

**Constructing Tiananmen Square as a Realm of Memory:
National Salvation, Revolutionary Tradition, and Political Modernity
in Twentieth-Century China**

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Dedication

To My Mother Ssu-Chen Hsieh

Abstract

To study the history of Tiananmen (The Gate of Heavenly Peace) Square is to study the history of Chinese political modernity from the late nineteenth century to the present.

While exploring the on-going process through which Tiananmen Square has been constructed as the symbolic center of twentieth-century China, this dissertation offers alternative theoretical discourses on the materiality and spatiality of Chinese modernity and the political uses of memory and history at the place.

This dissertation is a study on how Tiananmen Square has been constructed as the symbolic center of national events in twentieth-century China from the perspective of the politics of historical memory. Applying insights from scholarship on the materiality and spatiality of memory, it analyzes the on-going process through which Tiananmen Square has been constructed as a memorial site to store, recall, and manipulate the past in the present and thus became the symbolic center of national events in China's evolving political modernity in the twentieth century. It argues that state-sponsored commemorative architecture and practices at Tiananmen Square after the founding of the PRC have materialized Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition. As a consequence, Tiananmen Square has constituted the material and spatial framework by which both state power and grassroots activists used to manipulate that cultural memory to justify their different political agendas of modernity.

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Introduction

In the age of the modern nation-state, one visible way for each “imagined community” to forge its national identity is to create national memorial spaces in its capital city. The “modern cult of monuments” has been closely related to the growth of nationalism. A part of the invention of nation-states since the late eighteenth century, commemorative monuments and institutions have been constructed as the material manifestation of the sense of a common past around which national identities are forged.¹ As demonstrated by the Lincoln and Washington Memorials in Washington, D. C. and Red Square and Victory Park in Moscow, commemorative monuments and institutions erected at the state-sponsored memorial spaces in capitals constitute concrete forms to strengthen national identities by using memory and history.² Even in the epoch of globalization, making national spaces of monumentality for constructing national identities does not lose its validity. Instead, it has become a significant practice to consolidate local identities. As recently as in 2004, the National World War II Memorial was unveiled to the public between the Lincoln and Washington Memorials at the political heart of the United States.³

While serving as the material foundation of national memory and identity,

¹ Alois Riegl, “The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin,” *Oppositions* 25 (Fall 1982): 21-51; Miles Glendinning, “Beyond the Cult of the Monument,” *Context* (70): 15–18; Andreas W. Daum and Christof Mauch, ed., *Berlin-Washington, 1800-2000: Capital Cities, Cultural Representations, and National Identities* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), esp. pp. 3-30.; François Choay, *The Invention of the Historic Monument* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), esp. chapters 4-6; Dan Ben-Amos and Lillane Weissberg, ed., *Cultural Memory and the Construction of National Identity* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1999).

² Christopher A. Thomas, *The Lincoln Memorial and American Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Caroline Brooke, *Moscow: A Cultural History* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2006); Nurit Schleifman, “Moscow’s Victory Park,” *History and Memory* 13: 2 (2001): 5-34; Benjamin Forest and Juliet Johnson, “Unraveling the Threads of History: Soviet-Era Monuments and Post-Soviet National Identity in Moscow,” *The Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 92: 3 (2002): 524-547.

³ Nicolaus Mills, *Their Last Battle: The Fight for the National World War II Memorial* (New York: Basic Books, 2004); National Park Service of the United States, *World War II Memorial* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 2004).

commemorative monuments and memorial spaces built in capital cities are tangible manifestations of political change. In the wake of the German reunification, in the effort to reconstruct its national identity in the post-Cold War period, Germany successively created certain commemorative monuments and institutions in the center of its new capital, Berlin. In 2001, the Jewish Museum was opened to celebrate Jewish contributions to the German nation-state. In 2005, the Holocaust Memorial was located in the center of New Berlin to commemorate the memory of Jews persecuted during World War II. In 2010, the International Documentation Center of Topography of Terror was established to educate the public about the National Socialist past at a historic site of the perpetrators. Together they form the “Memory District” in New Berlin while constituting the spatial and material framework in the construction of a new German national identity.⁴ It is amazing to see Germany using its traumatic memory of the National Socialist past to create the common locus around which a German identity is reconstructed.

A more spectacular example is the erection of a giant sculpture of Confucius in 2011 at the magnetic center of the Chinese communist regime, Tiananmen (The Gate of Heavenly Peace) Square in Beijing, which embodies the glorious past of the Chinese revolution and communist movement. An officially assigned symbol of Chinese feudalism and backwardness in the era of People’s Republic of China (PRC), Confucius was placed in the sacred ground which hosts the physical and spiritual remains of Mao Zedong, who initiated a series of anti-Confucianism movements during the Cultural Revolution. As incredible as it is, one could argue that the PRC under the rule of the

⁴ Karen E. Till, *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), esp. pp. 193-228; Jennifer Jordon, *Structures of Memory: Understanding Urban Change in Berlin and Beyond* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).

Chinese Communist Party (CCP) intends to use and/or incorporate Confucianism into its ruling ideology to serve as the cultural and moral foundation in the construction of a socialist harmonious society. Nevertheless, if we are to understand the significance of the statue of Confucius at Tiananmen Square, we will need a further scholarly investigation on the official and popular discourses around the state-sponsored monument. Certainly, this seemingly odd monument should not surprise the students of the history of twentieth-century China when they realize how Tiananmen Square has become a window to look into the changes of political winds in the era of the PRC, socially and physically. In this view, the best way to understand the significance of the erection of Confucius's statue is to explore the changing socio-political life of Tiananmen Square.⁵

To study the history of Tiananmen Square is to study the history of twentieth-century China.⁶ On 4 May 1919, in front of Tiananmen at the geographical center on the north-south axis of modern Beijing, a large number of college students staged a patriotic demonstration, or the May Fourth Movement as it later became conceptualized, which has been considered a turning point in China's pursuit of its modernity along the course of the Chinese national salvation movement since the Opium War in 1840. On 3 February 1949, in order to commemorate the liberation of Beijing (then Beiping), which foresaw the liberation of China, the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) under the leadership of the CCP held a victory parade along the north-south axis of the city, passing through the historic sites of the May Fourth Movement three decades ago. On 1 October

⁵ A similar example to show the politics of the use of traumatic past in reconstructing national identity around memorial spaces in capital cities is the New Park in Taipei. Scott Simon, "Contest Formosa: Tragic Remembrance, Urban Space, and National Identity in Taipak," *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 10 (2003): 109-131. In his study of Taipei Park, Joseph R. Allen more or less touches upon the relationship between the configuration of urban space in Taipei City and the politics of memory and identity. Joseph R. Allen, "Taipei Park: Signs of Occupation," *Journal of Asian Studies* 66: 1 (Feb. 2007): 159-199.

⁶ A number of works on the history of modern China use Tiananmen, Tiananmen Square, or the Gate of Heavenly Peace as their main titles. For example, Jonathan D. Spence, *The Gate of Heavenly Peace: The Chinese and Their Revolution, 1895-1980* (New York: Viking Press, 1981).

of that decisive year, the founding ceremony of the PRC was held at Tiananmen Square on the center of the same axis. In the spring of 1976, Tiananmen Square became the battlefield for the first grassroots activism, or the April Fifth Movement, since the founding of the PRC to voice popular protest against the Gang of Four and project a popular vision of the Four Modernizations. Again, in the spring of 1989, Tiananmen Square was turned into the focus of global attention when the student protesters of the June Fourth Movement, following their “revolutionary” forerunners in 1976, declared the “New May Fourth Manifesto” at the same space to claim their political agenda of modernity. On 8 August 2008, at the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics, where China brought (the guests from) the West and modernity home, the firework show of “Footprints of History” once more went along the axis from Yongdingmen (Gate of Eternal Peace) in the south through Tiananmen Square in the middle to the National Stadium (Bird’s Nest) in the north. Thinking historically, the “Footprints of History” suggest that Tiananmen Square at the geographical center of Beijing has constituted the symbolic center of national events on the temporal axis of twentieth-Century China.

This dissertation is the first comprehensive study on how Tiananmen Square has been constructed as the symbolic center of defining moments for political modernity in twentieth-century China from the perspective of the politics of historical memory. The insights of scholarship on the materiality and spatiality of memory lead this dissertation to explore the on-going process through which Tiananmen Square has been constructed as a memorial space to store, recall, and manipulate the past in the present and thus became the symbolic center of national events in China’s evolving political modernity in the twentieth century. Utilizing various primary sources, including official archives,

history textbooks, memorial poems, protest literature, underground newspapers and journals, autobiographies, and documentary films, the dissertation argues that grassroots activism and commemorative architecture and institutions at Tiananmen Square before and after the founding of the PRC have stored and materialized Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition since the 1840 Opium War and consequently constituted the material and spatial framework by which both the state power of the PRC and grassroots activists competed to manipulate that cultural memory in the present in order to legitimize their different versions of Chinese modernity. The analysis of Tiananmen Square as a “realm of memory,” or *lieux de mémoire*, provides an ideal case study to examine the spatial, material, and functional aspects of historical memory.⁷

In the course of China’s evolving modernity, not only did many national events occur at Tiananmen Square, but also several state-sponsored monumental objects and institutions rendering the past of the Chinese national salvation and revolutionary movements were installed at the symbolic center of twentieth-century China. In order to commemorate the martyrs of the Chinese revolution, on 1 May 1958, the PRC erected the Monument to the People’s Heroes at the center of Tiananmen Square to endow the Chinese communist regime with historical legitimacy by materializing the defining moments of the century-long national salvation movement on the memorial (Site 2 on Illustration 1). The same year, in order to celebrate the coming of the tenth anniversary of the founding of the PRC, the Museums of Chinese History and the Chinese Revolution and the Great Hall of the People were established on the east and west sides of the space

⁷ Pierre Nora, “Between History and Memory: *Les Lieux de Memoire*,” *Representations* 26 (Spring, 1989), esp. pp.18-24.

to represent the past, the present, and the future of China (Site 3 and 4 on Illustration 1). On 9 September 1977, the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall was built to memorialize Mao Zedong and his contribution to the Chinese revolution (Site 5 on Illustration 1). In an attempt to welcome the recovery of China's sovereignty over Hong Kong, on 19 December 1994, a digital clock was set up in front of the Museum of the Chinese Revolution to count down minutes and seconds to 1 July 1997 (Site 7 on Illustration 1). Following the same practice, more countdown clocks were placed at the same location to time the arrival of national events, such as the return of Macao in 1999 and the holding of the Beijing Olympics in 2008. More interestingly, but not surprisingly, on 11 January 2011, a mammoth sculpture of Confucius appeared at the north entrance of the National Museum of China to materialize the PRC's new political line in the "Construction of Socialist Harmonious Society." A study of these and other permanent and temporary objects of monumentality since 1949 opens a window to analyze the on-going process through which Tiananmen Square has been constructed as the symbolic center of twentieth-century China by exploring the politics of the uses of memory and history at the space during the era of the PRC.

Questions

Why is Tiananmen Square so important a place in modern China? Over the last three decades, a body of literature has emerged to demonstrate the significance of Tiananmen Square in twentieth-century China from such diverse perspectives as political culture,⁸

⁸ Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom and Elizabeth J. Perry, ed., *Popular Protest and Political Culture in Modern China*, 2nd Edition (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994) and Peter Li, Marjorie H. Li, and Steven Mark, ed., *Culture and Politics in China: An Anatomy of Tiananmen Square* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1991); Craig J. Calhoun, *Neither Gods nor Emperors: Student and the Struggle for Democracy in China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Lucian W. Pye, "Tiananmen and Chinese Political Culture: The Escalation of Confrontation from Moralizing to Revenge," *Asian Survey* 30:4 (April 1990): 331-347; Andrew J. Nathan, "Chinese Democracy in 1980: Continuity and Change," *Problems of Communism* 38:5 (1989): 16-29; Elizabeth J. Perry and Ellen V. Fuller, "China's Long March to

social movement,⁹ ritual symbolism, identity politics,¹⁰ media studies,¹¹ civil society,¹² society-state relation,¹³ and crisis management of the PRC¹⁴ by focusing on the June Fourth Movement. The insights of this and other scholarship allow us to better understand the genesis, development, and influence of the student demonstrations in the spring of 1989. However, unlike this literature's exclusive focus on the June Fourth Movement,

Democracy," *World Policy Journal* 8 (Fall 1991): 663-685; Jane McCartney, "The Students: Heroes, Pawns or Power-Brokers?" in George Hicks, ed., *The Broken Mirror: China after Tiananmen* (London: Longman Current Affairs, 1990), pp. 3-21; Chung-fang Yang, "Conformity and Defiance on Tiananmen Square: A Social Psychological Perspective," in *Culture and Politics in China*, pp. 197-224.

⁹ Fabio Lanza, *Behind the Gate: Inventing Students in Beijing* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010); Michael Fathers and Andrew Higgins, *Tiananmen: The Rape of Peking*, ed., Robert Cottrell (New York: Independent in association with Doubleday, 1989); Mu Yi and Mark V. Thompson, *Crisis at Tiananmen: Reform and Reality in Modern China* (San Francisco: China Books & Periodicals, 1989); Scott Simmie and Bob Nixon, *Tiananmen Square* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1989); Lee Feigon, *China Rising: The Meaning of Tiananmen* (Chicago: I.R. Dee, 1990); Cheng Chu-yuan, *Behind the Tiananmen Massacre* (Boulder: Westview, Press, 1990); Tony Saich, ed., *The Chinese People People's Movement: Perspective on Spring 1989* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 1990); Nan Lin, *The Struggle for Tiananmen: Anatomy of the 1989 Mass Movement* (London: Praeger, 1992); Timonthy Brook, *Quelling the People: The Military Suppression of the Beijing Democracy Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1992); J. Guthrie, "Political Theater and Student Organizations in the 1989 Chinese Movement: A Multivariate Analysis of Tiananmen," *Sociological Forum* 10: 3 (Sep., 1995): 419-454; Teresa Wright, "State Repression and Student Protest in Contemporary China," *China Quarterly* 157 (Mar., 1999): 142-172.

¹⁰ For the relationship between the May Fourth and June Fourth Movements in terms of identity politics and political culture, see Craig C. Calhoun, "Science, Democracy, and the Politics of Identity," in *Popular Protest and Political Culture*, pp. 93-124; Vera Schwarcz, "Memory and Commemoration: The Chinese Search for a Livable Past," in *Popular Protest and Political Culture*, pp. 170-183; Vera Schwarcz, "No Solace from Lethe: History, Memory, and Cultural Identity in Twentieth-Century China," *Daedalus* 120:2 (Spring 1991): 85-112; Joseph W. Esherick and Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, "Acting Out Democracy: Political Theatre in Modern China," *Journal of Asian Studies* 49:4 (1990): 835-865; Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, "Student Protests and the Chinese Tradition," in Tony Saich, ed., *The Chinese People's Movement: Perspectives on Spring 1989* (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 1990), pp. 3-24; Rubie S. Watson, "Making Secret Histories: Memory and Mourning in Post-Mao China," in Roubie S. Watson, ed., *Memory, History, and Opposition under State Socialism* (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 1994), pp. 65-85; Xiaomei Chen, "Performing Tiananmen: From Street Theater to Theater of the Street," *Acting the Right Part: Political Theater and Popular Drama in Contemporary China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), pp. 195-233.

¹¹ Philip Cunningham, *Tiananmen Moon* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009); Steven Mark, "Observing the Observers at Tiananmen Square: Freedom, Democracy, and the News Media in China's Student Movement," in Peter Li, Steven Mark, and Marjorie H. Li, ed., *Culture and Politics in China*, pp. 259-284.

¹² David Strand, "Protest in Beijing: Civil Society and Public Sphere in China," *Problems of Communism* 39: 3(1990): 1-19; Lawrence R. Sullivan, "The Emergence of Civil Society in China, Spring 1989," in *The Chinese People's Movement*, pp. 126-144; Andrew J. Nathan, "Chinese Democracy in 1980: Continuity and Change," *Problems of Communism* 38:5 (1989): 16-29; John Burns, "China's Governance: Turbulent Environment," *China Quarterly* 119 (1989): 481-518; Richard Madsen, "The Public Sphere, Civil Society and Moral Community: A Research Agenda for Contemporary China Studies," *Modern China* 19:2 (April 1993): 183-198; Frederic Wakeman, Jr., "The Civil Society and Public Sphere Debate: Western Reflections on Chinese Political Culture," *Modern China* 19:2 (April 1993): 108-138; Zhou Xueguang, "Unorganized Interests and Collective action in Communist China," *American Sociological Review* 58 (1993): 54-73.

¹³ Dingxin Zhao, *The Power of Tiananmen: State-Society Relations and the 1989 Beijing Student Movement* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Alan P. L. Liu, *Mass Politics in the People's Republic: State and Society in Contemporary China* (Boulder: Westview, 1996).

¹⁴ Andrew J. Nathan, *China's Crisis: Dilemmas of Reform and Prospects for Democracy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990); Cheng Chu-yuan, *Behind the Tiananmen Massacre* (Boulder: Westview, Press, 1990); Lowell Dittmer, "Patterns of Elite Strife and Succession in Chinese Politics," *China Quarterly* 123 (September 1990): 405-430; Lowell Dittmer, "China in 1989: The Crisis of Incomplete Reform," *Asian Survey* 30 (January 1990): 25-41.

this dissertation seeks to show why so many national events and massive movements took place at the site in different historical circumstances by locating the study in the larger context of Chinese national salvation and revolutionary movements since the Opium War in 1840. This approach enables us to undertake a comprehensive inquiry into the socio-political life of Tiananmen Square and its changing meanings and functions in twentieth-century China from a long-term and broader horizon.

Moreover, previous scholarship has contributed to the study of Tiananmen Square from the perspectives of geographical and architectural symbolism. This approach is important in that it invites us to inspect the politics of the making of Tiananmen Square as a political space. With this approach, many scholars have been able to demonstrate the spatial and material dimensions of the politically sanctioned official representation of selected national past in the early years of the PRC.¹⁵ Nevertheless, most of them are inclined to secure the symbolic meaning and political function of Tiananmen Square without actually locating it over the ever-changing larger context of the politics of communist China. As Hung Chang-tai insightfully suggests in his studies of Tiananmen Square from the standpoint of political culture in the early People's Republic, the significance of Tiananmen Square is never static and forever alters with social, political, and cultural changes, in which different social groups make diverse conceptualizations and uses of the space.¹⁶ State-sponsored memorial spaces are supposed to be visible

¹⁵ Linda Hershkovitz, "Tiananmen Square and the Politics of Place," *Political Geography* 12: 5 (September 1993): 395-420; Mary G. Mazur, "Public Space for Memory in Contemporary Civil Society: Freedom to Learn from the Mirror of the Past?," *China Quarterly* 160 (Dec., 1999): 1019-1035; Wu Hung, *Remaking Beijing: Tiananmen Square and the Creation of A Political Space* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005);

¹⁶ Chang-tai Hung, "Revolutionary History in Stone: The Making of a Chinese National Monument," *China Quarterly* 166 (Jun., 2001): 457-473; Chang-Tai Hung, "The Red Line: Creating a Museum of the Chinese Revolution," *China Quarterly* 184 (2005): 914-933; Chang-tai Hung, "Kongjian yu zhengzhi: Kuojian Tiananmen guangchang de zhengjing fazhan (Space and politics: Expanding Tiananmen Square)," in *Liang'an fentu: Lengzhan chuqi de zhengjing fazhan* (Parting ways: Politics and economics across the Taiwan Straits), ed. Chen Yung-fa (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 2006), pp. 207-259; Chang-tai Hung, "Tiananmen Square: Space and Politics," *Mao's New*

forms to concretize and convey ruling ideologies and official discourses, but once constructed, they take on lives of their own and can be invested and assigned with alternative meanings and functions by multifarious groups of people under new circumstances. The changing socio-political life of Tiananmen Square from the early to late twentieth century constitutes an ideal instance to illuminate the fluidity and malleability of memorial spaces' symbolism and utility.

More importantly, a deconstruction of the geographical and architectural symbolism at Tiananmen Square alone does not necessary explain how diverse groups of people can *make sense* of those monumental objects at the space. On the one hand, a scrutiny of the symbolic meaning of commemorative monuments and institutions tell us about the ways in which the state constructed its official representation of a selected national past in physical and visible appearance from above. But, this approach could not tell us how the people below receive the official discourse concretized at Tiananmen Square and what their interpretation and conceptualization of the space are. On the other hand, the state-sponsored commemorative monuments are mere stones in the landscape without observers' psychological sympathy with or sentimental attachment to the shared values and ideals they are supposed to embody. One could not decode and even manipulate the encoded symbolism of commemorative architecture like the Monument to the People's Heroes without any prior knowledge, or conceptualization, of the particular significance, value, and interpretation of the structure assigned by the state. What is the political, cultural, discursive, or mental horizon for the PRC citizens to recognize with and find

World: Political Culture in the Early People's Republic (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), pp. 25-50; Hou Renzhi and Wu Liangyong, "Tiananmen guangchang: cong gongtang guangchang dao rein guangchang de yanbian he gaizao (Tiananmen Square: From Palace Square to People's Square: Development and Transformation)," in Hou Renzhi, ed., *Lishi Dilixue de Liluan yu Shijian* (Theory and Practice in Historical Geography) (Shanghai: Remin chubanshe, 1979), pp. 227-250.

connection to the officially sanctioned symbolism of the monumental objects installed at Tiananmen Square? To untangle these questions, with the approach of memory studies, this dissertation provides an alternative theoretical discourse by tracing the long-term Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition since the Opium War at the geographical and symbolic center of Beijing—Tiananmen Square.

Theoretical Framework

Over the last three decades, memory studies has emerged as an interdisciplinary field which examines the ways in which people conceptualize the sense of the historical past by investigating various vehicles of memory. One of the salient features of recent scholarship in world history is scholars' increasing interest in the study of the politics of memory.¹⁷ The term "memory" has taken its place as one of the leading conceptual tools in exploring the ways in which human societies construct the sense of the past in diverse "guises," such as collective memory, cultural memory, social memory, national memory, public memory, vernacular memory, and counter-memory, from cross-discipline perspectives of history, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and literature. To study history with the approach of memory studies can not simply look into how the past is remembered and articulated, but also how "vehicles of memory," or "realms of memory (*lieux de mémoire*)," such as religious beliefs, social practices, political culture, historical traditions, and memorial institutions and spaces, give rise to people's conceptualization

¹⁷ Patrick H. Hutton, "Placing Memory in Contemporary Historiography," *History as an Art of Memory* (Hanover: University of Vermont, 1993), pp. 1-26; Wulf Kansteiner, "Finding Meaning in Memory: A Methodological Critique of Collective Memory Studies," *History and Theory* 41: 2 (May, 2002): 179-197; Peter Fritzsche, "The Case of Modern Memory," *The Journal of Modern History* 73: 1 (Mar., 2001): 87-117; Alon Confino, "Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method," *American Historical Review* 102: 5 (Dec., 1997): 1386-1403; Susan A. Crane, "Writing the Individual Back into Collective Memory," *Historical Review* 102: 5 (Dec., 1997): 1372-1385; Jan Assmann and John Czaplicka, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity," *New German Critique* 65 (1995): 125-133.

of the past.¹⁸ Thus, historians have found manifold ways to examine how the representation of the past work in conceptualizing politics, society, and culture as well as their changes over time. For example, recent scholarship on nationalism in East Asia has shown the impacts of the memory about war experiences and trauma during World War II on the construction of national identities in the twentieth-century China, Japan, and Korea.¹⁹

Nevertheless, while the approach of memory studies has contributed to our understanding of the dynamics in which human societies conceptualize the sense of the past and to our exploration on the social and cultural foundation of the political use of memory and history, some scholars called attention to certain theoretical and interpretative predicaments behind the diverse “guises” of memory.²⁰ First, while many scholars have applied Maurice Halbwachs’s pioneering theory of collective memory as their theoretical point of departure, some noticed his tendency of anti-individualism.²¹ Halbwachs has argued persuasively that collective memory is carried by and perpetuated in social groups and that individual memory can only be acquired, recalled, and made sensible in the social setting in which it is constructed. In other words, both collective and individual memories are always socially mandated. Those who doubt Halbwachs’s

¹⁸ The term “vehicles of memory” is used by Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi in *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (New York, 1989).

¹⁹ Joshua Fogel, ed., *The Nanjing Massacre in History and Historiography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Ban Wang, *Illuminations from the Past: Trauma, Memory, and History in Modern China* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2005); Takashi Yoshida, *The Making of the “Rape of Nanking”: History and Memory in Japan, China, and the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Lisa Yoneyama, *Hiroshima Traces: Time, Space, and the Dialectics of Memory* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1999); Gerrit W. Gong, ed., *Remembering and Forgetting, The Legacy of War and Peace in East Asia* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1996); Paul Cohen, *History in Three Keys: The Boxer as Event, Experience, and Myth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); Stefan Tanaka, *New Times in Modern Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

²⁰ Kansteiner, “Finding Meaning in Memory,” pp. 185-190; Fritzsche, “The Case of Modern Memory,” pp. 99-112; Crane, “Writing the Individual Back into Collective Memory,” pp. 1372-1385; Noa Gedi and Yigal Elam, “Collective Memory—What Is It?,” *History and Memory* 8:1 (1996): 30-51; Confino, “Collective Memory and Cultural History,” pp. 1386-1390; Kansteiner, “Finding Meaning in Memory,” pp. 181-182.

²¹ Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, p. 7; A critical discussion on Halbwachs’s theory of collective memory, see Hutton, “Maurice Halbwachs as Historian of Collective Memory,” *History as an Art of Memory*, pp. 73-90.

theoretical articulation of memory have turned to actions of individuals and claim the accountability of individual memory.²² Second, some scholars criticize the epistemological distinction between history and memory as suggested by Halbwachs and Pierre Nora. Whereas Halbwachs considers collective memory and historical memory (or professional history) the two different ways in which social groups conceptualize the shared past, Nora has claimed the concurrent death of memory and rise of (professional) history in the twentieth century.²³ Some scholars attempt to deconstruct the epistemological division between (professional) history and (non-professional) memory of the past by suggesting that both memory and history are socially, politically, culturally constructed, though in various ways.²⁴ Finally, the study of memory, in Alon Confino's words, "has developed into a fragmented field." The success of memory studies does not go hand in hand with significant development of conceptual and methodological paradigms in the research of collective memory.²⁵ The consequence is that the notion of memory has become a fashionable label and can only be defined by various specific subjects that scholars deal with, and the tendency of fragmentation is reflecting in the diverse terminologies that they scrutinize, such as collective memory, social memory, national memory, public memory, vernacular or popular memory, counter-memory,

²² Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan, "Setting the Framework," in Winter and Sivan, ed., *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 23; Kansteiner, "Finding Meaning in Memory," p. 181.

²³ Maurice Halbwachs, "Historical Memory and Collective Memory," *The Collective Memory*, trans. Francis J. Ditter, Jr. and Vida Yazdi Ditter (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), pp. 50-87; Nora, "Between History and Memory" pp. 7-24. For a critical discussion of Nora's theory of collective memory, see Nancy Wood, "Memory's Remains: *Les lieux de mémoire*," *History and Memory* 6 (1994): 123-149; Peter Carrier, "Places, Politics and the Archiving of Contemporary Memory," in Susannah Radstone, ed., *Memory and Methodology* (Oxford: Berg, 2000), pp. 37-57; Hue-Tam Ho Tai, "Remembered Realms: Pierre Nora and French National Memory," *American Historical Review* 106: 3 (Jun., 2001): 906-922.

²⁴ Peter Burke, "History as Social Memory," in Thomas Butler, ed., *History, Culture, and the Mind* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1989), pp. 97-113; Allan Megill, "History, Memory, Identity," *History of the Human Sciences* 11:3 (1998), p. 56.

²⁵ Confino, "Collective Memory and Cultural History," p. 1387; Kansteiner, "Finding Meaning in Memory," pp. 179-182.

unreflective habitual memories, narrative memories, and traumatic memories.²⁶ Some critics thus even compare memory studies to the *Annales* School's approach of the history of *mentalités* in terms of their common purposes, subject matters, and scope.²⁷ More importantly, along with this tendency of fragmentation, previous scholarship has been inclined to isolate different categories of memories from the relationship to one another and thus disconnect the relationship between social, political, and cultural elements.²⁸

As demonstrated by this comprehensive inquiry into the politics of historical memory at Tiananmen Square, in order to go beyond the theoretical problems of memory studies, one needs to bring in relational thinking into the examination of memory work. Inspired by Aby Warburg (1866-1929), a historian who applied the phrase “collective memory” in the study of art history which emphasizes the correlation between material representation and cultural trend and social world, Alon Confino considers memory studies a handy approach to articulate “the connections between the cultural, the social, and the political, and between representation and social experience.”²⁹ Especially, in emphasizing the importance of “social mediation of images” in a given culture, Warburg calls attention to the study of “prevailing customs, tastes, and traditions that connected the historical conditions with the artistic representation” and the need to explore the

²⁶ James Fentress and Chris Wickham, *Social Memory* (London: Blackwell, 1992); Winter and Sivan, *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century*; Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen, *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992); Marita Sturken, *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1997); Mieke Bal, Jonathan Crewe, and Leo Spitzer, eds., *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1999); Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); Cathy Cauth, ed., *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); Paul Antze and Michael Lambek, eds., *Tense Past: Cultural Essays in Trauma and Memory* (New York: Routledge, 1996); Dominick LaCapra, *Representing the Holocaust: History, Theory, Trauma* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1994).

²⁷ Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, pp. 1-5; Confino, “Collective Memory and Cultural History,” pp. 1388-1390.

²⁸ Confino, “Collective Memory and Cultural History,” pp. 1389-1390.

²⁹ Confino, “Collective Memory and Cultural History,” p. 1388.

relationship between artistic representation and political changes and social values. With relational thinking in mind, Confino invites a study of the politics of memory that seeks to explore the interaction among various “realms of memory,” such as personal experiences, political conditions, hegemonic discourses, social practices, and cultural fashions.³⁰ As such, one could bridge different categories of memories to the milieu in which they are constructed. Moreover, Confino encourages scholars to explore how diverse social groups in a given context make sense, receive, and use shared memory and history in different ways. This trajectory is to discover what stories about the past matter to whom and how they have been distributed. It is also productive to disclose the ways in which the vehicles of memory, the memory makers, and memory consumers under a particular context intertwine with each other.³¹ The relational thinking and the reception perspective constitute essential parts of the theoretical framework of this dissertation in exploring the political, social, and cultural aspects of the construction of Tiananmen Square as a memorial space while scrutinizing diverse social groups’ conceptualization and representation of the symbolic center of twentieth-century China.

Inspired by previous scholarship on the materiality and spatiality of the politics of memory, this dissertation uses “cultural memory” as a conceptual tool to analyze the on-going process through which Tiananmen Square has been constructed as the symbolic center of twentieth-century China. Many thought-provoking works in the field of memory studies have used the phrase “cultural memory” to further articulate the materiality of

³⁰ Confino, “Collective Memory and Cultural History,” p. 1391.

³¹ Kansteiner, “Finding Meaning in Memory,” pp. 190-195; Confino, “Collective Memory and Cultural History,” pp. 1395-99.

memory making proposed by Halbwachs.³² In particular, Jan Assmann and John Czaplicka's articulation is instructive to the case study of Tiananmen Square. According to them, cultural memory is one form of historical memory that could be stored in the form of objectified culture, such as discursive texts, ritual practices, monumental architecture, and urban spaces and landscapes, for recalling "fateful events," or "fixed points," in the history of the collective for the *longue durée*.³³ In terms of memory making, the cultural memory of the "fateful events" first occurs in "the mode of potentiality," such as official or master discourse. Then, the official or discursive representation of the "fateful event" could be rendered in the form of monumental objects. Finally, transforming into "the mode of actuality," the cultural memory of the past "fateful events" materialized in monumental objects is to be manipulated by different individuals and social groups for their distinctive purposes for the future in the present.³⁴ It is in this way that cultural memory "links the past to the present and future."³⁵

This dissertation uses "cultural memory" as a conceptual tool to refer to the dynamics of memory making at Tiananmen Square in which the sense of China's past has been first conceptualized in official discourse, then materialized in monumental objects at the space, and finally utilized by various social groups in the present to justify their prospective visions of Chinese political modernity. With this theoretical framework, my dissertation demonstrates how the state-sponsored commemorative architecture and institutions (the Monument to the People's Heroes, the Museums of Chinese History and the Chinese Revolution, the Great Hall of the People, and the Chairman Mao Memorial

³² Jan Assmann and John Czaplicka, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity," *New German Critique* 65 (1995): 125-133; Bal, *Acts of Memory*; Dan Ben-Amos and Liliane Weissberg, eds., *Cultural Memory and the Construction of Identity* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1999).

³³ Assmann and Czaplicka, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity," pp. 128-129.

³⁴ Assmann and Czaplicka, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity," p. 128; Bal, *Acts of Memory*, p. vii.

³⁵ Bal, *Acts of Memory*, p. vii.

Hall) and ritual practices (the official national flag raising ceremony since 1 May 1991 and the countdown clocks for national events such as the 1997 return of Hong Kong) at Tiananmen Square have stored and materialized Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition in the language of Mao Zedong's revolutionary discourse. As a consequence, Tiananmen Square was constructed into a memorial space for both the state power of the PRC and the grassroots activists of the 1976 April Fifth Movement and the 1989 June Fourth Movement to recall and manipulate that cultural memory in the present to legitimize their different political agendas of modernity. From the "mode of potentiality" manifested in Mao Zedong's master discourse to the "mode of actuality" illustrated in the monumental objects at Tiananmen Square, the long-term cultural memory of Chinese national salvation and revolutionary movements experienced an on-going process of materialization. As a consequence of this process, Tiananmen Square has constituted the material foundation of the political use of memory and history about China's past in the era of the PRC.

Historical Setting: The Four Defining Moments

In order to explore the on-going process in the construction of Tiananmen Square as a memorial space, this dissertation locates the study of the space at the "fateful events," or "defining moments,"³⁶ in China's evolving its political modernity—the May Fourth Movement in 1919, the founding ceremony of the PRC in 1949, the April Fifth Movement in 1976, and the June Fourth Movement in 1989.

³⁶ Applying the key phrase that Steve Stern uses in his articulation of collective memory in another context, "defining moments" here refer to certain significant nation events which have played decisive roles in the formulation and transformation of Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary discourse in twentieth-century China. Steve Stern, *Remembering Pinochet's Chile: On the Eve of London 1998* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), p. xxviii.

The making of a national salvation discourse and its crystallization in Mao Zedong's revolutionary discourse must be examined in the larger context of modern China's pursuit of its modernity since the mid-nineteenth century. From the Opium War in 1840 to the early twentieth century, China confronted a series of military and cultural challenges from the Western forces. In order to rescue China from decline, the Chinese governments and progressive intellectuals initiated a series of technological, political, and intellectual reforms based on the Western model. It was against this supreme goal of bringing the "West," or modernity, home that the prototypical discourse of national salvation, or *jiuguo*, was invented to justify various programs of saving China from the crises caused by the Western forces by taking the Western prescriptions. As Talal Asad and Stefan Tanaka have argued in other contexts, the ideal of "modernity" became China's "inevitable" political goal.³⁷ Thus ever since the Opium War, the anxiety about national salvation had stretched the mind of the Chinese intelligentsia in the twentieth century. The national salvation discourse was further developed and employed in multifarious political and cultural programs of saving China proposed by reform-minded and revolutionary intellectuals and political elites from the late nineteenth century through the founding of the PRC. In this development, it was during and after the student demonstration on 4 May 1919 that the national salvation discourse with dual emphases on democracy and science was bodily performed at Tiananmen Square in reaction to China's diplomatic frustration caused by the encroachment of Western imperialism and Japanese militarism.³⁸ As this dissertation will analyze in depth, the national salvation

³⁷ Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, and Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 13; Stefan Tanaka, *New Times in Modern Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 88.

³⁸ The student demonstration on 4 May 1919 was one of the first social movements that took place at Tiananmen Square. In the demonstration, with nationalistic and anti-imperialistic sentiment, the Beijing college students made large-scale protests against the Treaty of Versailles that gives the sovereignty over the Shandong province of China to

discourse and the past of the May Fourth Movement later were to be manipulated selectively by the state power of the PRC and the grassroots protesters of the April Fifth Movement and the June Fourth Movement at Tiananmen Square for their different political goal of modernity in the present. The May Fourth Movement has constituted the first defining moment in both the construction of Tiananmen Square as the symbolic center of China and the history of Chinese modernity in the century-long national salvation movement.

During the era of the PRC, Tiananmen Square underwent three other defining moments in its history. On 1 October 1949, hundreds of thousand of people were mobilized to witness the founding ceremony of the PRC at Tiananmen Square where Chairman Mao declared the birth of New China and hoisted the first national flag. This was such a symbolic moment in the Chinese national salvation movement that the majority of the Chinese people tend to misbelieve, or imagine, that Mao had uttered the iconic phrase “the Chinese people have finally stood up” at the symbolic space. As such, both China and Tiananmen Square underwent their second defining moment, or what Tanaka calls as “zero point” to mark the birth of a new nation.³⁹ The moment of the founding of the PRC on the one hand marked the birth of a new China, and, on the other hand, refreshed the political significance and function of Tiananmen Square as a symbol of the PRC. The image of Tiananmen Square has been reproduced in visual and material objects that circulated and disseminated in the forms of national emblem, banknote, coin,

Japan. For the genesis and development of the student demonstrations and its social and cultural influences, see Chow Tse-tsung, *The May Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960); Vera Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment: Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

³⁹ Tanaka, *New Times in Modern Japan*, p. 88.

stamp, artistic representation, and, even, an insignia hung on Tiananmen.⁴⁰ To reproduce the image of Tiananmen Square is to reproduce the historical memory surrounding that place. To reproduce and circulate the historical memory about Tiananmen Square was part of the PRC's effort to create a common locus around which new national identity was to be constructed. Then, as my dissertation will demonstrate, Tiananmen Square became a functional site for state authorities like Mao to display power and discipline the Chinese citizens spatially and temporally.

The third defining moment in the history of Tiananmen Square came with the occurrence of the April Fifth Movement. In the spring of 1976, almost one million Chinese citizens made pilgrimages to the Monument to the People's Heroes at the center of Tiananmen Square to commemorate their late premier Zhou Enlai (1898-1976), who died on 8 January of that year. Many of them seized opportunities to voice protests against the Gang of Four by posting, transcribing, and transmitting memorial poems and essays. After the commemorative activities escalated into a massive grassroots movement, it was suppressed by the force of the Beijing militia under the control of the Gang of Four on 5 April. This first social movement from below provides a spectacular example to show how the Monument to the People's Heroes and Tiananmen Square constitutes the material and spatial foundation for grassroots activists to manipulate Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition, such as the May Fourth Movement, so as to give historical legitimacy to their protest against the Gang of Four and their prospective vision of the Four Modernizations. It also demonstrates how a state-

⁴⁰ Wang Jun, *The Story of a City (Cheng ji)* (Beijing: Chinese Bookshop, 2003), pp. 39-40; Liping Wang's work on the creation of Sun Yatsen Memorial in Nanjing as a national symbol is instructive to this point. In terms of the construction of the symbol of China, a comparison between the Sun Yatsen Memorial and Tiananmen Square will be interesting. In particular, this perspective can show the significance of Sun Yatsen Memorial during the rule of the PRC while Tiananmen Square was created as the symbol of New China. See Liping Wang, "Creating a National Symbol: the Sun Yat sen Memorial in Nanjing," *Republican China*, 21: 2 (1996): 23-63.

sponsored monument embodying official ideology was used by grassroots activists for unofficial functions and purposes. More interestingly, along with the decline of the Gang of Four and the rise of Deng Xiaoping, the movement was redefined from a counterrevolutionary incident to a revolutionary mass movement and utilized by the CCP to legitimize the new leadership of the party and the PRC. A study of the drama of the political use of China's past during the April Fifth Movement provides a window to look into the dynamics of using and making memory around the movement and the space.

The June Fourth Movement in 1989 represents the fourth defining moment of the socio-political life of Tiananmen Square in the twentieth century. Again, in the spring of 1989, following the "revolutionary" tradition of their forerunners in the April Fifth Movement, Beijing college students initiated a series of commemorative activities for their open-minded General Secretary Hu Yaobang (1915-1989), who died on 15 April 1989, around the Monument to the People's Heroes at Tiananmen Square. And, again, stimulated by the official effort to dismiss the commemorative activities as turmoil like the Cultural Revolution, the student protesters organized demonstrations and hunger strikes to make claims for political reform, such as democracy, human rights, and freedom of expressing public opinion. More dramatically, they even erected their own monument, the Goddess of Democracy, at Tiananmen Square to embody and display their utopian vision and common values. Eventually, symbolizing the failure of the movement, the first unofficial monument was pushed over by the tanks of the PLA on the early morning of June 4. Although the Goddess of Democracy was destroyed, its short-lived existence already amplified the symbolism of Tiananmen Square from an unofficial perspective. The battlefield of the June Fourth Movement was to be remembered as a

sacred ground of the Chinese democratic movement in the era of the PRC. Moreover, a close reading of the posters, handbills, and underground newspapers and journals once more shows how the student protesters justify their agenda of political modernity by using the national salvation discourse and manipulating the revolutionary tradition such as the May Fourth and June Fourth Movements while recalling the traumatic past the Cultural Revolution to discredit the PRC's suppression of the movement. A rethinking of the June Fourth Movement from the perspective of the political use of memory and history enables us to examine the changing meanings and functions of Tiananmen Square in addition to the impact of Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition as well as the traumatic past of the Cultural Revolution in the socio-political life of China without Mao. Nevertheless, why did the four defining moments, or fateful events, in China's pursuit of modernity under the larger context of national salvation movement take place at Tiananmen Square rather than somewhere else? Previous scholarship on the spatiality and materiality of the political use of memory and history provides a useful analytical standpoint to answer this question.

Analytical Strategy: Spatiality and Materiality of Memory

A study of Tiananmen Square constitutes a spectacular instance to consider the materiality and spatiality of the politics of memory and its relationship with the ever-changing political wind, social value, and cultural trend. In exploring the politically, socially, and culturally constituted nature of memory, many scholars have paid attention to the physical and spatial framework of the political use of memory and history. This gave rise to a wave of scholarly inquiry into the embodiments and manifestations of human conceptualization of the past, such as memorial sites, urban spaces, historical

museums, and architectural landscapes.⁴¹ In particular, Karen Till's examination of the spatial dimension of social memory is instructive. Till defines social memory as an "ongoing" process in which different social groups struggle with one another to gain authority to represent their own versions of the past for justifying their different political goals and identities in the present for the future.⁴² By creating a sense of continuity between the past and the present in a geographical space, political elites or interest groups could find ways to "claim territory" and "justify political action."⁴³ Moreover, the studies of spaces, or "theaters," of social memory, such as statuary, memorial, museum, grand boulevard, public square, and so forth, can illuminate the "the complex ways that nationalist imagination, political powers, and social identities are spatially produced."⁴⁴ Thus, given that the spatial construction of memory is an "ongoing" process, the significance and function of a space is always changing with different social groups' reception and manipulation over time.

Accordingly, this dissertation looks into the long-lasting process of constructing Tiananmen Square as the symbolic center of China under the rule of the PRC from the perspectives of the spatiality and materiality of the political use of memory and history at the space. This analysis can demonstrate how Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary movements was stored and materialized at Tiananmen Square

⁴¹ Karen Till, "Places of Memory," in J. Agnew, K. Mitchell, and G. O'Tuathail, ed. *Companion to Political Geography* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), p. 290; Till, *The New Berlin*; Robert Nelson and Margaret Prost, eds., *Monuments and Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); Diana Taylor, ed., *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003); Rico Franses, "Monuments and Melancholia," in *Journal for the Psychoanalysis of Culture & Society* 6:1 (2001): 97-104; Edward W. Said, "Invention, Memory, and Place," *Critical Inquiry* 26:2 (2000), pp. 179, 181, 183; Antonie Prost, "Monuments to the Dead," in Pierre Nora, ed., *Realms of Memory: The Construction of the French Past*, vol. 2 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 307-332; Rudy Koshar, *From Monuments to Traces* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); James Young, *The Texture of Memory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 36-37.

⁴² Till, "Places of Memory," p. 290.

⁴³ Till, "Places of Memory," p. 289.

⁴⁴ Till, "Places of Memory," p. 290.

along with the installed commemorative monuments and institutions. An analysis of this process of materialization can explain how Tiananmen Square constituted the material and spatial foundation of the four defining moments in twentieth-century China.

After the birth of New China, the first and foremost state-sponsored commemorative monument at Tiananmen Square was the Monument to the People's Heroes in 1958. Located at the center of Tiananmen Square, the Monument can be viewed as the center of the center of the center of the PRC. At the geographical and political heart of the newly founded PRC, the Monument was built to memorialize the martyrdom of those who gave their lives in the century-long struggle to save China from decline. More importantly, the state-sponsored monument was constructed to assert the righteousness and historical legitimacy of the birth of the Chinese communist regime. The matrix of the monument is invested with national soul and memory by embodying, or materializing, the story of "fateful events" in modern Chinese history from the Opium War to the founding of the PRC. In representing the orthodoxy knowledge of these "fateful events," it physically and visually concretizes particular historical interpretations in the language of Mao Zedong's revolutionary discourse, which has been officially sanctioned as part of ruling ideology before the founding of the PRC. By creating the sense of a shared past with a national monument, the PRC attempted to foster the sense of a common present and future. As such, the Monument to the People's Heroes at Tiananmen Square constituted the material and spatial basis around which a new national identity is constructed. Scrutiny of the construction of the Monument in terms of its location and design will reveal the impact of the cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition and Mao's master discourse.

Nevertheless, despite its official meaning and function assigned by the state, the Monument to the People's Heroes and the space around it were to be used and conceptualized subversively by dissident protestors at the space. During the April Fifth Movement, the monument was transformed from a material manifestation of official history into a public forum for common people to voice their protest against state authorities by posting their memorial and protest poems and essays. Likewise, the monument for the collective martyrdom of the Chinese revolution unofficially functioned as a public shrine to memorialize an individual, Zhou Enlai. As the memorial poems and essays created during the movement tell us, many people even imagined the Monument as the personification of Zhou Enlai. Those memorial poems and essays also explain why Chinese citizens would go to the Monument to memorialize Zhou. It was because on the south side of the Monument is an inscription in Zhou's calligraphy. Eventually, a sacred locus of national memory became a memorial space for protesters to memorialize Zhou's revolutionary career while protesting against state authorities. A close reading of those memorial poems and essays created during the April Fifth Movement can illuminate how the Monument at Tiananmen Square constitutes the physical and spatial framework with which common people recollected Zhou's revolutionary career and Chinese revolutionary tradition, such as the May Fourth Movement, while projecting their prospective imagination of China.

Likewise, during the June Fourth Movement, the Monument to the People's Heroes was used by student protesters for subversive purposes. In the early stage of the movement, the Monument was transformed into a personal shrine for students to commemorate Hu Yaobang. Later, the Monument was even transformed from a symbolic

heart of the PRC to the power center of the student movement. Once again, Tiananmen Square became a memorial space for dissident protesters to recall the revolutionary tradition, such as the May Fourth and April Fifth Movements, in the effort to justify their political agenda of democratic reform. A careful examination of those unofficially produced memorial and protest literature during the April Fifth and June Fourth Movements opens a window to explore how private people received the politically sanctioned official versions of the past at Tiananmen Square and consequently assigned alternative and subversive symbolism to the space.

Two more national buildings were established around Tiananmen Square during the Great Leap Forward. As part of the National Day Project (Guoqing gongcheng) to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the founding of the PRC, the Museums of Chinese History and the Chinese Revolution and the Great Hall of the People were built on the east and west sides of Tiananmen Square by September 1959 to symbolize the legitimate foundation of the Chinese communist regime.⁴⁵ The two Museums on the east side of Tiananmen Square together provide historical legitimacy to the rule of the CCP in the language of Mao's revolutionary discourse. The compound building designed to host the two Museums was completed in August 1959. Influenced by Mao Zedong's master discourse and temporal framework of modern Chinese history, the Museum of the Chinese Revolution in the north wing is to display the history of the Chinese revolution after the year 1840 and the Museum of Chinese History in the south wing to show the Chinese history before the year 1840. In addition to functioning as a state-sponsored

⁴⁵“Archive of the Beijing Urban Construction Bureau,” Beijing Municipal Archives, 138-1-34. The two museums have been merged into the National Museum of China in 2003.

monumental institution to disseminate official knowledge of Chinese history, the two Museums together provide historical legitimacy to the PRC's rule.

While the two Museums are intended to make claims of historical legitimacy for the PRC, the Great Hall of the People has embodied the communist regime's legal legitimacy. Completed in September 1959, the Great Hall was designed to house the National People's Congress (NPC) and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), hold mass assemblies on national holidays, and receive important national guests. Besides, the PRC's effort to forge a national identity around the leadership of the CCP was visually manifested in the interior design of the Great Hall. Not only does the Great Hall of the People embody the legal legitimacy, it also renders the temporality of China. Whereas the two Museums symbolize remote and recent Chinese past, the Great Hall represents the present and the future of China considering the political function of the NPC and CPPCC. As a consequence, Tiananmen Square constitutes a material container to render China's temporality: the past, the present, and the future.

Tiananmen Square underwent a second large-scale construction when the PRC decided to build the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall. In May 1977, the Memorial Hall was established at the south end of the central axis on the square. In terms of death politics in post-Mao China, both the preservation of Mao's remains and the building of the Memorial Hall were the means by which Hua Guofeng undertook to justify himself as Mao's successor. As a consequence, Mao's revolutionary history was visualized in the interior and exterior design of the Memorial Hall. For example, Mao's great contribution to the Chinese revolution is represented in the group sculptures in socialist realist style located at the northern entrance and southern exit of the Memorial Hall. The two group

sculptures on the east and west sides near the northern entrance are to represent Mao's contribution to the Chinese communist revolution. Mao's revolutionary past thus was materialized in the architectural complex of the Memorial Hall. The two group sculptures near the southern exit together are meant to display that the Chinese people of all ethnicities would inherit Mao's will to carry on the proletarian revolution to the end. The group sculptures symbolize Chairman Hua's legitimacy by representing Mao's utopian vision of permanent revolution. As a whole, the Memorial Hall architectural complex thus has symbolized and envisioned the past and the future of the Chinese revolution.

With the formation of the whole monumental complex, Tiananmen Square was constructed as an architectural embodiment of Mao's revolutionary discourse and a material container of China's temporality. Tiananmen Square has thus constituted both a memorial space and a physical foundation for state power and grassroots activists to manipulate China's past of national salvation and revolutionary tradition to justify their political demands.

Selective Memory at Work: Two Political Visions with One Cultural Memory

But how could the cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition be manipulated by both the state power of the PRC and private people to give legitimacy to their different political visions? Recent scholarship on the selectivity and plurality of memory provides a useful perspective to consider this question. Many scholars have shown us how various elements, such as socio-political changes, domestic and international politics, and generational and gender difference, resulted in the multiplicity and malleability of historical memories of the Nazi past. Those historical studies of the German collective memories of the Nazi past especially reveal the dynamics of "selective

remembrance” and “selective forgetting” at work.⁴⁶ The same dynamics is also reflected in the historical memory of Chile’s 1973 crisis. In *Remembering Pinochet’s Chile*, Steven Stern describes this politics of selective memory in one simple but magic sentence: “One’s person’s criminal is another person’s hero.”⁴⁷ This magic sentence concisely points out that the complexity, multiplicity, and malleability of memories regarding Pinochet in twentieth-century Chile lies in multifarious social and generational groups’ diverse remembering of that past. Similarly, a careful examination of state agencies and dissident protesters’ conceptualization of Tiananmen Square provides a window to explore the selectivity of the cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition in the era of the PRC.

Moreover, the dynamics of selective remembrance and selective forgetting leads us to think about the politics of the making of official and counter-memories.⁴⁸ In first place, the power of writing history is crucial to controlling collective memory by reinforcing official memory of selected national past. Edward Said has emphasized official historical writing as a way to mobilize people around the shared political goal or to promote collective forgetting.⁴⁹ Like Said, Paul Connerton also demonstrates the role historical writing plays in the forging and control of collective memory and in the organization of

⁴⁶ Robert Moeller, “War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany,” *The American Historical Review* 101: 4 (Oct., 1996): 1008-1048; Joyce Mushaben, “Collective Memory Divided and Reunited: Mothers, Daughters and the Fascist Experience in Germany,” *History and Memory* 11: 1 (1999): 7-40; Till, *The New Berlin*, pp. 193-228; Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2003), pp. 123-137.

⁴⁷ Stern, *Remembering Pinochet’s Chile*, pp. xxvii, 7; Steve Stern, *Battling for Hearts and Minds: Memory Struggles in Pinochet’s Chile, 1973-1988* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006); Steve Stern, *Reckoning with Pinochet: The Memory Question in Democratic Chile, 1989-2006* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010).

⁴⁸ Historians’ increasing interest in the study of counter-memory to some extent has been influenced by Michel Foucault, who notices the role power relation plays in the politics of memory in the form of discourse. For Foucault, in terms of historical memory, the point at stake is that the sense of the past is continually being remolded in the discourse of the present by the social groups who hold the power in controlling how the past is remembered. See Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, pp. 5-6.

⁴⁹ Said, “Invention, Memory, and Place,” pp. 179, 181, 183-184, 191.

collective oblivion.⁵⁰ That the writing of official history constitutes a tool to frame collective memory can be also verified in the study of colonial history. As Anne Norton shows, in order to colonize the historical consciousness of the colonized, imperialists tended to disconnect colonized subjects from their historical past by writing an imperial history without the presence of their remote past.⁵¹ A case study of the making and canonization of Mao's revolutionary discourse on the Chinese national salvation movement and its material embodiments at Tiananmen Square will show how the PRC's official narrative of the national past could frame the historical consciousness of the Chinese people and their conceptualization of the four fateful events in twentieth-century China.

Nevertheless, selective remembrance and selective forgetting as the consequence of official history writing do not necessarily mean that official memory cannot be appropriated and used for unofficial or subversive purposes and that contested popular memory of national past cannot be created and sustained. As Ann Burlien has persuasively argued, one could manipulate official history and hegemonic discourse as a strategy to serve a subversive aim.⁵² As I will demonstrate, the grassroots activists selectively appropriated and used official discourse on Chinese national salvation and revolutionary movements in justifying their dissident agendas during the April Fifth and June Fourth Movements. More importantly, as a result of this selective use of the PRC discourse, they were able to create contested discourses and memories around Tiananmen Square and the April Fifth and June Fourth Movements.

⁵⁰ Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, pp. 14-15.

⁵¹ Anne Norton, "Ruling Memory," *Political Theory* 21:3 (1993): 453-463.

⁵² Burline, "Countermemory on the Right," in Bal, *Acts of Memory*, pp. 208-217.

Structure

Based on the above discussion, in addition to the introduction and conclusion, this dissertation consists of eight chapters in four parts. Part One explores how the long-term anxiety over national crisis became deeply rooted in the minds of the Chinese state elites and progressive intellectuals and manifested in the creation and political use of the national salvation discourse in modern China and its crystallization in Mao Zedong's revolutionary discourse. For these purposes, Chapter One, "The Making and Use of the National Salvation Discourse in Modern China," traces the emergence and making of the national salvation discourse from the Opium War to the founding of the PRC to explore how it was created and used by reform-minded and revolutionary intellectuals in their programs of saving China and by the CCP to legitimize the party's changing political line, especially the twice united fronts with the Nationalist Party (Guomindang, GMD). Chapter Two, "The Making and Canonization of Mao Zedong's Revolutionary Discourse," first analyzes how the national salvation discourse was incorporated into Mao Zedong's comprehensive theory of the Chinese revolution by a close reading of his political writings from the 1920s to early 1940s. It then turns to explore the process in which Mao's doctrines on the Chinese revolution was canonized as the ruling ideology of the CCP, Mao Zedong Thought, while demonstrating the extensive and imperative impact of the Maoist revolutionary discourse on the historical consciousness of the Chinese citizens through a study of official history textbooks and historiography on modern China from the founding of the PRC to the 1980s. As Part One demonstrates, a careful examination of the emergence and use of the national salvation discourse and the making and canonization of Mao's revolutionary discourse allows us to locate the political and discursive foundation around which the people from below could make

sensible of the officially encoded symbolism of commemorative monuments and institutions at Tiananmen Square after the founding of the PRC.

Part Two of the dissertation focuses on the on-going process through which Tiananmen Square was constructed as the symbolic center of twentieth-century China from the perspectives of urban planning and memorial space. In doing so, Chapter Three, “The Making of A Chinese Capital of New Democracy: The Spatial and Symbolic Centrality of Tiananmen Square in Beijing’s Urban Planning,” first displays the impact of Chinese communist memory over the officially sanctioned revolutionary tradition, such as the May Fourth Movement, on choosing Beijing as the PRC capital based on the analyses of official documents and autobiographical writings. Then it moves to address how Mao’s revolutionary discourse of New Democracy was translated into Beijing’s urban planning and landscape before and after the founding of the PRC based on a careful examination of official archives. As this chapter suggests, the official sanction of Tiananmen Square as spatial and administrative center of Beijing made possible the consolidation and amplification of its symbolic centrality in the following years. Then, Chapter Four, “Materialization of the Chinese Revolutionary Memory at Tiananmen Square,” moves to analyze how the Chinese past of national salvation and revolutionary tradition was materialized with the language of Mao’s revolutionary discourse in the commemorative monuments and institutions at Tiananmen Square. As a consequence, Tiananmen Square not only has become the material manifestation of ruling ideology in the era of the PRC but also constituted the spatial and material framework for state power and grassroots activists competed to manipulate the Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition.

Parts Three and Four of this dissertation concentrate on the political uses of Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition at Tiananmen Square by case studies of the April Fifth Movement and the June Fourth Movement. Whereas Part Three focuses on the popular and official uses of the May Fourth and April Fifth Movements in the last years of Mao's China, Part Four concentrates on the impact of the Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition and the trauma of the Cultural Revolution in Deng Xiaoping's reform era. For the aim of Part Three, Chapter Five, "From 'May Fourth' to 'April Fifth': Poeticizing the Voice of Protest and Dynamics of Memory Making at Tiananmen Square," shows the Chinese memory of national salvation and the May Fourth Movement at work during the April Fifth Movement by examining grassroots activists' memorial poems and essays and photographs produced at Tiananmen Square. A close reading of these vehicles of memory reveals how the commemorative monuments and official ritual practices at Tiananmen Square constituted the material and cultural foundation for the dissident protesters to recall and manipulate China's past of national salvation and revolutionary tradition in a short-lived public sphere created at the space to justify their protest against the Gang of Four. It also opens a window to look into the dynamics of memory making in which the people from below conceptualized and memorialized Zhou Enlai, the movement, and Tiananmen Square in their popular discourse as compared to that of the PRC.

Moreover, Chapter Six, "Projecting Prospective Vision at Tiananmen Square: The Popular and Official Uses of the April Fifth Movement in China without Mao," on the one hand demonstrates how the dissident protesters during and after the April Fifth

Movement legitimized the popular vision of Chinese modernity, the Four Modernizations, that they projected by manipulating the communist sanctioned revolutionary tradition while attaching their recollection of Zhou Enlai's revolutionary career with the Monument to the People's Heroes. On the other hand, it turns to display how the CCP redefined and utilized the April Fifth Movement as a revolutionary tradition in order to endow Deng Xiaoping's rise to power with social and historical legitimacy. The two chapters together illuminate the fluidity and constructed nature of the symbolism of Tiananmen Square by demonstrating how a contested discourse and memory around the movement and the space was created at a state sponsored memorial space.

While Part Three exemplifies the political uses of the communist-sanctioned revolutionary tradition during and after the April Fifth Movement, Part Four provides spectacular examples to consider how the state power of the PRC and the student protesters during the June Fourth Movement competed to manipulate, but selectively, both the traumatic and glorious past of the Chinese revolution in Tiananmen Square and beyond. Given this general purpose, Chapter Seven, "Recalling Traumatic Past around Tiananmen Square: The Four Cardinal Principles, the Cultural Revolution, and the June Fourth Movement," begins with a brief discussion on how Deng Xiaoping incorporated the national salvation discourse into his doctrine of the Four Cardinal Principles emphasizing the Chinese nation's stability and unity in an attempt to avoid the atrocity of the Cultural Revolution. Then, based on a close reading of the official discourse on the June Fourth Movement, it moves to analyze how the PRC criticized and discredited the student protests and justified its military suppression at Tiananmen Square by manipulating the traumatic memory of the Cultural Revolution in the language of Deng's

discourse on stability and unity. Nevertheless, as this chapter also demonstrates, the use of the past of the Cultural Revolution and the official discourse on stability and unity was not exclusive to the state power of the PRC. Although being defined by state authorities as counter-revolutionaries in turmoil like the Cultural Revolution, the student protesters and their supporters had come to appropriate the official discourses on the Cultural Revolution and stability and unity to justify their demonstrations and political agendas of modernity and to discredit the PRC's suppression of the movement.

Furthermore, Chapter Eight, "From 'May Fourth' and 'April Fifth' to 'June Fourth': Playing the Variations of Communist Revolutionary Memory at Tiananmen Square," turns to explain how the revolutionary past of the May Fourth and the April Fifth Movements were manipulated and conceptualized by the pro-democratic advocates during the June Fourth Movement in the language of the national salvation discourse by analyzing protest literature, underground newspapers and journals, autobiographical writings, documentary films, and official documents produced during the movement. The two chapters together provide a window to look into the selectivity of political uses of memory and history by illuminating both official and popular manipulation of the national salvation discourse and national traumatic past.

The cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition continued to have an impact in the post-June-Fourth era. In the conclusion, along with a discussion on how the construction of the commemorative monuments and institutions and socio-political activisms at Tiananmen Square manifested communist China's pursuit of its political modernity, this dissertation demonstrates how the cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition was reenacted in Tiananmen Square by looking into

the PRC's official national flag raising ceremony since 1 May 1991 and the countdown clocks set up for celebrating national events, such as the 1997 return of Hong Kong and 2008 Beijing Olympics. With a retrospective view, it suggests that the popular conceptualization of Mao as the "Reddest Sun" rising over Tiananmen Square during the Cultural Revolution was related to the PRC's national flag raising ceremony *at the moment of sunrise*. Finally, the conclusion as a whole offers an alternative theoretical discourse on the political uses of memory and history at Tiananmen Square from the perspective of the "cult of the monument" in the age of the modern nation-state.

PART ONE

On 1 October 2009, at Tiananmen Square, the President of the PRC and the General Secretary of the CCP, Hu Jintao (1942-), claimed that the development and progress of New China over the past sixty years fully proved that “only socialism can save China.”¹ This remark was given in a speech delivered at a ceremony commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the PRC. At that symbolic moment, he was trying to indicate that only socialism could save China under the leadership of the CCP. This rhetoric of saving China is not a new invention by Hu Jintao but was inherited from the Chinese Communist Party’s political culture and Mao Zedong’s master discourse of the Chinese revolutionary history. The political leaders of the CCP, such as Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, and Jiang Zemin, were good at using this rhetoric when the nation or the Party was at a life or death moment. But, the national salvation discourse in effect was not the CCP’s invention either.

The origin of the national salvation discourse can be traced back to the century-long anxiety about national humiliation and salvation as a result of the imperialist encroachment from the Opium War in 1840. What really distinguishes the CCP’s use of the discourse lies in the Party’s effort to privilege itself as the sole savior of the Chinese nation as epitomized by the slogan “only socialism can save China.” Moreover, the anxiety about national salvation has become so deeply rooted, despite the fact that the Chinese nation has already “stood up,” as Mao Zedong claimed at the First Plenum of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) in 1949, that political

¹ Hu Jintao, “Talk at the 60th Anniversary Commemoration of the Founding of the PRC,” *People’s Daily* (October 2nd, 2009): 2.

leaders of the PRC and CCP have continued to use the discourse allegorically. Therefore, it does not surprise us that Yang Tao, a student leader during the June Fourth Movement in 1989, would complain: “China does not need a movement for national salvation.... Our leaders are always promoting national salvation movements that are not based on any clear ideology.... What China needs now is personal liberation.”² However, this does not necessarily mean that social groups and individuals other than the state power of the PRC would not use the national salvation discourse politically. As chapter eight will demonstrate, the national salvation discourse was so useful that the student protesters of the June Fourth Movement made use of it.

The national salvation discourse had been incorporated into Mao Zedong’s hegemonic discourse on the Chinese revolution even before the PRC was founded. In Mao’s theoretical formula of New Democracy, modern Chinese history since the Opium War was precisely a history of national salvation and revolutionary movements in reaction to the international imperialism and domestic feudalism. Before the founding of the PRC, China had been through a century-long journey to search for the right path of modernization to rescue the nation from destruction. Until the success of the communist revolution, not only the Self-strengthening movement (1861-1895) and the Hundred Days’ Reform (1898) ended in failure; even Sun Yat-sen’s Revolution of 1911 found the premature abortion of the new republic in the political chaos created by warlordism. It was only the communist revolution that could save China by following the “the path of the Russians,” that is, the Marxism-Leninism sent by “salvoes of the October Revolution.”³ In describing this century-long national salvation movement, Mao

² Shen Tong, *Almost A Revolution* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1990), p. 150.

³ Mao Zedong, “On People’s Dictatorship,” in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. IV (Peking: Foreign Languages

concludes, “the finest sons and daughters of disaster-ridden Chinese nation fought and sacrificed their lives...in quest of the truth that would save the country and the people.... But it was only after World War I and the October Revolution in Russia that we found Marxism-Leninism, the best of truths, the best of weapons for liberating our nation. And the Communist Party of China has been the initiator, propagandist and organizer in the wielding of this weapon.”⁴ In other words, the founding of the Chinese Communist Party marked the turning point of the Chinese revolution that was to lead to the eventual success of rescuing China from decline.⁵ This dissertation will demonstrate how the Chinese communists had made the great effort to develop their power base and mobilize popular support by holding the banner of national salvation and manipulating the national salvation discourse strategically.

Chapter One first attempts to trace the emergence, making, and use of the national salvation discourse by a close reading of political writings by the major advocates in the attempt to propagate their programs of rescuing China from decline during the Self-Strengthening Movement, Hundred Days’ Reform, Revolution of 1911, and New Culture Movement. It is not my intention to provide a comprehensive study of the national salvation discourse in modern China, but to show a general genealogy of the political use of the discourse from 1860s to 1920s. It will allow us to understand how the anxiety

Press, 1965), p. 413.

⁴ Mao Zedong, “Reform Our Study,” in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. III (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), p. 17.

⁵ The same logic not only has manifested in Hu Jintao’s speech delivered at the commemorative ceremony of the 60th anniversary of the founding of the PRC at Tiananmen Square, but also clearly demonstrated in the editorial of *People’s Daily* on the same day. According to the editorial, from a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society to a nation with the people mastering their own affairs, from the new democratic revolution to the socialist revolution, from the highly centralized planned economy to the market economy full of vigor, from being secluded and half-secluded to being open, historic changes have taken place under the firm and steadfast leadership of the CPC. Editorial, “Yingzhe zhonghua minzu weida fuxing de shuguang: relie qingzhu zhonghua renmin gongheguo chengli lishi zhounian [To greet the dawn of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation: Warmly celebrating the 60th anniversary of the founding the People’s Republic of China], *People’s Daily* (1st October 2009): 4.

about national salvation became deeply rooted in the minds of the Chinese political elites and progressive intellectuals as manifested in the manipulation of the national salvation discourse. Then, the second half of Chapter One will move to examine the Chinese communist revolutionary discourse of nation salvation from the emergence of the CCP to the eve of the founding of the PRC. In doing so, it intends to show how the CCP had used the national salvation discourse at certain defining moments in the development of the party as a prominent political force in the Republican era.

Chapter two will turn to examine the ongoing process of the making of Mao Zedong's hegemonic discourse on the Chinese revolution while looking into the official canonization of his discourse as the guiding ideological principles of the CCP, namely, Mao Zedong Thought. In order to illuminate the pervasive impact of Mao's master discourse in communist China, the examination will end with a discussion on the characteristics of the post-1949 historiography on modern Chinese history in general and the May Fourth Movement in particular as well as on the writing of the PRC history textbooks from the founding of the PRC to the 1980s. In my analysis, the scholarly works of the Chinese historical profession and the official history textbooks by and large have become the discursive media to carry Mao's revolutionary discourse and to transplant the discourse to the minds of the Chinese people.

Chapter One

Making and Use of the National Salvation Discourse in Modern China

Those who wanted to rule China had to propound and implement a program of national salvation.¹

Use the Past to Serve the Present.²

At the present juncture, with the country facing extreme danger and the fate of the nation in precarious balance, we have reached an understanding with the KMT [GMD] of China on the basis of peace, national unity, and joint resistance against foreign aggression, in order to save our fatherland from extinction.³

The Emergence of the National Salvation Discourse

It would not be an exaggeration to say that the master narrative of modern Chinese history is the discourse of national salvation. The process of the making of the national salvation discourse can be best understood when we locate it in the longer context of modern Chinese history from the Opium War in 1840 to the political victory of the CCP in 1949. In facing a series of national humiliation as a result of the encroachment of Western and Japanese imperialism, the anxiety about national salvation had always been in the minds of the Chinese political elites and progressive intellectuals in late nineteenth- and twentieth-century China.⁴ Given such a profound anxiety, they were determined to cleanse the humiliation and to rescue China from crisis by proposing various programs of national salvation. The anxiety had become so deeply rooted in the collective consciousness of the Chinese people that ambitious political elites and reform-minded intellectuals found it useful to mobilize manpower and to put forward socio-cultural

¹ Suisheng Zhao, "Chinese Nationalism and Its International Orientations," *Political Science Quarterly* 115: 1 (Spring, 2000): 4.

² Mao Zedong, "Zhi Lu Dingyi [To Lu Dingyi]," *Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji* [Selected Correspondence of Mao Zedong] (Beijing: People's Press, 1983), p. 598.

³ CCP, "Zhonggong zhongyang wei gongbu guogong hezuo xuanyan [The CCP's declaration on the GMD-CCP cooperation]," in Hu Hua, ed., *Zhongguo xinminzhu zhuyi gemingshi cankao ziliao* [Materials on the new-democratic revolutionary history] (Beijing: Zhongguo tushu, 1951), p. 354.

⁴ Paul A. Cohen, "Remembering and Forgetting: National Humiliation in Twentieth-Century China," *Twentieth-Century China* 27:2 (April, 2002): 1-39; Suisheng Zhao, "Chinese Nationalism and Its International Orientations," *Political Science Quarterly* 115: 1 (Spring, 2000): 1-33; Yuan Ming, "Chinese Intellectuals and the United States: The Dilemma of Individualism vs. Patriotism," *Asian Survey* 29:7 (July, 1989): 645-654; William A. Callahan, "National Insecurities: Humiliation, Salvation, and Chinese Nationalism," *Alternatives* 29 (2004): 199-218.

ideals by using the rhetoric of national salvation. So much so that, especially in the twentieth century, those who intended to establish their power base and/or to rule the Chinese nation had to propose a program of national salvation, such as Mao Zedong's "On New Democracy" and Jiang Jieshi's *China's Destiny*.⁵ As such, one is not surprised that Hu Jintao would claim that only socialism under the leadership of the CCP can "save" China when the PRC is rising to a world power.⁶ It is fair to say that the national salvation discourse is so influential that individuals and state actors would use it to seize political power.

Previous scholarship has called attention to the making of the national humiliation discourse in terms of the political use of the Chinese shameful past. In his case study of the Chinese remembering and forgetting of the Twenty-One Demands, Paul Cohen has convincingly shown that in the twentieth century patriotic Chinese had "referred endlessly to the humiliations (*guochi*)" that China had confronted at the hands of Western and Japanese imperialism from the Opium War onward as manifested by the anniversary commemoration of national humiliations during the Republican era. In particular, the official sanction of certain dates of national humiliation as national days, such as the National Humiliation Day (*guochi ri*) of May Seventh, together with the sentiment of national disgrace, constituted a major form of national remembering in a body of *guochi* literature.⁷ According to this literature, as Cohen suggests, "there was an overriding emphasis on the shameful interlude of China's victimization at the hands of imperialism in the century following the Opium War."⁸

⁵ Mao Zedong, "On New Democracy," pp. 339-384; Chiang Kai-shek, *China's Destiny* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1947).

⁶ Suisheng Zhao, "Chinese Nationalism," 4.

⁷ Cohen, "Remembering," 1.

⁸ Cohen, "Remembering," 17.

However, the anniversary commemoration of the disgraceful past does not necessarily mean remembering that past as it happened. As Cohen's study suggests, the official and popular anniversary commemoration of the Twenty-One Demands had not automatically led to keeping alive the memory of what it was like. Instead, it was often accompanied by a "distortion" of "the content and import of what was to be remembered to the point where it too contributed to an overall sense of memory debasement or loss."⁹ Cohen argues that this "distortion" or "memory loss" was the result of "a process of routinization or repetition overload" inherited in the official and popular commemoration and in the dissemination of formulaic allusions appearing on stamps, wallpaper, stationery, newspaper ads, playbills, and school texts.¹⁰ Cohen has persuasively shown the paradoxical effect of the anniversary commemorations in various forms, such as ritual ceremonies and commercial products, around the historical memory of certain past events. When the commemoration is supposed to be about remembering something of the past, eventually it would become major carrier for forgetting something. Indeed, either official or popular memory of the past in commemoration must have involved a process of selecting in which something significant is emphasized for remembering would result in forgetting something not so important. This constitutes one dimension of the selectivity of memory as discussed in the introduction. At this point, no wonder that Sun Fuyuan, who had been an active participant of the May Fourth Movement, would complain: "The historical significance of the May Fourth Movement seems to become clearer every year.

⁹ Cohen, "Remembering," 8.

¹⁰ Cohen, "Remembering," 12.

Yet concrete impressions of what the May Fourth Movement was like grow hazier every year.”¹¹

Compared to Cohen’s study of the anniversary commemoration of the Twenty-One Demands, in his examination of the *guochi* literature, William Callahan goes further to argue that the master narrative of modern Chinese history is the discourse of the century-long national humiliation (*Bainian guochi*).¹² To demonstrate the political use of the national humiliation discourse in the construction of Chinese nationalism, Callahan has analyzed how that discourse has been deployed in the forms of public histories, textbooks, romance novels, museums, popular songs, mass movements, prose poems, feature films, and atlases in twentieth-century China.¹³ According to Callahan’s investigation, Chinese books on China’s century of national humiliation generally tell the story of the nation “going from being at the center of the world to being the Sick Man of Asia after the Opium War (1840), only to rise again with the Communist Revolution (1949).”¹⁴ This temporal framework is identical with that of the communist master narrative on modern Chinese history that “ends with the national salvation of China in 1949,”¹⁵ as Mao Zedong told the world that the Chinese people had finally stood up and that “[o]ur nation will never be a nation insulted by others.”¹⁶ Here, Callahan has noticed the close relationship between national salvation and national humiliation. This leads him to suggest that national salvation is the discursive twin of national humiliation.¹⁷ He is correct in

¹¹ Sun Fuyuan, “Huiyi wusi dangnian [Remembrances of that year of May Fourth],” *Renmin wenxue* 5 (May, 1954): 118.

¹² Callahan, “National Insecurities: Humiliation, Salvation, and Chinese Nationalism,” *Alternatives* 29 (2004): 204.

¹³ Callahan, “National Insecurities,” 199, 214.

¹⁴ Callahan, “National Insecurities,” 202.

¹⁵ Callahan, “National Insecurities,” 205.

¹⁶ Mao Zedong, “Opening Address at the First Plenary Session of the Chinese People’s Political Consultation Conference,” in Michael Y. M. Kau and John. K. Leung, eds., *The Writings of Mao Zedong, 1949-1976*, vol. 1 (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1986), p. 5

¹⁷ Callahan, “National Insecurities,” 205.

suggesting the significance of the national humiliation discourse in the nation-building project of twentieth-century China. However, his overriding focus on the national humiliation texts makes him fail to provide further account of the other side of the discursive twin, national salvation discourse.¹⁸

Whereas both Cohen and Callahan pay exclusive attention to the national humiliation literature, this chapter intends to trace the making of the national salvation discourse in modern China. One could not construct Chinese nationalism simply by remembering national humiliation without providing a program of national salvation to overcome that humiliation. In other words, national humiliation needs to be cleansed by national salvation. Thus, it is important to explore the use of the national salvation discourse that was to be part of the Chinese communist master discourse on the Chinese revolution. National salvation and national humiliation are two sides of that master discourse.

The National Salvation Discourse and Political Modernity: To Bring the West Home

The emergence of the national salvation discourse and its evolution can only be fully understood by locating it in the longer context of the century of national humiliation. From the Opium War through the Revolution of 1911 to the founding of the PRC, China had witnessed one after another military and cultural challenges from Western and Japanese imperialism. This period can be considered as a series of nationalistic moments when China initiated one by one technological, political, and cultural reform movements in reaction to the recurring theme of national crisis. Under such nationalistic moments, one of the crucial issues that existed in China's program of rescuing the nation from destruction was the introduction and adoption of Western technologies, institutions, and

¹⁸ Callahan, "National Insecurities," 203, 204, 207.

thought into the Chinese local context. From the Self-Strengthening movement since 1861 through the One Hundred Days' Reform of 1898 and the Revolution of 1911 to the communist revolution, the Chinese were to look for prescriptions from the West to save the nation. This national salvation movement witnessed China's protracted journey of bringing the West home for overcoming the Western-caused national crises.¹⁹

This journey of bringing the West home can be considered as a period in which China engaged in the quest for modernity by negotiating with the Western world politically, technologically, and culturally. Given the anxiety about national salvation, the ideal of "modernity," or the West, had become China's inevitable "political goal" following the Opium War through the late nineteenth to the twentieth centuries.²⁰ It was this inevitable "political goal" of modernity that the late Qing government and progressive intellectuals had called for reforms based on the ideas of the Western modern science, politics, and sociology. As Dipesh Chakrabarty suggests, the achievement of political modernity outside the European realm should be examined in the local's contradictory relationship to the Western social and political thought.²¹ It is a contradictory relationship because the non-European countries were forced to bring the West home to overcome the anxiety over national crises as a result of the Western encroachment. It is a contradictory relationship because in bringing the West home the local countries have to deal with the conflict between the modernity and tradition. In the case of China, it was exactly this political goal of bringing the West (modernity) home that both late Qing government and reformed-minded intellectuals created the modern nation salvation (jiuguo) discourse to

¹⁹ Here, I have adopted the phrase "brining the West home" from Theodore Hutters, *Bringing the World Home: Appropriating the West in Late Qing and Early Republican China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005).

²⁰ Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, and Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), p. 13; Stefan Tanaka, *New Times in Modern Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 88.

²¹ Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 9.

rationalize their programs of rescuing China from destruction. This rationalization was meant to serve as a rhetorical device to convince themselves, and, more importantly, to persuade their conservative opponents. Therefore, as we can tell from this prototypical national salvation discourse, some reformists still revealed their unease and vacillation between bringing the whole “West” home and combining traditional Chinese learning as essence with the Western learning as the means.²² The anxiety of bringing Western modernity home to save China became entrenched in the hearts of the Chinese political elites and progressive intellectuals.

China’s journey of bringing the West home for saving the nation started with the Self-strengthening Movement since the 1860s. In the mid-nineteenth century, Qing China witnessed lethal threats from the Western imperialism. The defeat of the Opium War with the British government, whose aim was to compel China to allow free trade, forced the Qing court to sign the Treaty of Nanjing, the first unequal treaty in modern Chinese history. According to the Treaty of Nanjing, China was to open five treaty ports and cede Hong Kong Island to the United Kingdom. Qing China lost not only its national pride but also a piece of territory, which would not return to the sovereignty of China until 1 July 1997.²³ After the Qing shameful defeat at the hands of the United Kingdom and France in Tianjin and in Beijing in 1860, some top-ranking central officials and powerful local leaders believed in the necessity of adopting “Western” technology to rescue China from the threat of the “Western” imperialism. This quest for the “Western” prescriptions to save China, under the support of the Prince Gong, Yixin (1833-1898), was launched by a number of local power-holders who called attention to the indispensability of self-

²² About the late Qing and early Republican intellectuals and reformists’ ambiguous, ambivalent, and anxious mentalities toward the perplexing issue of “bring the ‘West’ home,” see Hutters, *Bringing the World Home*.

²³ Peter Ward Fay, *The Opium War, 1840-1842* (New York: Norton, 1976).

strengthening (*zhiqiang*). The major focus of the Self-Strengthening Movement was to build China's military technology industry and to reorganize the armed forces on the model of the West.²⁴ As a contemporary emphasized, "The way of governing the nation lies in self-strengthening. Considering the situation [of crisis] nowadays, the first priority of self-strengthening is army training, and the most important aspect of army training is producing weapons."²⁵ It was out of the purpose to build new-type military industry as "the foundation of China's self-strengthening" that Zeng Guofan (1811-1872) proposed to found the Jiangnan Arsenal (Jiangnan jiqi zhizhao ju) in 1865.²⁶ Likewise, Li Hongzhang (1823-1901), who was later in charge of the Jiangnan Arsenal, claimed that "the arsenal is the foundation of what can prevent China from humiliation and of self-strengthening."²⁷ Other than military reformation based on the arsenals built, the leaders of the Self-Strengthening Movement engaged in setting up new types of schools to create human resources for the development of scientific technology. They trained translators and established institutions to introduce the Western learning on science and technology and tried to increase the nation's wealth by opening new types of enterprises. The supreme aim of these efforts was to "enrich the state and strengthen the military (*fuguo qiangbing*)" so as to protect China from the Western humiliation.²⁸

The Self-Strengthening Movement found its bankruptcy in the 1894-1895 Sino-

²⁴ *Yangwu yundong* [The westernization movement] (Shanghai: Renmin chubanshe, 1973); Steven A. Leibo, *Transferring Technology to China: Prosper Giquel and the Self-Strengthening Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); David Pong, *Shen Pao-chen and China's Modernization in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

²⁵ Quoted in Li Jiangze, "Jinshi Jiuhuo lunshu [The modern national salvation discourse]," *Beijing Social Science* 2 (1991): 117.

²⁶ Quoted in Li, "Jinshi Jiuhuo lunshu," 117.

²⁷ Quoted in Li, "Jinshi Jiuhuo lunshu," 117.

²⁸ According to Hutters, in order to justify the cause of the Self-Strengthening Movement, the reformist leader like the Prince Gong would have to go so far to argue that the Western science and technology was originated in China: "The Western technique of [mathematics] came originally from the Chinese *tian yuan*, which the West regards as an Eastern technique." Hutters, *Bringing the World Home*, p. 30.

Japanese War. In the wake of the defeat with Japan, China changed its trajectory in searching for the prescription of national salvation from the technology-oriented improvement to a thorough political reform. After the defeat of the war with the Japanese, the Treaty of Shimonoseki was signed on 17 April 1895, which brought to Qing China a great loss symbolically, psychologically, and materially. In this treaty, the Qing government was forced to recognize the total independence of Korea and to cede the Liaodong Peninsula, Taiwan and Penghu Islands to Japan in addition to paying a great amount of reparation.²⁹ Given the shameful military defeat with Japan and the humiliating Treaty of Shimonoseki, many reform-minded intellectuals, led by Kang Youwei (1858-1927) and Liang Qichao (1873-1929), began thinking that the only way to save China was a comprehensive institutional and political reform.³⁰

To rationalize the emergency of the political reform, those reform-minded intellectuals in the late nineteenth century wove the rhetoric of national salvation to their political discourses. To express his opposition to the Treaty of Shimonoseki, Kang

²⁹ Qi Qizhang, *Jiawu zhanzheng shi* [The history of the Sino-Japanese war] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1990); *Jiawu zhong-ri zhanzheng* [The Sino-Japanese war in the year of jiawu] (Shanghai: Renmin chubanshe, 1973); S.C.M. Paine, *The Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

³⁰ Kang and Liang strongly promoted the system of constitutional monarchy for the political reform and stood for a modernization project based on the model of the Japanese Meiji Restoration. Zheng Guanying (1842-1922) argued that the rise and fall of commercial enterprises lies in the political reform in the form of constitutional monarchy. Wang Tao (1828-1897) proposed to adopt the constitutional monarchy on the model of the United Kingdom. In his *Study of Humanness* (*Renxue*, 1897), in determining the ideological foundation of the imperial China, Tan Sitong (1865-1898) on the one hand blamed the monarch as bandit, and, on the other, regarded Confucianism as nothing but hypocritical orthodoxy used by the monarchy. Therefore, he called for an overall attack on the centuries long tradition and an attention to the values of independence and promote the idea of democracy. He also argued that China needed to apply the principles of capitalism at the time. Compared to Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao's milder program, Tan anticipated a radical approach of political and cultural reform. Tang Zhijun, *Wuxu bianfa shi* [The history of the reformation movement of 1898] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1984); Li Wenhai and Kong Xiangji, *Wuxu bianfa* [The reformation movement of 1898] (Chengdu: Xinhua shudian, 1986); Mao Haijian, *Wuxu bianfa shishi kao* [An investigation of historical matters pertaining to the reformation movement of 1898] (Beijing: Sanliang shudian, 2005); Luke S.K. Kwong, *A Mosaic of the Hundred Days: Personalities, Politics, and Ideas of 1898* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984); Rebecca E. Karl and Peter Zarrow, ed., *Rethinking the 1898 Reform Period: Political and Cultural change in Late Qing China* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2002); Hsiao Kung-chuan, *A Modern China and a New World: K'ang Yu-wei, Reformer and Utopian, 1858-1927* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975); Paul A. Cohen, *Between Tradition and Modernity: Wang T'ao and Reform in Late Ch'ing China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974); Chang-chuan Wu, *Cheng Kuan-ying: A Case-Study of Merchant Participation in the Chinese Self-Strengthening Movement (1878-1884)* (New York: Columbia University, 1975).

Youwei initiated the *Gongju Shangshu* movement, along with around thirteen hundred civil examination candidates, by presenting a ten-thousand-word petition to the Emperor Guangxu to call for a political reform. In order to persuade Guangxu, and, more importantly, the conservative opponents in the Qing court, Kang had to find ways to make his idea of political reform appear compatible and indispensable. In his petition, Kang began with an emphasis on the necessity of political reform by using the rhetoric of national salvation. He claimed that the political reform is inevitable for China to “protect the territory and extend the life of the nation.”³¹ The same rhetoric was reiterated in his next petition to Guangxu when he tried to make the situation of the nation seem very urgent by arguing that “a political reform without delay is inevitable,” not only for “protecting the territory” and “self-strengthening,” but also for “cleansing the national humiliation (*xue guochi*).”³²

Kang Youwei’s use of the national salvation rhetoric to justify the emergency of political reform was not exceptional at that time. Liang Qichao also used the same strategy to justify the cause of political reform. For example, in “The Cost of not Reforming Politics,” Liang reiterates that political reform is “the way for national salvation and survival (*tucun zhi dao*),” otherwise, the nation could only “wait quietly for the day of destruction (*fuwang*).”³³ A political reform could do so much for the Chinese nation that Liang concludes his essay by claiming that a timely political reform not only could “preserve the nation (*baoguo*)” and “preserve the race (*baozhong*),” but also even

³¹ Kang Youwei, “Shang Qingdi dier shu [The second letter presented to the Qing Emperor],” in Association of Chinese History, ed., *Zhongguo jindai shi ziliao congkan: Wuxu Bianfa* [A series of collection of historical materials on modern China: The reformation movement of 1898], vol. 2 (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin chubanshe, 1957), p. 131.

³² Kang, “Shang Qingdi dishan shu,” p. 131.

³³ Liang Qichao, “Lun bu bianfa zhi hai [On the cost of not reforming politics],” in Association of Chinese History, ed., *Zhongguo jindai shi ziliao congkan: Wuxu Bianfa*, vol. 3, p. 18.

could “preserve Confucianism (baojiao).”³⁴ This anxiety about national salvation and survival led reform-minded intellectuals like Liang to vigorously advocate the cause of political reform by incorporating the national salvation rhetoric into their political discourses.

Yan Fu (1853-1912) was another late Qing reformist who followed the same logic of line to contend the necessity of political reform in achieving the supreme goal of national restoration through the path of “Wealth and Strength.”³⁵ With the theoretical framework of social Darwinism, like what Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao had done, Yan Fu also attempted to emphasize the significance of a political reform for the Chinese nation by using the rhetoric of national salvation. For example, in “On the Origins of [National] Strength,” Yan tries to hold up the point that China would be declining if without a timely political reform for the “Wealth and Strength.”³⁶ Likewise, in “Decisive Words on Our National Salvation,” Yan attempts to make clear that “China will be perishing if without a political reform today” by suggesting that the abolition of the civil service examination is the first priority of reformation for it is the sole “way of self-salvation at the decisive moment of life and death.”³⁷ In this way, Yan tried to justify the cause of political reform in the language of national salvation.

From Reformist to Democratic Revolutionary Discourse of National Salvation

Yet not everyone was satisfied with the milder trajectory of political “reform” proposed by Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao. Some argued that what China needed was a

³⁴ Liang Qichao, “Lun bu bianfa zhi hai,” p. 18.

³⁵ Benjamin I. Schwartz, *In Search of Wealth and Power: Yen Fu and the West* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964).

³⁶ Yan Fu, “Yuan qiang [On the origin of (national) strength],” in Association of Chinese History, ed., *Zhongguo jindai shi ziliao congkan: Wuxu Bianfa*, vol. 3, p. 53.

³⁷ Yan Fu, “Jiuwang juelun [Decisive words on our national salvation],” in Association of Chinese History, ed., *Zhongguo jindai shi ziliao congkan: Wuxu Bianfa*, vol. 3, p. 64.

thoroughly political “revolution” to survive the peril rooted in the threat of foreign imperialism and the corruption of Qing politics. Among many, one of them was Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925). According to Sun’s recollection in 1918, it was precisely the corruption of the Qing court revealed in a series of military humiliations, especially the defeat in war at the hands of France in 1885, that led him to come out with his program of national salvation by a more radical trajectory of revolution, that is, to overthrow the Qing dynasty.³⁸

Sun’s revolutionary program was to be institutionalized with the founding of the Revive China Society (*Xingzhong hui*) as early as in 1894 after the breaking out of the Sino-Japanese War.³⁹ The platform of the Society was to “Expel the northern barbarians, restore the [Han] Chinese nation, and established a united government.” Here, the “northern barbarians” referred to the Manchu people. As Sun pointed out clearly in 1918, the aims of the Society were to overthrow the Qing dynasty and to establish a republican polity. In other words, the national crisis of China was not simply rooted in the threat of foreign imperialism, but also in the domestic degeneration as a consequence of the corrupt and incapable Qing court. To emphasize the necessity of the overriding goal, Sun argued, “When the ‘motherland’ is in the danger of destruction and the Qing politics is so corrupt, it would be impossible to rescue [China] in peril without a radical transformation of the nation.”⁴⁰ Instead of the milder political reform promoted by progressive

³⁸ Sun Yat-sen, “Geming yuanqi [The Origins of the Revolution],” in Association of Chinese History, ed., *Zhongguo jindai shi ziliao congkan: Xinhai geming* [A series of collection of historical materials on modern China: Revolution of 1911], vol. 1 (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin chubanshe, 1957), pp. 3-4; also Sun Yat-sen, “Xingzhong hui chengli xuanyan [The founding declaration of the Revive China Society],” in *Zhongguo jindai shi ziliao congkan: Xinhai geming*, p. 85.

³⁹ Sun, “Geming yuanqi,” p. 3.

⁴⁰ Sun, “Geming yuanqi,” p. 3.

intellectuals like Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, in Sun Yat-sen consideration, the mission of national salvation could only be achieved by the means of revolution.

Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary discourse of national salvation can also be seen in the other revolutionaries' political writings, such as Zou Rong's *Revolutionary Army* (*Geming jun*). According to Sun Yat-sen's recollection, the *Revolutionary Army* was one of the most prominent works that played decisive role in the growth of the revolutionary movement, especially its popular reception and influence among the oversea Chinese.⁴¹ At the very beginning of *Revolutionary Army*, Zou at once indicates that the purpose of his book is to "spread the principles of revolution throughout the land."⁴² In Zou's vision, revolution is the only way for China to "sweep away millennia of despotism in all its forms, throw off millennia of slavishness, and annihilate the five million and more of the furry and horned Manchu race."⁴³ With a very strong anti-Manchu sentiment, more importantly, Zou reiterates the necessity of revolution by using the rhetoric of national salvation. The anti-Manchu revolution, in Zou's consideration, is "the essence of the struggle for survival or destruction in a time of transition."⁴⁴ Therefore, for the sacred cause of national salvation, he cries to his fellow-countrymen:

Revolution is inevitable for China today. It is inevitable if the Manchu yoke is to be thrown off; it is inevitable if China is to be independent; it is inevitable is to take its place as a powerful nation on the globe; it is inevitable if China is to survive for long in the new world of the 20th century; it is inevitable if China is to be a great country in the world and play the leading role.⁴⁵

Five consecutive "inevitables" are used by Zou Rong here to punctuate the indispensability and urgency of revolution in the attempt to restore China's national

⁴¹ Sun, "Geming yuanqi," p. 10.

⁴² Zou Rong, *The Revolutionary Army*, collected in Association of Chinese History, ed., *Zhongguo jindai shi ziliao congkan: Xinhai geming*, vol. 1, p. 333; The English translation adopted here is from John Lust, *The Revolutionary Army* (Paris: Mouton, 1968), p. 58.

⁴³ Zou, *The Revolutionary Army*, p. 333; Lust, *The Revolutionary Army*, p. 58.

⁴⁴ Zou, *The Revolutionary Army*, p. 333; Lust, *The Revolutionary Army*, p. 58.

⁴⁵ Zou, *The Revolutionary Army*, p. 333; Lust, *The Revolutionary Army*, p. 58.

strength and make it become an independent and powerful country in the world. Then, based on this overall goal of a thoroughgoing revolution, in practice, the indisputable prescriptions for the Chinese revolution to found the Republic of China were based on the Western doctrines of human rights, national determination, as well as freedom and democracy. Zou called these prescriptions as the “magical medicine for bring back the dead to life” for China.⁴⁶

Toward the Communist Revolutionary Discourse of National Salvation

The Chinese search for the path of saving the nation was to be continued. The 1911 Revolution did not bring authentic national salvation because further national humiliation remained to be brought about by the Republican government controlled by Yuan Shikai. The politics of the Republican regime became the stage of power struggles among numerous warlords of different factions, and China was led to the path of chaos. The chaos was to become a national shame when Yuan Shikai accepted the Twenty-One Demands proposed by the Japanese government on 9 May 1915. The Twenty-One Demands was part of Japanese empire’s ambition to take over German concessions on the Shandong peninsula by taking advantage of the World War I during which Japan was on the winning side of the Entente Powers. The Yuan government did not accept the Twenty-One Demands at first. Yuan was hoping the coming of international intervention, especially the British and Russia, since China was in the camp of the Entente Powers as well. Meanwhile, on 7 May 1915, the Japanese government sent out an ultimatum to require the Republican government’s response by May 9. Eventually, the international intervention that Yuan expected did not come, and he was forced to accept the

⁴⁶ Zou, *The Revolutionary Army*, pp. 335, 361-363; Lust, *The Revolutionary Army*, pp. 60, 122-124.

disgraceful Twenty-One Demands. Yuan's shameful deed resulted in the mass movement opposing the Twenty-One Demands at the Central Park (today's Zhongshan Park) to the southeast of the Forbidden City. As part of the movement in Shanghai, some bankers and businessmen even established the National Salvation Fund (jiuguo jijin) at that time. Thereafter, May 7 and May 9 were considered as the National Humiliation Days (guochi ri). Under such chaos, Chinese progressive intellectuals began to show their anxiety in the quest for prescriptions of saving China again. Many of them even came to believe that there was no other way to save China other than changing the mental outlook of the Chinese people. In order to cure the mental illness of the Chinese people, they launched a thoroughly socio-cultural revolution that was known as the New Culture Movement.⁴⁷ As such, China's quest for the path of national salvation turned to the trajectory of intellectual revolution.

The advocates of the New Culture Movement had used the national salvation discourse to justify their program of intellectual revolution as well. The New Culture Movement was generally regarded as an intellectual revolution beginning with the birth of the *New Youth* magazine in 1915. Considering the republic was going to be suffocated by warlords like Yuan Shikai, the founder of the magazine, Chen Duxiu (1879-1942), came to believe that the political revolution was not enough to liberate China from the restless decline. Instead, the only way to "save China," as Chen claimed, is to "carry out an intellectual revolution (sixiang geming)."⁴⁸ In his view, only a comprehensive intellectual revolution could rescue China from its backward tradition. Thus, on 15

⁴⁷ Vera Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment: Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* (Berkeley, C. A.: University of California Press, 1986), esp. chapter 2; Chow Tse-tsung, *The May Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960), esp. chapters 3, 7, 11-13.

⁴⁸ Ren Jianshu, *Chen Duxiu da zhuan* [The biography of Chen Duxiu] (Shanghai: Renmin chubanshe, 2004), p. 108.

September 1915, Chen Duxiu created the journal *Youth* (later renamed *New Youth* in 1916) in Shanghai.⁴⁹ Given the general goal of a wide-ranging intellectual revolution, *New Youth* became the battlefield for Chen Duxiu and other intellectuals, such as Qian Xuantong, Lu Xun, Li Dazhao and Hu Shi, to launch an iconoclastic attack on the tradition of “Confucius and Sons,” to introduce the Western ideas, such as democracy and science, and to put forward a literary revolution.⁵⁰ The desire to pursue a more fundamental mental and cultural reconstruction is revealed clearly in his “Our Final Awakening (Wuren zuihou zhi juewu),” which gives an accent on the necessity of the Chinese people’s awakening through the intellectual revolution.⁵¹ More importantly, in order to rationalize the importance of the agenda, Chen also employed the rhetoric of national salvation in his writings. For example, in the opening remarks of *Youth*, “Call to Youth,” Chen argues that “I would rather see the ruin of our traditional ‘national quintessence (*guocui*)’ than have our nation vanished because of its unfitness for survival.”⁵² In his late years, he still strongly believed that “we should strive our hardest to fight against the encroachment of imperialism that endangers the survival of our nation and not refuse [to adopt] its culture.”⁵³ For the generation of the *New Youth*, the sole way to save China was to undertake an intellectual revolution by introducing and adopting the Western ideas.

⁴⁹ The magazine was named *Youth* because Chen believed that the hope of the restoring the Chinese nation lies in the intellectual transformation of the youth generation. As he puts it in a sentimental tone in the opening remarks for the magazine, “Call to Youth (Jinggao qingnian):” “I merely, with tears, place my plea before the fresh and vital youth, in the hope that they will achieve self-awareness, and begin to struggle.” Chen Duxiu, “Jinggao qingnian [Call to youth],” *Youth* 1:1 (September 15, 1915): 1-2.

⁵⁰ The intellectual orientation of the generation of the *New Youth*’s cultural turn, see Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment*, esp. chapter 2; also Chow, *The May Fourth Movement*, esp. chapter 3.

⁵¹ Chen Duxiu, “Wuren zuihou zhi juewu [Our final awakening],” *New Youth* 1:6 (Feb. 15, 1916), pp. 1-4.

⁵² Chen Duxiu, “Jinggao qingnian [Call to youth],” *Qingnian zazhi* [Youth Magazine] 1:1 (September 15, 1915): 3; the English translation quoted from Chow, *The May Fourth Movement*, p. 46.

⁵³ Chen Duxiu, “Zhanhou shijie dashi zhi lunkuo [The sketch of the state of affairs in the post-war world],” *Congqing Dagong Bao* 21 March 1942; Duan Peijun, “Lun liangzhong yiyi de minzu jiuwang: Wusi yundong jiben xingzhi de zairenshi [On two meanings of national salvation: rethinking of the essence of the May Fourth Movement],” in Hao Bin ed., *Wusi yundong yu ershi shiji de zhongguo*, vol. 1 (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2001), pp. 225-226.

The use of national salvation discourse can also be found in the political discourses of the younger generation in the early Republican era.⁵⁴ For example, at the very beginning of the May Fourth Movement, the student protesters had manipulated the rhetoric of national salvation in the “Manifesto of All the Students of Beijing” in order to make protest against the unjust Treaty of Versailles.⁵⁵ To emphasize the urgent situation that China was facing, the “Manifesto” concludes by crying out: “[T]his is the last chance for China in her life or death struggle.”⁵⁶ Similarly, during the May Fourth Movement, Zhang Guotao (1897-1979), one of the founding members of the CCP, had called for “the whole student body” to “take part in a Save-the-Country Movement” because “saving the country is more important than anything else.” In Zhang’s concern, the movement should be a national exercise without exception so that “everyone should rise up and unite to

⁵⁴ With the great impact of *New Youth*, among many reasons, Chen Duxiu’s call for an intellectual revolution was to fall on the receptive ears of the younger generation of college students, such as the members of the *New Tide* Society (*Xinchao she*) and the *Citizen* Society (*Guomin she*). While the *New Tide* Society was a student organization chiefly concerned with carrying out the pure literary and intellectual revolution through the *New Tide* magazine, the *Citizen* Society was devoted to mobilize the new intellectuals and the public to the patriotic and social movement. Being inspired by the Western learning introduced by the older generation of the *New Youth*, in particular, the younger generation of the *New Tide* society had proposed their version of “intellectual revolution,” such as the quest for a scientific world view, an attack on the Chinese national character, a rebellion against conventional familial ethics of subservience, and an iconoclasm against the Chinese tradition. In addition to its political orientation, the *Citizen* Society had shown its intellectual affinity with the Marxist intellectuals like Li Dazhao. The *Citizen* had played certain role in the dissemination of Marxism as the magazine had been publishing parts of *The Communist Manifesto* and Marx’s preface to *Das Kapital*. A number of the members of the *Citizen* Society were to become prominent communists, such as Xu Deheng and Zhang Guotao. Moreover, being influenced by the 1917 October Revolution, the *New Youth* came to promote the doctrine of Marxism, and in 1920 the magazine would become the official propaganda journal of the Chinese Communist cell in Shanghai and later that of the CCP. The impact of this dissemination of Marxism among the younger generation was to be further manifested in the founding of the Commoners’ Education Lecture Society and the Society for the Study of Marxist Theory organized and participated by the younger generation of the May Fourth Movement. For the *New Tide* Society and the *Citizen* Society’s intellectual movement and activities during this period see Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment*, esp. chapter 3; Chow, *The May Fourth Movement*, pp., 82, 97, 299.

⁵⁵ Students themselves called the event, which resulted in a series of strikes and anti-Japanese campaigns, as the May Fourth Movement. Chow, *The May Fourth Movement*, p. 1; Yang Hu, “Wusi yundong mingcheng suyuan [The origins of the term May Fourth Movement],” *Beijing Daxue Xuebao* (Zhaxue Shehui Kexue) [Journal of Beijing University (Philosophy and Social Sciences) 43:2 (Mar. 2006): 152-154; Guo Ruoping, “Yiyi de fuyu: Shishi zhuanqi yu wusi huayu de yanbain [The significances allocating: historical contexts and the shift of ‘May 4th’ discourse],” *Anhui Shixue* 5 (2008): 33-45. The impact of the May Fourth Movement were so pervasive that, in addition to the rise of the students and labor movements, it has been widely acknowledged as a decisive stimulus that expanded the influence of the New Culture Movement to a nationwide scale until 1921. For the relationship between the New Culture Movement and the May Fourth Movement, see Li, “Qimeng yu jiuwang de shuangcong bianzou [The dual variation on enlightenment and national salvation],” pp. 7-49.

⁵⁶ The English translation of the entire text, see Chow, *The May Fourth Movement*, p. 106.

save the country.”⁵⁷ An active student protester of the May Fourth Movement, Xu Deheng (1890-1990) had epitomized the participants’ mental attitude in the form of poetry, which reads: “To purge clean the shame from Chinese hearts and minds, we stand today as prisoners. Among the thirty-two arrested, there is none who fears death. We thrashed the traitors thoroughly and burned the Cao mansion to the ground. In ferreting out traitors we’ve spared no cost, including death. We’d do anything to save China.”⁵⁸ In general, national salvation had constituted the frame of reference in the period. As Chow Tse-tung suggests, “the basic spirit of the movement” was to “create a new, modern civilization to save China.”⁵⁹

By using the language of saving China, the student leaders and participants of the May Fourth Movement meant to mobilize the public to participate in or identify with the movement. It shows that even the younger generation at that time was not unfamiliar with the discourse, and its use could only work when the recipients also found it understandable and sensible. This understandable discourse was inherited from the long-term anxiety about national salvation among the Chinese intellectuals, who had always taken for granted that they had to be responsible for the fate of their country.⁶⁰ This long-term anxiety can be traced back to the predecessors of the May Fourth generation—the

⁵⁷ Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment*, p. 86.

⁵⁸ Xu Deheng, “Wusi yundong liushi zhounian [The Sixtieth Anniversary of the May Fourth Movement],” *Wusi yundong huiyi lu xu* (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1979), p. 54; the English translation of the poem see Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment*, p. 19.

⁵⁹ Chow, *The May Fourth Movement*, p. 359. The theme of national salvation was widely acknowledged as the essential component of the May Fourth Movement. The May Fourth Movement was defined as a socio-cultural movement in which political national salvation and cultural enlightenment had intertwined with each other. It has been also considered as the watershed in the history of the Chinese national salvation movement because the movement had involved a profound cultural transformation based on the model of the West. Li Zehou, “Qimeng yu jiuwang de shuangcong bianzou [The dual variation on enlightenment and national salvation],” *Zhongguo xiandai shi lun* [Essays on the Intellectual History of Modern China] (Beijing: Dongfang chubanshe, 1987), pp. 7-49; Duan Peijun, “Lun liangzhong yiyi de minzu jiuwang: Wusi yundong jiben xingzhi de zairenshi [On two meanings of national salvation: rethinking of the essence of the May Fourth Movement],” in Hao Bin ed., *Wusi yundong yu ershi shiji de zhongguo*, vol. 1 (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2001), pp. 222-245.

⁶⁰ The relationship between the May Fourth Movement and the long-term tradition of the national salvation cause, see Li, “Qimeng yu jiuwang de shuangcong bianzou,” pp. 11-13.

reform-minded and revolutionary intellectuals during the Self-Strengthening Movement, the Hundred Days' Reform of 1898 and the Revolution of 1911, whose shared commitment was to achieve the mission of national salvation.⁶¹ Thus, in his study of the intellectual relationship between the New Culture Movement and the May Fourth Movement, Li Zehou has suggested that Chen Duxiu's program of intellectual revolution had not deviated from the long-term tradition of "assuming personal responsibility for all under heaven (yi tianxia wei jiren)" and the national salvation movement.⁶²

Nevertheless, some radical intellectuals were to propose a different trajectory of national salvation based on the doctrine of Marxism. Along with the tidal wave of the New Culture Movement and the May Fourth Movement, the doctrine of Marxism was disseminated by the *New Youth* intellectuals, such as Li Dazhao and Chen Duxiu, throughout China.⁶³ The ideas of Marxism quickly attracted the eyes of a number of intellectuals, who realized that an "intellectual revolution" would take too much time to achieve the mission of national salvation and who had become disappointed with the system of the Western democracy after World War I. For those who converted to Marxism, it was necessary to save China in a timely manner by carrying out a national reconstruction with the approach of communist revolution. Many intellectuals who resorted to the Russian path, such as Mao Zedong, would use Marxism as the theoretical groundwork to propose a communist program of national salvation, as we will see in the following pages. As a consequence, being influenced by the teachings of Marxism and

⁶¹ Nevertheless, there were some differences between the younger generation of the May Fourth Movement and the older generations of the Self-Strengthening and Reformation Movement of 1898. Unlike their older generations, which had attempted but failed to save China from top by counting on a reform-minded emperor, the May Fourth generation believed that they could save China by awakening the consciousness of their fellow-countrymen from below. Schwarz, *The Chinese Enlightenment*, pp. 24-36.

⁶² Li, "Qimeng yu jiuwang de shuangcong bianzou," pp. 11-13.

⁶³ Ding Shouhe and Ying Xuyi, *Cong wusi yundong dao makesi zhuyi de chuanbo* [From the May Fourth Movement to the Diffusion of Marxism] (Beijing: Sanliang shuju, 1963); Maurice Meisner, *Li Ta-chao and the Origins of the Chinese Marxism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967).

under the guidance of the Comintern (The Communist International), the Chinese Communist Party was officially founded in Shanghai in 1921. The CCP would later become a prominent political force that led the Chinese nation to the communist trajectory of national salvation—a national salvation by means of armed proletarian revolution under the party.

So far this chapter has traced the making of the national salvation discourse from the Self-Strengthening Movement through the Reformation Movement of 1898 and the 1911 Revolution to the New Culture Movement. The long journey of bringing Western modernity home to rescue the Chinese nation from destruction forced the top-ranking officials and progressive intellectuals to weave the rhetoric of national salvation into their political discourses in order to disarm the fierce opposition from the conservative antagonists and to rationalize their programs of using the Western prescriptions to cure the Western illness. Before turning to the making of the communist national salvation discourse, let us review this long journey of the Chinese quest for the prescriptions of national salvation in Mao's words:

From the time of China's defeat in the Opium War of 1840, Chinese progressives went through untold hardships in their quest for truth from the Western countries. Hung Hsiu-chuan, Kang Yu-wei, Yan Fu and Sun Yat-sen were representative of those who had looked to the West for truth before the Communist Party of China was born. Chinese who then sought progress would read any book containing the new knowledge from the West....They represented the culture of Western bourgeois democracy, including the social theories and natural sciences of that period, and they were called "the new learning" in contrast to Chinese feudal culture, which was called "the old learning." For quite a long time, those who had acquired the new learning felt confident that it would save China, and very few of them had any doubts on this score, as the adherents of the old learning had. Only modernization could save China, only learning from foreign countries could modernize China. Among the foreign countries, only the Western capitalist countries were then progressive, as they had successfully built modern bourgeois states. The Japanese had been successful in learning from the West, and the Chinese also wished to learn from the Japanese. The Chinese in those days regarded Russia as backward, and few wanted to learn from her. That was how the Chinese tried to learn from foreign countries in the period from the 1840s to the beginning of the 20th century....The Chinese learned a good deal from the West, but they could not make it work and were never able to realize their ideals. Their repeated struggles, including such a country-wide movement as the Revolution of 1911, all ended in failure. Day by day, conditions in the country got worse, and life was made impossible. Doubts arose, increased

and deepened....Then, and only then, did the Chinese enter an entirely new era in their thinking and their life. They found Marxism-Leninism, the universally applicable truth, and the face of China began to change....The salvos of the October Revolution brought us Marxism-Leninism. The October Revolution helped progressives in China, as throughout the world, to adopt the proletarian world outlook as the instrument for studying a nation's destiny and considering anew their own problems. Follow the path of the Russians—that was their conclusion. In 1919, the May 4th Movement took place in China. In 1921, the Communist Party of China was founded....⁶⁴

The CCP's Use of the National Salvation Discourse

Before the founding of the PRC, the CCP without exception utilized the national salvation discourse to justify the party's political agendas, to mobilize popular support for the communist revolution, and to legitimize the policy of the united front with the Nationalist Party (Guomindang, GMD) during the Great Revolution (1923-1927) and the War of Resistance against Japan (1937-1945).⁶⁵ Then, the national salvation discourse was to be integrated into Mao Zedong's revolutionary discourse that would be canonized as the ideological guidelines of the CCP and thus became rooted in communist political culture.

The communist revolutionary trajectory of national salvation was institutionalized with the founding of the CCP and the holdings of the party's first two national congress. Under the guidance of the Comintern, the First National Congress of the CCP was held on 23 July 1921 in Shanghai, where Mao Zedong and the other twelve delegates of the Communist cells adopted the Party's first platform (*gangling*). According to the platform, the party aimed to overthrow the bourgeoisie classes with the revolutionary army of the proletariat, to put an end to the class distinction by reconstructing the nation under the leadership of working class, and to abolish the capitalist private ownership of property by

⁶⁴ Mao, "On People's Dictatorship," pp. 412-413.

⁶⁵For examples: "Guanyu gumin yundong ji kuomintang wenti de yijuean" [The Resolution on the National Movement and the KMT Question], in "Erda" he "Sanda" [*The Second and Third National Congresses*] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1985), pp. 181-182; CCP [Zhou Enlai], "Zhonggong zhongyang wei gongbu guogong hezuo xuanyan" [The CCP's Declaration on the KMT-CCP Cooperation], in *Zhongguo xinminzhu zhuyi gemingshi cankao ziliao* [*The Materials on the Chinese New-Democratic Revolution*] (Beijing: Zhongguo tushu, 1951), pp. 354-356.

establishing the proletarian dictatorship.⁶⁶ The Second National Congress of the CCP was held in 1922 in Shanghai. In addition to the “Constitution of the Chinese Communist Party,” the Second National Congress had defined the CCP as “the party of the proletariat” and set up its long-term and short-term aims.⁶⁷ The long-term aims of the party were “to organize the proletariat and to struggle for (the establishment of) the dictatorship of the workers and peasants, the abolition of private property, and the gradual attainment of a Communist society.” Before attaining the long-term goal, the CCP had to “lead the workers to support the democratic revolution and forge a democratic united front of workers, poor peasants, and petty bourgeoisie” for realizing its short-term objectives “in the interests of the workers and poor peasants.” With these political guidelines, at the present-stage revolution, the CCP was to struggle for securing the following objectives: “to quell the internal disorder by overturning the warlords and creating the internal peace; to attain the complete independence of the Chinese nation by overthrowing the encroachment of the international imperialism; and to unite the China Proper (*zhongguo benbu*) into a genuine democratic republic.”⁶⁸

The national salvation discourse was used in the “Manifesto of the Second National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party” to justify the CCP’s political agendas.

Beginning with the traumatic past of the encroachment of Western and Japanese imperialism from the Opium War onward, the Manifesto calls for all Chinese people, to

⁶⁶ “The First Program of the CCP,” in Tony Saich, ed., *The Rise to Power of the Chinese Communist Party* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1996), pp. 16-17.

⁶⁷ CCP, “Zhongguo gongchandang dierci quanguo dahui xuanyan [The manifesto of the second national congress of the Chinese Communist Party],” in “*Erda*” he “*Sanda*”: *Zhongguo gongchandang dier, desan ci daibiao dahui ziliao xuan bian* [Second and third national congresses: selection of materials on the second and third national congress of the Chinese Communist Party] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1985), p. 105; My translation of the text here is based on the English version of the section three of the Manifesto collected in Conrad Brandt, Benjamin Schwartz, and John K. Fairbank, ed., *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1952), pp. 63-65.

⁶⁸ CCP, “Zhongguo gongchandang dierci quanguo dahui xuanyan,” p. 105; CCP, “Manifesto of the Second National Congress of the CCP” p. 64.

“rise up” for the proletarian revolution “at the decisive moment of life or death” (*shengsi guangtou*) for the nation,” especially when the workers and peasants who have been so oppressed by the domestic and international capitalists.⁶⁹ The rhetoric of the moment of life or death was targeted to the “motive forces” of the socialist revolution, the Chinese workers and peasants, who had been suffering from the exploitation of Western imperialism and domestic warlordism. As the “Manifesto” claims, the Chinese people “could only liberate themselves from the imperialism by following the path of the proletarian revolution” under the leadership of the CCP.⁷⁰ The national salvation discourse was used to mobilize the Chinese proletariat to participate in the communist revolution to overthrow Western imperialism and domestic warlordism. The same discourse was to be utilized by the CCP to justify the policy of the cooperation with the GMD at the Third National Congress.

The holding of the Third National Congress represents a critical moment in twentieth-century China in general and in the CCP’s history in particular. It was convened in June of 1923 in Canton. The most significant impact of the Third National Congress on the CCP’s political line was to cooperate with the GMD in the First United Front.⁷¹ To establish a united front between the GMD and CCP was Maring’s (Henk Sneevliet, 1883-1942) proposition, an outcome of his trip in south China, especially in Canton. According to his observation on the worker’s movement and the GMD’s situation in 1922, Maring came to believe that the cooperation between the GMD and the CCP would be very

⁶⁹ CCP, “Zhongguo gongchandang dierci quanguo dahui xuanyan,” p. 98.

⁷⁰ CCP, “Zhongguo gongchandang dierci quanguo dahui xuanyan,” p. 100.

⁷¹ This formulation of the policy itself had shown the Comintern’s enormous influence on the CCP’s policy-making in the early stage of the Party’s history. In the first place, the CCP was founded under the Comintern’s assistance. At the Second National Congress, the CCP adopted an official resolution declaring itself as a branch of the Comintern. CCP, “Zhongguo gongchandang dierci quanguo dahui xuanyan,” p. 106; “Zhongguo gongchandang jiaru disan guoji yijue an [Resolution on the CCP’s joining the Comintern,” in “*Erda*” he “*Sanda*,” p. 68.

crucial in achieving the Chinese “national revolution (minzu gemin).”⁷² On 12 January 1923, the Executive Committee of the Comintern adopted “The Resolution on the Question of the Relationship between the CCP and the GMD.” Assuming that the GMD was “the sole significant national revolutionary group” in China and that the Chinese worker’s movement was “not strong enough” throughout the country, Comintern argued that “the cooperation between the GMD and the ‘young’ CCP is necessary.”⁷³ Less than half a month after the Resolution was adopted, Adolph A. Joffe (1883-1927), the ambassador of the Soviet Union, and Sun Yat-sen signed an agreement on the cooperation between the GMD and the CCP.⁷⁴ Then, one month before the Third National Congress in Canton, the Comintern sent its directive on the cooperation between the GMD and CCP to its “branch” in China.⁷⁵ It was the CCP’s turn to make a decision.

The policy of the cooperation with the GMD came to a final decision at the Third National Congress of the CCP. Being influenced by the Comintern’s determination, Chen Duxiu clearly conveyed the Comintern’s directive on the cooperation with the GMD, and he “has decided to persuade all of the party members to join the GMD.”⁷⁶ This significant change in the CCP’s political line was to be translated into its official document, resolution, and even the constitution. The CCP had become determined to

⁷² Malin, “Malin gei zhixingju de baogao [Malin’s report to the Central Committee of the Comintern],” in “*Erda*” he “*Sanda*,” p. 119.

⁷³ Executive Committee of the Comintern, “Gongchang guoji guanyu zhongguo gongchandang yu guomingdang de guanxi wenti de jueyi [The resolution on the question of the relationship between the CCP and the GMD],” in “*Erda*” he “*Sanda*,” p. 146.

⁷⁴ “Joint Manifesto of Sun Yat-sen and A. A. Joffe,” in *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism*, pp. 70-71.

⁷⁵ Executive Committee of the Comintern, “Gongchang guoji gei zhongguo gongchandang disanci daibiao dahui de zhishi [The directive to the third national congress of the CCP],” in “*Erda*” he “*Sanda*,” pp. 165-176.

⁷⁶ Chen Duxiu, “Zai zhongguo gongchandang disanci quanguo daibiao dahui de baogao [Report at the third national congress of the CCP],” in “*Erda*” he “*Sanda*,” p. 170.

require its party members to participate in the GMD in the name of individuals.⁷⁷ The CCP had to take pains to justify the change in the party's political line.

The national salvation discourse constitutes the rhetorical device for the CCP to rationalize the policy of the cooperation with the GMD. In the “Manifesto of the Third National Congress (June 1923),” the CCP begins its statement with lines targeted to “all” of the Chinese people, including the workers and peasants, and, even the businessmen, by arguing that: “The Chinese people are doubly oppressed both by foreign powers and by warlords, and the nation’s existence as well as the freedom of its people, are in an extremely precarious state.”⁷⁸ To make the dramatic shift in the party’s political line seem reasonable not only need a piece of the national crisis rhetoric but also an larger scope of “people” to which the appeal is to be made. The defined “people” here refers to, as the Manifesto indicates, “not only” the workers, peasants and students, who have been being considered as major “motive forces” of the proletarian revolution, “but also the peaceful and moderate merchants.” From the “Manifesto of the Second National Congress” to the “Manifesto of the Third National Congress,” the amplification of the scope of the targeted audience, the “people,” in effect was the reflection of the changing of political atmosphere toward establishing the untied front at that time, since the “proletarian” revolutionary CCP was to “cooperate” with the “democratic” revolutionary. The “Manifesto” goes on to call attention to the whole body of the Chinese citizens (*guomin*): “*There is no salvation unless the people muster up their own strength in a*

⁷⁷ On the First United Front between the GMD and the CCP, see Harold Issacs, *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1938).

⁷⁸ CCP, “Zhongguo gongchangdang disanci quanguo dahui xuanyan [Manifesto of the third national congress of the CCP,” in “*Erda*” he “*Sanda*,” p. 193; An English translation of the entire text, see Brandt, Schwartz, and Fairbank, ed., *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism*, pp. 71-72.

national movement for self-determination (*guomin zijue yundong*).⁷⁹ In this way, by using the rhetoric of national salvation, the CCP intended to rationalize the indispensability, and to release the anxiety, of the cooperation with the GMD. This use of national salvation discourse was to be used again and again in the CCP's political discourse after the break up of the First United Front with the GMD as well as before and during the Second United Front with the GMD.

The Incident of September 18 and National Salvation

The use of the national salvation discourse by the founding of the PRC was largely a result of Japan's recurrent ambition to subjugate the Chinese nation. Throughout the thirty years from 1915 to 1945, the Japanese empire launched diplomatic and military campaigns one after another to spread out its influence in the territory of China. The Japanese militarist intention to enlarge its dominance in China became clearer after the Mukden Incident of September 18, 1931. In the wake of the Mukden Incident, Japan began its occupation of the three provinces in northeast China, which ended up with the establishment of the puppet state Manchukuo in 1932.

The Mukden Incident, also known as the Incident of September 18, fomented another tidal wave of national salvation movement from below and a series of anti-Japanese campaigns. However, given Jiang Jieshi's nonresistance policy toward Japan's invasion, the national salvation movement was suppressed by the Republican authorities. The GMD government's nonresistant approach to dealing with the Japanese military occupation in northeast China gave rise to the pervasive resentment among the Chinese

⁷⁹ CCP, "Zhongguo gongchangdang disanci quanguo dahui xuanyan," p. 193.

people, and the date of the Mukden Incident was considered as another national humiliation day.

Even the GMD applied the national salvation discourse to justify the nonresistance policy. In the “Open Letter to all Compatriots for Unanimous Domestic Pacification before External Resistance” on 23 July 1931, Jiang Jieshi puts forward the policy of “Domestic Pacification before External Resistance (*annei rangwei*),” and contends that the policy is “the only way to save the Chinese nation.”⁸⁰ The line of logic behind the policy was to uphold that the Chinese nation would have to annihilate the CCP first and then resist the Japanese aggression. Along with the cause of national salvation, the principle of “Domestic Pacification before External Resistance” was actually meant to justify the necessity of the Encirclement Campaigns against the communist armed forces in the rural areas. Although many signs showed that the Japanese militarist was about to carry out the plan of conquering China, the principle formally became the GMD regime’s national policy even after the occurrence of the Mukden Incident in June 1932.

Under this circumstance, the CCP had come to voice its protest against the Japanese military occupation of Manchuria and the GMD’s nonresistance policy by using the national salvation discourse as well. On September 20, 1931, the CCP announced the “Declaration on the Incident of Japanese Imperialist Occupation of Manchuria by Force” to reiterate the urgency of resistance against Japan. Beginning with a historical review of the Japanese encroachment in China, the “Declaration” comes to argue that “the only way to liberate China” from the Japanese aggression lies in “the victory of the Soviet of the

⁸⁰ Jiang Jieshi, “*Gao quanguo tongbao yizhi annei rangwei* [Letter to the all Compatriots for Domestic Pacification before External Resistance],” in *Xianzongtong jianggong sixiang yanlun zongji*, vol. 30 (Taipei: Zhongguo guomindang zhongyang weiyuan hui dangshi weiyuan hui, 1984), pp. 149-151.

workers and peasants.”⁸¹ Moreover, the CCP used the national salvation discourse to stigmatize the GMD and its nonresistance policy. The “Declaration” labels the GMD as the “running dog (*zougou*) of imperialism” and suggests that “the nonresistance policy” completely displayed “their [GMD’s] shameless surrender and their true face of selling out the interest of the nation.”⁸² It also describes the GMD as the warlord (*guomindang junfa*) who is “simply the bodyguard of imperialism killing the Chinese people.”⁸³ Therefore, as the “Declaration” emphasizes, the Chinese workers and peasants must “overthrow the Japanese Imperialism and the GMD warlord” for the sake of “liberating the Chinese nation.”⁸⁴ Ten days after the issuance of the “First Declaration,” the CCP announced the “Second Declaration on the Japanese Imperialism’s Occupation of the Manchuria by Force.”⁸⁵ The same strategy of using the national salvation discourse was manifested in the writing of the “Second Declaration” as well. Not only does the “Second Declaration” apply the first declaration’s rhetorical strategy in stigmatizing the GMD with the rhetoric of national salvation, it goes further to propose more practical resolution to carry out the resistance to Japan in general and the anti-GMD campaign in particular by any possible means of social movement, including mass demonstration and gathering and the strikes of the students, workers and shopkeepers. No matter how determined they

⁸¹ CCP, “Zhongguo gongchandang wei riben diguo zhuyi qianbao zhanling dongsansheng shijian xuanyan [Declaration on the incident of Japanese imperialist occupation of Manchuria by force,” *Zhonggong zhongyang wenjian xuanji*, vol. 11 (Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 1986), pp. 396-399.

⁸² CCP, “Zhongguo gongchandang wei riben diguo zhuyi qianbao zhanling dongsansheng shijian xuanyan,” p. 397.

⁸³ CCP, “Zhongguo gongchandang wei riben diguo zhuyi qianbao zhanling dongsansheng shijian xuanyan,” p. 397.

⁸⁴ CCP, “Zhongguo gongchandang wei riben diguo zhuyi qianbao zhanling dongsansheng shijian xuanyan,” p. 398.

This stigmatization of the GMD and its nonresistance policy is totally different from the basic tone of the “Manifesto of the Third National Congress of the CCP,” which determines the GMD as the central force of the “national revolution,” during the period of the First United Front. This change in the CCP’s party line toward the GMD naturally was a corollary consequence of the Jiang Jieshi’s fierce suppression on the communists since the broke up of the First United Front in 1927. “To overthrow the warlord-GMD regime” had always been the Party’s formal policy since the CCP’s Sixth National Congress in the September of 1928. CCP, “Zhongguo gongchandang diliuci quanguo daibiao dahui zhengzhi jueyan [Political Resolution of the Sixth National Congress of the CCP],” in Brandt, Schwartz, and Fairbank, ed., *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism*, p. 132.

⁸⁵ CCP, “Zhongguo gongchandang wei ri diguo zhuyi qianzhan dongsansheng shijian dierci xuanyan [The second declaration on the incident of Japanese imperialist occupation of Manchuria by force,” *Zhonggong zhongyang wenjian xuanji*, vol. 11, pp. 425-430.

were to overthrow the GMD, the CCP was to moderate its political line toward the GMD again when the party came out with the idea of establishing a national united front of resistance war against Japan in April 1934. The political use of the Chinese anxiety over national crisis in the two declarations reveals the validity of the national salvation discourse.

Toward the Proposition of the Second United Front: The August 1st Declaration

The shift of the CCP's party line toward the GMD did not take place over night. The shift was a gradual process that began in April 1934 and culminated in the founding of the Second United Front. In April 1934, considering that north China was to be occupied by the Japanese military force, the CCP called for establishing an anti-Japanese united front in an open letter. The letter argues, "any Chinese people who willingly fight against the imperialism and who are not reconciled to be the slave of a conquered nation should unite under the united front of anti-imperialism."⁸⁶ The idea of the united front was further elucidated in the "Open Letter to the all Compatriots on Resistance against Japanese and National Salvation" which was made public on 1 August 1935, widely known as the "August 1st Declaration (Bayi xuanyan)."⁸⁷ To cease the civil war and to establish a joint national defense government became the CCP's general principles to dealing with the Japanese aggression. On 25 December 1935, the CCP adopted the establishment of the National United Front of Resistance against Japan and National Salvation as its policy at the Wayaobao Conference.

⁸⁶ CCP, "Zhonggong zhongyang wei riben diguo zhuyi zhanling huabei bingtun zhongguo gao quanguo minzhong shu," in *Zhongguo xinminzhu zhuyi gemingshi cankao ziliao* (Beijing: Zhongguo tushu, 1951), p. 260.

⁸⁷ CCP, "Zhongguo suweiai zhengfu zhongguo gongchandang zhongyang wei kangri jiuguo gao quanti tongbao shu [Open letter to the all Compatriots on Resistance against Japanese and National Salvation," in *Zhonggong zhongyang wenjian xuanji*, vol. 11, pp. 518-524.

How did the CCP justify the policy of creating the second united front with the GMD? How did the CCP rationalize its cooperation with a bourgeois-oriented party that had been the major target of the proletarian revolution since the Party's Sixth National Congress? To answer the two questions, we must begin with a close reading of the "August 1st Declaration."

The "August 1st Declaration" paved the way for the CCP's shift toward the policy of establishing the National United Front with the GMD. On 1 August 1935, the central government of the Soviet Republic and the Central Committee of the CCP jointly issued the "Open Letter to the Compatriots in the Entire Nation for Resistance against Japan and National Salvation," which later became known as the "August 1st Declaration." In the "Declaration," the CCP tries hard to hold up the indispensability of ceasing the civil war by using the rhetoric of national salvation. The "Declaration" begins with several passages revealing Japanese imperialism's program to dominate China articulated in the "fabricated" Tanaka Memorial. Then, it moves on to stress on the consequence of the Japanese invasion will be that "all fellow-countrymen of four hundred million people would become slaves of a conquered nation (*wangguo nu*)."⁸⁸ To make sense of the Japanese ambition to exterminate China, the "Declaration" emphasizes that "for the past few years" the Chinese nation is "already at the moment of life or death, and, therefore, "[if we] resist against Japan, [we will remain] alive, and, [the consequence of] nonresistance [is] the death."⁸⁹ This beginning, which was phrased with strong sense of anxiety over national salvation, was followed by the CCP's rebuttal to the GMD's

⁸⁸ CCP, "Zhongguo suweiai zhengfu zhongguo gonchandang zhongyang wei kangri jiuguo gao quanti tongbao shu," pp. 518-519.

⁸⁹ CCP, "Zhongguo suweiai zhengfu zhongguo gonchandang zhongyang wei kangri jiuguo gao quanti tongbao shu," p. 519.

nonresistance policy. Then, the “Declaration” turns to argue that any differences of political position can and must be ignored for the mission of national salvation:

At this moment when our country and our people are threatened with imminent destruction, the Communist Party once again appeals to all fellow countrymen: whatever the past or present differences of political opinion and of interests among the political parties... whatever the past or present hostilities between the various armies... we should stop the civil war so as to concentrate the nation’s resources (manpower, material and financial resources, and the armed forces) on the fight for the sacred cause of resisting Japan and *saving the nation*.⁹⁰

The national salvation discourse was employed again. Since China was “threatened with imminent destruction,” so its priority “at this moment” was to “stop the civil war so as to concentrate the nation’s resources” for “the sacred cause of resisting Japan and saving the nation.” Nevertheless, the CCP’s goodwill to cooperate with the GMD was not without any conditions, as the “Declaration” indicates:

Once again the Communist Party solemnly declares if the Kuomintang [GMD] troops cease their attacks on the Red Army and if any units carry out resistance to Japan, then the Red Army, regardless of any old feuds or present conflicts or differences on domestic issues, will not only immediately cease its hostile actions against these units, but willingly work closely with them *to save the nation*.⁹¹

The condition was that, if the GMD could suspend the Encirclement Campaigns and begin to resist the Japanese aggression, the CCP was “willingly to work closely with them to save the nation.” It was this “willingly to work closely” with the GMD for the supreme cause “to save the nation” which anticipated the possibility of establishing the Second United Front with the GMD. As the “Declaration” point out, “the Communist Party is ready to hold immediate talks with all those willing to join the cause of resisting

⁹⁰ CCP, “Zhongguo suweiai zhengfu zhongguo gongchandang zhongyang wei kangri jiuguo gao quanti tongbao shu,” pp. 521-522; The English translation adapted here is from Mao Zedong, “Zhongguo gongchandang zai kangri shiqi de renwu [The tasks of the Chinese Communist Party in the period of resistance to Japan],” in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. I (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), note 2, p. 276.

⁹¹ CCP, “Zhongguo suweiai zhengfu zhongguo gongchandang zhongyang wei kangri jiuguo gao quanti tongbao shu,” p. 522.

Japan and saving the nation.”⁹² For the supreme cause of “resisting Japan and saving the nation,” the CCP was on its way to the Second United Front.

The party line of establishing the National United Front was written into the “Resolution of the CCP on the Present Political Situation and the Tasks of the Party” adopted at the Wayaobao Conference on 25 December 1935.⁹³ Other than using national salvation rhetoric, one of the distinguishing characteristics of the “Resolution” is that it shows CCP’s ambition to catch the banner of the anti-Japanese resistance movement discursively. As the “Resolution” suggests, the CCP should try hard to “acquire the leadership in the united front of resistance against the Japanese.” It goes even further to claim: “only under the leadership of the CCP, can the anti-Japanese movement achieve a thoroughgoing victory.”⁹⁴ To catch the banner of the national united front is to grasp the banner of the Chinese revolution, and to catch the banner of the Chinese revolution is an attempt to grasp the control of the national salvation discourse. This intention to control the national salvation discourse can be seen in almost all the communist writings on the Chinese revolution in general and on the national united front in particular.⁹⁵

⁹² CCP, “Zhongguo suweiai zhengfu zhongguo gongchandang zhongyang wei kangri jiuguo gao quanti tongbao shu [Open letter to the all Compatriots on Resistance against Japanese and National Salvation” in *Zhongguo xinminzhu zhuyi gemingshi cankao ziliao*, p. 267; CCP, “Zhongguo suweiai zhengfu zhongguo gongchandang zhongyang wei kangri jiuguo gao quanti tongbao shu [Open letter to the all Compatriots on Resistance against Japanese and National Salvation” in *Zhonggong zhongyang wenjian xuanji*, vol. 11, pp. 522-523.

⁹³ CCP, “Zhongyang guanyu muqian zhengzhi xingshi yu dang de renwu jueyi [Resolution of the CCP on the present political situation and the tasks of the Party” in *Zhonggong zhongyang wenjian xuanji*, vol. 11, pp. 598-628.

⁹⁴ CCP, “Zhongyang guanyu muqian zhengzhi xingshi yu dang de renwu jueyi [Resolution of the CCP on the present political situation and the tasks of the Party” in *Zhonggong zhongyang wenjian xuanji*, vol. 11, p. 606.

⁹⁵ For example, in “The Tasks of the Chinese Communist Party in the Period of Resistance to Japan,” in concluding the course of the Chinese revolution after the collapse of the First United Front, Mao argues that the GMD, which represented the interest of the bourgeoisie, “betrayed the revolution and sold China’s national interests to imperialism,” and, thus, the task of the national revolution “devolved upon the Chinese Communist Party *alone*.” In Mao’s vision, since 1927, the CCP was “the only remaining revolutionary party” which could not but have to “shoulder the responsibility for organizing the revolution.” Based on this vision, in the present circumstances of Japanese aggression, “without the political leadership of the proletariat and its Party [CCP], it is impossible to establish an anti-Japanese national united front.” This means the responsibility of the CCP in the period was to promote the establishment of the united front so as to “function as the general staff in resisting Japan and saving the nation.” Mao Zedong, “Zhongguo gongchandang zai kangri shiqi de renwu [The tasks of the Chinese Communist Party in the period of resistance to Japan],” in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. I (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), pp. 263, 271, 272.

The CCP's anti-GMD policy was to change gradually in the middle of 1936 when the united front became the party line principle toward the Japanese aggression. According to Mao's recollection, the CCP had abandoned the policy of overthrowing the GMD regime as early as in the May of 1936.⁹⁶ The three letters that the CCP successively sent to the GMD from May to August 1936 together demonstrate Mao's suggestion. On 5 May 1936, the CCP sent a telegram to call for the GMD to cease the civil war and to forge a united front for resisting the Japanese aggression.⁹⁷ In particular, the telegram no longer calls Jiang Jieshi as the thief who sold out the national interests as the CCP did in the "August 1st Declaration."⁹⁸ Instead, it respectfully refers to Jiang Jieshi as "Mr. Jiang Jieshi (Jiang Jieshi shi)." On June 20, 1936, the Central Committee of the CCP sent another letter to the Second Plenary Conference of the GMD to reiterate the importance of ceasing the civil war and forming a united front in the resistance against with Japan.⁹⁹ Likewise, in this letter, the CCP did not describe the GMD as a warlord as it did in the "Declaration on the Incident of Japanese Imperialist Occupation of Manchuria by Force (1931)."¹⁰⁰ On 25 August of the same year, the CCP sent the third letter to express its goodwill to cooperate

⁹⁶ "The contradiction between China and Japan has changed matters for the masses throughout the country (the proletariat, the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie) and for the Communist Party, and it has changed the Party's policy. More and more people have risen to fight for national salvation. The policy proclaimed by the Communist Party after the September 18th Incident was to conclude agreements with those sections of the Kuomintang which were willing to co-operate with us for resistance, subject to three conditions (stop attacking the revolutionary base areas, guarantee the freedoms and rights of the people, arm the people), and it has developed into a policy of establishing an anti-Japanese united front of the whole nation. This is the reason for the following steps taken by our Party: in 1935, the August declaration and the December resolution; in 1936, the abandonment of the "anti-Chiang Kai-shek" slogan in May, the letter to the Kuomintang in August, the resolution on the democratic republic in September, and the insistence on a peaceful settlement of the Sian Incident in December; and in 1937, the February telegram to the Third Plenary Session of the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang." See Mao Zedong, "Zhongguo gongchandang zai kangri shiqi de renwu [The tasks of the Chinese Communist Party in the period of resistance to Japan]," p. 264.

⁹⁷ CCP, "Tingzhan yihe yizhi kangri tongdian [Telegram for ceasing the war and peaceful agreement to resist Japan]," in *Zhonggong zhongyang wenjian xuanji*, vol. 11, pp. 20-22.

⁹⁸ CCP, "Zhongguo suweiai zhengfu zhongguo gongchandang zhongyang wei kangri jiuguo gao quanti tongbao shu," pp. 520, 521.

⁹⁹ CCP, "Zhonggong zhongyang zhi guomindang erzhong quanhui shu [Letter of the Central Committee of the CCP to the Second Plenary of the GMD]," in *Zhonggong zhongyang wenjian xuanji*, vol. 11, pp. 43-47.

¹⁰⁰ CCP, "Zhongguo gongchandang wei riben diguo zhuyi qianbao zhanling dongsansheng shijian xuanyan," p. 397.

with the GMD.¹⁰¹ In the letter, “Letter from the CCP to the GMD of China,” the CCP even respectfully call Jiang Jieshi as the “Generalissimo Jiang (Jiang weiyuanzhang)” and considered the GMD as the significant, necessary force in the revolutionary National United Front.¹⁰² More importantly, in an attempt to give historical legitimacy to the “second” united front, the letter strategically manipulates the past of the cooperation with the GMD in the First United Front along with using the national salvation discourse:

We are willing to establish a solid revolutionary united front with you [the GMD], just like we have forged together into the great united front of anti-national oppression and anti-feudalism during the First Great Revolution from 1925 to 1927, because this is the *only correct way of national salvation* in the present day.....Now all of the people in the entire nation hope that the two parties can cooperate once again...because they believe that only the cooperation between the GMD and the CCP and the general cooperation among all parties and all groups of the society *can save the nation from destruction and survive.*¹⁰³

It seems that the CCP had forgotten how the GMD had suppressed the communists since the break up of the First United Front. Instead, it decided to remember the revolutionary past of the “great united front” in the period of the “First Great Revolution.” The CCP’s selective memory of the relationship between the two parties was displayed to vindicate the indispensability of forging the Second United Front. The cooperation was so important that “all of the people in the entire nation” believed that the cooperation was the only prescription of national salvation at the time. As such, as the letter claims, the CCP was “willing to establish a solid revolutionary united front” with the GMD simply because it was “the only correct way of national salvation in the present day.” This tactical change was justified by rendering the revolutionary tradition of the First Great Revolution in the language of national salvation.

The Formation of the Second United Front

¹⁰¹ CCP, “Zhongguo gongchandang zhi zhongguo guomindang shu [Letter from the CCP to the GMD of China],” in *Zhonggongn zhongyang wenjian xuanji*, vol. 11, pp. 77-88.

¹⁰² CCP, “Zhongguo gongchandang zhi zhongguo guomindang shu,” p. 78.

¹⁰³ CCP, “Zhongguo gongchandang zhi zhongguo guomindang shu,” p. 86.

However, the GMD was not going to soften its determination to root out the communist armed forces in advance to fighting against with Japan. Not until the Xi'an Incident on 12 December 1936 did the GMD begin to consider the CCP's proposition. The peaceful resolution on the Incident of Xi'an paved the way to negotiation between the two parties so that the establishment of the national united front was to become thinkable.¹⁰⁴ On 15 July 1937, a week after the Lukouchiao Incident, the CCP officially sent its "Declaration on the GMD-CCP Cooperation" to the GMD.¹⁰⁵ This time, it was the GMD's turn to make a decision.

The CCP's overall party line of forcing Jiang to resist Japan was to go on until the Second GMD-CCP Cooperation was forged in practice. Until then, the CCP revealed its anxiety over establishing the second united front for the cause of national salvation while trying hard to overcome that anxiety by proposing various programs of resistance against war and national salvation.¹⁰⁶ In particular, in order to overcome the anxiety of nation destruction and their determination to forge the united front, the CCP adopted a

¹⁰⁴ On 12 December 1936, when Zhang Xueliang (1910-2001), the vice commander-in-chief of the Northwest Army for the Encirclement Campaign, and Yang Hucheng (1893-1949), the commander of the Seventeenth Army, arrested and kidnapped Jiang Jieshi. On that very same day, Zhang and Yang asked Jiang to cease the civil war and establish a united government for the cause of resistance against the Japanese invasion. On 17 December 1936, in echoing Zhang and Yang's demand, the CCP released a telegram to suggest the principle of peaceful settlement in resolving the Incident. In this telegram, the CCP tried hard to make two points: the necessity of ceasing the civil war and assembling a joint conference included all parties in the entire nation to "discuss the policy of resistance against Japan and national salvation." CCP, "Xian shibian shi zhonggong zhuzhang heping jiejuetongdian [Telegram on the CCP's Stand for a Peaceful Settlement of the Incident of Xi'an]," in *Zhongguo xinminzhu zhuyi gemingshi cankao ziliao*, p. 273.

¹⁰⁵ CCP [Zhou Enlai], "Zhonggong zhongyang wei gongbu guogong hezuo xuanyan [The CCP's Declaration on the GMD-CCP Cooperation]," in *Zhongguo xinminzhu zhuyi gemingshi cankao ziliao*, pp. 354-356; An English translation please refer to Conrad Brandt, Benjamin Schwartz, and John K. Fairbank, ed., *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism*, pp. 245-247.

¹⁰⁶ For example, in "Politics, Measures and Perspectives for Resisting the Japanese Invasion," written on July 23 of 1937, one week after the CCP had sent the "Public Statement on GMD-CCP Cooperation" and two weeks after the Incident of Lukouchiao, Mao Zedong reiterates the CCP's position is to "stand for a resolute war of resistance and oppose compromise and concessions." In order to emphasize the necessity of "a resolute war of resistance," Mao begins the article by using the national salvation discourse: Fellow-countrymen! Peiping and Tientsin are in peril! Northern China is in peril! The Chinese nation is in peril! A war of resistance by the whole nation is the only way out..... Let the Kuomintang and the Communist Party closely co-operate and resist the new attacks of the Japanese aggressors! Drive the Japanese aggressors out of China! Mao Zedong, "Fandui riben jingong de fangzhen, banfa he qiantu [Policies, measures and perspectives for resisting the Japanese invasion]," in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. II, pp. 13-14.

propaganda outline drafted by Mao Zedong, “The Ten Great Policies of the CCP for Anti-Japanese Resistance and National Salvation.” The outline has shown the CCP’s determination, confidence, anxiety in carrying out the united front policy at the same time. In order for the Chinese nation to fully and resolutely carry out the united front, the CCP “proposes to the Kuomintang, to the people of the whole country, to all political parties and groups, to people in all walks of life and to all the armed forces a Ten-Point National Salvation Programme [Ten Great Policies] for the purpose of completely defeating the Japanese aggressors.”¹⁰⁷ In order to appeal to his audiences the desirability of the “Ten Great Policies,” Mao claimed that “China can be saved only if this programme [Ten Great Policies] is put into effect,” and argues that if the GMD was to continue to “procrastinate and allow the situation to deteriorate,” the responsibility of national destruction will fall on the GMD.¹⁰⁸ In Mao’s view, the second united front with the GMD was the only prescription for the sacred cause of national salvation at that time.

After a series of negotiations between the two parties, the GMD and the CCP finally came to a consensus on the Second United Front for resistance against Japan. On September 22, 1937, two years after the proposition of “August 1st Declaration,” “The CCP’s Declaration on the GMD-CCP Cooperation,” drafted by Zhou Enlai, was made public by the GMD’s Central News Agency (Zhongyang tongxunshu).¹⁰⁹ Next day, as a response to the CCP’s “Declaration,” Jiang Jieshi finally announced his “Statement on the CCP’s Declaration (Dui zhongguo gongchandang xuanyan de tanhua),” recognizing

¹⁰⁷ Mao, “For the Mobilization of all the Nation’s Forces for Victory in the War of Resistance,” p. 25.

¹⁰⁸ Mao, “For the Mobilization of all the Nation’s Forces for Victory in the War of Resistance,” p. 25; Mao Zedong, “Guogong hezuo chengli hou de pochieh renwu [Urgent tasks following Kuomintang-Communist co-operation],” in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. II, p. 40.

¹⁰⁹ CCP [Zhou Enlai], “Zhonggong zhongyang wei gongbu guogong hezuo xuanyan [The CCP’s Declaration on the GMD-CCP Cooperation],” in *Zhongguo xinminzhu zhuyi gemingshi cankao ziliao*, pp. 354-356; An English translation please refer to Conrad Brandt, Benjamin Schwartz, and John K. Fairbank, ed., *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism*, pp. 245-247.

the legitimacy of the CCP, and thus represented the eventual forging of the Second United Front.¹¹⁰ Both public statements, without exception, have packed the cooperation between two parties with the national salvation discourse, as the opening paragraph of the CCP's "Declaration" reads:

At the present juncture, with the country facing extreme danger and the fate of the nation in precarious balance, we have reached an understanding with the KMT [GMD] of China on the basis of peace, national unity, and joint resistance against foreign aggression, in order to *save our fatherland* from extinction. We are determined to overcome the national emergency by concerted effort. What a profound significance this will have on the future of the great Chinese nation!¹¹¹

In his "Statement on the CCP's Declaration," Jiang Jieshi argues:

The declaration announced by the CCP is considered to be the case in point showing that national consciousness transcends over everything.... At this *decisive moment of life or death* for the Chinese nation, we should not dispute over what has happened in the past, but to make a thorough new start for all citizens of the entire nation to untie as a whole to *preserve the life and survival of the country*....to concentrate the nation's resources/ strength on *rescuing the nation from destruction*....¹¹²

Over two years after the "August 1st Declaration" was publicized, the GMD and the CCP finally came to a shared understanding on the policy of resistance against Japan based on the cooperation between the two parties, and it was precisely for the cause of national salvation according to their political discourses. As Mao Zedong commented after the establishment of the GMD-CCP Cooperation, "The Communist Party's declaration and Chiang Kai-shek's [Jiang Jieshi's] statement announced the establishment of cooperation between the two parties and laid the necessary foundation for the great cause of alliance between the two parties *to save the nation*."¹¹³ Therefore, to appeal to the

¹¹⁰ Jiang Jieshi, "Dui zhongguo gongchangdang xuanyan de tanhu [Statement on the CCP's declaration]," in *Jiuyiba yilai guonei zhengzhi xingshi de yanbian* (Beijing: Zhongguo xiandai shi ziliao bainji weiyuanhui, 1957), pp. 166-167; Tetsuya Kataoka, *Resistance and Revolution in China: the Communists and the Second United Front* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).

¹¹¹ CCP, "Zhonggong zhongyang wei gongbu guogong hezuo xuanyan [The CCP's declaration on the GMD-CCP cooperation]," in *Zhongguo xinminzhu zhuyi gemingshi cankao ziliao*, p. 354; The English translation adopted here, see Conrad Brandt, Benjamin Schwartz, and John K. Fairbank, ed., *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism*, p. 245.

¹¹² Jiang Jieshi, "Dui zhongguo gongchangdang xuanyan de tanhu [Statement on the CCP's declaration]," in *Jiuyiba yilai guonei zhengzhi xingshi de yanbian* (Beijing: Zhongguo xiandai shi ziliao bainji weiyuanhui, 1957), pp. 166-167.

¹¹³ Mao Zedong, "Guogong hezuo chengli hou de pochieh renwu [Urgent tasks following Kuomintang-Communist cooperation]," in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. II, p. 37.

compatriots of the entire nation the indispensability of the cooperation, the CCP begins the “Declaration” with the national salvation discourse, which can be found in almost all of the Party’s public statements and official documents from the outbreak of the Mukden Incident in the fall of 1931 through the Wayaobao Conference in the end of 1935 to the aftermath of the Xi’an Incident.

As we have seen above, the CCP consistently used the national salvation discourse to legitimize the party’s political lines on the first and second united front with the GMD. From the Sixth National Congress in 1928 to the abandonment of the anti-GMD-Jiang policy in the May of 1936, we have seen how the CCP’s rhetorical change—from “the GMD-warlord/ the Thief Jiang” to “the indispensable forces for the revolutionary national united front/ The Generalissimo Jiang”—was accompanied with the shift of the party line toward the GMD—from the anti-GMD regime and anti-Jiang policies to the Second GMD-CCP Cooperation—for the supreme cause of national salvation. The political use of the national salvation discourse was not to end here. Instead, as the history of twentieth-century China tells us, both the GMD-Jiang Jieshi and the CCP-Mao Zedong had displayed their desires to utilize the power of the discourse, to gain the power by using the discourse, and use their power to monopolize the interpretation of that discourse, especially during the period of the War of Resistance against Japan. The dynamics between the power of discourse and the power of using discourse was the integral part of the power struggle between the GMD-Jiang Jieshi and the CCP-Mao Zedong in the history of twentieth-century China.

In retrospect, as the central theme of the Chinese nation from the mid-nineteenth century onward, not only has the psychological anxiety about national salvation become

deeply rooted in the mental structure of the Chinese people, but also it has been translated by the socio-cultural reformists and political elites into discursive texts, which have in turn become the carrier to transmit that long-term anxiety. More than that, this discursive manifestation of the anxiety over national salvation would be incorporated into Mao Zedong's hegemonic discourse on the Chinese revolution. As this dissertation will show in later chapters, not only has this anxiety over national salvation been stored in the form of discursive texts, but also it has become materialized in the form of monumental objects at Tiananmen Square. Nevertheless, before entering the process of materialization, the national salvation discourse would have to experience a process of routinization in which the political leaders of the CCP and GMD were to use and to monopolize the discourse repeatedly in ideological education, public declarations, propagandistic exercises and anniversary commemorations in an attempt to vindicate their political causes during the defining/crisis moments of the Chinese nation.

Chapter Two

Making and Canonization of Mao Zedong's Revolutionary Discourse

War of Words: National Salvation and the Two Destinies of China

On April 23, 1945, when the Chinese nation remained in the midst of the War of Resistance against Japan, Mao Zedong had already begun projecting the prospective vision of creating a new China under the leadership of the CCP by weaving the national salvation discourse into the opening speech he delivered at the Seventh National Congress of the CCP. The opening speech, entitled “China’s Two Destinies,” obviously was a reaction to Jiang Jieshi’s *China’s Destiny* (*Zhongguo zhi mingyun*).¹ In emphasizing the significance of the Congress, Mao suggests:

What is the significance of our congress? It is a congress, it should be said, that affects the destiny of China’s 450 million people. China can have one of two destinies. Someone [i.e. Jiangjie Shi] has written a book about one of them [*China's Destiny*]; our congress represents China’s other destiny and we, too, shall write a book about it [“On Coalition Government”].²

In this opening remark, Mao meant to provide an alternative “destiny” for the Chinese nation, a prospect other than Jiang Jieshi’s *China’s Destiny*. “Two possible destinies await China,” as Mao points out, “a destiny of light and a destiny of darkness.” In his clarification on the two possible destinies, Mao is implying that the Chinese nation’s light destiny lies in the creation of a new China under the leadership of the CCP, and Jiang Jieshi could only provide a destiny of darkness. The two options of China’s destiny in words also represent the power struggle between the GMD-Jiang Jieshi and the CCP-Mao Zedong in reality. Mao’s overwhelming confidence had not come from nowhere but from the successful historical experience of the CCP in pursuing the supreme mission of

¹ Chiang Kai-shek, *China’s Destiny* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1947).

² Mao Zedong, “Liangge zhongguo zhi mingyun [China’s two possible destinies],” in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. III (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), p. 201.

national salvation.³ In Mao's prospect of a new China, or in the pursuit of national salvation, it is the CCP that will play the most prominent role.

In retrospect, Mao's overwhelming confidence and his prospect of China's bright future not only came from the successful experience of the CCP, but also derived from the growth of the communist force during the eight years of the Resistance War against Japan. The membership of the CCP had increased to one million and two hundred thousand by 1945. In the summer of 1945, the Red Army had grown enormously into a one million-strong regular army, not to mention the several million peasant militias who supported the cause of the CCP.⁴ The enormous expansion in the organization and armed force was the basis for the CCP to achieve the final military and political victory in the civil war with the GMD following the War of Resistance against Japan. Undoubtedly, the leadership of Mao Zedong constitutes one of the reasons which led to the triumph of the Chinese Communist Revolution.⁵ It is based on this understanding that this chapter turns to Mao Zedong's journey in the quest for the prescription of national salvation.

In twentieth-century China, like their counterparts in the late nineteenth century, all Chinese political leaders, such as Sun Yat-sen, Jiang Jieshi, and Mao Zedong, shared a deeply rooted anxiety of overcoming national humiliation by achieving national salvation.

At the same time, they were also good at manipulating the national salvation discourse to

³ As Mao argues, "In the twenty-four years of its existence since its birth in 1921 the Communist Party of China has gone through three historical periods of heroic struggle—the Northern Expedition, the Agrarian Revolutionary War and the War of Resistance Against Japan—and has accumulated a wealth of experience. Now our Party has become the centre of gravity of the Chinese people's struggle to resist Japan and save the nation, the centre of gravity of their struggle for liberation and of their struggle to defeat the aggressors and build a new China." Mao, "China's Two Possible Destinies," p. 203.

⁴ For the reasons of the dramatic growth of the CCP during the period of the War of Resistance against Japan, see Chalmers Johnson, *Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962); Mark Selden, *The Yanan Way in Revolutionary China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971).

⁵ Benjamin I Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1952); Jerome Chen, *Mao and the Chinese Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965); Yves Chevrier, *Mao and the Chinese Revolution* (Northampton, Mass.: Interlink Book, 2004).

term their political programs of saving China. From the mid-nineteenth through twentieth centuries, the long-term anxiety had become so profoundly entrenched in the Chinese consciousness that the use of the national salvation discourse remained favorable and valid in the political culture of twentieth-first-century China as demonstrated by Hu Jintao's talk on the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the PRC. Without any exceptions, those political leaders who intended to obtain hegemonic power so as to rule China had to set forth a program of national salvation.⁶

Yet however great efforts the political elites like Sun Yat-sen and Jiang Jieshi had made to rescue the nation from decline, only the communist revolutionary trajectory of national salvation led by Mao Zedong was successful in driving the Chinese nation forward to the long-term aim of “wealth and power” in twentieth-century China.⁷ Mao's entire life witnessed the vicissitude of the Chinese national salvation movement in the first half of the twentieth century.

The Emergence of a Communist

Mao Zedong was the son of twentieth-century China. Before Mao converted to an advocate of the communist revolution, he was to experience several intellectual reorientations in the quest for the prescription of national salvation.⁸ In his youth, Mao had become influenced by Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao's idea of political reform before he turned to the trajectory of Chen Duxiu's “intellectual revolution.” Although Mao was only four when the abortive Hundred Days' Reform took place, he later was introduced to the movement in the years of studying at the Dongshan Higher Primary

⁶ Zhao, “Chinese Nationalism and Its International Orientations,” p. 4.

⁷ Maurice Meisner, *Mao Zedong* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), p. 1.

⁸ For Mao Zedong's intellectual development, see Stuart Schram, *Thought of Mao Tse-Tung* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 13-94; Li Jui, *Mao Zedong de caoqi geming huodong* [Early revolutionary activities of comrade Mao Tse-tung] (Changsha: Hunan renmin, 1980), esp. chapters 1-4; Li Jui, *Early Revolutionary Activities of Comrade Mao Tse-tung* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1977), esp. chapters 1-4.

School and paid his worship to Kang and Liang.⁹ Before he went to the Hunan Provincial Fourth Normal School, in 1912, Mao turned to Western thought during the “period of self-education” when he spent a lot of time in the Hunan Provincial Library reading the works of politics, economy and sociology by Western scholars such as Adam Smith, Darwin, Mill, Spencer, Rousseau, and Montesquieu.¹⁰ The young Mao, like the Chinese progressive intellectuals following the Opium War, was committed to finding the principles from the West “that would save the country and people.”¹¹ Mao’s intellectual evolution entered the era of radicalization when he studied in the Hunan Provincial Fourth Normal School from 1913 to 1918. In this period, he was led by his teacher Yang Changji, who had been learning Western philosophy in Japan, England, and Germany, to study more Western works on philosophy and social theory by Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Hobbes, Spinoza, Nietzsche, and Spencer.¹² More importantly, being influenced by Chen Duxiu’s “intellectual revolution,” Mao began to shape political ideas and to acquire the “first experiences in social action.”¹³ Mao came to believe that the cultural and mental reconstruction of the Chinese nation was the priority, which was reflected in his first published article in *New Youth* on 1 April 1917.¹⁴ In this article, “A Study of Physical

⁹ Edgar Snow, *Red Star over China* (New York: Random House, 1938), p. 120.

¹⁰ Meisner, *Mao Zedong*, p. 7; Jiang Jingyuan, “Mao Zedong taosuo jiuguo daolu chuangli geming xuesuo de lishi kaocha [A historical investigation on Mao Zedong’s exploration on the way of national salvation and founding of revolutionary theory],” *Lishijiaoxue Wenti* 6 (1993): 1-2. Mao, “On People’s Dictatorship,” pp. 412-413.

¹¹ In another article, Mao calls this quest for truth as “the truth that would save the country and the people.” Mao Zedong, “Reform Our Study,” in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. III (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), p. 17.

¹² Meisner, *Mao Zedong*, pp. 11-14.

¹³ Snow, *Red Star over China*, p. 128. Like the young students at the time, *New Youth* had become the thought pool for the young Mao to find access to absorb the cultural revolutionary ideas and to become determined to march toward the trajectory of intellectual revolution propagated by Chen Duxiu: “Most of these societies were organized more or less under the influence of *New Youth*, the famous magazine of the Literary Renaissance, edited by Chen Duxiu. I began to read this magazine while I was a student in the normal college and admired the articles of Hu Shi and Chen Du Xiu very much. They became for a while my models, replacing Liang Qichao and Kang Youwei, whom I had already discarded.” Snow, *Red Star over China*, p. 132.

¹⁴ Ershiba hua sheng [Mao Zedong], “Tiyu zhi yanjiu [A study of physical education],” *Xin qingnian* 3:2 (April 1, 1917); An English translation of the entire text can be seen in Mao Zedong, “A Study of Physical Education,” in Stuart

Education,” Mao attributed the weakness of China to the deteriorating physical condition of the Chinese people as a consequence of the discouragement of military “spirit.”¹⁵ In Mao’s view, the priority of increasing the Chinese national strength is to “influence people’s subjective attitudes and stimulate them to become conscious of physical education.”¹⁶

To increase China’s national strength through the widespread promotion of physical education in the entire country was a recurring theme in China’s pursuit of national salvation from the late nineteenth through twentieth to twentieth-first centuries.¹⁷ This dream was to be realized in the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games almost one hundred years after Mao’s writing of “A Study of Physical Education.” It is not an exaggeration to say that “A Study of Physical Education” has epitomized Mao’s early attempt to pursue the prescription of saving China through the trajectory of intellectual revolution.¹⁸

Mao’s determination to change the mentality of the Chinese people also manifested in the founding of the New People’s Study Society (Xinmin xuehui). In April 1918, along with Cai Hesen (1895-1931), a prominent communist in the early years of the CCP’s history, Mao founded the New People’s Study Society, one of the numerous radical student groups under the influence of *New Youth*.¹⁹ According to Mao, the major aims of the Society were to propagate “new thought, new moral, and new culture.”²⁰ Moreover,

R. Schram, ed., *Mao’s Road to Power: Revolutionary Writing 1912-1949*, vol. 1 (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1992), pp. 113-127.

¹⁵ Mao, “Tiyu zhi yanjiu”; The English translation adopted here is from Mao Zedong, “A Study of Physical Education,” in Schram, ed., *Mao’s Road to Power*, p. 113.

¹⁶ Mao, “A Study of Physical Education,” p. 121.

¹⁷ Susan Brownell, *Beijing’s Games: What the Olympics Mean to China* (New York: Rowan & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2008), esp. pp. 19-48.

¹⁸ As Mao has confessed in a letter to Li Jinxi (1890-1978) later on August 23 of the same year, he was determined to devote himself to “change fundamentally the mentality of the whole country.” Mao Zedong, “Letter to Li Jinxi (August 23, 1937),” collected in Schram, ed., *Mao’s Road to Power*, vol. 1, p. 132.

¹⁹ Snow, *Red Star over China*, p. 131.

²⁰ Jiang Jingyuan, “Mao Zedong taosuo jiuguo daolu chuanglei geming xuesuo de lishi kaocha,” 2.

being inspired by the anarchist idea of “work-study” programs, the Society also devoted itself to sending the Chinese students to France to study the Western thought.

After graduating from the Normal School in the summer of 1918, Mao entered another crucial moment in his journey of searching for the path of national salvation when he worked as an assistant librarian at the Beijing University Library. Working at the center of the New Culture Movement, not only did Mao find connection to Chen Duxiu and Li Dazhao, but also he became more intensively exposed to the revolutionary ideas of the Russian October Revolution and Marxism.²¹ As Mao recalled later, “Under Li Dazhao, as assistant librarian at Peking [Beijing] National University, I had rapidly developed toward Marxism, and Chen Duxiu had been instrumental in my interests in that direction too.”²²

In this period, Mao’s persistence in the quest for the path of national salvation was demonstrated in the writing of “The Great Union of the Popular Masses.” Published in three consecutive issues of the *Xiang River Review*²³ on 21 July 21, 28 July and 4 August of 1919, the “Great Union” proposes a method to rescue China from its degeneration after the May Fourth Movement.²⁴ Given the chaos of Republican politics, Mao seemed to realize that it was not enough to save his country through an intellectual revolution. The occurrence of the May Fourth Movement revealed to Mao that the decline of China had “reached an extreme” and only a more radical approach like “the great union of the

²¹ Ding Shouhe and Ying Xuyi, *Cong wusi yundong dao makesi zhuyi de chuanbo* [From the may fourth movement to the diffusion of Marxism] (Beijing: Sanliang shuju, 1963), p. 175; Meisner, *Mao Zedong*, p. 16.

²² Snow, *Red Star over China*, p. 140. We do know that he had attended several of the informal discussions of the Society for the Study of Marxist Theory coordinated by Li Dazhao. Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao*, p. 16.

²³ Before the May Fourth Movement, Mao had already returned from Beijing to Changsha and, in July 1919, he created the *Xiang River Review*, a weekly periodical which enjoyed a brief but nationwide attention.

²⁴ Mao Zedong, “Minzhong de dalianhe [The great union of the popular masses],” collected in Minoru Takeuchi ed., *Collected Writings of Mao Tse-tung*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Hokubosha, 1972), p. 57; the English translation adopted here is from “The Great Union of the Popular Masses,” in Schram, ed., *Mao’s Road to Power*, vol. 1, p. 378.

popular masses” could serve as “a basic method” to reform his motherland. Mao believed that the “Chinese people possess great inherent capacities” to forge a great union of popular masses for liberating China from the Japanese oppression.²⁵ He suggests that the Chinese people should form a great unity based on the small unions, such as associations of peasants, workers, students, women, teachers, policemen, and rickshaw boys, to achieve this liberation.²⁶ With a nationalistic tone, Mao emphasizes the indispensability of this trajectory of national salvation by calling loudly:

We are awakened! The world is ours, the state is ours, [and] society is ours. If we do not speak, who will speak? If we do not act, who will act? We must act energetically to carry out the great union of the popular masses, which will not brook a moment’s delay!²⁷

These lines were to become well-known recurrent phrases used by the state power of the PRC and grassroots activists in the twentieth century, especially when China was at a moment of national crisis. For example, seventy years later, the student protesters of the June Fourth Movement frequently uttered these phrases in their protest against with the PRC government.

Toward the Communist Trajectory of Revolution

While Mao’s desperate quest for the path of national salvation continued, he became converted to the doctrine of Marxism in 1920. From the end of 1919 to the summer of 1920 in Beijing and Shanghai, Mao began really studying works on the Russian October Revolution and Marxism and had the opportunities to consult with Chen Duxiu and Li Dazhao. We are told that, during his second visit to Beijing, Mao had “read much about the events in Russia” and had tried hard to seek out “what little Communist literature was

²⁵Mao, “Minzhong de dalianhe,” pp. 59-60; Mao, “The Great Union of the Popular Masses,” p. 380.

²⁶Mao, “Minzhong de dalianhe,” p. 66; Mao, “The Great Union of the Popular Masses,” pp. 386-388.

²⁷Mao, “Minzhong de dalianhe,” p. 66; Mao, “The Great Union of the Popular Masses,” p. 386.

then available in Chinese.”²⁸ Among many, the *Communist Manifesto*, Karl Kautsky’s *Class Struggle* and Kirkup’s *History of Socialism* were three most influential books “especially deeply carved in” Mao’s mind and helped him to build up “a faith in Marxism.”²⁹ “By the summer of 1920,” as he recalled, “I had become, in theory and to some extent in action, a Marxist, and from this time on I considered myself a Marxist.”³⁰

Mao’s initial conversion to Marxism was accompanied by his rapid shift to the trajectory of radical communist revolution. The letters Mao received from Cai Hesen, who had read the writings of Marx and Engels and convinced of the desirability of the Leninist Bolshevik revolution, led Mao to further become familiar with the Bolshevism.³¹ In the end of 1920, after he returned to Changsha from Beijing and Shanghai, Mao revealed his favor of communist revolution in the letter to Xiao Zisheng and Cai Hesen. In the letter, he claims that, in order to reconstruct China, the Russian ways of Bolshevik revolution and proletarian dictatorship are “simply the natural course of events.”³² The same ideas were further manifested in the annual meeting of the New People’s Society held from January 1 through 3 of 1921. At the meetings, Mao reiterated that the approach of communist revolution under the dictatorship of the workers and peasants (laonong zhuanzheng) was the only way to reconstruct China.³³ Mao’s conversion to communist was translated into practice when he convened the inaugural meeting of the Socialist

²⁸ Snow, *Red Star over China*, p. 139.

²⁹ Snow, *Red Star over China*, p. 139.

³⁰ Chen Duxiu also had a considerable influence on Mao’s conversion to Marxism. In the summer of 1920, Mao visited and consulted with Chen in Shanghai on the Marxist works he had read. As Mao later recalled, “Chen’s own assertions of belief had deeply impressed me at what was probably a critical period in my life.” Snow, *Red Star over China*, p. 139.

³¹ Meisner, *Mao Zedong*, p. 29.

³² Mao Zedong, “Mao Zedong gei Xiao Xudong Cai Linbin bing zaifa zhu huiyou [Letter to Xiao Zisheng, Cai Hesen and the Members of the Society in France],” collected in Museum of the Chinese Revolution and the Museum of Hunan, eds., *Xinmin Xuegui Ziliao* (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1980), pp. 144-152; Mao Zedong, “Letter to Xiao Xudong, Cai Linbin, and the Other Members in France,” in Schram, ed., *Mao’s Road to Power*, vol. II, pp. 5-14.

³³ Mao Zedong, “Xinmin Xuehui huiwu baogao:dier ao [Report on the affairs of the new people’s society: number two],” collected in *Xinmin Xuegui Ziliao*, pp. 17-18.

Youth League (later renamed the Communist Youth League) and created a communist cell in Changsha on January 13, 1921.³⁴

Finally, in the letter to Cai Hesen on January 21, 1921, Mao reiterates his favor of the radical revolutionary approach of communism. This letter was a response to the letter Cai sent to Mao on September 16, 1920, in which Cai argues that the only solution for saving China is proletarian dictatorship like that of Soviet Russia. Mao's letter confirms that "the materialist conception of history is the philosophical basis of our Party."³⁵ Mao even went so far as to suggest that "without achieving political power (feide zhengquan), it is impossible to launch, maintain, and carry through the revolution."³⁶ This letter represents Mao's complete commitment to the trajectory of Bolshevik revolution. In early 1921, Mao became a real communist. It was precisely from this time onward that Mao was to put forward one program after another program of national salvation from the perspective of communist revolution.

Toward the Maoist Revolutionary Discourse of National Salvation

The making of Mao Zedong's revolutionary discourse of national salvation experienced a long-term ongoing evolution in which Mao Zedong put forward theoretical speculations and political-military strategies for the Chinese communist movement from the 1920s to the 1940s. This journey in the quest for the path of national salvation was manifested in Mao's later-canonized master writings on the Chinese revolution. The making of Mao's master discourse on the Chinese revolution began with his early works in the period of First United Front with the GMD, was formulated in rudimentary form in his writings on

³⁴ Meisner, *Mao Zedong*, p. 29.

³⁵ Mao Zedong, "Mao Zedong gei Cai Hesen [Letter to Cai Hesen]," collected in *Xinmin Xuegui Ziliao*, pp. 162-163; Mao Zedong, "Letter to Cai Hesen," in Stuart R. Schram, ed., *Mao's Road to Power*, vol. II, p. 35.

³⁶ Mao, "Letter to Cai Hesen," p. 35.

political-military strategy during the civil war with Jiang Jieshi's troops, and culminated in his theoretical literature on the Chinese communist revolution during the War of Resistance against Japan. This ongoing process simultaneously accompanied the rise of Mao to power in the CCP. Along with Mao's climbing upward to the top of the power ladder in the party, his revolutionary national salvation discourse become canonized as the ideological guidelines of the Chinese communist revolution before and after the founding of the PRC. The canonized "Mao Zedong Thought" was to rule China for at least thirty years without any critical challenges. The power of his master discourse had largely paved the way for Mao's rise to a dominant leader in China, and Mao's unequalled power in the CCP in turn extended the impact of the Maoist hegemonic discourse.

It is the purpose of the following pages to explore the ongoing process of the making of Mao's master discourse on the Chinese revolution in general and the May Fourth Movement in particular. Because providing overwhelmingly empirical evidence is beyond the scope of the chapter, it will focus on several discursive texts that have manifested Mao's decisive progress in putting forward the essential theoretical framework and conceptual tools related to the making of the Maoist revolutionary discourse.

The Chinese Revolution and the Centrality of the Peasants

One of characteristics of Mao Zedong's revolutionary discourse is his pro-peasant position. Being influenced by the Marxist notion of class struggle, in the winter of 1925, Mao became concerned with the social structure of the Chinese society and the relationship between various social classes. In particular, in his "Analysis of the Classes

in Chinese Society” (hereafter Analysis), published in the December of 1925, Mao provides a preliminary investigation of the class structure of China.³⁷ The article embodies the embryonic form of the essentials of his revolutionary discourse, such as the centrality of peasants in the Chinese revolution.

In addition to analyzing the Chinese social structure at that time, in “Analysis,” Mao especially consider questions about the major targets and motive forces of the Chinese revolution from a theoretical perspective of class struggle. In Mao’s analysis, the social component of Chinese society at the time was consisted of five different classes: The landlord and comprador class, the middle (national) bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie, the semi-proletariat (semi-owner peasants, poor peasants, small handicraftsmen, and shop assistants and peddlers), and the proletariat.³⁸ In Mao’s view, while warlords, bureaucrats, landlords, compradors, and the reactionary section of the intelligentsia are the main targets of the Chinese revolution, the proletarian working class is the leading force.³⁹ Mao’s proposition here is well in line with the CCP’s party line in overthrowing imperialism and its running dogs in China before and during the period of the First United Front. What significantly makes Mao’s “Analysis” distinctive is his conclusion that “the entire semi-proletariat and petty bourgeoisie,” in which the peasants constitutes tremendous majority, can be viewed as the motive forces of the Chinese revolution. This is to imply that, in addition to the leading force of the industrial proletariat, the CCP has to pay attention to the peasant question (nongmin wenti) in the countryside and to

³⁷ Mao Zedong, “Zhongguo shehui gejieji de fenxi [Analysis of the classes in Chinese society],” in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. I (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), pp. 13-17; This text, previously dated March 1926 in the official canon of Mao’s Selected Works, is now known to have first appeared in the December 1, 1925, issue of *Geming*, the semi-monthly organ of the Guomindang’s National Revolutionary Army, see “Analysis of All the Classes in Chinese Society,” in Stuart R. Schram, ed., *Mao’s Road to Power*, vol. II, note, p. 249.

³⁸ Mao, “Analysis of the Classes in Chinese Society,” pp. 13-18.

³⁹ Mao, “Analysis of the Classes in Chinese Society,” p. 18.

consider the peasants as an indispensable ally in the revolutionary movement.

The tendency to regard the peasants as a prominent motive force of the communist movement was to become an essential feature of Mao's revolutionary discourse. We are told by the CCP that Mao's "Analysis" was written to do battle with two sides represented by Chen Duxiu's right opportunism and by Zhang Guotao's left opportunism. Chen had underestimated the importance of the peasants in the revolution and his concern was simply cooperation with the GMD. Zhang Guotao had tended to emphasize the labor movement and overestimate the role of the urban workers at expense of the motive force of the peasants in the countryside. To rationalize his pro-peasant proposition, it was indispensable for Mao to demonstrate the real motive forces of the communist revolution.⁴⁰

Mao's sophisticated consideration of the peasant question was evident in "An Analysis of the Various Classes among the Chinese Peasantry and their Attitudes toward the Revolution," published in the January of 1926. In the article, Mao puts forward a more comprehensive examination of the social component in the countryside. According to his field research, there are five categories of "revolutionary peasants" who can be considered as the motive forces of the communist revolution in the countryside: owner-peasants, semi-owner peasants, sharecropper, poor peasants, and farm laborers and rural artisans. Moreover, in his analysis, Mao goes further to conclude certain principles that could be functioned as the underpinning for the work of organizing the "revolutionary peasants."⁴¹ This exemplifies that Mao not only became aware of the importance of the

⁴⁰ Mao, "Analysis of the Classes in Chinese Society," editor's note, pp. 13-14.

⁴¹ Mao Zedong, "Zhongguo nongmin zhong ge jieji de fenxi jiqi duiyu geming de taidu [An analysis of the various classes among the Chinese peasantry and their attitudes toward the revolution]," in Schram, ed., *Mao's Road to Power*, vol. II, pp. 303-308.

peasant question, but also began contemplating how to mobilize the peasant masses in the countryside.

Mao's pro-peasant position was fully displayed in "The National Revolution and the Peasant Movement," published on September 1, 1926.⁴² In the article, Mao reiterates the importance of the Chinese peasantry and the peasant movement in the communist revolution in China.⁴³ What makes Mao's theoretical thinking on the Chinese revolution distinctive in the article is precisely his emphasis on the peasant question, which was only supported by a few communist theorists such as Qu Qiubai (1899-1935). Mao's pro-peasant position in turn led Mao to contemplate the issue about targets of the revolution outside the urban cities. In his analysis, the social origin of the peasant question was the endless and merciless oppression and exploitation caused by the "feudal-patriarchal class of the landlord in the countryside."⁴⁴ In other words, the feudal landlord in the countryside had become "the only solid basis for the ruling class at home and for imperialism abroad," and it will be absolutely impossible to liberate the peasants from the suffering and to complete the "national revolution" without wiping out the social basis.⁴⁵ Behind this emphasis on the social foundation of the peasant question lies Mao's tactical view that the geographical center of the revolution should be in the backward countryside rather than in the progressive urban cities. In other words, along with the shift of the major targets of the revolution to the landlord class, the center of the Chinese revolution should also be transferred to the countryside. The dual stress on the centrality of the Chinese

⁴² Mao, "The National Revolution and the Peasant Movement," in Schram, ed., *Mao's Road to Power*, vol. II, pp. 387-392.

⁴³ As the article's opening paragraph reads: "The peasant problem is the central problem of the national revolution (*guomin geming*). If the peasants do not rise up and join and support the national revolution, the national revolution cannot succeed." Mao, "The National Revolution and the Peasant Movement," p. 387.

⁴⁴ Mao, "The National Revolution and the Peasant Movement," p. 387.

⁴⁵ Mao, "The National Revolution and the Peasant Movement," p. 388.

peasantry as the major motive force of the revolution and the countryside as the geographical gravity of the Chinese revolution are the integral parts of Mao's revolutionary discourse, which was to be manifested in the monumental objects installed at Tiananmen Square.

Political Power Grows out of the Barrel of a Gun

In the spring of 1927, in Mao's "Report on an Investigation of Peasant Movement in Hunan (hereafter Peasant Movement in Hunan)," the pro-peasant position was translated from theoretical consideration into empirical facts based on his thirty-two-day case study of the peasant movement in Hunan.⁴⁶ In this report, in addition to addressing the fourteen great achievements of the revolutionary peasants in the countryside, Mao especially emphasizes the urgency of solving the peasant question as he Mao argues that "the cornerstone of imperialism, warlordism and corrupt officialdom," the landlord class in the countryside, is "the real objective" of the revolution.⁴⁷ And, while "the great peasant masses have risen" to "overthrow the forces of rural feudalism," it was about time for every revolutionary comrade to "know that the national revolution requires a great change in the countryside." Given this necessity of dealing with the peasant question, Mao even claims that those who do not push forward the peasant movement in the countryside "will be taking the stand of counter-revolution."⁴⁸

More importantly, in "Report," Mao first time proposes his definition of revolution. In making clear the revolutionary feature of the armed struggle in the countryside, Mao suggests:

⁴⁶ Mao Zedong, "Hunan nongmin yundong kaocha baogao [Report on an investigation of the peasant movement in Hunan]," in *Mao Zedong xuanji*, vol. I (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1969), pp. 12-24; Mao Zedong, "Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan," in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. I (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), pp. 23-59.

⁴⁷ Mao, "Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan," p. 27.

⁴⁸ Mao, "Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan," p. 27.

[A] revolution is not a dinner party, or writing an essay, or painting a picture, or doing embroidery; it cannot be so refined, so leisurely and gentle, so temperate, kind, courteous, restrained and magnanimous. A revolution is an insurrection, an act of violence by which one class overthrows another. A rural revolution is a revolution by which the peasantry overthrows the power of the feudal landlord class.⁴⁹

This well-known definition of revolution has foreshadowed another essential element of the Maoist revolutionary discourse, namely, the armed struggle. In Mao's view, it is precisely such kind of violent rural revolution can lead to the success of revolution by devastating the feudal class of landlord in the countryside. This emphasis on armed revolution was sanctioned as the CCP's political line at the August Seventh Conference of the Central Committee of the CCP in Hankou in August 1927. At the conference, in commenting on the failure of the Fifth Counter-Encirclement Campaign, Mao had called for the CCP's attention to the military problem by arguing "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun."⁵⁰ Given this sense of revolution, in "Report," Mao goes further to view the peasants as the "vanguards of the revolution."⁵¹

The idea of putting armed revolution into practice in the countryside was to become even more favorable following the breakdown of the First United Front with the GMD. In order to survive in the civil war with the GMD, Mao's notion of armed revolution and pro-peasant position were translated into a political-military strategy in "Why Is It that Red Political Power Can Exist in China (hereafter Red Political Power)."⁵² In the article, Mao intends to provide a strategic explanation to elucidate how the communist strength

⁴⁹ Mao, "Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan," p. 29.

⁵⁰ Mao, "Mao Zedong guanyu gongchan guoji daibiao baogao de fayan," in the Committee for Collection of Materials on CCP History and the Central Party Archives, ed., *Bayi huiyi* [The August Seventh Conference] (Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi ziliao chubanshe, 1986), p. 58; Ten years later after the August Seventh Conference, Mao has used this phrase in his writing on war and strategy, see Mao Zedong, "Zhanzheng he zhanlue wenti [Problems of war and strategy]," in *Mao Zedong xuanji*, vol. II (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1969), p. 512; Mao Zedong, "Problems of War and Strategy," in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. II (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), p. 224.

⁵¹ Mao, "Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan," pp. 30-32.

⁵² This article was part of the resolution, originally entitled "The Political Problems and the Tasks of the Border Area Party Organization," which was drafted by Mao Zedong for the Second Party Congress of the Hunan-Kiangsi Border Area. Mao Zedong, "Zhongguo hongshe zhengquan weishimo nenggou cunzai [Why is it that red political power can exist in China?]" in *Mao Zedong xuanji*, vol. I, pp. 47-55; Mao Zedong, "Why Is It that Red Political Power can Exist in China?" in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. I, pp. 63-72.

would remain survival after the breakdown of the First United Front. He argues that the only way to save the CCP from the civil war with the GMD is “establishing independent regimes of the workers and the peasants by armed force (gongnong wuzhuang geju)” in the rural “small areas.” And, because it is not possible to create an independent regime without standard forces of ample strength, the existence of a regular Red Army is an indispensable condition for the existence of the communist political power.⁵³ In addition, in Mao’s analysis, the development of the organization of the Communist Party and its correct party line are also important factors of the survival of the Red political power.⁵⁴ In Mao’s final analysis, “armed struggle,” and the Party building are the most important elements, or three magic weapons (fabao), in pushing forward the revolution.

Two-Stage Temporal Framework and Encircling Cities by the Countryside

The strategic scheme of founding armed independent regime of the workers and the peasants in small areas can be best exemplified in Mao’s experience of military struggle in the Jinggang Mountains. On November 25, 1928, Mao Zedong submitted “The Struggle in the Chingkang [Jinggang] Mountains” (hereafter Chinggang Mountains) in the form of report to the Central Committee of the CCP.⁵⁵ In the report, the theoretical considerations manifested in “Peasant Movement in Hunan” were fully elucidated based his down-to-earth experience in the small rural areas under the armed independent regimes. In addition to the military tactics related to the building of the armed independent regimes, the report touches upon such political issues as the Party building in the Red Army and the nature of the Chinese revolution at that time.

⁵³ Mao, “Why Is It that Red Political Power can Exist in China?” p. 66.

⁵⁴ Mao, “Why Is It that Red Political Power can Exist in China?” pp. 66-67.

⁵⁵ Mao Zedong, “Jinggangshan de douzheng [The struggle in the Chinggang mountains],” in *Mao Zedong xuanji*, vol. I, pp. 56-80; Mao Zedong, “The Struggle in the Chinggang Mountains,” in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. I, pp. 73-104.

The most vital significance of “Chingkang Mountains” is Mao’s further clarification on the idea of the small area. The idea of the small area was translated into a strategic terminology like “central district (*zhongxin quyū*)” or “base areas (*genjudi*).” In order to guarantee the survival and growth of armed independent regimes, as Mao suggests, the communist political forces everywhere must take care and concentrate all the strength “to lay a solid foundation in the central districts.”⁵⁶ According to the report, the main reason why many communist armed forces suffered a series of military defeats was due to their premature advances in the attempt of unrestricted expansion without laying a solid foundation in the central districts or the base areas. On the contrary, the successful experience of the Jinggang Mountains was the best footnote to the strategy of laying a solid foundation in the central districts.

In addition to the political-military strategy for the survival of the independent regimes in the rural base areas, the question concerning the nature of the Chinese revolution is also an essential part of “Chingkang Mountains.” Given the directive of the Comintern’s resolution on China, in Mao’s vision, the Chinese nation at the time is at the stage of the “bourgeois-democratic revolution (*zichan jieji minquan geming*)” rather than that of socialist or communist revolution.⁵⁷ In this stage, according to “Chingkang Mountains,” the central tasks of the communist movement are to overthrow the imperialism and the new warlord government of the GMD by eradicating the comprador class in the cities and the landlord class in the countryside, and the most crucial part in this process is to deepen the agrarian revolution in the base areas under the armed independent regimes of the workers and peasants. In other words, the Chinese nation

⁵⁶ Mao, “The Struggle in the Chingkang Mountains,” pp. 73-74.

⁵⁷ Mao, “The Struggle in the Chingkang Mountains,” p. 97.

must go through a democratic revolution before it can “lay a real foundation for the transition to socialism.”⁵⁸ This two-stage temporal framework of the Chinese revolution, along with the notion of armed revolution in the rural base areas, was to be incorporated into Mao’s theoretical writings on the Chinese revolution in late 1930s and early 1940.

Supported by his successful experience in the Jinggang Mountains, Mao came to deeply believe in the strategic centrality of the countryside in the success of the Chinese revolution that he proposed the idea of “encircling cities by the countryside (*nongcun baowei chengshi*)” in “A Single Spark can start a Prairie Fire.” In this article, Mao claims that the communist armed revolution can step by step seize political power and found the proletarian regime, just like “a single spark can start a prairie fire.”⁵⁹ In an attempt to demonstrate the centrality of rural base areas in the progress of the communist revolution, Mao argues that:

...at the same time the major prerequisites for helping the struggle in the cities and hastening the rise of the revolutionary tide are specifically the development of the struggle in the countryside, the establishment of Red political power in small [base] areas, and the creation and expansion of the Red Army..... in our opinion it would also be wrong for any of our Party members to fear the growth of peasant strength lest it should outstrip the workers’ strength and harm the revolution.⁶⁰

Here, Mao goes further to theoretically bridge the close relationship among the struggle in the urban cities, struggle in the rural base areas, and the progress of the revolution. In Mao’s vision, the “development of the struggle in the countryside” is one of the “major prerequisites for helping the struggle in the cities and hastening the rise of the revolutionary tide.” In other words, the armed struggle under the independent regimes in the rural base areas is the precondition of the success of the revolution. This suggestion

⁵⁸ Mao, “The Struggle in the Chingkang Mountains,” p. 97.

⁵⁹ Mao Zedong, “Xingxing zhi huo keyi liaoyuan [A single spark can start a prairie fire],” in *Mao Zedong xuanji*, vol. I, pp. 94-104; Mao Zedong, “A Single Spark Can Start a Prairie Fire,” in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. I, pp. 117-128.

⁶⁰ Mao, “A Single Spark Can Start a Prairie Fire,” pp. 122-123.

displays the embryonic form of Mao's famous formulation of "encircling cities by the countryside," another significant element of the Maoist discourse of the Chinese revolution.

Mao's theoretical writings on the communist revolutionary movement in the light of political-military strategy during and after the period of the First United Front with the GMD have already embodied the essential elements of his revolutionary discourse in their rudimentary forms. Such significant questions as the nature, targets, motive forces, political geography and general orientation of the communist revolution in China had been tentatively explored by Mao from the perspective of Marxism. Given the guidance of the Comintern and the concrete situation of China at the time, in Mao's vision, the Chinese revolution was to go through a transitive stage of the bourgeois-democratic revolution before entering the stages of socialist and communist revolution. In this transitional period, a great union, or a united front, consisting of the workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie, and national bourgeoisie, was to be established in order to overthrow the international imperialist and the domestic warlords and their social basis in the countryside under the leadership of the proletariat and the CCP. As the precondition of the success of the Chinese revolution, the priority task of the CCP was to push forward the armed class struggle in the forms of the peasant movement and agrarian revolution under the independent regimes in the base areas of the countryside. All of these ideas were to be further clarified in and systematically incorporated into Mao's revolutionary discourse in late 1930s and early 1940s along with his rise to the power. The power of Mao's revolutionary discourse was to rule China in the form of the canonized "Thought of Mao Zedong" by the reform era.

The Making of the Maoist Discourse on the Chinese Revolution

Mao's initial attempt to create a comprehensive theory of the Chinese revolution can at least be traced back to his "The May Fourth Movement" in early May 1939. The article "The May Fourth Movement" was first published in the newspaper *Liberation (Jiefang)* on 1 May 1939 in commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement.⁶¹ In addition to his commentary on the historical significance of the May Fourth Movement, the article embodies Mao's effort to provide the young communists in Yan'an a theoretical elucidation of the Chinese revolution. In this article, Mao locates the history of the Chinese revolution in the larger context of the national salvation movement following the Opium War:

If we trace China's bourgeois-democratic revolution back to its formative period, we see that it has passed through a number of stages in its development: the Opium War, the War of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom [Taiping Rebellion], the Sino-Japanese War of 1894, the Reform Movement of 1898 [One Hundred Day's Reform], the Yi Ho Tuan [Yi He Tuan] Movement (Boxer Rebellion), the Revolution of 1911, the May Fourth Movement, the Northern Expedition [National Revolution], and the War of the Agrarian Revolution. The present War of Resistance Against Japan is yet another stage, and is the greatest, most vigorous and most dynamic stage of all.⁶²

In Mao's vision, the bourgeois-democratic revolution can be traced back to each moment of national crisis from the Opium War to the Resistance War against Japan. Mao has not defined the bourgeois-democratic revolution in the article. But it does say that the goal of the bourgeois-democratic revolution is "to establish a social system hitherto unknown in Chinese history, namely, a democratic system having a feudal society (during the last hundred years a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society) as its precursor and a socialist

⁶¹ The version I use here is from Mao Zedong, "Wusi yubdong [The May Fourth Movement]," in *Mao Zedong xuanji*, vol. II (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1969), pp. 522-524; Mao Zedong, "The May Fourth Movement," in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. II (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), pp. 237-239. Mao Zedong wrote this article for newspaper, *Liberation*, in Yan'an to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the May 4th Movement on May 1st, 1939.

⁶² Mao, "The May Fourth Movement," in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, p. 237.

society as its successor.”⁶³ This two-stage periodization of the Chinese revolution had been mentioned in Mao’s earlier writings in the 1920s. Here, he further clarifies that the nature of the two stages before the revolution enters the phase of a communist society. This clarification shows Mao’s effort to incorporate the larger context of the century-long national salvation movement into a comprehensive theory of the Chinese revolution with a Marxist theoretical framework.

Moreover, in this article, Mao has taken pains to make sense of the CCP’s role in the stage of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. He argues that the most important feature differentiating each stage in the bourgeois-democratic revolution is “whether they came before or after the emergence of the Communist Party.”⁶⁴ This implies that the stage of the bourgeois-democratic revolution can be divided into two sub-stages, one without the CCP and one with it. The idea of two sub-stages within the stage of the bourgeois-democratic revolution is a novel element in Mao’s discourse on the Chinese revolution at the time, and it was to be fully developed and elucidated in the second chapter of *The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party* and his “On New Democracy.”

Three days after “The May Fourth Movement” was published, Mao came to give a slightly clearer but still incomplete notion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in a speech delivered at a mass meeting of youth in Yan’an commemorating the May Fourth Movement.⁶⁵ In the speech, “The Orientation of the Youth Movement,” Mao tried to offer a comprehensive deliberation on the Chinese revolution in a more systematic manner. Especially, Mao endeavored to clarify the questions related to the bourgeois-

⁶³ Mao, “The May Fourth Movement,” p. 238.

⁶⁴ Mao, “The May Fourth Movement,” p. 237.

⁶⁵ Mao Zedong, “Qingnian yundong de fangxiang [The orientation of the youth movement],” in *Mao Zedong xuanji*, vol. II, pp. 525-533; Mao Zedong, “The Orientation of the Youth Movement,” in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. II, pp. 241-249. Mao Zedong wrote this article for newspaper, *Liberation*, in Yan’an to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the May 4th Movement on May 1st, 1939.

democratic revolution to meet the special needs of the communist movement in the period of the War of Resistance against Japan. In considering the targets of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, other than international imperialism and domestic feudalism, Mao has specifically pointed out that Japanese imperialism and the Chinese collaborators must be rooted out in making the revolution at the time. In reiterating the nature of the Chinese revolution, Mao suggests that the system of private property should not be destroyed in the stage of bourgeoisie-democratic revolution. Moreover, in the speech, Mao goes further to argue that one of the goals of the bourgeois-democratic revolution is to establish a people's democratic republic that will be different "both from the semi-colonial and semi-feudal stage of the present and from the socialist system of the future," and in this process the capitalists "should be allowed in a people's democracy."⁶⁶ In addition, during the period of the War of Resistance against Japan, given the indispensability of establishing a larger united front, Mao even comes to amplify the definition of the revolutionary social forces. In addition to the "backbone of the revolution," the proletarian workers and the peasants, as Mao suggests, the revolutionary motive forces should include "all members of others classes who are willing to oppose imperialism and feudalism."⁶⁷ The scope of the revolutionary social classes becomes much broader than that he had suggested in the 1920s. This was a consequence of the existence of the Second United Front.

The Idea of the New-Democratic Revolution

Mao's effort to create a comprehensive theory of the Chinese revolution was preliminarily completed in *The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party* in

⁶⁶ Mao, "The Orientation of the Youth Movement," pp. 242-243.

⁶⁷ Mao, "The Orientation of the Youth Movement," p. 242.

late 1939.⁶⁸ The second chapter of the book, “The Chinese Revolution,” can be seen as Mao’s most comprehensive analysis of the Chinese revolution in a theoretical manner. As he has done in “The May Fourth Movement,” Mao begins the chapter by locating the Chinese revolution in the larger context of national salvation movement since 1840:

The history of China’s transformation into a semi-colony and colony by imperialism in collusion with Chinese feudalism is at the same time a history of struggle by the Chinese people against imperialism and its lackeys. The Opium War, the Movement of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, the Sino-French War, The Sino-Japanese War, the Reform Movement of 1898, the Yi Ho Tuan Movement, the Revolution of 1911, the May 4th Movement, the May 30th Movement, the Northern Expedition, the Agrarian Revolutionary War and the present War of Resistance Against Japan—all testify to the Chinese people’s indomitable spirit in fighting imperialism and its lackeys.⁶⁹

Bearing these national events in mind, as they are already mentioned in Mao’s “The May Fourth Movement,” many of them would become the motifs of the reliefs on the Monument to the People’s Heroes erected at the center of Tiananmen Square.

Following the opening section on the revolutionary movements from the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries, Mao turns to dealing with the question about the targets and principal form of the Chinese revolution in the light of a Marxist notion of history. According to Mao, because “the nature of present-day Chinese society is colonial, semi-colonial and semi-feudal,” the chief targets of the Chinese revolution “at the present stage” are “imperialism and feudalism, the bourgeoisie of the imperialist countries and the landlord class of our country.” More specifically, given the context of Japanese invasion, the principal enemies of the revolution are “Japanese imperialism together with all the Chinese traitors and reactionaries in league with it.”⁷⁰ Here Mao tries to relate the

⁶⁸ *The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party* is a textbook written jointly by Mao Zedong and his other comrades in Yan’an. In particular, Mao himself wrote the second chapter of the book, titled “The Chinese Revolution.” It has widely been believed that this masterpiece on the Chinese revolution played a significant role in the communist propaganda in the Party and among the Chinese people. Mao Zedong, “Zhongguo gemin he zhongguo gongchandang [The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party],” in *Mao Zedong xuanji*, vol. II, pp. 584-617; Mao Zedong, “The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party,” in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. II, pp. 297-334.

⁶⁹ Mao, “The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party,” p. 314.

⁷⁰ Mao, “The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party,” p. 315.

content of the Chinese revolution to the socio-economic foundation with which the conflicts between the oppressing and oppressed classes emerged. In facing such powerful enemies, the Chinese revolution must take the form of armed struggle. This suggestion of armed struggle had been the essential component of Mao's early works since the writing of "Peasant Movement in Hunan" in 1927. Likewise, in "The Chinese Revolution," Mao reiterates that "the principal means or form of the Chinese revolution must be armed struggle."⁷¹ In other words, "the barrel of a gun" is an essential part of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. After a discussion on the importance of armed struggle, Mao turns to address the issue of revolutionary base areas, an idea that he developed in late 1927 and early 1928. Here, Mao attempts to incorporate the strategy of "encircling cities by the countryside" into his revolutionary discourse.

Mao's most important contribution in the chapter of "The Chinese Revolution" is his first introduction of the concept "new democratic-revolution," prefiguring his theory of New Democracy. As mentioned above, in his early works, Mao has divided the Chinese revolution into two stages before entering the communist revolution: bourgeois-democratic revolution and socialist revolution. In particular, he always refers the bourgeois-democratic revolution to the Chinese revolutionary movements from the Opium War through the Revolution of 1911 to the War of Resistance against Japan. Later, in May 1939, Mao implicitly indicated that the stage of the bourgeois-democratic revolution could be divided into two sub-stages before and after the emergence of the CCP.⁷² Here, Mao provides a clearer articulation on the role of the CCP in the bourgeois-democratic revolution. As Mao argues, "it was only after World War I and the October

⁷¹ Mao, "The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party," p. 316.

⁷² Mao, "The May Fourth Movement," p. 237.

Revolution in Russia, that we found Marxism-Leninism, the best of truths, the best of weapons for liberating our nation,” and it was “the Communist Party of China” that “has been the initiator, propagandist and organizer in the wielding of this weapon.”⁷³ It is in this sense that the emergence of the CCP was identified by Mao as the turning point of the Chinese national salvation movement. Here, Mao further elucidates his idea of the two sub-stages in the bourgeois-democratic revolution with the concept of “new-democratic revolution”:

However, in present-day China the bourgeois-democratic revolution is no longer of the old general type, which is now obsolete, but one of a new special type. We can call this type the new-democratic revolution... Thus, the new type of democratic revolution clears the way for capitalism on the one hand and creates the prerequisites for socialism on the other. The present stage of the Chinese revolution is a stage of transition between the abolition of the colonial, semi-colonial and semi-feudal society and the establishment of a socialist society, i.e., it is a process of new-democratic revolution.⁷⁴

This passage reveals Mao’s attempt to theorize the Chinese revolution from the perspective of a Marxist notion of history. In doing so, Mao divides the bourgeois-democratic revolution into two categories, the old general type and a new specific type. Considering that the nature of the Chinese society at his time was a colonial and semi-colonial society, what was happening in China must be a “new-democratic revolution.” The phrase “new-democratic revolution” was to be fully developed and completed in Mao’s “On New Democracy.”

The Theory of New Democracy and the May Fourth Movement

“On New Democracy” marks the maturity of Mao’s comprehensive theory of the Chinese revolution. This article was first published in the first issue of *Chinese Culture* (*Zhongguo wenhua*), a communist journal, on 15 February of 1940 with the title of “The

⁷³ Mao Zedong, “Reform Our Study,” in *SW*, vol. III (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), p. 17.

⁷⁴ Mao, “The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party,” pp. 326-327.

Politics and Culture of New Democracy.”⁷⁵ The version under discussion is from the official edition of *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung (Mao Zedong xuanji)*, entitled “On New Democracy.”⁷⁶ In the “Chinese Revolution” chapter and his other theoretical writings in 1939, Mao already considered questions related to the Chinese revolution in the light of the interrelationship between the socio-economic system and political structure. We have seen how Mao had formulated his theoretical thinking on the economic and political features of the new-democratic revolution. With the writing of “On New Democracy,” Mao further articulates the cultural aspect of the new-democratic revolution, with which a comprehensive theory of New Democracy was accomplished.

More importantly, the writing of “On New Democracy” represents the apogee in China’s century-long national salvation movement since the Opium War. For Mao, the theory of New Democracy itself was a consequence of the long-term Chinese anxiety over seeking the prescription of national salvation, and the truth he found must be based on the “scientific approach” of Marxism. “The troubles that have fallen on our nation are extremely serious,” as Mao emphasizes, “and only a scientific approach and a spirit of responsibility can lead it on to the road of liberation.”⁷⁷ In other words, to save China is to march toward the road of the new-democratic revolution, a path of Marxism-Leninism.

Moreover, in “On New Democracy,” Mao has gone so far as to project his prospect of a new China as the consequence of the new-democratic revolution. Overall, the aim of

⁷⁵ Mao Zedong, “Xinminzhu zhuyi de zhengzhi yu xinminzhu zhuyi de wenhua [The politics and culture of new democracy],” *Zhongguo wenhua* [Chinese Culture] 1 (Feb. 2, 1940): 2-24.

⁷⁶ Mao Zedong, “Xinminzhu zhuyi lun [On new democracy],” in *Mao Zedong xuanji*, vol. II, pp. 623-670; Mao Zedong, “On New Democracy,” in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. II, pp. 339-384. Although from the version of *Chinese Culture* journal to the one of *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* has undergone some modification in various respects of term and punctuation mark, the overall theoretical framework has not changed. Moreover, considering that the purpose of this chapter is to examine Mao’s revolutionary discourse and its impact on the historical consciousness of the Chinese people in twentieth-century China, our discussion will focus on the official version which has enjoyed the widest reception throughout China and the world.

⁷⁷ Mao, “On New Democracy,” p. 339.

the new-democratic revolution, in Mao's words, "is to build a new society and a new state for the Chinese nation," and this new China will "have not only a new politics and a new economy but a new culture."⁷⁸ In other words, as Mao suggests, "China's new politics are the politics of New Democracy, that China's new economy is the economy of New Democracy and that China's new culture is the culture of New Democracy."⁷⁹ Given the theoretical framework of a Marxist notion of history, in Mao's analysis, "the politics of New Democracy are the concentrated expression of the economy of New Democracy," and "a given culture [of New Democracy] is the ideological reflection of the politics and economy" of New Democracy.⁸⁰ As far as the politics of New Democracy is concerned, it is to establish a new-democratic republic "under the joint dictatorship of all anti-imperialist and anti-feudal people led by the proletariat."⁸¹ This new-democratic republic under the people's dictatorship is a transitional form of government designed to serve the special needs of the Chinese nation before it enters the stage of socialist revolution. In terms of the economy of New Democracy, the new-democratic republic will "take certain necessary steps to confiscate the land of the landlords and distribute it to those peasants who have little or no land," but will neither confiscate capitalist private property in general nor forbid the rich peasant economy in the countryside. In other words, the "equalization of landownership" and "regulation of capital" are two basic principle of the economy of New Democracy. As we have seen above, Mao's central idea of the politics and economy of New Democracy has already been developed in the "Chinese Revolution" chapter, and here he simply use the phrase

⁷⁸ Mao, "On New Democracy," p. 340.

⁷⁹ Mao, "On New Democracy," p. 342.

⁸⁰ Mao, "On New Democracy," pp. 354, 369.

⁸¹ Mao, "On New Democracy," p. 350.

“New Democracy” to label the theory of the new-democratic revolution.

A more significant contribution of “New Democracy” lies in Mao’s attempt to extend his analysis of the political and economic dimensions of the new-democratic revolution into the realm of culture.⁸² The new-democratic culture, in Mao’s suggestion, “is the anti-imperialist and anti-feudalist culture of the broad masses,” and, in the period of the War of Resistance against Japan, it means “the culture of the anti-Japanese united front.”⁸³ In order to overthrow the class enemies of the revolutionary people and their ideological foundation, this new culture must be “led by the culture and ideology of the proletariat.”⁸⁴ In particular, the new-democratic culture should serve broad masses of workers and peasants who make up more than 90 percent of China’s population. In this sense, the culture of New Democracy must be a mass culture. As chapter four will show, this notion of the culture of New Democracy was to be translated into the official design principle of the Monument to the People’s Heroes.

Furthermore, as an ideological weapon of the Chinese revolution to bring down imperialism, the new-democratic culture must take a national form. To nourish its own culture, as Mao indicates, the Chinese nation should assimilate whatever is useful in the present day, not only from the foreign socialist and new-democratic cultures, but also from the progressive culture of the various capitalist countries in the Age of Enlightenment. However, the assimilation of foreign progressive culture has to go through a critical process in which the Chinese nation’s subjective situation must be considered and the national characteristics must be incorporated when applying that progressive culture. As Mao emphasizes, “in applying Marxism to China, the Chinese

⁸² Mao, “On New Democracy,” p. 370.

⁸³ Mao, “On New Democracy,” pp. 372-373.

⁸⁴ Mao, “On New Democracy,” p. 373.

communists must fully and properly integrate the universal truth of Marxism with the concrete practice of the Chinese revolution, or, the universal truth of Marxism must be combined with specific national characteristics and acquire a definite national form.”⁸⁵ In other words, to apply Marxism in China involves a process of sinicization of Marxism (*Makesi zhuyi zhongguohua*). It has been widely recognized that the sinicization of Marxism was one of Mao’s significant contributions to the communist movement, which was manifested in his comprehensive theory of the Chinese revolution.

One question remains unresolved: when did the process of the new-democratic revolution begin, in Mao’s view, in the course of the Chinese revolution? As his first but premature attempt to answer the question, in the article of “The May Fourth Movement,” Mao has already indicated that the process of the new-democratic revolution started in China with the May Fourth Movement of 1919. At the very beginning of this commemorative essay, in determining the significance of the May Fourth Movement, he suggests, “The May Fourth Movement twenty years ago marked a new stage in China’s bourgeois-democratic revolution against imperialism and feudalism,” and “the cultural reform movement which grew out of the May Fourth Movement was only one of the manifestations of this revolution.”⁸⁶ This suggestion actually is to say that the May Fourth Movement belongs to the new category of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, and the cultural reform movement is the “culture of New Democracy.” Later in the chapter of “The Chinese Revolution,” Mao put this suggestion in a more explicit way:

The present stage of the Chinese revolution is a stage of transition between the abolition of the colonial, semi-colonial and semi-feudal society and the establishment of a socialist society, *i.e.*, it is a process of new-democratic revolution. This process, begun only after the First World War and the Russian October Revolution, started in China with the May 4th

⁸⁵ Mao, “On New Democracy,” pp. 380-381.

⁸⁶ Mao, “The May Fourth Movement,” p. 237.

Movement of 1919.⁸⁷

Here, the Chinese revolution from the Opium War to the eve of the May Fourth Movement is defined by Mao as the “old general type” of the bourgeois-democratic revolution and those from 1919 to the War of Resistance against Japan is considered as the “new special type” of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. As such, from 1840 to 1918 is the stage of old bourgeois-democratic revolution and from 1919 onward is that of new-democratic revolution. This temporal framework in conceptualizing the history of the Chinese revolution not only was to rule the Chinese historical consciousness in many ways in twentieth-century, and even present-day, China, but also was to be materialized at Tiananmen Square with the state-sponsored commemorative monuments and institutions as I shall explain in detail in Chapter Four.

Yet, why was the May Fourth Movement so important that Mao considered it as the watershed mark of the coming of the new bourgeois-democratic revolution? Why did Mao come to realize the prominent significance of the May Fourth movement and to incorporate it into his comprehensive theory of the Chinese revolution history twenty years after the event? A logical answer may lie in Mao’s thinking that the emergence of the CCP was the most important feature marking the turning point of the Chinese revolution, which in turn led to the success of national salvation. And, since the emergence of the CCP was such a distinctive moment in Chinese revolutionary history, the May Fourth Movement that made possible the introduction, dissemination, and reception of the Marxism as well as the founding of the Party must be very significant too. A full answer can only be found in Mao’s particular discourse on the May Fourth Movement in the light of his comprehensive theory of the Chinese revolution.

⁸⁷ Mao, “The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party,” p. 327.

The Maoist Revolutionary Discourse of the May Fourth Movement

The history of the May Fourth discourse has attracted scholarly attention since the 1960s. Since the publication of Chow Tse-tsung's [Zhou Cezong] classic work of *The May Fourth Movement*, the Chinese historians in both the Western world and China have been looking at the subject matter in one way or another. In his path-breaking work, Chow concludes his exploration on the subject matter with a concise review on the interpretation and evaluation of the May Fourth Movement by the liberal and conservative intellectuals as well as the GMD and CCP authorities.⁸⁸ In a similar trajectory, in *The Chinese Enlightenment*, Vera Schwarcz has engaged in a remembered history of the May Fourth Movement by a close reading of the May Fourth generation's commemorative proclamations. In doing so, Schwarcz focuses on the political uses of the May Fourth allegory during the 1949, 1969, and 1979 anniversaries of the movement in the light of the official discourse created by the GMD and CCP authorities, such as Sun Yat-sen, Jiang Jieshi, and Mao Zedong. Given the imperative forces of the official master discourse, the remembered history of the May Fourth Movement displays the working of the politics of selective memory.⁸⁹ However, Schwarcz has not shown us how that official discourse was formulated and became an imperative frame of reference for intellectuals across the Taiwan Strait to conceptualize the May Fourth Movement. One cannot take for granted the formation and working of the official discourse. It involves a process in which the official discourse comes into being along with the rise to power of its creator and a power mechanics in which an imperative force finds the channels to find the reception in both the academic circles and everyday life. One of the purposes of the

⁸⁸ Chow, *The May Fourth Movement*, pp. 338-368.

⁸⁹ Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment*, pp. 240-282.

following pages is to look into the dynamics of the making of the Maoist hegemonic May Fourth discourse by a close reading of the literature on the May Fourth Movement created by Mao Zedong.

Influenced by Western scholarship, since the late 1990s, historians in China began to pay attention to the study of the May Fourth discourse and have produced a body of literature on the subject. The literature in general has shown Chow Tse-tung's impact on the scholarship in China and Taiwan. In particular, Chow's analytical framework was adopted by Chinese scholars, such as Ouyang Zesheng and Yu Yingshi for their comprehensive reviews or specialized case studies.⁹⁰ Some scholars like Gu Xi moved to focus on the Chinese intellectuals' interpretation of the May Fourth Movement around the seventeenth anniversary of the event to show the impact of the communist ideological imperative on the historical profession.⁹¹ More scholars have turned to focus on the Chinese communists' revolutionary discourse of the May Fourth Movement, and most of those writings are brief review essays focusing on the introduction of the important works by prominent Chinese communist theorists, such as Qu Qiubai, without further theoretical analyses.⁹² Over the past few years, a few comprehensive works were written

⁹⁰ Ouyang Zhesheng, "Ziyou zhuyi yu Wusi chuantong: Hu Shi dui Wusi Yundong de lishi quanshi [Liberalism and the May Fourth Tradition: Hu Shi's Interpretation of the May Fourth Movement]," *Zhongguo wenhua yanjiu* [The Chinese culture studies] 1997; Ouyang Zhesheng, "Ziyou zhuyi yu Wusi chuantong: Hu Shi dui Wusi Yundong de lishi quanshi [Liberalism and the May Fourth Tradition: Hu Shi's Interpretation of the May Fourth Movement]," in Ouyang Zhesheng, *Xin wenhua de chuantong—Wusi renwu yu sixiang yangjiu* [The tradition of new culture—the study of the May Fourth figures and thoughts] (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 2004), pp. 144-159.; Ouyang Zhesheng, "Bei jieshi de chuantong—Wusi huayu zai xiandai zhongguo [The explained tradition: The May Fourth discourse in the Modern China]," in Ouyang Zhesheng, *Xin wenhua de chuantong—Wusi renwu yu sixiang yangjiu*, pp. 166-207. Yu Yingshi, *Wusi Xinlun: Jifei wenyi fuxing, yifei qimeng yundong* [New perspectives on the May Fourth: neither Renaissance nor Enlightenment] (Taipei: Lianjing, 1999), pp. 1-26; also see Yingshi Yu, "Neither Renaissance nor Enlightenment: A Historian's Reflections on the May Fourth Movement," in Milena Dolezelova-Velingerova, Oldrich Kral, eds., *The Appropriation of Cultural Capital: China's May Fourth Project* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2001), pp. 299-320.

⁹¹ Gu Xi, *Zhongguo qimeng de lishi tujing—Wusi fansi yu dangdai zhongguo de yishi xingtai zhi zheng* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1992).

⁹² Liang Lei, "Jianguoqian zhongguo gongchandang ren guanyu wusi yundong pinlun shuping [Review on the Chinese communists' evaluation on the May Fourth Movement before the founding of the nation]," *Dangshi yanjiu yu jiaoxue* 3 (2002): 40-44; Dong Defu, "Bashi nian lai zhonggong lingdao ren de Wusi guan huifang [A Review upon the views of

to explore the making of the communist May Fourth discourse by locating their researches in the long-term context of the politics of China from 1919 to 1949 from the perspective of the politics of historical memory.⁹³ Based on the findings of previous scholarship, the following pages will further examine Mao Zedong's revolutionary discourse of the May Fourth Movement in the light of his theory of the Chinese revolution and to look into the power mechanics through which Mao's discourse on the Chinese revolution and the May Fourth Movement became a powerful imperative for the historical profession and the writings of history textbooks in communist China.

Mao's most prominent contribution to the making of the May Fourth discourse lies in his attempt to determine the revolutionary attributes of the May Fourth Movement in the light of his theoretical thinking of the Chinese revolution. Nevertheless, it is important to note that Mao's interpretation of the May Fourth Movement was not completely his own original ideas but had largely drawn from the communist intellectuals and theorists' literature from 1919 to the late 1930s. A comprehensive survey of the whole body of the literature is beyond the purpose of this chapter, and the subject matter itself is worthy of a separate project. Here it will suffice to point out that the writings on the May Fourth Movement by communist intellectuals and theorists and historians, such as Chen Duxiu, Li Dazhou, Qu Qiubai, Zhang Tailei, Mao Dun, Chen Boda, Ai Siqu, Zhang Shenfu, Zhu Xinfan, Li Dingsheng, Wu Qiyuan, Chen Duanzhi, Zhang Wentian and He Ganzhi had

the May Fourth offered by Leaders of the Chinese Communist Party during the [past eighty years]," *Jingsu lingong daxue xuebao (shehuo kexue ban)* 2 (2001): 1-6; Dong Defu, "Mao Zedong dui wusi de jiedu [Mao Zedong's interpretation of the May Fourth Movement]," *Dangshi yanjiu yu jiaoxue* 1 (2002); Dong Defu, "Wusi renzhi moshi zhong geming huayu de chubu queli—lun Qu Qiubai wusi guan de zhengzhi qingjie [Revolutionary discourse in the context of May Fourth mode of thinking—Qu Qiubai's political complex and the May Fourth Movement]" *Jingsu daxue xuebao* 4:3 (September, 2002): 11-17; Guo Ruoping, "Mao Zedong's Wusi guan jiqi pinglun moshi de chuxian [Mao Zedong's views of the May Fourth and the emergence of his evaluation model]," *Zhonggon fujian shengwei dangxiao xuebao* 5 (1999).

⁹³ Guo Ruoping, "Yiyi de fuyu: Shishi zhuanji yu wusi huayu de yanbain [The significances allocating: historical contexts and the shift of 'May 4th' discourse]," *Anhui Shixue* 5 (2008): 33-45; Zhang Yan, "Wusi yundong chanshi shi yanjiu (1919-1949)," Ph.D. dissertation, Zhejiang University, 2005.

paved the way for the formulation of Mao's May Fourth discourse.⁹⁴ The novelty of Mao's May Fourth discourse lies in his attempt to incorporate the widely accepted points of view in the communist camp into his comprehensive theory of the Chinese revolution.

The May Fourth Movement as the Turning Point

In Mao's definition, the May Fourth Movement above all was a revolutionary movement. In his definition, the May Fourth Movement is "an anti-imperialist as well as an anti-feudal movement," and it was precisely "its thorough and uncompromising opposition to imperialism as well as to feudalism" that Mao identified it a revolutionary movement.⁹⁵ The second prominent significance of the May Fourth Movement in Mao's consideration is that it marked the turning point of the Chinese revolution. In his "The May Fourth Movement," Mao has already suggested: "The May Fourth Movement twenty years ago

⁹⁴ To name a few examples of the communist literature on the May Fourth Movement: Li Dazhao, "Zai *Gumin* zazhi zhounian jinianhui shang de yanshuo [Talk at the anniversary commemorative ceremony of the *Citizen* magazine]," *Li Dazhao wenji*, juan xia (Beijing: People's Publisher, 1984), p. 101; Li Dazhao, "Yaxiya qingnian de guangming yundong [The Enlightenment Movement of the Asian Youth]," *Li Dazhao wenji*, juan xia, pp. 213-215; Li Dazhao, "Zhongguo xueshengjie de may day [The May Day of the circle of the Chinese students]," *Li Dazhao wenji*, juan xia, p. 464; Li Dazhao, "Jinian wuyue sizi [The Commemoration of the May Fourth]," *Li Dazhao wenji*, juan xia, p. 656; Zhang Tailei, "Wusi yundong de yiyi yu jiazhi [The significance and value of May Fourth Movement]," *Zhang Tailei wenji* [Collected writings of Zhang Tailei] (Beijing: People's Publisher, 1981), pp. 86-87; Zhang Tailei, "Wusi jinian gao Guangdong xuesheng [Letter to Cantonese students on May Fourth]," *Zhang Tailei wenji*, pp. 139-143; Qu Qiubai, "Jinian Wusi yu minzu geming yundong [Commemorating May Fourth and National Revolutionary Movement]," *Qu Qiubai wenji: Zhengzhi lilun bian*, vol. 3 (Beijing: People's Publishing, 1989), p. 155; Zhu Xinfan, *Zhongguo geming yu zhongguo shehui ge jieji* [The Chinese revolution and the various social classes of Chinese society] (Shanghai: Lianhe shudian, 1930); Li Dingsheng, *Zhongguo Jindai shi* [The Modern Chinese History] (Shanghai: Guangming shuju, 1933); Wu Qiyuan, *Zhongguo Xinwenhua gaiguan* [The overview of the Chinese New Culture Movement] (Shanghai: Xiandai Shuju, 1934); Chen Duanzhi, *Wusi yundong zhi shi de pinjia* [A historical valuation of the May Fourth Movement] (Shanghai: Shenghuo shudian, 1935); He Ganzhi, *Jindai Zhongguo qimeng yundong shi* [The history of the enlightenment in Modern China] (Shanghai: Shenghuo Shudian, 1937); Mao Dun, "Wusi yundong zhi jiantao [A review of the May Fourth Movement]," *Mao Dun wenji* (Beijing: People's Literature, 1993), pp. 57-70; Chen Boda, "Zexue de guofang dongyuan [The mobilization of national defense in the front of philosophy: The self-criticism of the new philosophy and the suggestion on the new enlightenment]," in Ding Shouhe, ed., *Zhongguo jindai qimeng sichao* [The intellectual movement of enlightenment in modern China] (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 1999), pp. 156-160; Chen Boda, "Lun xin qimeng yundong: The second new culture movement—the national salvation movement in the cultural front," in Ding Shouhe, ed., *Zhongguo jindai qimeng sichao*, pp. 160-165; Chen Boda "Sixiang de ziyou yu ziyou de sixiang—Zailun xin qimeng yundong [The freedom of thought and thought freely—Reconsidering the new enlightenment]" in Ding Shouhe, ed., *Zhongguo jindai qimeng sichao*, pp. 173-181; Zhang Shenfu, "Wusi jinian yu xin qimeng yundong [Commemoration of the may fourth and the new enlightenment movement]," in Ding Shouhe, ed., *Zhongguo jindai qimeng sichao*, pp. 166-168; Ai Siqi, "Shemo shi xin qimeng yundong [What is new enlightenment movement]," in Ding Shouhe, ed., *Zhongguo jindai qimeng sichao*, pp. 170-172; He Ganzhi, "Xin qimeng yundong yu zexuejia [The new enlightenment movement and the philosophers]," in Ding Shouhe, ed., *Zhongguo jindai qimeng sichao*, pp. 181-184; Zhang Wentian, *Zhongguo xiandai geming yundong shi* [The history of the modern Chinese revolutionary movement] (Xinhua ribao huabei fen guan, 1936).

⁹⁵ Mao, "On New Democracy," p. 373; Mao, "The Orientation of the Youth Movement," p. 241.

marked a new stage in China's bourgeois-democratic revolution against imperialism and feudalism."⁹⁶ Half of a year later in his "On New Democracy," Mao gives us a more specific elucidation on the significance of the movement:

The century of China's bourgeois-democratic revolution can be divided into two main stages, a first stage of eighty years and a second of twenty years. Each has its basic characteristic: China's bourgeois-democratic revolution in the first eighty years belongs to the old category, while in the last twenty years, owing to the change in the international and domestic political situation, it belongs to the new category. Old democracy is the characteristic of the first eighty years. New democracy is the characteristic of the last twenty years.⁹⁷

In Mao's comprehensive theory of the Chinese revolution, the year 1919 has become the milestone to divide the Chinese bourgeois-democratic revolution into the first stage of eighty years and the second stage of twenty years. In other words, the Chinese revolution "in the last twenty years" since the May Fourth Movement belongs to the new category of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, that is, a new-democratic revolution. Therefore, Mao argues that New Democracy is "the fundamental characteristic of the Chinese revolution of today," which is "counting from the May Fourth Movement of 1919."⁹⁸ The May Fourth Movement was thus incorporated into Mao's comprehensive theory of the Chinese revolution as it was defined as the milestone in the Chinese revolution leading to the new-democratic revolution.

The May Fourth Movement, the Founding of the CCP, and the Great Revolution

The new-democratic nature of the May Fourth Movement was manifested in many ways according to Mao's theoretical speculation. First, the May Fourth Movement marked the awakening of the Chinese people, especially the progressive intellectuals and the proletarian class.⁹⁹ The Chinese progressive intellectuals' political awakening was

⁹⁶ Mao, "The May Fourth Movement," p. 237.

⁹⁷ Mao, "On New Democracy," p. 370.

⁹⁸ Mao, "On New Democracy," p. 347.

⁹⁹ Mao, "The May Fourth Movement," p. 238.

manifested in their reception of the Russian Revolution and the proletarian worldview during in this period.¹⁰⁰ Second, since the May Fourth Movement, the Chinese revolutionary movement had witnessed the rise of the proletarian class.¹⁰¹ In particular, with the formation of the working class, the Chinese proletariat rapidly became “an awakened and independent political force.”¹⁰² As the basic motive force of the Chinese revolution, along with the biggest revolutionary social force of the peasants, the proletarian class would lead China to the path of socialist revolution under the guidance of the CCP. More importantly, Mao attributed the founding of the CCP to the cultural movement that grew out of the May Fourth Movement. As Mao suggested, it was during this cultural movement those intellectuals who “approved of the Russian Revolution” had brought the Chinese youth’s attention to the Russian Revolution, and eventually led to the occurrence of the May Fourth Movement. It was also those intellectuals who “had the rudiments of communist ideology” had made the Marxism-Leninism disseminate among the proletariat class. “Both in ideology and in the matter of cadres,” as Mao claims in “On New Democracy,” “the May Fourth Movement paved the way for the founding of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921.”¹⁰³

Not only did the May Fourth Movement lead to the founding of the CCP, in Mao’s theory of the Chinese revolution, it also paved the way to the First United Front and the Northern Expedition in the period of the Great Revolution (1924-1927). Mao argued that it was the emergence of the CCP after the May Fourth Movement that in turn “led to the first cooperation between the Guomindang and the Communist Party, to the May

¹⁰⁰ Mao, “On New Democracy,” p. 373.

¹⁰¹ Mao, “The May Fourth Movement,” p. 237.

¹⁰² Mao, “On New Democracy,” p. 348.

¹⁰³ Mao, “On New Democracy,” p. 374.

Thirtieth movement, and to the Northern Expedition, thus bringing about the First Great Revolution.” “Without the May Fourth movement,” as he suggested, “the Great Revolution would have been impossible” because it had prepared “public opinion, and people’s hearts and thoughts, as well as the cadres for the First Great Revolution.”¹⁰⁴

The May Fourth Movement as a Cultural Revolution and the Four-Period Time Frame

Thanks to Mao’s theory of New Democracy, the prominent significance of the May Fourth Movement was extended into the realm of culture. Since the May Fourth Movement marked the beginning of the new-democratic revolution, the cultural movement that sprang from the May Fourth Movement, in Mao’s consideration, is identified as the ideological reflection of new-democratic revolution. “On the cultural or ideological front,” as Mao puts it, “the two periods preceding and following the May Fourth Movement form two distinct historical periods.” According to Mao, before the May Fourth Movement, the cultural movements, such as the first half of the New Culture Movement, simply “played a revolutionary role in fighting the Chinese feudal ideology” to serve “the bourgeois-democratic revolution of the old period.” On the other hand, since the May Fourth Movement, as Mao claims: “A brand-new cultural force came into being in China, that is, the communist culture and ideology of the Chinese Communists, or the communist world outlook and theory of social revolution.”¹⁰⁵ Thus, Mao considered the May Fourth Movement as the turning point from the culture of old category to that of new category.¹⁰⁶

Moreover, Mao turns to provide a temporal frame for historicizing the development

¹⁰⁴ Mao, “The Great Significance of the December Ninth Movement,” p. 272.

¹⁰⁵ Mao, “On New Democracy,” p. 371.

¹⁰⁶ As Mao puts it: “Prior to the May Fourth Movement, China’s new culture was a culture of the old-democratic kind and part of the capitalist cultural revolution of the world bourgeoisie. Since the May 4th Movement, it has become new-democratic and part of the socialist cultural revolution of the world proletariat.” Mao, “On New Democracy,” pp. 371-372.

in the cultural realm of the new-democratic revolution. In Mao's consideration, in the stage of the new-democratic revolution there was a united front in the cultural as well as in the political realms, and the development of the united front in the cultural realm after the May Fourth Movement can be divided into four periods. The first period covered the time from the May Fourth Movement to the emergence of the CCP. In this period, after the May Fourth Movement there emerged a cultural united front consisting of communist intellectuals, revolutionary petty-bourgeois intellectuals and bourgeois intellectuals in addition to the masses of the proletariat.¹⁰⁷ The second period extended from the founding of the CCP to the completion of the Northern Expedition, in which the peasantry was drawn into the cultural united front when a political united front between the GMD and the CCP was established.¹⁰⁸ The third period extended from the collapse of the first united front in 1927 to the War of Resistance against Japan in 1937, or the period of the First Great Civil War, in which the bourgeois intellectuals went over to the counter-revolutionary camp to serve the despotic regime in alliance with the landlord class and the big bourgeoisie whereas the proletariat, the peasantry, and the petty bourgeoisie stayed in the cultural united front of the revolutionary side.¹⁰⁹ The fourth period was the War of Resistance against Japan, in which the four classes were again joined together in both the political and cultural united front for the shared cause of resistance against the Japanese aggression.

This four-period temporal framework was to be translated by Mao into the methodological framework for the study of the CCP's history. In late 1938, Mao began to call for the education of senior cadres focusing on the study of Marxism and the Chinese

¹⁰⁷ Mao, "On New Democracy," pp. 373-374.

¹⁰⁸ Mao, "On New Democracy," pp. 374-375.

¹⁰⁹ Mao, "On New Democracy," pp. 376-377.

revolutionary history.¹¹⁰ Mao's suggestion was quickly institutionalized with the establishment of the Cadre Education Department. This partly explains why Mao had begun articulating his comprehensive theory of Chinese revolution in the late 1930s. The party's promotion in the study of Marxism and Chinese revolutionary history became more pervasive when the small group study system was established at each level of the Party organization during the Rectification Movement 1942-1944. It was in these surroundings that Mao attempted to propose his methodological framework for the study of Party history in which the four-period time frame was incorporated.

In an internal report delivered at the meeting of the Central Study Group (Zhongyang xuexi zu) on 30 March of 1942, Mao further developed and incorporated the four-period temporal framework into his methodological thinking for the study of the CCP's history.¹¹¹ In his report, entitled "How to Study the History of the Chinese Communist Party (*Ruhe yanjiu zhonggong dangshi*)" (hereafter Study the History of the CCP), Mao starts by suggesting that the study of the history of the CCP's party lines would be helpful for the Party to formulate a correct party line in the present. "This study [of the Party history] is necessary, and if we haven't made clear the history of the Party and of the party line, we could not make the thing better."¹¹² In the report, Mao cautiously conceals his criticism of the party lines under the leadership of Chen Duxiu and Li Lisan. Whereas Chen Duxiu was guilty of "right" opportunism in the later phase of the First United Front, Li Lisan was criticized exhibiting "left" opportunism from the September

¹¹⁰ Tony Saich, "Writing or Rewriting History? The Construction of the Maoist Resolution on Party History," in Tony Saich and Hans van de Ven, eds., *New Perspectives on the Chinese Communist Revolution* (Armonk, N. Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1995), p. 317.

¹¹¹ The writing of this report was a corollary result of the setting up of the Committee for Clarification of Party History, chaired by Mao, on 13 October of 1941. Mao Zedong, "Ruhe yanjiu zhonggong dangshi [How to study the history of the Chinese Communist Party]," in *Mao Zedong ji bujuan* [Supplements to collected writings of Mao Tse-Tung], vol. 7 (Tokyo: Soso sa, 1985), pp. 81-89.

¹¹² Mao, "Ruhe yanjiu zhonggong dangshi," p. 81.

Eighteenth Incident of 1931 to the Zunyi Conference of 1935.¹¹³ As part of the Rectification Movement in Yan'an, pushing Mao to the top position of the CCP, this report manifests Mao's attempt to use the Party history as a way to consolidate his power.

To study the history of the CCP's party lines is to examine the serious errors made by the central leaders in the history of the Party. In terms of political culture, the power struggle inside the Party involves the understanding and writing of the history of the CCP and using that history to legitimize one's policy line so as to consolidate one's position or claim legitimacy in the Party. Mao understood this political culture very well, and he used it successfully, as the construction of the "Resolution on Certain Historical Questions (20 April 1945)" demonstrated.¹¹⁴ The political use of Party history was an integral part of Mao's rise to the power. Behind the four-period temporal framework actually lies Mao's political use of the Party history to claim the legitimacy of his leadership by establishing himself as the correct interpreter of the history of the Chinese Revolution in general and of the Party in particular.

The four-period temporal framework for conceptualizing the history of the new-democratic revolution was transplanted in Mao's methodology on the study of the CCP's history. In Mao's periodization, the history of the CCP can be divided into four phrases: the period of preparation from the May Fourth Movement in 1919 to the founding the CCP in 1921, the period of the Great Revolution from 1921 to the collapse of the First United Front in 1927, the period of the civil war from 1927 to 1937, and the period of the

¹¹³ Mao, "Ruhe yanjiu zhonggong dangshi," esp. p. 83.

¹¹⁴ CCP, "Zhongguo gongchandang zhongyang weiyuanhui guanyu ruogan lishi wenti de jueyi [Resolution of the CCP CC on certain historical questions]," in the Secretariat of the CCP CC, ed., *Liuda yilai: Dangnei mimi wenjian* [Since the sixth party congress: Secret inner-party documents], vol. 1 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1981), pp. 1179-1200; CCP, "Resolution of the CCP CC on Certain Historical Questions," collected in Tony Saich, ed., *The Rise to Power of the Chinese Communist Party* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1996), pp. 1164-1179; the official version of the English translation of the Resolution, see CCP CC, "Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party," in the Appendix of Mao Zedong, *Our Study and the Current Situation* (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1966), pp. 23-94.

War of Resistance against Japan.

The four-period temporal framework amplified Mao's two-stage periodization of the Chinese revolution. In Mao's comprehensive theory, the Chinese revolution is divided into the old bourgeois-democratic revolution and the new-democratic revolution, and the stage of the new-democratic revolution is further divided into four periods. This whole set of the Maoist temporal framework, along with his theory of New Democracy and his May Fourth discourse, was to become deeply rooted in the Chinese people's historical consciousness in twentieth-century, even present-day, China. The pervasive impact of Mao's revolutionary discourse was to be manifested in the PRC's history textbooks, in the historical studies of modern China within academic circles, and in the state-sponsored commemorative monuments and institutions at Tiananmen Square. All of which would in turn become the channels in which Mao's master discourse on the Chinese revolution and the May Fourth Movement found access to the popular reception among the Chinese people. Before all of these become thinkable, Mao's revolutionary discourse had to experience the process of canonization along with his rise to power in the CCP.

The Canonization of the Maoist Revolutionary Discourse

Mao's long journey of rise to power had begun with the Zunyi Conference in January 1935 and culminated in the holding of the Seventh National Congress of the CCP in 1945. Over fourteen years after the birth of the CCP, Mao's position in the party gradually became consolidated, and he began to lay the theoretical foundation of the Maoist doctrine of the Chinese revolution in an attempt to establish his unchallenged role as the ideological shaper of the CCP. With his comprehensive theory of the Chinese revolution, Mao attempted to make himself the sole authority on ideological guiding principles of the

CCP by launching the Rectification Movement in Yan'an. Along with the consolidation of his leadership in the CCP, Mao's journey of power struggle in the party attained its victory with the canonization of his revolutionary discourse in 1945, first in the adoption of the "Resolution on Certain Historical Questions" and then in the institutionalization of "Mao Zedong Thought" as the CCP's ideological guiding principle in the Constitution of the CCP. Based on a brief account of Mao's rise to power in the CCP, the purpose of the following pages is to explore how Mao's revolutionary discourse found its legal foundation to exert imperative influence on the Chinese conception of history along with the canonization of Mao Zedong Thought.

The Rise of Mao to Power and the Power of Discourse

The story of Mao's rise to power should be traced from the beginning of the founding of the CCP. To begin with, in July 1921, Mao was among the thirteen founders of the CCP in Shanghai. At the Third National Congress in June 1923 in Guangzhou, he became a member of the Central Committee. At the Fifth National Congress in May 1927, Mao came into conflict with the leadership of the CCP for his radical peasant-based trajectory of armed revolution. As a consequence, in November 1927, he lost the position he had obtained in the Politburo at the August Seventh Conference, where he proposed the idea of "political power grows out the barrel of a gun." Following his strategy of armed struggle in the rural base areas, Mao retreated to the Jinggang Mountains to continue mobilizing the peasants in making the communist revolution. Later in November 1931, he became the chairman of the Chinese Soviet Republic in Reijin, Jiangxi. After the defeat in the Fifth Counter-Encirclement Campaign, which proved that Li Lisan's party line was an error, Mao gained control of the party at the Zunyi Conference in January

1935 during the Long March. At the Zunyi Conference, Mao became the secretary in the Central Secretariat, the chairman of the Party Military Committee, and reentered the Politburo as a full member. Then, in 1943 in Yan'an, Mao further consolidated his power when he was elected as the chairman of the Politburo and the Central Committee. By that time, Mao had established his supreme leadership over the entire Party organ and the Red Army.

Along with Mao's seizure of the political supremacy in the CCP came the canonization of his revolutionary discourse. The publication of Mao's writings on propaganda work during the War of Resistance against Japan, such as *Collection of Mao Zedong's Treatises* and *Mao Zedong on the Sino-Japanese War* in 1937, and the *Selected Writings of Mao Zedong on National Salvation* in 1939, anticipated the trend toward canonization.¹¹⁵ The popular acknowledgement of Mao's revolutionary discourse was epitomized in the use of the term "Maoism (Mao Zedong sixiang)," or "Mao Zedong Thought," in the party newspaper in 1942.¹¹⁶ This use of the term "Maoism" foreshadowed a process of the routinization of Mao's revolutionary discourse during the Rectification Movement when Mao's writings became required readings for the party members in the study of the Party history.

During the Rectification Movement in Yan'an, Mao's revolutionary discourse was established as the CCP's guiding framework through an ideological reeducation based on

¹¹⁵ Mao Zedong, *Mao Zedong lunwen ji* [Collection of Mao Zedong's treatises] (Shanghai: Dazhong chubanshe, 1937); Mao Zedong, *Mao Zedong lun Zhong-Ri zhangzheng* [Mao Zedong on the Sino-Japanese War] (n.p.: Shannxi renmin chubanshe, 1937); Mao Zedong, *Mao Zedong jiuguo yanlun xuanji* [Selected writings of Mao Zedong on national salvation] (Congqing: Xinhua ribao guan, 1939); Helmut Martin, *Cult and Canon: The Origins and Development of State Maoism* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharper, 1982).

¹¹⁶ Stuart R. Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung* (New York: Praeger, 1963), p. 80.

a study group system.¹¹⁷ The purpose of this movement was to regenerate the CCP by destroying the tendencies of opportunism, subjectivism, sectarianism, and formalism inside the party and by pushing forward a new approach in the study of Marxism-Leninism with an emphasis on taking into account the concrete situation of the Chinese revolution. For these purposes, the study groups were organized to study the required readings designated by the General Study Committee (Zongxuexi weiyuanhui). Under Mao's supervision, the Committee selected and edited the required readings covering the party's history. As a result, two collections, *Before the Sixth National Congress (Liuda yiqian)* and *After the Sixth National Congress (Liuda yilai)*, contained the most important materials for the ideological education under the study groups system.¹¹⁸ The materials were mostly drawn from Central Committee's resolutions, directives, and announcements, and party leaders' speeches, as well as Mao's writings.

As such, the study of the CCP's history constituted the essential part of the Rectification Movement. By reexamining the history of the party lines since the founding of the CCP, Mao meant to demonstrate the errors in the political lines of Chen Duxiu, Li Lisan, Zhang Guotao, and especially Bo Gu and Wang Ming, thereby to emphasize the correctness of his line.¹¹⁹ The Rectification Movement substantially embodied Mao's ambition to assume ideological hegemony in the CCP. More importantly, through the movement, Mao's revolutionary discourse had not only penetrated into the methodology of the study of the CCP's history, but also become deeply rooted in the hearts of the party

¹¹⁷ About the Rectification Movement and Mao's rise to power, see Gao Hua, *Hongtaiyang shi jeyan shengqi de: Yan'an Zhengfeng yundong de lailong qumai* (Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1997); Meisner, *Mao Zedong*, pp. 93-97.

¹¹⁸ Secretariat of the CCP CC, *Liuda yiqian: Dang de lishi cailiao* [Before the sixth national congress: materials for Party history] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1980); Secretariat of the CCP CC, *Liuda yilai: Dangnai mimi wenjian* [Since the sixth party congress: Secret inner-party documents] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1981).

¹¹⁹ Saich, "Writing or Rewriting History?" pp. 299-338; Martin, *Cult and Canon*, p. 9.

members. It was in this way that Mao laid the ideological foundation for his supreme power to rule China in the following thirty-five years.

Mao Zedong Thought as the Only Correct Way to Save China

Along with the routinization of his writings during the Rectification Movement, Mao's revolutionary discourse found popular reception among the party members. This popularity was embodied in Liu Shaoqi's "Liquidation of Menshevik Thought in the Party" published on 6 July 1943.¹²⁰ In this article, Liu criticizes the Mensheviks in the party as "false Marxists" and eulogizes the Bolsheviks as "true-Marxists."¹²¹ In order to eradicate the "false Marxists," Liu goes further to call for revising the CCP's history based on the correct Marxist-Leninist interpretation of the Chinese revolution, and the model in his consideration is Mao Zedong, whose "guidance" needs to "penetrate into all working sections and departments" in the party.¹²² In order to eradicate the "false Marxists," Liu concludes, "all cadres and Party member should [.....] diligently and master Comrade Mao Zedong's doctrines of the Chinese revolution and other subjects."¹²³

Liu Shaoqi's proposition was quickly formalized in the "Resolution on Certain Historical Questions,"¹²⁴ which was adopted at the Seventh Plenary Session of the Sixth

¹²⁰ Liu Shaoqi, "Qingsuan dangnei Mengshiweizhuyi sixiang [Liquidation of Menshevik thought in the party]," *Jiefang ribao* 6 July 1945; The English version adopted here is from "Liquidation of Menshevik Thought in the Party," in Boyd Compton, ed., *Mao's China: Party Reform Document 1942-1944* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1952), pp. 255-268.

¹²¹ Liu, "Liquidation of Menshevik Thought in the Party," pp. 258-262.

¹²² Liu, "Liquidation of Menshevik Thought in the Party," p. 260.

¹²³ Liu, "Liquidation of Menshevik Thought in the Party," p. 267.

¹²⁴ On 10 May 1944, the Secretariat organized the Preparatory Committee of Resolution on Historical Questions (Lishi wenti jueyi zhunbei weiyuanhui) to draft the resolution. The Committee consisted of Liu Shaoqi, Kang Sheng, Zhou Enlai, Zhang Wentian, Peng Zhen, Gao Gang, Ren Bishi, and even Bo Gu, one of the two key leaders singled out for criticism. Under Ren Bishi's guidance the draft was revised some fourteen times. It was believed that the draft was based on Mao's "Draft on Historical Questions (lishi wenti cao'an)," written in 1942, and Mao himself also participated in the revision of the draft for the "Resolution." Hu Qiaomu, who was the secretary to Mao then, was the one who made the final draft. In 1981, he would be asked to write the first draft of the "Resolution on Certain Historical Questions since the Founding of the PRC" as well.

Central Committee. The “Resolution” provides an analysis of the CCP’s history until the Zunyi Conference by focusing on criticizing the three “left lines” from 1927 to 1935, especially the period from the Fourth Plenum of the Sixth Central Committee under the leadership of Wang Ming and Bo Gu. The errors of the three “left lines” in the CCP’s history are strikingly contrasted with the correct line of Mao. It is in this way that the “Resolution” displays the correctness of Mao’s line while legitimizing his leadership in the party.¹²⁵

The most prominent significance of the “Resolution” is the sanction of Mao’s revolutionary discourse as the sole guiding ideology for the CCP. The Opening section of the “Resolution” places Mao and Mao Zedong Thought in the central position of the CCP’s history and the Chinese revolution:

Ever since its birth in 1921, the Communist Party of China has made *the integration of the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete practice of the Chinese revolution* the guiding principle of all its works, and *Comrade Mao Tse-tung’s [Mao Zedong] theory and practice of the Chinese revolution represent the integration*. With the founding of the party a new stage of the Chinese revolution was immediately unfolded, *the stage of the new-democratic revolution*, as pointed out by Comrade Mao tse-tung. Throughout the twenty-four years of struggle for *New Democracy*, throughout the *three historical periods*—the First Great Revolution, the Agrarian Revolution and the War of Resistance Against Japan—out party has consistently led the broad masses of the Chinese people in extremely arduous and bitter revolutionary struggles against their enemies, imperialism and feudalism, and has gained great successes and rich experience. In the course of its struggle the party has produced its own leader, Comrade Mao Tse-tung. Representing the Chinese proletariat and the Chinese people, Comrade Mao Tse-tung has creatively applied the scientific theory of Marxism-Leninism, the acme of human wisdom, to China, a large semi-feudal and semi-colonial country in which *the peasantry constitutes the bold of the masses* and the immediate tasks is to fight against imperialism and feudalism, a country with a vast area and a huge population, where the situation is extremely complicated and the struggle extremely hard, and he had brilliantly developed the theories of Lenin and Stalin on the colonial and semi-colonial question as well as Stalin’s theory concerning the Chinese revolution.¹²⁶

The “Resolution” defines the CCP’s history as a process in which the party made “the

¹²⁵ As the conclusion of the Resolution reads: “Today, with unprecedented unanimity the whole Party recognized the *correctness of Comrade Mao Tse-tung’s line* and with unprecedented political consciousness rallies under his banner.... This Enlarged Seventh Plenary Session of the Sixth Central Committee is firmly convinced that *under the correct leadership* of the Central Committee headed by Comrade Mao Tse-tung, the Communist Party of China.... will assuredly lead the Chinese revolution to complete victory.” CCP CC, “Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party,” in the Appendix of Mao Zedong, *Our Study and the Current Situation* (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1966), pp. 84-85.

¹²⁶ CCP CC, “Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party,” pp. 23-24.

integration of the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism with concrete practice of the Chinese revolution” whereas Mao’s “theory and practice of the Chinese revolution represent the integration.” In addition, as integral parts of Mao’s comprehensive theory of the Chinese revolution, the four-period temporal framework, and pro-peasant position have been incorporated into the “Resolution.” The content of the section and the language in use makes the “Resolution” appear like a eulogy dedicated to Mao.

The next step of the canonization of Mao’s revolutionary discourse took place when the new “Constitution of the Chinese Communist Party” was adopted at the Seventh National Congress on 11 June 1945.¹²⁷ As the fundamental organic law of the CCP, the “Constitution” defines Mao Zedong Thought as the “guiding principles” of the Party in its entire works.¹²⁸ One of the duties of Party members is to “raise the degree of their consciousness and study the basic ideas of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought.”¹²⁹ Moreover, Mao’s theory of the new-democratic revolution was integrated into the “Constitution” when it determines the “struggle for the realization of the New Democracy” as the present-stage task of the CCP.¹³⁰

The canonization of Mao Zedong represents the apogee in Mao’s search for the path of national salvation. In his comprehensive “Report on the Revision of the Party Constitution,”¹³¹ in considering the significance of Mao’s revolutionary discourse, Liu Shaoqi claims that Mao Zedong Thought is “the only ‘correct’ way and policy for ‘saving

¹²⁷ CCP, “Constitution of the Chinese Communist Party,” in Brandt, Schwartz, and Fairbank, eds., *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism*, pp. 422-439.

¹²⁸ CCP, “Constitution of the Chinese Communist Party,” p. 422.

¹²⁹ CCP, “Constitution of the Chinese Communist Party,” p. 424.

¹³⁰ CCP, “Constitution of the Chinese Communist Party,” p. 422.

¹³¹ Liu Shaoqi, “Guanyu xiugai dang de zhangcheng de bagao [Report on the revision of the Party constitution].” The translation here is based on that in Liu Shaoqi, “Report on the Revision of the Party Constitution,” in Saich, ed., *The Rise to Power of the Chinese Communist Party*, pp. 1244-1253.

China” in addition to its “sinicization of Marxism.”¹³² Accordingly, this dissertation suggests that the canonization of Mao Zedong Thought in the “Constitution” completely represents the victory in Mao’s long quest for the prescription of national salvation.

The final step in the canonization of Mao’s doctrines of the Chinese revolution was the official editing and publication of the *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung (Mao Zedong xuanji)* in the 1950s and 1960s.¹³³ With the formal canonization of Mao Zedong Thought, Mao’s revolutionary discourse, along with his particular interpretation on the May Fourth Movement, became the hegemonic ideology that was to rule China for over thirty-five years. Even in the reform era under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, the ghost of Mao Zedong Thought would continue to display its prominent influence in one way or another.

The Imperative Power of Maoism

For the purpose of this dissertation, it is important to understand the ways in which Mao Zedong Thought exerted its imperative influence on the Chinese people’s historical consciousness. At this point, previous scholarship on the organizational features of the CCP historiography and the communist interpretation of certain significant events have provided us valuable insights to examine how Mao’s revolutionary discourse extended its power.¹³⁴

The organizational structure of communist historiography in China developed a mechanism extending from the Central Committee of the CCP through the Party schools to the regional universities. In this mechanism, the Central Committee took the predominant role in forming the authorized interpretation of history that was conveyed to

¹³² Liu Shaoqi, “Report on the Revision of the Party Constitution,” esp. pp. 1250-1252.

¹³³ On the editing and publication of the Mao Tse-tung xuanji, see Martin, *Cult & Cannon*, pp. 13-24.

¹³⁴ Tony Saich and Hans van de Ven, eds., *New Perspectives on the Chinese Communist Revolution*; Jonathan Unger, ed., *Using the Past to serve the Present: Historiography and Politics in Contemporary China* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1993); Albert Feuerwerker, ed., *History in Communist China* (Cambridge, Mass.: The M.I.T. Press, 1968), esp. pp. 247-276, 306-329.

lower levels through official documents such as the “Resolution on Certain Historical Questions.” Under the influence of the CCP’s historical interpretation, the historiographers in the communist China had to follow the official line in their writings of scholarly works and textbooks.¹³⁵ Given the imperative of the 1945 “Resolution” and the Party Constitution, modern Chinese history in general and Party history in particular were either closely linked to or framed within Mao’s revolutionary discourse. As discussed above, the history of Mao’s theoretical integration of Marxism-Leninism with the practice of the Chinese revolution had been defined as the main content and temporal framework in the studies of modern Chinese and the CCP’s history. This Maoism-centered historiography became the major medium to continue and reinforce the routinization of Maoism in the post-revolutionary period. It was by this means that Mao’s revolutionary discourse became the discursive foundation for the Chinese people to conceptualize the past.

A comprehensive examination of Maoism’s impact on historical studies of the Party and modern China is beyond the scope of this chapter. It will suffice to demonstrate the point by a concise review of the historiography on the May Fourth Movement and modern China from the founding of the PRC to early 1980s. The conventional scholarship on modern Chinese history in general had been largely molded by Mao’s theoretical framework of the Chinese revolution.¹³⁶ Taking the scholarship on the May Fourth Movement as an example, historians unanimously followed the line of Mao’s May Fourth discourse. This literature had provided more empirical evidences to amplify

¹³⁵ Susanne Weigelin-Schwierdrzik, “Party Historiography,” in Unger, ed., *Using the Past to serve the Present*, pp. 156-157.

¹³⁶ Lu Zhenxiang, “Wusi yundong yanjiu shuping [Review on the studies of the May Fourth Movement],” *Jindaishi yanjiu* [Modern History Research] 2(1989): 78.

Mao's viewpoint.¹³⁷ Some scholars attempted to make certain modifications, but the theoretical and analytical frameworks they applied were derived from Mao's theory of New Democracy and constituted an integral part of the conventional scholarship from the founding of the PRC through the period of the Cultural Revolution.¹³⁸ Not until early 1980s did some historians begin to challenge the Maoist paradigm by expanding the scope of subject matters and conducting their researches with more plural perspectives. In general, from the founding of the PRC until the early 1980s, conventional scholarship on the May Fourth Movement was dominated by Mao's theoretical framework of the Chinese revolution.

The first comprehensive work on the subject was *The History of the May Fourth Movement* written by a prominent Marxist historian based on the formula of New Democracy. The author, Hua Gang (1906-1972), finished the first draft in May 1948 and eventually published the book in August 1950. In the book, Hua articulates the significance of the May Fourth Movement in Maoist language: "The May Fourth Movement was a watershed that marks the development from the old-democratic to new-democratic revolution and the beginning of the great integration of the best truth of Marxism and the practice of the Chinese revolution."¹³⁹ Following the line of the 1945 "Resolution" and Party Constitution, Hua argued that the final victory of the new-democratic revolution was only thinkable under the leadership of the Mao Zedong Thought.¹⁴⁰ The book also reflects the impact of Mao's May Fourth discourse when Hua

¹³⁷ Lu Zhenxiang, "Wusi yundong yanjiu shuping," 64.

¹³⁸ Lu, "Wusi yundong yanjiu shuping," 78.

¹³⁹ Hua Gang, *Wusi yundong shi* [The history of the May Fourth movement] (Shanghai: Xinwenyi Chubanshe, 1953), p. 1.

¹⁴⁰ Hua, *Wusi yundong shi*, p. 7.

oftentimes concludes each chapter by directly citing Mao's words.¹⁴¹

The imperative influence of the Maoist ideology was manifested in the specialized works on the May Fourth Movement in the next thirty years. The most important work on the subject matter in this period was Ding Shouhe and Ying Xuyi's *From the May Fourth Movement to the Dissemination of Marxism (Cong wusi yundong dao makesi zhuyi de chuanbo*, 1963).¹⁴² In order to amplify Mao's suggestion on the corollary relationship between the May Fourth Movement and the emergence of the CCP, they based their study on the official interpretation. During the Cultural Revolution, there was no serious academic work on the May Fourth Movement, but the label "May Fourth" became a political allegory used by the Red Guards to justify their revolutionary acts since Chairman Mao had defined the May Fourth Movement a thorough cultural revolution in thirty years earlier. As late as in the 1980s, another more comprehensive work on the May Fourth Movement by Peng Ming reveals the lasting influence of Mao's revolutionary discourse.¹⁴³ Beginning with a methodological consideration on the study of the May Fourth Movement, in the book, Peng pays attention to several intellectuals who had been underestimated by the conventional scholarship, such as Hu Shi and Chen Duxiu, and to the issue of the women's movement in the period. But, being influenced by Mao's speculation on the culture of New Democracy, Peng divides the cultural movement into two phrases, the bourgeois-cultural reform before the May Fourth Movement and the diffusion of Marxism and communist outlook after the May Fourth Movement.

¹⁴¹ Hua Gang, *Wusi yundong shi*, pp. 40-42, 44, 130, 163, 168, 184, 191, 195, 206, 213, 220, 224, 231.

¹⁴² Ding Shouhe and Ying Xuyi, *Cong wusi qimen yundong dao makesi zhuyi de chuanbo* (Beining: Sanlian shuju, 1963).

¹⁴³ Peng Ming, *Wusi yundong shi* [The history of the may fourth movement] (Beijing: Remin chubanshe, 1983).

Many prominent Party historiographers from the late 1940s to the early 1960s applied Mao's theoretical framework of the new-democratic revolution in their writings on modern Chinese history. For example, Fan Wenlan (1893-1969), a significant first-rank Party historiographer who wrote a couple of influential textbooks, published *Modern Chinese History* (*Zhongguo jindaishi*, 1947) covering the revolutionary history from the Opium War to the founding of the PRC. Given the influence of the Maoist two-stage temporal framework, the book is structured in two parts, the old-democratic revolution and the new-democratic revolution.¹⁴⁴ The profound influence of Mao's theory of New Democracy can also be seen in the *Chinese New-Democratic Revolutionary History* (*Zhongguo xinminzhu zhuyi geming shi*, 1950) by Hu Hua (1921-1987), who assumed the leading role in the teaching and writing of modern Chinese history in communist China. Mao's four-period temporal frame was translated into the structure of the book. In terms of the content, the imperative power of Maoism can be discerned as the author tended to cite from Mao's works on each period of the new-democratic revolution.¹⁴⁵

The long-term imperative of the Maoist doctrine of the Chinese revolution was to be continued and reinforced in the publications of new textbooks on modern Chinese history in the 1950s and 1960s. He Ganzhi (1906-1969), who held leading positions in the Party school before the founding of the PRC, published *The History of the Modern Chinese Revolution* (*Zhongguo xiandai geming shi*, 1956) that covers the history from the new-democratic revolution through the socialist revolution.¹⁴⁶ Following the official line, He

¹⁴⁴ Fan Wenlan, *Zhongguo jindaishi* [Modern Chinese History] (Yan'an: Xinhua shuju, 1947).

¹⁴⁵ In order to advance the investigation of the new-democratic revolution, Hu wrote a methodological work based on Mao's theory and edited collection of source materials drawn from the writings of Mao. Hu Hua, *Guanyu xuexi xinmingzhu zhuyi geming shi de jige wenti* [On certain questions in the study of the new-democratic revolutionary history] (Beijing: Xinchao, 1951); Hu Hua, ed., *Zhongguo xinminzhu zhuyi gemingshi cankao ziliao* [Materials on the new-democratic revolutionary history] (Beijing: Zhongguo tushu, 1951).

¹⁴⁶ He Ganzhi, *Zhongguo xiandai shi* [History of the modern Chinese Revolution] (H.K.: Sanlian shuju, 1958).

defined the account of the integration of Marxism-Leninism and the practice of the Chinese revolution the main content of modern Chinese history. Following the Maoist perspective on the new-democratic revolution, He begins the book with an examination of the relationship between the May Fourth Movement and the founding of the CCP. Likewise, in the 1960s, with the framework of Mao's theory of the Chinese revolution, Li Xin (1918-2004) published *The Comprehensive History of the Stage of the New-Democratic Revolution in China* (*Zhongguo Xinminzhu zhuyi shiqi tongshi* 1962) that deals with history from the May Fourth Movement to the founding of the PRC.¹⁴⁷ Mao's four-period periodization of the new-democratic revolution was translated into the structure of the book. Twenty-one years later, Li and his student, Chen Tiejian (1934-), co-authored the most comprehensive work on the history of the new-democratic revolution since the founding of the PRC, *The Annals of the History of the Chinese New-Democratic Revolution* (*Zhongguo Xinminzhu zhuyi geming shi changbian* in twenty-one volumes, 1983-1996), demonstrating the lasting influence of Mao's revolutionary discourse.¹⁴⁸

The history textbooks of the PRC from 1949 to the present have largely been framed by Mao's revolutionary discourse as well. A general survey of the official standard outlines for the teaching and writing of history textbooks from 1949 to 2000 shows Maoism's deeply rooted influence.¹⁴⁹ In this period, in terms of the high school history textbooks, the PRC had revised the standard outline for ten times, and none of them has shown any deviation from Mao's theoretical and temporal framework of the Chinese

¹⁴⁷ Li Xin, *Zhongguo Xinminzhu zhuyi shiqi tongshi* [The comprehensive history of the stage of the new-democratic revolution] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1962).

¹⁴⁸ Li Xin and Chen Tiejian, *Zhongguo Xinminzhu zhuyi geming shi changbian* [The annals of the history of the Chinese new-democratic revolution: The great beginning] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1983).

¹⁴⁹ Kecheng jiaoxue yanjiu suo ed., *Ershi shiji zhongxiaoxue kecheng biaoqun jiaoxue dagang: Lishi Juan* (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1999).

revolution.¹⁵⁰ By 1992, the PRC's history textbooks have always divided the Chinese revolution into two stages: 1) the old-democratic revolution for the part of early modern history [jindaishi] and 2) the new-democratic revolution for the part of the modern history (xiandai shi).¹⁵¹ Moreover, the history of the new-democratic revolution has been divided into five stages according to Mao's temporal framework for the study of the CCP's history. In terms of structure, the writing of PRC history textbooks had been largely framed by Mao's revolutionary discourse.

Conclusion

The Chinese century-long anxiety over looking for the best path of national salvation had culminated in the making and canonization of Mao's revolutionary discourse. Following the path of Russia, Mao found the scientific truth of national salvation in Marxism and used it to construct his hegemonic discourse by integrating Marxism-Leninism with the practice of the Chinese revolution. With his "correct" line in the practice of the communist revolution and imperative power of his revolutionary discourse, during the Rectification Movement in Yan'an, Mao was able to climb upward to the top position in the power structure of the CCP and became the supreme leader and the center of the communist revolution, as manifested by the "Resolution on Certain Historical Questions" and the 1945 Party Constitution. Along with his rise to power, Mao's revolutionary discourse was canonized as the guiding principles of the CCP, Mao Zedong Thought, which represents his victory in searching for the prescription of national salvation.

¹⁵⁰ The PRC had revised the official standard outline in 1956, 1963, 1978, 1980, 1986, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1996, and 2000.

¹⁵¹ The 1992 version of the standard outline for the teaching and writing of history textbook has defined the early modern part as the history from the Opium War to the eve of the founding of the PRC and modern part as the history after the founding of the PRC, see "Jiunian yiwu jiayu quanrizhi chuji zhongxue da gang (caoan) [The outline for the teaching of Chinese history in the junior high school (Draft)]," in *Ershi shiji zhongxiaoxue kecheng biaoqun jiaoxue dagang: Lishi juan*, pp. 135-165.

Along with the canonization of Mao Zedong Thought, the Maoism-centered historiography and the official textbooks since the founding of the PRC have become the channels through which Mao's revolutionary and May Fourth discourse have not only extended imperative influences into the historical profession but also become deeply rooted in the hearts of the Chinese people. This imperative influence was further consolidated and reinforced with the commemorative monuments and institutions constructed at the center of Tiananmen Square, the geographical and symbolic center of Beijing.

PART TWO

“Tiananmen! Tiananmen!” Dajiang pointed at the image of Tiananmen on the bas-relief “May Fourth Movement” crying out at the top of his voice excitedly. “Yes! Tiananmen,” our teacher raised his head and looked up to the splendid Tiananmen opposite the Monument [to the People’s Heroes] and praised with deep emotion, “the magnificent Tiananmen is the testimony of the Chinese people’s gloriously revolutionary tradition. On 4 May 1919, the Chinese youth began a revolutionary storm against imperialism and feudalism that led to the May Fourth Movement.” Standing at the place where the May Fourth Movement took place and gazing at the relief of “May Fourth Movement,” we were extraordinarily excited. Pointing at the text on the banner carved on the relief, Rongmei read: “China is the Chinese people’s China. Abrogating the secret [Versailles] treaty.”... Our teacher... led us to view the relief “May Fourth Movement” carefully and told us the stories about May Fourth... all of which had paved the way to the emergence of the CCP in terms of the preparation of ideology and cadres.... Then, our teacher went on to indicate that: “The May Fourth Movement marked a new stage in the progress of the Chinese revolution, namely, a turning point from the old-democratic revolution led by the bourgeois class to the new-democratic revolution led by the proletarian class.”

Lü Denglai, *Renmin yingxiong jinianbei shihua* (1980)¹

This is a description drawn from popular reading material for the purpose of patriotism education in the 1980s. Written in the form of a student’s field trip report, this award-winning book describes how a teacher introduces to his students the defining moments of the Chinese revolution by explaining the marble reliefs on the Monument to the People’s Heroes during a tour at Tiananmen Square on the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the PRC. Although the scenario may be imaginary, it provides a vivid representation of what typically took place in the daily life of Tiananmen Square. As described by the documentary film “The Square (*Guangchang*),” in addition to being a scenic spot for the tourists from the provinces of China and foreign countries, the space has functioned like a history classroom for the old and young people to learn or to recollect the history of the Chinese revolution. It has also been assumed as a ritual site for the members of the Young Pioneers of China to display their loyalty to the CCP and the nation by swearing the pledge: “I am a member of Young Pioneer of China. Under the Pioneer Flag, I

¹ Lü Denglai, ed., *Renming yingxiong jinianbei shihua* [The history of the Monument to the People’s Heroes] (Shanghai: Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshe, 1980), p. 48.

promise that I love the CCP, I love the motherland, I love the people; I will study and exercise well to get ready to contribute my effort to the cause of Communism.”²

Tiananmen Square has become a public history classroom in which teachers or tour guides transmit the Maoist version of Chinese revolutionary history to students or tourists by using the historical reliefs on the Monument as auxiliary teaching materials. This typical scenario not only illustrates how Mao’s revolutionary discourse was transmitted from generation to generation but also reveals how Tiananmen Square has been constituted as a spatial and material framework to embody the Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition.

At first glance, this description is simply a record of a student’s personal recollection on his field trip to the Monument to the People’s Heroes. More than a personal reminiscence, however, it provides a typical setting to show how the official discourse of the past is transplanted in individual memory. Looking at the artistic representation of Tiananmen on the relief “May Fourth Movement” before the actual gate, the student learned from his teacher that Tiananmen is “the testimony of the Chinese people’s glorious revolutionary tradition.” While gazing at the relief that expresses considerable patriotic sentiment with the line of “China is the Chinese people’s China,” the student realized that the May Fourth Movement as a revolutionary tradition had “paved the way to the emergence of the CCP.” Mao’s definition of the May Fourth Movement as “a turning point from the old-democratic revolution to the new-democratic revolution” was transmitted from the teacher to the students. The visual manifestation of Tiananmen and the May Fourth Movement and the teacher’s verbal narrative in the language of Mao’s revolutionary discourse work together to play a critical role in the intergenerational

² Zhang Yuan, dir., *The Square*, 1994.

circulation of the cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition. It is in this way that the official discourse of the Chinese past is transplanted in individual memory.

A close reading of the description further demonstrates certain essential elements involved in the memory making and transmission of the Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition: the defining moment of the Chinese past (the May Fourth Movement); an official discourse on the defining moment (Mao's revolutionary discourse); a physical representation of that defining moment in the language of official discourse (Monument to the People's Heroes); a physical and spatial framework where the verbal and physical reproduction of that official discourse take shape (Tiananmen Square); and finally memory transmitters and receivers of that official discourse from different generations and social groups (teachers or tour guides and students or tourists). These elements are essential in the making and transmission of the cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition at Tiananmen Square.

Considering that the description was written in 1979 when the architectural complex of Tiananmen Square was already in place, we can see in the text that a material and spatial framework of memory making come into being. If the Monument to the People's Heroes had not been installed at Tiananmen Square, the scenario documented in the description would become unthinkable. Whereas Chapter Two has explored the making and canonization of Mao's revolutionary discourse and its imperative impact on historiography and history textbooks in communist China, the aim of Part Two is to explore how Tiananmen Square was constituted as a material and spatial framework within which the Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary

tradition has been reproduced, recollected, and transmitted in the language of Mao's revolutionary discourse from generation to generation. In particular, that cultural memory entered a period of materialization in the era of the PRC when Mao's revolutionary discourse was further translated into Beijing's urban configuration and the commemorative monuments and institutions established at Tiananmen Square.

Chapter Three

Making of A Chinese Capital of New Democracy: The Spatial and Symbolic Centrality of Tiananmen Square in Beijing's Urban Planning

A comprehensive study of the urban planning of Beijing after the founding of the PRC demonstrates both external and internal influences. It is generally accepted that Beijing's urban planning in the early years of the PRC reflected profound impact of Soviet concepts and methodology in building socialist cities.¹ After the founding of the PRC, the CCP had such modest knowledge and experience in urban management that they resorted to the Russian experts. Given the impact of those Russian experts, who came to Beijing in September 1949, March 1953, and April 1955, Soviet ideas of urban planning found lasting reception by the PRC urban planners and were manifested in the landscape of contemporary Chinese cities.²

If we were to focus too much on Soviet influence, we would overlook alternative influences, foreign and local. As a veteran expert recalled, when the municipal government under the sway of the CCP drafted the general programs on the urban planning of Beijing, in addition to drawing from the Soviet experience, they also borrowed the concepts and methodologies from Europe and the United States and took the actual situation of Beijing into consideration.³ Some veteran urban planners even

¹Victor Sit, "Soviet Influence on Urban Planning in Beijing, 1949-1991," *The Town Planning Review* 67:4 (Oct., 1996): 457-484; Victor Sit, *Beijing: The Nature and Planning of a Chinese Capital City* (New York: Wiley, 1996), pp. 82-113; Thomas J. Campanella, *The Concrete Dragon: China's Urban Revolution and What it Means for the World* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2008), pp. 93-119.

²Although the relationship between the USSR and the PRC became worsen after 1960, some major Soviet concepts of urban planning were manifested in the 1982 General Program on the Urban Planning and Construction of Beijing and even in its revision in 1992. Sit, "Soviet Influence on Urban Planning in Beijing, 1949-1991," 465, 478; Sit, *Beijing*, pp. 84, 97-105, 109.

³Dong Guangqi, "Wushiqinian guanghui licheng—Jianguo yilai Beijing chengshi guihua de fazhan [The glorious history—The development of the urban planning of Beijing since the founding of the PRC]," *Beijing guihua jinashe* [Planning and construction of Beijing] 5(2006): 13.

refused to admit the Soviet influence.⁴

Despite the fact that the Soviet influence is evident, it is important to explore how indigenous elements had an impact on the urban configuration of Beijing before and after the founding of the PRC. To do so, this chapter focuses on how the Chinese communist nostalgia over the officially sanctioned revolutionary tradition and Mao's revolutionary discourse were imposed on the making of Beijing as the PRC capital of New Democracy. The urban planning of Beijing under dominion of the Maoist ideology represents a "human product" which involved "an appropriation and transformation of space" that was "inseparable from the reproduction and transformation of society in time and space."⁵ More relevant to the purpose of this dissertation, without the official sanction of Beijing as the PRC capital, Tiananmen Square would not have been endowed with such considerable symbolism as it has today.

Nostalgia over Revolution and Making Beijing as a Capital of New Democracy

For many reasons, Beijing was determined to be the PRC capital. First, Beijing was an ancient city that had been the political center of China since the twelfth century.⁶ The city had been the national capital of the principal ruling houses in imperial China since the Jin dynasty (1115-1234). The scale of the city was further consolidated and expanded in the Yuan (1271-1368), Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties.⁷ Moreover, given

⁴ For example, Tao Zongzhen claimed that his design of Tiananmen Square in 1958 had nothing to do with that of Red Square in Moscow but essentially a product based on the actual circumstance of Beijing. Tao Zongzhen, "Tiananmen guangchang daodi shi shei guihua de [Who was the one to design Tiananmen Square]," *Wenshi bolan* [Culture and history vision] 6 (2008): 11.

⁵ Linda Hershkovitz, "Tiananmen Square and the Politics of Place," *Political Geography* 12:5 (Sept. 1993): 396.

⁶ Zhongyang dang'an guan [Central Archives], ed., *Xinzhongguo xiang women zoulai* [*The coming of new China*] (Beijing: Chinese Archives, 1999), p. 86; Wang Juying, *Xinzhongguo dingdu Beijing jishi* [An account of setting Beijing as the capital of new China] (Beijing: Junshi kexue, 2000), pp. 66-80.

⁷ Hou Renzhi, *Beijingcheng de qi yuan and bianqian* [The origins and development of Beijing] (Beijing: Zhongguo shudian, 2001), esp. pp. 53-143; Jasper Becker, *City of Heavenly Tranquility: Beijing in the History of China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); L. C. Arlington and William Lewisohn, *In Search of Old Peking* (Hong Kong: Oxford University, 1987). Except the first fifty-three year of the Ming dynasty, Beijing was the capital of the Ming ruling house since 1421.

the historical development of over seven hundred years, the ancient capital was turned into a historic city that embodies abundant physical relics and cultural heritages from traditional China. After the fall of the Qing dynasty, among many legacies in Beijing, the Forbidden City built by the Emperor Yongle has been well kept and turned into a national museum since the Republican era.⁸ After over sixty years of development in the PRC era, the urban layout of old Beijing has largely remained intact up to the present.

However, being a long-established political and cultural center of imperial China alone would not make Beijing the PRC capital. It is generally believed that the conclusion reached to setting Beijing as the PRC capital was due to the fact that Beijing was a sacred city embodying the communist sanctioned revolutionary tradition. By the peaceful liberation of Beijing (then Beiping),⁹ the top leaders of the CCP had already chosen the ancient capital as the political heart of the prospective New China. It was commonly perceived by the Chinese communists that the city's revolutionary tradition, such as the May Fourth Movement and the Anti-War and Anti-Hunger Movement in 1947, had paved the way to the final victory of the CCP, and thus, making Beijing the PRC capital was a corollary outcome of the communist revolution.¹⁰ So much so that, when Mao moved to Beijing along with the headquarters of the CCP on 25 March 1949, he could not help thinking about his revolutionary career in Beijing around the May Fourth Movement:

⁸ A comprehensive study of urban planning and construction of Beijing during the Republican era, see Madeleine Yue Dong, *Republican Beijing: The City and its Histories* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), esp. pp. 21-53.

⁹ The name of the city has been changed several times since it became the national capital of China. During the Jin dynasty, the city was known as Zhongdu (middle capital). During the Yuan dynasty, the city's name was changed into Dadu (great capital). In the wake of the collapse of the Yuan Empire in China, in 1368, the Emperor Hongwu (1368-1398), the founder of the Ming dynasty, renamed it as Beiping (northern peace). In 1403, the Emperor Yongle (1402-1424) gave today's name of the city known as Beijing (northern capital). Until the city was renamed as Beiping by the GMD government of Republic of China in 1928, throughout the Qing dynasty and early Republican era, Beijing had been used as the name of China's national capital. See Hou, *Jingcheng de qiyuan and bianqian*, esp. pp. 53-143.

¹⁰ Central Archives, ed., *Xinzhongguo xiang women zoulai*, pp. 86-87; Wang, *Xinzhongguo dingdu Beijing jishi*, pp. 66-80.

I have been in Beijing as well, and it was exactly thirty years ago. In those days, I was rushing about in order to *search for the principles of saving the nation and the people* (jiuguo jiumin de zhenli). Although I experienced some hardship, it was *good* because I met a truly great man, and that is comrade Li Dazhao. Only with his assistance would I become a Marxist-Leninist. What a pity, he had sacrificed his precious life for the revolution. He was truly my mentor, and I do not know where I would be if without his guidance!¹¹ (Italics mine.)

Finding himself to be in a city of revolutionary memory, Mao could not refrain from longing for his past experience and late comrade in the thirty-year struggle for the cause of national salvation. With this nostalgia over his good old days, Mao bridged the temporal continuity between the past and the present in order to justify what he was at that moment. In the communist imagination, Beijing is a sacred place with abundant physical remnants and historic sites embodying the past of national salvation and revolutionary tradition.

The communist nostalgia over the officially sanctioned revolutionary tradition and the CCP top leaders' anticipation that Beijing would be the capital of New China largely explains why the CCP put forward the policy of peaceful liberation of the ancient city. To protect the sacred "red city" from the devastation of war, as early as in September 1948, Mao revealed his wish to liberate the city without applying military force during the enlarged Politburo meetings held in Xibopo when he told the general Xu Xiangqian (1901-1990): "It would be better not to attack Beiping (Beijing) [by military force]."¹² In late 1948, during the Pingjin (Beiping-Tianjin) Campaign, Mao's wish was echoed by general Nie Rongzheng (1899-1992). After occupying Tianjin, Nie sent a telegram to Mao suggesting the idea of peaceful liberating Beijing, and his suggestion was approved.¹³ Nie's intention was to keep the city from ruin so that it would remain intact

¹¹ Wang, *Xinzhongguo dingdu Beijing jishi*, p. 126.

¹² Xin Xiangyang and Ni Jianzhong, ed., *Shoudu zhongguo* [Capitals of China] (Beijing: Zhongguo guoji chubanshe, 1997), p. 961.

¹³ Wang, *Xinzhongguo dingdu Beijing jishi*, p. 70.

to serve as the capital of New China. General Nie would become the second mayor of Beijing after the founding of the PRC.

By the end of 1948, the CCP adopted peaceful liberation of Beijing as its formal policy. The CCP issued the directive “To Fight for the Liberation of an Intact Cultural Ancient Capital and the Capital after the Liberation” and ordered the Beijing underground party organizations to launch propaganda work targeted to Fu Zuoyi (1895-1974), the chief general of the GMD troops guarding the city.¹⁴ Eventually, the CCP and general Fu reached an agreement on 21 January 1949, and, ten days later, the PLA and new municipal government took over Beijing. In this way, the sacred city of revolutionary memory thus remained undamaged. On 23 February 1949, at a meeting with Fu, Mao told him: “You have done a great thing [for Beijing], and the people will never forget you.”¹⁵

The Maoist Ideology

In addition to the Chinese communist nostalgia over the sanctioned revolutionary tradition, the Maoist ideology also played a crucial role in the CCP’s decision to make Beijing the capital of New China. On 8 September 1948, at an enlarged Politburo meeting, Mao already projected his proposal to create a New China by establishing the proletarian dictatorship based on an alliance of the workers and peasants. In Mao’s view, the new regime would be totally different from Jiang Jieshi’s authoritarian dictatorship, and therefore the capital should not be set at Nanjing, which hosted the social basis of the GMD regime, the bourgeois class in Jiangsu and Zhejiang. “We are going to establish the

¹⁴Beijing Archives, ed., *Beiping heping jiefang qianhou* [Before and after the peaceful liberation of Beiping] (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1988), pp. 43-74; Wang, *Xinzhongguo dingdu Beijing jishi*, pp. 33-39; Xin and Ni, ed., *Shoudu zhongguo*, p. 961.

¹⁵Wang, *Xinzhongguo dingdu Beijing jishi*, p. 42.

capital in Beiping [Beijing], and there we will find our social basis, the working class and enormous laboring masses.”¹⁶ Thus, Beijing not only was to be the new capital of China but also a city of proletarian class.

The CCP officially decided to choose Beijing as the capital of New China at the Second Plenum of the Seventh Central Committee of the CCP in March 1949. During the meetings of Second Plenum, Mao optimistically projected: “We hope to seize Nanking in April or May, and then to hold the political consultative conference in Beiping, establish the joint government, and set Beiping as the capital.”¹⁷ The party delegates unanimously supported Mao’s idea, and Beijing was determined to be the national capital of the PRC.

The formal legitimation of Beijing as the PRC capital came with the holding of the First Plenum of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (FCCPPCC). On 27 September 1949, the FCCPPCC formally chose Beijing as the PRC capital and renamed it Beijing.¹⁸ Written in Maoist language, the “Suggestion on the National Flag, National Capital, and Calendar Era” states why the FCCPPCC decided to set Beijing as the new capital:

The counterrevolutionary GMD set their capital in Nanking, and the reason was that they could rely on imperialism as Nanking is close to Shanghai, which was the central city for imperialism and comprador class to exploit the Chinese people. The PRC is a people’s country and it depends on the Chinese people alone. Hence, we do not have to set our capital in Nanking. Beiping had been the capital of China over seven hundred years. Politically, it is located in the old liberated area of northern China where the people’s power is enormous.... Culturally, it is a noted historic and cultural city with worldwide reputation and has been the cradle of new culture and thought since the May Fourth.... Therefore, we suggest that the PRC should set Beiping as the capital and rename it Beijing.¹⁹

The almost eight-century long tradition of being the capital city of imperial China, the

¹⁶Xin and Ni, *Shoudu zhongguo*, p. 960.

¹⁷Wang, *Xinzhongguo dingdu Beijing jishi*, p. 80; Xin and Ni, *Shoudu zhongguo*, p. 961.

¹⁸ FCCPPCC, “Sige jueyan [The four resolutions],” in Yang Jianxin, *et al.*, ed., *Wuxing hongqi cong zeli shengqi: Zhongguo renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi dansheng jishi ji ziliao xuanbian* [Account and selected materials on the emergence of the Chinese people’s political consultative conference] (Beijing: Wenshi ziliao chubanshe, 1984), p. 505.

¹⁹ FCCPPCC, “Guanyu guoqi guodu jinian de yijian [Suggestion on the national flag, national capital, and calendar era],” in Central Archives, ed., *Xinzhongguo xiang women zoulai*, p. 88.

plentiful historical and cultural heritages from the imperial past, the glorious tradition of new-democratic revolution, and the ideological correctness of social component in the city, Beijing was destined to be the new capital of the Chinese communist regime.

Constructing a Capital of New Democracy

In addition to being the PRC capital, Beijing was to be constructed as a Maoist city of New Democracy. Given the optimistic prospect to win the civil war with the GMD, the CCP began to plan the urban management of Beijing even before the liberation of the city. On 13 December 1948, the CCP set up the Beiping (later renamed Beijing) Committee of the CCP headed by Peng Zhen (1902-1997). Four days later, the first meeting of the Beijing Committee announced to set up the People's Government of Beiping Municipality and the Military Control Commission of Beiping.²⁰ According to the public announcement of the People's Government on 1 January 1949, the new municipal authorities assumed building the city into a "new Beiping of New Democracy" as its vital task.²¹ A similar message was conveyed in the second announcement that calls for all the residents to "fight for building new Beiping of New Democracy."²² The banner of the Maoist ruling ideology was upheld in Beijing even before the founding of the PRC.

The eventual liberation of Beijing marked the rebirth of the ancient capital. On 31 January 1949, the PLA entered Beijing through the Xizhimen (the Gate of Western Axis) and subsequently assumed the duty of guarding the prospective PRC capital. The military

²⁰Wang, *Xinzhongguo dingdu Beijing jishi*, p. 2.

²¹ The public announcement reads: "The suburb of Beijing has been recaptured and the ancient city will be liberated. In order to maintain the public security, ensure the safety of people's lives and properties, mobilize and organize the people from all levels to help the People's Liberation Army to rapidly crush the counter-revolutionary rule of Jiang and Fu's gang of bandits, and building new Beiping of New Democracy, we establish the Beiping People's Government." See "Beijingshi renmin zhengfu chengli bugao [Public announcement of the founding of the People's Government of Beijing Municipality]," in Beijing Archives, ed., *Beiping heping jiefang qianhou*, p. 88.

²² "Beijingshi renmin zhengfu rucheng bangong bugao [Public announcement of moving the People's Government of Beijing Municipality into the city]," in Beijing Archives, ed., *Beiping heping jiefang qianhou*, p. 98.

flag of the PLA was hoisted on the top of the city's entrance gate, and Beijing entered a new chapter of its history. Two days later, the new Beijing municipal government formally moved to the city. The next day, in order to commemorate the liberation of Beijing, the PLA held a formal ceremony of entering the city. Greeted by the residents standing along the streets, the PLA troop procession entered the city from the Yongdingmen (the Gate of Eternal Peace) and headed north all the way through the Zhengyangmen (the Gate of Pure Sun) and went out of the city by the Guanganmen (the Gate of Broad Peace).²³ From Yongdingmen to Guanganmen, the parade route overall was along the central axis of Beijing, a route that would play an important role almost half a century later when the PRC held the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games as I will demonstrate in the conclusion.

In the middle of the procession, the PLA troops intentionally turned west at Dongjiaminxiang (Legation Street) and passed through the Beijing Legation Quarter where the Chinese military and police forces had not been allowed to enter since 1901. The designated procession route embodied the CCP's intention to make obvious to Western imperialism that, after the century-long fight for national salvation, Beijing now belonged to China and the Chinese people.²⁴ By passing through the Legation Quarter, the CCP aimed to associate the liberation of Beijing with the May Fourth Movement, a revolutionary tradition that was defined by Mao as the start of the new-democratic revolution. The ceremony was meant to represent the city's rebirth by invoking the Chinese past of national salvation and revolutionary tradition.

The Maoist language of New Democracy was further manifested in the celebration

²³*People's Daily* (3 February 1949): 1.

²⁴Wang, *Xinzhongguo dingdu Beijing jishi*, p. 9.

ceremony of Beijing's peaceful liberation at Tiananmen Square on 12 February 1949. It was reported that over twenty thousand Beijing residents went to the ceremony, and many of them took small portraits of Chairman Mao in their hands. Four giant portraits of Mao, Zhu De, Nie Rongzhen and Ye Jianying were hung on the walls of the Tiananmen. Mao's giant portrait was for the first time hung on Tiananmen.²⁵ At the ceremony, the first mayor Ye Jianying declared the founding of the Beijing municipal government and reiterated one of its central tasks was to carry out the policy of New Democracy under the guidance of Mao.²⁶

The significance of building new Beijing as a city of New Democracy in the progress of the Chinese revolution was provided in the *People's Daily's* editorial for celebrating the peaceful liberation of the city in line with Mao's revolutionary discourse. The editorial characterizes Beijing as a place that embodies abundant revolutionary tradition by calling the future capital as "the cradle of the May Fourth Movement" as well as "the heart of student and labor movements since May Fourth."²⁷ The liberation of the city symbolizing the beginning of the new-democratic revolution thus marks the first step to the success of the Chinese revolution in the century-long struggle for national salvation. Then, the editorial projects a new China in which a people's democratic dictatorship will be established in the form of an alliance of the workers and peasants following the success of the new-democratic revolution.²⁸ Applying the metaphor of rebirth, it goes on to suggest that, when the "old" China was going to be reformed into a "new" China, the "old" Beijing would be constructed as a "new" Beijing by carrying out the policy of New

²⁵*People's Daily* (18 February 1949): 1.

²⁶"Ye Jianying shizhang jianghua [The mayor Ye Jianying's Talk]," *People's Daily* (15 February 1949): 1.

²⁷"Wei jianshe renmin minzhu de xin Beiping er fendou [To fight for the construction of the people's democratic new Beijing]," *People's Daily* (4 February 1949): 1; "Wei jianshe renmin minzhu de xin Beiping er fendou," in Beijing Archives, ed., *Beiping heping jiefang qianhou*, p. 7.

²⁸"Wei jianshe renmin minzhu de xin Beiping er fendou," 1.

Democracy. In the end, the editorial concludes by calling for all residents of the city to fight for the construction of new Beijing as a city of New Democracy.²⁹ The ancient capital was to be reformed into a city that encapsulated the Maoist ideology.

A Production City of New Democracy

The construction of new Beijing as a New Democracy city was not simply meant to materialize the Maoist ideology but also represented that the center of revolution was shifted from the countryside to urban cities to meet the need of seizing political power.

The strategic shift was proposed at the Second Plenum of the Seventh Central Committee in March 1949, as Mao puts it:

From 1927 to the present the center of gravity of our work has been in the villages—gathering strength in the villages, using the villages in order to surround the cities and then taking the cities. The period for this method of work has now ended. The period of “from the city to the village” and of the city leading the village has now begun. The center of gravity of the Party’s work has shifted from the village to the city.³⁰

With this shift, the strategy of encircling cities by the countryside was suspended, and as a consequence, in Mao’s words, “the center of gravity of the work of the Party and the army must be in the cities and we must do our utmost to learn how to administer and build the cities.”³¹ Given the CCP’s scant knowledge and experience in the work of urban management, in addition to resorting to the Soviet experts, it seemed logical for the urban administrators to apply Mao’s New Democracy policy in their works in the cities.

What does the New Democracy policy mean to the work in the urban areas? New Democracy was more than simply a political label. In his report to the Second Plenum of the Seventh Central Committee, Mao extended his theory of New Democracy into the general principles of urban management. Mao suggested that, in order to consolidate the

²⁹“Wei jianshe renmin minzhu de xin Beiping er fendou,” 1.

³⁰Mao Zedong, “Report to the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the CCP,” in *SW*, vol. IV, p. 363.

³¹Mao, “Report to the Second Plenary Session,” pp. 363-364.

people's political power in the urban areas, the CCP's struggle in the cities should "whole-heartedly rely on the working class, unite with the rest of the laboring masses, win over the intellectuals and win over to our side as many as possible of the national bourgeois elements, and their representatives who can co-operate with us."³² For this purpose, the urban administration in the cities first of all is to "restore and develop the production in the cities."³³ In doing so, the party comrades in the urban areas "must do their utmost to learn the techniques of production and the methods of managing production as well as other closely related work such as commerce and banking." Otherwise, according to the past experience, the outcome would be that "the workers are unemployed, their livelihood deteriorates and they become dissatisfied with the Communist Party." "Only when production in the cities is restored and developed, when consumer-cities are transformed into producer-cities," in Mao's final analysis, "can the people's political power be consolidated."³⁴ Following Mao's ideas, the future premier Zhou Enlai ordered that the urban administrators in the entire nation must put the policy of "serving for the production and workers" into practice.³⁵ As a result, in May 1949, the Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Commission was set up to supervise the urban planning of the city.³⁶ The guiding principle of restoring and developing production was

³²This conforms to the idea of creating a united front consisting of the workers and peasants as well as the national and petty bourgeoisie in the politics of New Democracy as discussed in previous chapter. In Mao's view, the priority of the work in urban areas is to do anything necessary to make sure the consolidation of the people's political power in the form of united front. Mao, "Report to the Second Plenary Session," p. 364.

³³Mao, "Report to the Second Plenary Session," p. 364.

³⁴Mao, "Report to the Second Plenary Session," p. 365.

³⁵Zhou Enlai, "Guanyu guomin jingji dierge wunian jihua de jianyi de baogao [Report of the suggestions on the second five-year project of national economy]," in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjusshi, ed., *Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian* [Selection of the important documents since the founding of the PRC], vol. 9 (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1994), p. 191; Li Qinggang, "Lun Zhou Enlai dui Beijing chengshi jianhe de gongxian [On Zhou Enlai's contribution to the construction of Beijing]," *Beijing shehui kexue* [Beijing social sciences] 2 (2004): 33.

³⁶"Archive of the Beijing Committee of the CCP," Beijing Municipal Archives, 1-5-19, p. 6; Dong Guangqi, *Gudu Beijing: Wusi nian yanbian lu* [Old capital Beijing: A record of development in fifty years] (Nanjing: Dongnan daxue chubanshe, 2006), p. 3; Likewise, given the overall goal to consolidate the people's political power, the urban construction in the cities also involved other economic measures of New Democracy targeted to the national and petty

to be translated into the urban construction of Beijing by the 1980s.

The Maoist guiding principles of municipal management in the cities were soon manifested in Beijing's urban planning and industrial construction in the wake of the Second Plenum of the Seventh Central Committee. As early as in April 1949, in line with Mao's guiding principles, Peng Zhen drafted the resolution on "Restoring and Developing the Production is the Central Task of the Work in the City."³⁷ "According to the spirit of the resolution adopted at the Second Plenum, the gravity of the Party's work has shifted from the countryside to the cities," as Peng puts it, "and to restore, reform and develop production in the city is now the central task for the party, government, army and the people."³⁸ Under the sway of Mao's discourse on New Democracy, not only was Beijing to be assumed as the cultural and political center of the PRC, it was to be constructed as a Maoist production city, a city of chimneys.

The Maoist guiding principles of urban management were also imposed on Beijing's city planning and management by the reform era. In 1952, the Maoist guiding principles were translated into the three policies of the municipal work in Beijing: To serve the people, to serve production, and to serve the central government.³⁹ The three policies

bourgeoisie. As demonstrated in previous chapter, in Mao's theory of New Democracy, the private property is allowed to exist in the transitive period of new-democratic revolution. Therefore, the urban work in this period must take into account the issues related to the management of private capital. In particular, given the facts that China's private capitalist industry was a considerable force that could not be ignored in the interest of developing the national economy, it was necessary to "make use of the positive qualities of urban and rural private capitalism as far as possible (p. 367)" even after the victory of communist revolution in a long period. In accordance to the theory of New Democracy, in the period of new-democratic revolution, "all capitalist elements in the cities and countryside which are not harmful but beneficial to the national economy should be allowed to exist and expand (p. 368)." But, the private capital's existence and development were not without any restrictions but needed to be controlled under the people's political power. Therefore, in Mao's view, the central task for the party comrades in the cities was to restrict the development of private capital in a moderate way while at the same time restoring and developing the production in the urban areas. See Mao, "Report to the Second Plenary Session," pp. 367-378.

³⁷ Peng Zhen, "Huifu yu fanzhan shengchan shi chengshi gongzuo de zhongxin renwu [Restoring and developing production is the central task of the work in the city]," in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Peng Zhen Wenxuan* (Selected writings of Peng Zhen) (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1991) pp. 178-185.

³⁸ Peng, "Huifu yu fanzhan shengchan shi chengshi gongzuo de zhongxin renwu," p. 178.

³⁹ Peng Zhen, "Guanyu Beijingshi wunianlai zhengfu gongzuo qingkuang he jinhou renwu de baogao," in Beijingshi dangangan [Beijing Municipal Archives], ed *Beijingshi zhongyan wenxian xuanbian* [Selection of the important

were further written into the general program on the urban planning and construction of Beijing proposed by the municipal government in summer 1953. According to the program, the building of the national capital was devoted to “serve production, the central government and the people,” and the national capital was planned not only to be the “political, economic and cultural center,” but also to be China’s “industrial base and scientific technology center.”⁴⁰ The guiding principle of restoring and developing production was especially emphasized during the period of the Great Leap Forward as manifested by the “1958 General Program on the Urban Planning and Construction of Beijing.” In its report to the Central Committee of the CCP, the Beijing Committee reiterates that “Beijing is not only the political center and cultural and education center of our nation, it should be rapidly constructed into a center of modern industrial base and scientific technology” and “this is the precondition on which this General Program was drew up.”⁴¹ This emphasis on building Beijing as a production city was lasted until the late 1970s when the “Draft of the General Program on the Urban Planning and Construction of Beijing” was proposed in March 1982. Following the instruction from the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the CCP, this new program not any more assumes building Beijing as a production city as the guiding principle. Instead, the PRC capital was redefined as the political and cultural center of the nation, and there was no

documents about the Beijing municipality] (Beijing: Zhongguo dangan chubashe, 2002), p. 522; Wang Yanchun, “Peng Zhen dui Beijingshi zhongti guihua de gongxian [Peng Zhen’s contribution to the general urban planning of Beijing Municipality],” *Beijing dangshi* [The Party history of Beijing] 3(2002): 9.

⁴⁰ “Gaijian yu kuojian Beijingshi guihua caoan de yaodian (1953) [The essentials of the draft program on reconstructing and expanding the Beijing Municipality],” Archive of the Beijing Committee of the CCP, Beijing Municipal Archives, 1-5-90; also collected in Beijing Municipal Archives; “Gaijian yu kuojian Beijingshi guihua caoan de yaodian,” in Beijing jianshe shishu bianji weiyuanhui [Beijing Construction History Editorial Committee], ed., *Jianguo yilai Beijing chengshi jianshe ziliao (JYLBCJZ)* [Materials on the city construction of Beijing since the founding of the PRC], vol. 1, Chengshi guohua [City Planning] (Beijing: Beijing Construction History Editorial Committee, 1987), p. 172.

⁴¹ “Guanyu Beijing chengshi jianshe zongti guihua chubu fangan xiang zhongyang de baogao [Report to the Central Committee about the draft of the general program on urban planning and construction of Beijing],” in *JYLBCJZ*, p. 195.

mention of Beijing being an economic center or a modern industrial base.⁴²

Planning Spatial Centrality of Tiananmen Square in Beijing

Tiananmen Square as a Milestone on the Central Axis of Beijing

The construction of Tiananmen Square since 1949 is usually considered as one of the milestones in the history of Beijing constructed on its central axis.⁴³ As Hou Renzhi suggests, the building of the Forbidden City, which crystallizes the quintessence of traditional Chinese architecture and culture, on the north-south axis of Beijing can be viewed as the first milestone. The second milestone was the enlarged construction of Tiananmen Square at the center of the central axis in new Beijing.⁴⁴ As an outcome, the former T-shaped palace square was transformed into an open space in which an architecture complex was established to embody the Maoist ideology and to symbolize New China. The third milestone was the installation of National Olympic Sport Center at north section of the central axis. As the site to hold the Eleventh Asian Games, the Sport Center represents communist China's initial reemergence in the world sports stage.⁴⁵ I suggest that a fourth milestone in the urban construction of Beijing can be added to the list: the building of National Stadium (Bird's Nest) at the new northern end of the city's central axis. It was built to host the 2008 Beijing Olympics that symbolizes China's rise to the power in the world.

The four architectural complexes on the central axis of Beijing from the center to the northern end not only constitute four milestones in the history of the city's urban

⁴² Beijing Construction History Editorial Committee, ed., *JYLCJZ*, pp. 78, 217-218.

⁴³ Hou, *Jingcheng de qi yuan and bianqian*, pp. 144-151; Hou Renzhi, "Shilun Beijing chengshi guihua jianshe zhong de sange lichengbei [A preliminary discussion on three milestones in the construction of Beijing]," *Chengshi guhua* [City planning review] 6 (November 1994): 4-9; Hou Renzhi, *Beijingcheng de shengming yinji* [Living memory of Beijing city] (Beijing: Sanliang shudian, 2009), pp. 259-268.

⁴⁴ Hou, *Jingcheng de qi yuan and bianqian*, pp. 149-150; Hou, *Beijingcheng de shengming yinji*, p. 261.

⁴⁵ Hou, *Jingcheng de qi yuan and bianqian*, p. 151; Hou, *Beijingcheng de shengming yinji*, pp. 261-262.

construction but also signify four defining moments of Chinese history. To tell the stories of the last three milestones is to render the history of communist China from the founding of the PRC to the twentieth-first century. This history can be best understood by locating it in the broader context of Beijing's urban planning and construction.

From Political Symbolism to Geographical Centrality

A sacred place where numerous officially sanctioned revolutionary events took place and the birthplace of New China where Mao declared the founding of the PRC, Tiananmen Square was destined to be constructed as the symbolic center of communist China.

According to veteran urban planners and administrators of Beijing, the PRC leaders already decided reconstructing Tiananmen Square to be the central task in the urban construction of Beijing even before the founding of the PRC. Immediately after Beijing was liberated, considering that the space in front of Tiananmen was too small to hold large-scale military parades and mass congregations, Mao gave an instruction to the Beijing municipal authorities to renovate Tiananmen Square into an immense "One-Million-People Square (Baiwanren guangchang)."⁴⁶ We also learn that, on the day of founding ceremony of the PRC, Mao and Zhou Enlai suggested that Peng Zhen turn Tiananmen Square into "the people's favorite place," a "people's square."⁴⁷ Since the preparation of the founding ceremony of the PRC, the planning of the space was already

⁴⁶ Peng Zhen, "Guanyu chengshi guihua wenti de fayan [Talk on the questions of urban planning]," collected in "Archive of Commission of Urban Planning," 151-1-17, Beijing Municipal Archives, pp. 15-17; Peng Zhen, "Guanyu tiananmen guangchang he renmin dahuitang de jianshe [On the construction of Tiananmen Square and the Great Hall of the People,]" in Zhonggong beijing shiwei [Beijing Party Committee of the CCP], ed., *Zhanzai geming he jianshe de zui qianxian* [Standing on the fore front of the revolution and construction] (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1992), p. 246; Wu Liangyong, "Tiananmen guangchang de guihua yu sheji [The Plan and design of Tiananmen Square]," in *Chengshi guihua yu sheji lunwen ji* [Collection of essays on urban planning and design] (Beijing: Yanshan chubanshe, 1988), p. 422.

⁴⁷ Wu, "Tiananmen guangchang," p. 446; Ma Ju, "Peng Zhen he Beijing chengshi jianshe [Peng Zhen and the city construction of Beijing]," in Li Haiwen, ed., *Peng Zhen shizhang* [The mayor Peng Zhen] (Taiyuan: Zhonggong dangshi, 2003), pp. 195-196; Zheng Hong, "Beijing chengshi guangchangqun gainian sheji [Concept and design of Beijing city square group]," *Beijing guihua jianshe* [Beijing city planning and construction review 1(2004): 116.

the priority task for the Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Commission.⁴⁸ Turning Tiananmen Square into an immense square became one of the prerequisites of Beijing's urban planning.

A survey of the general programs on the urban planning of Beijing since 1949 suggests that the considerable symbolism of Tiananmen Square was translated into the geographical centrality in the PRC capital's urban construction. From the founding of the PRC to the present, the Beijing municipal government successively proposed six different general programs on the urban planning of the national capital in 1953, 1957, 1958, 1982, 1992, and 2004. With simply a glance at the design blueprints of those general programs one can easily notice the central position of Tiananmen Square in the construction and spatial layout of Beijing.⁴⁹ The consolidation of this centrality was given the institutional sanction by the PRC's decisive determination to locate the state's administrative center zone around Tiananmen Square in the early years of the PRC. Without this institutional endorsement, as some veteran urban planners suggested, Tiananmen Square would not have become the central square of the PRC capital and the symbolic center of communist China.⁵⁰ Only given the consolidation of the space's geographical centrality, its symbolic centrality could be further reinforced and amplified with the installation of state-sponsored commemorative monuments and institutions on the space.

Tiananmen Square as the Center of the Administrative Center Zone

⁴⁸ Dong, *Gudu Beijing*, p. 138.

⁴⁹ Beijing Construction History Editorial Committee, ed., *JYLCJZ*; Beijing Chengshi guihua sheji yanjiuyuan [Beijing Municipal Institute of City Planning and Design], *Beijing chengshi zongti guihua 1991-2010* [General Plan of the Beijing Municipality 1991-2010] (Beijing: Beijing chengshi guihua sheji yanjiuyuan, 1992); Dong Guangqi, "Wushiqi nian guanghui licheng—Jianguo yilai Beijing chengshi guihua de fazhan [The glorious course—The development of the urban planning of Beijing since the founding of the PRC]," *Beijing guihua jinashi* 5(2006): 13-16; Su Feng, "Cong Beijing qici chengshi zongti guihua kan shoudu jianshe de jiben silu [Considering the basic thinking of construction of the capital from the perspectives of the seven general programs on the urban planning of Beijing]," *Beijing dangshi* [The party history of Beijing] 2(2008): 21-24.

⁵⁰ Beijing Construction History Editorial Committee, ed., *JYLCJZ*, p. 14.

The urban planning of Beijing was initiated with the establishment of the Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Commission in May 1949. To draft the general program on the urban planning of Beijing, the Commission not only assembled celebrated Chinese specialists, such as Liang Sicheng (1901-1972), but also invited Soviet experts to bring in experience from Moscow. As a result, five programs were proposed, and they can be divided into two major groups according to the administrative center zones they plan for the city.⁵¹ One group led by the Soviet experts planned to locate the central government in the heart of old Beijing, namely, the area around Tiananmen Square.⁵² Another group headed by Liang Sicheng and Chen Zhanxiang insisted to place the administrative center at a new urban area in the western suburb of Beijing (present-day district of Wukesong [五棵松]) in order to preserve the Imperial City and the old Beijing urban area.⁵³ The debate between the two groups resulted in the difficult birth of a general program.⁵⁴

The Beijing municipal government eventually decided to place the administrative center at the heart of old Beijing around Tiananmen Square. Both the Soviet experts and majority of the Chinese urban planners disagreed with Liang-Chen scheme, which locates the center in a new constructed urban area in the western suburb. In order to preserve the urban landscape from destruction, the Soviet experts suggested the Beijing municipal government to finalize the city's urban planning centered on the area around Tiananmen

⁵¹ Beijing Construction History Editorial Committee, ed., *JYLCJZ*, pp. 5-14; Sit, *Beijing*, p. 92.

⁵² "Beijingshi jianglai fazhan jihua de wenti de baogao [Report on the questions of the future development of Beijing Municipality]," in *JYLCJZ*, pp. 109-118; "Jianzhu chengshi wenti de zaiyao [Summary on the question of the city construction]," in *JYLCJZ*, pp. 119-123; "Ahbu la mofu zai taolunhui shang de jiangci [Ahbulamofu's talk at the discussion forum]," in *JYLCJZ*, pp. 124-127.

⁵³ Liang Sicheng and Chen Zhanxiang, "Zhongyang renmin chengfu xingzheng zhongxin weizhi de jianyi [Suggestion on the location of the administrative center of the central people's government]," in *JYLCJZ*, pp. 128-160; Liang Sicheng and Chen Zhanxiang, "Zhongyang renmin chengfu xingzheng zhongxin weizhi de jianyi," in Wang Ruizhi, ed., *Liang-Chen fangan yu Beijing* [Liang-Chen scheme and Beijing] (Shenyang: Liaoning jiaoyu chubanshe, 2005), pp. 3-61.

⁵⁴ Liang Sicheng, "Zhi Zhou zongli xin [Letter to the Premier Zhou]," *Liang Sicheng wenji* [Collected writings of Liang Sicheng], vol. 4 (Beijing: Zhongguo jianzhu gongye chubanshe, 1986), p. 369; "Beijingshi jianglai fazhan jihua de wenti de baogao," in *JYLCJZ*, pp. 109-118.

Square as the location of the administrative center zone.⁵⁵ These Russian specialists seemed to understand the symbolic significance of Tiananmen Square to the new Chinese communist regime very well. They argued that the Beijing municipal government should use that symbolic space to serve as the political and administrative center of the state. This emphasis on the symbolism of the central part of a city actually conforms to one of the Soviet principles in building socialist cities, that is, to have “architecture and squares to reflect the glory of the socialist state.”⁵⁶ Moreover, they argued that building a new urban center, as the Liang-Chen scheme proposes, was not an economic way to renovate the capital.⁵⁷ In order to empower their proposition, they even implied that Mao also supported the idea of establishing the administrative center zone in the heart of old Beijing.⁵⁸

In December 1949, considering the fragile condition of the national economy as well as the infrastructural advantages and cultural heritages in the urban area of old Beijing, the urban administrators and planners endorsed the Russian proposal.⁵⁹ In April 1950, Zhu Zhaoxue and Zhao Dongri together proposed their joint scheme. In considering the spatial layout of the city, they argued that the old Beijing urban area, which embodies centuries-long Chinese cultural heritages and precious treasures, should be “constructed as the center of national capital,” which they argued would undoubtedly be “economic and reasonable.” Finally, they decided to place the administrative center in the district around Tiananmen Square. As a consequence, as Zhu and Zhao puts it, Tiananmen Square would be “surrounded by the administrative center zone” and serving as the “axial

⁵⁵ “Beijingshi jianglai fazhan jihua de wenti de baogao,” in *JYLBCJZ*, p. 114.

⁵⁶ Sit, “Soviet Influence on Urban Planning in Beijing, 1949-1991,” 463; Sit, *Beijing*, p. 87.

⁵⁷ “Jianzhu chengshi wenti de zaiyao,” in *JYLBCJZ*, p. 120.

⁵⁸ “Ahbu la mofu zai taolunhui shang de jiangci,” in *JYLBCJZ*, p. 124.

⁵⁹ Cao Yanxing and Zhao Pengfei, “Duiyu Beijingshi jianglai fazhan jihua de yijian [Suggestion on the plan of the development of Beijing in the future],” in *JYLBCJZ*, pp. 107-108.

center” of new Beijing.⁶⁰ The final decision on the location of the administrative center consequently determined the spatial framework of Beijing’s urban configuration in the following decades. More importantly, the institutional sanction of Tiananmen Square as the center of socio-political life in the capital paved the way to the space’s spatial centrality in Beijing’s urban planning.

Tiananmen Square as the Center of the PRC Capital

Once the location of administrative center zone was confirmed, the Beijing urban planners were ready to finalize the general program on urban planning of the city. Under the supervision of the Urban Planning Commission, in spring 1953, two alternative general programs were proposed, Programs Jia (甲) and Yi (乙). Even though there are differences between the two programs, they both define Tiananmen Square the center of urban construction and transportation network in Beijing.⁶¹ In summer 1953, the Beijing Committee of the CCP set up a special group to finalize the general program; with the assistance of Russian experts, it generated a combined program based on the Programs Jia and Yi: “Draft Program on Reconstructing and Expanding the Beijing Municipality (1953 Program).”⁶² The first master program on the urban planning of Beijing was thus formulated and reported to the central government for approval. In considering the totality of Beijing, this program especially emphasizes, “A city must be a close and organic entity with a center. . . . And, it is necessary to stand out that center with a massive

⁶⁰ Zhu and Zhao, “Dui shoudu jianshe jihua de yijian,” in *JYLCJZ*, p. 162, 168.

⁶¹ Beijing Construction History Editorial Committee, ed., *JYLCJZ*, pp. 16-18.

⁶² “Gaijian yu kuojian Beijingshi guihua caoan de yaodian (1953) [The essentials of the draft program on reconstructing and expanding the Beijing Municipality],” Archive of the Beijing Committee of the CCP, 1-5-90, collected in Beijing Municipal Archives; “Guanyu Gaijian yu kuojian Beijingshi guihua caoan de baogao [Report on the draft program on reconstructing and expanding the Beijing Municipality] (1953),” Archive of the Beijing Committee of the CCP, 1-5-90, Beijing Municipal Archives.

square or several tall buildings.”⁶³ Moreover, this program also reiterates, “Beijing as the national capital of our great motherland, its central part must be the location of central government, and, it is not simply to be made as the center of the city but also to be turned into the “heart” where the people in the entire nation look forward to.”⁶⁴ In other words, the “1953 Program” still defines Tiananmen Square the center of Beijing’s urban planning.⁶⁵

In response to the comments from the National Planning Committee, the Beijing Planning Commission slightly modified the “1953 Program” and renamed it the “1954 Program.” In this revision, the centrality of Tiananmen Square was once again emphasized. Like previous general programs, the “1954 Program” not only has the central government’s buildings built around Tiananmen Square but also plans the expanded construction of Tiananmen Square.⁶⁶ Despite the lack of official sanction, the 1954 Program was implemented in Beijing during the period of the First Five Year Plan (1953-1957).⁶⁷ The 1954 program represents that Tiananmen Square’s centrality in the urban planning of Beijing was confirmed.

The urban planning of Beijing was to be continued after the implementation of the “1954 Program.” In April 1955, the Beijing Committee of the CCP set up the Office of Experts (zhuanjia gongzuoshi) led by the Soviet specialists, who had participated in the urban planning of Moscow, and established a new Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Commission to work on a new general program based on the “1953 Program.” After two years of research and design, in spring 1957, the Urban Planning Commission

⁶³ “Guanyu Gaijian yu kuojian Beijingshi guihua caoan de baogao (1953),” p. 6.

⁶⁴ “Gaijian yu kuojian Beijingshi guihua caoan de yaodian (1953),” p. 13; Beijing Construction History Editorial Committee, ed., *JYLCJZ*, p. 19.

⁶⁵ Beijing Construction History Editorial Committee, ed., *JYLCJZ*, pp. 17, 19-21.

⁶⁶ “Gaijian yu guojian Beijingshi guihua caoan de yaodian,” p. 173.

⁶⁷ Beijing Construction History Editorial Committee, ed., *JYLCJZ*, pp. 21-25.

promulgated the “Preliminary Version of the General Program on the Urban Planning and Construction of Beijing (1957 Program).” In June 1958, the “1957 Program” was reported to the central government. In terms of Beijing’s urban configuration, the “1957 Program” is basically in line with the “1953 Program.”⁶⁸ In the “1957 Program,” the geographical, administrative, and transportation center of the PRC capital is still located in the area of Tiananmen Square.

In order to reflect the CCP’s new political line of “Great Leap Forward,” the Beijing municipal government very soon proposed a new version of the general program in September 1958.⁶⁹ The “1958 Program” again emphasizes, “The old city of Beijing will be still the central zone of the capital, and Tiananmen Square is the central square (zhongxin guangchang) of the capital... where the central government is to be installed.”⁷⁰ Moreover, the program clearly defines a boundary of the city centered on Tiananmen Square.⁷¹ This program not only maintains the spatial centrality of Tiananmen Square but also specifically includes National Holiday Project (guoqing gongcheng) that was launched to establish national architecture, such as the Great Hall of the People and the Museums of Chinese History and Chinese Revolution, around Tiananmen Square to display the great achievement of socialist revolution.⁷² We will discuss this massive project in detail in Chapter Four. Here, it will suffice to note that, through the implementation of this architectural construction project, the centrality of Tiananmen Square was to be physically manifested in material structure.

⁶⁸ Beijing Construction History Editorial Committee, ed., *JYLBCJZ*, pp. 32-33.

⁶⁹ “Beijing chengshi jianshe zongti guihua chubu fang’an de yaodian [Preliminary version of the general program on the urban planning and construction of Beijing],” Archive of the Beijing Committee of the CCP, 1-5-253, Beijing Municipal Archives, p. 9; “Beijing chengshi jianshe zongti guihua chubu fangan de yaodian,” in *JYLBCJZ*, pp. 190-213.

⁷⁰ “Beijing chengshi jianshe zongti guihua chubu fangan de yaodian,” p. 9.

⁷¹ “Beijing chengshi jianshe zongti guihua chubu fangan de yaodian,” in *JYLBCJZ*, p. 207.

⁷² “Beijing chengshi jianshe zongti guihua chubu fangan de yaodian,” p. 34; “Beijing chengshi jianshe zongti guihua chubu fangan de yaodian,” in *JYLBCJZ*, p. 208; Beijing Construction History Editorial Committee, ed., *JYLBCJZ*, pp. 39-50.

The central position of Tiananmen Square in the urban planning of Beijing was still emphasized even after China entered the reform era.⁷³ Based on new guiding principles proposed by the CCP, in March 1982, the Beijing municipal government put forward the “Draft of the General Program on the Urban Planning and Construction of Beijing (1982 Program)” and was reported to and approved by the State Council in December 1982.⁷⁴ In addition to maintaining the central position of Tiananmen Square on the central axis and in the urban renovation of old Beijing, the “1982 Program” emphasizes the preservation of cultural heritages and revolutionary relics in the ancient city.⁷⁵ Likewise, the centrality of Tiananmen Square was so accentuated that “1992 Program” reiterates the necessity to “maintain the leading position of the space on the central axis of Beijing” (Illustration 2).⁷⁶ Like previous programs, “1992 Program” emphasizes that one of the vital tasks of Beijing’s urban work is to reflect the city’s revolutionary tradition.⁷⁷

Remaking Tiananmen Square as the Central Square of the PRC

The organization of space is a material manifestation of the organization of political power.⁷⁸ The spatial centrality of Tiananmen Square in Beijing’s urban planning was translated into state-sponsored physical renovation on the space. As the political heart of the PRC capital, the former imperial T-shaped palace square was transformed into the central square of the city to display the state disciplinary power and to render the glory of the socialist state by expanding the space into an “One-Million-People Square.” However,

⁷³ During the period of the Great Cultural Revolution the urban management in Beijing entered the stage of suspension. From 1966 to 1976, the implementation of general program on the urban planning in Beijing was suspended. See Beijing Construction History Editorial Committee, ed., *JYLBCJZ*, pp. 64-73.

⁷⁴ “Beijing chengshi jianshe zongti guihua fang’an [General Program on urban planning and construction of Beijing],” in *JYLBCJZ*, pp. 214-260.

⁷⁵ “Beijing chengshi jianshe zongti guihua fang’an,” in *JYLBCJZ*, pp. 230-232.

⁷⁶ Beijing Municipal Institute of City Planning and Design, *Beijing chengshi zongti guihua 1991-2010*, p. 20.

⁷⁷ Beijing Municipal Institute of City Planning and Design, *Beijing chengshi zongti guihua 1991-2010*, p. 34.

⁷⁸ Hershkovitz, “Tiananmen Square and the Politics of Space,” 403.

the metamorphosis of Tiananmen Square did not happen in one day. It had to undergo physical destructions and reconstructions and social activisms from the Republican to the PRC eras until the space was reformed into a monumental complex to display the Chinese past of century-long national salvation movement and revolutionary tradition in the language of Mao's revolutionary discourse. This process first involved morphological and functional alteration of Tiananmen Square in the Republican era.

From a Palace Square to a Public Space

The making of Tiananmen Square as the symbolic center of communist China was an ongoing process that lasted from the early Republican era to the late twentieth century. In Ming-Qing China, Tiananmen and the T-shaped palace square before it constituted an architectural manifestation of the symbol of imperial sovereignty (Illustration 3).⁷⁹ It was not until the Republican era that the T-shaped enclosure became accessible to the common people and was turned into an informal marketplace where hawkers and peddlers and idlers and beggars frequented and, more importantly, a political space where significant events related to social movements took place.⁸⁰ Along with the holding of the founding ceremony of the PRC, the space was to be redefined as the sacred birthplace of New China and to be constructed as the functional place to display central leaders' political power and the PRC's state discipline. To do so, the PRC leaders were determined to construct Tiananmen Square into an immense square that would allow mass congregations as many as one million people.

⁷⁹ Hou Renzhi and Wu Liangyong, "Tiananmen guangchang: cong gongting guangchang dao remin guangchang de yanbian he gaizao (Tiananmen Square: From Palace Square to People's Square: Development and Transformation)," in Hou Renzhi, ed., *Lishi Dilixue de liluan yu shijian* [Theory and practice of historical geography] (Shanghai: Remin chubanshe, 1979), pp. 227-250; Hou, *Beijingcheng de shengming yinji*, pp. 277-298; Hou, *Beijingcheng de qi yuan yu bianqian*, pp. 100, 147; Shu Jun, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan* [Historical archives on Tiananmen Square] (Beijing: College of CCP, 1998), pp. 8-17.

⁸⁰ Wang Hungzhi, *Tiananmen guangchang geming jianshi* [A brief revolutionary history of Tiananmen Square] (Shanghai: Renmin, 1979); Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, pp. 20-23.

In Ming-Qing China, Tiananmen had been the main gate of the imperial city. Because it was located on the south end of the Forbidden City's central axis, Tiananmen was also considered as the south gate of imperial palace (Illustration 4).⁸¹ The gate was initially constructed in 1417 during the reign of Emperor Yongle and officially named Chengtianmen (Gate of Receiving Mandate of Heavenly) through out the rest of Ming dynasty. The name of the gate embodied the Emperor Yongle's anxiety to claim legitimacy of his throne by materializing the traditional doctrine of mandate of heaven. In 1644, the gate was destroyed under the fire of war when the Manchus entered China Proper and conquered the Ming dynasty. In 1651, during the reign of Shunzhi (1644-1661), the gate was rebuilt and renamed Tiananmen, which implies the meaning of "receiving the mandate from the heaven to pacify the realm and rule the people (shouming yu tian, anbang zhiguo)."⁸² The nominal symbolism of Tiananmen was further amplified with actual political function by holding imperial rituals in the great hall of the gate.

Tiananmen along with the T-shaped palace square constituted an architectural enclosure to hold most significant imperial ceremonies. Since the Hongxi reign (1424-1425), the Ming emperors' enthroning ceremonies were held in the great hall of Tiananmen.⁸³ Moreover, it was the place where the ceremony of promulgating the imperial edict was held when a new emperor ascended the throne (dengji zhao) or a happy occasion took place (banen zhao). The ceremony was called "Golden Phoenix

⁸¹ Hou and Wu, "Tiananmen guangchang," p. 238.

⁸² Hou and Wu, "Tiananmen guangchang," pp. 238-240; Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, pp. 31-32; Based on his reading on the Manchu name of Tiananmen, Pär K. Cassel argues that Tiananmen should be translated "The Gate of Heaven's Pacification" or "Gate of Heavenly Peacemaking." See Pär K. Cassel, "The Gate of Heavenly Peacemaking," in Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, et al, ed., *China in 2008: A Year of Great Significance* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009), p. 142.

⁸³ Wu Wei and Ma Xianju, *Tiananmen guangchang duandaishi* [The dynastic history of Tiananmen Square] (Beijing: Daxiang chubanshe, 2007), pp. 21-23.

Promulgating Imperial Edict (jinfeng banzhao),” and the last time it was held was on 12 February 1912 to promulgate the Emperor Xuantong’s abdication edict, which was later collected in the Museum of the Chinese Revolution after the founding of the PRC.⁸⁴ Sanctioned by the imperial ceremonies, more than simply the main gate of imperial city, Tiananmen became the symbol of monarchial sovereignty in Ming-Qing China.

The T-shaped enclosure in front of Tiananmen consisted of a horizontal Heavenly Street (tianjie) in the north arm and a vertical bar extending southward to the Gate of Great Ming (Damingmen) (Illustration 4). The Heavenly Street, with a length of three hundred and sixty-five meters and a width of one hundred and twenty-five meters, was the central section of today’s Chang’an (Eternal Peace) Avenue. To either side of the Heavenly Street stood the Chang’an Left and Right Gates. The vertical bar was the Imperial Way (yudao) that, with a length of five hundred meters and a width of sixty-five meters, served as the main passage on the southern extension of the imperial palace’s central axis. An entrance in the southern end of the T-shaped enclosure, the Gate of Great Ming was also considered as China’s National Gate (Guomen), which was renamed the Gate of Great Qing (Daqingmen) in the Qing dynasty and the Gate of China (Zhonghuamen) in the Republican era. Along either side of Imperial Way were built with palace walls, and inside the walls were the East and West Thousand-Step Porch

⁸⁴ In such a ritual ceremony, the imperial edict would be placed on a copper tray named “Cloud Tray (yunpan)” and delivered by the officials of the Board of Rites from the Hall of Supreme Harmony (Taihedian) to Tiananmen’s gate tower with a portable “Pavilion of Nine Dragons” (jiulong ting). In receiving the imperial edict, civil and military officials would kneel down on the ground below facing Tiananmen. After the edict was announced on the balcony of the gate tower, it would then be placed on a gilded wooden tray called “Cluster of Cloud (duoyun)” that was to be put in the mouth of a “Golden Phoenix (jinfeng)” and was lowered by a rope to another “Cluster of Cloud” on the ground. Eventually, the edict would be placed on another dragon pavilion to be moved to the office of the Board of Rites by the imperial route located in the south bar of the T-shaped palace square and then formally sent through the country. Wu and Ma, *Tiananmen guangchang duandaishi*, pp. 166-169; Hou and Wu, “Tiananmen guangchang,” p. 243; Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, pp. 36-37.

(Qianbulang).⁸⁵ Therefore, the T-shaped enclosure surrounded by the palace walls was part of the imperial palace that was restricted to the royal family and high officials during the Ming and Qing dynasties.

The architectural enclosure of the T-shaped palace square held strong political implication. The “Imperial Way” served as the central route extending from the Gate of Meridian (Wumen), the southern entrance of the Forbidden City, to the Gate of Great Ming/Qing for the emperors and imperial families and prominent officials to enter and exit the palace city. The promulgated imperial edicts were transported through the passage to the office of Board of Rites and sent through the nation. The Chang’an Left and Right Gates during the normal times were the main entrances for the civil and military officials to enter the imperial palace.⁸⁶ It is well known that, during the time of One Hundred Days’ Reform, it was through the Chang’an Left Gate that Kang Youwei walked into the T-shaped place square and then entered the imperial palace to see the Emperor Guangxu on 19 June 1898. The East Thousand-Step Porch was the site to assemble successful candidates in the provincial examinations who went to attend the Metropolitan Examination (huishi) before they were qualified for the Palace Examination (dianshi). To release the result of Palace Examination, the officials of the Board of Rites would bypass the Tiananmen and exit the Chang’an Left Gate to hang the imperial edict listing the names of successful candidates at the “Dragon Shed (Longpeng).” Therefore, the Chang’an Left Gate was commonly referred to as the “Dragon Gate (Longmen).” The West Thousand-Step Porch was the place to hold autumn and court assizes to decide life or death of criminals who were brought in the spot through the Changan’an Right Gate.

⁸⁵ Wu, “Tainanmen guangchang,” p. 413; Hou and Wu, “Tiananmen guangchong,” pp. 239-240; Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, p. 11.

⁸⁶ See Wu and Ma, *Tiananmen guangchang dduandaishi*, pp. 148-149.

Therefore, the Chang'an Right Gate was generally referred to as the Gate of Tiger (Humen).⁸⁷ In Ming-Qing China, the boundary between left and right in the T-shaped palace square represented the line between life and death. This juxtaposition between east and west was manifested in spatial arrangement of imperial administration zone in either side behind the enclosed space (Illustration 4). As an old saying puts it, “[The offices on the] east side governs the life and [those on the] west governs the death.”⁸⁸ This symbolic juxtaposition between east and west would be granted a different meaning in the PRC era.

It is worthwhile noting that it was due to the political symbolism of Tiananmen and the T-shaped enclosure that made the architectural enclosure the target of foreign military invasion. During the suppression of the Boxer rebellion in 1900, the foreign armies not only bombarded the Tiananmen but also held a victory parade passing through the Gate of Great Qing and the Imperial Passage and Tiananmen and entered the Forbidden City.⁸⁹ Once the physical symbol of imperial sovereignty was occupied, the traumatic memory of the Chinese national humiliation was written into the site where today's Tiananmen Square is situated.

Redefining Tiananmen as the Symbol of New China: The Chinese People Have Stood Up!? Along with the promulgation of Xuantong emperor's abdication edict, the function and significance of Tiananmen and the T-shaped palace square underwent a dramatic change in the Republican era. Especially, considering the transportation convenience between the

⁸⁷ Hou and Wu, “Tiananmen guangchong,” p. 242; Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, pp. 12-13.

⁸⁸ To the east stood the government offices, such as the Imperial Clan Court (zongrenfu) as well as Boards of Civil Office, Household, Rites, and Industry, in charge of public affairs about the daily life of the. To the west was the area in which located the offices dealt with military and judicial affairs like the Board of Punishment and Five Chief Military Commissions and Imperial Guard. See Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, pp. 16-17.

⁸⁹ Hou and Wu, “Tiananmen guangchong,” p. 244; Wang, *Tiananmen guangchang geming jianshi*, p. 12; Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, pp. 17-19.

east and west sides of Beijing urban areas, the municipal government under the leadership of Zhu Qiling (1872-1964) demolished the walls alongside the Chang'an Left and Right Gates in 1912. The devastation of the walls turned the former Heavenly Street into an open pathway. Furthermore, the East and West Thousand-Step Porches and Chessboard Streets (Qipan jie) outside the Zhonghua Gate were torn down in 1914.⁹⁰ Accompanying by the destruction of physical remnant from the imperial China, the T-shaped enclosure not only became accessible to the common people but also was transformed into a political stage in which social movements “searching out the space to express their political discontents,” such as the May Fourth Movement, the December Ninth national salvation movement in 1927, and the Anti-Hunger and Anti-Civil-War protest in 1947.⁹¹ These social movements at Tiananmen Square were keys to the Maoist-sanctioned revolutionary tradition. As a consequence of destructing material objects from the imperial past and these social movements, a palace square was transformed into a public space.

The symbolic significance of Tiananmen Square experienced another change in the period of the PRC. The place that embodies the Maoist-sanctioned revolutionary tradition became the site to celebrate the liberation of Beijing. On 1 October 1949, the space again was chosen to hold the founding ceremony of the PRC.⁹² At that symbolic moment, Mao Zedong standing on the balcony of Tiananmen declared the birth of the PRC and hoisted the first national flag at Tiananmen Square. Considering the fact that Tiananmen was the

⁹⁰ Hou and Wu, “Tiananmen guangchong,” p. 245; Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, pp. 19-20; Tao Zongzhen, “Tiananmen guangchang guihua jianshe de huigu yu qianzhan [Review and Prospect on the plan and construction of Tiananmen Square],” *Nafang jianzhu* [South architecture] 5 (1999): 28; The general principle of Beijing’s urban planning in the Republican era was to unify different parts of the city and connect the city to the outside world. See Dong, *Republican Beijing*, pp. 22, 41.

⁹¹ Hershkovitz, “Tiananmen Square and the Politics of Space,” 404-405; Wang, *Tiananmen guangchang geming jianshi*, pp. 16-25; 37-46; Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, pp. 19-20; Arlington and Lewisohn, *In Search of Old Peking*, p. 31.

⁹² Wang, *Tiananmen guangchang geming jianshi*, pp. 49-51; Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, pp. 19-20.

architectural manifestation of Ming-Qing imperial legitimacy, one can argue that, at that defining moment, the mandate of heaven was passed on to the PRC. The old symbol of imperial authority was thus appropriated to legitimize the new communist regime allegorically.

More interestingly, given the considerable symbolism of Tiananmen Square in the century-long national salvation movement that the Chinese people have tended to imagine that Mao had uttered that “the Chinese people have stood up” in the symbolic space. One of the scenarios in “The Square,” a documentary film recording the daily life of Tiananmen Square, represents this collective imagination very well. In the scenario, a group of Young Pioneers of China is led to the spot where Mao declared the founding of the PRC, and they are guided by a producer of a news crew of the Chinese Central Television to speak out that “this is the place where the great Chairman Mao declared ‘the Chinese people have stood up.’”⁹³ Nevertheless, this well-known motto was actually uttered by Mao at the opening ceremony of the CPCPPCC on 21 September 1949.⁹⁴ The scenario to some extent demonstrates how in the collective imagination the balcony of Tiananmen was the site where Mao proclaimed “the Chinese people have stood up” has been reproduced for generations at Tiananmen Square.

⁹³Zhang Yuan, *The Square*, 1994. When the group of the Young Pioneers is led to the balcony of Tiananmen, the producer starts his interview by asking, “Where are standing?” The children answer, “[The place was] where Chairman Mao stood and declared the PRC is founded.” The producer continues to ask, “Anything else?” The children answer, “[Chairman Mao said that] Now the Chinese people have stood up.”

⁹⁴In his opening address, Mao Zedong said: “Fellow delegates, we all share the feeling that our work will be written down in the history of humanity; it will show that the Chinese people, forming one quarter of humanity, have stood up...Our nation will never be a nation insulted by others. We have stood up. Our nation has won the sympathy and acclamation of the broad masses of the people throughout the world.” See Mao Zedong, “Mao Zedong zai zhongguo renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi de yijie quanti huiyi shang de kaimuci [Mao Zedong’s opening address at the first plenary session of the Chinese people’s political consultation conference],” in *Wuxing hongqi cong zeli shengqi*, p. 307; The English translation of the text see Mao Zedong, “Opening Address at the First Plenary Session of the Chinese People’s Political Consultation Conference,” in Michael Y. M. Kau and John. K. Leung, eds., *The Writings of Mao Zedong, 1949-1976*, vol. 1 (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1986), pp. 4-5.

The Chinese people have been educated in many ways to believe that their Great Leader and Teacher Chairman Mao Zedong had said “the Chinese people have stood up” in such a symbolic center of China since the founding of the PRC. In national ceremonies, official newspapers, history textbooks, and popular readings, that well-known motto has been reiterated over and over again. For example, in introducing the history of Tiananmen Square, the Museum of Chinese History remarks, “Thirty years ago on 1 October 1949, the first five-star flag was hoisted here [Tiananmen Square]. Here Chairman Mao Zedong declared to the world: ‘The People’s Central Government of the PRC is hereby founded. The Chinese people have stood up.’”⁹⁵ More interestingly, this image is so powerful that even foreigners, including top-ranking professional historians of modern China, tend to believe Mao uttered the same statement at the square.⁹⁶ It is not this chapter’s intention to explore the origin and reproduction of the slogan in communist China. But it will suffice to note that the Chinese collective imagination about the slogan can only become thinkable given the considerable symbolism of Tiananmen Square before and after the founding of the PRC. It is in this sense that Tiananmen Square can be viewed as the spatial framework to recall China’s past of national salvation and revolutionary tradition.

That Tiananmen Square was constituted as the spatial framework to memorize the Chinese past of national salvation and revolutionary tradition was a result of the state-

⁹⁵ The Museum of Chinese History, ed., *Tiananmen* (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1980), p. 1.

⁹⁶ To name a few here: Roderick MacFarquhar, ed., *The Politics of China: 1949-1989* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 1; Richard Baum, “The Road to Tiananmen,” in *The Politics of China: 1949-1989*, p. 471; Mary G. Mazur, “The United Front Redefined for the Party-State: A Case Study of Transition and Legitimation,” in Timothy Cheek and Tony Saich, ed., *New Perspectives on State Socialism in China* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1997), p. 54; Mark Selden and Victor D. Lippit, “The Transition to Socialism in China,” in Mark Selden and Victor D. Lippit, ed., *The Transition to Socialism* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1982), p. 4; Godwin C. Chu, “The Changing Concept of Zhong (Loyalty): Emerging New Chinese Political Culture,” in Shiping Hua, ed., *Chinese Political Culture 1989-2000* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 2001), p. 42; Scott Simmie and Bob Nixon, *Tiananmen Square* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1989), pp. 125-126; Liu Binyan, Ruan Ming and Xu Gang, *Tell the World: What Happened in China and Why* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1989), p. 69.

sponsored symbol making and physical renovation centered on the symbolic space. Along with the holding of the founding ceremony of the PRC, first, Tiananmen Square was redefined as the sacred birthplace of New China so that its frontal image was integrated into the national emblem of the PRC that has been represented in the banknotes, coins, stamps, badges, artistic representation, the front page of official documents, as well as the national insignia hung at the eave of Tiananmen. Moreover, Tiananmen Square was to be intentionally constructed as the functional place for the top leaders of the PRC to display political power and as the spatial framework to discipline the people by constructing the space into an immense square for holding national ceremonies and mass congregations.⁹⁷ This determination not only was translated into one of the perquisites for the urban planning and construction of Beijing as demonstrated previously but also was manifested in the state-sponsored commemorative monuments built at Tiananmen Square.

The Rebirth of Tiananmen Square

The physical renovation of Tiananmen Square began with a large-scale cleaning at the space by the founding ceremony of the PRC. When the Beiping Military Control Commission took over Beijing, the ancient capital appeared like a field of garbage. Even in the open space before the Tiananmen, the former magnificent imperial square and the sacred site of revolutionary tradition, there were rubbish and weeds everywhere.⁹⁸ In order to improve the hygienic condition in the city and to restore the landscape of Tiananmen Square, the municipal government set up a special committee to launch a city-wide campaign of eliminating trash from the future capital. According to *People's*

⁹⁷ Peng, "Guanyu chengshi guihua wenti de fayan," pp. 15-17.

⁹⁸ It was said that the garbage accumulated in the square was as high as a six-meter little hill or a three-floor building. See Wu and Ma, *Tiananmen guangchang duandai shi*, p. 241; Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, p. 22.

Daily, over six thousand students actively participated in the cleaning work at Tiananmen Square. Consequently, the ancient capital and Tiananmen Square became rejuvenated and were restored to their former spectacular landscape.⁹⁹

The first physical renovation of Tiananmen Square was part of preparations for the founding ceremony of the PRC. Following the resolution adopted at the Preparatory Session of the CPPCC in June 1949, the CCP decided to hold the founding ceremony, military parade, and civilian process at Tiananmen Square on 1 October 1949.¹⁰⁰ For this purpose, the Beijing municipal government adopted a project to renovate Tiananmen Square.

The renovation project includes five main parts. First, under the supervision of the Beijing Municipal Construction Bureau, the balcony of Tiananmen was reconstructed into a rostrum for the founding ceremony; eight giant lanterns were hung under the eaves of the gate tower; the red walls alongside the Tiananmen were brushed with new paint. Moreover, considering that it would need massive space to hold the founding ceremony, the open area before the Tiananmen was expanded into a gigantic space with a surface area of fifty-five thousand square meters to host a mass congregation of two hundred thousand people. Then, a flag-raising pole of twenty-two and a half meters was erected on the central axis to the south of Tiananmen. The pole was equipped with a mechanical device connecting with a button located in the balcony of Tiananmen by an electronic wire so that Chairman Mao could hoist the first national flag by simply pushing the button. In addition, Chang'an Avenue in front of the Tiananmen was repaired and paved

⁹⁹ From March 24 to June 30, the municipal government totally removed as much as two hundred thousand tons of garbage. See Wu and Ma, *Tiananmen guangchang duandai shi*, p. 241; Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, p. 22.

¹⁰⁰ Wu and Ma, *Tiananmen guangchang duandai shi*, p. 240; Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, p. 22.

with asphalt. Finally, trees and grass were planted around Tiananmen Square to make the landscape appear more beautiful.¹⁰¹ Given the scale of the physical renovation, in addition to the efforts contributed by the Beijing municipal government, plenty of common people devoted themselves to the national project. According to *People's Daily*, more than eighteen thousand students became volunteers for the renovation at Tiananmen Square.¹⁰² This can be viewed as an example to show popular participation in the PRC's nation-building project. By the end of September 1949, Tiananmen Square was ready to welcome the coming of New China.

Planning Tiananmen Square as the Central Square of the PRC Capital: 1950-1956

The systematic state-sponsored spatial expansion of Tiananmen Square began with the founding of the PRC. From 1949 to the present, in addition to the construction project of the Monument to the People's Heroes and other partial and trivial repairs and renewals every now and then, Tiananmen Square had undergone spatial rearrangement several times. Before it entered the period of actual construction, nevertheless, it would first go through the preparatory period of planning. From 1950 to 1957, following the general guidelines of Beijing's urban planning to transform Tiananmen Square into a mammoth central square, the municipal government drafted several construction projects. A close reading of these master projects not only displays the centrality of Tiananmen Square in the urban planning of Beijing but also illustrate how the space was planned to be the central square of the PRC capital.

The planning work on the expansion and construction of Tiananmen Square began as soon as the space was determined as the central zone of Beijing's urban configuration in

¹⁰¹ Wu and Ma, *Tiananmen guangchang duandai shi*, pp. 242-243; Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, p. 23.

¹⁰² "Xin de kaishi! Ji Beiping xuesheng chanjia xiuzhu Tiananmen guangchang [New beginning! An account of the students' participation in the renovation of Tiananmen Square]," *People's Daily* (11 September 1949): 1.

1950. From 1950 to 1954, the Beijing municipal government sequentially proposed fifteen schemes on the spatial arrangement and physical construction of Tiananmen Square.¹⁰³ None of these schemes was sanctioned by the municipal and central governments because of several controversies about Tiananmen Square's disposition and size as well as the scale and height of buildings and the treatment of physical remnants from imperial period around the space.¹⁰⁴ Because these controversial issues did not reach agreement, the master project was in difficult birth by 1954.

Although there existed different perspectives on the issues about the renovation of Tiananmen Square, there are a couple of commonalities among those fifteen schemes. First, being constructed as a political or cultural center, none of the urban planners denied the centrality of Tiananmen Square in the urban layout and construction of Beijing. As the general programs on the urban planning of Beijing have done, these designers also “clearly determined the space as the central square of the capital to host mass congregations and processes.”¹⁰⁵ This general principle, as a veteran urban planner recalled, largely framed the successive master projects on the expansion and construction

¹⁰³ Dong, *Gudu Beijing*, pp. 138-154.

¹⁰⁴ On the issue of Tiananmen Square's disposition, some urban planners argued that, since Tiananmen symbolizes the nation, the area around the space should be constructed into the political center of the PRC by establishing museum of revolutionary history in addition to main buildings of the central government. Some suggested that, other than serving as the political center of the nation, it should also be constructed as a cultural center by placing architecture like national museum and library. As for the issue of size, some planners suggested that Tiananmen Square should be expanded into a massive space of the surface area of thirty to forty hectares considering that the place was to serve as the central square for the Chinese people to hold political activities and mass congregations and processes. Another group argued the size of the square should not be oversized from the perspective of architectural proposition in the space, and the proper scale of the square is to be “expanded” into an area of twenty to twenty-five hectares. On the issue of the architecture scale around Tiananmen Square, some planners believed that, since the space represents the great achievement of the nation's socialist construction, there must be some tall buildings like the Soviet Building established around the area to single out its centrality in the capital city. On the contrary, some other experts argued that, since Tiananmen and the Monument to the People's Heroes are not so tall, the architecture built around the area should not be taller than the two major monumental buildings. As for the treatment of the physical remnants of the imperial age in Tiananmen Square, one group argued that the old architecture, such as the Zhengyangmen and Zhongguamen, should be replaced by new high buildings that can represent socialism and communism. See Dong, *Gudu Beijing*, pp. 138-139.

¹⁰⁵ Wu, “Tiananmen guangchang,” p. 415.

of Tiananmen Square.¹⁰⁶ All of the designers agreed that, as the central square of capital city, Tiananmen Square must be expanded into a larger space than before. These commonalities indicate an unstated consensus among urban planners, that is, Tiananmen Square's centrality in the urban layout of Beijing.

Some of the controversial issues would reach conclusion in 1956. With assistance of the Russian experts, the Beijing municipal government proposed ten new plans based on the fifteen schemes drafted in June 1956.¹⁰⁷ There are some similarities among these plans. First, the central position of Tiananmen is commonly emphasized. Second, all of the planners unanimously asserted that the height of architecture built around Tiananmen Square should not be taller than the gate itself.¹⁰⁸ Third, as a physical relic of the imperial age, the Zhengyangmen would be preserved rather than being demolished. Finally, their spatial designs imply that the extension of Tiananmen Square is necessary.¹⁰⁹ Like previous plans, the ten plans generally emphasize the centrality of Tiananmen Square and the need to expand the space.

The mayor Peng Zhen was subsequently to sanction expanding Tiananmen Square as the formal policy of Beijing's urban planning. On 10 October 1956, in his report delivered at the Beijing Committee, Peng stresses that a massive Tiananmen Square is out of the need of actual situation and development:

“About the question of the size of Tiananmen Square. Now [we] have proposed three plans: thirty, forty, and fifty hectares (not including the ground for constructing architecture). The square is bound to be a little big rather too small because we are the most populous country in the world. We cannot say that we cannot have one just because that various countries in

¹⁰⁶ Tao Zongzhen, “Tiananmen guangchang guihua jianshe de huigu yu qianzhan,” 28.

¹⁰⁷ In order to solicit opinions and comments from the public, the ten plans were displayed in an exhibition of urban planning held by the municipal government. Dong, *Gudu Beijing*, pp. 155-165.

¹⁰⁸ As such, there will be no high buildings like the Soviet Building to be established around the area as some planners suggested by 1954. This decision implies that the Soviet experts' influence was not as powerful as the conventional scholarship claimed.

¹⁰⁹ Dong, *Gudu Beijing*, p. 155.

the world have no such a big square.... We need to consider the question based on the need of actual situation and development.”¹¹⁰

Here Peng Zhen has not explained what he means by “the need of actual situation and development.” It seems that, when Peng gave his report, the “need” was self-evident considering the mainstream idea on the centrality of Tiananmen Square. As discussed previously, the “need of actual situation” here probably means to expand Tiananmen Square into a central square of the PRC capital to hold the military parades and mass congregations on the national holidays. The “need” itself was part of the new communist regime’s nation-building project.

The general consensus of expanding the capital’s central square was manifested in the transformation of the landscape around Tiananmen Square. The expansion and renovation of Tiananmen Square first meant to destroy the imperial relics that were excluded from and incompatible with the state-sponsored project of turning Tiananmen Square into the massive central square of the PRC capital. In order to turn Chang’an Avenue into an eighty-meter wide thoroughfare for large-scale military and mass parades to pass through, the Chang’an Left and Right Gates were demolished in August 1952.¹¹¹ For the same purpose, the railways of the trolleybus on Chang’an Avenue were later removed in March 1959, so as to make the grand parade pathway flat.¹¹² Moreover, in order to make Tiananmen Square appear larger after the erection of the Monument to People’s Heroes, the east and west walls that stood behind the former Thousand-Step Porches were destroyed in 1955. For the same reason, the Zhonghua Gate at the south

¹¹⁰ Peng, “guanyu chengshi guihua wenti de fayan,” pp. 15-17; This is the manuscript version of “Guanyu Beijing de chengshi guihua wenti,” in *Zhanzai geming he jianshe zui qianxian*, pp. 239-245.

¹¹¹ Dong, *Gudu Beijing*, p. 138; Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, p. 24; In order to justify the demolition of the gates so as to disarm opponent’s resistance, the Beijing municipal government even found a number of the tricycle carters to appeal that the gates were the biggest concern to the traffic safety on Chang’an Avenue. See Wang Jun, *Chengji* [The record of the city] (Beijing: Sanliang shudian, 2003), p. 164.

¹¹² “Archive on National Day Project,” 125-1-1218, p. 1, collected in the Beijing Municipal Archives.

end of Tiananmen Square was demolished later in 1958.¹¹³ In addition, under the supreme goal of building the central square of New China, it is little known that over twenty thousand houses of the common people were leveled during the expanded construction of Tiananmen Square.¹¹⁴ The construction of Tiananmen Square into the material manifestation of ruling ideology in the first place involved destruction.

To sum up, the urban configuration of Beijing under the sway of the CCP had been influenced by various indigenous elements in addition to the Soviet impact. The Chinese communist nostalgia over the officially sanctioned revolutionary tradition, Mao's ideological consideration on the social component of the city, as well as the abundant historical and cultural heritages in the ancient capital had great impact on Beijing's political function and urban development before and after the founding of the PRC. A general survey of Beijing's urban planning has displayed that Tiananmen Square, a space embodying revolutionary tradition, has been the center of the city's urban construction since 1949. As demonstrated by the "1992 General Program on the Urban Planning of Beijing," the emphasis on the revolutionary tradition of Beijing has been the focal point in the city's urban planning and historic preservation.¹¹⁵ In addition, along with the shift of the center of revolution from the countryside to the cities, Mao's discourse on New Democracy was incorporated into the guiding principle of municipal work in the urban areas until the introduction of the "1982 General Program."¹¹⁶

¹¹³ "Archive on National Day Project," 125-1-1218, p. 1; Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, p. 24.

¹¹⁴ "Archive on National Day Project," 125-1-1218, p. 4.

¹¹⁵ Like four different general programs before it, the 1992 General Program reiterates that the vital task of urban construction of Beijing is to reflect the city's revolutionary tradition. Capital Commission of Planning and Construction, ed., "1992 General Program on the Urban Planning of Beijing," *Shoudu guihua jianshe wenjian huibian (neibu ziliao)* [Collection of documents on planning and construction of the capital] (Beijing: Capital Commission of Planning and Construction, 1984), p. 9.

¹¹⁶ "Beijing chengshi jianshe zongti guihua fangan [General program on the urban planning and construction of Beijing]," in *JYLBCJZ*, pp. 214-260.

More importantly for the purpose of this dissertation, as a consequence of the successive programs on the planning of Beijing after the founding of the PRC, the symbolism of Tiananmen Square was translated into the spatial centrality of the space in the capital's urban configuration. This official sanction of Tiananmen Square's geographical centrality was clearly manifested on the urban planner's blueprints. The central government's administrative center zone was placed around Tiananmen Square as the political heart of the PRC capital. The urban construction and transportation network in Beijing were centered on Tiananmen Square. The centrality of Tiananmen Square was further reinforced as a result of the Beijing municipal government's effort to maintain the space's leading position on the central axis in the reform era. Nevertheless, Tiananmen Square was more than simply a central spot on the urban planner's blueprints. As the sacred site of official-sanctioned revolutionary tradition and the birthplace of communist China, Tiananmen Square's symbolic centrality was to be further amplified by and manifested with the construction of commemorative monuments and institutions at the space. As Chapter Four will demonstrate, Tiananmen Square was to be transformed into a memorial space to render the Chinese past of national salvation and revolutionary tradition.

Chapter Four

Materialization of Chinese Revolution Memory at Tiananmen Square

After almost a decade of research and design, the project of turning Tiananmen Square into the PRC's central square was translated from theory into practice. From 1958 onward, the spatial expansion and physical construction of Tiananmen Square entered the period of actual building. In this period, the Urban Planning Commission successively proposed four master projects to devise the expanded construction of Tiananmen Square. As part of National Day Project to display the great success of the socialist nation building in Beijing, the first project was drafted in 1958 to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the founding of the PRC. As a consequence, the Museums of Chinese History and the Chinese Revolution and the Great Hall of the People appear to the east and west of Tiananmen Square. The second project was proposed in 1964 to renovate Tiananmen Square taking into account the spatial relationship with Chang'an Avenue.¹ In this master project, planned in a conference at the International Hotel on 10 April 1964, the general layout of Tiananmen Square has not changed. The urban planners once again emphasized Tiananmen Square's central position on the central axis of Beijing.² The third project was proposed to build the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall in the light of overall spatial composition at Tiananmen Square in 1976. The fourth project was put forward in 1985 to respond to the adjustment in the general principles of Beijing's urban planning in the reform era. In this project, in addition to the new emphasis on historic preservation around Tiananmen Square, urban designers did not change the layout of the space, but

¹ For a discussion on the design and construction of Beijing's Chang'an Avenue, see Shuishan Yu, "To Achieve the Unachievable: Beijing's Chang'an Avenue and Chinese Architectural Modernization during the PRC Era," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Washington, 2006; Shuishan Yu, "Redefining the Axis of Beijing: Revolution and Nostalgia in the Planning of the PRC Capital," *Journal of Urban History* 34: 4 (2008): 571-608.

² Dong, *Gudu Beijing*, pp. 177-178.

continue to stress its centrality in the urban planning of Beijing.³ Thus, major large-scale spatial rearrangement and physical renovation in Tiananmen Square mainly occurred with the execution of the 1958 and 1976 projects. A careful examination of these two projects allows us to see how Tiananmen Square not only was turned into a central square of the PRC capital to represent the symbolic center of China but also was constructed into an architectural complex to embody Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition in the language of Mao's revolutionary discourse.

Materializing Mao's Revolutionary Discourse in the Monument to the People's Heroes

1958 as A Defining Moment

The year 1958 marks a watershed in Tiananmen Square's history of construction when two decisive developments took place. First, the Monument to the People's Heroes was established at the center of Tiananmen Square in late April 1958. From Mao's laying the foundation on 30 September 1949 to 1 May 1958 as the Monument was unveiled to the public, it took almost one decade to design and complete the most symbolic structure at the most symbolic space of China. Second, the CCP decided to launch National Day Project to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the founding of the PRC at an enlarged Politburo meeting in August 1958. This project includes expanding Tiananmen Square and building the Museums of Chinese History and Chinese Revolution and the Great Hall of the People around the space.⁴ From 1958 to 1959, Tiananmen Square experienced its first large-scale spatial expansion and physical construction since the founding of the PRC.

³ Dong, *Gudu Beijing*, pp. 181-186.

⁴ Wu, "Tiananmen guangchang," pp. 421-431; Dong, *Gudu Beijing*, pp. 165-168.

The first and foremost piece of architecture installed at Tiananmen Square after the founding of the PRC was the Monument to the People's Heroes (Site 2 on Illustration 1). The plan of building the Monument was approved at the FPCPPCC on 30 September 1949. In the afternoon of the same day, the foundation ceremony of the Monument was held at the center of Tiananmen Square.⁵ At the ceremony, Zhou Enlai indicated the purpose of establishing the Monument by stating that: "In order to commemorate the dead and to inspire the living, the FPCPPCC thereby decided to build the Monument to the People's Heroes in the Republic's capital Beijing for who had sacrificed for the nation."⁶ Then, Mao declared the encomium he drafted for the Monument:

Eternal glory to the People's Heroes who have given their lives over *the last three years* in the People's War of Liberation and the People's Revolution! Eternal glory to the People's Heroes who given their lives in the *last thirty years* in the People's War of Liberation and the People's Revolution! Eternal glory to the People's Heroes, who, since *the year of 1840*, have given their lives in the many struggles to resist the enemy, domestic and foreign, to strive for the independence of the nation and the freedom and well-being of the people!"⁷

After finishing the encomium, Mao laid the foundation stone of the Monument at the center of Tiananmen Square. The stone was placed at the center of the central axis on the space with about the same distance to the Tiananmen in the north and the Zhengyangmen in the south.⁸ The Monument probably is the most important piece of architecture to be built on the central axis of Beijing since the founding of the PRC. In his letter to the mayor Peng Zhen in August 1951, Liang Sicheng anticipates, "Tiananmen is the major

⁵ Liang Sicheng, "Renmin yingxiong jinianbei sheji de jinguo [An account of the designing of the Monument to the People's Heroes]," *Liang Sicheng quanji* [The complete works of Liang Sicheng], vol. 5 (Beijing: Zhongguo jianzhu gongye chubanshe, 2001), p. 462; Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang kishi dangan*, pp. 104-106.

⁶ Liang Sicheng, "Renmin yingxiong jinianbei sheji de jinguo [An account of the designing of the Monument to the People's Heroes]," *Jianzhu xuebao* [Architectural journal] 6 (1991): 27; Liang Sicheng, "Renmin yingxiong jinianbei sheji de jinguo," in *Liang Sicheng quanji* [The complete works of Liang Sicheng], vol. 5 (Beijing: Zhongguo jianzhu gongye chubanshe, 2001), p. 462; Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, p. 105.

⁷ The English translation here is based on Mao Zedong, "Draft for Inscription on the Monument to the People's Heroes," in Kau and Leung, eds., *The Writings of Mao Zedong, 1949-1976*, vol. 1, p. 9.

⁸ Wu Liangyong, "Renmin yingxiong jinianbei de chuanguo chengjiu [The creative achievement of the Monument to the People's Heroes]," *Jianzhu xuebao* [Architecture journal] 2 (1978): 4; Wu and Ma, *Tiananmen guangchang duandiashi*, p. 252.

structure in the square, but the Monument to the People's Heroes is to be a new building with the same importance. Both of them are the PRC's most important symbolic structural design."⁹ Liang was correct in his prediction.

The Location

Why was the Monument to the People's Heroes located at Tiananmen Square? The answer lies in the considerable symbolism of the space in terms of the Maoist-sanctioned revolutionary tradition. Initially, Tiananmen Square was not the only option to be considered as the place to build the Monument. Some delegates of the FCPPCC suggested placing the Monument at the square of Dongdan (East End) or in Eight-Treasure Mountains (Babaoshan). According to those who had participated in FCPPCC, it was Zhou Enlai who proposed Tiananmen Square as the ideal place to establish the Monument, and most of the delegates agreed with his idea because Tiananmen Square was the sacred place where "the prologue of new-democratic revolution was pulled up."¹⁰ As a delegate recalled, "Zhou Enlai's proposal was endorsed unanimously by all of us because here [Tiananmen Square] embodies the revolutionary tradition since the May Fourth Movement."¹¹ It seems a very natural outcome that a sacred place of Chinese revolutionary memory was chosen to be the ideal location to install a monument for the revolutionary martyrs.

The idea of constructing the Monument to the People's Heroes at Tiananmen Square was largely welcomed by the common people as well. Many letters were sent from the

⁹ Liang Sicheng, "Zhi Peng Zhen shizhang xin [Letter to the Mayor Peng Zhen]," in *Liang Sicheng wenji*, vol. 4, p. 43.

¹⁰ Wu, "Renmin yingxiong jinianbei," 4; Wu, "Tiananmen guangchang," p. 419.

¹¹ Chu Tunan, "Poxiao zhi qian: Wo canjia xin zhengxie choubei gongzuo he shoujie zhengxie de jingguo [Before the daybreak: An account of my participation in the preparation work for the new political consultation and the first plenum of the CPPCC]" in Shi Guangshu, ed. *Yinglai shuguang de shenghui: Xin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi qinliji* [The pageant meeting the dawn: Personal records of the new Chinese People's Political Consultation Conference] (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 1987), p. 83.

people in the entire nation to Beijing to express their excitement.¹² Some even zealously provided their designs to the Beijing municipal government. As Yang Xueli puts it:

When we realized that the Monument is to be established in [China's] Red Square, we were too excited to convey our pleasure in words. It reflects that the unconquerable spirit of the people's heroes, who sacrificed for the mission of human liberation, will forever be rooted in the hearts of living people. We should remember the great deeds of the people's heroes so as to make the living people understand that the beautiful life in the present and the bright prospect in the future are at expense of their blood.¹³

Yang's letter is significant in terms of the memory making centered on the Monument.

First, his letter is largely framed by the official discourse on the Monument. Like Zhou Enlai's statement at the foundation ceremony, the two major elements in Yang's letter are "the dead" martyrs to be memorialized and "the living" people to be remembering the "great deeds of the people's heroes." Second, it is the erection of a physical monument that made possible the memory making in the hearts of living people. The Monument thus provides a physical foundation for the Chinese people to commemorate their revolutionary martyrs. Third, Yang and many others conceptualized Tiananmen Square as China's "Red Square." This reference reveals that some Chinese people conceived Tiananmen Square to be the most symbolic space in China as "Red Square" was in the Soviet Union. Finally, by the June Fourth Movement in 1989, the memory work attached to the Monument has projected the nation's "bright prospect in the future" rather than being limited to remembering the revolutionary past in the present as Wu Hung suggested.¹⁴ In this sense, the Monument has constituted a material medium on which the memory making of the Chinese past of national salvation and revolutionary tradition based.

¹² "Rang yingxiong de yehi guwu women qianjin," *People's Daily* (13 August 1954): 2.

¹³ "Archive of the Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Commission," 150-1-46, the Beijing Municipal Archives.

¹⁴ In his comparison of the Monument and Tiananmen, Wu Hung argues, "While the Monument embodying the past of 'the revolutionary history,' the opposing Gate, with all its newly bestowed glory, stood for the present and future of that same history." See Wu Hung, "Tiananmen Square: A Political History of Monuments," *Representation* 35 (Summer 1991): 101.

The Date

The date of laying the foundation stone of the Monument to the People's Heroes deserves further consideration. Wu Hung argued that the precise timing, one day before the founding ceremony of the PRC, "signifies an attempt to put a punctuation mark in the flow of history, to separate the past from the present" and that the placement of the Monument's foundation stone was meant to serve as "a witness and legislator" to the founding of the PRC.¹⁵ Wu's suggestion is reasonable in the sense that the installation of the Monument's foundation can be understood as an effort to mark a watershed in the history of modern China or to claim legitimacy to the establishing of the PRC. In this sense, the precise timing of laying the foundation does constitute the "zero point" to represent a new chapter of modern Chinese history.¹⁶ However, this legitimacy was not based on a complete separation of the past from the present as Wu suggested. I argue that this legitimacy was founded on the CCP's effort to bridge the historical continuity between the revolutionary past and the final victory of communist revolution in the present. As previous scholarship suggests, when a social group or a political regime attempts to make an effort to begin with a wholly new beginning, it involves an element of recollection by using its "knowledge" of the past in a directive and active way. "The images of the past," as Paul Connerton suggests, "commonly legitimate a present order."¹⁷ In this sense, the foundation stone and the Monument representing an uncontested version of the past are physical manifestations of the PRC's claim to the historical legitimacy of its rule.

¹⁵ Wu, "Tiananmen Square: A Political History of Monuments," 100, 101.

¹⁶ In his consideration on the temporality of the Japanese nation's modernity, Stefan Tanaka argues that the separation of the past from the present functions as the "zero point in history" for Japanese society not only to justify the existence of the present but also makes possible a horizon of expectation for the progress in the future. See Stefan Tanaka, *New Times in Modern Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 88.

¹⁷ Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 3, 6, 45.

Mao's Revolutionary Discourse and the Architectural Style

As soon as the FPCPPCC decided to build the Monument to the People's Heroes at Tiananmen Square, the Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Commission immediately began to solicit design plans from the public. According to archival records, in order to attain the goals of commemorating the dead and inspiring the living, in the public announcement of solicitation, the Urban Planning Commission set up four design requirements.¹⁸ Based on these requirements, the Monument was supposed to be constructed as a structure in national style to represent the noble revolutionary spirit of the Chinese people's heroes with Mao's encomium as the central theme. This idea was echoed by a document, recorded on 10 June 1950, from the Urban Planning Commission. It clearly states that, in order to memorialize the people's heroes, the design of the Monument is to convey the spirit of Mao's encomium on an architecture built in national style that the common people can appreciate easily.¹⁹

The principle of constructing the Monument to be national in form and Mao's encomium in content was imposed by Mao's theory of New Democracy. As discussed in Chapter Two, in Mao's definition, the culture of the new-democratic revolution is "the ideological reflection of the new politics," and it must be "the culture and ideology of the proletariat."²⁰ Thus, the new culture must serve broad masses of workers and peasants by

¹⁸ The requirements are: First, the Monument must be a majestic, modest, beautiful, and harmonious architecture. Second, the design must signify the greatness of the revolution and the noble revolutionary spirit in a simple and clear way. Third, the design must fully display in the form of the Chinese national art. Finally, the design must leave ample space for Mao's inscription on the Monument. See "Archive of the Monument to the People's Heroes Construction Commission (ACCMPH)," 23-1-19, p. 19; Ying Shuangxi, *Yongheng de xiangzheng: Renmin yingxion jinianbei yanjiu* [The eternal symbol: The study of the Monument to the People's Heroes] (Shijiazhuang: Hebei meishu, 2006), p. 62.

¹⁹ "Beijingshi renmin yingxiong jinianbei sheji taolun jilu [The minute of the discussion on the design of the Monument to the People's Heroes in Beijing]," in Chen Leren, ed., *Ershi shiji Beijing chengshi jianshe shiliao ji* [Collection of the historical materials on the city construction of Beijing in the twentieth century] (Beijing: Xinhua chubanshe, 2007), p. 177.

²⁰ Mao, "On New Democracy," pp. 370, 373.

taking a national style that the Chinese people can understand.²¹ It is in this sense that the official design principles of the Monument have epitomized Mao's revolutionary discourse. As a result, the Monument was to be built as a structure that is national style in form and Mao's discourse in content. The principle would be manifested in the construction of other monumental structures at Tiananmen Square.

The Urban Planning Commission received around one hundred and seventy-eight design submissions in total. According to Liang Sicheng, who played important role in the design of the Monument, the submitted designs could be divided into three types in terms of architectural style.²² First, considering that the majority of revolutionary martyrs were workers and peasants, some designers proposed to build several low structures to visualize the people's grass-root quality. They suggested that, in order not to hinder the central axis of Tiananmen Square, the Monument should be constructed dispersed around the center on the space.²³ Second, some designers proposed to build the Monument in the form of giant sculpture to represent the revolutionary martyrs. Third, more designers were inclined to display the noble spirit of the people's heroes by establishing a structure in the form of lofty tower or obelisk.²⁴

In order to decide the architectural style of the Monument, the Urban Planning Commission assembled renowned architects and artists to form a committee to review the submissions. Because one of the design requirements stipulates that the Monument must signify the "noble" spirit of Chinese revolutionary heroes, the designs of "low" structure were considered to be inappropriate. Subsequently, according to Liang Sicheng's notes,

²¹ Mao, "On New Democracy," pp. 380-381.

²² Liang, "Renming yingxiong jinianbei sheji de jingguo," p. 27; Wu, "Renming yingxiong jinianbei," p. 5.

²³ Wu, "Renming yingxiong jinianbei," p. 5; Ying, *Yongheng de xiangzheng*, p. 51.

²⁴ "Shoudu renmin yingxiong jinianbei sheji jingguo (1953 nian) [The designing of the Monument to the People's Heroes in capital]," in Chen Leren, ed., *Ershi shiji Beijing chengshi jianshe shiliao ji*, p. 191; Liang, "Renming yingxiong jinianbei sheji de jingguo," p. 27; Wu, "Renming yingxiong jinianbei," p. 5.

the committee suggested that the vertical stone structure in the national style of Chinese stele is the most ideal form to display the Monument's the central theme, Mao's encomium.²⁵

Once the architectural style was confirmed, the committee came to develop design principles of the Monument in the language of Mao's revolutionary discourse. First, the great achievements in the two stages of the Chinese revolution should be represented in bas-reliefs on the Monument. Second, besides inscribing Mao's encomium in Zhou Enlai's calligraphy on the one side of the Monument, an eight-character inscription "Eternal Glory to the People's Heroes (Renmin yingxiong yongcui buxiu)" by Mao should be inscribed on the other.²⁶ The committee's general principles were approved by the central government in the spring of 1952 are reflected in the final design of the Monument.

As soon as the architectural style was settled upon, the Urban Planning Commission began to find the model for designing the main body of the Monument in "national style." Under Peng Zhen's instruction, the prototype of designing the Monument was based on the Tablet of Kunming Lake (Kunminghu bei) in the Summer Palace (Yiheyuan) and the Tablet of Spring Shade on the Jade Flower Isle (Qiongdao chunyun bei) at the foot of White Pagoda Hill (Baitashan).²⁷ "The design of the Monument was based on the form of traditional tablet memorializing important events and inscribing the Confucian Classics," as an official document indicates, "such as the Tablet of Songyang Temple (Songyang guan) in Dengfeng of Henan, the Tablet of the Classic of Filial Piety (Xiaojingbei) in Xi'an, and the Tablet of Spring Shade on the Jade Flower Isle and the Tablet of Kunming

²⁵ Liang, "Renming yingxiong jinianbei sheji de jingguo," p. 27; Wu, "Renming yingxiong jinianbei," p. 5.

²⁶ Liang, "Renming yingxiong jinianbei sheji de jingguo," pp. 27-28; Wu, "Renming yingxiong jinianbei," p. 5.

²⁷ Liang, "Renming yingxiong jinianbei sheji de jingguo," p. 28.

Lake.”²⁸ These “national-style” stone tablets constitute an ideal form to memorialize the revolutionary martyrs in the century-long national salvation movement in the language of Mao’s master discourse by inscribing Mao’s encomium.

The Construction Commission

Now the establishment of the Monument was ready to enter the period of actual construction. In order to administer the construction of the Monument, in its report sent to the Government Administration Council on 22 May 1951, the Beijing municipal government first time proposed to set up the Construction Commission of the Monument to the People’s Heroes.²⁹ Over one year later, the Commission was established on 10 May 1952. At the founding meeting of the Commission, the mayor Peng Zhen was elected the chief director and Liang Sicheng and Zheng Zhenduo were vice-directors.³⁰

More importantly, at the meeting, the committee members discussed the question about the motifs for the reliefs on the Monument. They decided that the reliefs should represent the defining moments in the Chinese revolution since 1840 as Mao’s revolutionary discourse defines. These reliefs were considered to be the crucial part of the construction project because it is “an important political implication [of the Monument].”³¹ In order to select proper themes for the reliefs, the first meeting of the Construction Commission suggested setting up a specialized committee headed by Fan Wenlan, a leading historian of the CCP’s history, to review materials on the Chinese

²⁸ The Construction Commission of the Monument to the People’s Heroes, ed., *Shoudu Yenmin Yingxiong Jinianbei sheji ziliao* [The designing materials on the Capital Monument to the People’s Heroes] (Beijing: Construction Commission, 1953), p. 7; Wu, “Renming yingxiong jinianbei,” p. 6; About the characteristics of these tablets, see Ying, *Yongheng de xiangzheng*, pp. 96-100.

²⁹ “Beijingshi renming zhengfu guanyu chengli shoudu renmin yingxiong jinianbei xingjian weiyuanhui zhi zhengwuyuan de baogao, [The People’s Government of Beijing Municipality’s report to the Government Administration Council about the establishing of the Construction Commission of the Monument to the People’s Heroes],” in *Ershi shiji Beijing chengshi jianshe shiliao ji*, pp. 181-182.

³⁰ “Renmin yingxiong jinianbei xingjian weiyuanhui chenglihui jilu [The record on the establishing meeting of the construction commission of the Monument to the People’s Heroes],” in *Ershi shiji Beijing chengshi jianshe shiliao ji*, p. 185.

³¹ “Renmin yingxiong jinianbei xingjian weiyuanhui chenglihui jilu,” p. 185.

revolution.³² Moreover, it was required to give special lectures on the history of the Chinese revolution, such as the May Fourth Movement, to the sculptors led by Liu Kaiqu.³³ This specialized committee would play an important role in selecting the defining moments in the Chinese revolution to be represented on the reliefs of the Monument.

The Orientation: From the South to the North

Until the completion of the Monument, the Construction Commission would need to deal with such controversial issues as the orientation of the structure and the selection of themes for the decorative reliefs. In the early designs, the front façade of the Monument was devised to face south, and, not until at least November 1954, the orientation was adjusted to north. In traditional China, major official building such as imperial palaces and monumental objects such as stone tablets were generally constructed to face south. Following this practice, the designers had tended to have south side of the Monument as the front façade. According to the Beijing municipal government's report to the Government Administration Council on 27 February 1951, the Construction Commission planned to inscribe Mao's inscription, "Eternal Glory to the People's Heroes," on the south face of the Monument. "The inscription is on the south side of the Monument," as the report puts it, "so that tourist can face toward the Tiananmen when they read it."³⁴

³² The Commission suggested that the members of the specialized committee should be chosen from the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Institute of Modern History and the teaching and researching section of modern history at the People's University. See "Renmin yingxiong jinianbei xingjian weiyuanhui chenglihui jilu," p. 185.

³³ Ying, *Yongheng de xiangzheng*, p. 164. Moreover, to make sure the progress and quality of construction project, under the Construction Commission, there were four other specialized committees on construction, structure design, architecture design, and sculpture and history. When the first two specialized committees mainly managed in actual work on engineering, the last two played very important role in the detail design of the Monument and in the selection of historical themes for the reliefs. Whereas Liang Sicheng supervised the work on general design of the Monument, the sculptor Liu Kaiqu was responsible for creating the decorative reliefs based on the themes selected by the specialized committee led by Fan Wenlan. Liang "Renmin yingxiong jinianbei sheji de jinghuo," 28.

³⁴ "Beijingshi renming zhengfu guanyu jinchin kaishi xingjian renmin yingxiong jinianbei zhi zhongyang renmin zhengfu zhengwuyuan zheng, [The People's Government of Beijing Municipality's report to the Government

This means that the front façade of the Monument is facing south. At the third meeting of the Specialist Committee of Architecture Design on 28 July 1952, the committee members still planned to engrave Mao's inscription on the south side of the Monument. Even in the plan approved by the central government on 1 August 1952, the design has not changed.³⁵

In autumn 1953, some members of the Association of Architectural Construction suggested that Mao's inscription should be put on the north side of the Monument as the front façade. They argued that, "it would be not so good for Chairman Mao to see the back of the Monument when he stands on the balcony of Tiananmen reviewing [military parades and mass congregations]."³⁶ According to Liang Sicheng, Peng Zhen decided to engrave Mao's inscription on the north side of the Monument at a meeting of the Beijing municipal government on 6 November 1954.³⁷ Based on Peng's decisions, ten days later, the Construction Commission ordered that the Monument's front façade was to be adjusted to the north.³⁸ According to Wu Liangyong, a veteran urban planner of Beijing, it was Zhou Enlai who played the most decisive role in adjusting the Monument's orientation. Considering that after the expansion of Tiananmen Square, there would be more crowds of people entering the place from the north and assembling in the north of the place, Zhou thought that it would be better to place Mao's inscription on the north side of the Monument so that the masses could have a better view of it. Mao approved this idea.³⁹

Administration Council of the PRC about starting establishing the Monument to the People's Heroes in this spring],” in *Ershi shiji Beijing chengshi jianshe shiliao ji*, p. 179.

³⁵ “ACCMPH,” 23-1-18, p.18; Ying, *Yongheng de xiangzheng*, p. 46.

³⁶ “ACCMPH,” 23-1-58, p. 91; Ying, *Yongheng de xiangzheng*, p. 46.

³⁷ Liang, “Renmin yingxiong jinianbei sheji de jingguo,” p. 28.

³⁸ “ACCMPH,” 23-1-94, p. 24.

³⁹ Wu, “Renmin yingxiong jinianbei,” p. 7.

The significance of the adjustment in the Monument's orientation deserves further consideration. In terms of political geography, Wu Hung suggests that the change of the Monument's orientation has turned Tiananmen Square into a self-contained unit independent from the rest of Beijing when the two juxtaposing structures, the Tiananmen and the Monument, together embrace the square in the middle. He also argues that, as soon as the unit was formed, a new "perspective" and a "new" hierarchical structure of Beijing emerged when Tiananmen Square became "the meeting point of the four directions and thus the heart of the capital and the whole country."⁴⁰ Wu's interpretation is right about the point on the formation of Tiananmen Square as a self-contained unit after the orientation adjustment of the Monument. Nevertheless, we cannot take this point of view for granted. As demonstrated previously, the centrality of Tiananmen Square in both Beijing and whole country was not novel when the Monument was still under design and construction. Even before the founding of the PRC, Tiananmen Square was already decided by the CCP's top leaders and urban administrators to be the central square of the national capital. Following the founding ceremony of the PRC, its symbolic and geographical centrality was further reinforced by the general programs on the urban planning of Beijing and master projects on the construction of Tiananmen Square. In other words, Tiananmen Square as "the meeting point of the four directions" and "the heart of the capital and the whole country" from the very beginning already consisted in those general programs and master projects rather only until the placement of the Monument. In this light, Tiananmen Square as a self-contained unit embraced by the Tiananmen facing south and the Monument facing north in effect was an architectural manifestation of the centrality of Tiananmen Square in the urban planning of Beijing. In

⁴⁰ Wu, "Tiananmen Square," 84-117; Wu Hung, *Remaking Beijing* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2004), p. 96.

this sense, the “new perspective” and the “new” hierarchical structure of Beijing following the formation of Tiananmen Square as a self-contained unit as Wu suggested is only thinkable when we take into account Beijing municipal government’s institutional efforts to make Tiananmen Square the central square of the PRC capital.

In terms of political implication, moreover, Hung Chang-tai argues that it was “a careful attempt by the Communists to emphasize the monument’s revolutionary and anti-traditional nature.” The point he makes is reasonable considering the motivation of establishing the Monument as well as the general architectural style and the design of historical reliefs on the structure. Nevertheless, when Hung goes on to argue that the Monument, which is taller than the Tiananmen by 4.24 meters, has “overshadowed the [Tiananmen] Gate and the old Forbidden City (the monarchial past) both in height and symbolic importance,” his interpretation became questionable.⁴¹ It is true that the Monument is physically taller than the Tiananmen, but it is not true that the symbolic significance of the Monument would overshadow that of Tiananmen. Tiananmen was no longer the symbol of monarchial authority, but has been redefined as the sacred place where Mao declared the birth of New China. It was to be constituted into a functional space for the PRC leaders such as Mao to display political power and review mass congregations and military parades. Its frontal image is part of the PRC’s national emblem. Therefore, Tiananmen and the Monument are the two most significant structures of approximate, if not the same, symbolic importance located at the most symbolic place of China.

The Motifs of Reliefs: Eight Defining Moments and Mao’s Revolutionary Discourse

⁴¹ Hung Chang-Tai, “Revolutionary History in Stone: The Making of a Chinese National Monument,” *China Quarterly* 166 (June 2001): 463.

The other controversial issue left for the Construction Commission was to select historical themes for the decorative reliefs of the Monument as the physical manifestation of the Chinese revolutionary history. A specialized committee of sculpture and history under the leadership of Fan Wenlan was organized to select significant events to represent the defining moments in the course of the Chinese struggle for national salvation from the Opium War in 1840 to the final victory of communist revolution in 1949. The committee members included leading historians of the CCP's history from the Institute of Modern History at the Chinese Academy of Sciences as well as representatives from the State Administration of Cultural Heritage, the Political Department of the Central Military Commission, the Propaganda Department of the CCP, and the Central Academy of Fine Arts.⁴² The committee basically represents the party, government and, military's official perspectives on the history of the Chinese revolution.

The selection of the historical themes for the Monument reliefs revealed the impact of Mao's revolutionary discourse. The specialized committee led by Fan Wenlan put forward the first proposal in July 1952. In this proposal, ten events were selected to be represented on the reliefs of the Monument: Sanyuanli (referring to Opium War), Yi He Tuan (Boxer Rebellion), Xinhai Geming (The Revolution of 1911), Wusi Yundong (May Fourth Movement), Erqi Yundong (February Seventh Movement in 1923), Wusa Yundong (May Thirtieth Movement in 1925), Jinggangshan (Jinggang Mountains), Youjizhan (Guerrilla Warfare), Pingxingguan (The Battle of Pingxingguan in September 1937), and Dujiang (Crossing the Yangzi River in 1949). The proposal was adopted by the Construction Commission on 4 August 1952 and sent to superior authorities and the

⁴² "Shoudu renmin yingxiong jinianbei xingjian weiyuanhui xiashe ge weiyuanhui mingdan, [The name list of the committees under the Construction Commission]," in *Ershi shiji Beijing chengshi jianshe shiliao ji*, p. 187.

members of the Commission for comments.⁴³ Among many, Mao's comments were sent to the Construction Commission. Mao suggested replacing "Jinggangshan" with "Bayi (i.e. Nanchang Uprising on 1 August 1927)," "Yi He Tuan" with "Jiawu (i.e. Sino-Japanese War in 1894)," and "Pingxingguan (i.e. Battle of Pingxingguan)" with "Yan'an Chuji (Counterattack from Yan'an)." In addition, Mao recommended that a better scenario than "Sanyuanli" could be found.⁴⁴ This shows Mao's deep intervention in selecting themes of the Monument's reliefs.

Mao's comments deserve further consideration in terms of his theoretical thinking on the Chinese revolution. First, Mao's last comment implies that he did not completely disagree on the motif of Opium War, but only suggested that a better scenario than "Sanyuanli" could be found to represent the event. In Mao's revolutionary discourse, as discussed in Chapter Two, the Opium War is defined as the starting point of the century-long national salvation movement and the old-democratic revolution. Thus, it seemed reasonable to Mao that this defining moment was chosen as a motif. Second, that the specialized committee selected "Jinggangshan" probably meant to pay respect to Mao's great achievement in the revolutionary base area of Jinggang Mountains. As addressed in Chapter Two, Mao did make a great contribution to the CCP's armed struggle in terms of proposing political-military strategies in building armed political power in the rural revolutionary base areas. But, Mao's suggestion cannot be considered to be simply the expression of his modesty. It can be best understood by taking into account his theoretical thinking on the Chinese revolution. As demonstrated in Chapter Two, the key to Mao's speculation on the Chinese revolution was the idea of armed struggle, as epitomized by

⁴³ "ACCMPH," 23-1-6, p. 8; Ying, *Yongheng de xiangzheng*, p. 165.

⁴⁴ Liang, "Renmin yingxiong jinianbei sheji de jingguo," p. 28.

his well-known slogan “Political Power Grows out the Barrel of a Gun.” In Mao’s view, armed struggle was one of the focal points that would lead to the success of the Chinese revolution. And, the Nanchang Uprising was generally conceived as a decisive moment in the progress of communist revolution that symbolizes the founding of the Red Army. Therefore, in Mao’s view, it is “Bayi” rather than “Jinggangshan” can best represent that defining moment in the Chinese revolution.

Mao’s comments did play an important role in the revision of motifs for the Monument’s reliefs. In early 1953, the sculptors headed by Liu Kaiqu were divided into ten groups for creating ten reliefs according to the themes selected by Fan Wenlan’s specialized committee. The ten new motifs include: Humen Xiaoyan (Burning the Opium at Humen), Taiping Tianguo (i.e. Taiping Rebellion), Jiawu Zhanzheng (i.e. The First Sino-Japanese War in 1894), Xinhai Geming, Wusi Yundong, Wusa Yundong, Nanchang Qiyi, Yanan Chuji, Kangri Youjizhan, and Dujiang.⁴⁵ As we can tell from this list, the specialized committee took Mao’s comments very seriously. The committee members decided to use “Humen Xiaoyan” to replace “Sanyuanli” to represent the Opium War and to replace “Boxer Rebellion” with “The Sino-Japanese War” and “Jinggang Mountains” with “Nanchang Uprising.”

After further research and discussion, in September 1953, the specialized committee decided to reduce the motifs from ten to eight. “Jiawu Zhanzheng” and “Yanan Chuji” were dropped from the list. According to accessible archival records, we do not know why the numbers of motifs was reduced or why the two themes were dropped from the list. In any case, the motifs of the Monument’s reliefs were eventually settled. According to Liang Sicheng, on 6 November 1954, the Beijing municipal government and the

⁴⁵ “Shoudu renmin yingxiong jinianbei fuke sheji dayi,” in *Ershi shiji Beijing chengshi jianshe shiliao ji*, pp. 187-188.

Construction Commission came to a decision on the eight motifs for the reliefs to be put on the Monument.⁴⁶ In this finalized plan, there are only slight modifications in the titles of the eight motifs, and they are: Humen Xiaoyan, Jintian Qiyi (i.e. Taiping Rebellion), Wuchang Qiyi (i.e. Revolution of 1911), Wusi Yundong, Wusa Yundong, Nanchang Qiyi, Kangri Youjizhan, and Shengli Du Changjiang (Successfully Crossing the Yangzi River). In addition, on either side of “Shengli du Changjiang” are small reliefs that represent the scenarios of “Zhiyuan Qianxian (Supporting the Military Front)” and “Yingjie Jiefang (Greeting the Liberation).” These two small reliefs are designed to display the popular participation in and popular support for the Chinese communist movement. Eventually, eight historical themes were to be engraved on the reliefs of the Monument to represent the eight defining moments in the history of the Chinese revolution.

The Monument: Materialization of the Maoist Revolutionary Discourse

The actual construction of the Monument was initiated on 1 August 1952, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Nanchang Uprising. After nine years of design and construction, the Monument was unveiled to the public on 1 May 1958. In addition to serving as an intentional memorial to remember the revolutionary martyrs, the Monument has materialized Mao’s revolutionary discourse in many ways.

The structure consists of two major parts: a granite obelisk on the top and a double plinth on the bottom. The enlarged-stele like obelisk consists of over seventeen thousand pieces of granite and marble blocks, and a sixty-ton slab is inserted in the central part on the front side. Mao’s inscription, “Eternal Glory to the People’s Heroes,” is engraved on the central slab and the encomium drafted by Mao is inscribed on the other side in the

⁴⁶ Liang, “Renmin yingxiong jinianbei sheji de jingguo,” p. 28; Ying, *Yongheng de xiangzheng*, pp. 128, 166; Wu, “Renmin yingxiong jinianbei,” p. 8; Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, pp. 107-108.

calligraphy of Zhou Enlai. The east and west sides of the Monument are decorated with red stars, flags, pines and cypresses to symbolize that the spirit of revolutionary heroes will last forever.⁴⁷ Under the obelisk is a double plinth constructed in the style of traditional Chinese *Xumizuo* (high base with decorative design). The upper section is ornamented on four sides with eight large wreaths of peonies, lotus, and chrysanthemum to signify the perseverance, purity, and nobility of the revolution.⁴⁸ The lower section is decorated with ten marble reliefs that represent eight defining moments in the history of the Chinese revolution from 1840 to 1949.⁴⁹

Mao's inscription and encomium must be read together with the ten reliefs to decode Mao's master discourse on the Chinese revolution encoded on the Monument. First, from the very beginning, Mao's encomium was set by the Beijing municipal government as the central theme that must be represented on the reliefs of the Monument. Whereas Mao's inscription clearly expresses the central theme in a concise way, his encomium exactly locates the Chinese revolutionary martyrs' struggle for the liberation of China in the larger context of the century-long national salvation movement from the Opium War onward. As Mao puts it, "Eternal glory to the People's Heroes, who, *since the year of 1840*, have given their lives in the many struggles to resist the enemy, domestic and foreign, to strive for the independence of the nation and the freedom and well-being of the people." More importantly, the temporal framework from 1840 to 1949 indicated in the encomium precisely reproduces Mao's revolutionary discourse. As discussed in Chapter Two, in his revolutionary discourse, Mao has located his discussion on the

⁴⁷ "Shoudu renmin yingxiong jinianbei huawen sheji dayi," in *Ershi shiji Beijing chengshi jianshe shiliao ji*, p. 188; Wu, "Renmin yinxiong jinianbei," p. 8.

⁴⁸ "Shoudu renmin yingxiong jinianbei huawen sheji dayi," p. 188; Wu, "Renmin yinxiong jinianbei," p. 8.

⁴⁹ The eight decisive moments carved on the reliefs of the Monument to the People's Heroes are: Burning Opium; The Jintian Village Uprising; Wuchang Uprising; The May Fourth Movement; May Thirtieth Movement; Nanchang Uprising; War of Resistance against Japan; Successful Crossing the Yangtze River; See ACCMPH," 23-1-198.

Chinese revolution in the century-long national salvation movement. In Mao's view, the progress of the Chinese revolution spontaneously witnessed the Chinese people's striving for the cause of national salvation, as his "Chinese Revolution" chapter reads:

The history of China's transformation into a semi-colony and colony by imperialism in collusion with Chinese feudalism is at the same time a history of struggle by the Chinese people against imperialism and its lackeys. The Opium War, the Movement of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, the Sino-French War, The Sino-Japanese War, the Reform Movement of 1898, the Yi Ho Tuan Movement, the Revolution of 1911, the May 4th Movement, the May 30th Movement, the Northern Expedition, the Agrarian Revolutionary War and the present War of Resistance Against Japan—all testify to the Chinese people's indomitable spirit in fighting imperialism and its lackeys.⁵⁰

This passage is not an exceptional example. As demonstrated in Chapter Two, Mao had defined the year of 1840 as the beginning of the Chinese old-democratic revolution in many places; a perspective that has been already reproduced in PRC history textbooks and scholarly writings.⁵¹ Thus, the Chinese communists generally conceived 1840 as the beginning of modern Chinese history. Now, the perspective was materialized on the Monument along with Mao's encomium.

Those revolutionary movements Mao listed in the passage above are manifested on the Monument's reliefs as well. Considering that Mao had mentioned the list many times, it is safe to argue that he truly regarded those events as most decisive moments in the course of the Chinese revolution, and they were sanctioned as the communist revolutionary tradition represented on the Monument. As we can tell from the passage,

⁵⁰ Mao, "The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party," p. 314.

⁵¹ To name a few here: In considering the historical significance of the May Fourth Movement, Mao suggests: "If we trace China's bourgeois-democratic revolution back to its formative period, we see that it has passed through a number of stages in its development: the Opium War, the War of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom [Taiping Rebellion], the Sino-Japanese War of 1894, the Reform Movement of 1898 [One Hundred Day's Reform], the Yi Ho Tuan Movement [Boxer Rebellion], the Revolution of 1911, the May 4th Movement, the Northern Expedition [National Revolution], and the War of the Agrarian Revolution. The present War of Resistance Against Japan is yet another stage, and is the greatest, most vigorous and most dynamic stage of all." See Mao, "The May Fourth Movement," p. 237; Likewise, in comparing the historical significance of the May Fourth Movement and December Ninth Movement, Mao suggest: "It has been a hundred years now since the Chinese people began to fight against imperialism and the dark forces in the Opium War." See Mao Zedong, "The Great Significance of the December Ninth Movement," in Stuart R. Schram, ed., *Mao's Road to Power: Revolutionary Writing 1912-1949*, vol. 7 (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1992), p. 270.

except for the victory of the CCP, seven events from the list are visualized on the eight reliefs. “Burning Opium at Humen” that refers to the Opium War and “Jintian Uprising” that refers to the Taipei Rebellion are placed on the east side of the Monument; “Wuchang Uprising,” “May Fourth Movement” and “May Thirtieth Movement” are on the south; “Nanchang Uprising” and “Guerrilla War of Resistance against Japan” are on the west; and “Successfully Crossing the Yangzi River” that represents the victory of the CCP is on the north. It is in this sense that I argue that the Monument can be considered as a physical manifestation of Mao’s revolutionary discourse and communist revolutionary tradition.

Second, the encomium of the Monument as a whole has epitomized Mao’s two-stage temporal framework of the Chinese revolution. Mao’s encomium is structured by three defining moments in the progress of the Chinese revolution: “the last three years [1946-1949],” “the last thirty years [1919-1949],” and “since the year of 1840 [1840-1949].” When the first and third key moments constitute the temporal framework from 1840 to 1949, the second one precisely marks the May Fourth Movement as the turning point of the Chinese revolution. As demonstrated in Chapter Two, in his revolutionary discourse, Mao defines the Chinese revolution as a bourgeois-revolution that has to undergo two stages—old-democratic revolution and new-democratic revolution—before entering the stage of socialist revolution. More importantly, Mao defined the May Fourth Movement the turning point from the old-democratic revolution to the new-democratic revolution.⁵²

Thus, Mao’s two-stage temporal framework not only has been reproduced in the PRC’s

⁵² In Mao’s words, “The century of China’s bourgeois-democratic revolution can be divided into two main stages, a first stage of eighty years and a second of twenty years. Each has its basic characteristic: China’s bourgeois-democratic revolution in the first eighty years belongs to the old category, while in the last twenty years, owing to the change in the international and domestic political situation, it belongs to the new category. Old democracy is the characteristic of the first eighty years. New democracy is the characteristic of the last twenty years.” See Mao, “On New Democracy,” p. 370.

history textbooks and scholarly writings but also materialized on the Monument to the People's Heroes.

Furthermore, the decisive significance of the three defining moments is further manifested in the spatial arrangement of the eight reliefs on the Monument. "Burning Opium at Humen," "May Fourth Movement" and "Successfully Crossing the Yangzi River" are located at three symbolic positions on the Monument. "Burning Opium at Humen" is placed in the "first" of the two reliefs on the east side to represent the beginning of the Chinese revolution in 1840. "May Fourth Movement" is put in the "middle" of three reliefs on the south to symbolize the event as the turning point from the old-democratic to the new-democratic revolution in 1919. "Successfully Crossing the Yangzi River" in the "middle" of three reliefs on the north clearly signifies the final success of the new-democratic revolution and the CCP's political victory. The location of "May Fourth Movement" on the middle of south and that of "Successfully Crossing the Yangzi River" on the opposite north exactly exemplifies the beginning and the success of new-democratic revolution. Taking into account that the Monument is constructed at the center of the central axis on Tiananmen Square, as soon as the Monument was installed, the spatial axis of Tiananmen and Beijing has been turned into a temporal axis as well.

To sum up, Mao's revolutionary discourse and communist nostalgia over the Chinese revolutionary tradition had played crucial roles in the design of the Monument. The traditional Chinese stele was chosen as the architectural style to make the Monument a vertical stone structure to display Mao's encomium and the noble spirit of the revolutionary martyrs. To amplify Mao's encomium as the central theme of the Monument, eight defining moments in the Chinese revolution were chosen by leading

historians of the CCP's history to be represented on the reliefs, not to mention Mao's involvement in the process. That the orientation of the Monument was adjusted from the south to the north was precisely because the crowds of the people could have a better view of Mao's inscription, not to mention that Mao standing on top of Tiananmen would not have to see the back of the Monument. More importantly, Mao's encomium along with the ten reliefs has encoded Mao's revolutionary discourse in the most symbolic structure erected at the most symbolic place of the PRC. The Monument to the People's Heroes thus has constituted a mnemonic medium to embody the Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition in the language of Mao's revolutionary discourse to speak to the future generations.

Rendering Chinese Temporality in the Maoist Language at Tiananmen Square

National Day Project and the Great Leap Forward

Another important event that took place at Tiananmen Square in 1958 was the execution of the National Day Project. This, the largest scale construction project at Tiananmen Square, was launched as part of the PRC's nation-building project during the Great Leap Forward. In August 1958, in order for the PRC to celebrate its tenth birthday, at the enlarged Politburo meeting in Beidaihe, the CCP decided to initiate the National Day Project in Beijing to display the great success of the socialist nation building.⁵³ More than a material construction, as Peng Zhen indicated, the project was "to build the factory producing spirit (shengchan jingshen de gongchang) to unify the general will of the nation, to demonstrate the supremacy of socialism and the Chinese people's revolutionary enthusiasm, and to mobilize popular participation in the building of socialism. As such,

⁵³"Archive of Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Bureau," 131-1-325, p. 1; Peng Zhen, "Guanyu Tiananmen guangchang he renming dahuatang de jianshe [On the construction of Tiananmen Square and the Great Hall of the People]," *Zhanzai geming he jianshe zui qianxian*, pp. 246, 247; Wu, "Tiananmen guangchang," pp. 421-422.

the importance of this spiritual factory is no less than that of the factory producing material (shengchan wuzhi de gongchang).”⁵⁴ In this sense, the National Day Project can be viewed as a material manifestation of the PRC’s ideology construction for the cause of socialist revolution during the Great Leap Forward.

Under this National Day Project, the CCP was determined to expand Tiananmen Square and to build Ten Great Buildings in the PRC capital.⁵⁵ As a consequence of the project, the buildings to host the Museum of Chinese History and the Museum of the Chinese Revolution and the Great Hall of the People were to be established around Tiananmen Square (Site 3 and 4 on Illustration 1).⁵⁶ In late December 1958, the Beijing municipal government’s final plan of the National Day Project was approved by the Politburo of the CCP.⁵⁷ Given the importance and urgency of the project, both the central government and Beijing municipal government took the construction of Ten Great Buildings as priority during the budget year of 1958-1959, especially the ones to be established at Tiananmen Square were the priority of all priorities (zhong zhong zhi

⁵⁴Peng, “Guanyu tiananmen guangchang,” p. 247; Similarly, according to archival records, the vice-Mayor Wan Li also clearly suggested that the completion of the Project would “demonstrate the great achievement over the ten years, especially during the period of Great Leap Forward since 1958, in the wake of the founding of our nation.” See “Archive of the Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Bureau,” 131-1-363, the Beijing Municipal Archives, p. 3; “Archive of the Beijing Committee of the CCP,” 1-20-185, the Beijing Municipal Archives; Wan Li, “Zai Beijingshi guoqinggongcheng wuji ganbu huiyi shang de baogao [The report delivered at the meeting of the Beijing municipal national day project],” *Beijing dangan shiliao* [Archives and historical materials of Beijing] 2 (2003): 149.

⁵⁵“Archive of the Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Bureau,” 131-1-361, p. 1; “Archive of the Beijing Municipal Construction Bureau,” 125-1-1223, p. 178; “Archive of the Beijing Committee of the CCP,” 1-5-253, pp. 9, 18, 34; The Ten Great Architecture are the Great Hall of the People, Museum of Chinese History and Museum of Chinese Revolution, the Cultural Palace of Nationalities, the Beijing Railway Station, the Workers’ Stadium, the National Agriculture Exhibition Hall, the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse, the Minzu Hotel, the Overseas Chinese Hotel, and the People’s Revolutionary Military Museum. See “Archive of the Beijing Municipal Construction Bureau,” 125-1-1218, pp. 1-2. For the discussion on the construction and location of the Ten Great Buildings, see Hung, *Mao’s New World*, pp. 51-72; Wu, *Remaking Beijing*, pp. 108-116.

⁵⁶“Archive of the Beijing Committee of the CCP,” 1-5-253, the Beijing Municipal Archives, p. 34; “Archive of the Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Bureau,” 131-1-325, the Beijing Municipal Archives, pp. 1, 42; “Archive of Beijing Municipal Urban Construction Commission,” 47-1-92, the Beijing Municipal Archives, p. 6; “Archive of the Beijing Municipal Construction Bureau,” 125-1-1218, the Beijing Municipal Archives, pp. 1-2; “Archive of the Beijing Municipal Construction Bureau,” 125-1-1223, the Beijing Municipal Archives, pp. 61, 83, 178.

⁵⁷ Dong Guangqi, *Gudu Beijing*, p. 168; Shen Yurong, “Bange shiji qian Tiananmen guangchang de guihua yu jianshe [The planning and construction of Tiananmen Square in half a century ago],” *Beijing guihua jianshe* [Beijing City Planning and Construction] 6(2002): 65.

zhong).⁵⁸ Once again, Tiananmen Square became the meeting place of both material and ideological construction of the PRC.

The master project on the construction of Tiananmen Square in 1958 reveals the tremendous impact of Mao's will. According to Peng Zhen, Mao had determined the guiding principle in the spatial expansion of Tiananmen Square in the first place.⁵⁹ To serve as the central square of the PRC capital, Mao resolutely argued, Tiananmen Square's scale must be "big."⁶⁰ Under this principle, Tiananmen Square was to be turned into "the world's largest square to hold mass congregations of one million people."⁶¹ In order to hold massive military parades and civilian processes, Chang'an Avenue was to be broadened into a grand thoroughfare. For the same purpose, the trolley tracks on Chang'an Avenue must be removed.⁶² Moreover, in his instructions to Peng Zhen, Mao suggested establishing the Great Hall of the People and Museums of Chinese History and the Chinese Revolution on the west and east sides of Tiananmen Square.⁶³ Thus, Tiananmen Square was to undergo a massive expansion under Mao's guiding principle—the scale must be BIG.

The Expansion of Tiananmen Square: The Victory of the Party's General Line

Mao's guiding principle was integrated into the master project on the construction of Tiananmen Square in 1958 as well. In the finalized project, Zhao Dongri and Shen Qi

⁵⁸ "Archive of the Beijing Municipal Construction Bureau," 125-1-1224, pp. 55, 61.

⁵⁹ Peng, "Guanyu tiananmen guangchang," p. 247.

⁶⁰ As for the idea of "big" and its significance in the PRC's nation building and urban construction, see Zhiguo Ye, "Big is Modern: The Making of Wuhan as a Mega-City in Early Twentieth Century China, 1889-1957," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 2010.

⁶¹ Peng, "Guanyu tiananmen guangchang," p. 247; Wu, "Tiananmen guangchang," p. 422; For the purpose, the boundary of Tiananmen Square was to be enlarged to the Gong'an Jie (Street of Public Security) in the west, to Xipishi Dajie (Street of the West Leather Market) in the west, and to Zhengyangmen in the south. See Peng, "Guanyu tiananmen guangchang," p. 248; Dong, *Gudu Beijing*, pp. 165-166; Tao, "Tiananmen guangchang guihua jianshe," p. 29.

⁶² Peng, "Guanyu tiananmen guangchang," p. 247; Dong, *Gudu Beijing*, p. 165;

⁶³ Peng, "Guanyu tiananmen guangchang," pp. 247-248; Also see Dong, *Gudu Beijing*, p. 166.

plan to enlarge Tiananmen Square into a “big” rectangle space as large as Mao expected. In their proposal, they argue that Tiananmen Square is “the heart of capital” and “the favorite place of the Chinese people,” and, therefore, “the scale of the square should not be too small.”⁶⁴ In order to legitimize their project, Zhao and Shen emphasizes the symbolism of Tiananmen Square:

Tiananmen Square was the place where [Mao] declared the birth of New China. It is the place for Chairman Mao and central political leaders to review the power of the Chinese people every year. It is the place for national leader and crowds of people to celebrate national holidays together. It is the place for the heroic and revolutionary people to hold mass congregations and processes in the struggle with the imperialism. It was also the place for oppressed people to undertake revolutionary struggle against imperialism and feudalism before the liberation of the nation.⁶⁵

In other words, as Zhao and Shen put it, “Tiananmen Square, a place which embodies historical tradition and political consciousness, is the heart of New China,” and “we should use this place to display the supremacy of Communism.”⁶⁶ In their view, the most symbolic center of China, Tiananmen Square was supposed to be expanded into a mega space.

With completion of the master project, Tiananmen Square was enlarged into an enormous rectangular space in August 1959. The surface area of Tiananmen Square was extended from one hundred and ten thousand square meters to around four hundred and thirty thousand square meters.⁶⁷ The northern part of Tiananmen Square, the space between Tiananmen and the Monument, was constructed into an enormous asphalt ground of two hundred thousand square meters to host mass congregations of six hundred thousand people. Chang’an Avenue near Tiananmen Square was broadened into a one-kilometer-long thoroughfare with a width of eighty meters to hold massive military

⁶⁴ “Archive of the Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Bureau,” 131-1-325, p. 29.

⁶⁵ “Archive of the Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Bureau,” 131-1-325, pp. 28-29.

⁶⁶ “Archive of the Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Bureau,” 131-1-325, p. 29.

⁶⁷ “Archive of the Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Bureau,” 131-1-325, p. 30; “Archive of the Beijing Municipal Engineering Bureau,” 138-1-34, p. 3; “Archive of the Beijing Municipal Construction Bureau,” 125-1-1218, p. 2.

parades and civilian processes. In order to allow sixty-ton heavy tanks to pass through, the entire thoroughfare was cemented with stone blocks, and the central section in front of Tiananmen was especially paved with granite slabs.⁶⁸ The southern part of the Square was turned into a large district of grassland to plant over one hundred thousand evergreen trees to represent eternal glory of the people's heroes.⁶⁹ As a result, the space was turned to a mega space to serve as the central square of the PRC capital and symbolic center of New China.

From the beginning to the end, it took only six months to complete the expanded construction of Tiananmen Square. This incredible achievement was exactly a material manifestation of the socialist building during the Great Leap Forward. “[The fact that] it took us as short as six months to complete such as a huge project of [expanding] Tiananmen Square,” as the Beijing municipal government concluded, “is the Great Leap Forward in the history of urban construction in the national capital and the victory of the Party's General Line (zongluxian).”⁷⁰ The 1958 master project was a manifestation of the PRC's nation building project.

Exhibiting the Revolutionary Tradition in the Maoist Language

Two more national buildings were established around Tiananmen Square during the period of the Great Leap Forward. Whereas Tiananmen Square was expanded into an enormous space of perfect rectangle to symbolize the heart of New China and to imagine the unity and totality of the Chinese nation under the rule of the CCP, the Museums of

⁶⁸ “Archive of the Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Bureau,” 131-1-325, pp. 31-32; “Archive of the Beijing Municipal Engineering Bureau,” 138-1-34, p. 3; “Archive of the Beijing Municipal Construction Bureau,” 125-1-1218, p. 3; Tao, “Tiananmen guangchang guihua jianshe,” p. 29.

⁶⁹ “Archive of the Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Bureau,” 131-1-325, p. 34; “Archive of the Beijing Municipal Engineering Bureau,” 138-1-34, p. 3; “Archive of the Beijing Municipal Construction Bureau,” 125-1-1218, p. 4.

⁷⁰ “Archive of the Beijing Municipal Engineering Bureau,” 138-1-34, p. 23.

Chinese History and the Chinese Revolution and the Great Hall of the People were constructed to physically render the legitimate foundation of the PRC at the same time.

The Museum of Chinese History and the Museum of the Chinese Revolution on the east side of Tiananmen Square together provide historical legitimacy to the rule of the CCP in the language of Mao's revolutionary discourse. The architectural compound designed to host the two Museums was completed in August 1959.⁷¹ From the very beginning, the architecture was devised to host the Museum of the Chinese Revolution in the north wing and the Museum of Chinese History in the south wing. There are one introductory hall plus seventeen exhibition rooms in each of the two Museums.⁷² The exhibitions on display in the two Museums are divided by the year of 1840, the date of the Opium War, which was defined by Mao as the beginning of the old-democratic revolution. Whereas the Museum of the Chinese Revolution is to exhibit the history of the Chinese revolution by displaying the revolutionary relics after 1840, the Museum of Chinese History is to exhibit the Chinese history from ancient times by displaying cultural heritages before 1840.⁷³ In addition to serving as state-sponsored monumental institution for studying and spreading the officially sanctioned knowledge of Chinese history and revolutionary tradition, the two Museums together have provided historical legitimacy to the PRC under the leadership of the CCP by exhibiting the Chinese comprehensive history and recent revolutionary tradition at the heart of New China. This

⁷¹ The entire architecture is a majestic building with a surface area of over sixty-five thousand square meters and a height of thirty-five meters. "Archive of the Beijing Municipal Construction Bureau," 125-1-1218, p. 3; Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Bureau, "Zhongguo geming yu zhongguo lishi bowuguan [The Museums of Chinese Revolution and Chinese History]," *Jianzhu xuebao* [Journal of architecture] Z1 (1959): 34.

⁷² "Archive of the Beijing Municipal Construction Bureau," 125-1-1223, pp. 61-62, 83; Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Bureau, "Zhongguo geming yu zhongguo lishi bowuguan," 34.

⁷³ Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, pp. 192-199; Wu, *Remaking Beijing*, pp. 117-121. The two Museums were merged into and renamed as the National Museum of China in 2003.

legitimacy is further empowered by framing the exhibition design of the two Museums with Mao's two-stage temporal framework.

The Maoist revolutionary discourse was manifested on the appearance of the compound architecture as well. According to the Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Bureau, the general principle in designing the architecture is to display the supreme goal of revolutionary cause and the great victory of the Chinese revolution. For example, the front porch was designed in the form of "victory gate (shenglimen)" to represent the triumph of the communist revolution.⁷⁴ On the top of the two gate pillars alongside the front porch are two reliefs engraved in the image of torch to symbolize the connotation of "A Single Spark can Start a Prairie Fire," an influential essay in which Mao proposes the strategy of encircling the cities by the countryside as discussed in Chapter Two.⁷⁵ The two reliefs are intended to serve as a visual manifestation of Mao's proposal of encircling the cities by the countryside, a decisive factor leading to the success of the communist revolution. It also implies the passing on the torch of revolution to future generations given the two Museums' function to transmit the official revolutionary history. The two reliefs look exactly like the seals on the front façade of the architecture to connect the present with recent revolutionary tradition claiming historical legitimacy to the CCP rule.

The Maoist revolutionary discourse is further crystallized in the exhibition of the Museum of Chinese Revolution. In the original design, entering the Museum, the visitors would immediately see an inscription of Mao's well-known motto, "The people, and the people alone, are the motive force in the making of world history."⁷⁶ This is to emphasize

⁷⁴ Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Bureau, "Zhongguo geming yu zhongguo lishi bowuguan," 38.

⁷⁵ Shu, *Tiananmen guangchnag lishi dangan*, p. 193; Mao Zedong, "Xingxing zhi huo keyi liaoyuan [A single spark can start a prairie fire]," in *Mao Zedong xuanji*, vol. I, pp. 94-104; Mao, "A Single Spark Can Start a Prairie Fire," in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. I, pp. 117-128.

⁷⁶ Mao Zedong, "On Coalition Government," in *SW*, vol. III, p. 207.

that the people are the masters of the nation and makers of the nation's history, and thus the people constitute the legitimate power source of the PRC. This implication is further reinforced by the exhibition in the introductory hall of the Museum of the Chinese Revolution. Entering the introductory hall, there is a huge glazed pottery relief mural with the national anthem of the PRC. Beside the relief mural is Mao's inscription "The Victory of the People." The first national flag hoisted at the founding ceremony of the PRC and some other valuable relics are also exhibited here.⁷⁷ This exhibition is designed to represent the legitimacy of the PRC by displaying Mao's inscription and the PRC's national symbols at the national museum that function to tell the official history of century-long national salvation struggles by the Chinese people. The reliefs in the image of torch at the front porch, Mao's gilded inscription at the main entrance, and the national symbols in the exhibition hall of the Museum of the Chinese Revolution together constitute the visual manifestation of the PRC's historical legitimacy.

Moreover, the exhibition of revolutionary relics in the Museum of the Chinese Revolution is divided into two major parts based on Mao's two-stage temporal framework of the Chinese revolution: old-democratic revolution and new-democratic revolution. The section of the old-democratic revolution is to display decisive events in the history of the Chinese revolution from the Opium War to the Revolution of 1911. The section of new-democratic revolution is divided into five units based on Mao's four-periods temporal framework: The Founding of the CCP, the First and Second Civil Wars, the War of Resistance against Japan, and the Third Civil War.⁷⁸ As mentioned in Chapter Two, Mao divided the history of the new-democratic revolution into four periods: from

⁷⁷Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, p. 197.

⁷⁸Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, p. 198.

the May Fourth Movement in 1919 to the founding the CCP in 1921; from the Great Revolution since 1921 to the collapse of the First United Front in 1927; the civil war from 1927 to 1937; and the War of Resistance against Japan. Considering that Mao had proposed this temporal framework in 1942, one can argue that the exhibition of the five units in the section of the new-democratic revolution have reproduced Mao's four-period temporal framework.

Second, the exhibitions on display in the section of the new-democratic revolution are designed to tell the history of the CCP from the founding of the party to its final triumph. In doing so, the rule of the CCP is endowed with historical legitimacy by rendering the recent revolutionary history during the new-democratic revolution. As demonstrated in Chapter Two, Mao's four-period temporal framework has already been reproduced in the PRC history textbooks since the founding of the PRC. Now, it was further manifested in the exhibition design of the Museum of the Chinese Revolution. In this sense, the Museum of the Chinese Revolution as a state-sponsored monumental institution to spread the official knowledge of revolutionary tradition has constituted a mnemonic medium to transmit Mao's revolutionary discourse.

Displaying the People's Power: The Great Hall of the People

While the two Museums are designed to claim the historical legitimacy to the PRC, the Great Hall of the People is to embody the PRC's legislative legitimacy. Finished in September 1959, the Great Hall was planned to house the National People's Congress (NPC) and CPPCC, to hold mass assemblies on national holidays, and to receive important foreign guests.⁷⁹ Thus, the Great Hall is constituted of three major parts: the

⁷⁹ Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Bureau, "Renmin da huitang (The Great Hall of the People)," *Jianzhu xuebao* [Journal of architecture] Z1 (1959): 23.

Ten-Thousand-People Great Auditorium in the west, the State Banquet Hall in the north, and the office building of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress in the south (Site 4 on Illustration 1).⁸⁰

With a width of seventy-six meters and a length of sixty meters, the Great Auditorium is an oval meeting space to hold the NPC and CPPCC. The center of the ceiling above the Great Auditorium is decorated with an illuminated red star encircled by sunflower patterns. According to an official report, the red star represents the leadership of the CCP and the sunflowers signify the Chinese people around the party. They together convey an image that the nation under the rule of the CCP is embraced by all the Chinese people.⁸¹ The Banquet Hall is a rectangular room with a width of fifty-four meters and a length of seventy-six meters. It is spacious enough to hold national banquets of up to five thousand people to receive important national guests.⁸² The south wing of the Great Hall is a five-floor office building to accommodate the Standing Committee of the NPC as well as the Delegation Halls (Daibiaoting) named after the provinces, special administrative regions, and autonomous regions of the PRC, such as Beijing Hall, Hong Kong Hall, and Taiwan Hall.⁸³

The legislative legitimacy embodied in the Great Hall of the People can be understood in many ways. First, the official name of the building clearly symbolizes the power source of the PRC—the people. According to archival records, during the period of construction, the building was generally called the Great Hall of the National Congress

⁸⁰ The surface area of the structure is one hundred and seventy-one thousand and eight hundred square meters with a height point of forty meters. "Archives of the Beijing Municipal Construction Bureau," 125-1-1226, pp. 38, 213; Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Bureau, "Renmin da huitang," 23.

⁸¹ "Archives of the Beijing Municipal Construction Bureau," 125-1-1218, p. 2; Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Bureau, "Renmin da huitang," 27, 29.

⁸² Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Bureau, "Renmin da huitang," 29-30.

⁸³ Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Bureau, "Renmin da huitang," 30; Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, pp. 187-191.

(Quanguo daibiao dahui dahuitang) or the Great Ten-Thousand-People Auditorium (Wanren dalitang).⁸⁴ It was not until the eve of the completion of the building that Mao designated its name as “the Great Hall of the People (Renmin Dahuitang)” when he went to inspect the construction site.⁸⁵ Taking into account that Mao had so emphasized the motive force of the people in making national history, in the Chinese revolution, and in the nation building of New China, the name of the Great Hall of the People can be read as a rhetorical device to endow the PRC with legitimate foundation by singling out the people as the power source of the state. Second, this emphasis on the people as the power source of the nation is further manifested in the architectural design of the Great Hall. According to Peng Zhen, premier Zhou Enlai determined the general principle for the design of the Great Hall is to express the spirit of “serving the people (wei renmin fuwu),” which was formulated by Mao as the central motto of the state apparatus.⁸⁶

Third, more importantly, as the headquarters of the NPC and the meeting space to hold the CPPCC, the Great Hall of the People precisely function as an institutional agency to endow the PRC with legislative legitimacy. Given this political function of the Great Hall, whereas the design of the red star encircled by the sunflowers on the ceiling above the Great Auditorium visually symbolizes that the nation under the leadership of the CCP is embraced by all the Chinese people, the Delegation Halls are to represent that the power source of the PRC’s legislative legitimacy is from the general will of the people’s delegates in the entire nation. The Great Hall of the People as a whole has both

⁸⁴ “Archives of the Beijing Municipal Construction Bureau,” 125-1-1218, p. 1; Archives of the Beijing Municipal Construction Bureau,” 125-1-1226, pp. 1-37; “Archives of the Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Bureau,” 131-1-325, pp. 40-41; “Archives of the Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Bureau,” 131-1-363, p. 3; “Archive of the Beijing Municipal Urban Planning Commission,” 47-1-92, pp. 1-3, 6; .

⁸⁵ Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, p. 179.

⁸⁶ Peng, “Guanyu tiananmen guangchang,” p. 248; Mao Zedong, “Serve the People,” in *SW*, III, pp. 177-178.

substantially and symbolically legitimized the PRC regime under the leadership of the CCP.

Signifying the Chinese Nation's Temporality: The Past and The Present

Not only does the Great Hall of the People embody the legislative legitimacy of the PRC, it also signifies the Chinese nation's temporality. As discussed above, the Museums of Chinese History and the Chinese Revolution on the east side of Tiananmen Square have largely exhibited the Chinese nation's remote past and recent revolutionary tradition. Compared to the two Museums, the Great Hall on the west side precisely signifies the presentness of communist China given the political functions of the NPC and CPPCC. The juxtaposition of the two Museums and the Great Hall in terms of rendering the Chinese nation's temporality can be best understood by taking into account traditional Chinese ideal of urban planning of capital city.⁸⁷

The most authoritative document that governed the layout of the Chinese capital was *Zhou Li (Rites of Zhou)*, and most of the capitals of imperial China were generally based on the standards determined by the classical text. In particular, in “Kaogongji (Records on investigating crafts)” of *Rites of Zhou*, there is a passage describing the rules of urban planning of an ideal capital. Among many rules, the ideal capital is a walled city in which the palace is to be located on the center of central axis facing south, and the Imperial Ancestral Temple (Taimiao) is to be placed on the left (east) side of the central axis while the Altar of Earth and Harvest (Shejitan) is on the right (west).⁸⁸ Accordingly, the old Beijing with walls in all four sides exactly represents an ideal capital in which the

⁸⁷ This point of view is credited to Edward Farmer who leads me to compare the two Museums and the Great Hall with the Imperial Ancestral Temple and the Altar of Earth and Harvest.

⁸⁸ Hou, *Beijingcheng de shengming yinji*, pp. 272-273, 263-265.

Forbidden City was posited on the central axis and the Ancestral Hall was placed on the east and the Altar of Earth and Harvests on the west.

During Ming-Qing China, the Imperial Ancestral Temple was a ritual space for the imperial house to hold sacrificial ceremonies to honor and memorialize their ancestors. In doing so, they meant to claim political legitimacy by establishing historical continuity with ancestral past. The Altar of Earth and Harvests was another ritual place for the emperors to perform the national ceremonies to deities of grains and soils. In doing so, they meant to ensure the prosperity of the empire by bringing heavenly blessings to the land. In other words, whereas the Imperial Ancestral Temple represents the past, the Altar of Earth and Harvests precisely signifies the present.

The Imperial Ancestral Temple and the Altar of Earth and Harvests lost their ceremonial functions since the Republican era. The Imperial Ancestral Temple was turned into the Peace Park (Heping gongyuan) in 1924 and was transformed into the Working Peoples' Cultural Palace (Laodong renmin wenhuagong) in 1950. Likewise, the Altar of Earth and Harvests was converted into the Central Park (Zhongyang gongyuan) in 1914 and renamed Sun Yat-sen Park (Zhongshan gongyuan) in 1928.

I argue that the juxtaposition of the past and the present along with the central axis of imperial capital was translated into the counterparts of Tiananmen Square during the era of the PRC. As soon as the Museums of Chinese History and the Chinese Revolution and the Great Hall of the People were established at Tiananmen Square, they have been endowed with similar political and temporal symbolisms as the Imperial Ancestral Temple and the Altar of Earth and Harvests used to have. Whereas the two Museums located to the east of the central axis on Tiananmen Square provide the PRC with

historical legitimacy by rendering the Chinese remote past and recent revolutionary tradition, the Great Hall of the People on the west has bestowed the PRC with legislative legitimacy by displaying people's power and the presentness of the Chinese nation. It is in this sense that Tiananmen Square has constituted an architectural embodiment to symbolize China's temporality: the past, the present, and the future.

Displaying Mao in His Language: Chairman Mao Memorial Hall

Tiananmen Square underwent the second large-scale construction when the PRC decided to establish the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall at Tiananmen Square in November 1976.

It is conceived that the idea of creating the Memorial Hall at Tiananmen Square was proposed in the wake of Mao's death. In reality, as early as in 1964, some urban planners like Dai Nianci (1920-1991) already suggested to save room on the southern part of Tiananmen Square for a Mao's memorial museum.⁸⁹ Not until Mao died on 9 September 1976, the central and Beijing municipal governments began to consider this proposal seriously when they came to think how to memorialize their Great Helmsman in visible form.

The first idea was to establish a memorial building for the Chinese people to pay respects to Mao from generation to generation. As essential part of the politics of legitimacy making in post-Mao China, the memorial rally for Mao was decided by the state funeral committee headed by Mao's heir-apparent, Hua Guofeng (1921-2008), to be held on 18 September 1976 at Tiananmen Square.⁹⁰ Meanwhile, the CCP began to consider the possibility of building memorial hall in the style of imperial mausoleum (lingmu). Some suggested placing the mausoleum in the mountainous area near Beijing.

⁸⁹ Dong, *Gudu Beijing*, p. 180.

⁹⁰ Frederic E. Wakeman, "Mao's Remains," in Watson, James L. and Rawski, Evelyn S., eds. *Death Ritual in Late Imperial China and in Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), pp. 269-271.

But some argued that it would be too far away from the center of Beijing for the people to memorialize Mao or it would be too much like Zhongshanling, the Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum in Nanking. Some proposed to establish the mausoleum in Jingshan (Prospect Hill) located on the central axis of the capital city. But many disagreed with the idea because it was the place where the Emperor Chongzhen hung himself. An inauspicious place where the last emperor of the Ming dynasty ended his life is not an ideal site to place Mao's mausoleum. Eventually, the CCP gave up the idea of building an imperial-style mausoleum in the mountains area.⁹¹ In any case, it is not a good idea to build an imperial-style mausoleum representing old China to memorialize the great leader of New China.

The CCP turned to consider building a memorial hall (jiniantang) at Tiananmen Square to preserve the remains of Mao for public viewing. According to Frederic Wakeman, it was Mao's successor, Hua Guofeng, who proposed to establish a memorial hall for Mao to the Central Committee of the CCP.⁹² On 8 October, the CCP decides that a memorial hall would be built for Mao so that "people will be able to pay their respects to his remains in a crystal coffin."⁹³

After the architectural style was determined came the question of the location. We are told by Wakeman that it was also Hua Guofeng who proposed to place the memorial hall at Tiananmen Square.⁹⁴ Considering the considerable symbolism of Tiananmen Square, the official design team of the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall decided to place the building at the sacred site of revolutionary tradition. Moreover, taking into account that

⁹¹ Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang beiwanglu* pp. 145-146.

⁹² Wakeman, "Mao's Remains," p. 276, note 98.

⁹³ Wakeman, "Mao's Remains," p. 276; Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang beiwanglu* [Memorandum of Tiananmen Square] (Beijing: Xiyuan chubanshe, 2005), p. 147.

⁹⁴ Wakeman, "Mao's Remains," p. 277, note 103.

Mao had been remembered as a popular leader who was always in the middle of the people, it seemed very logical to choose the “favorite place of the people” as the location of the Memorial Hall. The design team suggested that the most ideal place to preserve the remains of Chairman Mao is to have it “rests peacefully in the midst of the crowds of people (anwo zai renmin qunzhong zhizhong)” at Tiananmen Square. As a result, in early November 1976, the Politburo of the CCP decided to build the Memorial Hall in the south of the Monument to the People Heroes (Site 5 on Illustration 1). The CCP claimed that, by placing the memorial hall at Tiananmen Square where the people undertake important political activities, it would enhance “political implications” of the space.⁹⁵

Rendering Mao and the Chinese People’s Revolutionary Past

What “political implications” were enhanced at Tiananmen Square as a consequence of the construction of the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall? First, the Memorial Hall in many ways has spatially and physically symbolized Mao’s central position and personal contributions in the history of communist revolution. From 24 November 1976 when the foundation stone was laid to the completion of the construction project on 24 May 1977, it took as little as six months to have the Memorial Hall installed at Tiananmen Square.⁹⁶ The Memorial Hall is a square building of one hundred and five point five square meters with a height around thirty-four meters. It is difficult to imagine that such a huge structure could be finished in such a short period of time if not for Mao’s extraordinary position in the political life of twentieth-century China. More importantly, the prominent significance of Mao’s revolutionary career is further displayed in the exact location of the Memorial Hall. The main architecture is located at the center on the central axis between

⁹⁵ The Design Team of the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall, “Maozhuxi jiniantang zongti guigua [General design of Chairman Mao Memorial Hall],” *Jianzhu xuebao* [Journal of architecture] 4 (1977): 4.

⁹⁶Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, pp. 125, 141.

the Monument to the People's Heroes and the Zhengyangmen. By placing the Memorial Hall at the southern center of the central axis in Tiananmen Square, the design team intended to emphasize Mao's central position in the progress of communist revolution. Moreover, by installing the building in the people's square where important mass congregations to be held, the Memorial Hall was placed to re-envision that "Chairman Mao is in the midst of the masses and forever lives in the hearts of the people."⁹⁷ Based on the same idea, the façade of the building was designed to face north, from which the crowds of people normally pass through or enter Tiananmen Square when mass parades and political congregations were held.⁹⁸ The Memorial Hall on the central axis at the most symbolic heart of the PRC thus constitutes a material manifestation of Mao's centrality in the history of twentieth-century China.

Mao's prominent contribution to the Chinese revolution is further visually represented in the design of overall structure and exterior and interior ornaments of the Memorial Hall. First, according to the design committee, the square base clad in red granite surrounded by white marble balustrades with designs of the *wannianqing* (evergreen plant) in bas-relief is meant to symbolize "the Chinese people's determination to keep 'the red state founded by Chairman Mao' firm as the rock and long living as the evergreen plan."⁹⁹ This design crystallized Mao's most important contribution to the Chinese revolution—the founding of the PRC.

⁹⁷The Design Team of the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall, "Maozhuxi jiniantang zongti guihoa," 4.

⁹⁸The Design Team of the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall, "Maozhuxi jiniantang zongti guihoa," 4.

⁹⁹The Design Team of the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall, "Maozhuxi jiniantang zongti guihoa," 2; A member of the committee makes the same point in his recollection of the design and construction of the Memorial Hall, see Wang Xueliang, "Maozhuxi jiniantang de xuanzhi yu sheji [The selection of location and design of the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall]," *Dangshi wenhui* 9 (2007): 37. At this point, Rudolf G. Wagner suggests that the entire edifice of the Memorial Hall is "not just a memorial hall for Mao Tse-tung [Zedong], but a symbol for the structure of the new state, with Mao Tse-tung enshrined in the center." See Rudolf G. Wagner, "Reading the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall," in Susan Naquin and Chun-fang Yu, ed., *Pilgrims and Sacred Sites in China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), p. 404.

Second, two group sculptures in socialist realist style are placed on east and west sides near the northern entrance of the Memorial Hall to represent Mao's revolutionary career and contribution in communist revolution. The group sculpture on the east was created to illustrate Mao's great leadership in the stage of the new-democratic revolution up to 1949.¹⁰⁰ In this group, four sets of sculptures in the images of ordinary people represent the scenarios drawn from the Second Civil War (and the Long March), the War of Resistance against Japan, the Third Civil War, and the final victory of the new-democratic revolution. The west group is created to display Mao's achievements in the period of socialist revolution since 1949. In this group, four sets of sculptures were produced to manifest Mao's revolutionary practices such as the Agricultural Cooperativization Movement and the Cultural Revolution.¹⁰¹ It was in this way that the Chinese revolutionary past was materialized in the architectural complex of the Memorial Hall.¹⁰²

The first set of sculpture on the east group deserves a further discussion in terms of Mao's decisive role in the progress of communist revolution.¹⁰³ These sculptures together are devoted to represent the image that the spark lighted by Mao is turning into a prairie fire during the Second Civil War, and this symbolically manifests the central idea of

¹⁰⁰The Design Team of the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall, "Maozhuxi jiniantang," 12; Chi Shu, "The Sculptures at the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall," *Chinese Literature* 2 (1978): 115.

¹⁰¹The Design Team of the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall, "Maozhuxi jiniantang," 12.

¹⁰²More interestingly, as Ellen J. Laing argued, this materialization of the Chinese revolutionary past in the two group sculptures constitute a "thematic connection" between the Memorial Hall and other buildings at the periphery of Tiananmen Square in terms of representing the Chinese nation's temporality. While the group sculpture on the "east" constitutes a "thematic connection" with the Museums of Chinese History and the Chinese Revolution located on the east side of Tiananmen Square, the group sculpture on the "west" are related to the Great Hall of the People and progress since Liberation. Ellen J. Laing, "The Political and Artistic Significance of the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall," in *The Winkling Owl*, pp. 92-93.

¹⁰³In this set of sculptures, audience can see the images of male and female rebellious fighters with broadswords and spears in hands, a warrior of Red Army standing on Jinggang Mountains, miners in Anyuan lifting revolutionary torch and two warriors of Red Army accompanying Mao during the Long March.

“Political Power Grows out of the Barrel of a Gun.”¹⁰⁴ By stressing Mao’s revolutionary activities during the Second Civil War rather than that in the earlier period, this set of sculptures stresses the importance of Mao’s leadership in the early stage of communist revolution.

In addition to the group sculpture on the northern entrance of the Memorial Hall, there stand two other group sculptures near the south exit. According to the design committee, these two group sculptures together are intended to display that all the Chinese people of various ethnicities would inherit Mao’s will to carry on the proletarian revolution to the end under the guidance of Chairman Hua Guofeng. Along with the architectural crystallization of Mao’s revolutionary past, these group sculptures are meant to inspire the Chinese people to continue fighting for the revolution in the future.¹⁰⁵ Given the same moral intention, to the northern side of Zhengyangmen was attached an inscription: “Carry Out Chairman Mao’s Behests, and Carry the Cause of the Proletarian Revolution to the End.”¹⁰⁶ On the right and left of the Zhengyangmen, thirty red flags on high poles were installed to represent that the people from the provinces, municipalities, and autonomous regions of China would be unified around Chairman Mao to carry on the proletarian revolution “under the guidance of the Party Center headed by Chairman Hua.”¹⁰⁷ The group sculptures, political slogan, and red flags to the south of the Memorial Hall as a whole, therefore, symbolize Mao’s utopian vision of permanent revolution. As a consequence, the legendary past of Mao has delivered a utopian future of the Chinese nation. In this way, rather than signifying “a closed chapter in the history of

¹⁰⁴ Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, p. 136.

¹⁰⁵ The Design Team of the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall, “Maozhuxi jiniantang,” 12; Chi Shu, “The Sculptures at the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall,” 116; Wagner, “Reading the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall,” pp. 402-403.

¹⁰⁶ The Design Team of the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall, “Maozhuxi jiniantang,” 8.

¹⁰⁷ The Design Team of the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall, “Maozhuxi jiniantang,” 8.

the Chinese Communist Party and the People's Republic of China," as Ellen J. Laing argued, the Memorial Hall has both symbolized and re-envisioned the Chinese revolution's past and future.¹⁰⁸

Displaying Mao Himself: Legitimizing the New Leadership of Hua Guofeng

In addition to representing Mao's revolutionary career, the most important element of the Memorial Hall is Mao himself. Entering the Memorial Hall from the north, the visitors right away encounter a white marble sculpture of Mao seated in an armchair with book in hand, legs casually crossed, head slightly askew, and a friendly smile on his face as if he is talking to the people. This sculpture shows one dimension of the resemblances between the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall and the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D. C. The marble sculpture of Mao is clearly reminiscent of the statue of Lincoln.¹⁰⁹ According to a member of the design committee, it was in the attempt to render the image of Chairman Mao as an approachable leader that the sculpture was created in this form.¹¹⁰ Once again, the image that Mao was always in the midst of the people was emphasized in a visible way.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ Mao's revolutionary career was also manifested in the paintings, art works, and calligraphers of his poems placed on the walls of the four reception rooms inside the building. In the southwest room, one painting representing the birthplace of Mao, Shaoshan, and a poem describing the center of his early revolutionary activities, Changsha, are decorated. One poem and two paintings are displayed to represent two communist revolutionary sites during the Second Civil War. While the poem is on the early communist military base, Jinggang Mountains, the two paintings are about the Jinggang Mountains and Zunyi (where Mao entered the center of leadership). In the northeast room, the poem "Long March" and a painting showing the Date Garden in Yan'an, the communist headquarters in Shaanxi are placed. In the room of southeast, while the seaside resort of official and bureaucrats since the founding of the PRC, Beidaihe, is featured in a poem and a painting, Zhongnanhai, Mao's Beijing residence, is depicted in a weaving. Laing, "The Political and Artistic Significance of the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall," pp. 93-94.

¹⁰⁹For the resemblance between the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall and the Lincoln Memorial, see Laing, "The Political and Artistic Significance of the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall," p. 93; Wagner, "Reading the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall," p. 399.

¹¹⁰ Wang, "Maozhuxi jiniantang de xuanzhi yu sheji," 37; Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang beiwanglu*, p. 160.

¹¹¹Rudolf G. Wagner suggests the sculpture of Mao in such a style is meant to imply a promise by (or a compromise of) the Hua Guofeng leadership that "the tension and the hectic activity of the Cultural Revolution with its feverish adoration of Mao and its persecutions were over." Wagner, "Reading the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall," p. 405.

Behind the northern hall is a shrine-chamber where the mortal body of Mao lies in a crystal coffin for public viewing. In terms of the death politics in the post-Mao communist China, both the preservation of Mao's remains and the construction of the Memorial Hall can be read as the ways in which Hua Guofeng undertook to authenticate and legitimize himself as the successor of Mao.¹¹² As a dead body continued to "radiate the charisma of Mao Tse-tung's [Zedong's] personal power," Mao's physical legacy enshrined in a public monument was used by the new Chairman Hua to be the "source of charismatic authority."¹¹³ In other words, along with the Memorial Hall, the physical presence of Mao's remains constitutes a symbolic reminder that Hua Guofeng was the successor handpicked by Chairman Mao. This image was reinforced by Hua's practical behavior. Appearing as Mao's successor, Hua was the one who received condolences and delivered the funeral oration at Mao's mourning ceremony, who proposed to build a memorial hall accommodating Mao's remains, and who embedded the foundation stone and autographed the inscribed board of the Memorial Hall.¹¹⁴ By attaching his name with Mao in the forms of ritual ceremony and material architecture, Hua's identity as the successor of the Party and the state was legitimized. It is in this sense that the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall, like Mao Zedong Thought, represented an "indispensable form of legitimation" for Hua Guofeng.¹¹⁵

Moreover, like the Monument to the People's Heroes, Mao's body is placed to face north. This can be understood as that, even though he is dead, his body would stay in

¹¹² Wakeman, "Mao's Remains," pp. 254-288; A. P. Cheater, "Death Ritual as Political Trickster in the People's Republic of China," *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs* 26 (Jul., 1991): 67-97; Wagner, "Reading the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall," pp. 394, 405, 413, 415

¹¹³ Wakeman, "Mao's Remains," pp. 274-276.

¹¹⁴ Wakeman, "Mao's Remains," pp. 270, 276-277; Cheater, "Death Ritual as Political Trickster in the People's Republic of China," 83, 93; Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang beiwanglu*, p. 126.

¹¹⁵ Wakeman, "Mao's Remains," p. 274.

Tiananmen Square to look after his successors and to review the people's mass congregations and military parades as well as to see his utopian vision of permanent revolution to be carried on. More importantly, in terms of the transmission of memory centered on Tiananmen Square, both Mao's sculpture and remains that signify the communist past became a material medium to transmit the cultural memory of revolutionary tradition.

To sum up, the architectural complex of the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall was constructed into a place to memorialize Mao's revolutionary past and to project the utopian vision of the Chinese revolution. In this way, the Memorial Hall has constituted not only an "indispensable form of legitimation" for the leadership of Hua Guofeng but also a mnemonic medium to perpetuate the memory of Mao and Chinese revolutionary tradition. It is this installment of the Memorial Hall that the Chinese people from generation to generation, as Hua Guofeng imagined at the foundation ceremony on 24 November 1976, "will be able to pay their respects here to Chairman Mao's remains, recollect his magnificent contributions, review his teachings, and be personally touched by the education and inspiration that Chairman Mao gave."¹¹⁶

Conclusion: Tiananmen Square as A Public History Classroom or An Open Museum
Along with the formation of the monumental complex, Tiananmen Square was turned into an architectural embodiment of Mao's revolutionary discourse and a material container of the Chinese temporality. As an old man who graduated from History Department of Beijing University remarked, "[We] can put it in this way: The history of

¹¹⁶Wakeman, "Mao's Remains," p. 277.

Tiananmen [Square] is a history of modern China.”¹¹⁷ Nevertheless, the metamorphosis of Tiananmen Square did not take place in one day. Constructing Tiananmen Square into the geographical, temporal, and symbolic center of both Beijing and the PRC was an ongoing process lasted from the collapse of imperial China to the era of the PRC. This process involved the transformation of Tiananmen Square both in its socio-political function, symbolic significance, and physical landscape. In this process, Tiananmen Square was constructed by the state into a political and symbolic center on the spatial-temporal axis of the entire nation. It is given the political, temporal, and symbolic centrality of Tiananmen Square that the central square of the PRC capital could function as a public history classroom to embody and transmit the Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition in the language of the Maoist master discourse.

Nevertheless, Tiananmen Square was more than a public history classroom for the students and tourists to obtain and recollect the Maoist version of modern Chinese history. Given its considerable symbolism, as Parts Three and Four will demonstrate, Tiananmen Square have functioned like an open museum to witness, trace, and memorize the socio-political life of the Chinese people at Tiananmen Square and to create, display, and circulate contested discourse of the Chinese political modernity during the April Fifth Movement and the June Fourth Movement.

¹¹⁷ Jin An, ed., *Tiananmen guangchang fengyunlu* [The records of Tiananmen Square] (Beijing: Gaige chubanshe, 1997), p. 6.

PART THREE

Two roads lie before the Chinese people, the road of light and the road of darkness. Two possible destinies await China, a destiny of light and a destiny of darkness.

Mao Zedong, “China’s Two Possible Destinies” (1945)¹

The people’s Premier is dead,
Why aren’t they allowed to mourn him?
Why are the memorial poems ripped away?
Why are the flower wreaths all removed?
...
“The Tiananmen Incident [April Fifth Movement]”
Saw a conflict pitting brightness against darkness,
Democracy against autocracy,
Where bayonets were crossed between Revolution and Counter-revolution;
...
“The Tiananmen Incident”
Tolled the death knell of the Gang of Four,
It hastened the downfall of the Gang of Four—
It brightened the eyes of the people;

“The Tiananmen Incident”
Is the most brilliant sheaf of poems,
It’s the river-fork, where revolution and counter-revolution divide;
It is the turning point in Chinese history.

Ai Qing, “On the Crest of a Wave” (1978)²

Written by Ai Qing (1910-1996), known as the Poet of the People, “On the Crest of a Wave” constitutes a poetic manifestation of the Tiananmen Incident on 5 April 1976. The Tiananmen Incident, or the April Fifth Movement as it later became known, was the first large-scale unofficial social movement at Tiananmen Square since the founding of the PRC.³ In late March and early April of 1976, millions of Chinese people in Beijing and from the provinces had spontaneously gathered in Tiananmen Square to mourn the late

¹ Mao, “China’s Two Possible Destinies,” p. 201.

² Ai Qing, “Zai langjian shang [On the crest of a wave],” *Shikan* [Poetry journal] 12 (Dec. 1978): 14-19, 60; *People’s Daily*, 10 December 1978, p. 6; Eugene Chen Eoyang, ed., *Ai Qing: Selected Poems* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1982), pp. 158-159.

³ Roger Garside, *Coming Alive: China after Mao* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1981), pp. 110-141; Yan Jiaqi and Gao Gao, *Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution*, trans. D. W. Y. Kwok (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1996), pp. 482-503; Frederick C. Teiwes and Warren Sun, “The First Tiananmen Incident Revisited: Elite Politics and Crisis Management at the End of the Maoist Era,” *Pacific Affairs* 77:2 (Summer 2004): 211-235; Frederick C. Teiwes and Warren Sun, *The End of the Maoist Era: Chinese Politics During the Twilight of the Cultural Revolution, 1972-1976* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2007), pp. 462-535; Yan Jiaqi and Gao Gao, *Zhongguo shinian wengeshi* [A history of the decade of the Chinese Cultural Revolution] (Hong Kong: Dagongbao, 1986); Yan Jiaqi, et al, *Siwu yundong jishi* [Factual record of the April Fifth Movement] (Beijing: Renmin chubashe, 1979); Tong Huaizhou, *Weida de siwu yundong* [The great April Fifth Movement] (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1979).

Premier Zhou Enlai, who had died on 8 January of the same year. Manipulating the official practice in commemorating the revolutionary martyrs on the Qingming Festival, the mourners from below laid wreaths and posted poems at the base of the Monument to the People's Heroes (hereafter Monument) to memorialize Zhou and protest against the Gang of Four.⁴ Those wreaths and poems, as Ai Qing's poem indicates, were stealthily "removed" and "ripped away" by the authorities deep in the night. In an effort to retrieve the "removed" poems and wreaths, on 5 April, the movement escalated into an ardent protest against the authorities. Ultimately, the Beijing Workers Militia under the control of the Gang of Four was ordered to quell the movement that night. Two days later, the movement was denounced by the Politburo of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) as a "counterrevolutionary political incident in Tiananmen Square."⁵ Nonetheless, on 14 November 1978, the Beijing Party Committee reversed the verdict and redefined the incident as a "revolutionary action."⁶ One month later, the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee of the CCP (hereafter Third Plenum) endorsed the reversal by declaring the incident a "revolutionary mass movement" that constituted "the mass bases" for the CCP's "success in smashing the Gang of Four."⁷ Like the May Fourth Movement,

⁴ The Gang of Four is a designation given by Mao Zedong to refer to a leftist political faction composed of Jiang Qing, Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wenyuan, and Wang Hongwen, who became prominence during the Cultural Revolution. On 17 July 1974, Mao had warned them against becoming "a small faction of four." At a Politburo meeting on 3 May 1975, Mao plainly warned them: "Do not function as a gang of four." Nevertheless, the term Gang of Four was used publicly only they had fallen in October 1976. Yan Jiaqi and Gao Gao, *Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution*, trans. D. W. Y. Kwok (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press), pp. 443, 464; Colin Mackerras, Donald Hugh McMillen, and Andrew Watson, ed., *Dictionary of the Politics of the People's Republic of China* (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 97.

⁵ *People's Daily*, 18 April 1976, p. 1.

⁶ *People's Daily*, 16 November 1978, p. 1.

⁷ *People's Daily*, 24 December 1978, p. 1; My English translation of the text is based on CCP Central Committee, "Communiqué of the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee of The Communist Party of China" *Peking Review* 52 (December 29, 1978): 13-14. The Third Plenum was held from 18 to 22 December 1978. It is generally considered as an important meeting which introduced the period of reform and of Deng Xiaoping.

the April Fifth Movement was officially sanctioned as part of the communist revolutionary tradition at Tiananmen Square.⁸

As “On the Crest of a Wave” poetically suggests, the April Fifth Movement constituted a “turning point” in the history of twentieth-century China. Whereas the May Fourth Movement has been conceptualized as the defining moment in the Chinese national salvation movement leading to the new democratic revolution, the April Fifth Movement symbolizes a critical juncture when the socialist revolution reached a crossroads between “the road of light” and “the road of darkness” at the end of the Maoist era. As “On the Crest of a Wave” implies, the April Fifth Movement had manifested China’s struggle between “darkness” and “brightness” represented by the radical Maoists’ line of the Cultural Revolution and Zhou Enlai’s line of the Four Modernizations. Consequently, as Ai Qing underscores, the movement had “cleared the ground for the Four Modernizations” by ringing the “death knell of the Gang of Four.”⁹ In retrospect, both a “counter-movement against the nihilism and violence of the Cultural Revolution” and a “symbol of the spirit of popular resistance to a despotic state,”¹⁰ the April Fifth Movement not only anticipated the closure of the Maoist era but also paved the way for the advent of socialist modernization in China.¹¹ The magic dates of “May Fourth (*wusi*)” and “April Fifth (*siwu*)” signify two of the most prominent watersheds in twentieth-century China.

⁸ “Weida de Siwu Yundong [The great April Fifth Movement],” *People’s Daily*, 22 November 1978, p. 3.

⁹ Ai, “Zai langjian shang,” p. 60; Eoyang, ed., *Ai Qing: Selected Poems*, pp. 159-160; Yan, *Siwu yundong jishi*, pp. 1, 3, 139, 150-155; Tong, *Weida de siwu yundong*, pp. 2-4, 318-337.

¹⁰ Garside, *Coming Alive*, p. 116; Maurice Meisner, *Mao’s China and After* (New York: The Free Press, 1999), p. 404.

¹¹ Yan, *Siwu yundong jishi*, pp. 1, 142-155; Renmin de daonian lianhe bianjizu [Edition Team of the people’s grief], “Preface,” *Renming de daonian* [The people’s grief] (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1979), p. iii; Chen Ziming, “Lishi da shiye zhong de siwu yundong,” in Chen Ziming, et al, *Siwu yundong: Zhongguo ershi shiji de zhuanze dian—sanshi nian hou de huiyi yu sikao* [The April Fifth Movement: The turning point of twentieth-century China] (Hong Kong: Bozhi chubanshe, 2006), p. 3.

As Part Three intends to demonstrate, the April Fifth Movement constituted a “turning point” in the symbolism of Tiananmen Square as well. Since the founding of the PRC, Tiananmen Square had been constructed as a performance stage to display state disciplinary power and a memorial space to embody Mao’s revolutionary discourse. However, during the April Fifth Movement, Tiananmen Square was subversively converted into a short-lived public sphere in which grassroots activists found an outlet to voice their protest against state power by posting memorial poems in addition to bodily practices such as mass demonstrations, public speeches, and ritual ceremonies. It was through those memorial poems from Tiananmen Square, or the Tiananmen Poems, that a popular discourse on the movement was invented in the public sphere. Furthermore, the Tiananmen Poems constitute a mnemonic vehicle to embody the popular memory of Zhou Enlai and the movement. During the April Fifth Movement, Tiananmen Square had been turned into a public sphere to display the people’s power and a memorial space to store the popular memory of the movement.

Given the relative lack of scholarly attention to the April Fifth Movement and the Tiananmen Poems, the purpose of Chapter Five is to consider the significance of the event by a close reading of the Tiananmen Poems from the perspectives of the dynamics of memory making and the transmission of Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition at Tiananmen Square. As the voice of protest against the Gang of Four, the Tiananmen Poems provide insights to trace the genesis and significance of the first unofficial social movement from below in the era of the PRC. As the carrier of popular reminiscences of the event, they also constitute valuable materials to examine the dynamics of memory making involved in the public commemoration for Zhou Enlai.

They document the war over memory between the state and the people, in which popular mourners broke through the state discipline and official blackout to express their mourning over the late Zhou by laying white wreaths and posting memorial poems at the base of the Monument to the People's Heroes. A short-lived public sphere was thus created to remember Zhou while expressing a prevalent animosity to the Gang of Four and incipient disillusionment with Mao under the context of the succession crisis in the end of the Maoist era.

The Tiananmen Poems open a window to look at the spatial and physical foundation of memory making implicated in the political drama of the April Fifth Movement. They disclose how the mourners from below conceptualized Tiananmen Square as the sacred site of the communist revolutionary tradition during the movement. In particular, the mourners tended to associate their movement with the May Fourth movement and reflect it in their memorial poems and bodily practices attached to the relief of the May Fourth Movement on the Monument in order to legitimize their mourning activities and dissident discourse. The popular recollection of the communist-sanctioned revolutionary tradition at Tiananmen Square thus constituted, in Richard Madsen's words, "moral resources" for the mourners to foster the public sphere created during the movement.¹² In this way, the popular commemoration for Zhou was turned into a "political theater" for the unauthorized mourners to usurp the official practice and script about the communist revolutionary tradition to challenge the state authorities.¹³

¹² Richard Madsen, "The Public Sphere, Civil Society and Moral Community: A Research Agenda for Contemporary China Studies." *Modern China* 19: 2 (April 1993): 190.

¹³ Joseph W. Esherick and Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, "Acting Out Democracy: Political Theatre in Modern China," *Journal of Asian Studies* 49:4 (1990): 844-848.

Moreover, the Tiananmen Poems allow us to explain why the mourners went to the specific spot around the Monument to memorialize an individual, Zhou Enlai. Mirroring the anxiety about succession crisis after the death of Zhou, the mourners were committed to be the late premier's revolutionary successors in their commemoration for him. Likewise, revealing the popular enthusiasm to remember Zhou, the Tiananmen Poems display the mourners' desire to erect an imaginative monument to the memory of Zhou in their hearts as a living memorial. In many cases, the Monument was even envisioned as the personal incarnation of Zhou.

Finally, as Chapter Six will show, the Tiananmen Poems allow us to look into the politics of the uses of memory and history during and after the April Fifth Movement. On the one hand, they illustrate how the mourners used the past of revolutionary tradition to justify their political vision of the Four Modernizations while conceptualizing Zhou's career in the language of national salvation and Mao's revolutionary discourse. On the other hand, a close reading of the personal and official commemorative writings on the April Fifth Movement as well as the popular reception of the Tiananmen Poems after the rehabilitation of the movement displays the dynamics of the political use of the April Fifth Movement before and after the Third Plenum. Along with the political struggles and transitions within the CCP, the popular discourse embodied in the Tiananmen Poems was sanctioned and used by the party to serve its political demands, such as the Four Modernizations and the Four Cardinal Principles, in post-Mao China. This new official discourse was further reproduced and reflected in the popular understanding of the movement. As manifested by Ai Qing's "On the Crest of a Wave," influenced by the new official discourse, the people displayed the tendency to associate the April Fifth

Movement with the Four Modernizations. This association was further manifested in the popular reception of the Tiananmen Poems. From “May Fourth” to “April Fifth,” Tiananmen Square had witnessed two “turning points” in the Chinese national salvation movement.

Chapter Five
From “May Fourth” to “April Fifth”:
Poeticizing the Voice of Protest and Dynamics of Memory Making at Tiananmen Square

The creation of the Tiananmen Poems marked the beginning of a new era of political lyric (zhengzhi shuqing shi) in terms of its poetic manifestation of popular protest against the state authorities. Literary historians have recognized the April Fifth Movement as the most spectacular manifestation of the political use of poetry in twentieth-century China.¹ In the first three decades of the PRC, the political lyric was mostly written to eulogize national leaders and political campaigns and generate popular support for them. This kind of poems dominated poetry writing during the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. After the April Fifth Movement, Chinese political poetry underwent a substantial change. Instead of acclaiming the socialist revolution and national leaders, poems voiced popular protest against the state authorities. This spirit of protest set the tone of the political lyric that was to come afterward, such as the ones produced during the Democracy Wall Movement.² Given such a considerable influence, many Chinese literary historians even suggest that the creation of the Tiananmen Poems represented the beginning of a new literature in communist China.³

¹ Bonnie S. McDougall and Kam Louie, *The Literature of China in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), p. 424.

² Shiao-ling Yu, “Voice of Protest: Political Poetry in the Post-Mao Era,” *China Quarterly* 96 (Dec., 1983): 703; David S. G. Goodman, *Beijing Street Voices: The Poetry and Politics of China’s Democracy Movement* (Boston: Marion Boyars, 1981), pp. 18, 136, 151, 159; Hong Zicheng, *A History of Contemporary Chinese Literature* (Boston: Brill, 2007), p. 254; Yu, “Voice of Protest,” 703. For the genesis and development of the Democracy Wall Movement, see Andrew J. Nathan, *Chinese Democracy* (New York: Knopf, 1985).

³ Guo Zhigang, *Zhongguo dangdai wenxueshi chugao* [The draft of the literary history of contemporary China], vol. 2 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1981), pp. 335-336; Ershier xiao bianxiezue, ed., *Zhongguo dangdai wenxueshi* [The literary history of contemporary China] (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1985), pp. 28-29; Zhu Zai, *Zhongguo dangdai wenxue sichaoshi* [The intellectual history of contemporary Chinese literature] (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1987), pp. 520-521; Kong Fanjin, *Ershi shiji zhongguo wenxueshi* [The literary history of twentieth-century China] (Jinan: Shandong wenyi, 1997), p. 1247; Zhu Dongling, et al., *Zhongguo xiandai wenxue shi* [The literary history of modern China] (Beijing: Gaodeng jiaoyu, 1999), p. 16.

Despite their spirit of protest, the Tiananmen Poems retain traces of Maoist literary practice during the Cultural Revolution. Their most prominent feature, expressing the people's grief over the death of Zhou Enlai while castigating the injustice perpetrated by the Gang of Four, reveals the imperative influence of the Cultural Revolution literature and art, especially the principle of "a combination of revolutionary realism and revolutionary romanticism."⁴ Under the canon of socialist realism, three distinguishing features of the Cultural Revolution literature and art can be discerned. First, under the principle of the "Three Emphases," the works of literature and art must emphasize positive characters over all other characters; must emphasize heroes over positive characters; and must emphasize central heroes over minor heroes. Second, they must express the people's love of revolutionary heroes and hatred of counterrevolutionaries at the same time. Third, in addition to representing popular reminiscence of the communist revolutionary tradition in the past, they must display utopian vision of Communism in the future.⁵ The three prominent features have been reflected in the Tiananmen Poems that were created to express the people's love of Zhou Enlai as a revolutionary hero and convey popular resentment of the Gang of Four as counterrevolutionaries.⁶ It is this poetic manifestation of "a combination of revolutionary realism and revolutionary

⁴ Foreshadowing in the "Yan'an Talk on Literature and Art," during the Great Leap Forward in 1958, Mao proposed the idea of "a combination of revolutionary realism and revolutionary romanticism" to generalize the essence of socialist realist literature and art. The principle was further amplified in the "Summary of the Symposium on Armed Forces Cultural Workers," promulgated as an official document in March 1966 with Mao's personal revisions, and became the canon of socialist literature and art. About the theory of a combination of revolutionary realism and revolutionary romanticism, see Su Wei, "The School and the Hospital: On the Logics of Socialist Realism," in Pang-yuan Chi and David Der-wei Wang, ed., *Chinese Literature in the Second Half of A Modern Century* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), pp. 65-75; Hong, *A History of Contemporary Chinese Literature*, pp. 203-221.

⁵ Su, "The School and the Hospital: On the Logics of Socialist Realism," p. 70; Hong, *A History of Contemporary Chinese Literature*, pp. 219-220; Wu Shanzeng, "Zailun siwu tiananmen shige zai wenxueshi zhong de dingwei [Reconsidering the significance of the April Fifth Tiananmen Poems in the history of literature]," *Nanjing shehui kexue* [Social Sciences in Nanjing] 10 (Oct. 2004): 67-68.

⁶ Wu, "Zailun siwu tiananmen shige zai wenxueshi zhong de dingwei," 68-70; Cheng Guangwei, *Zhongguo dangdai shigeshi* [The history of the poetry in contemporary China] (Beijing: Renmin daxue chubanshe, 2003), p. 173.

romanticism” that allows us to consider the Tiananmen Poems as firsthand materials to examine the April Fifth Movement from the perspective of the politics of memory.

The Tiananmen Poems examined in this chapter are mostly drawn from the official collection of the memorial poems created during the April Fifth Movement.⁷ Given the official prohibition of the popular commemoration for Zhou Enlai, as soon as the handwritten poems were posted around the Monument to the People’s Heroes, they were defined as “reactionary verse (*fandong shici*)” by the CCP’s Politburo controlled by the radical clique of the Cultural Revolution.⁸ This could not but drive more people to come to Tiananmen Square to read and transcribe those “reactionary poems” and circulate them privately to their close relatives and friends. Various collections of the poems were distributed underground all over the nation.⁹ In an interview, the editor of those clandestine, or *samizdat*, collections, Tong Huaizhou, a collective pseudonym that literally means, “remembering Zhou together,” over two million copies of them were reprinted.¹⁰

⁷ Tong Huaizhou, ed., *Tiananmen shichao* [Transcriptions of the poems from Tiananmen] (Beijing: Renmin wenzue chubanshe, 1978).

⁸ The Gang of Four is a designation given by Mao Zedong to refer to a leftist political faction composed of Jiang Qing, Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wenyuan, and Wang Hongwen, who became prominence during the Cultural Revolution. On 17 July 1974, Mao had warned them against becoming “a small faction of four.” At a Politburo meeting on 3 May 1975, Mao plainly warned them: “Do not function as a gang of four.” Nevertheless, the term Gang of Four was used publicly only they had fallen in October 1976. Yan Jiaqi and Gao Gao, *Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution*, trans. D. W. Y. Kwok (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press), pp. 443, 464.

⁹ The best known appeared in mimeographed form by the first anniversary of Zhou’s death and was printed later the same month for limited circulation. An expanded and revised edition came out in February 1978 under the title *Transcriptions of Revolutionary Poems (Geming shichao)*, and a new edition, *Collection of Revolutionary Poems and Essays from Tiananmen (Tiananmen geming shiwen xuan)* was printed, which was followed by a sequel collection in April 1978. Tong Huaizhou, ed., *Geming shichao* [Transcriptions of revolutionary poems], vol. 1 (Beijing: Beijing dier waiguoyu xueyuan hanyu jiyanshi, 1977); Tong Huaizhou, ed., *Tiananmen geming shiwenxuan* [Collection of revolutionary poems and essays from Tiananmen] (Beijing: Beijing dier waiguoyu xueyuan hanyu jiyanshi, 1977); Institute of Automation of Academia Sinica, ed., *Geming shichao* [Transcription of revolutionary poems] (Beijing: Institute of Automation of Academia Sinica, 1977); Tong Huaizhou, ed., *Tiananmen geming shiwenxuan: Xubian* [Sequel collection of revolutionary poems and essays from Tiananmen] (Beijing: Beijing dier waiguoyu xueyuan hanyu jiyanshi, 1978).

¹⁰ Xu Heming, “Xiangei zhonghua minzu de zizi sunsun: Fangwen *Tiananmen shichao* bianze Tong Huaizhou [To the descendants of the Chinese nation—An interview with the editors of *Transcriptions of the Poems from Tiananmen* Tong Huaizhou],” in *Liaoning daxue zhongwenxi* [Department of Chinese, Liaoning University], ed., *Zhongguo*

As soon as the April Fifth Movement was formally rehabilitated, the People's Literature Publishing House published the official one-volume collection of the Tiananmen Poems under the title of *Tiananmen shichao (Transcriptions of the Poems from Tiananmen)* before the third anniversary of the death of Zhou Enlai. The collection, consisting of more than fifteen hundred poems, was authorized by state power with the golden cover title handwritten by the successor of Chairman Mao, Hua Guofeng. Those "reactionary poems" were redefined as "revolutionary poems" created during a "revolutionary movement" that made up the mass foundation for the smashing of the Gang of Four.¹¹ In addition to the official collection, a memorial album of photographs taken by the mourners during the movement, entitled *The People's Grief*, was published in 1979.¹² Like the Tiananmen Poems, the album constitutes a carrier of the state-sanctioned popular memory of the movement. From reactionary to revolutionary objects, the changing destiny of those poems and photographs witnessed the power struggles and transitions within the CCP before and after the rehabilitation of the April Fifth Movement.

In this chapter, a close allegorical reading of the Tiananmen Poems is based on the official collection while a few exceptions are drawn from those of underground versions. The photographs in *The People's Grief* are referenced to serve as the visual manifestation of the Tiananmen Poems and the movement when available.

A War over Memory for Zhou Enlai and Mao's Distrust of Zhou

The production of the Tiananmen Poems was an integral part of the April Fifth Movement. In addition to being the poetic manifestation of the popular nostalgia over Zhou Enlai and the grassroots protest against the Gang of Four, they embody plentiful

dangdai wenxue yanjiu ziliao: Tiananmen shichao zhuanji [Research Materials on the contemporary Chinese literature: Special issue of *Tiananmen Poetry Transcriptions*] (Shenyang: Liaoning daxue zhongwenxi, 1979), p. 1.

¹¹ "Weida de siwu yundong," *People's Daily*, 22 November 1978, p. 3.

¹² Renmin de daonian bianxiezu, ed., *Renming de daonian*.

information about the genesis and development of the movement and the power struggles and transitions within the CCP in the later period of the Cultural Revolution.

The Tiananmen Poems demonstrate that the popular commitment to memorialize Zhou Enlai was a grassroots resistance to the official suppression of the mourning activities. As made clearly by one poem, “upon the Qingming Festival when we are especially missing our close relatives, we do not see any newspapers and journals memorializing you,” and, therefore, “with the unbounded emotion of sorrow that could not be suppressed, myriad people congregate in front of the Monument.”¹³ Many of the Tiananmen Poems reveal how the Gang of Four engaged in suppressing the mourning activities by every possible means. They had laid down many restrictions over the public commemoration for Zhou. They even utilized the official news media to diminish the impetus of the mourning activities. Terms like “beloved Premier Zhou” were not allowed to appear in the newspapers. Photographing of the mourning activities was forbidden.¹⁴

As manifested by the Tiananmen Poems, the Gang of Four also endeavored to defame Zhou Enlai by using official newspapers. This general atmosphere was documented in one of the poems, which reads: “[There is] no propaganda for the Premier’s glory, but only false slander and accusations.”¹⁵ At first, the official vilification targeted Zhou in a roundabout way. The Gang of Four believed that they could reduce the public influence

¹³ Tong, ed, *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 56.

¹⁴ On 14 January, one day before the memorial ceremony for Zhou, in order to divert public attention, Yao Wenyuan, one the Gang of Four, ordered *People’s Daily* to reprint an article published by Qinghua University, entitled “A Big Debate Brought About a Big Change,” on the front page. The article begins by falsely claiming that, “[r]ecently, the people throughout the country are concerned about the big debate on the educational revolution held in Qinghua University.” It was part of the political campaign meant to advance the Maoist line of “criticizing Deng and counterattacking the right-deviationist wind of reversing correct verdicts.” This aroused popular resentment and many readers tore that issue to shreds and mailed them to the offices of *People’s Daily*. Garside, *Coming Alive*, pp. 7-13; Yan and Gao, *Turbulent Decade*, pp. 484-485; Yan, *Siwu yundong jishi*, p. 7; Tong, *Weida de siwu yundong*, pp. 29-30; “Da bianlun dailai da bianhua [A big debate brought about a big change],” *People’s Daily*, 14 January 1976, p. 1; Cheng Zhongyuan, “Liangge zhongguo zhi mingyun de juezhan—1976: Cong Tiananmen shijian dao fensui Sirenbang [A decisive battle over China’s two possible destinies—1976: From the Tiananmen Incident to Crushing the Gang of Four],” *Dangdai zhongguo yanjiu* [Contemporary China history studies] 12:1 (January 2005): 68.

¹⁵ Yan and Gao, *Turbulent Decade*, p. 484;

of Zhou's death by furthering the campaign of "Criticizing Deng and Counterattacking the Right-Deviationist Wind to Reverse Correct Verdicts."¹⁶ As part of the campaign, on 10 March 1976, *People's Daily* printed a front-page editorial, "It is against the People's Will to Reverse Verdicts," which, in line with Mao's words, labels Deng as "the unrepentant capitalist roader wielding power" and "the one who initiated the trend of reversing verdicts." Then, on March 25, *Wenhui Daily* published a front-page article implying that "the capitalist roader inside the Party wanted to help the unrepentant capitalist roader regain his power." While Deng was well known as "the unrepentant capitalist roader," "the capitalist roader inside the Party" referred to Zhou.

Behind the official suppression of the commemoration of Zhou was Mao's suspicion of Zhou's intention to reverse the verdicts adopted by the CCP during the Cultural Revolution. The Gang of Four's suppression of the mourning activities can be viewed as an extension of the campaign of "Criticizing Lin [Biao], Criticizing Confucius (Pi Lin, Pi Kong)" under the context of the succession crisis at the end of the Maoist era.¹⁷ In a sense, the Gang of Four was simply Mao's puppet speaking out the master's mind. Mao believed that Zhou's death would be utilized by the veteran cadres, such as Deng Xiaoping and Chen Yun, as a pretext to turn the political line from class struggle to the Four Modernizations. The chairman of Zhou's funeral committee, Mao attended neither the cremation nor the memorial ceremony. He offered no condolences for Zhou other

¹⁶ After the Fourth National People's Congress in July 1975, under the supreme cause of the Four Modernizations proposed by Zhou, the first vice-premier Deng started a rectification program in various fields for improving the national economy. This pro-economy line threatened the power base of the Gang of Four, who insisted on upholding Mao's line of class struggle. Under the situation, Mao suspected that Deng intended to jeopardize the Cultural Revolution by reversing the verdicts determined by the CCP under his leadership. In late 1975, the Gang of Four launched the campaign of criticizing Deng with Mao's approval. Yan and Gao, *Turbulent Decade*, pp. 463-81.

¹⁷ Gao Wenqian, *Zhou Enlai: The Last Perfect Revolutionary*, trans. Peter Rand and Lawrence R. Sullivan (New York: PublicAffairs, 2007), pp. 249-262; 305-310; Gao Wenqian, *Wannian Zhou Enlai* (Honk Kong: Mingjing chubanshe, 2003), pp. 479-545; 601-607; Roderck MacFarquhar, *et al*, *The Politics of China, 1949-1989* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 286-288; Teiwes and Sun, *The End of the Maoist Era*, pp. 158-164; Meisner, *Mao's China and After*, pp. 392-394; Tong, *Weida de siwu yundong*, pp. 17-19, 29.

than a perfunctory wreath.¹⁸ Controlling the popular memory of Zhou was a subtle way to defend Mao's political line.

Against the official vilification of Zhou, the popular anger was ready to explode. As one of the poems states metaphorically: "A mad dog barking at the sun cannot cover the sky; the *Wenhui Daily* shows its true color. Appearing to criticize the capitalist-roaders, but actually humiliating Premier Zhou. For the good Chinese sons and daughters, who would not become angry upon learning of it?"¹⁹ The injustice of slandering Zhou was so unforgivable that many people were irritated to the point that they were eager to "seize the black behind-the-scenes backers," "execute them in the public on the streets," and "cook them in boiling water." In the mind of the mourners, the official newspapers were simply the centers of "spreading rumors, making false accusation, and faking news."²⁰ They were thus determined to defend Zhou's reputation by writing "a truthful history" with their poems.²¹

As a consequence, from mid March onward, upon the coming of the Qingming Festival, residents of Beijing and people from the provinces began to commemorate Zhou Enlai around the Monument. On 19 March, the Niufang Elementary School from Chaoyang District laid the first wreath at the base of the Monument. By March 30-31, infuriated by *Wenhui Daily*'s March 25 article, the white wreaths began to proliferate, the prevalent resentment was written into the memorial poems, and the number of mourners started to increase significantly.²² During the movement, the Monument attracted one

¹⁸ Cheater, "Death Ritual as Political Trickster in the People's Republic of China," 74.

¹⁹ Tong, ed, *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 118.

²⁰ Tong, ed, *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 98; also Tong, ed, *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 279.

²¹ Tong, ed, *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 87.

²² In addition to the April Fifth Movement, on March 28, Nanjing residents demonstrated in the streets to mourn Zhou and protest against the Gang of Four. A large number of posters targeting at the radical leftist faction appeared in public.

million people and countless wreaths and poems “like a giant magnet.”²³ Given the situation, the Beijing Security Bureau had had to order the policemen to monitor Tiananmen Square and clear the wreaths and poems placed around the Monument deep in the night. Early one morning, one poem was posted to satirize the situation: “I came to make trouble on Qingming; plainclothesman is my name. I destroyed all the wreaths when it was dark; I am a ghost stealing the flowers.” While many poems compare the authorities to a “ghost stealing the flowers,” some characterize the mourners as “the Goddess guarding flowers.”²⁴ During the April Fifth Movement, Tiananmen Square was turned into a battleground in which the people’s power was in contest with state discipline.

Creating a Short-Lived Public Sphere at Tiananmen Square

In order to manage the crisis at Tiananmen Square, the municipal authorities under the control of the radical leftist faction put forward several measures. In particular, the notices announcing that work units should prevent their workers from going to Tiananmen Square and that “Qingming is a festival for ghosts (guijie)” and “laying wreaths is the Four Olds” from the Beijing Party Committee were relayed to the public on the next two days.²⁵ These notices enraged the public, and, as a response, on the Qingming Festival, almost two million people marched to Tiananmen Square to mourn Zhou despite the official bans. “Mourning the Premier publicly,” as one poem puts it,

The Nanjing Incident can be considered as the prelude of the April Fifth Movement. Garside, *Coming Alive*, pp. 111-115; Yan, *Siwu yundong jishi*, pp. 15-24.

²³ Zhou Xiaodong, “Zai Renmin dahuitang jiandao de [What I have seen in the Great Hall of the People],” in *People’s Daily*, ed., *Bingchen qingming jishi* [A documentation of Qingming 1976] (Beijing: People’s Daily, 1980), p. 82.

²⁴ Tong, ed, *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 116, 117.

²⁵ Yan, *Siwu yundong*, p. 34; Tong, *Weida de siwu yundong*, pp. 63, 86, 89; Teiwes and Sun, “The First Tiananmen Incident Revisited,” 217; Garside, *Coming Alive*, p. 115; Yan and Gao, *Turbulent Decade*, p. 494.

“not fearing the repeated orders and notices.”²⁶ Many other poems further vented the popular fury to the notices. One of them reads:

Says who, the Qingming Festival is a Four Olds.
Says who, the custom of Qingming is bad?
We have been commemorating our martyrs from year to year,
Why do you publish the official ban this year?²⁷

As this poem suggests, it has been an established practice to lay wreaths around the Monument to honor the revolutionary martyrs on the Qingming Festival since 1958, and this practice had been deeply rooted in the people’s memory.²⁸ Hence, upon learning of the notices, the mourners only questioned why in 1976 the “revolutionary” Qingming Festival would suddenly become “a Four Olds” and why the people were not allowed to offer wreaths at the base of the Monument on that day. Placing “reactionary” poems and “Four-Olds” wreaths at the Monument thus became the only way to make the voice of protest heard given the official control of the mass media. Manipulating the official ritual practice at the space of state discipline, they turned the mourning activities into a “political theater” to protest against the authorities. It was in this way that the mourners created a short-lived public sphere at Tiananmen Square to shape and circulate their dissident discourse during the April Fifth Movement.

In his study of the streets in Manhattan as a public space in antebellum New York, David Henkin calls attention to the spatial dimension of the public sphere. He articulates the spatiality of the public sphere by creatively combining the insights of Jürgen Habermas and Benedict Anderson. In his view, the public sphere is “a network of

²⁶ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 39, 40; Xiao, *Tiananmen Poems*, p. 25.

²⁷ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 87.

²⁸ As one of the mourners clearly points out in his recollection: “[We] sweep the graves and offer wreaths to commemorate the revolutionary martyrs on the Qingming Festival every year, how could the Qingming Festival become a festival for the ghosts and the Four Olds this year?” Cheng Jinhai, “Minxin buke qi [The people’s hearts cannot be deceived],” in *Renmin ribao* (People’s Daily, ed., *Bingchen qingming jishi* [A documentation of Qingming 1976] (Beijing: Renmin ribao, 1980), pp. 110-112. Many participants recollected their suspicions of those notices, see *Bingchen qingming jishi*, pp. 25, 37, 52, 74, 79, 82, 107, 110, 137, 173, 178, 202, 219, 278.

institutions and sites of rational discussion and a critical ideal through which public interest can in principle be ‘identified’ and ‘enforced’.” In this network, the “world of letters” constitutes the public sphere in the open public space. Whereas Habermas has based “publicity” and “public opinion” on an audience-oriented subjectivity inside the closed space, Henkin suggests that this subjectivity can be shaped in the open public space. As an effect, the subjectivity that “entailed a sense among participants in the public sphere” in which the ordinary people “engaged in thought that could be communicated to an impersonal and dispersed group of interested others.”²⁹ Henkin’s insights can be used to explain what occurred in Tiananmen Square during the April Fifth Movement.

The participants of the April Fifth Movement created a short-lived public sphere at Tiananmen Square as an open public space by posting, transcribing, and circulating memorial poems to present their dissident discourse. As the Tiananmen Poems make clear, the authorities attempted to undermine the popular impetus to honor Zhou Enlai by blocking out the news of the mourning activities and by defaming Zhou with official newspapers. When the news media was strictly in the hands of the Gang of Four, the sole way to make the popular voices “identified” was to create their own network to circulate the information about what really happened by posting poems in the “world of letters” invented at Tiananmen Square. The network was extended when many more people went to Tiananmen Square to copy and circulate those poems to a larger scope. During the April Fifth Movement, Tiananmen Square became an open public space to voice dissident viewpoints beyond the official channels. As one poem puts it:

²⁹ David M Henkin, *City Reading: Written Words and Public Space in Antebellum New York* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), pp. 8, 9.

To spread poems and flowers at the base of the Monument,
For the *Journal of Poetry* and newspapers are not allowed to publish them...
Having not seen any newspapers and journals commemorate you,
We dedicate poems in front of Tiananmen.³⁰

With poetry and wreaths, the mourners created a public sphere to form and circulate a dissident discourse beyond the discipline of state power. In this way, within the short-lived public sphere, the mourners penetrated the blackout of the official mass media to present their viewpoints. As one of them made clear: “This [Tiananmen Square] is a square and also a battlefield.... Here we can say anything we dare not to say in normal times.”³¹ As a consequence, the disciplinary space to represent the PRC’s state power and the official revolutionary discourse, Tiananmen Square was turned into a public sphere in which a network to create and circulate popular discourse was made possible. One protester even described Tiananmen Square as a “liberated area under the Gang of Four’s white terror.”³² Tiananmen Square was thus turned by the protesters into a “battleground” of war between the state and the people over remembering and forgetting Zhou.

Hatred Behind Love: Incipient Disillusionment with Chairman Mao?

It was in this short-lived public sphere at Tiananmen Square that the people from all walks of life found an outlet to express the prevalent antipathy to the Gang of Four while showing their respect to Zhou Enlai. It was in such a space that the Tiananmen Poems address the common dual topics of socialist realist literature: proletarian people’s love and hate. On the one hand, the mourners used their poems to display their nostalgia and love for Zhou. On the other hand, the furious protesters convey their hatred of the Gang of Four:

The red heart has borne the fruits of victory,

³⁰ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 44.

³¹ Cheng, “Minxin buke qi,” *Bingchen qingming jishi*, p. 111.

³² *People’s Daily*, ed., *Bingchen qingming jishi*, p. 67.

Loyal blood will make the followers of revolution bloom again.
If there are monsters who spit out poisonous fire
There will be men who dare to seize them.³³

The poem begins with the people's eulogy to Zhou and the inspiration to the living.

While the first line represents his loyalty to the revolution, the second one displays the popular urge to follow Zhou's footsteps to carry on the revolution. At the end of the poem, the author compares the Gang of Four to the "monsters who spit poisonous fire" and signals the people's earnestness to struggle with those monsters. This was such a subversive message that the authorities had to remove it before more people saw it.

Another poem conveys a more powerful signal:

In our grief we hear demons shriek;
We weep while jackals and wolves laugh.
Though tears we shed to mourn a hero,
With heads raised high, we draw our swords.³⁴

This message was so subversive that the authorities condemned this poem as the number one counterrevolutionary case.³⁵ The poem explains why the mourners initiated a war with the Gang of Four by drawing their "swords": the "demons" and "jackals and wolves" only "shrieked" and "laughed" when the people were in deep grief of mourning the "hero." The "swords" were nothing but the poems they posted, as one poem puts it: "Mourning the Premier at the moment of turbulent situation, all the people write poems as weapons."³⁶ By using poems as weapons, they were so optimistic as to predict the "collapse" of the Gang of Four:

The Huangpu River is spanned by a bridge (qiao).
Rotten, the river bridge already totters.
The river bridge totters (jiang qiao yao),
We see it is about to collapse.

³³ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 279; Garside, *Coming Alive*, p. 120.

³⁴ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 11; The English translation is mine. For an official version see Xiao, *Tiananmen Poems*, p. 24; Another version can be seen in Garside, *Coming Alive*, p. 120.

³⁵ Yan, *Siwu yundong jishi*, pp. 53-54; Tong Huaizhou, "Ziyou renmin xie chunqiu," in *Tiananmen shichao zhuanji*, p. 18.

³⁶ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 42.

Tell us do: Shall it be smashed or burned?³⁷

A reasonable paraphrase of this poem would be that the Gang of Four would eventually be overthrown by the people's power. Implicitly, the author uses "The Huangpu River" to imply the power base of the Gang of Four, Shanghai, for they were also known as the "Shanghai Clique (Shanghai bang)." Whereas the Chinese expression used for "river bridge totters" are "jiang yao qiao" that refer to Jiang Qing, Zhang Chunqiao and Yao Wenyuan, the last line metaphorically anticipates the result of the people's power at work. This poem reveals the popular determination to topple the "tottering" Gang of Four.

During the April Fifth Movement, while the mourners explicitly expressed their hatred to the Gang of Four, they implicitly revealed incipient disillusionment with, if not distrust of, Mao. Mao's sublime image as the reddest red sun and his prestige as an infallible helmsman had rather dwindled after the excesses of the Cultural Revolution.³⁸ An incipient, if not widespread, disillusionment with Mao was mirrored in one of the Tiananmen Poems from the underground collection that praises Zhou Enlai as the "Father of the Nation."³⁹ Moreover, as compared to Zhou, Mao was hardly admired in the Tiananmen Poems. The exclusive homage paid to Zhou at Tiananmen Square implied a turning away from the cult of Mao. In most cases, Mao's name was mentioned only when the authors stressed Zhou's loyalty to him and the cause of Communism. Yet, it would be an overstatement to say that the disillusionment with Mao already constituted a powerful

³⁷ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 262; Xiao, *Tiananmen Poems*, p. 27.

³⁸ Mao's image as the reddest red sun in the red hearts of the Chinese people and his prestige as an infallible helmsman of communist China had somewhat dwindled after the excesses of the Cultural Revolution. Especially the Lin Biao affair of 1971, when an attempt to topple the sacrosanct Chairman was attributed to Mao's chosen successor, constituted a striking blow to Mao's authority. At the beginning of 1976, some people took it amiss that Mao dropped the late Zhou Enlai and exposed Zhou's legacy to the denigration of the radical Maoists. They felt betrayed and were not willing to accept this anymore. Garside, *Coming Alive*, p. 123; Sebastian Heilmann, *Turning Away from the Cultural Revolution: Political Grass-Roots Activism in the Mid-Seventies* (Stockholm: Center for Pacific Asia Studies at Stockholm University, 1996), pp. 29-31; MacFarquhar, *The Politics of China*, pp. 277-278.

³⁹ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen geming shiwenxuan: Xubian*, p. 235.

or apparent mainstream among the Chinese people at that time. A careful examination of the Tiananmen Poems shows that very few authors conveyed their criticism of Mao in a straightforward way. As Andrew Nathan has demonstrated, this tendency of criticizing Mao without mentioning his name was still reflected in the wall posters produced during the Democracy Wall Movement.⁴⁰

While most Tiananmen Poems intend to satirize the Gang of Four, only one lengthy poem is unequivocally targeted at Chairman Mao. One poem reveals the author's disillusionment with Mao by suggesting: "Gone for good is Qin Shihuang's feudal society."⁴¹ Whereas Qin Shihuang (the First Emperor of the Qin Dynasty) had constantly served as a secret code alluding to Mao since the 1950s, the allegorical use of Qin Shihuang alone could not really be an insult to Mao.⁴² The point here is that the author's suggestion that the era of Qin Shihuang is "gone for good" allegorically announces the end of Mao's rule while he was still in power. This can be viewed as a poetic manifestation of the incipient disillusionment with Mao.

The incipient disillusionment with Mao was further visually displayed in the pictorial confrontation between Mao's portrait and the giant pictures of Zhou Enlai at Tiananmen Square. During the April Fifth Movement, many Zhou's pictures were installed at Tiananmen Square, and many of them were placed right on the façade of the Monument, directly opposite Mao's portrait hung on Tiananmen. The pictures of Zhou produced by

⁴⁰ Nathan, *Chinese Democracy*, pp. 7, 92, 102.

⁴¹ China is no longer the China of the past, And the people are no longer wrapped in utter ignorance, Gone for good is Qin Shihuang's feudal society, We believe in Marxism-Leninism, To hell with scholars who emasculate Marxism-Leninism! Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 282; Garside, *Coming Alive*, p. 127.

⁴² During the 1950s, Mao had compared the Chinese communist regime with the reign of Qin Shihuang in its determined suppression of dissidents: "We have surpassed Qin Shihuang a hundred-fold." Before and during the campaign of "Pi Lin, Pi Kong," Qin Shihuang was praised for having followed "progressive" ways by means of "revolutionary violence." As a result, every statement on Qin Shihuang tended to be understood as a statement on Mao in the 1970s. Heilmann, *Turning Away from the Cultural Revolution*, p. 30.

the people were thus placed to confront the state-sponsored portrait of Mao.⁴³ Following the pictures of Sun Yat-sen and Jiang Jieshi, Mao's portrait became the third visual representation of Chinese political leader hung on Tiananmen (Illustrations 5 & 6). But it is the one that has been through the longest period even after his death. So much so that, the portrait has become the symbol of Tiananmen Square, the CCP, and New China.⁴⁴ In replying to an Italian reporter Oriana Fallaci's question about the destiny of the giant portrait, Deng Xiaoping once said, "We will forever hang Chairman Mao's portrait on Tiananmen" and "will forever commemorate him as the founder of our Party and country."⁴⁵ Nevertheless, during the April Fifth Movement, Mao's portrait was no longer the only picture of a Chinese political leader that the people could see at Tiananmen Square.

This pictorial confrontation between Mao and Zhou not only embodied the contest between grassroots and state power at Tiananmen Square but also manifested the incipient disillusionment with Mao. Tiananmen Square was no longer an altar of a personal cult exclusive to Mao, but also to Zhou.⁴⁶ During the April Fifth Movement, the symbolism of Mao's portrait underwent a decisive change and its sacred aura had faded

⁴³ As Garside vividly described: "Row upon row of wreaths dedicated to Zhou, many bearing his portraits, were arrayed on their stands, facing the Gate of Heavenly Peace. They advanced northward from the Monument to the very edge of the square, so that an army of Zhou Enlai confronted the portrait of Mao.... As men they had never clashed in public, but here the images of the dead Zhou and the dying Mao were arrayed against each other." Garside, *Coming Alive*, p. 128.

⁴⁴ As mentioned in Chapter Three, along with Zhu De, Nie Rongzhen and Ye Jianying, the giant portrait of Mao was first time hung on Tiananmen at the ceremony of the peaceful liberation of Beijing in February 1949. The giant portrait, together with Mao himself, witnessed the founding of the PRC on Tiananmen on October 1, 1949. During the Cultural Revolution, along with the big pictures of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin on the two sides of Tiananmen Square, Mao and the portrait reviewed the mass congregations of the Red Guard for eight times. About the history of the portraits of Mao, see Shu, *Tiananmen guangchang lishi dangan*, pp. 43-46; Wu, *Remaking Beijing*, pp. 68-84.

⁴⁵ *Deng Xiaoping wen xuan* [Selected works of Deng Xiaoping] (Hong Kong: Sanlian shudian, 1983), p. 303.

⁴⁶ As a veteran Red Guard commented: "The Square used to belong to him. Now, the Square no longer belonged to him. He sadly realized that his honeymoon with the Square has come to an end.... He has been abandoned by the Square." Chen, "Lishi da shiye zhong de siwu yundong," in *Siwu yundong*, p. 83.

somewhat as that of Mao himself. The same political drama would be reenacted during the June Fourth Movement in 1989.

The Dynamics of Memory Making and the Mnemonic Medium at Tiananmen Square

In addition to serving as historical markers of the April Fifth Movement, the Tiananmen Poems contain valuable knowledge to look into the dynamics of memory making as they evolved in the public commemoration for Zhou Enlai at Tiananmen Square. First, they reveal how the Monument constituted the material foundation on which the mourners paid respect to Zhou while recalling and conceptualizing Tiananmen Square as the sacred site of the communist revolutionary tradition. They especially demonstrate how the mourners rendered the past of the May Fourth Movement in their memorial poems and bodily practices by attaching to the relief of the May Fourth Movement on the Monument. Second, the poems explain why the mourners came to the particular spot around the Monument to memorialize Zhou as an individual revolutionary and how Chang'an Avenue became a place to the memory of his death. Third, the Tiananmen Poems illustrate the ways in which the mourners engaged in war over memory in opposition to the official suppression of the popular commemoration of Zhou.

Tiananmen Square as an Altar for Personal Worship of Zhou Enlai

As the spatial framework of the popular commemoration of Zhou Enlai, Tiananmen Square was written into and emphasized in the popular discourse on the April Fifth Movement. By attaching the mourning activities to Tiananmen Square and the Monument, the authors of the Tiananmen Poems intended to make the movement appear important and meaningful. More significantly, the Monument built to honor the collective revolutionary martyrs was unofficially used to memorialize an individual person. Before

1976, no wreaths for any individual person had ever been presented to the base of the Monument in the history of the PRC.⁴⁷ In the spring of 1976, the Monument for the first time became attached to an individual.

The unusual attachment of the Monument to the memory of an individual was manifested in the Tiananmen Poems as well. Many authors of the Tiananmen Poems emphasized that the place where mourners came to honor Zhou *was* Tiananmen Square.⁴⁸ For example, in recounting the popular commemoration of Zhou, one poem stresses: “A great number of crowds together assemble in the Square, memorializing the loyal soul with countless pain.”⁴⁹ Given the context of writing the poem, the “loyal soul” apparently refers to Zhou. Moreover, the mourners were so numerous that “the Square has been an ocean of people, like the waves of the Four Seas.”⁵⁰ Whereas many poems describe the spectacular scene of endless crowds at Tiananmen Square, others specify that the commemorative activities around the Monument were especially dedicated to Zhou alone. As one of them describes, “The people coming to the base of the Monument are endless, the wreaths piled up is as high as a building. Mourning the soul of the Premier, everyone bows the head down.”⁵¹ Mourning Premier Zhou, the grief was so deep that one poem reads: “all the mourners around the Monument are people with broken hearts.”⁵² Writing the symbol of New China into their poems, they intended to emphasize that the only place for the people to memorialize Zhou Enlai was Tiananmen Square. As one poem puts it, “Ask me not where I am today; for is it possible that you yourself have not come

⁴⁷ Cheater, “Death Ritual as Political Trickster in the People’s Republic of China,” 75-76.

⁴⁸ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 6, 8, 9, 15, 16, 20, 26, 27, 28, 35, 45, 47, 99, 128, 130, 134, 139, 161, 212, 225, 234, 236.

⁴⁹ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 15.

⁵⁰ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 224; Xiao, *Tiananmen Poems*, p. 48.

⁵¹ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 130.

⁵² Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 215.

to Tiananmen Square?”⁵³ In the poetic manifestation during the April Fifth Movement, Tiananmen Square is represented as a memorial place to display the people’s nostalgia over Zhou Enlai as an individual revolutionary.

A New Place of Memory: Memorializing Premier Zhou on Chang’an Avenue

In addition to representing Tiananmen Square as a memorial space to express the popular enthusiasm to remember Zhou Enlai as an individual revolutionary, the Tiananmen Papers reveal that Chang’an Avenue was turned into a place of memory attached to his death. The boulevard is the east-west central axis of Beijing that passes through directly before the Tiananmen gate and to the north of Tiananmen Square. The creation of Chang’an Avenue as a memorial place to remember Zhou was an unexpected outcome of the official repression of the mourning activities for him. Only three days after his death, the CCP decided that Zhou’s body would be cremated at the Babaoshan Revolutionary Cemetery. Although the date of cremation was not announced to the public, the mourners learned by word of mouth when Zhou’s body was on the way to Babaoshan, and almost two million people lined Chang’an Avenue to mourn him silently under temperatures of twelve degrees below zero Celsius as the hearse passed. As if it were Zhou’s last visit to Tiananmen Square, the hearse circled around the square before moving to its destination. At that symbolic moment, it was blocked by the masses of mourners, who did not want to see the late premier be cremated. Deng Yingchao, Zhou’s wife, had to assure the crowd that the Premier had ordered his own cremation.⁵⁴ The scene was translated into a brief essay, “Condolence for the Premier Alongside the Ten-Mile Long Avenue,” which has been studied in classrooms of the PRC since the early 1980s. The same scene was

⁵³ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 224; Xiao, *Tiananmen Poems*, p. 48.

⁵⁴ Wakeman, “Mao’s Remains,” p. 260; Cheater, “Death Ritual as Political Trickster,” pp. 73-74.

recorded in the Tiananmen Poems and in the photographs of *The People's Grief* as well (Illustration 7).

The Tiananmen Poems represent this unforgettable scenario on Chang'an Avenue vividly. Many people's hearts were broken when they learned that Zhou's body was to be cremated only three days after his death. The mourners were so inconsolable that they could only stand silently alongside the Chang'an Avenue to bid farewell to their late premier "without feeling the chill of the northern wind." They were so sad that they "could not bear to see the hearse pass by" for it was to "crash our hearts." Thus, many of them came to stop the hearse from moving, but only ended up with "hate for the Babaoshan" when they "failed to stop it."⁵⁵ This popular sentiment was clearly conveyed by another poem:

The wide Chang'an Avenue, and the grand Square.
The boundless ocean of people stretches alongside the road for several kilometers.
It is coming, a simple and unadorned white hearse, slowly driving to us....
Alas! Motorcade of the hearse, please move slowly;
Alas! Time, please halt a little while.
This is the last time our Premier is to be in the midst of the people,
This is the last time our Premier is to be passing through Tiananmen Square.⁵⁶

Chang'an Avenue and Tiananmen Square thus constituted the ultimate destinations for the people to memorialize Zhou. Because this was the last time for Zhou to be "in the midst of the people," the crowd was so reluctant to leave their premier that they wished time could "halt a little while" for them to remember the scene in their hearts. One poem describes the sentiment clearly: "Beloved Premier, you are not dead. You are still alive in our hearts. We will never forget, the motorcade of the hearse on Chang Avenue, accompanied by the crowd for a hundred kilometers."⁵⁷ Along with their bodily practice in the streets, the memory was deeply rooted in the people's hearts. Chang'an Avenue

⁵⁵ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 134.

⁵⁶ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 173-175.

⁵⁷ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 178; also, Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, 166, 180, 189, 196.

and Tiananmen Square thus constituted the spatial framework of the popular memory of the April Fifth Movement.

Rendering “May Fourth” at the Sacred Site of Revolutionary Tradition

While functioning like a memorial space to mourn Zhou Enlai, Tiananmen Square was also a symbolic place to recall the communist revolutionary tradition. During the April Fifth Movement, the authors of the Tiananmen Poems remembered and conceptualized the space as the sacred site of the revolutionary past. As one poem puts it: “Walking around in front of Tiananmen, how many past events would jump to your mind.”⁵⁸ One mourner specified such a mental state: “Whenever I come to Tiananmen Square and stand by the majestic Monument, my excited thoughts make me drift along the long river of memory.”⁵⁹ Tiananmen Square was thus conceptualized as a memorial space to stimulate the popular reminiscences of the past.

What kind of the revolutionary past did those mourners bring to mind at Tiananmen Square in the spring of 1976? Most of them came to think about the officially sanctioned communist revolutionary tradition embodied in the place. As one poem illustrates: “Alas! The Monument! In the Square before your eyes, an expansive and mega square, numerous revolutionary martyrs had shed their blood, the troops of the May Fourth Movement had been crossing, and the slogans of the December Ninth Movement had been posted.”⁶⁰ Thus, recalling the communist revolutionary tradition in the larger context of national salvation movement constituted a typical mentality as Tong Huaizhou’s conceptualization of the movement shows:

It is true that Tiananmen Square is a historical witness to the Chinese people’s brave struggle.
It was in front of the square that the Eight-Nation Alliance bombarded the red walls of the

⁵⁸ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shiwenji*, vol. 2 (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1979), p. 309.

⁵⁹ Liu Yin, “Aige [Mournful song],” in *Bingchen qingming jishi*, pp. 132-133.

⁶⁰ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shiwenji*, vol. 2, p. 420.

square, recording the Chinese people's humiliation and sufferings. It was in this square that the youth of the May Fourth Movement first called for science and democracy to rescue our ill and weak motherland. It was in this square that the students of the December Ninth Movement...held up the banner of resistance against Japan and national salvation for the survival of the Chinese nation. It was in this square that Chairman Mao hoisted the first red flag of five stars and solemnly announced the birth of New China. The movement at Tiananmen Square on the Qingming Festival of 1976 precisely was a further development of the revolutionary spirit of the Chinese people from generation to generation.⁶¹

Given the widespread anxiety about national crisis after Zhou's death, while locating "April Fifth" in the national salvation movement, the mourners conceptualized Tiananmen Square as a realm of memory to recollect the communist revolutionary tradition. The same conceptualization was displayed in another memorial essay:

To go to Tiananmen Square was the common aspiration of the people in Beijing. Tiananmen is the symbol of our country. The Monument to the People's Heroes standing tall and upright in the center of Tiananmen Square constitutes the Great Wall of the people's blood and flesh. Fifty-seven years ago, the May Fourth Movement that astonished the people in the country and abroad took place here. Forty-one years ago, the patriotic December Ninth Movement of national salvation also broke out here. In 1949, our country's first flag of five stars was hoisted here. Today, when the people's enemies furiously attack the people's premier, to mourn our beloved Premier Zhou is the protest against the Gang of Four, the counterattack to the Gang of Four, and a brave struggle.⁶²

By juxtaposing the popular protest against the Gang of Four with officially sanctioned revolutionary tradition, such as the May Fourth Movement, the December Ninth Movement, and the founding of the PRC, the mourners meant to conceptualize the April Fifth movement as the latest addition to the hallowed revolutionary tradition at Tiananmen Square. A close reading of the Tiananmen Poems shows how they associated the April Fifth Movement with the communist revolutionary tradition at Tiananmen Square.

Given the significance of the May Fourth Movement in the Maoist revolutionary discourse, it is not surprising that it was also the most frequently rendered communist revolutionary tradition during the April Fifth Movement. In the memorial poems and

⁶¹ Xu, "Xiangei zhonghua minzu de zizi sunsun: Fangwen *Tiananmen shichao* bianze Tong Huaizhou," pp. 1-2.

⁶² Yan, *Siwu yundong jishi*, pp. 25-26.

essays, many authors underscore that the site they went to honor Zhou Enlai was Tiananmen Square where “there is the glorious tradition of the May Fourth Movement.”⁶³ In an attempt to legitimize the protest against the Gang of Four, many of them compared “April Fifth” to “May Fourth.” For instance, in emphasizing the considerable significance of the protest, one poem indicates: “[Whereas] you imitate the method of Yuan [Shikai], I will send you to the grave with the spirit of May Fourth.”⁶⁴ Here, the author on the one hand connects the Gang of Four to Yuan Shikai, a feudal ruler and infamous usurper in the early Republican era, and, on the other, implies that the protesters were upholding the spirit of “May Fourth” to fight against the feudal ruler of their time, the Gang of Four. Another poem similarly reveals the tension between the mourners and the Gang of Four: “Today Khrushchev reuses his old skill, and you cannot close your eyes in the underworld. Although you have no chance to see our zeal, one day the glory of May Fourth will become visible again.”⁶⁵ Besides, whereas many protesters associated the April Fifth Movement with the May Fourth Movement, some even went so far as to assert the identity of the two movements. In emphasizing the great significance of the April Fifth Movement, one memorial essay concludes, “I realize a simple fact that although May Fourth and April Fifth are different numbers, they have precisely the same connotation.”⁶⁶ So much so that, one even called the April Fifth Movement “the May Fourth Movement in the seventies of the twentieth century.”⁶⁷

In addition to the juxtaposition of April Fifth and May Fourth, the mourners consciously related their activities to what had happened during the May Fourth

⁶³ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 296; also Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 235-326.

⁶⁴ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 286.

⁶⁵ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 42.

⁶⁶ Wang Dawei, “Fasheng zai siyue liuri shangwu [What happened in the morning of April Sixth],” in *Bingchen qingming jishi*, p. 205.

⁶⁷ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen siwenji*, vol. 2, p. 472.

Movement. For example, on April Fifth of 1976, as soon as the protesters saw that the official command post was on fire, they right away connected the scene to burning Cao Rulin's house during the May Fourth Movement. We do not know if the person who set the fire on the command post ever thought about this past, but many eyewitnesses did recall it when they saw the scene.⁶⁸ By identifying the violence of May Fourth as revolutionary tradition, they intended to justify their action by relating the Gang of Four to the traitor Cao Ruling.

Rendering May Fourth in Bodily Practices and Memory Making

Furthermore, some protesters even attempted to recreate the circumstances of "May Fourth" in their bodily practices during the April Fifth Movement. Garside provides an interesting example of reenacting "May Fourth" during "April Fifth":

A young man taught several thousand people to sing a slow lament he had written for Zhou... I noticed he was wearing a jacket, not in the Mao style with turned-down collar and plastic buttons, but in the pre-1949 style with a stand-up collar and cloth buttons. Under his arm on the gray, drizzling afternoon was an umbrella: not one of the plastic one now sold in Peking but one made in the old way, of oiled paper. He surely intended his archaic dress to recall that of the young men who had come to the original Tiananmen Square, a smaller place, on 4 May 1919 and, by their demonstration against the feudal rulers of their time, had launched the great movement of national renewal that came to be known as the May Fourth Movement.⁶⁹

Clothing constitutes a way to represent socio-political identity. Garside's account illustrates how the young man endeavored to make sense of the movement by "dressing" and "acting" "May Fourth" with his body. With an old-fashioned appearance, he intended to mobilize public support by comparing the protest against the Gang of Four to the May Fourth Movement. Whereas their revolutionary pioneers struggled with the domestic feudalism at Tiananmen Square in 1919, the young man and his comrade-in-arms were

⁶⁸ Yan, *Siwu yundong jishi*, pp. 93-94.

⁶⁹ Garside, *Coming Alive*, pp. 124-125.

fighting with contemporary “feudal rulers,” the Gang of Four, when China was again in the critical moment of national crisis in 1976.

The case of Garside’s young man is significant in terms of the transmission of Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition. On the one hand, it demonstrates the impact of Mao’s revolutionary discourse on the historical consciousness of the Chinese people. As a young man who grew up in New China, he must have learned Mao’s particular discourse on the May Fourth Movement from the textbooks in schools, the official propaganda on news media, and the commemorative architecture at Tiananmen Square. On the other hand, his bodily practice in turn constituted a mnemonic medium to transmit the cultural memory of the May Fourth Movement as the “great movement of national renewal” while embodying the past of the April Fifth Movement. It is in this sense that we can consider the bodily practices at Tiananmen Square a physical foundation to transmit the cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition.

The case of Garside’s young man was not an exception during the April Fifth Movement. Many mourners attached their bodily practices to the Monument that symbolizes the defining moments of the Chinese revolution. On 30 March 1976, one lament dedicated to Zhou Enlai was posted on the relief of the May Fourth Movement on the Monument (Illustration 8).⁷⁰ This spectacular scene was captured by many photographs in *The People’s Grief*. As the first lament posted on the Monument during the movement, the essay on the one hand expresses the workers’ homage to Zhou, and, on the other, in the language of radical leftists, displays their determination to launch “the

⁷⁰ Cao Zhijie, “Wo weishemo zouxiang Tiananmen,” in *Siwu yundong*, pp. 247-248; “Diyi pian daoci [The first mourning lament],” in Tong Huaizhou, ed., *Bingcheng Qingming jianwen lu* [Eye-witness account of the Qingming Festival 1976] (Beijing: Gongren chubanshe, 1979), pp. 4-5; Yan, *Siwu yundong jishi*, p. 29.

bloody fight against the bourgeoisie inside and outside the Party.”⁷¹ The subversive lament received much attention from both the people and authorities. Posted on the relief of “May Fourth,” it was a posture targeted the political faction of radical leftists as “the bourgeoisie inside the Party” without mentioned their names. Given the general atmosphere since Zhou’s death, the mourners standing before the relief of “May Fourth” understood very well that the lament was targeted Jiang Qing and her clique.⁷² The material manifestation of “May Fourth” on the Monument thus functions like a mnemonic medium to memorialize the defining moments in the Chinese revolutionary history while being used by the protesters to serve their political demands.

Indeed, the reliefs on the Monument had constituted the material foundation for the mourners to make sense of the movement by associating with the May Fourth Movement. In particular, during the April Fifth Movement, numerous young students went to the Monument to pay homage to Zhou Enlai, and many of them were inclined to imaginatively attach themselves with the relief of the May Fourth movement, as one memorial essay portrays:

By the Qingming Festival of 1976, we, all the students of the fourth class in the fifth grade at the number 172 high school, decided to produce a wreath and deliver it to the base of the Monument to the People’s Heroes to pay tribute to the respected and beloved Premier Zhou... In front of the Monument, we lifted up our right hands and seriously took an oath.... At that very moment, we seemed have merged into the relief of the May Fourth Movement....⁷³

Becoming a part of the relief imaginatively, it appeared as if the students were committed to be the revolutionary youth of new generation by identifying with their May Fourth forerunners. As illustrated by the memorial poems and essays and those bodily practices

⁷¹ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 310.

⁷² Tong Huaizhou, “Qingming nahan,” in *Bingchen qingming jishi*, p. 1; Cao, “Wo weishemo zouxiang Tiananmen,” pp. 247-248; “Diyi pian daoci,” in *Bingcheng Qingming jianwen lu*, pp. 4-5.

⁷³ Wang Ming, “Qingming ciri de diyige huaquan [The first wreath on the morning after Qingming],” in *Bingchen qingming jishi*, pp. 190-191.

discussed above, the communist-sanctioned revolutionary tradition like the May Fourth Movement constituted the “moral resources” for the mourners to make sense of and legitimate the April Fifth Movement.

Some symbols of the May Fourth Movement had been used by the mourners at Tiananmen Square during and after the April Fifth Movement. In particular, the best-known symbolic icon to signify the revolution and the May Fourth Movement, a torch was displayed on the Monument on April 6, 1976. A witness provides his interpretation of the icon:

Around ten in the morning, a realistic torch suddenly appeared before people’s eyes on the relief inscribed on the west side of the Monument. . . . The torch that represents brightness and revolution has always been the pride of the Chinese revolutionary youth and the symbol of the spirit of May Fourth. At this moment, in the hearts of the people who came to the square under the circumstance of the white terror, the torch lit up on April Fifth of 1976 to welcome the advent of new age is flaming in the spring wind. . . .⁷⁴

Placed on April 6, the torch constitutes a visual manifestation of the popular conceptualization of the April Fifth Movement. First, displaying the torch icon that symbolizes “brightness and revolution” on the Monument meant to define the movement as a revolutionary event. Second, by installing a material object in the shape of torch representing “the spirit of May Fourth,” it was intended to identify the April Fifth Movement with the May Fourth Movement in an effort to legitimize the popular protest against the Gang of Four. Third, it shows that, like “the torch of May Fourth,” the April Fifth Movement had lit up its own torch to be handed down from generation to generation at Tiananmen Square.⁷⁵ As one poem indicates, “May the revolutionary torch, lighted by the heroes, and now in our hands, be carried forward from generation to

⁷⁴ Wang Dawei, “Fasheng zai siyue liuri shangwu,” in *Bingchen qingming jishi*, p. 205.

⁷⁵ Lu Jisheng, “Wusi de huoju wansui [Long live the torch of May Fourth],” in *Beijing daxue youpai fenzi fandong yanlun huiji* [Collection of speeches and writings by Peking University rightist reactionary elements] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1957), p. 163.

generation.”⁷⁶ Although the icon was quickly removed, its existence as the symbol of the April Fifth Movement has already been ingrained in the popular memory and was to be transmitted inter-generationally, as the transmission of the revolutionary torch.

Zhou Enlai’s Inscription and the Personalization of the Monument

The Tiananmen Poems not only tell us how Tiananmen Square was conceptualized by the people from below as the sacred site of revolutionary tradition in the century-long national salvation movement but also reveal how the Monument to the People’s Heroes constituted the material basis to recall Zhou Enlai’s revolutionary career. In the first place, the mourners offered wreaths at the base of the Monument because they remembered that it was an official revolutionary practice to be done every year on the Qingming Festival. Moreover, the Tiananmen Poems provide an explanation of why people came to Tiananmen Square to mourn Zhou at the specific spot around the Monument: It was because the gold-gilded epitaph on the south face of the Monument was handwritten by Zhou. The Monument became the material relic left behind by a dead person that could incite the mourners’ memory of him. In the spring of 1976, the state-sponsored Monument thus constituted a “vital monument that coalesces communal memories” and a “mechanism for the projection of personal values and desires.”⁷⁷

Many memorial essays emphasize the relationship between the nostalgia over Zhou and his hand-written inscription on the Monument. Most people would stand at the south side of the Monument to honor Zhou, as one of them indicates: “Here the people look upward to the shining inscription handwritten by the Premier. Watching the object while

⁷⁶ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 230; Xiao, *Tiananmen Poems*, p. 55.

⁷⁷ Nelson and Olin, ed., *Monuments and Memory: Made and Unmade*, p. 6.

missing him, they no longer could keep down their deep grief.”⁷⁸ This scene was composed into a song sung at Tiananmen Square, as one mourner recollects:

On 3 April, when it was drizzling, my child and I again came to the Square. There, I saw a man, who stood on the step in the southwest side of the Monument in the drizzle, teach the song he composed by himself: “Whenever I come to Tiananmen Square and stand by the grand Monument, the excited thought makes me drift along the long river of memory. Alas, beloved Premier Zhou, how could people not miss and admire your life? Looking upward to your inscription, how could the people’s eyes not glisten with hot tears?” . . . Whenever the people sang the part of “looking upward to your inscription,” they could not help but look upward to the grand Monument and watch the Premier’s inscription with profound love. It appeared as if the beloved Premier Zhou was standing there. . . .⁷⁹

The song mentioned in this passage suggests that it was very common for the mourners to memorialize Zhou while looking at his inscription on the Monument.

The common posture of looking upward to the inscribed handwriting by Zhou was poetized in the Tiananmen Poems as well. “Looking up to the gold-gilded inscription on the grand Monument,” one poem describes, “and bend our heads to lament your grace.”⁸⁰ In telling the psychological effect of watching the inscription, one poem states, “How many people have been in deep sorrow and silent condolence under your inscription!”⁸¹ The sorrow was so profound that some would even “cry their hearts out while looking upward to the inscription.”⁸² Whereas many memorial poems show how Zhou’s handwritten inscription provoked the mourners’ melancholy, one poem clearly discloses that the popular nostalgia over him was stimulated by simply watching the inscription: “You had handwritten the inscription to memorialize the revolutionary martyrs, and we are in sadness and think of you while looking at the inscription.”⁸³ In this way, the Monument established to honor the collective revolutionary martyrs was turned into an artifact left behind by an individual person to provoke the popular memory over Zhou.

⁷⁸ Wei Wei, “Zai hongliu zhong [In the great current],” in *Bingchen qingming jishi*, p. 221.

⁷⁹ Liu Yin, “Aige,” in *Bingchen qingming jishi*, p. 133.

⁸⁰ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 112.

⁸¹ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen geming shiwenxuan*, p. 229.

⁸² Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 97.

⁸³ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shiwenji*, vol. 2, p. 47.

This also explains why Tiananmen Square had become an altar for the personal worship of Zhou.

Moreover, in the popular imagination, the Monument was turned into a site where Zhou Enlai's spirit resides. As an outcome, some people went so far as to envision the Monument as Zhou himself. This personalization of the Monument was amazingly recorded in one poem:

Today we sincerely dedicate [wreaths and flowers] to you!
The Monument to the People's Heroes,
For you are the great incarnation of the beloved Premier,
Supporting both heaven and earth.
I silently stand under your foot,
Looking upward to your whole body for a long while.
Yesterday I have said good-bye to your remains,
Could it be that you come back to life from death.⁸⁴

More than simply a material monument, the Monument is envisioned as the “incarnation of the beloved Premier.” In another poem, Zhou is even envisioned as Tiananmen Square.⁸⁵ This personalization of the Monument converted the material manifestation of Mao's revolutionary discourse into an imagined monument for an individual person. It was in this way that the Monument was transformed to a mnemonic medium to embody the popular memory of Zhou Enlai and the April Fifth Movement.

Preserving the Memory Media of the April Fifth Movement

In addition to the Monument, many other memory media were invented at Tiananmen Square to embody and transmit the popular memory of the April Fifth Movement. The most important of them were the Tiananmen Poems and photographs taken during the popular protest against the Gang of Four. The preservation of those “reactionary” objects before the rehabilitation of the movement displayed how the Chinese people had engaged

⁸⁴ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen geming shiwenxuan*, p. 326;

⁸⁵ Tong, ed., *Geming shichao*, p. 27.

in the war over remembering and forgetting Zhou Enlai and the April Fifth Movement. Moreover, the mourners themselves constituted the most prominent memory carrier of the movement. As manifested by many Tiananmen Poems, the mourners tended to imagine their hearts as the living monuments to memorialize Zhou. As stated in the documentary film *The Beloved Premier Zhou is Immortal* [*Jing'ai de Zhou zongli yongcui buxiu*], “The beloved Premier! The eight hundred million Chinese people will remain with you forever...Drops of warm tears sprinkle onto Tiananmen Square; petals of white flowers bedeck the pine trees in front of Tiananmen. This is the way the people will remember, for they have erected a monument to their premier in their hearts.”⁸⁶

The Tiananmen Poems constitute one of the most important mnemonic media to carry the popular memory and discourse on the April Fifth Movement. While many people posted their memorial poems and essays at the base of the Monument to the People's Heroes, more people went to Tiananmen Square to read and transcribe those memorial poems and essays. This was one of the reasons why the Tiananmen Poems were largely preserved and widely circulated. Nevertheless, those “reactionary” poems would have to go through a period of darkness before the verdict on the movement was reversed by the CCP. After the suppression of the April Fifth Movement, the Beijing Public Security launched a large-scale campaign to confiscate the poems and photographs produced at Tiananmen Square during the movement. Many of the Tiananmen Poems and photographs had survived from the official confiscation.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Yan and Gao, *Turbulent Decade*, p. 484; Yan and Gao, *Zhongguo shinian wengeshi*, pp. 549-550.

⁸⁷ After the suppression of the movement, the Public Security apparatus launched a large-scale “double-pursuit” campaign (*shuangzhui yundong*) to inspect “the behind-the-scenes schemer and director of the counterrevolutionary incident in Tiananmen Square” and “the sources of those reactionary rumors, poems, and leaflets.” As a result, the Beijing Public Security Bureau confiscated five hundred and eighty-three original handwritten poems from Tiananmen Square, sixty thousand pieces of transcriptions of the Tiananmen Poems from the ordinary people, and one hundred and

Many memorial essays about the April Fifth Movement allow us to know how the transcribers and collectors had tried every possible means to hide those reactionary poems and photographs from the official confiscation. They hid the poems that they copied at Tiananmen Square or collected from their close relatives and friends in unexpected objects or places. Some copied them on small pieces of paper and put them into the middle of hollowed candles; some put the poems and photographs into plastic bags and buried them in the flowerpots or in the earth of mountainous areas; some concealed them beneath the walls covered by yellow clay. Many people preserved the poems in creative ways. Some rewrote them with code systems that no one could understand but them. Some simply kept them in their memories.⁸⁸ In those ways, those fighters of memory not only preserved the Tiananmen Poems but also the popular discourse on the April Fifth Movement. One can compare the Tiananmen Poems to the *samizdat* literature of the former Soviet Union in the late 1960s and the early 1970s in terms of the creation and transmission of dissident discourse.⁸⁹

Thus the memorial poems and pictures embodying the popular memory of the April Fifth Movement found ways to be transmitted and rooted in the people's hearts from generation to generation. Many Tiananmen Poems were so popular that they became the

eight thousand pieces of pictures taken at Tiananmen Square from the photographic studios in Beijing. Yan, *Siwu yundong jishi*, p. 120.

⁸⁸ See Tong, ed., *Bingchen qingming jianwen lu*, pp. 157-169; Tong Huaizhou, "Ziyou renmin xie chunqiu," in *Tiananmen shichao zhuanji*, pp. 19-23; *People's Daily*, ed., *Bingchen qingming jishi*, pp. 29, 50, 96-98, 108, 181.

⁸⁹ *Samizdat* is a Soviet term coined by post-Stalin dissidents for the old Russian revolutionary practice of circulating uncensored dissident material privately, usually in manuscript form, such as nonconformist poetry and fiction, memoirs, historical documents, protest statements, and so on. The term *samizdat* is modeled on the shortened form—*gosizdat*—of State Publishing House (*Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo*). In a general sense any copy of a document that has been produced in the Soviet Union outside the chain of state publishing house may be referred to as *samizdat*. The production and circulation of *samizdat* documents increased dramatically in the wake of the fall of Khrushchev in November 1964, especially after the trial of Siniavski and Daniel in February 1966. The most prominent figures among the oppositionists had relied on the production and circulation of *samizdat* documents in their battle for free speech, freedom of the press, and basic democratic rights. For the genesis and development of *samizdat* literature, see F. J. M. Feldbrugge, *Samizdat and Political Dissent in the Soviet Union* (Leyden: A. W. Sijthoff, 1975); George Saunders, *Samizdat: Voices of the Soviet Opposition* (New York: Monad Press, 1974).

symbols of the movement. Whenever the participants read those poems, they remind them of what happened during the movement. As one memorial essay puts it:

‘The people’s Premier is loved by the People. The people’s Premier in turn loves the people. The Premier and the people share bitter and sweet. The people and the Premier are linked heart to heart.’ The poem posted at the base of the Monument in Tiananmen Square has circulated so widely and been so popular in the days of darkness. Whenever I read this poem, memory brings me to the unforgettable days of the Qingming Festival of 1976.⁹⁰

The circumstance of the movement was thus encapsulated in one single poem and song. The poem and song in turn became the memory media to transmit popular memory of the movement. As we shall see in Chapter Eight, this poem was to be used by the student protesters during the June Fourth Movement to honor Hu Yaobang. Likewise, the pictures taken during the April Fifth Movement constituted another material medium to memorialize and provoke popular memory of the movement.⁹¹ Those Tiananmen poems and photos not only became the material media to embody popular memory of the April Fifth Movement but also functioned like a catalyst to stimulate popular memory over the movement.

Establishing the Living Monument and “Memorial” to Zhou Enlai

The Chinese people not only created such memory media as the memorial poems and pictures to preserve the popular memory on the April Fifth Movement, they imaginatively established a figurative monument to Zhou Enlai in their hearts.⁹²

Throughout history, building physical monuments has been a central means of shaping

⁹⁰ Wu Nianlu, “Yishou shi de gushi [The story of a poem],” in *Bingchen qingming jishi*, pp. 106, 108.

⁹¹ With the sentiment of high esteem to the Premier Zhou, I have participated in the activities of mourning the Premier Zhou and criticizing the Gang of Four in January and April of 1976 and January and April of 1977. I have taken some pictures of the activities then. Now they became valuable revolutionary objects. Every time I open the photo albums, the amazing scene of mountains of flowers, sea of poems and tides of crowd in Tiananmen Square appears in my mind. Especially, those photos I took at the Qingming Festival of 1976 have left unforgettable memory in my mind. Luo Zewen, “Lishi de jianzheng [A testimony of the history],” in *Bingchen qingming jishi*, p. 94.

⁹² Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 8, 13, 14, 27, 32, 56, 59, 68, 104, 119, 129, 150, 170, 212, 214, 221, 235, 239, 269, 347.

collective memory attached to significant events and prominent individuals.⁹³ However, after Zhou Enlai's death, the CCP showed no intention to erect any monument to memorialize him. Even Zhou himself, on his deathbed, ordered that his remains be cremated and scattered all over China and that no memorial should ever be erected to his memory.⁹⁴ Given the succession crisis in the end of the Maoist era, the CCP's indifference and Zhou's last will are comprehensible. It was unsurprising that for the CCP's party apparatus under the control of Jiang Qing and her clique had no motivation to build a memorial for their opponents to manipulate the dead Zhou in the name of commemoration when the suppression on the popular mourning activities for Zhou was on its way. For Zhou, it was probably because he feared the possible desecration of his grave and memorial, and even his body.⁹⁵ Against the circumstances, the popular protesters revealed their anxiety regarding erecting a special monument to Zhou, as one Tiananmen Poems epitomizes:

Fresh flowers bedeck the Monument; sad strains sweep the land.
 We come at the Qingming Festival to pay mournful tribute as one to the Premier who lives forever in our hearts.
 The people's emotions cannot be suppressed; verses of passion dismay the foe.
 Though sullen clouds pall the sky, we fear naught. Traitors!
 Think not you can wantonly flaunt your power....
 Mourning the Premier at the Qingming Festival, Erecting the Great Monument in the bottom of the people's hearts.⁹⁶

The origins of the popular eagerness to create a monument to Zhou are amplified in other poems. Because Zhou's ashes were scattered over the rivers and mountains of China, finding no grave to pay tribute to him, the mourners could only erect a monument of their own, as one poem states: "His ashes now scattered in rivers and streams. His monument

⁹³ Jonathan Boyarin, "Space, Time and the Politics of Memory," in Jonathan Boyarin, ed. *Remapping Memory: The Politics of TimeSpace* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), p. 20; Alois Riegl, "The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin," *Oppositions* 25 (1982): 21-51.

⁹⁴ Wakeman, "Mao's Remains," p. 260; Cheater, "Death Ritual as Political Trickster in the People's Republic of China," pp. 72-73.

⁹⁵ Wakeman, "Mao's Remains," p. 260; Cheater, "Death Ritual as Political Trickster in the People's Republic of China," p. 73.

⁹⁶ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 128-129.

erected in the people's hearts."⁹⁷ This eagerness to establish an imaginative monument is clearly indicated by another poem:

For you no monument is raised; for you no plinth for statue laid.
Yet the monuments to you are legion, deeply rooted in the people's hearts.
Nine thousand strokes of lightning cannot strike them down, nor a twelve-force typhoon topple.
Deeply rooted in the people's hearts, your monument, more enduring than any one man-made!⁹⁸

In this way, the Chinese people constituted the living monuments to Zhou. As one poem claims, "Eight hundred million people constitute eight hundred million monuments to him."⁹⁹ More importantly, the second half of the poem reveals the mourners' determination to erect an indestructible monument to the memory of Zhou. Because the living monuments were "deeply rooted in the people's hearts," they were more imperishable than any physical one.¹⁰⁰

The Tiananmen Poems reveal that the protesters had projected their opposition to the official vilification of Zhou in the imaginative monument erected in their hearts. They believed that the living monuments embedded in their hearts are imperishable from evil forces as emphasized by one poem: "The monument cannot be damaged by the dogs and crows, because it is buried in the hearts of the people."¹⁰¹ Here, "dogs and crows" refers to the Gang of Four, and the monument "buried in the hearts of the people" obviously represents the figurative monument to Zhou. The popular imagination appeared as if the people had appreciated Zhou's anxiety of the possible desecration of his grave, and they believed that the monuments are indestructible from desecration by the Gang of Four since they are ingrained in their memory. So much so that, one poem claims, "It is

⁹⁷ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shi chao*, p. 13; Xiao, *Tiananmen Poems*, p. 9.

⁹⁸ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 214; Xiao, *Tiananmen Poems*, p. 34.

⁹⁹ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 150; Xiao, *Tiananmen Poems*, p. 38.

¹⁰⁰ Another poem makes this determination clear, "Although there is no grave to be specially constructed for you; the Baoshan has not preserved your ashes either; there is no monument to be erected in the land of nine million and six hundred thousand square kilometers. However, [...] in the hearts of the Chinese and their offspring from generation to generation, we install a monument that will never be erased forever." Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 313-314; also Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shiwenji*, pp. 423-425.

¹⁰¹ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 56.

ridiculous to think that anyone can move the monument in the hearts of eight hundred million people because its base and body are made of our blood and flesh.”¹⁰² It was this “blood and flesh” constituted the living monuments to the memory of Zhou Enlai.

It is worthwhile noting that some popular protesters began to use “memorial hall” to refer to the monument erected in their hearts after the CCP decided to build the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall at Tiananmen Square. For example, on the second anniversary of the April Fifth Movement, in emphasizing that only the people could appreciate Zhou’s real contribution to China, one poem indicates, “All the people’s hearts are memorial halls.”¹⁰³ In recalling the scattering of Zhou’s ashes, one poem describes the land of China as “the memorial hall.”¹⁰⁴ Some poems even convey the popular desire to build a memorial hall for Zhou, a desire so strong that one of them claims, “To build Duke of Zhou Memorial Hall as soon as possible.”¹⁰⁵ The same desire was demonstrated in some of the dissident posters during the Democracy Wall Movement as well. The most interesting of those wall posters even included a detailed drawing of Tiananmen with a memorial for Zhou located between the Monument to the People’s Heroes and the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall.¹⁰⁶ On the third anniversary of Zhou’s death in 1979, this popular desire was translated into practice when several protests occurred at Tiananmen Square to call for a monument to be built for Zhou.¹⁰⁷ Those posters and protests express the prevalent aspiration to build a monument to the memory of Zhou while reflecting the

¹⁰² Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 221. As a result, as one poem concludes, “[i]t is impossible for them to strike down and destroy the monument in our minds.” Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 239.

¹⁰³ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shiwenji*, vol. 2, p. 365.

¹⁰⁴ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shiwenji*, vol. 2, p. 395.

¹⁰⁵ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shiwenji*, vol. 2, p. 367; Some people even used plain language to ask a memorial to be build for Zhou. See Tong, ed., *Tiananmen geming shiwenxuan*, vol. 1, pp. 566, 568.

¹⁰⁶ Laing, *The Winkling Owl: Art in the People’s Republic of China*, p. 95 and fig. 112.

¹⁰⁷ Martin, *Cult and Canon*, pp. 111-112; Wakeman, “Mao’s Remains,” p. 284.

political circumstances after the April Fifth Movement, to which we shall return in Chapter Six.

Formulating an Intergenerational Memory of the April Fifth Movement

In addition to revealing the spatial and physical foundation of the memory making on the April Fifth Movement, the Tiananmen Poems suggest how an intergenerational memory of the movement was formulated. During the movement, coming to Tiananmen Square to lay wreaths and post and transcribe memorial poems oftentimes were family activities. The elder generations of a family would go to Tiananmen Square with the younger generations. It was not unusual to see a whole family of three generations or more together come to the square. These scenarios were documented in the Tiananmen Poems during the movement.

The Tiananmen Poems have shown that the popular grief was not generational. “The people throughout the entire country are together in sorrow,” one poem states, “memorializing the Premier in the hearts from generation to generation.”¹⁰⁸ As a consequence, three generations of the Chinese people were all in sorrow while cherishing the memory of Zhou. As one poem puts it: “The people of your generation reminisce your love, the middle-age people think of you as a kind father, the children memorialize you for they cannot see you any more.”¹⁰⁹ Under such an atmosphere, “while old and young together weep silently,” as one poem describes, “parents and children together wipe their tears.”¹¹⁰

Some poems represent how the parents brought their children to mourn Zhou at the Monument. One poem vividly describes such a scenario: “While it is raining endlessly at

¹⁰⁸ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 26.

¹⁰⁹ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shiwenji*, vol. 2, p. 220.

¹¹⁰ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 15-16.

the Qingming Festival, mothers and daughters stand before the Monument. They together mourn the soul of the Premier, painfully recalling the days of three months ago.”¹¹¹ Not only did the parents bring their daughters and sons to honor Zhou, they narrated to them his contribution to the Chinese revolution just right before the reliefs on the Monument. As one mourner observes: “He rouses his spirit and leads his daughter to the base of the Monument. Pointing at the lively reliefs, he talks about the Premier’s glorious achievements in each stage of the Chinese revolution with deep emotion.”¹¹² In this way, on the one hand, the popular memory of Zhou and the movement was rooted in the hearts of two generations, and, on the other, the Chinese revolutionary past was transmitted to the young people. Thus, as one poem indicates, “Courageously bringing the daughters and sons to the Square, the revolution is to be pass on from generation to generation.”¹¹³ Given these family activities, the popular memory of the April Fifth Movement and the Chinese revolution were transmitted from generation to generation.

Moreover, the Tiananmen Poems have shown us that some mourning activities were participated in by all members of a family. For example, one memorial poems posted on the Monument was dedicated to Zhou Enlai in the name of the whole family:

These flowers, though few, we bring from our home,
Gathered with tear-filled eyes at the Qingming Festival.
A bouquet of flowers, the love of our family,
Our Premier will always be in the people’s hearts.¹¹⁴

This poem was pinned to a bouquet of flowers and signed “From our whole family, old and young.” As it indicates, the flowers gathered from the family’s home were dedicated to Zhou to represent their love, and through this bodily practice, Zhou “will always be in

¹¹¹ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 21-22.

¹¹² Wang Wulu, “Wei le mingtian [For the tomorrow],” in *Bingchen qingming jishi*, pp. 146-147.

¹¹³ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 21-22.

¹¹⁴ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 159; Xiao, *Tiananmen Poems*, p. 15.

the people's hearts." This poem not only pictures a typical scenario of the mourning activities but also records the experience of the family's bodily practice to be recalled and transmitted from generation to generation. The dynamics of transmitting popular memory of the April Fifth Movement is displayed by the following poem:

A white-haired veteran of the Red Army brings his whole family to mourn;
A poem pouring out their feelings and a pure white wreath he hangs above the plinth.
Two children lead an old grandmother who hobbles to the Monument.
She gazes long at the portrait there, tears trickling down her cheeks, sighing and tapping her cane in sorrow.
Toddlers who have barely learnt to walk are lifted by their mother and fathers,
So they may themselves tie their white flowers to the evergreen boughs.¹¹⁵

The memory about those familial bodily practices during the April Fifth Movement not only has been stored in the Tiananmen Poems like this poem, it was to be remembered in the hearts of the whole family, young and old, as living monuments. While previous scholarship has convincingly demonstrated that the bodily practices and family remembering and recollection largely constitute the fundamental mnemonic medium to formulate, sustain, and transfer shared memory of social groups, a close reading of the Tiananmen Poems allow us to illustrate that it was through those familial bodily practices at Tiananmen Square in the commemoration of Zhou Enlai that a popular memory of the April Fifth Movement was preserved and transmitted from generation to generation.¹¹⁶ As Chapter Seven will demonstrate, the student protesters of the June Fourth Movement, who were at a young age in the spring of 1976, tended to recall their family activities at Tiananmen Square during the April Fifth Movement.

Conclusion

Given the official suppression of the commemoration of Zhou Enlai, during the April Fifth Movement, the mourners turned Tiananmen Square into a short-lived public sphere

¹¹⁵ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 225-226; Xiao, *Tiananmen Poems*, p. 50.

¹¹⁶ Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 3-7; Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), esp. pp. 58-59.

to voice protest against the Gang of Four by posting memorial poems at the base of the Monument. In this process, they broke through the official blackout to express their nostalgia over Zhou, criticism of the Gang of Four, and implicit disillusionment with Mao in the Tiananmen Poems. The Tiananmen Poems constitute a valuable memory medium to examine the material and spatial foundation of the memory making about the April Fifth Movement. During the Movement, Tiananmen Square not only was converted into an altar to worship Zhou as an individual revolutionary, which temporarily changed the function of the Monument, but also constituted a memorial space for the mourners to validate their activities by recalling the place as a sacred site of national salvation and revolutionary movements. In this process, Chang'an Avenue was turned into a site of memory to embody popular memory of Zhou and the movement. Moreover, Tiananmen Square was turned into a stage for rendering the past of the May Fourth Movement in memorial writings and bodily practices closely attached to the Monument. More importantly, the Monument constituted the material foundation for the mourners to memorialize Zhou while looking at the inscription left by him. Some even envisioned the Monument as Zhou himself.

The end of the April Fifth Movement did not necessarily mean the end of the war of memory over remembering and forgetting Zhou and the related movement. The mourners were determined to preserve the memory of the movement by hiding the Tiananmen Poems and photographs from the official confiscation. Revealing the popular desire to remember Zhou, the mourners displayed how they preserved their memory of the late premier by erecting a figurative monument in their hearts that was indestructible by the Gang of Four. Thus, they metaphorically constituted the living monuments to remember

Zhou and the movement. Furthermore, this popular memory was to be transmitted inter-generationally while the mourners often came to Tiananmen Square with their children and grandsons to honor Zhou and to read and transcribe the memorial poems and essays. Through the bodily practices of the family activities, an intergenerational memory of the April Fifth Movement found a way to be transmitted from generation to generation.

Chapter Six
Projecting Prospective Vision at Tiananmen Square:
Popular and Official Uses of the April Fifth Movement in China without Mao

The Popular Use of the April Fifth Movement

Given the short-lived public sphere created at Tiananmen Square during the April Fifth Movement, the mourners found a channel not only to protest against the Gang of Four in the present but also to project a prospective vision of China for the future. By the commemoration of a dead leader, they displayed their aspiration to carry on the Chinese revolution as revolutionary successors by inheriting the legacy of Zhou Enlai. Moreover, behind the popular nostalgia over Zhou's revolutionary past, they projected a new prospect for the PRC based on the program of the Four Modernizations ascribed to Zhou. It was in this way that the mourners injected a future envisioning into their recollection of the past revolutionary tradition at Tiananmen Square.

Recalling Zhou Enlai with the CCP's Revolutionary Past

During the April Fifth Movement, the popular commemoration of Zhou was coupled with the nostalgia over his revolutionary career before the Monument. This constitutes an interesting scene in which Zhou's lifetime achievements were recalled next to the Monument constructed to represent the defining moments of the Chinese revolution. The zeniths of his career from the May Fourth Movement through the Nanchang Uprising to the founding of the PRC correspond to those defining moments materialized in the Monument. It is in this sense that to recall Zhou's lifetime merits is to render the Chinese communist revolution at Tiananmen Square.

Many Tiananmen poems recollect the most vital accomplishments in the lifetime of Zhou.¹ The popular reminiscence usually begins with the May Fourth Movement. In recalling his career, one poem begins with what he had done for China in the early twentieth century: “Scribbling fast with pen during the period of the May Fourth Movement, [he] spread the idea of revolution to the people.”² It appears that Zhou had played an important role in the most prominent revolutionary tradition in the Chinese revolution. In the popular discourse on the April Fifth Movement, the May Fourth Movement representing the turning point to the new-democratic revolution constitutes the sacred start of Zhou’s revolutionary career.

The most often recalled revolutionary achievement of Zhou Enlai before the founding of the PRC in the Tiananmen Poems is the Nanchang Uprising. The Nanchang Uprising, as mentioned in previous chapters, has been considered one decisive moment in the Chinese communist revolution because it marked the establishment of the Red Army in which Zhou played a critical role. Thus, it is not surprising that most authors who recalled Zhou’s career would emphasize the Nanchang Uprising in their poems posted around the relief of the event on the Monument. In standing out the critical significance of the Nanchang Uprising, one poem reads, “[After] the sound of gunshot at Nanchang on 1 August, the revolution spread several hundred and thousand *li* like an iron stream.”³ Another poem further specifies Zhou’s critical role in the event as it states, “[He] displayed the army flag in the city of Nanchang, uncovering a new chapter of the Chinese revolution.”⁴ Likewise, while one poem portrays the event by phrasing “Holding up the

¹ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 23, 63, 65, 96, 100, 103, 104, 145, 162, 163, 186, 208, 234, 249, 296-305.

² Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 296.

³ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 103.

⁴ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 296.

military flag in the city of Nanchang,” another one clearly addresses that Zhou had “launched the revolt and established the Red Army in Nanchang.”⁵ As a result, many people came to the Monument to honor Zhou because his “merit of establishing the [Red] Army is extremely significant.”⁶ To render Zhou’s career facing the relief of the Nanchang Uprising provides an interesting scenario to show how the reliefs of the Monument functioned like the material foundation for the people to remember the communist revolutionary past at Tiananmen Square.

In addition, other revolutionary events that are mentioned here and there in the poetic manifestation of Zhou’s revolutionary career include the Xi’an Incident, the Long March, the War of Resistance against Japan, the peace conference with the GMD at Chongqing, and his political and diplomatic achievements as the State Premier.⁷ It appears as if the Chinese people were so familiar with Zhou’s career, many authors only used the names of places to refer to Zhou’s significant achievements. For example, in describing a soldier’s memory of Zhou’s revolutionary career, one poem reads, “In front of the Premier’s portrait, I gently touched the badge of military emblem on my collar... At that time, my thoughts went far away: Nanchang, Zunyi, Yan’an, Chongqing, Beijing, and Wanlong....”⁸ Just as Tiananmen Square that embodies the memory of the May Fourth Movement, these places represent influential events occurring in the Chinese communist revolution. In this way, the mourners recalled and remembered the communist revolutionary tradition while memorializing Zhou’s influential career.

⁵ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 104; also pp. 63-64.

⁶ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 104, 145.

⁷ An often mentioned event ascribed to Zhou in the Tiananmen Poems is the Xi’an Incident. In the language of official discourse, the Tiananmen Poems poetically elucidate the significance of the Incident and the role Zhou played. When most of them concisely touch upon the Incident, one lengthy poem clearly points out: “In the negotiation for the Xi’an Incident, you resolutely executed the Chairman Mao’s policy, forcing the Thief Jiang to stop the civil war and speeding up the creation of the national united front of resistance against Japan.” See Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 297; also pp. 63, 104.

⁸ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 234.

Poeticizing the Revolutionary Successors (Geming Jiebanren) and their Ideals

Along with their recollection of Zhou's revolutionary career, the popular protesters displayed zealous aspiration to be his "revolutionary successors (geming jiebanren)." Standing in front of the Monument, they made pledges to show their determination to receive the revolutionary torch from Zhou to carry on the revolution. This emphasis on the desire to be Zhou's revolutionary successors somewhat reflected the popular anxiety over the succession crisis after his death. It further manifested the people's desire to oppose the Gang of Four as represented by identifying with Zhou's program of the Four Modernizations. The Tiananmen Poems reveal the mental impact of the popular commemoration for a dead political leader.

A comprehensive study of the Tiananmen Poems shows that one of the most stated motifs is to convert the grief into the strength of being Zhou's revolutionary successors.⁹ When the Chinese people first learnt the news about Zhou's death, they tended to doubt it and then fell into deep sorrow as they realized that it was true as described by one poem: "Upon hearing the news, we did not believe it, but our hearts were broken when we were sure it was true."¹⁰ Not long afterwards, they would turn their grief into the strength to inherit the premier's unfinished will. Many poems represent this psychological process very well. "To resist the endless passionate tears with great difficulty," as one poem stresses, "memorializing the Premier's last will in our hearts."¹¹ Some people would even turn to comfort the soul of Zhou by displaying their determination to inherit his revolutionary ambition as one poem reads: "May the Premier feel relieved, the

⁹ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 16, 17, 24, 26, 33, 34, 47, 70, 72-75, 77, 79, 98-99, 105, 111, 121, 123, 148, 182-183, 193, 196, 204, 223, 230, 231, 239-240, 266, 271, 282, 304.

¹⁰ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 15.

¹¹ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 26.

revolutionary banner will be received by your successors.”¹² Another poem makes this resolution much more clearly by claiming: “Alas! We are the successors (jiebanren) of Communism, and we will follow your footprints to march forward! March forward forever.”¹³

The longing for “inheriting the Premier’s last will to succeed the revolution (jiegeming ban)” was so enthusiastic that the authors of the Tiananmen Poems were inclined to emphasize that the succession is totally beyond question.¹⁴ Written in the language of national salvation, one poem indicates, “Whereas the Premier had sacrificed himself for China, we will become his successor for the eternal survival of the nation.”¹⁵ While some poems display the people’s will to carry on the revolutionary vocation, others convey the optimistic prospect for the succession. “It is natural that the person who loves the people will be loved by the people,” as one poem indicates, “so how would the revolution have no successors?”¹⁶ Despite the difficulties at the time, the mourners were determined to inherit Zhou’s revolutionary vocation. As one poem indicates, “Even if the long journey is challenging, it is natural that the revolution will have successors.”¹⁷

In addition, some authors would use certain symbols of the revolution in their poetic representation of the process of succession. For example, in one poem meant to describe how the mourners took the pledge to follow the footprints of Zhou, the author puts it in a metaphorical way: “Praying that you will be at peace in the underworld, the ‘red flag’

¹² Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 72.

¹³ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 204.

¹⁴ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 271; also see pp. 16, 17, 24, 55, 70, 73, 74, 79, 99, 105, 111, 121, 231, 266, 271, 282.

¹⁵ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 74.

¹⁶ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 24.

¹⁷ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 79.

will be spontaneously received by the successors.”¹⁸ Likewise, in anticipating the aftermath of the succession, one poem writes, “It is joyful to have the successors to grasp the flag, striking the drums and launching the Long March again.”¹⁹ The mourners’ firm determination to “*jie geming ban*” reflected the succession crisis after Zhou’s death in late Maoist era.

While numerous Tiananmen Poems imply the popular anxiety about a succession crisis, many of them further amplify what they meant by inheriting Zhou’s unfinished ambition. On the one hand, while they gave their word to serve as Zhou’s revolutionary successors, they at the same time expressed the firm stand to oppose the radical political line of the Cultural Revolution as represented by the Gang of Four.²⁰ One poem makes the resolution clear: “We come to the base of the Monument to present our poems, inheriting [the Premier’s] unfinished will to fight against the stubborn criminals.”²¹ Moreover, given the difficult situation when the official authorities were determined to restrict the popular commemoration, the protesters had displayed the courage to uphold the revolutionary banner inherited from Zhou. In showing the earnestness, one poem indicates, “Even if we will be beheaded and shed our passionate blood, we will raise the revolutionary flag high with our hands.”²² Some authors clearly showed the steadfastness to protest against the Shanghai clique in a metaphorical way as one poem puts it: “Receiving the precursor’s gun and pen, we dare to fight with the monsters to the end. Sweeping away the evil pests, the Premier’s unfinished will is taken over by us.”²³

¹⁸ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 73.

¹⁹ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 17.

²⁰ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 33, 34, 47, 75, 77, 150.

²¹ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 123.

²² Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 33.

²³ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 34.

On the other hand, some Tiananmen Poems reveal the popular optimism in carrying on the revolution and the earnest faith in the utopian vision of Communism.²⁴ As one poem emphasizes, “Making oaths before the Monument, we swear that we will not retreat until the world becomes red.”²⁵ While some authors poeticized the people’s confidence to carry on the revolution, others represent their faith in Communism. They not only truly “believed in the truth of Communism” but also “swore to turn the Premier’s revolutionary ambition into the Communist enterprise.”²⁶ More interestingly, some authors even projected the ideal of unifying Taiwan in their poems. “Scattering your ashes over the province of Taiwan,” as one of them claimed, “may the precious island be returned to us for the unification of China.”²⁷ In order to realize these ideals in the future, the mourners further swore to Zhou that they would hand down the revolutionary torch to the later generations.²⁸ One poem vividly portrays this ambition: “When the elder generation has not laid down, the middle-age people remain embrace the great goal. When the young people earnestly participate [in the rank], the children will catch up. Spontaneously, the revolution will have successors as the red flag is to be transmitted from generation to generation.”²⁹

Envisioning A Prospective Vision of China: The Four Modernizations

More importantly, in addition to reflecting the succession anxiety after Zhou’s death, the Tiananmen Poems reveal the dissident protesters’ prospective vision of China based on the ideal of the Four Modernizations. As discussed above, the mourners had conveyed the popular resentment to the atrocities of the Cultural Revolution behind their opposition to

²⁴ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 17, 34, 70, 148, 182-183, 223.

²⁵ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 70.

²⁶ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 17, 34.

²⁷ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 193.

²⁸ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 16, 55, 99, 105, 111, 231, 266, 271, 282.

²⁹ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 266.

the Gang of Four. Along with this antipathy to the radical Maoists' political line, the Tiananmen Poems reveal the popular earnestness to realize the Four Modernizations policy proposed by Zhou.

In January 1975, in considering that the ideological struggle of the Cultural Revolution had destroyed the nation, the dying Zhou called for China to shift to the trajectory of modernizing the state's agriculture, industry, national defense and science and technology at the First Session of the Fourth National People's Congress. Under this Four Modernizations policy, China was supposed to turn into a powerful country "with a high degree of socialist industrialization" in two steps: establishing an independent and improved industrial and economic system by 1990 and being "in the first ranks of the world" by the end of the twentieth century.³⁰ With the assistance of the vice-premier Deng Xiaoping, the Chinese people saw a bright future brought by Zhou's grand plan. However, following the death of Zhou and the purge of Deng, the policy of the Four Modernizations was strangled by the Gang of Four. Against such a desperate situation, the popular protesters showed their firm support to the Four Modernizations because they considered it as the only way to save China. This was manifested in the Tiananmen Poems.

First, the Tiananmen Poems represent the popular anxiety of national crisis after Zhou's death and the prevalent support for the Four Modernizations program. On the one hand, the mourners related Zhou's death to the crisis of the nation and the CCP. As one memorial essay articulates, "the Premier's death has largely to do with the rise and fall of our motherland, the prospect of our Party, and the destiny of our nation."³¹ On the other

³⁰ Gao, *Zhou Enlai*, p. 275; Garside, *Coming Alive*, p. 54; Meisner, *Mao's China and After*, p. 395.

³¹ Liang Xin, "Xinhua [Flowers in the hearts]," in *Bingchen qingming jishi*, p. 262.

hand, they displayed the popular anxiety over the political distress caused by the Gang of Four as one poem addresses in the language of national salvation: “May heaven open its eyes quickly, for the Chinese nation is in disaster. If this continues, our country will perish, and Communism cannot be realized.”³² Given this atmosphere, they expected the appearance of a national savior as one poem expresses: “While the slaves long for liberation, the people hope for a savior.”³³ As a result, this “hope for a savior” was projected into their memory of Zhou when the Tiananmen Poems describe him as the savior who had been “rescuing the Chinese nation from water and fire” and “saving China by socialism.”³⁴ Thus, when Mao’s aura had faded and Zhou was dead, the only way to rescue China from decline was to inherit the “savior’s” unfinished will to “smash the old world and create a new universe.”³⁵ The unfinished will was Zhou’s grand plan of the Four Modernizations.

The popular mourners wrote their support for the Four Modernizations into their memorial poems and essays.³⁶ As early as in the Nanjing Incident on March 28, 1976, they had already shown their determination: “Learning from the Premier, [we] will defend our revolutionary calling with our live and blood to fight for the realization of the Four Modernizations.”³⁷ During the April Fifth Movement, much more people swore to the Monument that they would endeavor to fulfill the “great plan of the Four Modernizations” by inheriting Zhou’s last will.³⁸ They promised that they would

³² Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 103.

³³ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 186-187.

³⁴ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 96, 131, 205, 240.

³⁵ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 16.

³⁶ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 6, 8, 35, 71, 88, 109, 114, 177, 194, 219, 282, 317, 327; Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shiwenji*, vol. 2, pp. 156, 297, 340, 357, 363, 366, 374, 377, 385, 390; *People’s Daily*, ed., *Bingchen qingming jishi*, pp. 6, 21, 30, 36, 64, 92, 101, 105, 139, 140, 143.

³⁷ Yan, *Siwu yundong jishi*, p. 17.

³⁸ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 71, 88; Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shiwenji*, vol. 2, p. 156.

“implement the Four Modernizations in our motherland” and build China as a “strong country of the Four Modernizations.”³⁹

Second, some authors wove the specific features of the Four Modernizations into their memorial poems and essays. For example, one of them implicitly suggested that they would make sacrifice to Zhou on the day the “grand plan” is realized by simply punctuating the date of 2000 without mentioning the Four Modernizations.⁴⁰ As mentioned above, in Zhou’s vision, with the Four Modernizations, China would become a powerful modernized state by the end of the twentieth century. Although the author simply mentioned the date “2000,” the audience can easily read his intended meaning. Other poems explicitly indicate the specific procedures of the Four Modernizations. “The Four Modernizations,” as one poem states, “was to be carried out by two steps (liangbu zou daodi).”⁴¹ The “two steps” is clearly referred to the two milestones set up by Zhou. In showing the optimistic prospect of achieving Zhou’s “grand plan,” one memorial essay clearly specify the Four Modernizations as it claims: “Beloved Premier Zhou, inspired by you immortal spirit, we definitely will build our great PRC into a strong socialist country with modernized industry, agriculture, science and technology, and national defense.”⁴² The prospect was so optimistic that many people swore to Zhou: “The day the Four Modernizations are realized, we will make sacrifices and pay homage to you again.”⁴³

A careful examination of the Tiananmen Poems allows us to examine how the Chinese people conceptualized Zhou Enlai’s revolutionary career while projecting their

³⁹ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 6, 109.

⁴⁰ The poem reads: “When the year 2000 comes...we will call your name...respectful premier, please take a look: We have already realized the grand plan that you proposed on behalf of the party center.” Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 194.

⁴¹ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 114; also p. 177.

⁴² Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 317.

⁴³ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 282; also p. 88.

anxiety and prospect for the Chinese socialist revolution in the language of national salvation. The Tiananmen Poems reveal the popular anxiety of succession crisis after Zhou's death and the grassroots hatred of the atrocity of the Cultural Revolution. They epitomize the popular commitment to inherit Zhou's revolutionary ambition by pursuing the ideal of the Four Modernizations for rescuing the nation from decline. It was in this way that the popular protesters projected a prospective vision for the communist China.

Official Use of the April Fifth Movement and Deng Xiaoping's Rise to Power

The aftermath of the April Fifth Movement demonstrated how the popular discourse on the movement was sanctioned and used by the CCP. From the occurrence of the movement through its rehabilitation to Deng Xiaoping's rise to power, the CCP's official discourse on "April Fifth" underwent dramatic changes. In this process the official position on the Tiananmen Poems changed from their being reactionary verse to their being revolutionary poems. While the former official discourse was thrown into the dustbin of history with the downfall of the Gang of Four, the popular discourse created in the public sphere at Tiananmen Square was endorsed and appropriated by the CCP to serve its political demands in the post-Mao era.

April Fifth as a Counterrevolution and the Purge of Deng Xiaoping

As soon as the Tiananmen Incident was suppressed, the Politburo of the CCP under the control of the radical Maoists defined the April Fifth Movement as a counterrevolutionary political incident.⁴⁴ From the start of the movement, the Gang of Four already estimated the mourning activities at Tiananmen Square to be a reactionary incident. On 30 March, Wang Hongwen suspected that the poems posted around the Monument were to "create public

⁴⁴ Teiwes and Sun, "The First Tiananmen Incident Revisited," p. 231; Garside, *Coming Alive*, p. 135.

opinion for the counterrevolution.”⁴⁵ On April 5, in his speech broadcast at Tiananmen Square before the brutal suppression, Wu De, the First Secretary of the Beijing Party Committee and a member of the Politburo, called attention to the “reactionary” nature of the incident because “some bad individuals are creating disturbances and committing reactionary sabotage in Tiananmen Square.”⁴⁶ After the Politburo condemned the April Fifth Movement as a counterrevolutionary incident on April 7, *People’s Daily* printed a series of articles to unveil the official discourse on the movement to the public.

On April 8, the first article, entitled “The Counterrevolutionary Political Incident in Tiananmen Square,” was printed on the front page of *People’s Daily* along with Wu De’s speech broadcast at Tiananmen Square.⁴⁷ It begins with a concise definition of the “reactionary” nature of the popular mourning activities for Zhou: “In early April, in the Tiananmen Square of the capital, a small handful of class enemies used mourning Premier Zhou at the Qingming Festival as an excuse to create a premeditated, planned, and organized counterrevolutionary political incident. They openly gave reactionary speeches, posted reactionary poems and slogans, and circulated reactionary leaflets.” Then, it continues to imply Deng Xiaoping’s involvement in the movement by claiming that those class enemies were aimed to “shift the general direction of criticizing Deng and counterattacking the right-deviationist wind of reversing correct verdicts.” This allegation makes Deng become the people’s enemy. The article in general reveals the radical leftists’ intention to use “April Fifth” as an excuse to push Deng off the stage. Next to it is the

⁴⁵ Yan, *Siwu yundong jishi*, p. 70

⁴⁶ *People’s Daily*, 8 April 1976, p. 1.

⁴⁷ *People’s Daily*, 8 April 1976, p. 1.

CCP's resolution on the dismissal of Deng from his posts in the Party and the State based on Mao's proposal.⁴⁸

After "The Counterrevolutionary Incident in Tiananmen Square," two more articles were printed on the front page of *People's Daily* to amplify the relationship between Deng and April Fifth.⁴⁹ The first of them, "What Does the Incident in Tiananmen Square Tell Us?" printed on April 18, was written to pinpoint the connection between Deng's political line and the April Fifth Movement. It tries to make two points. On the one hand, the movement proved that there was bourgeoisie class inside the Party and the official suppression on it precisely represented the struggle between the proletarian and bourgeois' political lines. Reciting Mao's words of criticism to Deng, "the capitalist-roader in authority within the Party," it further claims, as the "General Behind-the-Scenes Supporter" of the right-deviationist wind of reversal, Deng's revisionism exactly represented the bourgeoisie class's interest, and thus the struggle with him was a "serious class struggle" against the line of bourgeoisie class. On the other hand, it accuses that the counterrevolutionaries' purposes substantially identified with that of Deng's revisionism, and thus Deng was the "General Representative (Zongdaibiao)" of those counterrevolutionaries. As we will demonstrate in Chapter Seven, the title of "What Does the Incident in Tiananmen Square Tell Us" was to be manipulated by the protesters of the June Fourth Movement to criticize Deng.

It appeared as if the second article was not nearly enough to validate the relationship between the movement and Deng that the third one was simply published under the title of "Deng Xiaoping and the Counterrevolutionary Incident in Tiananmen Square" on

⁴⁸ *People's Daily*, 8 April 1976, p. 1.

⁴⁹ *People's Daily*, 18 April 1976, p.1.

April 28.⁵⁰ In this article, the alleged author, Liang Xiao, concludes the points that had been made in the first two pieces.⁵¹ As a counterrevolution, in the article, the movement was viewed as a manifestation of Deng's reactionary revisionism that stood for the bourgeoisie class's interest. As the "General Manage of the Company of Producing Counterrevolutionary Public Opinion," he used the "reactionary literati (fandong wenren)" to instigate reactionary activities by posting "reactionary poems" behind the cause of the Four Modernizations in an attempt to "restore the capitalism."

The three articles constituted the main features of the official discourse on the April Fifth Movement before the downfall of the Gang of Four. The making of this official discourse can be best understood by locating it in the context of the campaign of criticizing Deng and counter-attacking the right-deviationist wind of reversal since late 1975. In this discourse, whereas the April Fifth Movement is considered as the consequence of Deng's revisionism, Deng himself was accused as the "General Behind-the Scenes Supporter" of the right-deviationist wind of reversal. Given the atmosphere at that time, it would not be an overstatement to say that the radical Maoists' discourse on the April Fifth Movement was intended to topple Deng by alleging him as the "General Representative of the counterrevolutionaries." This in turn shows the invented nature of official discourse.

According to Garside's eyewitness account, a remarkable feature of the mourning activities for Zhou Enlai was "the absence of any mention of Deng."⁵² Although

⁵⁰ *People's Daily*, 28 April 1976, p. 1.

⁵¹ Liang Xiao that was widely known as the pseudonym of the Criticism Group (Pipan zu) of the Beijing and Qinghua Universities because it is a homonym for "two schools," meaning Beida and Qinghua, which were under control by the Gang of Four. Therefore, during the April Fifth Movement, many poems conceal the popular resentment to the two schools. For example, in mocking the two schools, one poem writes, "One newspaper [*Wenhui Daily*] and two schools; several clowns are clamoring." Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 259.

⁵² Garside, *Coming Alive*, p. 136.

Garside's observation is somewhat overstated, he did catch the point. Most of more than fifteen hundred Tiananmen Poems created in the spring of 1976 were written to honor Zhou and criticize the Gang of Four, and only three of them directly refer to Deng. One of the poems shows the people's sympathy to Deng, who lost his power to dominate the domestic state affairs because of the campaign of criticizing Deng, while expressing the popular resentment to the official suppression of the mourning activities for Zhou: "Whoever opposes Premier Zhou, we will fight against them to the end. Whoever wants to persecute Deng Xiaoping, they will never succeed."⁵³

Another one, entitled "What are We Supposed to Do," is more likely to project the popular nostalgia over the period in which Deng assumed duty to implement the Four Modernizations as the first vice-premier when Zhou Enlai was fighting his illness in the hospital.⁵⁴ After the Fourth National People's Congress in July 1975, under the supreme cause of the Four Modernizations proposed by Zhou, the first vice-premier Deng started a rectification program in various fields for improving the national economy. This pro-economy line threatened the power base of the Gang of Four, who insisted on upholding Mao's line of class struggle. Under the situation, Mao suspected that Deng intended to jeopardize the Cultural Revolution by reversing the verdicts determined by the CCP under his leadership. In late 1975, the Gang of Four launched the campaign of criticizing Deng with Mao's approval.⁵⁵ It was against this circumstance that this poem has written the popular distress to the fall of Deng and the political line he represented, a point was made in another poem.⁵⁶

⁵³ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, p. 151.

⁵⁴ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 257-258.

⁵⁵ Yan and Gao, *Turbulent Decade*, pp. 463-481.

⁵⁶ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shichao*, pp. 363-364.

Ironically, it was only after the purge of Deng following the April Fifth Movement that more and more poems were posted at Tiananmen Square to express the popular anguish over his fall on the first two anniversaries of Zhou's death and the movement. Those poems written to show the popular support for Deng can be seen in the unofficial collections of the Tiananmen Poems.⁵⁷ On the first anniversary, more than twenty poems were posted to call for the rehabilitation of the April Fifth Movement while revealing the popular expectation to see Deng reassume his offices. On the second anniversary, interestingly, the poems written for Deng suddenly dropped to only three. This was probably because Deng had returned to his posts in the Party and the State after the Third Plenum of the Tenth Central Committee in July 1977, and the public found no need to insist on justice for him.⁵⁸ While the connection between Deng's rise to power and those poems produced on the first two anniversaries of Zhou's death and the movement needs further investigation, for the purpose of this chapter, it will suffice to point out that they can be viewed as the poetic manifestation of the political use of the April Fifth Movement from below. More importantly, this popular use of the April Fifth Movement was simply a direct reaction to the official discourse on the event. As Chapter Seven will show, the same political drama was to replay during the June Fourth Movement.

April Fifth as a Revolutionary Action and the Rise of Deng Xiaoping

Although it is difficult to prove the direct relationship between Deng Xiaoping and the April Fifth Movement, the history of post-Mao China shows that both shared a common destiny. After the fall of the Gang of Four, the Chinese people began to demand the official verdict on the April Fifth Movement as a counterrevolutionary incident to be

⁵⁷ Tong, ed., *Tiananmen shiwenji*, vol. 2, pp. 295, 296, 298, 299, 300, 303, 304, 305, 310, 315, 324, 335, 339, 346, 347, 347-350, 361, 375, 376.

⁵⁸ Meisner, *Mao's China and After*, p. 433; Garside, *Coming Alive*, p. 182.

reversed as manifested in the memorial poem posted at Tiananmen Square in January and April 1977.⁵⁹ Before the official reversal in late 1978, Deng's rehabilitation was to come in March 1977. Since the "General Representative of the counterrevolutionaries in the Tiananmen Incident" was restored to power, it naturally came the reversal of the verdict. Only in less than three years, the CCP's official discourse on the event was to undergo a dramatic change. The movement defined by the radical Maoists as a "counterrevolutionary political incident" in April 1976 was to be redefined by the Party Politburo as "a completely revolutionary action" in November 1978. This process witnessed the power struggles and transitions within the CCP in post-Mao China.

The official discourse on Deng's involvement in the April Fifth Movement began to dissolve at the Work Conference of the CCP Central Committee in March 1977. In an attempt to resist the trend of restoring Deng's power within the CCP, Hua Guofeng relayed a prohibition to each working group, requiring the party cadres not to touch upon two sensitive issues: Deng's return to office and the rehabilitation of the Tiananmen Incident.⁶⁰ But, Hua's colleagues disappointed him. On 13 March, Chen Yun fired the first shot at the Work Conference by claiming: "The rehabilitation of the Tiananmen Incident and restoring Deng Xiaoping's leadership in the Party Central are the two most important things to do after the downfall of the Gang of Four." Then, he continued to argue that "comrade Deng Xiaoping had nothing to do with the Tiananmen Incident" and that, "for the need of the Chinese revolution and the CCP," it was "completely right and necessary" for Deng to reenter the leadership of the Party.⁶¹ Chen's statement was echoed

⁵⁹ Yan and Gao, *Turbulent Decade*, pp. 504-528; Meisner, *Mao's China and After*, pp. 405-406.

⁶⁰ Zhang Jincai, "Lun 'Zai paihui zhong qianjin' de liangnian: Cong fensui 'Si Ren Bang' dao shiyi jie sanzong quanhui," *Dangdai zhongguoshi yanjiu* [Contemporary China History Studies] 14: 4 (July, 2007): 77.

⁶¹ Zhang, "Lun 'Zai paihui zhong qianjin' de liangnian," 77-78.

by many of his comrades. Given the unstoppable trend of supporting Deng within the CCP, Hua was to make a huge concession. On 14 March, in his speech at the plenary session of the Work Conference, he announced that Deng had never ever involved in the Tiananmen Incident, but he insisted on carrying on the campaign of criticizing Deng. In addition, he indicated that the Party was to “let Deng return to office in an appropriate time.”⁶² Four months later Deng reassumed his posts at the Third Plenum of the Tenth Central Committee on July 17.

However, Hua firmly held his position on the verdict of the April Fifth Movement. The successor of Mao, it seemed improper for him to reverse the verdict proposed by his predecessor. Moreover, Hua was directly involved in the crisis management of the movement when he was the minister of Public Security, and reversing the verdict would threaten his authority. Thus, at the plenum of the Work Conference on 14 March, Hua argued that, although the mourning activities for Zhou Enlai and the protest against the Gang of Four were justified, “a handful of counterrevolutionaries” did create a “counterrevolutionary political event in Tiananmen Square.”⁶³ Hua’s statement was still in line with the official discourse invented in April 1976.

It seemed bizarre to see Deng return to his offices without an official reversal on the April Fifth Movement. As mentioned above, on the first two anniversaries of Zhou Enlai’s death, the protesters posted poems and posters in public, such as Tiananmen Square, in the effort to struggle for a rehabilitation of the movement. Numerous people posted big-character posters to put forward the same demand. In a poster written to the

⁶² Zhang, “Lun ‘Zai paihui zhong qianjin’ de liangnian,” 78.

⁶³ Zhang, “Lun ‘Zai paihui zhong qianjin’ de liangnian,” 77; Yu Guangyuan, “Yijiu qiba nian Beijing shiwei wei Tiananmen shijian pingfan zhenxiang [The truth of the Beijing party committee’s rehabilitation of the Tiananmen Incident],” *Bainianchao* [Hundred-year tide] 3 (1998): 36.

CCP, the author argues that the April Fifth Movement was a great revolutionary movement like the May Fourth Movement.⁶⁴

Those poems and posters produced on the anniversary of Zhou Enlai's death were followed by a series of publications concerning the April Fifth Movement and the Tiananmen Poems in the official news media. In September 1978, an article written to introduce the life of Han Zhixiong, a member of the Communist Youth League of China who was actively involved in the movement, and some Tiananmen Poems were published on the first reprinted issue of *China Youth*, an official journal of the Communist Youth League of China suspended in 1968 during the Cultural Revolution. On 18 October, *PLA Daily (Jiefangjun bao)* released several Tiananmen Poems drawn from Tong Huaizhou's underground collections. On 22 October, *Beijing Daily* reprinted some Tiananmen Poems and began calling them "revolutionary poems." On 11 November, *China Youth Daily* printed an editorial, entitled "The Great People's Movement Creating Immortal Poems," to praise the Tiananmen Incident as "a great revolutionary movement of the people."⁶⁵ On 17 November, *People's Daily* used a whole page to print a number of Tiananmen Poems.⁶⁶ Meanwhile, *In a Land of Silence*, a stage play produced to represent the movement, was performed in Shanghai and Beijing and received popular attention from the public.⁶⁷ By the verdict on "April Fifth" was reversed, the "reactionary" Tiananmen Poems already occupied the official media.

⁶⁴ Tong, *Weida de siwu yundong*, pp. 255-258; Chen Ziming, "Lishi da shiye zhong de siwu yundong," in *Siwu yundong*, pp. 102-111.

⁶⁵ Tong, *Weida de siwu yundong*, pp. 258-260.

⁶⁶ *People's Daily*, 17 November 1978, p. 3; Li Zhi, "Huiyi yu sikao: Tiananmen shichao chuban qianhou [Recollection and reflection: Before and after the publication of Transcriptions of the Poems from Tiananmen]," *Xinwenxue shiliao* 1 (2001): 144.

⁶⁷ Chen, "Lishi da shiye zhong de siwu yundong," in *Siwu yundong*, pp. 111-112; Li, "Huiyi yu sikao: Tiananmen shichao chuban qianhou," 144.

The trend of reversal continued to blow into the circle of elite politics of the PRC since the rehabilitation of Deng Xiaoping. On 8 June 1978, Yu Huanchun, a reporter from *People's Daily*, openly asked that the verdict on April Fifth to be reversed at a meeting of the CPPCC by arguing that “the April Fifth Movement is comparable with the May Fourth Movement in the modern Chinese history.” His suggestion was echoed by many delegates.⁶⁸ Then, at the Work Conference of the Party Central Committee in November 1978, a number of veteran party cadres, such as Chen Yun, Tan Zhenlin and Hu Yaobang, asked that the movement be rehabilitated.⁶⁹ In particular, many party cadres compared the April Fifth Movement with the May Fourth Movement in an attempt to redefine the movement as a revolutionary movement. At the meeting, Li Chang suggested that “May Fourth was an enlightenment during the new democratic revolution, and the mass mourning activities at Tiananmen Square was an Marxist enlightenment during the socialist revolution.”⁷⁰ The popular discourse on the April Fifth Movement thus occupied the party center of the CCP.

The day for reversal of the verdict on the April Fifth Movement came quickly. On November 14, 1978, the Beijing Party Committee announced that the Incident was “completely a revolutionary action.” The reversal was publicized in the official newspapers like *Beijing Daily* and *People's Daily*.⁷¹ Revealing his change in attitude, Hua Guofeng did the calligraphy for the book title of the official collection of the

⁶⁸ Wang Donglin, “Zhengxie weiyuan huyu wei Tiananmen shijian pingfan [Delegates of the CPPCC called for the rehabilitation of the Tiananmen Incident],” *Dangshi bolan* 8(1998): 6.

⁶⁹ Zhang, “Lun ‘Zai paihui zhong qianjin’ de liangnian,” 78; Yu, “Yijiu qiba nian Beijing shiwei wei Tiananmen shijian pingfan zhenxiang,” 36.

⁷⁰ Chen, “Lishi da shiye zhong de siwu yundong,” in *Siwu yundong*, p. 121; Likewise, at the meeting of Eastern China Division, Lu Zhengcao asserted that “If there was the May Fourth Movement in the period of democratic revolution, then the Tiananmen Incident is the April Fifth Movement in the period of socialist revolution.” Chen, “Lishi da shiye zhong de siwu yundong,” in *Siwu yundong*, pp. 121-122.

⁷¹ *People's Daily*, 16 November 1978, p. 1.

Tiananmen Poems on 18 November.⁷² At the Work Conference of the Party Central Committee on November 25, Hua finally announced the reversal: “The Tiananmen Incident was completely a revolutionary mass movement, and it should be rehabilitated openly and thoroughly. On November 14, the Politburo permitted the Beijing Party Committee to declare that... [The Tiananmen Incident] was a completely revolutionary action.”⁷³ A counterrevolutionary action was redefined as a revolutionary action.

The whole process of reversal appeared as if the CCP was forced to endorse the popular discourse on the April Fifth Movement after the news media revealed the signal of rehabilitation. It could be a signal exposed from the CCP to lay the foundation of public opinion for Deng’s rise to power. For the purpose of this chapter, it will suffice to point out here that the whole process displayed how the popular discourse on the April Fifth Movement had counterattacked step by step from Tiananmen Square through the official news media and finally to the CCP.

April Fifth Movement, Four Modernizations, and Four Cardinal Principles

The CCP’s official resolution on the Tiananmen Incident was adopted at the Third Plenum on 22 December 1978. According to the “Communiqué” of the meeting, the CCP announced that the incident was “completely a revolutionary action.” It described the April Fifth Movement as “a great revolutionary mass movement” which “paved the mass bases” for the CCP’s “success in smashing the Gang of Four.”⁷⁴ The resolution not only marks the official rehabilitation of the movement but also represents the birth of the CCP’s new official discourse on “April Fifth.” In this popular-turned-official discourse,

⁷² *People’s Daily*, 19 November 1978, p. 1; Li, “Huiyi yu sikao: *Tiananmen shichao* chuban qianhou,” 144.

⁷³ Tong, *Weida de siwu yundong*, pp. 260-261; Yan, *Siwu yundong jishi*, p. 229; Zhang, “Lun ‘Zai paihui zhong qianjin’ de liangnian,” 78; Yu, “Yijiu qiba nian Beijing shiwei wei Tiananmen shijian pingfan zhenxiang,” 37-38.

⁷⁴ *People’s Daily*, 24 December 1978, p. 1; “Communiqué of the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee of The Communist Party of China” *Peking Review* 52 (December 29, 1978): 13-14.

“April Fifth” is conceptualized as a revolutionary movement that paved the way for the downfall of the Gang of Four.

The same language can be seen in the official news media even before the Third Plenum. On 21 November 1978, *People’s Daily* printed an editorial, entitled “The Truth of the Tiananmen Incident,” to reverse its previous comments on the incident.⁷⁵ It begins by claiming that the incident “was not a counterrevolutionary action at all, but completely a revolutionary action.” Then, it continues to argue that the Gang of Four had manipulated the *People’s Daily* to slander the April Fifth Movement and Deng Xiaoping. The rest of the article offers a new story of the movement different from the old official discourse produced by the Gang of Four, reading like a reprinted version of the Tiananmen Poems.

On 22 November 1978, *People’s Daily* reprinted an article, entitled “The Great April Fifth Movement,” written by a commentator of *China Youth Daily*.⁷⁶ This article defines the April Fifth Movement as “a great revolutionary movement of the people that is totally comparable with the well-known May Fourth Movement in the history of the Chinese revolution.” In line with Mao’s revolutionary discourse, it further explains that whereas the May Fourth Movement constituted “the beginning of the people’s democratic revolution,” the April Fifth Movement had “unveiled the prologue of a new historical stage.” This article also reiterates that the movement was meant to fight against the Gang of Four in the effort to protect “the red rivers and mountains created by the veteran proletarian revolutionaries” and “the socialist bright future of the Four Modernizations.” Therefore, the Chinese people not only would view the April Fifth Movement as “a

⁷⁵ *People’s Daily*, 21 November 1978, p. 1.

⁷⁶ *People’s Daily*, 22 November 1978, p. 3.

socialist democratic movement” that “paved the way to the demise of the Gang of Four’s fascist and feudal dictatorship” but also had to develop the “spirit of April Fifth” in order to improve the socialist democratic and legal system. It even goes so far as to argue that “April Fifth” was “a movement of intellectual liberation under the banner of Marxism and Mao Zedong Thought” which led to the proposition of the principle of “Practice is the sole criterion for testing the truth” and laid the “intellectual foundation to speed up the realization of the Four Modernizations.” This article contains essential features of the PRC’s new discourse on the April Fifth Movement after the collapse of the Gang of Four in Deng Xiaoping’s rise to power.

More importantly, “The Great April Fifth Movement” illustrates the political use of the April Fifth Movement in the early period of the post-Mao era. Its significance can be best understood by locating it in the context of the power struggle between the “Whatever” and “Practice” factions inside the CCP before the Third Plenum.⁷⁷ To make the story short, as manifested by the official news media during the time, Deng Xiaoping’s “Practice” faction had already gained the upper hand in their struggle with Hua Guofeng’s “Whatever” faction by the Third Plenum. The article was first published in *China Youth Daily*, the mouthpiece of the Communist Youth League controlled by one of the members of the “Practice” faction, Hu Yaobang. It was written to utilize the April Fifth Movement to legitimize Deng’s political line when it goes to suggest that “April Fifth” not only was “a movement of intellectual liberation” leading to the principle of

⁷⁷ The “Whatever” faction was led by Hua Guofeng who strongly upheld the principle of “Two Whatevers”: “We resolutely support whatever policy decisions were made by Chairman Mao and unswervingly follow whatever instruction were given by Chairman Mao.” See *People’s Daily*, 7 February 1977, p. 1. This Maoist loyalists’ principle was firmly opposed by the “Practice” faction headed by Deng Xiaoping that put forward the idea of “Practice is the sole criterion for testing truth.” Whereas the “Whatever” faction was inclined to stubbornly stick with and passionately worshiped the political line of class struggle as Mao’s legacy, the “Practice” faction was determined to shift the focus to practically develop national economy based on the program of Four Modernizations. MacFarquhar, *et al*, *The Politics of China*, pp. 292-294, 297; Meisner, *Mao’s China and After*, pp. 433-434.

“Practice is the sole criterion for testing the truth” but also laid the “intellectual foundation” of the Four Modernizations. This political use of “April Fifth” was manifested in another front-page editorial of *People’s Daily* on the day before the closing of the Third Plenum (21 December), “Long Live the People: On the Revolutionary Mass Movement in Tiananmen Square.”⁷⁸ The editorial reiterates that the April Fifth Movement not only “anticipated the downfall of the Gang of Four” but also “indicated that the socialist revolution has entered into a new stage of development” in which “the realization of the Four Modernizations is the central task.” The article prefigured the coming of the reform era of Deng Xiaoping and the Four Modernizations. If Deng had not benefited from the April Fifth Movement, he had gained benefit from the political use of it. To serve the cause of the Four Modernizations continued to be the most prominent feature of the political use of the April Fifth Movement in the early period of the post-Mao era.

The past of the April Fifth Movement was used to justify Deng Xiaoping’s doctrine of the Four Cardinal Principles. At the third anniversary of the movement in 1979, *People’s Daily* published a front-page article under the title of “Developing the Revolutionary Spirit of Tiananmen” to associate the April Fifth Movement with Deng’s “Four Cardinal Principles.”⁷⁹ A comparison with Deng’s “Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles,” which was proposed on 30 March 1979, reveals that the article completely reproduced Deng’s revolutionary discourse on the Four Cardinal Principles.⁸⁰ In addition to reiterating the importance of the Four Modernizations, the article goes so far as to

⁷⁸ *People’s Daily*, 21 December 1978, p. 1.

⁷⁹ *People’s Daily*, 5 April 1979, p. 1.

⁸⁰ Deng Xiaoping, “Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles,” in *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping, 1975-1982* (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1984), pp. 166-191.

argue: “Today to inherit and develop the revolutionary spirit of the April Fifth Movement is to uphold the socialist path, uphold the people’s democratic dictatorship, uphold the leadership of the CCP, and uphold the Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong Thought.”⁸¹ This is to say that the spirit of the April Fifth Movement is to advocate the Four Cardinal Principles. This emphasis on the association with the Four Cardinal Principles is intelligible considering the CCP’s desire to achieve the program of the Four Modernizations in a stable and united order under the leadership of its ideological doctrine. More interestingly, in order to justify the association, the article even claims that the April Fifth Movement could become so influential a revolutionary movement only because it was “under the leadership of the Party [i.e. CCP].” In this official discourse, the Tiananmen Incident, previously defined by the “Party” as a counterrevolutionary event, was turned into a great revolutionary movement that “under the leadership of the Party.” This proposition clearly illustrates the invented nature of the making of official discourse.

One more interesting point in “Developing the Revolutionary Spirit of Tiananmen” is that it conceals the official disapproval of the Democracy Wall Movement. Although the article was meant to commemorate the April Fifth Movement, its conclusion denounces that “a tiny minority of the people used the banner of inheriting the spirit of the April Fifth Movement to spread disbelief in Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, the leadership of the CCP, the proletarian dictatorship, and socialism.” This evidently referred to the Democracy Wall Movement that lasted from mid-November 1978 to the officially forced closure of the wall in December 1979 as Deng had criticized in his

⁸¹ In his “Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles,” Deng concludes the article by suggesting: “[I]n order to achieve the Four Modernizations we must uphold the socialist path, the people’s democratic dictatorship, the leadership of the CCP, and Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong Thought.” See Deng, “Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles,” p. 180.

“Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles.” In his “Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles,” Deng condemns that “a small group of person have provoked incidents in some places. Instead of accepting the guidance, advice, and explanations of leading officials of the party and government, certain bad elements have raised sundry demands that cannot be met at present or are altogether unreasonable.”⁸² During this movement, many dissidents identified themselves with their April Fifth precursors while some of them even established an organization named “April Fifth Study Group (Siwu xuehui)” to propagate the “spirit of April Fifth” through an underground journal called *April Fifth Forum (Siwu luntan)*.⁸³ Deng and the CCP seemed to encourage the movement at one time probably because the posters placed on the wall in Xidan had shown popular support for him and the party. When the movement was turned into a popular movement for the causes of human rights and democratic reform, Deng changed his attitude because it constituted a direct threat to the CCP’s rule and his leadership. On December 5 and 20, Wei Jingsheng posted wall posters, entitled, “The Fifth Modernization,” to ask for political democratic reform. Wei went so far as to criticize Deng as a new dictator in “Do We Want Democracy or New Dictatorship” posted on 25 March. As an official reaction, on 29 March 1979, Wei was arrested and later sentenced to fifteen years of imprisonment as a counterrevolutionary.⁸⁴ On March 30, at an internal meeting of the CCP, Deng brought up the Four Cardinal Principles, which constituted the rules the Beijing authorities adopted to check and prohibit the Democracy Wall Movement and prospective democratic activities in the 1980s. Under these circumstances, it is clear that, in addition

⁸² Deng, “Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles,” p. 181.

⁸³ Goodman, *Beijing Street Voices*, pp. 31, 136-137.

⁸⁴ Goodman, *Beijing Street Voices*, pp. 36, 64, 105-106; Nathan, *Chinese Democracy*, pp. 14-15, 33; MacFarquhar, *The Politics of China*, pp. 321-325.

to propagating the Four Cardinal Principles, “Developing the Revolutionary Spirit of Tiananmen” targeted the Democracy Wall Movement. The case of the Democracy Wall Movement provides a spectacular example of the political use of the April Fifth Movement by both the grassroots activists and the state power of the PRC in the post-Mao era.

The official manipulation of the April Fifth Movement in order to legitimize the Four Modernizations and the Four Cardinal Principles was employed again at the fifth anniversary of the event. On April 5, 1981, *People’s Daily* reprinted the editorial of *China Youth Daily* of the previous day on its front page.⁸⁵ Entitled “Unite and Develop the Chinese Nation: Commemoration and Vision at the Fifth Anniversary of the April Fifth Movement,” the editorial emphasizes the importance of the stability and unity of China in the realization of the Four Modernizations, and the key to meet this general goal is to develop the “spirit of April Fifth.” It argues that what constitutes “April Fifth” as an inspiring revolutionary movement was that it inherited the glorious tradition of “May Fourth,” that is, “the spirit of patriotism.” “To develop the spirit of patriotism,” thus, “is the first thing we need to do when we commemorate the April Fifth Movement today.” Moreover, it emphasizes the essence of “April Fifth” is the spirit of sacrifice and collectivism, and they are indispensable to the progress of the Four Modernizations. In line with the new official discourse, the article clearly points out that the glorious tradition of “April Fifth” is to uphold the Four Cardinal Principles, and it is required to support the correct line established by the CCP since the Third Plenum for the sake of the Four Modernizations. Reiterating the necessity of a united society, it concludes with an

⁸⁵ *People’s Daily*, 5 April 1981, p. 1.

interesting statement on the distinction between the “spirit of April Fifth” and its “way of struggle”:

After smashing the Gang of Four, we have a stable and united situation so as to implement the construction of the Four Modernizations. This is a very big happiness, and we should value what we have now. Therefore, on the one hand, [we] need to inherit and develop the revolutionary spirit of the April Fifth Movement, and, on the other, we need to understand that the present situation is totally different and our tasks and the way to achieve them are totally different. The way of struggle of the April Fifth Movement was a product of a very special circumstance in our socialist society. Given that the Gang of Four seriously destroyed the socialist democracy, the people had no alternative but to use ‘that kind’ of way of struggle to express their opinions and expectations. Now we have correct leadership of the Party Central and democratic and legal system are recovered and improved. If the people want to propose any opinions, suggestions and questions, they can do that by various and proper channels.

In other words, the CCP did need (to use) the “spirit of April Fifth,” but it did not want another April Fifth Movement. What they really needed was to make sure of China’s stability and unity for achieving the Four Modernizations under the guidance of the Four Cardinal Principles.

This official discourse was written into the CCP’s official document, “Resolution on Certain Questions in the history of our Party since the Founding of the PRC.”⁸⁶

Reviewing the history of party lines to justify new leadership has been one prominent feature of the CCP’s political culture as demonstrated in Chapter Two by the case of Mao’s “Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party (1945).” In accordance with this tradition, “Resolution on Certain Question in the History of Our Party since the Founding of the PRC,” adopted at the Sixth Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee on June 29, 1981, was released to validate Deng Xiaoping’s political line and leadership after the Third Plenum by pointing out the party’s incorrect line during the Cultural Revolution. Among many critical issues involved in this document, for the purpose of this chapter, the part on the April Fifth Movement deserves special

⁸⁶ Central Committee of the CCP, *Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party since the Founding of the PRC* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1981).

attention. In the “Resolution,” the movement was described as “a powerful movement signaled by the Tiananmen Incident which swept the whole country, a movement to mourn for the late Premier Zhou Enlai and to oppose the Gang of Four,” which “laid the ground for massive popular support for the subsequent overthrow of the counterrevolutionary Jiang Qing clique.” The depiction is not new since it corresponds to the language of the CCP’s official discourse after the rehabilitation of the movement. What interests us is that it continues to emphasize that the “essence” of the movement was “a demonstration of support for the Party’s correct leadership as represented by Comrade Deng Xiaoping.”⁸⁷ This is interesting because, in order to justify the mass basis of Deng’s leadership, it actually repeats the old official discourse invented by the Gang of Four in which Deng was accused as being a behind-the-scenes supporter of the movement. The only difference is that the Gang of Four would determine Deng’s line as revisionism rather than a “correct leadership.” Moreover, the resolution never uses terms like “revolution” or “revolutionary” to depict the movement. As amazing as it may be, this inexplicit underestimation echoed the official discourse on the movement since the Democracy Wall Movement that emphasized the association between stability and the spirit, and only spirit, of April Fifth. The resolution reveals the CCP’s paradoxical use of the movement. On the one hand, the historical April Fifth had led to the fall of the Gang of Four while demonstrating Deng’s “correct leadership.” On the other hand, while the “spirit of April Fifth” is significant for the Four Modernizations, they did not want another April Fifth Movement in the era of Deng.

Rereading the Tiananmen Poems from the Perspective of the New Official Discourse

⁸⁷CCP, *Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party since the Founding of the PRC*, p. 40.

Along with the rehabilitation of the April Fifth Movement and Deng's rise to power, the impact of the official discourse on the event was manifested in the popular conceptualization of the movement and reception of the Tiananmen Poems. First, in line with the new official discourse, the Chinese people were inclined to connect the April Fifth Movement with the Four Modernizations.⁸⁸ For example, in exploring the meaning of the event, one memorial essay suggests, "developing its revolutionary spirit is significant to speed up the pace of the Four Modernizations."⁸⁹ In commemorating the movement, Bing Xin emphasizes that it had "paved the way to the road of carrying out the Four Modernization."⁹⁰ Some people automatically recalled the April Fifth Movement when they commemorated the May Fourth Movement as a noted historian of the CCP's history, Li Xin, puts it, "the seed the April Fifth Movement ingrained in the Chinese people's hearts" was to "fight for the Four Modernizations."⁹¹

This tendency to connect the Four Modernizations with the April Fifth Movement was also manifested in the popular reception of the Tiananmen Poems.⁹² For instance, in reflecting the significance of the movement, one reader suggests that reading the

⁸⁸ Wang Shihua and Sun Congyuan, "Weida de siwu geming jingshen wansui: Jinian Tiananmen geming huodong sanzhounian [Long live the revolutionary spirit of the great April Fifth Movement]," *Anhui shifan* [Anhui normal school] 1 (1979): 9; Li Xin, "Cong wusi dao siwu [From May Fourth to April Fifth]," *Shehui kexue zhanxian* [Battle line of social sciences] 2 (1979): 20; Bing Xin, "Cong wusi dao siwu [From May Fourth to April Fifth]," *Wenyi yanjiu* [Studies of literature and art] 1 (1979): 26; Xie Zuo, "Yangmei jian chuqiao, rixie xie shipian [I drew my sword with head raised, writing poems with hot blood]," *Zhongshan daxue xuebao* [Journal of Zhongshan University], 1(1979): 4; Su Hongchang, "Renmin de xinsheng, lishi de fengbai: Lun Tiananmen geming shici de zhongda yiyi [The people's heartfelt wishes, the grand monument of history]," *Xian shifan* [Journal of Xian Normal School] 2 (1978): 12; Xie Mian, "Renmin de xinbei [The monument in the people's hearts]," *Beijing daxue xuebao* [Journal of Beijing University] 1 (1979): 30; Liu Qian and Ding Fangyun, "Xiwang zaiyu renmin [The hope is in the people]," *Beijing shifan daxue xuebao* [Journal of Beijing Normal University] 2(1979): 27-28; Liu Shaoben and Cao Guifang, "Shige changhe de julan: Du Tiananmen shichao [The great wave in the long river of poetry]," *Hebei shifan daxue xuebao* [Journal of Hebei Normal University] 1(1979): 4; Chen Zhiping, "Du Tiananmen shichao [Reading Transcriptions of Poems From Tiananmen]," *Huazhong shifan daxue xuebao* [Journal of Huazhong Normal University] 1(1979): 93; Wu Huanzhang, "Lun Tiananmen shige [On Tiananmen Poems]," *Fudan daxue xuebao* [Journal of Fudan University] 1 (1979): 14.

⁸⁹ Wang and Sun, "Weida de siwu geming jingshen wansui: Jinian Tiananmen geming huodong sanzhounian," 9.

⁹⁰ Bing Xin, "Cong wusi dao siwu," 26.

⁹¹ Li, "Cong wusi dao siwu," 20.

⁹² Xie, "Yangmei jian chuqiao, rixie xie shipian," 4; Su, "Renmin de xinsheng, lishi de fengbai," 12; Xie, "Renmin de xinbei," 30; Liu and Ding, "Xiwang zaiyu renmin," 27-28; Liu and Cao, "Shige changhe de julan," 4; Chen, "Du Tiananmen shichao," 93.

Tiananmen Poems “is still inspiring as marching forward to the truth, the science, and the Four Modernizations.”⁹³ To think about the Four Modernizations while reading the Tiananmen Poems that embodies the popular support of it seemed to be very normal response even without the impact of the official discourse. But, an interesting point in the popular reception and interpretation of the Tiananmen Poems does show the imperative influence of the official discourse on the movement. In line with Deng’s revolutionary discourse, for instance, many readers believed that the April Fifth Movement was an “intellectual liberation” leading to the principle of “Practice is the sole criterion for testing truth.” A reader likewise suggested that the mourners did use the spirit of “Practice is the sole criterion for testing truth” to oppose the Gang of Four.⁹⁴

Second, like the official discourse, the popular recollection of the April Fifth Movement and reception of the Tiananmen Poems were inclined to compare the movement with the May Fourth Movement.⁹⁵ In emphasizing the significance of the movement, most authors of memorial essays came to conceptualize the April Fifth Movement as the turning point to the new historical stage of the socialist revolution as compared to the May Fourth Movement as the turning point to the new-democratic revolution. In celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement, Li Xin remarks: “The May Fourth Movement had opened the new stage of democratic revolution

⁹³ Xie, “Yangmei jian chuqiao, rixie xie shipian,” 4

⁹⁴ Su, “Renmin de xinsheng, lishi de fengbai,” 12; Wu Huanzhang, “Lun Tiananmen shige,” 16.

⁹⁵ Fu Ying, “Qingchun de songge: Xiangei ‘Siwu’ yundong zhong de qingnian yingxiong [The carol of youth: To the young heroes in the April Fifth Movement],” *Anhui daxue xuebao* [Journal of Anhui University] 4(1978): 4; “Editorial: Fayang siwu jingshen, yingjie xin de zhuanbian [Developing the spirit of April Fifth, Welcoming the new transformation],” *Renmin jiaoyu* [People’s education] 12 (1978): 10; Li, “Cong wusi dao siwu,” 20; Bing Xin, “Cong wusi dao siwu,” 26; Su, “Renmin de xisheng, lishi de fangbai,” 7.

and resulted in the victory of the new-democratic revolution. The April Fifth Movement started and must lead to the new stage of the socialist revolution and construction.”⁹⁶

Likewise, the juxtaposition of the April Fifth Movement and the May Fourth Movement was reflected in the popular understanding of the socialist democracy and science. In memorial essays, the April Fifth Movement was largely considered as an intellectual liberation that inherited and developed the May Fourth Movement’s spirit of democracy and science. “While the May Fourth Movement was an intellectual movement that liberated the people’s mind from Confucianism,” as one author puts it, “the April Fifth Movement was also an intellectual movement that liberated the people from the Gang of Four.”⁹⁷ Moreover, inheriting the tradition of May Fourth, science and democracy, the April Fifth Movement precisely was a revolutionary movement that “paved the way to the victory of scientific Marxism and socialist democracy and legal system” in the new stage of the socialist revolution.⁹⁸ Another author specifies the meaning of scientific Marxism and socialist democracy by describing the Four Modernizations as “the science in the socialist revolution” and the protest against the Gang of Four as “the democracy in the socialist revolution.” In other words, as the author concludes, “the Tiananmen Incident itself displayed the Chinese people’s new demands for the science and democracy in the new historical stage.”⁹⁹ For the cause of the Four Modernizations, the CCP’s discourse on the April Fifth Movement after the downfall of the Gang of Four was manifested in the common conceptualization of the movement and the popular reception of the Tiananmen Poems in the early days of Deng’s era.

⁹⁶ Li, “Cong wusi dao siwu,” 20.

⁹⁷ Li, “Cong wusi dao siwu,” 19.

⁹⁸ Renmin de daonian lianhe bianjizu, “Preface,” *Renming de daonian*, p. iii.

⁹⁹ Xie, “Renmin de xinbei,” 30.

In Place of Conclusion: April Fifth as A Forgotten Revolutionary Tradition?

The popular and official use of the April Fifth Movement unexpectedly witnessed a sudden decrease, if not demise, after Deng's rise to power. While an exploration of this phenomenon deserves a separate study, for the purpose of this chapter, it will suffice to suggest certain clues evident in the official discourse on the movement after the Third Plenum.

According to a comprehensive survey of *People's Daily* from 1982 to the present, no editorial or review article has been printed to memorialize the April Fifth Movement, not to mention any news about the official-sponsored memorial ceremonies to be held. In retrospect, the last two official memorial essays on the movement already anticipated this result. One of them was the *People's Daily's* front-page article, "Developing the Revolutionary Spirit of Tiananmen," that was published on the third anniversary of the movement. As discussed above, the article goes extremely far to emphasize the importance of upholding the Four Cardinal Principles by developing the "spirit of April Fifth." More importantly, its conclusion implies the dissidents of the Democracy Wall Movement as "a tiny minority of the people" who used "the banner of inheriting the spirit of the April Fifth Movement to propagate disbelief in Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong Thought, the leadership of the CCP, the proletarian dictatorship, and socialism." Therefore, considering the relationship between the movement and Democracy Wall Movement and Deng's role in the two events, commemorating April Fifth probably represented a liability for Deng's leadership. Thus, this implicit admonition of the Democracy Wall Movement anticipated the official indifference to the April Fifth Movement afterwards.

The last official memorial essay on the movement is *People's Daily's* reprint of *China Youth Daily's* editorial, "Unite and Develop the Chinese Nation," on the fifth anniversary of the movement. As discussed above, in its conclusion, the essay differentiates "the spirit of the April Fifth Movement" and "the way of struggle of the April Fifth Movement." While the spirit of the movement was significant in realizing the Four Modernizations, the way of struggle of the movement was no longer encouraged in the new historical stage. For stability and unity of China, the CCP did not welcome another April Fifth Movement.

The tendency to underestimate the significance of the movement is reflected in the "Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party since the Founding of the PRC." Other than legitimizing Deng's leadership and political line by claiming that April Fifth constituted the mass basis of new Party rule after the Third Plenum, the resolution never uses such terms as "revolution" or "revolutionary" to describe the movement, which is different from the language appeared on the official news media before the Third Plenum. Given that the abrupt decrease of the official commemoration of the April Fifth Movement occurred precisely after the release of the "Resolution," it is safe to suggest that the political use of the movement was no longer necessary since the new leadership was consolidated. More importantly, the tendency of underestimation of the April Fifth Movement demonstrated the official effort to bury both the spirit and memory of the movement.

Official-Forced Oblivion and Unaccountability

This official silence on the April Fifth Movement was reflected in the participants' anxiety about the forced oblivion of the event. The official erasure of the movement has been an unacceptable injustice in the minds of participants, especially for those people

who had been named by the official authorities as the “April Fifth Heroes.” In recalling the movement on its thirtieth anniversary, Cao Zhijie, who posted the first lament on the relief of the May Fourth Movement of the Monument, once mentioned his experience of being forced to keep silent about the movement. In 1986, he was invited to attend an informal commemoration ceremony on the tenth anniversary of the movement, but he was ordered not to mention any terms like “April Fifth Movement” and “Tiananmen Incident,” and his speech notes had to be censored by party cadre. Moreover, while some foreign journalists intended to interview Cao, only the one from Hong Kong was allowed to do so the next day, and the report was never printed in the newspaper.¹⁰⁰ Thus, Cao was forced to remain silent on what he had experienced in the spring of 1976. In considering this official-forced unaccountability of the April Fifth Movement, another participant complained: “The April Fifth Movement was an epoch-marking turning point after the May Fourth Movement. But, for many years, its history was castrated and marginalized. Some people called this ‘freezing dead pig (dong sizhu),’ that is, putting it in the refrigerator, taking no notice of it, and pretending there is no such a thing.” In conclusion, he called attention to “rescuing this history [of April Fifth].”¹⁰¹ He was trying to say that we should save the past of April Fifth from oblivion. Those April Fifth veterans were to find opportunities to rescue that memory during and after the June Fourth Movement in 1989.

To sum up, the rise and fall of both the popular and official discourses on April Fifth before and after the rehabilitation of the movement evidently illustrated the politics of the conceptualization of the past. The making of the popular discourse on the movement was

¹⁰⁰ Cao, “Wo weishemo zouxiang Tiananmen guangchang,” in *Siwu yundong*, p. 257.

¹⁰¹ Sun Qingzhu, “Lishi de zhuanzhe: Jinian Siwu Yundong sanshi zhounian [The turning point of history: Commemorating the thirtieth anniversary of the April Fifth Movement],” in *Siwu yundong*, vol. 2, p. 45.

an outcome of a war over memory under the circumstances of the succession crisis in the late period of the Maoist era. During the April Fifth Movement, the mourners turned Tiananmen Square into a battleground to memorialize Zhou Enlai and to make protest against the Gang of Four by posting memorial poems and essays at the base of the Monument. As a result, they created a short-lived public sphere to express their criticism of the Gang of Four and disillusionment with Mao. Along with the power struggles and transitions within the CCP, the official discourse on the movement experienced several changes and amplifications. From a counterrevolutionary incident to a completely revolutionary action, the definition of the movement witnessed the intertwining of the succession politics and the making of official discourse in Mao's China and after, and demonstrates the invented nature of the conceptualization of the past. This process shows how the popular discourse of the Tiananmen Poems was sanctioned and used by the power holders to legitimize the CCP's political agendas, such as the Four Modernizations and the Four Cardinal Principles, in post-Mao China. This reveals the political power at work in the making of official discourse and the power of discourse making.

The Tiananmen Poems not only render Zhou's revolutionary career and the communist revolutionary tradition but also document the mourners' prospective vision for China. The mourning public displayed popular anxiety of succession crisis by showing their determination to serve as the revolutionary successors so as to carry on the Chinese revolution from generation to generation. This determination was reflected in their poetic manifestation of Zhou's revolutionary career and in their bodily practices such as swearing to the Monument and placing symbolic icon like revolutionary torch.

Behind their defiance to the Gang of Four, they projected a political vision for China in the language of national salvation based on the Four Modernizations as Zhou's legacy.

As a consequence, as the Tiananmen Poems have demonstrated, it was in those ways that an alternative popular discourse beyond the control of state power was created in Tiananmen Square and used by both the people and the PRC to claim their political demands. But, it would be an exaggeration to argue that the popular discourse was completely novel. As novel as their points of view may be, the Tiananmen Poems have illustrated how the popular discourse created during the April Fifth Movement had woven the language of Mao's revolutionary discourse and the anxiety about national salvation into their voice of protest. This political drama was to be reenacted in the making of popular discourse during the June Fourth Movement.

PART FOUR

I never knew that before the Cultural Revolution came May Fourth.
I never knew that after the Cultural Revolution would come April Fifth.
I never knew that there is today [June Fourth] before tomorrow.
I never knew that there would be a tomorrow when today [June Fourth] is over.¹
—Ji Nan, “I Never Knew” (22 May 1989)

Published in *News Herald* (*Xinwen daobao*), an underground newspaper created by the student demonstrators during the Tiananmen Square protest of 1989, or the June Fourth Movement as it later became known, “I Never Knew” constitutes a poetic manifestation of how the grassroots activists and their supporters conceptualized the prodemocracy movement by recalling the communist revolutionary tradition of the April Fifth and May Fourth Movements as well as the traumatic past of the Cultural Revolution at Tiananmen Square. A comprehensive study of the official and popular discourses manifested during the “Beijing Spring” in 1989 shows how the Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition as well as the traumatic reminiscence of the Cultural Revolution constituted a shared moral repertoire for both the official authorities and prodemocracy advocates to manipulate in order to justify their different visions of Chinese modernity. Yet, playing the same melody of the communist revolutionary and traumatic memory does not necessarily lead to all the same conceptualization of the shared past. Conversely, state agency and grassroots activists tended to term their revolutionary past and trauma in a different way. It is the aim of Chapters Seven and Eight to explore how the major tune of Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition was performed variously by diverse social groups at Tiananmen

¹ Ji Nan, “Wo bu zhidao [I Never Knew],” *News Herald* 5 (May 1989): 4; Han Minzhu, ed., *Cries for Democracy: Writings and Speeches from the 1989 Chinese Democracy Movement* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 321.

Square during the June Fourth Movement from the perspectives of memory studies and political culture.

To examine the June Fourth Movement with the approach of memory studies can provide productive insights in many ways. First of all, whereas previous scholarship has been inclined to look into the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989 and the PRC government's crisis management from the perspective of a reformer-conservative factional struggle within the CCP, this chapter provides an alternative to show how the fierce conflict between the dissident protesters and the official authorities was actually a political manifestation of elder revolutionary cadres' traumatic memory of the Cultural Revolution at work in the reform era.² Given the traumatic experience during the ten-year turmoil, old revolutionary cadres, such as Deng Xiaoping, Peng Zhen, Chen Yun, Li Xiannian, and Bo Yibo, who assumed liberal positions toward the April Fifth Movement against the Gang of Four and who played critical roles in the rehabilitation of the incident, had turned into the hardliners against the prodemocracy protests in the spring of 1989. The direct consequence was the official definition of the student movement as "turmoil (*dongluan*)" like the Cultural Revolution as manifested in the April 26 editorial of *People's Daily*. As Chapter Seven will explore, the juxtaposition of the student movement and the Cultural Revolution was more than simply a rhetorical strategy to defame the prodemocracy movement, it was an expression of elder revolutionary cadres' profound anxiety over the possible resurgence of the ten-year turmoil. Along with the vilification of the student movement as turmoil like the Cultural Revolution, the

² Andrew J. Nathan, *China's Crisis: Dilemmas of Reform and Prospects for Democracy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990); Cheng Chu-yuan, *Behind the Tiananmen Massacre* (Boulder: Westview, Press, 1990); Lowell Dittmer, "Patterns of Elite Strife and Succession in Chinese Politics," *China Quarterly* 123 (September 1990): 405-430; Lowell Dittmer, "China in 1989: The Crisis of Incomplete Reform," *Asian Survey* 30 (January 1990): 25-41.

hardliners employed Deng Xiaoping's revolutionary discourse on the indispensability of stability and unity in the drive for the Four Modernizations. The trauma of the Cultural Revolution constituted a significant element in the official suppression of the June Fourth Movement.

Nevertheless, during the June Fourth Movement, using the Cultural Revolution as a rhetorical label to underscore the necessity of stability and unity was not the sole privilege of state authorities. Given the ideological baptism of official propaganda, young students were good at using the same official script to undermine the validity of the hardliners' political discourse. In other words, the war of words between the prodemocracy protesters and the official authorities in the spring of 1989 shared common language to serve their different political demands.

Second, from the perspective of memory studies, Chapter Eight will contribute to the previous scholarship on the influence of the Chinese traditional and modern political culture on the June Fourth Movement.³ Whereas scholars have revealed the lasting constraint of the intelligentsia tradition of remonstrance and mentality of loyalty to the ruling regime in their studies of the June Fourth Movement, Chapter Eight will show that, given the ideological and historical education under the PRC, the younger generations of the June Fourth Movement tended to incorporate the CCP's official script, such as the rhetoric of national salvation and Mao's revolutionary discourse on the Chinese revolution, into their protest literature and bodily practices.⁴ While previous scholarship

³ Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom and Elizabeth J. Perry, ed., *Popular Protest and Political Culture in Modern China*, 2nd Edition (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994) and Peter Li, Marjorie H. Li, and Steven Mark, ed., *Culture and Politics in China: An Anatomy of Tiananmen Square* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1991); Also Craig J. Calhoun, *Neither Gods nor Emperors: Student and the Struggle for Democracy in China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

⁴ Lucian W. Pye, "Tiananmen and Chinese Political Culture: The Escalation of Confrontation from Moralizing to Revenge," *Asian Survey* 30:4 (April 1990): 331-347; Andrew J. Nathan, "Chinese Democracy in 1980: Continuity and

has disclosed the relationship between the May Fourth and June Fourth Movements in terms of cultural repertoire, ritual symbolism, and identity politics⁵, Chapter Eight will explain how the prodemocracy protesters of 1989 not only usurped the official discourse on the May Fourth Movement and identified themselves with the May Fourth forerunners, but also tended to replay the old tune of revolutionary memory of the April Fifth Movement in the popular discourse at the “political theater” they created to challenge the authority of the ruling elites.⁶ This will demonstrate that the prodemocracy protesters not only reenacted the practice of mourning the deceased Zhou Enlai in the commemoration of Hu Yaobang, but also were inclined to manipulate the revolutionary tradition of the April Fifth Movement in 1976 in order to undermine the legitimacy of state suppression of the student movement and to mobilize broader public support.

Third, while past scholarship shows the tendency to emphasize the cultural, ritual, and symbolic dimensions of the student demonstrations, Chapter Eight will expound how Tiananmen Square itself constituted the spatial and physical foundation of the June Fourth Movement in which student protesters were allowed to manipulate the communist revolutionary heritage and traumatic past in the language of national salvation. Moreover,

Change,” *Problems of Communism* 38:5 (1989): 16-29; Elizabeth J. Perry and Ellen V. Fuller, “China’s Long March to Democracy,” *World Policy Journal* 8 (Fall 1991): 663-685; Jane Macartney, “The Students: Heroes, Pawns or Power-Brokers?” in George Hicks, ed., *The Broken Mirror: China after Tiananmen* (London: Longman Current Affair, 1990); Chung-fang Yang, “Conformity and Defiance on Tiananmen Square: A Social Psychological Perspective,” in *Culture and Politics in China*, pp. 197-224.

⁵ Craig Calhoun, “Science, Democracy, and the Politics of Identity,” in *Popular Protest and Political Culture*, pp. 93-124; Vera Schwarcz, “Memory and Commemoration: The Chinese Search for a Livable Past,” in *Popular Protest and Political Culture*, pp. 170-183; Joseph W. Esherick and Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, “Acting Out Democracy: Political Theatre in Modern China,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 49:4 (1990): 835-865; Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, “Student Protests and the Chinese Tradition,” in Tony Saich, ed., *The Chinese People’s Movement: Perspectives on Spring 1989* (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 1990), pp. 3-24; Rubie S. Watson, “Making Secret Histories: Memory and Mourning in Post-Mao China,” in Rubie S. Watson, ed., *Memory, History, and Opposition under State Socialism* (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 1994), pp. 65-85; Xiaomei Chen, “Performing Tiananmen: From Street Theater to Theater of the Street,” *Acting the Right Part: Political Theater and Popular Drama in Contemporary China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2002), pp. 195-233.

⁶ Borrowing from Esherick and Wasserstrom, the term “political theater” here means a political space created by the grassroots force to subvert the authority of ruling elites by usurping official rituals and scripts and creating the popular discourse; see Esherick and Wasserstrom, “Acting Out Democracy,” 845.

a careful examination of the popular and official discourses produced during the June Fourth Movement allows us to look into how the elder and younger generations conceptualized the significance of Tiananmen Square when a fierce contest between state power and prodemocracy activists occurred inside, and outside, the symbolic center of the PRC. On the one side, the authorities defined and monopolized Tiananmen Square as the “face” of the PRC and the sacred site of the Chinese revolution. On the other side, the dissident protesters had conceptualized the place as the battlefield of national salvation and deliberately came to occupy and convert it into the symbol of the Chinese democratic movement. In the grassroots conceptualization of Tiananmen Square in the spring of 1989, many protesters even went so far as to imagine what they had created at Tiananmen Square was a small “Republic (*gongheguo*).” As revealed by the autobiographical writings of the student leaders of the June Fourth Movement, the prodemocracy protesters had imagined that a Republic, or a public sphere, beyond the state tutelage that had been established at Tiananmen Square.

Can this small Republic created at Tiananmen Square be considered as a genuine civil society or public sphere as previous scholarship has debated? While some scholars attribute the rise of the June Fourth Movement to the emergence of Chinese civil society, as an unexpected outcome of economic reform, others suggest that the scale and mode of the movement was a political manifestation of the absence of civil society in China.⁷ This dissertation argues that, from a short-term perspective, what had appeared in the June

⁷ David Strand, “Protest in Beijing: Civil Society and Public Sphere in China,” *Problems of Communism* 39: 3(1990): 1-19; Lawrence R. Sullivan, “The Emergence of Civil Society in China, Spring 1989,” in *The Chinese People’s Movement*, pp. 126-144; Andrew J. Nathan, “Chinese Democracy in 1980: Continuity and Change,” *Problems of Communism* 38:5 (1989): 16-29; John Burns, “China’s Governance: Turbulent Environment,” *China Quarterly* 119 (1989): 481-518; Richard Madsen, “The Public Sphere, Civil Society and Moral Community: A Research Agenda for Contemporary China Studies,” *Modern China* 19:2 (April 1993): 183-198; Frederic Wakeman, Jr., “The Civil Society and Public Sphere Debate: Western Reflections on Chinese Political Culture,” *Modern China* 19:2 (April 1993): 108-138; Zhou Xueguang, “Unorganized Interests and Collective action in Communist China,” *American Sociological Review* 58 (1993): 54-73.

Fourth Movement at Tiananmen Square can be considered as a short-lived public sphere away from the control of the state disciplinary power. As a consequence, the nature and scale of this short-lived public sphere was much more advanced and extensive than the one created during the April Fifth Movement.

Chapter Seven
Recalling Traumatic Past around Tiananmen Square:
The Four Cardinal Principles, the Cultural Revolution, and the June Fourth Movement

Setting the Tune: Stability and Unity, Four Modernizations, and Four Cardinal Principles

In the first decade of Deng Xiaoping's reform era, the supreme goal of the PRC was to carry out the Four Modernizations under the situation of political stability and unity (*anding yu tuanjie*). Since the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee in December 1978, the CCP shifted its party line to the Four Modernizations. To reach the ultimate goal of the Four Modernizations, the consolidation of political stability and unity, in Deng Xiaoping's words, "is both a prerequisite and guarantee."¹ This emphasis on the indispensability of stability and unity constituted the most prominent feature of Deng's revolutionary discourse in the reform era.

In Deng Xiaoping's view, the consolidation of stability and unity required the PRC to uphold the Four Cardinal Principles. Deng once proclaimed: "To carry out China's Four Modernizations, we must uphold the Four Cardinal Principles ideologically and politically. This is the basic prerequisite for achieving modernization."² Deviation from the Four Cardinal Principles would lead to "the complete disruption of political stability and unity" and "the total failure of our modernization program." In that case, as Deng anticipated, "China will once again be plunged into chaos, division, retrogression and darkness, and the Chinese people will be deprived of all hope."³ In Deng's view,

¹ Deng Xiaoping, "Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles," in *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping, 1975-1982* (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1984), pp. 166, 167.

² Deng, "Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles," p. 172.

³ Deng, "Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles," p. 184.

upholding the Four Cardinal Principles was the only way for China to guarantee stability and unity in order to guarantee the success of China's modernization.

More importantly for the purpose of this dissertation, the rhetoric of national salvation was written into Deng Xiaoping's discourse on the Four Cardinal Principles. The first of the Four Cardinal Principles is that the Chinese communist regime must "keep to the socialist road." Why? Deng Xiaoping claims: "The historical conclusion that the Chinese people have drawn from their own experience in the sixty years since the May Fourth Movement is that only socialism can save China."⁴ To legitimize socialist rule in China, like Mao, Deng wove the national salvation rhetoric into his discourse on the Four Cardinal Principles.

Second, the Chinese communist regime must "uphold the dictatorship of the proletariat," which means "socialist democracy for the people, democracy enjoyed by the workers, peasants, intellectuals and working people." Without this "socialist democracy," Deng argues, "there can be no socialism and no socialist modernization."⁵ Nevertheless, Deng never defined democracy in the terms in which it is generally understood in the west. As a "special form of class struggle," in Deng's words, "it is necessary to put into effect dictatorship over all anti-socialist elements, and socialist democracy is impossible without it."⁶ Thus the real purpose of upholding the dictatorship of the proletariat is to fight against the "anti-socialist elements" in order for the PRC to assure political stability and unity for the progress of socialist modernization. This special sense of socialist democracy partly constituted the ideological clash between the prodemocracy protesters and official authorities during the June Fourth Movement, as we shall see later.

⁴ Deng, "Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles," p. 174.

⁵ Deng, "Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles," p. 176.

⁶ Deng, "Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles," p. 177.

Third, the Chinese nation must “uphold the leadership of the Communist Party.” “Without the Chinese Communist Party,” as always reiterated in the official propaganda before and after the founding of the PRC, “there would be no socialist new China.” “Without the leadership of a Communist Party,” as Deng asserted, “the socialist revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat, and socialist construction would all be impossible.”⁷ Without the CCP’s leadership, in Deng’s words, “the Four Modernizations will vanish into thin air.”⁸

Fourth, the Chinese communist regime must “uphold Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought.” Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought were the keys to the success of the Chinese new-democratic revolution and will be always the keys to the success of socialist modernization. As the crystallization of successful integration of the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism with the practice of the Chinese Revolution, Mao Zedong Thought “is and always will be the banner of China’s socialist cause.” In order to achieve the Four Modernizations, in Deng’s words, “we will always hold the banner of Mao Zedong Thought high.”⁹ In Deng’s final analysis, in order to maintain stability and unity for the cause of the Four Modernizations, the PRC must “keep to the socialist road, uphold the dictatorship of the proletariat, uphold the leadership of the Communist Party, and uphold Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought.”¹⁰

More importantly, Deng Xiaoping’s master discourse on the indispensability of stability and unity in the drive for the Four Modernizations is characterized by its manipulation of the traumatic past of the Cultural Revolution. As Ernest Young has

⁷ Deng, “Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles,” p. 177.

⁸ Deng, “Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles,” p. 179.

⁹ Deng, “Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles,” pp. 179, 180.

¹⁰ For Deng Xiaoping’s political discourse on the Four Cardinal Principles and Four Modernizations, see Peter Nansong Lee, “Deng Xiaoping and 1989 Tiananmen Square Incident,” in *Culture and Politics in China*, pp. 173-196.

shown, the traumatic past of the Cultural Revolution was conceptualized as an “ancien régime” to symbolize the chaotic and backward China that could only be saved by the reform of the Four Modernizations.¹¹ This discursive feature is evident in Deng’s discourse on upholding the Four Cardinal Principles. In reiterating the importance of stability and unity in the success of China’s modernization, Deng often represented the Cultural Revolution as the turbulent decade of “trouble-making” and “factionalism and anarchism” created by the Gang of Four’s “feudal fascist dictatorship” and “mental shackles.” In order to avoid the revival of the ten-year turmoil, it was necessary for China to shift to the trajectory of the Four Modernizations by upholding the Four Cardinal Principles.¹² In Deng’s reform discourse, the Cultural Revolution is a traumatic past that needs to be redressed and a chaotic turmoil that cannot reappear in China.

Deng Xiaoping’s discourse on stability and unity and the atrocity of the Cultural Revolution was written into an official document of the CCP, “Resolution on Certain Question in the History of Our Party since the Founding of the PRC,” which was adopted at the Sixth Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee on 29 June 29 1981. As discussed in Chapter Six, the “Resolution” was produced to validate Deng’s political line and leadership by emphasizing the incorrect line taken during the Cultural Revolution. This chapter will show that this discursive feature of Deng’s discourse was not only a rhetorical device to rationalize the indispensability of stability and unity but also a manifestation of elder revolutionary cadres’ profound traumatic memory of the Cultural Revolution. This deep anxiety over the resurgence of the ten-year turmoil was evident in

¹¹ Ernest P. Young, “Imagining the Ancien Régime in the Deng Era,” in *Popular Protest and Political Culture in Modern China*, pp. 18-31.

¹² Deng, “Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles,” pp. 167, 170, 173.

the process of pacifying the prodemocracy movement in the spring of 1989 and was written into the official discourse on the June Fourth Movement.

The Tune of Stability and Unity and the April 26 Editorial: June Fourth as Turmoil (Donghuan)

Following the steps of their predecessors in the April Fifth Movement, the student demonstrators of the June Fourth Movement initiated their protests against state authorities with the mourning activities for the former liberal-minded General Secretary Hu Yaobang. Upon learning of Hu's death on 15 April 1989, Beijing college students launched marches to the base of the Monument to the People's Heroes at Tiananmen Square to mourn the former General Secretary, who was purged from his position because of his soft line on the student demonstrations in 1986.¹³ As a consequence, just as in the spring of 1976, white wreaths and huge pictures of Hu were placed around the Monument. The "face" of the "Soul of China (*Zhongguo hun*)" was installed at Tiananmen Square to "face" the "face" of Mao Zedong on Tiananmen.¹⁴ As the mourning activities continued, on April 18, the student leaders emerged to demand a dialogue with state leaders on the basis of the petition of seven demands. In the petition, they call for the CCP to reevaluate Hu Yaobang's political career and achievements and the anti-spiritual and anti-bourgeois campaigns. They also urged the PRC to deal with such issues as official corruption and profiteering, press freedom, and education policy.¹⁵ In order to present the petition to the party and state authorities, on April 20, the student protesters began a sit-in demonstration under the national emblem hung on the Gate of New China (Xinhuaamen), the entrance of the headquarters where the CCP Central Committee and the

¹³ Basically, one can read the purge of Hu Yaobang as the victim of Deng Xiaoping's master discourse of the Four Cardinal Principles.

¹⁴ The phrase of the "Soul of China" (*Zhongguo zhi hun*) was inscribed on pictures of Hu Yaobang placed on the Monument to the People's Heroes by students at Tiananmen Square.

¹⁵ For a full text of the petition, see Suzanne Ogden, *et al.*, *China's Search for Democracy: The Student and the Mass Movement of 1989* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 1992), p. 91.

PRC State Council are located. Eventually, the demonstration ended with a brutal suppression by military policemen. On the night of next day, in order to participate in the official memorial ceremony of Hu Yaobang, more and more students marched to and occupied Tiananmen Square. On April 22, when the official memorial ceremony for Hu was held inside the Great Hall of the People, three students suddenly knelt on the steps outside the building under the national emblem with hands holding up the petition to be presented to the Premier Li Peng. Encountering state leaders' indifferent response, students at Tiananmen Square became furious and ready to turn the grief to the strength of pushing forward a democratic reform.

The elder revolutionaries of the CCP and the members of the Standing Committee of Politburo became angry as well. They came to define the student protests as political turmoil that would undermine national stability and unity as well as the prospect of the Four Modernizations. This verdict was relayed on the television that night and published in *People's Daily* as a front-page editorial the next day. Again, as happened during the April Fifth Movement, it was this official April 26 editorial and its vilification of the student movement as political "turmoil" that further infuriated the student protesters, liberal intellectuals, and Beijing residents. As a consequence, the scale of the movement escalated. The frustrated students started to make such demands as democratic reform, human rights protection, and freedom of speech and press by circulating posters and handbills along with bodily practices such as public speeches, sit-in demonstrations, protest marches, and even hunger strikes. In an endeavor to pacify the student movement, the Politburo Standing Committee of the CCP and the State Council of the PRC decided to resort to martial law on May 20 and brought in the PLA to clear Tiananmen Square in

the early hours of June Fourth. The severe clash between the student protesters and the official authorities during the June Fourth Movement was largely a conflict between the subversive demand of democratic reform and the official position on the necessity of political stability and unity. This was manifested in official authorities' decision-making on the measures taken to deal with the crisis and in the official discourse on the student movement.

With an attempt to alleviate the social unrest after the death of Hu Yaobang, at a meeting held at Deng Xiaoping's residence on April 25, the Standing Committee of Politburo decided to define the student protests as "turmoil." Li Peng reported to Deng that the nature of the posters and slogans that students used in their demonstrations were "anti-Party and anti-socialist." They suggested that the "spear" of the student movement had "pointed directly at you [Deng] and the other proletarian revolutionaries of elder generation."¹⁶ By defining the posters and slogans as "anti-Party and anti-socialist," Li was saying that the movement had broken the tenets of the Four Cardinal Principles. Li's statement was followed by brief reports on the subversive nature of the student movement made by Chen Xitong, the secretary of the Beijing Party Committee, and Li Ximing, the mayor of Beijing. Then, Li Peng continued to argue that the students' rebellious practices "seriously harm social stability and unity," and, for that reason, the members on the Standing Committee of the Politburo "all believe that this is turmoil and that we must rely on law to bring a halt to it as soon as possible."¹⁷ Likewise, in expressing his support to Li Peng's position, Yao Yilin emphasized that the nature of the

¹⁶ Andrew J. Nathan and Perry Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers: The Chinese Leadership's Decision to Use Force Against Their Own People—In Their Own Words*, Zhang Liang, comp. (New York: PublicAffairs, 2001), p. 71.

¹⁷ Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 72.

movement had changed from “a natural expression of grief” into “social turmoil.” Finally, Deng concluded:

I completely agree with the Standing Committee’s decision. This is no ordinary student movement. The students have been raising a ruckus for ten days now, and we’ve been tolerant and restrained. But things haven’t gone our way. A tiny minority is exploiting the students; they want to confuse the people and throw the country into chaos. This is a well-planned plot whose real aim is to reject the Chinese Communist Party and the socialist system at the most fundamental level. We must explain to the whole Party and nation that we are facing a most serious political struggle. We’ve got to be explicit and clear in opposing this turmoil.¹⁸

It seemed that history had repeated itself. Like Mao’s definition of the April Fifth Movement as a reactionary rebellion initiated by a small handful of people with ulterior motives, Deng without hesitation showed his support to the Politburo’s decision by arguing that “a tiny minority” was using the student movement to “throw the country into chaos” by carrying out a “well-planned plot” aimed to “reject the Chinese Communist Party and the socialist system.” The general spirit of Deng’s remark was translated into a *People’s Daily*’s editorial on April 26 (the April 26 editorial) and his final resolution—“We’ve got to be explicit and clear in opposing this turmoil”—became the editorial’s title.

The April 26 editorial was first broadcast on the major television news programs the night of April 25 and then published on the front page of *People’s Daily* next day. Written in the language of the official discourse on stability and unity and the Four Modernizations, the editorial concisely defines the nature of the student movement in accordance with Deng Xiaoping’s remark. At the very beginning of the editorial, in an attempt to distinguish the mourning activities for Hu Yaobang from the subsequent student movement, the authorities suggest that the Chinese people from all walks of life had “expressed their determination to turn grief into strength to make contribution in realizing the Four Modernizations and invigorating the Chinese nation.” This deliberate

¹⁸ Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 73.

distinction between the popular mourning activities and the student protests probably was the effect of taking the lesson from the April Fifth Movement in which the Gang of Four's harsh suppression of the mourning activities for Zhou Enlai resulted in an unintended popular resentment. It is this distinction that leads the editorial to recognize the positive significance of the popular commemoration of Hu Yaobang by claiming that the mourners had "expressed their determination to turn grief into strength to make contribution in realizing the Four Modernizations and invigorating the Chinese nation."¹⁹ In this way, the editorial on the one hand intends to distract public attention from the student movement to the cause of the Four Modernizations, and, on the other hand, explains why the state had "adopted an attitude of tolerance and restraint" toward the mourning activities.

Then, the editorial moves to define the student movement since the official memorial ceremony for Hu Yaobang as "turmoil" by stressing that the "abnormal phenomena" occurring in the popular demonstrations were the outcome of "an extremely small number of people's ulterior purposes." The editorial condemns that those people with "ulterior motives" used the mourning activities as an excuse to attack the CCP and state leaders and even "instigated the masses to break into Xinhua Gate at Zhongnanhai." Some of them, according to the editorial, even went so far as to commit rebellious crimes of "beating, smashing, looting, and burning," which are synonymous with social turmoil defined by the PRC.²⁰ Especially, as the editorial emphasizes, after the official memorial ceremony for Hu, those people with "ulterior motives" continued to "take advantage of the young students' feeling of grief" to call for "opposition to the leadership by the CCP

¹⁹ "It Is Necessary to Take a Clear-Cut Stand against Turmoil," in *China's Search for Democracy*, p. 116.

²⁰ "It Is Necessary to Take a Clear-Cut Stand against Turmoil," p. 116.

and the socialist system” and their purposes were to “sow dissension among the people, plunge the whole country into chaos, and sabotage the political situation of stability and unity.”²¹ “This is a planned conspiracy,” as the editorial defines in Deng’s language, “and a turmoil” that aimed to “negate the leadership of the CCP and the socialist system.”²²

After defining the nature of the student movement, the editorial continues to sketch the catastrophic outcome which would ensue should the turmoil go unchecked; it requires the people to “be explicit and clear opposing the turmoil.” Once the turmoil escalated into “a seriously chaotic state,” as the editorial claims, the bright future of the reform and the revitalization of China based on the program of the Four Modernizations would “become empty hopes.” “A China with very good prospects and very bright future,” as a result, “will become a chaotic and unstable China without any future.” In order to preserve the “hard-earned situation of political stability and unity” and to carry out the “program of the Four Modernizations,” the whole party and the people nationwide should “unite to take a clear-cut stand to oppose the turmoil” and “struggle to firmly and quickly stop the turmoil.”²³

The same language was further manifested in the Party’s formal report in the wake of the military cleanup of Tiananmen Square. “During late spring and early summer, namely, from mid-April to early June, of 1989,” as described in Chen Xitong’s report to the Standing Committee of the Eighth Plenum of the Seventh National People’s Congress on June 30, “a tiny handful of people exploited student unrest to launch a planned, organized, and premeditated political turmoil, which later developed into a counter-revolutionary

²¹ “It Is Necessary to Take a Clear-Cut Stand against Turmoil,” pp. 116, 117.

²² “It Is Necessary to Take a Clear-Cut Stand against Turmoil,” p. 117.

²³ “It Is Necessary to Take a Clear-Cut Stand against Turmoil,” pp. 117, 118.

rebellion in Beijing, the capital.”²⁴ In accordance with the language of Deng Xiaoping’s remark, the report defines that the subversive rebellion was to “negate the Communist Party leadership and the socialist system.”²⁵ In the CCP’s final analysis, more than simply a political turmoil, the June Fourth Movement was a counterrevolutionary rebellion.

Rhetoric of Stability and Unity: Martial Law and Military Cleanup of Tiananmen Square
Stability and unity must take precedence over everything in realizing the Four Modernizations. The first prominent feature of the April 26 editorial is its emphasis on how the social turmoil after the death of Hu Yaobang had threatened the political stability and unity of China. This tune of stability and unity was to be frequently played in the PRC’s crisis management of the June Fourth Movement. When Li Peng asked Yuan Mu, then the State Council’s spokesman, to draft another *People’s Daily* editorial to amplify the government’s position toward the student movement on April 27, he emphasized that “the main point of the editorial should be stability.” “The overriding issue right now,” as Li reiterated, “is to preserve social stability.”²⁶ The same point was highlighted by Yuan Mu in his “dialogue” with the representatives of the official student unions on April 29.²⁷ Likewise, at the Politburo Standing Committee meeting on May 1, as a response to the students’ demand for democratic reform, Li Peng argued, “our first order of business

²⁴ Chen Xitong, “Report to the National People’s Congress,” in Yi Mu and Mark V. Thompson, ed., *Crisis at Tiananmen: Reform and Reality in Modern China* (San Francisco: China Books & Periodicals, Inc., 1989), p. 195.

²⁵ Chen, “Report to the National People’s Congress,” p. 200.

²⁶ Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 83.

²⁷ “Yuan Mu and Others Hold Dialogue with Students,” in Michael Oksenberg and Marc Iamberg, ed., *Beijing Spring, 1989: Confrontations and Conflicts, the Basic Documents* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1990), pp. 218-244. Yuan’s frequent stress on the importance of stability and unity left deep impression in the hearts of the protesting students. In his autobiographic writing, Li Lu, one of the student leaders, records: “Throughout the uneven dialogue, Yuan Mu insisted that... student should not threaten the stability of the country. Stability was most important.” Li Lu, *Moving the Mountain* (London: Macmillan, 1990), p. 123.

should be stability. Once that is achieved, we can talk about reforming the political system.”²⁸ For the hardliners, stability and unity took priority over everything.

This emphasis on political stability and unity continued to wield substantial impact on the CCP’s decision to impose martial law in Beijing. In his talk at the enlarged meeting attended by all top Party, government, and military leaders on May 19, in order to legitimize the necessity of imposing martial law to calm the turmoil in the capital, Li Peng emphasized the need to “take resolute and powerful measures so as to ensure the smooth progress of the reform, the open policy and socialist modernization.”²⁹ Otherwise, should the chaotic state in Beijing have escalated into a nationwide turmoil, China’s “reform, open policy and the Four Modernizations [will be] at stake.”³⁰ In order to safeguard the country’s stability and unity, Li Peng asserted that it was necessary to “adhere to the Four Cardinal Principles” in order for China to “advance the cause of socialist modernization.” In Li’s concern, enforcing martial law and upholding the Four Cardinal Principles constituted the “resolute and powerful measures” to restore political stability and unity for the cause of the Four Modernizations.³¹ This view was echoed by Chen Yun’s speech to the Standing Committee of Central Advisory Commission on May 26. In order to rationalize the necessity of enforcing martial law, Chen Yun argues: “Facts once again tell us that, to safeguard the stability and unity in society and guarantee smooth sailing for the drive for socialist modernization, it is imperative to firmly adhere to the Four Cardinal Principles.”³²

²⁸ Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 107.

²⁹ Li Peng, “The Capital Is in Anarchy,” in *Crisis at Tiananmen*, p. 177.

³⁰ Li, “The Capital Is in Anarchy,” p. 178.

³¹ “Li Peng Delivers Important Speech on Behalf of Party Central Committee and State Council,” in *Beijing Spring*, p. 313.

³² Chen Yun, “Speech to the CPC Central Advisory Commission Standing Committee,” in *Beijing Spring*, p. 332.

This anxiety over recovering political stability and unity largely led to the CCP's final resolution to terminate the student movement by cleaning Tiananmen Square with military force. At the meeting with the Politburo Standing Committee and several elder revolutionary cadres on June 2, in order to justify the use of the PLA to resume the control of Tiananmen Square and to put down the student movement, Deng resolutely asserted: "Stability must take precedence over everything."³³ His assertion was supported by other elder revolutionaries like Peng Zhen. In considering the harmful consequence caused by the student movement, as a victim of the Cultural Revolution, Peng Zhen said: "This [...] turmoil lets us see how important stability is. Stability is the crucial issue if China's going to shake off poverty and get to the Four Modernizations."³⁴ The anxiety of maintaining stability and unity in the drive for the Four Modernizations required the hardliners to take up the "resolute and powerful measures" to stop the turmoil as an outcome of the student movement.

The same language of stability and unity was translated into the official reports on the June Fourth Movement. On May 19, in his report on the social chaos in Beijing since mid-April, Li Ximing emphasizes the subversive influence of the student movement by claiming that "the movement has not only undermined the political, economic, and social order of the capital, but also undermined political stability and unity in the nation." Therefore, as the report concludes, the whole Party and the people nationwide must "unite to preserve stability and unity in the capital and throughout the country" in order to "promote reform and the Four Modernizations."³⁵ Likewise, in his formal report, Chen

³³ Beijing Municipal Party Committee and Beijing People's Government, "On the True Nature of the Turmoil," in Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 360.

³⁴ "On the True Nature of the Turmoil," p. 358.

³⁵ Li Ximing, "Report of the Situation of the Student Movement in Beijing," in *Beijing Spring*, p. 307.

Xitong explains that, in order to “safeguard the social stability in the city of Beijing,” it was a “resolute and correct decision” for the government to declare martial law and use military force to pacify the student movement at Tiananmen Square.³⁶ Chen’s report attempts to rationalize that, for the supreme cause of maintaining national stability and unity in the drive for the Four Modernizations, the PRC had no alternative but to use force to resolve the social turmoil in the spring of 1989.

The Traumatic Past of the Cultural Revolution: June Fourth as a Second Cultural Revolution

Behind the official emphasis on the indispensability of stability and unity in China lay the elder revolutionary cadres’ anxiety over the resurgence of the Cultural Revolution. The second feature of the April 26 editorial is its explicit association of the student demonstrations with the anarchy in the turbulent decade of the Cultural Revolution by portraying it as political turmoil (*dongluan*). In the political vocabulary of communist China, the term *dongluan* has become a code word for the upheavals of the Cultural Revolution and has been enshrined as pejorative description for anything that threatens national stability and unity.³⁷ Thus, the official definition of the student movement as *dongluan* was meant to manipulate the critical memories of “turmoil” of the Cultural Revolution. In this way, the authorities intended to “link the present generation of student protesters to the Red Guards of the late 1960s” and to represent “the Democracy Uprising as nothing but a new form of Red Guardism.” More importantly, since “memories of the violence of the Cultural Revolution continue to haunt many Chinese of all classes,” the official propaganda on the chaotic student movement would have “alienated a great deal

³⁶ Chen Xitong, “Report to the National People’s Congress,” in *Crisis at Tiananmen*, p. 217.

³⁷ Wasserstrom “History, Myth, and the Tales of Tiananmen,” pp. 288-289; Wasserstrom, “Student Protests and the Chinese Tradition,” pp. 10-12.

of popular support from the students.”³⁸ It has been conceived by previous scholarship that portraying the student movement as turmoil was the CCP’s rhetorical strategy to discourage the popular support for the prodemocracy movement by using the traumatic past of the Cultural Revolution. Yet, as this chapter demonstrates, more than simply a rhetorical technique, the vilification of the student movement as *dongluan* like the Cultural Revolution actually revealed elder revolutionary cadres’ deep anxiety over the revival of the ten-year turmoil.

This deep-rooted anxiety over the resurgence of the Cultural Revolution was evident in the elder revolutionaries’ conceptualization of the student movement in the spring of 1989. As early as on April 20, in seeing the social disturbances resulted from the student protests, Peng Zhen, who was imprisoned and tortured as a member of an “anti-Party clique” during the turbulent decade from 1966 to 1976, expressed his urgent concern to Chen Xitong by claiming: “With Beijing in chaos like this we’ve got to guard against a ‘Second Cultural Revolution.’”³⁹ Given the profound unease over the revival of a “Second Cultural Revolution,” some elder revolutionaries appeared eager to ask that something resolute and powerful to be done to prevent the escalation of the student movement. At a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Politburo on May 1, Bo Yibo, who was sent to the countryside to learn from the peasants during the ten-year turmoil, spoke of the student movement in a resolute tone: “We absolutely have to stop the student movement from getting any bigger! Students are networking all over the country.

³⁸ Wasserstrom, “Student Protests and the Chinese Tradition,” p. 11.

³⁹ Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 46. Likewise, in his telephone call to Deng Xiaoping, Wang Zhen, another victim in the ten-year turmoil, condemned that the students were “in rebellion” and called for helpful measures to stop the rebellion. Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 46. On April 25, in considering how to deal with the students’ class boycott, He Dongchang suggested that the government had to “remember the lessons of the Cultural Revolution.” Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 75.

This is serious! We can't let the tragedy of the Cultural Revolution happen again."⁴⁰ Bo's statement epitomizes elder revolutionaries' anxious mentality in conceptualizing the student movement as a threat to China's stability and unity. In order to avoid the recurrence of the "tragedy of the Cultural Revolution," these old victims of the ten-year turmoil strongly urged the CCP to apply resolute measures to prevent the student movement from "getting any bigger." They had no intention to be the victims of the "Second Cultural Revolution."

The concern over the student movement's escalation into a "Second Cultural Revolution" was most evident in the process of the CCP's crisis management of the so-called turmoil. On May 10, at a Politburo meeting, in an attempt to defend his hard line to pacify the student movement, Li Peng clearly denounced: "How is this [movement] different from the Cultural Revolution? If we let it go this could pull our whole country into a morass of chaos."⁴¹ With the same anxiety, at an emergency meeting of the Politburo Standing Committee on May 16, in emphasizing the necessity to suppress the prodemocracy movement resolutely, Bo Yibo argued that the activities of student protesters were far more subversive than those of the Red Guards during the Cultural Revolution:

This student movement had had a bigger and broader impact, has lasted longer, and has done more harm than any past student movement. Just imagine students trying to crash through Xinhua Gate! Repeatedly invading Tiananmen Square! These things didn't even happen during the ten years of internal turmoil... The spectacle these days of hundreds of thousands of people demonstrating in support of a hunger strike is something we didn't even see during the big Red Guards demonstrations in the Cultural Revolution!⁴²

⁴⁰ Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 106.

⁴¹ Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 136. Li's concern was also manifested in his diary written during the student movement. According to a report of *South China Morning Post* on June 4, 2010, in his diary, Li Peng claims: "I would rather sacrifice the lives of my family and myself than let China again experience once the tragedy of the Cultural Revolution."

⁴² Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 178.

In Bo Yibo's view, the movement was much more hazardous than the atrocity of the Cultural Revolution. Similarly, following Li and Bo's statements, Deng Xiaoping clearly punctuated the dangerous outcome of the student movement when he suggested that the protesters' demand of democratic reform would lead China into chaos "like the all-out civil war we saw during the Cultural Revolution."⁴³ Thus it was necessary for the CCP to adopt resolute measures, such as imposing martial law and using military force, to put down the student movement.

The elder revolutionaries' anxiety over the reappearance of the Cultural Revolution was clearly demonstrated in the formulation of the decision to impose martial law in Beijing. At a meeting attended by the eight elders⁴⁴ and all the members of the Politburo Standing Committee except for Zhao Ziyang, the CCP came to the resolution of imposing martial law. At the meeting, in order to justify the necessity of enforcing martial law, the elder revolutionaries were inclined to compare the student demonstrations to the massive violence of the Cultural Revolution. In order to attribute the student movement to Zhao Ziyang's misjudgment, the eighty-year-old Li Xiannian equated the social upheavals since the death of Hu Yaobang with the ten-year turmoil as he said: "What's the difference between what we're seeing all across the country and the Cultural Revolution?"⁴⁵ Likewise, in anticipating the terrible outcome of the student movement, Peng Zhen cautioned his colleagues: "We can't let this [movement] descend into rampant lawless like the Cultural Revolution." Explicitly conveying his anxiety over the recurrence of the Cultural Revolution, Peng continued to sigh: "Didn't we get enough of

⁴³ Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 188.

⁴⁴ The eight elders refer to Deng Xiaoping, Chen Yun, Li Xiannian, Peng Zhen, Deng Yingchao, Yang Shangkun, Bo Yibo, and Wang Zhen.

⁴⁵ Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 205.

that the first time around?”⁴⁶ To display his support for imposing martial law, Peng argued that “the million-person demonstrations in Beijing in the last few days are even bigger than the huge Red Guard rallies during the Cultural Revolution,” and, thus, military control was “the only cure for this kind of antidemocratic, anti-rule of law turmoil.”⁴⁷ Urged by those elder revolutionaries and the hardliners within the Politburo Standing Committee, the CCP decided to declare martial law and to bring in the force of the PLA in the name of recovering the stability and unity in the capital.⁴⁸

The anxiety over the reenactment of the trauma of the Cultural Revolution was further manifested in the official discourse on the June Fourth Movement. For example, in the official propaganda to oppose the “turmoil,” one of the slogans reads: “Do not let the tragedy of the ten-year turmoil re-emerge; uphold the Four Cardinal Principles and the general policy and line of reform and opening up.”⁴⁹ In his dialogue with the students on April 29, Yuan Mu stated that the student protests had “alarming similarities with the Cultural Revolution.”⁵⁰ Likewise, in his May 19 report on the student movement, with an attempt to justify the CCP’s decision to impose martial law in Beijing, Li Ximing used certain key terms referring to the Cultural Revolution to describe the subversive practices of the student demonstrations. For example, in order to punctuate the rebellious nature of the unofficial student autonomous unions established during the movement, Li denounced that “a small handful” of the people had “carried out the organized and well-

⁴⁶ Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 207.

⁴⁷ Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 208.

⁴⁸ In his effort to mobilize the PLA to restore the social order under the martial law on May 24, Yang Shangkun, the vice-president of the Central Military Commission then, clearly claimed that “a situation similar to that of the Cultural Revolution” had “emerged in Beijing.” “Main Points of Yang Shangkun’s Speech at Emergency Enlarged Meeting of the Central Military Commission,” in *Beijing Spring*, p. 323.

⁴⁹ “Jianjue zhizhi dongluan de xuanchuan kouhao [The propaganda slogans for resolutely stopping the turmoil],” a handbill from the Munro Collection, Section I, Document 5, New York Public Library.

⁵⁰ “Yuan Mu and Others Hold Dialogue with Students,” in *Beijing Spring*, esp. pp. 228-229.

planned ‘grabbing power’ (*duoquan*) activities in some universities.”⁵¹ By defining the organization of unofficial student unions as *duoquan* activities, Li intentionally compared those young students to the Red Guards. Similarly, in portraying the protesters’ intention to establish nationwide connections with the student protests in the provinces by means of “going down south and going north,” Li condemned that their real purpose was to “carry out linking-up (*chuanlian*) all over China.”⁵² By referring the student protests to “linking-up” movement of the Red Guards, Li intended to manipulate the people’s traumatic memory of the Cultural Revolution to discredit the student movement.⁵³ Moreover, in line with elder revolutionaries’ language, Li’s report goes so far as to denounce the movement as much more subversive than the Cultural Revolution. The report even emphasizes that such things as the attack to the Xinhua and the long-term occupation of Tiananmen “never happened in the ten-year turmoil.” It also claims that the nationwide demonstrations caused by the hunger strikes was “much more serious than the linking-up movement of the Red Guards in the Cultural Revolution.”⁵⁴

Before and after the “military cleanup” of Tiananmen Square, the same language of vilification was clearly displayed to the public in the official newspapers and reports. The editorial of *People’s Daily* on June 3 openly denounces that the student protests were “in the style of establishing mass connections during the Cultural Revolution” and that the unofficial student organizations had illegally forced the official student unions to “hand over the power” in the rebellious way of the Red Guards.⁵⁵ This public vilification of the

⁵¹ Li, “Report of the Situation of the Student Movement in Beijing,” p. 301.

⁵² Li, “Report of the Situation of the Student Movement in Beijing,” p. 301.

⁵³ *Chuanlian*, a practice of the Red Guards, allowed for free travel to exchange revolutionary experiences and form alliances.

⁵⁴ Li, “Report of the Situation of the Student Movement in Beijing,” p. 301.

⁵⁵ “Recognize the Essence of Turmoil and the Necessity of Martial Law,” *People’s Daily*, 3 June 1989, p. 1; For the English version of the full text, see *Beijing Spring*, pp. 342-353.

student movement as the ten-year turmoil was meant to justify the military suppression of Tiananmen Square the next day. Likewise, in order to reiterate the legitimacy of imposing martial law and using military force, Chen Xitong's report denounces that the illegal student unions intended to "*duoquan*" and that the student protests were "something that never occurred even during the Cultural Revolution."⁵⁶

The Impact of the Trauma of the Cultural Revolution

The anxiety over the resurgence of the Cultural Revolution was not confined to the elder revolutionary cadres and hardliners within the CCP. In retrospect, to some extent, the official vilification of the student movement as the Cultural Revolution did exert an impact on ordinary people.⁵⁷ The people of older generations who had been through the ten-year turmoil displayed their reservation to the student movement at first. According to interviews conducted by David Rice after the military suppression of the student movement and the autobiographical writings of the student leaders, given the traumatic memory of the Cultural Revolution, many young students' parents displayed a common propensity to stop their children from becoming involved in the protests at Tiananmen Square. As an interviewee reflected, Tiananmen Square during the June Fourth Movement was very much like "a map of generation gaps" in communist China:

I perceived a pattern in it. It seemed as if youngsters had begun the protest movement... and then gradually people a little older, and thus a little timid, began to join in. The over-forties simply lined the streets to watch. And some of the very old eventually sent in the tanks. Tiananmen Square was like a map of the generation gaps that exists in China.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Chen, "Report to the National People's Congress," p. 202.

⁵⁷ According to report of Xinhua News Agency, "The Situation in Chongqing on the Nineteenth," the city residents, fearful of another Cultural Revolution, began to change their attitudes toward the demonstrations from sympathy and support to resentment. They said things like: "These students didn't experience the hardships of the Cultural Revolution. What do you gain by paralyzing a country?" See Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 230; Likewise, according to previous scholarship, the students' decision to boycott classes on April 23 and the establishment of the Temporary Beijing Student Association on 25 April were unwelcome from the Beijing citizen's point of view. This reveals that the memories of the chaos of the Cultural Revolution were still fresh in the minds of the Chinese people at that time. See Yang, "Conformity and Defiance on Tiananmen Square," p. 211.

⁵⁸ Rice, *The Dragon's Brood*, p. 124.

Indeed, as another interviewee amplified, “the crackdown at Tiananmen Square is sometimes regarded as a particularly violent expression of the generation gap between the very old and the very young.”⁵⁹ When the elder generation, such as Peng Zhen, Li Xiannian and Bo Yibo, clung to stability, college students of the younger generation “demanded change.”⁶⁰

The gap that separated the elder generation from the younger generation was the traumatic experience and memory of the Cultural Revolution. In the spring of 1989, an interviewee explained to David Rice that the June Fourth Movement was confronted by four generations of the Chinese people. The first and foremost was the generation of the “Old Guard.” This group of people was the “first generation of revolutionaries who fought all their lives to establish New China.” Most of them were more than sixty years old in the spring of 1989, and most of them had been prosecuted during the Cultural Revolution. China’s state and party leaders at that time came from this generation. The second was the “Red Generation” in the late forties and early fifties who grew up and had been brainwashed under the “sunshine of the Communist Party.” Then came the “Grey Generation,” or “Red Guard Generation,” between twenty-eight and forty who felt lost after the Cultural Revolution. The last was the “Tiananmen Generation” under twenty-eight who grew up during the reform era and had been most active in the June Fourth Movement although most of them had been through the Cultural Revolution, and the April Fifth Movement, at a young age.⁶¹ The most prominent feature distinguishing the fourth generation from the older generations was that those young students were not haunted by the trauma of the Cultural Revolution and were inclined to accept change

⁵⁹ Rice, *The Dragon’s Brood*, p. 126.

⁶⁰ Rice, *The Dragon’s Brood*, p. 126.

⁶¹ Rice, *The Dragon’s Brood*, p. 125.

under the relatively liberal and open atmosphere in the reform era. As an older interviewee concluded, the new generation was “different from anything that ever went before because they grew up with the Open Door.”⁶²

The mental impact of both the traumatic experience and memory of the Cultural Revolution was manifested in the old generations’ position and behavior patterns in the student movement. According to Rice’s observation, most grandparents and parents from the older generations tended to “stop their children and grand children going out and joining the demonstrations.”⁶³ In explaining the conservative response of the older generations, one of Rice’s interviewees clearly suggested that it was because they “can’t forget the time [of the Cultural Revolution],” and thus they “all try to teach their children not interfere in political matters.” “If it wasn’t the Cultural Revolution,” he continued to complain, “China would be a happier and a healthier place now.”⁶⁴ This view was shared by another young interviewee. “Whenever I discuss politics with my parents,” said a nineteen-year-old male student, “they always cite the Cultural Revolution. They are scared of any political movements. Some are afraid to take part in anything because of the scars of the Cultural Revolution.”⁶⁵ This helps explain why so few middle-aged and elder people took part in demonstrations at Tiananmen Square, although secretly they may have agreed with the students. Indeed, in some cases, even though the older generations agreed with students’ demands, they tended to be onlookers at very beginning of or throughout the student movement. In complaining the elder’s conservative actions, one young student remarked: “So where were all those thirty-year-

⁶² Rice, *The Dragon’s Brood*, p. 132.

⁶³ Rice, *The Dragon’s Brood*, p. 127.

⁶⁴ Rice, *The Dragon’s Brood*, p. 79.

⁶⁵ Rice, *The Dragon’s Brood*, p. 127.

olds during the demonstrations? They had their heads down. Here in Beijing... the ones in their thirties were flat on the ground.”⁶⁶ Even the people of “Grey Generation” shared the same perspective. “So when our students wanted to demonstrate for democracy,” as an interviewee from the older generation admitted, “we said—you go first; we’ll watch from the window. You make sacrifices, then we’ll stand behind you when we see how the tide is going.” “If the general climate is congenial,” he continued to suggest, “then we’ll step forward and say a few words on behalf of students.”⁶⁷ This explains why the older intellectuals did not appear to express their support to the students until the prodemocracy movement gained the momentum.

To sum up, the traumatic past of the Cultural Revolution did play critical role in the Chinese conceptualization of the June Fourth Movement. The psychological impact of the profound traumatic memory of the Cultural Revolution was not only manifested in the CCP’s crisis management in the spring of 1989 and in the official discourse on the June Fourth Movement but also displayed in common people’s attitudes and behaviors during the student movement.

The Popular Use of the Official Discourse on Stability and Stability and the Cultural Revolution
A careful examination of the popular discourse created by the grassroots protesters during the June Fourth Movement demonstrates that the political use of the rhetoric of stability and unity and the traumatic past of the Cultural Revolution was not exclusive to the authorities. In order to legitimize their political demands and undermine the official vilification of the student movement, the protesters usurped the official discourse on stability and unity and the Cultural Revolution. With the same purpose, moreover, the

⁶⁶ Rice, *The Dragon’s Brood*, pp. 134-135.

⁶⁷ Rice, *The Dragon’s Brood*, p. 129.

student demonstrators and liberal-minded intellectuals came to utilize Mao's revolutionary discourse although the aura of Mao Zedong faded after the Cultural Revolution. This popular usurpation of official discourse and Maoist language not only constituted a rhetorical device to empower the legitimacy of prodemocracy movement but also revealed the impact of official propaganda since the founding of the PRC. As an outcome, the authorities and protesters shared the same language in their war of words.

Reform as the Guarantee of Stability and Unity

One of the prominent demands of the prodemocracy protesters during the June Fourth Movement was freedom of press and speech. In the attempt to validate the importance of press freedom, the dissident protesters ingeniously wove the official discourse on stability and unity into their protest literature. In his essay to call for press reform, Hu Jiwei asserts that the press freedom is the precondition for real stability and unity.⁶⁸ "Without freedom of the press," as the title of the essay indicates, "there will be no real stability." The same language was manifested in a slogan shouted by the protesting students and journalists during the demonstration on May 5: "Freedom of the Press is Good for Stability."⁶⁹ Moreover, Hu further argues that under a society with merely the voice of authorities could only provide a "false impression of stability and unity" at a cost of people being numb, cold, detached, and depressed, and this false stability and unity in silence could only brew serious danger. In this way, Hu on the one hand attempted to

⁶⁸ Hu's essay begins with an emphasis on the importance of constitution and the people's constitutional consciousness. Then he moves to argue the relationship between the freedom of the press and consolidation of the popular consciousness of constitution. "If the freedom of the press within the scope of the constitution can be guaranteed," as Hu rationalizes, "the people will feel that the constitution is not a mere scrap of paper, but a fundamental law that actually functions. In this way, as Hu indicates, "the people will strength their constitutional consciousness" and "will respect and obey the constitution" and "get unified under the banner of the constitution" so as to provide a "fundamental protection of social stability." The freedom of the press therefore is "the solid foundation for a modern society to maintain real stability and unity." Hu Jiwei, "Without Freedom of the Press, There will be no Real Stability," in *China's Search for Democracy*, pp. 174-175.

⁶⁹ See *China's Search for Democracy*, p. 174.

usurp the official discourse on stability and unity to justify the freedom of press and speech, and, on the other hand, provides a popular conceptualization of stability and unity.

Likewise, as a response to the April 26 editorial that denounced the student movement as a subversive threat to the national stability and unity, liberal-minded intellectuals like Yan Jiaqi publicized the “May 16 Statement” to argue that the freedom of expressing opinions “is an effective tool for eliminating corruption, maintaining national stability, and promoting social development.”⁷⁰ “It is a mistake,” as the “Statement” argues, “to call the student movement antiparty and antisocialist turmoil” because the basic meaning of freedom of speech” is to “recognize and protect citizens’ right to express different political opinions.”⁷¹ “A society with only one voice,” in the view of those intellectuals, “is not a stable society.” Thus, they urged the PRC to learn the lessons from “the Cultural revolution” and “allow a broad expression of opinions.” In their conclusion, only when a broad expression of opinions on public affairs becomes real “will it be possible for a truly stable and unified political system to take shape.”⁷²

Thus, the official rhetoric of stability and unity was usurped by the protesters to legitimize their demands for the freedom of press and speech. Meanwhile, they created a popular discourse on stability and unity beyond the official discourse. To some extent, the conflict between the popular protesters and official authorities was a manifestation of the two parties’ diverse understandings of stability and unity. This clash was especially sharpened after martial law and military control were imposed. For example, in a conversation with a corporal, a young student argued that although the arrival of the PLA

⁷⁰ “Wu yiliu shengming [May 16 statement],” *News Herald* 4 (May 17): 2; Yan Jiaqi, et al, “May 16 Statement,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 216.

⁷¹ “Wu yiliu shengming,” 2; Yan, et al, “May 16 Statement,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 216.

⁷² “Wu yiliu shengming,” 2; Yan, et al, “May 16 Statement,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 216.

probably would stabilize the situation, it was “not the kind of stability we want.” “We want the stability of the national system,” he continued to amplify, “and not the kind of stability that consists in suppressing the people.”⁷³ The student protesters asked for a national stability and unity based on the constitutional system, not a result of a small handful of authorities’ administrative violence. The use of the PLA force should conform to national system, not by the order of certain political strong men. An open letter from young teachers of Beijing Normal University epitomizes this view concisely: “Three million soldiers belong to the people, but it is not the kind of stability we want. We want stability, but we want socialist stability, not feudal stability.”⁷⁴ Given this alternative notion of stability and unity, the popular protesters even went so far as to criticize Li Peng as the personification of such “feudal stability” and mock him as a dictator like Hitler who really “takes a clear-cut stand to ‘create’ turmoil.”⁷⁵ “It is Li Peng who created the turmoil,” as a handbill explicitly denounces, “in his attempt to use soldiers to clasp the people and eliminate dissidents.” “With Li Peng gone,” therefore, “stability will return under heaven.”⁷⁶ This viewpoint was visualized in a caricature that portrays Li Peng as a butcher with a broadsword named “Turmoil.”

⁷³ “A Dialogue between a Student and a Corporal of the People’s Liberation Army,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 362.

⁷⁴ “Letter from Young Teachers of Beijing Normal University,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 139.

⁷⁵ In an attempt to imply Li Peng was the real creator of turmoil, a handbill reads: “Like Hitler’s usurpation of power and Lin Biao’s ‘Project 571’ coup attempt, Li Peng gals created turmoil and then imposed emergency measures under the pretext of quelling the turmoil.” “Some Views on the Current Situation and Our Tasks,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 301.

⁷⁶ “Why We Have Initiated this Democracy Movement,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 323; Likewise, the point of view that it was Li Peng who created the turmoil was clearly epitomized in the title of a handbill, see “Shi Li Peng zai zhizhao dongluan [It is Li Peng who is creating turmoil],” from Robin Munro Collection, Section III, Document 5.



Poster Collected in The Archives of Chinese Pro-democracy Movement of 1989, p. 219.

The popular manipulation of the official discourse on stability and unity for the cause of the Four Modernizations was employed to legitimize the demand of democratic reform as well. For instance, in emphasizing the necessity of democracy in maintaining a stable society, one protest slogan reads: “Without Democracy, There Can Be No Stability.”⁷⁷ Likewise, in an attempt to claim the inevitability to oppose autocracy for creating and safeguarding a democratic system, an underground social organization, “Chinese Human Rights Movement Committee,” resolutely proclaims: “Democracy and freedom are the basic guarantees of social stability, people’s well-being, and national prosperity.”⁷⁸ Similarly, in order to propagate the ideal of democratic reform, an anonymous poster writer asserted that a socialist multiparty system is “where the hope for China’s democracy and modernization lies.”⁷⁹ Some protesters even attributed the prodemocracy movement to the failure of the CCP in pushing forward a democratic reform. “During the ten years of reform, because of the lack of feedback in the present autocratic system,” as one poster indicates, “corruption [became] widespread and many wrong decision were made.” This situation not only “produced profound ideological,

⁷⁷ Han Minzhu, ed., *Cries for Democracy: Writings and Speeches from the 1989 Chinese Democracy Movement* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 134.

⁷⁸ Chinese Human Rights Movement Committee, “Declaration of Human Rights,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 281.

⁷⁹ Yang XX, “The Socialist Multiparty System in China,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 211.

economic, and political crises,” the poster continues to argue, but also “led to this widespread political movement.” Thus the purpose of the student movement was to facilitate Chinese political system’s “shift from autocracy to democracy” in order to “fit the needs of modernization.”⁸⁰ The same argument was epitomized in the “New May Fourth Manifesto” of the Autonomous Student Union of Universities and Colleges in Beijing on the seventieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement. In the “Manifesto,” the student leaders attribute the stagnation of Chinese modernization to the CCP’s failure in the “construction of Democracy.” In students’ view, democratic reform is the only way to achieve the supreme goal: “modernization in China.”⁸¹ The same point was made in the May 4 editorial of *News Herald*, an underground newspaper created by the Preparatory Committee of Beijing University Autonomous Student Union.⁸² The cause of modernization was usurped by popular dissidents to justify the necessity of a democratic reform in China. “If there is no democratization in China,” a handbill claims, “there will be no Four Modernizations.”⁸³

Popular Use of the Cultural Revolution as a Label

The student protesters clearly recognized that the official denouncement of the prodemocracy movement as being analogous to the Cultural Revolution was aimed to undermine the legitimacy of their movement. Although the trauma of the ten-year turmoil seldom left mental impact on the young students, given the Party propaganda and ideological education, they understood the official discourse on the Cultural Revolution very well. This understanding was manifested in the autobiographical writings of the

⁸⁰ “Some Viewpoints on the Current Situation,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 295.

⁸¹ Autonomous Student Union of Universities and Colleges in Beijing, “New May Fourth Manifesto,” in *Cries for Democracy*, p. 136.

⁸² “Develop the Spirit of May Fourth, Carry Forward the Progress of Democracy,” *Xinwen daobao* 2 (May 4, 1989): 1.

⁸³ “Minzhu yundong yu zhongguo de qiantu [Democratic movement and the prospect of China],” from the Munro Collection, Section VII.

student leaders of the movement. In his autobiography, Shen Tong indicates: “The government had made this same announcement in Tiananmen Square in 1976, at the Democracy Wall in 1979, and after the student movement in 1986.” “Whenever it used the phrase ‘a small clique of counter-revolutionaries,’” Shen continues, “there was serious trouble for those involved.”⁸⁴ Likewise, whereas the intellectuals of older generation denounced the April 26 editorial for its “Cultural Revolution-style thought and language,” one of Rice’s interviewees clearly pointed out that state authorities were “still trying to use terms from the Cultural Revolution” and that “such terms” were both “ridiculous and offensive” to the young people.⁸⁵ Similarly, as a rebuke to the April 26 editorial, one of protest posters argues that “those writers sought out by the officials as their mouthpiece” tended to use “their ‘Cultural Revolution’ terms, such as ‘a small handful,’ ‘with ulterior motives,’ and ‘a conspiracy long concocted,’” to slander the student movement. The young students thought that these terms “sound so fearful and yet so funny” because it was precisely the CCP that was “trying to take China back to the days of the Cultural Revolution.”⁸⁶ In students’ view, the official use of the Cultural Revolution-style language itself was the resurgence of the Cultural Revolution.

The young protesters’ understanding of the official manipulation of the traumatic past of the Cultural Revolution led them to actively clarify the distinction between the student movement and the ten-year turmoil. An editorial in the first issue of *News Herald* on May 2 clearly distinguishes the student movement from the Cultural Revolution in an attempt to undermine the validity of the April 26 editorial. Whereas the Cultural Revolution was a consequence of the factional struggle within the CCP, as the editorial emphasizes, the

⁸⁴ Shen, *Almost A Revolution* (Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 1990), p. 138.

⁸⁵ Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 139; Rice, *The Dragon’s Brood*, p. 95.

⁸⁶ “Who Are the Manufacturers of Turmoil?” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, pp. 135-136.

student movement was a spontaneous patriotic movement from below aimed to push forward the modernization of China.⁸⁷ The endeavor to differentiate the student movement from the Cultural Revolution was manifested in another protest poster from the perspectives of sociopolitical background, qualities of the participants, social purpose, and attitude toward the Party. In particular, the poster argues that, while the Cultural Revolution was used by the careerists within the CCP to strive for certain interest for themselves, the student movement was a spontaneous patriotic democracy movement that resulted from the “deep-rooted social crisis” under the rule of the PRC. In other words, instead of creating turmoil, the student movement was the result of existing social crisis. Unlike the Red Guards who were so eager to seize the power of the CCP, the protesting students still showed their support to the leadership of the party in pushing forward China’s modernization. Therefore, the student movement should not be considered as an antiparty turmoil like the Cultural Revolution. The goals and results of the two movements were completely different.⁸⁸

The student protesters demonstrated their creative uses of the official discourse on the Cultural Revolution in their protest literature. As a reaction to the April 26 editorial’s false vilification, *News Herald* published an article to disclose the close relationship between *People’s Daily* and the violence of the Cultural Revolution. The editorial describes how the editorials of *People’s Daily* had “stirred up turmoil” in the turbulent decade from 1966 to 1976 and attributes its false accusation of the student movement to

⁸⁷ “Ba women de minzhu yundong jinxing daodi [To carry on our democratic movement to the end],” *News Herald* 1 (May 2, 1989): 1.

⁸⁸ “China’s Patriotic Democracy Movement and the Cultural Revolution,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, pp. 162-164.

the malicious leftovers of that turbulent decade.⁸⁹ By connecting the mouthpiece of the CCP to the Cultural Revolution, the article means to undermine the authority of *People's Daily* to defend the name of the prodemocracy movement.

The same strategy was applied by students to mobilize Beijing workers' support for the movement. For example, in order to carry out counter-propaganda to the PRC's mobilization of laboring class in a pro-government demonstration, the students of Beijing University circulated a handbill to call forth the "elder brother workers" to "stand up bravely" for the patriotic students. On the one hand, the handbill reiterates the glorious tradition of working class involvement in student movements since the May Fourth Movement. On the other hand, it compares Li Peng's mobilization of the working class to fight against student protesters with the "dirty tricks of Lin Biao and the Gang of Four" during the Cultural Revolution.⁹⁰ In this way, they attempted to discredit the pro-government propaganda and to strive for the support from the workers by manipulating the official discourse on the Cultural Revolution.

The authorities' anxiety over the resurgence of the Cultural Revolution was even creatively used by the popular protesters to legitimize the prodemocracy movement while undermining the validity of the official discourse on the movement. For example, appearing to protest against the implementation of martial law in Beijing, a public statement on the one hand reiterates the students' firm position to oppose turmoil, and, on the other hand, claims that, from the very beginning, the student movement was intended to "remove the danger of the resurgence of the Cultural Revolution" by "making China

⁸⁹ "On the Historical Achievements of *People's Daily*," *News Herald* 3 (May 12, 1989): 2; "On the Historical Achievements of *People's Daily*," in *China's Search for Democracy*, pp. 180, 183.

⁹⁰ As the handbill reads: "During the Cultural Revolution, Lin Biao and the Gang of Four also incited the workers to fight against the students and agitated the masses to fight against each other. Today, Li Peng and his ilk again 'creatively learn and apply' the dirty trick of Lin Biao and the Gang of Four." For a full text of the handbill, see "Stand Up Bravely, Our Elder Brother Workers," in *China's Search for Democracy*, p. 263.

march forward to the road of democracy and wealth and power.”⁹¹ By weaving the official discourse on the Cultural Revolution and modernization into the statement, the Beijing University students managed to make clear to the public that the prodemocracy movement was not political turmoil but simply a solution to prevent the resurgence of the ten-year turmoil. In this sense, both the popular protesters and official authorities wanted to prevent the occurrence of the “Second Cultural Revolution.”

The traumatic past of the Cultural Revolution had been utilized by the prodemocracy protesters to criticize the government’s approaches to deal with the student movement. For example, after the hunger strike initiated on May 13, the liberal-minded intellectuals used their “May 16 Statement” to compare Li Peng’s settlement of the student movement to the autocracy and darkness of the ten-year turmoil. In the first place, the date to publicize the “Statement” was a subtle way to remind the public of the “May 16 Directive” of 1966 that represents the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. They intended to use the “May 16 Directive” to imply their protest against the official suppression of the student movement. “The May 16 Directive,” as the “Statement” begins, “is universally acknowledged by the Chinese people as a symbol of autocracy and darkness.” Then, in an attempt to prevent the movement from being quelled bloodily by state power, the “Statement” requests the hardliners to keep calm by reflecting upon the shameful past of the violent suppression of student movements in modern Chinese history. “The Beijing government in 1919, the Guomindang government in the 1930s and 1940s, the Gang of Four in the late 1970s,” as it indicates, “used force against student movements, and in each case it led to their disgrace in the eyes of history.” In an effort to urge the PRC not

⁹¹ “Guanyu shiju de liudian shengming [Six-point statement on the current situation],” from the Munro Collection, Section XII, Document 4a; For the English translation of the text, see Mellissa Yao, “Six-Point Statement on the Current Situation,” *Huaqiao ribao* [China daily news], 22 May 1989, p. 2.

to reenact the atrocities of those dictatorial regimes, it continues to suggest: “History tells us [that] whoever would crush the student movement is doomed.”⁹² In this way, by associating the state violence to the atrocities in the Republican era and the Cultural Revolution, the prodemocracy supporters anticipated the military crackdown of the student movement.

The same anxiety over the reappearance of the state violence during the Cultural Revolution was clearly displayed in the posters and handbills produced after imposing martial law on May 20. For example, in anticipating the use of military force to put down the student movement, a handbill of Beijing University reads: “Good people: do you remember these big sticks on your backs during the anti-Rightist movement, the Cultural Revolution, and the April Fifth Movement?”⁹³ By recalling the state violence in the traumatic past of communist China, in order to win popular sympathy for the prodemocracy movement at Tiananmen Square, the protesters called attention to the inevitable tragedy as a consequence of enforcing martial law in Beijing. This creative use of the traumatic past of the Cultural Revolution was manifested in another public statement presented by the prodemocracy supporters. On May 20, a handbill titled “Six-point Statement on the Current Situation” was released at Tiananmen Square to denounce the declaration of martial law by comparing the current situation to the universal unrest during the Cultural Revolution. “If the top leaders still insist upon the wrong policy and continue to make mistakes,” as the “Statement” proclaims, “they may finally take extreme measures, such as assuming military control, which would lead to actual turmoil and even disintegration of the nation.” Then, it continues to imply that the predictable

⁹² “Wu yiliu shengming,” 2; Yan, et al, “May 16 Statement,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 215.

⁹³ “An Unpredictable Government is Always Unpredictable,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 300.

consequence of military control would be much more severe than the catastrophe of the Cultural Revolution. The “Statement” concludes: “This grim prospect is unacceptable to those Chinese people who have experienced the ten tumultuous years of the Cultural Revolution.”⁹⁴ The official discourse on communist China’s troubled past was thus used by student protesters to undermine the legitimacy of imposing martial law and using military force in suppressing the student movement.

The Creative Use of the Maoist Revolutionary Discourse

In addition to using the official discourse on the Cultural Revolution, the student protesters during the June Fourth Movement creatively employed Mao Zedong’s revolutionary discourse to legitimize the prodemocracy demonstrations and to undermine the prestige of the Li Peng government. Entering the era of reform, although the charismatic aura of Mao had somewhat faded, Mao Zedong Thought as a label still exerted its influence. Both in the CCP’s historical document, “Resolution on Certain Questions in the history of our Party since the Founding of the PRC,” and in Deng Xiaoping’s political discourse on the Four Modernizations and the Four Cardinal Principles, Mao Zedong Thought was still esteemed as the ideological guidance of the CCP in theory and often quoted to empower the party line in practice. Nevertheless, the political use of Mao’s revolutionary discourse was not exclusive to state and party authorities. Given the imperative influence of ideological education and official propaganda, even young students were adept at creatively manipulating Mao’s words to serve their political demands.

Mao’s revolutionary discourse on New Democracy was woven into the protest literature during the June Fourth Movement. For example, in the attempt to underscore

⁹⁴“Guanyu shiju de liudian shengming.”

the considerable significance of the prodemocracy movement, in the “New May Fourth Manifesto,” the student protestors compared themselves to the revolutionary forerunners of the May Fourth Movement in the language of Mao’s master discourse. “May Fourth and the subsequent New Democratic Revolution,” as the “Manifesto” addresses, “were the first steps in the patriotic democracy movement of Chinese students. From this point on, Chinese history entered a completely new phrase.”⁹⁵ This juxtaposition with the May Fourth Movement, the beginning of new-democratic revolution, in the language of Mao’s master discourse was meant to give accent on the novelty of the student movement. Whereas the May Fourth Movement was defined by Mao as the turning point of the Chinese revolution, the student demonstrators considered their movement as another turning point in Chinese history that would lead to the liberation from the “constraints of feudal ideology” and “modernization of China” by “carrying on the spirit of May Fourth.”⁹⁶

Likewise, Mao’s discourse on the working class’s emergence on the Chinese political stage since the May Fourth Movement was used by students to mobilize workers in Beijing. In a handbill circulated after imposing martial law, in order to obtain Beijing workers’ support, students tried to utilize the language of Mao’s revolutionary discourse:

During the May Fourth Movement, the older generation of China’s workers bravely stood up and held general strikes to support the patriotic students. After that, the Chinese working class stepped onto the stage of history and became the leading force of the revolution. The history of the Chinese working class is a glorious history. In all the patriotic democracy movements in the past, the workers always played a great role. We believe, therefore, that today in the 1980s, educated and [politically] conscious workers will never become puppets ... manipulated by Li Peng. We believe that the working class in the 1980s will play an even more glorious role than its predecessors.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ “New May Fourth Manifesto,” in *Cries for Democracy*, p. 135.

⁹⁶ Mao, “On New Democracy,” pp. 373, 374. For a discussion on the Maoist discourse on New Democracy and the May Fourth Movement, see chapter two of the dissertation; “New May Fourth Manifesto,” in *Cries for Democracy*, p. 136.

⁹⁷ “Stand Up Bravely, Our Elder Brother Workers,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, pp. 263-264.

The students' language demonstrates the proximity to Mao's master discourse. In Mao's view, as discussed in Chapter Two, it was during and after the May Fourth Movement that the working class became "an awakened and independent political forces" and "the political leader of the Chinese bourgeois-democratic [i.e. new democratic] revolution."⁹⁸ Accordingly, the protesting students' handbill first suggests that "the older generation of China's workers" had "bravely stood up" to "support the patriotic students" during the May Fourth Movement. Then, just as Mao had asserted more than forty years earlier, the students also said that "the Chinese working class stepped onto the stage of history and became the leading force of the revolution" after the May Fourth Movement. Given the "glorious history" of the working class, thus, the students believed that their "elder brother workers" would show their support to the "patriotic students" as their May Fourth forerunners did. In doing so, the students meant to facilitate Beijing workers' support by appealing their splendid tradition since the May Fourth Movement.

The dissident protesters also manipulated some well-known Maoist slogans to express their resolute determination to carry on the prodemocracy movement. For example, in their "Hunger Strike Declaration" on May 13, student activists adapted Mao's words from "The Great Union of the Popular Masses" to show their firm stand to sacrifice for the mission of national salvation:

Compatriots with a conscience, at this critical moment in our nation's life and death, listen to our voice:	
This country is our country;	國家是我們的國家
The people are our people.	人民是我們的人民
The government is our government.	政府是我們的政府
Who will shout if we don't?	我們不喊，誰喊？
Who will act if we don't? ⁹⁹	我們不幹，誰幹？

⁹⁸ Mao, "On New Democracy," p. 348.

⁹⁹ "Jueshi shu [Hunger strike declaration]," *News Herald* Extra Issue (May 14, 1989): 2; "Hunger Strike Declaration on May 13," in *China's Search for Democracy*, p. 213.

Seventy years earlier, as mentioned in Chapter Two, Mao revealed the same sentiment in his effort to articulate the methods of saving China after the May Fourth Movement:

The country is our country,	國家者，我們的國家
The society is our society.	社會者，我們的社會
Who will speak if we don't?	我們不說，誰說？
Who will act if we don't? ¹⁰⁰	我們不幹，誰幹？

With slight revision, the protesting students borrowed Mao's language to display their firm stand to step forward at the defining moment of national salvation. By doing so, they on the one hand empowered their protest activities, and, on the other hand, pointed out the fact that, after seventy years of development, especially forty years of communist rule, China was still the degenerated country that Mao intended to reform, and at the moment of 1989, only students could do something good for the Chinese nation. This conscious manipulation of Mao's language was revealed in one of the student leaders' autobiography:

I walked up and down alongside the marchers, encouraging them by calling out some of Mao's sayings from the Cultural Revolution. Referring to the Red Guards, he had said, 'Those who put down student movements have a bleak future' and 'If the students don't act, who will?'—slogans that seemed perfect for us now.¹⁰¹

Likewise, in order to demonstrate their resolute determination to push forward the prodemocracy movement, the popular protesters creatively referred to Mao's military strategy during the War of Resistance against Japan. For example, in considering the strength and weakness of the student movement and its prospect, a poster writer suggested that the protesting students "must clearly understand the difficult and complicated nature of the situation" and "strategically conduct a 'protracted war'." By quoting one of Mao's most famous writings, "On Protracted War," the writer meant to

¹⁰⁰ Mao Zedong, "Minzhong de dalianhe," p. 57. For a discussion on the article, see Chapter Two of the dissertation.

¹⁰¹ Shen, *Almost A Revolution*, p. 180.

propose a long-term strategy for the Chinese prodemocracy movement.¹⁰² Since the students could not realize democratization of China overnight, the writer urged them to carry out a “protracted war” by means of turning the effort to “the propaganda work of emancipating the people’s minds by popularizing the ideas of democracy, freedom, and human rights.” While the author anticipated that these efforts “will bear fruit within the next decade, or within several decades,” in an attempt to encourage the students to fight for democracy in a long-term period, he suggested they “should not forget that the Communist party also fought for several decades [before victory].”¹⁰³ In other words, as the communist revolution did, the prodemocracy advocates would achieve their own victory in their own “protracted war.”

Furthermore, in emphasizing the considerable significance of the prodemocracy movement, the popular protesters were inclined to apply Mao’s “stand up” rhetoric. As demonstrated in Chapter Three, the Chinese people believed that it was at Tiananmen Square that Mao had declared “the Chinese have stood up” at the founding ceremony of the PRC although that phrase was actually uttered at the opening ceremony of the First Plenum of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference on 21 September 1949. Nevertheless, this iconic slogan is so symbolic for the Chinese people that both official and popular discourse since the founding of the PRC used the phrase “the Chinese people have stood up” to indicate the significance of certain important events. It was not exceptional in the spring of 1989. In considering the significance of the student movement, Bao Zunxin, a well-respected historian, claimed in a passionate tone: “You, your movement, has finally made China stand up.” “On October 1, 1949, Mao

¹⁰² Mao Zedong, “On Protracted War,” in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, vol. 2, pp. 113-194.

¹⁰³ “Reflection on the Student Movement,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, pp. 333, 334.

proclaimed in Tiananmen Square that China has stood up,” Bao continued, “but that was propaganda.” In his view, it was the student movement of 1989 that “made those words real.”¹⁰⁴

Likewise, on May 30, when the “Goddess of Democracy” was unveiled to the public at Tiananmen Square, it was considered by the “Headquarters of Tiananmen Square” as a milestone symbolizing that “the Chinese people have really stood up.” “The revolution of May, the Goddess of Democracy, and the May Thirtieth Declaration,” as the Headquarters indicates in a handbill, “[together] represent a great milestone in modern history.” “Just like the French Revolution and the May Fourth Movement,” the handbill continues, “it will be recorded in the annals of humanity and China.” In the end, the handbill emphasizes the significance of the student movement by concluding that: “the Chinese people use the ‘thorough and uncompromising’ revolution of May to declare to the world that ‘the people have really stood up’.”¹⁰⁵ Here, while the phrase “thorough and uncompromising (chedi er bu tuoxie)” was drawn from Mao’s master discourse on the May Fourth Movement, “the people have really stood up” was adapted from Mao’s iconic phrase “the Chinese people have stood up.” In this way, the protesting students used Mao’s words to legitimize the prodemocracy movement and the erection of the “Goddess of Democracy” at Tiananmen Square.

Accordingly, the rhetoric of “stand up” was manifested in the public announcements of the student leaders and other protesting posters. For example, in her public announcement to the Chinese people at home and abroad in late May when the student movement was under the risk of military suppression, Chai Ling uses the “stood up”

¹⁰⁴ Schwarcz, “Memory and Commemoration: The Chinese Search for a Livable Past,” p. 170.

¹⁰⁵ “Renmin zhenzheng zhanli qilia le [The Chinese people have really stood up],” Munro Collection, Section XV, Document 1.

rhetoric to display her firm will to devote herself to a long-term democracy movement. “If I am alive,” as she claims, “I desire to ‘stand up’ again in the next movement and let the people of China really ‘stand up’.”¹⁰⁶ While the first “stand up” refer to her strong will to push forward the democracy movement, the second one is meant to indicate the importance of the movement. This imagination of the prospect of the Chinese democratic movement was manifested in another poster entitled “The Declaration of the Dragon,” which asserts that the most distinctive meaning of the student movement was to make “the great giant of the Chinese nation stand up.”¹⁰⁷

The prodemocracy protesters not only manipulated Mao’s revolutionary discourse to legitimize their movement, they also used Mao’s language to criticize the PRC government and state leaders like Deng Xiaoping, Li Peng, and Yang Shangkun. For example, in an attempt to rationalize their criticism to the state authorities, the student protesters utilized a quotation of Mao during the Cultural Revolution: “Those who make criticisms are not guilty, and those who are being criticized should listen carefully.”¹⁰⁸ Likewise, in justifying the student movement and popular opposition to the state authorities’ wrong verdict, one handbill reads: “One man cannot hoodwink the public, and millions of people send off the ‘god of diseases.’” The phrase is drawn from a poem of Mao to honor a village that eliminated schistosomiasis in the 1950s. By using Mao’s phrase, the protesters were implying that they were determined to “send off” Deng Xiaoping and Li Peng, who became the real source of the problems “plaguing” China.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Chai Ling, “I Was Willing to Sacrifice Myself to Allow More Students to Live On,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 344.

¹⁰⁷ “Long de xuanyan [Declaration of dragon],” Munro Collection, Section XXVII, Document 2b.

¹⁰⁸ “Announcement Concerning the Protest March by Chinese All over the World on May 28,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 337.

¹⁰⁹ “A Million Beijing Residents Demonstrate in Support of the Students and Demand that Deng Xiaoping Step Down,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 229 and note 3.

Similarly, in order to oppose martial law, one poster anticipates that such fascists as Li Peng and Yang Shangkun would inevitably step down by using Mao's language on the crime of the rightists in the party. "Chairman Mao pointed out long ago that once the true rightists in the party come to power and carry out a despotic fascist dictatorship," the poster reads, "they are bound to be opposed by the people of the whole country."¹¹⁰ By comparing Li and Yang to the rightists in Mao's words, the protesters intended to weaken the legitimacy of the Li Peng government.

Conclusion

In the spring of 1989, Tiananmen Square constituted a memorial space for both state power and popular protesters to use the traumatic past of the Cultural Revolution. Along with using the rhetoric of stability and unity, the state authorities intended to undermine the legitimacy of the student movement by vilifying it as a Cultural Revolution like turmoil. Yet, the official manipulation of the traumatic past of the Cultural Revolution was more than simply a rhetorical strategy to defame the student movement. The April 26 editorial, imposing martial law, and military cleanup of Tiananmen Square were the political manifestation of elder revolutionary cadres' anxiety over the resurgence of the Cultural Revolution. Given their traumatic experiences in the ten-year turmoil, they tended to compare the students' protests to those of the Red Guards. As victims of the ten-year turmoil, they were so eager to prevent the occurrence of a "Second Cultural Revolution" by using such resolute measure as martial law and military suppression.

The use of the traumatic past of the Cultural Revolution was not the official authorities' sole privilege. Like the rhetoric of stability and unity, the official discourse

¹¹⁰"Smash the Counterrevolutionary Coup Carried Out By Li Peng and Yang Shangkun," in *China's Search for Democracy*, p. 276.

on the Cultural Revolution was usurped by the student protesters to undermine the legitimacy of state injustice and violence involved in pacifying the student movement. In the popular discourse during the June Fourth Movement, in order to weaken the validity of the April 26 editorial, the protesting students labeled *People's Daily* as the tool of real troublemakers like the Gang of Four during the Cultural Revolution. The brutal atrocities of the Cultural Revolution and the Gang of Four were manipulated as labels to condemn state leaders' misconduct. More interestingly, given the deep impact of the historical and ideological education under the Chinese communist regime, the young students and prodemocracy supporters were able to borrow Mao's revolutionary discourse and his iconic phrases to empower their protest literature.

Chapter Eight

From “May Fourth” and “April Fifth” to “June Fourth”: Playing the Variations of Communist Revolutionary Memory at Tiananmen Square

In addition to the use of Deng Xiaoping’s master discourse on stability and unity, both the official authorities and prodemocracy dissidents during the June Fourth Movement played the century-long tune of national salvation in their imagination of Chinese modernity. As demonstrated in Chapter One, the CCP has utilized the national salvation discourse to give reasons for any prominent changes in its political line and to mobilize the people at the moment of national crisis before and after the founding of the PRC. It has been used in Mao’s master discourse on the Chinese revolution. It has been employed in Deng Xiaoping’s discourse on the Four Modernizations and the Four Cardinal Principles since the early days of reform era. Such slogans as “only the CCP can save China” and “socialism alone can save China” constitute spectacular manifestation of the political use of the national salvation discourse. Likewise, the discourse had been manipulated by the CCP to legitimize imposing martial law and military suppression of the student movement in the spring of 1989. The national salvation discourse has become deep-rooted in the political culture of the CCP since the founding of the party, so much so that, even a young student leader, Yang Tao, came to complain in the spring of 1989: “Our leaders are always promoting national salvation movements.” In Yang’s view, “China does not need a movement for national salvation,” but a “personal liberation.”¹

Nevertheless, Yang Tao’s complaint does not necessarily mean that the prodemocracy advocates during the June Fourth Movement had themselves refrained

¹ Shen, *Almost A Revolution*, p. 150.

from using the national salvation discourse. Instead, like state authorities, in order to legitimize the student movement and the demand of democratic reform, they frequently integrated the national salvation discourse into their imagination of Chinese modernity. Especially after martial law was enforced in Beijing, the old tune of national salvation was often played in their big-character posters and small-character handbills. This chapter will show that the national salvation discourse constituted a shared cultural script for both the official authorities and prodemocracy advocates in their war of words and in their diverse visions of Chinese modernity.

Moreover, in addition to the traumatic past of the Cultural Revolution, the student protesters during the June Fourth Movement were good at using the communist-sanctioned revolutionary tradition at Tiananmen Square. On the one hand, the student protesters used the past of the May Fourth and April Fifth Movements to conceptualize and justify the prodemocracy movement and to mobilize popular support for the demand of a democratic reform. On the other hand, they utilized the past of state violence involved in the May Fourth and April Fifth Movement to undermine the legitimacy of official suppression of the student movement and to criticize the state authorities. This use of the May Fourth and April Fifth revolutionary tradition thus constituted a “symbol-laden performance,” in Esherick and Wasserstrom’s words, to “symbolically undermine the regime’s legitimacy and move members of larger and economically more vital classes to take sympathetic action.”² As this chapter will show, both nostalgic and critical memories of the May Fourth and April Fifth Movements were manipulated by the student protesters at Tiananmen Square during the June Fourth Movement.

² Esherick and Wasserstrom, “Acting Out Democracy,” 839.

The Official and Popular Uses of the National Salvation Discourse

During the June Fourth Movement, the official propaganda of the CCP was characterized by the use of the national salvation discourse in its vilification of the student movement. As mentioned above, in an attempt to distract public attention from the student movement to the supreme cause of reform and opening up, the April 26 editorial suggests that the mourning activities for Hu Yaobang had demonstrated popular determination to “make a contribution in realizing the Four Modernizations and invigorating the Chinese nation.” Moreover, in pointing out the catastrophic turmoil caused by the student movement, the editorial claims that “the tremendous achievements scored in the reform during the last past decade may be completely lost” and “the great aspiration of the revitalization of China cherished by the whole nation will be hard to realize.”³ “A China with very good prospects and a very bright future,” as it continues to anticipate the effect of the student movement, “will become a chaotic and unstable China without any future.” From the perspective of state authorities, China would step into lethal crisis once the student movement escalates into a nationwide turmoil. Therefore, in its conclusion, the editorial argues that the struggle against the turmoil does matter for “the success or failure of the reform and opening up, the program of the Four Modernizations, and the future of our state and nation.”⁴ By playing the old tune of national salvation, the state authorities meant to discredit the student movement.

The same tune was played in Li Peng’s emphasis on the indispensability of imposing martial law to suppress the student movement. “All this indicated that a nationwide turmoil can not be avoided,” as Li made clear in his speech at a meeting on May 19, “if

³“It Is Necessary to Take a Clear-Cut Stand against Turmoil,” p. 117.

⁴“It Is Necessary to Take a Clear-Cut Stand against Turmoil,” p. 118.

action [i.e. imposing martial law] is not taken to stabilize the situation.” To emphasize the emergent situation as a result of the student movement, Li continued to argue that “China’s reform, open policy and the four modernizations are at stake” and that “the future and fate of the PRC is already seriously threatened.” He was implying that, once the student movement developed into a nationwide turmoil, not only “the reform and opening to the outside world, democracy and legality, and socialist modernization will all come to nothing,” but also “a hopeful China with a bright future will become a country without hope and future.”⁵ Therefore, in Li Peng’s view, it was necessary to use the “resolute and powerful measures” to stop the student movement. “This is because the current struggle to put down the rebellion,” as Li Peng’s spokesman Yuan Mu amplified in a news conference, “is one of life-and-death for the party and the state.”⁶ In line with the April 26 editorial, Li Peng intended to validate imposing martial law by portraying the student movement as the origin of national crisis and the murder of China’s prospect and future.

The official use of the national salvation discourse was also manifested in Deng Xiaoping’s reiteration of the necessity of upholding the Four Cardinal Principles after the military suppression around Tiananmen Square. Deng clearly asserted: “Things [i.e. the June Fourth Movement] which happened currently have shown that persisting in the socialist road and party leadership is the crux.” In his view, the Chinese communist regime must “persist in socialism” because “only socialism can save China, and only socialism can develop China.” Deng suggested that the most important lesson the people should learn from the June Fourth Movement was that there would be no future for China

⁵ Li, “The Capital Is in Anarchy,” p. 178.

⁶ “State Council Spokesman Yuan Mu Holds News Conference,” p. 376.

without persistence in socialism. “If we fail to take the socialist road,” as Deng indicates, “there will be no hope for China.”⁷

The Popular Use of the National Salvation Discourse

The political use of the national salvation discourse was not restricted to the authorities. The prodemocracy protesters often incorporated the national salvation discourse into their protest literature. After the CCP denounced the student uprising as turmoil, in order to undermine the official defamation, the popular protesters used the national salvation discourse. In stressing the constructive significance of the student movement, the student protesters integrated the century-long agenda of “wealth and strength” into their “New May Fourth Manifesto.” “Fellow students and compatriots: the ‘prosperity’ of our nation,” as the “Manifesto” emphasizes, “is the goal of this patriotic democracy movement.” “Fellow students and compatriots: let’s once again strive for democracy, science, human rights, and legality,” as it continues to reiterate, “as well as the ‘wealth and strength’ of the nation under the symbolic Tiananmen.”⁸ Here, the “Manifesto” strategically emphasizes that it is at Tiananmen Square that the young students are striving “once again” for the “wealth and strength of the nation.” By weaving the national salvation discourse, the students aimed to justify their movement while undermining the official vilification. As another statement asks: “How many of our forefathers unhesitatingly marched to the battlefield of national salvation?”⁹ In the spring of 1989, grassroots activists conceptualized Tiananmen Square as the “battlefield of national salvation.”

The national salvation discourse was manifested in the prodemocracy protesters’ conceptualization of the student movement as well. In demanding that the official false

⁷ “Full Text of Gists of Deng Xiaoping’s Speech to Member to Members of New Politburo Standing Committee,” in *Beijing Spring*, p. 384.

⁸ “New May Fourth Manifesto,” p. 136.

⁹ “Solemn Statement,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 345.

accusation of the student movement as turmoil be removed, the Preparatory Committee of the Hunger Strikers' Petition Group argues that the students were "rescuing the country, not creating turmoil."¹⁰ Likewise, in the "May 16 Statement," a group of liberal-minded intellectuals suggest that the movement not only represents "a national awakening" drawn on "the spirit of May Fourth" but also "a great historical moment that will determine the fate of China."¹¹ A similar perspective was displayed in some young teachers' reflection on the psychological impact of the student movement. In an open letter to the public, they suggest that the resolute determination to "oppose the yoke, the oppression, and the dictatorship" was an effect of the students' enthusiasm to "lay a foundation for the revitalization of the Chinese nation." "When we were walking with you in the demonstration [and heard] the solemn and stirring cries for 'freedom and democracy' and 'the Chinese nation must be revitalized,'" the letter continues, "our feelings ran high."¹² In the popular protesters' mind, the student movement was vital for China's survival.

This identification of the student movement as a patriotic democracy movement aimed to rescue China at the moment of life and death was not confined to educated intellectuals. In its public statement, the Beijing City Construction Workers' Autonomous Union calls for the working class from all sections and professions to "unite together and protect our students" considering that "each individual has the responsibility to save the nation" when "a national crisis is ahead."¹³ In stressing the positive significance of the student movement, a Beijing worker suggested that the students' action "has stirred the

¹⁰ "Declaration of the Hunger Strike Group Formed Jointly by People of All Nationalities, Workers, and Well-known People of All Walks of Life in Society," in *China's Search for Democracy*, p. 324.

¹¹ "May 16 Statement," in *China's Search for Democracy*, p. 215.

¹² "Letter from Young Teachers of Beijing Normal University," in *China's Search for Democracy*, pp. 139-140.

¹³ "The Purpose of the City Construction Workers' Autonomous Union," in *China's Search for Democracy*, p. 278.

feelings of our workers and the whole society” when they “have spoken words from our hearts” and their “grief and anxiety for the country are exactly ours.” In his view, the popular support to the student movement was inevitable because “the rise and fall of a nation is the responsibility of each individual.”¹⁴

Likewise, the popular acknowledgement of the student movement’s significance and influence in the language of national salvation was extended to party members and PLA soldiers. For example, in pointing out the wide impact and positive outcome of the student movement, in an open letter to the CCP, some party members claims: “The great patriotic democracy movement now sweeping Beijing and the whole country essentially reflects the will of the whole party and the people of the whole country to revitalize China and to realize the Four Modernizations.”¹⁵ Even top-ranking PLA commanders expressed the same position to the student movement in the language of national salvation. According to a handbill written by a soldier from the Beijing Military District, the Commander Xu Qinxian of the Thirty Eighth Army “was moved to tears by the students’ spirit of self-sacrifice for national salvation” and thus decided to decline the order to lead the troops into Beijing.¹⁶ The point here is that the popular supporters during the June Fourth Movement tended to conceptualize the prodemocracy movement in the language of national salvation.

The national salvation discourse was used by prodemocracy protesters in their criticism of the state’s indifference toward the students’ petition. For example, in condemning the official arrogance and coldness to the petition presented by three young

¹⁴“A Beijing Worker’s Open Letter to the Students,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 107.

¹⁵ “Letter to the Party Central Committee by Party Members in Shanghai,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 284.

¹⁶ “A Moving Story: The Removal from Duty of Commander’s Xu of the Thirty-Eighth Army, in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 340.

students who knelt down before the Great Hall of the People on April 22, a handbill furiously complains: “More than one hundred thousand students are asking for a meeting with the leaders on matters of life and death for the nation. Is that not enough?”¹⁷ Likewise, the popular resentment to the official coldness to the popular cry for a dialogue was manifested in the autobiography of Feng Congde, one of the student leaders during the June Fourth Movement:

In front of the people of several hundred thousand and in front of the officials of over one thousand, under the Tiananmen, [the three students] knelt for thirty-five minutes! This is a tragedy of the whole nation. . . . In a great nation of more than a billion people, to one’s surprise, no leader with love and honor dares to stand forward to face the masses and to listen to their opinions and expectation to the country. . . . I feel that a nation is dying. . . .¹⁸

Here, Feng use the rhetoric of national salvation to blame the state power on its ignorance of the students’ demand to dialogue with the state leaders.

The same language of national salvation was utilized to denounce official misconduct in dealing with the student movement. For example, in a letter to the CCP, a party member urges Deng Xiaoping to “admit his mistake and acknowledge that labeling the student movement as ‘turmoil’ on April 25 was a total error of judgment” by beginning with: “The students face peril! The situation is perilous! The country faces peril.” In order to punctuate the urgency for the CCP to “act instantly and choose wisely for the suffering nation,” the letter concludes: “Save the students! Save the nation.”¹⁹ In this way, the popular supporters implied that the only way to save China from peril was official recognition of the error in characterizing the student movement as turmoil. Likewise, the editorial of *News Herald* on May 22 argues that the state’s wrong decision to impose martial law was the only reason for the nation to confront “the moment of life and death.”

¹⁷ “Who are the Manufacturers of ‘Turmoil’,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 136.

¹⁸ Feng Congde, *Liusi riji: Guangchang shang de gongheguo* [The June Fourth Diary: The republic on Tiananmen Square] (Hong Kong: Chen Zhong, 2009), p. 124.

¹⁹ “Deng Xiaoping Should Admit Mistakes: Open Letter to the CCP,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 231.

And, “at this moment of life and death of the Republic,” as the editorial calls for, “all of the citizens of the Republic should unite together” to prevent the state from sinking into another turmoil.²⁰ The same rhetoric was manifested in another open letter to the people all over China with an attempt to make clear that the national crisis was simply the result of state leaders’ misconduct in treating the student movement.²¹ In the view of these protesters, it was the official injustice resulted in the national crisis, not the students.

The language of national salvation was used by student leaders to legitimize the practice of hunger strike. Forced by the official suppression against the prodemocracy movement, the student leaders decided to launch a hunger strike to mobilize popular support for their demands on May 13. In the “Hunger Strike Declaration,” the students explain to the public that they had no alternative but to employ such a radical practice to strive for the democratic reform. For the sake of national salvation, they suggested that the students were compelled to “leave behind everything beautiful about life.” No matter “how reluctant and unwilling” they were, it was state violence that forced them to fight for the country “in the finest moment of [their] youth.” In this manner, the students intended to empower their practice by portraying the hunger strikers as patriots with spirit of sacrifice. Moreover, they went further to call for popular support by weaving the national salvation discourse into their public declaration. “Compatriot with a conscience, at this critical moment in our nation’s life and death,” as the “Declaration” reads, “listen to our voice.”²² Who would not show sympathy to the voice of their young children who wholeheartedly fight for the rise and fall of the nation if they have conscience?

²⁰ “Tuanjie qilai qizhi xianming de fan dongluan [Unite to take a clear-cut stand against turmoil],” *News Herald* 5 (May 22, 1989): 1.

²¹ “Gao quanguo tongbao shu,” from the Munro Collection, Section II, Document 33.

²² “Jueshi shu [Hunger strike declaration],” *News Herald* Extra Issue (May 14, 1989): 2; “Hunger Strike Declaration on May 13,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 213.

The national salvation discourse was often used by the popular dissidents to describe the hazardous situation of the prodemocracy movement and the popular anxiety over military suppression after imposing martial law in Beijing. For example, on May 23, the Joint Conference of People from All Walks of Life in the Capital announced a public statement to indicate the danger of martial law to the student movement in the rhetoric of national salvation. The statement points out that “the Chinese democratic movement is facing the moment of life and death” due to the turmoil caused by “the perverse acts of a handful of people like Li Peng.” And, as a result of “the perverse acts,” such as imposing martial law, China’s “accomplishments of the ten years of reform and the open door will be totally lost,” and would “in turn push the Chinese nation into a lethal crisis.”²³ When the situation was so perilous, therefore, the statement calls for public attention in the language of national salvation: “Every Chinese with a conscience and sense of justice: let’s unite and save our country from danger.”²⁴ The statement’s logic is that the turmoil produced by martial law would destroy the prodemocracy movement, and this would in turn result in the crisis of national survival because the “accomplishments of the ten years of reform and the open door will be totally lost.” In other words, the only way to save China lies in the preservation of the prodemocracy movement. By using the national salvation discourse, the statement on the one hand reveals the popular opposition to martial law, and, on the other, stresses the significance of the student movement in the survival of the Chinese nation.

²³The statement also emphasizes the considerable significance of the student movement in the history of China. “The great patriotic democracy initiated by the college students in Beijing and broadly participated in by people from all walks of life throughout the country,” as it determines, “is unprecedented in Chinese history.” “Since April 1989,” thus, “China has entered a totally new historical era.” “The Final Battle between Light and Darkness: Statement on the Current Situation,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, pp. 293, 294.

²⁴“The Final Battle between Light and Darkness: Statement on the Current Situation,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 294.

The same tune of national salvation was played in the posters and handbills created by the Beijing workers and residents after the issuing of martial law. For example, on May 22, in a public letter to Beijing citizens, the author played the tune of national salvation in its rebuke to the martial law in an effort to mobilize popular support for the student movement. “The Chinese people,” as the letter states, “are facing a life and death situation.” “The people, the students and the intelligentsia,” as it continues to amplify, “are facing immediate and bloody persecution.” “In order to save the Republic,” therefore, “we members of the intelligentsia are making these urgent proposals [to solve the crisis].”²⁵ In an attempt to emphasize the importance of carrying out their proposals in order to protect the student movement and save the country, in its conclusion, the author urges Beijing citizens to stand forward to “defend the People’s Republic with your blood and your lives” because it could be “the last fight and the last hope of the Republic.”²⁶ Accordingly, on May 26, in a handbill entitled “Urgent Mobilization to Capture the Bastille of the 1980s,” the Autonomous Union of Beijing Workers used the national salvation discourse to mobilize the popular support for the young students while protesting the state violence of imposing martial law. “Reform is in peril, democracy is in peril,” as it reads, “and patriotic masses and youth are in peril!”²⁷ Interestingly, a foreign revolutionary past was used to legitimize the grassroots activism against the Chinese communist regime. In order to rally manpower to stop the martial troops from entering

²⁵ “An Extremely Urgent Appeal to the People of Beijing,” in Mok Chiu Yu and J. Frank Harrison, ed., *Voices from Tiananmen Square: Beijing Spring and the Democracy Movement* (New York: Black Rose Books, 1990), p. 135.

²⁶ “An Extremely Urgent Appeal to the People of Beijing,” p. 136.

²⁷ “Jinji dongyuan qilai, gongke bashi niandai de Bashidi yu [Urgent mobilization to capture the Bastilles of the 1980s],” from the Munro Collection, Section XIV, Document 13.

Tiananmen Square and protect the students, the Union called for the people to “unite as a whole for saving China.”²⁸

Finally, the protesting students utilized the national salvation discourse to validate their specific demands and practices. For example, in order to make clear the necessity of carrying out the democratic reform, the students wrote the national salvation discourse into their protest literature. “Compatriots,” as a handbill epitomizes, “without democracy, [the nation] will be perishing; without reform, [the nation] will be perishing.” “In the massive struggle for the nation’s life and death,” thus, “let’s unite as a whole to save China.”²⁹ Likewise, following the imposition of martial law, the prodemocracy advocates claimed that the purposes of the student movement were to “eradicate official corruption and profiteering, lift news censorship, defend freedom of speech, and oppose dictatorship and autocracy,” and the rationality of these demands was that they would help the Chinese communist regime to “administer the country through the people’s democracy, rescue the motherland from a survival crisis caused by widespread difficulties and accumulated by age-old misdeed, guarantee smooth progress in reform, and reinvigorate China.”³⁰ Correspondingly, in an endeavor to justify the erection of the Goddess of Democracy at Tiananmen Square on May 30, the protesting students made their declaration in the language of national salvation. As “the symbol of the ideals of tens of thousands of students on Tiananmen Square and tens of millions of Chinese people,” the

²⁸ “Renmin de haoing [The people’s order],” from the Munro Collection.

²⁹ “Women faqi zechang Zhongguo lishi shanf zui weida de aiguo minzhu yundong de yuanyin [The reason we initiate the greatest patriotic democracy movement in the Chinese history],” from the Munro Collection, Section II, Document 12-C1.

³⁰ “Declaration of the Hunger Strike Group Formed Jointly by People of All Nationalities, Workers, and Well-known People of All Walks of Life in Society,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 324.

Goddess of Democracy, in their words, “are the hope of rescuing the Chinese nation.”³¹

In addition, many prodemocracy advocates even went so far as to use the national salvation discourse to rationalize their opposition to Deng Xiaoping’s Four Cardinal Principles. “[Whereas] the Four Principles are the source of the nation’s misfortune,” as a poster reads, “freedom and democracy are the root of the nation’s revival.”³² In the political discourse during the June Fourth Movement, the supreme cause of national salvation was used by the prodemocracy protesters to serve as a rhetorical weapon to justify the popular envision of Chinese modernity.

The Popular Use of the May Fourth Movement at Tiananmen Square

In addition to usurping official rhetoric of stability and unity, manipulating the traumatic past of the Cultural Revolution, and utilizing the national salvation discourse, the popular dissidents tended to recall the communist-sanctioned revolutionary tradition during the June Fourth Movement. As a consequence of the PRC’s historical education and ideological hegemony, young student protesters, or the Tiananmen Generation as Wang Dan called them, were skillful at using the May Fourth revolutionary tradition to undermine the legitimacy of official suppression, to conceptualize the significance of the prodemocracy movement, to mobilize popular support for their protests, and to legitimize the demand of democratic reform for the supreme cause of modernization.³³

The Tiananmen Generation thus performed in a way as if they were the direct successors of their May Fourth forerunners. “It was the end result of the Party culture,” as one

³¹ “Declaration of Eight Institutes of Art in the Capital,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 342. For the process of creating the statue of the Goddess of Democracy, see Tsao Tsing-yuan, “The Birth of the Goddess of Democracy,” in *Popular Protest and Political Culture in Modern China*, pp. 140-147

³² Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 59.

³³ In his forward to Zhang Boli’s autobiographical writing, *Escape from China*, Wang Dan calls the young students who have participated in the June Fourth Movement as “Tiananmen Children” and “Tiananmen Generation.” See Wang Dan, “Foreword: The ‘Tiananmen Generation,’” in Zhang Boli, *Escape from China: The Long Journey from Tiananmen to Freedom*, translated Kwee Kian Low (New York: Washington Square Press, 2002), ix-x.

student leader recalled, “that we have shown an uncritical attitude toward May Fourth as what the communist education taught us and pretended ourselves to be the heirs of the May Fourth Movement.”³⁴

The Aura of May Fourth and the Anniversary Effect: Something Had to Happen

The deep-rooted cultural memory of the May Fourth Movement was demonstrated in the popular anticipation that something unusual would take place at the seventieth anniversary of the movement before the outbreak of the June Fourth Movement. The year of 1989 was an unusual year for the Chinese people to commemorate two significant events: the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the PRC and the seventieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement. Given serious official corruption and worsening economic inflation, the Chinese people, old and young, were inclined to anticipate that something bizarre was to happen at this monumental year. As early as in the spring of 1988, in his speeches delivered at universities in the United States, Liu Binyan already predicted: “Unexpected events could take place in China, and that could well become the center of world attention, because 1989 marked the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the PRC and the seventieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement for democracy.”³⁵ The popular sentiment that something was going to occur was echoed by an interviewee of David Rice in his recollection of the people’s mental situation upon the coming of 1989: “Because the seventieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement was close at hand... So people just felt that something had to happen.”³⁶ The emotion provoked by those historic events stimulated young students’ desire to create a democratic environment in which the public would pay attention to the issues, problems, and ills of the country.

³⁴ Feng, *Liusi riji*, p.189, note 104.

³⁵ Binyan Liu, Ming Ruan, and Gang Xu, *Tell the World*, trans. Henry L. Epstein (New York: Pantheon Books, 1989), p. x.

³⁶ Rice, *The Dragon’s Brood*, p. 270.

“With such emotions running high among students,” as King K. Tsao points out, “there was a general perception that soon they would leave campuses and take to the streets, especially around the May Fourth period.”³⁷ To some extent, one could argue that it was this anniversary effect that laid the mental foundation for the student movement in the spring of 1989.

The popular sentiment that “something had to happen” was manifested in the young college students’ democratic activities on campuses before the June Fourth Movement. Shen Tong reports that both he and Wang Dan anticipated that something extraordinary would happen in 1989. By the end of the conversation, Wang remarked: “Things will happen this year,” and Shen expressed his agreement:

“I know,” I said. “The world is already focusing on China’s record on human rights because of the Lhasa incident last December.” I have read about the Chinese Communists’ brutal treatment of Tibetan protesters in one of the Hong Kong magazines. “And of course we are coming up to the seventieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement.”³⁸

Here Shen Tong attributes the unusual thing that would happen to the “seventieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement” in addition to the issues of human rights and Tibetan incident that year. Then, as a response to Shen’s statement, Wang became engaged as they talked about the possibilities of a student movement. The conversation was reported by Shen Tong:

‘The National People’s Congress will convene this spring,’ he said. ‘July fourteenth is the two hundredth anniversary of the French Revolution. October first is the fortieth anniversary of Liberation.’... ‘Many of the old Party cadres will want a big celebration, because they’ll never live to see the next major anniversary,’ I said. As everyone laughed at this, I continued, ‘But if they want to celebrate, things will happen.’ Wang Dan nodded. ‘This is a very important year.’³⁹

³⁷ King K. Tsao, “Civil Disobedience and Dissent against the Party-State: An Eyewitness Account of the 1989 Chinese Student Movement,” in *Culture and Politics in China*, p. 155.

³⁸ Shen, *Almost A Revolution*, pp. 152-153.

³⁹ Shen, *Almost A Revolution*, pp. 152-153.

Thus the three momentous anniversaries constitute the psychological foundation for the Tiananmen Generation to foresee a large-scale grassroots movement to occur in the year of 1989. It is worthwhile noting that this passage exemplifies the political use of foreign revolutionary past, such as the French Revolution and “1968 Prague Spring” during the June Fourth Movement. This topic deserves further examination.

The Tiananmen Generation’s sentiment over that “something had to happen” was to be further translated into actual demonstrations at Tiananmen Square. Given the anniversary effect of the May Fourth Movement, in the popular perception, its seventieth anniversary constituted a great opportunity to call attention of the public to their political demands. As Shen Tong’s autobiography demonstrates, every student knew why the day of May Fourth was very important for the momentum of the movement because “it was the seventieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement, the first student-led political movement in modern Chinese history.”⁴⁰ This perception was echoed by another student leader’s recollection. In recalling the situation upon the coming of the seventieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement, Li Lu remembers that he was so excited that he said to other students: “we must demonstrate on May 4.” “May 4 would be the last chance to demonstrate,” as he continues to explain, “and if we waited longer, the momentum would be lost.”⁴¹ The seventieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement was thus used by students to make protests against the official indifference to their political demands.

In addition to the various social, economic, political origins of the June Fourth Movement, the anniversary effects of the May Fourth Movement were influential in the

⁴⁰ Shen, *Almost A Revolution*, p. 219.

⁴¹ Li, *Moving the Mountain*, p. 127.

explosion and development of the student movement in the spring of 1989. It was in this way that the cultural memory of the May Fourth revolutionary tradition was rendered in the popular demonstrations during the June Fourth Movement. The anniversary effect of May Fourth reveals the impact of the cultural memory of revolutionary tradition on the Chinese historical consciousness.

Conceptualizing the June Fourth Movement by Recalling May Fourth

A careful examination of the popular discourse during the June Fourth Movement and the student leaders' autobiographies allow us to look into how the prodemocracy protesters conceptualized the student movement by recalling the revolutionary past of the May Fourth Movement. In late April, in an attempt to legitimize the prodemocracy movement, the student leaders considered their protests to be much more significant than those of the May Fourth Movement. At the planning meeting for establishing the Autonomous Student Union of Beijing University on April 24, Wang Dan suggested that a senior party member "who was in many student movements during the Nationalist period" told him that the student movement was "the biggest one since May Fourth." Thus, as Wang continued to remark: "We can be proud of our place in history."⁴² By quoting the words from a senior party member who was part of the May Fourth Movement, Wang intended to emphasize the great significance of the student movement so as to mobilize more students to join them and to justify the organization of the Autonomous Student Union of Beijing University. The same strategy was utilized in "New May Fourth Manifesto" as the students used the May Fourth Movement to justify their demonstration at Tiananmen Square on May 4, 1989:

⁴² Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 64.

Seventy years ago today, a large group of illustrious students assembled in front of Tiananmen, and a new chapter in the history of China was opened. Today, we are once again assembled here, not only to commemorate that monumental day but more importantly, to carry forward the May Fourth spirit of science and democracy. Today in front of the symbol of the Chinese nation, Tiananmen, we can proudly proclaim to all the people in our nation that we are worthy of the pioneers of seventy years ago.⁴³

This passage conveys important messages in terms of political use of the May Fourth Movement. On the one hand, it is safe to argue that the strategy of using the past of the May Fourth Movement was applied to empower the student movement at Tiananmen Square since the CCP has sanctioned the movement as a sanctioned revolutionary tradition as manifested in the Monument to the People's Heroes, the exhibition of the Museum of the Chinese Revolution, the official propaganda, and the history textbooks. On the other hand, this rhetorical strategy was used to mobilize popular identification for the student movement by connecting themselves to their May Fourth revolutionary predecessors. The making of cultural memory is an "ongoing" process in which different social groups struggle to gain authority to justify their demands by using the past, and what the students did constitutes a footnote to that process.⁴⁴

The juxtaposition of the June Fourth Movement with the May Fourth Movement not only was reflected in the self-estimation of the protesting students but also had been manifested in the popular conceptualization of the student movement. For example, in an endeavor to rebuke the April 26 editorial, a poster urges the state leaders to recognize that the student movement "is the continuation of the May Fourth Movement" rather than political turmoil to overthrow the communist Party and the socialist system.⁴⁵ Similarly, in order to mobilize popular support for the prodemocracy movement, a group of

⁴³ "New May Fourth Manifesto," in *Cries for Democracy*, p. 135.

⁴⁴ Karen Till, "Places of Memory," in J. Agnew, et al, ed. *Companion to Political Geography* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), p. 290.

⁴⁵ "Is It a Dialogue or an Admonitory Talk? On the 'Dialogue' of April 29," in *China's Search for Democracy*, p. 150.

intellectuals consciously usurped the official discourse on the May Fourth Movement in the “May 16 Statement.” “This [movement] is a national awakening that not only draws on the spirit of May Fourth,” as the “Statement” asserts, “but also goes beyond it.”⁴⁶ In the view of those dissident intellectuals, the significance of the student movement was much more considerable than that of the May Fourth revolutionary tradition. The same perspective was epitomized in a poster written in the language of Mao’s revolutionary discourse by an anonymous author called “Student of Mao Zedong.” “This student movement will compose a new chapter of revolutionary era in modern Chinese history,” as the poster claims, “and its significance is much more far beyond than the people’s estimation.” Then, it continues to amplify: “It will be a patriotic democracy movement that thoroughly fights against the remnants of feudalism under the socialist condition since the May Fourth Movement of 1919.”⁴⁷ Written in Mao’s language, the poster is aimed to justify the student movement by describing it a movement that “thoroughly fights against the remnants of feudalism.”

The same strategy was used in the protest posters to mobilize the popular support for the student movement and criticize imposing martial law in Beijing. For example, in a public statement announced on May 23, the Joint Conference of People from All Walks of Life in the Capital claims that the student movement not only “is unprecedented in Chinese history” but also “surpasses any revolution in Chinese history.” So significant as it may be, the statement suggests: “Even the May Fourth Movement of 1919 and the

⁴⁶ “Wu yiliu shengming,” 2; Yan, et al, “May 16 Statement,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 215.

⁴⁷ “Beijing xuesheng yundong kaocha baogao [The investigation report on the student movement in Beijing],” in Shiyue pinglun she [October review press], ed., *Zhongguo minyun yuan ziliao jingxuan* [The selected collection of the materials on the Chinese democracy movement], vol. 2 (Hong Kong: Shiyue pinglun she, 1989), p. 139.

April Fifth Movement of 1976 cannot match it.”⁴⁸ In this way, the Joint Conference aimed to condemn martial law and to rally the public to uphold the student movement under the terrifying hazard of military crackdown. Likewise, in order to discredit the military control in Beijing, a public letter to the troops emphasizes that the student protest was “a movement of the same historical importance as with the May Fourth Movement of 1919 and will be certainly recorded forever in history.”⁴⁹ On the other hand, some prodemocracy supporters of the older generation came to persuade the students to withdraw from Tiananmen Square by arguing that the movement already created momentous contribution to the Chinese nation. For example, in a letter from the “Educated Youth of Three Old Classes [1966, 1967, and 1968],” the authors claim that “the historical significance of this patriotic democracy movement has surpassed the May Fourth, the December Twenty-Ninth, and the April Fifth Movements,” and since the students “have obtained the epoch-making great victory,” the people “will inscribe the day of your withdrawal on the historical monument.”⁵⁰ In this way, these old educated youths, who had been through the Cultural Revolution, intended to urge the protesting students to return to campuses.

The political use of the May Fourth Movement continued to be reflected in the popular discourse on the military cleanup of Tiananmen Square. In a public letter to the Chinese people, the Autonomous Student Union of Universities and Colleges in Beijing emphasizes that, “one month after the seventieth anniversary of the May Fourth

⁴⁸“The Final Battle between Light and Darkness: Statement on the Current Situation,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 293.

⁴⁹ “A Letter to all Soldiers who are Ordered to Enter Beijing to Impose Martial Law,” in *Voices from Tiananmen Square*, p. 133; also see, “Letter to the Officers and Soldiers Ordered to Enter Beijing to Impose Martial Law,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 298.

⁵⁰“Zhi Tiananmen guangchang tongxue de yifeng xin [A letter to the students at Tiananmen Square],” in *Zhongguo minyun yuan ziliao jingxuan*, vol. 2, p. 70.

Movement,” the prodemocracy fighters “once more soaked the flag of the People’s Republic with their blood in capital city.” Then, it reiterates that the movement had “inherited and furthered the spirit of May Fourth” and “turned a new page in the struggle for freedom and democracy in the Chinese society.”⁵¹ The letter seems to argue that the state violence should not be committed in pacifying the student movement that was as important as the officially sanctioned May Fourth revolutionary tradition.

May Fourth, National Salvation, and the Ideal of Democracy

In addition to using the past of the May Fourth Movement, the popular protesters tended to conceptualize the June Fourth Movement by locating it in the larger context of the Chinese national salvation movement. In the first issue of *One Generation (Yidai ren)*, one of the underground newspapers created during the June Fourth Movement, the student protesters published an open letter written in the rhetoric of national salvation to consider the significance of the student movement. The letter states: “Seventy years earlier, China confronted its political crisis. Seventy years later, what we face today is a worsening cultural crisis.” By relating to the severe predicament of their May Fourth revolutionary forerunners, the students meant to single out the considerable meaning of the prodemocracy movement. Then, in order to amplify the meaning, the letter continues:

Seventy years ago, the May Fourth new culture movement with the central agenda of enlightenment by means of democracy and science had met the anti-imperialist and patriotic movement.... Seventy years later, we again encountered harsh challenge of the reality [imposing martial law].... Seventy years is simply an instant in history, but our nation has endured all kinds of suffering. Today, are we repeating May Fourth when we commemorate it by rekindling the spirit of May Fourth and crying for science and democracy once more? No, we want to surpass May Fourth and complete the unfinished mission of enlightenment left by the May Fourth Movement.⁵²

⁵¹ “Statement of Association of Students’ Unions of Beijing Universities to Compatriots Everywhere,” in *Voices from Tiananmen Square*, pp. 187, 191.

⁵² “Wei wusi qishi zhounian gao quanti tongbao shu [Letter to the compatriots of the whole country],” *Yidai ren* [One generation] 1 (May 4, 1989): 1.

This passage is meaningful in terms of the Chinese national salvation movement. On the one hand, by juxtaposing the crises China encountered seventy years earlier and later, the student demonstrators invented a historical continuum between the June Fourth Movement and the May Fourth Movement. It is this continuum that justifies the legitimacy of the student movement when the Chinese nation “has endured all kinds of suffering” in seventy years from 1919 to 1989. In this way, they were implying that the PRC rule did not prevent China from suffering, and, therefore, it was necessary for them to complete the mission of national salvation by “rekindling the spirit of May Fourth” and “crying for science and democracy.”⁵³ On the other hand, by emphasizing that the movement was not simply to repeat May Fourth but to surpass it, they tried to point out the much more vital importance of the prodemocracy movement as they showed the determination to “complete the unfinished mission of enlightenment left by the May Fourth Movement.” Whereas the May Fourth project seventy years earlier was replaced by the “anti-imperialist and patriotic movement,” in the students’ view, the June Fourth Movement was to complete that unfinished project to save China from decline. This view was echoed by a student leader’s public statement suggesting that the movement was “the most magnificent bursting out since the May Fourth Movement” and “the beginning of a new enlightenment movement of new democracy with the students as its core.”⁵⁴ For the students, the May Fourth project of science and democracy is the sole way leading to

⁵³ As Rice’s interviewee points out: “[In] these recent protests at Tiananmen Square, we were using those same words [i.e. science and democracy] again. The substance has not changed in China. Even the declarations from 1919, recorded in the writing of Lu Xun, are still valid for today’s movement. . . . But if seventy years later we are still using the same slogans, it indicates nothing has changed in China. We still democracy more than anything.” Rice, *The Dragon’s Brood*, p. 241.

⁵⁴ Feng Congde, “My Inner Thoughts—To the Students of Beijing Universities,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 172.

national salvation. Weaving the national salvation discourse into the letter, the students aimed to justify their prodemocracy movement.

The same strategy was manifested in prodemocracy supporters' intention to rationalize their protest activities by holding up the banner of democracy.⁵⁵ As addressed above, in the effort to justify the large-scale demonstration at Tiananmen Square on 4 May 1989, the "New May Fourth Manifesto" begins with a juxtaposition of the May Fourth Movement and the student movement in the tune of national salvation. In order to emphasize the necessity of democratic reform for the modernization of China, it comes further to claim: "Only then can the tasks the May Fourth Movement set before us be accomplished, only then can the spirit of May Fourth be carried forward, and only then can our wish for a strong China be realized."⁵⁶ Three successive "only thens" were used to stress the importance of democracy in the language of national salvation. In its conclusion, the same language is used to reiterate the claim of democratic reform:

Fellow students, fellow countrymen, prosperity for our nation is the ultimate objective of our patriotic student movement. Democracy, science, human rights, and rule by law are the ideals that we hundreds of thousands of university students share in the struggle.... Fellow students, fellow countrymen, here at richly symbolic Tiananmen, let us once again search

⁵⁵ Before the outbreak of the June Fourth Movement, in his inaugural statement for the first issue of the journal *New May Fourth*, Wang Dan emphasizes the indispensability of democratic reform in solving China's predicaments by using national salvation discourse. "Under China's current situation," as the statement begins, "it is necessary for us to think of Gu Yanwu's famous saying: 'The life and death of the nation is the responsibility of each individual'." For prodemocracy advocates like Wang Dan, as mentioned above, the only way to save China at the moment of life and death is to carry out a democratic reform. Then, in his attempt to legitimize the cause of democratic reform, Wang continues to identify with the revolutionary tradition of May Fourth in an allegorical way: "Seventy years ago, the spirit of Prometheus appeared in the sky of the long dark night of China. Democracy and science... the slogans has inspired the hearts of several thousand of the Chinese youth, and they realized that the responsibility of pushing forward our nation to the rank of strong country spirit of May Fourth is on themselves—the New Youth. Seventy years later, the spirit [of Prometheus] is still roaming about [in the sky] and its call [for democracy] is still surging." Here Wang Dan uses the old cultural script from late Ming and the historical precedent in early twentieth century to call for "the New Youth" of 1989 to respond the call of the "spirit of Prometheus," democracy and science, for the supreme cause of national salvation. In other words, with his statement, Wang was trying to mobilize the young students of his time to strive for democratic reform by referring to their May Fourth revolutionary forerunners in the language of national salvation. Wang Dan, "Xin wusi xuanyan [New May Fourth Declaration]," in *Zhongguo minyun yuan ziliao jingxuan*, vol. 2, p. 185.

⁵⁶ "New May Fourth Manifesto," in *Cries for Democracy*, p. 136.

together and struggle together for democracy, for science, for freedom, for human rights, and for rule by law. Let our cries awaken our young Republic!⁵⁷

Here, in their cries for awakening “the young Republic,” the student protesters claim that their final goal is to make “prosperity of our nation” by means of democracy, science, human rights, and rule by law. Interestingly, in an attempt to empower the prodemocracy movement, Tiananmen Square as the symbol of the nation is emphasized by the end of the “Manifesto.” The same rhetorical strategy can be read in the editorial of *News Herald* on the very the same day.⁵⁸ The ideal of democracy was thus legitimized by the students’ identification with the May Fourth Movement written in the language of national salvation.

May Fourth as a Weapon to Defame the Official Authorities and Mobilize Popular Support

Other than serving as a rhetorical strategy to legitimize the prodemocracy movement, the May Fourth Movement was used by the popular protesters as a weapon to slander the state leaders and official misconduct in the crisis management of the student movement. At Nankai University in Tianjin, a title of “Guidelines for a New May Fourth” was used in a poster to criticize Li Peng.⁵⁹ Likewise, in a big-character poster placed on the campus of the People’s University on April 26, the state injustice imposed on the student

⁵⁷ “New May Fourth Manifesto,” in *Cries for Democracy*, p. 137.

⁵⁸ Similar rhetorical practice was also demonstrated in the posters created by the protesters in the provinces. In its open letter to the college students in Xi’an on May 1, the Xi’an Student Union of Solidarity uses the rhetoric of national salvation to rally more students to join the rank of the prodemocracy movement. “Seventy years earlier, for the sake of rescuing the country and the nation from peril and demise,” as the letter puts it, “the older generation of our age carried out a difficult struggle with resolute determination by holding up the banner of science and democracy.” “Seventy years later,” it continues to accentuate, “today we have no alternative but to hoist this banner once again.” “Gao Xi’an quanti daxuesheng shu, [Letter to all college students in Xi’an],” in *Zhongguo minyun yuan ziliao jingxuan*, vol. 2, p. 70. Likewise, the same language was written into its declaration of class boycott the same day: “On May 4 in seventy year ago, at the critical moment of life and death of the motherland, in order to rescue our Chinese nation from suffering, numerous passionate youths march forward resolutely and bravely, and they eventually wrote a glorious page in Chinese history.” “Xi’an goading xuexiao lianhe bake xuanyan, [Joint declaration of class boycott of colleges and universities in Xi’an],” in *Zhongguo minyun yuan ziliao jingxuan*, vol. 2, p. 118.

⁵⁹ Andrew J. Nathan and Perry Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers: The Chinese Leadership’s Decision to Use Force Against Their Own People—In Their Own Words*, Zhang Liang, comp. (New York: PublicAffairs, 2001), p. 59.

movement was compared to those committed by the Beiyang government in 1919, the GMD government in 1937, and the Gang of Four in 1976:

The May Fourth Movement was considered by the Beiyang government as flood and monster, the December Ninth Movement was vilified by the Guomindang as damage to the Resistance against Japan, and the April Fifth Movement was determined by the Gang of Four as a counterrevolutionary incident. Yet, do not the citizens with clear heads and communists recognize the progressive nature of the student movement? You, our government, do not see this point here and use your state apparatus to suppress the student movement, and do not tell me that you would like to rehabilitate and commemorate [the student movement] in ten, twenty, and even seventy years later?”⁶⁰

This passage is interesting in two senses. First, the author was expert at manipulating the critical memories of the Republican era and the Cultural Revolution to undermine the validity of the official discourse on the student movement. Second, this passage reveals the invented nature of the official discourse on the grassroots movement under the Chinese communist regime. Because of this invented nature, the author even came to anticipate that the PRC would “rehabilitate and commemorate” the student movement several decades later. This anticipation of reversing the verdict on the student movement constitutes a manifestation of the popular memory on the April Fifth Movement, in which the event was first defined as a counterrevolutionary incident and then redefined as a revolutionary action. The juxtaposition of the April 26 editorial and the Gang of Four’s verdict on the April Fifth Movement was utilized by the author to alert the government: If you do not learn the lesson from the Gang of Four, the down fall of the PRC is anticipatable.

The strategy of invoking the May Fourth Movement was utilized to discredit the state use of violence before and after enforcing martial law. In the “May 16 Statement,” the past of the violent suppression of student demonstrations during the May Fourth, the December Ninth, and April Fifth Movements was manipulated to call for the government

⁶⁰ “Kebei a, zhengfu [Alas! What a lamentable government],” in *Zhongguo minyun yuan ziliao jingxuan*, vol. 2, p. 133.

to avoid applying military force in pacifying the student movement. Likewise, in a letter to the troops, the author attempts to undermine the legitimacy of military suppression by arguing that the student movement “is a Movement of the same historical importance as with the May Fourth Movement of 1919.”⁶¹ By relating the student movement to the May Fourth Movement, it aims to discourage the PLA soldiers to use force against the students.

On the other hand, the same strategy was employed to encourage protesting students and to mobilize popular support for the prodemocracy movement. In an attempt to establish the social foundation of the prodemocracy movement, a handbill reports various cases illustrating popular support from all walks of life in the country. Among many points, it emphasizes that “the old Beijing University people” who “before Liberation has participated in a student movement [during the May Fourth period] also expressed support [to the student movement in 1989].” In its conclusion, the handbill reiterates this support was from the older generations who had been through the May Fourth Movement by claiming: “Old Beijing University people support us!”⁶² By giving examples demonstrating the support from the May Fourth revolutionary forerunners, the handbill was meant to encourage students to carry on the prodemocracy movement.

The popular dissidents were also good at appropriating the glorious past of the May Fourth Movement to mobilize popular support for the prodemocracy movement. For example, in order to rally Beijing workers to stand with the students, a handbill from Beijing University recalls the splendid tradition of working class support of the student movements since May Fourth period. “During the May Fourth Movement,” the handbill

⁶¹ “A Letter to all Soldiers Who are Ordered to Enter Beijing to Impose Martial Law,” in *Voices from Tiananmen Square*, p. 133.

⁶² “Dad and Mom Support You,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 109.

stresses, “the older generation of China’s workers bravely stood up and held general strikes to support the patriotic students.” Then, it continues to argue that, since “the workers always played a great role” in “all the patriotic democracy in the past,” we “believe that the working class in the 1980s will play an even more glorious role than its predecessors.”⁶³ The students thus used official discourse on the revolutionary tradition of working class to rally the workers to support the student movement.

The Popular Use of the April Fifth Movement at Tiananmen Square

The popular reminiscence of the April Fifth Movement at Tiananmen Square also played an important role in the course of the June Fourth Movement. As previous scholarship has emphasized, one of the most distinct similarities between the April Fifth and June Fourth Movements was that both grassroots movements began with popular mourning activities for a deceased leader: the April Fifth Movement was initiated by the popular commemoration of Zhou Enlai, the June Fourth Movement started with Beijing students’ mourning activities for Hu Yaobang. More importantly, both mourning activities developed into large-scale protests against state authorities in the name of defending the late leaders’ reputation. Whereas the protesters during the April Fifth Movement intended to oppose the Gang of Four’s vilification of Zhou, the student demonstrators during the June Fourth Movement aimed to urge the CCP to reevaluate the achievement of Hu. One poster clearly points out: “There is an astonishing historical similarity between the April Fifth Movement and this democratic movement. The cause was the same—the death of a great man who had suffered from unjust treatment.”⁶⁴ Thus, using mourning the dead as an excuse to voice protest became a common feature between the April Fifth and June

⁶³ “Stand Up Bravely, Our Elder Brother Workers,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, pp. 263, 264.

⁶⁴ Fang Sheng, “Cong wusi, siwu dao wuyue chunchao [From ‘May Fourth’ and ‘April Fifth’ to the spring tide of May],” from the Munro Collection, Section XXVII, Document 6-3.

Fourth Movements. The following pages will show that the practice of mourning the dead was more than an “astonishing historical similarity,” it was a manifestation of the cultural memory of the April Fifth Movement.

A study of the popular discourse created during the June Fourth Movement suggests that the memory about the April Fifth Movement played a critical role in the popular conceptualization of the prodemocracy movement. As touched upon in Chapter Six, the student leaders’ autobiographical writings demonstrate that the Tiananmen Generation vividly remember their experiences of mourning Zhou Enli as well as reading and transcribing the Tiananmen Poems with their grandparents or parents at the base of the Monument to the People’s Heroes. Although they did not really understand the significance of the April Fifth Movement when they were young, those college students did translate their personal memories of the event into the commemorative activities for Hu Yaobang. Moreover, in the posters and flyers created during the June Fourth Movement, the student protesters had used the glorious past of the April Fifth Movement to justify and conceptualize the prodemocracy movement. Many grassroots activists also came to manipulate the past of the state violence during the April Fifth Movement to criticize the PRC’s misconduct in dealing with the student uprising. In doing so, some of them even borrowed the popular discourse created to protest against the Gang of Four to criticize the official suppression. As such, the student protesters had played variations of communist revolutionary memory at Tiananmen Square during the June Fourth Movement.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ It is worthwhile noting that, in addition to the May Fourth and April Fifth revolutionary tradition, the protesting students tended to recall and reenact many communist reminiscences at Tiananmen Square during the June Fourth Movement. Among many, one of the most interesting examples was the holding of the wedding of Li Lu and Zhao Ming at the base of the Monument to the People’s Heroes. The wedding was considered as a reenactment of the “Wedding at Execution Ground (Xingchang shang de hunli),” a widely known communist legend printed in the

Mourning the Dead Hu Yaobang: Reenacting the April Fifth Movement

The reminiscence of the popular commemoration of Zhou Enlai came to the mind of both official authorities and young students when Hu Yaobang died on 15 April 1989. When he anticipated possible impact of Hu's death at a Politburo Standing Committee meeting, Yao Yilin cautioned other committee members in a resolute tone: "We'd better watch that some people don't use the mourning for Comrade Yaobang as an excuse to make their complaints."⁶⁶ Yao's concern could well have come from his experience during the April Fifth Movement; he had been a victim of the Cultural Revolution and a fighter against the Gang of Four.

The autobiographical writings of certain student leaders during the June Fourth Movement reveal that the historical memory of the popular mourning activities for Zhou Enlai was manifested in young college students as well. When Zhang Boli, a writer who studied in Beijing University in 1989, saw the students' mourning activities for Hu Yaobang in mid-April, he immediately suggested: "It was reminiscent of the April Fifth Movement of 1976 when Premier Zhou Enlai died."⁶⁷ As a thirty-year-old student who has been through the later days of the Cultural Revolution, Zhang's statement is likely from his conceptualization of the April Fifth Movement. Given his personal memory of the April Fifth Movement, Zhang posted the first memorial poem to mourn Hu at the Triangle (Sanjiaodi) at Beijing University.⁶⁸ Other young students were inclined to recall

textbook of the PRC. In this legend, a pair of communist lovers announces their wedding on the spot when they were going to be executed by the GMD authorities. The juxtaposition of the wedding of Li and Zhao and that of the communist legend was recorded in the autobiographical writings of the student leaders. See Feng, *Lisi riji*, pp. 368-369; Li, *Moving the Mountain*, pp. 173-174.

⁶⁶ Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 22.

⁶⁷ Zhang, *Escape from China*, p. 33.

⁶⁸ Zhang Boli, "Chang xiangsi, wuye song Yaobang [Constant yearning, farewell to Yaobang on a rainy night]," in Jiang Pinchao, ed., *Liusi shiji* [Poetry collection of June Fourth] (Taipei: Boda chubanshe, 2007), p. 3. According to the note of the editor of the poetry collection, this poem was the first memorial poem posted at Triangle Land after the death of Hu Yaobang.

the popular mourning activities for Zhou when they reenacted the same practice for Hu. As a twenty-three-year-old student at Beijing University, Feng Congde “thought of the mourning activities for Zhou Enlai in 1976” as soon as he saw the popular commemoration of Hu.⁶⁹ More interestingly, in considering the significance of the student movement as an aftermath of the mourning activities, Feng suggests:

China is a country of worshipping death. For centuries, [the Chinese people] have valued burial and paid careful attention to funeral rites, and, therefore, often use the dead to oppress the living. The people use mourning Zhou to express resentment to the Cultural Revolution; mourning Hu is similar. At the death of Zhou Enlai, the people commemorated him at Tiananmen [Square] and resulted in the stepping down of Deng Xiaoping. But this made him won over the people’s support for his rise to power afterward. At the death of Hu Yaobang, the people also went to Tiananmen to commemorate him, but this resulted in Deng’s use of force to kill the people, making him lose the people’s support and leaving a gloomy record in the history of his life and the country.”⁷⁰

Here, with a comparison of the mourning activities during the April Fifth and June Fourth Movements, Feng touches upon the issue of the politics of memorializing the dead. Especially, he associated this death politics to the rise and fall of Deng Xiaoping. This association suggests the impact of the official discourse on the April Fifth Movement after the Third Plenum. As discussed in Chapter Six, the official discourse in the reform era had defined the April Fifth Movement as the social foundation for the legitimacy of Deng Xiaoping’s rise to power.

The memory of the popular mourning activities for Zhou Enlai had also influenced younger students during the June Fourth Movement. For example, as a senior college student of twenty-one years old, Shen Tong recalled his experience as a child of mourning Zhou when he became involved in the popular commemoration of Hu Yaobang. “I did not really understand the events of that year [1976] until I was much older,” as Shen points out, “but I vividly remember the day Zhou Enlai died.” In his autobiography,

⁶⁹ Feng, *Liusi riji*, p. 79.

⁷⁰ Feng, *Liusi riji*, p. 79.

Shen recalls in detail his experience of mourning Zhou and reading the Tiananmen Poems with his parents at the base of the Monument to the People's Heroes during the April Fifth Movement.⁷¹ It was his bodily practice at Tiananmen Square that allowed Shen to remember and recall the April Fifth Movement in the spring of 1989.

The impact of the memory of the April Fifth Movement was also manifested in certain bodily practices during the mourning activities for Hu Yaobang. As mentioned in Chapter Five, the hearse carrying the body of Zhou Enlai made one circuit of Tiananmen Square before moving to the Babaoshan Cemetery. The mourning students in the spring of 1989 also asked the hearse carrying Hu's remains to reenact the same practice.⁷² The state authorities refused the students' request, probably because the government did not want the same scenario from the April Fifth Movement to take place once more at Tiananmen Square. Likewise, the scenario of mourning Premier Zhou alongside Chang'an Avenue in 1976 re-emerged on 22 April 1989 when the official funeral rite for Hu was held inside the Great Hall of the People.⁷³

⁷¹ Shen, *Almost A Revolution*, esp. pp. 23-27. Describing his experience of mourning Zhou Enlai with his mother at Tiananmen Square, Shen Tong's autobiography reads: "Afterward she directed us to do something unusual: we put on our black armbands and took all of the white flowers we had made to Tiananmen Square (23). Likewise, Shen documented his experience of reading memorial poems at the base of the Monument to the People's Heroes: "Toward the end of March I went with my family almost every day to Tiananmen Square to see all of the *xiaozibao*, small-character posters with writings and slogans on them, that had been put up by the people of Beijing. After dinner my father took me with him, and on Sundays he interrupted my play with other children to ask me to go with him.... Thousands of people seemed to be making their way to the pedestal of the Monument to the People's Heroes to read *xiaozibao*, but there were very few children in the square. Many people were copying the *xiaozibao*. My father must have copied everything he could, because he had several notebooks full of writings. He told me they were very good poems, but I was too young to ask him about them, although I knew that he had writing some poetry himself and that literature and writing were important to him. Since the Cultural Revolution had begun, all of the books published and sold in bookstores had been politically 'correct' which meant that the contents were meaningless propaganda. My father and thousands of other Beijing residents furiously copied the writings on the monument because this was a way in which they could read contemporary Chinese works of real literary value and because the poems were an expression of the dissatisfaction they all felt. Every night Fourth Uncle came over, and he and my parents exchanged what they had copied that day.... But my father never moved from the pedestal. He spent every minute of his time reading the posters and writing in his notebook. (24-25)"

⁷² Liu, *Tell the World*, p. 14.

⁷³ Liu, *Tell the World*, p. 14.

The reenactment of the April Fifth scenario in the June Fourth Movement was not limited to applying the practice of mourning the dead. The prodemocracy demonstrators were inclined to incorporate the discourse from the April Fifth Movement into their posters and handbills. For example, one of the most quoted and circulated slogans in the popular mourning activities for Zhou Enlai at Tiananmen Square—“The People’s Premier is Loved by the People; The People’s Premier in turn Loves the People”—was borrowed and adapted in the mourning activities for Hu Yaobang: “The People’s Secretary is Loved by the People; The People’s Secretary in turn Loves the People.”⁷⁴ Moreover, the Tiananmen Poems were often repeated in the popular discourse of the June Fourth Movement. For example, the poet Bei Dao’s “The Answer (Huida),” a poem that became a symbol of “April Fifth,” was reprinted in the first issue of *News Herald* on 4 May 1989.⁷⁵ Shen’s autobiography allows us to trace how those poems, such as “The Answer,” found channels to the young generation of his age. First, Shen’s experience of reading poems with his father at the base of the Monument in the spring of 1976 could be in common among the young students of his age. This shared experience constituted a channel through which young college students learned of Bei Dao’s poems. Second, given the CCP’s loose control in the creation of literature and art in the 1980s, numerous works of fiction and poems aimed to reflect the Cultural Revolution were widely circulated among the young Chinese people. In his autobiography, Shen reports that it was through reading those collections of the “Scar Literature,” or “Misty Poems,” that he encountered Bei Dao’s “The Answer.”⁷⁶ This could be a shared experience among the

⁷⁴ Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, pp. 29-30.

⁷⁵ Beidao, “Huida [The answer],” *News Herald* 1 (May 4, 1989): 4.

⁷⁶ According to his autobiography, in the summer of 1985 when he was a high school student, Shen found a chance to earn extra money by selling the underground *New Age Poetry Collection* (*Xinsichao shiji*) at Beida campus with some other thirty students. He not only sold the underground poetry collection but also had read it. In that poetry collection,

Tiananmen Generation. In this sense, “The Answer” constitutes a cultural script shared by the students of the June Fourth Movement to remember their prodemocracy movement.

June Fourth as the Landmark of the Chinese Democratic Movement

In addition to appropriating the practices and language from the mourning activities for Zhou Enlai, the student protesters in the spring of 1989 came to manipulate the past of the April Fifth Movement to conceptualize and legitimize the prodemocracy movement. For example, in pointing out the significant meaning of the student movement in China’s search for democracy, the editorial of *News Herald* locates it in the longer context since “April Fifth”: “[From] the April Fifth Movement, the Democracy Wall Movement, and the 1985 and 1986 student movements [to] this patriotic democracy movement, in a decade, one after another waves of crying for democracy have become more and more intense and stronger.”⁷⁷ This association with the April Fifth Movement is meaningful in two senses. First, by connecting with the April Fifth revolutionary past, the editorial justified the demand for democratic reform. Second, it turned the April Fifth Movement into a newly “invented tradition” of the Chinese democratic movement at Tiananmen Square. Although the April Fifth Movement did mark a turning point in the social-political life of Tiananmen Square since the founding of the PRC in terms of popular protests against state power, it was hardly a democratic movement in its purpose. By inventing the April Fifth Movement as part of a democratic tradition, the student protesters attempted to claim the historical legitimacy for their movement. It is in this sense that Tiananmen Square had experienced another turning point in its history since

according to Shen, his favorite one was Bei Dao’s “The Answer.” As his autobiography reads: “I had underlined a poem by Bei Dao titled ‘The Answer.’ This poem had become a symbol of the 1976 movement in Tiananmen Square, the event that had so touched my parents when I was too young to understand.” Shen, *Almost a Revolution*, pp. 74-75, 78.

⁷⁷ “Ba women de minzhu yundong jinxing daodi,” *News Herald* 1 (May 2, 1989): 1.

the founding of the PRC and the first unofficial social movement in the spring of 1976. Tiananmen Square was turned into a symbol and battleground for the supreme cause of democracy.

The juxtaposition of the June Fourth Movement with the April Fifth Movement was reflected in the prodemocracy protesters' desire to display the significance of the student movement in the history of the Chinese revolution and democratic movement after imposing martial law. On May 23, the Joint Conference of People from All Walks of Life in the Capital released a statement to underscore that the movement "has surpassed any revolution in Chinese history." The significance of the movement was so considerable that it goes so far as to claim: "Even the May Fourth Movement of 1919 and the April Fifth Movement of 1976 cannot match it."⁷⁸ Likewise, in an open letter aimed to persuade protesting students to withdraw from Tiananmen Square, a group of educated youths who had been through the Cultural Revolution conceptualize that the student movement "has surpassed the significance of the May Fourth, the December Ninth, and the April Fifth Movement."⁷⁹ Like the May Fourth Movement, the April Fifth Movement was used by protesters to conceptualize the June Fourth Movement.

Using April Fifth to Discredit State Violence

The April Fifth Movement was also utilized by the popular demonstrators to discredit the state violence imposed on the student movement. For example, after the brutal suppression of the sit-in demonstration before the Xinhuaamen on April 20, the Autonomous Union of Beijing Workers released a letter to discourage policemen and soldiers to "serve as tools of the people's enemies" and call for them to "stand on the

⁷⁸"The Final Battle between Light and Darkness: Statement on the Current Situation," in *China's Search for Democracy*, p. 293.

⁷⁹"Zhi Tiananmen guangchang tongxue de yifeng xin," in *Zhongguo minyun yuan ziliao jingxuan*, vol. 2, p. 70.

people's side" by claiming that the people "will never forget the crimes of those murders involved in the 'April 5 Incident' [1976] and the 'April 20 Bloodshed' [1989]." In doing so, the workers intended to juxtapose the violent suppression on 20 April 1989 with the Gang of Four's brutal crackdown of the April Fifth Movement.⁸⁰ Likewise, on April 24, *News Herald* published an open letter to the college students of the whole country to condemn the official violence in suppressing the student's petition by referring to the April Fifth Movement. "The government falsely vilified patriotic students as a small handful of people with ulterior motives after the April 20 Incident at Xinhuaamen," the letter points out, "and this cannot help but to make people recall the Tiananmen Incident thirteen years ago."⁸¹ In doing so, the letter compares the April 20 incident to the Gang of Four's bloody suppression of the April Fifth Movement. Again, in a handbill written to condemn official misconduct in dealing with the demonstration on April 20, the author uses the "unforgettable" April Fifth Movement to display his determination to remember the state violence committed at the Xinhuaamen: "We can never forget the Tiananmen Square Incident of April 5, 1976. Today a similar episode is again taking place in front of Zhongnanhai, the heart of the People's Republic of China, under the solemn national emblem. We shall never forget this day of April 20, 1989, when a government used state machinery in a fascist crackdown on the students and city residents who were participating in mourning the death of Mr. Hu Yaobang and presenting a peaceful petition."⁸²

⁸⁰ "Letter to People of the Entire City," in *China's Search for Democracy*, p. 87.

⁸¹ "Gao quanguo gaoxiao tongxue shu [Letter to the college students of the whole country]," *News Herald* Special Issue (April 24, 1989): 1.

⁸² "Under the National Emblem of the People's Republic," in *China's Search for Democracy*, p. 83.

Moreover, the student protesters attempted to criticize the official indifference to their demand of making dialogue with state leaders by using the past of the April Fifth Movement. In an open letter to the CCP, the National People's Congress, and the State Council, two hundred intellectuals call for the government to "draw an historical lesson from the Tiananmen Square Incident of 1976" so as to "listen to the wishes and demands of the students and hold a dialogue with them on the basis of full equality."⁸³ The same rhetoric was applied in the student protests in the provinces. For example, in Xi'an college students' condemnation of the official crackdown of their demonstration on April 22, their handbill reads: "This kind of white terror in this locality reminds me of the April Fifth Movement in 1976."⁸⁴ The April Fifth Movement was thus recalled in the protest against the state violence and injustice during the June Fourth Movement.

Furthermore, using the unjust past of the April Fifth Movement to discredit the official reaction to the student movement was employed in the popular resistance to the April 26 editorial. As mentioned above, in an attempt to discredit the official defamation of the student movement, a poster compares the April 26 editorial to the Gang of Four's incorrect verdict on the April Fifth Movement.⁸⁵ Likewise, with the same motivation, a handbill comes to address how *People's Daily* as the mouthpiece of the CCP distorted the nature of unofficial social movements from below by comparing its editorial printed on 8 April 1976 and the one on 26 April 1989. In doing so, the handbill is to challenge the accuracy and reliability of the April 26 editorial by demonstrating how the April 8 editorial in 1976 has falsely defined the April Fifth Movement as a counterrevolutionary

⁸³ "Open Letter to the Party Central Committee, Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, and the State Committee," in *China's Search for Democracy*, p. 89.

⁸⁴ "Sei shi Xian si erer can'an de xiongshou [Who is the murder of April 22 incident]," in *Zhongguo minyun yuan ziliao jingxuan*, vol. 2, p. 116.

⁸⁵ "Kebei a, zhengfu [Alas! What a lamentable government]," in *Zhongguo minyun yuan ziliao jingxuan*, vol. 2, p. 133.

incident.⁸⁶ Similarly, on May 4, in order to discredit the April 26 editorial, the second issue of *News Herald*, an underground newspaper created by the protesting students, reprinted *People's Daily's* editorial on 18 April 1976, "What Does the Incident in Tiananmen Square Tell Us?" which fabricated the connection between the April Fifth Movement and Deng Xiaoping as discussed in Chapter Six.⁸⁷ This reprinted editorial implies that, just as Deng Xiaoping had been incorrectly accused as the behind-the-scene supporter of the April Fifth Movement, the students were mistakenly defined by the April 26 editorial as "a handful of people with ulterior motives." Then, in the following issue on May 12, *News Herald* printed an article to review the role of *People's Daily* in the turbulent decade of the Cultural Revolution. By comparing the April 26 editorial to the ones printed in *People's Daily* during the Cultural Revolution, the protesting students meant to undermine the validity of the official vilification on the June Fourth Movement.

In addition, the critical memory of the April Fifth Movement was manifested in the popular anxiety over the military crackdown on the student movement at Tiananmen Square. For example, on the eve of May 20, in an open letter to the people, some cadres of the central government call for the public attention to the anticipated state violence in the wake of imposing martial law. "Martial law is now imminent," as the letter makes clear, "and the suppression [such as] that which followed the [incident of] April 5, 1976, will soon resume."⁸⁸ Likewise, in anticipating the use of military power in pacifying the student movement, a handbill created by the student protesters of Beijing University was

⁸⁶ "Siyue xueyun he siwu yundong—Yizhong guanfang jili guibi de bijiao fenxi [The April student movement and the April Fifth movement—A comparative analysis that the official authorities tries to avoid]," in *Zhongguo minyun yuan ziliao jingxuan*, vol. 1, p. 65.

⁸⁷ See *News Herald* 2 (May 4, 1989): 4.

⁸⁸ "Letter to the People," in *China's Search for Democracy*, p. 257; also see "Letter to the People," in *Voices from the Tiananmen Square*, p. 126.

circulated to remind the people of the “big sticks” on the protesters’ backs during the April Fifth Movement.⁸⁹

The same popular anxiety over the resurgence of the state violence involved in the April Fifth Movement was recorded in the autobiographies of the student leaders during the June Fourth Movement. For example, given his knowledge of the April Fifth Movement, Li Lu, one of the student leaders, revealed his anticipation of military crackdown at Tiananmen Square. This anticipation of state violence was epitomized in his autobiography: “We were fully prepared for the army to break in, beat, arrest, and kill some of the student leaders, using stun guns, tear gas, and water guns. If the authorities repeated their actions in Tiananmen Square of thirteen years ago, in April 1976, they would enrage the entire country, and the people would rise up in rebellion against them.”⁹⁰ Li’s anticipation was right. The state authorities of the PRC did repeat “their actions in Tiananmen Square of thirteen years ago.” Correspondingly, as soon as learning the news that troops were ordered to clean up Tiananmen Square by dawn on June 4, the atrocity of the April Fifth Movement came to the mind of Zhang Boli, as his autobiography indicates: “Images of the April Fifth Incident of 1976 replayed in my mind. Would the bloodshed that took place thirteen years before happen again on the same spot?”⁹¹ Yet, the existence of the popular memory of the April Fifth Movement does not necessary mean that the student protesters could rescue themselves from the state violence of the PRC. As such, another traumatic memory of China’s past was transplanted in their hearts at Tiananmen Square.

⁸⁹ “An Unpredictable Government is Always Unpredictable,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 300.

⁹⁰ Li, *Moving the Mountain*, p. 185.

⁹¹ Zhang, *Escape from China*, p. 45.

In Place of Conclusion: June Fourth as a Defining Moment

With the June Fourth Movement came the third defining moment in the history of Tiananmen Square since the founding of the PRC. Since 1949, Tiananmen Square was constructed as a national symbol of the PRC, a memorial site of Chinese revolutionary tradition, and a functional place to display state disciplinary power. During the April Fifth Movement, it was turned into a short-lived public sphere for grassroots activists to make voices of protest against state power and to project a popular vision of Chinese modernity. Since the June Fourth Movement, Tiananmen Square was not only once again converted into a short-lived public sphere for displaying the people's power in making popular discourse beyond the tutelage of the state, but also had been invented into a symbolic space of a Chinese democratic movement.

The popular use of the symbol of state power to protest against state power inevitably resulted in the fierce contest between popular protesters and official authorities in claiming the authority or “sovereignty” to occupy Tiananmen Square. For the authorities, Tiananmen Square represents the “face” of the PRC, and, thus it is intolerable to see the space occupied by the grassroots force for subversive purposes. Seeing protesting students' hunger strike lead to a large-scale demonstration at Tiananmen Square, Deng Xiaoping could not bear the worsening situation and complained in a resolute tone: “Tiananmen is the symbol of the People's Republic of China. The Square has to be in order when Gorbachev comes. We have to maintain our international image. What do we look like if the Square's a mess?”⁹² In the view of official authorities, the student unrest at the symbol of the PRC would make the state lose face when Gorbachev visited China. As a consequence, when the student movement was sustained, the use of military power

⁹² Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 148.

to clean up the student movement at Tiananmen Square so as to “recover” the “face” of the state became an unavoidable “final solution” for the authorities to claim the “sovereignty” of the space. As an excuse to justify the validity of the decision to impose martial law, the same point of view was manifested in Li Ximing’s official report. “Tiananmen is the symbol of the new China,” as Li’s report emphasizes, “the window through which China showcases itself to the world.” “Over the past month and a half, and especially since the declaration of martial law,” as it continues to amplify, “a tiny minority has organized and plotted turmoil and had made continuous occupation of the Square an important political tactic.”⁹³ Due to the “continuous occupation of the Square,” in Li’s words, “the sacred and solemn Tiananmen Square has been reduced to a frontline command center for the turmoil, the center for nationwide transmission of counterrevolutionary opinion, the gathering place for hostile forces foreign and domestic, and a counterrevolutionary base from which to launch furious attacks on the Party and government.”⁹⁴ Thus in order to recover “the sacred and solemn Tiananmen Square” from a “counterrevolutionary base,” it was necessary to “clean up” the “face” of the PRC with force.

Although the military suppression of the student movement was imposed in the end, it was because the sacred symbolism of Tiananmen Square that the authorities reiterated that no blood should be shed on the “face” of the PRC. It was Deng Xiaoping who authorized the use of force in clearing Tiananmen Square but insisted that no blood be spilled within the space.⁹⁵ Deng’s order was emphasized many times after enforcing

⁹³ Beijing Municipal Party Committee and Beijing People’s Government, “One the True Nature of the Turmoil,” in Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 330.

⁹⁴ Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 356.

⁹⁵ Andrew J. Nathan, “Introduction,” in Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. xliv.

martial law.⁹⁶ Deng's instruction was made clear at the Politburo Standing Committee meeting on June 3 when Yang Shangkun relayed the order to clear Tiananmen Square by dawn of June 4. In line with Deng's order, Yang accentuated that, in the process of restoring Tiananmen Square, "we must do everything we possibly can do to avoid bloodshed." By the end of his speech, Yang repeated the point twice: "No bloodshed within Tiananmen Square! [...] No one must die in the Square."⁹⁷ None of the authorities dared to see blood shed on the PRC's "face" and the sacred site of Chinese revolutionary tradition.

The idea that no blood was shed within Tiananmen Square was re-emphasized in the official reports after June 4. On June 6, the report from the Thirty-Eighth Group Army claims that during the clearing of Tiananmen Square the martial troops "didn't kill a single person with rifle fire."⁹⁸ On the same day, at the news conference of the State Council, Zhang Gong, the political commissar and director of the Political Department of the troops, reported that when the martial troops carried out the task of clearing Tiananmen Square they "did not kill one single student or individual."⁹⁹ The same point was reflected in Li Ximing's report as it reads: "No one was killed within the scope of Tiananmen itself."¹⁰⁰ Likewise, in his report to the National People's Congress on June 30, Chen Xitong again emphasizes: "During the whole operation [at Tiananmen Square] no one, including the students who [initially] refused but were [eventually] forced to

⁹⁶ For example, at a meeting with elder revolutionary cadres at Deng Xiaoping's residence on the night of May 27, in accordance with Deng's instruction, Yang Shangkun resolutely asserted: "We must be equally firm about stopping the turmoil and about avoiding in doing so." Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 314.

⁹⁷ Beijing Municipal Party Committee and Beijing People's Government, "One the True Nature of the Turmoil," in Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 370.

⁹⁸ "Accomplish the Mission, Conscientiously complete the Martial Law Task," in *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 391.

⁹⁹ "State Council Spokesman Yuan Mu Holds News Conference," in *Beijing Spring*, p. 367.

¹⁰⁰ Li Ximing, "Report on Pacifying the Counterrevolutionary Riots in Beijing," in Nathan and Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers*, p. 436.

leave, died.”¹⁰¹ The authorities were eager to prove that no one was killed within the sacred land of Tiananmen Square although numerous people were killed in the areas “outside” of the square on the night of June 3.¹⁰² This chapter has no intention to argue whether the military crackdown of the student movement caused any death within Tiananmen Square. The point here is the fact that the state leaders were so eager to avoid bloodshed on the “face” of the PRC itself constitutes a manifestation of the vital symbolism of Tiananmen Square since the founding of the PRC. The symbolism is so considerable that it simply causes pollution to the “face” of the PRC by shedding blood on Tiananmen Square.

On the other hand, for the prodemocracy advocates, it was because of the considerable symbolism of Tiananmen Square that they occupied the sacred “face” of the PRC to protest against state power. In the popular discourse during the June Fourth Movement, Tiananmen Square not only functions as the symbol of the PRC as the official discourse emphasizes but also constitutes a memorial space for the student protesters to used the officially sanctioned revolutionary tradition to struggle with the authorities. Following the footprints of the May Fourth and April Fifth revolutionary forerunners, making popular protest against state power at Tiananmen Square became, in

¹⁰¹ Chen, “Report to the National People’s Congress,” in *Crisis at Tiananmen*, p. 231.

¹⁰² Considering that, as previous scholarship and the documentary films on the June Fourth Movement tell us, no positive evidence can prove that any single one was killed within Tiananmen Square, it seems that, following Deng’s order, the martial troops did try every possible mean to avoid bloodshed spilled on the “face” of the state. For the works on the June Fourth Movement, see Michael Fathers and Andrew Higgins, *Tiananmen: The Rape of Peking*, ed., Robert Cottrell (New York: Independent in association with Doubleday, 1989); Mu Yi and Mark V. Thompson, *Crisis at Tiananmen: Reform and Reality in Modern China* (San Francisco: China Books & Periodicals, 1989); Lee Feigon, *China Rising: The Meaning of Tiananmen* (Chicago: I.R. Dee, 1990); Scott Simmie and Bob Nixon, *Tiananmen Square* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1989); Nan Lin, *The Struggle for Tiananmen: Anatomy of the 1989 Mass Movement* (London: Praeger, 1992); Timothy Brook, *Quelling the People: The Military Suppression of the Beijing Democracy Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1992); Craig Calhoun, *Neither Gods nor Emperors: Student and the Struggle for Democracy in China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Dingxin Zhao, *The Power of Tiananmen: State-Society Relations and the 1989 Beijing Student Movement* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Philip Cunningham, *Tiananmen Moon* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009). For the documentary films on the June Fourth Movement, see *Moving the Mountain* (1994); *The Gate of Heavenly Peace* (1995); *Sunrise Over Tiananmen Square* (1998); *The Tank Man* (2006); *Declassified: Tiananmen Square* (2006); *Democracy Crushed: Tiananmen Square* (2006).

Li Ximing's words, "an important political tactic" for the prodemocracy advocates to legitimize their demand of democratic reform. As a consequence, the protesting students and popular supporters were inclined to underscore the symbolism of Tiananmen Square and the location of the student movement in their protest literature. By connecting with the name of Tiananmen Square, the protesters intended to show the significance of their movement were as considerable as that of May Fourth and April Fifth.

In addition to emphasizing Tiananmen Square as the site of the student movement, the popular demonstrators consciously manipulated the material objects installed at Tiananmen Square to empower their demonstrations. During the June Fourth Movement, the Monument to the People's Heroes was used by student protesters as their headquarters. Likewise, the national emblem of the PRC became one of the most used icons that they usurped to justify their bodily practices at Tiananmen Square. Both the peaceful petition at Xinhuaamen on April 20 and the sit-in demonstration before the Great Hall of the People took place under the national emblem of the PRC. More than just an objective fact, the bodily posture "under the national emblem" was an effect of the protesters' considerate calculation.¹⁰³ As a result, the scene of three students kneeling under the national emblem before the Great Hall of the People became an unforgettable moment during the June Fourth Movement.

The posture "under the national emblem" was further translated in the popular resentment to the state indifference to the student petition. "The national emblem on the front gate of the Great Hall of the People must have now seen how the masters of the Republic were petitioning like slaves," a handbill condemns, "and how the dignified

¹⁰³ For example, in considering the strategy of peaceful petition at Tiananmen Square on April 22, Zhang Boli suggested: "Let's submit our petition directly to the government. If they refuse to take it, we shall kneel in front of the national emblem to show our condemnation of the government." Zhang, *Escape from China*, p. 37.

emperor-like officials were treating them with indifference!”¹⁰⁴ The same rhetorical strategy was manifested in a poster titled “Under the National Emblem of the PRC” aimed to rebuke the brutal suppression of the peaceful petition under the national emblem at the Xinhuaamen.¹⁰⁵ In order to underscore the illegitimacy of state violence, the national emblem was used by the protesters to serve for unofficial causes.

Other than identifying Tiananmen Square as the symbol of the Chinese nation and the sacred land of revolutionary tradition, the grassroots activists of the June Fourth Movement were inclined to conceptualize the place as the “battlefield of national salvation” for the cause of modernization. This popular conceptualization of Tiananmen Square as the “battlefield of national salvation” constitutes a spectacular manifestation of the impact of the long-term Chinese cultural memory of national salvation in twentieth-century China. The prodemocracy protesters claimed that Chinese modernization by means of democratic reform was the only way to complete the mission of national salvation. It was in this way that, during the June Fourth Movement, Tiananmen Square was imagined as the “battlefield of national salvation” for the prodemocracy advocates to project the popular vision of Chinese modernity—democracy.

Thus, with the occurrence of the June Fourth Movement, the symbolism of Tiananmen Square experienced further amplification. In the spring of 1989, Tiananmen Square was imagined by the popular protesters as the sacred land of the Chinese democracy movement where they projected a popular vision for Chinese modernity by

¹⁰⁴ “Our Humiliation Must Be Wiped Out!,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 104.

¹⁰⁵ In order to denounce the state violence by comparing the brutal suppression to the April Fifth Movement, the poster claims: “We can never forget the Tiananmen Square Incident of April 5, 1976. Today a similar episode is again taking place in front of Zhongnanhai, the heart of the People’s Republic of China, under the solemn national emblem. We shall never forget this day of April 20, 1989, when a government used state machinery in a fascist crackdown on the students and city residents who were participating in mourning the death of Mr. Hu Yaobang and presenting a peaceful petition.” “Under the National Emblem of the People’s Republic,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 83.

calling for a democratic reform. At this sacred land, they created a short-lived public sphere to propagate the ideal of democracy by making bodily protests, circulating posters, setting up public speech stations, printing underground newspapers, and creating educational institutions like Democracy University.¹⁰⁶

It was in this short-lived public sphere that Tiananmen Square had displayed the people's power to challenge state power. It was the existence of this short-lived public sphere that Tiananmen Square was converted into a place like London's Hyde Park. Some protesters even went so far to consider that Tiananmen Square in the spring of 1989 had functioned like a "small Republic." This imagination was reflected in Li Lu's recollection: "A teacher from Beijing University said to me, 'isn't the square like a small republic?' You have everything—radio station, newspapers, university, administrative system, government, and parliament."¹⁰⁷ In those protesters' imagination, Tiananmen Square constitutes a "small Republic" to promote the ideal of democracy. This imagination was clearly reflected in the subtitle of Feng Congde's autobiography: *The Republic of the Square (Guangchang gongheguo)*.

More significantly in terms of the socio-political life of Tiananmen Square, a symbolic monument of the Goddess of Democracy was erected at the Republic of the Square. On May 30, in order to create another momentum for the student movement, the protesting students erected a statue of Goddess of Democracy on the central axis of Tiananmen Square between the Monument to the People's Heroes and the giant portrait

¹⁰⁶ In pointing out the purpose of establishing the Democracy University, in his autobiography, Li Lu states: "We decided to set up a Democracy University under the statue. Though we could not yet launch a frontal attack on the Government, we could make Tiananmen Square the fount of democracy in China, a college to cultivate talented people and leaders, a base for a future democracy." Li, *Moving the Mountain*, pp. 181-182.

¹⁰⁷ Li, *Moving the Mountain*, p. 184.

of Mao.¹⁰⁸ As “the symbol of the ideas of tens of thousands of student on the square” and as the physical manifestation of “the spirit of the 1989 Chinese democratic tide,” the Goddess of Democracy constituted a landmark in the history of Tiananmen Square.¹⁰⁹ Its significance is as important as that of the Monument to the People’s Heroes in terms of the amplification of symbolism of Tiananmen Square. However, given the official conceptualization of Tiananmen Square as the “face” of the state, the authorities considered that the Goddess of Democracy had caused a major humiliation (*wuru*) to “the national dignity and the image of the Chinese nation.”¹¹⁰ As a result, when the troops entered Tiananmen Square to clear the PRC’s “face,” the Goddess of Democracy was the first subversive object to be destroyed. As short-lived as it may have been, the erection of the statue had already marked a defining moment in the symbolism of Tiananmen Square and constituted an imperishable monument in the hearts of the prodemocracy advocates. As the creators of the statue had expected: “the Chinese People will keep this Goddess of Democracy in their heart permanently.”¹¹¹ More than that, many reproduction of the Goddess of Democracy had been erected in many places, such as the campus of the University of Minnesota, all over the world.

In addition to being conceptualized as the “face” of the PRC, the battlefield of national salvation, and the sacred land of Chinese democratic movement, in the spring of 1989, Tiananmen Square constituted a memorial space for both state power and popular protesters to play the past of the May Fourth and April Fifth Movements as well as the trauma of the Cultural Revolution. Using the rhetoric of stability and unity and national

¹⁰⁸ For the process of creating the statue of Goddess of Democracy, see Tsao Tsing-yuan, “The Birth of the Goddess of Democracy,” in *Popular Protest and Political Culture in Modern China*, pp. 140-147.

¹⁰⁹ “Declaration of Eight Institutes of Art in the Capital,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 342.

¹¹⁰ “Solemn Statement,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 345.

¹¹¹ “Declaration of Eight Institutes of Art in the Capital,” in *China’s Search for Democracy*, p. 342.

salvation discourse, the state authorities of the PRC discredited the student movement by describing it as turmoil like the Cultural Revolution. Yet, the official discourse on the Cultural Revolution was also usurped by student protesters to undermine the legitimacy of the state injustice and violence involved in dealing with the prodemocracy movement. In the popular discourse created during the June Fourth Movement, in order to challenge the validity of the April 26 editorial, student protesters labeled *People's Daily* as the tool of real troublemakers like the Gang of Four during the Cultural Revolution. The atrocities of the Cultural Revolution were used by protesters to criticize the state injustice. With the same motivation, the May Fourth revolutionary tradition was used to legitimize the ideal of democracy in the language of national salvation. The state violence during the May Fourth Movement was recalled to criticize state authorities and to rebuke martial law and military suppression. The prodemocracy advocates used the past of the April Fifth Movement to conceptualize their movement as a landmark of the Chinese democratic movement. The state violence during the April Fifth Movement was recalled to undermine the legitimacy of imposing martial law in pacifying the student movement. The political use of the May Fourth and April Fifth Movement at Tiananmen Square during the June Fourth Movement thus constituted a spectacular manifestation of the impact of Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition.

Tiananmen Square during the June Fourth Movement was turned into a memorial space for both state power and popular protesters to play the variations of communist revolutionary memory to serve their political demands. This understanding allows this chapter to conclude by a poem adapted from the quotation at the very beginning of Part Four:

Now I know that before the Cultural Revolution came May Fourth.

Now I know that after the Cultural Revolution would come April Fifth.
Now I know that there is June Fourth before tomorrow.
Now I know that there will be a tomorrow when June Fourth is over.

Conclusion

Why has Tiananmen Square been constructed into the symbolic center of the national events for political modernity in different historical contexts of twentieth-century China? What can we learn from the study of Tiananmen Square in terms of the materiality and spatiality of the political uses of memory and history in the twentieth century? What does the story of constructing Tiananmen Square as a realm of memory suggest about the relationship between the politics of making memorial space and the construction of national identity? What is the broader significance of the case study of Tiananmen Square in terms of the modern cult of monuments in the age of the modern nation-state? As the first comprehensive study of the politics of memory at Tiananmen Square, this dissertation provides answers to these questions by exploring the dynamics of memory making in that place with a theoretical discourse on the spatiality and materiality of the configuration, transmission, and manipulation of Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary movement.

As previous chapters demonstrate, the on-going process of making Tiananmen Square into the symbolic center of national events for political modernity discloses the dynamics of memory making and its spatiality and materiality. The sense of the shared past of Chinese national salvation and revolutionary movements was first conceptualized and encapsulated in Mao's canonical discourse and then materialized in the commemorative monuments and institutions at Tiananmen Square. In examining this on-going process, a study of the PRC's history textbooks and historiography on modern Chinese history allows us to see the deep-rooted and extensive impact of Mao's revolutionary discourse on the historical consciousness of the Chinese people. This

dissertation argues that Mao's revolutionary discourse has constituted the cultural, or discursive, foundation based on which that Tiananmen Square was constructed as the architectural embodiment of Chinese temporality. Without understanding such a discursive foundation, one would find it difficult to explain why different social groups could *make sensible use* of the monumental objects installed by the PRC at Tiananmen Square. Without an imperative conceptualization of the past of modern China in the Chinese people's historical consciousness in Mao's language, the monumental architecture and institutions at Tiananmen Square would be mere material objects foreign to its Chinese spectators. A consequence of the materialization of Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition in the language of Mao's canonical discourse, Tiananmen Square has constituted the spatial and material framework for the state power of the PRC and grassroots activists of the 1976 April Fifth Movement and 1989 June Fourth Movement to manipulate that cultural memory in the present to legitimize their different political agendas of modernity for the supreme cause of national salvation. This analysis not only shows the changeable and flexible symbolism of Tiananmen Square from the viewpoints of different social groups but also explains why at that place many other national events and monumental objects appeared in different historical contexts.

The dissertation makes clear that to study the history of Tiananmen Square is to study the history of political modernity in twentieth-century China. In the era of the PRC, Tiananmen Square was made into the symbolic center of communist China to display state discipline and represent Chinese temporality in the language of the Maoist revolutionary discourse. Along with state-sponsored architectural constructions and

frequent manpower mobilizations, Tiananmen Square was transformed into not only a political space to manifest the disciplinary power of the PRC but also a memorial space to forge new national identity by rendering China's temporality: the past, the present, and the future. A careful examination of this on-going process on the one hand reveals that Tiananmen Square has witnessed the PRC's evolving political modernity in three aspects—state disciplinary disposition of things, creation of the sphere of political authority, and popular participation. On the other hand, it shows how popular versions of Chinese political modernity were constructed in the short-lived public sphere created by the grassroots activists to voice unofficial ideals of modernization and democracy. It is in this sense that the dissertation argues that Tiananmen Square constitutes the temporal and spatial framework of Chinese political modernity in the era of the PRC.

Official Version of Chinese Political Modernity at Tiananmen Square

As Michel Foucault has articulated, the configuration of state disciplinary power—a feature of political modernity—must take into account both its spatial and temporal dimensions. It requires the making of a functional site like a prison, hospital, or school, in which each subject has its own position and utility, and the imposing of a temporal framework.¹ Accordingly, the making of Tiananmen Square as a symbolic center of China has illuminated how an “open” space was converted into a “functional site” without walls to enforce the PRC's disciplinary power by mobilizing “the people” and by concretizing the shared past of the Chinese people in the monumental complex at the symbolic place.

¹ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1977), pp. 141-143.

The state-sponsored construction of Tiananmen Square into a functional site was an integral part of the PRC government's effort to display its disciplinary power in terms of the "right disposition of things." In contemplating the emergence of political modernity, Foucault has characterized "the right disposition of things" as a feature of the figuration of state disciplinary power, a political technology central to the nation-state building.² Since the founding of the PRC, Tiananmen Square has been constructed as the symbolic center of communist China by the "right deposition of things" in the space along with the completion of state-sponsored urban planning projects in Beijing. Given the "right deposition of things" at Tiananmen Square, the Maoist revolutionary discourse, which conceptualized the past of modern Chinese national salvation movement, was materialized in the Monument to the People's Heroes and visually displayed in the Museum of Chinese History and the Museum of the Chinese Revolution in order to provide the rule of the PRC with historical legitimacy. As a consequence of this materialization and visualization, Tiananmen Square was transformed into a memorial space to embody and transmit the official knowledge of Chinese national salvation and revolutionary past in the PRC's endeavor to create a new national identity. Moreover, the Great Hall of the People was built to symbolize the past, the present, and the future of New China while rendering the legal legitimatization of the PRC. The Chairman Mao Memorial Hall was designed to manifest China's national salvation and revolutionary past and to project a utopian vision of socialist revolution. Even the huge portrait of Mao hung on Tiananmen was conceptualized as the symbol of communist China. It is through this "right deposition of things" that Tiananmen Square as an "open" space has been

² Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in James D. Faubion, ed., *Power*, volume III (New York: The New Press,), pp. 208-211.

invested with considerable symbolic and historical significance to give legitimacy to the PRC's disciplinary power by rendering the temporality of modern China. Thus, given the logic of right deposition of things, when the Goddess of Democracy was erected at Tiananmen Square by the people's power at the end of the June Fourth Movement, the PRC government would be so determined and eager to exert its disciplinary power at the space by criticizing it as a subversive object that pollutes the sacred land of revolutionary tradition. The state-sponsored monumental objects at Tiananmen Square allow us to examine the spatiality, materiality, and temporality of the PRC's state disciplinary power.³ And, the "right disposition of things" at Tiananmen Square also constitutes an essential part in the PRC's reconstruction of national identity in the twentieth century.

Tiananmen Square was managed by the PRC to serve as a spatial framework of political authorities' sphere as well. On the National Day of 1 October, the PRC would hold anniversary commemoration to celebrate the founding of the nation by manpower mobilizations and military parades at Tiananmen Square. That day, the state and party leaders would reiterate the past glories, the present prosperity, and the future prospect of the Chinese revolution in the language of national salvation discourse; as Hu Jintao stated on the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the PRC "only socialism [and the CCP] can save China." Moreover, during nationwide political campaigns, Tiananmen Square would function like a performance stage to display national leaders' political power. For example, during the Cultural Revolution, along with his huge portrait hung on Tiananmen, Mao summoned and received the Red Guards at Tiananmen Square eight times to display his supreme power while justifying his political line. On 18 August 1966, as many as one million Red Guards made pilgrimages to Tiananmen Square from every corner of the

³ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 144.

country to worship their great Chairman Mao at the moment of sunrise to the accompaniment of “The East is Red.” In the wake of Mao’s death, on 18 September 1976, one million of “the people” once again assembled at Tiananmen Square to memorialize him when the official memorial ceremony was held inside the Great Hall of the People.⁴ Less than one month later, on 24 October 1976, a victory rally of one million civilians and soldiers was mobilized to celebrate the “smashing of the Gang of Four” at the same space. Tiananmen Square thus became “One-Million-People Square” as Mao had expected it to be in the early days of the PRC.

The extensive mobilization of “the people” at Tiananmen Square was a strategy to legitimize the political power of national leaders and the rule of the PRC. This leads us to consider another dimension of the political modernity of communist China: popular participation. Popular participation as a political technique was a critical aspect of political modernity in the modern world.⁵ Along with the rise of the nation-state, the “subject” was redefined as “the people” to assume the source of political legitimacy. Mao and the PRC found the tool of popular participation useful in legitimizing his personal leadership and the rule of the CCP. At first glance, Mao’s demonstration of his political authority before “the people” at Tiananmen Square revealed its affinity with the public representation of the court, feudal, or monarchical authorities in the pre-modern era.⁶

⁴ R. Keith Schoppa, *Revolution and Its Past: Identity and Change in Modern Chinese History*, second edition (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc., 2006), p. 351.

⁵ Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment: The Science of Freedom* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1977), esp. pp. 448-496; Jonathan I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650-1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 258-274; Roy Taylor, *The Creation of the Modern World: The Untold Story of the British Enlightenment* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2000), pp. 184-204; Daniel Roche, *France in the Enlightenment*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000), pp. 322-338.

⁶ “Representation in the sense in which the members of a national assembly represent a nation or lawyer represents his clients had nothing to do with this publicity of representation inseparable from the lord’s concrete existence, that, as an ‘aura,’ surrounded an endowed his authority. When the territorial rulers convened about him ecclesiastical and worldly lords, knight, prelates, and cities, this was not a matter of an assembly of delegates that was someone else’s representative. As long as the prince and the estates of his realm ‘were’ the country and no just it representatives, they

Nevertheless, on further consideration, Mao had used the technique of popular participation to legitimize his supreme power. Along with his popular discourse, Mao's performance at Tiananmen Square was not only a public representation of his ruling power but also a practice he used to justify his leadership by mobilizing "the people's" participation. In the political drama performed at Tiananmen Square on national holidays, "the people" of the PRC were mobilized not only to witness the power demonstration of state and party leaders but also to provide them with mass basis as the legitimate source of their political authority.

The PRC's state disciplinary power also manifested in its efforts to create the visual representation of Tiananmen Square as symbolic capital, a national symbol. The PRC's "right disposition of things" of Tiananmen Square was evident in the sanction of the image of Tiananmen's facade by incorporating it into the national emblem. As a national symbol of the PRC, the image of Tiananmen was widely reproduced and disseminated in diverse material forms; a huge national emblem is even hung on the top of Tiananmen itself.⁷ The symbolism of Tiananmen Square thus went through a process of, in Bourdieu's words, "legalization of symbolic capital" by means of reproducing and circulating the visual representation of Tiananmen.⁸ This constitutes an example to explain how the "standardization and mass production" of an image can be employed by state power as the "technical rationality" to demonstrate the "rationality of domination."⁹

could represent it in a specific sense. They represented their lordship not for but 'before' the people." Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, pp. 7-8.

⁷ Zhongyang dang'an guan [The Central Archive], ed. *Xin Zhongguo xiang women zou lai [New China walks toward us: The actual record of the birth of the national flag, emblem, anthem, capital, and the name of the country]* (Beijing: The Central Archive Press, 1999), p. 37; Wang Jun, *The Story of a City (Cheng ji)* (Beijing: Chinese Bookshop, 2003), pp. 39-40; Wu, *Remaking Beijing*, p. 64.

⁸ Pierre Bourdieu. "Social Space and Symbolic Power," *In Other Words: Essays Toward a Reflexive Sociology*, trans. Matthew Adamson (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), p. 134.

⁹ Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), p. 95.

It is through this process of “legalization” that Tiananmen Square was constructed as a symbolic capital embodying an “absolute and universal value,” the PRC, around which a Chinese national identity was forged.¹⁰ In this view, the case study of Tiananmen Square can be viewed as a standpoint from which to explore the politics of the “cult of the monument” with Chinese characteristics in the age of modern nation-state.

“Right Disposition of Things” at Tiananmen Square in the Post-June Fourth Era

The official “right disposition of things” at Tiananmen Square after the June Fourth Movement deserves a preliminary consideration in terms of the continuity and change in the symbolism of the space and the PRC’s political uses of memory and history. The Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition stored at the space in China’s evolving political modernity has continued to play a critical role in the political and everyday life of the post-June Fourth era. In particular, the PRC’s official national flag raising ceremony and the countdown clocks for national events installed at Tiananmen Square demonstrate that cultural memory at work. The material objects related to the national flag raising ceremony and the installment of countdown clocks at Tiananmen Square are spectacular manifestation of the impact of that cultural memory in the post-June Fourth era.

National Flag Raising Ceremony and Countdown Clocks

The PRC’s national flag, the Five-Star Red Flag, is a material manifestation of the Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and the Maoist revolutionary discourse. Following a common practice in the age of modern nation-state, the PRC engaged in

¹⁰Pierre Bourdieu. “Social Space and Symbolic Power,” *In Other Words: Essays Toward a Reflexive Sociology*, trans. Matthew Adamson (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), p. 136.

creating a national flag to represent the country.¹¹ The sixth subcommittee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) assumed the responsibility of designing the national flag. Under the approval of Mao and Zhou Enlai, the subcommittee decided to call for designs from the public, another form of popular participation. As a result, it received almost three thousand designs by August 20, 1949. The committee members went through a long discussion but reached no final decision. On September 25, Mao made a final call to select the design of the Five-Star Red Flag, which is composed of five yellow stars on the red surface, as the PRC's national flag. The design was adopted at the CPPCC two days later. On 1 October 1949, the Five-Star Red Flag first time flew over the sky of Tiananmen Square at the founding ceremony of the PRC.¹²

Mao's revolutionary discourse was written into the design of the Five-Star Red Flag. First, according to the design principle adopted by the sixth subcommittee of the CPPCC, the national flag should represent the characteristics of the new regime: "The people's dictatorship based on the alliance of the workers and peasants led by the proletarian class."¹³ Mao and Zhou Enlai approved the principle, and it was translated into the design of the national flag. Moreover, according to Zeng Liansong (1917-1999), the designer of the Five-Star Red Flag, the idea of five stars was inspired by Mao's "On People's Dictatorship," which defines the elements of revolutionary people under the regime of the people's dictatorship: the workers, the peasants, the petty bourgeoisie, and the national

¹¹ The brief description of the creation of nation flag in the world history, see Marc Leepson, *Flag: An American Biography* (New York: St Martin Press, 2005), pp. 1-19.

¹² Zhongyang dang'an guan [Central Archives], ed., *Xinzhongguo xiang women zoulai* [*The Coming of New China*] (Beijing: Chinese Archives, 1999), pp. 6-27; Tang Jianguo, *Zhengbu zouguo Tiananmen* [Walking through Tiananmen with Goose-Steps] (Beijing: Haichao chubanshe, 2000), pp. 32-46; Han Tailun, ed., *Muji Tiananmen* [Witness the Gate of Heavenly Peace], vol. 3 (Xian: Shanxi People Press, 2000), p. 2064.

¹³ CPPCC, "Zhengqiu guoqi guohui tuan ji gouge cipu qishi [Announcement of soliciting the design of national flag and emblem and the lyrics and song of national anthem]," collected in Central Archive, ed., *Xin Zhongguo xiang women zoulai*, p. 10.

bourgeoisie. While the bigger yellow star symbolizes the leadership of the CCP, the four smaller stars refer to the four classes of revolutionary people. Besides, according to Zeng, the big star was also designed to represent the CCP as the “big saving star (dajiuxing), or savior, of the Chinese people.”¹⁴ As such, Mao’s revolutionary discourse on the people’s dictatorship was visually manifested on the Five-Star Red Flag.

Zeng Liansong’s creative idea finds its echo in Mao’s interpretation of the Five-Star Red Flag. On 25 September 1949, at the conference held at his residence, in displaying his support of Zeng’s design, Mao talked to the committee members of the CPPCC: “This design represents the great solidarity of our revolutionary people in the present and in the future.”¹⁵ Next day, the sixth subcommittee of the CPPCC decided to choose Zeng’s design as the national flag of the PRC. At a banquet that night, with an enlarged picture of the Five-Star Red Flag in his hands, Mao said to the attendees: “The victory of the Chinese revolution was obtained by the common struggle based on the workers and the peasants and their union with the petty and national bourgeoisie under the leadership of the CCP, and this is a historical fact of the Chinese revolution.”¹⁶ Next day, the CPPCC adopted the Five-Star Red Flag as the PRC’s national flag. Mao’s interpretation of the flag was written into the official resolution of the First Plenum of the CPPCC. While the red color represents the revolution, the five stars symbolize “the great solidarity of the Chinese revolutionary people.”¹⁷ As a whole, the Five-Star Red Flag not only represents the Chinese people and the PRC under the leadership of the CCP but also constitutes a

¹⁴ Zhongyang dang’an guan, ed., *Xin Zhongguo xiang women zou lai*, pp. 21-22; Tang, *Zhengbu zouguo Tiananmen*, pp. 35.

¹⁵ Zhongyang dang’an guan, ed., *Xin Zhongguo xiang women zou lai*, p. 20; Tang, *Zhengbu zouguo Tiananmen*, pp. 46-47.

¹⁶ Zhongyang dang’an guan, ed., *Xin Zhongguo xiang women zou lai*, p. 24; Tang, *Zhengbu zouguo Tiananmen*, p. 46.

¹⁷ Zhongyang dang’an guan, ed., *Xin Zhongguo xiang women zou lai*, p. 27; Tang, *Zhengbu zouguo Tiananmen*, p. 47.

visual manifestation of the ideal of the “Great Union of the Popular Masses” that Mao already proposed in 1919.

The symbolism of the Five-Star Red Flag was further amplified at the founding ceremony of the PRC. The symbol of the Chinese people and the PRC, the Five-Star Red Flag was first time revealed and hoisted in public on 1 October 1949 when Mao stood on the balcony of Tiananmen announcing the birth of the PRC. The scenario of raising the national flag at the defining moment of the history of the PRC at Tiananmen Square visually manifested Mao’s famous motto, “the Chinese people have finally stood up.” While Mao’s motto literally epitomizes the triumphant moment of the Chinese national salvation movement from the Opium War to the founding of the PRC, the scenario can be viewed as a ritual manifestation of that defining moment. As a scholarly work on the socio-political life of Tiananmen Square reads: “Every time people walk through Tiananmen Square, they will naturally recall the remarkable occasion of the founding ceremony of the PRC when Mao Zedong hoisted the Five-Star Red Flag and announced that ‘the People’s Republic of China has been established and the Chinese people have finally stood up....’ Along with the raising Five-Star Red Flag, the dignity and pride of the Chinese nation have been lifted. It displays to the world that ‘the Chinese people have finally stood up.’”¹⁸ It is in this sense that the national flag constitutes a memory medium encapsulating Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition.

Given the considerable symbolism of the Five-Star Red Flag, it is bizarre to learn that not until 1 May 1991 did the PRC install the official ceremony of raising the national flag at Tiananmen Square on a daily basis. From October 1949 to September 1951, an electrician, Chen Hongnian, assumed the task of hoisting the national flag. From October

¹⁸ Han, *Muji Tiananmen*, vol. 3, p. 1933.

1951 onward, another electronic mechanic, Hu Qijun (1929-2007) took over the task for twenty-six years.¹⁹ According to Hu, he did not raise the national flag every day, but only on certain national holidays, such as the New Year's Day, the Labor Day on 1 May, the birthday of the CCP on 1 July, the birthday of the PLA on 1 August, and the birthday of the PRC on 1 October.²⁰ From May 1977 onward, Hu's duty was continued by the soldiers of the PLA. The mission of raising the national flag at Tiananmen Square was transferred from a civilian to the military. But, it was still conducted in a very informal way. Two soldiers would take the national flag to the base of the flagpole on the central axis of Tiananmen Square and hoisted the flag by switching an electronic button.

An embryonic form of official national flag raising ceremony was installed by late 1982. On 28 December 1982, a special squad of the PLA was ordered to assume the duty of hoisting the national flag. This special squad was later known as the "National Flag Squad (Guoqi ban)."²¹ Considering that the established way of raising the national flag was too simple and informal, the first leader of the "National Flag Squad," Dong Ligan, proposed to hold a flag raising ceremony on a daily basis. And, Dong decided to raise the national flag at the moment of sunrise in order to represent that the national flag as the symbol the PRC would be "shining forever like the sun" and "illuminating the land of China like the sun."²²

Dong Ligan was not the only one who associated raising the national flag with the moment of sunrise. Hu Qijun displayed a very similar attitude. In recalling his experience of hoisting the national flag, Hu indicated that he would have "looked upward to the sky

¹⁹ Zhao Xinfong, ed., *Tiananmen guoqi ban banzhang jiang guoqi* [The Leaders of the Tiananmen National Flag Squad Lecturing the National Flag] (Beijing: Beijing Ligong University Press, 2005), pp. 74, 147-150, 153-154.

²⁰ Tang, *Zhengbu zouguo Tiananmen*, p. 75.

²¹ Tang, *Zhengbu zouguo Tiananmen*, p. 83.

²² Tang, *Zhengbu zouguo Tiananmen*, pp. 86-87.

to wait for the [moment of] sunrise.” When he was watching the first official national flag raising ceremony at Tiananmen Square, Hu recalled his memory of raising the Five-Star Red Flag: “I would climb to the top of the base of the flagpole and wait for the moment of sunrise. At that time, I could see the whole process of sun rising at Tiananmen Square because there were no tall buildings in Beijing and the Museum of Chinese History had not yet been built on the east side of the square yet. As soon as I saw the dawn appearing at the ends of the earth, I would swiftly pull the power switch on the electric box under the base of the flagpole, and then the flag would be raised slowly to the sky. Seeing the Five-Star Red Flag rise with the sun, I was very excited.” Raising the national flag at Tiananmen Square became Hu’s lifetime pride. On 1 October 2007, Hu died of heart disease after he left his last words: “It is time to hoist the flag.”²³

In order to assure that the timetable for raising the national flag was correct, Dong Lingan began to record the time of sunrise at Tiananmen Square. Later, in the effort to make a correct timetable, Dong resorted to the Beijing Observatory from which he realized that the whole process of sun rising from the appearance of the first sunshine on the surface of the earth to its complete emergence takes two minutes and seven seconds. Accordingly, Dong confined the whole time span of raising the nation flag in two minutes and seven seconds.²⁴ In this way, the Five-Star Red Flag was conceptualized as a material manifestation of the sun and the standardized solar time was reproduced at

²³ Tang, *Zhengbu zouguo Tiananmen*, pp. 75-76.

²⁴ Tang, *Zhengbu zouguo Tiananmen*, pp. 86. Lin Hengguo at the Beijing Observatory (later the National Observatory) was the first astronomer who was in charge of making the timetable of raising the national flag at Tiananmen Square. It is important to note how Lin Hengguo considered his task. According to Zhao Xingfong, a later leader of the “National Flag Squad,” Lin felt very excited when he accepted the task because he understood very well how significant this task was. Lin thought that raising the national flag at the moment of sunrise symbolizes: “The Chinese people have stood up.” Zhao, ed., *Tiananmen guoqi ban banzhang jiang guoqi*, p. 158.

Tiananmen Square to function as the temporal framework of state discipline.²⁵

Nevertheless, this national flag raising ceremony in two minutes and seven seconds was not imposed by state power but only by a low-ranking military officer.

The state-sponsored reform project of the national flag raising ceremony came out in early 1991. On 10 January 1991, the State Council decided to reform the national flag raising ceremony in order to make it appear more formal and solemn and become a special sightseeing site in the capital of the PRC.²⁶ The reform project was proposed by the Beijing municipal government in early March and approved by the State Council by the end of April. As part of the reform project, the base of the national flagpole was reconstructed into a monumental structure symbolizing the eternity of the PRC and the solidarity of all the Chinese people.²⁷ The “National Flag Squad” was reorganized into the “National Flag Escort Team (Guoqi huwei dui)” composed of thirty-eight policemen of the Chinese People’s Armed Police Force. At the new national flag raising ceremony, held by the flag-bearer with a leading officer in the front of the rank, the Five-Star Red Flag is to be escorted by thirty-four armed policemen to the base of flagpole and then hoisted by two flagmen at the point. Along with the melody of national anthem, the flag is to be raised to the top of flagpole in two minutes and seven seconds beginning at the

²⁵More than that, after the installment of the solar time at Tiananmen Square, a standardized time system for the national flag raising ceremony was initiated nationwide. The person who proposed the time system was Jaing Xieju, the deputy of the National Observatory then. After the solar time was installed at Tiananmen Square, Jiang noticed that the time for local ceremonies were so incoherent and undisciplined. Since the local time for sunrise in the whole country is so various, in 2000, Jiang made a standardized timetable of the national flag raising ceremony that indicates the local times of sunrise and sunset. In this way, Jiang provided a scientific foundation for the standardization of the national flag raising ceremony nationwide, a relatively simultaneous standardization. More importantly, the PRC sent Jiang’s timetable to local governments and ordered them to hold the national flag raising ceremony based on the timetable. Zhao, ed., *Tiananmen guoqi ban banzhang jiang guoqi*, pp. 159-160.

²⁶Tang, *Zhengbu zouguo Tiananmen*, p. 101.

²⁷Tang, *Zhengbu zouguo Tiananmen*, pp. 99-100.

moment of sunrise.²⁸ A new state-sponsored national flag raising ceremony was thus created.

The first official national flag raising ceremony in two minutes and seven seconds at Tiananmen Square was held on 1 May 1991. That day, a hundred thousands people witnessed the defining moment of the history of the PRC when the new ceremony was held at the moment of sunrise (5:40) at Tiananmen Square. Through the nationwide live broadcast by the China Central Television, the monumental scene caught the eyes of the Chinese people. As a contemporary commentator pointed out, the impression of the Five-Star Red Flag rising with the sun in two minutes and seven seconds at Tiananmen Square immediately became rooted in the hearts of the Chinese audience.²⁹ As a further investigation will show, the fresh memory of raising national flag with the rising sun can be linked to the popular memory of worshiping Mao as the “reddest sun” at the moment of sunrise during the Cultural Revolution, as shown in the lyrics of the popular children’s song “I Love Beijing’s Tiananmen”: “I love Beijing’s Tiananmen, the place where the sun rises. Our great leader Chairman Mao, guiding us to march forward.”³⁰

The new official national flag raising ceremony was a way for the PRC to display the state discipline at Tiananmen Square on a daily basis in the post-June Fourth era. In the wake of the June Fourth Movement, the PRC reinforced police surveillance and military force around and within Tiananmen Square. In order to carry out spatial control at Tiananmen Square, the PRC began putting pieces of lawn in the mega space that the tourists are not allowed to step on. The visitors and tourists are also forbidden to walk close to the Monument to the People’s Heroes, once occupied by the prodemocracy

²⁸Tang, *Zhengbu zouguo Tiananmen*, p. 106.

²⁹Han, *Muji Tiananmen*, vol. 3, pp. 2083, 2085.

³⁰Gin Guolin, “I Love Beijing’s Tiananmen,” quoted in Wu, *Remaking Beijing*, p. 53.

protestors as their headquarters during the June Fourth Movement, which is now guarded by armed policemen. To control Tiananmen Square spatially and physically is a means of restoring the state's disciplinary power at that space. From 1 May 1991 on, along with the holding of the national flag raising ceremony at the moment of sunrise, the PRC's state discipline has been reinforced at Tiananmen Square on a daily basis.

The official national flag raising ceremony at Tiananmen Square can be regarded as part of the PRC's project of strengthening the Chinese people's identity with the state in the post-June Fourth era. After the June Fourth Movement, the PRC launched a nationwide patriotism education campaign. In August 1990, in an effort to propagate patriotism education at primary and secondary schools, the PRC relayed a series of notices emphasizing the importance of learning about the Five-Star Red Flag and of holding national flag raising ceremony on school campuses.³¹ One month later, the PRC promulgated the first National Flag Code in order to "develop the spirit of patriotism."³² As part of the patriotism education campaign, the PRC launched a history textbook reform emphasizing the teaching of modern Chinese history in the primary and secondary schools. Given this purpose, the new history textbooks use the phrase "national salvation movement (jiuwang yundong)" to describe the history of the Chinese revolution from the Opium War.³³ In this sense, the history of modern China was officially defined as the history of the Chinese national salvation movement. More importantly, the new history textbooks are given an accent to reiterate the importance of socialism and the leadership of the CCP in the Chinese national salvation movement. In other words, only socialism

³¹ Zhao, ed., *Tiananmen guoqi ban banzhang jiang guoqi*, p. ii.

³² "Zunjing guoqi, aihu guoqi: Xiying *Zhongguo renmin gongheguo guoqifa* shishi [Respect and protect the national flag: Welcome the implement of the National Flag Code of the PRC]," *People's Daily* 30 September 1990: 1.

³³ Kecheng jiaoxue yanjiu suo [Institute of Curriculum and Pedagogy], ed., *Ershi shiji zhongxiaoxue kecheng biaoqun jiaoxue dagang: Lishi Juan* [The curriculum standards and pedagogical outlines for primary and secondary schools in the twentieth century: The volume of history] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1999), pp. 607-655.

and the CCP can save China.³⁴ As part of the patriotism education campaign, the armed policemen of the “National Flag Escort Team” were ordered to give lectures on the history of the Five-Star Red Flag at primary and secondary schools. In these lectures, they likewise reiterated the necessity of the CCP’s leadership and emphasized that “only socialism can save China.” In addition, stories about the “National Flag Escort Team” were frequently published in official newspapers, such as *People’s Daily*.³⁵ As an integral part of the patriotism education campaign, the PRC intended to use the propaganda around the Five-Star Red Flag to reconstruct the Chinese citizens’ identity with the communist regime by manipulating the rhetoric of national salvation.

The holding of the official national flag ceremony at Tiananmen Square constitutes a ritual way to reinforce Chinese identity with the PRC by recalling the popular memory of the national salvation movement under the leadership of the CCP. As discussed above, in addition to serving as the symbol of the PRC, the Five-Star Red Flag can be considered as a material manifestation of the cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition under the leadership of the CCP. In this sense, the Five-Star Red Flag not only visually represents the historical legitimacy of the CCP’s rule but also materially encapsulates the historical memory of the Chinese communist movement. Accordingly, the rhetoric of national salvation was woven in to the lyrics of the national anthem of the PRC, “March of the Volunteers (*Yiyongju jinxingqu*).” In late September 1949, the First Plenum of the CPPCC decided to use “March of the Volunteers,” initially a theme song of the patriotic film *Sons and Daughters in the Time of Storm*, as the national anthem of the PRC. The final decision had not been made without fierce debates among the

³⁴ Kecheng jiaoxue yanjiu suo, ed., *Ershi shiji zhongxiaoxue kecheng biaoqun jiaoxue dagang: Lishi Juan*, esp. pp. 618, 635.

³⁵ Tang, *Zhengbu zouguo Tiananmen*, pp. 90-93.

committee members of the CPPCC as represented in a historical film produced for commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the PRC, *The Founding of a Republic* (2009). What was at stake was the tune of national salvation in the lyrics of “March of the Volunteers.” Despite the fact that the victory of the communist revolution which had marked the end of the Chinese national salvation movement and the standing up of China, “March of the Volunteers” was eventually chosen as the national anthem when Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai argued that its lyrics could function as a reminder for the Chinese people to recall how difficult it was for China to overcome the long-term struggle of national salvation and to inspire the people to march forward in the road of socialist revolution.³⁶ In this sense, like the national flag, the national anthem can be viewed as a memory vehicle to embody the historical memory of both the Chinese national salvation movement and the communist revolution.³⁷ Therefore, at the official national flag raising ceremony held in Tiananmen Square, the Five-Star Red Flag and the national anthem together can be read as a ritual way for the PRC to inspire the people’s patriotism by recalling the cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition in order to reconstruct the Chinese identity with the PRC under the leadership of the CCP.

In the post-June Fourth era, the official national flag raising ceremony at Tiananmen Square has become a “must-go” sightseeing site in Beijing. The ceremony itself has constituted a drive to attract more people to go to Tiananmen Square. According to the Beijing municipal government, from 1991 to 2008, more than 200 million people came to

³⁶ The lyrics of “March of the Volunteers” reads: “Arise! All who refuse to be slaves! Let our flesh and blood become our new Great Wall! As the Chinese nation faces its greatest peril, All forcefully expend their last cries. Arise! Arise! Arise! Our million hearts beat as one, Brave the enemy’s fire, March on! Brave the enemy’s fire, March on! March on! March on! On!”

³⁷Wang Xia, “Dui tiananmen shengqi yishi de zhengzhi fen xi [A political analysis on the flag raising ceremony at Tiananmen Square],” People’s University of China, Master Thesis, 2003, pp. 7, 19-22.

Tiananmen Square to watch the national flag ceremony.³⁸ According to some scholars, the social effect of watching the official national flag raising ceremony demonstrates the Chinese people's patriotism and their confidence in their country's future.³⁹ This interconnection between tourism, memory, and identity deserves a further investigation. Moreover, international tourists coming to watch the PRC's national flag ceremony at Tiananmen Square constitute an important way to shape a global memory of the symbolic space in the post-June Fourth era.

In the post-June Fourth era, the Chinese cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition was further manifested in the countdown clock erected at Tiananmen Square for the return of Hong Kong to the sovereignty of China. Whereas Wu Hung has interpreted the installation of the countdown clock as a way for the PRC to give pressure to the prodemocracy advocates in Hong Kong, I suggest it displays the cultural memory of national salvation at work.⁴⁰ To make the story short, after the State Council of the PRC approved the installation of the countdown clock for China's recovery of the sovereignty in Hong Kong, the countdown clock was erected in front of the Museum of Chinese Revolution, facing the relief of Burning Opium on the Monument to the People's Heroes, on 19 December 1994.⁴¹ The significance of erecting such a countdown clock at Tiananmen Square can be best understood by locating it in the larger context of the Chinese national salvation movement from the Opium War. First, the date, 19 December 1994, was the tenth anniversary of the Sino-British Joint Declaration signed by the PRC and the United Kingdom. It represents a time that would lead China to another defining

³⁸ *People's Daily*, January 1 2010.

³⁹ Tang, *Zhengbu zouguo Tiananmen*, p. 111; Han, *Muji Tiananmen*, vol. 3, p. 2086.

⁴⁰ Wu Hung's interpretation is questionable because he has incorrectly assumed that the countdown clock was unveiled to the public on 30 June 1994, the effective date of the Patten Proposal. Wu, *Remaking Beijing*, p. 163.

⁴¹ Shu, *Tiananmen guanghcang lishi dangan*, pp. 204-208; Tang, *Zhengbu zouguo Tiananmen*, pp. 130-133.

moment in the Chinese people's long-term national salvation movement—the return of Hong Kong on 1 July 1997. Second, the location of the countdown clock—in front of the Museum of Chinese Revolution facing the relief of Burning Opium at Humen—spatially and physically represents that the return of Hong Kong had experienced a long journey from 1840 to 1997. Although the distance between the countdown clock and the Museum of Chinese Revolution is as short as one hundred and fifty meters, but it took China over one century to traverse this distance. In other words, the countdown clock was counting down days and seconds to another defining moment of China's national salvation and was written into the popular memory of the Chinese people at Tiananmen Square. Applying the same practice, another clock for welcoming the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games was unveiled to the public at the same spot on 21 September 2004 to count down the time to the other defining moment of the Chinese nation: China's great leap in the twentieth-first century.⁴²

The defining moment of China's national salvation also marks another defining moment for Tiananmen Square. To celebrate the return of Hong Kong, the PRC held a huge mass ceremony in front of the countdown clock at Tiananmen Square.⁴³ With masses counting down to 1 July 1997, the nationalistic moment was written into Chinese history and into the collective memory of national salvation at Tiananmen Square. Once again, Tiananmen Square became the spatial framework of the cultural memory of national salvation. Once a “tradition” was invented at Tiananmen Square, it would be reenacted at the space. More countdown clocks for national events, such as the return of

⁴² For the political and cultural significance of the Beijing Olympics in terms of Chinese modernity and national identity and China's rise to power in the world, see Susan Brownell, *Beijing's Games: What the Olympics Mean to China* (New York: Rowan & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2008), esp. 19-48, 73-96.

⁴³ Shu, *Tiananmen guanghcang lishi dangan*, pp. 273-276.

Macao and the holding of the Beijing Olympics, were placed at the symbolic center of Chinese temporality. More interestingly, the practice of counting down was even utilized in the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympic Game at the National Stadium of China on 8 August 2008. With counting down the seconds from ten to zero, China was bringing both the West and modernity home right at the northern end of Beijing's central axis which marks a milestone on China's temporal axis. After "5-4," "4-5," and "6-4," a new set of magic number of modern Chinese history was memorialized with Tiananmen Square—"8-8-8."

The Statue of Confucius: A Resurgence of Confucianism or/and De-Maoization?

"1-11-11" constitutes another set of magic number stored at Tiananmen Square to decode the changing political and ideological wind of the PRC. On 11 January 2011, a mammoth sculpture of Confucius was erected at Tiananmen Square, which is supposed to embody the Chinese revolutionary past in Mao's language. In the sacred territory of Mao, who initiated nationwide anti-Confucianism campaigns during the Cultural Revolution, a bronze statue of Confucius, or Kong the Second Son (Kong Lao Er) in Mao's words, was placed at Tiananmen Square. The 9.5-meter bronze sculpture of Confucius is located at the north entrance of the National Museum of China, once the two museums of Chinese history and the Chinese revolution before March of 2003. The statue with a serious facial expression shows the old philosopher from more than 2,500 years ago putting his palms together in front of his chest, wearing a double-edged sword on his left side, and looking into the distance in the direction of Mao's portrait. Across Chang'an Avenue, the portrait of Mao on the top of Tiananmen and the statue of Confucius on the ground of Tiananmen Square are staring at each other. The coexistence of the material representations of the

two most significant figures in Chinese history thus produces a very dramatic and ironic landscape. One could even imagine that Mao himself would be “turning over” in his monumental “grave,” the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall, if he knew this. The curator of the National Museum of China, Wu Zhangshen, attempted to provide the public, and probably Mao, with a justification from the viewpoint of the Chinese culture. “Confucius is representative of the Chinese traditional culture,” said Wu, “[and] is also the Chinese cultural name card.” That the statue of Confucius was settled at the north gate of the national museum representing the cultural content of China, as Wu emphasized, “is very suitable.” Nevertheless, this justification is far from enough to explain the coexistence of Mao and Confucius at Tiananmen Square.

At first glance, like the Goddess of Democracy erected by student protesters in the spring of 1989, the statue of Confucius can be considered as another “wrong deposition of thing” at Tiananmen Square. How could a cultural symbol of feudal and backward China defined by the official discourse be placed at the sacred land of revolutionary tradition representing the emblem of the PRC? How do we interpret the significance of erecting the monument of Confucius at Tiananmen Square in twentieth-first-century China? Can we understand the statue of Confucius as a material manifestation of the PRC’s new political discourse and ruling ideology in the attempt to construct national identity under the larger context of the development of socialism with Chinese characteristic? Does this necessarily mean that the validity of Mao’s revolutionary discourse has diminished along with the practical-oriented economic reform of China since the Third Plenum? Does the coexistence of Mao and Confucius at Tiananmen Square amplify the symbolism of the symbolic center of the PRC? Certainly, the

motivation, design, and location of the state-sponsored monument of Confucius as well as the aftermath of Mao's mausoleum and portrait need longer observation and further investigation. The one thing certain is that the monument of Confucius, as do its "predecessors," materializes a decisive change, or amplification, of the symbolism of Tiananmen Square.

The conclusion intends to provide some preliminary thoughts on the significance of the newly state-sponsored monument in terms of the relationship between the politics of place making and the changing political and ideological discourse of the PRC. First, the statue of Confucius erected at the symbolic center of the PRC can be read as a material manifestation of the resurgence of Confucianism and the official endorsement of it. Confucius and his teachings are enjoying a revival in China over the past decade. Books about Confucius become the best sellers.⁴⁴ A movie on the life of Confucius was produced in 2010 and enjoyed popular reception.

Second, the revival of Confucianism and the official endorsement of it largely are consequences of the PRC's effort to create a broader ruling ideology to foster national identity in coping with the economic growth and social change after over thirty years of developing "socialism with Chinese characteristics." Since the Fourth Meeting of the Sixteenth Central Committee of the CCP on 19 September 2004, the policy of "the Construction of Socialist Harmonious Society" has become the PRC's new political task. Besides reiterating the importance of Marxism, Maoism, and Deng's theories, the PRC's political discourse of the policy introduces the ideas of Confucianism as the intellectual and moral foundation (*sixiang daode jichu*) of "the Construction of Socialist Harmonious

⁴⁴ "Mammoth Sculpture of the Ancient Philosopher Confucius Shows Up on China's Tiananmen Square," www.artdaily.com/index.asp?int_sec=2&int_new=44140.

Society.” The PRC intends to sanction Confucianism, which emphasizes family values and societal harmony, as part of its ruling ideology in order to relieve the growing rich-poor gap and popular resentment and to recover from the increasing social unrest and moral degradation as a consequence of the economic reform since the Third Plenum. The move to redefine Confucius’s teachings as moral foundation of “the Construction of Socialist Harmonious Society” can be seen in the state-sponsored establishment of three hundred and twenty-two Confucius Institutes over the globe from November of 2004 to October of 2010. Confucian values have also been taught in political study classes emphasizing social harmony ever since 2005.⁴⁵ In addition to reflecting the mainstream of the revival of Confucianism, this ideological amplification was further materialized in the sculpture of Confucius erected at the symbolic center of the PRC. As the designer Wu Weishan told the media, the 9.5-meter monument is created as a cultural monument to convey the Confucian ideal of a harmonious society.⁴⁶ Once again, Tiananmen Square constitutes the spatial and physical framework for the state power of the PRC to render its changing political discourse for the supreme cause of national identity.

Considering that the PRC would not completely abandon using Marxism and Maoism as its ideological foundation in the short term, how do we understand the significance of Confucian philosophy in the PRC’s government and its relationship with the communist revolutionary discourse as manifested in the monumental objects at Tiananmen Square? To answer this question, one would first need to consider the PRC’s new discourse on Confucius and his teachings. In doing so, more questions will come. Does the Confucius in the PRC’s political discourse correspond to the historical

⁴⁵ “Confucius on Tiananmen Square,” www.rfa.org/english/news/china/confucius-01142011161101.html.

⁴⁶ “Adding Confucian elements at political center,” opinion.globaltimes.cn/observer/2011-01/612554.html.

Confucius? Does the statue of Confucius carrying a sword on his left side imply that the PRC will never give up its “barrel of a gun” in ruling China or in unifying Taiwan? How does the PRC make sense of incorporating Confucianism into its established revolutionary discourse? There are no easy and simple answers to these questions. One has to undertake a comprehensive study of the PRC’s official discourse on Confucius before and after the proposition of the policy of “the Construction of Socialist Harmonious Society” and to explore the cause and effect of the creation of Confucius’s statue at Tiananmen Square.

Popular Version of Chinese Political Modernity: Public Sphere and A Global Memory?

This dissertation also shows that the socio-political life of Tiananmen Square provides a popular version of Chinese political modernity. Whereas previous scholarship tends to believe that there is no public sphere in communist China, my dissertation suggests that there indeed existed a short-lived “public sphere” at Tiananmen Square since 1949. As discussed in Parts Three and Four, during the April Fifth Movement and the June Fourth Movement, the short-lived “public sphere” was created at the “functional space” of the PRC, Tiananmen Square. It was thanks to the creation of the “short-lived” public sphere that dissident protesters were able to manipulate the cultural memory of national salvation and revolutionary tradition to justify their unofficial version of Chinese modernity.

Whereas Habermas suggested closed spaces as the spatial feature of public sphere, this dissertation reads Tiananmen Square as a public open space in which both a network of rational-critical discussion and “popular discourse” about public affairs were created by dissident protesters and common people and identified by a global audience beyond

the state control. In his study of the structural transformation of the public sphere, Habermas defines the public sphere as “the sphere of private people come together as a public” in which a kind of public debate or public opinion is initiated to discuss public affair or their public authority.⁴⁷ In contrast, Tiananmen Square as a memorial space provides a public or open spatial framework in which popular discourses of the April Fifth and June Fourth Movements were created, stored, and transmitted to contest with official propaganda through the uses of manuscript, print and digital media, as well as bodily practices. During the grassroots activism, a network of public opinion was invented by the participants inside and outside Tiananmen Square, through which the popular discourses and memories of the movements were created, stored, and circulated.

In addition to the bodily demonstrations, public speech, and hunger strikes, dissident protesters during the April Fifth and June Fourth Movements used the big-and-small-character posters and handbills to present and form the popular discourses about public affairs, a popular practice since the founding of the PRC. In the popular discourses created at Tiananmen Square, the supreme goal of the Four Modernizations as well as the ideals of democracy, media freedom, and legal reform were voiced along with protest against the state authorities. According to the extant written and visual materials, during the April Fifth and June Fourth Movements, the people from below posted memorial poems and printed underground newspapers and journals to make public and disseminate their dissident ideas in order to break through the PRC’s powerful control on news media. When there existed only the state-sponsored newspapers presenting official discourse, the only way for private people to oppose the violence of state propaganda was to create their own network of voicing and circulating their public opinions and the knowledge about

⁴⁷Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, pp. 27, 28, 31-43.

what really happened at Tiananmen Square. This took place in the April Fifth Movement when participants opposed to official *Wenhui Newspaper*'s stigmatization of the late Zhou Enlai and their commemorative activities with their own big-and-small-character posters. It again occurred in the June Fourth Movement when prodemocracy students attempted to circulate the posters, handbills, and underground newspapers and journals, to protest against *People's Daily*'s vilification of their movement as turmoil like the Cultural Revolution. Moreover, many people knew how to enlarge the network of disseminating the popular discourses by transcribing and circulating the protest literature inside and beyond Tiananmen Square. Tiananmen Square on the one hand provided the "private people" a "public space" to perform their political drama, and, on the other hand, became a site for those "private people" to create their "public sphere." When the social movements were suppressed by the PRC's military force, however, the short-lived public sphere vanished. In the sense that Tiananmen Square constituted a public space for the private people to "publicize" their own discourses, the space had become a realm in which dissident protesters created their "short-lived" public sphere at an "open space" beyond the state power of the PRC during the movements. The popular discourses created at Tiananmen Square thus became the memory vehicles of the April Fifth and June Fourth Movements.

It is worthwhile noting that certain modern media of communication like radio, television, and fax machines also played critical roles in the global knowledge of the June Fourth Movement. This global spread of knowledge about the June Fourth Movement was a product of historical contingency. Initially, international journalists flew to Beijing for witnessing the decisive moment in the diplomatic history of the PRC, the visit of

Mikhail Gorbachev (1931-). They nevertheless became eyewitnesses of the June Fourth Movement. The international news media thus played important roles in the spread of the news about the student movement in the spring of 1989 and the popular discourse invented in the short-lived public sphere. The consequence of this international transmission of the stories of the June Fourth Movement was the emergence of a global memory of the event and the space.

The protesting students clearly noticed the existence of the international news media and strategically used them. Not only did the private people at Tiananmen Square in the spring of 1989 produce a popular discourse, in order to attract the attention of the local and global audience, they had performed some dramatic political dramas such as erecting their own monument—the Goddess of Democracy—at Tiananmen Square. By holding parades in the Beijing City that ended at the symbolic place of Tiananmen Square, the student leaders of the June Fourth Movement intended to mobilize the city residents' support. More importantly, their bodily performance was transmitted world wide through the international journalists' cameras. By occupying Tiananmen Square, the symbol of the PRC, they on the one hand connected themselves with their “revolutionary” forerunners of the May Fourth and April Fifth Movements, and, on the other hand, were able to make public claims to criticize state authorities under the “eyes” of Mao. On the 4 May 1989, the seventieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement, student protesters announced a “New May Fourth Manifesto,” which shows their identity with the May Fourth nation salvation discourse and their supreme goal of modernity—democracy. In the end, by creating the Goddess of Democracy right in front of Mao's portrait, the student protesters created their own historical monument, which was considered by the

PRC as “wrong deposition of thing” at Tiananmen Square.⁴⁸ All of these democratic dramas had successfully attracted the gaze of global audience, and, as a consequence, they created a global memory about the June Fourth Movement and Tiananmen Square, which requires a separate investigation.

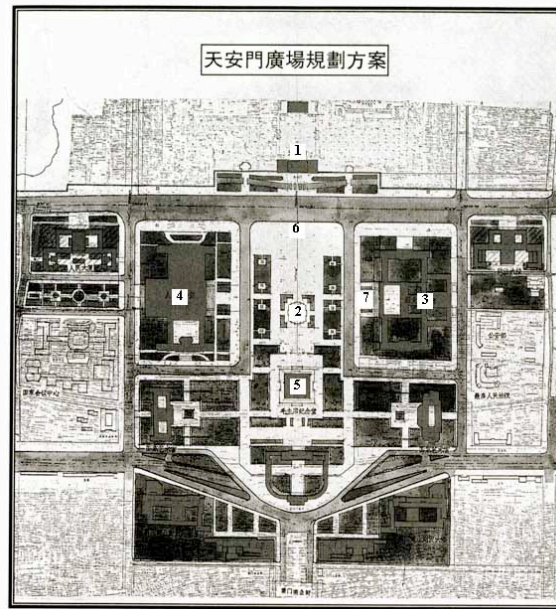
Bringing the West Home along the Central Axis of Beijing

To study the history of Chinese political modernity at Tiananmen Square is to study the long-term historical course in which China brought the West, or modernity, home. To save and build China into a modernized state by introducing and localizing the Western science, technology, and political institutions had been Chinese people’s noble dream since the Opium War. This dream was realized in the holding of Beijing Olympic Games in the summer of 2008 under the rule of the PRC. More interestingly, the north-south axis of Beijing, on which Tiananmen Square serves as the spatial-temporal center, witnessed the progress of the Chinese century-long national salvation movement and modernization. In 1919, the student protesters of the May Fourth Movement attempted to save China from the encroachment of Japanese imperialism by upholding the Western values of democracy and science at Tiananmen Square. On 3 February 1949, in order to commemorate the liberation of Beijing, which anticipated the creation of New China, the PLA under the leadership of the CCP held a victory parade along the axis. On 1 October 1949, the founding ceremony of the PRC was held at Tiananmen Square on the center of the same axis. During the revolutionary April Fifth Movement, the protesters from below voiced their protest against the Gang of Four and projected their prospective vision of the Four Modernizations at Tiananmen Square in the spring of 1976. Repeating the tradition

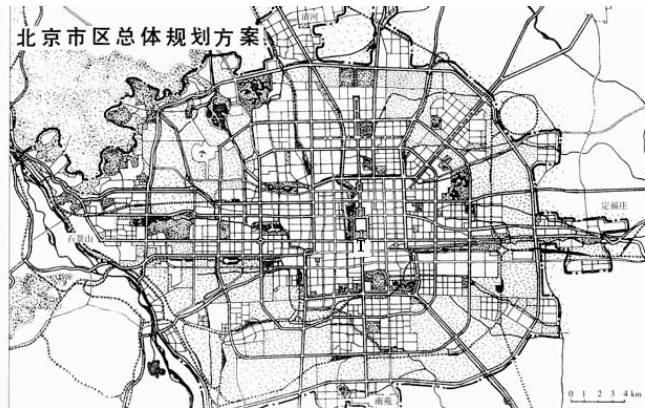
⁴⁸ Lee, *China Rising: The Meaning of Tiananmen*, p. 156; Lianhe Newspaper, ed., *Tiananmen 1989*, p. 156; Wu, *Remaking Beijing*, pp. 16-17.

invented by their April Fifth forerunners, in the spring of 1989, the student protesters of the June Fourth Movement again upheld the banner of democracy in an attempt to save and modernize China. On 19 December 1994, the tenth anniversary of the Sino-British Joint Declaration, a digital clock was placed in front of the Museum of the Chinese Revolution to count down the dates and seconds to China's recovery of sovereignty in Hong Kong. The same practice, or tradition, was reenacted at Tiananmen Square to welcome the return of Macao and the coming of the Beijing Olympic Games. On 8 August 2008, at the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics, the firework show of "Footprints of History" again passed along the axis from Yongdingmen in the south through Tiananmen Square in the middle to the National Stadium of China in the north. At the Beijing Olympic Games, China under the rule of the CCP had finally reached its apogee of modernity by bringing (the guest from) the West home along with the counting down from ten to zero at the Bird's Nest on the new north end of the same axis. As suggested by the "Footprints of History," Tiananmen Square has not only become the geographical center of the spatial axis of Beijing but also constituted the symbolic center of the temporal axis of the PRC.

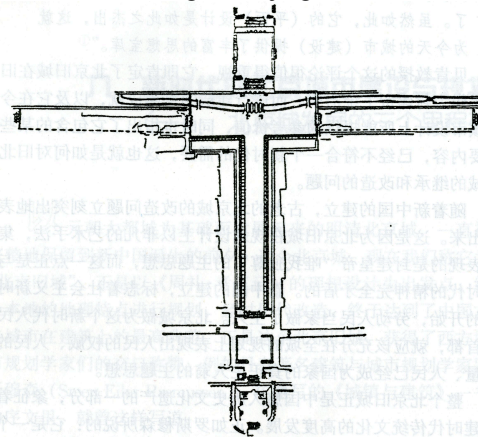
Illustrations



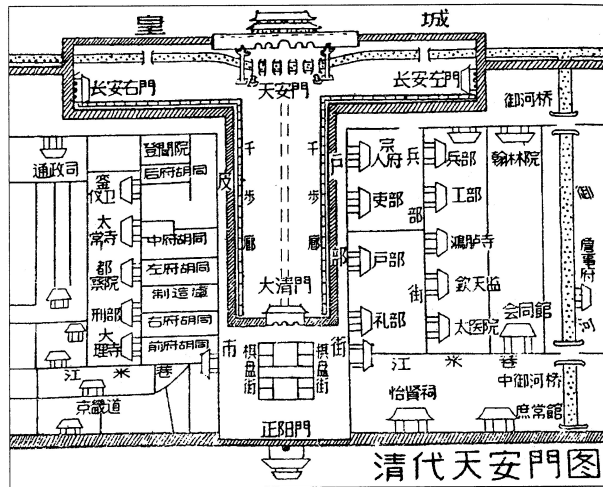
1. Layout of Tiananmen Square, from Dong, *Gudu Beijing*, p. 181.



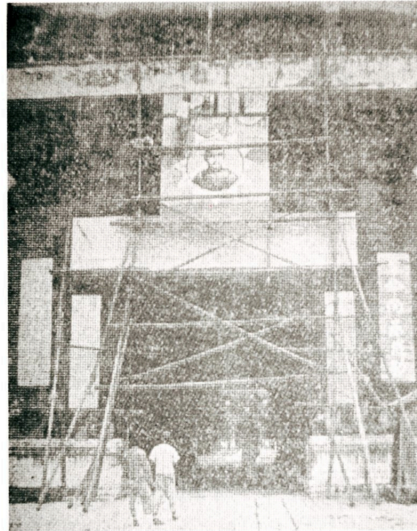
2. General Program on the Urban Planning of Beijing in 1982, from Dong, *Gudu Beijing*, p. 44.



3. The T-shaped Palace Square of the Forbidden City A, from Hou Renzhi, *Beijingcheng de qiyan yu bianqian* [*The Origins and Development of Beijing*] (Beijing: Zhongguo shudian, 2001), p. 146.



4. The T-shaped Palace Square of the Forbidden City B, from Dong, *Gudu Beijing*, p. 137.



5. Sun Yat-sen's Portrait on Tiananmen, from Wu Hung, *Remaking Beijing*, p. 71.



6. Jiang Jieshi's Portrait on Tiananmen, from Wu Hung, *Remaking Beijing*, p. 74.



7. Mourning Zhou Enlai alongside Chang'an Avenue, from *Renming de daonian*, page number unknown.



8. Memorial Wreath and Poem on the relief "May Fourth Movement," from *Renming de daonian*, page number unknown.

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