuine democracy), but throughout almost two years reign, his relaxation in political control and unwillingness to cooperate with the conservatives, is a calculation of implementing his radical economic program, such as price reform and coastal development strategy, and a consideration for establishing his own political base after Deng Xiaoping. What Zhao had done in the summer of 1989 are some kind of opportunist attempt, he tried to save his personal fame and expand his political dominance, by shifting the blame of China's failure to Deng and the Party in support of the hunger strikers, but it was all to no avail.

Literature Review

One of the best illustration of Zhao Ziyang's early years is written by David Shambaugh: *The Making of a Premier* (1984), the author had had spent several years in China in the late 1970s to locate the evolution of Zhao's career before he became the State Premier in 1980. This book covers the period from Zhao's joining

[1] Interestingly, conservative and leftist as well as liberalist and rightist are synonymous in the context of Chinese politics.

in the CCP in the 1930s until his promotion to Beijing in the 1980s, particularly paying attention to Zhao's provincial career in Guangdong and Sichuan, where he was the local Party Secretaries. Although Shambaugh's research does not relate to the time scope of this thesis, but the author has provided Zhao's background before his recruitment into Beijing, and his early relationship with Deng Xiaoping. The thesis also uses this premise in aiding readers to understand the causality between Zhao's early Party experiences and his "Beijing career".

There are several intensive researches about post-Mao China, and they are done by Richard Baum (*Burying Mao*, 1994), Maurice Meisner (*The Deng Xiaoping era*, 1996 & *Mao's China and After*, 1999), Kwan Ha Yim (*China Under Deng*, 1991), and Immanuel Hsu (*China Without Mao*, 1990). Particularly in the latter parts of these books, they cover much from Zhao's ascension in the early 1987 to his passing away from political stage in 1989. They concentrate mostly on the Thirteenth Party Congress with its personnel reshuffle, and the failure of price reform as well as the unrest among the students and intellectuals before and during the June Fourth movement. Unlike this thesis, those researches are mainly political histories, they focus less on the events happened outside the Party, and somewhat overlook the social machinery that led China to Tiananmen.

Benedict Stavis's masterpiece: *China's Political Reforms* (1988) is an investigation dealing with the political reform movements in the 1980s China. The distinctiveness of the book is the author traces back to Chinese ancient governance long time ago, and compares China's political reforms under Deng Xiaoping with those of Gorbachev in Soviet Union and other contemporaries in Eastern Europe. Because the time when Benedict completing this research (1988) as Zhao's political reform was still in progress, so the author is not able to make an original conclusion as well as to predict the outcome of Zhao's program.

In my unbiased opinion, the Chinese scholar and long time Zhao Ziyang's associate Wu Guoguang's Chinese book: *Zhao Ziyang Yu ZhengZhiGaiGe* (*Political Reform under Zhao Ziyang*, 1997) is the best reference in this field. The research spans from the late 1986 to the eve of Tiananmen turbulence in 1989. Wu used to be a member of Zhao's think tank and the backbone of political reform office. By such privileges, the author could present every segment of the whole story: From the origin of the reform to its first draft, from every intense discussions and meetings to the final paper submitted to Zhao Ziyang as his opening speech at the Thirteenth Congress. Wu Guoguang had witnessed the twist and turn of the project and the birth of this first comprehensive political reform blueprint in the history of PRC. Because Wu's pro-Zhao background and his expulsion from China after the June Fourth, it also creates some deficiencies of this research. Wu apparently has too much sympathy toward Zhao, and he exaggerates the liberal and Western-oriented nature of this political reform. Strictly speaking, Wu's book is a personal memoir rather than an academic analysis. Some events appear in the book, such as the sites, the times, the people and their words are remained in doubt, but generally the originality is maintained. Furthermore, the work done by Stephen Ma (1996), Kalpana Mistra (1998), and Hsi-Sheng Chi (1991) can be the supplementary sources for Zhao's political reform. Unlike Wu Guoguang, the three American scholars are outsiders of the CCP, but their investigations are from another point of view. Their outcome of researches contradicts that of Wu: The motive of Zhao Ziyang in launching the 1986 reform was preventing the erosion of Party corruption, rather than embracing the intra-party democracy.

Regarding to China's economic development under Zhao Ziyang, the thesis also has consulted many scholastic sources. In economic area, Harry Harding (1987) has done a good job in the research of China's economic base before Zhao's accession,

particularly about Hu Yaobang's urban reform started from 1984. James Ethridge (1990), Peter Nolan and Dong Fureng (1990) produce the comprehensive survey in Deng's economic modernization after 1978, and the changes in the late 1980s are their main concern. Some people also have substantial contribution to the investigation of Zhao's economic program. For the transition and privatization of State Owned Enterprises (SOEs): Nicholas Lardy (1998), Lynn White (1998), and William Hinton (1991). The Township and Village Enterprises (TVEs) by Gary Jefferson (1999), and the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and the Coastal Development Strategy (CDS) by George Crane (1990). Besides, Ilpyong Kim and Bruce Reynolds (1988) analyze the general economic policies in the late 1980s; Susan Shink (1993) puts the economic development under China's political context at that time; Joseph Fewsmith (1994) carefully examines the conflict of economic philosophies between Zhao's and those of his conservative rivals; and Alan Kluver tells how the economic impact triggered the student movement in 1989.

Other aspects of social development under Zhao Ziyang's reign are as follows:

Agricultural reform, village elections, and peasant migration: Jean Chun (1999), Frank Leeming (1988), Dali Yang (1996), Colin Carter (1990), and Dorothy Solinger (1999).

Industrial reform and workers' daily life: Jackie Sheehan (1998), Tidrick Gene and Chen Jiyuan (1987).

Education, student activities, and academic researches: Jing Lin (1993), Irving Epstein (1991), and Ruth Hayhoe (1996).

Art, literature, and films: Bonnie McDougall (1997 & 2003), Chen Xihe and Xia Hong (1993), Paul Clark (1987 & 2005), Richard Madson (1989), and Nick Browne (1994).

Prospects of democracy under Zhao Ziyang and the origin of June Fourth: Andrew Nathan (1990 & 1997), Orville Schell (1988),

Link Perry (1992), Fang Lizhi (1990 & 1992), Liu Binyan (1989 & 1990), John Woodruff (1990), Gargan Edward (1991), Gregor Benton and Alan Hunter (1995).

The turmoil and massacre in Tibet caused by the ethnic independent movement on March 1989 is the most overlooked in the research of Chinese history in the late 1980s, as such event was occurred in the periphery of Han China. Unfortunately, many existing materials, such as Tsering Shakya (1999), Ronald Schwartz (1994), Lee Feigon (1996), and Melvyn Goldstein (1997), they do not delve into the role of which Zhao Ziyang had played during the March rebellion. The thesis decides to fill the gap, and the detailed narration about Zhao's conduct during the Tibetan massacre will be given on Chapter Two.

For the Chinese intellectuals in the late 1980s, except the general reference by Ruth Cherrington (1997), and the detailed categorization in terms of their political inclinations by Min Lin and Maria Galikowski (1999), there is a classical research done by Merle Goldman: *Sowing the Seeds of Democracy in China*, which was published in 1994. The book is an intensive survey of Hu Yaobang's intellectual network, but unfortunately its description about Zhao's intellectual network is limited. Goldman presents two major intellectual groups (establishment and non-establishment) that had already formed before Zhao's ascendancy. Some of the intellectuals had joined into Zhao's think tank, to participate in his fateful program of political reform started in the late 1986. Their arguments about China's economic and political reform would have continued to conflict after Zhao's degradation.

The documentations regarding to the Beijing Spring in 1989 are the core texts of this research. Apart from Zhang Liang's *Zhongguoliusizhenxiang* (*June Fourth: The True Story*, 2001), which is the primary sources of this investigation. According to their

genres, most of the sources that the researcher has consulted can be classified into three categories:

1. **Personal Memoir**: Michael Duke (1990), Lee Feigon (1990).
2. **Academic Research**: George Black and Robin Munro (1993), Michael Fathers and Andrew Higgin (1989), Yi Mu and Mark Thompson (1989), Mok Chiu Yu and Frank Harrison (1990), Craig Calhoun (1994), Timothy Brook (1992).
3. **Collection of Documents, Writings, and Speeches**: Han Minzhu (1990), Geremie Barme and Linda Jaivin (1992), Michel Oksenberg, Lawrence Sullivan and Marc Lambert (1990).

There are some inadequacies of abovementioned literature, including those for the June Fourth movement. First of all, in my limited vision, most of the existing researches which cover post-Mao period and few of them focus on Zhao Ziyang era (1987–89), particularly from his acting General Secretary in January 1987 to the eve of Tiananmen. Secondly, although all of the authors have their individual specialties, such as Maurice Meisner for politics and Joseph Fewsmith for economy, but the scattering of scholarships can not give readers a completed picture of Zhao Ziyang era. Last, the existing literature tend to believe that the June Fourth was the only or the most important reason to spell the collapse of Zhao's political career.

Methodology and Sources

To change the deficiencies of abovementioned literature, the thesis tries to do a comprehensive research by combining surveys of most of the social sectors at that time: From the political background to the economic and social changes, finally the examination of Tiananmen incident, to present the first integrated study of Zhao Ziyang era (1987–89). It seems too ambitious for an independent thesis, however, it is still worthy of such unprecedented experimentation.

The study adopts a historical approach, including literary analysis and archival research, which is "the basic method and the common denominator of all historical inquiry"[2]. Because this is an independent research paper, the notion of supervision does not fully apply to me, as those of traditional schools do for their students. The unavailability of some materials places limitations upon my research, since libraries of local research institutions and universities in Toronto are not open to independent scholars, and original Chinese publications here are also rare. Throughout two and a half years of my investigation, the researcher exclusively acquired the materials in local public libraries and ordered the Chinese sources from Asia. On occasion, to ensure fidelity and accuracy to original texts, or to provide greater fluency and coherence, I have translated certain Chinese phrases into English here. Therefore, the thesis involves mainly reading secondary and English sources.

Thesis Structure

In Chapter One, the thesis will first trace back to Zhao Ziyang's pre-Beijing experiences, and present how both "Sichuan achievement" and his relation with Deng Xiaoping had contributed to Zhao's premiership in Beijing from 1980 onwards. Then it briefly reviews the post-Mao China before 1987, with special attention to the relation between Zhao Ziyang and Hu Yaobang, and how Zhao became acting Party General Secretary by benefiting from both Hu's disgrace and the 1986–87 student movement. Immediately after, the thesis carefully examines the road led to the Thirteenth Party Congress in October 1987; Zhao's opening speech about "Primary

[2] Richard E. Beringer, *Historical Analysis: Contemporary Approaches to Clio's Craft* (Toronto : Wiley, 1978), 17.

Stage of Socialism" and the impact of personnel resettlement at the Congress, as well as the course and consequence of first Party political reform under Zhao's patronage.

In Chapter Two, the investigator delves into the economic and social development under Zhao's tenure as General Secretary (1987–89). It consists of the researches from price readjustment, enterprises and ownership reform, coastal development strategy, to agriculture and peasants' daily life, workers movement, education and student activities, intelligentsia, art, literature and films, as well as the Tibetan insurrection in 1989.

The last Chapter is dealing with the Beijing Spring in the summer of 1989, and is the finale of Zhao Ziyang as well as the climax of the thesis. It follows every step during the incident, from the first wall poster for mourning Hu Yaobang in Beijing University in April to the aftermath of the bloodshed on June 4. It concentrates on the intra-party struggle between Zhao and his political rivals, and the outside-party struggle between the students and the hardliners. The thesis attempts to find out about the motives of the students and other social strata who participated in the movement and Zhao's role in the decisive moment before the massacre.

All the three chapters describe the vicissitudes of two years of Zhao's China; they delineate the causes of Zhao's final downfall in the wake of Tiananmen, and offer an account about how Zhao from being the dominator of China's political stage to the "guilty person of the CCP". The conclusion at the end of the thesis responds to this introduction: It refutes both the overstatement of Zhao Ziyang's political morality, and the misconception of the June Fourth was the only one element that generated Zhao's exit. The research is more about a political and social history of the PRC in the late 1980s, rather than merely a Zhao Ziyang's political biography.

Chapter One
Political Background

A. Zhao Ziyang Before 1987

Zhao Ziyang was born on October 18, 1919; he joined in the CCP in 1938. Zhao's experience in Party ladder is roughly divided into five phases. From 1938 to 1946, Zhao was appointed as Party General Secretary of his hometown Hua county in Henan Province, and responsible for coordinating with Party committees all over the country, in confrontation with Guomindang or Nationalist Party (KMT) before the CCP final victory in 1949.

In 1951, Zhao had been promoted to General Secretary of South China Sub-Bureau Secretariat in Guangdong and had become a member of the Sub-Bureau's Standing Committee. By working with Provincial Party General Secretary Tao Zhu, Zhao's "Guangdong experience" was highly successful, particularly in the field of propaganda. No sooner had Zhao Ziyang been appointed as the Deputy Secretary of Province in 1955, than he replaced Tao Zhu in 1965, as the youngest Provincial Party General Secretary in the history of PRC at the age of 46. Even Zhao and Tao were denounced at the beginning of Cultural Revolution, but fortunately Zhao was downgraded to Inner-Mongolia for several years before relocated to Guangdong in 1972, to be able to avoid those turbulent period. In Guangdong Zhao Ziyang had matured as a politician in the CCP

system and become a political generalist by learning the game rules of political survival. He always articulated his own preferences while being aware of the swing in the center. For example, both Zhao and Tao passively implemented the policy of Great Leap Forward in Guangdong while painstakingly praising Mao Zedong's greatness. And during the Cultural Revolution, Zhao clearly sided himself with the "Gang of Four" on the surface, but in private he frequently contradicted leftist policies.

The turning point of Zhao Ziyang's life was in November 1975, when he was transferred to Sichuan Province, and subsequently promoted as the Provincial Party Secretary one month later. In this politically subtle period of the late 1970s, when Mao Zedong and the "Gang of Four" still dominated the realm of communist China, Zhao adopted the "wait and see" political strategy in Sichuan. Meanwhile Zhao successfully stimulated the Sichuan economy, especially in agriculture. He let the region became one of few grain harvest Chinese provinces in the late 1970s, and this achievement paralleled what Wan Li had done in Anhui province at the same time.

After the April Fifth incident and the purge of Deng Xiaoping, Zhao Ziyang did not openly criticize Deng. When the Gang fell in October 1976, Zhao immediately followed the center to denounce the Gang. Deng was not to forget Zhao's allegiance, after Deng returned to power in 1978; Zhao was transferred to Beijing with full membership on the Politburo in September 1979, and was named Premier of State Council in September 1980 until the Thirteenth Party Congress in 1987, when he took the highest position — the boss of the CCP. This marks the beginning of Zhao Ziyang's fifth and the final phase of his political career, about which the thesis will mostly concern.

It is a misunderstanding that Zhao Ziyang's recruitment in Beijing was only Deng Xiaoping's repayment for Zhao's allegiance, but more was rather Zhao's remarkable "Sichuan experience" (1975–78)

attracted Deng's most attention. Deng trusted Zhao's talent and frequently consulted with him about reform policies. From 1980 to 1987, while being the State Premier, Zhao was mainly responsible for China's economic management.

Quoting Shambaugh's conclusion of Zhao Ziyang before 1987: "Agriculture has undoubtedly been Zhao's specialty throughout his career. He is truly an agricultural expert; he understands both technical and managerial facets." and "Zhao Ziyang must be considered a very liberal economic thinker. He favors decentralization of decision-making, the use of material incentives, private enterprise, a promotion system based on merit, enterprise accountability pegged to profits and losses, and many more policies which were anathema to his predecessors"[1]. Like Deng Xiaoping, Zhao is a pragmatist indeed.

B. China Before 1987

After the state founder Mao Zedong died in 1976, China from 1976 to 1981 was rather a palace drama than a kind of history. The "Gang of Four" (radical Maoist), Hua Guofeng (moderate Maoist), and Deng Xiaoping (Reformer) started to fight for the supreme leadership vacuumed by Mao. The "Gang of Four" struck at first to attack Mao's chosen successor Hua Guofeng, but Hua tactically launched a coup d'etat by the help of senior Party leaders, to arrest the "Gang of Four" in October 1976. Deng did not directly participate in crushing the "Gang", but invoked the support of Party veterans and military leaders to gain the ascendancy two years after. Once again in 1989, Deng united these force to go through the storm of the Beijing Spring.

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[1] David L. Shambaugh, *The Making of a Premier: Zhao Ziyang's Provincial Career* (Colo : Westview Press, 1984), 120.

From 1977 to 1978, only Hua Guofeng and Deng Xiaoping were competing for the paramount leadership of PRC, and Hua's failure fully proved that he was not a politician as skillful as Deng. Hua's most fatal fault was he admitted his mistake in labeling the "reactionary" nature of April Fifth movement, conceding that the Tiananmen incident had been "completely revolutionary", and rehabilitating Deng and the victims of the movement. Such decisions undermined the legitimacy of Hua's power. Unlike Hua's surrender in the late 1970s, Deng Xiaoping never did the same to make a compromise with his rivals after conducting the Tiananmen massacre in 1989. Deng took over Hua's job in the decisive moment of the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Party Central Committee on December 18, 1978, to be approved as the de facto supreme leader in both the Party and the state, and it ended the thirty years of Maoist era[2]. Hua Guofeng's intention in 1976 was restoration, called for stability; Deng Xiaoping's resolution in 1978 was reform, called for change, and the Chinese at this time urgently needed was a real change.

From 1979 to 1981, when Deng Xiaoping was formally in charge of China, he understood that his power had not been consolidated, and was threatened by the Maoists and dissidents alike. So before undertaking the comprehensive structural reform, he had had to defrost all walks of Chinese life and clean up the obstacles that prevented the implementation of the "open door" policy. At first, since the Third Plenum in 1978, Deng Xiaoping reaffirmed the Party collective leadership rather than the Mao Zedong-like unlimited

[2] Except the Chairman of the Military Affairs Commission, Deng Xiaoping never assumed any supreme positions in either the Party or the state, but passed the titles to his disciples and played a role of "leader behind the scene". He seemed to have absorbed the lesson of both Mao Zedong and Hua Guofeng in their power excessiveness.

individual power-swelling, appointed more technocrats instead of the political cadres, but kept the revolutionary elders (known as "Gang of Olds") into the Central Advisory Committee (CAC) of Politburo as the Chinese style of "check and balance". From the end of 1978 to early 1979, Deng Xiaoping suppressed the Beijing Democracy Wall movement, which was inspired to generate by dissident Wei Jingsheng, and Wei was the first person in the PRC history to demand democracy be included in the government's policy. Deng realized that the ghost of Mao Zedong still paralyzing the legitimacy of his rule and the "open door" policy, he supervised the compilation of "Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party" in 1980, and it was unanimously adopted at the Sixth Plenum, 1981. This final assessment of Mao Zedong was that he had been correct seventy percent and incorrect thirty percent of the life time, only blamed for certain "leftist" excesses in his later years, and such errors were mostly attributed to the intrigues of Lin Biao and the "Gang of Four". Deng Xiaoping also established the lower limit in post-Mao China — "Four Cardinal Principles", to forbid any further political demand from below.[3]

In 1980, the national trial of the "Gang of Four" was presented all over the world, but this court drama was a kind of political retaliation rather than a purely law suit. During the trial, China failed to convince the international society that the rule of law had been returning to the country. At the beginning of 1980s, Deng Xiaoping had characterized his regime as the economically de-Maoistnization but politically under the Maoist arbitrary mode.

After the political restoration (1976–81), China began its economic rejuvenation from 1982 onwards. Deng Xiaoping

[3] The "Four Cardinal Principles" was established by Deng Xiaoping as a commitment to Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong thought, Party leadership, socialism, and the dictatorship of the proletariat, after crushing down of the Democracy Wall movement in early 1979.

consolidated his victory of reform by grooming two protégés for power — Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang. Both Hu and Zhao were committed to Deng's reform policy, while upholding the Four Cardinal Principles. Hu Yaobang was named as General Secretary of the Party, toward the eventual removal of Hua Guofeng and other Maoists from power in 1981. During his six years reign (1981–86), Hu's role was dubious and vague. While Deng controlled the final decision and the military force, "Gang of Olds" supervised the Party internal affairs, and the Premier Zhao Ziyang conducted the economic work. But Hu was obviously drowned by the Party ideological and spiritual combats, with the exception of leading the agricultural reform, such as "Rural Contract System" and "Household Responsibility System", under Deng's auspices in the early 1980s, and setting up the not-so-successful urban reform in 1984.

Even Hu Yaobang was highly appreciated among the Chinese populace, but he was still removed from the position after the student movement in December 1986. Hu had been criticized as unwilling to curb the bourgeoisie liberalization, and he had long been viewed as unorthodoxy for implementing the policies that departed from the general Party line, expressing the opinions that angered Deng Xiaoping, "Gang of Olds", and the military. After the purge, Hu was hailed as the hero of the mass and his legacy passed after 1987. When China enter the era of Zhao Ziyang (1987–89) and Zhao was still exercising his power under the shadow of one pivotal swing figure — Deng Xiaoping.

C. Zhao Ziyang's Ascent

The era of Zhao Ziyang began with the youth disturbance in the late 1986. At the beginning of December 1986, students at the prestigious University of Science and Technology in Hefei, Anhui province (known as Keda, an abbreviation of its Chinese name),

took a massive demonstrations outside the campus, protesting the selection of deputies to the local people's congress by the Party leaders rather than by their constituents in competitive elections. Their action was advocated by Keda's vice-president Fang Lizhi and under the acquiescence of Keda's president Guan Weiyan. From December 1986 to January 1987, tens of thousands of students went to street and fought for their rights. Beginning at Keda, Anhui province, to Shanghai, then Beijing, the student movement had been spread out across the country. Most of the students participating in the demonstrations came from the key-point universities, which bore a great impact on China academically as well as socially. While the Keda students called for democracy, human rights, and freedom of the press (under Fang Lizhi's influence), the majority of other institutional students complained about the poor quality of campus food and living conditions, inflation, corruption, rising tuition fees, and the elimination of student aid. Unlike the Beijing Spring in 1989, most of Chinese official media in 1986 calmly persuaded the students to have patience, noting that democratization could not be achieved overnight. Apart from a small number of arrests taken by public security forces, local authorities generally refrained from using excessive methods to quell students. Reportedly Hu Yaobang had declined Deng Xiaoping's directive to curb the disorder by iron hand (equivalent to the Martial Law issued by Li Peng on May 19, 1989), so when Deng appealed for students returning to classes, they peacefully did in January 1987. But Deng also laid the groundwork for the bloodshed of student movement eighteen months after, by publicly announced that the Party would take a more decisive attack if the turmoil happens once again in future.[4]

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[4] Richard Baum, *Burying Mao*: *Chinese Politics in the Age of Deng Xiaoping* (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1994), 205.

The 1986–87 student demonstrations was the largest student movement since the May Fourth of 1919 in modern China's history, but by comparing with the May Fourth (anti-imperialism), the demands of 1986–87 were meaningless, unfocused, and devoid of content. The students did not know what democracy exactly means, nor went as far as calling for a system change. They mainly wanted improving the living standard, or simply vented their personal anger for missing out China's economic development. Furthermore, the 1986–87 demonstrations did not gain support from urban residents, workers, and intellectuals, who had no intention to join. Because in 1986 China's social problems were not as blatant as they were in 1989, the intellectuals also feared that the movement would threaten the reform and their positions in the government. Such immature protest with a weak social base was easily losing its momentum when the Party adopted the policy of conciliation. The conservatives, who had been defeated by the reformers in the wake of anti-spiritual pollution campaign in 1983, did capture this opportunity to fight back. Their best method was to find a scapegoat who was responsible for the student upheaval, and the first choice was their long time target — Hu Yaobang.

Hu Yaobang was born in 1915, a long time protégé of Deng Xiaoping who rose from leader of the Communist Youth League (CYL) in 1950s, and had been purged at the beginning of Cultural Revolution. Hu was brought back to the center in 1975, and elected as secretary-general of the CCP in 1981. Hu was unique among the revolutionary communists; he was widely regarded as one of the most open-minded leaders in Deng era, and incompatible to the Party elders. These all attributed to Hu's Hakka origin — a branch of ethnic Han group in China's Southern mountains, shaping his more questioning and less conformist personality.

Hu Yaobang's second ouster from the office came after the New Year of 1987, by the typical court politics originated from feudal

China. On January 4, 1987, Deng Xiaoping was gathering Zhao Ziyang, Yang Shangkun, Wang Zhen, Bo Yibo and Peng Zhen at his home, to summon his secret decision — Hu Yaobang has to step down immediately. The charges of Hu reflected the traditional Party strategy of internal struggle — by digging up (or fabricating) Hu's mistakes that went far back into the past. At first, Deng was upset two times that Hu did not follow his order to repress student movement in 1986–87, and since the Sixth Plenum in September 1986, Hu had welcomed Deng's threat to resign and had not disseminated Deng's statement against bourgeois liberalization. "Gang of Olds" feared that Hu's "lax" leadership style would risk splitting the Party and provoking total Westernization. There were two secret reasons also had raised elders' hatred towards Hu Yaobang, they were angry with Hu's anti-corruption campaign began in 1986, which had involved many children of leading conservatives, such as Peng Zhen's daughter and Hu Qiaomu's son. Moreover, Hu Yaobang tried to build up his faction by urging old cadres retired and recruiting personnel from his former political base — CYL into the membership of Secretariat, such as Hu Qili, Hu Jiwei, Wang Zhaoguo, Xiang Nan, the newly appointed director of the Propaganda Department Zhu Houze, and the latest Minister of Culture Wang Meng. Those practices seriously annoyed the elders. The military did not support Hu either, for he had no close relationship with the army, no experience in military service, and had assigned a low priority or low benefits for the military in the Four Modernizations. Since September 1986, the military had worked toward his removal.

Surprisingly, Zhao Ziyang — also a reformer same as Hu Yaobang, allied with elders to support Hu's removal. Zhao's discontent with Hu half due to their struggle for Deng Xiaoping's succession; half came from their cleavage in economic administration. Zhao constantly complained that Hu tried to replace his role — a designated economic policy maker. "He favored

centrally controlled economic reform, but Hu showed a greater willingness to empower local authorities and enterprise managers, allowing them to assume substantial operational autonomy at the expense of central planners"[5]. Zhao wrote a letter to Deng Xiaoping, stating that he could no longer work with Hu, and eventually Zhao had invoked the Party elders to back him[6]. When Hu was removed from office in January 1987, Zhao was named to succeed Hu as general secretary. But as a whole, the gap between Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang was mainly in economic area; both of them have the common understanding in tolerating free expression, and sometimes collaborating to repel conservative challenges to reform policies. So it is not surprised to see, that after 1987 Zhao had assumed Hu's former role as the protector of the intellectuals and the ardent advocator of political reform.

On January 16, at an enlarged meeting of the Politburo attended by the members of the CAC and hosted by Bo Yibo, Hu Yaobang was forced to make a self-criticism and resigned from his post, and Zhao Ziyang was chosen as acting CCP General Secretary. Even Hu had been purged, but he was not tortured or imprisoned as had happened under Mao era, but was allowed to step down peacefully, to remain as a member of the Politburo and to lead a normal life at home[7]. Unlike any Party leaders in the PRC history before, Hu enjoyed

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5 Merle Goldman, *Sowing the Seeds of Democracy in China*: *Political Reform in the Deng Xiaoping Era* (Cambridge MA : Harvard University Press, 1994), 55.

6 Ibid.

7 There are varieties of reason in why the treatment of Hu Yaobang and the students after 1986, were more lenient than those of Zhao Ziyang and the students after 1989. One of the explanation is Deng Xiaoping had more power reserved when Hu served as the general secretary of the Party from 1981–86, and had more intervention in national affairs, so Deng considered himself should share the result of social disturbance and Hu's mistakes.

a high popularity among Chinese during and after his tenure, hailed as a political hero who cared the livelihood of the people. The people were impressed by "his courage in rehabilitating the controversial figures and the victims of Maoist, his criticism of the Cultural Revolution, his effort to reinforce the Party discipline, his willingness to reform a socialist China, and his openness to the West"[8]. Considering Hu Yaobang had experienced the anti-spiritual pollution campaign in 1983, two student demonstrations in both 1985 and 1986–87, while facing the deeply skepticism of the Party elders toward his strength, Deng Xiaoping's pressure, and the increasing rift with Zhao Ziyang, he really deserved such mass admiration.

But the most significance of Hu was he had protected many outspoken intellectuals by shielding the ammunition of conservatives, recruited such intellectuals into the Party establishment[9]. Hu's intellectual network had become dominant since the 1986. Hu Yaobang's meritocratic circle also provided the pool of talents for Zhao Ziyang's think tank later, which made up the first political reform group within the Party in the history of PRC. So the openness of Zhao era (1987–89) is somewhat exaggerated by some scholars, as such consequence was already been a continuity from Hu Yaobang, but not created by Zhao. The era of Hu Yaobang (1981–86) was the most politically plural and culturally prosperous in the PRC history.

The dismissal of Hu Yaobang not only further widened the gap between the Party and the people, but also violated the provision of the Party constitution, for which the removal of a general secretary should be decided by the National People's Congress (NPC), not by a small group or the personal authority of Deng Xiaoping. In either

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8 Goldman, *Sowing the Seeds*, 59.

9 For the intensive survey of Hu Yaobang's intellectual network, please see Goldman, *Sowing the Seeds*, 25–61.

way both laid the groundwork that might create a tension in future Chinese politics, and when Hu's death on April 15, 1989, it directly triggered the Tiananmen turbulence.

Except Hu Yaobang, some members of the Politburo were seriously reprimanded by the conservative elders. Hu Qili, director of General Office, was seen as predisposed to bourgeoisie liberalization; Zhu Houze, Party's propaganda chief, had been temporarily suspended; and Tian Jiyun, Vice-Premier, was held responsible for the inflation that connected with Hu Yaobang's radical economic reform in the early 1985. Those three were the allies of Hu Yaobang, to question their conducts after Hu's purge was considered to be the preparation in reshuffling Hu's faction in coming days. And there were three intellectuals were counted as the major "black hands" behind the scenes of the student unrest in 1986–87.

Liu Binyan, a renowned investigative reporter who was born in 1925, joined the Communist Party in 1944. He was purged during the anti-rightist campaign in 1957 and rehabilitated in 1978. After 1979, Liu was hired as a journalist for the *People's Daily*, by writing many "reportage literature" about the Communist injustice and the sufferings of people, and defending the freedom of the press during his speeches given at Chinese universities, made him a household reputation of "China's conscience".

Wang Ruowang was born in 1918; he used to be in jail for four years for expressing dissent on Mao Zedong's thoughts before the Cultural Revolution. After 1979, Wang's CCP membership restored and put in the post of editor-in-chief of *Shanghai Literature Monthly*, he published many essays in revealing the crime and abuse of Party cadres and urging the multiparty system in China. Wang was highly welcomed by the university students and infuriated most to Deng Xiaoping.

The astrophysicist Fang Lizhi was the most controversial figure during the student movement in 1986–87. Born in 1936

and he entered the Department of Physics at Beijing University at age sixteen, but had been disrupted his study while the Cultural Revolution erupted. Fang continued to delve into cosmology when he was sent to labor in the countryside in 1970s, and after 1979 he was allowed to travel abroad, to participate in the international academic conferences. The turning point of Fang's life appeared in 1984, when he was elected to be the vice president of the University of Science and Technology (Keda), working with the president Guan Weiyan. Fang painstakingly encouraged the free thinking and innovative curriculum inside the campus. He also criticized the repressive view of orthodox Party theorists Hu Qiaomu and Wang Zhen, for their argument that Marxism must replace scientific research. When Fang urged the students to fight for the democratic election, it directly triggered the "bourgeoisie turmoil", but he never asked them to take to the streets. Fang Lizhi's political opinion was totally different with those of Hu Yaobang's intellectual network. Fang wholly negated Marxism and favored total Westernization in China; whereas Hu's allies liked to remain as members of the Party, to support in establishing a kind of humanistic socialism.

Unlike under Mao era, the expulsion of three intellectuals did not affect their life negatively, they were still treated as the human beings, and their fate had raised the sympathy among Chinese people, caused a worldwide counter-reaction, as well as provided the impetus for 1989 Beijing Spring. Later these three intellectuals were allowed to travel abroad for academic exchange, seizing the opportunity to disseminate their political dissent, and to wider circulate their writings. Their fame after the student demonstrations did not declined but rose.

Very few policy changes were announced to deal with the student problem after 1986. Political standards were disregarded for university enrollment; labor education and military training not widely introduced; curriculum requirements had not been altered

in light of political climate shifts. Unlike after June Fourth movement in 1989, the published textbooks after 1986 did not show some signs of efforts to return to the content used during the Cultural Revolution. The political control in education following the fall of Hu Yaobang in 1987 was not strengthened.

But the highly visible changes at this time — the "moral crisis" plagued throughout the campus, the university students had less interest in political work, but participated more in various kinds of activities, "the whole classroom rocks with laughter whenever communism and Marxism-Leninism are mentioned…"[10] Overall, after 1986–87 movement the Chinese students had become less obedient, less submissive, and less dependent, many had developed a more independent mind. "They were much more informed, able to compare and contrast, eager to learn and unlearn things. They have steered away from using communist ideology to judge everything and they have reached out to inquire about a democratic society where they can have more participation"[11]. The roots of the 1989 demonstrations could also be found in the incomplete resolution of the 1986–87 demonstrations. The resentment of the students was only hidden under the surface after 1987, and revived during the price crisis in 1988, then culminated in the Beijing Spring in 1989. Such consequence could be prevented two years in advance, if the harsh method being implemented to suppress the demonstrations by the Party in 1987. But the Party only invoked the conciliatory policy and lax control over the students; it had already laid the groundwork for bloodshed in 1989.

On January 6, 1987, *People's Daily* ran an editorial launching a campaign against "bourgeois liberalization". "Bourgeois liberalization"

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10 Irving Epstein, ed. *Chinese Education*: *Problems, Policies, and Prospects* (New York : Garland Publishing Inc, 1991), 440.

11 Ibid., 443.

means negating the socialist system in favor of capitalism, and in fact, such campaign was a vengeance to Hu Yaobang, the students and all the Chinese liberalists in the 1980s. The campaign of "anti-bourgeois liberalization" was actually initiated by Deng Xiaoping, and implemented by Party elders (Chen Yun, Peng Zhen, Deng Liqun, and Hu Qiaomu). Deng Xiaoping feared the 1986–87 demonstrations would further threaten his rule, and he warned: "bourgeois liberalization would plunge the country into turmoil once more. Bourgeois liberalization means rejection of the Party leadership; there would be nothing to unite over 1 billion people, and the Party itself would lose all power to fight"[12]. The elders revived Mao Zedong's ideological methods and Cultural Revolution policies which stemmed from pre–1949 revolutionary days, to highlight the decadence of Western culture, to extolled traditional Chinese nationalism, as well as to denounce Western system of separation of powers. They were not only Deng's accomplices, but also used the campaign to carry out their own personal vendettas towards Hu Yaobang, and to show the determination to root out other like-minded people.

Both the campaigns of "anti-spiritual pollution" in 1983 and "anti-bourgeois liberalization" in 1987 were the short-lived political fanfares, but the latter could not be compared to the former neither in scope nor in selection of targets. From January to May 1987, "anti-bourgeois liberalization" did not interfered in people's daily life. And unlike the purge after the June Fourth massacre in 1989, the campaign in 1987 was not a massive movement, but was confined within the Party apparatus and the intellectual circle.

Apart from few Party members were disciplined, such as Zhu Houze; the "anti-bourgeois liberalization" campaign continued

12 Goldman, *Sowing the Seeds*, 206.

to criticize three intellectuals — Fang Lizhi, Wang Ruowang and Liu Binyan, while they had already been expelled from the Party and dismissed from their posts. The elders offered payment to other writers, for setting up the written attack to three intellectuals, but few were responsive. Ironically, the Party's effort had produced the opposite effect, it gave these intellectuals' thoughts wider circulation during 1987, by compiling their most provocative speeches and manuscripts into booklets for negative study, distributing them to the people, and requiring Party members to study them, their fame became more popular and influential than ever.

After succeeding Hu Yaobang, the acting CCP General Secretary Zhao Ziyang, a reformer who concerned more about economic development rather than ideological issues, stood up to faithfully defend Deng Xiaoping's anti-liberalization campaign. On the other hand, Zhao was assuring the campaign would be confined to the Party, and China was not in the throes of political chaos. He restated that the comprehensive reform, the open door policy, and the invigoration of domestic economy would not be changed. Zhao argued that there was no antagonism between the Four Cardinal Principles and the structural reform. He always warned that such campaign might scare off the foreign investment and turn China into isolation again, and this statement did raised Deng Xiaoping's nightmare of another Cultural Revolution.

After the 1987 campaign, the Party elders painfully discovered that the mass did not listen to them. Their pronouncements fell on deaf ears; most people simply counted on their passing. "Chinese dared to boycott or ignore the campaign against 'bourgeois liberalization', they openly ridiculed the Party policies and demanded greater freedom of the press, and surprisingly, their lives were still undisturbed. The campaign of 'anti-bourgeois liberalization' had failed to tame the people, and plunged into the opposite result. Work slowdowns and labor strikes increased; hundreds of thousands of

peasants rose up in protest against economic losses they had suffered at the hands of the government, and they destroyed the offices of the local government and Party committee"[13]. Finally Chinese life seemed to return to normal by the spring of 1987. For the main targets of the campaign, "the more one was criticized, the more prominent one became; the more one's works and ideas were singled out and quoted for criticism, the more they became known and were found appealing. The attacks on Hu Yaobang, the publicly targeted three intellectuals, the theorists, and the nonconformist writers and journalists made them heroes, rather than villains"[14]. After the campaign, there was virtually no sudden switching from Right to Left, and no interfering with the normal development of many aspects in China.

The conservative group (Party elders) could have secured their dominance over the reformers in 1987, if had it not been a turning point of their self-convened conference on April 6–12, 1987, at Zhuozhou, Hebei province. The elders in the conference asserted that the "bourgeois liberalization" had not been over, and the Party members should struggle to the end. Furthermore, they were interested in repudiating not only Western political thoughts, but also Western economic ideas. Their task was to reverse the policy of the Third Plenum in 1978, in other words, they were trying to overturn Deng Xiaoping's reform program and the open policy, and heading straight back to the old order of Mao Zedong. Zhao Ziyang decided to preempt, and he apprised Deng Xiaoping of Zhuozhou conference by collecting the recordings of the speeches made at the meeting. Deng reacted angrily, he ordered Zhao to terminate the "anti-liberation" campaign immediately, and to distance themselves from the conservatives.

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13 Baum, *Burying Mao*, 217.

14 Goldman, *Sowing the Seeds*, 223.

The aftermath of Zhuozhou conference was far-reaching. At first, Zhao Ziyang, who used to ally with the elders to overthrow Hu Yaobang, had displeased the elders when he targeted on Zhuozhou, and it might well suggest Zhao's fate two years after when the elders retaliated. Second, unlike after the Beijing Spring in 1989, in 1987 Deng Xiaoping needed not to wait three years to stand up, he seized the opportunity of Zhuozhou to counterattack the elders' ascendancy in time. Last, the result of Zhuozhou may explain why Deng decided to increase his support of Zhao's political reform program; it was not only a vengeance to the elders, but also a practical strategy to balance the political scale. Thanks to Zhuozhou, after the succession Zhao Ziyang still carried out Hu Yaobang's enlightened reform route, his national policy was the continuation of his predecessor, and both the eras of Hu and Zhao were the most liberal times in the PRC history. But Zhao did not defeat the elders in a landslide at this moment; he was proved to be the second Hu Yaobang and the second victim of Deng. Zhao had inadvertently built a path that led to his downfall while he was taking the power.

On four occasions in May and June 1987, before foreign visitors, Deng Xiaoping vigorously affirmed the need to curb leftism and expand the scope of economic reform and the "open door" policy. Newspapers and journals, which had been awaiting a signal, quickly echoed this line. This was a triumph for anti-leftism and a deflation of the "anti-bourgeois liberalization" campaign. The reformers had regained a measure of coherence and started to plan for an offensive at the forthcoming enlarged Politburo meetings at the summer resort of Beidaihe in July 1987.

At Beidaihe, intense political jockeying took place among the various power brokers, and an agreement was reached on four principal issues: (1) a political report on the future course of development to be delivered at the Thirteenth Party Congress

scheduled for October 1987; (2) retirement of the elders and selection of the future leadership; (3) an official statement on the nature of the present stage of socialist construction; and (4) political restructuring. The deliberations were kept secret until their final ratification by the Thirteenth Congress.[15]

Finally the lenient treatment to Hu Yaobang, the intellectuals, and students after 1986-87 demonstrations, was sufficiently to let them reserve their strength, and continue to exert pressure to the Party in the forthcoming two years. Because of Zhuozhou conference, the "anti-bourgeois liberalization" campaign was subsided, Zhao Ziyang had offended the Party elders, and Deng Xiaoping temporarily returned to reformer wing. Whether it was Zhao purely disliked Hu's economic ideas, or he intended to bring Hu's downfall, such things are continued to be debated. But it was hard to deny, that the primary beneficiary of Hu's descent was Zhao. And privately Zhao also bore the ambition to launch his own reform program, by gathering the reformers and liberalists inside the Party. After he gained the ascendancy, Zhao Ziyang might think that he could cultivate his positive image among the students and people, but they regarded his economic reform as too radical. Zhao might hope that the intellectuals could support and implement his policies, but they considered his political reform as too conservative. Zhao might invoke Deng Xiaoping's help to resist the elders' pressure, but the elders were regenerating since the failure of Zhuozhou conference, began to deal with "another Hu Yaobang". Eventually both Deng and the military abandoned Zhao, as he had betrayed Socialism; Zhao came to the complete loneliness and helplessness. Zhao Ziyang repeated what Hu Yaobang had gone through, but his ending was more tragic. The Thirteenth Party Congress started on October 25,

15 Baum, *Burying Mao*, 220.

1987, was witnessing the beginning of Zhao Ziyang era, as well as foretelling a story which happened in 1989.

The Thirteenth National Party Congress (The Big Thirteenth) was convened in the People's Great Hall in Beijing, and was hosted by the CCP new boss Zhao Ziyang from October 25 to November 1, 1987. The Congress was unprecedented whether in scale or in the number of attendees since the founding of the PRC. There were 1,936 delegates representing 46 million Party members from all over the country[16]. Before and during the Congress, there were two unusual things appeared. First, throughout the summer and fall of 1987 public opinion polls were published showing that the majority of the population considered it was a ripe time for change. It was significant that China's population was being asked its views on political matters, as public opinion polling had been associated with bourgeois and inappropriate in a socialist country before. Chen Yizi, head of the Institute of Economics Structural Reform, established the first polling bureau in 1984 to find out opinions on price reforms, and other polling agencies mushroomed throughout the country ever since. These polls, such as the one indicating that 93.8 percent of the people questioned believed that such reforms were necessary, helped Zhao Ziyang mobilized popular support for political reforms to be proposed at the Thirteenth Party Congress[17]. Second, the Party leaders admitted Western reporters to the Congress for the first time. 200 foreign journalists, including some from Taiwan, were invited to view the opening and closing ceremonies, and allowed to raise various questions regarding to the Party policies in the media reception.

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16 Kwan Ha Yim, ed. *China under Deng* (New York : Facts on File, 1991), 221.

17 George Black, and Robin Munro, *Black Hands of Beijing: Lives of Defiance in China's Democracy Movement* (New York : John Wiley, 1993), 126.

The Congress was significant in several ways. First, it reaffirmed the correctness of the policy of reforms and the "open door" that had had been adopted at the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Congress in December 1978, and it made economic development as the central task of the Party. Second, it outlined a new theoretical framework for the market-oriented reforms previously thought un-Marxist by the conservatives. Third, it defined the scope of political restructuring so that administrative efficiency could be improved. But before we examine the abovementioned issues, let us first delve into the subtle personnel change during the Congress. This change was more than merely a rejuvenation of the leadership by the retirement of the Long March generation of elders and their replacement with younger and better-educated technocrats, or simply a victory of the reformers, as we used to think. The implication of personnel change at this moment was ambiguous; it did complicate the whole event that led to what happened in 1989.

On the surface, there were ample facts had proved that the reformers had had triumphed at the Congress. Deng Xiaoping set an example to leave almost all of the posts he assumed before, including the member of Politburo and the Politburo Standing Committee, as well as the Chairman of the CAC. Unlike Mao Zedong, who permanently stuck to the power and often designed some titles for himself regardless of the national constitution, such as the "Party Chairman". After Deng secured that the new generation had safeguarded his reform program as well as the Four Cardinal Principles, he was to become the first Party leader to voluntarily resign his supreme position in the PRC history.

Conversely, a large group of Party elders were reluctant to follow Deng Xiaoping's example, most of them were the major opponents of reform. Virtually it was Deng to orchestrate them to exit, rather than they managed themselves to do so. Particularly Chen Yun, the head of the conservatives, insisted that he would not step down

so easily unless Deng joined him. The most significant changes among the conservative wing at the Congress, were the Long March generation — Wang Zhen, Ulanhu, Deng Yingchao, Ye Jianying, Li Xiannian, Chen Yun, Nie Rongzhen, Xu Xiangqian, Peng Zhen and Liao Chengzhi, no longer kept the seats in the Politburo, nor Chen Yun, Li Xiannian and Ye Jianying remained in the powerful inner circle of the CCP — the Politburo Standing Committee.

If Deng Xiaoping was to voluntarily remove himself from the leadership, whereas the two CCP leading ideologists — Hu Qiaomu and Deng Liqun were removed from most of the leadership positions in the Central Committee by the voters, even from traditionally conservative bases of the CAC and the Central Discipline Inspection Commission (CDIC). The ouster of both Hu and Deng was due to their recent unwelcome conducts, for which they had played a major role in engineering Hu Yaobang's downfall in January 1987, as well as in spearheading the "anti-bourgeoisie liberalization" to denounce the liberalists and the reform policy. Widely resented by the reformers at the Congress, they deliberately gave the two old-timers a humiliation, to do without them in the leadership selection. The exclusion of Hu Qiaomu and Deng Liqun from the leadership was not only a result of intra-party struggle between the Left and the Right, but also was the result of new election procedures instituted at the Thirteenth Congress, as the elections for membership of the Central Committee were more open than ever before. When this system was used to elect the Thirteenth Central Committee, it produced a major surprise: Hu Qiaomu and Deng Liqun came in near the bottom of the election list. Surprisingly, after falling from grace in January, Hu Yaobang remained in the Politburo but was no longer on its Standing Committee, and he was receiving substantial support in the Central Committee elections at the Congress. Hu's return was not only a sympathy given by the delegates, but also considering

taking revenge on Hu Qiaomu and Deng Liqun. Although Hu Yaobang's position was titular, but unlike in Mao Zedong era, such disposed leader might have faced further humiliation, even expelled from the Party. Hu's image proved to be having firmly rooted in the society and widely appreciated by the voters.

The new Politburo, headed by Zhao Ziyang, elected several new members: Li Ruihuan, mayor of Tianjin; Jiang Zemin, mayor of Shanghai; Li Ximing, the Beijing Party secretary; Yang Rudai, the Sichuan province Party chief; Song Ping, State Councilor; Li Tieying, minister in charge of the Commission, for restructuring the economy and minister of the electronics industry; and Ding Guangen, the alternate member. The young reformer Hu Qili was also appointed as the leader of a 4-member Central Secretariat. It was not quite sure whether those new figures advocated Deng Xiaoping's reform, but these changes, the average age of Politburo members was certainly reduced from 70 to 64 compared with the previous one. And the new members had become the second Party echelon after the Long March Generation.

Of the five members of the new Standing Committee, only Zhao Ziyang remained after the Thirteenth Congress, and the newly selected members (Qiao Shi, Li Peng, Hu Qili and Yao Yilin) average age was 64, 13 years younger than that of their predecessors. The most significant change was the dominance of Zhao in the supreme leadership; he was elected to be the General Secretary (no longer acting) of the Party as well as the Central Secretariat. Because of the nature of the CCP ruling system, Zhao's power rendering was still under the guidance of the paramount leader Deng Xiaoping. After Zhao's position was formalized, he had had to vacate the Premier of the State Council, a position he had held since 1980, to a younger man Li Peng, who had risen to membership of the Politburo in 1985 and was supposed to be a proxy of the Party conservatives. Barely three weeks after the close of the Congress, Li was named Acting

Premier and at the National People's Congress in March 1988, was confirmed as Premier (See the tables on the next page).

There was another interesting area at the Thirteenth Congress: The military's influence in the Party was further whittled away. Deng Xiaoping replaced China's top three military staff officers; it appeared to be in keeping with his policy to replace aging veterans with younger, more reform-minded leaders. The army chief of staff, Yang Dezhi, was succeeded by Chi Haotian, who had been political commissar of the Jinan Military Region. Yu Qiuli, director of the general political department (the army's No. 2 staff post), was succeeded by Yang Baibing, former political commissar of the Beijing Military Region. Hong Xuezhi, director of the general logistics department, was succeeded by his deputy, Zhao Nanqi. Hong retained his seat on the Party's Central Military Commission, but Yang Dezhi and Yu were dismissed from the commission. The overall military representation on the new Central Committee remained low, where almost 20 percent of the members were PLA officers, compared with the peak time in Mao era of 50 percent.[18]

The result after the Congress was remarkable. As what Zhao Ziyang had foreseen before the Congress, that the CCP should slowly separate itself from the administration of government, leaving leadership there in the hands of professional civil servants. Even the balanced ratio of reform-minded to conservative-minded leaders on the Central Committee was approximately maintained, but the leadership as a whole was certainly much younger and better-educated. Furthermore, the elders' power in the Party was weakened, the Congress brought about the departure of 96 full members of the 209 members of the Central Committee, excluded were most of those in their eighties who had dominated the Party for over five decades. The size of the new Central

[18] Baum, *Burying Mao*, 220.

Committee was reduced from 385 full and alternate members to 285, a drop of more than 25 percent. 42 percent of the CC members and alternates were first-timers, while more than 70 percent were college educated; 57 members were employed in high-technology fields. Only 20 percent of the members were over the age of 60, almost half were 55 years old or younger; slightly more than half — 50.4 percent — had joined the Party after 1949. The average age of the members of the new Central Committee dropped to 55 from the previous average of 59. Finally, the Thirteenth Central Committee was noteworthy for its strengthened provincial and local representation. Apart from streamlining the central state organs by reducing the number of ministries and commissions to 41 from 45, the largest single bloc of CC members elected at the October 1987 Party Congress — 122 (43 percent of the total) — came from the ranks of provincial, municipal, and local Party secretaries and government officials, which were compared to only 31 percent from central Party and government organs.[19]

The impact of personnel reform at the Thirteenth Congress was tremendous; it had profound implications for China's political future. There were two indications generated from the Congress. First, the creation of the first step to an efficient state bureaucracy, it was toward increasing the importance of bureaucratic technocrats and diminishing the role of personal ties, as well as reducing the patrimonial power of the Party monarchy. Second, the institution of a retirement system, and the recruitment of younger and better educated cadres, have improved the Party center's ability to manage personnel and monitor their behavior, therefore Chinese central authorities retained a firm grip over the vital aspects of personnel allocations: selection, promotion and removal. The CCP had turned out to be a bureaucratic Party from a revolutionary Party.

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[19] Baum, *Burying Mao*, 221–225.

Table 1.1. Party Leadership before the Thirteenth Congress

1. Politburo

Member: Wan Li, Xi Zhongxun, Wang Zhen, Wei Guoqing, Ulanhu, Fang Yi, Deng Xiaoping, Deng Yingchao, Ye Jianying, Li Xiannian, Li Deng Sheng, Yang Shangkun, Yang Dezhi, Yu Qiuli, Song Renqiong, Zhang Tingfa, Chen Yun, Zhao Ziyang, Hu Qiaomu, Hu Yaobang, Nie Rongzhen, Ni Zhifu, Xu Xiangqian, Peng Zhen, Liao Chengzhi

Alternate Member: Yao Yilin, Qin Jiwei, Chen Muhua

2. Politburo Standing Committee

Hu Yaobang, Ye Jianying, Deng Xiaoping, Zhao Ziyang, Li Xiannian, Chen Yun

3. Central Secretariat

General Secretary: Hu Yaobang

Secretary: Wan Li, Xi Zhongxun, Deng Liqun, Yang Yong, Yu Qiuli, Gu Mu, Chen Pixian, Hu Qili, Yao Yilin

Alternate Secretary: Qiao Shi, Hao Jianxiu

4. Military Affairs Commission

Chairman: Deng Xiaoping

Vice-chairman: Ye Jianying, Xu Xiangqian, Nie Rongzhen, Yang Shangkun

5. Central Advisory Commission

Chairman: Deng Xiaoping

Vice-chairman: Bo Yibo, Xu Shiyou, Tan Zhenlin, Li Weihan

6. Central Discipline Inspection Commission

General Secretary: Chen Yun

Vice-secretary: Huang Kecheng, Wang Heshou

Table 1.2. Party Leadership after the Thirteenth Congress

1. Politburo

Member: Wan Li, Tian Jiyun, Qiao Shi, Jiang Zemin, Li Peng, Li Tieying, Li Ruihuan, Li Ximing, Yang Rudai, Yang Shangkun, Wu Xueqian, Song Ping, Zhao Ziyang, Hu Qili, Hu Yaobang, Yao Yilin, Qin Jiwei

Alternate Member: Ding Guangen

2. Politburo Standing Committee

Zhao Ziyang, Li Peng, Qiao Shi, Hu Qili, Yao Yilin

3. Central Secretariat

General Secretary: Zhao Ziyang

Secretary: Hu Qili, Qiao Shi, Rui Xingwen, Yan Mingfu

Alternate Secretary: Wen Jiabao

4. Military Affairs Commission

Chairman: Deng Xiaoping

First vice-chairman: Zhao Ziyang

Permanent vice-chairman: Yang Shangkun

5. Central Advisory Commission

Chairman: Chen Yun

Vice-chairman: Bo Yibo, Song Renqiong

6. Central Discipline Inspection Commission

General Secretary: Qiao Shi

Vice-secretary: Chen Zuolin, Li Zhengting, Xiao Hongda

Comparing with the previous Central Committee, the Party elders' influence seemed to be in eclipse after the Congress, but in fact the whole picture was somewhat ambiguous. The new personnel list at the Thirteenth Congress was virtually the coexistence of the Left and the Right. The reformers were surrounded by the "retired" old revolutionaries, and the Party elders acted as "shadow cabinet" after the Congress, proceeded to influence affairs of state from behind the scenes through complex informal networks of power and connections.

First, let us look at the five members of the Politburo Standing Committee. All of them claimed to be supporters of reform; they differed only in style, method, and pace. Zhao Ziyang and Hu Qili were reformers who ardently supported market-oriented economic development. Li Peng and Yao Yilin were inclined toward the central planning, representing the elders. While Qiao Shi, a vague figure who was a security specialist in the middle position, between the reformers and the elders, but actually Qiao had more conservative thoughts than Zhao and Hu. So in the reality the new Standing Committee did not represent a even balance of political forces, from each background of five members, one could assume that the elders might have more say in the future political affairs.

Second, even retreating from almost all of the leadership posts at the Congress, Deng Xiaoping was smart enough to reserve the most important one for himself — Chairman of the Military Affairs Commission (MAC). Deng fully understood the importance of "the Party controls the gun", and therefore the Party constitution was amended to permit him to remain as the head of the MAC even though he was no longer a member of the Politburo. This chairmanship gave Deng all control of the military in the crackdown on students two years after. At the same time, Deng Xiaoping also appointed the revolutionary veteran Yang Shangkun as the permanent Vice-Chairman of the MAC, and Zhao Ziyang as Vice-Chairman. It

could hint that Zhao might become the potential successor to Deng in the troop, but such arrangements were deemed to be impossible. It was strongly rumored before the Congress that Deng did not want to continue his duty as the MAC Chairman, but had been persuaded to stay on. Because the old soldiers in the Commission would not have tolerated anyone without a military record as their chairman, while Deng would not have anticipated a chairman who belonged to the military establishment. Zhao Ziyang, like his predecessor Hu Yaobang, both were highly unwelcome by the military, they were not only the liberal elements hostile to military leaders, but also had spent most of their life in civilian positions and joined the Party after the Long March. They lacked of the credentials to enforce the authority on the PLA. However, the military leaders insisted on installing Yang Shangkun as permanent Vice-Chairman, and the choice of Yang was acceptable for the PLA and the Party elders alike. On the other hand, Yang and the new Premier Li Peng both came from Sichuan province, together with their promoter Deng Xiaoping (also a Sichuanese), so the conservative wing had already formed a clique of Sichuan on the top Party leadership. Such local-factionalism plays a substantial role in Chinese politics.

Third, even Deng Xiaoping resigned his chairmanship in the CAC; he still perpetuated this group after the Thirteenth Congress, with Chen Yun as its new Chairman and Bo Yibo and Song Renqiong as Vice-Chairmen. The CAC was Deng's own invention and originated from the late 1970s, in the wake of Mao's death in 1976, a group of revolutionary elders or the "Gang of Olds" served as the conservative components in post-Mao era. After Deng took China's power, the "Gang of Olds" became an organization without any formal power, symbolizing the basis of Deng's leadership, the legitimacy of Communist power continuation in China after the discredited Mao era. Basically the "Gang of Olds" was the embodiment of Mao Zedong, so it was not surprised that Deng

never openly repudiated Mao's legacy and negated Mao's record. After the Twelfth Party Congress in September 1982, the "Gang of Olds" was formalized as the CAC. The intention of establishing the CAC was to function as a "retirement home" for elderly officials, and it had no direct executive powers. However, the CAC provided its members with a number of conveniences and with the right to carry out investigations and make reports to the Deng. The members also had the right to sit on Politburo meetings but not to cast formal votes at those meetings. But many of the CAC members were not satisfied with a decorative position. Throughout the 1980s, the CAC constantly launched attacks on the reform program, Deng Xiaoping also used the CAC as a political buffer to counterbalance the liberalist, and such buffer could definitely take effect during the student movements in both 1986 and 1989. But Deng never allowed both the old-timers and the liberalists to stride over the framework of his regime: Upholding the "open door" policy as well as the Four Cardinal Principles. The CAC exercised enormous influence on official policy and practiced through informal political networks based on longstanding personal relationships. And it had demonstrated its great power early in Hu Yaobang's purge, and would have done it again later for Zhao Ziyang.

Last, the most fatal part of the coexistence of the Left and the Right after the Congress was the co-leadership between Party General Secretary Zhao Ziyang and State Premier Li Peng. It was not only a compromising arrangement that Li represented the cautious conservative wing, while Zhao implemented Deng Xiaoping's radical reform program, but also Zhao's Achilles' heel that circumscribed his political ambition. It was not known whether Li wanted to be General Secretary, but Zhao did not. Zhao was chiefly interested in making the program of national economic reform, and was much happier with the impersonal ways of governance than with the uncertainties of life at Party headquarters. Zhao had told Deng many times before the

Thirteenth Congress, when acting General Secretary that he would prefer to go back to being Premier, but Deng never listened to him.

Though Li Peng was the son of martyrs and raised under the guidance of ex-premier Zhou Enlai, Li was not widely respected by the people. He was a Soviet-trained engineer in 1950s and upon returning to China, he quickly worked his way up from managing the Xiaofengman hydroelectric power station in Northeast China to becoming Minister of Electric Power in 1970s. When the ministries of hydro power and electric power were merged, he became Vice-Minister. Even Li was carefully groomed for Party leadership by powerful figures in the energy bureaucracy, but Qian Zhengying, the Minister, thought Li did not do a good job as vice minister. Nor did a wide range of people, including students, believe he was effective when he served on the State Education Commission in 1985.[20]

When Li Peng was made a member of Secretariat at the end of 1985, and Hu Yaobang was removed in January 1987, Deng Xiaoping wanted Wan Li to become Premier. Wan Li, though a reformer, was close to Deng. In 1975 Wan had skillfully reorganized China's entire railroad system after the Cultural Revolution. Later, as first Secretary of Anhui province he led sweeping agricultural changes. Wan had opposed the constant attacks against liberalization. When Hu Yaobang was forced to resign, Wan submitted his resignation to Deng, but Deng insisted he stay on, and proposed him as Premier. Zhao Ziyang sided with the elders to oppose Wan, and propose another reformer Tian Jiyun instead, but this was voted down. Deng concluded that only Li Peng was acceptable by all sides, and it was proved to be a fateful choice. No one then imagined how fanatical Li Peng could be after he got the full support from the elders.

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[20] Liu Binyan, *China's Crisis, China's Hope*, trans. Howard Goldblatt (Cambridge MA : Harvard University Press, 1990), 73.

The whole picture was messing up. Even Zhao Ziyang and Li Peng each represented a strand in Deng Xiaoping's way of thought, but neither represented his unique blend of political conservatism and economic radicalism, and both Zhao and Li would have to struggle to win over each other since then. Furthermore, after the Congress Zhao and Li would consult with Deng on all important political and economic matters, and so would Deng with the elders again, before making any major decisions. This was a worrying sign in China's nerve center that later development confirmed.

Anyway, there were no clues to show that the conservatives had dominated the Thirteenth Congress and thwarted the reform. Zhao Ziyang called for far-reaching economic changes (will be examined on next chapter) and submitted his blueprint of political reform (will be examined later on this chapter) in a two-and-a-half-hour opening speech on October 25, 1987. Some meticulous observers reported that Zhao had used the word "reform" in this speech more times than in any of his previous speeches — specifically a total of 168 times. Except lavishly praising China's achievements contributed by the CCP since the Third Plenum in 1978, the most interesting part of Zhao's speech is his analysis of "the primary stage of socialism", and the following summary are the highlights of this point of view[21]:

- Economists have discarded the traditional idea that only an economic system built on the imaginary social model conceived by Marx is socialism and that only the Soviet model of forty or fifty years ago is out-and-out socialistic. There might be many economic models leading to socialism,

[21] Xinhua News Agency; available from http://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2003-01/20/content_697061.htm; Internet; first accessed on December 12, 2006

and a socialist economic system should not be one that defies all changes.

- Precisely because our socialism has emerged from the womb of a semi-colonial, semi-feudal society, with the productive forces lagging far behind those of the developed capitalist countries, we are destined to go through a very long primary stage. During this stage we shall accomplish industrialization and the commercialization, socialization, and modernization of production, which many other countries have achieved under capitalist conditions. We are not in the situation envisaged by the founders of Marxism, in which socialism is built on the basis of highly developed capitalism, nor are in exactly the same situation as other socialist countries. So we can not blindly follow what the books say, nor can we mechanically imitate the examples of other countries.
- It will be at least one hundred years from the 1950s, when the socialist transformation of private ownership of the means of production was basically completed, to the time when socialist modernization will have been in the main accomplished, and all these years belong to the primary stage of socialism.
- The neutral means and methods that do not determine the basic economic system of a society, the fundamental task of a socialist society is to expand the productive forces. Whatever is conducive to the growth, is in keeping with the fundamental interests of the people and is therefore needed by socialism and allowed to exist; whatever is detrimental to this growth goes against scientific socialism and is therefore not allowed to exist.

To the Party leadership, Zhao Ziyang's speech was a huge success. Official publications hailed it as a new basic blueprint

for China's future and development. The leadership praised the continuance of the line from the Third Plenum, and claimed that the speech had made a more refined and systematic exposition on the theory of the "primary stage of socialism". Overseas commentators argued that factional differences among the leadership seemed to have disappeared, and declared that the speech broke new ground for the entire socialist world by legitimizing Adam Smith's "invisible hand" theory. Some Western diplomats argued that Zhao had staked out an awesomely large terrain for economic reform.[22]

But when we delve into the various facets of the "primary stage" theory, we may find a different implication. First, the notion of "primary stage" was by no means novel, it had been set forth in 1979 by the Marxist theoretician Su Shaozhi under the title of "undeveloped socialism", and Zhao Ziyang only resurrected it at the Thirteenth Congress[23]. In original Marxism, this proposed that socialism presupposed capitalism, not only was a critique of capitalism, but also recognized it as an essential step toward an advanced social level. "In Zhao's word, because China had attained socialism without the proper capitalist experience before, so that China must use whatever means are available to catch up with the advanced capitalist countries"[24]. He argued it would be naïve and utopian to believe, that China could skip over this primary stage and proceed directly to mature socialism. Therefore, Zhao had laid the groundwork and excuse for importing capitalist elements to build "socialism with Chinese characteristics". Zhao also hinted

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22 Alan R. Kluver, *Legitimating the Chinese Economic Reforms: A Rhetoric of Myth and Orthodoxy* (Albany : State University of New York Press, 1996), 83.

23 Maurice Meisner, *The Deng Xiaoping Era: An Inquiry Into the Fate of Chinese Socialism, 1978–1994* (New York : Hill and Wang, 1996), 352.

24 Ibid.

that China before the Thirteenth Congress, its reform since 1978 was only a socialist self-strengthening, but not a structural reform in modern sense. From this point of 1987, "Zhao thought he might lead his nation into the family of world powers through American pragmatism."[25]

Second, an implication of "primary stage" had not escaped the people's notice was that it could be used by the government to excuse lack of change and improvement for so many years. The Chinese leadership used the Thirteenth Congress to shore up its weakening legitimacy since the Cultural Revolution, by introducing the theoretical innovation of the "primary stage of socialism", and providing a broad mandate for greater reform. Thus "the legitimacy of the CCP and its early policies was maintained"[26]. Here Zhao Ziyang might have invoked his mentor Deng Xiaoping's method from the official reevaluation of Mao Zedong in June 1981. On "Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party since the Founding of the People's Republic of China", Deng defended CCP's political ruthlessness in the past decades by demythologizing Mao's prestige and putting blame on "Gang of Four". By the same token Zhao accomplished an important task by the theory of "primary stage"; it explained and excused the economic backwardness still existent in China after almost four decades of rule by the CCP. The poverty was not due to the Party's rule, but rather due to the historical situation. "The CCP could not be expected to change historical progression itself; it could only guide the nation through the historical stages that in themselves are immutable."[27]

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25 Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, *China without Mao*: *The Search for the New Order* (Toronto : Oxford University Press, 1990), 187.

26 Kluver, *Legitimating the Chinese Economic Reforms*, 84.

27 Meisner, *The Deng Xiaoping Era*, 357.

Third, Zhao Ziyang had forged a new ideological tool — the development of a new theory to fit reality rather than bending reality to theory. In this theory China had to be under socialism control for another 100 years. What Zhao really meant "socialism" was the political dictatorship of the CCP, and in his euphemism, only the CCP monopoly could guarantee China's prosperity and stability. In this version, during the "primary stage", everything including the democracy must be subordinated to "one center" (economic construction) and "two basic points" (Four Cardinal Principles and open door policy), and postponed to a future so distant they were rendered meaningless. The Party and its leaders could be expected to hold their power firmly in hand until 2050, "to a population that over the 1980s had grown cynical and despondent about the prospects for both socialism and democracy, Zhao's speech offered little comfort."[28]

Last but not the least, Zhao Ziyang's speech at the Thirteenth Congress was to counterattack the arrogance of the conservatives that prevailed in the campaigns of "spiritual pollution" (1983) and "bourgeoisie liberalization" (1987). The core of this speech, which called for radical market-oriented economy, totally contradicted the cautious central planning of the Party elders. Besides, at the Congress Zhao at least had made a good preparation in establishing his own power base, in the coming tenure as Party General Secretary.

After the Thirteenth Congress in 1987, the CCP was far from the Party in the late 1970s, while still committed to a Leninist model of political control. Deng Xiaoping and his allies had turned economic reform into an irreversible commitment. The educational levels and professional-technical skills of the personnel resulted from the new Congress, could strengthen the Party's capacities for implementing more powerful strategies. Policy within the Party and its relationship

[28] Meisner, *The Deng Xiaoping Era*, 378.

with other institutions was more contested than in the past, with 66.4 million members it was an extremely diverse organization with a wide range of political beliefs represented.

The Thirteenth Congress was also embraced by the foreign media, the Western world in particular applauded Deng Xiaoping and his allies for introducing the capitalism, and some even speculated that China had abandoned Marxism altogether. Some analysts declared the China's reform would be reliable model for the rest of the Socialism world to follow; even Mikhail Gorbachev's government in the Soviet Union looked to China as an example. Although Deng and his Party garnered praise abroad, they did not enjoy universal acclaim at home, the fame of Deng and Zhao was always associated with bureaucratic corruption and inefficiency. The criticism of government politics came from all walks of life. Many citizens, particularly students, clamored for more far-reaching reform of the political system. Economic problems, such as dissatisfaction with arbitrary pricing structures and a growing income gap between the people, also contributed to the choruses of criticism.

Some factors still dominated Chinese politics at the central level in the period following the Thirteenth Congress until the early months of 1989. First of all, the Congress represented no clear victory for the reformers, but rather a compromise among disparate groups within the Party. The conservative elders had retired but had not relinquished their influence and could still have used it to block more drastic liberalization. The new Party General Secretary Zhao Ziyang's implementation of his radical approach would be accompanying the uneasy conservative reaction. Second, Deng had arranged for Zhao to be the First Vice-Chairman of the Military Affairs Commission, but there was no assurance that Zhao could succeed him. In the past, all designated heirs had fallen failed to inherit the power: Liu Shaoqi in 1966, Lin Biao in 1972, and Hua Guofeng in 1980. Instability has been inherent in the leadership

succession in any Socialist state. Last, there was the tension between conservatives and reformers, and it was particularly conspicuous in the battle between Zhao Ziyang and Li Peng. When Deng Xiaoping placed Li as new Premier after the Congress, served as assistance to Zhao and as compromise to Party elders, he could not know that he had thrown both Zhao and Li into the hot water. Zhao and Li would represent their respective cliques to fight against each other, for the dominance in post-Deng era, while Deng would act as a mediator between two sides. Such situation would have characterized Chinese politics in the coming years, and did not seem to be explosive until the very day in June 1989.

The coexistence but no compromise of the Left and the Right in leadership after the Thirteenth Congress, did really give trouble to Zhao Ziyang's power wielding, as the reformers' implementation always collided with the Party elders' interest in the coming two years. Not to mention the paramount leader Deng Xiaoping, he was supposed to hold the balance of power, but his orthodox Leninist mind always tended to inclined towards the conservative wing, especially when the critical times came. But only the dispute of economic consideration would not make the conservatives render Zhao's collapse so cruelly after the Tiananmen massacre in 1989. Let us compare Zhao with his fallen predecessor Hu Yaobang, they were extremely similar in leading the same path to power descent, but Hu's treatment was more lenient than Zhao's. Anyone at this moment would be incited to ask: What factors had contributed to such outcome? As during the 1986-87 student movement, Hu had done so many things that paralleled what Zhao did in 1989. They either had sympathy for the students' outcry, or acquiesced in the intellectuals' criticism towards the Party. Both Hu and Zhao consistently opposed using military method to crack down the demonstrations, and admitted that the Party has serious problems and need to be further reformed. So the reason of Zhao's fate was worse than Hu's,

is not about the discrepancy of economic thoughts, or his attitude towards the student movement, but Zhao's fatal program — political reform within the Party, which started from the end of 1986. Such program caused the anxiety of Deng Xiaoping and the curse of the conservatives; it triggered not only the downfall of Zhao, but also the lost of the whole reform generation in the 1980s. We remember when Hu had lost his power in 1987, but his reformed-minded colleagues still kept their seats in the Party; whereas Zhao's political reform group was wholly purged from the Party membership following Zhao's suffering. And more importantly, Hu's stepping down only resulted in retreating from active political participation; on the other hand, Zhao was permanently under house detention until he died. Now we have to investigate carefully the whole picture of such political reform under Zhao Ziyang's conduct: Its origin, its process, why it failed, and how it failed.

D. Reform of Politics or Reform of Administration?

Zhao Ziyang submitted his political reform blueprint in his opening report at the Thirteenth Congress, and became the first General Secretary to acknowledge the necessity of political change at the national Party meeting. Zhao made clear that political reform was indispensable if economic reform was to continue, and with an unusual rhetoric that stated the Central Committee had decided that "it was high time to put political reform on the agenda for the whole Party"[29]. But his proposal was more skeletal and suggestive than concrete or substantive, and contained few specific details for implementing the reform. It was generally in seven areas:

[29] Baum, *Burying Mao*, 221.

(1) separating Party and government; (2) delegating state power and authority to lower levels; (3) reforming government bureaucracy; (4) reforming the personnel (cadre) system; (5) establishing a system of political dialogue, and consultation between the Party and the people; (6) enhancing the supervisory roles of representative assemblies and mass organizations; and (7) strengthening the socialist legal system[30]. But when we trace the origin of Zhao's sensitive reform proposal, we would find out more than the paper had suggested.

It seems to be easy to draw a stark contrast between the economic and political dimensions of reform in China since 1978, characterizing as "long leg of economic reform and short leg of political reform". While economic reform has been bold and far-reaching, whereas political reform has been hesitant and limited. The CCP dominance remained clearly evident, and many of the professed goals of political reform (such as 'socialist democracy') have not been materialized. But in the reality, such conclusion is inappropriate. Mao Zedong's hand-picked successor Hua Guofeng had done some Party remolding jobs in the wake of Cultural Revolution. Afterwards, Deng Xiaoping claimed his willing to improve the leadership system in 1978, by ameliorating the crashing economic situation and reshuffling Maoist radical political faction. And Hu Yaobang imposed the new disciplinary regulations for the Party cadres in 1982. But all of them above did not approach to the more pronounced political change until 1986 — all regarding to the rising political star Zhao Ziyang.

There are still three unresolved questions today about such political reform: Why did Deng Xiaoping launch the political

[30] Xinhua News Agency; available from http://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2003-01/20/content_697061.htm; Internet; first accessed on December 12, 2006.

reform at a critical moment of student demonstrations in the late 1986? And meanwhile Hu Yaobang's liberal stand was challenging Deng's tolerance. Why chose Zhao Ziyang, but not someone else? And what was the motive of Deng to propose such reform, which might have altered the Party's fate and led to Tiananmen incident in 1989.

In September 1984, a group of liberal young economists affiliated with Premier of State Council Zhao Ziyang's reform network convened a four-day working conference at Moganshan, Zhejiang province. Participants in the conference voiced strong support for a stepped-up program of structural reforms, including an end to the "iron rice bowl" of life time employment, enhanced operational autonomy for enterprise managers, and greater reliance on market mechanisms. Widely regarded as a watershed in the post-Mao reform movement, the Moganshan conference served to be a catalyst in support for the fundamental restructuring of Chinese economy, and to be the origin of political reform in 1986. After two years in 1986, Deng Xiaoping reasserted that the Chinese reform should include political structural reform, and without the political reform, the economic reform would not succeed. But the turning point was in April 1987, when a group of conservatives held a seminar in Zhuozhou, Hebei province, to bombard the reformers' policy after the students movement in the late 1986, their attack was beyond the tolerance of Chinese paramount leader. Both Deng and Zhao deeply felt that the conservatives' sphere of influence was too broad in Chinese political institution, always hampering the normal reform course. So it was the first time in the history of PRC, Deng decided to endorse the official political reform in the accelerative manner. Choosing Zhao Ziyang instead of Hu Yaobang, to manage the 1986 political reform, was a big puzzle for many people. As Zhao was Premier of State Council in 1986, and was supposed to conduct the economic work only, whereas Hu was General Secretary, and any political affairs should be designated as his bailiwick. Deng seemed

to be suspicious of Hu's loyalty to socialism dictatorship even before the 1986 student movement, and intended to boost Zhao as his new successor in place of Hu. Deng also understood the risk of conducting such structural reform in China's Byzantine politics by himself, finding a scapegoat in case of any serous outcome happened, was the best idea of the all.

At the time of summer in 1986, Deng Xiaoping first time put forward the Party political reform agenda since 1980. He always took the chance to tell the visiting foreigners that at the Thirteenth Congress in 1987, the Party would discuss plans for reform of the political system. But what Deng meant of political reform had little to do with the Western democracy. He never wavered from the "Four Cardinal Principles", especially the principle of "the leadership of the Party", and firmly refused to multiparty system, the separation of three powers, the concept of checks and balances, and the freedom of speech. Even Deng had tolerated a very few intellectual thoughts and political movements outside the control of the CCP since 1978, but as he said: "the reform of the political structure was subject to restrictions, and we must not imitate the West, and no liberalization should be allowed".[31]

There were many reasons behind the door for launching the 1986 political reform. At first, obviously Deng Xiaoping wanted the political reform to facilitate the economic reform, channeling a new way to go through the economic bottleneck after 1984. Second, except as a fundamental condition for economic development, the political reform has been instrumental to rationalize the Party's policymaking procedures. Since the founding of PRC in 1949, it has been "a world of organizations but no institutions, of

[31] Richard Evans, *Deng Xiaoping and the Making of Modern China* (New York : Viking Penguin Books Inc, 1993), 280.

constantly changing rules, and the organization that conquered China in 1949 was more a Party army than a political Party in the normal sense of the term, the real rules of the game were personally defined only within the inner circle." and "the PRC has been far less institutionalized than were any imperial Chinese governments, even the Republican China developed more formal civil service requirements than the PRC produced in its first forty years in power"[32]. The PRC's revolutionary origins as a peasant-based Party, those Party revolutionaries who seized power in 1949 have proven major obstacles to the development of enduring political institutions. Deng seized this opportunity to provide limited institutionalization to PRC's ruling apparatus, by moving toward decentralization, increasing cadres' efficiency, eliminating power abuse and corruption such as embezzlements, extortions and bribes, stimulating the political initiative of workers, peasants and intellectuals, and providing legal protections for individual to participate in policy implementation. Third, from 1949 to 1976, Mao Zedong's rule severely undermined the integrity and legitimacy of the CCP, the scars which derived from the ill-conceived policies in the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. The arbitrary judgments and outdated experiences of Party leaders have proved lasting even after Mao's death. So the 1986 political reform was also regarded as the efforts to prevent the recurrence of Mao's error, to restore the norms of political conduct, which had been flouted in the Cultural Revolution and to legitimate once again the rule of the CCP since the Third Plenum in 1978. The last but not the least, when Deng delivered a speech to the Politburo in the spring of 1986, it revealed some sense of Deng's nostalgia, that his political reform in 1986 was

[32] Kenneth Lieberthal, *Governing China*: *From Revolution Through Reform* (New York : Norton, 1995), Preface.

the restoration of what it had been in the early years of the PRC, particularly the political golden age of the period of the Soviet-modeled First Five Year Plan (1953-1957), when the CCP collective leadership presented an orderly and disciplined society. Please note that those were also "years of Deng's own political success, culminating in his triumphantly prominent role in the Eighth Party Congress of 1956, no doubt contributed to the attractiveness and romanticized image of the era."[33]

There was another secret reason about why Deng Xiaoping mobilized the 1986 political reform. It could be compared to Mao Zedong's Hundred Flowers campaign in 1956: Not a genuine attempt to solicit criticism of the CCP, but a ploy to expose dissidents, as the subsequent Tiananmen massacre and the eventual purge of Zhao Ziyang had been fully proved. But there is one thing should be clarified: Because in 1950s China had no independent foreign policy and just followed "whatevers" of Soviet Union, Chinese were the obedient disciples of Russian at that time. Mao Zedong did not know how to react either the secret speech of Khrushchev, or the riots in Eastern Europe, and he decided to create a lenient political atmosphere by launching the "Hundred Flowers" campaign, welcoming the opinions from all walks of life, and examining whatever the consequence in China, but the consequence was exactly the same as those in Eastern Europe. So in this retrospect, Deng's political reform in 1986 was paralleling what Mao had done in 1956, neither to embrace the Western democracy, nor to search for the adversaries, but to adopt a wait-and-see approach by playing this biggest political gamble since he took power in 1978.

For the Premier Zhao Ziyang, since he controlled the economic power in 1980, the accomplishment of Chinese economy was faded

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[33] Meisner, *The Deng Xiaoping Era*, 362.

comparing with what had produced between 1978 and 1979, so Zhao was eager to catch the opportunity of political reform and to rebuild his fame. And Zhao understood Deng Xiaoping's intention for choosing him, not Hu Yaobang, as the supervisor of the political reform. He knew that his chance of becoming the successor of Deng was coming.

Several international events in the late 1980s also inspired Deng's political reform, and he did not want such turbulences repeated in China after his death. The overthrow of the Marcos regime in Philippine; the protest against the authoritarian President Chun Doo-Hwan in South Korea; the political liberalization in Taiwan; the expulsion of the Haitian dictator, Jean-Claude Duvalier; the democratic movements in Eastern Europe; and the Glasnost in the former Soviet Union. Plus the continuous lobbying of the oversea Chinese and Chinese students studying abroad, the pressure from the West with its high expectation toward China's political transformation, since Deng's successful economic modernization after 1978.

At the beginning of 1986, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) convened several discussions on the issue of political reform, some scholars such as Su Shaozhi and Yan Jiaqi even presented papers with specific suggestions, and their voice was highly welcomed by the CCP reformers of Wan Li and Tian Jiyun. In the annual July/August policy review meeting at the summer capital at the beach resort of Beidaihe, Deng Xiaoping, Hu Yaobang, Zhao Ziyang, Hu Qili, Li Xiannian, Chen Yun, Peng Zhen, Yang Shangkun, and Yu Qiuli, they discussed in detail the question of reform of the political system. In September 1986, the Standing Committee of the Politburo established a five-person "central discussion group for reform of the political structure", comprising three middle-aged technocratic reformers (Zhao Ziyang, Hu Qili, and Tian Jiyun) and two veteran revolutionaries (Bo Yibo and Peng Chong). Deng asked the group to outline the political reform proposal. Zhao sent his first draft for Deng's review at the end of

1986, but Deng rejected some kinds of content, such as a system of checks and balances, because the student movement and "bourgeois liberalization" at that time greatly concerned him. Zhao submitted the second draft to Deng in March 1987, but it was not approved until May. The final version of the political reform proposal was passed at the Seventh Plenum of the Twelfth CC in September 1987, and it had become the main feature of Zhao's opening speech at the Thirteenth Party Congress in October 1987. Since then, the political reform group moved from underground to surface.

The Zhao Ziyang-led political reform lasted for about two and a half years, it could be considered as the Chinese political barometer during this time. Meanwhile the student movements, "anti-bourgeoisie liberalization" campaign, the fall of Hu Yaobang, the Thirteenth Congress, and the price reform in 1988 were taking place. The political reform started from September 1986, but it had no certain ending date. Before the Beijing Spring in 1989, the political reform group had already ceased to function. After the Beijing massacre on June 4, following the purge of patron Zhao Ziyang, most of the group staff was afflicted by the political trouble, some of them were taken into custody. The political reform group was undertaking totally behind the doors through two and a half years, never be allowed to report by the Chinese media, so it was completely ignored by the Chinese people. And as the Chinese paramount leader, Deng Xiaoping neither made an inquiry about the political reform, nor participated in their conferences, seminars, and decision makings. Besides, the executive planner of the group Zhao Ziyang, even he constantly attended the conferences and seminars, and disseminated the instructions to the group, but he never made the final decision on those occasions.

After making the general guidelines by the five-person group, Zhao Ziyang began to depend on his own think tank more than the five-person group. Actually Zhao's think tank contributed much more than any one else, to influence the policy of the 1986 political reform.

Like Hu Yaobang always relying on intellectuals, Zhao's pre-1980 career was entirely in the provinces and he lacked the necessary ties throughout the central bureaucracy to control them. While entering the centre of Beijing power, first as Premier and then as General Secretary, Zhao's power was more circumscribed, he had to deal with the central bureaucracy, which the Party elders dominated. After the Thirteenth Congress, especially placing some conservative staff in the Politburo, Zhao's power was further limited. In circumventing the conservative rivals, Zhao had to develop a group of think tank outside the normal bureaucratic system. The think tank derived their power primarily from the direct access they enjoyed to Zhao; the people who staffed this new body were generally young reformers who recognized the problems of China. They worked hard to cultivate direct ties with units at all levels of the national administration, and to bring the resulting data to bear on policy matters. The think tank had made considerable progress in improving the information flows to the top, and in some instances lower-level bodies in the provinces and cities made similar improvements.

One interesting thing was, at the time of October 1986, encouraged by Chen Yun, the conservative leaders Hu Qiaomu and Deng Liqun gathered their followers in the same place where the political reform group held meetings, to organize the campaign against Zhao Ziyang. Although members of both groups had known each other for a long time, but when they met in the corridors, they did not speak. Ironically, the political reform group adopted a strategy that they did not allow the opposite group to participate in their meetings, nor considered its opinions. "It showed that the Chinese reformers too had little understanding that freedom of expression involved tolerance of opposing views."[34]

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[34] Goldman, *Sowing the Seeds*, 232.

There were two individuals played prominent roles in drafting political reform proposals in Zhao Ziyang's think tank. One was Zhao's political secretary Bao Tong, also the vice-minister of the State Commission on Economic Restructuring; another was CASS political scientist Yan Jiaqi. They both were responsible for coordinating the theoretical recommendations made by the group's various study panels. Yan and his wife Gao Gao's book, *A history of the Ten-Year Cultural Revolution*, was banned early in 1987, afterwards Yan stopped attending and then withdrew from the political reform group. But virtually it was Yan's radical political reform approach contrasted the moderate expression of Bao and Zhao, and it was resulted in their final split. In addition, there were more than forty people joined in the political reform group (See the table below). Referring to Wu Guoguang's words, the group was not Zhao Ziyang's personal consultation office, but a formal organization belonged to central government[35]. Except Bao Tong, Zhou Jie, and He Guanghui, most of the group members were between thirty and forty, and had entered universities after the Cultural Revolution. They were drawn from a wide spectrum of organizations, including research institutes, universities, the *People's Daily*, and the Institute of Economic Structural Reform, most of them had working experiences in the CCP bureaucracy before joining in the group. The members of the group were recruited from different times during this period, and there were two major methods of such selection. One was according to the normative procedure in the CCP bureaucratic system, to assign the people to the corresponding organizations by their nature and missions, for example, Chen Fujin and Li Dangang were belonged to this category. Another was to

[35] Wu Guoguang, *Zhao Ziyang Yu Zhengzhi Gaige* (*Political Reform under Zhao Ziyang*, Hong Kong : The Pacific Century Institute, 1997), 35.

recommend by a person who was already working in the political reform group, for example, both Yan Jiaqi and Wu Guoguang was introduced by Bao Tong to Zhao Ziyang.

All the staff in the group held the membership of the CCP, and their intake was not beyond the function of typical CCP mechanism. Even most of the group members were admitted based on their merits, but some of them being hired because the political reform group could take advantage of their past experiences, connections, and backgrounds (some members were the descendants of the Party elders), to seek the research and working convenience, and such practices were not uncommon in the CCP elite system. Zhao's reform-oriented think tank absolutely rejected the outspoken independent intellectuals to participate in the group activities, such as Fang Lizhi, Chen Ziming, and Wang Juntao, for fearing those non-establishment liberalists would hurt the reform as well as themselves.

Table 1.3. Zhao Ziyang's Political Reform Group

Patron:
Zhao Ziyang — General Secretary, Chinese Communist Party

Directors:
Yan Jiaqi — Director, Institute of Political Science, Chinese Academy of Social Science
Bao Tong — Secretary of Zhao Ziyang; Deputy Director, Chinese Economic Structural Reform Committee
He Guanghui — Deputy Director, Chinese Economic Structural Reform Committee; Secretary, Political Reform Group
Zhou Jie — Deputy Director, Central Chinese Communist Party Office
Chen Yizi — Member, Chinese Economic Structural Reform Committee; Chairman, Institute of Chinese Economic Structural Reform
Chen Fujin — Member, Branch of Politics and Law, Central Chinese Communist Party Office

Secretaries:
Xu Shiming — Director, Branch of Service, Central Chinese Communist Party Office
Bei Jibo — Member, Central Chinese Communist Party Office
Liu Hong — Member, Central Chinese Communist Party Office

Research Associates:
Gao Shan — Director, Institute of Chinese Rural Development Research, State Council
Gu Yunchang — Director, Central Party Propaganda Department
Chen Xiaoping — Director, Communist Youth League, Jiangsu Provincial Party Committee
Wang Chunsheng — Director, Central Party Organizing Department
Yu Xianfu — Vice-Mayor, Chongqing, Sichuan Province
Li Tielin — Vice-Chairman, Organizing Department, Beijing Party Committee
Chen Qunlin — Vice-Secretary, Guizhou Provincial Party Committee
Zhang Dianhui — Secretary, Central Chinese Communist Party Office
Tang Yanan — Secretary, People's Liberation Army
Chen Xiaolu — Junior Officer, People's Liberation Army
Ying Songnian — Associate Professor, Chinese University of Politics and Law
Deng Yun — Lecturer, Chinese National Defense University
Niu Tiehang — Editor, International Department, Economic Daily,
Wu Guoguang — Journalist, People's Daily
Xu Cong — Lawyer, Chinese Railway Judiciary
Yue Hui — Teacher, A Beijing Middle School
Yan Xiaoyan — Faculty Member, Central Party School
Yan Shuhan — Instructor, Fujian Provincial Party School; Graduate Student, Central Party School
Chi Fulin — Graduate Student, Central Party School
Wu Wei — Graduate Student, Central Party School
Wang Guanzhong — Graduate Student, Central Party School
Zhou Dali — Member, Chinese Economic Structural Reform Committee
Wang Shaoxian — Member, Chinese Economic Structural Reform Committee
Ji Ning — Member, Chinese Economic Structural Reform Committee
Li Dangang — Member, Branch of Economy, Central Chinese Communist Party Office
Sun Fangming — Member, Central Party Propaganda Department
Shen Ronghua — Member, Chinese Communist Party Committee
Lu Changchun — Member, Central Chinese Human Resource Committee
Huang Hai — Member, Central Party Culture and Archive Research Office
Zhang Zhanbin — Member, Institute of Chinese Communist Party Historical Research

Zhang Wei — Member, Organizing Department, Shanghai Party Committee
Mei Xingbao — Member, Hunan Provincial Party Committee
Zhao Fengtian — Member, Economic Research Centre, Yantai, Shandong Province
Yang Zhenfang — Member, Science and Technology Committee, Ministry of National Defense

The period of 1986 Zhao Ziyang's political reform could be divided into two: The first was from the beginning of September 1986, to the Thirteenth Congress in October 1987; the second was from the October 1987 onwards until the eve of Tiananmen massacre in June 1989. During this period, the daily working methods of the political reform group were to collect the related reading materials, particularly the Western political science works, and to invite scholars, officials, oversea Chinese and Western economists, attending hundreds of seminars and conferences presided by Zhao. After the Thirteenth Congress in October 1987, the group changed its original name from "Political Structural Reform Office" (zhengzhi gaige bangongshi) to the new title of "Research Center for the Reform of the Political Structure under the Central Committee" (zhongguozhongyang zhengzhitizhi gaige yanjiushi). Please note that there is a huge difference between the meanings of "Office" (bangongshi) and "Research Center" (yanjiushi) in Chinese linguistics. The latter implies that this unit focuses on the paper-based research, rather than dealing with the day-to-day routine work. Sure enough, the Research Center only concentrated in the theory discussions, they even could not conclude a final blueprint of the political reform, which was required to submit to Deng Xiaoping at the end of the period, and it might be due to the advent of Beijing Spring in the mid–1989. Through the group's conferences and seminars, their general discussions included: The separation of Party and government, reducing the blurring lines of Party and government structures which followed the Cultural Revolution; the reform of

cadre system, professionalizing their qualifications, bringing the merit system to the promotion decision; institutionalizing the nomenclature system, choosing the selectorate, but not the electorate, and introducing the civil service system; strengthening the legal system, to reject the corruption and to discipline the Party by the introduction of public polls, hotlines for handling popular input and complaints, and the Scandinavian ombudsman system. The group also mentioned about making the labor union more representative of workers' interests; granting more freedom to Chinese medias, literature and art, but still required them mainly write about the positive aspects of socialism; mobilizing intellectuals for the reform participation; encouraging multiparty cooperation under the dictatorship of the CCP. It was surprising that there had been little discussion about education reform to create a more democratic political culture.

There were two different perspectives of political reform divided in Zhao Ziyang's group: Bao Tong and Yan Jiaqi were the respective representatives. Bao wanted a more efficient, more popular communist system, he considered the Meiji Restoration in Japan in the late 19th century as an example of successful top-down reform. Yan, however, wanted to go further — a fundamental change in the communist authoritarian system. Tension grew between the two and led to their final breaking up in 1987. The whole political reform proposal attempted to be comprehensive, but in the reality it was ambiguous and full of defects. The key feature of the political reform was the separation of the Party from the day-to-day operation of the government and economic enterprises. But such term of "separation" was vague, as Deng Xiaoping only wanted the separation of their daily responsibilities, not a thorough separation between two entities. In Deng's mind, it was the Party, not the government, should have the last word. As James Ethridge said: "the CCP leaders never understood that the administrative questions are not political questions, the

field of administration is a field of business, it is removed from the hurry and strife of politics, and they never accepted the need for a politically neutral civil service"[36]. Even Zhao was ostensibly to free the Party from the chores of supervising the routine operations of state bureaucracy, so that it could concentrate its attention on managing its own affairs and formulating long term plans. But Deng understood this policy also had the potential of taking the actual governing power out of the Party hands. Some conservatives argued that even if there were separation at the lower levels, the Party-government combination at top levels had to be retained. So the final draft of political reform proposal implied that the separation of Party and government will only strengthen the leadership of the Party, not weaken or abolish it.

The second important theme of the proposal was multiparty system under the CCP monopoly. Although the membership in the small parties had grown to 290, 000 in 1988, but Zhao Ziyang sought to use the small parties as window dressing, they could not rival the CCP's forty-four million members and their existence depended on the wish of the CCP[37]. While the role of the small parties was to be expanded after the Thirteenth Congress, real competition between them and the CCP was not yet to be allowed. Besides, the political reform also proposed a new legal system, by the rule of law, not by the rule of man. But do not forget that the Chinese law after 1949 was only made and defined by the CCP, not anything else. And its transformation from cadre system to Western civil servant system was only implemented after Zhao's fall in 1989. Sometimes the political reform meetings during this period were somewhat out of topic, they

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36 James M. Ethridge, *China's Unfinished Revolution: Problems and Prospects since Mao* (San Francisco : China Books & Periodicals, 1990), 36.

37 Ibid., 37.

usually discussed about economic reform and how to lift the Chinese living standard instead, especially during the high tide of price reform in 1988. These meetings seldom talked about the reform of the NPC, the introduction of parliamentarianism, and never approached to the Party top levels such as the Politburo and the CAC.

Zhao Ziyang always considered his 1986 political reform as the first structural reform in PRC history, all the reforms before his were only functional. But actually Zhao's 1986 reform was still functional in nature; it was an administrative reform rather than a political real change. The definition of his political reform had more to do with efficient, more systematic decision making than with democratic practices. Zhao's political restructuring did not signify that a Western style reform in which a democratic system complete with free elections, a free press, a three-way division of power, and alternating control of government by different parties. Rather, it simply meant improvement in administrative as well as economic efficiency, simplification of bureaucratic structures, and elimination of overstaffing. The major target of Zhao's 1986 political reform was the Party bureaucracy. As the most paradoxical case in China, "usually assumed that both the Cultural Revolution under Mao and the market economy under Deng undermine bureaucratic power, but unfortunately both events have served to enrich local officials, their relatives, and their friends"[38]. Particularly after the reform in 1978, political power has greatly facilitated the establishment and operation of various business ventures by cadres and their clients, while the newly fashioned commercial economy has opened vast new opportunities for official corruption, so that both Deng and Zhao had strong determination to restrain the Party officials. But the PRC history always shows that such anti-corruption campaigns are

[38] Meisner, *The Deng Xiaoping Era*, 48.

the vicious recurrence: Endless cycle of simplification, expansion, resimplification, and reexpansion[39]. This time was not an exception; after Zhao's purge in 1989, the CCP bureaucracy phenomenon was as same as ever before. Everything was a vain attempt.

Even Zhao Ziyang's 1986 political reform was under Deng Xiaoping's strict surveillance, with the circumscription of no space for the American style of a tripartite division of powers, and the absolute persistence in the CCP dictatorship, but Zhao's reform was still relatively bold in the PRC history. Nevertheless, the 1986 political reform was by no means popular, whether inside or outside the Party. For the conservatives, Zhao's conduct had more to do with internal struggles against them, to undermine their power in the Party. For the military, they never supported Zhao's effort, as from 1984 to the eve of Tiananmen crackdown; Zhao began a program to reduce its four million-man military establishment to three million[40]. The military were not satisfied their budget declined. When official China and dissident Chinese speak of "political reform" they have their own quite different definitions in mind. For the orthodox intellectuals, they considered that the only way to bolster China's political change was joining the CCP membership. For the non-establishment intellectuals, they proclaimed that "the democracy could not bestowed from above but must be won from below — what was bestowed could be withdrawn, but what was won could not"[41]. The unorthodox voice, such as those of Fang Lizhi and Wang Ruowang, they did not expect political reform to go very far very soon, and regarded it as not a genuine desire for democracy. As such reform

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39 Harry Harding, *China's Second Revolution*: *Reform after Mao* (Washington, D.C. : Brookings Institution, 1987), 18.

40 Meisner, *The Deng Xiaoping Era*, 96.

41 Fang Lizhi, *Bringing down the Great Wall*: *Writings on Science, Culture, and Democracy in China, trans. James Williams* (New York : Knopf, 1991), 130.

was proceeding within the framework of the CCP monopoly; it was rather a pseudo-democracy or even anti-liberalism. Reportedly after Fang listened to Zhao's political reform report at the opening session of Thirteenth Congress, he reminded a Hong Kong interviewer that "Mao Zedong made speeches were even better to listen to than this one. It is not enough just to read the speeches…You also have to keep your eye on the concrete indicators"[42]. It was not surprised to see, from the beginning to the end that Zhao's political reform group always turned a deaf ear to Fang's criticism. The lack of mutual trust had laid down a huge gap between tow sides, such situation also spelt the disaster during the Tiananmen demonstrations in 1989, which we will see in the subsequent chapters.

Even Wu Guoguang, a member of political reform group, highly praises that Zhao Ziyang had emphasized a division of authority and pursued a real sense of democracy. But as on what Merle Goldmen comments: "The descriptions may have overstated Zhao's democratic inclinations in order to gain support for Zhao abroad"[43]. When Zhao was first time to talk about his program, he said: "The political reform is not going to discuss whether the CCP should be a ruling Party, but is going to discuss how the CCP rule China"[44]. Such definition revealed the nature of this reform, it based on the premise of the CCP monopoly, and it was the program of bureaucratic rationalization, not democratic government. The 1986 political reform was to loosen the control of the people, rather than to end the Party dictatorship; to introduce the rule by law instead of the rule by man; to expand people's participation in politics, while never allow people to decide it; to strengthen the Party's prestige, but not to weaken it.

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42 Baum, *Burying Mao*, 223.

43 Goldman, *Sowing the Seeds*, 233.

44 Wu Guoguang, *Zhao Ziyang Yu Zhengzhi Gaige* (Political Reform under Zhao Ziyang), 151.

Zhao's 1986 political reform was to improve the Party's efficiency, while preventing the Party from further erosion by the bourgeoisie liberalization. In some extend, this reform was to compliment Deng Xiaoping. As in 1986, when Zhao was appointed to lead a five-person group in drafting the political reform manuscript, he pledged to say, that there was no mutual antagonism between the Four Cardinal Principles and the political reform. Such words may be seen as a counterattack to the conservatives' criticism, while proclaiming his loyalty to Deng. For Zhao, the long-term goal of political reform was institutionalization, not democratization. And "democracy" as basically a tool to mobilize the people for the Party's own ends, to realize Deng Xiaoping's ideal socialism: Soviet government + good order on the Prussian railways + American technology and trusts + national education in United States = Socialism, in another words, a Stalinism in a relatively benign and rational form."[45]

Zhao Ziyang's 1986 political reform was limited in oral discussions and paper research, it never came true in Chinese politics, so we can say that such reform never began and never failed (only Zhao's political career failed). Nevertheless, the 1986 political reform did touch the sensitive issue of the legitimacy of CCP monopoly, and did challenge the vested interests of Party bureaucracy. When the reform began to be put into practice, but the harsh atmosphere that followed the crackdown in the summer of 1989 led to a reversal. These also had contributed to one of Zhao's charges following his descent after the Tiananmen incident, and explained why the conservatives disliked him.

This political reform was a crucial contradiction, "were the long-term goals of reform to change fundamentally the nature of the communist political system? Were they designed ultimately to replace

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45 Harding, *China's Second Revolution*, 20.

the proletariat operating through the CCP, by a democratically elected multi-Party system? Some intellectuals had this goal. Alternatively, were the reforms designed to improve the efficiency and legitimacy of the CCP rule so it could continue indefinitely? Deng Xiaoping had this objective"[46]. Zhao Ziyang's thought laid between the two, he hoped to establish a moderate authoritarian government under the status quo, but if he was successful, we could foresee that China would follow the path of former Soviet Union under Gorbachev, which led to the communist collapse in 1991.

During the Thirteenth Congress in October 1987, before reciting the opening speech of "primary stage of socialism", Zhao Ziyang extravagantly praised his mentor Deng Xiaoping as "a model in the integration of the universal truth of Marxism with Chinese reality", and developed a little cult of Deng's personality[47]. Such worship of a paramount leader coming from Zhao's mouth was not a surprise. Both the theories of "primary stage of socialism" and neo-authoritarianism (xinquanwei zhuyi) came hand in hand, they were to defend the CCP dictatorship in China and to excuse China's backwardness under such circumstance. Neo-authoritarianism was a political concept formulated by certain think tank members (mainly Bao Tong and Wu Guoguang) under the guidance of Zhao. It revealed that Zhao was to be an advocate not of Western-style liberalism but of Chinese-style "neo-authoritarianism", a doctrine that stressed the need for strong, centralized technocratic leadership. The first to broach neo-authoritarianism were Zhang Bingjiu, a doctoral candidate at Beijing University, and Wu Jiaxiang, a member of the CCP's Central Policy Research Section

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46 Benedict Stavis, *China's Political Reforms*: *An Interim Report* (New York : Praeger, 1988), 61.

47 Meisner, *The Deng Xiaoping Era*, 380.

and a close associate of Zhao[48]. This idea began to appear in 1986 but the theory became more prominent in 1988.

The notion of neo-authoritarianism was to combine political dictatorship with a capitalist market economy. At first Zhao Ziyang wanted to rebuild an intra-party "democratic centralism", which characterized the governance of early Mao era (1949–57), but such "democratic centralism" has nothing to do with votes or multiparty systems, rather, it simply means consultation. Second, neo-authoritarianism emphasized on Zhao, not Deng or any other Party leaders, it was obviously a tool used by Zhao's think tank to fight with their Party rivals, such as Li Peng and other conservatives. Third, advocates of neo-authoritarianism argued that a benevolent strongman leadership could be the best suitable for current China, they rejected the East European approach of simultaneously implementing political and economic reforms, in favor of the economic reform preceding political reform. As in a backward society like China, with low economic level, large uneducated population, and lack of democratic traditions and consciousness, where democratization was not viable and should be put off until an in- definite time in the future. They argued that the most dangerous threat to reform came not only from conservatives in leadership, but also from social groups mostly influenced by the West, the early introduction of democracy would only cause chaos.

The supporters of Zhao Ziyang even cited the experiences of South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. The striking examples of combining a complete absence of democratic polity with a high degree of individual economic freedom and rapid growth of living standards. Some of them also invoked Mikhail Gorbarchev as an example of an all-powerful leader using his authority to reform a dictatorial system.

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48 George Black, and Robin Munro, *Black Hands of Beijing*, 63.

The non-establishment intellectuals just disdained the notion of neo-authoritarianism; they argued that the situation in Asian four little dragons is not comparable to that of China. The formers are currently more democratic than China, and most of them had benefited from semi-colonialism before gaining the prosperity. They also considered it was an illusion for Zhao Ziyang becoming another Gorbarchev, as there are many examples of an enlightened authoritarian leader who had turned into a despot, or had been overthrown by the entrenched Party bureaucracy because the reforms threatened their interests. The dissidents defined Zhao's neo-authoritarianism as an enlightened autocracy, and a traditional despotism in new guise, and Zhao's political orientation was not Westernization or democratization, but East Asianization. This kind of non-conformists also took to streets at the outbreak of Beijing Spring in 1989. But unlike the motives of the students, who wanted to bring the downfall of Deng Xiaoping and Li Peng; whereas the non-Party intellectuals had already lost faith in Zhao Ziyang, and wanted to vent their anger, for a person who they used to hope would assume Hu Yaobang's role in promoting democracy.

Even Zhao Ziyang's 1986 political reform was the most comprehensive in theory, but he was not the pioneer in the PRC history. On August 18, 1980, Deng Xiaoping delivered the first political reform speech in PRC history — "On the Reform of the System of Party and State Leadership". In it he called for an end to the common practice of high Party officials also holding government posts, saying that it was "not good to have too many people holding two or more posts concurrently"[49]. In the speech, Deng talked more

[49] Xinhua News Agency; available from http://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2005-02/04/content_2547080.htm; Internet; first accessed on December 12, 2006.

about problems than solutions, but what he said was very quotable and very pertinent. Some of the conditions and practices he criticized, such as iron rice bowl, complete job security system, lifetime tenure in office, and blurred lines of responsibility, and these criticisms from a top Party leader was unprecedented in the PRC history. But Deng's 1980 political reform speech did not make its impact until seven years later, when the broader issues of political reform were placed on the agenda with great publicity in 1987, as this speech had not been allowed to report by the Chinese media in 1980. Sarcastically, Zhao Ziyang's 1986 political reform draft and his opening speech in the Thirteenth Congress were, in some extent, the duplication of core features in Deng's 1980 speech. So we can say that Zhao's 1986 political reform generally lacked of originality. Furthermore, Deng sanctioned the 1980 county-level People's Congress elections. Hundreds of counties across China in the latter half of the year were launching the election campaign, embodied an unprecedented degree of political openness and grass-roots participation. But the 1980 local elections did caused some kind of social disorder, and the criticism to Mao Zedong and Party legitimacy from some outspoken non-Party candidates. The elections concerned Deng and the conservative coalition, and were finally discontinued.

Deng Xiaoping's economic reform after 1978 was to recover the pain of the state, while his political reform was to recover the pain of the Party, both was caused by the Cultural Revolution. Even Deng's 1980 political reform was short-lived, but at least it had turned the theory into practice (1980 local elections), contrasting the armchair discussion of Zhao's after 1986.

There is an interesting comparison between Zhao Ziyang's 1986 political reform and Mikhail Gorbachev's Glasnost in the late 1980s. Since 1949, Mao Zedong sought advice from a quite different source: Stalin's socialist system in the USSR; and he copied Soviet experience to build his regime in the PRC. In fact the Chinese

and the Soviet system had a number of points in common: "Both stressed centralized control and bureaucratic administration; both utilized ideology to buttress the legitimacy of the system, and held that the leaders embodied the correct ideology, leaving no room for private, individual interests or for organized opposition to the state; both consciously fostered competition among various bureaucracies in order to maximize control by the top leaders"[50]. After Zhao took power in China and Gorbachev became leader in the USSR, both their goals of reform were to make socialism stronger, transforming from "dictatorship of the proletariat" to "state of all the people", from "state socialism" to "socialism governed by society (self-managed socialism)". There is a wide-spread cliché that Gorbachev political reform preceded the economic reform, and China led the opposite direction, but in fact it was not wholly correct. As it has been mentioned above, after Mao Zedong died, both Hua Guofeng and Deng Xiaoping had undertaken some complementary political reform while launching the radical economic modernization. Of course, China's experiences in market economy and democratization were much less than Russia's, as before Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, Russian was partly committed to Western institution than had Republican government done in China before 1949.

Nevertheless, the political reforms both under Zhao Ziyang and Gorbachev have many things in common. Zhao planned his Party remolding from 1987 to 1989, while Gorbachev practiced his Glasnost (political openness) from 1987 to 1991. Unlike Deng Xiaoping, Zhao constantly got in touch with the political reforms in the USSR, East Europe, and Yugoslavia; he regarded those reforms and the Western systems as the inspiration for

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[50] Nicholas Lardy, *Foreign Trade and Economic Reform in China, 1978–1990* (New York : Cambridge University Press, 1992), 23.

China. His political reform group also had specialized research in Gorbachev's "new thinking". Vice versa, Gorbachev recognized China's economic reform since 1978 as Soviet's best example. Zhao's political reform was derived from the lost ten-year (1966–76) of Cultural Revolution, while Gorbachev's was out of the stagnation reign of Leonid Brezhnev, from 1964 to 1982. And Zhao's reform wanted to restore the "human socialism" in early years (1949–57) of Mao Zedong's China, whereas Gorbachev's intended to imitate Lenin's conciliatory New Economic Policy (NEP) found in 1921.

Even both Zhao Ziyang and Gorbachev eventually failed (Tiananmen massacre and the collapse of Soviet Union), but there are also many strikingly differences between two reforms. In Gorbachev's words, there were five kinds of major content in his program: managerial decentralization; economic privatization; economic marketization; political openness; and democratization[51]. Zhao's 1986 political reform only discussed the former threes, and the last two (political openness and democratization) were still not considered. For example, in the late 1980s about 90 percent of Soviet censorship had been abolished, but such state mechanism in Zhao's China never ceased to function[52]. In the late 1980s Zhao still insisted "democratic centralism", but after accession in 1985, Gorbachev had stressed that the important element of Perestroika is democratization, and there can not be democracy without Glasnost. The word of "Glasnost" means more than simply freedom of speech; it also means pluralism of views in the Party, free comparison of different opinions and discussions, and most of the all, the renovation of Soviet society. Besides, Gorbachev's Glasnost was much more open

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51 Stephen F. Cohen, and Katrina vander Heuvel, *Voice of Glasnost: Interviews with Gorbachev's Reformers* (New York : Norton & Company Ltd, 1989), 15.

52 Ibid.

than Zhao's "transparency", and the Soviet press was more critical of Stalin than China had been of its past leaders. In 1989, Gorbachev launched the mass campaigns for the Congress of People's Deputies (Supreme Soviet) — the first multi-candidate elections in many decades, the result was unprecedented successful, and in early 1990 Gorbachev announced that future governments would be elected through a multiparty system.

Unlike Gorbachev, Zhao Ziyang and his associates were unwilling to tolerate any politically oriented organization, group, or journal over which the Party did not have some control. China's experimental local elections in the late 1980s always invalidated the dissident candidates such as Fang Lizhi, and imposed the people who supported not only the reform, but also the CCP monopoly. On the other hand, Gorbachev's Congress elections were the genuine introduction of a parliamentary body; they accepted the candidates including former political victims, radical intellectuals, even unorthodox figures such as anti-communists and the priests. In case of intellectuals, professional elites under Gorbachev not only collaborated with government in decision and policy makings, but also participated in popular political debates and fought for the rights of common folk, as well as formed various unorthodox groups in confrontation with government. Unlike their Russian counterparts, however, China's intellectuals see state and society not as separate entities, but as inextricably connected. They are unwilling to challenge communist orthodoxy and their role is limited whether inside or outside the Party.

Zhao Ziyang considered China at that time was on the "primary stage of socialism"; but for Gorbachev, Soviet was on the "stage of restructuring". For Zhao, the debate was still between "socialism" and "capitalism"; for Gorbachev, it was "democracy" or "dictatorship". Gorbachev's reform was almost every thing practicable in Soviet Union; contrastively, Zhao's plan was mainly in empty talk. Gorbachev's campaign was to achieve democratic change by

undemocratic means; while Zhao's political reform adopted the moderate method to strengthen the Party's rule. Zhao Ziyang was used to symbolize as "China's Gorbachev", but his fate was more tragic. As Deng Xiaoping and the conservatives were virtually in charge of China's politics behind Zhao's named Party General Secretary, Zhao was facing the opposition from his mentors as well as his subordinates. When Gorbachev took power in the USSR, both his predecessors, Yuri Andropov and Konstantin Chernenko, had died, he could wield his power to implement the reform, and the only opposition came from local cadres. Last, from the Soviet experience, the genuine political reform could not be taken under a Leninist party-state, as Gorbachev's pluralism inevitably led to the collapse of Soviet empire. If Zhao Ziyang practiced his 1986 blueprint and did not encounter the Beijing Spring in 1989, China might have resembled in what had happened in the USSR in 1991.

After the June Fourth incident in 1989, most of the members in Zhao Ziyang's political reform group were purged, some of them were put in jail (Bao Tong); some of them fled abroad (Yan Jiaqi, Chen Yizi, and Wu Guoguang); some of them were demoted or transferred to another units (He Guanghui, Chen Fujin). Since then most of them were more outspoken rather than submissive, they had abandoned their political thoughts took shape during the formative stage of 1986 political reform, which was to seek a humanitarian socialism under one Party dictatorship. Even Zhao, who had already been under house detention, maybe fearing nothing and no longer occupying the premiership, or deeply disappointed by the CCP and waking up to reality, he had repudiated the neo-authoritarianism and embraced Western liberalism. Zhao no longer considered the enlightened CCP monopoly plus an open-minded Party leader is the only appropriate formula to current Chinese situation, in some extent, he had discarded everything he had acclaimed during this political reform period (1986–89).

Chapter Two
Social Change

A. Economic Administration

Apart from the radical political reform proposal, Zhao Ziyang's economic policy offering in the opening speech of the Thirteenth Congress, was also full of pragmatic ethos and in favor of capitalism. Zhao announced that market reforms would not only be continued but deepened, and he proceeded to move the economy in a Western direction, calling for substantially stepped-up use of the free-market mechanism and for rapid expansion of the collective and privately owned sectors of the economy. He even predicted that within two or three years only 30 percent of China's economy would be subject to central planning[1]. Under the slogan "the state regulates the market; the market guides the enterprise", Zhao urged the creation of private markets for "essential factors such as funds, labor services, technology, information, and real estate"[2]. In another break from Marxist tradition, he further indicated that "in the future, buyers of bonds will earn interest, and shareholders dividends; enterprise

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1 Xinhua News Agency; available from http://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2003-01/20/content_697061.htm; Internet; first accessed on December 12, 2006.

2 Ibid.

managers will receive additional income to compensate for bearing risks"[3]. The report further recommended the introduction of "new types of institutions for commodity circulation, foreign trade, and banking, as well as networks of autonomous agencies to provide technology, information, and service"[4]. In this context, Zhao Ziyang had "put his personal stamp on the reform program by proposing a far more prominent role for foreign capital in China's development than most Party leaders had hitherto been willing to contemplate"[5]. He attacked the two traditional shibboleths of state socialism: Central planning and state ownership. A dramatic reduction in the role of the plan in controlling the economy was proposed, giving the green light to the non-public sectors. "Together with the political reform, this economic plan was a slap in the face not only for the utopian Maoist development before 1978, but also for Chen Yun's 'Bird Cage' reform contention since the Twelfth Congress in 1982."[6]

State control over China's economy is not a new phenomenon introduced by Communism. For thousands of years, the Chinese state had played a major role managing and regulating the economy. "It controlled irrigation and water works, much of industry and commerce. China did not have a vigorous class of economic entrepreneurs independent of the government, as Europe did on the eve of its industrial revolution. The Communist system of state control over the economy reinforced this old pattern, and did not create it."[7]

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3 Xinhua News Agency; available from http://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2003-01/20/content_697061.htm; Internet; first accessed on December 12, 2006.

4 Ibid.

5 Meisner, *The Deng Xiaoping Era*, 392.

6 Joseph Fewsmith, *Dilemmas of Reform in China*: *Political Conflict and Economic Debate* (Armonk, N.Y. : M.E. Sharpe, 1994), 228.

7 Ibid.

China's economic reform is closely connected with changes of thought, which to a great extent determine the rate of progress of reform. Whether reform can progress depends primarily on the ideas of China's leaders and the economists who advise them. It also depends on whether cadres at all levels accept the new theories of reform and are convinced by the results, this is not always appreciated by Western economists. After the landslide victory at the Third Plenum in 1978, Deng Xiaoping gained the support of provincial leaders and Party veterans in the center, to repudiate Maoism and to implement his radical modernization, with the assistance of Chen Yun. Deng tended to rely on his intuitive style of "cross the river by feeling the stone".

It is a long time misunderstanding that Deng Xiaoping was the "primary architect of Chinese reform". In fact that many "Dengist" policy innovations — such as the production responsibility system, price reform, market regulation, and smashing the "iron rice bowl" — were first proposed by other members of Deng's reform coalition, including Chen Yun, Zhao Ziyang, Wan Li, and Hu Yaobang. And unlike Mao Zedong, who stubbornly followed Stalinist system in Soviet Union, Deng's program observed a lot from the examples of newly developed countries in East Asia. The first decade of the era of economic reform in China (1978–87) divided roughly in two parts, and it was characterized by the philosophical conflict between the reformers and the conservatives. The first phase (1978–83) was marked by dynamic growth in agriculture and rural small-scale industry. Deng successfully copied the unique experiences of what Zhao Ziyang had done in Sichuan and Wan Li in Anhui, when they were the Party secretaries there before 1978. At the same time, reform efforts faltered badly in the core urban industrial sector, during this period experiment in the intransigent urban economy was cushioned by growing surpluses of food and raw materials of agricultural origin. The second phase (1984–87) witnessed a heating up of the reform

effort in the urban economy. Led by General Secretary of the Party Hu Yaobang, China had boosted the resurrection of the private sector and the opening up to the world economy.

The economic reforms which began in China in 1978 have had a powerful impact. A decade of rural reform, by giving individual farmers the residual fruits of extra effort, more than doubled the growth rate in agriculture. Agriculture output per worker rose 250 percent, in part because 80 million underemployed peasants left the land for non-agricultural employment[8]. This massive transfer of labor led, in its turn, to explosive growth of rural industry. Foreign trade also mushroomed in these years, and per capita incomes rose rapidly, China's share of world trade rose from 0.8 percent in 1978 to 1.7 percent in 1987, and the ratio of its exports to GNP rose from just 5 percent in 1978 to 13 percent in 1987[9]. Before 1978 China had little participation in international economy, but only limited in trading with Hong Kong and its neighboring countries, after the reform China had a great increase of business interaction with United States and Western Europe. In 1987, China could look back on ten years in which its GNP growth record, more than 10 percent per year, far outstripped that of any other countries in the world[10]. In the late 1980s, Chinese life had turned into a different face than in 1978: "Cars, trucks, and buses now crowded thoroughfares once devoid of motor vehicles. Small shops that were shuttered during the Cultural Revolution had now reopened, some as restaurants, some as stores, some as barber shops, and some as billiard halls. Private vendors thronged on the street corners, free markets were full of fresh meat, fish, and they were crowded with shoppers. In the suburban areas,

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8 Harding, *China's Second Revolution*, 81.

9 Ibid., 82.

10 Ibid., 83.

construction materials for private housing lined the major roads, and many peasant homes now displayed television antennas."[11]

After the 1984 urban reform began, China's economic problems had arisen. Chinese development got bogged down in "high speed, high accumulation, but low results, and low consumption"[12]. After enjoying foreign trade surpluses through the early 1980s, China suffered a US$12.1 billion deficit in 1985 and a deficit of US$8.7 in 1986, resulting in a sharp decline in the foreign reserves painstakingly built up over several decades[13]. In 1985, China had been forced to engage in draconian remedial measures, including drastic contraction of imports, tighter controls on foreign exchange, and larger borrowings from foreign banks, and China's foreign debt grew rapidly in the late 1980s, totaling US$28 billion by 1986 and reaching at least US$35 billion in 1988[14]. The sudden swings in China's foreign economic behavior posed great hardships on China's trading partners and investors, who found their contracts canceled or postponed, and their ventures in China starved of necessary foreign exchange.

In internal atmosphere, although the peasants' enthusiasm for the rural reform starting from 1978 generally overwhelmed the opposition, by contrast, the urban economic reform, introduced in 1984, had no comparable appeal to the urban population. The boom-and-bust cycles (officially known as "overheating" and "retrenchment") after 1984 came quickly and sharply, bringing hardship and insecurity to the urban working population. Adding to the hardships were bursts of inflation, most of the population during this period suffered from the social disparity and the depressing

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11 Harding, *China's Second Revolution*, 83.

12 Ibid., 99.

13 Ibid., 101.

14 Ibid.

of living standard. Moreover, the CCP bureaucracies used the reform as a method to seek their personal privileges; the result was no plan — and no really free market either — but rather an out-of-control economy under the rule of a privileged group. "In 1978 the reform seemed quite realistic; in 1984 it seemed easily achievable and was full of euphoria; but in 1987, with agriculture stagnant, state-owned enterprises not yet healthy, and with a disgruntled citizenry facing a rigid government which has lost credibility, Chinese economy seemed to reach a dead end at this time"[15]. So during Zhao Ziyang's reign (1987–89), Chinese economy and society was like a potentially eruptive volcano, sooner or later, and it chose the moment of 1989 to explode.

After becoming the Premier of State Council in 1980, Zhao Ziyang was mainly in charged of China's economic administration, and he was a helpful assistant of Deng Xiaoping. Zhao was an ardent advocate of Deng's reform program, and when taking power in 1987, he really wanted to build his own characteristics distinguished with those of Deng. The difference between China economy under Zhao and its before was the high growth rates China had enjoyed in the first half of the reform decade were bound to decline, the Chinese economy was moving into a new stage of growth that presented unprecedented problems. Zhao's reign was the first time to try to turn China into a genuine market economy in the PRC history, and it was a transition, from which a wholesale plan economy to partly unbridled capitalism, partly communist central planning. It was a hybrid system of personal and economic freedom combined with rigid political controls. Unfortunately Zhao's program was still economic reform, not economic transformation. He attempted to transform a state managed economy into a competitive profit-oriented market-driven one, but the

15 Harding, *China's Second Revolution*, 107.

result was bureaucratic market muddle. And Zhao's blindness to the social consequences of his economic policies made him increasingly vulnerable to attacks from hardliners disillusioned with the outcomes of economic reform, which led to his affliction in 1989. China only revived Zhao's economic policy in 1992, in the form of Deng's highly publicized southern tour (nanxun), after Zhao had permanently fallen from grace. Zhao Ziyang's economic policies have many ways in concert with Deng's since he was appointed to be General Secretary in the Thirteenth Congress, but Zhao still has some distinctiveness, namely price reform, enterprises reform, and coastal development strategy.

B. Price Reform

For a long period before 1978, prices in China were wholly or partially frozen. In the mid–1980s, the state began to repudiate price adjustment through market simulation. Price of food, transport, housing and energy were all kept artificially low pre-1978, and economic reform was bound to produce pressure for some of these to rise, or the removal of state control over those prices. Price reform started from Hu Yaobang period (1981–87), but presided over by Premier of State Council Zhao Ziyang, whose main duty at that time was conducting the economic work. Moganshan Conference in September 1984 was the origin of political reform as well as price reform. The economists who attended the Conference argued that attempts to reform industrial enterprises would be unsuccessful under the existing price system, and the price reform was the key to reform of the entire economic structure, but overnight elimination of price control in a system would have produced chaos[16]. Accordingly, the decision was taken to introduce a "dual track" or "dual price system",

[16] Baum, *Burying Mao*, 231.

with part of the enterprise output sold at state fixed prices and part at either free-market or 'floating' prices (with the state determining the boundaries of the 'float'). The "dual price system" (more precisely, a three-tiered price system), which provided a quasi-legal sanction for strategically situated officials to buy goods and materials at low state prices and sell them at double or more the purchase price on the free market, was based on the Hungarian "market socialism" model: The prices of certain key industrial products (such as steel and oil) remained fixed by the state; prices of other industrial products were allowed to fluctuate within higher and lower government-determined price ranges; and the prices of most consumer goods and agricultural products were freed from all government controls and permitted to fluctuate according to the dictates of the market. Zhao Ziyang liked this approach, the dual track system suited his economic desire as well as his own political needs — the approach could minimize opposition from Chen Yun.[17]

The price reform started at the end of 1984 did produce the chaos. The official profiteering (guandao) was expanded enormously by the price reform. The government's sanction of coexisting state and market prices in effect legalized much of the black market, and it was the most common and the most lucrative method of bureaucratic enrichment. By the end of 1985, retail prices in the cities had risen rapidly; inflation was on the minds and lips of urban-dwellers even more than corruption. According to official statistics, from 1985 to 1987 the rate of inflation was 10–20 percent, but urban people felt it was much higher[18]. The budget deficit announced by the government was probably half the true figure, and the same ratio probably existed between the announced and true rate of inflation, which for some

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17 Baum, *Burying Mao*, 231.

18 Liu Binyan, *China's Crisis, China's Hope*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 13.

consumer goods doubled between 1985 and 1987. How to control inflation which had distorted and stunted the functioning of the national economy was becoming a central political issue.

It was assumed that Zhao Ziyang commanded the comprehensive price reform in the late 1986 after the initial step taken in 1984, but in fact Zhao had no final decision on national economy before the Thirteenth Congress in 1987, and it was Deng Xiaoping who behind the scene to push Zhao to adopt the radical approach. In early 1987, Zhao was cautious about the outcome of 1985, the inflationary spiral of 1984–85 had convinced him of the need to delay the price reform. On the other hand, Deng became courageous of taking risks; he believed that China could withstand the transitional shock and accelerate its development pace by going through the price deregulation. The price reform indeed had appeal to Deng's personality, who was getting impatient with the pace of reform since 1978 and increasingly aware of his mortality. "The price reform not only was a simple solution that appeared to be the answer to multiple problems, including corruption, economic reform, and social conflict over group interests, but also could build up Deng's prestige and authority, especially when he was getting older"[19]. Confronted with Deng's strong advocacy of price reform, Zhao had little choice but to endorse Deng's ideas, hoping to fold in his own ideas behind Deng's leadership.

On May 15, 1988, Chinese government removed price controls on certain basic foodstuffs, as part of its effort to wean the nation from an economy dominated by central planning in favor of one governed by free market forces. Prices shot up 60 percent overnight in the big cities, the gradual removal of such price controls had sparked unprecedented inflation in China. In the summer of 1988, the state

[19] Fewsmith, *Dilemmas of Reform in China*, 234.

statistical bureau reported that China's inflation rate had reached its highest level in nearly 40 years, and the retail prices were up 19 percent since 1987 — the largest increase since the CCP took power in 1949 (See the table on next page). Official method showed that 30 percent of urban residents had suffered a decline in living standards since the price reform began.[20]

Table 2.1. Chinese Inflation Rates, 1979–89

YEAR	INFLATION (percent)
1979	2.00
1980	6.00
1981	2.40
1982	1.90
1983	1.50
1984	2.80
1985	8.80
1986	6.00
1987	7.30
1988	18.50
1989	17.80

Source: Kenneth Lieberthal, *Governing China*: *From Revolution Through Reform* (New York : Norton, 1995), 271

By the days of 1988, the panic buying set in among residents of China's cities, who feared that the ice cube was about to evaporate altogether, the situation quickly spread to other cities and has been repeated off and on ever since. The Chinese were converting their

[20] Fewsmith, *Dilemmas of Reform in China*, 234.

cash into goods that would hold their prices, making these goods a form of savings. "The summer and fall of 1988 witnessed runs on banks all over China, people began lining up at the crack of dawn, forcing some banks to place limits on withdrawals. People who had never once lost faith in the CCP and its currency began to exchange their savings for American dollars on the black market at twice or three times the official rate. Many Chinese were in a state of shock: after forty years of Party rule, they were for the first time beginning to doubt its authority and ability to control the economy; their confidence was being eroded."[21]

In 1988, Chinese economy was out of control and the government was forced to adopt severe austerity measures to avert a disastrous crash, price reform was abandoned even before it had been officially instituted.

By the summer of 1988, Deng Xiaoping started to back away and shifted the blame for Zhao Ziyang. Deng was dissatisfied with Zhao and angered by complaints lodged by Party elders Wang Zhen and Bo Yibo during the price reform fiasco. At the Politburo Beidaihe meeting on August 15–17, 1988, even though it was Deng, not Zhao, who had insisted on the price reform, Zhao was blamed for the sharp increase in prices and became the scapegoat of Deng. During the meeting, Zhao was compelled to make a self-criticism for the overheating of the economy and the concentration of price reform. But the self-criticism was intentionally made as collective rather than individual, addressing a failure of the entire leadership and not only of Zhao himself. In the wake of price reform, the conservative leaders directly challenged Zhao's policy, and argued that the economic situation required its implementation be delayed; they recommended the reform be shifted to readjustment and called

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[21] Liu Binyan, *China's Crisis, China's Hope*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, 34.

for economic stabilization. The elders groomed their disciple Premier Li Peng to replace Zhao, for conducting the economic work. Li, who tried to recentralize control over the economy, to tighten the money supply, and to delay further reform in order to decrease the inflation. Li declared that the outstanding problem currently facing the country was high inflation, to combat the problem, the state council must imposed price controls on most basic raw materials and services, as well as on shipping, railway and air transportation.

In the wake of price reform, signs of popular dissatisfaction with the Deng Xiaoping regime were everywhere: Workers' strikes and slowdowns in factories; an alarming upsurge in crime; the appearance of youth gangs in both cities and countryside; the rapid spread of old social vices such as drug addiction, prostitution, gambling, and pornography; profiteering and corruptions by Party members and cadres were said to be rampant; growing student political activism, which spread from the campuses to city streets where illegal "big-character posters" began to appear. "The social unrest did not escape official notice. Mobile armed police forces were organized in anticipation of disorder and police officials were dispatched abroad to learn the latest anti-riot techniques"[22]. In political perspective, Zhao Ziyang's descent and Li Peng's rise were assured; the conservative group was overwhelming the reformers wing. In later half of 1988, Zhao tried to counterattack Li's position, but he did not succeed. Zhao had lost both Deng's confidence and the momentum to continue his reform experiment even before the Beijing Spring in 1989, it indirectly fused the result of June Fourth Tiananmen massacre one year after.

China in 1988 was in a state of flux. With a 10 percent economic growth rate and 19 percent inflation, China was experiencing the

[22] Baum, *Burying Mao*, 247.

growing pains of a developing nation. "In those unsettling times, economic euphoria, ideological confusion, falling morality, and widespread corruption formed a vortex of paradoxes, from which a new order was struggling to emerge."[23]

C. Enterprise Reform

Zhao Ziyang's market-oriented policies also included "enterprise reform", a mostly abortive effort to remove government control over the finances and management of state-owned factories. Contrasting industry in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the five important elements contributed to Chinese state-owned enterprises (SOEs) uniqueness: 1) loose and easily overfulfilled production plans that offer only limited guidance to enterprises; 2) the availability of allocated items outside the allocation system; 3) the existence of multiple prices for the same product and customer in a single region; 4) multiple-level supervision of enterprises; 5) the nature of the nomenclature control over the appointment of directors and communist Party secretaries within enterprises[24]. Besides, Chinese SOEs provided its workers all kinds of health care and social benefits, from generation to generation, from cradle to grave. But every year since 1985, China's revenues-taxes and earnings from SOEs have fallen; the financial crisis in the SOEs meant that they could no longer carry the economic burden of providing the previous levels of social welfare for their workers. The SOEs was a great burden for China, the problem was compounded by the fact that many SOEs have become net destroyers of assets, with what they consume being of far greater value than what they produce. The dilemma for

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23 Hsu, *China without Mao*, 242–43.

24 Lynn T. White, *Unstately Power* (Armonk, N.Y. : M.E. Sharpe, 1998), 11.

the government was that they still provided significant subsides for all levels of SOEs, and the privatization of SOEs was deemed as impossible; it would only result in not only mass unemployment, but also social chaos.

Since 1982, the Party leaders have seen the next item on the reform agenda as establishing market discipline for the SOEs, in order to raise their efficiency which was now abysmally low. This was important because the roughly 80,000 SOEs are the dominating force in industry, raw materials production, energy, transport, and other key sectors. Chinese economists believed that two reforms were necessary to rectify this situation[25]. First, SOEs must be freed from their bureaucratic owners and turned into independent economic entities which had decision-making power over their own operations, it was to end the policy that all SOEs profits went to the government, and that higher levels of the government made all decisions for the SOEs. Second, it was necessary to de-control the prices of major industrial raw materials (like steel and coal), transport, electric power, industrial crops, and grain. The new policy allowed factories to retain a certain portion of their profits. When profits exceeded targets, the extra profits could be kept at the enterprises and used for reinvestment and depreciation, wage bonuses, and welfare. Likewise, if actual profits were lower than targets, wages could be diminished. This change in management began to give the SOEs some autonomy. Starting in 1984, when the rural reform completed, the reform of SOEs took initiative. One of the core measures in the 1984 reform program was the "li gai shui" (tax-for-profit) reform. Endorsed by Zhao Ziyang in September, he called this measure "a prerequisite for accelerating urban economic reform, as well as to free enterprises completely

[25] Lynn T. White, *Unstately Power* (Armonk, N.Y. : M.E. Sharpe, 1998), 13.

from administrative interference"[26]. As the tax collection would regulate the relations of distribution between the state and SOEs, and would create conditions for SOEs to operate independently and assume sole responsibility for their profits and losses, the administrative relationship that had previously bound SOEs and ministries together would be replaced by a simple economic relationship. In this way, the SOEs — the economic cells of Chinese economy — would be invigorated. After 1986, Zhao decided to launch a comprehensive operation for the dieing SOEs, he mainly adopted the four restructurings:

Ownership: In the traditional concept of socialism only two forms of public ownership were recognized: ownership by the whole people, and collective ownership (cooperative enterprises in which working people pool resources and labor)[27]. In the past the SOEs were virtually regarded as owned by the "people" and were directly administrated by the state. After reform started they increasingly became independent self-administrated enterprises, responsible for their own profit and loss, and grew considerably. This is undoubtedly a form of public ownership, but no one quite knows how exactly its property rights should be defined. The Thirteenth Party Congress in 1987 approved the resolution that China was in the primary stage of socialism. In this stage, although public ownership was the basis, the auxiliary role of the private sector was not rejected, which implied the adoption of a system in which different forms of ownership coexisted. Therefore, a system of shareholding was introduced.

At first it leased relatively small SOEs to individuals or groups of workers for terms of three to six years. For larger SOEs, reformers had proposed a second ownership reform scheme known as "gufenhua"

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[26] Fewsmith, *Dilemmas of Reform in China*, 232.

[27] Ibid., 233.

(stockification). Under this proposal, ownership in these SOEs would be vested in shares of stock, which would then be assigned or sold to various government agencies, public organizations, workers, and individual citizens, who would then elected a board of directors to appoint and supervise the enterprise manager.[28]

Labor System: In SOEs under the old system, staff and workers were employed and allocated to enterprises by the state. They then had 'iron rice bowls' with complete security of employment, and the state or the enterprise decided any subsequent move. They had no choice of trade, nor could enterprises really choose their own staff and workers. This labor system was very detrimental to the motive of both the enterprises and the workers. This has now been replaced by the contract system, in which newly employed staff and workers entered into contracts with the SOEs. In this way both sides were given a choice and a labor market has been created which encouraged the national mobility of labor. The labor system has improved but many problems remained, especially those relating to all kinds of social benefits of staff and workers inherited from Mao era.

Bankruptcy Law: The ultimate form of financial discipline on the SOEs would be bankruptcy for those that run chronic losses. The appropriateness of bankruptcy for a socialism economy was debated intensely in academic circles and in the press throughout 1985 and 1986. Draft bankruptcy regulations were implemented on a trial basis in a few cities, and when a national bankruptcy law was presented to the NPC in 1986, it enaceed stiff opposition, some delegates argued that the institution of bankruptcy proceedings against egalitarian socialist doctrine. After tabling the issue for several months, a provisional Enterprise Bankruptcy Law was put into operation in December 1986 and took full effect in November

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[28] Fewsmith, *Dilemmas of Reform in China*, 233.

1988, but it remained uncertain how rapidly, or how stringently, it would be enforced[29]. Despite the passage of such Bankruptcy Law, there appeared virtually no chance of any large SOEs being declared bankruptcy in the late 1980s; what has changed was the SOEs could retain part of their profits, but loss was still borne by the state, and indeed, around 15 percent of the SOEs continued to make losses but carried on business through state subsidies[30]. This Law was not a very strong restraint, and the SOEs were not generally worried by the threat of bankruptcy.

The problem of bankruptcy illustrated perfectly the interconnectedness of economic reform in China. Both bankruptcy and price reform were among the most sensitive issues on the Chinese political agenda. They represented a conundrum for Zhao Ziyang and other Chinese reformers: failure to adopt them might condemn other reforms to failure; but attempts to implement them might seriously reduce the political support for the reform program.[31]

Factory Director Responsibility System: It was the core reform of the SOEs, and was also the part of discussion in Zhao Ziyang's political reform group from 1987 to 1989. The Chinese SOEs directors (or managers) not only had constraints from the external environment in terms of decisions on key factors such as sourcing of inputs, sales of products, mandated staffing and wage levels, but had authority problems within the enterprise itself vis-à-vis the Party committee. The Factory Director Responsibility System (FDRS) dictated directors, not Party secretaries, were declared to be the "centre" of the enterprises; the director of an enterprise had sole authority and responsibility for production planning. This approach

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29 Ethridge, *China's Unfinished Revolution*, 76.

30 Ibid., 77.

31 Ibid.

reduced interference in management by the Party and government, it also improved decision making. FDRS was an attempt to make a clear demarcation between the Party and the day-to-day administration of enterprises and emphasized the need for the director to be able to act on certain matters without always first asking for the approval of the Party secretary. Since the late 1950s, the absolute authority in China's SOEs has been held by the Party secretaries, which meant that economic management was a function of the hierarchical Party structure. As early as 1978, Deng Xiaoping had proposed abolishing Party committees in industrial enterprises. In 1980, Deng had talked about this problem in his speech on reform of the Party and state leadership system, calling for factory directors to be given primary responsibility for production decisions. In 1983, FDRS was experimented in Shenzhen — the Shekou Industrial Zone was the vanguard of this structural reform, and the experiment was known as the "Shekou formula"[32]. Two key elements of the system were a novel recruitment system for factory directors and an extension of powers wielded by directors. FDRS was put into further effect in six cities in the fall of 1984 and was rapidly instituted in numerous other cities. The 1988 NPC passed the long-awaited Enterprise Law ("Law of the PRC on Industrial Enterprises Owned by the Whole People"); the law affirmed that the factory director should occupy the central position in the enterprise and assume overall responsibility for its material and cultural progress. Nevertheless, the director was still appointed by competent authorities in charge of the enterprise — that was by the government ministry or department which exercised administrative control.

Under FDRS, the factory directors would not only determine production schedules, wages, and prices in accordance with changing

[32] Harding, *China's Second Revolution*, 76.

market conditions, but also decide how the profits of the enterprise would be utilized. Further and most socially significant, directors would have the power to hire and fire workers in accordance with market conditions and the criterion of economic efficiency, that was, ending the system of lifetime job security for regular state employees — would discipline a lackadaisical work force and increase labor productivity. But the key issue was to whom would the director be responsible? Chinese regulations were ambiguous. Ultimately, the question of the responsibility of a factory director boiled down to the question of who actually owned productive assets. On such a question, it was difficult to avoid fundamental ideological questions. In China the capital initially came from the government. "Should the director be responsible to the government? If so, what incentives would there be for directors and workers? Alternatively, if the factory became autonomous or responsible to the workers, there effectively would have been a transfer of public assets to individuals; this has to raise many thorny problems."[33]

The SOEs reform under Zhao Ziyang era (1987–89) was an abortive reform. "SOEs died as soon as they were controlled, there was chaos as soon as they were released, as soon as there was chaos they were controlled again, and as soon as they were controlled they died again"[34]. The SOEs reform produced not intensive growth (increased efficiency in already existing factories) but extensive growth (rapid expansion of industrial capacity). Because the Chinese government continued to be responsible for bailing out losing firms, industrial waste and inefficiency translated into persistent budget deficits, rapid extensive growth produced supply and energy shortages and inflation rates of more than 15 percent for several years after 1985.

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33 Ethridge, *China's Unfinished Revolution*, 82.

34 Ibid.

D. Coastal Development Strategy

Coastal Development Strategy (CDS) originated from the adoption of "open door" policy in December 1978. From that point, Deng Xiaoping listened the suggestion from the coastal region officials, to move the country in the direction of greater opening and more international contact, as evidenced by the creation of Four Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in 1979[35]. In early 1985, Premier Zhao Ziyang announced the more opening of the Yangtze Delta, the Pearl River Delta, and the Southern Fujian Triangle, as well as the designation of Hainan Island as the fifth zone, with two additional regions in North China, the Jiaodong peninsula in Shandong province and the Liaodong peninsula in Manchuria[36]. Under the lobbying of Deng and Zhao, the Party elders were quick to dismiss the treaty port or foreign concession analogy in Qing dynasty; they understood that China would retain full sovereignty and political control over the zones. SEZs were not a Chinese invention. When China's reformers began to promote the idea in 1979, there were nearly a hundred such zones operation in various Asian countries, and the most successful located in Taiwan and South Korea. The PRC government offered SEZs to foreign investors for building plants, provided a well-trained, obedient labor force at low wages, and the modern amenities of life that temporary foreign residents desired, as well as preferential tax rates and other financial incentives, including the development of

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35 The original four zones were Shenzhen, located near Hong Kong, the largest and most important of the four; Zhuhai, a tiny enclave established near Portuguese colony of Macao; Shantou, the old treaty port city in northern Guangdong province; and Xiamen, the former treaty port located in Fujian province across the straits from Taiwan.

36 George T. Crane, *The Political Economy of China's Special Economic Zones* (Armonk, N.Y. : M.E. Sharpe Inc, 1990), 35.

transportation networks in the zones. It was usually stipulated that goods produced in the zones would be exported so as not to compete with domestic industries. "SEZs were designated as attracting foreign capital, assisting in introducing advanced technology, creating new jobs, and serving as "schools" for learning the principles of the marketplace that could be later applied to the structural reform of the whole country."[37]

CDS was designed by a handful of economists; most of them were research fellows at the State Planning Commission. They argued to Zhao Ziyang in late 1987 that an export-oriented strategy would enable China to solve two main problems: a shortage of raw materials and a surplus of rural labor[38]. They also argued that an export-oriented strategy could help China surmount two main obstacles: enterprise reform and price reform[39]. After the Thirteenth Congress, Zhao made two inspection trips to the coastal areas of Shanghai, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Fujian provinces in November 1987 and January 1988, and he was thoroughly convinced of the feasibility of CDS. His optimistic report on "The Strategic Problems of Coastal Economic Development" won the full support of Deng Xiaoping. Deng endorsed the plan on January 23, 1988, and on February 6, 1988, the Politburo formally approved the plan.

"Coastal Development Strategy was to encourage growth along the coast represented a fundamental change from the policies of the late Chinese leader Mao Zedong, who had advocated greater development of the interior regions of the country, and it also illustrated Zhao Ziyang's openness to proposals from young, liberal

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37 George T. Crane, *The Political Economy of China's Special Economic Zones* (Armonk, N.Y. : M.E. Sharpe Inc, 1990), 60.

38 Harding, *China's Second Revolution*, 78.

39 Ibid.

reformers, his willingness to champion practical new ideas regardless of how far they might diverge from those of some of the older Party leaders"[40]. CDS departed in several ways from SEZs put into effect in 1979. First, instead of concentrating foreign investment and trade in certain areas, the new policy opened up to foreign investment the entire coastal region from Liaoning to Guangdong. Second, under the new policy both capital and management were expected to come mainly from overseas investors rather than through joint ventures. Third, the strategy was to export China's cheap excess labor power. The old policy in 1979 emphasized that foreign investors should supply China with advanced modern technology, whereas the new policy in 1988 stressed labor-intensive industries like clothing, handicrafts, and light industrial products. The new policy was one of "export-led growth" or "export-oriented industrialization". It was explicitly modeled on the experiences of Taiwan and the other Asian "small dragons". "Zhao Ziyang's plan was to develop a fifth 'dragon' along China's coast — one much larger than all the rest — to integrate into the world market."[41]

By the end of 1988, considerable achievements were claimed for CDS. For the first eight months of the year exports from six of the coastal provinces were reported to have increased 21 percent over the same period of 1987, to a sum of US$11.77 billion, representing 44 percent of China's total exports[42]. But the problems of this strategy remained. First, the conservatives considered the strategy was not only economically suspect, but also politically dangerous; it would either boost the reformers' position in the Party, or pull the country out of socialism. Zhao Ziyang's major Party rival Li Peng, who always

40 Crane, *The Political Economy*, 62.

41 Meisner, *The Deng Xiaoping Era*, 397.

42 Ibid., 398.

disregarded Zhao's policy, called for attention to the development of inland as well as coastal areas. Second, CDS also made China heavily dependent on the international economy, subjected her to the fluctuating foreign markets, and forced China to forfeit control of her economic fate, and it contributed to the growth of China's trade deficit, which swelled to US$4 billion in 1988 and $4.5 billion in 1989, even while exports were increasing[43]. Third, CDS weakened central government control over the coastal provinces, especially in the South, and augmented the amount of capital in the hands of local officials. It greatly enlarged the degree of financial autonomy enjoyed by local governments, individual enterprises, and local branches of banks. The loosening of central government controls over budgets, investment decisions, and economic operations in general provided local officials with far greater sums of capital and greater leeway to use it. Therefore, "CDS encouraged official profiteering and created vast bureaucratic corruption that was to engulf Zhao regime in the closing years of the decade"[44]. Last, CDS did create the consequence of accelerating the economic inequalities between the coastal areas and the interior. The strategy concerned more about rapid economic growth and sought suitable locations for economic activities in coastal provinces in the east and south, rather than addressing issues of income or welfare differences across the country. As early as 1984, Zhao termed the coastal regions a pivot in developing the whole country and declared that other interior provinces would have to wait till the uncertain future. Under CDS, the central government allocated a huge amount of capital investment in coastal regions at the cost of the interior regions. Besides limited resources and other economic factors, there were political compulsions, such as local

43 Meisner, The Deng Xiaoping Era, 398.

44 Ibid.

nationalism and extreme separatism, which did not allow the CCP to encourage the inland to initiate speedy development as their aceparts had done in the east. The significant characteristic of the inland was about 70 percent of China's minority populations were living here; therefore, the uneven development during this period mostly affected minority-populated areas, which in 1988 constituted 74.5 percent of the poorest counties of China[45]. In 1984 the interior provinces received 49 percent of state investment, only 2 percent less than the coastal provinces, but by 1989 the gap had been widened, with coastal provinces getting 59 percent and the interior 41 percent[46]. Zhao Ziyang was responsible for the enlarging gap between the coastal and interior regions under his Coastal Development Strategy.

E. Agriculture and Peasants

In a country like China, where consists of 80 percent peasants of its total population, the agriculture is by no means of trivial. But since 1949, Chairman Mao Zedong adopted the industry-biased method and imposed the heavy state exploitation to the farmers, and up to 1976, Chinese agricultural institution and its infrastructures were in the state of chaos. Chinese peasants only sustained their life in subsistence level as many centuries ago, "in 1977, the per capita grain in the nation was even slightly less than it was in 1957, and there are more than 100 million rural dwellers that do not have enough to eat"[47]. The rural China in the late 1970s was far away from the socialist paradise envisioned by Mao.

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45 Meisner, The Deng Xiaoping Era, 340.

46 Ibid.

47 Dali L. Yang, *Calamity and Reform in China*: *State; Rural Society, and Institutional Change since the Great Leap Famine* (Stanford : Stanford University Press, 1996), 147.

When Deng Xiaoping took power in 1978, his first initiative of the Chinese reform was from the countryside, he fully understood "the grain as the key link", and the importance of keeping 80 percent population in firm control. During the Third Plenum in December 1978, the CCP issued the milestone of "New Sixty Articles" (New Rural Policy), changing the agricultural production way from mandatory grain quotas to procurement contract system, from collective communes to private household responsibility system. Under the policy of "Household Responsibility System" (HRS), the collective assigned plots of land to individual peasant families — not to own, but to farm. The family then had to provide its share of the agricultural tax due to the government, the agricultural products purchased by the state under the system of mandatory production quotas, and fees owed to the collective. Whatever the households produced above these quotas could be disposed of as they wished: they could consume it, sell it to the state at a premium procurement price, or sell it to other peasants and urban dwellers at market prices. China's rural policy since 1978 represented a dramatic reversal of Maoist priorities, the new system was expected to restore lost motive in work, to correct excessive egalitarianism and to increase outputs. Afterwards, grain output was no longer the sole objective of rural production, diversification was encouraged, and the private small rural businesses mushroomed, they served the foundation of upcoming township enterprises.

It was not surprised to see, when Zhao Ziyang and Wan Li both were promoted to Politburo in the late 1970s, because of their successful local experiences in agricultural practices. In April 1980, Premier Zhao suggested that the State Agricultural Commission organize people to undertake rural investigations. Therefore, ten groups of scholars and practitioners went to the countryside, including researchers from the Rural Policy Research Office of the Central Committee Secretariat (Du Runsheng and Wu Xiang),

the Institute of Agricultural Economics of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and the Rural Development Research Group (Zhan Wu, Wang Guichen, Wei Daonan, Chen Yizi, and Wang Xiaoqiang). Most of the researchers had been sent to do manual labor in the countryside during the Cultural Revolution and had come to sympathize with the peasants' plight. The researchers wrote a shocking report about Chinese rural backwardness, it was highly praised by Zhao, but attacked by Party conservatives as a "third road force aiming to seize the Party's leadership"[48]. Those researchers were later incorporated into Zhao's think tank for the future political as well as economic reform.

Under Zhao Ziyang's reign, there was the Seventh Five-Year Plan (1986–90), including an agricultural project known as the "Spark Plan". A million farmers were being given intensive training, urban scientists and technicians were working in the countryside on pilot projects, and hundreds of universities and research institutes had established special units and projects devoted to solving specific problems. In reality there was little progress in Chinese agriculture after urban reform launching in 1984. Grain output did not sustain high growth after 1984, even though the population continued to grow; rural irrigation works deteriorated as the state's ability to mobilize collective labor declined. The first signs of trouble appeared in 1985, grain output fell precipitously to 394 million tons from 407 million in 1984, the largest annual decline since the crisis years of the Great Leap Forward[49]. In 1988 the grain harvest again declined, to 379 million tons, the fourth consecutive year of harvests considerably below expectations and needs, since then, China

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48 Merle Goldman, and Roderick Macfarquhar, ed. *The Paradox of China's Post-Mao Reforms* (Cambridge MA : Harvard University Press, 1995), 147.

49 Ethridge, *China's Unfinished Revolution*, 102.

briefly became a net importer of grain in international market[50]. The immediate cause of the decline in grain production in the mid-1980s was the marketization of the rural economy. Agricultural investment from all sources lagged, because industrial profits and taxes became the primary source of local prosperity, the CCP officials tended to emphasize industry and neglect agriculture (zhonggong qingnong).

The thesis here argues that the Township and Village Enterprises (TVEs) were rather a strategy given by the CCP to solve the farmers' problems[51]. TVEs were originated from Hu Yaobang era, and promoted by Zhao Ziyang since 1984; they were the largest and most economically significant dominance in the Chinese countryside for the most of the 1980s. The establishment of TVEs has long been identified both nationally and in the villages as the most important income-generating rural activity, and the largest portion of nonagricultural earnings of Chinese farmers in 1980s mainly came from TVEs[52]. Government leaders continued to emphasize the TVEs as the "pillar of the rural economy or the "key to rural prosperity"[53]. Farmers in subsistence or semisubsistence agriculture, the income from TVEs may have a positive effect in stimulating or maintaining agricultural production. In addition, TVEs may have also contributed to agriculture by providing technical services and improved

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50 Ethridge, *China's Unfinished Revolution*, 102.

51 The TVEs refer to industrial enterprises where the means of production and the products are owned by workers in TVEs, whereas the SOEs refer to industrial enterprises where the means of production and the products are owned by all the people. The SOEs are enterprises in which the legal ownership of tax profits resides in the hands of some level of the government, whereas TVEs are those in which this residual ownership right resides with the enterprise itself.

52 Merle Goldman, and Roderick Macfarquhar, ed. *The Paradox*, 211.

53 Elisabeth J. Croll, *From Heaven to Earth*: *images and experiences of development in China* (New York : Routledge, 1994), 217.

infrastructure in the community, and by absorbing labors, they typically employ workers with some education in the village, leaving farms to the elderly and women.

The consequence of TVEs was shocking. In the late 1980s the government estimated that 20 million peasants had already leaved the land each year, because of the lure of the larger incomes boasted by peasants now working in TVEs[54]. Such profit-oriented and industry-biased rural policy was heavily criticized by the Party conservatives. The dean of veteran Chinese economists Chen Yun, said after the disappointing grain crop of mid-1980s, that the state would lead to social disorder. And in 1988 when then Acting Premier Li Peng addressed the Seventh National People's Congress he put the growth of grain production at the top of his list of objectives.[55]

In the post–Mao era two periods of regime receptiveness to farmer interests can be distinguished. Responsiveness was high during the initial stage of reform (1978–83), when the regime allocated HRS to the agricultural sector and dismantled the commune system. During the second period (1984–89), particularly under Zhao Ziyang era, regime responsiveness to agrarian interests was low. Deng Xiaoping's program of HRS in late 1970s and Zhao's TVEs in mid–1980s indeed had transformed Chinese rural economy from a self-sufficient one to a commodity economy, and the business of engaging in specialized jobs and in a multiplicity of occupations besides farming and socialized production has developed in varying degrees. At the core of China's "economic miracle" is a massive upsurge of rural industrialization. The decade of 1980s saw the economy take off in vast areas of the Chinese countryside. By 1989 rural industry surpassed agriculture as the dominant source of total

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54 Ethridge, *China's Unfinished Revolution*, 57.

55 Fewsmith, *Dilemmas of Reform in China*, 338.

rural income. Total output generated by rural enterprises rose almost ninefold from 1980 to 1989, as output of rural enterprises grew more than 26 percent annually from 1978 to 1989[56]. These industries have yielded close to one-quarter of China's total exports. Between 1978 and 1989, the percentage of the rural labor force engaged in village and township enterprises more than doubled, and the 57 million new jobs created from 1978 to 1989 alone equaled the total number of workers hired in all SOEs between 1952 to 1989[57]. Even by no means of substantial grow, the proportion of rural households with an annual per capita income below 200 yuan was 33 percent in 1978 and 8.2 percent in 1987, while those with 500 yuan or over went from 0.6 percent in 1979 to 28.6 in 1989.[58]

Despite the initial success, it was discovered that the way to prosper in the post-Mao countryside was not to till the soil but to exploit the labor and the products of the labor. Due to Zhao Ziyang's industry-biased policy in the late 1980s, the disastrous result was immediate grain shortage. There was a real possibility that in 1988–89, for the first time since the famine of the GLF, a large part of the population — forty million people would suffer severe hunger, even disaster was averted later, but the country would continue to live on the edge. In 1989, China has become the world's largest wheat importer ever since, at sixteen million tons surpassing the Soviet Union's fourteen million[59]. Besides, Zhao's agricultural system was the final decline since Deng's HRS program and the experimental rural reform in the late 1970s. The income gap between town and countryside, which had been significantly narrowed during the

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56 Fewsmith, *Dilemmas of Reform in China*, 338.

57 Ibid., 339.

58 Yang, *Calamity and Reform in China*, 287.

59 Ibid.

early years of the Deng regime, was now greater than it was at the beginning of the reform era. And the growing deterioration of the rural infrastructure, continuing environmental pollution and the shrinkage of arable lands in 1980s, they all culminated in Zhao's reign.

Having based on the 1989 National Population Census, the rural labor force was extremely large: 480 million in total and most of them were redundant[60]. Because of the diminished arable lands, the implementation of HRS, the wide-spread TVEs, and the "one child" policy had little restraint in rural China, where produced two many new-born kids per year, especially the male. The byproduct of the late 1980s rural policy was a massive human flow in countryside to urban China. In 1989 alone, reports spoke of enormous numbers, variously estimated at between 30 and 80 million, of rural labors flooding into various Chinese cities in search of work[61]. Unlike cash cropping jobs, such work in the cities do not require any special skills. The floating population comes mainly from provinces such as Sichuan, Henan, Hubei, Shandong, Shaanxi, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Anhui, and their main destinations included Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangdong, where high-wage jobs could be found. It is predicted that more than 300 million rural residents no longer needed on the land would leave farming in China by the end of twentieth century[62]. They crowd into already packed railroad cars, sleep at railway stations, and camp on the streets; enormous strains are put on the transportation system and the host cities.

As Chinese farmers increasingly penetrate into the cities, the mutual grievance is developed between rural floating population and

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60 Colin Cater, *China's Ongoing Agricultural Reform* (San Francisco : San Francisco Institute, 1996), 153.

61 Yang, *Calamity and Reform in China*, 326.

62 Ethridge, *China's Unfinished Revolution*, 281.

urban dwellers. In 1989 survey of Chinese urban residents, 91 percent of respondents were anxious about floaters' influence on transport, 81 percent about security of property, public order, 77 percent about transients' impact on the environment, 50 percent concerned the welfare benefits, 36 percent were apprehensive about outsiders' effect upon employment. They worried about the basic dimensions of an exclusive urban existence, affect by outsiders[63]. At the end of the 1980s, China shared with much of the world one particularly critical issue: how to handle the question of the citizenship of massive numbers of migrants pushing into its major cities[64]. The floating population is supposed to be confronting the state; they invade the limited perquisites set by the government, which are only available to city members. Moreover, if the poor life of "lumpenproletarians" in cities remains unchanged, the floating population will definitely threaten and rebel against the CCP rule.

It is the supreme irony of Chinese political reform that the more reforms were introduced to rationalize and streamline, the faster the bureaucracy expanded, and rural China is not exceptional, it is perhaps more bureaucratized than at any time since 1949. The township bureaucracy continued to expand at around 7 percent a year, by the beginning of 1989, China had 69, 842 townships, led by 350,000 township Party secretaries and township heads[65]. They were in turn in charge of 845,025 village councils, led by 2,530,000 village Party branch secretaries and council chairman[66]. Chinese rural bureaucratic expansion is best illustrated by the formation and

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63 Dorothy J. Solinger, *Citizenship in Urban China*: *peasant migrants, the state, and the logic of the market* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 1999), 205.

64 Ibid.

65 Ethridge, *China's Unfinished Revolution*, 287.

66 Ibid.

development of TVEs. The survival of TVEs mainly depends on local cadres, such as red seals and official stamps, and the more growth of TVEs, the stronger power of local cadres. The power of local cadres and rural economy become the most harmonious political marriage in modern China, and between the politics and agriculture, it turns out to be the most oppressive employer-employee relationship. Chinese rural officials are businessmen as well as government administrators; it is characterized as Chinese local-state corporatism. It is not exaggeration to say, the administrative reform of rural China in the late 1980s, in a process that bears striking resemblance to what occurred in the late Republican China (1911–49), cadre-peasant relations have severely deteriorated, and the legitimacy of the party-state among the peasant population has had declined.

Table 2.2. Expansion of Township Bureaucracy, 1986–1989

	Township Management			
Year	Rural Labor Force (10,000)	Number of Management/ Labor Employees (10,000)	Growth (percent)	Rate Ratio (per 1,000)
1986	37,989.8	103.4	27.8	2.7
1987	39,000.4	119.6	15.7	3.1
1988	40,066.7	128.6	7.5	3.2
1989	40,938.8	137.3	6.8	3.4

Source: Dali L. Yang, *Calamity and Reform in China*: *State; Rural Society, and Institutional Change since the Great Leap Famine* (Stanford : Stanford University Press, 1996), 287

In an attempt to deal with abovementioned problems, in the countryside there has been the extensive program to introduce direct elections in the villages. The effectiveness of such village elections is really contested. The NPC in November 1987 adopted an Organic Law, which sets up incentives both for responsiveness to the villagers' desires and for disciplined implementation of tasks handed down from the townships. The law sought to generate peasants' enthusiasm and curb local despotism via real elections at the village level while simultaneously making village cadres responsible for implementing tasks, such as tax collection and implementation of the birth control program, assigned from above. The Organic Law established villagers' committees which are composed of three to seven members, each of whom serves for three years. Committee members are chosen in popular elections, in which all registered villagers have the right to vote and stand for office. Under the law, elected cadres have prescribed powers and limited but real autonomy from township officials directly above them.

These reforms have received much attention outside China. The Carter Center, the International Republican Institute, and various embassies have sent observers to monitor village elections. At the same time, the Ford Foundation, the United Nations Development Program, and the Asia Foundation have worked with Chinese authorities to standardize election procedures and to train local election officials[67]. On the contrary, the local cadres and the Party conservatives feared the village elections, as the elections might endanger the Party authority and spread the "bourgeois liberalization". Even sometimes the village elections were controlled by the cadres and the "black hands" in Beijing, but they still produced some genuine seeds of democracy. It showed

[67] Yang, *Calamity and Reform in China*, 287.

that in many places ordinary villagers have played an unusually active part in implementing the laws with great enthusiasm, the local elections have become avenues of protest when peasants disliked the incumbents and yet voted out the unpopular choices. In early 1989, in elections held in a number of villages in Jingmen municipality of Hubei, the elected were the dumb, the blind, and the mentally ill. The villagers simply refused to elect those who had been village cadres[68]. In Sichuan and southern China, there were cases where villagers deliberately chose illiterate cadres so that a "secretary" had to be provided to read documents[69]. Such cadres were said to be both obedient to superiors and less capricious toward fellow villagers. China's peasants, like other social strata such as the intelligentsia, appeared to have become more assertive in pursuing their interests in the late 1980s; village cadres had clearly perceived the more independent and even rebellious mood of peasants.

Nevertheless, the Organic Law may be a pathway to democracy, but not democracy itself. It was later confirmed that the CCP used the elections as the best way to improve relations between cadres and villagers, rather than triggering grass-root competitions. The village elections were designed to serve as an advertisement or embellishment of China's sluggish political reform for the outside world. So that if the local or grass-root elections are fully promoted in China, one can imagine that the urban dwellers may invoke the ballots to change the nature of institution. On the other hand, the rural villagers merely use this right to improve their living standards and protect their personal interests. Comparing both, the CCP may realize that the village elections cost less political price than those in the cities. It is not surprised to see that the local elections in cities

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68 Ethridge, *China's Unfinished Revolution*, 293.

69 Yang, *Calamity and Reform in China*, 297.

were short-lived and ended before 1989; but the village ones, which engendered from Zhao Ziyang era, have lasted after Tiananmen incident, and continued to flourish in 1990s.

Chinese farmers traditionally seldom intervened in political affairs, with no communication with the government, and had been continually manipulated by the CCP since 1949. Unlike women, young people, and overseas Chinese, farmers do not have their own national mass organization in modern China, to assert their voice in policymaking, and they can be constantly bullied by local cadres. If the village elections did not work and the conflict continued, to which the villagers could not pick up the people in place of the candidates imposed by the state, therefore, making appeals to upper levels of government (shangfang) was widely adopted since the late 1980s. The logic of peasant rebellions in imperial China may be reminisced in the CCP leaders' mind; the resentful peasant group in contemporary China will probably become the potential to overthrow the communist government, and the collapse of Yuan and Ming Dynasties had been fully proved.

F. Workers

Almost all of the Chinese workers under Mao Zedong era were SOEs workers, they had far less mobility freedom than Russian and East European did, and they were enslaved by "work unit" through lifelong time. But under the Mao era did provided them with "iron rice bowl" (lifetime job security), complete social welfare, and medical benefits. After 1978, Chinese workers no longer enjoyed the reputation as "the leading hero of proletariat" shared under Mao era, and began to feel the class discrimination raised by the market society. The workers found that under Deng Xiaoping's rule, they had lacked not only the political right, but also job security which was assured before. There was very little acceptance among workers

of Deng's idea that it was all right if 'a few people get rich first'; they saw this simply as unfair distribution. The Chinese workers still can not quit or shift their positions in work units, and the Chinese government has no genuine intention to smash the "iron rice bowl", but rather to allow it die naturally. In some extent, even Chinese peasants could have their life improved after 1978, because of the implementation of HRS; on the other hand, Chinese workers benefited little from Deng's program.

The industrial output in reform era increased in China mainly as a result of the increase of capital assets, rather than an improvement in productivity on technology, even in Zhao Ziyang era, China was still a labor-intensive economy. In the early 1980s, China had total of 38 million workers working in SOEs, after 1984 urban reform, there were 34 million employed in TVEs[70]. In the late 1980s, some of them were drawn into the private enterprises, foreign owned and joint ventures, these new forms of business began to take shape during Zhao era. Even Chinese workers generally earn more in the non-SOEs, but the management of these enterprises is more arbitrary, as the non-SOEs, practically those of owned by Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan, are more competitive and driven by the market desire rather than the state procurement. The Chinese workers have to work in a very poor condition, extreme overtime schedules; they are totally deprived of any social protections and health care, while facing the farmers' competition, which are recruited increasingly as their lower pay level and more willing to do the drudgeries. The development of a tight monetary policy through 1988 meant that by early 1989, as many as two-thirds of urban factories were running at less than full capacity, and that as a consequence, workers on short-time working, often a two-

[70] Yang, *Calamity and Reform in China*, 297.

or three-day week, were not receiving their full salary. Many were only on 70 percent or less of their usual pay, and in the context of further price reform and the highest inflation rates of the reform period so far, this was a major cause for complaint among workers[71]. It is generally agreed that, mainly as a result of very high urban inflation, but also influenced by the prevalence of short-time working and suspension of bonuses, real urban industrial incomes actually fell slightly between the end of 1986 and the end of 1988. It estimated that in 1988 about 30 percent of workers reduced to subsistence level.[72]

Because the Chinese workers benefit the least from the reform, they become the major opponent of Deng Xiaoping's program, and increasingly feel the need for independent organizations through which they can defend their collective interests. But it is difficult for the CCP to come up with this, as the existence of any autonomous organizations in the PRC would open up the attack to the CCP's monopoly of political power, and the Chinese leaders are afraid that the workers will follow the political orientation of Polish Solidarity, to bring down the regime of Communist. On the other hand, the Chinese workers, the biggest victim of post-Mao reform, are eager the most for the political reform. If the CCP continues to disregard their voice, the Chinese workers may have their Solidarity-like movement in future.

As the Chinese workers are less privileged and more insecure than ever before, it results in their powerlessness and lack of a voice in the workplaces, and the pressure increased on them to work harder and produce more and better goods, leading to a more widespread sense of

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71 Jackie Sheehan, *Chinese Workers: a new history* (New York : Routledge, 1998), 235.

72 Ibid., 236.

alienation and exploitation. Overall workers' picture during 1988–89 was characterized as very dark. Chinese officials had almost doubled their previous estimates of the 1988 urban unemployment rate, from 2 to 3.5 percent, representing over four million people, and many enterprises were reported to be unable (or unwilling) to pay taxes[73]. With the threat of layoffs and bankruptcy now looming over chronically unprofitable SOEs, forty-nine industrial works stopping were reported in the first half of 1988; by the end of the year the total had risen to more than one hundred[74]. The Chinese workers increasingly felt themselves to be nothing more than the part of the machinery, by a sharp increase in antagonism towards enterprise management, and profound worries about insecurity, and growing disgust at open official corruption while their own standards of living stagnated or declined. But the biggest change of Chinese workers in the late 1980s was they dared to express their discontent through strikes or other industrial action. The plight drove many of them into Beijing Workers Autonomous Federation (BWAF) and the streets in the spring of 1989.

G. Education

Unlike Mao Zedong's policy of keeping the populace ignorant, in the early 1980s, Deng Xiaoping began to realize the importance of education for China's modernization. Deng ordered to resume national entrance examination for higher education, which had been paralyzed during the Cultural Revolution, and dispatch of unprecedented numbers of Chinese students and scholars for training and research abroad, mainly in United States. Under the slogan of

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73 Jackie Sheehan, *Chinese Workers: a new history* (New York : Routledge, 1998), 237.

74 Ibid., 240.

"technology is the first productive force", about 90 percent of Chinese students studying abroad chose the aspects of natural science and engineering[75]. In some extent, such science orientation led to the great thirst for unorthodox knowledge of Western humanities and social science among the intelligentsia and university students, so it could say that the result of student movements in both 1987 and 1989 was the indirect influence and explosion of such thirst. Beginning in 1985, the educational reform, marked by the Central Committee's issue of "Decision on the Reform of the Educational System" in May, which decided to hand considerable authority back to the universities themselves and reduced state intervention. But the education in the mid-1980s was still one of the Chinese area where progressed relatively bad. According to UNESCO statistics, out of 149 countries China came 130th in terms of the proportion of the gross national product allotted to education[76]. It was true that expenditure on education has increased in China in recent years in absolute terms, however, expenditure has probably not grown at all (it was 9.7 percent of total national expenditure in 1986 and 9.6 percent in both 1987 and 1988) and in other respects it has actually decreased[77]. For example, China's 1988 investment in education of 2 percent of GDP compared with an average 3.3 percent among countries with an annual per capita income of U.S. $300 or less; and a 15 percent increase in educational funding was included in the 1989 budget, but this was not quite sufficient even to keep up with almost 20 percent inflation plagued at that time.[78]

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75 Harding, *China's Second Revolution*, 45.

76 Ethridge, *China's Unfinished Revolution*, 290.

77 Ibid.

78 Perry Link, *Evening Chats in Beijing: Probing China's Predicament* (London : Norton, 1992), 74.

Nevertheless, there were some remarkable educational changes during Zhao Ziyang era, and marked by the year of 1989, which was proclaimed the Year of Education in PRC. Most striking of all was in political education. A new generation of young political instructors began to develop innovative teaching materials that used some of the new ideas emerging in the social sciences to redesign what had traditionally been highly dull and rigid texts. For the first time, there seemed to be a possibility that political study could become an independent discipline of political science, rather than functioning as a tool of students' brainwashing. New courses had been added in the late 1980s that included Citizenship Education, Moral Education, Social History, and Common Knowledge of Socialist Reconstruction. These courses taught communist belief and traditional Chinese values, as well as the civil service to the people, informing students about the economic reform and changes that were taking place in China.

Second, the development of a modified credit system and changes of the curriculum in terms of enrollment emphasis, whereby students were encouraged to choose courses both in areas related to their major fields and in areas of their interests. There was a considerable increase of enrollment in applied social sciences, business management, and engineering. The changes initially represented a growing recognition of the importance of "soft sciences" in the process of China's modernization, and they reflected a kind of market response to students' demand.

The Chinese textbooks in this period showed that the content had become much more expanded and inclusive, with the values taught tending to be more tolerant and neutral. Overall, it was a decade of considerable curricular experimentation, in which universities made choices by their own in the development of new programs and the reform of old ones, rather than being imposed order from State Educational Commission.

Another important change was the reintroduction of research into the Chinese university community. Under the relaxed conditions of the late 1980s, many universities developed or restored research institutes on their campuses, and struggled to gain permission for new appointments to these institutes, where the main responsibility was for research rather than for teaching.

Gradual efforts to dismantle the national job assignment system, beginning in 1986, and culminating in plans for the majority of gradates to seek their own employment opportunities by the late 1980s. Changes were initiated as a new system called "mutual selection", meaning that the university, acting on behalf of and sometimes in consultation with its students, recommended candidates for positions, while employment agencies chose those they wished. Except greater freedom for graduates in seeking work, and also for university faculty in transferring within the university community or in leaving for jobs in other sectors.

The most important part of the reemerging identity of Chinese universities in the late 1980s was the role they played in helping China reconnect to an international milieu after a decade of isolation. During this period, Chinese universities were engaged in constant academic exchange with foreign institutions, accepting more Western funding, and actively participating in co-research, marked by the increasing numbers of theses by Chinese scholars published in oversea journals. It also made increasing opportunities for graduate study abroad more and more attractive to the most ambitious young graduates, and the whole study abroad movement changed in nature over this period. These situations have not been reversed even after the 1989 Beijing Spring.

In Zhao Ziyang era, beside the normal educational system, people had more access to other training opportunities. The radio/television universities, whose enrollment are the largest of all adult higher education institutions in China, and the Independent Study

(zixue kaoshi), where admission is unconditional, plus any other correspondence and evening classes, private schools, newly short-term education which flourished in the late 1980s, responding to requirements of emerging commodity society.

In addition to some positive changes, there were still some negative aspects lingering in Chinese education in the late 1980s. Overstrict control by government departments over schools at all levels, particularly at the pre-tertiary education; weak elementary education, as exemplified by shortages of schools and qualified teachers; poorly developed vocational and technical education, unable supplied the millions of urgently needed middle-level technicians; overspecialized in certain subject areas; outdated textbooks. Chinese teachers burdened with low salary and low moral, were facing the rigid curriculum and poor disciplinary students who hate studies.

In higher education, without sufficient government funding, leaving little or nothing for library and program development, equipment acquisition, and general maintenance. Universities found themselves forced into seeking new sources of income. Some individuals and departments were much more able than others to devise money-making schemes, resulting in great differences in income among faculty in different departments and fields. As those in fields of engineering, finance, foreign languages, and management were able to develop substantial independent incomes, while teacher institutions and agriculture universities fell more and more behind. Compounding this by the late 1980s was the attraction of joint venture and other new commercial opportunities for university teachers, that a considerable number have either moved or changed careers.

However, as economic reform gathered more momentum by the late 1980s, a commercialization of the curriculum set in, with universities desperately seeking approval for new programs that

would be likely to attract large numbers of self-paying students and so enhance university income. Whether they had the appropriate resources or not, most universities tried to set up programs in areas such as international trade, management, and foreign languages, which looked economically promising in the short term. Likewise, research was more and more oriented toward pragmatic links with enterprises, in which might have little academic value but could turn a quick profit. On the other hand, the social sciences and humanities, such disciplines due to their susceptibility for overt political manipulation during periods of ideological stridency, had been formerly disregarded, and the students and faculty from these departments were disproportionately selected for retaliation after the June Fourth massacre.

The class disparity was also a shocking story in Chinese education in the late 1980s. There was an increasing gap between rural and urban, rich and poor, male and female students in terms of higher education entry, and the national policy always favored the formers. Chinese national entrance examination for higher education (gaokao) culminated in its most competitive form in the late 1980s, as the university recruitment had not been expanded until the early 1990s; the disadvantaged students were really adding salt to their injuries. For example, even rural students have maintained a relatively high rate of participation; they tended to be confined to subject areas with little promise: agriculture, teacher education, mining, and heavy industrial fields. While urban youth dominated enrollments in foreign languages, finance and trade, civil engineering, and law, which have become more and more popular under the changing economic process.[79]

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[79] Ruth Hayhoe, *China's Universities, 1895–1995: A Century of Cultural Conflict* (New York : Garland Pub, 1996), 328.

Perhaps the hottest educational trend in Zhao Ziyang era was study abroad movement. In case of government-funded (gongfei) exchange program, even under the obligatory regulation, that required all Chinese scholars return motherland upon the end of their study, but it was still not clear how many of them would return, and how many would try every opportunities to stay overseas. And the serious "brain drain" from China to the West has already begun. For those Chinese students and scholars that did return home, the issue was whether they would be employed in positions that would fully employ the skills and knowledge acquired abroad. Unfortunately, many returned students and scholars were assigned to administrative work; others were frustrated by the underfunded research bodies, the lack of laboratory equipment, libraries, and computer facilities comparable to those to which they had access overseas. Upon the returning, most of Western-trained Chinese academics have been effectively reabsorbed into the Chinese educational and scientific establishment, and they always complained that their skills were not being used at all.

It was also in the late 1980s, Chinese began study abroad in self-funded (zifei) approach, most of them had little intentions of returning to China on graduation, but this trend had produced some new problems. For example, between 1987 and 1988, over 30,000 young people were issued student visas to go to Japan under private auspices. Ostensibly they were going to study, but actually they dropped out so they could earn valued foreign currency through various kinds of illegal labor, and they had very little to do with academic studies[80]. It was the first time that China produced its "garbage of studying abroad" (liuxue laji).

The enthusiasm for learning foreign languages, particularly English, was obviously linked with the going abroad trend. "Studying

[80] Epstein, ed. *Chinese Education*, 334.

English Craze" was for communicating with increasing numbers of foreigners entering China, and was also vital for those who wished to read books and watch films, as well as other cultural items. For many Chinese students, the foremost aim of learning English was to pass an examination such as TOEFL in order to gaining academic admission abroad. The numbers of TOEFL candidates in Beijing, for example, increased from only 285 in 1981, in 1987, an estimated 26,000 people applied[81]. The figures remained high in the late 1980s and the test centers were opened in other major cities throughout the country. The growth of popularity for this examination as students skipped classes or tried to study surreptitiously during class time.

In order to assist with the preparations for the tests many young people "sharpened their language skills at every opportunity", local English Corners and short term English classes were spread across the country. Not all those attending English Corners and English classes were students. In fact, some participants appeared to be from other sections of youth, such as "private business owners" (getihu) who were self-taught English speakers with little or no formal training. Thenceforth, it appeared as if everyone in China was learning English.

After the tragedy of brutal military suppression in June 1989, the CCP conservatives argued it was the result of lax political education on Chinese youth since 1978, but in fact it was not truth. Beginning in 1988, besides having to worry about passing college entrance exams, senior middle-school students now had to face the possibility they might not even have a chance to sit for the exam. As the political, ideological and moral qualities were given major weight in permitting students to take college entrance exams, and the ideological line had now assumed even greater importance. Under the new regulations,

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81 Ruth Cherrington, *Deng's Generation*: *Young Intellectuals in 1980s China* (New York : St. Martin's Press, 1997), 128.

exams might be taken only by those who "support the four basic principles, cherish the motherland, observe discipline, and express determination to study hard for the development of the socialist modernization program." In addition, approved students must take part satisfactorily in a new program of "experience in society," also called "social practice." The program involved participation in "social investigation," meaning field work in neighboring small towns, and in "learning from workers and peasants" through volunteer work on farms or in factories.[82]

The student uprisings in the late 1980s were out of other reasons. By 1986 and 1987, the protests were about discontent with management within the university community, and with the way in which local elections for people's congress were being manipulated by Party authorities. By 1989, there was considerable pessimism in the university community over the outcome of economic reform, as well as increasingly evident political corruption and nepotism. This was the main theme of the movement in the spring of 1989.

H. Intelligentsia

In March 1989, when thirty-three leading Chinese intellectuals signed a petition asking the Party leadership to declare an amnesty for political prisoners, this simple act shook the Chinese polity at its highest levels. It was a catalyst in the chain of events that led to the tremendous uprising later that summer. Many scholars may recommend that either the seventieth anniversary of May Four Movement, the bicentenary of French Revolution, or the death of Hu Yaobang, the arrival of Mikhail Gorbachev did inspire the students uprising in 1989, but in reality it was the intellectuals, not the students,

[82] Epstein, ed. *Chinese Education*, 335.

to evoke the anti-communist emotion among the mass demonstrations. So it is noteworthy to examine the discourse of post-Mao intellectuals, whose activities had reached the high tide in Zhao Ziyang era.

In Chinese the term of "intellectual" differs greatly from that in Western world. Unlike the West, in where the intellectuals are always defined by their actual professional occupations; in China, "intellectuals" include college students, and sometimes the self-educated people. "Intellectual" a term in China is generally judged by a person's conscience, notably his "worrying mentality" (youhuan yishi) or "a scholar worries over the world before the world worries itself; a scholar is happy only after all mankind has achieved" (xiantianxiazhiyoueryou, houtianxiazhileerle). Chinese intellectuals are fully committed to politics and "saving the nation", and as Perry Link had pointed out: "in America, if a writer or an intellectual went around all day shouting about 'the duty of the writer' or 'the mission of the intellectual', he might seem a bit ridiculous; but in China, to be a writer or intellectual and not speak of responsibility and mission seems equally ridiculous."[83]

Under Mao Zedong era, Chinese intellectuals were officially classified as the "Stinking No. 9" (choulaojiu) at the bottom of the social heap. Almost all of Mao's political campaigns targeted on intellectuals, and had made their suffering incalculable, which culminated in the peak time of Cultural Revolution. After Deng Xiaoping's return, under the program of modernization and the orientation of knowledge power, the intellectuals' status was revived, but still bound by the Party patronage. As long as they are willing to cooperate with the Party, the Party will grant them considerable freedom; vice versa, if they challenge the supremacy of the Party and they will be punished.

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[83] Link, *Evening Chats in Beijing*, 152.

Unlike the intellectuals in Mao era, whose submission to the Party was indiscriminate. After 1978, Chinese intellectuals became the most independent and the most critical of the Party since 1949, most of them no longer bore the passive attitude towards Party's persecution. In post-Mao era, there are three age groups of intellectuals in China. The first group is the "Generation of 1950s"; they were born before 1949 and among the most persecuted under Mao. The second group is the "Generation of Cultural Revolution", they had encountered the Cultural Revolution and had been discontinued their studies while reaching the mature age, and became the most self-educated group ever since. The third group is the "Generation of Reform"; most of them were born in the late 1960s, and grew up in the early 1980s, they have experienced the high tide of "open door" policy. When it came to Zhao Ziyang era, most of the first group had withdrawn from the historical stage, the second and the third groups began to make their statement. Particularly the "Generation of Cultural Revolution", as the experience of their formative years in such political suffering, left them skeptical of communist belief. They possessed the most powerful rebellion attitude against any authority, and developed a questioning spirit, a search for new values, and an openness that was close to that of their May Fourth predecessors. The "Generation of Reform" has the best advantage of contacting outside world, they were living in the most diversified milieu since 1949, and some of them have been sent abroad to study. This generation was the most dissatisfied with the CCP regime, and dared to spearhead in the streets in the spring of 1989. The revolt psychology of both groups was pent-up for a long time, and exploded in the end of Zhao era. Actually they could have become the generation of changing Chinese political discourse in the late 1980s, not only were they the most participated, but also they had been patronized by the two communist leaders Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang.

According to the account by Min Lin and Maria Galikowski, there were five types of intellectuals existed in Zhao Ziyang era[84]. The first group was the Party conservative associates, such as Chen Yong, He Jingzhi, and Lin Mohan, they concentrated on stabilizing the communist order, and most of them were belonged to the CCP Propaganda Department, and were the elders' hired writers. The second group was the neo-conservatism, the representatives He Xin, Wu Jiaxiang, and Dai Qing. They insisted the theory of "unique Chinese characteristics" (zhongguo guoqing lun), arguing that the Western experiences are not suitable for China, and the socialism is the best model, but they did not object to the limited change within the framework of Four Cardinal Principles. The third group was the moderatism, and most of them were the mainstream intellectuals and were associated with Zhao's think tank, such as Zhou Yang, Yu Guangyuan, Su Shaozhi, Yan Jiaqi, Li Zehou, and Jin Guantao, These people considered China should follow the way of rationalism and the humanistic Marxism, and objected to any radical and precipitous approaches. The fourth group was the neo-liberalism, including Gan Yang, Liu Xiaofeng, and Xu Youyu, and in fact such group was not considered a certain school of intellectuals who share the same research interests, but rather through variety of unorthodox explorations. All the people in this group were somewhat academics in the ivory tower; they have worked in either universities or research institutes and were relatively young, aged between 30 and 50. They argued that Chinese problems are not only the ideological disputes between socialism and capitalism, or between democracy and arbitrary, but a more philosophical and metaphysical issue, and

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84 Min Lin, and Maria Galikowski, *The Search for Modernity*: *Chinese Intellectuals and Cultural Discourse in the Post-Mao Era* (New York : St. Martin's Press, 1999), 20–39.

should delve into Chinese cultural core and pursue the ultimate concerns. The last group was the radicalism, such as Fang Lizhi, Liu Xiaobo, Hu Ping, Chen Ziming, and Wang Juntao. Most of them were cultural iconoclasts and non-establishment intellectuals, their thoughts were rejected by official institutions. The group was aiming for a total break with the existing order by criticizing and attacking the very foundations of the political, economic and ideological systems which still dominate Chinese social life. They supported the idea of wholesale westernization and anti-traditionalism. This group was the most political oriented, for example, Chen Ziming and Wang Juntao, who sent numerous reform proposals to Zhao Ziyang, but all these efforts were rebuffed and they were unable to find positions in the official institutes. Unlike their counterparts inside the establishment, both Chen and Wang had to seek to bring about political change from the bottom up; their approach was to criticize the government and educate the commoners, by forming their own journals and networks to carry out their political agenda outside the Party atmosphere. In 1988, Chen Ziming brought the semi-official journals of *Economic Weekly* and *World Economic Herald* in the public, and set up a number of independent organizations that appeared to be laying the basis for a civil society similar to those developing in Eastern Europe. Most of the group had participated in the Beijing Spring in 1989, some of them tried to utilize the student demonstrations to realize their political purpose. It resulted in raising the accusation by the CCP, that the people in this group were instigating the student rebellion and the "black hands" behind Tiananmen.

There was a new enlightenment movement generated by the intellectuals in the late 1980s China. Under Zhao Ziyang's reign, Chinese intellectuals had experienced the most cultural diversified and the most political liberated period since the May Fourth Movement of 1919 in modern Chinese history. During these celebrated years,

all kinds of unorthodox books and essays mushroomed, and it saw the emergence of several semi-independent or autonomous research institutes, such as the Stone Research Institute, Social Economic Research Institute, and the Beijing Young Person's Research Association of Economics, as well as many salons organized by young lecturers and students in universities all over China.

Even the Chinese intellectuals in the late 1980s were the most politically participated and the most critical, but there were some factors prevented them from being an independent group distanced from the state, like those in the West. First, the Chinese intellectuals in the late 1980s were struggling with their economic plight, even they had acquired the relatively prestige positions, such as professors, research associates, and doctors, but their low-paid salary were sharply contrasted with their social status, their monthly incomes were still lower than those of shoemakers. Chinese intellectuals always had to rely on some sidelines to sustain their families and could not preoccupy themselves in their professions. Second, it was right that through the 1980s Chinese intellectuals had encountered two Party patrons Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang, but both of them were short-lived in the CCP leadership. In case of Zhao, unlike his predecessor Hu, he only protected the intellectuals within the establishment, such as his think tank or the persons who shared with him the same thoughts. For the nonestablishment intellectuals, Zhao not only discarded them, but sometimes cooperated with the conservatives to denounce them. When Zhao's think tank designed the neo-authoritarianism for consolidating Zhao's ruling base in the Party, most of the nonestablisment intellectuals criticized the concept was a kind of neo-dictatorship. Last, Chinese intellectuals traditionally are theoreticians rather than pragmatists; they devoted more attention to arguing what democracy could do for China than to discussing what it would be or how to introduce it. For example, comparing to Andrei Sakharov, the democracy theory

of "China's Sakharov" Fang Lizhi seemed to be abstract and not suitable for Chinese situation. And Sakharov was a scientist as well as a social activist, he devoted more concrete actions to make his dream come true than most of Chinese intellectuals dared to do. On the other hand, Chinese intellectuals have always sought to preserve the possibility of a return to state service; this has made many intellectuals reluctant to do anything that would mean a final break with the state. There is a self-contradictory behavior prevailing among the Chinese intellectuals, that the only way to change the system is to join in the Communist Party, but ironically afterwards, they immediately find that their ideas are not acceptable by the CCP bureaucracy. Chinese intellectuals still consider the civil society not vis-à-vis the state, but view both are mutually interdependent and working together. For example, unlike the East European intellectuals, whose independent institutions were wholly in opposition to the prevailing government; but Chen Ziming and Wang Juntao's self-funded research establishments intended to negotiate with and influence the government.

Chinese intellectuals under Zhao Ziyang era, like the university students, because of their low living standard and political dissatisfaction, it would be immediately any time for them to take the rebellion, and the best time occurred in the spring of 1989. One of the reasons of how June Fourth movement failed could be deemed as the disunity of abovementioned three intellectual groups, they were unable to form a solid intellectual base to negotiate with the government. As the older generation had experienced the hardship under Mao's era, and tended to adopt gradual policy; whereas the younger generation was refreshed by the reform ethos, and they considered the radical approach was the most appropriate. The relationship between the Chinese intellectuals and the state in the late 1980s, like putting both together into a magnetic field, they are mutually attracted while isolated from time to time. Chinese

intellectuals under Zhao era were the most nonsubmissive to the state since 1949, they were even more independent than the intellectuals after the June Fourth massacre, as the latter have been brainwashed politically and bribed materially by the CCP ever since.

I. Art, Literature, and Film

Beginning in the early 1980s, it gave rise to an intense exploration of cultural tradition in China, this trend became pronounced in the late 1980s, and was popularly called "culture fever" (wenhuare), or "searching –for-roots fever" (xungenre). "Cultural fever" culminated in summer 1988 with the appearance of the six-part television series called "River Elegy" (He Shang), which was first broadcasted on government-controlled China Central Television (CCTV) in June. "River Elegy" was produced by a group of former Red Guards, included principal writers/producers Su Xiaokang and Wang Luxiang; director Xie Xuanjun; co-authors Yuan Zhiming and Zhang Gang; principal advisors Jin Guantao; and a number of the experts, such as Bao Zunxin, Wang Juntao and Zheng Yi. Most of the visual content in this film series was taken form other documentaries and movies, the various themes were unified visually through the use of repeated symbolic images. The Chinese title of the series "He Shang", 'He' means river, and especially the Yellow River, considered the cradle of China's civilization. 'Shang' means to die ahead of one's time (the connotations of the Chinese title amount almost to "mourning the nation"). The series condemned China's traditional civilization, through vivid cinematography, symbolized by the dragon, the Great Wall, the communist capital Yan'an, the yellow-soil plateau, and the turbulent, muddy Yellow River. It conveyed a sense that China, like the Yellow River, once at the forefront of civilization and has the "ultrastability" of 5,000 years isolated history, now had become a peasant-based and inward-looking society with

the profound conservatism and permanent backwardness. The series argued that China must get rid of "Yellow River civilization", and embrace the blue Pacific and "Azure Ocean civilization". It also showed clips of the anti-rightist campaign, Great Leap Forward, and the Cultural Revolution, implying that communism after 1949 was not only the major contributor of modern China's backwardness, but also a part of long time China's feudal tradition.

After broadcasting twice on CCTV, People's Daily and other newspapers published complete scripts, and in the next round, funds were approved in 1988 for a sequel of "River Elegy". The series was seen by perhaps as many as several hundred millions viewers, its script was circulated of several millions and subsequently sold over seven hundred thousand copies in book form in 1988 alone, it has also gone through multiple editions in Hong Kong and Taiwan[85]. The series had inspired a storm of books and articles, both critical and favorable, plus a multitude of conferences at home and abroad. The popular response was generally positive, despite some complaints from intellectuals, they criticized the program for historical inaccuracies and its criticisms of Chinese tradition seem to be too simplistic. But the reaction of "River Elegy" from official circles was divided. Party Secretary Zhao Ziyang was said to have praised the series and go to great lengths to ensure that it was seen on television sets throughout the country. Zhao also permitted a nationwide rebroadcast of "River Elegy" after its initial present in mid-June 1988. He even sent a copy of the video as a gift to Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, with whom Zhao shared the governing notion of neo-authoritarianism[86]. At the same time,

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85 Maurice Meisner, *Mao's China and after*: *A history of the People's Republic* (New York : The Free Press, 1997), 495.

86 Ibid., 496.

the conservative elders, particularly Wang Zhen and Bo Yibo, they disparaged "River Elegy" was "wholesale westernization", "cultural nihilism", and was highly evident of "bourgeoisie liberalization". The elders even threatened to stop broadcasting the series, and fortunately because of Zhao's defensive role, the attack of "River Elegy" did not lead to a national campaign to denounce the writers, as Bai Hua's "Unrequited Love" in the early 1980s.

Reportedly the production of "River Elegy" was patronized by General Secretary Zhao Ziyang, as Zhao wanted to take advantage of the series to advertise his neo-authoritarianism, and boost his position in the CCP[87]. For example, the embrace of "Blue Color Westernization" in "River Elegy" was the praise for Zhao's coastal development strategy. But such assumption was somewhat farfetched, as most members of the series production team were not associated with Zhao's think tank, and there was no evidence in "River Elegy" showed that it preached any kinds of neo-authoritarianism. The images of the West in "River Elegy" seemed to be too romanticized and idealized, and it never articulated what future path China should follow: either it was under democracy or neo-authoritarianism. Whether Zhao was a patron of the series or not, one thing was certain, that Zhao indeed was utilizing this opportunity to support his factional struggle against Party elders even before the Beijing Spring in 1989, and "River Elegy" was only an ace.

Later, most of the authors and producers of "River Elegy" were involved to a certain degree in the student movement in summer of 1989, they were signing petitions and open letters and seeking to protect the students by invoking the Constitution. The crackdown

87 Richard W. Bodman, and Pin P. Wan, trans. *Deathsong of the River*: *A Reader's Guide to the Chinese TV Series* (Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 1991), 85.

of June Fourth was in turn followed by a spate of books and articles attacking the creators of the series for diverse sins, from propagating cultural nihilism to instigating counterrevolutionary turmoil. The series was banned in China; several of its principal writers have fled into exile, while two of their interviewees have received stiff sentences for political crimes. The fate of "River Elegy" after Tiananmen also led to the dismissal of Minister of Culture Wang Meng, for his lax political control over cultural and intellectual matters.[88]

Zhao Ziyang, as a short-lived Party General Secretary in his twenty-month reign, was first time in PRC history to begin a policy of not intervening any Chinese literary work by the Central Committee. So it was not surprised to see, that the world might be most shocking of the widely reported first-ever exhibit of nude paintings at the end of 1988 in Beijing, but more significant were probably the outspokenness in magazines and newspapers, the daring of some books, and the new assertiveness of intellectuals. Even the pop music during this period, both officially sanctioned pop music (Hong Kong and Taiwan) and underground rock music (Hou Dejian and Cui Jian), it was "less a mere adjunct to leisure than a battlefield on which ideological struggle is waged in the highly politicized Chinese context"[89]. The thesis here only discusses the most representative art forms of literature and film, particularly in the film industry, as in any country literature and film are vital components of popular culture, in case of China, they are also the most reliable barometer of Chinese political agenda. From the CCP victory in 1949 until the twenty-fold improvement in living standard in the late 1980s, literature and film were major means of creating a mass, socialist culture under the control of Beijing.

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88 Ethridge, *China's Unfinished Revolution*, 45.

89 Cherrington, *Deng's Generation*, 138.

There are three stages divided in PRC literature development vis-à-vis political atmosphere. From 1949 to 1978, most of Chinese writers were the slaves of the Party rule and the targets of every political persecution, their work were merely the tools of Party propaganda and subject to constant investigation. Started from the late 1970s, Chinese writers regained the prestige lost after 1949, speaking out on behalf of the educated urban population against the abuse and crimes of the Cultural Revolution and re-creating the non-conformist hero in fiction; they undermined the Party authority and sometimes charged the communist arbitrariness under Mao Zedong era. At the second half of the 1980s, the Party interference was limited to minimum since the founding of PRC. And the most importantly, in the late 1980s Chinese writers had a direct connection with the fate of the world, they began to experiment their creativity in postmodernism (Liu Suola), neo-realism (Wang Anyi), and were even in cooperation with filmmakers for a new literary expression (Su Tong, Mo Yan). Popular culture from Hong Kong and Taiwan, including Jin Yong's martial arts fiction and Qiong Yao's romantic novels, were highly influential in Mainland, and some writers were beginning to produce popular fiction, sometimes by explicit descriptions of sex and violence, for the mass market.

But the conscience of Chinese writers still prompted them into social activities. Most of dissident writers were involved in the protest in 1989, in support of the students' outcry and the downfall of the CCP government. After the June Fourth massacre, some of the writers fled abroad, they continued to publish in exile journals and voice against the communist rule. For the writers who had no choice but to stay, some of them were arrested and in imprisonment; some of them were deprived of current positions and banned from any publication in China. Most of the writers after the June Fourth incident were silenced and did not dare to produce new work for a long time.

In the wake of Cultural Revolution, Chinese film industry had been partly revived its vitality. The filmmakers not only experimented with new techniques and equipment, but also asserted their own voice in their work, to express the misconduct by authority during the past turbulent era. In the first half of 1980s, Chinese did produce some excellent work in condemnation of the Anti-Rightist Campaign (1957), the Great Leap Forward (1958–61), and the Cultural Revolution (1966–76), as well as all kinds of disastrous consequences by the Party radicalism and state bureaucracy, such as *The Legend of Tianyun Mountain* (1981), *Yellow Earth* (1985), *Hibiscus Town* (1986), and *One and Eight* (1984). Most of them could not avoid to be criticized by several campaigns against "bourgeois liberalization".

The craze of film theory and criticism also occurred in the 1980s in mainland China, through the translations of Andre Bazin and Seigfried Kracauer, and by the invitation of several groups of prominent American scholars (Bill Nichols, Brian Henderson, Nick Browne, Janet Staiger, Ann Kaplan, and Vivian Sobchack), to present their seminars and lectures at Beijing Film Academy. Some of which were eventually published in the two most important film magazines in China, *Contemporary Cinema* and *Film Art*. These Western film theories have become comprehensible and useful to Chinese film scholars, especially Chinese intellectuals at that time were looking for the means by which to criticize the old political and ideological system and to construct a new position for themselves, and these theories offered them a weapon. Even after the June 4, 1989, *Contemporary Cinema* still published a special issue discussing Jacques Derrida and post-structuralism.

Technological developments were also embodied in Chinese film studies in the 1980s. This began with a challenge to the traditional concept of film as recorded drama and with an appeal for the modernization of film language, following debates inspired studies into the unique nature of the medium and discussions on its

nationalization. These developments, which focused on technology and dealt primarily with issues of form, style and expression, strongly and directly influenced production and made deep changes in the film form and style of China. In the later part of the 1980s, Chinese film theory, in its critique of traditional culture, developed in two directions. One was the discussion of filmmaking, the pro-Fifth Generation position; the other was a reevaluation of traditional Chinese film theory. Therefore, Chinese film studies shifted from technological to ideological concerns, from matters of ontology to the relationship of film to society. The following developments became more prominent[90]:

1. Beginning in 1985, the Fifth Generation and the Xie Jin "model".

2. In 1986, the recognition and review of traditional film aesthetics — Yingxi (Shadowplay) — from the perspective of culture and philosophy.

3. From 1987 to 1989, the discussion on the position and function of the entertainment film in Chinese culture and film.

4. From 1988 to 1989, the debate on the position and nature of Chinese film theory in the New Era (1979–89).

Like the popular literature prevailed in the late 1980s, the entertainment film reached its peak and became an important trend in the late 1980s also; it turned out to be a basic theme of the 1988 Conference on the Entertainment Film and was even approved of by liberal authorities[91]. Aside from intellectual offerings, many young Chinese people enjoyed foreign films, particularly those made in Hong Kong and Taiwan. These films were so popular and Chinese

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90 George Semsel, Chen Xihe, and Xia Hong, ed. *Film in Contemporary China: Critical Debates, 1979–89* (Westport : Praeger, 1993), 93.

91 Ibid, 94.

film studios churned out such productions in order to make money. Western films were increasingly allowed on general release in China, after the Beijing Spring, Western films were attacked by the Party propaganda, accusing them of the instigation to the Tiananmen turmoil. But most of the entertainment films were taken advantage of by the Party, to counterbalance the aftermath of massacre and to anesthetize the political consciousness of Chinese people.

From 1987 to 1989, an innovative film director Huang Jianxin presented his postsocialist trilogy — *The Black Cannon Incident* (1987), *Dislocation* (1988), *Transmigration* (1989). They were made at the Xian Film Studio, an institution under the bold leadership of Wu Tianming, seemed to have specialized in the production of postsocialist artworks. The trilogy was inspired by some postmodernist Western films, to deal with conditions that were inherently "absurd" (huangdan). Huang was the first one in Chinese film history to create the concept of "red humor" (hongse youmo) to reveal the rigors of life under socialism. Huang's work belongs to the vaguely defined category of Fifth Generation films made between 1983 and 1989. However, more than the works of any other Chinese filmmakers, Huang Jianxin was the pioneer of post-Mao Chinese filmmaking, and he had anticipated the extraordinary turmoil rushing in the Beijing streets in the summer of 1989.

The most significant appearance of Chinese film in the late 1980s was the flourishing of the Fifth Generation, the term is generally referred to the first post-Cultural Revolution 1982 class of the Beijing Film Academy completed their B.A. work, and graduates were assigned to work in various state-run film enterprises[92]. In this group consisting of Chen Kaige, Tian Zhuangzhuang, Zhang Yimou,

[92] Paul Clark, *Reinventing China: a generation and its films* (Hong Kong : Chinese University Press, 2005), Preface.

Wu Ziniu, and a few others who dealt with the profound problems of the contemporary socialist country. Most of them have gained the worldwide reputation and some of their films were awarded by the internationally well-known film festivals.

Chinese film industry, as a state-run enterprise in which the Communist Party and its administration are the most important components, requires all of the subordinate filmmakers, like other walks of life in China, to be submissive, and the filmmakers' work are only confined to reflect the positive aspects of socialism. The Fifth Generation was the first time in Chinese history confronting the cinema bureaucracy. Like documentary serials *River Elegy*, their films addressed some of the key social, political and ideological problems of the 1980s, and a reassessment of the Mao era, through the scenes took place in pre–1949, not the contemporary China (such as *Yellow Earth* and *Red Sorghum*), so they could without going beyond the official limits. Apart from political problems, there were financial constraints in the reform era as state-owned studios suffered cutback, and the market system was introduced. Frequently the Fifth Generation had to look to foreigners for funding for new productions and finally at the end of 1980s, most of their films had turned to be Sino-foreign cooperation. The emergence of the Fifth Generation indicates that the development of Chinese film in the new era, they made a significant contribution to the revival of film studies and filmmaking after the Cultural Revolution, and laid a solid foundation for those to follow.

After the Beijing Spring in 1989, many Chinese film talents left the country to study film and communications in elsewhere in the world. Wu Tianming, head of the Xian Studio, was out of China but publicly condemned the government, having begin a period of exile in the United States. Ma Ning, a playwright now in Australia, has already published significant new writings. Hou Jianping, Xia Hong and Chen Xihe, the editors of many film translations, continued

Table 2.3. Major Figures and Works of the Fifth Generation

Chen Kaige: born in Beijing in 1952, director of *Yellow Earth* (1986), among other films.

Hu Mei: female, born in Beijing in 1957, director of *Army Nurse* (1986), *Far from War* (1988) and television historical serials.

Jiang Haiyang: born in Shanghai in 1955, director of *The Anonymous Phonecall* (1988), among other films and television dramas.

Liu Miaomiao: female, born in Ningxia, northwest China in 1962 and the youngest member of the Fifth Generation. Director of *The Sound of Hoofbeats* (1989), among other films and television works.

Peng Xiaolian: female, born in Shanghai in 1953, director of *Three Women* (1988), among other films. Later graduate of New York University film school and maker of documentaries.

Tian Zhuangzhuang: born in Beijing in 1952, director of *Horse Thief* (1986), among other films. Producer at the Beijing Film Studio.

Wu Ziniu: born in Sichuan province in 1953, director of *Evening Bell* (1988), among other works.

Zhang Jianya: born in Shanghai in 1951, director of Ice *River* (1986), among others. Producer at the Shanghai Film Studio.

Zhang Yimou: born in Xi'an in 1950, cinematographer of *Yellow Earth* (1986), director of *Red Sorghum* (1987), *Judou* (1989), among other films.

Source: Paul Clark, Reinventing China: a generation and its films (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2005), 8

to write and present their findings to the Society of Cinema Studies and the Asian Cinema Studies Society. Wang Chunlei, from the China Film Archive; Wang Xiaowen, from the Beijing Film Academy; and Hu Yiyi, an actress from Shanghai, were beginning to produce work of the highest order. The tragic events in Tiananmen Square not only caused China to regress politically and economically, but also darkened the prospects for continued cultural development. He Jinzhi, the new Minister of Culture in 1989, a poet and high official in the Party's propaganda department, suggested a conservative intention to censor and police on a scale not seen for years; the tone of newspaper and journal articles on cultural, political and economic topics was felt by observers to be increasingly leftist. The debates and arguments within film theory, which had created a new and exciting decade for film studies, fell silent once again. Political propaganda now dominated both filmmaking and film studies, four students from the Beijing Film Academy were arrested, and severe criticism leveled especially at the works of the Fifth Generation.

J. Tibet in March

Tibet is the most turbulent region in the PRC, whether in Mao era or Deng era. At the end of 1980s, Tibet became the most political explosive minority area in China, and the events happening there turned to be international sensation. Since the People's Liberation Army (PLA) entered Tibet in 1951, and claimed the region to be a part of China, Tibetan never cease to think that Chinese rule has not only meant the destruction of Tibetan sovereignty, but also a genocide of the Tibetan people and their culture. At first Mao Zedong adopted a relative conciliatory policy towards Tibetan, and tried to submit them gradually. But after the Tibetan rebellion led by spiritual leader Dalai Lama in 1959, the CCP became more oppressive to the region. During the Cultural Revolution, Chinese

colonialism culminated in destroying nearly all the cultural roots and minority cadres in Tibet. After Deng Xiaoping took power in 1978, he decided to "reverse the verdict"; the newly appointed Party Secretary Hu Yaobang made a genuine apology to Tibetan about their suffering under the Gang of Four, while he was touring in Tibet in 1980. Hu pledged to redress the past Party mistake and made a further six-point of liberal commitments to Tibet's future[93]. Hu wined not only the recognition of Tibetan, but also the admiration of Tibetan government-in-exile leader Dalai Lama. Dalai Lama believed that there was a realistic chance of reconciliation between two sides under the new Chinese leadership.

Hu Yaobang really had some sympathy towards Tibet; his new policy consisted of two components: (1) an ethnic dimension — making the Tibet Autonomous Region more Tibetan character oriented; (2) an economic dimension — improving the standard of living of individual Tibetan[94]. Hu understood the weakness of Tibet was its primitive agrarian production and dependent-on-state-subsidies economy; to cut off the "blood transfusion" Tibetan must find their own way to create a market oriented economy. Therefore, Hu worked out a plan to develop a tourism industry in Tibet, by utilizing its exotic ancient culture, to be a main economic component in the new era. The plan was going well in the early 1980s; it brought modest economic benefit and gradual relaxation of social and political control. The better-than-ever situation in Tibet attracted the return of many Tibetan-in-exile, the visiting of large amount of foreigners, and the increasing influx of inland Chinese settlers. The former brought the outside liberal influence and political awareness,

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93 Tesering Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*: *A History of Modern Tibet since 1947* (London : Pimlico, 1999), 382.

94 Ibid., 402.

and the latter caused Tibetan resentment against Chinese. On the other hand, the increasing contact with outside world made Tibet more vulnerable to internal unrest at the end of 1980s.

Since 1987, there were more than 140 demonstrations in Tibet; most of them were related to ethnic confrontation and political clash. September 25, 1987, local television in Lhasa had shown Dalai Lama's visit to the United States for meetings with Congressional leaders. The Chinese government had condemned Dalai Lama's visit. On September 27, many young Tibetans rallied in support of Dalai Lama, carrying the Tibetan flag and shouting the slogans "Tibet is Independent" and "May the Dalai Lama Live Ten Thousand Years". The demonstrators were confronted by the Chinese police, some monks along with five young Tibetans were arrested, and the crowd was dispersed without violence.[95]

The demonstrations on October 1, 1987 — Chinese National Day, began at the morning. These demonstrations were planned by monks from Sera monastery north of Lhasa. The demonstrators proceeded around the streets carrying a Tibetan flag and shouting slogans for Tibetan independence. The monks were joined by other young Tibetans. The demonstrations were quickly broken up by police, the demonstrators beaten, and the monks were arrested and taken to the local police station. A small group of police moved toward and shot the crowd, the crowd then set the police on fire. The shooting continued until the afternoon, when all the police left the area. The crowd began to loot the police station while it burned. The looting continued through the next day and thousands of police files were scattered in the street. Therefore, a night-time curfew was enforced in Lhasa and police vehicles with wailing sirens patrolled

[95] Ronald D. Schwartz, *Circle of Protest: Political Ritual in the Tibetan Uprising, 1987–92* (New Yor k: Columbia University Press, 1994), 155–56.

the deserted streets. During the following days convoys of trucks with soldiers armed with automatic weapons and motorcycle-sidecars with tripod-mounted machine-guns paraded through the main streets surrounding the Tibetan section of Lhasa.[96]

On Tuesday, October 6, 1987, another group of young monks left a monastery and walked into Lhasa to protest in front of the Chinese government compound against the continued detention of monks who had staged the first demonstrations on September 27. A few minutes later, a large number of armed police arrived. The monks were arrested and beaten with belts, sticks, rifles, and pieces of metal, but two days later all of them were released.[97]

About fifty foreigners witnessed the demonstrations on October 1 and were present during the violent confrontation at the police station. Some of them remained in the middle of the Tibetan crowd, and a number of them took photographs. Five foreigners were arrested on October 1 for taking photographs and had their film confiscated; three of them had their passports and cameras impounded for two days. In the weeks after the demonstrations, foreigners were persistently harassed by the Chinese authorities. Westerners had their rooms searched and passports checked and were told that they had to leave Tibet. Visa extensions could no longer be obtained from Public Security in Lhasa, and thus travelers had no choice but to leave. At the center, the CCP launched the anti-splittist campaign at the end of 1987, and condemned the "Dalai Clique"; it announced the Party would continually fight against "splittism" and quell the disturbance in Tibet with the utmost effort.[98]

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96 Ronald D. Schwartz, *Circle of Protest: Political Ritual in the Tibetan Uprising, 1987–92* (New Yor k: Columbia University Press, 1994), 157–59.

97 Ibid., 160–64.

98 Ibid., 164–66.

In 1988, when the Party policy in Tibet was loosen, there were sporadic demonstrations, and the major one was occurred in March 1988, following the Mönlam festival. Unlike the violence on October 1, 1987, when local Public Security officers opened fire on a Tibetan crowd, the events of March 1988 pitted Tibetans against units of the PAP (People's Armed Police) moved in from Sichuan to suppress protest. The conflict had been reduced to its starkest elements, a direct confrontation between Tibetans and uniformed Chinese soldiers. On June 15, 1988, Qiao Shi, member of the Politburo and secretary of the Party's Political and Legal Commission, began an inspection tour of Tibet. Qiao called for greater suppression of mass demonstrations, and pointed out that Tibetans would be "gunned down in the streets" if there were any further demonstrations.[99]

The international well-known Tibetan demonstrations in 1989 were triggered by three events. At first it was the trial of independence activists since the beginning of unrest in 1987 took place in January 1989. On January 19 the Chinese government announced that twenty-seven Tibetans, some of them held for more than a year, had been tried and sentenced. The second was March 10 approached — the thirtieth anniversary of the failed Tibetan uprising and the subsequent flight of Dalai Lama in 1959. The last was the death of Panchen Lama from a heart attack on January 28 during his visit in Tibet. Panchen Lama is the Party sanctioned spiritual leader in Tibet, and the Acting Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) since 1964. He defied the Chinese by refusing to denounce Dalai Lama, and called for his return and the restoration of Tibetan independence instead. For this

[99] Ronald D. Schwartz, *Circle of Protest: Political Ritual in the Tibetan Uprising, 1987–92* (New Yor k: Columbia University Press, 1994), 168–74.

act of defiance he was denounced as a reactionary, put on trial and tortured. He vanished from public for fourteen years. Following the announcement of Panchen Lama's death, rumors circulated in Tibet that he had been murdered by Chinese conspiracy. Though the Chinese government might insist that the search for a new Panchen Lama, but it was rejected by Dalai Lama and his government-in-exile, as well as most of Tibetan. Demonstrations grew in late February and early March of 1989. On March 5 about forty people began a peaceful demonstration in front of a temple in Lhasa, a few angry protesters threw stones back at Chinese police.[100]

Over the next few days the demonstrations escalated. At least three times soldiers poured into the city, shooting wildly into the crowds, and the crowds rushed in stores run by Chinese, pillaging them and forcing their owners to flee. Premier Li Peng announced Martial Law in Lhasa on March 7. The next day more than two thousand soldiers entered the city and began arresting rioters. The Chinese dragged thousands of Tibetans from their homes and placed them under detention, and hundreds of casualties reported. Since then, Tibet was closed to free travel by foreigners. Protest in Tibet since 1987 has produced a radicalized younger generation of Tibetans. "Having grown up under Chinese rule, these young protestors epitomized the antagonism of a new generation to Chinese rule in Tibet and to the communist political system alike"[101]. Under Martial Law, the anger and the tension between two sides do not alleviate, but extend.

It was difficult to reveal what Party Secretary Zhao Ziyang's attitude toward Tibetan unrest in 1989, because Zhao was

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100 Ronald D. Schwartz, *Circle of Protest: Political Ritual in the Tibetan Uprising, 1987–92* (New Yor k: Columbia University Press, 1994), 175–81.

101 Ibid., 188.

not responsible for the imposition and implementation of Martial Law in Tibet (as in the Beijing Spring, such acts were directed by Li Peng). But Zhao must have acquiesced Party's decision at that time, as Hu Jintao, the Party head of TAR in 1989 and one of the protégé of Zhao, who conducted Martial Law in March and ordered the shooting to Tibetan. Zhao also went along with his fellow Politburo members in condemning the protests in Tibetan streets. In addition, unlike in the eve of Tiananmen massacre, when Zhao Ziyang showed support to students' patriotism and persuaded them to leave the square with tear. During the turmoil of Tibet, Zhao did nothing to alleviate the situation, neither making a moderate speech in Beijing, nor touring to Tibet to find a solution.

Unlike the aftermath of Tiananmen massacre later that year, Western media gave more reports and analyses on Beijing than on Lhasa. Neither ordinary Chinese who advocated human rights, nor students who demonstrated in the Beijing streets, have expressed the sympathy to March turbulence in Tibet, as the Tibetan fighting for democracy is beyond their agenda of Chinese democratization process. Few Chinese proponents of democracy spoke out against the suppression of the Tibetans. Most leading intellectuals either supported the government's actions or refused to comment. "After the Tiananmen crack down, it became common for Chinese dissidents in the West to share a platform with Tibetan leaders, and the two groups met and talked on a number of occasions. Differences remained, but a much greater understanding of each other's problems developed."[102]

Since the founding of PRC in 1949, there were several thousands of minority unrest in China, in which Tibet was among having the

[102] Ronald D. Schwartz, *Circle of Protest: Political Ritual in the Tibetan Uprising, 1987–92* (New Yor k: Columbia University Press, 1994), 209.

most and being the worst region and the majority of them occurred in the late 1980s. Under Zhao Ziyang era, the Sino-Tibetan relation had reached the lowest point since 1959. Except the bloodshed protest in March, the year of 1989 brought another setback after the Tiananmen massacre in June and Dalai Lama being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in October. The immediate consequence was the "Han" government fostered a more hard-line political policy in Tibet ever since.

Dalai Lama should also bear some responsibilities for the Tibetan problem. He tried to make the Tibetan issue internationalized, particularly in the late 1980s, by lobbying the West to intervene in the region, a subject that the Chinese government considered to be their internal affair. Besides, Dalai Lama set the only one prerequisite for the negotiation with the Chinese government was the talk of Tibetan independence, and always indirectly called for local Tibetans to fight for the task without the fear of violence[103]. Dalai Lama's intransigence only further irritated the Chinese, and therefore they continued to give trouble to Tibetans.

The problem of Tibet in the late 1980s was fundamentally the conflict between two cultures. For Chinese government, they hoped that Tibetans could concern more about economy, not politics, in the reform era, and the next Tibetan generation could be merged into modern society, being a part of Chinese, and less Tibetanized. For Tibetans, even the generous "blood-transfusion" or a large amount of money investment from Beijing, it could not solve the incompatibility between Chinese culture and Tibetan culture, and their disgust of Chinese political control.

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[103] Only in the early 1990s did Dalai Lama renounce the demand of Tibetan independence, and ask the meeting with Chinese government for a peaceful solution of a more self-governed Tibet, on the ground of "one China and Tibet is a part of China".

Chapter Three
Tiananmen Elegy

A. Origin of Tiananmen Incident

Political Context

The origin of 1989 Beijing Spring politically could be traced back to the Thirteenth Party Congress in October 1987. During the meeting, Deng Xiaoping's decision to retain the Party elders "retire club" — CAC, and withdraw himself from all party and state posts except the most important one of Chairman of MAC. Both the CAC and the chairmanship of MAC served as the watchdog for the newly Party reformers and the social liberalist. Zhao Ziyang, appointed Party General Secretary at the Thirteenth Congress, was stuck between the leftist and the reformist personnel at the Congress. The conservative leadership led by Premier Li Peng, frequently monitored Zhao's conducts for the contention of Deng's succession.

It was Deng Xiaoping who pushed Zhao Ziyang for radical price reform and economic transformation in the late 1986, the result of almost 20 percent inflation and the chaos of panic buying in the streets in the subsequent year made Deng felt deeply scared. Deng needed a scapegoat at this time and choose Zhao. During a heated confrontation in August 1988 at summer resort of Beidaihe, the Party leadership voted to shelve Zhao's program of price reform and

to halt any further approaches toward expanding the role of market mechanisms in the economy. The final pillar of Zhao's economic program was razed in March 1989, when Li Peng and his left wing of the Party made a direct public attack on Zhao and his policies at the annual meeting of the NPC. Li spoke the economic difficulties facing the country, particularly the unrelenting pace of inflation. He told the Chinese people that they must be prepared for "several years of austerity" if the country were to overcome its economic problems. And in a direct allusion to Zhao and his programs, Li said that the government had made mistakes in the past, most of which were due to "the tendency of some people to want quick results." At this moment, a few months before the student demonstrations, Li had already replaced Zhao in the field of economic management.

Li Peng's courage to publicly oppose Zhao Ziyang came from the support of the old men who stood offstage, behind a screen. For the Party elders, Zhao was second task to be overthrown after Hu Yaobang since 1987. After the failure of "anti-bourgeoisie liberalization" campaign and Zhuozhou conference (they were both curbed by Deng and Zhao), the elders regained a hope after Li Peng's ascendancy at the Thirteenth Congress and the failure of Zhao's price reform[1]. After Zhao launching the political reform movement in the late 1986, the conservatives considered it would seriously undermine the Party's monopoly. At the beginning of 1989, a group of political old men were launching a "spring attack" on Zhao and the ammunition began to explode[2]. Chen Yun took the lead and disseminated the "Eight Opinions" at the Politburo

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1 See Chapter One in the thesis, 14–16.

2 Michel Oksenberg, Lawrence R. Sullivan, and Marc Lambert, ed. *Beijing Spring, 1989*: *Confrontation and Conflict, the Basic Documents* (Armonk, N.Y. : M.E. Sharpe, Inc, 1990), 275–79.

meeting. He accused Zhao of completely abandoning the socialist economy and pursuing a capitalist commodity economy. Chen emphasized that Zhao has deviated from the major direction of socialism. Shortly after the "Eight Opinions", Bo Yibo wrote a letter to Deng Xiaoping launching a second attack. Bo criticized Zhao was second after Hu Yaobang to import "bourgeoisie liberalization", and was too lenient toward intellectuals' "spiritual pollution". Besides, both Yao Yilin and Li Peng repeatedly blamed Zhao, saying that the General Secretary had extended his reach too far and wide in economic affairs and that Zhao should keep himself within the bounds of his power. Subsequently the "overthrowing Zhao" chorus took shape; it included Bo Yibo, Wang Zhen, Li Xiannian, Deng Yingchao, Yao Yilin and Li Peng, with Chen Yun as the central figure, they lodged the complain against Zhao to Deng Xiaoping, and urged changing the General Secretary. For Deng, unlike the elders, he lost the trust of Zhao mainly coming from the economic stratum, but he still supported Zhao's political reform at this moment. Deng adopted a stratagem as follows: he might protect Zhao if it is still possible for him to do so, otherwise, he will give him up. Deng decided that Zhao's political fate would be sealed in the coming Beidaihe summer meeting of 1989, but the student movement changed the whole route.

Zhao Ziyang must have regretted that he had allied with the elders to oust Hu Yaobang in the early 1987. After the coexistence between the Left and the Right leadership formed in the Thirteenth Congress, and the death of Hu in April 1989, Zhao had lost the reformist political base to strike back. The failure of Zhao's political career after the Tiananmen massacre seems to be confirmed even before the Beijing Spring began, and it could be assumed that even without June Fourth incident, Zhao would be purged by the elders anyway. Zhao Ziyang in the early 1989 was extremely lonely and vulnerable to attack.

On the other hand, Zhao Ziyang started his Beijing career as State Premier who was in charge of economy in the early 1980s, but unfortunately he became the Party General Secretary after the Thirteenth Congress in 1987. That means Zhao should have spent more time on political administration than on his long time specialty as an economic expert. Should Zhao remain in concentrating on economy through his tenure, that the outbreak of June Fourth may spell less trouble on him, and even he would not step down afterwards. Zhao Ziyang's China in the late 1980s like that of Mao Zedong in the mid–1970s, the economy was in stagnation, and Zhao's 1986 political reform was a tool to reinvigorate the economy, but unfortunately he had failed eventually. The year of 1989 Zhao must traverse was by no means smooth, and the mass reacted to the national difficulties by taking the rebellious flag against Zhao and the Party. After the failure of price reform in the early 1989, Zhao Ziyang stepped aside to let the conservative Li Peng arise, but at this time Zhao only lost his control on economy, he still had a say on political affairs. The emergence of Beijing Spring in the coming months was the best opportunity for Zhao to fight back the conservatives, obviously Zhao wanted to use this last straw to desperately regain his power, no matter confronting the Party and Deng Xiaoping. These analyses can explain why Zhao behaved so contradictory to the Party discipline and Deng's expectation during one and a half months of Beijing turbulence.

Social Context

By March 1989, just before one month ago the outbreak of Tiananmen incident, the majority of Chinese was noticeably better off than ever before. From the early 1979 to 1989, exactly ten years "open door" and reform in China, there had been extraordinary transformations in the country, and China was changing its face when it came to Zhao Ziyang era. According to the analyses in Charter Two, comparing with a decade earlier, China in the late 1980s

had greater access to social openness, cultural liberation, material abundance, with limited political diversity, and all of them identified by the double-digit growth in GDP. Since 1987, however, many of the gains had been eroded and the economy had been deteriorated. "Peasants had been paid for their main crops (still purchased by the government) only partly in cash. Inflation had eaten up much of the extra earnings of urban workers and may even have led to a fall in real income for the first time in the post-Mao period. Unemployment, hidden behind the euphemism "waiting for work", was growing rapidly, leaving numerous young members of the urban working class with both the time and the rationale for protest."[3]

But the most dangerous time-bomb under Zhao Ziyang's reign were the unprecedented corruption and profiteering, and the decline of social moral in the PRC history. The reason partly laid in the government's loss of control over its own cadres, partly was the product of economic reform. Prostitutes brazenly cruised hotels in the big cities; crime, from theft to murder, rape to kidnapping, increased; corruption spread like unchecked cancer, to the point that nothing could be done without passing money from hand to hand. Inflation exacerbated the problems: Petty officials were generally on fixed incomes, and when inflation squeezed them, they squeezed others. Such behavior likely added to the resentment ordinary people felt toward corrupt Party leaders, such as the wrongdoings by the offspring of Deng Xiaoping, Zhao Ziyang and many Party elders. A striking picture was formed: In 1989, China's total national income was about 150 billion yuan, of which about 600 billion was personal income[4]. The portion of the domestic economy that was vulnerable

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3 Baum, *Burying Mao*, 431.

4 Zhang Liang, *Zhongguo Liusi Zhenxiang* (June Fourth: the True Story, Hong Kong : Mirror Books, 2001), 215.

to official profiteering was between 200 billion and 300 billion yuan annually[5]. These figures do not include any corruption connected with foreign trade and investment. China's prosperity in the late 1980s was likely not the economic growth, but self-consumption — the tiger eating itself.[6]

Almost all of the mass demonstrations in China since 1976, including those of June Fourth, only occurred in the cities, not the countryside, as the peasants, the getihu (small and 10,000 yuan entrepreneurs), and the employees of joint-venture companies have benefited the most from the reform since the late 1970s. These people were intentionally quiet during the unrest of Beijing Spring. On the other hand, the victims of Deng Xiaoping's program, such as the factory workers, university students, urban residents, and the intellectuals, were the most active participants in Tiananmen. Their social and economic statuses were lagged far behind the national progress, and always regarding themselves being betrayed by the Party. So as Andrew Nathan had put it before "it was the collapse of hope more than rising anger at inflation or corruption that led people into streets in 1989."[7]

Intellectual Context

The Chinese mass democratic movements could be traced back to May Fourth movement in 1919, when thousands of students protested in front of Tiananmen Square, for lobbying government delegation not to sign the humiliated Treaty of Versailles. It was the first mass demonstrations vis-à-vis the state in Chinese history.

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5 Zhang Liang, *Zhongguo Liusi Zhenxiang* (June Fourth: the True Story, Hong Kong : Mirror Books, 2001), 215.

6 Link, *Evening Chats in Beijing*, 56.

7 Andrew J. Nathan, *China's Transition* (New York : Columbia University Press, 1997), 228.

After the May Fourth, the New Culture Movement starting from 1920s had established a kind of primitive civil society in China, though limited in intellectual sphere. From the founding of Republican government by the KMT regime in 1911, partly due to the need of struggles with the CCP for the control of the country, partly was the bourgeoisie ideology upheld by the KMT, many democratic practices and opposition expression flourished under its rule. From the 1913 elections when a number of parties genuinely competed for political office, to demonstrators condemned various warlord oppressors during the 1920s; from the December Ninth Movement leaders organized their opposition to the ineffectual government response to Japanese aggression in 1935–36, to many Beijing University intellectuals formed the League for the Protection of Civil Rights in the early 1940s, in order to criticize the KMT's abuse of human rights. Such seeds buried in the soil of Mainland were harvested after KMT fled to Taiwan in 1949, as in the mid-1990s the regime was effectively guiding Taiwan through a process of rapid modernization and has taken steps toward developing a multiparty democracy. "Because Guomindang repression was somewhat erratic, intellectuals were able to organize groups and establish journals to express such ideas"[8]. But those democratic movements since the early twentieth century under the Republican period were generated by the people (bottom-up), not by the government (top-down), and they could not be achieved and institutionalized. After the Japanese invasion in 1937 and the Civil War in 1945, the Chinese democratic movements in Mainland were discontinued, and the energies of the entire nation and intellectuals were consumed by the long time adversity.

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[8] Merle Goldman, *China's Intellectuals*: *Advise and Dissent* (Cambridge MA : Harvard University Press, 1981), 22.

On the contrary, it could be defined that China under Mao Zedong, from the liberation in 1949 to the end of political chaos in 1976, was a desert of democratic movement. With only one exception of brief period liberalization begun in May 1957, when the Party encouraged the "blooming of a hundred flowers and the contending of a hundred schools of thought" and called for the nation's intellectuals to criticize the Party. The resultant outpouring of expression was swiftly cut off by the end of June, when an "antirightist campaign" was launched against who had spoken out. The subsequent ten-year ideologically driven, faction-ridden bloodshed of the Cultural Revolution in the late 1960s, gave the Chinese another legacy — the legitimacy to rebel against the authority.

At the end of 1970s, Chinese people felt completely disappointed with Mao's rule, and such disappointment occurred in the form of mourning of Zhou Enlai's death. A dramatic, semi-spontaneous demonstrations in Tiananmen Square on April 5, 1976, against the dictatorship of Mao, the Gang of Four, and the Cultural Revolution, as well as in support of the return of Deng Xiaoping. After Mao died and Deng took charge, the Democracy Wall movement started in the late 1978 was a more genuine and wholly spontaneous mass participation, led by Beijing Zoo electrician Wei Jingsheng. The movement called for human rights, a rule of law, freedom of speech, and the fifth modernization — democracy. It not only criticized the tyranny of Mao, but also charged the root of Chinese long time autocracy — the Communist Party system. Both two movements went hand in hand with the Byzantine Chinese politics: The Aril Fourth movement served as an advocator to Deng Xiaoping, for his intra-party factional competition with the Gang of Four; the Democracy Wall was exploited by Deng, in when he supported the movement for his top power struggle with Hua Guofeng, but after Deng consolidated his sole leadership then ordered to suppress it.

The two movements in the late 1970s were the first time that the Chinese people staging a mass protest movement on their own in contempt of the Party. The participators of two movements were mainly former Red Guards and rusticated youth from countryside, although they could become the intellectuals if had not been the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution. Both the city dwellers, students, and the intellectuals were absent, they feared that such movements might hurt the coming reform program under the new leader Deng Xiaoping, and furthermore, the horrible picture of mass turbulence during the Cultural Revolution was still lingering in their mind.

In case of intellectuals — the most restless group in long time Chinese democratic movements, they are unlike Wei Jingsheng or any other former Red Guards, and still have openly faith in Marxism, believing in the Party's ability to reform itself under Deng Xiaoping. Especially after the April Fifth movement in 1976 and the Third Plenum in 1978, when the Party decided to "reverse the verdict", by rehabilitating most victims under the Cultural Revolution, imposing the new national development program of four modernization, promising to safeguard the individual rights and not to repeat Mao's mistakes. It immediately generated a hope (or illusion) to Chinese intellectuals that the state would definitely return to the right track under the new leadership, and the intellectuals regained the confidence since the Hundred Flowers movement that they had already given up any hope about the Party. Even after the crackdown of Democracy Wall in 1979, Chinese intellectuals still supported Deng Xiaoping and the reformist wing of the Party, because they wanted the reformers to defeat the remaining Maoists in the Party, for cleaning up the obstacles to the forthcoming comprehensive reform. Particularly in the year of 1980, the Party's announcement of the Gengshen reform did produce an unintended consequence: victory for democratic candidates in the election campaigns that swept China's district- and county-level People's Congress, campuses,

and factories. The beginning of 1980s liked the beginning of 1950s in the PRC history, in both times when the intellectuals bore strong affection toward the Party and were willing to devote their energies to the state.

But the honeymoon between the intellectuals and the Party did not last long, when the latter produced so many campaigns against playwright Bai Hua and the bourgeoisie liberalization in the 1980s; they progressively alienated many of those who had earlier held out hope for Deng Xiaoping. After Deng announced to amend the Constitution and eliminate the four big freedoms (speaking out freely, airing views fully, holding great debates, writing big-character posters), the high point of reformist optimism in the early 1980s began to reverse. The paramount leader for many Chinese intellectuals was no longer their benefactor, but still a Mao-like figure, although the economic control had been lessened.

There were still some factors contributed to China's liberalization and the intellectuals' dissatisfaction at the Party in the 1980s. First, since 1978 thousands of foreign scholars, business people, students and tourists visited China each year. Foreign companies, joint ventures and western products were constantly found within China. China's interaction with outside world mushroomed like never before. The influence of the thaw in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and East Asia (mainly South Korea and Taiwan) also brought tremendous effect to Chinese democratic elites; it certainly opened another window to them for the inspiration of political change. Besides, after the Cultural Revolution and the reform, the deteriorated Party role created a "belief vacuum" to Chinese mundane society; it gave place to various religions, secret societies, and the popular desire to make as much money as possible and to live a comfortable life.

Second, Deng Xiaoping was also responsible for the awakening of Chinese liberalism in the 1980s, although that was not his original intention. When the time went back to early 1980s, Deng encouraged

Chinese students learned from the West and sent thousands of them abroad to study. While the students in the West observed the newly technologies, they were inevitably contracted the Western bourgeois liberalization, and brought it back home with the distrust of any Party orthodoxy. By the late 1970s Deng was convinced that China needed both technical and organizational expertise to develop its economy rapidly, and by promoting the rehabilitated cadres, intellectuals, and younger generation to create a pool of talent. Deng wanted them to fill up the Party posts vacated by the veterans, as well as to reinvigorate the Communist spirit in the new era. But unfortunately, due to their past unhappy experiences under Mao era, those recruits always despised the rigid doctrines and were eager to transform the party-state both economically and politically. Deng's protégés Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang were the most distinguished examples among them.

Under the most relaxed social milieu of Hu and Zhao, the intellectuals during the 1980s had chance to reflect that is Chinese traditional culture, rather than its political system, as the nub of contemporary problems, and the national stagnation lies in the Chinese characteristics as a whole. Such inquiry produced the prevalence of six-part "River Elegy" and the debate of "Cultural Fever" in the late 1980s. Unlike in the wake of June Fourth, Deng Xiaoping did not seal the liberalists' fate after the student movement in the late 1986, and he continued to urge Zhao Ziyang conducting the political reform at this time. Zhao's political reform had split the Chinese intellectuals in terms of their political views: Those of establishment intellectuals (within Zhao's political reform office) and non-establishment ones. The establishment intellectuals considered their Party membership as the most advantageous to propel the reform. On the other hand, they were always impatient to the reform obstacles everywhere laid down by the conservatives, and pushed Zhao to act more radically. For the non-establishment intellectuals, including those withdrew from Zhao's political reform group, they

distasted the outcome of Zhao's program, particularly the new cult of Zhao — neoauthoritarianism. Most of them joined in the street demonstrations in the summer of 1989, they were no longer satisfied with remonstrating with those in power, and tried a bolder step to overthrow of the system.

The intellectuals during the later half of 1980s also created many new institutional bases beyond the Party control. Coffeehouses and restaurants provided space for these political and intellectual discussions; some even operated on campuses, leasing their facilities from the universities. Intellectuals emulated Shanghai of the 1920s in the May Fourth movement, opening a "New Enlightenment Salon" for tea and critical analysis in the basement of the downtown Beijing located Dule "Happiness" Bookstore. When the Bookstore was opened on January 28, 1989, there was attended by more than 100 people, among them Beijing-based American, French, and Italian correspondents as well as Chinese[9]. The "New Enlightenment Salon" also promoted the short-lived journal *New Enlightenment*, and the Dule itself was reputed to be the first private bookstore in China since 1949.

Even more important were the proliferating think tanks and research institutes. Although some of them were sponsored by the government, particularly by reform factions allied with Zhao Ziyang; a few were set up by major private business corporations such as the Stone Computer Corporation. Others were headquartered on campuses or created as more autonomous academic institutions, such as Chen Ziming Wang Juntao's Beijing Social and Economic Sciences Research Institute. Other intellectual centers remained part of the government's higher education or scientific establishment but were increasingly free from authority supervision.

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[9] Craig Calhoun, *Neither Gods nor Emperors*: *Students and the Struggle for Democracy in China* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 1994), 226.

The intellectuals spearheaded the 1989 democratic movement even before Hu Yaobang's death in April. Apart from the announcement by a large group of intellectuals to withdraw from the Party membership at the end of 1988, on January 16, 1989, astrophysicist and professor at Chinese University of Science and Technology (Keda) Fang Lizhi wrote a private letter to Deng. He called on Deng to declare a general amnesty for "political prisoners", particularly the leader of Democracy Wall — Wei Jingsheng, in honor of the coming of several important anniversaries, including the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the PRC in 1949. On February 13, the poet Bei Dao and 32 other prominent intellectual and literary figures signed an open letter to the Standing Committee of the NPC in support of Fang's letter. Just under two weeks later, 42 Beijing scientists and intellectuals signed another open letter, this one addressed to General Secretary Zhao Ziyang, calling for further democratic reforms — including freedom of speech, publication, and press, and the release from prison or labor camps of all people convicted of "crimes of thought". On March 14, another public letter came out in support of Fang's call for amnesty. This one signed by 43 literary figures and addressed to the NPC, was organized by Dai Qing, the reporter from the Guangming Daily who later tried to negotiate with the students, and Yan Jiaqi, Beijing University professor and former member of Zhao Ziyang's political reform group. These four letters shook the Chinese polity at its highest levels and it was a catalyst in the chain of events that led to the tremendous uprising later that summer, indirectly triggering the student unrest starting in April[10]. In the wake of June Fourth, Chinese government accused these dissidents of "instigating student rebellion" against the Party.

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[10] Gregor Benton, and Alan Hunter, ed. *Wild Lily, Prairie Fire: China's Road to Democracy, Yan'an to Tiananmen, 1942–1989* (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1995), 264–65.

Student Context

Regarding to the Chinese students in the late 1980s, even their campus life, accommodation, food supply, and daily living standard were far better than any other generations in the PRC history, but they were still the most resentful group toward the government at that time. Partly it was students' parents, families and their relatives had been depressed by the political chaos under Mao and the economic uncertainty under Deng, partly the students felt that their voice were still unconcerned by the Party even in the reform period.

Influenced by the liberalist tendency, Chinese university students were actively engaged in the political and scholarly organization in the late 1980s. Notably generating from the nation's most prestigious institution — Beijing University and the time could be traced back to 1919. When the University leadership (Cai Yuanpei, Chen Duxiu, Hu Shi) put the ideas of "democracy for governance of the school", freedom of thought, and tolerance of diversity into practice, fully ensuring that there would be academic freedom within the school walls. Beijing University at that time could boast an unprecedented vitality in intellectual life, various scholarly trends, and many different schools of thought. The University students under the guidance of school leadership also dared to defy the imperialism of Versailles Conference, and challenge Confucianism and traditional learning. Beijing University students were the pioneers in the subsequent New Culture movement; they formed reading societies and published magazines, and took their messages beyond the university gates to give street-corner and even peasant village lectures. Their messages had turned on the ideas of science and democracy and revitalized China by transforming both culture and politics during the May Fourth period. The spirit of May Fourth became the inspiration both for the Chinese Revolution and for future generations of students.

When the time came to 1988–89, it seemed that the clock had turned back seventy years ago. Many Chinese capital students formed

several large public gatherings across campuses, not only from Beijing University. The audiences were drawn here mainly for the topics related to China's fate; some of attendees were simply student fans of popular young scholars. Many organizers of these discussion groups later became the leaders of student demonstrations, such as Shen Tong's Olympic Institute and Wuerkaixi's "Confucius Study Society"; the most famous one was Wang Dan's "Democracy Salon".

In 1989 Wang Dan was a twenty-one years old Beijing University undergraduate student with history major, his "Democracy Salon" held first in a student dormitory room and later (to accommodate a larger audience) on a campus lawn near the statue of Cervantes. The Salon always invited some renowned intellectuals, such as Ren Wanding and Fang Lizhi spouse, to lecture on all kinds of dissents, including Neo-Marxism, Existentialism, and the open discussion of a multi-party system in China[11]. Some student leaders, including Wang Dan, might be inspired by these discussions to think that the future student demonstrations should target on not only the Party corruption, but also the whole Party system. That such meetings before the outbreak of Beijing Spring had acted as a bridge to connect between the intellectuals and the students, providing them an opportunity to communicate and understand each other. "Democracy Salon" and other public gatherings had formed a base to solidify the intellectuals and the students; unlike in 1978 and in 1986, however, this time was combining both forces to participate together in democratic movement unprecedented in the PRC history.

The students during the 1980s quickly grew anxious to take some direct action, not just to talk. We may regard the September 1985 student demonstrations against Japanese goods, "which can be interpreted as unfavorable to the reform leaders, who

11 Calhoun, *Neither Gods nor Emperors*, 227–28.

advocated trade with Japan"[12]. Whereas the 1986 protest called for a concrete method by the Party to end the skyrocketing inflation and the declining living standard, and opposed to the conservative side. Because of Deng Xiaoping's lenient punishment toward the students after the 1986 turbulence, these young men continued to act impetuously; sometimes there was nothing related to political reason, but only to vent their anger in the public. In spring of 1988, after three unemployed youths killed a Beijing University student in a confrontation in a restaurant near the campus, over a thousand Beijing University students marched to Tiananmen, demanding retribution and measures to improve school security and public order. In December of the same year, a fighting at Hehai University in Nanjing between some African students and Chinese students had led to angry protest marches denouncing Africans for allegedly assaulting Chinese women and beating up other students. On January 1, 1989, a similar incident occurred at the Beijing Language Institute, an African student who had allegedly abused a Chinese woman was the object of an angry protest by several hundred Chinese students who put up wall posters and demanded punishment for the African. Two weeks later, African students at Zhejiang Agricultural University went on strike in protest against Chinese racism. But in reality, the nature of such riots was the Chinese students' resentment that the Africans (who constituted the majority of third-world students studying in China on Chinese government scholarships) received far larger living stipends[13]. These protests were considered to be a "trial run" for the events in the spring of 1989, and unfortunately the Party underestimated this pent-up dissatisfaction of the students.

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12 Goldman, *Sowing the Seeds*, 202.

13 Baum, *Burying Mao*, 238.

However, unlike any previous movements in which only one social group fighting with the government, the 1989 chorus was joined by members of nearly every profession, from the restless students, the tactful intellectuals, and the formative BWAF (Beijing Workers Autonomous Federation), as well as journalists, cadres, entrepreneurs, medical doctors, hotel chefs, and to some extent even peasants (who helped stop army trucks from getting into Beijing from the surrounding countryside). China in 1989 was a tinderbox ready to blow up, and the curtain rose in April.

B. Tiananmen Days and Nights

In 1989, a year of snake in traditional Chinese calendar, was witnessed to be a great memorial year which coincided with many historical moments: The bicentenary of the French revolution; the 70th anniversary of the May Fourth movement; the 40th anniversary of the founding of the PRC; the 30th anniversary of the Lushan Conference; the 20th anniversary of the death of Liu Shaoqi; the 10th anniversary of the imprisonment of Wei Jingsheng; and even the centenary of the birth of Adolf Hitler. But those moments were not essential to trigger the tragedy in this Beijing summer, and surprisingly the unexpected death of Hu Yaobang, the former General Secretary of CCP, on April 15, did lead to the events happened on June 4.

By no means of a liberal politician in Western sense, Hu Yaobang was still regarded by many Chinese as one of the few open-minded Communist leaders, and a valued advocate of more tolerant policies toward intellectuals. He adopted the less rigid policy during his tenure by favoring Western suits and ties instead of Mao style jackets, and did extensive foreign travels while bringing back home with many reform ideas. Besides, Hu was among the very few Chinese leaders whose children were not believed to be involved in corruption or in

profiteering from their business. For Chinese university students Hu was a hero, because he had refused Deng Xiaoping's dictate to crush the late 1986 movement and it led to his downfall in the early 1987.

Hu Yaobang's death liked "a match thrown into a barrel of waiting gunpowder" (Beijing Mayor Chen Xitong). As had happened in China in the past, the death of a popular leader jolted Chinese consciences and provided an opportunity that ignited long-contained resentment. Chinese university students always spearheaded in these occasions, as what their predecessors did during the May Fourth movement in 1919. On the day of Hu's death, there appeared the first Dazibao (big character posters) mounting on the walls of Beijing University's "Triangle Area" to mourn the deceased leader. Then numerous elegies and essays in Hu's memory were posted on the walls of many Beijing higher institutions. By 4:30 in the afternoon, the first student mourners had appeared in Tiananmen Square, the political symbol of the country, where they laid at the Monument of the People's Heroes white paper flower mourning wreaths adorned with vertical strips of paper bearing elegiac couplets. Over the next few days, many more processions of students spontaneously formed and marched from their campuses to Tiananmen. During these marches, they not only carried mourning wreaths and banners, but also shouted slogans and waved signs calling for an end to corruption in the government and for the introduction of democratic reform. From April 17, the student mourning also spread and intensified in the provinces outside Beijing. In Shanghai, Tianjin and Xian, the student mourning activities resulted in not only the heavy traffic jams, but also the clashes between students and local police. On April 18 in Beijing, many students attempted to deliver a petition containing seven demands to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and to meet with a representative of the Standing Committee, by performing a sit-in in front of the Great Hall of the People. The demands called for the government to: (1) reevaluate

Hu Yaobang and his achievements; (2) renounce the 1987 Anti-Bourgeois Liberalization campaign; (3) allow citizens to publish nonofficial newspapers and end censorship of the press; (4) reveal the salaries and other wealth of Party and government leaders and their families; (5) end restrictions on demonstrations in Beijing; (6) increase state expenditures for higher education; and (7) hold democratic elections to replace government officials who made bad policy decisions. At this moment, the student movement was evolved from its embryo into the form of confrontation with the Chinese government.[14]

It is important here to trace the enigma of Hu Yaobang's death, and there are many rumors about his untimely death. Reportedly Hu unexpectedly spoke at the April 8 Politburo meeting, complaining about the neglect of education and its funding, and arguing that the root of bourgeois liberalization was not the relaxed political control, but the Party corruption. During the meeting Hu bitterly quarreled with Zhao Ziyang and Li Peng, who insisted that Hu had no right to speak as he was no longer in charge of state affairs. Hu carried away with indignation and suddenly fell on the floor, and he finally passed away on April 15. From Hu's death — the origin of June Fourth movement, it clearly showed that the student movement was not pro-democracy in nature, but anti-corruption at least at its beginning. For many students, Hu Yaobang was not a symbol of liberty, but rather a beacon of honesty. Even many democratic slogans they held during the petition, the word of "democracy" was merely a tool to clean out the corruption, not a call for a new era of multiparty system.

There were two themes in the whole event that culminated in the June Fourth massacre: the conflict between the Left and the Right in the Party leadership, and the conflict between the Party and the

[14] Calhoun, *Neither Gods nor Emperors*, 231–32.

students. In the wake of Hu Yaobang's death, the two conflicts started. At first, before Hu's memorial meeting on April 22, Party Secretary Zhao Ziyang gave Hu a posthumous evaluation as "a great Marxist", although he seldom sided with Hu before. But the paramount leader Deng Xiaoping disagreed, he considered the evaluation was "too high", insisting that Hu was not qualified enough for such title, and he was responsible for many mistakes during the campaign against the bourgeois liberalization. Second, under the endorsement of Premier Li Peng, on April 18 Beijing Mayor Chen Xitong announced a work report accusing the student mourning of "heating up" and potentially dangerous[15]. Chen's report was only a prelude of bigger accusation later in April 26 *People's Daily* editorial. The date of April 18 served as watershed, as the usefulness of Hu Yaobang's death was no longer existed after this date; the students' mourning for Hu had changed into mourning for China.

From April 19 to 23, the student demonstrations exploded across the country than ever before. Began with laying siege to Xinhua Gate, the students targeted directly on the CCP, and the nature of the demonstrations now was not mourning, but shouting. At this moment, except some university lecturers and professors shed sympathy by writing letters to the government in support of their pupils, there were no other social groups joining in the demonstrations but students. On April 20, the democracy salon at Beijing University reopened on 11 p.m., during the meeting seven students, including Ding Xiaoping, Wang Dan, Wuerkaixi, Yang Tao, and Feng Congde, announced that a "United Association" — former body of University Students Autonomous Association in Beijing (BUSA) which formalized on April 24 — be established. They petitioned the government to reevaluate Hu Yaobang and

[15] Zhang Liang, *Zhongguo Liusi Zhenxiang* (June Fourth: the True Story), 125.

to release Wei Jingsheng, insisting that Deng Xiaoping admit the mistakes during the ten years of reform. Their slogans were "Down with dictatorship" and "Lift the freedom", and all of them agreed that they would continue to boycott the class unless the government meets their demands. Furthermore, on the date of Hu Yaobang's state funeral at Great Hall, the students continued to shout and wait for the Party leaders to accept their demands, by kneeing down at the steps of the Hall — — a long time Confucian tradition in remonstrating the emperors. Such act was definitely a defiance to the CCP and it caused great embarrassment to the leadership.

During this period, the tension between the students and the government did not increase until the Police Security Bureau attacked the students by force on April 22. The students reacted by shouting the slogan of "Down with the police", and demanded the government's investigation on this issue. Since then the confrontation escalated and no one could stop it. But generally, the situation in Beijing was still under control, and both the students and the government could remain in rational way while facing conflict. The worst disorder occurred in Xincheng Square, Xi'an — the capital city of Shaanxi Province. On April 22 many students and Xi'an residents rallied in the Square to present the wreaths and express their grief at the death of Hu Yaobang, at the same time several thousand policemen appeared for the security reason and the tragedy began. The combat between two sides resulted in hundreds of them injured and died, the whole day's fighting and the bloodshed in Xi'an could only be compared to June Fourth massacre one and a half months later in Beijing. And the most strikingly, the Xi'an incident had not been reported until after the June 4.[16]

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[16] Han MinZhu, ed. *Cries for Democracy*: *Writings and Speeches from the 1989 Chinese Democracy Movement* (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1990), 97–103.

On April 21, there were a hundred well-known scholars like Bao Zunxin, Wu Zuxiang, Yan Jiaqi, and Li Zehou, both establishment and nonestablishment intellectuals, sent an open letter to the Party, the NPC, and the State Council, demanding the government accept the students' request and the democratic institutions in China. The letter said:

> It is a constitutional right of the students to criticize the leaders. It may not be considered illegal. The students' demands are as follows. (1) Perpetuate the spirit of Hu Yaobang's ideas and accelerate the reform of the political system. (2) Adopt firm concrete measures to deal with the increasing corruption within the Party and the political institutions and to solve the problem of serious social injustice. (3) Solve the problem of weakness and incompetency that exists at all levels of government and implement the responsibility system at all levels and never allow the collective responsibility to obscure the responsibility of individuals. (4) Practice freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of publication. Guarantee the supervisory functions of the mass media and of public opinion. We think these demands are constructive. They will enable China to overcome its current difficulties; will unify the minds of the people. They are essential policies we must follow. They are the premises for building up a long-term stable social environment. Therefore, we suggest that the Party and government leaders learn from the 1976 Tiananmen Incident, listen carefully to the students and engage in a dialogue on equal footing with them. You cannot simply ignore the students. If you ignore the students, this will surely only lead them to more radical action, which would be harmful for the great cause of modernization of China.[17]

While only a written support, and there was no evidence showed that the intellectuals had physically participated in the demonstrations in the late April. But the letter has revealed that the intellectuals were going to join in the movement and they were

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17 Oksenberg, Sullivan, and Lambert, ed. *Beijing Spring,* 1989, 25.

more ambitious, as they wanted to add one more item — democracy, into the content of the demonstrations, besides the students' anticorruption. The intervention of intellectuals on April 21 and the appearance of their slogan "democracy" later gave the government an excuse, to charge the movement of not a good intention to reform the Party within, but was counterrevolutionary and antigovernment. Therefore, the government had the right to suppress.

Inside the government, they were still observing the student demonstrations calmly. But after Hu Yaobang's national funeral on April 22, Party Secretary Zhao Ziyang would start his official visit to North Korea, scheduled from April 23 to 30. At this critical juncture, reportedly Vice-Premier and one of Zhao's trusted aides Tian Jiyun had tried to convince Zhao to put off the visit, but Zhao refused, as he thought the postponement would lead foreigners to speculate that China's political situation was in danger[18]. And before the departure, Zhao also left Premier Li Peng to handle the current difficulty. Subsequent events had fully proved that Zhao's leave at this decisive moment, and his temporary power relegation to Li was a faulty stroke on the whole picture. First, the Party power balance would be declined on the reformers' side when Zhao was abroad, and there was no strength for the reformist wing to counterbalance the radical policies of the Left without the presence of Zhao's leadership. Second, the conservatives were gaining the ascendancy by Li's charge on state affairs; they used this opportunity to control everything, included filtering and fabricating the news to paramount leader Deng Xiaoping. They took the advantage of Zhao's absence to target on not only students, but also the power struggle against the reformers. When Zhao was not present during a crucial meeting on April 24, in which the top

[18] Zhang Liang, *Zhongguo Liusi Zhenxiang* (June Fourth: the True Story), 155.

leadership decided upon the inflammatory anti-student editorial that was published two days later in *People's Daily*, which was sparking the biggest demonstrations.

On April 24 Li Peng convened a Politburo meeting, in which many members of Standing Committee and both reformers and hardliners in the Party, including Yang Shangkun, Qiao Shi, Hu Qili, Yao Yilin, Wan Li, Tian Jiyun, Li Tieying, and Li Ximin, all participated. The intention of Li Peng at the meeting was to unify all the members' mind by reaching a consensus that the current student demonstrations should be judged as counterrevolutionary and anti-party. But the reformers led by Wan Li stressed that the measure to deal with such difficulty must be carefully installed. Failing to produce an agreement, Yang Shangkun decided to consult the paramount leader Deng Xiaoping on the next day.

Like many meetings during the Beijing Spring in 1989, the one on April 25 was held at Deng Xiaoping's home, and most of the important decisions regarding to state affairs throughout this period were also made here. During the April 25 meeting, the conservatives won a landslide victory over the reformers. Li Peng convinced (or provoked) Deng that the student movement was endangering the Party. Under Deng's aegis, the Party mouthpiece People's Daily published an editorial on next day, denouncing the student movement was counterrevolutionary and illegal in nature, and the students' behavior were like those of hooligans, it further implied that the Party would not tolerate such chaos for a long time and might take a firm step to act. As a student commented: "the editorial vilified the present patriotic movement as disorder and agitation, and the extremely negative tone has really caused deep, deep shock, disappointment and anger in the nation's citizens"[19]. The April 26

[19] Calhoun, *Neither Gods nor Emperors*, 49.

editorial reflected the views of Deng Xiaoping himself which hardly changed from then until the June Fourth massacre.

The reasons of issuing the April 26 editorial are many. First, because Chinese people have lived in an arbitrary society for several thousand years, and have developed a habit of absolute obedience. So that by using the term of "turmoil" (dongluan) to define the student demonstrations, Deng Xiaoping hoped that the editorial might intimidate the students and make them retreat, as well as exterminate the movement in its rudimentary stage. Second, Deng worried that if the Party publicly recognized student-organized unions and delegates, it would be subjected to countless demands from other groups throughout the country who wanted similar freedom. The editorial was playing a role as "threatening the monkey by killing the chicken". Last, the editorial was like a catalogue of Deng's fears: his belief in behind-the-scenes conspiracy; his inability to distinguish between peaceful dissent and the nightmare upheavals during the ten years Cultural Revolution; his morbid, decade-long fascination with the collapse of socialism in Eastern Europe.

The most reactions from students immediately after the editorial, were saying the government line was too harsh, and matters would not have come to this extreme if the government had agreed to enter into some form of dialogue with the students in time. The students absolutely did not tolerate the label of "turmoil", as it connected their reasonable conduct with the absurdity of Red Guards during the Cultural Revolution. Contradiction to the provinces and military, in which all agreed to follow the Party instruction and keep the turmoil going on in their localities in minimum level; there were widespread sympathy for the students among university presidents and high-ranking educational officials. Some of them were cited by name as stating that the April 26 editorial had exaggerated the danger of the demonstrations, widened the gap between the students and the government, and

removed the basis for dialogue that might have led to a smooth resolution of the students' grievances. And no doubt, the students' grievances were going to explode.

On April 27 the students replied with angry demonstrations, totaling 150,000 persons peacefully broke through police lines to the cheers of thousands of onlookers and reached Tiananmen Square. Apart from Beijing, the epidemic of demonstrations spread across the country on the same day, even students from the cities in which never involved before also participated in. The students demanded a dialogue with the government officials promised they would give them an answer by May 11. The April 27 demonstrations not only gained support from Beijing dwellers, who contributed food and drink to students on the date; but the students' good processional discipline also surprised the armed force who were ready to put down the "turmoil". It was the first time in the PRC history, the largest scale of student spontaneous demonstrations in defiance of the Communist government, to claim the rights of Chinese citizens. The triumph of April 27 demonstrations could give students short-lived euphoria that the strength of unarmed inhabitants might defeat the state iron hands. The date of April 27 in 1989 is like May 4 in 1919, both of them symbolizing that a revolution was just coming up.

On April 28, Premier Li Peng summoned an enlarged Politburo Standing Committee meeting and focused on finding solution on current student incident. During the meeting, the conservative wing led by Li Peng gave no inch to the revise of April 26 editorial, insisting that the student behavior was still "counterrevolutionary", and the Party was prepared for a long battle. Li further accused of many illegal organizations behind the scenes to support the students, of which mainly came from United States, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and even the conspirators within China, such as Fang Lizhi and his wife Li Shuxian. Some speakers, most of them were reformers, had revealed different opinions on how to deal with the

student movement at the meeting. They stressed the good intention of the students and pointed out that it should be handled cordially. Although the intra-party dissents were surfaced at this moment, but the leadership was not polarized until Zhao Ziyang returned from North Korea.

Before Zhao's return, there was an interlude occurred on April 29, when Li Peng assigned Yuan Mu, State Council spokesman, and He Dongchang, Vice-Minister of the State Education Commission, to conduct a televised dialogue with the students. Both Yuan and He were think tank members of the conservatives; they were trained to be the Party theorists and were good at political polemics. At this first officials-students meeting since the outbreak of the movement, "Yuan sure enough proved himself a much more sophisticated performer on camera than the students"[20]. He categorically denied that the Party is wholly corrupted, and blandly stated that only a fraction of officials involved in profiteering. Yuan could easily parry most of the students' charges and evade many of the questions by changing the topic. Some students just walked out the meeting as a protest, others poured contempt on Yuan's slick skills. Most of the students on Beijing campuses were upset with the dialogue. They complained that the participating students were primarily from the official student groups rather than real representatives of student interests, therefore the meeting was phony.

At this moment, General Secretary Zhao Ziyang committed a second mistake since he visited North Korea on April 23, and therefore left the space for the conservatives to rise to prominence during the heyday of student demonstrations. While in North Korea, Zhao adopted an ambiguous attitude of contradicting himself, by cabling back explicitly expressing full agreement with the decision

[20] Calhoun, *Neither Gods nor Emperors*, 50.

made by Deng Xiaoping on handling the current turmoil and the tone of April 26 editorial. But no sooner had Zhao returned to Beijing than he changed his mind immediately at a Politburo meeting held on May 1st. Even during the meeting Zhao generally had compliance with Li Peng, but the meaning of Zhao's word was still vague. He implied that the social stability does not mean the elimination of democracy, and the students' slogan of "anti-corruption" is in accordance with the Party's goal, as well as the Party should learn how to handle the current situation in a democratic and legal way, rather than a despotic method. Zhao was further pointing out that the "disturbance" was not to negate socialism, but a patriotic student movement. Such view was wholly incompatible with the point of April 26 editorial, and Zhao might use it as a political tactics against the conservatives at the first instance, but it was later proved to be a fatal step that led to his downfall after the Beijing Spring. Since May 1st, not only did the tension between the students and the Party escalate, but also the Party factional struggle started to publicize.

From May 1 to 3, there were no large-scale demonstrations happened in Beijing, except some sporadic ones, the students were waiting for another big opportunity on May 4 — the International Youth Day. On May 2 the BUSA presented a twelve-point petition outlining demands for a genuine dialogue with the government, and the withdrawal of the April 26 editorial[21]. The BUSA's proposal was refused and sneered by the State Council spokesman Yuan Mu during a press conference for Chinese and foreign journalists on May 3. Maybe the largest student demonstrations before the May 4 was in Shanghai — the largest Chinese city, the students there gathered on their campuses, marched toward the People's Square and conducted a sit-in in front of the office of the People's Municipal Government.

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[21] Oksenberg, Sullivan, and Lambert, ed. *Beijing Spring,* 1989, 40–41.

At the same time, the leader of Shanghai students' committee announced that they would postpone the classes to an indefinite date.

Inside the Party, the factional struggle between the Left and the Right continued to intensify. On May 3 Zhao Ziyang delivered a speech at a conference to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of May Fourth movement. The speech had been drafted by Zhao's secretary and the deputy director of political reform office Bao Tong and reviewed by the Politburo and the Central Committee Secretariat. During the speech, Zhao emphasized that the ideological enlightenment and national emancipation — the core concept of May Fourth, were still upheld by the Party. He expected the modern Chinese youth inherited the spirit of democracy and science from their predecessors, to build up a strong socialist country. Reportedly the Party conservatives, including Yang Shangkun, Li Peng, and Yao Yilin, had urged Zhao to add the phrase of "oppose bourgeois liberalization", but Zhao just simply ignored[22]. Even the speech adopted a moderate stand, but Zhao had enraged the conservatives by sympathizing with the students. Zhao was still adding the gas into the fire; he delivered another speech at the meeting of Asian Development Bank held in Beijing on May 4. Apart from calling for a solution to the crisis by legal and democratic means, Zhao praised the spirit of students, and insisted that "they are by no means opposed to our fundamental system. Rather they are asking us to correct mistakes in our work"[23]. For Zhao the demonstrations were a patriotic movement and not "turmoil". After hearing the speech, Deng Xiaoping felt anger about Zhao's disregarding Party's discipline; especially it was made before the Minister of Finance Shirley Kuo, the unprecedented attendance of an official from Taiwan.

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22 Zhang Liang, *Zhongguo Liusi Zhenxiang* (June Fourth: the True Story), 110.

23 Oksenberg, Sullivan, and Lambert, ed. *Beijing Spring*, 1989, 68.

Since then, Zhao Ziyang had completely sided against not only the conservatives, but also Deng Xiaoping and the CCP. For Zhao, the May 4 speech might be a softer approach with the students and trying to stabilize the situation, but his conciliatory methods had the paradoxical effect of confusing the Party bureaucracies. For Deng, Zhao did not followed the tone of April 26 editorial and his May 4 speech seemed designed to fan the protest rather than to calm it down, by exposing the Party's divisions in public. In Deng's eyes, Zhao was no longer a comrade but an enemy, as same as the students.

Having impressed by Zhao Ziyang's speech, the BUSA announced the "New May Fourth Declaration" and tens of thousands of students held large-scale demonstrations around the country at the same day. They were calling attention to inflation and corruption, and there was no violence, both because the students preserved order and because local authorities forbade the police to use force. No doubt, Zhao would be downplayed by the Party soon at this moment, but he gained the support from the students. After watching the broadcast of Zhao's May 4 speech, the students erupted in applause, one reported: "I agree with his eight-word principle: be calm, be reasonable, exercise restraint, and keep order"[24]. Therefore, most of the students but those of BUSA decided to resume classes on May 5. At this stage, the press outside China had covered largely on student protests in Beijing. Most of them supported the students' request, but warned that pushing forward political reform might be difficult if the pace was too fast. Since the beginning of May that the incident in Beijing was no longer an internal affair of China, but it had already been internationally dispersed. The CCP must make very careful decision at every step to avoid any unforeseen embarrassments.

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[24] Black, and Munro, *Black Hands of Beijing*, 168.

The history has showed that it never goes in a direct and smooth course. Upon 80% university students retaking the classes from May 5 to 7, at this point the protest might be dissipated and the whole situation could be normal again. But the tranquility proved to be short-lived; from the onset of Zhao Ziyang's May 4 speech at the meeting of Asian Development Bank, to the emergence of May 13 Hunger Strike Declaration, there must be something happened during this week that led to the unavoidable massacre on June 4. The research shows that the biggest turning point of Beijing Spring was neither the arrival of Soviet leader Gorbachev on May 15, nor the imposition of Martial Law on May 19, but it was from May 4 to 13, the seem-to-be quiet period in which the conservatives formally prevailed over the reformers, and such power balance did not reversed ever since through the whole event.

Zhao Ziyang had tried three times respectively on 6, 8, and 10 of May, to reach an agreement with the Party in dealing with the protest peacefully, and to clean up the obstacles for the forthcoming arrival of Gorbachev and the Vice-Premier Wan Li' state visit to North America on May 12. But Zhao's effort was a vain attempt. On May 6 he paid a visit to PRC President Yang Shangkun, who is a close comrade of Deng Xiaoping. Zhao persuaded Yang on behalf of him to convince Deng giving up the tough opinion of April 26 editorial, and unfortunately Deng insisted that the editorial be maintained. On May 8 the Standing Committee of the Politburo met in emergency session. The meeting ended in quarreling between Zhao and Li Peng when Zhao announced that he intended to visit the students in the square. Li warned that Zhao would be responsible for splitting the Party, and it was the first public confrontation between two leaders. On May 10 the Politburo was in session again. This time Zhao suggested that the Party accede to some of the protesters' demands, particularly those that concerned corruption. He said he would allow his own sons' activities in Shenzhen to be the first target of a probe.

Zhao also boldly proposed that press freedom be expanded. With this outspoken remark on loosen control of the Party; Li raged that Zhao was straying from Party policy. Therefore these meetings all parted on bad terms. Zhao wanted to introduce a dialogue between the Party and the students, but he could not get the hardliners to go along with.

The failure of Zhao Ziyang's endeavors immediately caused a chain of reaction. At first around 1,000 journalists led a petition in front of Zhongnanhai, in where the Chinese leadership resides. The journalists became the first group of people to join in the student movement, and demanded their freedom of speech that had been deprived of by the CCP since 1949. During the peak time of 1989 spring, Chinese media was the first time to have enjoyed the unprecedented freedom in the PRC history. Because the government was too preoccupied by the students, in which resulted the loosen control of censorship at that time, the journalists could bravely reported many secret information about the movement, and exposed the dark side of the society and the corruption of the CCP officials. Chinese media had played a role not only in close cooperation with the students and intellectuals during the movement, but also in inflaming the ordinary people's anger towards the Communist regime by revealing the government's inefficiency.

For the students, their movement developed dramatically at the beginning of May. On May 6, the BUSA sponsored a poll in the dorms to determine whether they should return to class or continue the boycott. The majority still voted in favor of the latter. On May 10, tens of thousands of students in Beijing held a bicycle demonstration, and the next day, the idea of a hunger strike was born resulted in the discussion of BUSA members. At the midnight of May 13, the students studying at many Beijing universities joined together and produced the Hunger Strike Announcement. They insisted a genuine dialogue be held; otherwise the conciliation would not be reached. In the coming several days, many university students from other

provinces joined in the Beijing hunger strike, and they began to refuse drink as well as food. Some of the strikers' physical condition became serious and started to collapse.[25]

The hunger strike can be deemed as the students no longer tolerated the continuous delay by the government for a dialogue. For the students, the hunger strike was reasonable but by no means of inevitable. The problem is both the students and the government adopted the tactics that antagonized each other. The students wanted the dialogue first, but the government indicated the students should retreat from the Tiananmen Square then came second the dialogue. "At this critical juncture, a golden opportunity presented itself: the approaching visit of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, scheduled for May 15–18. As the date of Gorbachev's arrival approached, the eyes of the entire world would focus on Beijing. It was manna from Moscow, a situation made to order for the students and their increasingly media-conscious leaders"[26]. After the arrival of Gorbachev, the chance of agreement between the rulers and the ruleds totally disappeared, this drama of Beijing Spring was becoming a tragedy and the avoidance of a massacre seemed to be impossible.

Began in the late April, the Chinese intellectuals started to send moral support to protesters, but they had not been completely involved in the incident. The intellectuals were unremittingly searching a chance to join in the spotlight, and they finally caught the best opportunity in the time of students' hunger strike. On May 14, twelve well-known scholars and writers Dai Qing, Yu Haocheng, Li Honglin, Yan Jiaqi, Su Xiaokang, Bao Zunxin, Wen Yuankai, Liu Zaifu, Su Wei, Li Zehou, Mai Tianshu, and Li Tuo jointly signed "An Urgent Appeal Concerning the Current Situation", and the

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25 Oksenberg, Sullivan, and Lambert, ed. *Beijing Spring*, 1989, 258–60.

26 Baum, *Burying Mao*, 255.

later of "May Sixteenth Declaration"[27]. The intellectuals expressed that they would act as mediator between the government and the students, and promised only does the government accepts a dialogue, the students will be called to leave the Square. The intellectuals also asked the students to discontinue the hunger strike for the sake of the long-term benefit of the reform and to ensure a harmonious Sino-Soviet summit. Both the government and the students turned a deaf ear to such suggestions, because "these middle-aged intellectuals had little idea of what was going on in the students' mind. They were still trying to persuade them to respect the party's authority and to trust its bureaucratic decision-making process. The intellectuals may have had a better understanding of political realities than the students, and certainly they had a better grasp of the workings of democracy, but they understood nothing about the psychology of the rebels. While the students saw themselves as defying the tradition, the intellectuals still spoke about respecting the rules of the party"[28]. So that the intellectuals had no choice but took part in the movement to assert their own voice.

The nature of the Beijing Spring had been changed on the day of Gorbachev's arrival, and the student movement finally became the people movement. On this day the people coming from all walks of life participated in the demonstrations in support of the students' hunger strike. Not only the intellectuals, but also the Beijing Workers Autonomous Federation (BWAF) led by Han Dongfang, a worker at the Fengtai railway yards in Beijing's southwestern suburbs, and the tens of thousands of students in fourteen provinces, were all expressing support for the Beijing hunger strikers.

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27 Oksenberg, Sullivan, and Lambert, ed. *Beijing Spring*, 1989, 44–46.

28 Lee Feigon, *China Rising*: *the Meaning of Tiananmen* (Chicago : Ivan R. Dee, Publisher, 1990), 200.

The demonstrations was first time to attract the attention of Chinese entrepreneurs, particularly the general manager of Stone Company Wan Runnan, who had established this first high-tech corporation in the PRC, and painstakingly supported the protestors by urging the government to meet the demands of students. By assuming Gorbarchev's arrival ceremony would be held on Tiananmen Square, many Western Medias had televised on the site since the early May. Ironically what they caught was not the Communist triumphant moment of Sino-Soviet détente, but a strong defiant wave of anti-communism.

Soviet Party Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to the PRC from May 15–18 in 1989 was a historic occasion in many ways, and its importance in leading up to the events of June Fourth could not be underestimated. During the late 1980s, Gorbachev had great popularity among Chinese youth and intellectuals, his priority in political reform, which was contrasted to the policy of Deng Xiaoping, had brought a less corrupted and more dynamic Communist regime. Besides, for many Chinese the Soviet leadership was dissimilar to the CCP gerontocracy, Gorbachev was relatively young, and willing to listen to and promote the younger generation. The Soviet leader's state visit had provided the students with an unparalleled opportunity to pressure their own leaders to follow the example of the Soviet reformers, by reaching the highest tide of demonstrations since the beginning of Beijing Spring in the late April.

For the Chinese leadership, the Sino-Soviet summit represented a political victory, because the Soviet leader was the first time coming to Beijing for the last three decades. It was a powerful symbol of the end of two Communist giants' conflict in 1960s and the summit could be seen as a personal triumph for Deng Xiaoping. It was announced shortly before the Gorbachev's visit that Deng would step down from his last post as Chairman of the MAC,

meaning that Deng would relinquish his last official post prior to the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the PRC on October 1. The Sino-Soviet summit could have been the most dramatic act of this legendary Chinese statesman, it served as Deng's last glorious farewell by sealing a great reformer's place in history. But things went against Deng's will, Gorbachev brought the international press, giving the students an opportunity to embarrass the regime and further delaying the crackdown. The students increased their demands and the regime's weakness emboldened more people to come to the streets. Deng no longer tolerated the "turbulence", and it precipitated his determination to quell the people after Gorbachev's leave.

More to Deng Xiaoping's embarrassment, there was a decisive moment in the meeting between Zhao Ziyang and Gorbachev on May 16. When Zhao was unintentionally making the situation worse by saying that Deng was still China's supreme leader even though he had retired from his formal positions, the message was that Zhao was a pseudo Party leader, and Deng should be held responsible for the way the students affair was being handled. Zhao's comment was a sensational departure from the hermetic practices of Chinese politics. Both Deng and the conservatives were outraged; they claimed that it was Zhao's deliberate attempt to shift the blame to Deng for current China's political trouble and to reveal a state secret. Since then Deng decided to dispose of Zhao and the meeting with Gorbachev was Zhao's last known official appearance.

In fact Zhao Ziyang's sentence was hardly a state secret to every Chinese, and subsequent charges were distortion and political retaliation engineered by Zhao's rivals. Zhao originally wanted to pay a respect to Deng Xiaoping, and to save Deng's face that Deng had lost since the outbreak of student movement. Zhao's words were completely in line with the Party orthodox discourse. If such words came from Li Peng or any other conservative's mouth, the result would have been totally different.

On May 17, they might have been infuriated by what Zhao Ziyang said to Gorbachev, more than a million people converged on Tiananmen for perhaps the largest unauthorized protest ever, exceeding in size even Zhou Enlai's funeral in 1976. The demonstrators no longer targeted on Zhao and his reform, but Deng Xiaoping and the CCP. "During the protest, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions — China's only recognized labor organization — publicly gave 100,000 yuan to help the students' hunger strike. Letters of support poured in from a variety of groups and one of the most important features of these was the groups that had always been controlled by the Party were acting independently of any orders from the top."[29]

After Gorbachev's departure on May 18, the CCP was planning to strike back. On this day's morning, four Politburo Standing Committee members, Zhao Ziyang, Li Peng, Qiao Shi and Hu Qili, went to the Beijing Hospital and the Tongren Hospital to visit the fasting students who had been carried there from the Square, in seeking to persuade students to call off their strike. The exhausted and bed-ridden students stated that they were not trying to overthrow the government, and all they wanted to do was to speed up the reform and end the corruption. The students repeatedly asked the visitors to go to Tiananmen Square to talk with the hunger strikers, but the officials merely expressed their sympathy and their desire to end the suffering. The Party leaders left the hospital without having secured an agreement with the students. Some observers have indicated that "the government's show of concern for the welfare of the hunger strikers at this moment as a cynical charade, designed to shift the burden of responsibility for the coming crackdown from the Party to the students."[30]

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29 Calhoun, *Neither Gods nor Emperors*, 76.

30 Baum, *Burying Mao*, 260.

In the afternoon, in the midst of this frustration and anxiety, Premier Li Peng, together with Yan Mingfu and Li Tieying, agreed to meet with the representatives of BUSA, including Wang Dan and Wuer Kaixi, and the meeting was televised nationally. In fact the students wanted to talk with not only Li Peng, but also Zhao Ziyang and even Deng Xiaoping. But the sophisticated Deng deliberately did not attend. For Zhao's absence, it could imply that he had been downplayed by the Party. So that the meeting was merely the Premier's solo, Li Peng was unbridled and the students felt disappointed. During the meeting, the students reiterated that the government must repudiate the April 26 editorial and confirm that the student movement is patriotic. But Li insisted that the protest is counterrevolutionary by any standard, and the students should leave the Square and end the hunger strike immediately. The problem of the meeting was both the students and Li Peng had let the time being wasted. The students did not know what to ask and what to talk, and Li Peng just simply did not want to answer and to talk. Therefore the meeting was even worse than that of Yuan Mu on April 29, and it went inconclusively.

Zhao Ziyang had realized at this moment, that the doom of his political career was coming, because not only his soft line toward the student movement, but also his previous failure of economic policy causing inflation plague across the country. Zhao understood that Deng would rub him off sooner or later. Zhao decided to submit a letter of resignation to Deng via Yang Shangkun, and the event was not known to the public until the aftermath of June 4. In this letter signing on the date of May 18, Zhao was saying that he could no longer work with the Party, as his suggestion of the withdrawal of April 26 editorial being negated. He also agreed that he was willing to follow the principle of the minority being subordinate to the majority. Owing to the letter, Zhao was accused of a political coward by the conservatives in the wake of student movement, for his casting aside the "unity of the Party".

Even many PLA officers and NPC members send open letters to the MAC and Deng Xiaoping respectively, lobbying that the student protest should be solved peacefully, and could not be intervened by the force. But once again the typical Chinese political culture prevailed over every thing. In the morning of May 18, with Zhao Ziyang's absence, Deng Xiaoping, Chen Yun, Li Xiannian, Peng Zhen, Deng Yingchao, Yang Shangkun, Bo Yibo, Wang Zhen, and Li Peng met at Deng's home and formally agreed to declare Martial Law in Beijing, in other words, to decimate the protestors with bloodshed.

Zhao Ziyang's last voice appeared at the midnight of May 19, he went to Tiananmen Square to meet the hunger strikers, and was followed by Li Peng, who secretly scrutinized Zhao's behavior. With tears in his eyes, Zhao began that "Fellow students, this is the last time I can meet with you." and "Your health will be irreparable. You are still young, fellow students. You still have ample time. You should live healthily and live to see the day when China completes the four modernizations. You are not like us, who are old. We have come, but too late." First of all, Zhao deeply realized that the massacre delayed by Gorbachev's visit now was irreversible to the students, although the Martial Law not yet declaring, but the official statement was underway. Because of political tactic and the consideration of personal safety, Zhao could not reveal Deng's directive to the students at this time; he chose to persuade the students to end the demonstrations, for the sake of their personal health and China's future. And indeed, after Zhao's words some of the students decided to leave the Tiananmen Square. But Zhao's swan song was ambiguous, he understood that during his tenure he was not welcome by most of the Chinese people and students, because of the corruption of the Party and his offspring, as well as the failure in both practicing a smooth economic reform and undertaking a genuine political reform. At the moment of Beijing Spring, Zhao was not

regarded as more liberal than the rest of the Party leadership, and his private opposition to Deng's hard line was not yet known to the general public. This was the last chance for Zhao, to make a biggest political gamble in his life by "turning to the masses looked more like an attempt to secure his position in history than a principled search for an alternative to Communist Party rule."[31]

After hearing Zhao's conduct at the Tiananmen Square, Deng Xiaoping felt extremely fainted. For Deng the current question of undoing Zhao was not when but how. There is little information about whether Zhao had contacted Deng before the announcement of Martial Law, but a story here is interesting: When a meeting with Deng, Zhao had called for continuing toleration and he was voted down. Deng apparently insisted that the Army now had to be used. "I have the Army behind me," he was reported to have boasted. "But I have the people behind me," Zhao replied. "Then you have nothing," retorted Deng[32]. Deng's rhetoric implied that although after forty years Communist modernization, the real power man in China is still the one who controls the gun regardless what his official title is, and it proves that Zhao's dialogue with Gorbachev was nothing but truth. Zhao Ziyang after less than two years in his new post had lost a critical fight even before the massacre, an indication then that he would no longer be a significant voice within the leadership. Zhao would soon be deprived of all the power and treated by the Party as a figure even worse than an ordinary Chinese.

Zhao Ziyang's last chance was given by Li Peng, who asked Zhao to present at the meeting of Party Central and the State Council convening at 10 p.m. on May 19. But Zhao declined the

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31 Meisner, *The Deng Xiaoping Era*, 578.

32 Timothy Brook, *Quelling the People: the Military Suppression of the Beijing Democracy Movement* (New York : Oxford University Press, 1992), 41.

request by asking for a three-day "sick leave", and subsequently was conspicuously absent before the television. The meeting was supposedly a final showdown between Zhao and other hardliners, and Zhao gave himself no choice but to perpetuate an opposing line to the Party. Given Zhao's uncompromising attitude, it fell to Li Peng to deliver a strongly worded speech. During this speech, Li Peng announced the Document 47 and declared the State of Crisis and Martial Law. He concluded that the PLA had been called in and all the counterrevolutionaries should be responsible for the consequence of current anarchy. While underlining "a handful people" that were using the hunger strikers as hostages to coerce the Party to yield to their political demands, in fact the Martial Law was intended not to sabotage a limited number of counterrevolutionaries, but to annihilate the whole student movement. The storm was coming.

When the Martial Law had been effective at 10 p.m. on May 20, the reaction was more far-reaching since the outbreak of Beijing Spring. The university students poured out of the streets and protested in 116 cities across the country in defiance of Martial Law. They shouted the slogans of "Down with Li Peng and Deng Xiaoping", and it seemed that the student movement was no longer anti-corruption in nature, but became more anti-Communist oriented. The reaction of other provinces outside Beijing was ambiguous, and there are two categories in which distinguish their tones of response. The inland and less developed provinces were among the most passionate supporters of the central decision, as they benefited little from the reform program since 1978 and intended to show their allegiance in return for more future attention from Beijing. On the other hand, the coastal region particularly Guangdong and Fujian, they have been privileged by the economic liberation, especially Zhao Ziyang's "Coastal Development Strategy", so that they adopted wait-and-see policy, to be circumspect of what would happen in Beijing's internal struggle.

The feedbacks of imposing Martial Law were negative in both military and the NPC. Eight veteran PLA leaders led by Marshal Nie Rongzhen and Marshal Xu Xiangqian, demanded that the Martial Law be repudiated, as "the gun can not be put against the students, and the People's Liberation Army can not be put against the people"[33]. For the NPC, China's rubber-stamping legislative body, their immediate reaction to the Martial Law was angry. Around one-third of the NPC's senior leaders signed a petition calling for the imposition of Martial Law should be carefully considered, and they argued that according to Article 89 of the Constitution, Li Peng's decision without prior consultation with the NPC would be regarded as the violation of normal procedure.[34]

For the rest of the world, including Europe and U.S., even most of them had sympathy toward the students, but they only hoped, not warned, the Chinese government not to introduce the method of force eventually. Such moderate attitude adopted by the Western regimes toward the CCP did not change until the June Fourth massacre. In oversea Chinese communities, not to mention the strong reaction among Chinese inhabitants and Chinese students abroad, and the most pessimists were from the British colony — Hong Kong. After the implementation of Martial Law in Beijing, the sorrowful atmosphere was lingering in Hong Kong, the media in the city described that not only the democracy in China would be an illusion, but also the prospect of "one country, two system" in 1997 is dim. Furthermore, some students naively believed that in Western countries, if Martial Law forces can not achieve their objective within forty-eight hours, it is automatically cancelled. But such logic in democratic societies can not apply to China; the Communist political culture here maintains that it is ruled by whim, not by law.

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33 Zhang Liang, *Zhongguo Liusi Zhenxiang* (June Fourth: the True Story), 265.

34 Ibid., 264.

At this tantalizing moment, both the government and students wanted a last-ditch attempt to solve the problem — the return of Vice-Premier Wan Li. Wan was a long time liberal associate with Zhao Ziyang, he was regarded as the pioneer in post-Mao reform, and had given so much inspiration to Deng Xiaoping later on. Wan started his twenty-one day state visit to North America on May 12, as NPC Chairman, he had given a speech that signaled he would firmly support the enthusiasm of the young people and oppose the Martial Law. Wan deliberately distanced himself from Deng Xiaoping's regime while abroad.

On May 23, the central government ordered Wan Li to cancel his trip and return to China. Deng Xiaoping appointed Shanghai Mayor Jiang Zemin, who later emerged as Zhao Ziyang's successor. On May 25, in avoidance of any severe consequences, the destination of Wan Li's arrival assigned to Shanghai, not Beijing. Reportedly Wan was under house arrest to be briefed by Jiang; after realizing who in fact controlled the whole game, Wan wrote a public letter to express his support for the decisions of Deng Xiaoping and the elders, by abandoning his ally Zhao Ziyang. This was the final straw that broke students' heart.

For the students, they used to have great expectation for Wan Li and had organized the Beijing citywide demonstrations welcomed him on May 25. But after hearing Wan's public letter, the students felt betrayed. They realized that all their endeavors were a vain attempt and their days were numbered. At this moment, the students at hunger strike still decided not to withdraw, as they thought, once they advanced and there was no place for retreat.

The CCP paramount leader Deng Xiaoping stayed completely out of public view since his meeting with Gorbachev on May 16. Many rumors reported that Deng had flown to somewhere in the country, in avoidance of chaos in Beijing. No matter what the story was, during the later half of Beijing Spring, as MAC Chairman Deng

certainly remained in a secret place to monitor the progress of Martial Law and the procedure of removing Zhao Ziyang.

Deng Xiaoping secretly instructed the long time party revolutionary Chen Yun, to chair a meeting of the CAC on May 26, announcing that Shanghai Mayor Jiang Zemin would replace Zhao Ziyang as a new Party boss. For many outsiders, Jiang was a colorless figure and hardly a liberal reformer; known as being tough toward the student demonstrations in Shanghai, and played a role as submitting Wan Li to the Party general line. Furthermore, as in the early 1989, Jiang ordered the weekly issue of *World Economic Herald* closed because of its "inflammatory" reporting of the death of Hu Yaobang, and its liberal chief editor Qin Benli got fired under Jiang's recommendation. Zhao Ziyang totally disagreed with the shutdown of the *Herald* by Jiang's effort, and Jiang might see his intra-party promotion as a political retaliation to Zhao.

Deng Xiaoping had ordered his long time protégé Zhao Ziyang being under house detention since May 28, and Zhao's powerbase — Political Reform Office, had been virtually seized to function at this moment. On May 22, two days after declaring Martial Law, Li Peng announced that he would personally take over the instruments of propaganda from former Zhao's loyalist Hu Qili, to destroy the reformers' faction. Deng's goal was apparent to everyone: He wanted to clear all the obstacles within the Party, in order to concentrate in final crackdown of the students.

The military dispatch after the Martial Law was also a big concern to many people. The whole operation was presided by Deng Xiaoping behind the scene, and practiced at the front line by Li Peng and "Yang Clique", namely MAC permanent Vice-Chairman Yang Shangkun and his nephew General Yang Baibing. Half of the divisions brought in to impose Martial Law belonged to the group armies of the Beijing Military Region, and one of these, the 38th Group Army. Other group armies belonging to other

Military Regions across the country — the 24th based partly in Chengde to the northeast, the 28th and the 63rd based in Shanxi province, and the 65th based in Inner Mongolia. At the end of May, other units from both the Guangzhou and Nanjing Military Regions had arrived in Beijing to take part in the final suppression. Among those participants, the major one in the conduct of massacre was the 27th Group Army, whose commander was Yang Baibing's son, Yang Jianhua. In the days following the tragedy, many Beijing inhabitants would refer with contempt to the 27th as the "Yang Family Army". Once arriving in Beijing, the soldiers knew only that Martial Law had been imposed, but they did not know what that meant, or what they would be expected to do. Not till the last minute came did the soldiers realize that they have to kill the people who are supposed to protect.

From the onset of Martial Law to the eve of massacre, the Chinese government deliberately stopped food supplies to Beijing and engaged in other disruptive action, such as suspending the public transportation and cutting off the subway service, in order to transport the armies. The CCP intended to create an atmosphere of crisis that could justify the coming crackdown, a perfect excuse that the chaos was caused by the counterrevolutionaries and not by the government. Under students' inspiration, the citizens of Beijing not only took the risk of resisting the armies and placed their own authority above the Party, but also created a harmony of self-governed without the presence of the state that was unprecedented in Chinese history and rare in human history. There was no single policeman in the city, but the order of Beijing was only kept by the populace here. As Timothy Brook said: "In Beijing, no longer in a people's republic, but in a true People's and Students' Republic"[35].

[35] Brook, *Quelling the People*, 59.

As the CCP explained, that the station troops in Beijing was for the purpose of stopping upheaval and restoring normal order, not for suppressing the students and the people. But given the abovementioned scene, such statement was a big irony that evidenced the armies coming to the capital was exactly for the latter, not the former.

The last act of Chinese intellectuals before the storm was a new hunger strike manifesto written by the four nonconformists on June 2. This was the first and also the last opportunity for Chinese intellectuals to assert their voice after the imposition of Martial Law. But those four dissidents have different political outlook and flavor compared to other establishment intellectuals. Hou Dejian, a Taiwanese singer and composer who had deserted to Mainland in 1983, his popular song "Descendants of the Dragon" was among those most familiar to the Chinese nationals in the late 1980s. Liu Xiaobo, the enfant terrible of Chinese literary critics, a brilliant young Ph.D. and an extremely popular lecturer at Beijing Normal University. Zhou Duo, a sociologist and the head of the general planning department of the Stone Computer Corporation. Gao Xin, a former chief editor of the magazine put out by Beijing Normal University and a member of the CCP. All of them were among thirty to forty years old, and were relatively privileged and successful beneficiaries of the transformation in reform era. Unlike other groups' motive, such as students' banner of anti-corruption; workers' slogan of lifting the standard of living; and the establishment intellectuals' yelling for the freedom of speech and the deepening of political reform. These four figures no longer considered the CCP was the only one legitimacy in ruling China. They called for the end of gerontocracy and Communism, not by the measure of violence, but by the use of peaceful means to further democratization in China. Because "what we need is not a perfect savior, but a sound democratic system" and "We don't have enemies,

don't let hatred and violence poison wisdom and the process of democratization in China".[36]

Deng Xiaoping's eventual target — the students in the street, they seemed to be calm even before the bloodshed, and still naively believed that the guns would not put against them. Some things could definitely justify the students' confidence. Just before the Martial Law, Marshal Nie Rongzhen and Xu Xiangqian, both loyal supporters of Deng Xiaoping and Yang Shangkun, appeared on television to assure that the army would not fire on the people. Secondly, the idealism and romanticism of the students gave themselves an illusion, that their current conduct could make everything possible in regardless of any difficulties in the name of patriotism. Last, at the end the students still stubbornly thought, that Deng would not risk to ruin the achievements of ten years reform by shooting people overnight. From a Leninist point of view, violence was an appropriate means for ensuring the survival of the revolution. For the CCP tradition, violence was not only a way to control the people, but also the characteristic of Party inherited from its long time guerilla warfare. At this moment of "to be or not to be", what Deng and his partisans desperately wanted to safeguard was not the ideal of Communism, but the power of their own which had been captured forty years ago. Thereby, the students made a fatal calculation, they used to generally expect nothing worse than tear gas and rubber bullets, but what they were being shot with were deadly military bullets.

Before the final showdown, there were still some chances for the students to escape the doom. But the students at the Central Academy of Fine Arts built and erected a symbol of Goddess of Democracy in Tiananmen Square on May 30; the Goddess was face-

[36] Han MinZhu, ed. *Cries for Democracy*, 349 & 354.

to-face with Mao Zedong's portrait, gripping her torch of freedom in both hands. As the appearance of the Goddess highly resembled the Statue of Liberty in New York, therefore it gave an excuse to the CCP's accusation of the Democracy Movement as "a Western inspired counterrevolutionary", and strengthened the argument of the conservatives that a crackdown was necessary. After the troops entered Tiananmen on June 3 at night, they issued an ultimatum to require the students leave there immediately; the students at the last moment before the massacre were still arguing if they should withdraw from the Square. Some of them wanted to maintain a long term goal and asked to retreat, but the majority of the students voted to stay and rejected the ultimatum. The CCP had no choice but turned the students into debris. For the students, what they were waiting for was not democracy but death.

The massacre started at 2 a.m. on June 4, and it was brutal in nature, as one side used all kinds of modern military weapons to attack, and the other side only had two hands and their bodies to resist. Please remember, the Xidan intersection; the Fuxingmen overpass; the Muxidi Bridge; and the Military Museum over four miles west of the Square. These were the killing grounds of Beijing in 1989. At the end of the ravage, the troops torn down the Goddess of Democracy — a statue used to symbolize the wakening of Chinese democracy, but now it fell among the corps of the students. This was the finale of Beijing Spring that lasted exactly 51 days.

Except Beijing, the bloodshed concurrently occurred in its most extensive form in Chengdu and Shanghai. On June 4 in Chengdu, the armed police moved violently against demonstrators, killing at least a dozen and possibly many more. In Shanghai, three buildings were reportedly burned and the city was shut down for three days. The day after the massacre, Beijing was like a ghost city, strangely quiet plus extremely tantalizing. The people living in the city pretended to be normal but all of them had known that

the world has had been changed since yesterday. On the contrary, the reaction outside Beijing was keen. Thousands of people rallied across the country in demonstrating the massacre, they argued that the CCP had violated the Geneva Convention and should be trialed immediately. Hundreds of them were arrested by the Public Security Bureau. In the international arena, most of the countries issued the solemn statements to criticize the "Beijing Butchery", some of them even threatened to discontinue the diplomatic relation with China. The only one exception was Romanian Communist Party General Secretary Nicolae Ceauşescu, who hurriedly congratulated Chinese government for the success of suppression. But unfortunately the dictator met the fate of death as same as the students in Beijing streets later that year. In oversea Chinese communities, they no longer protested the Communist regime at this moment, but protested the serious human violation by the Chinese compatriots in Mainland. In case of Hong Kong, the demonstrations there disproved the easy assumption that the Hong Kongers are only interested in making money. Hong Kongers sent money, medical supplies, and messages of sympathy to students in the Square. After the massacre, they donated blood and withdrew their savings from Mainland banks in the territory.[37]

After the massacre, the PLA occupied every universities and colleges in Beijing. The Chinese government issued the order for arresting every suspect who had participated in the movement but luckily escaped the massacre. Including the students, their leaders, BWAF members, Zhao Ziyang associates, the intellectuals, and the "Most Wanted" figures, such as Fang Lizhi spouse and any other "black hands behind the scene". Sadly, unlike in Mao era, in 1989 whatever the government coerced or enticed, "Ordinary citizens

[37] Calhoun, *Neither Gods nor Emperors*, 147.

showed little interest in informing on their neighbors; university deans displayed little desire to punish students; and most worrisome for the government, the cadres in charge of workplaces carried out only the minimum level of persecution and rectification necessary to keep up appearance."[38]

Unlike the international society, Chinese government tried their best to conceal the fact of killing students. The CCTV repeatedly showed in the evening golden time across the country, a scene about a group of hooligans (the TV caption) beating and killing a soldier, they poured gasoline on the body and burned it. Both Beijing Mayor Chen Xitong and State Council Spokesman Yuan Mu accused of the students who were exactly responsible for the riot, even the wounded civilians were caused by the acerevolutionary rebellion, and the armies were forced to fire to avoid more losses. They both insisted the casualties of students be far lower than that of armies[39]. It was quite difficult to attain an exact number of dead and wounded during the massacre. First, because the situation was in completed chaos when the tanks moved in, not only in Square, but also in the hospitals where the casualties were transferred from Square; second, even after the massacre Chinese government still kept most of the files regarding to the movement in secret place up to present. The estimated dead during the storm were around 1,000 to 3,000, the wounded around 5,000 to 8,000, and the total were approximately 10,000 or above.[40]

On June 9, 1989, Chinese paramount leader Deng Xiaoping reemerged after half month absence from the public scene. He appeared in State Hall to congratulate "a great victory" of the Party

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38 Calhoun, *Neither Gods nor Emperors*, 147.

39 Oksenberg, Sullivan, and Lambert, ed. *Beijing Spring*, 1989, 364–69.

40 Han MinZhu, ed. *Cries for Democracy*, 96–99.

and the PLA, for successfully crushing down a counterrevolutionary rebellion, which "a handful of bad people mixed with so many young students and onlookers"[41]. Deng specially mentioned the key of such success: "What is most advantageous to us is that we have a large group of veteran comrades who are still alive. They have experienced many storms and they know what is at stake. They support the use of resolute action to ace the rebellion. Although some comrades may not understand this for a while, they will eventually understand this and support the decision of the Central Committee"[42]. The message behind the sentence was that the victory of struggle was owing to the Party conservatives, and it was the reformers' policy during the past years which facilitated the turmoil in 1989.

When the time returned to November 2, 1987, Zhao Ziyang, Li Peng, Qiao Shi, Hu Qili, and Yao Yilin, the newly elected Politburo Standing Committee, all of them were dressing in Western suits and taken photos by Chinese and foreign journalists alike, it symbolized the beginning of the new Zhao Ziyang's leadership in China — a potentially more prosperous and more Western-oriented era. But at this moment — June 9, 1989, another group of Chinese leadership were also taken photos by only Chinese journalists. The Party elders Chen Yun, Wang Zhen, and their disciple Li Peng replaced liberalist Hu Qili, Deng Xiaoping returned to the center and Jiang Zemin succeed Zhao Ziyang as designated new Party General Secretary, most importantly, the new Chinese leadership at this time was uniformly dressing in Mao-style jackets. The scene was highly contrasted to two years ago and it symbolized the ascendancy of Communist orthodox, although still short-lived, and the end of Zhao Ziyang era, from 1987 to 1989.

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41 Oksenberg, Sullivan, and Lambert, ed. *Beijing Spring*, 1989, 377.

42 Ibid.

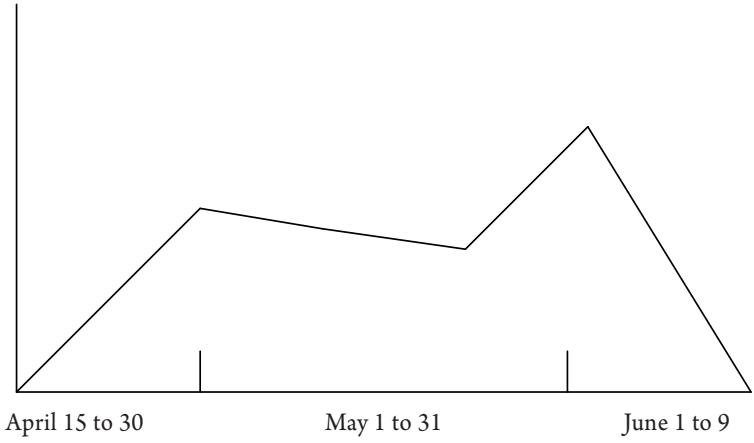
C. The Meaning of June Fourth

From April 15 to June 9, the whole event of Beijing Spring started from the death of Hu Yaobang, and ended in Deng Xiaoping's congratulatory meeting of "victory of suppression". Nearly two months theatrical development was like an unprecedented drama ever produced by human being, and was performed in front of the audiences across the world. It gave people a chain of psychological reaction from surprise to courage, from apprehension to shock. The Beijing Spring originated from students' mourning for Hu Yaobang in the form of their protest in downtown. During two months the capital city was the center of movement and it pioneered all kinds of unrest in the country. Beijing's movement always inspired others in the country in the second day and it served as a radiator that motivated other students in other cities. This is the formula of Tiananmen 1989: Beijing first, then the other cities came second.

The Beijing Spring was roughly divided into two phases: the students' demonstrations (April 15 to May 18) and the government's counterattack (May 19 to June 9); and the watershed between them was the closing day of Gorbachev's state visit to China on May 18. With Gorbachev's departure from Beijing, Chinese government could now concentrate on dealing with both the crisis in the streets and with Zhao Ziyang. Meanwhile, the students lost the protective umbrella provided by the international news coverage of Soviet leader's visit. As long as the demonstrations were absolutely peaceful, there was little the government could do, so that they had to invoke Martial Law and violence in order to justify their action. Apart from the Sino-Soviet summit from May 15 to 18, there were many decisive moments or turning points occurred during the whole event. From the death of Hu Yaobang on April 15, to the students' injuries caused by PSU and the Xi'an incident on April 22; from Zhao Ziyang's state visit to North Korea on April 23,

to the editorial of *People's Daily* on April 26; from Zhao's speech at the meeting of Asian Development Bank on May 4, to students' "Hunger Strike Announcement" on May 13; from television meeting between Li Peng and hunger strikers on May 18, to Zhao's last words to the students on May 19; from the effectiveness of Martial Law on May 20, to Wan Li's return from North America on May 25; from the setting up of Goddess of Democracy on May 30, to "New Hunger Strike Manifesto" on June 2. Those were step-by-step leading to the last tragedy in Tiananmen Square (See the table below).

Table 3.1. The Trend and High Tide of Beijing Spring Development



Students, the backbone of the movement, as an old Chinese saying that they were the newborn calf does not fear the tiger. The students in 1989 had established the most courageous and heroic example in Chinese history by making a hunger strike that lasted so long a time. But the hunger strike does not originate from Chinese tradition. Chinese intellectuals in history either had full participation or submission to the

regime when the harmony existed between them and the rulers, or in the time of regression, the method of withdrawal adopted. Thanks to Deng Xiaoping's reform program that brought foreign conception, so that the hunger strike was drawing inspiration generally from outside Chinese thinking — from Gandhi and Martin Luther King.

To break down the student participants in the movement and there are generally three groups divided. The first two are identified as members of *laosanjie* who were in the last years of high school during 1966, 1967 and 1968, and the "April Fifth Generation" who mostly participated in the first post-Mao democracy movement in 1976. These two generations that had matured during the Cultural Revolution were approximately in the ages of late 20s to early 40s in 1989. While as youth they were told that the capitalist was evil, and they had been send to for years of work in farms and factories throughout China. They traveled extensively and their rich experiences taught them a profound lesson of the realities of China — that the harshness of life was hardly changed even after 1949. Such social environment gave them a sense of distrust and cynicism to Communist. Fortunate enough, most of these two generations could participate in the first college entrance examination in post-Mao China, which was taking place in 1978. Due to the extremely competitive in nature at that time, some of them passed the exam and had become the Party dignitaries or the first generation of graduate students in Deng era in the late 1980s, in which they took to the streets and shouted the slogans during the Beijing Spring. They are regarded as both the lost generation and the best generation since 1949, in terms of the limited educational opportunities offered to them and the academic excellence they had achieved so far. They are also the most critical to the CCP and Marxism, but they never lost hope to reform the Party within.

The third group is the bulk of Tiananmen demonstrators, they are the undergraduates in 1989 and most of them came from the

national prestigious institutions such as Beijing University and Tsinghua University. These students were born from the late 1960s to the early 1970s, when China's "One Child" policy had not been implemented until 1979. So most of them were the eldest child in the family, always bearing strong sense of responsibility in assisting the family and raising their younger siblings. As growing up in the later years of Mao Zedong, most of their families still lived in subsistence level and they knew about the chaos and famine in Mao era from their parent's memories. Of those Beijing Spring participants, most of them had passed the fierce competition of university entrance examination and became the elite of college students which were rare in the 1980s China. The people had great expectation toward them and they bore a sense of pride or even a little arrogance, as well as a deep apprehension for China's future.

Unlike the first two groups, the youngest generation of students has real appreciation of foreign things. They were told by their government to focus on studies and to be open to the West. Because of the reform after 1978, the students were familiar with many Western values (Locke, Montesquieu, Sartre, and Nietzsche etc), and constantly compared China to the West. They realized that China was not doing well in the world, and they vigorously supported to reduce arbitrary government behavior, as well as to lead China into more Western orientation. As Lee Feigon said: "Compared with earlier generations of Chinese children, they had grown up in affluence, but they still felt poor. They were the first generation in China in more than a century not scared by poverty and fighting. While China was developing rapidly, they still felt it was too slow. They felt they could change the present in a way the old would never understand."[43]

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[43] Lee Feigon, *China Rising*, 181–2.

When the students took to the streets in 1989, their common banners were "Vive la liberte" and "Give me liberty or give me death". It seems they pursued the goal parallel to what their East European counterparts did at the same year. But such impression is somewhat misleading, most of the social groups who had participated in Tiananmen movement (included students) initially wanted to lead a campaign to exterminate the corruption inside the Party, to make the CCP more tolerated, but not to undermine its power. For the students, even they had some appeal for administrative change, but mainly in the campus context, such as the reform of education and research, the amelioration of accommodation and livelihood. From a survey during the movement below, you may see that was not a priority for the students to democratize China (See the tables below):

Table 3.2. Goals of the Student Movement

Goal	%
An end to corruption	71
Accurate news reporting	69
Freedom of expression	51
More respect for intellectuals	46
Help modernize China	35
Free elections	33
Change in senior government officials	31
Improve the economy	21
Free and independent associations	16
Others	3
N=112	

Source: Craig Calhoun, *Neither Gods nor Emperors*: *Students and the Struggle for Democracy in China* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 1994), 246

Table 3.3. Bystanders' Impressions of Movement Goals

Goal	%
An end to corruption	82
An end to official profiteering	59
Accurate news reporting	50
More respect for intellectuals	48
Freedom of expression	46
Change in senior government officials	38
Help modernize China	30
End price hikes	30
Improve the economy	28
Free elections	25
Better wages/salaries	14
Free and independent associations	8
Improved public security	5

N=111

Source: Calhoun, Neither Gods nor Emperors, 248

On the other hand, the initiators and the leaders of student organization (BUSA), such as Wang Dan, Wu'er Kaixi, Chai Ling and her husband Feng Congde, they had genuine concern about China's institutional transformation. The student leaders realized the problem of China was not just the corruption, but must be traced back to the root of state governance. Unlike other students who frequently wanted government recognition of their movement as patriotism in nature; these four people always called for a dialogue with the government instead. They planned to establish an entity

based on student and intellectual participants, like an opposition party, for superintending the CCP conduct thereafter. Of course, such blueprint was not feasible in current China.

There are two categories of intellectuals participated in the Beijing Spring: establishment and nonestablishment. The first one manifested their identities on May 14, when they co-signed an announcement and took to the streets in support of student hunger strike and the redemption of April 26 editorial. Of those who joined in the movement at this date, some were members of Zhao Ziyang's think tank. They detested the CCP corruption as the students did, but were cautious about any further liberal stands that might reverse Deng Xiaoping's reform program. This kind of intellectuals preferred restoration to transformation; they were Chinese traditional emperor's remonstrators-like attached to long time Confucian value.

The nonestablishment intellectuals could be reclassified into two sub-categories: the moderates represented by Fang Lizhi, Wang Juntao and Chen Ziming, and the radicals represented by Hou Dejian, Liu Xiaobo, Zhou Duo and Gao Xin, who declared the "New Hunger Strike Announcement" on the eve of massacre. Even both of them did not advocate the monopoly of the CCP, but the moderates adopted the wait-and-see attitude during the Beijing Spring; they understood that the aimless movement generated by the students must have no good result. Fang Lizhi totally distanced himself from vortex; Wang Juntao and Chen Ziming went to Square and persuaded the students to leave. Interestingly, the moderates' stand was similar to that of Zhao Ziyang. On the contrary, the radicals vigorously joined in the students and assumed the hunger strike until the last minute. The only one difference between them and the students was the former thought that the best solution for Chinese problem was democracy. It was the soil not the climate that created adversity to Chinese people.

It maybe a misunderstanding that the meaning of democracy in Chinese intellectuals' mind is no different with the definition in Western sense. As Merle Golden indicated: "Members of the democratic elite did not have an overall political program or even a clear understanding of democracy. Like their literati predecessors, they believed that those who governed, even in a democracy, should belong to an educated elite, a view generally held by China's intellectuals. Until the late 1980s, most of them insisted that China's peasants did not care about politics and were not sufficiently educated to understand democratic principles or practices. The intellectuals' outlook, though rational, scientific, and technological, was not 'democratic'. In many ways in the Deng era on professionalism and 'scientific' methods of decision making was reminiscent of the literati's stress on meritocracy"[44]. In sum, the concept of democracy in Tiananmen 1989 was quite sinicized. Anyway, the intervention of intellectuals in the Beijing Spring is significant. From the moral support letter on May 14, to the last moment of "New Hunger Strike Announcement", the intellectuals changed the tide of the whole movement; since then, it was not an idealized demonstrations for anti-corruption, but a sophisticated political campaign vis-à-vis the state.

It is a classical case of a spontaneous workers' outburst against insufferable living and working conditions, and according to the canons of Marxism those are bound to happen in capitalist countries, but should be by definition impossible under socialism. Chinese case is not an exception. The workers in Tiananmen not only wanted to improve their living standard, but also wanted to assert their voice in governmental policy-making, by forming a Chinese national workers' union. From this point of view, the workers in 1989 were more willing

44 Goldman, *Sowing the Seeds*, 2.

to support political pluralism in China than any other social groups. For the CCP, the workers were more threatening. The BWAF leader and a syndicalist Han Dongfang, he thought Chinese workers could play a role as seeking not just economic rights, but also political privileges

After the death of Mao Zedong, Chinese workers have been the major participants in all kinds of social unrest, as they no longer claimed to be "hero of proletariat" which they had enjoyed under Mao, and they were identified as losers under Deng's economic reform. The first large scale workers' rebellion took place in Democracy Wall movement in 1978, in which produced the first dissent representative Wei Jingsheng — a Beijing zoo electrician. If few workers had joined in the 1986 student movement, but in 1989 there was definitely a biggest "proletarian storm" that wanted to overthrow their "exploiting class" — the CCP. Plus the Polish-like Solidarity nightmare always haunted in the minds of Deng and the old guards, it was not surprise to see that the harshest revenge after the Beijing Spring given by the CCP was to the workers not to the students.

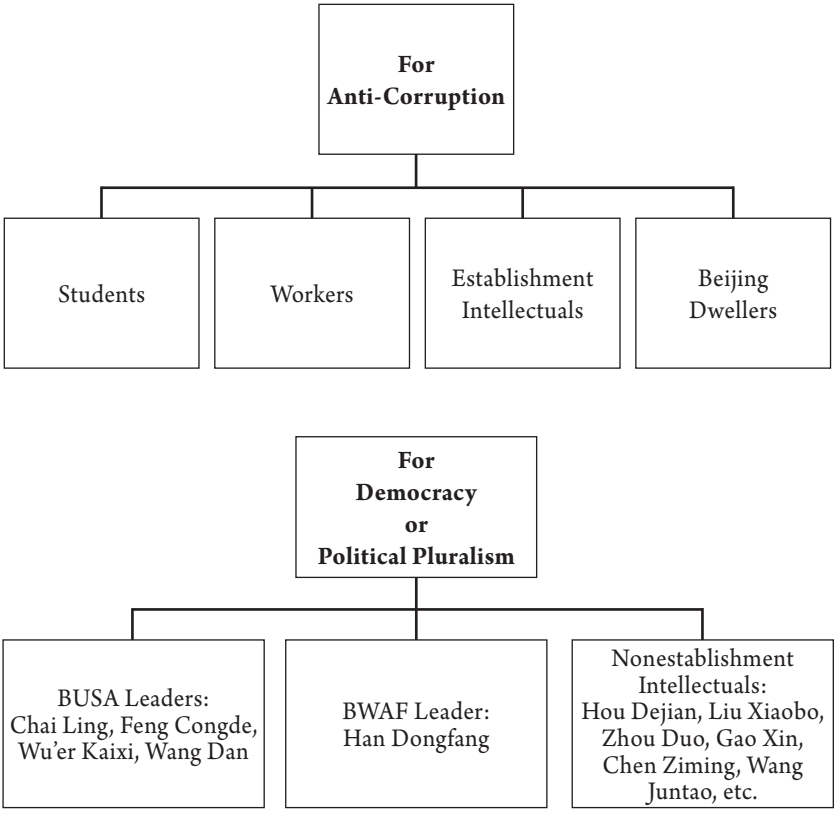
It was almost impossible to find evidence that showed Chinese peasants had gone to Tiananmen in 1989. In some rural suburbs, a few pro-Li Peng demonstrations were organized among peasants who received cash payments for taking part. It is a mystery that the largest part of Chinese population did not go hand in hand with the Tiananmen demonstrators, and the reason actually is quite simple. Since Deng Xiaoping's reform, the Chinese countryside was divided. In coastal regions, particularly in Guangdong and Fujian provinces, where the peasants benefited the most from Deng's program and had got rich before the Beijing Spring. They were tended to be apolitical and satisfied with their current situation. In inland regions, where the peasants were still living in the condition that were little different with Mao era. They were preoccupied by daily struggle to earn basic sustenance. Furthermore, the CCP since 1949 have successfully implemented the "policy of ignorance" (yumin zhengce) in Chinese

countryside. Chinese peasants up to now largely remain in illiteracy, and the modern media have little effect in changing the situation. The key to stabilize the country despite the turmoil in the capital during the Beijing Spring was the CCP firmly controlled the 80% population of Chinese peasants; otherwise the consequence would have been different and unimaginable.

The Beijing Spring was the largest, even not the first, spontaneous mass participation in defiance of the Party. The ordinary people (they were mainly Beijing dwellers) coming from all walks of life took to the streets, not only for protesting against the authority, but also for supplying material support to the students. Their participation let the world believed that it was the whole country of China versus the Communist Party. Deng Xiaoping no doubt could not tolerate them and it precipitated his determination of a massacre. The large scale of Beijing dwellers' participation in the Beijing Spring was reminiscent with the mobilization of Red Guards and the mass movement in Mao Zedong era. Most members of the top CCP leadership in 1989 had been the victims of these great terrors of Mao; for them, the Maoist revolutionary hallmark of mass movement was not the fervor in pursuit of Communism, but virtually a life-and-death anti-Party struggle. Such dark memories of Mao were still lingering among the minds of the Party elders, particularly in the case of Deng Xiaoping. Deng's whole family all experienced the suffering under Mao and his only son had been tortured by the Red Guards and resulted in losing one leg. During the Beijing Spring many people from all parts of China had traveled on the trains to Beijing without paying, some of them even were joining in for fun — another echo of the Cultural Revolution (when Red Guards "exchanged experiences" — chuanlian — across the country free of charge), the picture indeed disturbed the leadership and justified their anxiety. So the final massacre in Tiananmen was out of the Party leaders' fear of the ravage of Mao-style mass movement, not the fear of the democracy.

From the beginning to the end, all of the Tiananmen participants never openly opposed the Party, by doing so would have undermined the legitimacy of the movement and it was vulnerable to attack by the Party. In general, most of the participants in regardless what their occupations were had no intention in overthrowing the CCP or establishing the opposition parties, but reforming within the system. The charts below fully illustrate the motives behind each group of people in Tiananmen demonstrations: (See the table below)

Table 3.4. The Motives behind Each Social Group in Tiananmen



During the Beijing Spring, even within the CCP hierarchy was unprecedented chaotic. The dispute between the center (Beijing) and the peripheries (all other provinces) was highly manifestative. The leaders of some coastal regions even advocated the demonstrations in Beijing, and urged the Party to consider concession. Particularly in Guangdong, where had been the major beneficiary of economic liberalization since 1978. Most of the leaders there wanted a more capitalist-oriented bureaucracy in Beijing, to continue guiding their prosperity. In the aftermath of June Fourth, the CCP targeted on the disloyalty of Maritime Provinces, and removed most of the indigenous Party officials, replaced by the cadres from the North. For example, the former Guangdong provincial Party secretary, a reformer and long time Zhao Ziyang's associate Liang Xiang, who had proclaimed his sympathy toward the students, had been purged together with his whole family in disguise of an anti-corruption campaign after Jiang Zemin took power.[45]

In the center of power — Beijing, the situation was hardly better; the struggle for the supreme leadership between the Left and the Right continued throughout the Beijing Spring. The conservatives and their disciple Li Peng regarded the student demonstrations as not a national crisis, but a political opportunity. They were on the position of attack throughout the Beijing Spring, and always launched preemptive actions targeting on Zhao Ziyang and other reformers. Li caught every opportunity to disagree with Zhao on how to deal with the students, at the end, Li made the last gamble by urging Deng Xiaoping to kill the students, an extreme means of gaining his upper hand in the power struggle. Finally, the conservatives could boast that Deng might have returned to their side, and their position had been secured after the massacre. But unfortunately the conservatives

[45] Ethridge, *China's Unfinished Revolution*, 243.

were unable to claim the massacre was their permanent victory in the Party, because Zhao Ziyang was not replaced by Li Peng as they had expected before, but it was Shanghai Mayor Jiang Zemin, a moderate choice by Deng. Deng understood that Li was not welcome by the most Chinese nationals, and Deng never trusted the conservatives' economic policies. Besides, Deng really had some sympathy toward his long time disciple Zhao Ziyang.

Conversely, Party Secretary Zhao Ziyang was always on the position of defense and he had to resist the bullets from the conservatives throughout the Tiananmen movement. Zhao's role in 1989 was not a comfortable one; he was a thorn in the conservatives' eyes, and inasmuch as the corrupted conduct of his offspring, Zhao was not favored by common folk either. The people in the 1980s always attributed the title of "architect of China's reform" to Deng Xiaoping, and Zhao was supposed to be the implementer of Deng's policies. Whenever the hunger strikers protested the inefficiency of the Party leaders, Zhao was in the most-wanted list along with Deng Xiaoping and Li Peng. Only had Zhao released his last words in Tiananmen on May 19, his negative image began to transform and even beautify among the Chinese people. Zhao's tear in Tiananmen was both trying to rehabilitate himself and restore the good name of the CCP, as characterized by Geremie Barme, thus Zhao's actions on this day were merely "desperately attempts to use the student movement to save his own political career in history."[46]

Anyway, Zhao Ziyang "was the only major Communist leader who consistently advocated settling the crisis through dialogue and compromise. And he was one of the few higher Party officials who remained steadfast in his opposition to Deng's insistence on

[46] Geremie Barme, and John Minford, ed. *Seeds of Fire*: *Chinese Voices of Conscience* (New York : Hill and Wang, 1988), 43.

declaring martial law and employing military force"[47]. Unlike the conservatives, who deliberately stirred up the students' anger at every step during the Beijing Spring to serve their opportunism. From the pre-departure of state visit to North Korea, to May 1 Politburo meeting; from the May 4 speech at Asian Development Bank meeting, to his farewell to students on May 19; Zhao always tried to calm down the demonstrators' emotion, and to make a compromise between the government and the people in Tiananmen. But Zhao was still an "instigator of turmoil" in the eyes of Deng Xiaoping. Zhao's consistently opposing to the Martial Law and his last words on May 19 not only went against the Party discipline, but also gained the sympathy and praise among students, Chinese people, and international society. The massacre on June 4 was only further damaging the image of Deng, but enhancing Zhao's. Unlike Hu Yaobang, who never genuinely agreed with Deng and was distrusted by Deng gradually during his 6 years as Party Secretary. Zhao had been loyal to and protected by Deng all the time since 1987, Zhao was only disgraced unexpectedly before the massacre. His "sudden death" proved what once Deng had said that he just thoroughly understood his long time disciple overnight.

Zhao never thought he could have confronted Deng directly, and he was aware such consequence. Zhao wanted to rely on the people to convince Deng, but Deng had nothing except the army. The army alone proved to be enough, and Deng used it to secure the final victory in Tiananmen. The 1989 was like previous Chinese historical events: the pragmatism defeated the idealism.

The Beijing Spring was the largest social chaos since the Cultural Revolution, and it was the largest spontaneous mass movement since the May Fourth, but unfortunately it was the most tragic one

47 Meisner, *The Deng Xiaoping Era*, 437.

in modern Chinese history. The reasons of failure in Tiananmen are complicated, and the followings are decisive:

First, unlike in 1976 and in 1986–87, the Chinese government did not react promptly at the beginning of movement outbreak at the end of April. For example, the CCP did not remove the wreathes for mourning Hu Yaobang at the first instance, if they had done so, even by using the coercive methods, that such signal of intimidation might alert the students and stop their further actions.

Second, throughout the Beijing Spring, the reactions of international society were somewhat equivocal. Although they showed some sympathy toward students, but the superpowers such as Europe and the U.S. never publicly expressed genuine support to the movement, as they feared that would harm the relationship with Chinese government. So the CCP had no international pressure at all and it could deal with the movement as its purely internal affair with willfulness.

Third, the students' strategy during the Beijing Spring was bargaining with the government: they took advantage of the class boycott from time to time as a ace when negotiated with the authority. Such strategy made the CCP felt insulted. The students were criticized as pendulum in the wake of massacre, as they had no specific demands in Tiananmen. Their demands were changed capriciously many times in the course of demonstrations. Actually the students' demands were quite simple: a direct dialogue with Deng Xiaoping; the right to form an independent student union; a retraction of April 26 editorial; a genuine anti-corruption campaign; to deepen the political reform and to establish a civil society in China. But even given the best opportunities in when meeting with Yuan Mu and Li Peng, the students were still ambiguous in their words. Furthermore, the BUSA had no real sense of democracy and it lacked of discipline and solidarity. The students had no general agreement in what to advance step by step, their argument even went as trivial

as what should eat and what should not eat during the hunger strike. The failure of students had been predetermined before the massacre.

And the students had never drawn lessons from April Fifth movement and the 1986–87 protest, for so many days they dared to embarrass and humiliate the Party that was the first time in PRC history. They underestimated the strength of the conservatives and they had not yet realized that Deng is a phony democrat until the bloodshed came. "The students want to have an electric light, but they turn over the candle, meaning that the students wanted more democracy, but what they got instead was tighter political control and a swing back to political orthodoxy."[48]

On the other hand, "Party leaders have been quick to use the students when they needed their help, but they have also been quick to send them off out of the way, once their usefulness ended"[49]. Unlike the students, the CCP always had their goal firmly in hand and never gave up an inch. They deliberately divided the students and the dissidents, by praising the majority of the students while denouncing the "very, very few black hands". The CCP had totally manipulated the movement since the publishing of April 26 editorial, and successfully lead the students to butchery on June 4. They performed the killing in front of the world, and implied that anyone who opposes the government in China would have no good end.

Fourth, the tragedy in Tiananmen had articulated the hallmark of Chinese autocracy — the Party gerontocracy. Since 1949, Chinese Constitution Act had given the NPC a right to nullify any members Politburo Standing Committee and to veto decisions made by the state. But in 1989 such article in Constitution proved to be a "window

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48 Andrew Higgins, Michael Fathers, and Robert Cottrell, ed. *Tiananmen*: *the Rape of Peking* (Toronto : Independent in association with Doubleday, 1989), 64.

49 Lee Feigon, *China Rising*, 25.

dressing", even two third of the NPC members opposed the Martial Law, the last words were only rested on Deng Xiaoping and other elders such as Chen Yun and Wang Zhen. Those "shadow cabinet" or "emperors behind the curtain" could always assert their authority although in theory they had no real power at all. The rule by veteran revolutionaries would continue to lay down the cause for future political trouble in China until they died.

Fifth, both the demonstrators and the Party reformers such as Zhao Ziyang, had the same goal and the same enemy during the Beijing Spring, as they wanted to reform within the Party and to remove the influence of the conservatives. Unfortunately there was no agreement between both sides, they never mutually communicated and they did not inform each other on how to advance the movement tactically. Only until the last minute of May 19, when Zhao tearfully spoke to the students, did they begin to understand each other, but it was too late.

Among the demonstrators in Tiananmen, because of Chinese Confucianism tradition, the students and intellectuals consistently disdained the BWAF and its leader Han Dongfang. Unlike their counterpart in Eastern Europe, who always considers themselves as part of the civil society; the students and intellectuals in China thought themselves as rather the professional elite superior to the mass. Thus the deeply rooted contempt in pure intellectual class for physical effort was to persist down to present day. The absence of unity and coherence among the demonstrators in Tiananmen was one of the crucial factors in resulting in the collapse of the movement and the bankruptcy of their idealism.

Last, there were several phases in the development of the Beijing Spring, and the most important one was in the period from April 26 when the students reacted strongly to the publication of editorial, to the eve of Gorbachev's visit on May 13. During these days there were many opportunities for both the government and the demonstrators

to make a tentative conciliation, but none of them did the job. The time was wasted when Gorbachev departed, and the bloodshed was inevitable.

The fiasco of June Fourth could be avoided if had the students not be pushed by their romanticism and impulsiveness, and by the urge of Chinese people, media, and the international society; or if had the CCP been willing to listen to the opinions from below, and if had Zhao Ziyang's faction prevail in the Party, or had Deng been convince of adopting a peaceful measure. Unfortunately all 'ifs' above fail to realize, we can say the consequence of massacre was a point that both the government and the students were pressured to escalate into. For the students, the pressure for them was not democracy but patriotism. They thought that patriotism was the sole legitimacy to rebel current regime, and the invocation of patriotism was beyond the hostile reality. For the government, the pressure for them was not the ideal of defending Communism, but an endangered power which had been seized from their long time guerrilla warfare.

There are two major differences between the Beijing Spring and the spontaneous mass movements before in modern Chinese history. First, unlike the previous ones, which participants for each time were consisted of mainly one particular social group, such as college students in May Fourth and ex-Red Guards in April Fourth and Democracy Wall. In June Fourth there were many people came from all kinds of occupations, it was generated by the students, and then the others followed up. At the end, the movement turned out to be a national chorus against the CCP, the student movement had turned to be the people movement. If the April Fifth was the disappointment for the Mao regime and the 1986–87 demonstrations was the same for the Deng's, the June Fourth should be the end of faith in Communist dictatorship.

Second, comparing to the April Fifth and the Democracy Wall, China in 1989 was relatively more tolerated and politically pluralistic,

and the living standard was far higher than in the late 1970s. But the mass movements following Mao's death had more concrete demands: they wanted an end to both political persecution and proletarian dictatorship. The movements had a strong intention of democratization in China. Whereas the demands of Beijing Spring had no focus at all; they were changed from time to time. Most of the slogans there were venting their personal anger toward the reality, not politically constructive and rational. Strictly speaking, what students had done in Tiananmen was a utopian and Paris commune-like revolution, in some extent parallel to the blindness of Red Guards. The Beijing Spring was not the expressions of outright opposition to the Party rule, but was still the popular cries for justice, accountability, and reform of the Party. Most of the demonstrators wanted to save the Party, but not to overthrow it.

Tracing back to the first student movement in modern China in 1919, the May Fourth students had created two core elements for the subsequent China's development: social pluralism and mass political participation. These were the two valuable legacies which many subsequent generations had fought for. In 1989, once again we see the same motif among the students in Tiananmen, but against whom they demonstrated was the Communist Party, not the Republican Party. This is the absurdness: "It seems to as though as so many mass movements in China past should always start over again from the May Fourth." (The script of 'River Elegy') In this regard, whether the May Fourth, the April Fifth or the Democracy Wall, all of them exceeded the spirit of June Fourth. As Nathan said: "Seventy years after the May Fourth Incident of 1919, the April 27 Incident showed that the Chinese people are still yearning for the 'science and democracy' that they started searching for then. And thirteen years after the April 5th Incident of 1976, when students demonstrated in Tiananmen Square against the 'feudal fascist dictatorship' of Mao Zedong, the April 27 demonstrations revealed that the Deng

regime is facing a legitimacy crisis of its own. The new legitimacy crisis is equally severe but different in nature from the one that of mandate from the people by offering the promise of competent management and economic reform in place of Mao's revolutionary utopianism. Today, when the economy is in trouble and reform appears to blocked, the Chinese people no longer seem to accept Deng's authoritarian-technocratic mandate to rule."[50]

Every mass movement in the history of modern China has a paradox: They all stood vis-à-vis the government, but without the support of official patrons they could not succeed. In 1989 we can discern the relation between the political career of Zhao Ziyang and the fate of demonstrations: No sooner had Zhao fall in disgrace from the Party than the students suffered immediately afterwards. The students challenged the Party in the name of democracy, but not for democracy, precisely it was a pro-democracy movement. The Beijing Spring was a regression among modern Chinese anti-autocracy demonstrations. It was not a beginning but an end.

[50] Andrew J. Nathan, *China's Crisis: Dilemmas of Reform and Prospects for Democracy* (New York : Columbia University Press, 1990), 116.

Conclusion

Unlike Hua Guofeng, Li Peng, and Jiang Zemin, the ascent of Zhao Ziyang was not due to his political obedience, but his merit in economic construction in a remote province. Zhao had served in Chinese peripheries and never been a part of the "Beijing faction" until 1980; his recruitment in the political center was largely owing to his remarkable "Sichuan experience" in lifting the living standard there. Zhao's background presages that his style was different with those of the bureaucracies in Beijing, and Zhao might not have been accustomed to Byzantine politics in Zhong Nan Hai.

Unlike Li Peng and Jiang Zemin, both Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang had been truly trusted by Deng Xiaoping. Zhao was dictated by Deng to undertake the political reform in the Party structure in the late 1986; he was promoted to be acting Party General Secretary after Hu Yaobang's failure in dealing with the student movement in the early 1987, and his position was subsequently formalized during the Thirteenth Congress on October the same year. This was the turning point of Zhao's political career, from this moment he could no longer feel confident and relaxed as before.

Zhao's measure in dealing with Zhuozhou Conference and his program of political reform both made the conservatives treated him as "second target after Hu Yaobang". The personnel settlement in the Thirteenth Congress defined that Zhao's authority could not exceed that of Li Peng. The fetter somewhat paralyzed Zhao's political ambition and he had to always care about the reaction of his rival while contemplating the radical policies.

Beside in political arena, Zhao Ziyang's core programs in economic reconstruction: Price reform, enterprise reform, and coastal development strategy, all of them were implemented unsuccessfully. Particularly the price reform, it created unprecedented high inflation in modern China's history. Zhao's failure in economic reform not only disappointed the reformers and his supporters, but also gave the excuse to the conservatives (they had been unsatisfied that why Li Peng could not be the Party Secretary) in removing him. Perhaps the strongest reaction came from the Chinese people; they were the immediate victims of economic decline. Some outrageous people destructed Zhao's parents' tomb in his hometown Hua county in Henan province, acting in defiance of Zhao's radical policies[1]. Even Deng Xiaoping, Zhao's long time mentor, had reserved his opinions and hesitated to side with Zhao publicly.

Although Zhao Ziyang's provincial achievement was outstanding, but his tenure as Party Secretary from 1987 to 1989 was far from a success. Under Zhao's reign, the gap between the cities and the countryside, the coastal area and the inland, the rich and the poor in China was enormously widened. The living standard comparing to the beginning of 1980s was not better but worse. Even Zhao had relaxed the ideological control in the fields of education, art and literature, and resulting in the academic prosperity and the freedom of creativity flourished in the late 1980s. Ironically, the most severe criticism to Zhao came from the students and intelligentsia, both these two groups spearhead in the Beijing Spring in humiliating the Party.

In general, the era of Zhao Ziyang (1987–89) was no doubt the most liberal period in China since 1949, and he had undertaken the first market-style (even in its primitive form) economic reform in

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1 Ethridge, *China's Unfinished Revolution*, 117.

the history of People's Republic, it was even more political pluralistic and tolerated than Hu Yaobang's reign. Unlike the previous anti-intellectualism of Chinese Communism, both Hu and Zhao returned to the long time tradition of "scholar officialdom" inherited from ancient China, they no longer had hostility but always protected the intellectuals, including some of the dissidents. In case of Zhao, the intellectuals under his patronage were no longer employed as the tool of the Party, but they could freely give the academic suggestions to Zhao, even sometimes such suggestions were unacceptable to the Communist point of view. Zhao Ziyang was also one of the most scholar-like leaders in the history of PRC; he was fond of reading and knowledgeable to even the Western world. He disregarded the Marxism as the sole doctrine, and was receptive to whatever the unorthodoxy that may be helpful to China. Unfortunately Zhao had the most tragic political career among all the CCP leaders; he was criticized by many Communist bureaucracies and was labeled as "the communist without any communist characteristics". Only under Zhao's reign did the students and the city dwellers dare to go to the public and challenge the Party. He was both the symbols of enlightenment for the Chinese and anathema for the Communist respectively.

But we should be clear in mind that Zhao Ziyang was still under the control of the hands of paramount leader Deng Xiaoping, and he could not wield his power beyond the confine of Deng. Since 1978 Deng had swung between the reformers and the conservatives, and vaguely expressed his political stand. To delve in this issue, we can see that Deng was implicit in support to the liberal side most of the time, except in 1986 and 1989, when Deng saw the overextension of Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang, and he invoked the elders to save the regime. On the other hand, the conservatives never gave up the endeavors in exterminating their rivals. They took advantage in two student movements in both 1986 and 1989, to successfully

remove Hu and Zhao. But the conservatives' final target was Deng's comprehensive reform program; they wanted China returning to Maoist egalitarian, orthodox socialism as opposed to Zhao Ziyang's "socialism with a human face". The struggle between two sides made Deng like a ham in a sandwich, the predicament forced him went astray. The decision of massacre on June 4 was actually the result of Deng's helplessness. From 1978 onwards, Deng Xiaoping was consistently doing a big gamble in China: He tried to assert the lassie fair on economy while maintain the Stalinism on politics. After the June Fourth Deng could not claim either of them and the biggest loser was himself.

Hu Yaobang never supervised any kinds of political reforms before, but Zhao Ziyang did. Zhao's political reform program even was by no means of anti-Communism in nature, but it still undermined the centralization of the Party and gave the conservatives an excuse to avenge later on. The limitation of political reform conceived by some intellectuals indirectly triggered them going to the streets for the further political transformation. If without the event of 1986 political reform ahead of the Beijing Spring, the intellectuals might not have participated in the student movement. Therefore, Zhao's 1989 was like Hu's 1986, and Zhao would probably have the same fate as moderate as Hu.

Compared to Hu Yaobang, Zhao is not a faithful Marxist who should have a great sense of principle at all times, but rather a kind of careerist. The behaviors of careerism were evident throughout in every stage of Zhao's tenure. Started from the early 1987, Zhao was involved in engineering Hu's removal, though not an active participant, but no doubt Zhao was the biggest beneficiary in the political intrigue, as he replaced Hu as a new Party boss in October the same year. After becoming the General Secretary, Zhao turned his target on Li Peng and the conservatives. For opposing the economic policies of the elders, Zhao chose to implement Deng

Xiaoping's radical approach — price reform, although he generally disagreed with Deng on this issue. When the Beijing Spring occurred, Zhao's ambition had been performed in utmost before people's eyes. His appeal to a peaceful resolution of the crisis was more as political self-interest and less as natural inclination. Learning from the struggle between Deng Xiaoping and Hua Guofeng during the Democracy Wall in the late 1978, after the return from North Korea, Zhao saw in the student movement an opportunity to "strengthen his own party base and enable him to shunt aside Li Peng and perhaps even Deng Xiaoping himself"[2]. And nobody can eliminate the possibility that if Zhao overwhelmed Deng, and Zhao might invoke the method of Mao Zedong's "Hundred Flowers Movement" in dealing with the aftermath of student movement, by "luring the criticism to kill the dissidents".

It is difficult to foresee what happened if Zhao Ziyang dominated China after the Beijing Spring, because analysis in history is not like a laboratory in biology, the historical events can not be reproduced according to procedures in natural science; therefore, the historian can only predict the future based on the past facts. In this regard, there is a conclusion presented by the research: Zhao is not a liberal leader in Western sense as many people envisioned before, and China under Zhao may not be transformed to democracy even if he replaces Deng as new paramount leader. What Zhao bore in mind was the "third way" idea, that China's development should follow the model between totalitarianism and democracy, such thinking was not similar to Deng's and was far from acceptable to the conservatives. From the time when he was promoted to be General Secretary, Zhao had prepared for his political credential. His program of political reform and its core content of

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[2] Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: Norton, 1999), 698.

neo-authoritarianism deeply revealed that Zhao was not another Chiang Ching-kuo, Gorbachev, or even Boris Yelsin, but a man of Vladimir Putin, Lee Kuan Yew, or Tito. Throughout his tenure Zhao wanted to clean up the influence of Deng within the Party and establish "socialism with Zhao Ziyang's characteristics". China under Zhao after 1989 may be still under the CCP monopoly with some progress of freedom or a "black pluralism" regime that last for several generations, but nothing can affect the basic facts of Zhao's dictatorship. The logic is simple: Zhao Ziyang is no different with Deng Xiaoping if Zhao could control the Party after 1989, just like what Deng had done right after Mao Zedong's death. The only one difference between them is Deng favored one party rule + economic prosperity + autocracy; for Zhao was one party rule + economic prosperity + limited democracy, Zhao never considered the CCP monopoly and the genuine democracy is incompatible. From the onset of political reform in the late 1986 to the sadness of his farewell in Tiananmen in 1989, what Zhao had done throughout two years was to safeguard Socialism but not to undermine it. By nature, Zhao Ziyang is not a precursor of liberty, but still a figure of the CCP bureaucracy and a product of Communist institution.

However, Zhao Ziyang's mind after the June Fourth massacre was totally changed. Not only Zhao, but also some prominent members of the political reform office, such as Bao Tong, Yan Jiaqi, and Wu Guogang, who either had been put into jail or fled abroad for political asylum. They were no longer bearing a hope that the CCP could be reform from within; most of them became the ardent critics of the Chinese Communism. Maybe the massacre gave them a wake-up call or the lost of freedom made them self-question their past. In case of Zhao Ziyang, he presented his first public letter after the Beijing Spring to the Central Committee in 1997, requesting the June Fourth be reevaluated. He also indicated in the letter that unless the students' conducts are recognized as patriotism and

the criminals of the Massacre are trialed, otherwise he would not return to officialdom even Deng persuaded him to do so. Since then Zhao's situation became worse and he lost any personal freedom at all. The activities of Zhao after 1989 still need more investigation, but the letter in 1997 was definitely the last public proclamation of Zhao before his death in 2005.

The debacle in 1989 summer did not propel the collapse of the Communist regime; the CCP restored the stability and confidence quickly owing to the solid foundation of economic development during the past decade. In November 1989, the Central Committee agreed to Deng Xiaoping's request to retire from his position as Chairman of the MAC. Although no longer holding any official positions, he retained much authority and was frequently consulted by the new General Secretary Jiang Zemin, and even exercised power on major issues. After the June Fourth, Deng was very cautious about the Party liberalists, but he also could not tolerate the conservatives' prevalence. In 1993 Deng took a tour to Southern China; he used the opportunity to criticize the leftist residue and to perpetuate his reform policy. Ironically, China after 1989 was adopting a "Zhao Ziyang's policy without Zhao Ziyang" in economy. Deng realized that the only legitimacy for the CCP monopoly after the massacre was continuing to improve the standard of living of the population; even it was accompanied by a fertile area for the growth of corruption and resulting disciplinary deterioration within the state bureaucracy. Deng even went further and more radical than his before, China after 1989 onwards has become a state capitalism: More competitive than any other countries in the world, and the Chinese people had been virtually deprived of free health and education welfare to suit for the market mechanism.

On the political arena, Deng Xiaoping had fully observed the lesson of Zhao Ziyang, and abandoned any blueprints for political reform. The fundamental of the CCP governance after 1989 was

"leniency on the outside and harshness on the inside"; while accelerating the economic construction, the Party continued to deal with the dissidents in China and the "bourgeois liberalization" from the West ruthlessly. The crisis is still under the surface in current China. The CCP after the June Fourth propagandized the thought education, the popular culture, and the pressure in job market to overwhelm the students in campus, and it also successfully placated the intellectuals (mainly scientists and university professors) and the officials by the increase of funding and the tolerance of the Party corruption. But the victims of Deng Xiaoping's ten-year reform — the workers and the peasants, were still living in bare subsistence level; their situation were even worse than 1989 before as the market economy speeding up in the 1990s. So China is a time bomb and the second large political chaos is still possible.

There have been many scholarships done by Americans on the comparison between the regime of Chiang Ching-kuo in Taiwan and his contemporary Zhao Ziyang in Mainland China, such as Andrew Nathan, Immanuel Hsu, and Keith Schoppa. Both Chiang and Zhao had maintained their nations of rapid economic progress and continued political stability simultaneously, and Zhao's economic policy of "special economic zone" virtually modeled on Taiwan's "export processing zone" under Chiang. Even the two sides shared much resemblance in economic development, but in politics, although both were on the transition from totalitarian to democracy, the natures of their institutions are different and the comparison is somewhat more interesting.

First, unlike Mao Zedong, the founder of the KMT Sun Yat-sen was born in a family of bourgeoisie. The ideology of the KMT — Three Principles of the People (nationalism, democracy, and people's livelihood), has more liberal factors than Mao Zedong's "dictatorship of proletariat". The KMT which bears prospects for capitalism has been an anomaly among Leninist

parties; it lacks a Marxist ideology and has been pro-Western through most of its history.

Second, the history of Taiwan is a different story to those in Mainland. Before 1945 Taiwan had been colonized by Japanese for more than half a century, and its economic infrastructure, educational level, and agricultural system were more advanced than the war-torn Mainland at the same time. The native Taiwanese — the bulk of island's population, always regarding themselves are another ethnic group rather than Chinese, and have been antagonistic with the Mainlanders since the KMT entered Taiwan in 1949. Because of the Japanese cultivation, the Taiwanese lack of affinity to the Mainlanders, and unlike the dissidents and middle class in the PRC, the Taiwanese are independent economically as well as politically in the island. The Taiwanese has huge nonparty opposition to the Mainlanders' KMT, their constant tension pressured the KMT to compromise rather to oppress. The long time confrontation and negotiation between two sides thus paving the way for the growth of law and genuine democracy. Therefore, the political transition in Taiwan is a natural consequence and a logical development, without Chiang Ching-kuo and by someone else would have been able to do the same job smoothly. On the other hand, due to the special circumstances in Mainland China, even Chiang or Gorbarchev-like figures appeared in the CCP leadership in the 1980s, they might not have had the ability to transform the PRC, the political development after Deng Xiaoping's death has fully proved this matter.

Third, Taiwan after 1949 had been constantly threatened by the Communist Mainland, the Republic of China (ROC) under the KMT wanted to build up a model that is far more advanced than that of the PRC both economically and politically. Unlike the PRC, Taiwan after 1949 was an active part in international society, and the KMT rule was under the patronage of United States — the largest democratic

regime in the world, and most members in the island's parliamentary body — the Legislative Yuan, had been educated in America.

Fourth, the educational levels across the Taiwan Strait are hugely contrasted. Under Chiang Ching-kuo Taiwanese university graduates reached one of the highest percentages in the world, and a large numbers of them flew to the United States each year for further studies. A surplus of highly educated, Western-oriented, and dissatisfied young people could have created political problems and actually they did in the late 1980s. Conversely, Chinese education under Zhao Ziyang (1987–89) was underfunded, and most of the nationals had never been educated outside the country. The bulk of the population — the peasants are also the largest illiterate social group in the world. Such illustration of educational levels also applies to the membership in both the KMT and the CCP in the 1980s. The bureaucracies of the CCP were constituted largely by the long time revolutionary cadres, their educational levels were seldom beyond middle schools. Most of the KMT functionaries were skill technocrats, some of them even held Ph.Ds from American institutions[3]. Such makeup formed the KMT a vigorous organization rather than a rigid hierarchy.

Last and the most important one, after Chiang Kai-shek died in 1975, there was no one in the island could restraint Chiang Ching-kuo to wield his power, the initiative for the reform and all the supreme decisions could only lay with Chiang. In the PRC the situation is different. Unlike in Taiwan where is Chiang's familial regime, but the CCP is collective Party rule. It is Deng Xiaoping not Zhao Ziyang who occupies a position of paramount leader in the political system similar to Chiang Ching-kuo in Taiwan. When Deng

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[3] R. Keith Schoppa, *Revolution and its Past*: *Identities and Change in Modern Chinese History* (Upper Saddle River : Pearson Education Inc, 2002), 429.

and the elders were still alive, Zhao was not eligible to such a step forward. Zhao must have misunderstood the "secrets of Taiwan", he considered that the modernization must be accompanied by an enlightened autocrat, and he asserted the "neo-authoritarianism" throughout his reign to follow the model of Taiwan. But as Merle Goldman said: "they ignored the fact that the four little dragons had begun to modernization with already semiprivatized economies and with markets that had not necessarily been created by a strong leader. In the case of Taiwan, the privatized economy had emerged despite the strong rule of Chiang Kai-shek."[4]

Before Chiang Ching-kuo's death in 1988, he had already undertaken substantial reform movements within the KMT and the island. Such as increasing the membership for the native Taiwanese in the Legislative Yuan, allowing the establishment of oppositional parties, abolishing the Martial Law, releasing all the dissidents, and lifting the ban on the trades with Mainland and any other Communist bloc countries. After Chiang passed away, his chosen successor Lee Teng-hui, the first Taiwanese president of the ROC, had been engaged in constitutional and parliamentary reforms more boldly. Under Lee's reign Taiwan held its first national free election in 1989, whatever the result was, Taiwan has become a democratic country in Western sense. Even Zhao Ziyang was the same kind of person of Chiang Ching-kuo, but the two countries are wholly different, so the success is the inevitability in the ROC whereas the failure is the fatality in the PRC. The model of political transformation adopted in Taiwan can not be mechanically duplicated in the other side of the Strait.

Zhao Ziyang's reign from 1987 to 1989 was no doubt the most possible period in the PRC history to politically transform Communist China, but the massacre in June 4 had fully proved that

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4 Goldman, *Sowing the Seeds*, 255.

the Chinese culture and the CCP political system which make the democracy in China impossible. Traditionally, the quintessence of Chinese thoughts — Confucianism, Legalism, and Mohism, all emphasis on conformity and authoritarian rule, although they encourage the individuals to speak against the abuses of power and misconducts of despotic rulers from time to time. Chinese has developed a long time preference for achieving consensus wherever possible and are sensitive to anything suggesting dissent, as well as regarding democracy merely as the means to "wealth and power" for the nation-state, and never placing the democracy beyond the boundary of a mundane regime, as a right of universal human nature.

But the biggest obstacle for Chinese to accept genuine democracy is not their unique understanding on the term, but the habitus and inertia generated from the ancient Chinese culture. As the product of this tradition, Chinese people has grown accustomed to humiliation, timidity, submission, and the spirit of tolerance, in short, all the qualities opposite to the Western notions.

In the history of the PRC, the soil of the CCP brewed a person of Mao Zedong, he had not only destroyed Chinese people's belief in Communism, but also cost a great human lost in world history. After 1978, Deng Xiaoping determined to reduce the power of the Party leadership and the cadres in all of the governmental units. But it is like changing the wine without changing the bottle, the excessive centralization of the Party hierarchy is still a monolith vis-à-vis the Chinese people. Under such system, it is difficult to produce genuine democracy and the persons like Gorbachev and Chiang Ching-kuo, Zhao Ziyang and the June Fourth are the best examples and the best illustrations.

Although both Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang wanted to trigger limited political reform within the Party, but they were born untimely in the period of transition from the rule of revolutionaries to the rule of technocrats in the 1980s of China. During this period,

China was neither totalitarian nor democratic and neither Maoist autocracy nor in the transition to freedom and pluralism, but lay uncertainly between those points on the political spectrum. Both Hu and Zhao tried to build a "humanitarian socialism" in China during their tenures, but after the June Fourth Deng Xiaoping reversed the route to "black capitalism with Chinese characteristics". He had already perpetuated this system in China even after his death in 1997, and it is advocated by many Party members which have substantial vested interest benefited from Deng. The change seems to be impossible. The "black capitalism with Chinese characteristics" is an abnormal fetus produced by Deng's ten-year reform of the combination of quasi-laissez faire economy and coercive political control. This phenomenon should give pause to those who embrace the easy but problematic equation between capitalism and democracy, and the markets are not by themselves a guarantee of freedom, the best examples are Hitler's Germany and Pinochet's Chile.

In the CCP's point of view, there are two arguments for China to reject Western democracy. First, Chinese culture lacks a tradition of democracy, and thus can not accommodate a democratic system. The common people are not interested in democracy; they would not know how to use it if they were given it; they lack the ability to support it. Second, China has been a strong advocate of the right to development and has stressed that providing food and livelihood for its people takes precedence over rights of political expression and demonstrations. And there are too many people still illiterate in China; they have to be educated first. These two arguments sum up the CCP's categorical logic: The democracy is not only unsuited to, but in fact antagonistic to Chinese value. In this regard, Chinese indeed has great differences with ancient Greeks, the origin of Western democracy and civilization, whose notion of polis defines that the individual political virtue is participation not obedience,

every citizen in Hellenic state could enjoy political rights and play a role in government[5].

For the Chinese people who have been under Communism for half a century, democracy is understood by most of them not as a system of competition and participation, but as a term for the good polity of fairness, egalitarianism, stableness, and honesty. In another words, they want a government that is not corrupt and is responsive, as well as has strict self-imposed limits. Particularly among the older generation, who had been liberated by the CCP and had witnessed a high degree of moral authority of the Party in the early years of Mao. Even they constantly encountered the misdeeds of the Party in the late 1980s; they continued to view Communist in a good light. For them, the democracy or setting up a multi-party system is not yet ripe. So the result is odd and awkward: "Because rights are granted by the state, they could also be taken away by the state. Even under the reformist Deng regime, the people discovered they still had no rights vis-à-vis the state."[6]

Since the founding of the PRC, the biggest threat facing the CCP is not the Party corruption and people's demonstrations, nor the religious organizations and the economic reform, even the democracy movements could not challenge the Party's monopoly. But the unorthodoxies within the supreme Party leadership, such as Peng Dehuai, Liu Shaoqi, Hu Yaobang, and Zhao Ziyang etc, Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution and Deng Xiaoping's June Fourth massacre were both the highest measures to suppress such dissents.

Going to the end of this research, the conclusion may be quite pessimistic. Throughout Zhao Ziyang's political career, from his ascendancy in the late 1986 to his downgrading in 1989, although

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5 C. Warren Hollister, *Roots of the Western Tradition*: *a Short History of the Ancient World* (New York : Wiley, 1972), 74.

6 Goldman, *Sowing the Seeds*, 8.

many nostalgic people bear a hope that one day Zhao may return to the center and supervise the reform again. But Zhao's death in 2005 symbolizes the demise of his "third path" philosophy, in which China should follow a model between capitalism and socialism. Before the memory of massacre on June 4, Chinese reformers after Zhao Ziyang must painfully choose a future path for China only either totalitarianism or democracy, the "third path" is no longer available. Maybe the socialism or totalitarianism is the doom for China, and China will continue to devote all of its energies to the task of modernization under the CCP monopoly, but never succeed.

"Will the 1980s come to be seen as the dawn of a new Golden Age for China, analogous to that of the early Qing (1644–1911) emperors Kang Xi and Qian Long, with capable leaders and effective administrators, backed by able advisors, running a form of market socialism which inspires other large Third World countries in the post-Stalinist epoch and lays the foundation for a high-income democratic socialism? Will the 1980s be seen instead as a time of enormous short-term gains from the release of the system from the inefficiencies of Stalinism, but a false down, being merely the prelude to slow long-term growth and market muddle as self-seeking bureaucrats and an authoritarian Party ensure that neither plan nor market works well? Or will the 1980s be viewed as a temporary resting place for the Chinese economy in its transition out of Stalinism to unconstrained capitalism alongside the collapse of both the Party and effective planning? One can only pose the questions and hope that the answer is the first one."[7]

Anyway, Zhao Ziyang had failed but the transition of China was already underway.

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[7] Dong Fureng, and Peter Nolan, ed. *The Chinese Economy and Its Future: Achievements and Problems of Post-Mao Reform* (Cambridge : Polity, 1990), 135.

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