

**Functional Relationship between Higher Education, Economy
and Social Change: Post-Maoist Experiences of China**

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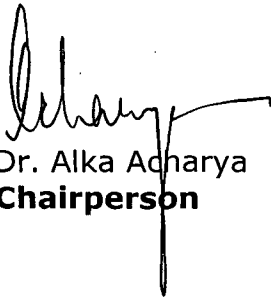
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Certified that the dissertation entitled "Functional Relationship between Higher Education, Economy and Social Change: Post-Maoist Experiences of China", submitted by Eldho Mathews for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy, has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.


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Declaration

I declare that the dissertation entitled "Functional Relationship between Higher Education, Economy and Social Change: Post Maoist Experiences of China" submitted by me for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eldho Mathews', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Eldho Mathews

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Introduction

China's higher education system has been witnessing a number of changes over the last two decades. One of the most noticeable changes during these two decades is the rapid reorganisation of the higher education system by reorienting its traditional role of serving the erstwhile planned economy to providing large number of human resources to an ever-growing market economy. The changing nature of Chinese political economy, officially known as "socialist market economy" has played a profound role in changing the basic structure and objectives of Chinese higher education. The manifold implications of the new policies envisaged by the "Four Modernisations" have been evolving as a response to the policy changes of the Chinese state after the Third Plenum of the Chinese Communist Party in 1978. Since then, higher education policy of the state has revolved around providing skills and expertise to the modernisation of the country, reflecting the characteristics of the free market economy (Chakrabarti 1998:144-145).

The reforms and the opening up of the Chinese economy to the outside world have also stimulated several reforms in higher education and altered the long-existing relationship between the state and higher education which was inherited from the planned economy, in which the government played the role of a patron. Studies on the changes in the funding structure of Chinese universities show that the state's gradual and partial withdrawal from the higher education system is consistent with the new economic orientation of the Chinese state. In 1978, while 95.9 percent of the sources for the functioning of the universities came from government funds, it was declined to 67.62 percent in 1997. Furthermore, there has been a gradual increase in the proportion of tuition fees, donation from outside agencies, revenues raised from university-run enterprises etc. Under the "socialist market economy", higher educational

institutions were forced to look for additional revenues rather than fully depending upon government funds (Rui Yang 2002:9). These changes have fundamentally transformed the structure of higher education and resulted in the emergence of an education market, offering an alternative to the state run higher education system (Ka Ho Mok 1997:263-264). Therefore, the current reorganisation of Chinese higher education is a clear reflection of the subtle ideological shifts, evidenced by the restoration of capitalist social relations, evolving in contemporary China.

At a broader level, globalisation is also exerting profound influence on Chinese higher education. Under the new situation, Chinese higher education system is increasing its degree of interaction with the outside world and functions as part of the international academic community (Min 2004: 53). The interdependent dimension of this process has brought about global trends into Chinese higher education. It is in this context that external financial agencies like World Bank and various Multinational Corporations are penetrating into the Chinese higher education system. These sweeping changes in the field of Chinese education are a testimony to the organic relation between its domestic educational system and the global educational system.

The abandonment of the egalitarian ideals of Maoism from the realm of Chinese higher education during the post-Mao period has resulted in the emergence of disequilibrium in Chinese society, which has stratifying consequences. A vital aspect of this change is the emergence of a bifurcated system of "mass sector" and "elite sector" (Rosen 1997:250-251). The emergence of new forms of class relations in terms of access to higher education reflects the conflicting nature of Chinese socialism. Such an objective condition becomes conducive for the reproduction of social inequalities. These changes are increasing the magnitude of inequalities based on social origins and raises important questions about the internal dynamics of class relationships in post-Mao Chinese society.

The loosening-up of the control of the state during the post-Mao period partially liberated large segment of the Chinese population from the direct

dependence on the state and gave limited autonomy (Rosenbaum 1992:24). The emergence of a new middle class, coupled with the growth of higher education system, accelerated this process and has created a large number of politically oriented groups, which provided the basis for the evolution of a public sphere in post-Mao China. The changes in the structure and organisation of knowledge and the introduction of Western ideas into the higher education system (Hayhoe 1990:294) during this period have facilitated a liberalised academic atmosphere paving the way for the emergence of various informal groups in the universities. The impact of these changes is symptomatic of the new social and political tensions arising out of reforms in higher education.

Review of Literature

The literature reviewed below is divided into three parts. The first part reviews the reciprocal relationship between higher education reforms and economic reforms in post-Mao China. It also looks into the literature dealing with the impact of globalisation on Chinese higher education. The second part evaluates the literature pertaining to higher education and educational stratification and the third section examines the literature on the political manifestations of higher education reforms.

Studies on the Changing Nature of Higher Education and Economy

The impact of political and economic reforms over the last two decades has brought about changes in the overall structure of higher education in China. The dynamic phase of this process began with the “Four Modernisations” programmes initiated after the Third Plenum of the Chinese Communist Party in 1978. The reforms initiated under the new leadership of Deng Xiaoping rationalised Chinese education with a view to downplay the political and social functions of education in favour of an educational strategy for the acceleration of China’s march towards modernisation. Under the new

leadership, education has become an organic component for social and economic development (Rosen 1997: 250-251). In a landmark speech delivered at the National Educational Work Conference in 1978, Deng stressed the importance of education in China's modernisation strategy (Deng Xiaoping 1983:123). From the work of John Gardner, one gets a sense of the purge of "Gang of Four" from the educational sphere and the early efforts made by the new leadership to reorganise the system. This period also witnessed the re-introduction of rigorous university entrance examinations and a dramatic increase in the number of students going abroad for higher studies with the active support of the state (Gardner 1982:280-287).

The development policies of the Chinese state in the present transitional phase have a great impact on the higher education reforms in China. Central to this issue is the argument that the creation of markets by the state has necessitated a change in the social and economic roles of the state (Wang Hui 2003:142). This is complemented by the argument of Ka-Ho Mok that post-Mao reformers' decision to withdraw from the social functions of the state and privatisation of education are interrelated. Ka Ho Mok argues that these reforms also reflect worldwide disenchantment with large-scale, centrally planned organisations and a shift toward greater reliance on decentralisation and marketisation (Ka Ho Mok 1997:260-265). Similarly, Jan-Ing Var Lofstedt and Zhao Shangwu (2002) also argue that the paradigm shifts in the political and economic systems have been reflected in Chinese education. Their argument is that the current phase of restructuring has been characterised by the growing impact of market mechanism, privatisation and individualism. An important manifestation of this change is the state's encouragement for universities and research centres to participate in the market, compete for projects, and contract their services to economic enterprises (Goldman 1992:200).

Since 1980s, many global factors are also influencing the national education system of China. The nature of the current restructuring process carried out in consonance with the trends in the international higher education system reflects the influence of these factors (Rui Yang 2000:327). One

aspect of this change can be gauged from the systematic and purposive way employed by the state to extract knowledge from the industrialised nations of the West through student exchange programmes (Lo 1989:559). According to Wang Hui, contemporary education and research in China are becoming structurally transnational, that is, the production of knowledge and research activities has been incorporated into the processes of globalisation (Wang Hui 2003:142). Since the quality of an education system is increasingly being compared with international standards in the present globalised world, it is necessary from the part of the state to redefine and readjust the manpower needs and institutional infrastructures (Wing Wah Law 2004:500-503). In the present Chinese context, it is the forces of demand and market supply rather than government planning that determines the development of human resources (Min 2004:64-72). These changes reflect the changing economic needs of the state and its impact on the higher education system.

Studies on the Emergence of a Stratified Higher Educational System

In a society like China, where societal stratification is primarily based on income and function rather than property, educational system is a potential source for either socio-economic equality or inequality (Meisner 1977:283). In the early days of reforms, educational stratification was manifested in the selection of students mostly based on the meritocratic criteria of entrance examinations. This system was conducive for transmitting social and economic status across generations. It also brought down the occupational mobility of the children from the blue collar and peasant families. Susan Shirk argues that the evolution of a highly stratified and meritocratic educational system would even influence the relationship between elites and citizens as well as the relationship between political and intellectual elites (Shirk 1984:245). The new approach of the Chinese state towards higher education is a clear departure from the policies adopted during the Maoist period. During the Maoist period, measures to increase the worker- peasant contingent in higher education were an integral part of the Party's policy for creating proletarian intellectuals (Taylor 1981:105).

The stratifying consequences of higher education reforms in the context of the changing nature of Chinese economy are an instructive case for analysing the nature of policy shifts that abandons the wider humanistic goals of education for the sake of functionally specified goals. The major impact of these transformations was the dismantling of the institutional structures of Maoist era. The concepts like social planning, public supported higher education, mandatory job system etc. were the worst affected areas (Rosen 1998). The new educational policies also legitimised the values of personal advancement and competition for accelerating economic development (Hannum 1999:202). In the liberalised academic environment of the eighties, increased popular demand for better education led to the emergence of a non-state sector in higher education. The state's encouragement for more diversity in educational sector and its promotion of individuals, business groups and local communities to create more learning opportunities resulted in the marketisation of education (Ka Ho Mok 1997:262-267).

In the eighties, making into the tertiary education sector was an effective route to high social position. The main reason is that getting a place in a university was usually linked to a white-collar job in the state sector upon graduation with the associated intellectual status (Cherrington 1997:61). The expansion of higher education coupled with the decentralisation, enterprise reforms and the success of township and village enterprises have also greatly expanded the size of an educated middle class in China. Alvin Y. So (2005) argues that in the present Chinese context this is self-evident and is a growing phenomenon. Since access to higher education is a prerequisite for social advancement, educational stratification has also some scope for influencing the social position of individuals and thus enlarging the size of a new middle class. In an analysis of the emergence of new scientific elites in China, Cong Cao and Richard P. Suttmeier (2001) argue that the products of China's revitalised system of higher education are forming a new class of scientific elites. According to them, the formation of this new class is linked to foreign education, particularly after obtaining doctorates from foreign countries.

Studies on Higher Education Reforms, Emergence of Intellectual Pluralism, and the Anxieties of the State

Education has an important role in shaping the attitude of the society towards the existing political system. The impact of this process “varies in direction and strength with specific issues” and it may lead either to radicalism or to conservatism (Stember 1961, Quoted in Coleman 1965:20). Lyn Webster Paine and Stanley Rosen have convincingly confirmed the above-mentioned point of view with respect to the emergence of a critical civil society in post-Mao China. According to Paine, reforms in higher education have been instrumental in laying the foundations of a critical civil society with a culture of public debates. After the repression of Tiananmen Movement, students, teachers and higher education sector in particular were held partly accountable for the turmoil (Paine 1994:960-983). Similarly, Rosen argues that since 1989 Chinese authorities were compelled to acknowledge that a significant number of students started questioning the soundness of ideas promoted by the state (Rosen 1992). The potential social bases created by the economic reforms have reduced the state’s pervasive influence on society. As the strength of the political intervention of state in social life declined, individual autonomy increased. This has resulted in the emergence of various autonomous student organisations representing colleges and universities in the eighties (Baogang He 1997:27-31). Therefore, the emergence of a semi- civil society in the context of Tiananmen Movement has to be seen in the wider context of economic reforms.

During the reform period, the quest for world standards of scholarship led the Chinese social scientists to adopt dominant Western political theories and frameworks. Manoranjan Mohanty argues that reforms in this direction have also resulted in granting more intellectual autonomy to the academic community than before (Mohanty 2000:435-443). These changes in the structure of higher education, which were largely academically inspired, gradually led to tensions within the political system: as a new generation of students, educated in a broader and critical way, began to make demands for structural reforms in the polity (Hayhoe 1993:25-27). The state’s policy to

send students abroad, particularly to the United States for gaining technological expertise has accelerated this process. The study by Xinshu Zhao and Yu Xie (1992) identifies the issue of “assimilation” in the host country and its impact on shaping the political attitude of the returnees. The authors argue that those students who returned to China after their studies carried the Western beliefs in freedom and democracy that will ultimately affect the Communist Party.

Although a great deal of studies have addressed these complex issues, barring Wang Hui, most of these works have not taken a comprehensive approach by giving inadequate attention to the complex interactions between higher education, economic reforms and social change. The strength of Wang Hui’s work lies in its analysis of the interpenetrating relationship between society and state in post-Mao period. He argues that the reforms in the context of globalisation have profoundly reorganised the basic structure of Chinese society. Central to this issue is that the creation of markets by the state has changed the social and economic roles of the state. He further adds that contemporary education and research in China are structurally transnational. According to him, the intellectuals who went abroad particularly to United States and European countries have had the opportunity to understand the ethos of Western societies and their intellectual trends. A vital aspect of this interaction was the opening up of a different perspective on China from that of those who stayed at home. Structured around an analysis of social and intellectual movement in the post-Mao period; this study dissects with clarity, the nature of contemporary education and research in China (Wang Hui 2003:141-144).

Rationale of the Study

The term “function” as an analytical category has an important value in the analysis of the changing nature of Chinese higher education and its impact on society. The functionalist approach in this study focuses not only on the mechanisms linking economy and education but also the correspondence

between higher education reforms and the larger societal process in post-Mao China. Since the combination of changing ideological conceptions of the Chinese state and economic restructuring process have a significant impact on the structure of higher education, a greater understanding of the emerging structure of higher education in China is not possible without a systematic analysis of the various contributing factors for this change. In the present study, the transformation of Chinese higher education is analysed within the broader context of China's political and economic transition over the last two decades. In doing so, this study aims to evolve more precise hypotheses about the extent and depth of changes that will, in turn, generate appropriate methodologies for testing them.

Scope of the Study

The social and political impact of higher education reforms conditioned by economic factors in post-Mao China is a testimony to the inter-relationship between state and education. Although several studies have addressed this issue, most of them have approached it in a compartmentalised form without giving adequate attention to the complex interactions between various factors within the larger societal process. Therefore, the present study will try to update the earlier evaluations of structural changes in the Chinese higher education undertaken by various scholars. The present study aims to explore the various manifestations of the functional relationship between higher education and economy and its impact on social changes, besides analysing the subtle interplay of emerging market economy and the decline in the political control of the state. Although a thorough investigation of the impact of globalisation process on Chinese higher education is outside the purview of the present study, a specific set of developments, which deal with the internationalisation of Chinese higher education, is selected for formulating the dialectical aspect of relationship between economic reforms and educational development.

Hypotheses

- (1) The functional relationship between higher education, economy and social change is complex and has been playing a critical role in the evolution of various social and political changes taking place in post-Mao China.
- (2) The continuing reforms in Chinese higher education are the logical consequences of reforms initiated under the new leadership of Deng Xiaoping since 1978. The nature of these reforms is a direct extension of the Chinese political leaderships' initiatives directed towards consolidation of state power within the changing context of political and economic reforms.

Research Questions

- (1) What has been the nature of functional relationship between higher education, economy and social change in post-Mao China?
- (2) How are reforms in education designed to cater to the needs of the changing domestic labour market?
- (3) How are the global factors necessitating a readjustment in Chinese higher education?
- (4) Do the reforms in higher education result in educational stratification?
- (5) How has the Chinese state responded to the issue of intellectual freedom?
- (6) Are there any connections between the reorganisation of Chinese higher education and the domestic civil society discourses?

Methodology

Based on the belief that only through a clearly specified theoretical position can the understanding of the issues in Chinese higher education be furthered, this study relies on the explanatory-analytical tradition of social science research. It will examine the structural changes and their impact from various theoretical approaches. The point of departure will be the base-superstructure analysis of Marxism for understanding the nature of relationship between the

economic base of the state and its educational superstructure. This will be followed by an attempt to analyse the basic characteristics of the functional relationship between higher education and economy in the Chinese context by using the general principles of correspondence theory formulated by Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis. Using the insights from Pierre Bourdieu's perspectives on the reproductive consequences of educational system, post-1978 higher educational reforms and the consequent issues related to educational stratification will be discussed in the second chapter. In the third chapter, the political manifestations of higher educational reforms will be analysed within the wider context of political socialisation theories. The concept of political socialisation mentioned here refers to the process by which individuals acquire attitudes and feelings towards the political system, and the role of education as an agency in this process (Coleman 1968:18). In addition to these approaches, the theories and arguments put forward by scholars on education in general and Chinese education in particular, and the general theories on the relationship between state and education will be used in this work

The second chapter maps the evolution of higher education reforms in post-Mao China and discusses the dialectical aspects of its relationship with the economic policies of the state. The relative influences of various contributing factors responsible for the changes are analysed within the broad framework of a base-superstructure, which consists of a set of institutions, or superstructure associated with the economic base. A brief analysis of the new educational philosophy of the Chinese state, which reflects the cautious philosophy of State's modernisation goals, providing some important insights into the changing role of the state and its educational agenda is also done. Besides, it also examines the changes brought about by globalisation and its impact on Chinese higher education.

Chapter three examines various issues associated with higher education, educational stratification and social mobility in the context of evolving class hierarchies in post-Mao China. It also looks into the positioning of Chinese state in the new situation along with the growth of private participation in

Chinese education and identifies the factors responsible for social differentiation in the background of economic reforms in post-Mao China.

Chapter four details the nature and dynamics of political socialisation process in post-Mao China. For understanding the contributory role of higher education in this process, this chapter analyses three important aspects of the issue: first is the political agenda of the state in the restructuring of academic disciplines, particularly social sciences and humanities, in the reform period; second is the role of universities in facilitating various autonomous/informal organisations outside the ambit of the political control of the state; and third, the impact of the new liberal academic environment on civil society and other liberal discourses—an important source of inspiration for the various student movements in post-Mao China. The last chapter summarises, in brief, the basic arguments of the study.

Functional Relationship between Higher Education and Economy: Post-Maoist Experiences of China

The higher education system of China has been witnessing a drastic reorganisation ever since the Third Plenum of the Chinese Communist Party in 1978. This has resulted in a comprehensive reorientation of the higher educational policies of the state correspond with the Four Modernisation programmes. The educational reforms initiated under the new leadership of Deng Xiaoping intended to give higher education a strategic place in the economic development of the country. (Hao Keming 1984:149). However, in the eighties and the nineties, market oriented economic reforms under the 'socialist market economy' fundamentally altered the structure of Chinese higher education. Various government policies since the early 1980s reflect this shift towards marketisation, including the reallocation of financial resources, increase in tuition fees, the encouragement of private education and other initiatives in the non-state sector (Ka Ho-Mok 1997:263-264). Although the reorganisation of Chinese higher education system has more often been the work of the state, pressures from outside, particularly the forces of globalisation, are also influencing the course of ongoing changes.

Theoretical Context

The determinants of policy changes in Chinese higher education over the last two decades can be analysed within the changing nature of the state's political and economic policies and its impact on the higher education system. The post-Maoist experiences of Chinese higher education confirm that an analysis of the economic policies of the state cannot be divorced from an analysis of the changes in the higher educational system. The modernisation of the Chinese economy has not only fostered the growth of a market economy but has also caused structural changes within the

educational system (Ka Ho Mok 2001:91-92). A major outcome of this process is the disappearance of the Maoist philosophy of egalitarianism from the realm of Chinese higher education. The orientations of higher educational institutions have also changed consistent with the basic economic orientation of the state to support the advancement of an emerging industrial infrastructure (Lucas 1978:362-363).

The following section details the factors responsible for the changes in the Chinese context. Although many factors have been contributing to these changes, the relative influence of each factor responsible for the changes, i.e. economic globalisation, structural adjustments of the domestic economy etc. could be analysed within the broad framework of a base-superstructure, which consists of a set of institutions, or superstructure associated with the economic base. Hence, an understanding about the dialectical nature of relationship between the economic base and its educational superstructure is important in the present study. In short, an attempt to analyse the different ways in which economic base affects higher educational system in China amounts to approach this issue within the base-superstructure frame work of Marxism. In this context, higher education in China can be situated within the larger framework of reciprocal relationship between economy and education. The Marxian notion of “social whole” views state from the level of economic base (the unity of productive forces and relations of production) and the superstructure.¹ That is to say, every social formation reproduces the existing relations of production. As Louis Althusser puts it:

The role of the repressive State apparatus, insofar as it is a repressive apparatus, consists essentially in securing by force (physical or otherwise) the political conditions of the reproduction of relations of production, which are in the last resort relations of exploitation. Not only does the State apparatus contribute generously to its own reproduction, but also and above all, the State apparatus secures by repression the political conditions for the action of the Ideological State Apparatuses (Althusser 1971:142).

He further argues that repressive apparatus of the state is just a shield for achieving the reproduction of the relations of production. Therefore, the role of the ideology of the state is a mediating factor between the various ideological

¹ According to Althusser, every social formation arises from a dominant mode of production, and the definite relations of production have an impact on the process of production. See Louis Althusser(1971).

apparatuses of the state. According to Marx, the sum total of the relations of production constitutes the economic substructure of the society. This implies that the definite forms of social consciousness and the legal and political superstructures are dependent upon the economic substructure. Therefore, a change in the economic substructure can cause a rapid change in the vast superstructure (Marx 1977:503-504). These Marxist assumptions about the reciprocal relationship between relations of production and the forces of production, which originally emerged from a body of theory that was formulated in the nineteenth century, continue to provide a starting point for understanding the relationship between state policies and the nature of higher education system in post- Mao China. However, this framework has some limitations, mainly because it gives analytical primacy to the role of economy in determining the course of changes in education. Although economy plays an important role in this process, the dynamic interplay between political sphere and education is also extremely important. Therefore, the limitations of the Marxist framework have to be overcome by approaching the issue through the structuralist paradigm of Louis Althusser and the correspondence principle formulated by Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis.

Althusser perceives that the representation of every society has an edifice containing an 'infrastructure' on which there exists the superstructure. However, Althusser's spatial metaphor of superstructure erected on a base contains two 'levels' or 'instances' that cannot be detached from the base. He further argues that the floors of the superstructure are determined by the effectivity of base.² This of course would require looking beyond the general affinities between the dialectical method of Marxism and education to a greater level that would help to explore the nature of the relationship between contemporary economic and political changes and its impact on higher education.

² The present analysis is primarily based on Althusser's "Lenin and Philosophy" and Other Essays. This work succinctly represents his thinking about the Ideological State Apparatuses. To Althusser, the educational apparatus, the religious apparatus, the family apparatus, the political apparatus, the trade union apparatus, the communications apparatus, the 'cultural apparatus' etc. are all part of the Ideological State Apparatus in contemporary capitalist social formations. He argues that all apparatuses have one common feature—the reproduction of the relations of production. In this framework, the dominant among the various apparatuses in capitalist social formation is education. (See Louis Althusser (1971).

The correspondence principle formulated by Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis have long been at the centre of various analyses in the sociology of education. What is most striking about this analysis is the functional approach towards understanding the relationship between education and economy. To Bowles and Gintis, the basic deterministic factor in educational change is economic change (Bowles and Gintis 1976:265-266). As an account of the interaction between changing nature of production relations and educational system, Bowles and Gintis illustrated this effect in the context of United States' educational system. Confronted by the growth of wage labour and factory system in the nineteenth century and the growth of corporate capital later, the educational system also had to adjust in order to perform within the context of a changing economy. Hence, social change is the product of the internal contradictions in the capitalist system of accumulation. This analysis also provides some useful explanations about why the higher educational system operates as it does, linking the reproduction of social division of labour with the economic requirements of the society. The potential applications of this approach are immense for analysing the changing nature of Chinese higher education in the post Mao-period.

Economic Restructuring Process as an Impetus for Educational Reforms

When China started restructuring its economy in the late 1970s, there were parallel initiatives to restructure its higher education system too. With the fall of Gang of Four, Deng Xiaoping was reinstated and restored to his post in the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. Deng's return to power led to a virtual abandonment of the 'egalitarian' and 'class struggle' dimensions of education practiced during the Maoist era for the sake of economic efficiency. Deng and his followers even went to the extent of pronouncing Cultural Revolution a calamity and catastrophe (Shirk 1984:245). In a landmark speech to the National Education Work Conference in 1978, Deng underlined the importance of education in China's future development (Deng 1983:123). As a means for promoting China's modernisation, higher educational reforms have been encouraged since 1978 with the belief that modernisation of science and technology was crucial for China's economic and social progress. Therefore, development of higher education was an important strategic goal

for the post-Mao reformers. According to Sreemati Chakrabarti (1998), these programmes were necessary for acquiring skills and evolved as a response to:

- (a) the reorientation of economic and science policy, and
- (b) the crisis of confidence among the younger population and the intellectual community.

In order to grasp the significance of the changes associated with the predominance of Deng Xiaoping, it is useful to sketch briefly the internal logic that brought a sudden shift in the economic and the political orientation of the Chinese state. Two points are worth making in this connection. The first is the distinctive economic and political circumstances that transformed the structure of Chinese economy. The second is the changes in the economic and political setting had an effect on the organisation of higher education system.

By the late 1970s, it became clear that the radical phase of the Cultural Revolution was over and correction and reconstruction could be initiated. The second generation of leaders under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping began to take over authority and started broad structural changes and reforms. The reformist leaders sought structural reorientations through various strategies like the “Four Modernisations”, “socialist market economy” etc. in the hope of achieving rapid socio-economic development. These policy changes had far-reaching effects both economically and politically. Deng’s slogan “Education must be geared to modernisation, to the world, and to the future” was widely publicised during this period (Ingvar and Zhao Shangwu 2002:184). Thus, the ideological reorientation of the state since the initiation of economic reforms and the emergence of a new leadership positioned to emphasise economic factor over political factor has considerably changed the nature of the Chinese state in the reform period. This was a departure from the Maoist period in which politicisation of the class was more important than the economic aspects of transition. After the revolution, even after the elimination of private ownership of means of production, Mao took a position favouring the renewal of ‘class struggle’. One of the peculiarities of this approach was the stress on ‘superstructures’ (Hong Yung 2003:93). In fact, Mao’s stress on ‘superstructure’ and its overall positive and

negative influence on social change is reflected in the following analysis made in the early 1960s, prior to the Cultural Revolution:

The bureaucratic class is a class sharply opposed to the working class and poor and lower middle peasants. These people are opposed to the working class and poor and lower middle peasants. These people have become or are in the process of becoming bourgeois elements sucking the blood of the workers (Quoted in Hong 2003:99).

This reveals the general feeling of uncertainty existed during the Maoist era. These gloomy predictions were followed by the Cultural Revolution, which aimed at the ideological re-orientation of the Chinese society. The nature of higher education system in the post-revolutionary China, which favoured intellectual and academic ability over the class and social origin, was a major contributing factor for initiating Cultural Revolution. Naturally, Mao's death and the purge of Gang of Four in 1976 created a vacuum followed by dramatic changes in all aspects of Chinese higher education system. In the new environment, the policies of the Maoist era were subjected to severe criticism and a socialist development model based on market-oriented principles was implemented under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping (White1993:3). Therefore, the changes taking place in the Chinese higher educational system can be situated within the various interrelated process evolving within the economy, society and the political system.

Within a few years after the Third Plenum of the Chinese Communist Party in 1978, political atmosphere in China witnessed a reverse trend from the radical Maoist policies of the preceding years. The most important among the institutional changes that came out of the Third Plenum was the revision of the concepts such as "socialism" and "transition to socialism". Although the ideas and policy proposals for revising the structure of the state was initially restricted to the economic sphere, they had profound political and ideological consequences (White 1993:8). The objective of this reorientation is effectively captured in Gordon White's formulation:

Reformers challenged the previous Stalinist/Maoist notion that economic entities undergo an inexorable transition from 'lower' (private, co-operative and collective) to higher (state or 'whole people') levels of ownership in the process of socialist development. They argued that this contravenes the Marxian "law" that relations of production must conform with the level of productive forces. In other words, in China's condition of underdevelopment,

large - scale state enterprises are often inappropriate, thus the role of private, small-scale co-operative/collective and various forms of hybrid or joint-ownership enterprises should be encouraged for the foreseeable future. At the same time, most reformers have tended to concede (publicly at least) that state ownership should remain dominant in the economy. (White 1993:47-48).

Gordon White's analysis is an appropriate point for understanding the unresolved tension between the "relations of production" and "forces of production" in the social process of China. The post- Mao reformers' attraction towards opening-up of the Chinese economy supplemented this thesis. Post-Mao reformers condemned the previous Maoist emphasis on national economic self-reliance as a form of national chauvinism that denied China the benefits of participation in the international division of labour through foreign trade and of infusions of foreign capital, which could spur domestic development (White 1993:48). As a natural corollary of this politico-economic upheaval, a tremendous push has been imparted to discover the merits of the capitalist system. Coupled with this changes, a nationwide campaign was started to "seek truth from facts" which epitomised Deng's strategy of downplaying theory in favour of a "more flexible and utilitarian standard to evaluate a new set of priorities and policies." (Misra 1998:2740-2744). The reintroduction of material incentives in production, tacit acceptance of individual competition etc. were also part of these early reform initiatives (Lucas 1978:362). It is important to recognize in this context that the changes in the Chinese higher educational system did not develop in isolation, rather as part of a series of changes related to the ongoing adaptation of the Chinese state to the new pattern of development. Paul Burkett and Martin Hart-Landsberg (2005:437) make it clear that Deng and his supporters in the Party viewed partial marketisation as a safe alternative to the problems faced by the state during the late 1970s. However, each stage in the reform process generated new tensions and contradictions. Further, they argue that:

The key dynamic driving China's transformation was the path-dependent channeling of policy options into pro-market, pro-capitalist directions. The results have been increasing alienation of economic priorities from grassroots needs and capabilities, and a corrosion of state's ability to plan and direct economic activity, both of which only reinforced the growing dependence on markets, private enterprises, foreign capital and exports" (Burkett and Landsberg 2005:437).

On this foundation, Alvin Y. So argues that the Chinese case is an example of the emergence of new classes and class relationships, leading to the birth of a “state-mediated class-divided society.” (So 2005:483). The obvious form of this pro-market tilt was accompanied by a series of institutional transitions at various levels of the state from a centralised economic and social planning system to a market economy officially endorsed and implemented by the state (Ka Ho-Mok 2005:222).

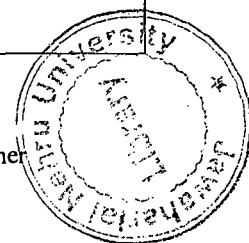
Most significant here is the attitude of the state which views people as a ‘precious resource’ or ‘human capital’ devoid of attaching adequate importance to social values. Not surprisingly, the reorganisation of Chinese higher education entails market related strategies like user-pay principle, generating income from university-industry contract research, engaging in consultancy services, seeking endowments or donations from the private sector and offering profit-making courses.³ Even though Chinese leaders emphasised the role of socialistic pattern of development by interpreting and reinterpreting Chinese socialism, their policies have always been attracted towards economic determinism, reflected in the attitude of the state towards its higher education sector. In short, restructuring of the state economy was not restricted to economy; rather the same principles also became the basis for the reorganisation of higher education as well. This reflects the reciprocal relationship between the reorientation of the economic priorities of the state and its higher education system. These changes have problematised the long-standing relationship between the state and universities inherited from the planned system in which the government played the role as a patron (Rui Yang 2002:9). This trend is evident from the following tables:

³ In the year 1999 alone, production income from the university run enterprises reached 37.9 billion yuan (around US\$4.5 billion). Beijing University was at the top among other universities with 8.73 billion yuan. See *Guangming Daily* (2000).

Table.1: Changing nature of the funding structure of Chinese universities (selected years from 1978 to 1997(%)).

Sources	1978	1990	1991	1992	1995	1996	1997
Government allotments	95.9%	87.7%	86.9%	81.8%	73.57%	70.05%	67.62%
University raised funds	4.1%	12.3%	13.1%	18.2%	26.43%	29.95%	32.38%
Revenue from university-run enterprises and services to society	4.1%	10.3%	10.7%	12.8%	8.30%	8.73%	8.73%
Donations		0.2	0.7	0.8	6.24	6.81	7.93
Tuition Fees	0.0	1.8	2.9	4.6	11.89	14.41	15.72

Source: Zhong, Yu-ping (2000), *Quanqiu yitohua yu Shichanghua xia de Gaojiao Fazhan* (Globalisation, Marketisation and Higher Education Development), Jiangshu Gaojiao (Jiangshu Higher Education Research), pp.3-7(Quoted in Rui Yang, 2002).



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Table.2: Funding Structure of Chinese Universities (1998- 2000).

	1998	2000
Proportion of government allotments	64%	56%
Proportion of university-raised funds	36%	44%

Source:Hu,Rui-wen and Chen.Guo-liang(2001).Zhongguo Gaojiao Zhouzi Duoyuanhua:Chengjiu,Tiaozhan,Zhanwang(Chinese Higher Education Funds: Achievements, Challenges and prospects), *Gaodeng Jiaoyu* (Quoted in Rui Yang ,2002)

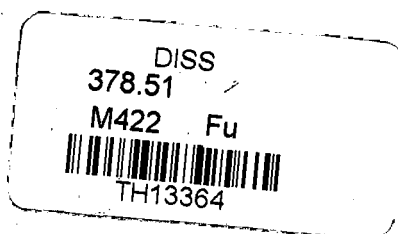


Table.3. Changing pattern of student enrolments (1988-1994)

Year	Total number of students	Number of self-supporting students	Percentage
1988	669700	42200	6.3
1989	579100	25800	4.5
1990	608600	17300	2.8
1991	616000	11800	1.9
1992	628400	11300	1.8
1993	924000	336000	36.4
1994	899800	364000	40.5

Source: (Yuan and Wakabayashi, 1996; Quoted in Ka Ho-Mok 2001).

Available figures show that while in 1978, 95.9% of the funds for higher education came from government sources, it was declined to 56% in 2000. At the same time the proportion of university-raised funds had been increasing gradually from 4.1% in 1978 to 44% in 2000. There had also been a slow but steady annual increase in the proportion of tuition fees raised from students, donations, and revenue from university-run enterprises and services to society (See Table 1 and Table 2) (Rui Yang 2002:9). The increase in the number of self-supporting students since 1980s is another aspect of the changing nature of Chinese higher education system. Prior to the 1980s, the Ministry of Education strongly controlled the admission quotas in higher education, restricting the number of self-supporting students. However, since late eighties, fee-paying students have become common, increasing significantly from around 6.3% of the total university student population in 1988 to about 40.5 % in 1994 (See table 3) (Ka Ho Mok 1997:268).

Another salient feature of the Chinese higher education is the policy of “walking on two legs” adopted in the nineties. Consequent upon the national policy formulated in 1993, initiatives of non-state actors were encouraged. In order to mobilise local communities, enterprises, individuals and even the market to engage in education, state promoted a scheme of sponsorship at three levels; village, township and county (Ka Ho-Mok 2001:92-93). A major change in such a policy context was the

emergence of various types of 'minban' (people run, non-state institutions) schools, colleges and universities (Ka Ho-Mok 2005:222). This was a calculated move from the part of the state to devolve responsibilities to non-state actors. After the endorsement of a 'socialist market economy' at the Fourteenth Party Congress in 1992, the State Education Commission officially gave approval for institutions of higher education to admit up to 25 percent of students in the fee paying fee-paying category (Ka Ho-Mok 2001:94). Under such a legal framework, private higher educational institutions started to mushroom in various parts of China from the 1990s. By 1999, thirty-seven private universities had been accredited by the government to award diplomas, in addition to around 1300 private institutions offering other courses (Umakoshi 2004:41). Most of the courses of these private educational institutions are aiming at market needs. As Ka Ho-Mok puts it:

Knowing that non-governmental higher education institutions would face immense difficulties in competing with the state supported system, private colleges have a clear vision to differentiate themselves from formal higher educational institutions by specializing in courses which are geared to the newly emerging market needs. (Ka Ho-Mok 2001:94)

Along with the rising popular demand for higher education, Chinese universities have started charging tuition fees as one of its strategies to address the problem of resource crunch (Min 2004:68-69). It is calculated that the national average annual tuition fees for higher education was about 5000 yuan (\$616.52) in 1995 (Beijing Review 2005:14). At present, more than one-fifth of the total operational budget of Chinese higher educational institutions (government) is covered by tuition fees (Min 2004:69-70). These changes reflect the evolving philosophical underpinnings of the Chinese state that adopts the supply/demand rationale of capitalism over the egalitarian values that are supposed to be represented by a socialist country.

Transformation in an Era of Globalisation

The impact of globalisation on Chinese higher education must be understood within the wider context of economic restructuring process. The current pace of economic globalisation and the pursuit for global capital in the last decade have necessitated a redefinition of higher education system in China. One way to account

for this change is in terms of changing institutional structures and missions.⁴ Under this new situation, it is hardly surprising that the new higher education policy of the Chinese state has been influenced by the strong tide of managerialism. These changes are taking place in the context of an expanding Chinese economy, which has maintained an average annual GDP growth rate of 8 percent over the past two decades. The implementation of economic reforms and open-door policies has helped the Chinese economy to become more integrated into the international economy. During this period, Chinese higher education has increased its degree of interaction with universities in other countries and now functions as part of the international academic community (Min 2004:53).

The transformationalist approach regarding the globalisation of education provides a rich framework for understanding the present changes related to globalisation in China. This approach views globalisation as a historically dependent process replete with contradictions linked with the international division of labour. As Marginson puts it, noting the impact of globalisation on the politics of education:

Globalisation is irreversibly changing the politics of the nation-state and its regional sectors, domestic classes and nationally defined interest groups. It is creating new potentials and limits in the politics of education. Its effects on the politics of education are complex... Increasingly shaped as it is by globalisation—both directly and via the effects of globalization in national government—education at the same time has become a primary medium of globalisation, and an incubator of its agents. (Marginson 1999:19-20)

The impact of these changes is multidimensional, involving a series of global flows and networks. As a result, educational systems everywhere in the world are under pressure to produce individuals for global competition. The revolution in the field of information and communication technologies has accelerated this process. The growing interdependency between nation-states, multinational corporations and other various international organisations in the current era of globalisation help accelerate flexibility in areas of high technology. (Daun 2002:1-17). The result is that most of the changes in the higher education system are not evolving in connection

⁴ For understanding the transformation of Chinese higher education in the new global age, an analysis of the changing nature of Chinese universities is highly useful. Although Chinese experiences of commercialisation and adjustment to market forces are different from the rest of the third world countries, the utilitarian concept of education officially promoted by the state reflects the extent of the changing pattern.

with the economic growth or labour market requirements of the host country. Besides, higher productivity and economic growth are increasingly dependent on the application of knowledge, which is increasingly science based. This is not an entirely new phenomenon because knowledge has always been a key factor in fostering economic growth. As economies become complex, competition increases, and knowledge and information are more critical to the production and realisation process (Carnoy 1995:653 1995). This is evident in many of the institutional changes taking place in post-Mao China (Ka Ho-Mok 2005:222). The present Chinese leaders are supporting the notion that modern state should act as a facilitator in public policy by adopting new strategies of governance to meet the global challenges. This has resulted in redefining the state-society relationship and is manifested through the various market-related strategies adopted by the post-Mao reformers. After carefully reviewing the salient features of structural adjustment programme, Martin Carnoy concludes that the changes in the world economy have provoked three kinds of response in the education sector. First is in response to the shifting demand for skills in both the domestic and the world labour markets-referred as “competitive driven reforms”, second is in response to cuts in public sector budgets, and the third is mainly equity driven(Carnoy 1995:658).

Hence, it is clear that the significance of competitive driven reforms and reforms emerging in response to the shifting demand for skills in domestic and world labour market can be evaluated within the broader context of the changing policies of the state for its human capital requirements. Because, once a country enters into the global economy, discussions related to education would always be sidelined from national debates and treated as an engine of economic activity and international competitiveness. The concept of university itself is changing from its traditional concept as a locus and bulwark of national culture to one that is increasingly measured in terms of various international performance indicators(Welch 2001:477-478). Therefore, the present analysis for isolating and analysing emerging trends in the human capital development of China that ultimately influences its higher education system is significant.

In this background, the experiences of Shenzhen, a small county before the initiation of reforms, provide the most impressive local impact of globalisation in

Chinese higher education.⁵ Higher education system in Shenzhen, during the reform period has been affected both directly and indirectly by the changes in the economy of Shenzhen. The direct impact is clearly visible in the development of higher education institutions in a responsive way to support the economic growth of Shenzhen. This is a micro level example for the development of higher education simultaneous with the China's modernisation programmes. It is important to note that prior to economic reform programme, Shenzhen was a small rural town in Baoan County in Guangdong province bordering Hong Kong. Before the inauguration of Shenzhen Special Economic Zone, majority of the inhabitants were engaged in farming and fishing. One consequence of the reforms was the importance given to Shenzhen as a model for rapid economic development. The proximity of Hong Kong also stimulated rapid economic development mainly because of the availability of cheap labour and low-cost land in Shenzhen. In the eighties and nineties, Shenzhen's rapid phase of economic growth required new jobs in management,clerking,sales,business services, financing and international trade. Prior to 1983, there was no higher educational institution existed in Shenzhen. However, the last two decades have been marked by crucial changes in the higher education sector of Shenzhen. The establishment of Shenzhen University as a comprehensive university in 1983 was one among the major changes. As economic reform programmes demanded more qualified work force, Shenzhen Polytech was established in 1993.This marked a turning point in the development of higher education in Shenzhen. The existence of these institutions encouraged the local rural students to enroll in large numbers. Both these institutions enrolled a total of 5,291 students in 1995 (Xiao Jin and Mun C.Tsang 1999:157).

In a very broad sense, the experiences of Shenzhen makes it clear that higher education in the transitional phase is geared towards preparing students for particular sectors of the labour market that will in turn support the export market. Here, knowledge is regarded as an investment to satisfy the labour market demand. Therefore, higher education is a vehicle for economic development and it influences the level of economic development in an era of globalisation. Another example is the

⁵Earlier Shenzhen municipality was part of the Baoan county.It includes three districts with a land area of around 2,020 square kilometers, bordering Hong Kong.

case of Jiangsu province on the east coast of China. Over the past decade, Jiangsu province has emerged as an educational hub of China reflecting the education/development dialectic. In 2001, Jiangsu had 72 higher educational institutions, more than in any other province. In terms of city wise distribution, there are two higher educational institutions in each of the 13 cities. Interestingly, Jiangsu province produced 1/10 of the GNP of China, and its per capita GDP reached US\$1400 for the 72 million residents of the province (Guangming Daily 2001). As market mechanisms become powerful in Chinese economy, higher educational institutions are evolving as producers of skills necessary to compete for global capital. This shows that the transnational linkages of globalisation are reshaping the higher education sector in such a way that only individuals and countries with a high level of education can benefit from the enormous changes taking place in the current scenario(Carnoy 1995:654).

The Chinese higher education system over the last two decades has also witnessed a gradual increase in the field of international cooperation and exchange with the implementation of the policy of opening to the outside world. According to UNESCO, until 2001 China sent more students to study abroad than any other country (Xin Ran Duan 2003). In terms of number of students studying in U.S., China was in second position after India by sending 63211 students during 2001-2002. The major strategic cause for this expansion is the modernisation of the country. According to Lofstedt and Zhao Shangwu (2002):

The cumulative number (from 1978 to 1996) of students/scholars going abroad for advanced studies had exceeded 200,000 and the number of faculty members teaching in foreign institutions under bilateral agreements between governments had reached 1260. More than 12,000 foreign experts had been employed by Chinese higher education institutes. In 1996 China sent more than 10,000 people to study abroad in about 100 countries and regions, and 267 regular higher education institutions received around 33,000 students from 160 countries enrolled in either long-term or short-term programmes. The intensified contact with the outside world has made it possible for Chinese educators to learn from the experiences of other countries and has promoted the reform and development of education in China.

The academic exchange programmes between China and the developed capitalist countries in the eighties were unprecedented in the history of post-revolutionary

China. China's Sixth Five Year Plan "proposal" (1981-1985) devotes a paragraph to the topic of sending students and scholars abroad:

Within these five years, efforts will be made to send 15,000 persons abroad, an average of 3,000 persons per year; within this period, 11,000 persons will complete their studies abroad and return home. Students sent abroad will major primarily in such specialties as the natural sciences and engineering technology, with emphasis on those fields and areas in which China is currently weak or which it needs to explore. At the same time, certain numbers should be sent abroad to survey and study politics, economics, law education and languages of foreign countries" (Beijing Review 1983).

It is estimated that out of the 580000 students who were sent abroad since the reform and opening-up of the economy, approximately 160000 students came back after the completion of their studies and served the country in various capacities (People's Daily:2003). They took initiatives to set up around 500 high-tech enterprises. In more than 90 institutes of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, 530 returnees became 'backbone' or leading researchers. Among them 219 became directors of the institutes, equal to 53% of the directors. More than 50% of the university presidents of various universities were also returnees from various foreign universities, during the same period (Education Weekly 2001). There are also reports that between 1995 and 1998 the number of students returning from foreign countries increased by 13% each year. It is estimated that more than 7,400 students returned from North America, Europe and Japan in the 1998 alone (China Education Daily 1999). Even officially conducted surveys points to the fact that brilliant students are still favouring Western countries for their postgraduate studies (Ta Kung Daily 1999). However, recent reports show that though Chinese students are keen on studying abroad, the number of students going abroad for higher studies and research has been gradually decreasing year by year since 2003. While in 2003 about 123000 students went abroad for higher education, it has come down to 115000 in 2004. However, this trend has not affected the number of Chinese students going to U.S (Zhu Zhe 2005).

Another major change in the field of learning English language. The chase for global capital and the pervasive fear of losing ground in international economic competition in an era of globalisation has necessitated important curricular changes in the field of learning English language. The primary aim of this change is to

promote necessary English language skills to compete in the global market. This change underlines the fact that the orientation of a people or a government towards language learning and teaching has always been influenced by social, economic and political needs (Yuan and Hua 1999). At present, English is teaching in China as China's number one foreign language. Passing a proficiency test in English is mandatory for students those who are not majoring in English to receive their bachelor's degree and for entering master's degree programmes. Many companies have also made it an important requirement for prospective employees.⁶ This shows that the stress on English language is vital for China's open-door policy that brought Western firms and joint ventures and therefore, acquiring communicative competence in English is important for promoting the skills necessary for globalisation.

CONCLUSION

Higher education reforms are always mediated through economic changes and this relationship may even be regarded as an interpenetrating and reciprocal one. This can be seen in the nature of the ongoing changes in the Chinese higher education system simultaneous with the transformation of Chinese economy from a centrally managed to state controlled market economy. There are many complex issues involved in this change. Two major interlinked points found in the present study are the impact of the economic reorientation or the retreat of the Chinese state from its social obligations and the effect of globalisation process in the 1990s. This is evident from the changing nature of Chinese higher education manifested in the incorporation of various structural reforms and the blurring of public/private boundaries. The long journey from a state guaranteed higher education system to a system with the dominance of the logic of the market clearly reflects the multidimensional relationship between state, economy and higher education in the post-Mao China.

⁶ Proficiency test in English (College English Test Band 4 -CET)) was started in 1987. Only 100000 students appeared in the first exam. In the ensuing years CET became mandatory for verifying the English language proficiency of students and rapidly spread across China. Currently CET is considered as the biggest single subject test in the world. (See Zou Xiang 2005).

However, there is a paradox here. Although there has been an increase in the number of higher education institutions and student enrolments in the last two decades, the inequalities between various social strata in the attainment of higher education is also widening simultaneously. As a result, access to higher education is becoming more selective, ridden with inequalities based on wealth, geographic, political, and linguistic factors. The present study shall now discuss the relationship between higher education reforms and educational stratification in the next chapter.

Reforms in Higher Education and the Dilemmas of Stratification

The rapid growth of higher education—both in terms of institutions and enrolments—is one of the major trends of educational development in post-Mao China ever since the beginning of the ‘Four Modernisations’ programme in 1978.¹ Clearly, this growth to a large extent is the result of economic and educational modernisation drive initiated by the state after the Third Plenum of the Chinese Communist Party in 1978. The following decades have witnessed various structural transformations in Chinese higher education that gradually led to the abandonment of the proletarian spirit of Maoist educational philosophy from the realm of Chinese higher education. These changes were accompanied by the logic of economic rationality that ultimately resulted in the emergence of a highly stratified and unequal higher educational system. The far-reaching implications of these changes are being felt at various levels of Chinese society.

The nature of the rapid expansion of Chinese higher education raises important questions about the changing internal dynamics of class relations in post-Mao Chinese society. The most obvious implication of this change consequent upon the changing economic and political milieu is the transformation of the emerging social hierarchies and the resultant inequalities in higher education system. This is further

¹ The various initiatives taken by the state since 1978 have led to a major change in the structure of Chinese higher education. One of its main effects is the gradual increase in the enrolments and the number of higher educational institutions. While the number of regular higher educational institutions in 1979 was 633, it increased to 1225 in 2000. During the same period the total enrolments increased correspondingly from one million to thirteen million. This happened mainly due to the change in the state’s higher education policy, which geared towards a productive educational system that conforms to the economic policies of the state. This has been accompanied by an increase in the number of higher educational institutions, public, quasi-public, and private. With this expansion, around 17% of the college-age students in China currently have places in China’s higher educational institutions. Official statistics show that while in 1981 only 2.4% of the university candidates got admission in higher educational institutions, the figure was 52% in 2002 (See Xin-ran Duan (2003), “Chinese Higher Education Enters a New Era”, www.aaup.org/publications/Acadame/2003/03nd/03ndfte.htm, p.2).

reinforced by the broader societal changes taking place in contemporary China, which have ramifications in determining educational stratification. Since students of higher educational institutions correspond to different social classes in society, the fluidity of relationship between higher education, multiple inequalities, and the emergence of a new class in post-Mao China can be easily contextualised.

The public higher education system of China with an enrolment of about 12 million students is still the dominant sector with 8391 institutions, including 1225 regular higher educational institutions that offers both undergraduate and graduate degree programmes and colleges without degree programmes. The private sector, which is a very recent phenomenon, on the other hand has around 1.13 million enrolments with 1202 institutions (Min 2004:54-72). However, the public/private difference is just one aspect of the changes taking place in Chinese higher education system. Many other factors are contributing to the changing pattern of educational stratification that gives definite advantages to the emerging middle class at the cost of majority of the working class and peasants, thus altering the egalitarian nature of the Maoist higher education system existed until the political ascendancy of Deng Xiaoping. The stratifying consequences of these changes are an instructive case for analysing the nature of policy shifts of the state that abandons the wider humanistic goals of education for the sake of functionally specified goals (Taylor 1981:105).

The class nature of the relationship between state and individual in a society to a great extent is reflected in the system of higher education existing in the country. While capitalist societies are supposed to uphold the “personal choices” of an individual to select courses, socialist states give importance to the requirements of the society over the personal inclinations of the individual. Therefore, to analyse Chinese higher education as a site for the reproduction of class differences should be in the context of the adaptation of the state to the logic of market economy.

The task of the present study is to contextualise the various factors responsible for higher educational stratification in the backdrop of economic reforms in post-Mao China. In this context, Milovan Djilas’ theory about the perversion of the

achievements of socialist revolution and the bureaucratisation of the erstwhile Yugoslavian Communist Party, and his analysis on the social and political transformation of the Western communist parties provide a powerful framework for understanding the various economic, political, and social questions surrounding the transformation of higher educational system in post-Mao China. To locate the distinctive features of this change, a reading of Pierre Bourdieu in the context of China is highly useful. Some of his theoretical approaches such as “habitus”, “cultural reproduction” etc. are using in this chapter for analysing the interaction of social, economic and cultural factors that are mainly responsible for the emerging class hierarchies in Chinese higher education. The causes for the emergence and perpetuation of class hierarchies through differential access to higher education, various other determinants of educational inequality and the antithesis between the grassroots realities and the state policy will also be drawn upon to analyse nature of higher educational stratification in post-Mao China.

The Process of Stratification

The expansion of higher education coupled with the loosening of the political control of Chinese state and the partial restoration of capitalist economic practices compounded the process of educational stratification in post-Mao China. On theoretical grounds, it can be argued that the process of stratification in Chinese higher education is multifaceted and a fuller understanding of the emerging contradictions is possible only through an analysis of conflicting interests existing between different social and political groups in post-Mao China. Therefore, it is possible to link-up Milovan Djilas’ theory about the emergence of new social formations in post-revolutionary societies-that mediate between state and society-with the political and societal changes taking place in China after the political ascendancy of Deng Xiaoping.² Djilas’ theory about the bureaucratisation of the communist party provides an empirically well-founded framework for understanding the phenomenon of the rise of a privileged class under the communist government. In

² Milovan Djilas was a prominent leader of the erstwhile Yugoslavian Communist Party. He became a member of the Central Committee of the party in 1938, and later in 1953 one of the four vice-presidents, during the presidency of Josip Broz Tito. However, due to his scathing criticism of the perversion of socialist ideology and the bureaucratisation of the communist party resulted in his expulsion from the Yugoslav Communist Party in 1954.

his classic work "The New Class", he argued that the nature of socialist rule in post-revolutionary societies due to the distorted policies was not different from the rule of the capitalists and landowners from whom power was taken over. His criticisms in "The New Class" emerged from the failure of the socialist system in tackling the new bureaucracy, for whom the party was just a vehicle for achieving power and position. Djilas describes it as:

It is the bureaucracy which formally uses, administers, and controls both nationalized and socialized property, as well as the entire life of society. The role of bureaucracy in society, i.e. monopolistic administration and control of national income and national goods, consign to it a special privileged position. Social relations resemble state capitalism. The more so, because the carrying out of industrialization is effected not only with the help of capitalists but also with the help of state machine. In fact, this privileged class performs that function, using the state machine as a cover and as an instrument" (Djilas 1957:35).

Milovan Djilas located both capitalism and bureaucracy as antisocialist forces existing within the transitional societies, that is to say, part of socialist state. Although Djilas' theory of socialism underlines the inevitable role and attainment of communism, it is sceptical about the continuation of bureaucratism and the political privileges enjoying by a powerful group in the transitional socialist societies. In Djilas' perspective, a socialist state can even stoop so low as to propound capitalist social relations. The ensuing legitimacy crisis is sometimes manifested in the lack of integration of the spiritual values of socialist ideology with the new market-oriented policies followed by the socialist states. Therefore, marketisation and the resultant stratification of Chinese higher education can be easily contextualised within the broad context of political and economic reforms evolving in post-Mao China.

Besides the systemic issues mentioned above, the complex ways through which social, economic and geographic factors interact in the attainment of higher education by an individual also have important implications for analysing the process of educational stratification in China. Although various theories have attempted to understand this issue within the educational and sociological research, the present study relies on the stratification theory propounded by Pierre Bourdieu to understand the problem. Bourdieu's theory of social reproduction primarily addresses the process of recreation of hierarchical social relations in society. The central analytical

contribution of Bourdieu is his effort to elaborate the implications of both objective and subjective structures, which are acting as barriers to the educational attainment of people from the periphery.³ According to Bourdieu, the forces that possess cultural capital determine the agenda of education to reinforce the hegemony of the dominant class in society. This theory can be used to explain the various causes for asymmetrical access to higher education in post-Mao China. The existence of such an asymmetrical relationship in access to higher education shows the internal social contradictions existing in Chinese society.

A number of factors are contributing to this change; the most important one is the significance attached to education as a source of continuous economic growth and upward social mobility. However, in this process, the students from the deprived sections of the population are at a disadvantageous position. Bourdieu's argument is that the varying degrees of social mobility can be approximated by studying the social origins, cultural competencies, natural familiarity with high culture, linguistic aptitude, place of origin, residence etc. of students.⁴ This perspective for understanding the nature of educational stratification in China is important mainly because, as Maurice Meisner points out, in a society like China, where societal stratification is primarily based on income and function rather than property, the educational system is a potential source for either socio-economic equality or inequality (Meisner 1977:283).

The flipside of the changes in China is that upward social mobility through higher education is not a feasible option for majority given the increasing educational

³ For Bourdieu, concepts like "habitus", "cultural capital" etc. are mediating mechanisms for differential access to various forms of cultural, social and economic capital. In his classic formulation about the interaction between culture and social structure, he defines his pivotal concept of 'habitus' as a long-lasting system of transferable arrangement in various environments. The term 'cultural reproduction', coined by Pierre Bourdieu is used in this chapter to describe a process in which a minority of society, due to some economic, cultural, and geographical advantages gradually takes the form of a privilege class. According to Bourdieu, what students learn at an institution is always an interaction between culture and social structure. The level to which these factors influence the educational mobility (vertical/horizontal) of students can be approximated by studying the social origins of students.

⁴ This is of particular importance in the context of China. Because more than two decades of higher educational reforms in parallel with the economic reforms have resulted in the emergence of a privileged middle class in Chinese society. Foreign university returnees, scientific elites, self-supporting students, party elites, urban elites with linguistic competence in English language etc. constitute the majority of the new privileged class. This has resulted in changing the sources of differentiation in Chinese higher education.

stratification. This points to the fact that even if there has been rapid expansion of the higher education, it is still a source of uneven social system reproducing the stratified social system. The outcome of this process illustrates the emergence of a class-reproductive model of education reflecting the structural changes taking place in the Chinese society in which the above factors function as the basis of class inequality. The implications of such a change are also symptomatic to the affluence of a section of Chinese society, among other factors, in the last two decades. This interpretation is perhaps more important and certainly more subtle. Because, issues related to stratification in higher education, instead of being a general tendency, have vital objective and subjective aspects. Since the means through which an individual improves his social position in society and the role of educational institutions in this process are closely interrelated, an understanding about the role of economic, cultural and geographic indicators in this social selection process is important. The main reason is that higher education is still considered as the most important means for upward social mobility. Many of the Bourdieu's works focus on the issue of social mobility through education and therefore it is a powerful tool for explaining the dilemma being faced by the proponents of market socialism in China.⁵ Moreover, his work demonstrates a systematic method for explicating the structure of a stratified educational system. This is important in the sense that it would improve the understanding of the process through which stratification is maintained/legitimised in Chinese higher education.

This theoretical approach has a unique position in the sociology of education, focusing on the various contributing factors that perpetuate hierarchical social relations. It has strategic importance for understanding the logic of stratification in

⁵ In "*Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*", Pierre Bourdieu and Jean- Claude Passeron give a clear picture about the impact of education and socio-economic background on social mobility. They argue that the significance of education as a social elevator invariably hinges on the socio-economic-geographic background of the student. Therefore, educational institutions have a larger role in the reproduction of social and cultural inequalities. In their description of the reproductive consequences from the experiences of French educational system, authors argue that there is always a direct correlation (which can be observable at the lower level) between the performance of students of upper class origin with their cultural capital, linguistic capital and geographical advantages (identifiable by the occupation of the parents). Although attainment of education for the son of a worker is supposed to be a guarantee for vertical mobility, there are many practical disadvantages in the process. The reason cited by the authors are mainly related to the socio-economic background of a student. Although the higher education system seems to be very democratic to an outsider, Bourdieu's study reveals that not only upper-class origin but also language competence, urban background etc. of a student can also influence the selection process and finally the performance of a student in an institution. (See, Bourdieu, Pierre and Jean-Claude Passeron(1977).

Chinese higher education. It also analyses the pattern and expansion of higher education and the potential reasons for the barriers that prevent the marginalised class from attaining education, and its effects on society. The study thus brings together both theoretical literature and relevant data to describe the mechanisms through which various forms of economic as well as cultural factors became internalised in the process of educational stratification. Thus, the aim of this chapter is to develop a framework that can encompass a variety of factors—changing societal structure and attitudes, uneven educational development, various forms of educational deprivation etc.—besides analysing various other contributing factors at different levels of Chinese higher education during the post-Mao period that influence the reproduction of class inequalities.

Dimensions of Stratification in Higher Education

The restructuring of Chinese economy and the open-door policies adopted by the state necessitated a simultaneous policy shift in higher education. In 1978, immediately after the Third Plenum of the Chinese Communist Party, reformers under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping made this position very clear by formulating and later implementing the new policies. The new leaders, who wrested control of the state immediately after the death of Mao Zedong from the Gang of Four, abandoned the social functions of education and prioritised the goal of producing expert knowledge for the modernisation of the economy. Since then, the priority for producing experts has dominated the educational policy of the state (Hannum 1999:202). The socialist slogans like “egalitarianism” and “class struggle” gave way to slogans and catchphrases emphasising economic efficiency and intellectual merit (Shirk 1984:245). The reintroduction of national level entrance examinations on “meritocratic” basis during the early days reforms reflects this change. During the same period, the state initiated a massive programme to promote reforms in higher education. Later developments in the Chinese higher education underline the fact that for the new leadership under Deng, modernisation of the country was an immediate and the most important goal rather than the democratisation of higher education. As Stanley Rosen, after analysing the internal report delivered to the Higher Party School

of the Chinese Communist Party in 1995 by Zhu Kaixuan, Director of the State Education Commission, points out:

The reform period “rationalized” Chinese education in accord with Deng Xiaoping’s views on the role of education in economic development. Deng’s educational agenda largely downgraded the political and social functions of education in favour of an educational strategy that would accelerate China’s march toward modernisation. It explicitly sanctioned the creation of a bifurcated system, wherein a small “elite” sector trains the first class scientists and engineers (who in turn will assist the government in meeting the ambitious targets of the “four modernisations” program) and a large “mass” sector provides the basic educational skills, and possibly additional vocational training, for the majority. Over time, as project 211 suggests, the elite sector will become more and more hierarchically structured, while the mass sector will remain more “open” and diverse. For Chinese youth, this bifurcated, hierarchical system offers differential rewards. For those who reach the elite sector, benefits may include the opportunity to study abroad; those who fall short often receive education only through junior high. This competitive system has spurred students and their parents to calculate optimal strategies for educational success in their localities (Rosen 1977: 250-251).

The main difference however lies in institutional differentiation and inequality in access. The products of key universities have a better chance occupy the top of the economic and social ladders in their later life. Similarly, the foreign returnees who were sent abroad for higher studies would be in a higher position than the students from the various national key universities after their return. Most of the foreign returned students have a better chance for professional influence and social respect than their predecessors who studied in the Soviet Union during the 1950s. The implication here is the correlation between the students who were sent abroad and their easiest route to upward social mobility back home.

In the eighties and the nineties, adaptive forms of reforms have become a prominent feature of higher educational reforms in China, thanks to the shift in the social policy paradigm of the Chinese state. Although a number of factors contributed to this change, two of which seem to be particularly pertinent. Firstly, the impact of the rapid economic transformation since the late 1970s. This is taking place in a society where higher education is still not universal and the transformation to a massive system of higher education is a contradiction in terms. This has resulted in limiting the opportunities of the deprived people for upward social mobility. At the same time, reforms are giving better opportunities to the elites for upward mobility.

The new educational policies are legitimising the values of personal advancement and competition as a necessary condition for producing the experts needed to facilitate economic development (Hannum 1999:202). Secondly, the problem is fuelled by the rapid changes taking place in the Chinese society. Therefore, apart from the specific requirements for the modernisation of economy, changing social structure and the ensuing new demands from the new social classes of Chinese society are also playing an important role in the emergence of educational stratification.

The new higher education policy of the state paved the way for the entrance of various private and other non-governmental players into higher education. Although the increase in the number of student enrolment and the mushrooming of private institutions seemed to have reached out the fruits of higher education to a larger number of societies, the real picture is different. The major impact of this transformation is the dismantling of the institutional structures of Maoist era. The concepts like social planning, public supported higher education, mandatory job system etc. were the worst affected areas. This has a particular significance in the growth of educational stratification in China (Rosen 1998). While education was purely a public good under the full responsibility of the state during the Maoist period, the establishment of socialist market economic structure has gradually changed the public education system into “public goods”, quasi public goods”, and “private goods”. The great imbalance in the geographic distribution of public education resources is also a worrying development (Zhang Li 2006). This has resulted in rural-urban disparities in access to prestigious educational institutions, which would ultimately perpetuate the advantages of elites in both educational accessibility and career opportunities (Shirk 1984:248-265). This would also hamper the mobility of students from poorer sections of the society.

Economic Reforms and the Consolidation of a New Middle Class in Higher Education

The changes in the structure of Chinese society, accompanied by the emergence of new classes and class conflict, have intensified the stratification process in Chinese

higher education. While decollectivisation during the initial stages reforms led to the emergence of a rich peasant class, the expansion of private sector in the following decades gave birth to a middle class and to a capitalist class. Similarly, decentralisation, enterprise reforms, and the success of township and village enterprises expanded the size of a new middle class consisting of corporate professionals like mid-level managers and accountants. The expansion of higher education and the service sector during the reform period also had an impact on the number of service professionals such as teachers and journalists. In the rural areas, a relatively homogeneous peasant stratum of the Maoist era was divided into rich peasant class and poor peasant class, whereas in the relatively homogenous urban population was divided into a capitalist class with billionaires and millionaires at the top; a middle class of small employers and self-employed; and a working class subdivided into permanent urban workers and temporary migrant workers (So 2005:484-486). These changes accelerated in the 1980s and 1990s and manifested in the distribution of middle-class students not only in the domestic higher educational system but also in the number of self-supporting students going abroad.

Studies show beyond doubt that the main components of the changes in Chinese higher education are the logic of capitalism and the emergence of a new middle class that followed economic reforms. The reforms have created a new class in Chinese society and it is the same class administering a new economic order parallel to the economic and political initiatives of the state. Related to this change, It should be noted that the total household bank savings in China with a population of about 1.2 billion had reached 5300 billion RMB (640\$ US Dollar) at the end of 1998. However, the money was not equally distributed among households but rather the richest 20 percent of Chinese households owned over half of the total household income (Chengzhi Wang 2000:12). It can be safely argued from this fact that the power over the economic and political life of the state gives the new elites a partial monopoly over access to higher education.

Private Institutions: A Reflection of the Changing Societal Choices

Another important aspect of this drift in the higher education policy of the Chinese state is the emergence of private educational institutions. At the time of the initiation of economic reforms in the late 1970s, China had no private higher educational institutions. Since 1980s, through the promulgation of various laws, state has been promoting private higher education under strict government scrutiny (Ka Ho- Mok 1997:262-267). These changes are consistent with the educational policy adopted by the Chinese Communist Party in 1985. In the document titled “Decision of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party of China on the reform of the Educational Structure” party clarified its position regarding the role of non-state sector in Chinese education. Since then, the role of non-state sector has been a major trend in Chinese higher education. Along with the liberal policy environment, increased popular demand for better educational opportunities has abundantly created the demand for non-state sectors. The state’s encouragement for more diversity in educational sector and its encouragement of individuals, business groups and local communities to create more learning opportunities also facilitated the marketisation of education (Ka Ho-Mok 1997). This period witnessed a gradual development of minban education—a non-state collective initiative by people; private individual/business initiatives; and, education conglomerates—with substantial resources for collaborative arrangements with well-established public universities and colleges.

The thirty-first session of the Standing Committee of the Ninth People’s Congress of the Chinese Communist Party held in December 2002 adopted a new law that gives private schools and universities the same legal status as public institutions. It also stipulated the evaluation procedures and legal guidelines that private institutions must follow. Currently there are around 1202 private higher educational institutions enrolling 1.13 million students (Min 2004:72). Out of these 1202 institutions, twelve are private universities with each having more than 10000 students. According to Zhang Li, Director General and Professor at the China’s National Centre for Education Development Research, under the Ministry of Education, the current strength of on-campus students in private educational institutions is about 10% of the national aggregate(Zhang Li 2006). Out of these institutions, about fifty private

universities are enrolling between 10000 and 35000 students. In some parts of China like Xian, private universities expanded so rapidly from their initial stage that many have huge campuses accommodating 6000 to 30000 students (Jing Lin 2006). Another important feature of this change is the sprouting of “education conglomerates” managed by business and industrial enterprises.⁶ These institutions offer educational options for self-supporting students who fail to qualify the national university entrance exam.

Changing Forms of Social Exclusion

The public higher education system in post-Mao China has in many ways failed to uphold a socially inclusive higher education policy. For instance, the design of the national level entrance examinations that often leads to social exclusion resulting in educational stratification. This analysis is consistent with discussions related to the national level college entrance examinations. Since good scores in the examination are mandatory for getting an admission in a reputed university, it is considered as symbol of success of twelve years basic education. There are only 2.5 million university seats for millions of aspirants and the success in the exam to a great extent depends on the type of schooling. Because of this high barrier at the university level, the chance of getting admission for students from elite schools are higher than the students from the ordinary schools⁷. This hypothesis is consistent with the findings of Weifang Min that highlight growing regional and social disparities in terms of educational development and accessibility. Min argues that increasing regional economic disparities are followed by regional educational disparities in higher education, both in terms of quality and quantity. The location of some of the Chinese universities is an example for this trend. All the top-ranking national key universities—such as Peking University, Tsinghua University, Fudan University, Shanghai Jiaotong University, Nanjing University and Zhejiang University—are located in the economically advanced provinces and municipalities. At the same time, less developed provinces like Guizhou, Qinghai, Xinjiang, Henan, and Shanxi has no

⁶ Beijing Jili University is an example of “educational conglomerate” existing in China. It was established by Jili Inc., which presently owns five other colleges and vocational technical schools. In addition to this, the corporation owns companies that manufacture cars, motorcycles, etc (See Jing Lin (2006).

⁷ See “Education as a Social Ladder”, Accessed 23 May 2006, www.library.csi.cuny.edu/modernchina/NYT/socialladder.pdf.

key universities (Min 2004:2004). Similarly, changing access pattern of 1990s shows that while the poorest of 20% of households accounted for just 9.5 % of total higher education enrolments, student enrolments from the richest 20% of households accounted for 30.1% of higher education enrolments, roughly three times higher than students from the poorest families (Ding Xiaohao 2003:Quoted in Min 2004).

The introduction of tuition fees and student loan programmes are other factors that are further reinforcing inequalities of access and acting as an attainment barrier for students from the poor background. The cost of higher education in China began to increase from the mid-1990s. Prior to 1978, college students did not have to pay fees and were assigned jobs upon graduation. The situation started changing after the educational reforms in 1985 that allowed institutions to admit students outside state plan, sponsored by enterprises or on a self-supported basis (Chengzhi Wang 2000:10). The fees for higher education increased from an average of just several hundreds yuan a year in the 1980s to 3500 yuan (US\$420) or 5000 yuan (US\$600), with the highest reaching 8000 yuan (US\$960), excluding boarding and lodging charges in the 1990s. This has resulted in making higher education out of reach for families living below the poverty line whose per capita monthly income was less than 200 yuan (US\$25). Recent statistics of China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation indicates that about 20% of the country's 16 million college students are coming from poor families(China Daily 2006). Stanley Rosen describes the early impact of this change:

In 1993 the state issued a major policy document stating that higher education should move gradually from a system under which the government guaranteed education and employment to a system in which students were held responsible for both. As a result, fewer students who qualified under the plan were admitted, while qualified students who were unable to pay high fees were excluded (Rosen 1997:254).

It is estimated that around thirty percent of the students are facing problems in paying the tuition fee (Yang Ching Yao 2006). Exorbitant tuition fees are accentuating the problem in the recent years. It is estimated that while the national annual tuition fees was about 800 yuan in 1995, it increased to 5000 yuan in 2004 (Beijing Review 2005b), further burdening the poor students. Because middle class students normally find financial arrangements easier than students from poor

background. Many studies have shown that students from the working-class and peasant background found it difficult not only to get education loans but also to repay it. In fact, preoccupation with loan repayment also affects the studies of poor students and will lead to further exclusion. Although student loan programme was introduced by the government in 1999 to overcome the difficulties faced by the students, it was seriously strained in recent years due to repayment defaults on loans (Qiu Quanlin 2004).

Despite various efforts initiated by the state like the “New Great Wall Programme” in 2002 for providing stipends to students from the needy families, the persistence of the problem is drawing more attention from the society and policy makers alike in contemporary China.⁸ For Yang Weimin, a sociologist with Beijing based Renmin University of China, the psychological and emotional impact of these changes are many:

In addition to tending to the financial needs of students from poor families, their psychological well-being should not be neglected. Aside from economic pressures, they may suffer even greater stress psychologically. A bank loan or a donation might ease their financial burden, but it may not rid them of mental and emotional stress. Living with classmates from well-off families can leave them feeling overly sensitive in certain situations and sometimes even inferior. Some of them decide not to mingle with others and end up isolating themselves.⁹

There is also a strong correlation between the gradual abolishment of free-higher education and job-assignment system in the reform era. Since the market economy requires a variety of talents and the talent market is flexible, state is not in a position to assign jobs for students passing out of the institutions (Yuansu Wu 1998). During the Maoist planned economy, both these factors were integral to the Chinese society. However, economic reforms have resulted in the emergence of a new flexible labour market. The job opportunities in the new flexible job market to a great extent is determined by the type of education one receives at the higher level, and in some cases, the linguistic competence of the job seeker—particularly mastery of English

⁸ The New Great Wall Programme was introduced by the China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation for assisting the students coming from the poor families. The foundation mainly depends upon institutions, high-ranking officers, private enterprises and other benefactors for its funds.

⁹ See “Poor students struggle to fund higher education(2003), Accessed 25 November, www.chinagate.com.cn/English.htm

language. Those students studied abroad have an edge over the others in getting a job both inside and outside China in an era of globalisation. This is a major contributing factor to the great flow of Chinese students abroad, particularly to European countries and USA for higher education and research.

Another important feature of the current change is the increase in the number of self-supporting students going abroad. The increase in the number is not by any design of the government. According to Frank Pieke, the reason for the increase is the growing wealth of emerging middle class in China (Leavey, 2004). This has resulted in the emergence of social differentiation based on higher education that involves distinction between foreign educated elites and their domestic counterparts.

The educational stratification process based on higher education in China is evolving in a sequence. Because the recent changes in higher education are inextricably linked to the mushrooming of private and other varieties of non-governmental schools started from the early eighties, parallel to the public educational institutions. It is estimated that around sixty thousand institutions had been established in China from the kindergarten to the university level, which included elite and ordinary schools and private universities (Jing Lin 1999). Attempts to follow such changes have widespread ramifications not only in education sector but also in the society. The reason is that these newly formed institutions are the carriers of inequalities to the upper level of the educational and societal hierarchy. Because most of the students benefiting from the private school education belong to the upper strata of the society. This has serious social ramifications because the entry routes to education are differentiated on the basis of wealth. Therefore, a small proportion of students from the elite families are reaping the benefits and it would affect the very fabric of Chinese society in the long run. The main reason is the complicated demographics of China where two thirds of its 1.3 billion population still live in the rural areas. They are the most deprived among the Chinese population. Apart from the poor educational infrastructure of rural schools, the talented students who were admitted from rural areas to a college or university often found it difficult to pay high tuition fees. It is estimated that the average tuition fees of colleges and universities alone is two or three times the per capita net income of a farmer. This has prevented the educational future of many rural youths. A national research

programme found that during the 1990s, as tuition fees rose, there has been a marked decline in the proportion of rural students at three of nation's top universities up to 5.7 percentage points. This situation has not only deprived the educational opportunities of the rural students, but also their scope for climbing the social ladder through education (China Daily 2005). The gradual decline in the proportion of college students from rural areas bears testimony to this deprivation. In the late 1980s, while 70 percent of the college students came from the countryside, it has shrunk to around 30 percent in 2005(Huang 2005).

Recent studies conducted by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences show that social groups occupying higher positions on the social ladder have better chances for passing their social origins to their children. This also reflects the wealth gap existing in the Chinese society and the imbalances in the higher education system. These trends are indicative of the changing nature of the Chinese social structure¹⁰, inextricably linked to many other factors like the rise in the uneven income distribution in society.

Selection of Courses, Personal Choices and Inequalities between Institutions

The influence of personal and parental choices in higher education is a new phenomenon gradually emerging in Chinese higher education. With the reforms and opening-up, students and parents are aware of the inseparable link between academic choice and careers. This has led to a “core-peripheral” relationship in terms of selection of subjects. Wang Roumei points out the impact of this change clearly:

For students and their parents, there is an inseparable link between academic choice and careers. Consequently, a number of “hot-spots” that are highly crowded have been formed. Most of these “hot-spots” are concentrated in the study of subjects such as economics and management that have some relationship with a foreign language; these include, for instance, international trade, international finance, world economic cooperation, foreign trade accounting, and so on. The popularity of these disciplines is often several times than that of any other subject. These majors imply for the future (i.e. the students' future) a good job, high income and more opportunities for going overseas. For those student candidates who have some measure of

¹⁰ See “Education as a Social Ladder”, Accessed 23 May 2006, www.library.csi.cuny.edu/modernchina/NYT/socialladder.pdf.

academic strength, the first preference that they report is almost invariably something that has to do with the word *guo* (national or international). In that same key middle school, for instance, those students who hoped to enter a program of study that is related to the *guo* subjects made up 87 percent of all students applying for liberal arts, and only 11 percent held on to the idea of reporting preference for a subject that they liked as a matter of personal interest. The utilitarian or profit-seeking mentality that is revealed in this discrepancy is palpable. Looking at the other end of things, at the “unpopular” or “cold” programs of study, we find, among the liberal arts, the traditional literature, history, and philosophy majors. Among the sciences, we find the disciplines in basic scientific theory, and other majors such as hydrology, mineralogy, and geology, all of which require field studies. Here the applicants are few and far between. In some cases, there is even a shortage of students. As we are faced with all these data regarding the academic preferences of students in the *gaokao*, we cannot help but sigh loudly: “Some families here will really rejoice, while others will be disappointed!” Naturally, from a realistic perspective, we can hardly find the situation reprehensible. All this clearly indicates that the concept of commodity economy has already infiltrated deeply into people’s minds (Roumei 1991:22).

The new trend in the selection of courses and the influence of personal choices can partially be explained in terms of difference in the type of institution, location of the institution, and above all the suitability of the courses in the job-market. One of the common features of this change is the adaptation of the higher education institutions to the new trends. Not surprisingly, national level entrance examination, proliferation of private higher educational institutions, market-oriented academic programmes etc. during the reform period have placed individual interest over the societal interest. Moreover, there exist different types of inequalities between institutions in cosmopolitan areas and small cities; between market-oriented and traditional departments; between liberal arts institutions and institutions of engineering and business; and between key institutions with large alumni and new local institutions with little bases for attracting donations and gifts (Chengzhi Wang 2000). The unevenness in the development of education has also led to fierce competition for places at prestigious key universities in urban centres. In 2001, agitated students from all over China who failed to make it to the key universities at Beijing complained that universities of the national capital Beijing such as Beijing and Tsinghua adopted an unfair admission policy heavily favouring the students from Beijing: thus disregarding the mandatory quota system. The mandatory quota system was originally designed to encourage talented students from underdeveloped areas of the country to attend the key educational institutions. Professor Cheng Kai-Ming of the

University of Hong Kong, who had conducted research on issues related to China's education policy also agrees that the admission system in the present form favors students from Beijing(South China Morning Post 2001).

Role of English as a Linguistic Capital

The popularity of a language cannot be measured simply by the number of people speaking it. Rather it is interconnected to various other factors: academic and commercial needs stand out among them. The best example is the increasing popularity of English in China. Academically, mastering English language enables the Chinese students not only to go abroad but also to interact with the academic world of English through books, papers, online contents posted in the Internet etc. For potential job-seekers it enables them to interact with the foreigners and to seek job in the foreign business and industrial establishments.

The desire to master English language with an eye to reap the opportunities in the international market has created a sort of disparity among the students that resulted in a language divide. English language training is a big business with an estimated 20 billion yuan (2.4 billion US\$) market in China today. There is a clear-cut divide in the English training market with smaller less known schools being dwarfed by a few well-known institutions. In this competition for attracting students, reputed urban centred private institutions like New Oriental, The Wall Street Institute, and Dell English School are at top among many other lesser-known institutions (People's Daily 2002). Most of these institutions are catering to the needs of students planning to go abroad by helping them to pass various English language proficiency tests like Graduate Record Examination(GRE), International English Language Testing System(IELTS),and Test of English as a Foreign Language(TOEFL).

There is a consistent and strong association between the open door policy and emphasis on English language. Presently, students in colleges, research scholars in universities, elementary, high school, and even kindergarten students have to learn English language. Currently, there are thousands of, both public and private, English language training schools in China. The national level English language proficiency test in China called "College English Test Band-4(CET-4)" is the largest single

subject test in the world. It is also called as China's "national English test." (Zou Xiang 2005). The increased demand for English language education has led to an explosion of new training centres in the recent years. Since fluency in English language is a stepping-stone for upward social mobility, students are eager to invest money for mastering English—the linguistic capital for social advancement. Even one of the official dailies of the Chinese state—*Peoples Daily*—mentioned this new tendency as "China's English education industry." (People's Daily 2001). However, the booming "English education industry" is mainly catering to the needs of elites among the Chinese population. The tuition fees of a complete set of English courses at the Wall Street Institute speak for itself; it is around 124100 yuan, i.e. three to four year's salary of an average Chinese worker. Despite this, more than 9000 students were enrolled in the various programmes offered by the institute in 2002. (Peoples Daily 2002).

This shows the popularity of new private and joint venture English learning centres sprouting in various parts of China. Although this is mainly linked with the aim to go abroad, learning English language could open up forms of literature and philosophy as well as the ability to communicate directly with the foreigners entering China. This would also give the opportunity to access foreign technological and scientific knowledge. Ruth Cherrington cites this as a reason for the official approval for learning English (Cherrington 1997:127-128). Recently the State Education Commission suggested that one specialised fourth-year course in each department of a college should be conducted in English. This is an important step further to lift the status of English as a foreign language to a medium of instruction to gain knowledge (Yuan and Hua 1999). It is paradoxical that these changes are evolving in the context of lack of English teachers, a problem faced right across rural China. This will eventually increase the disparities in terms of "linguistic capital" at the higher level.¹¹

¹¹ Shangzhou's case is an example of this situation. Situated 160 kilometres away from Shanxi province, Shangzhou is one of the educationally backward areas in China. In 2002, there were 519 schools in Shangzhou with over 100000 students. However, for more than 100000 students in 519 schools, there were only less than 50 English teachers.

Legitimising the Privileges of a Politically Privileged Class

A final factor that reinforces stratification in Chinese higher education is the emergence of a privileged class with party origins. The role of this factor in the stratification process is very complex and raises several questions and concerns. Indeed, it points to the existence of a class within a socialist society that is antithesis to the socialist system. During the Maoist period both “redness” and “expertise” were counted towards admission to higher educational institutions. While “expertise” meant academic excellence, “redness” connotes possession of revolutionary nature by virtue of one’s own class status, revolutionary behavior or the class status of one’s family (Chan 1982:303). The educational philosophy of Maoism always tried to maintain a balance between the demands of the developing economy and the egalitarian social goals. It was reflected in the educational selection process that was designed to widen the opportunities of the underprivileged rather than the elites to serve national reconstruction. There were several attempts during Maoist period to improve the uneven distribution of educational institutions by establishing several institutions in the rural hinterlands to spread educational opportunity more evenly. In the same way, measures to increase the worker-peasant contingent in higher education were also an integral part of the “class line” policy for creating proletarian intellectuals (Taylor 1981). However, the experiences of past two decades are a far cry from the educational policies followed during the Maoist era. While in the early days of reforms, evidence for this tendency was reflected in the privileges enjoyed by students from the families of intellectuals and officials who dominated the best educational institutions in China. The earliest symptom of this change was manifested in the late 1980s itself. For instance, while only 25 percent of the students of Zhejiang University in 1980 were from peasant families, the proportion of students from intellectual and official families was 28 and 23% respectively (Sidel 1982, Quoted in Stanley Rosen 1985).

In the eighties, educational background and specialised training became an important criteria for party membership and cadre positions in line with the party’s new role as an agent of economic modernisation. The party even set the task for attracting university students in the early 1980s. The outcome was an increase in the

number of educated party cadres. For instance, between 1984 and 1986 party membership among students in Beijing recorded an increase from 8.25 percent to 11.5 percent (Rosen 1989, Quoted in White 1993). The new desire to recruit members from the highly educated class of the society was justified by Deng Xiaoping at the ideological level, citing the important role intellectuals played in the modernisation of the country and likened them with the working class of the country (Deng Xiaoping 1978:82-95). This is very significant because it implied the dichotomy between the class line approach of Maoism, favouring the ordinary workers and poor peasants, and the reformist approach that favours the induction of students, teachers, scientists, and specialists into the party. This is consistent with the official line of the party that favours the notion of socialism as the development of the “productive forces”(White 1993:190). As Alvin Y. So rightly points out:

Before the reform era, cadres in the state bureaucracy were mostly veteran revolutionaries or from peasant or working-class backgrounds recruited during the Maoist era. Very few of them have received higher education or professional degrees. The need to promote economic reforms, however, has transformed the pattern of cadre recruitment in the reform era. Many new middle level and high-level cadres are professionals because recruitment in the state bureaucracy now favours university degree holders, professional training, and other forms of human capital. Veteran cadres are now taking university courses because professional certificates and academic degrees enhance their chances of promotion in the state bureaucracy. Many cadres are sent to Hong Kong or overseas for short term training in order to enrich their professional qualifications. This professionalization policy, in return entices many members of the new middle class to develop their careers inside the state sector, resulting in inbreeding between the middle class and the cadres”(So 2005:490).

Yanjie Bian, Xiaoling Shu and John R. Logan, after examining the role of educational credentials in the attainment of Chinese Communist Party membership and its impact on upward social mobility between 1949 and 1993 argue that education has an important role in attaining party membership and the consequent elite status in post-Mao China (Yanjie Bian, et al. 2001:806). This perspective, by borrowing from the field study conducted by Andrew G. Walder finds two separate routes to elite position in post-Mao China. While individuals with educational credentials moved into a group of professional elites of high social prestige, individuals with both education credentials and party membership entered the status of administrative elite with social prestige, authority, and material privileges. These accounts primarily

addressed the issue of mobility and its implications in terms of education and party origins. Such approaches assume that the mode of political screening is changing in accordance with the changing agenda of the communist party at a particular point of time. These changes also influenced by the interests of social groups that are mobilised by the state to carry out the agenda. This shows that party is no longer concerned about the proletarian origins of the cadres and therefore, attainment of higher education is an important asset for the political mobility of individuals (Walder 1995, Quoted in Yanjie Bian, et al. 2001).

The privileges related to party origins are also manifested in the foreign education of the sons and daughters of the Chinese communist party elites in the reform era. Deng Zhifang, the daughter of Deng Xiaoping (University of Rochester, USA); Jiang Mianheng, son of former President Jiang Zemin (Drexel University, USA); Zhu Yanlai, former premier Zhu Rongji's daughter (University of Regnel, Canada); Li Xiaopeng, former Premier Li Peng's son (University of Manitoba, Canada); Qian Ning, Vice Premier Qian Qichen's son (University of Michigan, USA); Qian Yu, Qian Qichen's daughter (Columbia University, USA) etc. are among the few (Time Asia 2003). These changes reflect the ways in which party connections acting as a push factor for reproducing party privileges. Obviously, these changes in the post-Mao Chinese higher education system provide some revealing insights on the stratification process evolving in Chinese higher education.

Conclusion

The changing nature of Chinese higher education during the reform period reflects the class nature of socialist transformation in China. On the face of it, the widening participation in higher education during the post-Mao period appears to have created more opportunity the reality is something different. The gap between the haves and have-nots, rural and urban people etc. in terms of educational opportunities is a stark reality of present day China. The conclusion of the present analysis is that, during the post-Mao reform period, the liberatory potential of higher education gave way to market-inspired policies and has resulted in reinforcing the class inequalities. The departure of the Chinese state from the Maoist egalitarianism to a privileged

system is reflected in the 'more equal' status to a 'creamy layer' of the Chinese society, thus reinforcing the social boundaries. The existence of various strata in higher education sector at the cost of workers and peasants underlines the limitations of socialist transformation in post-Mao China.

What is analysed above is only a part of the contributory factors related to stratification. By drawing all the strands of available evidences together, it can be argued that the reforms in the Chinese higher education system during the post-Mao period are structured to favour the class interests of the state/ruling class. The impact of these changes facilitates the process of class inequalities, thereby eclipsing the egalitarian nature of higher education. The juxtaposition of extra-economic factors with economic factors in the current stratification process confirms that the source of the contradiction lies in the very structure of Chinese society.

The issues related to stratification in Chinese higher education confirm that the concept of social exclusion is a reality even in socialist countries. The emergence of new forms of class relations in terms of access to higher education, privileges of wealth and party origins etc. reflect the conflicting nature of Chinese socialism. The emerging situation in post-Mao China is conducive for the growth of objective conditions for the reproduction of social inequalities. Thus, higher educational institutions are playing an important role in the perpetual reproduction of the systemic inequality in the post-Mao Chinese society. To some extent, these changes in Chinese higher education resemble the nature of educational hierarchies within a capitalist society, based on classes. However, the strict state scrutiny regarding the organisation of higher education and the privileges of party origins enjoyed by a stratum of society for moving into higher echelons of society may be an exception to this.

Higher Education Reforms, Emergence of Intellectual Pluralism and the Anxieties of the State

The political and economic framework of post-Mao period brought flexibility in the Chinese higher education system manifesting itself in a high level of liberal academic atmosphere on Chinese university campuses during the 1980s and 1990s. During this period, Chinese higher education witnessed two major transitions: the first resulted in the restructuring of traditional pattern of higher education, and the second resulted in a gradual decline in the political control of the state. The new version of socialism in post-Mao China under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping encouraged the integration of Chinese higher education into the outside world for the fulfilment of the “Four Modernisations.” The new leadership, realising the importance of the role of higher education in economic growth, restructured the curricula of higher education and encouraged Chinese-Western interaction at the academic level (Hayhoe 1993a:291). Gradually, these changes were complemented by the integration of production and knowledge systems of China with the process of globalisation and Chinese education and research has become structurally transnational (Wang Hui 2003:142). This has altered the perception of the state towards higher education and it is reflected in the structure and functioning of the universities. The open-door policies of the state, coupled with the flood of Western literature that encouraged individuality, freedom and self-centredness and the resultant deviation of student values (Hayhoe 1993b:33), has facilitated this process in the eighties and nineties.

The gradual emergence of various informal/autonomous organisations outside the domain of the state is an important political manifestation of the reforms in higher education. The expansion of non-state economy weakened the role of the state and altered the ways in which society is organised and interacts with the state apparatus. Here, two related points need emphasising: first, is the emergence of a new middle class in post-Mao China with more education and strong economic base; second is the

pluralisation of Chinese society in the context of globalisation (Zhang Ye 2003:142). Coupled with these phenomena, commercialisation and its attendant consumer culture have effectively integrated with the Chinese society and it has changed the social and economic role of the state (Wang Hui 2003). These changes ultimately affected the legitimacy of the state in its various spheres of influence and are evident from the attitude of the state towards both the academic institutions and disciplines in the post-Mao period.

Since the fundamental conflict of interest between state and society in post-Mao China is very complex, the effects of higher education reforms cannot be analysed from a single context. Hence this chapter tries to understand the issue by analysing three important aspects: first, the political agenda of the state in the restructuring of academic disciplines, particularly social sciences and humanities in the reform period; second, the role of universities in facilitating the emergence of various autonomous/informal organisations outside the ambit of the political control of the state; and third, the impact of new liberal academic environment on civil society and other liberal discourses—an important source of inspiration for the student movements—in post-Mao China.

Relaxation of Political Control and the Emergence of Intellectual Pluralism

The economic reform programmes and the open-door policy have created many potential social bases outside the ambit of the state. The loosening-up of the control of the state partially liberated large segment of the Chinese population from the direct dependence on the state and resulted in giving them limited autonomy (Rosenbaum 1992:24). Since 1978, the state's policy has been directed towards "de-dogmatisation" of the polity, allowing some degree of ideological diversity in both the Party and society. Under the new situation, the state encouraged some degree of open disagreement and "airing of views." (Bernstein 1985:6). The resultant cultural enlightenment that emerged during the post-Mao period played an important role in facilitating the student movement at Tiananmen Square in 1989 (Baogang He 1996:167-176). The decline in the ideological legitimation of the state and the resultant cracks in the internal political control system complemented this change. For

instance, prior to the reforms, if a student was caught for any political offences, political control authority in the university had the power to decide the level of punishment and to record the offence in the individual's dossier. However, in the reform era, a bad political record in the dossier is no longer a nightmare to political offenders due to the scope for getting jobs in the non-state sector (Zhao 1997:165). The contentious intellectual debates of the late 1980s such as the suitability of neo-authoritarianism in promoting economic modernisation and political development also reveals the decline of the ideological rigidity of the party/state (Rosen 1992:184). Universities are the nucleus of these changes for the transmission of new ideas. As Dingzin Zhao (1997) argues convincingly:

During the eighties, nonconformist intellectuals in China spread their ideas by publishing student-oriented books and, by holding conferences in universities. Those students who were sensitized by them then spread the ideas through the dormitory rooms.

Dingzin Zhao attributes these mobilisational activities to the diminishing political control system in the universities:

Between 1988 and 1999, many liberal intellectuals were spreading dissident ideas in universities through holding conferences. This was known as the "conference fever period". Members of the intellectual elites gave talks on one campus after the other. Interested students attended conferences held not only in their university but also in other universities. The arguments made in these conferences varied, but a common tone was clear, that is, China's economic reform had reached a critical period, to push forward, political reform, mainly democratization had to be introduced (Dingzin Zhao, 1997).

From the late 1970s, the eagerness of the state to achieve the targets of the "Four Modernisations" necessitated it to grant enough autonomy to intellectuals and it reflected a new wave of attitudinal change from the part of the state towards intellectuals and academic institutions. During this period, the state funded a variety of research institutes and think tanks and even tolerated a few privately financed ones. This new atmosphere encouraged intellectuals to place professional competence over the ideological orthodoxy of the state. By citing the Western European precedents, Rosenbaum (1992) argues that market economy and autonomous associational life facilitate the creation of new alternatives to state controlled channels for services and institutions. Unsurprisingly, the new environment gives opportunities for scientists, professionals and apolitical writers to seek freedom of enquiry, access to the outside

world, and conformity to international standards of professionalism (Rosenbaum 1992).

The experiences over the past two decades underline the close relationship between the relatively liberalised academic atmosphere of the post-Mao period and the emergence of various informal discussion groups. As the strength of political intervention of the state in social life declined, individual autonomy increased and in the new liberal atmosphere, intellectuals had been allowed and encouraged to organise research institutes and even cultural and literary salons. The most important among these salons in the eighties were the “democratic salon” organised by Wang Dan and the “Olympic Science Academy” organised by Shen Tong at Beijing University and the “Confucius Study Society” organised by Wu'er Kaixi at Beijing Normal University. Many new entities like Beijing Institute for Social and Economic Research (Rosen 1992:184), Academy of Chinese Culture, Capital Steel Research Institute, Happiness Book Store (Baogang He 1997:19-26) and Beijing Social and Economic Research Institute¹ also emerged during the period. In addition to these organisations, various autonomous students' associations such as Autonomous Students' Union of Beijing Institutes of Higher Education, the Dialogue Delegation, the Hungerstrickers Headquarters, and the Autonomous Union of Students from Outside Beijing etc. were also active during the course of Tiananmen Incident. The role of a privately owned bookshop “The Wanshan Bookshop” for improving the quality of social science research in China is also worth mentioning. The most important feature of this bookshop initiative is that its owner Liu Suli himself was a spokesperson for the Beijing Academy of Intellectuals in 1989. For Liu the aim of this bookshop was not just profit and he was instrumental in organising regular seminars and a reading society. The publication of a private journal, China Social Science Quarterly, founded by a group of Chinese intellectuals in 1992 without any funding from the government is also noteworthy in this regard. This journal is regarded as one

¹ Beijing Social and Economic Research Institute was established by a pro-democracy ideologue Chen Ziming and his wife in 1986. It is considered as the first non-official political think tank in Beijing. In 1988 Chen bought a journal “Economic weekly” and appointed Wang Juntao as the main columnist. They also established a publishing company that later published translations of Western Books and those of Chinese political thinkers. However, after the Tiananmen crackdown, Chen and Wang were imprisoned for perpetrating demonstrations against the state at Tiananmen Square (See Goldman, Merle and Leo Ou-Fan Lee (2002).

of the best academic journals in China came out during the period and one of its aims was to improve social science research in China. They organised seminars on various topics and had contributed significantly to the debates on civil society in China (Baogang He 1997:27-31).

The individual efforts made by Fang Lizhi, an astrophysicist and Vice President of the prestigious University of Science and Technology in Hefei are also worth mentioning here:

Fang spoke at a number of universities on the issue of individual rights. At Shanghai's Jiaotong University, he urged the students to go out and fight for their rights because, he asserted, rights are not granted from above, "rather men are born with rights." In contrast to the "obedient intellectuals of the 1950s," he encouraged students and intellectuals "to strive for what is one's due" (Goldman and Lee 2002:510).

Since the late 1970s and especially in the eighties cultural salons and alumni associations started functioning and appealed for progressive democratic movements in society. These new institutions were very livelier (Zhang and Ye 2003:10) and a major source of inspiration for the students. Incidentally, this period also witnessed discussions on the concept of civil society in China. An article written by Shen Yue in *Tianjin Social Science* during this period about the concept of "townspeople right" in the classical writings of Karl Marx argued that "townspeople" is an economic concept that includes both bourgeoisie and proletariat. Shen Yue's article was abstracted without comment in *People's Daily*, the official newspaper of the party/state. This move clearly established the fact that the article caught the attention of the party/state (Shu-Yun Ma 1994:183). During this period, two theorists, Liu Zhiguang and Wang Suli, put forward another major argument in this regard. Their argument was a step further towards the realisation of individual rights. According to Liu and Wang there could be no meaningful existence of collectivity unless individual rights are fully recognised. By quoting University of Chicago political scientist Tsou Tang's idea that Chinese state is based on a "mass society", they underlined the importance of raising people's awareness on civil rights:

The term "mass" in its traditional as well as contemporary Chinese usage connotes subordination to rulers, whereas the Western concept of "citizen" is associated with individual rights and equality. As the Chinese general public

have customarily identified themselves with “mass,” their “civic awareness” has been weak. China’s modernisation thus calls for raising people’s awareness of their civil rights, and a real guarantee of democracy and freedom to the people (Shu-Yun Ma 1994:184).

These intellectual initiatives have prompted the communist party to co-opt the idea of “socialist civic awareness” into the official ideological framework of the state. This was echoed in the Central Committee resolution of the Chinese Communist Party titled “Resolution Concerning the Guiding Principles of the Socialist Spiritual Civilization Construction” in 1986 (China Encyclopedic Yearbook 1987, Quoted in Shu-Yun Ma (1994). In 1988, a team of writers from the National People’s Congress, the Central Party School, the Beijing High Court, the State Administration of Industry and Commerce, and some other academic institutions co-published a book titled “Gongmin shouce (Xie Bangyu 1988: Quoted in Shu-Yun Ma: 1994). The official position of the state on a sinified version of civil society was represented in this book in with the aim of creating a socialist citizenry. The book also castigated the Western institutions such as universal suffrage, parliamentarism, the multi-party system, judicial independence, and equality of law for its inherent capitalist nature. However, demands of the exiled students/intellectuals were diametrically opposite to the official policy of the state. Their primary concern, according to Shu-Yun Ma was the creation of a private realm that is independent of the state (Shu-Yun Ma 1994:192).

Another striking intellectual movement in the 1980s was the New Enlightenment movement. Initially based on humanistic Marxism, it gradually transformed into a movement with radical demands for social reform. The two distinct aspects of this movement are: first, the intellectual fountainhead of its thought was derived from the Western (especially early French Enlightenment thinking and Anglo-American liberalism) economics, political science, and legal theory; second, the movement did not have a unitary aspect, rather its literary, philosophical, and political aspects had no direct relationship to one another. According to Wang Hui, the New Enlightenment thinking of the 1980s provided an enormous source for reforming the Chinese society and it dominated the intellectual discourses in the eighties (Wang Hui 2003:155-167).

The resuscitation of ideas earlier prevalent in the academic circles was another feature of the new intellectual environment in post-Mao China. The intellectuals, who were rehabilitated by the state during the post-Mao period from the political control of the Cultural Revolution, took the initiatives in this regard:

These ideas ranged from individualism to Western Marxism, from Nietzsche to Freud, and from existentialism to Christianity. The intellectuals were also able to renew contacts with Western colleagues and friends from whom they had been cut off for almost 30 years. As earlier in the century, China's intellectuals indiscriminately latched onto the newest Western intellectual fads, such as postmodernism and symbiotics, Toffler's concept of "the third wave" of postindustrialism and humanistic Marxism sweeping Eastern Europe at the time(Goldman and Lee 2002:500).

However, scholars like Qinglian He² argues that the notion of academic freedom brought about by market-oriented reforms and receptiveness to the outside world shows just a superficial understanding about the grassroots realities in China. Although intellectuals during the reform period can read Western social science literature and can use the research approaches of the social sciences that were prohibited during the Cultural Revolution, there are still many restrictions. For example:

...intellectuals are not permitted to introduce or study western political systems or democracy; research on the Cultural Revolution and the history of the Chinese Communist Party is restricted; and reform policies "should" be evaluated only in a positive way, that is, studies of them should not be biased against official positions"(Qinglian He 2002).

Those intellectuals who are deviating from the official line can be penalised by the state for breaking academic norms:

The penalties take various forms. A slight one stops a promotion that an academic deserves. In China, salary, housing, and medical care are linked with seniority, so someone who gets such a penalty may encounter difficulties. A more severe penalty may involve being laid off. Once someone is laid off for political reasons, it would be hard for the person to find another formal job, because no university or research institute wants to invite trouble by hiring a person the regime has defined as having a "political spot." A

² Qinglian He is a prominent Chinese economist and the author of "Pitfalls of China". Currently she is a visiting scholar at University of Chicago.

research fellow at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Xiaoya Chen, suffered such a fate. In the early 1990s, she wrote an academic book titled *History of the June Fourth Political Movement*, which touched on the most sensitive research topic in China: the democratic movement of 1989. She was immediately fired. She has been unemployed for about ten years now and has to struggle to survive without income or housing of her own (Qinglian He 2002).

Similarly,

The efforts of the Chinese regime to control intellectuals extend to its treatment of western scholars who study China. The government selectively invites as visiting scholars those who praise the policies of the Chinese government, giving them information about opportunities to conduct research in China. Scholars who have published criticism of the regime are, however, considered "unfriendly to China" and may see their visa applications rejected without explanation. The careers of many western scholars of China depend on their fieldwork in the country, leading some to maintain a "good" relationship with the regime by restricting their research programs to topics the government favors and avoiding criticism of government policies. Not all scholars are willing to apply such a strategy to get access to China. Some who have declined to do so have faced pressure for not being able to do research in China. As a result of this approach to western academics, the Chinese government has been quite successful in influencing images of China's current situation in western scholarship. (Qinglian He 2002).

Changes in the Curricula

Since the liberation of the country in 1949, the Chinese state has invariably been trying to instil the "official value system" of the state on the younger generation through education. Internalising the officially sanctioned social values and images is an important component of the political socialisation process in China for creating a "new socialist man". (Chan 1982:297). However, the loosening of the state's political control and the access of Chinese students to the outside world, particularly to the liberal intellectual currents of the West after the introduction of the economic reforms resulted in changing the attitude of the youth towards the state. In this new situation, the state is forced to shield its higher education system from outside influences.

There is an interesting correlation between shielding of educational institutions and the political system of a country. Because shielding of higher educational institutions from the academic world outside is not a tendency

existing/existed in the totalitarian set-up of communist countries.³ There are many instances in the past that show that the political systems of both—the dictatorship of the proletariat and the so-called democratic set-up— always tried to check the influences from the outside academic world (Piven 1983:21).

The economic reform programmes and the open-door policy initiated since late 1970s altered the hitherto existed curricula of higher education in China. It also enabled universities and other higher educational institutions to broaden their understanding about the outside world. In the late 1970s, new developments in the political and economic arena impinged upon the organisation of higher education and resulted in the reintroduction of courses which were virtually banned since 1952. Perhaps the major impact of these policies is reflected in the reintroduction of certain courses in social sciences and humanities. The changes in the structure of higher education, largely academically inspired, gradually led to tensions within the political system: as a new generation of students, educated in a broader and critical way, began to make demands for structural reforms in the polity (Hayhoe 1993b:25-27). These changes prompted the state to realise its folly of projecting the modernisation goals at the cost of political functions of higher education.

The general tenor of higher education reforms after the political ascendancy of Deng Xiaoping reflected his strategy for the modernisation of the country. Naturally, higher education reforms initiated under his leadership led to a total negation of the educational agenda of the Cultural Revolution by downgrading the political and social functions of education (Burns and Rosen 1986:284). After more than three decades of insulation from outside world except the influence of Soviet Union's educational system, Chinese higher education was opened to new areas of knowledge and the state officially started sending thousands of students abroad, particularly to U.S.A. and Canada, mainly for gaining the scientific and technological know-how. Although the

³ There is an example from the context of University of Chicago. Although University of Chicago is renowned for boldness of the curriculum and the freedom of its atmosphere, in the 1950s, students were not instructed to read the works of Karl Marx, Rosa Luxemburg, or Lenin. Instead, they were instructed to read Plato, Aristotle, Thucydides, Herodotus, Saint Augustine, Spinoza, Locke, Freud and Durkheim. This shows that educational authorities/state, whether it is in the democratic or totalitarian countries would always try to check the influences from the outside academic world on ideological reasons. Frances Fox Piven argues that later American universities had to change its earlier position mainly due to a new kind of worldly influence intruded upon the institutions (See Piven 1983:21).

state was aware of the chances for the penetration of “decadent and degenerate ideology” through Western science and technology, it was not concerned in regulating this flow. Mainly because, it was aware of the fact any such decision would ultimately affect both the non-scientific realm and the scientific realm (Goldman 1992:204).

The state has also taken various steps to assign social sciences a major role in China’s modernisation process during the post-Mao period. After a virtual ban of more than two decades, subjects like political science, anthropology and sociology were reintroduced. Another important change in higher education was the development of a new range of applied fields along with the classical disciplines of philosophy, history and literature in the humanities (Hayhoe 1993a:292-293). In 1979, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) was established and thereafter social scientists were instructed to lead the new campaign to “seek truth from facts” and take practice as the sole criterion of truth. They were also directed to study the experiences of the West and adopt relevant ideas to carry out the Chinese reforms (Mohanty, 2000). In the 1980s, CASS became a major think tank for the reformist intellectuals. During this period, educational cooperation with foreign countries increased and Western academics were invited to teach and advise on reforms. The interaction of Chinese intellectuals and students with their counterparts in foreign countries was on a greater scale than at any other time in Chinese history (Goldman and Lee 2002:506).

The impact of the opening-up of Chinese higher education and the fostering of some interdisciplinary studies resulted in questioning the authoritative ideas of the state from various quarters of academic community. The implications of these changes are more noticeable in the university level text books prepared during this period. One outcome of this new initiative was a textbook entitled “A Scientific World View” for new undergraduate courses in “Philosophy of Life”. This book talks about the historical development of various world views, human nature, the individual and society, ideals of human life, the value of human life, human freedom, human relations, views on public and private spheres, views on friendship, views on life and death, views on happiness, views on justice, views on honour, views on aesthetics reform and tradition, success and failure, life and fulfilment, self-cultivation etc. The key focus is on the individual, which was a marked departure from the state’s earlier

emphasis on the collective interests. Moreover, most of these texts drawn heavily on Western sources, with references ranging from Aristotle to Alvin Toffler and Daniel Bell within the general framework of Marxist philosophy. Although the state tried to rationalise its Marxist views while making these changes in the curricula, it actually provided a leg-up to students in getting an acquaintance with the new ideas from the West (Hayhoe 1993b:27-32).

The reform era in comparison with the previous Maoist period offered more autonomy to intellectuals (Mohanty 2000:440). During this period, the interaction between the Chinese scholars and Western knowledge system increased and the dominant Western theories and frameworks were incorporated into social science in China. Furthermore, inspired by the Chinese translations of U.S. behavioral literature authored by Gabriel and Sydney Verba, Chinese researchers had examined their country's political culture through sample surveys (Rosen 2002:171). After the reintroduction of sociology in 1979, efforts had been taken by scholars in mainland China and Taiwan to "sinify the discipline" to conform to the ideological requirements of the state. The main reason behind this effort for the sinification of sociology was that most of the Chinese social scientists were trained in the West and they had a tendency to select problems and theories for research preferred by the Western scholars.⁴

It is important to note that most of the young instructors who were responsible for the newly introduced texts were the products of the more open academic and cultural environment of the eighties. Ruth Hayhoe points out that the essence of these texts has some similarities with the goals of various student movements of the eighties that incorporated a sense of infinite possibility for personal development and an individual contribution to social change (Hayhoe 1993b:33). Chinese intellectuals have seized the new opportunity to redefine curricula in much broader and critical way, (Hayhoe 1990:294). Alarmed by the political challenges of opening-up, state has taken several measures to reform the university level courses in political education. The following section illustrates these changes:

⁴ Taiwan Xuezhе tan shehui ji Xingwei kexue yanjiu Zhongguohua [Taiwan scholars discussing the sinification of social and behavioral science research], 1982, shehui 2(Feb.), 43-45, Quoted in Cheng, L and A. So (1983).

The early 1980s saw the introduction of moral education (deyu) or thought and character education (sixiang pinde jiaoyu) as a whole new area that emphasized individual moral development in ways seldom found in the politically and socially oriented texts of the past. It was the harbinger of a whole range of new courses in Chinese universities under titles such as professional ethics, personal life philosophy, the cultivation of talent, the legal system etc. One text book entitled "The Discipline of Moral Education" published in 1986 was prepared for the training of the teachers in normal universities who would be responsible for new courses in moral education at all levels within the school system. It suggests that moral education should be seen as an independent science, which deals with the laws regulating moral learning processes, and that therefore it includes, by definition, thought education, political education, and the formation of moral character. It goes on to demarcate its relation to the fields of philosophy, ethics, psychology and sociology and to elaborate the special challenge it faces with China's open door policy and the determination to critically assimilate both China's historical heritage and the findings of Western thought and research (Hayhoe 1993b:30).

As part of the state's effort to develop new courses both in political theory and in related areas such as moral education and life philosophy, many changes were made since 1987 in the basic courses which had been existing since the early fifties. A basic course on the "History of Chinese Communist Party" was changed into "History of the Chinese Revolution". Earlier, the contents of most of the texts of this course ended with the revolution in 1949. However, one of the texts prepared under the new framework had one final chapter entitled "Establishing socialism with Chinese Characteristics" that discussed the world context.⁵ Similarly, a course on Marxist-Leninist philosophy was also revised to allow much greater emphasis on fostering independent thought and to analyse general trends in world history, the history of science and international relations.⁶

Therefore, it is not surprising to find that later in the wake of Tiananmen Incident in 1989, state became more vigilant in reformulating the curricula of social sciences and humanities. Soon after the Tiananmen Incident, the party/state reasserted the central role of ideology in higher education. These reforms aimed at the selective re-politicization of higher education and were designed to overcome the disaffection of

⁵See Zhu Shuigeng and Zhang Xitong, (eds.) Zhongguo gemingshi jiaocheng (Shanghai: Tongji daxue chubanshe, 1990), (Quoted in Hayhoe 1993b).

⁶ See Cheng Fuchun, "Zhexue jiaoxue gaige zhaozhu yuanyin peiyang xuesheng de zhexue sixiang nengli," Chengdu daxue xuebao, No.4 (1986), in Gaodeng jiaoyu, G4, no.2(1987), pp.55-60, (Quoted in Hayhoe 1993b).

the student movement (Sautman 1991:669). In August 1989, the then General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party Jiang Zemin told students at Qinghua University:

In the future, universities and colleges should earnestly intensify their ideological and political work so that Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought can take over the education bastion (Quoted in Sautman 1991).

However, these experiences were short-lived due to the emergence of contradictions:

Despite the repression of the student movement, the Chinese regime under Deng Xiaoping remains oriented to economic reform. The current attempt to repoliticize higher education thus is superficial; it is inconsistent with the requisites of economic change that China's leaders must meet to overcome the crisis generated by the first decade of reform(1978-88) (Sautman1991:671).

This shows that despite the growing effort from the part of the state to control higher education both politically and ideologically, considerable ambiguity still prevailing. This is mainly because of the inherent contradiction existing between a regimented higher education system and the open-door policies associated with the economic reforms in the post-Tiananmen period. Therefore, it is obvious that given the nature of the current reforms taking place in China, the state ultimately has to replace the intensively politicised courses in higher education with courses that would economically benefit the reform programmes (Sautman 1991:671).

New Social Bases and the Anxieties of the State

In the eighties, student unrest became common in the Chinese university campuses in comparison with the previous decades. Although various factors were responsible for these movements, the new liberal atmosphere prevailed on the campuses was an important factor that facilitated this process. Barring the 1989 movement at Tiananmen Square which was an example of large-scale social mobilisation in terms of its spontaneous and ubiquitous nature (Wang Hui 2003:46), almost all other movements held between mid-1980s and 1989 were small in scale and did not lead to

broad social mobilisation. The existence of many universities in cities like Beijing facilitated frequent interaction between students and became an important place for the exchange of ideas. This is noteworthy because while in 1949 there were only 13 universities in Beijing with a total enrollment of 17442; it was increased to 67 institutes of higher learning with 1,62576 residential students in 1989(Wang Hui 2003).

The June 4 incident at Tiananmen in 1989 was significant on the course of reforms in Chinese universities. During his speech given to the Martial Law Troops after the Tiananmen Incident, Deng Xiaoping identified the abandonment of political education as a main cause of the movement.⁷ Since then, the party/state started carefully monitoring activities of the students and stationed police around Beijing University and other universities to prevent demonstrations or to keep them confined within the universities (Goldman 2000:120). In the ensuing years, many efforts were taken by the state to renew the intellectual and ideological struggle in the universities to stem the tide of growing disaffection among the student community.

After the Tiananmen Incident, it became clear that the party/state was even afraid of the curricula of social sciences and humanities in higher education. In a speech on the problem of job assignment for social science and humanities students in 1991, the Vice-Commissioner for Education Teng Teng stressed that:

The purpose of education in social sciences and humanities is to form successors to socialism, not democratic individuals, and that all elective courses should be strictly monitored to ensure that they fit into a Marxist framework. They should not be seen as a free market place for ideas.”⁸

In the late eighties and nineties several measures were taken by the state to bring about change at the level of political education, broader teaching of humanities and social sciences, and the overall campus environment (Hayhoe 1993b:36). The state was so much anxious about the new developments that even heads of teaching units in the humanities and social sciences of Beijing and Wuhan universities were called

⁷ See ZGJYB, June 29, 1989, (Quoted in Ruth Hayhoe 1993b).

⁸ See, Teng Teng “Wenke jiaogai tixi jiachi Makesi zhuyi Zhidao he lilun lianxi shiji” (“The State Education Commission has organised and edited guidelines for humanities programmes”) *Zhongguo jiaoyu bao*, No.6 (1991), pp.2-7(Quoted in Ruth Hayhoe 1993a).

upon to ensure that every course that had any Western content was carefully checked and revised in accord with the correct political line.⁹ The History department of Beijing University was assigned with the task of criticizing the television series “River Elegy”¹⁰ and its views on traditional Chinese culture.¹¹ During this period, even scholars and researchers associated with the prestigious Chinese Academy of Social Sciences were silenced and subjected to indoctrination. Ruth Hayhoe discusses these changes, and their implications:

A survey of recent articles written by political instructors and researchers in different regions of the country over the period from June 1989 to mid-1991 gives further evidence that stability and pattern maintenance are the main concerns, and that there has been very little that is new in either form or content. Perhaps the most interesting articles on political education are those that research report on Western influences on Chinese university campuses, and that indicate how far-reaching these influences have been.(Hayhoe1993b:41).

Li Teyang, head of State Education Commission, in a long speech before a national higher education conference organised shortly after the Tiananmen incident in 1989 linked “bourgeois liberalisation” and “democratic individualism” with certain courses in social sciences.¹² The suggested solution to the problem was to strengthen party control on university campuses and to reassert political and patriotic education (Hayhoe 1993b:293). Various measures taken by the State Education commission later, confirm the anxieties of the state regarding the curricula of social science and humanities disciplines in the universities. Ruth Hayhoe further examines the implications of these changes:

Regular undergraduate enrolments for autumn 1989 were cut from a planned 640000 to 610000, with these cuts mainly affecting social science and

⁹ See, ZGJYB, September 14, 1989, p.3, (Quoted in Ruth Hayhoe 1993b).

¹⁰ The serial “River Elegy”(the river dies young) was televised by China Central Television Station (CCTV) in June 1988.As a critique of the shortcomings of Chinese culture, this serial captured the attention of people particularly university students as soon as it was broadcasted on CCTV. Su Xiaokang, the first author of the script was one of the most influential reportage novelists of that time. The serial argues that the main reason behind China’s ignorance and conservatism is the inward-looking, river and land based “yellow civilisation” .Therefore, to learn from the maritime-based civilisation of the West and to establish a market economy are the only way out to get rid of the anomalies of the present. In order to make the arguments more authoritative, theories of Hegel, Toynbee, and Karl A. Wittfogel were also incorporated in the serial.

¹¹ See, ZGJYB, October 12, 1989, p.1, (Quoted in Hayhoe 1993b).

¹² See, Zhongguo jiaoyu bao, 30 August 1989, (Quoted in Ruth Hayhoe 1990).

humanities specializations and national comprehensive universities directly under the State Education Commission. It was these universities, which pioneered new work in the social sciences over the past decade, and many of their students took a leading part in the democratic movement. There is thus little subtlety in the attack now being made upon them. To give some specific examples, Fudan's enrolment was cut from a planned 2000 to 1200; Nankai's from a planned 1200 to 800 and Beida's from a planned 2000 to 800. Some social science departments in fields such as sociology, philosophy, and politics were allowed no enrolments for 1989-90, those in history were one-third or one-quarter of the norm, and those in economics and management were mostly cut in half. In contrast, few cuts have been made in the basic or applied sciences, and provincial and sectoral institutions have been less affected by these measures (China News Analysis 1989; Quoted in Hayhoe 1990).

The new syllabi of subjects like political science, sociology, philosophy and the strict implementation of political education courses in the aftermath of Tiananmen incident confirms that the Chinese state wanted to insulate the subjects from the influence of Western intellectual currents. Another major cause of worry for the state was the interaction of Chinese students, who were sent abroad during the reform period, with the culture of the host countries, particularly the United States. It is estimated that between 1978 and 1988 more than 60000 Chinese students had gone abroad with 93 percent going to the US. Apart from the technological knowledge they brought in, they had also become an important vehicle for the transmission of Western ideologies and cultural values (Xinshu and Yu Xie 1992:509-511).

Xinshu Zhao and Yu Xie (1992), by quoting from various sources,¹³ argues that foreign influence was an important source for the political changes in the eighties

Before June 1989, they were referred to as Communist China's "best and brightest," "new elite," "future leaders," or the "successor generation." After June 1989, they were more often regarded as "the source of political disturbance," or the only group who openly "vowed to carry on the struggle for freedom and democracy (Xinshu Zhao and Yu Xie 1992).

In the late eighties and nineties, fearing that too many students would become "too westernised", Chinese government considered reducing the number of students going

¹³ Authors have quoted points from the doctoral dissertation titled "The Birds in the Rich Forest: Chinese Students at an American University" submitted by David Austell to University of North Carolina in 1990 and various reports covered by CBS and CNN on the issue.

to the West, particularly to the United States.¹⁴ After the Tiananmen episode, government realised that around 90 percent of Chinese students in the United States and Canada had become so “Westernised” that they would be a threat to the political stability of the state. Consequently, Chinese diplomats were instructed not to encourage those students who completed their studies from these countries to return.¹⁵

CONCLUSION

The dramatic changes in the economy and its impact on higher education over the last two decades have fundamentally altered the state-society relations in China. The impact of the new liberalised academic environment corresponding to these changes ended-up in a situation that has brought the legitimacy of the Chinese state into question. When the new cultural and intellectual atmosphere of the economic reforms percolated through the universities, the state was forced to shield its institutions from outside academic influence that met with little success. The impact of these changes is symptomatic of the new social and political tensions arising out of the reforms in post-Mao China.

The post-Mao experiences of China confirm the fact that an attempt to analyse the emergence of various social groups/social movements in the liberalised economic and political atmosphere cannot be detached from the developments in higher education—both at the level of academic disciplines and institutional structures. Because the structure of higher education in post-revolutionary China has always reflected the nature of state power and therefore, an analysis of the role of higher education is crucial for understanding the various political processes. Although the dislocation between reforms and restrictions in post-Mao China did not affect the pervasive domination of the hegemonic party/state in a big way (Rosenbaum 1992), the gradual relaxation of political control of the state over the universities and the resultant

¹⁴See New York Times (February 11 and March 24, 1988); World Journal Weekly (March 25, 1990), (Quoted in Xinshu Zhao and Yu Xie 1992).

¹⁵ See “Chinese Communist Party Tightens Curb on Overseas Students”(this article is based on a secret document of the Chinese Education Commission obtained by the Independent Federation of Chinese Students and Scholars in the United States),*World Journal Weekly*, (June 3,1990), (Quoted in Xinshu Zhao and Yu Xie(1992).

emergence of various informal groups during the reform period led to the emergence of a new political culture in the campuses and society at large. What gives the current transformation its importance is the political impact of the more liberalised academic environment. Perhaps this is perfectly mirrored in the attitudinal shift of the party/state towards higher education after the Tiananmen incident. Although in the wake of Tiananmen incident the party/state realised that the rather relative liberal atmosphere prevailed on the higher educational institutions was unnecessary to socialist transition, it lasted only for a short period. Furthermore, in the current pluralist cultural and intellectual environment with greater access to the new technologies of the Internet coupled with China's economic and technological interdependence would make it difficult for the state to swim against the tide of influences from abroad(Goldman and Lee 2002) . Whether these changes will negatively affect the existence of present socialist system in China questionable, considering the predominance of the strong party structure of the Chinese Communist Party. However, in the long run the party/state may find it difficult to balance its current strategy of following market reforms with limited democratic reforms.

Conclusion

It is not surprising to find that if the Chinese economy has been adjusted in the late 1970s to achieve the targets of the “Four Modernisations”, its higher education system has also simultaneously undergone considerable changes because of the major changes in the economic policies of the state. The drive towards a free market economy has brought about fundamental changes on the structure of Chinese higher education system previously based on socialist egalitarianism. The impact of these changes on Chinese society has resulted in the emergence of new social relations and poses serious questions about the mystification of class relations in a society that declares itself as socialist.

The purpose of the present study has been to investigate the nature of functional relationship between higher education and economy and its impact on social change in the light of economic and political reforms in post-Mao China. In other words, the dialectical process of interaction between economy and education was an integral part of the present study that offered many consistent explanations for the link between economy, education and social change. This perspective arose from the belief that economic reforms have pervasive impact on the organisation of higher education during the reform period. The present study also tried to approach the problem from the social, political and ideological context. This required an analysis of not only the changing structure of higher education but also the various policies and practices followed by the Chinese state, particularly in the field of higher education.

In the course of analysing some important aspects related to the functional relationship between higher education, economy and social change, this study considered four important manifestations of the problem. First, the changing role of the Chinese economy that gives a strategic place to higher education during the post-Mao period; second, globalisation and the openness of economic and cultural sphere where the society and polity are increasingly structured around capitalistic production relations; third, the shift from the egalitarianism of the Maoist period to market inspired policies and its impact on educational stratification; and fourth, the limitations of the state in controlling

the emergence of intellectual pluralism. It was also important to bring together the influences of both the macro and micro level changes evolving in post- Mao China that encompass many variables such as the emergence of a new middle class and the liberalised academic environment within the broad economic and social context.

The restructuring process over the last two decades has been increasingly directed towards downgrading the primacy of the state from the higher education sector with explicit economic thrusts. The implications of these changes are reflected in the political and social contradictions emerging in contemporary China. Two major interlinked points found in the present study are the impact of the economic reorientation or the retreat of the Chinese state from its social obligations and the effect of globalisation process on Chinese higher education in the 1990s. This is evident from the changing nature of higher education manifested in the incorporation of various structural reforms and the blurring of public/private boundaries over the last two decades. The historical context of the evolution of Chinese higher education since 1949 permitted this study to identify various issues in the wider political and economic context. The findings of the present study, on the basis of the evidence presented in the three chapters, confirm the fact that higher education system does not exist as a monolithic entity; rather it is a complex of relationships influenced by the socio-political process.

In the post-Mao period, the role of the state in the promotion of upward social mobility through higher education has suffered mainly due to the new policies that virtually promote the institutions and social relationships necessary for the domination of the emerging middle class. This also reflects the class nature of socialist transformation in China. On the face of it, the widening participation in higher education during the post-Mao period appears to have created more opportunity, the reality is something different. The gap between the haves and have-nots, rural and urban people etc. in terms of educational opportunities is a stark reality of present day China. The existence of such an asymmetrical relationship in access to higher education reflects the internal social contradictions existing in Chinese society. From this standpoint, stratification of Chinese higher education can also be viewed as an impact of the restoration of capitalistic social

relations in the post-Mao period. What appears to have facilitated this stratification process is the role of wealth and property that plays an important role in the attainment of higher education. Therefore, the significant expansion of higher education during the post-Mao period should not be seen to reflect the egalitarian ideals of socialism, but as a privileged system reinforcing the social boundaries. It also reflects the existence of the forces of cultural reproduction that benefits the newly emerged elites. In this context, it is debatable as to whether it would ever be possible to uphold a socially inclusive higher education system in China.

An analysis of issues related to the political manifestations of reforms in the curricula of Chinese universities and the anxieties of the state since the Tiananmen incident in 1989 clearly reflect the dilemmas faced by the Chinese state. In one sense, it is a testimony to the emergence of new social bases outside the domain of the state and the crisis of legitimacy faced by the state. The impact of the new liberalised academic environment has ended-up in a situation that has brought the legitimacy of the Chinese state into question. It reveals the complex and multifaceted nature of higher educational reforms in post-Mao China. This is of course related to the increasing importance attached to higher education by the state for attaining the modernisation goals.

Higher education is a field of practice that stands inside the domain of the state. The present study confirms that a critical analysis about the implications of power relations between political and economic forces that influence the policy process of the state has substantive importance for analysing the nature of higher education reforms. The overriding conclusion of the present analysis is that continuation of higher educational reforms in the present form will infuse new challenges to the Chinese state in the coming years mainly due to the emergence of fundamental discrepancies between the official ideology of the state and its practice in the post-Mao period. Therefore, the nature of relationship between higher education and economy not only derives its significance from the changes in the educational superstructure, but equally as an important issue that encompasses widespread social and political ramifications in post-Mao China.

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