

**THE EFFECT OF THE GREAT PROLETARIAN
CULTURAL REVOLUTION ON CHINESE
SOCIETY AS DEPICTED IN FICTIONS OF
*LIU XINWU***

*Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfillment of requirements
for the award of the Degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled "**THE EFFECT OF THE GREAT PROLETARIAN CULTURAL REVOLUTION ON CHINESE SOCIETY AS DEPICTED IN FICTIONS OF LIU XINWU**" submitted by **Syed Eqbal Hassan** in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY** is his original work and has not been submitted for the award of any other degree of this university or of any other university.

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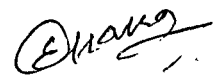
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that dissertation titled, **THE EFFECT OF THE GREAT PROLETARIAN CULTURAL REVOLUTION ON CHINESE SOCIETY AS DEPICTED IN FICTIONS OF LIU XINWU**, being submitted to the Centre for East Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy**, has not been previously submitted for any degree of this or any other university. Further, this dissertation is an outcome of my own study, research and analysis . I take responsibility for the same.



Syed Eqbal Hassan

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to take this opportunity to express my deepest sense of gratitude and sincere thanks to my supervisor and guide Dr. Madhu Bhalla, for her erudite guidance and for bearing with me during the course of writing this dissertation. Her patient advice at every stage of this work has gone a long way in sharpening my research skills for which I am greatly indebted to her.

I also express my sincere gratitude to all the faculty members, Dr. Alka Acharaya, Dr. Vara Prasad, Dr. Lalima Varma and Dr. H.S. Prabhakar of the Centre for the East Asian Studies especially for their academic guidance and support.

I am thankful to staff members of various Delhi based libraries for their valuable help and cooperation during the course of writing this dissertation.

I would also like to extend my thanks to the University Grant Commission for providing me the Junior Research Fellowship which helped me in sustaining my studies tremendously.

There are many others without whose assistance this work would not have been possible. I take this opportunity to express my deepest and sincere gratitude to my friend Anujaya.

I also take this opportunity to express my gratitude towards my younger brothers who have always stood by me in the hour of crisis and creation. I express thanks and gratitude to my friends Ajit, Mahendra, Sithara Fernando and Ekhlal. I am also thankful to Mahender S. Rana and all the staff of Sanjay Photostat to bring out this dissertation in this form by the stipulated time.

Finally, this study would not have been possible without my parents love, affection and constant encouragement.

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PREFACE

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution which lasted from 1966 to 1976, (official Chinese reckoning lasted to the death of the Mao Zedong) some ten years, was of the most extraordinary event in the history of twentieth century. The movement was largely the result of the decision of a single man, Mao Zedong. Mao's quest for revolutionary purity and his personal authority gave him enough power to unleash potent social forces but enough power to control them. This Great proletariat Cultural Revolution degenerated into violence, factionalism and chaos.

Much of the pain, the anguish and the search of young victims of the GPCR were expressed in post-Cultural Revolution literature, especially after the downfall of the 'Gang of Four' in October 1976, in critical writing on the darker side of the Cultural Revolution better known as Scar Literature. It has expressed and defined the problem Chinese young generation in post-Cr period in a most effective way. Among writers who stands out most prolific and the one who had greatest impact on this form fiction was Liu Xinwu.

The focus of this study is the period of GPCR which is 1960-1976. I have endeavoured to study how this ten years influence the Chinese society in particular with reference to its influence on the family system and youth. An attempt has been made to understand Chinese perspective (represented by Liu Xinwu) on the GPCR and the way it affected the people of China.

The present study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter deals with the background of the Cultural Revolution and the survey of literature about it. It also provides the justification of the proposed research study about the Cultural Revolution. The second chapter provides a detail study of the GPCR and analysis its impact on the Chinese youth. It also provides a detail account of Scar Literature of Liu Xinwu, a pioneer of scar literature. The third chapter takes up the period of post-GPCR and subsequent reaction of the Chinese youth and the emergence of scar literature. It also provides the literary works of the different prominent writers on scar literature.

The fourth chapter analysis the post-GPCR Chinese youth changing attitudes towards revolutionary tradition and new thoughts among them in China. The fifth and the last chapter gives a summary of the study and attempts to draw to broad conclusions about GPCR's implications for the contemporary china.

This study is purely a historical and analytical one. It is based on both primary and secondary sources through survey of literature from books and journals especially Scar Literature.

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CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION: THE GREAT PROLETARIAN CULTURAL REVOLUTION

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution that lasted for ten years (May 1966 to October 1976) had a profound impact on the Chinese nation. The need for this revolution was informed by various differing political perceptions and a series of events. By the late 1950s, Mao Zedong who started and led the movement argued that the agents of the capitalist class and counter-revolutionary revisionists had penetrated deep into the party, government, armed forces and cultural circles. He believed that the control over a majority of working units was no longer in the hands of the Marxists or the masses. Since all movements and struggles in the past (such as “The Anti-Rightist Campaign” of 1957 and the “Socialist Education Movement” of 1962) had failed to effectively deal with this problem, he came to the conclusion that only a complete Cultural Revolution could help. By this Mao envisaged an open and comprehensive movement to mobilize the masses as he stated in the “Theory of Continuous Revolution under the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.”¹

On 28 January 1958, Mao said in speech to the Supreme State Conference, “I stand for the theory of permanent revolution. In making

¹ Taisung An, *Mao ZeDong's Cultural Revolution* (Pegasus Publishers, USA, 1972). pp.27-28

revolution one must strike while the iron is hot. One revolution must follow another, the revolution must continually advance.”² He, thus, provided the theoretical basis for the Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution.

As Mao believed that mass movement was necessary for all work, the Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution which was essentially “a great mass movement in which the whole energies of the party and people were channelled for half a dozen years”.³

A number of reasons, including the political struggle for power and the manipulations of the Lin Biao and Jiang Qing groups (later the Gang of Four) made the nation-wide ‘revolution’ go off track. On 31 May 1966, Chen Boda, then the head of the Cultural Revolution Group, with the approval of Mao, led a group to reorganise the official newspaper ‘The People’s Daily’. This marked the beginning of important party organs falling into the hands of the Lin Biao and Jiang Qing groups. Control over the media and a mandate from Mao, then gave such groups the opportunity to ‘ignite’ the ‘raging flames’, which soon engulfed the whole of China.

The confusion and chaos that ensued saw a number of people being wrongly branded as counter revolutionaries or capitalist agents. They were publicly condemned in the ‘struggle meetings’ and often severely punished. Furthermore, the struggle and changes occurring in the political arena, translated into a frequent and often confusing change in ‘the revolutionary leadership’ of the society. The chaotic state of affairs continued

² Robert Michael Field, “Cultural Revolution: Second Thoughts”, *China Quarterly*, December 1986, p.628

³ Jack Chen, *Inside the Cultural Revolution* (Sheldon Press, London, 1976), p. 75.

intermittently till death of Mao Zedong and the downfall of the 'Gang of Four' in 1976. In the end, the effect of the 'revolution' was a widespread feeling of disillusionment and betrayal. Many Chinese people bore deep scars from the experience. But it was the young generation that was perhaps the most bitter about its experience.⁴

For those most affected were urban and largely from families of high ranking cadres. There were young people who had been regarded as the 'New Blood' or the 'Vital force' of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. After the ten years of chaos they reacted and demanded a change in the system and argued that communism was working against the welfare of the people. Their focus began to shift from ideology to material gain.

The Cultural Revolution ended with the downfall of the Gang of Four but its impact was felt for a long time both on Chinese society as well as on economy. Many people, especially China's youth could not help asking questions like "where the future lies and what was the solution to the post-GPCR chaos. What angered them the most was the role of the Gang of Four during the Cultural Revolution as articles and open debates on how and why the Gang of Four took the power, indicate, critical of the party's system. They often say that they have learned through this painful experience that they must possess the rights to freedom of thought and personal liberty under a legal system.

⁴ Lee Hong Yung , *The Politics of the Chinese Cultural Revolution* (University of California Press, Berkley, 1978), pp.3-4

China's youths who had grown up during the Cultural Revolution (1966-76) often call themselves 'the Lost Generation' and some Red Guards who played a prominent role during the ten years of chaos say they were sold out. Although the post-Cultural Revolution leaders have been promoting the Four Modernizations and adopting new policies to appease intellectuals, but they have not been able to gain the trust of the people especially educated youth.

Chuang hongqi, a female guard who sought political asylum in Brussels, said in November 1979 that "the Cultural Revolution victimized a whole generation of mainland youth to such an extent that they no longer have any faith in their leaders, have come to doubt the reasonableness of the one party dictatorship, and are concerned about securing freedom of speech for the people. There is a cultural gap between mainland youths and the people aged over forty. The youth are becoming more and more concerned about the future".⁵

Many young people developed anti-Maoist and anti-Communist sentiments since the Cultural Revolution and made efforts to set up a united front in order to demand freedom. For example, there was the case of the appearance of big characters posters in Canton in November 1974 which criticized the ideological basis of the Chinese state by pointing out that the capitalist system had been adopted in most of the socialist states, and more

⁵ Wang Xuewen, "Old Problems and New Thought Among Mainland Youth", *Issues & Studies*, July 1982, p.100

than one hundred communist parties in the world no longer believed in Marxism-Leninism.

Similarly, at the time of the Tiananmen incident in Beijing on April 4, 1976, youths wrote a big-character poster in blood appeared saying that China was no longer as it was; the people could no longer be fooled. The posters demanded freedom, democracy and legalism and human rights.

The problem of education and employment also troubled China's youth in 1970s, especially those who had been rusticated during the Cultural Revolution. The disruption of their education and actual unemployment and widespread despair led to a general social degeneration. Apart from the People Wall Movement of the mid 70s, there were many means through which young people expressed their anger against the Party. Some of the views were expressed through scar literature, drama and painting and film. Indian film 'Awara-the Vagabond' was very popular in the post-Cultural Revolution period and got an immense response from the rusticated youth who views themselves in the role of Raj Kapoor, who turned to petty crime as he saw no way out of his circumstances.

Following the ouster of the Gang of Four, there were outbursts among the young people demanding freedom, democracy, legalism and human rights. They demanded for rule of law in China and rules should be made democratically.

After the implementation of the Reforms and Open Door Policy, China was opened to foreign influences and the Chinese people were

exposed to western standards of living. Seeing the unfruitful product of so called revolutionary ideas, young people started favouring the idea of material benefits. “They started applying what they term as Little Four Modernizations” that is, modernization in clothing, freedom of action, a higher living of standard and modernization of furniture to their own lives.⁶ They asked why capitalism, supposedly inferior to socialism, had created a more prosperous economy than socialist China. Why was capitalist science and technology more advanced and the standard of living in capitalist countries higher.

Students noted that they wanted to lead the same quality of life as the workers of capitalist’s nations. In 1983, a poll was conducted in a Canton high school on the relative superiority of socialism, capitalism, feudalism, fascism, or anarchism revealed more than 50 percent youths polled felt capitalism was the best system.⁷ Clearly they were dissatisfied with socialism and communism. They wanted a different rule-based regime.

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was a ten-year political campaign with objectives to revolutionize China with the cultural and political ideologies of Mao Zedong. Mao Zedong launched ‘the Great Leap Forward’ in 1959, which was a complete disaster. To help bring China out of the economic depression caused by the Great Leap Forward, Mao Zedong began the Cultural Revolution in China that lasted for ten years from 1966-

⁶ Ibid. p.104

⁷ Chou Yunshan. “Mainland Youth in Search of Freedom”, *Issues & Studies*, Vol: 19, No: 6, June 1983, pp.64-65

1976. The goal of the Cultural Revolution was to steer China away from the lines of the Soviet model and into its own form of government.

Mao thus ultimately adopted four goals for the Cultural Revolution. They were:⁸ to replace his designated successors with leaders more faithful to his current thinking, to rectify the Chinese Communist Party, to provide China's youths with a revolutionary experience and lastly, to achieve some specific policy changes so as to make the educational, health care, and cultural systems less elitist. During this time, thousands were killed and millions of people were imprisoned or exiled.

The period of The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (approximately 1966-76) was the most extreme in modern Chinese history. Though its underlying causes were political, it had profound cultural, social and economic consequences. Chairman Mao began the Cultural Revolution as an attempt to regain power after criticisms emerged about the ruling of China. His goal was to return to the ideals of the Chinese Communist Revolution. Liu Shaoqi and other 'revisionists' had advocated relying on urban intellectual elite to lead national development, and they favoured using bonuses as incentives to increase production. Mao Zedong, however, emphasized that workers and peasants were the true revolutionary forces, and he sought to increase production through political idealism. He closed the schools and called upon all youth to take up the cause of revolution as 'Red Guards.' They were to fight against those who were taking the

⁸ Lee Hong Yung, *The Politics of the Chinese Cultural Revolution: A Case Study* (University of California, Berkley, 1978), pp. 34-35

'capitalist road.' With the support of the Red Guards and the Army, Mao had removed Liu Shaoqi from power by the end of 1968; revolutionary committees were established at all levels to replace the centralized bureaucracy associated with Liu. Party cadres were sent to the countryside to learn respect for physical labour and 'correct' political thinking.

The Red Guards attempted to eliminate the 'Four Olds': old ideas, old culture, old customs, and old habits. They travelled around the country destroying religious icons and ancient art works, changing names of streets and parks, forcing women to avoid 'bourgeois' clothing and long hair, and violently attacking counterrevolutionaries and foreigners. The Red Guards purged one faction after another, often with no apparent consistency, and fought with one another. Thus, it was dangerous to speak and write, because what was proper one day might be considered counter-revolutionary the next day. In this research, I will discuss how the Cultural Revolution affected the Chinese youth who actively took part in the revolution.

Over the past one and half years, I have conducted several interviews in an attempt to understand how the Cultural Revolution's event played out across China.⁹ In the summer of 1969, in almost all schools, the People Liberation Army (PLA) took charge of and physically attacked the Red Guards. Many Red Guards were beaten by the PLA. In other cases, the Red

⁹ I had conducted face to face conversations/interviews with some ex-Red Guards, who are at present settled in different organizations, during their visit to India in August 2003. Their names and designations are as follows: 1. Huang Yuan Xin, General Manager, ChengDu Yu Xin Catering Service Company, ChengDu City, FuQian Road-610021, 2. Chen Wenbin, Deputy General Manager, Liaoning Electric Power Co. Ltd, Ningbo Road, Shenyang, PRC-110006, 3. Jiang Qian, Chairman, Giant Elevator Co.Ltd, 68 Tai-an Raod, Nanxun, Huzhou, Zhejiang Porvince, PRC-313009.

Guards were seriously injured and some committed suicide after suffering humiliation and torture. Shortly after the rise of campus violence, more people off campus, who didn't come back to school to continue their studies, were threatened and murdered by the PLA as well. In the beginning of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution period, the Red Guards were as paramilitary to the PLA. In the later period, the relationship between the Red Guards and the PLA became as the manager and the subject.¹⁰

These violent attacks on campuses, however, have not been reported for various reasons. In the summer of 1969, when these events occurred, not a word concerning the violence was ever mentioned in the Chinese media (print and visual media), despite the fact that the media enthusiastically hailed the 'Red Guards' -- which had arisen nation-wide in early August of 1966, and the media reported their activities as headline news almost everyday. From the newspapers, magazines and documentary films published by Chinese authorities at that time, we can see pictures in which millions of teenagers wearing Red Guard armbands march through Tiananmen Square, with some Red Guards leaders applauding Mao Zedong who stands on the top of Tiananmen Gate. Against the red background of the red wall of the Gate, Mao's little red books, red flags, and red slogans, stood thousands of young, jubilant Red Guards forming a powerful, distinctive image of the Revolution.

¹⁰ Y.C.Chang, *Factional and Coalition Politics in China* (Praeger Publishers, London, 1975), p.47.

The bloody and the torturing sides of the Revolution were lost in the spectacular, uplifting image the media created. And the deaths or torture were also not reported which took place between the Red Guards and the PLA. Very few reports talked about the sufferings the Red Guards had gone through, that too were almost unnoticeable. Unfortunately for today's scholars, government-controlled media have become the primary and, in fact, almost the only primary source for research on this period of the Revolution.¹¹

Not only were the stories of violence not reported by the media at the time of their occurrence. The Chinese media only cautiously began to mention the victims as a way of restoring their reputation. This sort of publicity was limited to a small number of purged high-ranking cadres, victimized celebrities and a few ordinary people who were considered 'heroes' or 'heroines' for resisting the 'Gang of Four.' The students, then, the Red Guards who were victimized in 1969 were not so much mentioned in the later period. After the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution how they felt about it none of reports were mentioned sincerely by the Chinese media.

Some of the published general histories works such as Wang Nianyi's *Da dongluan de niandai* (Decade of Chaos), (Zhengzhou: Henan renmin chubanshe), 1988, Jin Chunming's *Wenhua geming shigao* (Cultural Revolution Report), (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe), 1995, *Wenhua's da geming shinian shi* (History of Ten Years Cultural

¹¹ Madawc Williams, "China - From Red Guard To Old Guard", available at <http://media2.travelzoo.com/msn> (April 2004)

Revolution), of the Cultural Revolution have covered the brutality against students carried out by the PLA in the summer of 1969. The fact that many of the events of the Revolution have not been reported has affected research on the period not only by Chinese but also by western scholars. One reason why authors of these books mostly neglected the subject is probably that they mainly relied on the written materials from that period, and have done little in the way of oral history. For instance, Gao Gao, the author of one of these histories, says in the preface that her book relies on three kinds of sources: publications of the authorities and of Red Guards during the Revolution and publications after the Cultural Revolution.¹²

When I was talking to the people and later on gone through some of the articles and books on the Cultural Revolution, I found that there were gaps between what happened and what has been reported, especially what happened to the Chinese youth who actively took part in the Cultural Revolution. How their personnel relationship were affected by the Cultural Revolution. They had confusion over what to say and whom to say about their feelings. Many basic facts have been neglected intentionally or unintentionally.

Review of Literature:

In the article 'A New Trend in the Literature of the PRC which Moves the Readers in the West', (*Issues & Studies*, Vol; 22, No; 9, Sept 1986), the writer Barbara Spielmann outlines new trends in the Chinese

¹² Gao Gao, *Wenhua da geming shinian shi* (Tianjin renmin chubanshe, Tian jin, 1986), p.3.

literary field in the post-Cultural Revolution period especially those which attracts the non-Chinese reader. She notes that the trends in Chinese literature have differed in the pre-CR, the CR and the post-CR periods. She has not only discusses the new techniques and narrative styles but the level to which 'the reality of life' is presented in post-CR literature. She analyzes new themes like 'love as fulfilment of life', 'pictures of desires' and 'conventional love stories' that have emerged in post-CR period. And she extensively discusses the emergence and importance of Scar Literature and the literature of expose in the post-CR period, which claims to present a realistic description of tragedies.

She analyzes few works of some writers such as, Chang Chieh, Chang Hsin-Hsin, to show the emergence of new trends and argues that the reason for the emergence of Scar Literature and the literature of expose is the obscurantist policy carried out during the Cultural Revolution against the people. She also points to social abuses and political contradictions as the main cause of the problems that occurred during this period and which are depicted in the writing of post-CR authors.

In an article 'CCP's Policy Toward Intellectuals' (*Issues & Studies*, Vol: 23 No: 1, 1987) Milton D.Yeh has written about the recent historical background of Chinese intellectuals. He analyzes the salient features of intellectuals in different periods under CCP's rule and the policies, which brought about changes in their positions and status. He discusses Zhou Enlai's stand on the autonomy of the Intellectuals and Mao and Deng's stand

on the role of intellectuals. Looking at the emergence of new trends in the Chinese literary scene, he talks about the different roles of intellectuals in Deng's era. Unlike the pre reform era period, intellectuals under Deng were included in the Party, but at the same time, he says, it is not clear whether intellectuals dominate the policy making process or not. Nor he notes can one find any clue to the role of intellectuals in China's development process. Finally Yeh discusses the debate that took place between Maoist and Dengist's on the emergence of new literary trends, with the Dengist demanding a 'double hundred movement.'

In 'China's Youth: Problem and Prospect', (*Issues & Studies*, Vol: 18, No: 8, Aug.1982) Thomas B. Gold discusses the youth problem in China. He says that there exists a crisis of confidence among youth in China. They lack confidence in socialism as it exists and they view it as failing to give them the benefits, which they have been promised for so long. Analyzing the impact of the Cultural Revolution on the minds of young people he finds that its experience prompted them to demand change in the system. This gave birth to the democracy movement, which was led by young people. The author also mentions the Party's response to the attitude of Chinese youth. While Party did not deny the existence of the problem, it stressed that involved only a minority and it was controllable. In the beginning the Party claimed that cause of the Cultural Revolution was the cult of Mao but later admitted that there were errors committed by Party leaders and there was fundamental problem in the Party and its system.

Jeffrey C.Kinklay's '*After Mao: Chinese Literature and Society, 1978-1981*', (Harvard University, 1985) attempts to examine the recent changes in the literary field and deal with contemporary Chinese literature and Chinese society. He analyzes the reason for the emergence of different kinds of literature in the post-Mao era. There is a general agreement on the issues he views as important in this period. He makes three points in the book. One is the emergence of 'the search for the truth of life', the second is the struggle for the independence of literature from politics, and the third is the expressions of self in Chinese literature. He says that these trends indicate the future direction of Chinese literature. He notes that in today's China writers and intellectuals are asking for freedom of expression, wherein they can express their own feelings and thoughts in their own ways. This book provides an analysis of unprecedented diversity of new literary forms that emerged in the aftermath of the Cultural Revolution. The author's approach to these studies reveals much about society, politics and popular culture in the post-Mao era.

In 'Communist China's Scar Literature', (*Issues & Studies* Vol: 19, No: 5, Feb 1983) Chou Yushan has talked about the reason for the emerging of Scar Literature in post-Mao China. At the end of 1978, at a forum jointly sponsored by the Central China Normal College and the Institute of Foreign Literature of the Chinese Academy of Social Science, the participants examined the four basic causes for tragedies under socialist rule. They pointed out that there were: 1. The existence of class, class contradictions

and class struggle, 2. defects in the socialist system itself such as lack of democracy and an imperfect legal system and bureaucratism, 3. Lack of experience in promoting continued revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, and 4. The existence of old ideology and of ignorance among the people. These four factors co-exist in the works of authors whose works constitute what is termed as 'Scar Literature'.

The writer says that under the Chinese Communist rule in the past thirty years numerous people on the mainland have suffered insults and bodily harm. He argues that many of them had a chance to acquaint the public with their sufferings by means of their own writings. In this article the author has cited three typical examples of Scar literature that prove that affection for one's own kin persisted in a society in which children were taught to place the Party above their family and told that 'Chairman Mao is dearer than their parents'.

Justification of research:

In the last one year, I have conducted interviews and collected materials in an attempt to understand how the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) has affected the Chinese Society and the people. I have interviewed several people who experienced the Revolution while they were in school. Most of the interviewees were students in 1969, but some also were teachers. Several were relatives of the victims. They related stories that occurred in schools, both in Beijing and in the provinces, including colleges, middle schools, elementary schools, and a kindergarten.

The fact that many stories of the Cultural Revolution were not reported which forced researchers to go beyond the printed or filmed materials that historians usually employ for their studies. For instance, two books considered the best works on this period,¹³ ‘The Politics of the Chinese Cultural Revolution’,¹⁴ and ‘Red Guard Factionalism and the Cultural Revolution in Guangzhou’,¹⁵ and the dissertation of the author of the latter book, ‘The Origin and Development of the Red Guard Movement of China’,¹⁶ while providing many details on the activities of the Red Guards, these made no mention of the violence against the Red Guards by the PLA in the summer of 1969. This despite the fact that these studies employed not only careful reading of large amounts of both government and Red Guard publications, but also made use of interviews with former Red Guards.

I have conducted face-to-face conversations and correspondence with the interviewees. I asked if they were beaten in schools during the Cultural Revolution. Most interviewees had been a witness to those events. I also asked for names of schools where there was no violence against the Red Guards. No response ensued. In fact, I have found no school where the PLA did not beat the Red Guards during the Cultural Revolution.

¹³ William A. Joseph, Christine P. W. Wong and David Zweig (ed.), *New Perspectives on the Cultural Revolution* (Harvard Press, Cambridge, 1991), p. 285.

¹⁴ Lee Hong Yong, *The Politics of the Chinese Cultural Revolution* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1978).

¹⁵ Stanley Rosen,, *Red Guard Factionalism and the Cultural Revolution in Guangzhou*, (Westview Press, Boulder, 1982).

¹⁶ Stanley Rosen, “The Origins and Development of the Red Guards in China”, Ph.D dissertation, 1979, printed in 1984 by University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Michigan, U.S.A.

Most interviewees were willing to tell me what they witnessed. Some interviewees who were involved in the beatings refused or were reluctant to talk to me. It is regrettable, though understandable, that those who best know the details have been the most adamant in refusing to disclose them.

A more surprising phenomenon is that some Red Guards victims who were beaten also would not provide details of torture. For them, the memories of this period are too humiliating and painful to relive. Students were physically attacked by the PLA. Eighteen educators in all were beaten to death by the PLA. In other cases, the 'Red Guards' were seriously injured and some committed suicide after suffering humiliation and torture.

These violent attacks on campuses, however, have not been reported for various reasons. In the summer of 1969, when these events occurred, not a word concerning the violence was ever mentioned in the Chinese media, despite the fact that the media enthusiastically hailed the "Red Guards" -- which had arisen nation-wide in early August of 1966 -- and reported their activities as headline news almost everyday. From the newspapers, magazines and documentary films published by Chinese authorities at that time, never mentioned anything about violent attacks against the 'Red Guards.'

The bloody side of the Revolution was lost in the spectacular, uplifting image the media created. Nor were the deaths or torture reported by the Red Guard publications of that period. Aside from these two kinds of materials, there are scarcely any private records left from that period.

Unfortunately for today's scholars, government-controlled media and the writings of Red Guards have become the primary and, in fact, almost the only primary source for research on this period of the Revolution.

When I was working on this paper, I was repeatedly shocked by the gap between what happened and what has been reported. Many basic facts have been neglected intentionally or unintentionally. This case is a classic example of the success of Chinese authorities in controlling mass media and public opinion, and reveals the extent to which key elements in an important part of history can elude even persistent historians.

CHAPTER – II

THE GREAT PROLETARIAN CULTURAL REVOLUTION AND ITS IMPACT ON THE CHINESE YOUTH

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was one of the most complex political events in the entire history of the Chinese Communist Party. It involved directly or indirectly, all of the Chinese people, raised debates on a wide range of issues, and revealed a multitude of conflicts at various levels.

After the catastrophic failures of the Great Leap Forward Movement, Mao Zedong withdrew from active politics and left Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping to guide the economy to recovery. All had been loyal Maoists but they no longer believed in the brand of radical ideological that Mao advocated. Under the new leadership there was a shift to an emphasis on expertise rather than ideological purity. Mao was disillusioned with the *revisionist* direction that the Communist Party was taking in the Soviet Union and probably saw China heading in the same direction.

‘The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution’ (1966-76) was launched by Chinese Communist Party (CCP) chairman Mao Zedong. He perceived that the country had drifted away from socialism and it was going toward the ‘restoration of capitalism’. The campaign, which was euphorically described as ‘a great revolution that touches people to their very soul’ and which

inspired radical students. But now it is regarded as having been a terrible catastrophe for the Chinese nation'.¹

The origins of the Cultural Revolution can be traced to the mid-1950s when Mao first became seriously concerned about the path that China's socialist transition had taken in the years since the CCP had come to power in 1949. His anxieties about the bureaucratization of the party, ideological degeneration in society as a whole, and the increasing socioeconomic inequalities that had emerged as China modernized escalated through the early 1960s and propelled him to embark on a crusade to expel the "revisionism" that he believed was contaminating the party and the nation.

According to Mao, the Cultural Revolution was a continuation of the revolution, which the Chinese people had been waging for over forty years against the Chiang Kai Shek's Kuomintang dictatorship. It was a political revolution carried out by the working class of China leading the main masses of the people, the peasants, the petty bourgeoisie, and the cadre intellectuals, against the Chinese bourgeoisies and all other exploiting classes and their international backers.

The Cultural Revolution can be best described as Mao's attempt to resolve the basic contradictions between the egalitarian view of Marxism and the elitist tendencies of Leninist organizational principles. By drawing the Chinese masses into the political process, Mao wanted to reverse the

¹ Jack Chen, *Inside the Cultural Revolution* (Sheldon Press, London, 1976), p.19

trend toward restratification caused by the bureaucratization of the Party and also he wanted to build a mass consensus on the future direction of the Chinese society.² As the attack on the Party commenced and proceeded, Mao relied on two organizations to implement his radical programme: one was the Red Guards, China's young generation of school and university students, and the other was the Cultural Revolutionary Group led by Mao's wife Jiang Qing.

The Red Guard:

After the launch of the Cultural Revolution, the Red Guard movement rapidly gain momentum. Thousands of students from all over the country gathered in Beijing and listened to Mao's speech on different occasions. They were inspired by Mao and some of them claimed to have got a glimpse of Mao. Under Mao's continuing encouragement, the numbers of the Red Guards grew rapidly. They not only carried out many protests and demonstrations, also started destroying the remnants of China's culture such as historical sites and temples. They arrested many people without having authority letters and attacked whom they wanted. They were doing things at their own will. In the beginning Mao did not seem to be disturbed. In one speech Moa said:

"I firmly believe that a few months of disturbances will be mostly for the good. And that little bad will result from these disturbances. It does not matter if there are no provincial Party committee; we still have the district and Xian committee.... workers, soldiers and

² Lee Hong Yung, *The Politics of the Chinese Cultural Revolution* (University of California Press, Berkley, 1977), p.3

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peasants must not interfere with the students in the great Cultural Revolution".³

And '*The People's Daily*' quoted Mao as saying, "In the best analysis, all the truths of Marxism-Leninism can be summed up in one sentence: To Rebel is justified".

Cultural Revolutionary Group: the Cultural Revolutionary Group was to act as a provisional organ of power and administration across the country until the shattered apparatus of the Communist Party was rebuilt. Theoretically, the Committee was to be established on the basis of a 'revolutionary triple alliance' consisting of (a) 'revolutionary mass organisations', (b) Red Guards and other Pro-Maoist 'rebel' groups, and (c) remnants of Party apparatus that still held party favour. At the provincial level, the revolutionary committee were to become the embodiment of the Maoist claimed that a seizure of power on the three way alliance principle had been accomplished. The army was to help the establishment of Revolutionary Committees throughout the country.⁴

The Red Guards disruptive behaviour prompted the Party to take some restrictive actions. On September 8, 1966, the Central Committee and the State Council decreed that the Red Guards should cooperate with the Party and government organizations and with the PLA in shouldering the glorious responsibility of protecting the Party and State secrets.

³ Y.C. Chang., *Factional and Coalition Politics in China* (Praeger Publishers, New York 1976), p.31.

⁴ Tai Sung An, *Mao Tse-Dong' Cultural Revolution* (Pegasus Publishers, USA 1972), p.28

Throughout the fall and winter of 1967, the Chinese People's Liberation Army made great efforts to restore peace and order and tighten control over unruly and protesting Maoist factions. The army sent the Maoist 'rebel' back to the schools and factories. PLA reopened the schools with the army political commissars on hand to supervise both the instructions and the ex-Red Guards pupils at schools. They enforced strict discipline against the troublemakers and exerted great pressure on rival Maoist factional groups to conclude the revolutionary three-way alliance or establish new Revolutionary Committee as new instruments of local power. As a result of factional fighting across the country in the summer of 1968, heavy damages were inflicted on Communist China's Industries, railways, ports and other communications facilities. Speaking to a conference of transport workers in Beijing in May, 1968, Premier Zhou Enlai acknowledged that factional fighting and sabotage in a key railway junctions in the southern Jiangxi border area had paralyzed.

In late July 1968, Chairman Mao apparently decided to take steps to crack down on this fresh phase of turmoil. Moderate leaders in Beijing apparently convinced Mao that if he allowed to continue such kind of factional fighting then it would risk national integration. So the time had come to bring the rampant Red Guards factional struggles to a halt. Convincingly or unconvincingly Mao decided to turn his back on the Red Guards as he had heard lot about their abrupt actions which creating disorder in the society.

It was quite apparent that even Chairman Mao was disillusioned with the Red Guards and their actions that he once hailed as 'forerunners' of his Cultural Revolution. According to reliable Hong Kong sources of August 1968, Mao personally called five Beijing Red Guard representatives at three o'clock in the morning of July 28, 1968, and continuously for five hours blamed them for their disunity and failure to measure up to his 'revolutionary' standards.⁵ These sources describe Mao as having broken down and wept as he told these senior Red Guard leaders that their unprincipled factional fighting was responsible for provoking the trend toward military rule in China and not proletarian rule in China. Mao told them "you have let me down; you have disappointed the workers, peasants and soldiers of china". After this session, Mao termed the Red Guards as troublemakers and asked PLA to put them down.

In August 1, 1968, (Beijing Army Day), Chairman Mao perhaps reluctantly approved directives authorizing the army to suppress Maoist factional fighting and halt the leftist-extremists militant struggle for power. He told that the PLA control them with arms also if necessary. All the posters and publishing of papers by the Red Guards were put under army control. The army was instructed to normalize railways traffic, which was disrupted by the Red Guards. The Army Day editorial (Beijing) described the Revolutionary Committees that were set up in provinces as the country's organs of power to be obeyed by all units. The army was directed to back

⁵ Joan Robinson *The Cultural Revolution* (Penguin Books, Middlesex, England, 1969), pp. 31-32

all Revolutionary Committees at all level of administration and to defend themselves from enemies on the right or extreme left.⁶

Since then the Red Guards have been consistently looked down upon in Beijing's official statements. An authoritative article published on August 25, 1968, in, *Red Flag*' and reprinted in '*The People Daily*' laid down the new line. Calling both the Red Guards and China's old intellectuals as vacillating and unreliable. It hailed the workers and peasants acting in collaboration with the commanders and fighters of the PLA as the staunchest and most dependable agents for carrying the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution through to complete victory.

Moreover, the Red Guards were subjected to more concrete disciplinary measures. Workers-peasants-soldiers team for propagating the thought of Mao moved into colleges, schools and other cultural establishments to deal with the students and intellectuals and carry out struggle 'criticism transformation. Fresh attempts were made to disband illegal mass organizations and to sent students and unemployed youths to work in the countryside or in border regions.

But considering the fact that they had to destroy the very same party, they went on not obeying the Party's order. And in May 1968, the Party called the PLA to stop the Red Guards disruptive activities. Hence, the PLA began an extensive campaign against the Red Guards. In this campaign the military used the Red Workers. At the end of July 1968, Qinghua

⁶ Ibid. pp. 56-57

University where the Red Guard movement had begun in 1966 was occupied by mixed work-teams of the PLA and the Red workers. In the course of this event number of students died and many were wounded. In many parts of China, the PLA with the help of the local organisation carried out campaign against Red Guards and in the process several hundred Red Guards were shot dead.⁷ The most serious confrontation between Maoists and local troops developed during the period of February 1968 to September 1968. It was here that 'a civil war-like' confrontation developed. Both sides used heavy weapons while fighting. Some of the towns were almost destroyed and more than 50,000 people were killed in four months. On seeing this kind of incidents taking place in china, the Red Guards were surprised and confused. And therefore, they appealed Mao to look into the matter. Their appeals were unanswered and they were captured by the Regional Commanders and their followers. At the same time other administrative units also declared that the Red Guards organizations were to be officially disbanded and replaced by other kinds of mass organization.

In order to bring the Red Guards and their organizations into under control the new leadership started to force the Red Guards to undergo manual labour in the village so that they learn from the peasants and learn how to submit themselves to 'revolutionary discipline'.

The nature of the conflict between the PLA and the Red Guards was violent. The fight between them led to many deaths and injuries. For

⁷ Joan Robinson, n.5, pp.47-48

example, four hundreds rebels were said to have burned alive in a multi-storey building in Wu Han incident of July 1967. In the later period of 1969, the participants in this factional struggle used arms like daggers, knives, small arms, automatic weapons, mortars, artillery and even tanks in some cases. And as a result many people had died in the fight. After going through the harsh treatment by the new leaderships the Red Guards were confused and developed a sense of betrayal. They could not help asking from Mao what was going on there. They reminded Mao the purpose of their formation as Red Guards. They said that their purposes were 'to change the nature of the Party, to revive revolutionary consciousness and to create a radical Party'. They asked him why the Party was controlling them when they were supposed to control the Party. And why Mao was also helping the new leadership in controlling them. The Red Guards felt betrayed socially, personally and ideologically.

In the post-Cultural Revolution period, there existed a crisis of confidence among the youth in China. They started disbelieving in Socialism that was supposed to benefit them as a system. They lacked faith in the Communist Party of China also which was supposedly working for society's betterment and therefore, indirectly would benefit them.

Socially: After being controlled by the Party with the help of the PLA, they felt socially betrayed, that is, their actions were condemned by the Party and by the people of the society. They were at lost by thinking that they were working for the welfare of the same people but eventually they were

criticising them for their actions. They could not help but got confused and felt betrayed by Mao. After their capture by the same Party which Mao had asked them to destroy, they developed a sense of betrayal among them.

Personal: Those forced to become manual workers complained that they had no hope of promotion. Their work was tedious and unrewarding and their years of study had been wasted.⁸ The Chinese young people felt betrayed personally. They said that they gave up their study to establish a new Party but they were paid nothing for that instead they got betrayed by the same Party. They had left their homes and joined Red Guards movement. But in return they had been given nothing but sense of betrayal.

Ideologically: Ideologically, the Chinese youth felt betrayed too. They thought that by following Mao's thought they would establish an ideal Political Party system, but they could not do it because their actions were halted in the process.

During the GPCR, the people and especially the youth were so loyal and 'inspired' that they would force themselves into believing anything, once the official announcement of it came.

In his fictions 'The Overpass' while describing the revolutionary spirit and enthusiasm of the youth, Liu Xinwu says, "the youth of that time were so simple, 'the call of the Party', 'the need of the motherland', 'the aspirations of the people', as soon as these words entered their ears, raging

⁸ Adrian Hsia, *The Chinese Cultural Revolution* (McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1972), p.63

flames would be ignited inside their hearts.” Another good example that depicts this effect of the Cultural Revolution on Chinese youth is Lu Xinhua’s ‘The Scar’ wherein a young girl hated her own mother for having ‘conspired with the enemies.’ She leaves her house to take part in the ‘revolution’ and refuses to even acknowledge having received letters that her mother sends her. It is only after a decade of hatred and self-convincing that informed that her mother was wrongly convicted. Even then she is unable to believe the news and waits for the ‘official confirmation.’

In November 1977 issue of ‘People’s Literature’ carried a short story ‘The Class Councillor’,⁹ written by Liu Xinwu. This was one of the first works of the new era in Chinese literature that later came to be known as ‘Scar Literature’, a movement that revealed the wounds and sufferings of the Chinese people. It was also the first writing that revealed how obscurantist policies carried out during the Cultural Revolution had harmed the minds and spirit of the youth.¹⁰ Thus, Liu Xinwu became one of the pioneers of the new era in Chinese literature. As he says himself in “Tearing off the Labels”,¹¹ he was even called the father of the Scar Literature

The first example of Liu Xinwu’s story about this secondary school teacher in “The Class Councillor.” The story revolves around Zhang Junshi, a teacher who is confronted with the task of admitting a juvenile delinquent Song Baoqi to his class. Zhang Junshi has a lot of speaking and explaining

⁹ Xinwu, Liu *The Class Counsellor* (People’s Literature Publishers, Shanghai, 1977)

¹⁰ Qin Yuhui, “Course of fiction writing after the Cultural Revolution”, available at <http://www.white-collar.net/wx_bzj/xslc/9910105_01htm>, 2001.

¹¹ Xinwu, Liu “Tearing off the Labels”, (ed.), Xiaohong Bo, <<http://www.kehuan999.com/xdwx/liuxinwu/000/016.htm>>, 2001

to do since there are apprehensions among other students regarding the ‘change of atmosphere’ in the class after the induction of the ‘young ruffian.’ Here we are introduced to Xie Huimin, a hard working model student of Zhang’s class. As the story develops, the focus slowly shifts from Zhang Junshi and Song Baoqi to Xie Huimin. Xie Huimin represents students of that period that were intelligent and capable, but due to the strong impressions taken from the ‘revolution’, evolved into stubborn personalities who failed to subject their views to scrutiny. To her, only thing that came out in the official newspaper were true. For instance, when other students and even Zhang himself asks her to read a foreign book “Niumeng” she refuses on the grounds that it has not been recommended in the newspaper. Such was the block in her mind that she closed doors to all views attacking the ‘naturally correct’ conclusions that she had made about life. Here, the reader gets the feeling that it is probably easier to reform Song Baoqi, who made silly mistakes owing to lack of maturity than to make Xie Huimin understands, who clings on to her views fearing confusion and insecurity. It can well be imagined that when it is so difficult to make a young and intelligent student come to terms with reality, how difficult and probably shattering it would be of others.

In another example ‘One’s Wishes’¹², we read about a secondary school with the mysterious character of Shi Yihui who has been its inconspicuous sweeper for years. His childhood was one full of suffering

¹² Xinwu, Liu, *One’s Wishes* (People’s Literature Publication, Shanghai, 1981)

and oppression by two foreign missionaries during the late Qing dynasty. Since, he belongs to another generation, he often able to give the author, a teacher in the school, a very different perspective on the events that take place during revolution. Here we once again observe the character of a young, earnest and simple teacher who is often in doubt regarding the evidently inhuman or illogical things happening around the campus in the name of revolution, but yet is unable to criticize them as wrong. For instance, he is very disturbed when he finds out that a 'capitalist' was dragged out of his house and beaten to death. The body of the man may out in the open as it rained without anybody caring for it. Shi Yihui, without the slightest fear or hesitation, covers the body with a plastic sheet. When 'revolutionaries' discover this, they are greatly angered and want to make an example of the counter- revolutionary who had so blatantly shown sympathy to the 'capitalist dog.' Though they never find out who did it, the author knows all along. However, he is angry with Shi Yihui too for having sympathised with such a man. It is only later in the story that the author had a chance to find out why Shi Yihui acted in the manner he did. Shi Yihui simply tells him that he thought the struggle was among men, and not between men and animals, thus there should be a line drawn. He tells the author that he respected the Party because he was sure that it would never ill-treat anybody. However, since a few years, he say totally different picture. To him people seemed to use the revolution more as a pretext to let their animalselves loose. This simple argument of an uneducated, illiterate

old man leaves the teacher deeply moved. Despite being equipped with all the theories and ideology, the author had failed to see things in the same light and clarity as Shi Yihui. Throughout the story, the author grapples with the character of Shi Yihui. He finds him mysterious, then foolish, then strange and finally someone to learn from. He is constantly perturbed by Shi Yihui's act but unable to summarily reject him as a clumsy fool. This is yet another example of how the ultra-left policies of extremist groups like the five-one-six plundered the Chinese society in the name of revolution.

In another fiction "The Overpass"¹³, Liu Xinwu describes a family living in an extremely small house. The story is set in Beijing after the Cultural Revolution came to an end. One observes as a distinct strain in human relations reflected in this work. The members of the Hou family seem to be in constant conflict with oneself in trying to strike a balance between individual interest and common interest. For example, Hou Yong, who initially admires his elder brother Hou Rui, a teacher in a secondary school, for his knowledge and intellect starts despising him and even looking down upon him. Hou Yong finds Hou Rui incompetent and incapable since he is unable to use contacts like some of his colleagues to get a better house allotted to him. He also finds out Hou Rui and younger sister Hou Ying 'obstructing' his aspirations of settling down in Beijing in spite of working in the outskirts, similarly the presence of sister in the house makes it difficult to him to move in and finally get his domicile transferred.

¹³ Xinwu, Liu, *The Overpass* (People's Literature Publication, Beijing, 1979)

In chapter 21 of 'The Overpass,' Liu Xinwu talks about the difference in the attitudes of people before and after the revolution. Describing the scene of an evening in the narrow lanes of Beijing, he says that the dark and gloomy streets were not a result of the fine tradition of saving electricity but instead a product of selfishness induced by the 'decade' which has no 'parallels' in history. He says that before the revolution, houses within one compound had only a common electric meter. The electricity charges were calculated by counting the numbers of lights or simply the total number of watts of electric bulbs. At that time people were not really that touchy about using electricity. During the evening the streets would always exhibit a splendid scene with the lights lit up in every compound. Since people were a lot more conscious, they would switch off the lights whenever not in use. Thus actual wastage was not much. After the decade-long chaos, 'there was this universal feeling of betrayal' and the people of these lanes in Beijing suddenly became selfish. The mutually accommodative and mutually forgiving neighbours suddenly changed into misers, calculative down to the last penny. In some years, every house had its own meters. This happened on such a scale that there was a scarcity of meters. As for those who were unable to get one installed, they would feel little lower than others. They would often be the losers when calculating the electricity charges. People became so miserable that they would have only an 8 or 6-watt bulb inside their houses. The money saved would then be used to buy other things. The result according to the author was that children often had to go

to man roads and study under the streetlights. This also discouraged people to spend their evenings reading newspapers or books, thus according to author, increasing ‘vulgarity’ and ‘shallowness’. Another result was that many hard-working children who had to do their homework under streetlights turned myopic.

The novels also talks about the overall economic situation of city dwellers at that time, and the disparities in well being that had crept in. This is an example of how the society was trying to get reorganized after ten years of chaos and how the years affected the mindset of the people.

Another story describing the situation after the revolution in ‘Black Walls’¹⁴, Liu Xinwu describes the difficulty faced by people in coming to terms with the new reality. A simple incident such as a man deciding to paint the walls of his house black attracts the concern and condemnation of his elderly neighbours. The writers shows us how these people who are tuned to the ‘class struggle’ mentality of the ‘cultural-revolution’ days, see a simple issue of personal preferences as an act of ‘bourgeois liberalism.’ Older generations find it hard to accept the end of class struggle and the diminished role of security organs and neighbourhood committees in implementing what seems to be a big fuss over mere interior decoration.¹⁵ The ‘revolutionary’ style of doing things had such a profound impact on the minds of these people, that they naturally went back to their well-practiced

¹⁴ Xinwu, Liu, *Black Walls* (People’s Literature Publication, Shanghai, 1978)

¹⁵ Steven W. Lewis, “Chinese Political Literature as Comparative Social Science Teaching Material: Issues and Obstacles”, Paper Prepared for the workshop on “Teaching Chinese Language, Literature and Culture”, Asian Studies Program, Rice University, <<http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~tnchina/commentary/lewis0500.thm>>, 2001.

ways whenever confronted with a situation of individual action against 'collective consultation'.

Through the examples cited above and other such writings, Liu Xinwu presents the readers with a spectrum of characters, and the personalities they evolve into, emerging from the Cultural Revolution. He vividly shows how the conflicting views and mutually contradicting statements emanating from the leadership at different points of time induced feelings of disillusionment, indifference and obstinacy in many people. His characters of the post-cultural revolution period often show a constant mental struggle where they feel insecure in subjecting their views to scrutiny but yet between the effects the period had by changing reality. He also makes a comparison between the effect the period had on people from different background and the way they reacted to events during and after the revolution. Thus, through his writings, Liu Xinwu gives the readers enough space and material to analyze and understand what the Chinese people came to be emerging from ten years of 'educating and liberating themselves.'¹⁶

Impact on the Chinese Society: Inspired by Mao's call to eliminate the 'four olds'-old culture, old ideas, old customs and old habits, the Red Guard student brigades went on a rampage. The Red Guards destroyed

¹⁶ From the 9th to the 28th of October 1966, The Central Committee of the CPC convened the central working proletarian cultural revolution". He called the Party's practice of sending working groups to various places for the task of leading the revolution the "Capitalist reactionary line" and instead championed the so called The Revolutionary Line of the Proletariat that advocated 'self-teaching' and 'self-liberation' of the masses. During this conference Lin Biao openly blamed Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping for following the so called "line of suppressing the masses and acting against the revolution." Working groups were actually sent to various parts of China to properly regulate and guide the revolution by Deng and Liu during Mao's absence. This was contrary to the interests of Lin Biao and his group.

anything and everything associated with pre-1949 China or the West. Their targets included tight trousers, jazz records, silk clothes, mah-jongg sets, antiques, classical and foreign literature, religious objects, and even pets. Then, since they did not have to go back to school, the Red Guards spread out across the countryside. Society was in complete chaos. People were forced to commit suicide. Many parents asked their children to kill them in order to be safely killed rather than killed brutally by the Red Guards. The Red Guards publicly ridiculed and abused Mao's rivals. Liu Shaoqi was imprisoned, where he died in worse condition than normal death in 1969; Deng Xiaoping was also put in jail, and Zhou Enlai was driven into seclusion. The aroused students and the Peoples Liberation Army were used to pull down bureaucrats from their positions of power and privilege. They forced Maoist orthodoxy on party members and populace alike. In all areas, from surgery to nuclear physics and beyond, Mao's words were law. Presumably, the application of the wisdom of Chairman Mao which was written in the little red book, *Quotations from Chairman Mao Zedong*, was to lead to miraculous achievements or at least what they had thought of. The Red Guards placed political purity above economic growth, and therefore they hampered production and research works. Their rallies and demonstrations disrupted the entire educational system. College professors, plant managers, and the children of the bureaucratic elite were tortured and forced to confess publicly their many crimes against 'the people'. In all the cases many innocent people became victim of their brutal act of violence.

Many victims were publicly humiliated at struggles sessions where they were forced to wear dunce caps and confess their crimes before crowds of baying tormentors. At the trial of Jiang Qing and her accomplices in 1980, it was reported that nearly 800,000 people had been framed and persecuted, of whom 34,900 were persecuted to death (this figure does not include those who committed suicide).¹⁷ Those who were not imprisoned or killed were forced to do manual labour in rural communes to enable them to understand the hardships endured by China's peasantry. In cities such as Shanghai, the workers seized control of the factories and local bureaucracy. As Mao had hoped, the centralized state and technocratic elites that had grown steadily since the Communists took over were being torn apart by the anger (rage) of the people. However satisfying for advocates of continuing revolution like Mao and Jiang Qing, who saw their power grow by leaps and bounds as Mao's former compatriots were purged, it was clear that the Cultural Revolution threatened to return China to the chaos and vulnerability of the pre-revolutionary era. By 1967 industrial production had hampered and basic education and research had ceased. Red Guards burned down the British consulate and attacked other foreign embassies in Beijing, and some areas of the country were almost in anarchy. The Red Guards and other student and worker movements were disbanded and in some cases forcibly repressed. When the Communist Party held its Ninth Party Congress in April

¹⁷ Bill Brugger, *Radicalism to Revisionism 1962-1979* (Croom Helm Publication, London, 1981), pp.67-68

1969, the students' holiday was over. Two thirds of the delegates were in military uniform, and almost nobody represented the radical youth.

Impact on the Red Guards:

During the Cultural Revolution, the personal life of most Chinese was affected to a great extent. The group whose life was most affected by the Cultural Revolution were adolescents and young adults. The Red Guards role was as the destroyer of the 'four olds of society i.e. old ideas, old cultures, old thinking, and old customs.

The generation of the sent-down youth in the Cultural Revolution are usually characterized as a homogenous group because of their similar experience during the Cultural Revolution in the countryside. But at the same time, others have described them differently. Some people call their generation as a lost, deceived, and decadent generation. The reason they give to call them as lost generation is that they participated in a failed political experiment and that they are marginalized in today's Chinese society. Some of them have described them as the most strong and capable generation of all.

They made posters forced them into conflict with authority and the older generation. Most of the youth of the Cultural Revolution generation felt that their lives had been off track. "In the post Cultural Revolution period, there existed a crisis of confidence among the youth in China. They started disbelieving in Socialism which was supposed to benefit them as a

system. They lacked faith in the Communist Party of China also which was supposedly working for society's betterment and therefore, indirectly would benefit them¹⁸.

The generation of the sent-down youth in the Cultural Revolution are usually characterized as a homogenous group because of similar experiences during the Cultural Revolution in the countryside. They have also been seen a lost, deceived, and decadent generation. Because they are seen as having participated in a failed political experiment and marginalized in Chinese society today. Some scholars, however, have described them as the most strong and capable generation of all.

Whatever or however people call them or described them, the red guards call themselves as lost generation due to their experience during the CR and their lost of education and almost everything in that period. They say that their education was interrupted and hence had no qualification to fight in today's Chinese society. "All they wanted was to complete their study and were given a suitable job in which they could use their talent and made contribution in the constructions of their country's economy".¹⁹ But due to their inability, they weren't provided any kind of job in the Post-Cultural Revolution period from the same Party for whom they sacrificed their whole adulthood and when that decade was over they were treated as a lost generation and given no attention to their problems of livelihood, career and their family. The rejection from the Party, they felt disheartened and

¹⁸ Wen Chung-Kuo, "China's Youth: Problems and Programs", *Issues & Studies*, Vol. 18, no. 8, August 1982, p. 42

¹⁹ Andrien Hsia, n.8, p.56

frustrated and hence, carried out a movement called Democracy Wall movement to express their anger towards the party and to seek justice. Young people dominated 1978-1980 movement. Their dissatisfaction and disillusionment with the system took the shape of great outpouring of grievances and suggestions for change in China's political system. Through this movement they wanted to convey their feelings of betrayal which they got from their own Party for which they worked for. They demanded the change in the political structure. This movement precipitated unprecedented political debates, fresh political issues, unofficial magazines, and independent political organizations. As Wang Juntao, one of the participants, has pointed out, the political activists who came to the fore in the Democracy Wall movement played a key role in China's 'struggle for democratic change',²⁰ in the post-Mao era. This movement not only began the public critique of the Cultural Revolution and Mao's policies and demanded a reversal of the unjust verdicts of the Mao period (1949-76), it also for the first time in the People's Republic called publicly for political reform and human rights. The participants of Democracy Wall movement attempted to achieve their own political rights. During the Democracy Wall movement the participants used the same methods of wall posters, pamphlets, open debates and establishing their own networks that they had used when Mao summoned them to rebel against authority in the Cultural Revolution. But this time their goals were different. A group of people were

²⁰ Merle Goldman, "The Twentieth Anniversary of the Democracy Wall Movement", *Harvard Asia Quarterly*, March 22, 2001, p. 8

looking for new institutions and new ideas and not the new leadership. Most of them started hating Marxist terminology. Because of the sufferings they, their families, friends, and colleagues had experienced in the Cultural Revolution. Some of them called for institutional and legal procedures to guarantee freedom of speech, human rights and civil liberties to prevent (avoid) such repression and arbitrary treatment in the future.

Debates on the role of Red Guard:

There are different opinions exist among the people in today's Chinese society about the role played by the Red Guards in the past and the significance of this past for the development of the nation. There are people who blame the Red Guards for the excesses and human tragedies which occurred in the Cultural Revolution. But Red Guards argued that they were forced into it, they did not do it willingly. They were told that what they were doing was good for the nation and especially for the struggle of classless society. Hence they thought it was good for the nation and committed tragedies and mistakes. They regretted about their actions and were unhappy and hoped that they wished they could have avoided those actions.

China's leaders may choose to ignore the Democracy Wall movement for political reasons but others have not done so. Democracy Wall Movement was a transformative political event in the People's Republic. It precipitated unprecedented political debates, fresh political issues, unofficial magazines, and independent political organizations. As Wang Juntao who

participated in the movement, has pointed out, the political activists who came to the fore in the Democracy Wall movement played a key role in China's struggle for democratic change in the post-Mao era. This movement not only began the public critique of the Cultural Revolution and Mao's policies and demanded a reversal of the unjust verdicts of the Mao period (1949-76), it also for the first time in the People's Republic called publicly for political reform and human rights. Unlike the participants in the spring 1989 demonstrations, who begged the party to reform, the participants in Democracy Wall movement attempted to achieve their own political rights.²¹

²¹ Natascha Vittinghoff, "China's Generation X: Rusticated Red Guards in Controversial Contemporary Plays", in Tang Tsou, *Cultural Revolution And post-Mao Reforms* (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1986), pp. 286-287.

CHAPTER – III

THE POST CULTURAL REVOLUTION: THE REACTION OF THE YOUTH AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE SCAR LITERATURE

The majority of youth were born on the eve of the Cultural Revolution and grew up in a period of great turmoil and terror. During their early childhood, all images of state and family authority were destroyed. Under slogans like 'Making revolution is no crime,' 'Rebellion is right,' 'the situation is excellent' and 'Don't forget class struggle,' the people of that time created unending confusion which undoubtedly hindered normal development of youth. When shuttered schools were reopened after the Cultural Revolution youth did not abandon their evil practices such as robbery and vandalism. They still insisted on struggling against teachers and school administrators. Many of them still preferred manual labour to gaining knowledge from books.¹

The Chinese Communists graded students by their political standards, because of this reason, very few cared to devote themselves to study. Teachers were afraid to discipline refractory pupils. They said that youth in mainland China today have a low educational standard and lack ethical standards. On May 21, 1981, the Guangming Daily published a letter from a teacher in a senior high school in Beijing who complained that

¹ Chiang Chen-chang, "Youth Problems in Mainland China", *Issues & Studies*, Vol:19, No.5, May 1983. pp. 37-38

troublemaking students had caused a women teacher to suffer a nervous breakdown.

After the downfall of Gang of Four in October 1976, the Chinese Communists initiated a new educational policy in which students were required to study hard, love and respect their parents and love their brothers and sisters.² The new policy had little effect. Still influenced by the anarchism of the Cultural Revolution and the poisonous feudalistic heritage they persisted in unruly behaviour and in some cases took part in demonstrations.

The outward manifestation of a youth problem in China varied from a general cynicism and sense of alienation to spectacular individual or group actions such as the bombing at the Beijing Railway Station. There deeply exists a crisis of confidence among youths in China. They lack confidence in socialism as it exists or even as it is supposed to be as a system to bring them the benefits that they have been promised for so long. They lack faith in the Chinese Communists Party as a dedicated and competent vanguard striving to build an ideal society.³ They also very sceptical of repeated pledges by elements in the Party to enforce discipline and regain the Party's fine working style of Yanan days. The party's very legitimacy is in question. On a more personal level, they lack a sense of efficacy-that an individual.

² Thomas B.Gold, "China's Youth: Problem and Programs", *Issues & Studies*, Vol: 18, No. 8, August 1982. p.53

³ Wen Chung-kuo, "The Rustication Policy and Youth Movements in Mainland China", *Issues & Studies*, Vol: 17, No.1, January 1981, pp.66-67

They can make a difference either towards achieving the Four Modernizations or controlling their own fates.

These themes were well expressed in the essay 'A Middle School Students Despondency' sent by her teacher to Shanghai's Wen Hui Bao and published there on January 20,1980. The student wrote that young people lived in a spiritual void and had experienced a distorted development. Despite enthusiastic sloganeering people were only out for themselves. In her daily life she was surrounded by hypocrisy and deceit. She wrote of her belief in Communism as an ideal and her desire to be useful person, a living being who benefits mankind. She pleaded for help to attain this goal.

"Youth who displayed great activism were usually suspect by their peers. Where as the majority of university students join the Communist Youth League (CYL) as a safety measure, peers who join the CCP are immediately branded as opportunists and careerists by others. Often, a student who had joined the CCP will complain the loudest about its shortcomings to show that he is still one of the guys. But whenever we are talking and a Party member comes around, we immediately change the subject. We can't trust them anymore."⁴

"At one end of the continuum of the manifestations of a youth problem, this alienation takes the form of acquiescing in what is demanded, but doing no more than that. Thus there are the phenomena of slacking off work and absenteeism; of a negative attitude towards co-workers and

⁴ Quotations from the interview. One of the Ex-Red Guards serving as Vice-Chairman in a Machinery Company in Kunming, China. 8th August,2003.

customers in the service sector, of a general lack of civility and of channelling of energies from serving society towards self-satisfaction, mainly in the form of consuming the material goods now appearing on the market, and aping foreign fads. There has emerged a new trend among some youth to seek meaning in life from new sources such as Buddhist worship is also experiencing a revival".⁵

This alienation also has been manifested in more aggressive forms. There are youths who hang out all day, going to entertainments, holding dance parties, circulating pornographic literature, engaging in sex and being a general nuisance.

A disturbing numbers of youths are turning to crime. In some case it is to obtain these goods or the wherewithal to get them. In others, it is a manifestation of the general breakdown in social order and morality over the past decade. Officials regarded it as one of the most outstanding of all our public security problems⁶... a good eighty percent of criminals caught between 1977 and 1980 were young people under 25, before the Cultural Revolution however juvenile delinquents made up only less than 20% of criminal offenders.⁷ There have been examples of spectacular criminal sprees. There are also consciously anti-social and anti-regime activities.

In 1979, the riots and demonstrations by rusticated youth in Shanghai and other cities demanding to be allowed to return to the cities

⁵ Yuan fu, Zhang *Autocratic Traditions and Chinese Politics* (Press Syndicate of Cambridge, Cambridge, 1993), p.327

⁶ Thomas B.Gold, "China's Youth: Problem and Programs", Vol; 18,No.8, August, 1982, p.44

⁷ Thomas B.Gold, n.2, p.44

were examples of young people seeking redress of grievances from the authority. Acting first as individuals many youths later organized to press their demands. There were reports in 1979, that anti-Party underground groups existed and had liaisons among themselves, though most have since been disbanded, their activists behind bars.⁸

China's leaders refer to June 4 as 'an unfortunate incident', none of them refer to the Democracy Wall Movement, nor, for that matter, did the participants in the Tiananmen Square demonstrations of spring 1989. Though a number of the Democracy Wall activists, now in exile in the United States, commemorated the event in the summer and fall 1998 issues of '*China Rights Forum*', its anniversary has come and gone without provoking much comment either in China or in the Western media and academic community.

China's leaders may choose to ignore the Democracy Wall movement for political reason but others have taken a serious note of it. Perhaps, the violent events of June 4, 1989 have superseded and focused attention on the later movement, but from the perspective of the end of the 20th century, the Democracy Wall Movement, much more than the spring 1989 Tiananmen demonstrations, was a transformative political event in the People's Republic. It precipitated unprecedented political debates, fresh political issues, unofficial magazines, and independent political organizations.

⁸ Ibid.

As Wang Juntao, one of the participants in both events, has pointed out, the political activists who came to the fore in the Democracy Wall movement played a key role in China's "struggle for democratic change in the post-Mao era"⁹. This movement not only began the public critique of the Cultural Revolution and Mao's policies and demanded a reversal of the unjust verdicts of the Mao period (1949-76), it also for the first time in the People's Republic called publicly for political reform and human rights. Unlike the participants in the spring 1989 demonstrations, who begged the party to reform, the participants in Democracy Wall movement attempted to achieve their own political rights.¹⁰

Equally unprecedented were the political practices used in the Democracy Wall movement. Most of the participants were ex-Red Guards and workers, who might have been students but for the suspension of their education from 1966 to 1976. They used the methods and strategies they had learned in the Cultural Revolution forming unofficial groups, putting up large-character posters, writing and printing pamphlets, and setting up their own networks to achieve their own political goals.

In the Cultural Revolution, they had employed these practices initially to purge party officials and the intellectual establishment in response to Mao's summons to "rebel against authority".¹¹ As their actions

⁹ David S.G. Goodman, *Beijing Street Voices: The Poetry and Politics of China's Democracy Movement* (Marion Boyars Publishers Ltd, London, 1981), p. 135

¹⁰ Merle Goldman, "The Twentieth Anniversary of the Democracy Wall Movement", *Harvard Asia Quarterly*, March 22, 2001, p. 2

¹¹ David S.G. Goodman, n.4, pp. 15-16

provoked increasing chaos and violence, decimated the party bureaucracy, and undermined the party's controls they had been able to establish in the later years of the Cultural Revolution their own study groups and engage in freer discourse than at any other time since the Hundred Flowers episode in the first half of 1957.

For some, the Cultural Revolution marked the beginning of an independent political consciousness and the means to express it, as seen, for example, in the controversial wall poster signed by Li yizhe, a pseudonym of its three authors, which appeared on November 7, 1974 in Guangzhou.¹² It denounced the lawlessness, despotism, recklessness, and killings of the Cultural Revolution and called for democratic and individual rights.

A larger-scale expression of increasing political independence occurred on April 5, 1976 with a demonstration in Tiananmen Square supposedly to honor Zhou Enlai, who had died in January 1976 without much official note. In actuality, the demonstration was an organized attack on the Cultural Revolution and the tyranny of the Gang of Four and implicitly of Mao. The April 5th demonstration was the first time since 1949 that ordinary Chinese had taken the initiative to launch their own movement and establish a public space where people could freely express their opinions. But it was suppressed after just a few days.

Whereas purged party officials and skilled workers had planned the parades and the placards to be carried into the Square months before April 5,

¹² Ibid., pp. 36-37

1976, the Democracy Wall Movement appears to have begun somewhat spontaneously. Against the background of the party's official repudiation of the designation of the April 5th demonstration as a 'counter-revolutionary' movement in the fall of 1978 and the official media's calls for 'socialist democracy and rule of law', individuals and groups suddenly began to put up large-character posters and gathered together to discuss political issues at the Xidan wall on a busy street in the middle of Beijing in November 1978.

While most of the Democracy Wall participants continued the April 5 critique of the Cultural Revolution, sought redress for Cultural Revolution abuses, and urged economic reforms, a minority of them went beyond these issues to explore new avenues of political action and dialogue. In addition, various groups some formed in the Cultural Revolution, others formed in its aftermath printed their own pamphlets or brought their underground magazines out in the open to publicize their views to a wider audience. In Beijing alone, there were several dozen unofficial magazines, among the most prominent being *Beijing Spring*, *Fertile Soil*, *April 5 Forum*, *People's Reference News*, and *Exploration*.¹³ Almost all of them were mimeographed, with print runs of just a few hundred. One journal, seeking political reform within the system and with connections to reform party officials, '*Beijing Spring*', printed 10,000 copies of one issue which were all sold out quickly, but that was the exceptional case. The sponsors of these magazines wrote, edited, mimeographed, and distributed or sold them at the Wall.

¹³ S.G. Goodman, *Beijing Street Voices: The Poetry and Politics of China's Democracy Movement* (Marion Boyars Publishers Ltd, London, 1981), pp. 136-137

These groups also established networks among themselves to carry out agreed upon the political goals. Although the magazines expressed different viewpoints and emphases, most shared the desire to reform the political structure. Several of their magazines called for 'democracy.' They may not have had a clear understanding of democracy, but they knew they wanted to reform the existing political system. They shared an antipathy to the Leninist political structure that had given unlimited power to one or a few leaders, resulting in the Cultural Revolution, and they desired more personal and political freedom. They held a weekly 'joint conference' of the various groups, at which they discussed and argued about politics in an intense but civil manner. They not only gathered in front of Democracy Wall, they also met in their living quarters and at public parks to exchange ideas and debate on a diverse range of political and economic issues.

Since Marxism-Leninism was the only ideology most of the Democracy Wall activists knew, they tried to propose political reforms within that ideological context. Some referred to the Marxist revisionist thinkers and reforms underway in Eastern Europe. A small number, who were able to obtain and read Western works on democracy, sharply criticized orthodox party views and provided important sources of alternative political visions.

A graduate student in philosophy at Beijing University, Hu Ping, for example, published a famous article 'On the Freedom of Expression' in '*Fertile Soil*', in which he asserted that genuine freedom of expression was

not achieved by 'Letting a Hundred Flowers Bloom', but by establishing laws and institutions to guarantee that freedom. Others offered, for the first time in public debate, topics suppressed by the party, such as human rights. Groups outside Beijing also contributed to this expanding political climate. Enlightenment, an organization in Guizhou, made six trips to Beijing in fall 1978, where they put up big-character posters and distributed their magazine under the same name. On one of their trips, they put up a poster 'An Open Letter to President Carter', asking the United States and other Western countries to pay attention to the state of human rights in China.

An unofficial organization, Human Rights League, established by Ren Wandong, a former Red Guard, did not publish a journal, but issued a Chinese Human Rights Declaration, which called on President Jimmy Carter to criticize China on the issue of human rights in the same way he had criticized the Soviet Union. The League also organized mass demonstrations of people who came to Beijing seeking individual redress for abuses suffered in the Cultural Revolution.¹⁴

In Shanghai, the petitioners demanded the return of youth sent to the countryside in the Cultural Revolution. In Beijing, petitioners marched with placards calling for an end of oppression and demanding human rights. Among those prominently supporting the petitioners was the only major woman activist in this movement, Fu Yuehua. She was also the first Democracy Wall activist to be detained for her activities. When this

¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 128-129

happened in January 1979, her family contacted the Democracy Wall groups, which then sent a delegation to the police demanding to know what happened to her. Their journals pleaded for her release.

This was another new phenomenon in the People's Republic. Before this movement, few family members, friends, or colleagues pleaded for anyone the party detained or attacked, for fear of endangering themselves and their associates. Though they may even disagree with the views or tactics of the one being attacked, the leaders of the Democracy Wall Movement immediately came to the defence of their colleagues under attack.

The Democracy Wall Movement quickly spread from the Xidan Wall in Beijing to other walls in the city and to other cities Shanghai, Guangzhou, Wuhan, Huangzhou and Qingdao. While most focused on economic issues and Cultural Revolution grievances, a small number emphasized political issues. Participants coordinated their actions in each city and sometimes between cities. By mid-1979, activists were beginning to set up connections between regions, which developed into a loose network. Although the activists were small in number, several hundred to several thousand at any one time, their posters, debates and magazines attracted tens of thousands of readers and listeners. Officials as well as ordinary people, who shared their revulsion at Mao's use of terror and chaos for his own political purposes and also sought to reform the political system, were among the readers and discussants at the walls.

The Democracy Wall Movement not only broke new political ground, it also broke new literary and artistic ground in China. 'Today', a bimonthly literary magazine was also distributed and its contents discussed at the Wall. It was started by a group of young writers who had educated themselves during the Cultural Revolution. In reaction to the politically conformist socialist realist literature and art that had dominated China since 1949, they asserted that each writer should be able to express his or her own individual voice. Their magazine cultivated a unique literary and artistic flowering that spread to the artistic establishment as well. 'Today' published a host of writers and poets who were to become prominent in China and abroad, such as Bei Dao, Mang Ke, Gu Cheng, Duo Duo, Shu Ting and made popular a new literary genre, called 'misty poetry', (*menglong shi*), an apolitical form poetry.¹⁵ For two years, 'Today' was able to produce nine issues and four books. In addition, it organized literary events and held regular monthly discussions on literary works that attracted large numbers of university students. Even though 'Today' was closed down in December 1980, it influenced China's contemporary literary scene for years after.

Democracy Wall also provided a space for non-socialist realist art and for abstract artists who showed their works in front of the Wall. When a group of these artists tried to present their work in what was called the Star Star exhibit in the fall of 1979, the police banned the exhibit. A few of the sculptures ridiculed Mao. As with suppression of other colleagues,

¹⁵ Ibid. pp.18-19

Democracy Wall activists organized demonstrations to protest the closure. Despite the ban on the Star Star exhibit and later criticism of 'misty' poetry as incomprehensible, these artistic innovations, associated with the Democracy Wall movement brought new vitality and originality to Chinese literature and art and have had a lasting impact.

Young people, primarily workers, dominated the 1978-80, Democracy Wall Movement. Their disillusionment with the system took the form of a large-scale outpouring of grievances and suggestions for democratic reforms in the media of wall posters and non-official publications in many Chinese cities. Although it is now believed that the Beijing Spring was a tactic of Deng Xiaoping to isolate and eliminate the whateverists within the Politburo, it was nevertheless a spontaneous mass movement.

Emergence of Scar Literature:

Scar literature emerged almost immediately after the Cultural Revolution as a series of first person accounts and short fiction usually authored by *zhiqing* - youth sent down to the countryside to be re-educated with the peasants

The arrest of Jiang Qing and the other members of the Gang of Four in 1976, and especially the reforms initiated at the Third Plenum of the Eleventh National Party Congress Central Committee in December 1978, led more and more older writers and some younger writers to take up their pens

again. Much of the pain, the anguish and the search of young victim of the Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution were expressed in post-Cultural Revolution literature, especially in critical writings on the darker side of the Cultural Revolution, writings which came to be known as 'Scar Literature'.¹⁶ In the post-Cultural Revolution period, this became very famous and has been openly circulated throughout mainland china. This literature has aroused an enthusiastic response in and outside china.

Scar Literature is also known as 'Exposure Literature', 'Literature on Catastrophe', and 'the literature on Socialist Tragedies'. Much of the literature discussed the serious abuses of power that had taken place at both the national and the local levels during the Cultural Revolution. The writers decried the waste of time and talent during that decade and bemoaned abuses that had held China back. At the same time, the writers expressed eagerness to make a contribution to building Chinese society.

This literature, often called 'the literature of the wounded', contained some disquieting views of the party and the political system. Intensely patriotic, these authors wrote cynically of the political leadership that gave rise to the extreme chaos and disorder of the Cultural Revolution. Some of them extended the blame to the entire generation of leaders and to the political system itself. The political authorities were faced with a serious problem: how could they encourage writers to criticize and discredit the

¹⁶ Chou, Yu-shan, "Communist China's Scar Literature", *Issues & Studies*, February 1980, p. 57

abuses of the Cultural Revolution without allowing that criticism to go beyond what they considered tolerable limits?

Since the downfall of the Gang of four in October 1976, critical writings known as Scar Literature ,on the darker aspects of the Cultural Revolution , have been openly circulated throughout the Chinese mainland and have aroused an enthusiastic response there and abroad. Terms like 'exposure literature', 'literature on catastrophes' and 'literature on socialist tragedies' emerged as synonyms of Scar Literature. Some of the people described thin kind of literature as 'Protest Literature' or 'enlightenment literature'.

At the end of 1978, at a forum jointly sponsored by the Central China Normal College and the Institute of Foreign Literature of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the participants examined the basic causes for tragedies under socialist rule. They determined the following four factors: 1) The existence of class, class contradictions and class struggle, 2) Defects of the socialist system itself, such as the lack of the democracy, an imperfect legal system and bureaucratism, 3) Lack of experience in promoting continued revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, such as the difference between subjective understanding and objective laws and the practice of certain incorrect principles and policies, and 4) the existence of old ideology and of ignorance among the people. These four points co-exist

in the works of the Scar Literature. Scar Literature works demonstrate that Chinese Communists rule based on terror, cruelty and deception.¹⁷

Under Chinese Communists rule in the past thirty years, numerous people on the mainland China have suffered insults and bodily harm. But how many of them have had chance to acquaint the public with their sufferings by means of their own writings? Following are few example of the works of Scar Literature that prove affection of one's own kin still exists in a society in which children are taught that 'Chairman Mao is dearer than parents'.

A. "The Scar"

"The Scar"¹⁸ was written by Lu Xinhua, a student of the department of Chinese Literature of Fudan University in Shanghai. Following its publication in the Shanghai Wen Hui Bao on August 11, 1978, works of a similar tragic nature have burgeoned and flourished in mainland China. These works are collectively described as Scar Literature. In fact, the "Scar" of Scar Literature had been taken form his novel only.

"The Scar" tells a story of a girl named Wang XiaoHua, who had drawn a clear cut line between her mother, an alleged traitor, and herself. Because of her grudges, Wang left her home at the age of sixteen for a rural area in Liaoning province where she settles down as a peasant. In the following nine years, she did not see her mother. Finally, overcoming her

¹⁷ Ibid. p.60

¹⁸ Xinhua, Lu, *The Scar* (Shanghai Wenhui Bao, Shanghai, 1978)

hesitation, she returned to her hometown only to find her mother lying dead in a hospital ward. With trembling hands she lifted the white cloth covering her mother's face and in the words of the story, moaned to herself.

-Oh! This is the mother I haven't seen for nine years!

-Oh! This is the mother now separated from me forever!

Her mother's emaciated face was crowned with white hair and some scars were etched among the wrinkles on her forehead. Her half-open eyes looked serene and she seemed to have been waiting for someone.

"Mama! Mama! Mama!" the heart-broken daughter cried, using the affectionate term she had not uttered since her childhood. "Mama! Look! Look at me! I am back Mama!"

Passionately she shook her mother's shoulders with all her strength, there was no response. Despite the daughter's grief at her mother's death, the Chinese Communists authorities asserted that the author of the story did not intend to emphasize affection among families. Thus, 'The Scar' was selected as material for political education in the movement to expose and criticize the Gang of Four.

In an interview Lu Xinhua said that he wrote the story to portray a person whose mind had been numbed by the Gang of Four. It was because of the pernicious effect of the quartet's ultra left ideology that the main character. Wand Xiaohua was sceptical when she received word that her mother was not a traitor but a completely innocent person. Because of her scepticism,

she deferred her visit to her hometown and missed the opportunity of reconciliation with her mother.

It should be noted that such tragedies did not begin with the Cultural Revolution. As early as 1957, years before the Gang of Four came into power, Pa Jin, a writer, confessed in his essay 'On Affection': "I have some young friends who were born into capitalists or landlords families. When the land reform and the three-anti and five-anti movements gained momentum, to draw a clear-cut demarcation line between themselves and their fathers and brothers almost all of them adopted the same strategy. i.e. to cut themselves off from their families. When their father or mother wrote to them, they ignored the letters to show that they still clung firmly to their standpoint. But deep in their hearts, they were not that firm. Sometime they would remember the caresses of their fathers and brothers and would shed tears in secret. Sometime, they wished to write back and ask for information about their families. They were afraid that if they did so, Party organizations would doubt their own loyalty and take actions against them."¹⁹

This depiction by Pa Jin more than twenty years ago was similar in theme to Lu Xinhua's story. According to Lu Xinhua, literary and artistic works in every period have their own special historical background. the Cultural Revolution and the influence of the Gang of Four were of such a distinctively special nature that they had no precedent either in China or in

¹⁹ Chou Yu-shan, "Communist China's Scar Literature", *Issues & Studies*, February 1980, pp. 61.62

the world. Therefore, the events in that period deserve careful analysis. In the present special historical period after ten years of disorder caused by the Gang of Four, literary and artistic works should respond to special demands. He said his story 'The Scar' was based on this concept.

B. "In Memory of Xiao Shan"

Pa Jin's tribute to his wife, "In Memory of Xiao Shan"²⁰ first appeared in the April issue (1979) of *Zuo pin* (Works), a monthly magazine published in Canton, and was later reprinted in Pa Jin's column in the Hong Kong *Ta Kung Bao*. In this story he described his resentment against the ruling Chinese Communists authorities and his affection for his late wife. Pa Jin wrote that he often attended the cremation of old friends, and in doing so, he always recalled twenty or thirty people most of them weeping had paid their last respects to Xiao Shan at her own cremation. He wrote:

"I remember that in Home, Chu Xin said, it seems that Chu has also become an unlucky spirit after her death when I wrote it 47 years ago I never thought that I would be writing it for myself."

In the story, Xiao Shan was thirteen years younger than Pa Jin. She died at the age of fifty-five. At one time she had been shut in a "cattle pen," paraded with the signboard on which the word "monster and ghost" were written and was ordered to clean the street just because she was Pa Jin's wife. For the same reason she was denied treatment when she suffered from

²⁰ Pa Jin, *In Memory of Xiao Shan* (Da Kung Bao, Hongkong, 1979)

cancer. Until three weeks before her death as a result of backdoor deal she was finally accepted at the hospital.

However it was already too late. In deep grief Pa Jin said, “she did not want to die, she wanted to live. She might have lived if she had not been the notorious wife of a ‘black element.’ In short it was I who had got her into trouble. It was I who ruined her.” Pa Jin regretted that he had written novels and that Xiao Shan had borne him children. In agony, Xiao Shan once told Pa Jin, “our children said that you have done evil things that got all of us into trouble.” It distressed him deeply to hear this.

C. “A Letter That Was Finally Sent”

Tao Chu, who was persecuted to death during the Cultural Revolution, was posthumously rehabilitated. In his memory, his daughter, Dao Xuliang wrote “A Letter That Was Finally Sent.”²¹ The deep affection of a daughter for her father the letter discloses, like the daughter’s affection for her mother in Lu Xinhua’s “the Scar” and the love between husband and wife in Pa Jin’s ‘In Memory of Xiao Shan’, was previously an unwelcome topic in literary and artistic circles in Mainland China where spirit is the focus of all emphases. These works about ‘blood and tears’ publicized by the current power-holders expose and criticize the Gang of Four might gradually exert negative effects on the Chinese Communists Party.

²¹ Tao Chu, *A Letter That Was Finally Sent* (Si Chuan Literature Publication, Si Chuan, 1982)

In 'A Letter that was Finally Sent', Tao Xuliang described her father as one of the victims of political frauds. She asked why her father had been driven off the political stage, imprisoned and persecuted to death all without the approval of any Party. According to Tao Xuliang, Tao Chu fell ill in October 1968. As a prisoner, he received only limited medical treatment. In April 1969, after his entire skin turned yellow, he was finally admitted to the hospital where his ailment was diagnosed as pancreatic carcinoma (a cancerous growth). An operation was performed, but it turned out to be too late for his condition gradually worsened and he died at the end of 1969 and was cremated.

D. "False Tracks Lined with Flowers"

Feng Jicai's first work on the Cultural Revolution 'False Track Lined with Flowers'²² is a melodramatic short novel from 1978 in the 'Scar Literature' genre. As we know that this genre was born as a means of dealing with the consequences of the violence and mass hysteria of the Cultural Revolution period. The meaning of the book's title is explained in the introduction in which Feng asks the readers to look back 'thunderstorm' which arose in the mid-1960s, when everything was submitted to reevaluation.

The story is about a young person who ends up on a false track. The first scene shows Bai Hui, a seventeen-year-old schoolgirl among a group of Red Guards during a session at which teachers were criticised and attacked.

²² Fengcai, Ji, *Falls Track Lined With Flowers* (People's Literature Publication, Shanghai, 1978)

Feng depicts how the Red Guards generation was militarized and whipped into a fanatic frenzy, being forced to train themselves in the use of 'hate speech' against the enemy. As a result of tense atmosphere, she allows her to be swept along and she joins the hate-filled crowd in beating up the 'class enemy' an elderly women teacher, until she is unconscious. When someone beside Bai Hui asks: "Is she dead?" Bai Hui is roused from her intoxication. She is seized by panic and nightmares start to torment her. She loves her father who is also humiliated during the Cultural Revolution. Feng depicts the daughter's train of thought as follows: "She revolutionized the life of others, just as the life of her father was revolutionized by others. She believed in the correctness of this rule even when this rule brought her some difficulties at the emotional level."

Through this novel Feng has tried to start a dialogue with society. He was the first who dared to oppose the Red Guards especially the obscurantist policies that ruined the whole nation.

E. "Ah! A Psychological Portrait of a Cultural Revolution Victim "

In 1979 Feng published the short novel 'Ah!'.²³ Which was proclaimed best short novel for 1979-1980 by the journal *Wenyi Bao* and which still together with *A Hundred Personal Stories*, must rank as the best work by Feng on the Cultural Revolution. The protagonist of the novel Wu Zhongyi is a staff member in an institute for historical research, an

²³ Feng Cai, Ji, *Ah! A Psychological Portrait of a Cultural Revolution Victim* (*Wenhui Bao*, Shanghai, 1979)

inconspicuous, timid man who is only recognized by his academic achievements.

Wu Zhongyi is genuine antihero. His possess an impeccable character. He preferred to be alone and avoiding conflicts he is trying to get along well with everyone. At that time, Wu zhongyi and his brother were still sensitive and passionate young men with many interests. One evening both the brother sits together with friends. And Wu is called to express his opinion. He points out that man feudal relics in society have still not been removed. "When state power comes under the control of a few people, personal power may develop again and class dictatorship may possibly be transformed into a personal dictatorship."

At one place the author has tried to express his feeling as: A hot feeling streamed through Wu Zhongyi. He raised his arms and cried on top of his voice: "Long Live the Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution!" ... tears of gratitude ran over his entire face. Jia DaZhen cautioned him: "Brother Wu, you have made a mistake and should learn from them. It was correct back then to detain you and now it is correct to restore your freedom to you." Wu Zhongyi smiled back at him. He was unable to hate anyone. He only wished to be treated by everyone with consideration. (p. 271)

Feng explained that he wanted to describe not only the situation of intellectuals during the Cultural Revolution but also the special atmosphere, psychology and experiences of this period. In his novel he has particularly talked about the intense struggle and criticism sessions. As Feng puts it in

his words: when I wrote Ah! I wanted to describe how we lived during those ten years.

‘Ah!’ shows that the destruction of Wu Zhongyi’s personality is due to political pressure. In this novel he has tried to show the really picture of the Cultural Revolution.

In another example, ‘The Tall Women and Her Short Husband’²⁴ the author writes about a young couple who arose their neighbours curiosity because of the great difference in their body length. Although they seemed perfectly happy together, but their neighbours were wondering about their real reason for marrying. During the Cultural Revolution a struggle and criticism session was convened against the couple. During the session the husband was accused groundlessly of having tried to pass the scientific secrets to foreign capitalists. While the session was on there emerged a woman and and asked very unrelated question. Everyone was surprised and confused as the question had nothing to do with couple’s being traitor. That woman asked: well, speak up. Why did you marry him? The tall women did not answer. Then that women said that well, if you don’t answer she would it for her. She said that your married this man because he is rich.

Through this story the author wants to convey that such was the scene during the Cultural Revolution. People were taking out their personnel grudges against their neighbour and relative whom they disliked.

²⁴ Feng Cai, Ji, *A Tall Woman and Her Short Husband* (People’s Literature Publication, Shanghai, 1986).

The author conveyed his sympathy for the couple, not by descriptive detail or dialogue, but portraying small details of their outward behaviour. in the novel, one of the most striking examples was the image of the short man walking in the street after his wife's premature death. While walking he was holding umbrella high above his head and to one side as usual as if to protect both his wife and himself.

The point that the author wishes to make is that these kinds of incidents and unreasonable criticisms had great impact on the Chinese people. They were compelled to seek change in the existing system and to bring change in their ideology. So that innocent people would not go through such tragedies.

CHAPTER - IV

BREAK WITH THE REVOLUTIONARY TRADITION:

If we consider the whole period since the liberation of the People's Republic of China to the Cultural Revolution (1949-1976) there were many conflicts between the Chinese youth and the leadership. From liberation to the Cultural Revolution period the conflicts were never resolved. On the contrary they gradually intensified as a result of a series of developments such as the anti-Party revolt, the educational revolution, the new Maoist educational policy and finally the vacillating educational policy pursued by the Chinese Communist Party. Prior to the Cultural Revolution, many time young people tried to express their discontent with Party leaders through discussion and other available and accessible means.¹

During the many movements that involved sending educated youth into the countryside many young people were discontented because they had no time for their studies, no time for leisure and precious little time for sleep. They also objected to political education and manual work, which neither interested them nor helped them in their academic pursuits. All they wanted was to complete their education and find a suitable job. But they found that the campaigns left them with little time to study and hence complete their

¹ Adrian Hsia, *The Chinese Cultural Revolution* (McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1972), p.75.

studies and, if some of them completed their studies, there was no certainty that they would be employed in the kind of work for which they had been trained and in which they were interested. In other words, young people in China wanted a greater degree of personal freedom, which they could not obtain under conditions of intense political pressure. To a certain extent, the conflict between Chinese youth and the Chinese leadership was a conflict between China's younger generation, which questioned the ideologically inspired policies with which they were confronted, and an older generation which insisted on ideological conformity and had the power to enforce it.

The ideological attitudes of young people in China, especially those people who were attending schools and universities were suspect in the eyes of the Party. Dissatisfied as they were with the state of Chinese education, politics and professional life, they often finding it difficult to obtain suitable jobs and in many cases finding themselves allocated to entirely unsuitable work. They were often accused of bourgeois leanings. It is not surprising that the contradiction between the youth and leadership was a serious one. Even though many trusted Mao and followed everything he had asked them to do few could sustain belief in the extreme aspects of his ideology. In the later period most of them admitted that their actions were based on fear and felt that they did not have any choice or the courage to oppose. The few who opposed were declared as "capitalist roaders" and condemned. The official

and public condemnation was so ruthless that finally only a few dared to oppose.²

Criticism of Political, Economic and Cultural Policies Of the Maoist Period: Political Criticism:

The political education of young people on the mainland in the Maoist period included the following four main programmes:³

Collectivism: The Communists opposed individualism, anarchism and private ownership. They advocated selflessness and equalitarianism, emphasised the importance of the interests of collectives and considered all pursuit of private interest immoral. They even taught young people to rigidly place national allegiance above filial piety.

Active participation in mass movements: Mao Zedong's insistence on mass movements to create revolutionary consciousness and create social transformation broke down structures of authority in China. He exploited the worship of the people to motivate them to launch these movements. The Communist Party of China made special effort to arouse the young people to struggle against class enemies. As a result, an ambivalent feeling gradually developed throughout Mainland China. People were taught to deal relentless blows to class enemies even if they were their friends or relatives. This

² Ibid., pp.47-48

³ Chiang Chen-Chang, "The Cultural Revolution and the Identity Crisis in Mainland China", *Issues & Studies*, April, 1984, pp.14-15

social aggression, which should have been constrained, was thus legalized on the mainland.

Acceptance of the authority of the Chinese Communist Party:

Political education on the Mainland China stressed loyalty and devotion to the new society. The people were taught to recognize special symbols of the country such as the flag and emblem of the Chinese Communist Party and the portrait of Mao Zedong. Children were taught that chairman Mao is dearer than their parents. Mao was regarded as the reincarnation of 'Truth'.

Sanctity of labour: In the new form of education everyone was to take a positive attitude towards labour. Students were told that they should choose their profession in accordance with the needs of the state and should sacrifice their own interests if necessary.

The Communist spares no effort to educate young people on a materialist world out look and patriotism and recalling past sufferings and contrasting them with the present happiness. In short, they taught young people to become blind worshiper and use them as robot under their control. This was a tragedy because young people's vitality was restrained and lessened.

The famous slogan of the Cultural Revolution propounded by Mao, "to rebel is justified" signified a break with the traditional claims of authority.⁴ This slogan, initially announced by Mao Zedong, also became

⁴ Law Kam yee, *The Chinese Cultural Revolution Reconsidered* (Palgrave Macmillan, (New York 2003), pp.249-250

popular in the post Cultural Revolution period but for different reasons. The Cultural Revolution offered much rarer authoritative discourse of the legitimacy of rebellion. This went beyond the notion that individual scholars might protest with rulers as a matter of individual conscience to include the notion that the rebellion was a right vested in the Chinese people. Students could claim a special status as the voice of this national conscience. This was an important moment in the development of a sense of Chinese nation because it introduced a bottom-up rather than top-down account of legitimacy. It broke with the identification of the Chinese people as the subjects of Chinese rulers or the state which in favour of a more autonomous conception of the people.

In the post Cultural Revolution period the student activists placed a positive value on individualism that was contrary to the Cultural Revolution period. They shared the notion that they were spokespeople for the national conscience and that this identification gave them the right to rebel. They claimed a right to challenge not only the policies of leaders but also the legitimacy of the leaders.⁵ Transformation in the discourse of political authority was linked to a new significance for the idea of democracy. The Cultural Revolution did not introduce this idea to China. The Cultural Revolution transformed the understanding of the 'Proletarian democracy. The Cultural Revolution introduced a stress on popular participation and

⁵ Ibid., pp.256-257

also the representation of popular interests. The interest Cultural Revolution transformed the understanding of proletariat democracy.

Criticism of Cultural Policies:

The notion of cultural crisis could be traced back to at least the last fifty or hundred years of Chinese history. Internal weaknesses and external threats raised questions in about the adequacy of Chinese culture to make the country strong in its new global situation. Cultural innovation and importation both responded to and some cases it created a sense of cultural crisis also. The self-strengthening movement and May 4th movement were the expression of this sense of crisis. This crisis reached a kind of highest point to the failure of the Cultural Revolution. During the Cultural Revolution there was call for an outright attack on the Chinese traditions. There was a call for declaring was on the old world. As the Red Guards of Beijing once wrote: we are critics of the old world. We want to criticise and smash all old ideas, old culture, old customs and old habits. Intellectuals were changing the “olds”.

During the Cultural Revolution period, the intellectual were called the “Stinking Ninth” category of bad elements. Rusticated, humiliated and abused Chinese intellectuals as a group came out of the CR with a sense of anxiety, with a range of grievances, and lot of unfulfilled aspirations. The

Cultural Revolution has accentuated modern China's sense of Cultural crisis⁶.

The Chinese intellectuals struggled in the post Cultural Revolution period to develop a renewed sense of their importance in China's Contemporary society, history and future. Students as cadet intellectuals inherited anxieties about the place of intellectuals from their elders. At the same time, they observed both the importance of technical specialist as agents of China's modernization. They neglect the broader cultural and political concerns which they felt intellectuals should also to address. In this regard, the Deng era echoed but went beyond the old 'ti-yong' call of foreign learning for practical matters and Chinese learning for matters of essence. It engaged in the importation of technical expertise, calling on members of the intellectual classes for help. Cultural Revolution had inhibited creativity among intellectuals. There was no open debate on cultural policy during the Cultural Revolution in China. Intellectuals argued that there should be more freedom in literary content and authors should be allowed to write whatever they wanted. In the post Cultural Revolution the role of the intellectuals as social critics is being recognized.

In the post Cultural Revolution the view that literature must intervene in life, that is, it must be concerned with and involved in the lives of individuals and groups, must reflect the darker side of the society as well as its bright side has been accepted and heard again. It has been reflected in

⁶ Ibid., pp. 251-.252

many greatly acclaimed short stories, poems and journalistic reports and essays.

The Scar Literature authors such as Liu Binyan, Liu Xunhua, Liu Xinwu, Wang Meng and many others participated in this debate. Although there is still a strong opposition to these ideas, but this debate was being conducted in the open.⁷ The party is apparently attempting to strike a balance those writings which explore the darker side of the society, which reflect the endeavour to correct the past mistakes and to build a modernized society. In the post Cultural Revolution, the main proponent has officially replaced the slogan 'literature and art serve politics' to 'literature and art serve the people and serve socialism.' This change was accompanied by the official abandonment of Mao's famous Yanan Speech in which he said that "literature and art are subordinate to politics". Research institutes and universities have been strengthened and given greater economic support. The Cultural Revolution generation's economists have been playing a very important role in formulating economics policies. Scientists, research scholar, engineer and other technical experts have been given greater freedom in pursuing their own research and charting the development of their respective fields.⁸

In the post Cultural Revolution period, new professional and academic associations have been established. Local associations have been

⁷ Kalpana Mishra, *From Post-Maoism to Post-Marxism: The Erosion of Official Ideology in Deng's China* (Routledge, New York, 1998), p. 21

⁸ Tsou, Tang, *Culture Revolution and post-Mao Reform* (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1986), pp.162-64

set up in various provinces and cities to mobilize all human resources to achieve and to take advantage of special talents. In the post-Cultural revolution period, the academics and professionals have been encouraged to take the initiatives in organizing specialized associations. The association of Chinese Writers adopted a decision to organize a committee to protect the rights and the interests of the writers. The *fanshen* or the reversal of the position of the intellectuals and the reverse flow of their influence to the state and the party on basic policy decisions is one of the manifestations of the changing relationships between political power and society.

Criticism of Economic Policy:

The Cultural Revolution created great havoc in China's economy and related fields like education, science and technology. The young generation argued that the Communist Party of China had failed to provide them with sufficient opportunity for employment and education within an economy that was stagnant and often disrupted by political movements. Maoist economic policies made the younger generation more apt to be pessimistic disillusioned and disenchanted. Some critics noted that the rustication policy implemented by the Communist Party of China had made young people economically useless in urban areas and thereby enhanced the prevalent instability in the mainland.⁹

⁹ Chung-kuo, Wen "The Rustication Policy and Youth Movements in Mainland China", *Issues & Studies*, Vol: 17, No. 1, January 1981, pp. 68-69

The rehabilitation of Deng Xiaoping in 1977 and his confirmation in office at the Eleventh Party Congress changed the nature of the campaign against the Gang of Four and made it possible to develop a new economic policy. Prior to Deng's reappearance, constant reference had been made to Mao's 1956 speech 'On the Ten Major Relationships', published openly in the press for the first time in late 1976. This speech was made partly as a complete refutation of the 1950s Soviet economic model. This model lay stress on a centralized economy. Soviet model was ambiguous and lent itself to different interpretations. On the one hand this policy affirmed the policy of simultaneous advance on all fronts, such as agriculture, heavy industry and light industry, on the other, it also become the rallying cry for the Great Leap Forward. In 1977, with the support of the younger generation Deng Xiaoping adhered to the sectoral balance interpretation of Mao's speech. In the post-Cultural Revolution period the rusticated generation shared with the government reformers a sense that China needed to make up for lost time. China needed to progress in areas where the Cultural Revolution had seen a regression. They expressed their view that political reform should accompany economic reform. In the post-Cultural Revolution period Chinese rusticated generation found that China's economy was weak and backward in comparison to the West.

This generation focused overwhelmingly on the goal of reversing the material decline and producing rapid economic growth. With this in mind people urged government to invest in heavy industry. They paid more

attention towards technical subjects. The economic reforms made a visible transformation in the material lives of the Chinese people and a great improvement in their standard of living. This generation began to have access to new forms of communication with the radio and television becoming household commodities. They now had access to all sorts of books including translations of western works, opportunities to travel and lots of other commodities, which were not available to them at the outset of the Cultural Revolution.

New Thought:

A great majority of Chinese youth confronted a loss of values and a general confusion over social and ethical moorings. Many of them could no longer put up with Chinese Communist control and persecution and developed anti-Maoist and anti-Communist sentiments. Hence, the generation of youth which smarted under the Cultural Revolution were wallowing to nihilism at the end of it. They no longer entertained hope for reform or identified themselves with the regime. The Cultural Revolution victimised a whole generation of mainland youths to such an extent that they no longer had any faith in their leaders. As young Chinese cast doubt on Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought and the superiority of socialism over capitalism some tried to escape the orbit of socialism and the Party leaderships' control. The reversal from revolutionary ideals often meant a craving for the bourgeois life style, individualism and anarchism. In

short, the post Cultural Revolution generation no longer believed in Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought, had no faith in proletariat dictatorship and the CCP leadership. However, as they doubted the one-party leadership they also became increasingly concerned about securing for the people freedom of speech. In doing so they dared to present a challenge to authority and lawfulness.

Since the Cultural Revolution, Chinese students made a few significant attempts to put a united front to demand freedom, despite the danger to state coercion. A typical case was the appearance of Li yizhe's big character poster in Canton in November 1974, which charged that, "Capitalism has been revived in most socialist countries and more than one hundred Communist parties in the world no longer believe in Marxism-Leninism. The socialist system in China is in bad shape and lawlessness is the order of the day. Arbitrary arrests, oppression and bad frames-ups are the daily fare of life in mainland China." When the Democracy Wall Movement erupted in Beijing on April 5, 1976 youth wrote in blood a big character poster saying that "China is no longer as it was" the people can no longer be fooled. These posters demanded freedom, democracy and legalism.

As scepticism of young Chinese about socialist ideology and their efforts to challenge the core aspects of Party ideology became apparent in the 1970s so did the regime's efforts to control this effect of the CR. The leadership under Deng began upgrading political-ideological education by emphasizing that Marxist-Leninist must be in control. In July 7, 1981, Deng

Xiaoping issued to the CCP Propaganda Department a directive on strengthening leadership work on the politico-ideological front.¹⁰ This directive called for upholding the Four Basic Principles, i.e. the socialist road, proletarian dictatorship, leadership under the Chinese Communist Party, and Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought. The objective of the campaign was defence of the leadership under the Chinese Communist Party against the rise of notions of bourgeois liberation. Party leadership and the socialist system need to improve but not in the direction of liberation or nihilism.

Anti- Communism:

In fact even before the Cultural Revolution educated youth in the mainland China were ideologically opposed to the CCP and communism. The ideological conflict revealed a contradiction between individualism and collectivism between the professional perspective and the political perspective and between liberalism and totalitarianism. A great majority, particularly college students, actively resisted communism.¹¹ The most conspicuous and frequent activities in which youths participated during the Cultural Revolution were rebellions against power holders and cadres. But at the same time they carried out anti-Mao, anti-Communist activities as well. The antagonism of youth to the CCP and Communism became deeper since the Cultural Revolution and ended with the arrest of the Gang of Four in

¹⁰ Xue Wen, Wang, "Old Problem and New Thought Among Mainland Youths", *Issues & Studies*, July 1982, pp.100-102.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 100-102

October 1976. After this event they raised four kinds of questions. The first was, which is superior, socialism or capitalism? Why is that only in socialist countries do great numbers of people risk their lives to flee abroad as refugees, but it rarely happens that people in capitalist countries seek political asylum?

The second question was, who were China's friends and who were its enemies? It seemed that no socialist countries could be counted on as China's friend. The third question was, what is socialism in essence? What is the criterion of socialism? Why is Communist China supposed to be the seat of genuine socialism and the Soviet Union accused of pursuing social-imperialism? And, fourthly, why is Communist China worried about the recruitment of successors? Why is there no such concern in capitalist countries?

The post-Cultural Revolution generation people favoured the capitalist system and had shown great interest for adoption of the capitalist in their countries. Their argument was that no matter what system we have as long as it benefits the people.

In May 1981, the Philosophy Department of Beijing University distributed a questionnaire to college students in Beijing asking them critical questions about their views on communist rule and socialist society. The first question asked students whether they were fond of Communist society. 25 percent of the students said yes, 26 percent said they liked capitalism, and 49 percent said that they liked whatever was good for the people. In answer

to the second question on what do they thought of Party central leadership, only 15 percent of the people thought it was in a position to lead the people in pursuing the modernization program. 40 percent demanded a shake up and 45 percent worried about Communist China's future because of the ideological rigidity of the leadership.

With more and more youths disenchanted with Communism in recent years, the result has been a drastic decline in for Party membership in 1979, but the number of applications decreased by applications for Party membership. It is reported in Shanghai that 5,270 league members applied 43.8 by 1980. When young people were asked what they thought about Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought they said that they were not Party members, or personally don't believe in Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought.¹²

Admiration of Capitalism:

Since the Open Door Policy of China, Western ideas have penetrated the mind of China's youth and produced a catalytic effect on their minds. Currently, there is an increasing numbers of new apostles of cynicism among the youth of China. Seeing through the futility of so-called revolutionary ideas, they favour the ideas of material benefits, freedom of action, a higher standard of living and modernization. They argued that since capitalism is supposed to be inferior and socialism superior, why are

¹² Ibid., pp.102-05

developed capitalists economies more prosperous than Mainland China, their science and technology more advanced and their standard of living higher?

A Canton youth disclosed that when schools conducted in late 1980s an anonymous questionnaire on which is superior, socialism, capitalism, communism, feudalism, fascism, more than 50 percent of students agreed that capitalism is the best system available for China. Clearly, with mainland youth capitalism and liberalism rate higher than socialism and communism.

Since the late 1970s there has been increasing and pressing demand for the three principles among the China's youth. These three principles are freedom, democracy, legalism and human rights. Following the outburst of the Gang of Four, there were outbursts among young Chinese demanding freedom, democracy, legalism and human rights. In an article in 1981, one young student wrote that everything should stand the test of history. China must follow the policy of pragmatism if the interest of the people is taken into account. Moreover, given that the CCP had mishandled national reconstruction it was inadvisable to prevent democratic parties from taking charge. The fact was, he argued, that the CCP had brought the country's economy to the verge of collapse, failing to meet the needs of the people and the ongoing program of four modernizations. It is clear that most young people of China had come to identify themselves with the Three Principles of the People (democracy, legalism and human rights).

Affirmation of the ordinary life:

In the 1980s, the post Cultural Revolution generation not only participated in China's greatly improved material standards of living, but also joined with others in developing much more explicit cultural values on the pleasure of ordinary life. The ideology of sacrifice was never lost but the difference was that the youth who were prepared to sacrifice for the sake of the country were not prepared to sacrifice for the Party. The young people rejected much of the asceticism that Mao and the revolutionaries had promoted. They paid attention to privacy and were openly consumerist. They enjoyed sexuality and personal friendship.

They demanded the right to pursue happiness not just material well-being or public virtue. In all this they were encouraged by the writings of 'Scar Literature' which probed the injuries inflicted during the Cultural Revolution. During the Cultural Revolution children had been forced to betray their parents, wives had been pressed to condemn husbands and lovers had been separated by rustication. Through the stories of Scar Literature a new value on personal relationships and ordinary happiness was nurtured, alongside a critique of the kind of political interventions into personal life that had shattered both. This kind of new positive valuations of private life helped to underwrite the young people to speak as individual

citizens rather than simply a member of the masses they were addressed by the Party.¹³

Achieving a sense of positive agency and personal efficacy was an important theme of discourse for Chinese young people in 1980s. By carrying out protests they also tried to show that they were nothing like the protesters of the Cultural Revolution. During the Cultural Revolution the young people were deprived of their autonomy and manipulated by the Party. In the post-Cultural Revolution period, the nature of the protest was more straight and open and directing the leadership. They were more open in demanding their interests. In the post Cultural Revolution the role of the intellectuals as social critics is being recognized. In the post Cultural Revolution the view that literature must intervene in life, that is, it must be concerned with and involved in the lives of individuals and groups, must reflect the darker side of the society as well as its bright side has been accepted and heard again. It has been reflected in many greatly acclaimed short stories, poems and journalistic reports and essays.

¹³ Law Kam-Yee, *The Chinese Cultural Revolution Reconsidered* (Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2003), pp. 230-235.

CHAPTER – V

CONCLUSION

In the post-Cultural Revolution, the cultural scene in China was more diversified than ever since the founding of The People's Republic of China, and for the first time commercial, rather than political, factors were determining the majority of what was published and produced. Guidelines from party leaders were no longer the main agent of cultural change and the market economy made its way into literature and the arts, ideological control weakened. Along with the rapid development of the media and publishing industry, literature split into many genres and levels each appealing to different audiences.

When the Chinese Communist Party leadership initiated economic reforms in 1978 they also set a process of political reform. The term 'political reform' here doesn't mean the introduction of a multi-party political system or even the end of the communist party rule as witnessed in eastern Europe and Soviet Union (which is seemingly rather impossible in the Chinese political system. It is by its very nature a rigid centralized more coherent and authoritative system). Rather, it refers to the massive changes in both the process and functioning of political power within the existing framework of party rule.

The Cultural Revolution resulted in a loss of faith in communist party rule; the new leadership deemed it necessary to gradually transform a

politically mobilized society into an economically mobilized society. This is evident in contemporary China and contemporary Chinese society has had a radical social transformation after the transitory Cultural Revolution period.

This change in emphasis in itself represented an important political reform. The move away from the mass mobilization and stormy techniques of the Maoist era resulted in a depoliticisation of Chinese society, compared to the highly politicised atmosphere of the Cultural Revolution.

In any civil society the main aim and the focus is on the following points. First, the continuance of century old values. The older generation wants to carry on at least some of their traditions and pass it on to the next generation because they love it and it is very difficult for them to depart from it. The second priority is on the political and economical growth and development. The third is their living standard matches to the contemporary highest living standard of the world. And the last but not the least, peace in their society at the cost of anything.

When we see the post-GPCR generation, the youth of China analyzed their society on the above mentioned ground and found themselves no where in the world's political, economical and social scenario. This caused a phenomenal and drastic change in their thought process. The major cause behind this was the collective failure in their society. Through contemporary literature and mass media this young generation rebelled against their past. Not only the current generation but the previous generation also does not want to talk about their lives during the Cultural Revolution. Attempts to

probe experiences result in highly emotional outbursts about their experiences. The previous generation sees their lives already ruined by the hands of Mao and they feel they cannot stop their children from rejecting Chinese culture and taking on western culture. They find no point in stopping their daughters and sons welcoming western culture and values in the very society which was earlier a communist pattern of society. They could not stop them embracing the western values. This despite the fact that they do not really want to accept this because in some corner of their heart they have appreciate their system as well. But they are unable to present any logic for supporting the older political culture since the current generation is totally unaware of communism and not willing to learn about it and feel that communism has set their society far behind western society. Their common argument is that they have little to do with Revolutionary Culture when they don't find any change on the ground after this idea was in practice for the last thirty years.

Young people often compare the living standard of the Chinese society with the western one. They compare their own society with that of western society in order to find a justification to continue and like their system but they failed in doing so. Consequently the admiration for western culture and its political system is on the rise. They find that the western cultural is more superior to their system. They argue that no matter what system China has, it should benefit the masses. If any good or superior system doesn't meet the need of the common people then the system is

useless for them. In the post-Cultural Revolution period, they were willing to embrace the capitalist system and criticised the revolutionary tradition of China. They demanded change in the whole political system, for democracy and freedom of expression. They demanded that the material interests of individuals should be given prominent place in ideology and policy decisions. They argued that the personal interests are the base on which class interests are concentrated, without this base there are no such things as common class interests. They also justified that fact that the common interests of a class will eventually find expression in terms of its members personal interests. They argued that to deny the personal interest is to deny the common interests. In the post Cultural Revolution period, one can see that individual interests are being given importance in comparison to the pre-Cultural Revolution period when collective interest was in focus.

While talking about socialism as a system they said that in order to build socialism in China, the party must not ignore the personal interests and must pay close attention to their material interests otherwise it will be impossible to bring about socialism. In effect, the material interests of individuals are being given a larger place in traditional formula that the socialist economy should integrate the material interests of the state, the collective units, and the individuals in various fields.

While talking about the freedom of expression and democracy they argue that to restrict the freedom of speech on matters of politics is equivalent to endorsing political autocracy. They said that without the

freedom of speech in the political field there can be no genuine freedom of discussion in science and art. Although the party has rejected the slogan of democracy as the fifth modernization there have been inclusions of human rights, democracy and rule of law in the Chinese constitution.

This is clearly evident from the Scar Literature, current writing in China and personal observation in China. Even in recent articles we can find that the scars of the Cultural Revolution is still on people mind. These innocent young people repeatedly asked only one question, what did we and our parents get from radical ideology? They express their need for peace, harmony and development in their personal and national life. They agree that irrespective of the political philosophy they follow, they don't want ideology that rouses the people without delivering a better quality of life to them.

Implication of GPCR:

Political

In the post-cultural Revolution period the state constitution was revised which reflected a clear rejection of the ultra-left political philosophy of the Cultural Revolution and a reversion to a more routinized form of socialist legality.¹ The new constitution emphasized the creation of orderly, accountable, legally regulated governmental institutions and procedures. This constitution sought to strike a balance between civil liberties and civic duties. This constitution reflected a clear break from the political

¹ Bill Brugger, *China: Radicalism to Revisionism 1962-1979* (Croom Helm, London, 1981), p.34

philosophy of the Cultural Revolution. However, it has not implemented the institutionalizing the pluralistic rule of law.

The Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the CCP held in December 1978 has turned out to be the landmark of the beginning of a new historic era in China.² For the political development of China, it has signalled the end of nearly three-quarter of century of revolutionary ferment and upheavals. After this session there was a “call on the party to shift the emphasis of its work to socialist modernization and to integrate the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought with the concrete practice of socialist modernization and develop it under the new historic conditions”.³ The changing relationship between political power and society can be most easily detected in the sphere of ideology, more specifically in a reinterpretation of Mao Zedong Thought.

In the post-Cultural Revolution period, though ideological discussion still has an important place in the official newspapers and various journals, there are greater proportion of articles on practical problems, factual reports, and empirical studies. The reversal of many concrete programs, strongly or partially justified by Mao’s ideas, as well as the abandonment of many of his explicit directives or policies has been rationalized on the basis of a reinterpretation of Mao Zedong Thought. This rationale basically implies a shift from the emphasis on the substantive conclusions of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong to stress on their use as a method of analysis. It

² Ibid.

³ Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Politics of China: 1949-1989* (Cambridge University Press, New York, 1993), pp.7-8

also implies a transition from the stress on utopian goals to an emphasis on the concrete conditions confronting China.

In the post-Cultural Revolution period, 'Practice is the criterion for testing the truth' has been elevated to the status of the most fundamental postulate on Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought.⁴ Thus, reversing the emphasis given by Mao in his later years to the decisive role of theory. These ideological shifts indicate the formulation adopted by the Third Plenum on the need to integrate the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought with the concrete practice of socialist modernization and develop it under the new historical conditions.

The ideological shift which took place in the post-Cultural Revolution period gives greater weight to the perceived interests and demands of various social groups and individuals as they impinge on the Party and the state, especially the Party's ideas about these interests and demands. China still has a system in which the Party and its leaders guide the national development, coordinate its interdependent parts, and ultimately control its multifarious groups and individual. But the inputs and feedback from the society to the Party and the state are more direct and have more discernible effects than before.

The significance of this kind of change lies not alone in the impetus given to the restoration of a measure of rationality in economic and other policies. Its fundamental meaning is that there exist certain areas of

⁴ Yuan fu, Zhang, *Autocratic Traditions and Chinese Politics* (Press Syndicate of Cambridge, Cambridge, 1993), p.152

autonomy in economic and social life into which political power can not and should not intrude. It symbolises and legitimatises the reversal of the historic trend toward the increasing penetration of politics into all social spheres. It has also marked the beginning of new relationship between political power and society.

Economic:

In post-GPCR period, economic reforms in China made a visible transformation in the material lives of the people and great improvement in their standard of living. Restriction on private entrepreneurship was greatly relaxed and disparity between the private and collective economy and state public sector was addressed through these reform measures by Chinese leaders.⁵ Productivity in industrial manufacturing and agriculture increased through greater investment in infrastructure and adoption of more scientific methods. Unemployment was dealt with by encouraging small entrepreneurial manufacturing and promotion of small-scale industries in county side.

The retreat of politics finds no more concrete expression than in the field of economics. The former trend toward increasing the scope for planning, restricting the use of the market, limiting the functions of price, attacking the use of profits, and disparaging material incentives has been reversed.⁶ Now the planning is limited. In the post-Cultural Revolution

⁵ Roderick Macfarquhar, n.3, p. 21

⁶ Yuan fu, Zhang, n.4, p.165

period there have been some shifts in the policy towards enterprises. According to the trend emerged in the post Cultural Revolution, enterprises should be given certain rights over their own incomes and expenditures.

Urban residents, particularly urban youth seeking employment are being encouraged to organize into small cooperatives to engage in small industrial and handicraft undertakings services trades. Licenses for individual traders are being issued. This kind of decision reverses the political-trends since the mid-1950s toward absorbing all family-and individual owned stores and trades into ever larger state-owned and operated enterprises and cooperatives. In other words, the state is increasingly relying on indirect methods to control China' economy. This new system is helping to replace centralized bureaucratic measures by the use of market forces and price mechanisms to create a structure in which basic-level units and individuals are being given a much larger measure of autonomy than before. The economists have replaced the revolutionaries as authoritative interpreters of social change. The central message is that economic considerations cannot and should not always be overridden by the political live and government action.

Such changes in economic thinking and practice took place in the larger context of renewed attention to the immediate material interests and pressing needs of the masses.

Social/Cultural:

The relationship between the individual and the state is also changing. The direction is toward granting individuals a limited sphere of immunity in which he can be assured of some degree of regularity and predictability in his daily life. The full significance of this new direction cannot be found by an examination of the slight changes in the provisions in the draft constitution for individuals rights. The current emphasis on 'socialist legality' is intended to prevent the reoccurrence of the terror unleashed by the Cultural Revolution, which is now regarded as a 'catastrophe'.

In post-GPCR period, Chinese intellectuals were recognised as a responsible social critics and their position became eminent in the Chinese society. Universities and other educational institutes were strengthened, given more freedom and greater economic support, scholars, scientists, engineer and other technical experts were given greater freedom in choosing and pursuing their own research and carrying the development of their respective fields. In post-GPCR period, the newly emerge out 'socialist humanism' led to abandoning on the autocratic control over people and society and upholding the equality of all before the law and providing individual freedom, rights and human dignity of the people.⁷

⁷ Milton D.Yeh, "The CCP'S Policy Towards Intellectuals", *Issues & Studies*, January 1987, pp.98-99

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