

Sources of Authority

Quotational Practice in Chinese Communist Propaganda

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Notes

All sources taken from the Internet and marked as downloaded in footnotes or in the bibliography can be found at the Digital Archive for Chinese Studies (DACHS, <http://www.sino.uni-heidelberg.de/dachs/>), Institute for Chinese Studies, University of Heidelberg.

Throughout the text, Pinyin is used as transcription of Chinese terms. If a different transcription is used within English or German quotations, however, this transcription is retained. Further exceptions are made for a few personal names which are more familiar in a different diction, such as Chiang Kai-shek.

Introduction: Quoting Authority

The Master said, “I transmit but do not innovate; I am truthful in what I say and devoted to antiquity.

I venture to compare myself to our Old Peng.”

Confucius, *The Analects*

When I write articles, I do not quote often what Marx or Engels say. As newspapers quote my words all the time, quote and quote, I do not feel comfortable. [One] should learn to use one’s own words when writing articles. Lenin seldom quoted other peoples’ words, but used his own words when writing articles.

Mao Zedong, *On Newspaper Work*

Why do I quote Confucius and Mao Zedong at the beginning of my dissertation? I might want to prove that (some) well-known Chinese have ventured to bequeath their views on quotation to us, and therefore quotation in China is an object worthy of study. I may be pledging allegiance to my field of research by duplicating a quotation by Confucius introduced by almost any sinologist writing on canonisation, quotation, or creativity in China.¹ Or I might want to introduce my topic in a humble or fashionable rhetoric, speaking through others before speaking for myself. Whichever of these explanations is true, I want to draw the readers’ attention to an aspect central to my whole thesis, namely that quotations pose a question: Why did the writer quote this particular sentence? Different rules pertain to different genres or fields as to how the ‘quoter’, i.e. the person quoting, is expected to handle this situation.² Today’s scientists are expected to explain their intentions. In fiction it is often

¹ See for example HOLZMAN (1978) *Confucius and Ancient Chinese Literary Criticism*. In: Rickett & Yeh *Chinese Approaches to Literature from Confucius to Liang Ch’i- chao*, Princeton, N.J.; RYCKMANS (1986) *The Chinese Attitude Towards the Past*, George Ernest Morrison Lecture in Ethnology, Canberra; ALFORD (1995) *To Steal a Book is an Elegant Offence. Intellectual Property Law in Chinese Civilization*, Studies in East Asian Law, Stanford; WANG (1997) *Two Authorial Rhetorics of Li Yu’s (1611-1680) Works: Inversion and Auto-Communication* (Ph.D. thesis). University of Toronto, Toronto; LEWIS (1999) *Writing and Authority in Early China* New York: 110; MITTLER (2004) *A Newspaper for China? Power, Identity, and Change in Shanghai’s News Media, 1872-1912*, Harvard East Asian studies monographs, vol. 226, Cambridge, Mass.: Chapter 2 “In the Words of the Sages. Authority and Style in the Chinese Newspaper”; HENNINGSEN (2008) *Copyright Matters: Imitation, Creativity and Authenticity in Contemporary Chinese Literature* (Ph.D. thesis). Sinologisches Seminar, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität, Heidelberg.

² The term ‘quoter’, though not found in standard dictionaries, is used in theoretical literature on quotation (see for example GARBER (2003) *Quotation Marks* New York: 23, 32). I will use it throughout my thesis on quotation in 20th century China.

left to the reader to solve the riddle. Or should we rather say each reader is allowed to find her/his own answer? Moreover, the ‘question’ may even be asked without ‘question marks’, i.e. the quotation is used without quotation marks. Only knowledge of the original will enable the reader to detect these ‘hidden quotations’. Marked or unmarked, we generally assume that there is an intention in choosing and using a quotation and that this intention may be understood by closer investigation into the source of the quotation. Thus, the philosopher Saka remarks that “quotations are ambiguous (or indeterminate) and that what they refer to depends on the speaker’s intentions” (Saka 1998:123-4; quoted in: Cappelen et al. 2008).

What do the quotations introduced at the beginning of this chapter tell us about quotation in general and about quotation in China? How do Confucius and Mao – the pre-modern sage and, one might daringly put it, its modern day equivalent – define quotation and what value do they attribute to the act of quoting? Both Confucius and Mao – if we believe in the authorship of these quotations and there is reason not to; I will come to this later – define transmission/quotation by what they see as its opposite, namely innovation or, as Mao put it, the use of one’s own words. This opposition is used by both to pass judgement. The judgement has changed during the two thousand years that separate one speaker (or writer?) from the other one. Confucius prefers transmission, Mao innovation. However, in the very act of declaring his preference, Confucius (unconsciously?) committed an act of innovation. He created a new maxim saying “I transmit but do not innovate”; this paradigm by Confucius was transmitted through time. The ‘original’ to which Confucius “ventured to compare himself”, Old Peng, is lost to memory. Instead of transmitting knowledge about Old Peng, Confucius only succeeded in transmitting his own opinion, an opinion that soon became a maxim. This example suggests that the relationship between transmission/imitation/quotation on the one hand, and creativity/innovation/originality on the other hand is not dichotomous, as this quotation by Confucius has repeatedly been interpreted. Instead, we may conclude that an innovation can build on an act of transmission, and even supersede it in further (possibly innovative) acts of transmission. The same argument may be made about the quotation by Mao given above. While he expressed his preference for the use of “one’s own words when writing articles”, he quoted both Lenin and himself as role model for emulation. Again doubt is raised as to the opposition of quotation and ‘one’s own’ or ‘the new’. It seems rather that there is neither innovation without quotation nor quotation without innovation. Or to put it in the words of yet another theoretician: “Every text is a mosaic of quotations. (Kristeva)”

The main objective of my dissertation is the relationship between innovation and imitation as seen in the quotational use made of a canon. My interest is the seemingly contradictory relation between a canon that is fixed in wording and sometimes even in the way it is to be interpreted on the one hand, and on the other the volatility and ambiguity that is implied in what Garber terms the “quotable quote” (Garber 2003:17). I see quotation as the most important tool in bridging the gap between a static canon and a changing world. Without quotation the canon cannot and will not survive. Actually, without being quoted it might have never become a canon or classic in the first place, though many other factors contribute to the making thereof.³ Bridging the gap, however, entails changes to the quotation. Those changes, that is the different techniques used to accommodate an extant formulation into a new textual creation, are the objects of analysis of this work. By changing the interpretation or context, but also by ‘discovering’ the ‘true’ origin of a quotation, the meaning thereof can be redefined. Thus, neither the quotation nor its meaning are stable. However, although all parts constituting the definition of a quotation (formulation, author, source text or context) are prone to manipulation, yet quotations (and especially canonical quotations) possess authority. This authority, this power of persuasion quite paradoxically rises with every instance of quotation, though each instance of quoting might have changed the ‘original’, even if only a bit. Where, then, does this authority derive from? How does quotation affect the authority of the canon as a whole and of each article therein?

The focus of my dissertation is on the propagandistic use of (Mao) quotations in newspaper articles of *People’s Daily* since the founding of the People’s Republic of China (hereafter PRC) in 1949. *People’s Daily* was in the early days of the PRC not only the most important propaganda instrument of the Party Central, it was also seen as an educational instrument of the Party rank and file as well as all other people. Education or indoctrination in Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought, reinforced by the Party press, was seen as a means of controlling the Party and the people. Thus, the Communists adopted a standpoint reminiscent of previous dynasties which had formed their bureaucracy through education in and examination of classical learning. This system had been criticised as dogmatic, backward, hindering any progress in 19th century China, and had finally been abolished in 1905. The classical Chinese canon was replaced by modern (often Western imported) science, Marxism-Leninism being one of them. Whereas the classical canon was perceived as everlasting truth, as authoritative void (Wagner Oct. 2002), no science does possess an inherent truth

³ Gumbrecht defines the classic as light-version of a canon, as ‘canon’ after abolishing canonisation. See: GUMBRECHT (1987) "Phoenix aus der Asche" oder: Vom Kanon zur Klassik. In: Assmann & Assmann *Kanon und Zensur*, München.

value. Instead, its truth can be and has to be tested and proven repeatedly by reality. The adherents of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought claimed for their doctrine the status of a science as opposed to a canon. Did this also change quotational practices? How could one quote Mao as sage-like authority, if he was just the proponent of *some* scientific programme? Or is the difference between canon and science only nominal, a terminological whim, not changing quotational practice? Propaganda as a tool of education plays a pivotal role in the dissemination of quotations. This top-down process is checked by the necessity to ‘sell’ the canon. Quotation ‘classics’ are not made, they are quoted. This is true for scientific as well as for canonical texts. Thus, it is the quoter and not the author of a text who wields the (democratic) power of choosing the ‘quotable’. The prescribed canon becomes the chosen classic.

In five case studies I hope to illuminate the reciprocal influence between quotation and canon, between innovation and imitation in modern China. Following this introduction, the second chapter of my thesis comprises three shorter case studies analysing different *lifecycles of quotations*: the lifecycle of “Seek truth from facts 实事求是”, a Han dynasty quotation revived and successfully popularised by successive leaders of the Chinese Communist Party (hereafter CCP, Chapter 2.1); the lifecycle of “Smash the Confucian shop 打倒孔家店”, an ‘invented’ May Fourth quotation (Chapter 2.2), and the lifecycle of “The working class has to lead everything 工人阶级必须领导一切”, a short-lived Cultural Revolution quotation star (Chapter 2.3). In these three case studies I ask how quotations are ‘made’, introduced into the discourse, repeated, duplicated, recycled, reconstructed, and extinguished. What differing meanings are given to the same quotation by usage in different contexts? I chose the image of a lifecycle, because I believe that quotations are not only used, manipulated, or stigmatised, but that they (can) possess a life of their own in people’s memory that is not easily altered or wiped out, but forces itself back into public discourse at unexpected moments in history. In Chapter 3, I discuss in detail how one single text of the canon, namely a 1941 speech of Mao Zedong entitled “Reform Our Study 改造我们的学习”, is excavated for quotations. This study may provide insights into the ‘selling’ or ‘popularisation’ of a canonical text. What sentences or sentence parts are chosen for later quotation? What policies can be and are legitimised by reference to the same authoritative source text? The fifth case study in Chapter 4 takes yet another perspective: it has been repeatedly claimed that anniversary articles of *People’s Daily* are interchangeable, that is they read the same every year.⁴ In respect of quotations, this statement implies that the choice of

⁴ SCHOENHALS (1992) *Doing Things with Words in Chinese Politics. Five Studies* Berkeley: 95.

quotations when writing anniversary articles is at least limited. Hence, in my last study I attempt a close reading of May Fourth anniversary articles. How is the story of this movement – canonised in a 1939 article and enclosed in the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* – retold every ten years? How are quotations employed to bridge the gap between the original movement of 1919, the normative history thereof written in 1939, and each subsequent ‘present’? How does the narrative and thus the canon change over time?

Why did I choose to analyse (only) *People’s Daily* and (mostly) quotations of Mao? Several reasons led to this confinement of my analysis. Though several studies on propaganda and press in the PRC exist, none of these examines the use of quotations in educating and guiding the people.⁵ The same situation pertains to research on the Chinese Communist canon; although canonisation, interpretation, and content have been the object of studies, none investigates the relation between quotation and canon.⁶ Thus, I explore new roads in old territory. Analysing *People’s Daily’s* use of quotations seems a reasonable choice because: a) the paper has been the model for emulation to others in the formative years of the PRC; b) it is one of few papers that never ceased publication even during the Cultural Revolution. And until today, it might be viewed as one of the last guardians of the canon, though its influence is dwindling with its readership; c) as long as the Party adopts Mao Zedong Thought as its leading ideology, *People’s Daily* will have to propagandise this canon, will have to ‘sell’ this canon to the people, will have to find ever new ways of bridging a widening gap between fixed text and changing world; and d) there has always been a close link between the Party Central and *People’s Daily*, thus the quotational usage as found in *People’s Daily* might be considered the ideal or normative quoting style in Communist China in the eyes of the Party.

⁵ VOLLAND (2003) *The Control of the Media in the People's Republic of China* (Ph.D. thesis). Sinologisches Seminar, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität, Heidelberg; LYNCH (1999) *After the Propaganda State. Media, Politics, and 'Thought Work' in Reformed China* Stanford; CHEEK (1997) *Propaganda and Culture in Mao's China. Deng Tuo and the Intelligentsia* Oxford; WU GUOQUANG (1994) *Command Communication: The Politics of Editorial Formulation in the People's Daily*. Research Note, *The China Quarterly*, 195-211; KOSCHWITZ (1971) *Pressepolitik und Parteijournalismus in der UdSSR und der Volksrepublik China* Düsseldorf.

⁶ On the early development of Mao Zedong Thought see: WYLIE (1980) *The Emergence of Maoism. Mao Tse-tung, Ch'en Po-ta, and the Search for Chinese Theory, 1935-1945* Stanford. Its canonisation is described in: MARTIN (Ed.) (1979) *Mao Zedong Texte. Schriften, Dokumente, Reden und Gespräche*, München; LIU JINTIAN 刘金田 & WU XIAOMEI 吴晓梅 (1993) <<毛泽东选集>>出版的前前后后: 1944.7 - 1991.7 [The whole story of publishing the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*: July 1944 to July 1991] 北京. Personal accounts on editing the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* can be found in: YE YONGLIE 叶永烈 (1994) 毛泽东的秘书们 [The secretaries of Mao Zedong] 上海; YE YONGLIE 叶永烈 (1993) 陈伯达传 [Biography of Chen Boda] 北京. A summary and analysis of its content is given in: SCHRAM (1989) *The Thought of Mao Tse-tung* Cambridge; History writing is described as commentary to the canon in: WEIGELIN-SCHWIEDRZIK (1984) *Parteigeschichtsschreibung in der VR China. Typen, Methoden, Themen und Funktionen*, Veröffentlichungen des Ostasien-Instituts der Ruhr-Universität Bochum ; 29, Wiesbaden.

My exploration is only made possible by the *People's Daily* database that provides a full-text search through all articles. Also, a full-text version of the Mao canon is freely available on the Internet (www.maostudy.org) and text comparisons between articles and this data is provided by QuotationFinder, a program developed for this purpose by myself. Aided by these devices it has become possible to assess the use of quotations by comprehensive statistics. The analysis of quotation use is now no longer one of incidental comparison. Instead, it is possible to find each and every incidence of one quotation, of quoting one source text, and even to draw approximations how often one author was quoted. All my case studies are based on such statistical data, aiding not only in the identification of articles quoting the canon, but also providing information about the use of a specific quotation at a certain point in time: is it singular/trendy, is it the beginning or the end of a trend, is it (un)related to other articles? Based on these results, a close reading of the identified articles is undertaken. This combined approach of statistical assessment and close reading of *People's Daily* articles quoting (mainly) Mao has, of course, its limitations. Some are due to technical problems (how to find allusions), others to the constraint to (just) five case studies (what about other quotations, source texts, or contexts), to one canon (what about the works of Marx or Lenin, or the classical Confucian canon), and to one paper (how 'representative' or even normative is *People's Daily* especially since the 1980s). I have tried to amend these limitations by excursions or comparisons, though these are by no means exhaustive. For example, *People's Daily* statistics are in some cases compared to similar statistics generated from a newly available database of *People's Liberation Army Daily*.

But then, this dissertation is trying to open a field of study rather than close an extant one; I hope to contribute to our understanding of the relationship between innovation and imitation, between quotation and canon in 20th century China with this novel methodological approach that will become more useful and attractive with more material being digitised each day by digitisation projects all over the world. The following chapter assays to situate my five case studies in an historical, institutional and theoretical framework. However, the chapter is not structured accordingly, as this would raise expectations (such as to detail changes in quotation practices and its evaluation over time, describing its causes and effects) that could not be fulfilled. Nor does there exist the groundwork that would allow giving such an account (i.e. a 'history of quotation', 'quotation in China today', the 'theory of quotation in China'). And, though different theories were an important inspiration to my study of quotation, neither could be called the theoretical basis thereof. For the following chapter, I therefore adopt a structure which progresses along problems: I will start by

asking what quotations are and how they differ from other intertextual practices. In a next step, I will focus on the relation of quotation and meaning. I will then proceed to factors external to the quotation itself, but nonetheless influential to its analysis: canon, commentary, ideology, education and propaganda. The chapter will come full circle in the last part that will again discuss the issues of quotation and transmission vs. innovation and originality, hoping to show how the value given to quotation shifted through time, directly affecting its usage, and indirectly changing the status of the canon. In each of the following parts, 20th century quotation practices in China will be contrasted with historical Chinese evidence and sometimes corresponding foreign practices. Theoretical considerations may help to illuminate aspects untouched by the evidential.

1. Quoting in China: Theoretical and Historical Consideration

Allusion, Proverb, Quotation, Motto, Plagiarism: What Is (Not) a Quotation

What is a quotation? What does quotation do? What makes quoting different from other acts of reference, other methods of re-using extant material such as proverb, allusion, or plagiarism? What is and what is not the object of this study?

Defining Quotation

Quotations are not confined to the realm of written texts or spoken words, but found in art or music as well. Thus, Neumann defines quotation in the following way: “Der Begriff des Zitates umfaßt jede bezugnehmende Wiedergabe eines gedanklichen, kunstsöpferischen oder gestalterischen Gegenstandes (des Zitatobjekts) in einer geistigen Produktion (dem Medium des Zitates) durch den Urheber dieser Produktion (das Subjekt des Zitates). (Neumann 1980:299)” Even human behaviour or self-styling are subject to quotation in Neumann’s sense. Many Nationalsozialisten, for example, grew a Hitler-Bärtchen (mustache à la Hitler) and Hua Guofeng adopted the hair style of Mao Zedong. Mankind is seen by some as the only self-quotation of god. And god, in turn, is the only one believed to be able to perform a creatio ex nihilo, whereas mankind can only imitate, copy or quote nature (Neumann 1980:298).

In Chinese, quotation is expressed either as *yinwen* 引文 or *yulu* 语录. Neither term is of recent origin; *yinwen* goes back to the *Houhan shu* 后汉书 (2nd CE), *yulu* first appeared during the Tang Dynasty (618-907) (Shangwu yinshuguan yuxian gongsi 商务印书馆有限公司 2002). Though often used synonymously, these words have slightly different connotations. See for example the following entries in the *ABC Dictionary Chinese-English* and the *Great Dictionary of Chinese* 汉语大词典:

yulu 语录 N. recorded utterance; quotation (esp. in Zen Budd., Neo-Confucianism, and Mao Zedong Thought); (DeFrancis 1996:756)

yulu 1. Literary style. Records or extracts of the speech of one person or discussion by many people. 【语录】1.文体名。某人或多人言论的记录或摘录。(Shangwu yinshuguan yuxian gongsi 商务印书馆有限公司 2002:entry on 语录)

yinwen 引文 N. quoted passage; quotation (DeFrancis 1996:729)

yinwen 1. Quote a sentence/text from a classical book/record or article. 【引文】1.引自其他典籍、文章的文句。(Shangwu yinshuguan yuxian gongsi 商务印书馆有限公司 2002:entry on 引文)

Whereas *yulu* stresses quotation as the act of recording (*lu* 录) something spoken (*yu* 语), *yinwen* means drawing on/introducing (*yin* 引) some extant text (*wen* 文), be it an article or book of modern or classical origin, in a new context. Both actions involve more than one person: an originator or author of the quotation and a quoter or recorder. *Yulu* often appears in book titles of quotation collections: *Leyutang yulu* 乐育堂语录 [Quotations from the Hall of Blissful Teaching], *Lu Xun yulu* 鲁迅语录 [Quotations of Lu Xun], *Mao zhuxi yulu* 毛主席语录 [Quotations of Chairman Mao]. Whereas *yulu* originally seems to have pertained to recording for posterity the spoken words of a sage – the *Analects* for example supposedly contain records of conversations of Confucius and his disciples compiled by his disciples or the disciples' disciples – the *Quotations of Chairman Mao* are no records of Mao's words. The book contains extracts of sentences and paragraphs – the 'best of' – taken from Mao's *published* works. As the usage of the term *yulu* in *Quotations of Chairman Mao* suggests, the difference between *yulu* and *yinwen* nowadays seems no longer that of recording spoken vs. copying written language, but of extracting and compiling quotations from a larger text for further transmission vs. embedding quotations of one text in a new context.

Though we now know how the word *quotation* is rendered in Chinese, what does it mean? Referring to the *Great Encyclopedia of China* 中国大百科全书 (hereafter *Encyclopedia*), no entry on *yulu*, but one entry on *yinwen* is found, located in the volume on journalism.⁷ Quotation is here described as quoting (摘引) written language (文辞) from other books, articles or primary material (文献资料, lit. documents and data) when writing a book or an article. There are two functions of quotations: to prove one's own opinion by reference to another author, or to introduce the viewpoint of another author. Four types of quotations are distinguished in the *Encyclopedia*: (1) *mingyin* 明引: clearly stating the source by author, book, part, volume, and page; (2) *fanyin* 泛引: giving only a general reference to place and author; (3) *anyin* 暗引: quoting without detailing any source; and finally, (4) *jieyin* 节引: using a modified or enlarged quotation. Whichever of these quotation types is employed, the *Encyclopedia* notes, it is possible to refer the reader to the source of a quotation in footnotes, endnotes, or in-text notes.

⁷ Cf. to the entry on quotation by Zhou Zhenfu 周振甫 in: ZHONGGUO DABAIKE QUANSHU ZONGBIANJI WEIYUANHUI "XINWEN CHUBAN" BIANJI WEIYUANHUI 中国大百科全书总编辑委员会"新闻出版"编辑委员会 (1990) 中国大百科全书: 新闻出版 [Great Encyclopedia of China: Journalism] 北京: 442. Note that only the volume on journalism contains an entry on quotation, not however the volumes on literature or art. The term *yulu* is not defined in any volume of the Encyclopedia.

What is a quotation (*yinwen*) according to the *Encyclopedia*? As opposed to the English word quotation, the term *yinwen* is confined to the realm of the (written) word. Neither *yinwen* nor *yulu* can denote similar acts of imitation in art or music. Quotations are further defined as having a function and a source, although the latter does not have to be openly stated in the quoter's main text, but may be added in annotations. Before we turn to the question why people quote, i.e. the function of quotation, I want to discuss in more detail this question of source or origin. By its very nature, every quotation has a source, though this source can be invented or faked.⁸ As opposed to plagiarised text, a quotation does not try to hide its derivative nature, but is meant to be recognised (Orr 2003:130; Henningsen 2008:23). It is left to the author, however, how she/he helps the reader to recognise the quotation by stating the exact *prototext*, i.e. the source text of a quotation, by using quotation marks or other typographical highlighters, or by using hidden quotations, recognisable only to those that know the source thereof. Hence, the implied reader's lack of knowledge may turn quoting into plagiarism, turn a legal into an illegal act of appropriation. Quotation marks are the safe way to interact with a prototext: "The primary function of quotation marks is to indicate that words are used quotationally (or mentioned) and not (merely) used with their regular extensions. (Cappelen et al. 2008)" By marking words as quotational, moreover, the author disclaims authorship to these words. In a negative sense, this might mean disclaiming responsibility for the words in quotation marks. But it could also mean refusing to take credit for the quotation and instead redirecting it elsewhere. As Garber remarked, "in their present condition of use, they [i.e. quotation marks] may indicate either authenticity or doubt. (Garber 2003:8)" In my own writing, I try to differentiate between these two uses of quotation marks by using double quotation marks when quoting, and inverted commas when using a loaded, and possibly questionable term such as 'the readership' (as there never is one unified group of readers) or the 'Gang of Four' (which is a construction of Chinese propaganda).⁹

Allusion and Paraphrase

Although quoting entails the verbatim repetition of some extant text, it is never an act of pure imitation, but the creation of some 'new' sense in 'old' words, a "Permanence of Names" rather than

⁸ Examples of "Parazitaten" (para-citation, i.e. quotations without prototext) in European avant-garde literature are found in ORAIC TOLIC (1995) *Das Zitat in Literatur und Kunst. Versuch einer Theorie* Wien: 34-9, 70-2. Similarly, Garber notes the "invention of phrases that famous speakers should have said. (GARBER (2003) *Quotation Marks* New York: 20)" Also, the Mao quotation introduced as motto to this introduction might have been invented by Deng Xiaoping. I will come to this later.

⁹ The only exemptions to this rule are, of course, quotations within quotations that are then also marked with single quotation marks.

of content (Ryckmans 1986:12).¹⁰ Though the author may disclaim authorship for words used quotationally, she/he consciously chose the words intending to say something *more/else* than just these words. They are “not (merely) used with their regular extensions (Cappelen et al. 2008)”. However, these notions taken from philosophy and quotation theory are tied to the marking of quotations as such. The *Great Encyclopedia of China*, however, introduced two concepts of unmarked quotations: *anyin* (quoting without detailing any source, i.e. hidden quotations) and *jiyein* (using a modified or enlarged quotation, i.e. a paraphrased quotation). If left without annotation, hidden or modified quotations pose a problem to the researcher similar to that caused by allusions: Are they intended by the author, i.e. did the author know the prototext, know that she/he was quoting? Did ‘the readership’ notice and thus be able to understand the quotation? These questions, of course, take us to more philosophical issues concerning the possibility of understanding and communication, the connection of words, meanings and objects, or the relation of author and reader (see below).¹¹ At this point, it should be noted that unmarked quotations are, according to the *Encyclopedia*, acceptable in China, in journalism at any rate, though *People’s Daily* recommends to its authors and editors to add annotations for the reader’s benefit.¹² As I am interested in the change of meaning to fixed formulations, my analysis is focused on *verbatim* quotations, sidelining but not altogether ignoring allusions and paraphrases.

Motto, Maxim, Aphorism

On the other end of the quotation spectrum, the motto is positioned: In general, it is an exact quotation that is not embedded into a text, but heading it. Mottos are not foreign to Chinese culture, the most recent famous examples being the “Quotations by Chairman Mao” heading almost each issue of *People’s Daily* and other newspapers roughly from Oct. 1965 until Mar. 1978. The English word motto derives from Italian and denotes a “witty comment” or “maxim” (Neumann 1980:300). In Chinese, motto is expressed as *geyan* 格言 (maxim, motto, aphorism). However, *geyan* according to the *Great Dictionary of Chinese* 汉语大词典 has no witty connotation, but only educational value as

¹⁰ See also MITTLER (2004) *A Newspaper for China? Power, Identity, and Change in Shanghai's News Media, 1872-1912*, Harvard East Asian studies monographs, vol. 226, Cambridge, Mass.: Chapter 2 “In the Words of the Sages. Authority and Style in the Chinese Newspaper”.

¹¹ See among others: QUINE (1960) *Word and Object* Cambridge, Mass.; PÊCHEUX (1983) *Language, Semantics and Ideology. Stating the Obvious* London; Basingstoke; AUSTIN & URMSON (1986) *How to Do Things With Words. The William James Lectures Delivered at Harvard University in 1955* London; Reader-Response-Criticism and Death of the Author in BARTHES (1976) *S/Z* Frankfurt.

¹² *People’s Daily*, for example, asked its contributors to add annotations to quotations that are used in their articles to facilitate the staff’s work in re-checking the correctness of the quotation. See: RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民日报社 (02.11.1956) 请注明引文出处 [Please indicate the source of quotations], 人民日报, 8.

a norm. Thus, it expresses the idea of a maxim or aphorism. Mottos head a whole text, being graphically separated from it. The “Quotations by Chairman Mao”, for example, were not only placed on the top of the paper beside the newspaper’s name, they were also often divided from the other content by a decorative boarder. Though visibly separated, an interaction between motto and text is expected by the audience. The anxiety to locate quotations in the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* that would positively interact as motto or maxim with the content of *People’s Daily*, led to the compilation of such quotations by Mao in the little *Red Book* during the Cultural Revolution (Leese 2006:122-50). In the introduction to this work, the relation between motto and text is not left unexplained, to be figured out by the reader. Scientific standards do not allow for such a practice. Thus, I used them both as motto and quotation, as tenor of my text and discussing them therein. Mottos to whole issues appeared in newspapers mostly during the Cultural Revolution, mottos of single articles on the other hand are rare; as mottos are exact quotations, they are included in my analysis.

Proverb or Chengyu

Another form of verbatim reproduction often encountered in Chinese texts are *chengyu* 成语 (proverb, idiom, set phrase; mostly comprising four or five characters). Contrary to mottos, *chengyu* are not separated from the text, nor are they marked as quotations. Neither are they allusions, as they are verbatim reproductions. Similar to axioms, they are carriers of a truth that seems generally accepted. However, this truth is no longer connected with an origin. That is to say although *chengyu* can often be traced to a prototext and/or author, neither of these is the sole constituent of its truth value. Rather, the continuous repetition of these phrases ingrained them to public memory, where now they are stored without question or quotation mark.

The lack of an origin or quoting out of context does not necessarily discredit quotations, indeed “they seem not only ‘true’ but iconic, monumental. (Garber 2003:19)” This is, what Garber calls the doxa effect: quotations becoming so familiar that they slide into aphorism or maxim. An interesting example of capitalising on this doxa effect is visible in the use of the *chengyu* “Seek truth from facts 实事求是” first by Mao Zedong and later by Deng Xiaoping (see Chapter 2.1). Today, this *chengyu* though dating from the Book of Han 汉书 of the 2nd century CE is accepted as slogan of Deng Xiaoping’s policy of Reform and Opening Up. *Chengyu* are not marked by quotation marks. Though this absence of quotation marks signifies an absence of origin (at least it is not explicitly referred to),

it does not signify an absence of truth.¹³ *Chengyu* gain power because they are repeated, recognised, familiar. They are but one example of what might be called a (bottom-up) ‘voting effect’: the more people use a quotation, the more will know and therefore use it in turn, and the more influential it will become. We see this system at work in the making of ‘classics’ in scientific fields: research papers are awarded the title of ‘citation classics’ because they scored the highest number of citations in other works.¹⁴ Citation indices provide statistical information on the citation habits of communities, ranking research work by the number of instances of being quoted. I will return to this aspect of voting for the classic-to-be when I discuss the relation between quotation and canon/classic further down. I devote Chapter 2.1 to the analysis of the lifecycle of one special *chengyu*, i.e. “Seek truth from facts”, in 20th and 21st century China, as this *chengyu* was appropriated by successive CCP leaders and thus, one may argue, turned back into a quotation. However, in general, I do not perceive of *chengyu* as quotations because they often no longer point to a certain author or prototext. A similar argument pertains to phrases below a certain number of words. What is still decisive enough to count as quotation? In an index to quotations of Mao Zedong compiled during the Cultural Revolution, the shortest quotation listed is “more thinking 多想” (1970:1034). However, not every instance of this phrase in a Chinese text is counted as Mao quotation. Though a (random) minimum length that a phrase has to possess so as to count as a quotation, would solve this problem, short, but important quotations might be lost. Therefore, in every instance of analysing a short phrase, I will discuss again if and why this may be counted as quotation, or merely as language usage.

Functions of Quotation

Before turning to the question of meaning/interpretation and quotation, I want to return to the function that quotations fulfil in writing? Why do we quote? What does an author intend by using quotations? And (how) can we know her/his intention when encountering a quotation? The *Encyclopedia* noted two functions that quotations have: to prove one’s own opinion by reference to another author, or to introduce the viewpoint of another author. These are, of course, not the only

¹³ The absence of truth in concurrence with the absence of quotation marks has been remarked upon in a canonical English example in GARBER (2003) *Quotation Marks* New York: 27.

¹⁴ See for example the Citation Classic Award by the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI). Its annual Journal Citation Reports lists the impact factor of each journal that in turn not only influences a researcher’s reputation but in some German institutions also their budget. An even more extreme case is when plagiarism or copy right infringements are valued as contributing to the publicity and popularity of the plagiarised item. This view is noted by Alford for classical Chinese painters (ALFORD (1995) *To Steal a Book is an Elegant Offence. Intellectual Property Law in Chinese Civilization*, Studies in East Asian Law, Stanford: 29), but also found among modern musicians about music exchange servers.

possible intentions of quoting. Quotations can be used to prove or support the argumentation of the quoter or in turn practical evidence can prove the quotation;¹⁵ quotations might give further information or details,¹⁶ or they might be introduced to the ‘borrower text’, i.e. the quoting text, with more critical intention: to differentiate one’s own view from the other, the new from the old; to criticise, subvert or even joke¹⁷ about what another said or wrote, or about that which is deemed canonical or normative by a group of people. In this sense, canonical or normative quotations can protect more subversive content from censorship, and its author from retribution.¹⁸ A similar process is at work when quotations are used as decoration: they do not interact with the content of the work, but by their being attached to it, the work is made more accepted, more popular, more trendy. The editor of Qiuzhang Youde’s 酋长有德 contemporary novel *The Legend of the Wolves’ King* 狼王传说 tried to heighten the popularity of the novel by adding mottos to each chapter (Henningsen 2008:160); a similar phenomenon is attributed by Kern to the use of quotations of the *Shijing* 诗经 (Book of Songs/Odes) in philosophical treatises in Early China: “it may have raised the odds of extended synchronic circulation and, finally, diachronic transmission. (Kern 2005:326)”¹⁹ The very

¹⁵ This function of quotations is manifested in Chinese in the verb 引证 *yinzheng* and the chengyu 引书为证 *yin shu wei zheng*, both meaning “to quote (books) as proof/evidence”.

¹⁶ An interesting case is the booklet *What is National Capitalism* 什么是国家资本主义 by Qian Jiaju 千家驹 from 1954. He had been asked to write a popular introduction to national capitalism by a publisher just after the decision on the general line in 1953. He quoted copiously from Lenin, Stalin and Mao Zedong, later explaining he had done so (1) for fear of erring, (2) as most normative and authoritative sources, (3) giving information on the early development of the concept. See: QIAN JIAJU 千家驹 (1956) 对‘不要以引证代替分析’的意见 [Objections to ‘Don’t substitute quotations for the analysis’], 读书.

¹⁷ The subversive use of quotations in the Zhuangzi (4th century BCE), the Huainanzi (2nd century BCE), and in Flowers in the Mirror (19th century) are subject of the following article: LEVI Quelques exemples de détournement subversif de la citation dans la littérature classique chinoise, *Extrême-Orient, Extrême-Occident*, 41-65. For jokes on the four books from the Ming dynasty see HUANG (1998) *Jokes on the Four Books: Cultural criticism in early modern China* (Ph.D. thesis). University of Arizona, Tucson. A typical example of joking about Cultural Revolution quotation usage can be found at HUOCHETOU WUDI 火车头无敌 [PSEUD.] (2005) 温故毛泽东语录 [Warm and old quotations of Mao Zedong]. <http://shaying.beelink.com.cn/cgi-bin/topic.cgi?forum=49&topic=3603&show=0&act=pre>, accessed: 26.05.2008, downloaded: 26.05.2008; similar cases are mentioned in BARME (1996) *Shades of Mao. The Posthumous Cult of the Great Leader* Armonk, NY and CHENG SHI 橙实 & SHAN CHUAN 山川 (Eds.) (1988) 文革笑料集 [Collection of Cultural Revolution jokes], 成都. In his blog, a self-claimed government employee from Beijing put together his own version of the ‘Little Red Book’ featuring Mao quotations to use, for example, when one is too tired to go to school. See: BUGU ZIXU 布谷子虚 [PSEUD.] (2006) 毛泽东语录十八条 [18 kinds of quotations by Mao Zedong]. <http://mackey331.bokee.com/viewdiary.11481042.html>, accessed: 26.05.2008, downloaded: 26.05.2008.

¹⁸ For the use of “Begläubigungszitate und Zitatmasken” (quotations as decorations or pseudo-quotations as camouflage) in Sowjet culture see GRÜBEL (2000) Zitate ohne Ende? Intertextualität und Interdiskursivität der russischen Postmoderne. In: Beekman & Grüttemeier *Instrument Zitat. Über den literarhistorischen und institutionellen Nutzen von Zitaten und Zitieren*, Amsterdam. Similar cases are known especially for research works in the German Democratic Republic and in the PRC.

¹⁹ For similar instances from the European history of quoting see VAN DEN BERG (2000) Autorität und Schmuck. Über die Funktion des Zitates von der Antike bis zur Romantik. In: Beekman & Grüttemeier *Instrument Zitat. Über den literarhistorischen und institutionellen Nutzen von Zitaten und Zitieren*, Amsterdam.

absence of interaction between quotation and borrower text unmasks the intention of the author or editor. When using quotations as camouflage and/or protection, the quoter is therefore well advised to construct an interaction, if only a pseudo-interaction.

Here we encounter one of the blind spots in analysing quotations: we do not know the quoter's intention and most often we cannot interview her/him to gain this knowledge, if indeed she/he would/could tell the truth. We have only clues to infer the intention *ex post facto*. Hence, only contemporary analysis of works quoting the *Shijing* introduced the idea that they were used as motor for circulation and transmission (Kern 2005). In the case of heading each issue of *People's Daily* with the "directives of Chairman Mao", it is known that the editor entrusted with this responsibility felt uncertain if it was at all possible to extract a *meaningful* quotation of Mao from the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* for each and every issue, especially as no index to the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* existed by this time to facilitate searching for quotations (Leese 2006). Another important and often noted function of quotations is what I would like to call the exchange of passwords.²⁰ Groups that define themselves by the belief in, knowledge of, or simply the use of certain texts exchange quotations to show allegiance or belonging to the group.²¹ This behaviour can be enforced by an institution or group. Thus, as Weigelin-Schwiedrzik remarked: "War die Beherrschung der konfuzianischen Klassiker Voraussetzung für die Aufnahme in die Hierarchie der Beamten-Literati, so ist die Aneignung der Mao-Zedong-Ideen heute Voraussetzung für die Aufnahme in die teleologische Bürokratie. In beiden Fällen geht es darum, daß der Kandidat die Übernahme von Werten, Interpretationen und Sprachregelungen unter Beweis stellt. (Weigelin-Schwiedrzik 1984:106)"²²

Quoting here becomes coercive, but only because it is to the (material) advantage of the quoter. Then again, when I quoted Confucius at the outset to this chapter, nobody compelled me to do so. But by quoting this stanza, I pledged allegiance to my field of research who had in turn almost entirely used this very quotation (see fn. 1). In the other motto to the introduction, Mao disclaimed

²⁰ See also GARBNER (2003) *Quotation Marks* New York: 15

²¹ The same phenomenon, though pertaining to language in its entirety is discussed by Foucault, Althusser or Pecheux in the analysis of the 'discourse' MILLS (2004 (1997)) *Discourse*, The New Critical Idiom, London; FOUCAULT (1996 (1974)) *Die Ordnung des Diskurses* Frankfurt: 28f; and PÊCHEUX (1983) *Language, Semantics and Ideology. Stating the Obvious* London; Basingstoke. Bourdieu saw a close connection between political power and the ability to produce the established political language. The uninitiated had to rely on "Wortführer" (opinion leaders) to translate their concerns and introduce them into the political discourse. See BOURDIEU (1982) *Die feinen Unterschiede: Kritik der gesellschaftlichen Urteilskraft* Frankfurt: 719-27.

²² For a more detailed discussion of the relation between quotation, education, and canon see below.

the use of quotations in general, however, he himself referred to Lenin as model of *not-quoting*. By refereeing to his forerunners (Marx, Engels, and Lenin), Mao defined his lineage.

The phenomenon of using quotations as passwords is, of course, not only common to elite formation, but used by every group that seeks to distinguish itself from others. The password function is often encountered in hidden quotations or ‘vacant references’, i.e. when crucial information to understand the communication is missing and has to be inferred by the reader/hearer. The *Shijing*, for example, was constitutive to the diplomatic language of the Spring and Autumn Period (723-469 BC) and “served to issue warnings, make recommendations, and petition for assistance. (Lewis 1999:156)”²³ Instances of quoting the *Shijing* are often either hidden quotations, i.e. quotations that do not give details of the source, or ‘vacant references’, i.e. only title or number of the ode would be mentioned without repeating the content.²⁴ Interpretation of these references and appropriate reaction to them was only possible if the hearer/reader knew the prototext. On the other hand, in more recent times the use of hidden quotations has often caused suspicions of plagiarism.²⁵ The lack of quotation marks thus opens a range of interpretations to the reader and researcher alike. It should, however, be recalled that the *Great Encyclopedia of China* itself accepts hidden quotations, merely advising clarification of the source by annotations.

Why else are quotations used? A function common to propaganda texts is the popularisation of ideology. At the start of new campaigns in the PRC, for example, quotations are introduced to editorials or other guiding texts as *pars pro toto*. Sometimes the source text is additionally referred to as important study material for the upcoming campaign, sometimes the interest of the reader is aroused only by featuring a quotation thereof. Again, the boundary between coercion and choice is fluent. Educating the Chinese people in Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought was not only a question of teaching the content of this new ideology; the correct formulation of thoughts held the same importance in the eyes of the Communist Party of China (hereafter CCP) (Schoenhals 1992). Moreover, in the early 1950s Mao’s language, along with that of Lu Xun, was selected and propagated as exemplary use of the new colloquial language (see below). Quoting Mao, thus,

²³ See also MARTIN Le Shijing, de la citation à l’allusion: la disponibilité du sens, *Extrême-Orient, Extrême-Occident*, 11-39: 18-9; HOLZMAN (1978) Confucius and Ancient Chinese Literary Criticism. In: Rickett & Yeh *Chinese Approaches to Literature from Confucius to Liang Ch’i- chao*, Princeton, N.J.: 34; LEWIS (1999) *Writing and Authority in Early China* New York: 155-63; JULLIEN (2000) *Umweg und Zugang: Strategien des Sinns in China und Griechenland* Wien: 75-93.

²⁴ For examples cf. to LEWIS (1999) *Writing and Authority in Early China* New York: 156f. This practice has also often been used when quoting the bible.

²⁵ For classical examples see ALFORD (1995) *To Steal a Book is an Elegant Offence. Intellectual Property Law in Chinese Civilization*, Studies in East Asian Law, Stanford; for modern Chinese examples see HENNINGSEN (2008) *Copyright Matters: Imitation, Creativity and Authenticity in Contemporary Chinese Literature* (Ph.D. thesis). Sinologisches Seminar, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität, Heidelberg.

fulfilled many functions simultaneously: teaching the new Chinese language, the new ideology and its correct formulation; propagating and popularising this ideology; and informing about texts to read for guidance in certain campaigns. Other functions introduced above are also found: quotations were used to give authority to a text or an argument, to criticise or denunciate (groups of) people,²⁶ as decoration or camouflage, and as passwords exchanged among the members of a certain group. Often, changes in policy were legitimised with the help of quotations. Schoenhals notes that the process of policy making in the PRC was and is closely connected to policy formulation (Schoenhals 1992:3). In another article, he even pointed out that “[a]cts that cannot be immediately sanctioned on the basis of arguments contained in canonical texts will be kept secret until the obstacles preventing such sanction have been eliminated. (Schoenhals 1991:243)” Similarly, Mittler reasoned that articles in the *Shenbao* 申報 (1872-1912) phrased their new ideas in old words to mediate between the known and the unknown, to cater to the taste of the reader, and compliment them on their knowledge (another form of exchanging passwords), but also as habitual act of the classically educated author: “There simply was no other way of writing” (Mittler 2004:126-8). Mittler also notes the function of quotation as sophisticated cultural shorthand. Quotations then open up a broader meaning, they communicate in a short form a larger issue. However, this shorthand function bears the danger of substituting the meaning itself, be it Confucian learning or Communist ideology. One of the criticisms repeatedly levelled at the examination system was that it did test recollection of quotations, rather than knowledge of their meaning. By memorising quotations one could pass the examination without ever understanding or even reading the classics (Franke 1963:20-7). Early in 1960, Lin Biao began to propagate quotations of Chairman Mao as shortcut to Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought (Leese 2006:107). By memorising quotations and using them in practice, he believed that the larger truth of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought would reveal itself to the quoter (see Chapter 3).

By investigation into Chinese definitions for quotation and contrast to other forms of reference, I have tried to outline what quotations are, and what will be the object of the following analysis. As to why people quote, numerous reasons have been related that were either acknowledged by authors

²⁶ In this case, either canonical quotations criticising certain behaviour/attitudes are connected with real people, or quotations from the works of the criticised person are given as example of their condemnable thoughts/attitudes. The latter method is, however, less used in propaganda. The negative is given less room than the positive, as Weigelin-Schwiedrzik remarked: future generations are moulded by positive examples, and negative factual information might be exploited by foreign media (WEIGELIN-SCHWIEDRZIK (1984) *Parteigeschichtsschreibung in der VR China. Typen, Methoden, Themen und Funktionen*, Veröffentlichungen des Ostasien-Instituts der Ruhr-Universität Bochum ; 29, Wiesbaden: 105).

themselves, reconstructed by analysis and interpretation, or result from theoretical considerations. However, seldom one reason alone accounts for the presence of a specific quotation. Moreover, the intention of the quoter (author or editor) reveals nothing about the effect a quotation had and has on each of the text's later readers. In the next part of this chapter, I will turn away from what a quotation is and why it is employed and ask what it might mean?

Constituents of Meaning: Formulation, Prototext, Author, and Context

Constituents of Meaning

How flexible/ambiguous is the meaning of a given quotation? What attributes do affect the meaning of a quotation? (How) does quoting fix or change the meaning? Author-oriented theories and reader-oriented theories both touch upon these questions: The author-oriented schools are primarily interested in what the author of a text had meant. One implication is that there is but one true meaning to a text and this meaning can be uncovered foremost through investigations into the author's life, work and time. The text is searched for autobiographical traces, for influences of the author's teachers or other contemporaries, for traces in wording, style or content left by history.²⁷ When I discussed above why people do quote, my question and its many answers derived mostly from author-oriented approaches. Reader-oriented approaches, on the other hand, stipulate that each successive reader interprets the same text differently depending on her/his prior reading experience, literacy, mood, or knowledge of the author, and depending on each reader's cultural, historical, and personal *context*. There is not one *meaning* to a text, but several *readings* of it. Not the original intention of the author, but the effect of a text on a certain reader or a group of readers is of interest to such research.²⁸

When it comes to quotation and its meaning we are faced with several interlocking problems that will have to be answered by drawing on both approaches: *First*, there is the author A of the 'original' text T, his intention in writing text T as well as the later quoted text part Q. What was the 'original' meaning of T and Q? What did the 'original' author A imply in writing this text T? What

²⁷ Biographical approaches to fiction were common to 19th century research in Europe and America (KLARER (2004) *An Introduction to Literary Studies* London: 85-87). Neglected for some time, they reappear in psycho-analytical and socio-historical approaches (SCHMITZ (2002) *Moderne Literaturtheorie und antike Texte. Eine Einführung* Darmstadt: 175-192 and 214-24).

²⁸ An impressive example from the area of Chinese Studies is Wang's intertextual reading of three Chinese novels (*Dream of the Red Chamber*, *Water Margin*, and *The Journey to the West*) focusing on the meaning of Chinese stone and jade lore. See: WANG (1992) *The Story of Stone. Intertextuality, Ancient Chinese Stone Lore, and the Stone Symbolism of Dream of the Red Chamber, Water Margin, and The Journey to the West* Durham; London.

traces of prior influences form her/his text T? How was T interpreted by contemporaries of A? Do canonical interpretations, e.g. in the form of an autobiography or text commentaries, exist of T that are still valid in the lifetime of the author A' quoting (the late) author A? I disclaim interest in this 'original' meaning for the sake of itself, but view it as the first instance of interpretation attributed to a string of words. *Second*, there is the author A' of another text T' quoting the 'original' text T of author A by embedding the quotation Q into his text T'. As a quoter, A' is also a reader R of the 'original' text T.²⁹ The quotation Q in another text T' by author A' can, hence, be read as an interpretation of a (sentence of) a text T by a reader R. It is this interpretation, this repeated and changing attribution of meaning to a fixed formulation that I will focus on in my dissertation. *Third*, there is the (implied) reader R' of the text T' containing quotation Q; How does this reader R' read T'? What meaning does she/he read into text T' quoting Q? Though these questions are not the focus of my work, yet they will recur throughout my work as the (implied) reader's knowledge impairs and in turn explains quotation practice. It is the (implied) reader's knowledge for example that allows the use of a famous sentence as hidden quotation, but demands further explanations for a quotation from a book rarely read.³⁰ The model of quotation being a mixture of authorial intention and reader's interpretation as given above is further complicated by the possibility that author/reader/quoter A' is not quoting Q from text T, but from later interpretations of T. These interpretations might be given in the form of commentaries to text T, but they might also result from repeated quoting of Q. In this way, quotations *accumulate* meanings that were not given to them when their author A wrote the 'original' text T, just as a person attains her/his personality not with her/his birth but mostly through later influences and experiences. It is for this reason that I speak of the 'lifecycle of a quotation' (cf. Chapter 2).

Ambiguity

Do quotations have a (fixed) meaning? Scholars from differing centuries, countries and professions all seem to stress the opposite: "[Q]uotations are ambiguous (or indeterminate) (Cappelen et al. 2008)" wrote the American philosopher Saka. The professor for English literature and linguistics

²⁹ It has even been argued that "the reader is also a text and that reading is in essence an encounter between texts", a notion that is captured by the term intertextuality. See: SANDERS (2001) *Intertextuality and Dialogue. New Approaches to the Scriptural Canon*. In: *Gorak Canon vs. Culture. Reflections on the Current Debate*, New York: 180 Similarly, others conceive of intertextuality as "memory of a text". See: EBERHARDT (2002) *'Es gibt für mich keine Zitate.'* *Intertextualität im dichterischen Werk Ingeborg Bachmanns* Tübingen: 38.

³⁰ For studies on the effects of quotations on readers during the Cultural Revolution see JI FENGYUAN (2004) *Linguistic Engineering. Language and Politics in Mao's China* Honolulu. A comprehensive overview on the development of research about the effects of media on readers is given in SCHENK (2002) *Medienwirkungsforschung* Tübingen.

Garber went further in arguing: “One of the slippery qualities of a quotable quote is that it can be used to point almost any moral (Garber 2003:17)” Quotations, it seems, are quotable, *because* they are indeterminate. Quotation reflects the reader’s usage rather than any meaning fixed by writing, or so the 16th century English playwright Shakespeare might be understood when writing “The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose. (Shakespeare 2006:Act 1, Scene 3)” The same is true for Cultural Revolution quotation practice, if we believe the 21st century sinologist Ji Fengyuan: “Even somebody who spoke only in Mao quotations could be accused of waving the red flag to oppose the red flag. (Ji Fengyuan 2004:177)” In this case, however, it is not so much the quoter’s intention, the devil’s purpose according to Shakespeare, that subverts the quotation, but the hearer/reader R’ of Mao’s quotations. In ancient China, such a quotation practice of keeping the form and changing the content was a cause for commendation rather than criticism, thus the ancient Chinese philosopher Confucius condoned “the deliberate misinterpretation of [a] poem so that it can be used as a moral tag. (Holzman 1978:30)” The sinologist Ryckmans finally argued that the Chinese tradition’s “permanence is first and foremost a ‘Permanence of Names’, covering the endlessly changing and fluid nature of its actual contents. (Ryckmans 1986:12)” Thus, quotations appear as just one of many examples in the vast Chinese tradition where a Permanence of Name disguises an endlessly changing content. It seems to be left to the quoter or reader to give a (any) meaning to it when using or reading a quotation. If quotations – or for that matter words or sentences – would signify nothing, however, there could be no communication. Quoting would then be ‘senseless’. So what are the attributes that delimit, though not completely determine the meaning of a quotation?

Verbatim quotations repeat (more or less than) a sentence, a *formulation*. The meaning of the formulation derives from the words organised according to grammar rules. Though current philosophers doubt that two people mean exactly the same by saying the same word, the approximation of (or public agreement on) the meaning of words is enough to make communication in general possible; and it is enough to justify research into quoting. The meaning of a formulation, however, is not stable. It changes, of course, when definitions of its constituent parts are ambiguous (synonyms) or change over time.³¹ Changing references of time, place, or person can also affect the meaning of a formulation. Sentence parts are more easily ‘distorted’ or ‘reappropriated’ than whole sentences, as part of their references (subject, object...) are replaced. Embedding a formulation in a new context can also affect its meaning. This is generally vilified as “quoting out of context”, and

³¹ For example, the Chinese character 红 *hong* (engl.: red) comprises both the connotation “female”, but later also “communist”, among others.

captured in the Chinese proverb 断章取义 (*duan zhang qu yi*, lit. breaking apart a stanza to extract a meaning) which in modern use bears also the negative connotation of to “garble a statement” (DeFrancis 1996:143).³² The Chinese proverb *duan zhang qu yi* as well as its English pendant “quoting out of context” speak to the fact that (1) the (original and new) context is significant to the meaning of a quotation;³³ (2) that when quoting, the ‘original’ context and content, i.e. what the author intended (but how do we know?) should ideally be repeated in the new text,³⁴ and (3) that in practice this is often not the case.³⁵ In the last part of this chapter, I will come back to point 2 and 3 when I try to show how the evaluation of quoting affected the practice thereof, and that different, sometimes contradictory quotation rules pertain to different genres and times. At this point, however, the focus is primarily on the complex relation between meaning and quotation. So what about point 1, how does the (which?) *context* relate to the meaning of a quotation?

Contexts

In the narrowest sense, the *context* (of a quotation) designates the text surrounding the quotation. This might be the adjoining sentences, the paragraph in which the quotation appears, or even the whole article or book in which it is published. In a wider sense, *context* refers to the relation between speaker/writer and hearer/reader, to their attitudes, interests, knowledge or assumptions about each other. In the case of quotation, this relation involves (at least) three people: original author A, quoter R/A’, and reader R’. In the broadest sense, *context* signifies the time, place, circumstances, etc. under which a certain statement is made or written.³⁶ For the sake of clarity, I differentiate these three types

³² Note that this quotation practice was not always vilified, but was seen as fundamental to citing the odes during the Spring and Autumn and early Warring States period. “To repeat a poem was a simple-minded enterprise, but to actively adapt it to new circumstances required skill and perception.” See: LEWIS (1999) *Writing and Authority in Early China* New York: 158.

³³ Drawing on the same proverb, Wang argues: “The aphorism, however, recognises the fundamental working principle of contextuality - that the meaning of a word is by no means autonomous, but is generated through a complex network of reference.” See: WANG (1992) *The Story of Stone. Intertextuality, Ancient Chinese Stone Lore, and the Stone Symbolism of Dream of the Red Chamber, Water Margin, and The Journey to the West* Durham; London: 14.

³⁴ “In an undated remark in the first half of On Newspaper Work, Hu [Qiaomu] says that one should always attempt to write in such a way as to force ‘the reactionaries to quote out of context and distort the meaning, should they want to take advantage of these materials.’” See: SCHOENHALS (1992) *Doing Things with Words in Chinese Politics. Five Studies* Berkeley: 96.

³⁵ Thus, 20th century Chinese guidebooks on how to write recommend the use of unabridged sentences when quoting. In reader’s letters complaints are voiced as to the “out-of-context” use of canonical quotations. Politicians often defend themselves by arguing that their views had been quoted out-of-context and thus misrepresented. Mao, for example, criticised People’s Daily for having distorted his views and argued in favour of “opposing adventurism” in 1958 MACFARQUHAR, CHEEK & WU (Eds.) (1989) *The Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao: From the Hundred Flowers to the Great Leap Forward*, Cambridge, Mass.: 395.

³⁶ The term ‘context’ is generally used in communication theory. For a comprehensive definition refer to BUBMANN (2002) *Lexikon der Sprachwissenschaft* Stuttgart: 374. The cultural, historical, or personal context were and are subject

of contexts wherever possible or necessary as *textual context*, *personal context*, and *historical context*.³⁷ When speaking about the context of a quotation, one must further differentiate between the *original context* of a quotation (if only re-constructed; for an example see Chapter 2.2) and its *new context*.

For example, the *original context* of the Confucius quotation I introduced at the beginning of this thesis would be the *Lunyu* (*Analects of Confucius*) compiled as far as we know today by Confucius' disciples in China between the end of the Zhou Dynasty and the Former Han (Cheng 1993:314), to give but the very basic information; the *new context* is my thesis written in Germany in the summer of 2008 by myself. How does this information change the meaning of the quotation "The Master said, 'I transmit but do not innovate; I am truthful in what I say and devoted to antiquity. I venture to compare myself to our Old Peng.'"? Besides the question of translation, many a thought has been spent on the 'true' meaning of this quotation. Confucius is not the author of the *Lunyu*, but his disciples or the disciples of his disciples. We therefore do not know if Confucius was the originator of the quotation – an information belonging to the *personal context* – nor if his words were correctly recorded. Both doubts reduce the authority of the quotation. On the other hand, as this stanza is quoted throughout Chinese history as Confucius' words, its effect on traditional Chinese thought and culture has been tremendous, restoring the quotation's authority (Liu Chang 刘畅 2001). In this sense, the 'author' appears as a constructed and accepted category, rather than a given fact (as is often the case). I hope to show in the following case studies that the author was one important attribute consciously used by 20th century CCP propagandists to change the meaning or value of a quotation. In Chapter 2.2, for example, we may see how a faceless collective authorship was constructed for the quotation "Smash the Confucian shop". In Chapter 2.3, I hope to show how the evaluation of the quotation "The working class has to lead everything" was manipulated by first attaching Mao as author, and after the Cultural Revolution substituting Yao Wenyuan instead.

Returning to Confucius and "I transmit but do not innovate", how did investigations into the *personal context* of Confucius, i.e. what is known about his life, work and attitude, alter interpretations of the quotation? Did Confucius live up to his own standards put forward in the quotation? This, Ryckmans notes, is not the case, because the antiquity that Confucius sought to

to studies of text interpretation as well; see WANG (1992) *The Story of Stone. Intertextuality, Ancient Chinese Stone Lore, and the Stone Symbolism of Dream of the Red Chamber, Water Margin, and The Journey to the West* Durham; London: 3.

³⁷ Catford introduced the term Kotext (engl. cotext or co-text) to differentiate from non-linguistic Kontext (context), a differentiation developed further by Petöfi. Both theoretical approaches, however, pertain to translation, rather than quotation. See BUBMANN (2002) *Lexikon der Sprachwissenschaft* Stuttgart: 374.

merely ‘transmit’ was a lost antiquity he had to reinvent or ‘innovate’, and he therefore concludes that Confucius’ “program was far less conservative than might first appear” (Ryckmans 1986:8). Cao even argued that Confucius adopted this attitude for reasons of propriety rather than conviction (Cao Jianying 曹建英 2006). Other investigations into the meaning of this quotation by Confucius attempt a close reading of the *Lunyu*. By comparison with other text passages of the same work, the quotation emerges as an opposition to and criticism of creation without knowledge (Lewis 1999:110), or as transmission of form rather than content (Holzman 1978). Here we see the influence of the *textual context* on interpretation. Other scholars of Chinese studies noted the established and esteemed practice of actively adapting *Shijing* quotations to new contexts especially in diplomatic circles.³⁸ In the light of this *historical context*, Confucius’ stance of “I transmit but do not innovate” cannot be interpreted as moral judgement against any innovation or preferment of exact transmission.

By these notions, quoting (as reading) is always an act of (re-)interpretation. By embedding a quotation in a new *textual context*, each quoter can to some degree elucidate her/his interpretation to the implied reader. By giving information about the original author, source text, historical circumstances of the prototext’s production, and the like, the quoter highlights what of the *original context* is in her/his view important to the quotation’s interpretation, and gives in turn significant clues to its analysis.³⁹ The lack of such references, however, does not necessarily attest to the fact that the quotation did not have a stable meaning. It might well be that at the time of quoting a school of exegesis had fixed what Wagner calls the “intersubjectively verifiable” meaning of a quotation (Wagner Oct. 2002:4). Twofold canonised quotations (canonised in form *and* meaning) can thus be used without further references or even quotation marks without becoming ambiguous (see below). However, outside the canon or outside common knowledge, the analysis of quotations without references or quotation marks becomes mere guess-work. Does the (implied) reader recognise the quotation? How do we know that the quoter of hidden quotations (*jieryin*) is a ‘quoter’, and not merely an independent author incidentally using the same words? How likely is this? Have we

³⁸ See MARTIN Le Shijing, de la citation à l’allusion: la disponibilité du sens, *Extrême-Orient, Extrême-Occident*, 11-39: 18-9, HOLZMAN (1978) Confucius and Ancient Chinese Literary Criticism. In: Rickett & Yeh *Chinese Approaches to Literature from Confucius to Liang Ch’i- chao*, Princeton, N.J.: 34, LEWIS (1999) *Writing and Authority in Early China* New York: 155-63, JULLIEN (2000) *Umweg und Zugang: Strategien des Sinns in China und Griechenland* Wien: 75-93; WAGNER (Oct. 2002) The Canon’s Many and Parallel Lives after the end of Canonization. Paper presented at: *Symposium Canon and Pluralism*, Internationales Wissenschaftsforum der Universität Heidelberg.

³⁹ A reader’s letter to People’s Daily attests to the fact that information about a quoted work (author, title, page, year of publication) was deemed insufficient when quoting the Marxism-Leninism canon in articles on theory. To properly contextualise it, the time and circumstances of the source text’s creation should be provided as well. CHEN CHENGZHONG 陈承中 (25.11.1963) 改进理论文章引文附注 [Improve the annotations of quotations in theoretical articles], 人民日报, 2.

already reached the point in history, were everything possible has been said or written and stored in the so-called ‘Library of Babel’ awaiting repetition?⁴⁰ Is ours a world where, as the German comedian Valentin once put it, everything has already been said, but not by everyone?⁴¹ I put this argument to test in Chapter 3, in which I analyse the use that was made of one whole canonised text by Mao Zedong in articles of *People’s Daily*. Many scholars have remarked on the close resemblance in style between *People’s Daily* and the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*. *People’s Daily* itself had propagated the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* as style guide of writing in 1951 (see below). So it seems likely that journalists from *People’s Daily* not only consciously chose quotations from this style guide, but unconsciously adopted many sentences from Mao’s writings, especially ordinary sentences.⁴² However, the result of my search proved just the opposite: only one fourth of all sentences in one article of Mao’s are quoted in *People’s Daily* at all, and of these quotations it is the extraordinary, not the ordinary sentences that are repeated. This indicates that (unconscious) repetition of or adaptation to Mao’s words, though not unlikely, is less often found than might be assumed (for details confer to Chapter 3).

Reference

As has been argued above, quotations do not only transport the meaning of their formulation from one text to another, but refer to a larger meaning derived from the *original context*. When quotations are employed as *pars pro toto*, the reader is prompted to investigate the origin of the quotation. Often this origin is the quotation’s source text which is recommended for further reading and study. Changing the exegesis of the source text impairs the meaning of its quotations.⁴³ However, the relation between source text and quotation, I claim, is not unidirectional, from the source text and its

⁴⁰ See the article “Universal Library” in QUINE (1987) *Quiddities: An Intermittently Philosophical Dictionary* Cambridge, Mass.: 223-5. Quine argues therein that the Library of Bable (an idea going back to Jorge Borges) is finite because it can be reduced to two volumes, one containing a single dot, the other a dash (referring to the binary notation used in computers). Thus, “everything worth saying, and everything else as well, can be said with two characters. (Ibid. 225)” Interesting as this idea may be, from a logical point the Library of Bable is not finite, because there is no restriction on the length of sentences/books nor is the repetition of words in a sentence prohibited.

⁴¹ In German, this quotation reads: “Es ist schon alles gesagt, nur noch nicht von allen. ”

⁴² Here I refer to sentences that are neither specific to time, place, or occasion in contents or formulation; sentences that might be used anywhere and every time, that are so ordinary that they can hardly be counted as quotations, such as: “These are all very good signs. 所有这些，都是很好的现象。” or “In accordance with the above views, I would like to make the following proposal. 依据上述意见，我有下列提议。”

⁴³ An interesting study on the meaning of a whole text has been conducted by Michel Pêcheux later termed ‘Mansholt report’. University students were asked to analyse the same text under the premise of different frameworks, resulting in totally differing interpretations. Thus, it was shown by experiment that sentences and texts have no fixed meaning. See: PÊCHEUX (1983) *Language, Semantics and Ideology. Stating the Obvious* London; Basingstoke; MILLS (2004 (1997)) *Discourse, The New Critical Idiom*, London: 12.

exegesis to the quotation. As in the case of the classic which is recommended by quotation, the quotation does not merely act as *pars pro toto* recommending its source for further study. Singling out one quotation and not another, and embedding it in a new context, changes the meaning of the quotation and this reflects on the source text. This process is most obvious when people describe why they study quotations without context, as found in the *Lunyu* or, of course, the *Quotations of Chairman Mao*. Thus Churchill remarked on studying Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations*: "The quotations when engraved upon the memory give you good thoughts. They also make you anxious to read the authors and look for more." The source text is approached from the quotation and with "the good thoughts" derived from it, looking for more quotations and good thoughts, and not, so it seems, looking for the original context or the original meaning. The interpretation of the quotation (either developed by a reader himself or given by another quoter) impairs the later reading of the source text. In Chapter 3, I will investigate the diverse political strategies legitimated by quoting one and the same source text, and how in turn the meaning of this source text was changed by its being quoted.

The "quotable quotation" is fixed in form, but ambiguous in meaning. As the Chinese tradition it "was not trapped in set forms, but kept the capacity for metamorphosis and adaptation. (Ryckmans 1986:22)" Metamorphosis and adaptation, as I tried to outline above, are to some degree constrained by attributes defining the quotation, e.g. original and new context as embodied in the author and quoter, source text or historical circumstances. Still, a quotation can only be fixed in formulation, not in meaning. The Chinese themselves, however, conceived what Ryckmans appraised as "capacity for metamorphosis and adaptation" differently, or so it has been argued by Wagner: "The plurality of voices crowding in the meaningful void of the canon was not and never seen in China as a positive thing. (Wagner Oct. 2002:6)"⁴⁴ Instead, even in the 20th century they tried to fix the interpretation of formulations through comments, commentaries or guidelines (Weigelin-Schwiedrzik 1984:34; Schoenhals 1991:Introduction; Leese 2006).⁴⁵ Not the resulting monotony, but official changes to interpretations excited criticism in Communist China (Weigelin-Schwiedrzik 1984:34). Did they succeed? Should an investigation into the meaning of canonical quotations focus only on these

⁴⁴ Note that modern consumer culture is building upon the "meaningful void" of quotations, archetypes, allusions, and references to a range of previous works and possibly a range of cultures to attract the attention and interest of consumers, and on the other hand leave them enough space to construct and possibly share their own fantasies and insights. JENKINS (2006) *Convergence Culture* New York: 93-130. Similarly, Eco describes the nature of cult objects: "one must be able to break, dislocate, unhinge it so that one can remember only part of it, irrespective of their original relationship with the whole. ECO (1998 (1986)) *Faith in Fakes. Travels in Hyperreality* London: 198" A cult book might thus, according to Eco, be reduced to a series of excerpts. But isn't every book reducible to a series of excerpts? And is the series of excerpts rather part of transforming a book into a cult, than the result of its being a cult book?

⁴⁵ Ji contests the CCP's success in controlling the interpretation of the code. See: JI FENGYUAN (2004) *Linguistic Engineering. Language and Politics in Mao's China* Honolulu: 35.

guidelines, and not on instances of quotation in the Party press? How was the Party press supposed to quote the canon? How effectively could and was this controlled? How thoroughly were readers and writers trained in the wording and interpretations of canonical texts limiting their expression? What was canonical in 20th century China? In the next part of this chapter, I will discuss the influence that education and canonisation did and do exhibit on quotation practices in general and the press in particular.⁴⁶

Limiting the Quotable

Up to now, I have been mostly concerned about rather general, theoretical questions: What is a quotation? Why do we quote? What could a quotation mean? I now want to turn towards more specific issues concerning the practice of quotation in China under Communism: What rules apply to quoting? How far is quoting controlled by others than the quoter? What limits are set to choosing a quotation and embedding it in another context?

Accessibility

We can only quote what we know. And we only know what we have learned. Learning includes rote memorization, but also hearing, reading or ‘browsing’. The latter activities will provide few people with quotable phrases, and constant access to the materials once heard, read or browsed becomes central to quoting (as opposed to rephrasing). Access entails possessing the original work, a rubbing thereof, or even a commentary to it; but it can also mean a collection of de-contextualised quotations such as Bartlett’s *Familiar Quotations* of 1855, the *Lunyu*, or the *Quotations of Chairman Mao*. Today, dozens of websites allow easy access to distinguished quotations, for example www.bartleby.com, www.yulu.info, or, of course www.wikiquote.org. But even before the advent of the Internet, locating quotations of an author, in a book, or about a certain topic was eased by indices. Different forms of access, I argue, encourage different quoting styles. Imagine a community A, where ‘the quotable’ is a finite number of works memorised by every member; quotation might

⁴⁶ On Communist China see: PRICE (1976) *Cadres, Commanders, and Commissars. The Training of the Chinese Communist Leadership, 1920-45* Boulder; APTER & SAICH (1994) *Revolutionary Discourse in Mao's Republic* Cambridge, Mass; SCHOENHALS (1992) *Doing Things with Words in Chinese Politics. Five Studies* Berkeley; VOLLAND (2003) *The Control of the Media in the People's Republic of China* (Ph.D. thesis). Sinologisches Seminar, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität, Heidelberg. On the early Chinese press see for example: VITTINGHOFF (2002) *Die Anfänge des Journalismus in China (1860-1911)*, opera sinologica, vol. 9, Wiesbaden; MITTLER (2004) *A Newspaper for China? Power, Identity, and Change in Shanghai's News Media, 1872-1912*, Harvard East Asian studies monographs, vol. 226, Cambridge, Mass.; WAGNER (2001) The Early Chinese Newspapers and the Chinese Public Sphere, *European Journal of East Asian Studies* 1, 1-33.

become a game of saying the same, but differently. When everybody knows the original, it is the deviation that awaits to be perceived, interpreted, and appreciated. Imagine a different community B, where only quotation collections are available. Detached from their context and author, quotations would be valued for their formulations only. Quoting-out-of-context would not exist, but quotations might lose some of their communicative value. In both cases, the form of access to that which is being quoted, affects quoting. Before turning to the values and rules attributed by society to quotation, let us take a closer look at other such ‘means of production’ that may (be used to) limit the use of quotations in China, namely canonisation, education, and censorship.

Canonisation

What is a canon? How does canonisation relate to education? How does it affect quoting? In theory, a canon is a body of texts selected for both inter- and extratextual characteristics by some form of institutionalised power. It can fulfill functions of representation, identification, legitimation, or orientation for a group of people.⁴⁷ A canon is always constructed, not naturally selected. It empowers texts by inclusion, but at the cost of excluded and sidelined others (Assmann et al. 1987:11). In China, education, more or less controlled by the state, played and plays a pivotal role in the dissemination and transmission of the canon. With every sentence, a speaker or writer positions her/himself towards this canon, either ignoring it, speaking against it or emulating it. “Wo ein Kanon herrscht, kann nur der Sinn Geltung beanspruchen, der mit dem Text des Kanons zu vermitteln ist. (Assmann et al. 1987:11)” The canon, hence, inflicted quotation in two ways: the choice of a quotation became that between the canonical or non-canonical; commentaries or guidelines reduced (to some degree) the ambiguity of the quotation. When Marxism-Leninism was imported to China, it met with a long tradition of canonisation. The oldest so-called Confucian canon⁴⁸ was formed during the Warring States period (4th to 2nd century BCE), a time of political and spiritual turmoil. It was based on the Five Classics 五经 written in the millennium between roughly 1000 BCE and 220 CE.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ For a theoretical discussion of the canon concept see especially the first part of ASSMANN & ASSMANN (Eds.) (1987) *Kanon und Zensur*, München.

⁴⁸ Besides the Confucian canon, Daoist and Buddhist canons exist in China, and exercised varying influences on thought and education. Cf. to HUTERS, WONG & YU (Eds.) (1997) *Culture and State in Chinese History: Conventions, Accommodations, and Critiques*, Stanford: 58-82, 161-181.

⁴⁹ Shijing 诗经 (book of songs / odes), Shangshu 尚书 (book of documents), Zhouyi 周易 (book of changes), Chunqiu 春秋 (Spring and Autumn Annals), Liji 礼记 (Book of Ritual). Another classic on music was lost to memory as early as the time of Confucius. For the general history of the Confucian canon refer to the following works: LEWIS (1999) *Writing and Authority in Early China* New York; WAGNER (Oct. 2002) The Canon's Many and Parallel Lives after the end of Canonization. Paper presented at: *Symposium Canon and Pluralism*, Internationales Wissenschaftsforum der Universität Heidelberg; GRIMM (1987) Der chinesische Kanon: seine Struktur, Funktion und Kritik. In: Assmann & Assmann *Kanon*

Later texts were included in the canon forming the “13 classics 十三经”.⁵⁰ The content of this early canon was proper state government as well as adequate personal behaviour. However, as the example of quoting the *Shijing* in diplomatic negotiations has shown, canonisation only authorised a certain body of texts, but did not define or restrict their meaning. Only in the 3rd century BCE, when schools of exegesis developed, the texts were given a meaning that was “intersubjectively verifiable”, replacing the earlier “random quotation exegesis” (Wagner Oct. 2002). If the meaning given to a canonical quotation did not accord with the commentary, this could now be reprimanded; quotation became (to some degree) verifiable.⁵¹ The later exegesis was incorporated into the canon first as preface, later as annotation to the text, and was in turn canonised. From this time, there is proof of another function of the canon: “When he quotes episodes to disagree with the ruler he will not be accused of crimes. 引爭而不罪. (Han Fei 韩非 2000:261; trsl. in: Harbsmeier 1988-2003)” The canon rendered criticism of a ruler safe and, therefore possible. A similar incident has been recorded for peasants quoting Mao in an argument with village cadres (see below).

If the sage or scholar was responsible for writing commentaries, and for transmitting certain texts as canonical through teaching and quoting, it was the ruler who sanctioned both canon and commentary as orthodoxy. Throughout Chinese history, we find different forms of the state dominating what was (not) the canon and what it could (only) mean. The first emperor of China, Qin Shi Huang 秦始皇 (259-210 BCE), extinguished the canon’s alternative readings and allegedly their exegets by burning the books and by burying the scholars alive. Another form is found during the Han dynasty: controlling education by appointing teachers and defining curricula.⁵² Both forms

und Zensur, München; HENDERSON (1991) *Scripture, Canon and Commentary. A Comparison of Confucian and Western Exegesis* Princeton; LEE (2000) *Education in Traditional China: a History*, Handbuch der Orientalistik, vol. 13, Leiden.

⁵⁰ The 13 classics were no stable entity (WAGNER (Oct. 2002) The Canon's Many and Parallel Lives after the end of Canonization. Paper presented at: *Symposium Canon and Pluralism*, Internationales Wissenschaftsforum der Universität Heidelberg). Henderson notes more generally that “[t]he Confucian canon was also notable among those of major traditions in the extent to which it remained open, resisting final fixation or complete closure.” See: HENDERSON (1991) *Scripture, Canon and Commentary. A Comparison of Confucian and Western Exegesis* Princeton: 49, 60.

⁵¹ Note, however, that until the advent of Neo-Confucianism different schools of exegesis existed simultaneously, vying for the state’s support to officially sanction their commentaries. The Neo-Confucians challenged the state’s monopoly to determine the canon. Ironically, the new commentaries by Zhu Xi (a leading Neo-Confucian) were in turn canonised by the state and set the main contents of the state examinations until its abolition in 1905. Other, more liberal interpretations of the canon emerged in independent schools, though not influencing the contents of examinations or the students preparing to take them. See: LEE (2000) *Education in Traditional China: a History*, Handbuch der Orientalistik, vol. 13, Leiden: 22f.

⁵² The curriculum of schools (representing the canon) changed over time: Since the Han dynasty it comprised the Five Classics, Lunyu (Annals of Confucius), the Classic of Filial Piety, the Book of History and the Book of Poetry. During the Tang dynasty, the Mencius was added. The Neo-Confucian school produced a new commentary to the Four Books (Classic of Filial Piety, the Analects, Mencius, and the Doctrine of the Mean) that became part of the canon in the Song dynasty. LEE (2000) *Education in Traditional China: a History*, Handbuch der Orientalistik, vol. 13, Leiden.

reappear in 20th century China: Guomindang as well as CCP persecuted political enemies and censored their writing. Moreover, the CCP controlled any job appointments, including teaching positions at schools and universities. However, especially in the early years of the CCP, politically trustworthy academics were scarce, but positions were many. Therefore, at least in Shanghai appointees to schools were politically suspicious or academically unprepared (U 2004). The third form used to control the canon was, of course, the state examination system introduced during the Song dynasty (960-1279).⁵³ Instead of defining the curriculum of (state-owned) schools, the state now controlled learning indirectly through setting examinations as prerequisite to admission to and ascension in the state's bureaucracy. It was the content of the state examinations that defined the curriculum for private schools, and not the other way round (Bastid 1988:9).⁵⁴

In 1942, on the verge of creating a new canon, Mao Zedong displayed all his contempt for what had become of its Confucian counterpart in the early 20th century: "In those days the ruling classes indoctrinated students with Confucian teachings and compelled the people to venerate all the trappings of Confucianism as religious dogma, and all writers used the classical language. In short, what was written and taught by the ruling classes and their hangers-on was in the nature of stereotyped writing and dogma, both in content and in form. (Mao Zedong 毛泽东 1967 (1953):788; trsl. in: Mao Zedong 1965a:54)" The CCP did not conceive of Marxism-Leninism and later Mao Zedong Thought as substitute of the Confucian canon, but as science. However, we might ask if the CCP only succeeded in changing the content, not the form of both canon and quotation. What is the difference between canon and science? And how could this affect quotation practice? In theory, no science possesses an inherent truth value, but its truth is repeatedly tested by reality; whereas a canon is true by its status as such. The text of a canon is fixed for eternity. Over the years, the semantic gap

⁵³ On the state examination system there is a very comprehensive history found in: ELMAN (1999) *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China* Berkeley. An equally comprehensive history of education in China until 1900 is given in: LEE (2000) *Education in Traditional China: a History*, Handbuch der Orientalistik, vol. 13, Leiden. Lo and Chaffee focus both on the examination system under the Song dynasty: LO (1987) *An Introduction to the Civil Service of Sung China: with Emphasis on its Personnel Administration* Honolulu; CHAFFEE (1995) *The Thorny Gates of Learning in Sung China: a Social History of Examinations* Binghamton. For criticism of the examination system especially since the Ming dynasty and its reform in the 19th and 20th century see: ELMAN (1999) *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China* Berkeley: 521-625; BASTID (1988) *Educational Reform in Early Twentieth Century China* Ann Arbor; FRANKE (1963) *The Reform and Abolition of the Traditional Chinese Examination System* Cambridge, Mass.. Of further interest is a study on a late Ming jest book containing jokes on the Four Books, then part of the canon and tested in the state examinations. Chapter two focuses on the criticism implicit in jokes about the examinations: HUANG (1998) *Jokes on the Four Books: Cultural criticism in early modern China* (Ph.D. thesis). University of Arizona, Tucson.

⁵⁴ Bourdieu remarked that today literary classics are canonised by the educational system BOURDIEU (1999) *Die Regeln der Kunst. Genese und Struktur des literarischen Feldes* Frankfurt: 237f. Thus, the canon is formed by the contents of education, not the reverse. The same is noted in LEE (2000) *Education in Traditional China: a History*, Handbuch der Orientalistik, vol. 13, Leiden: 22.

between the (ancient) text of the canon and the ever-changing world grows, the canon loses significance if it is not repeatedly accommodated to the world. This function is fulfilled by what Assmann calls the “maintenance of meaning, one of three guardians of the canon”. Commentaries are one option to maintain the meaning of a canon. And in my view, quotation is another important mechanism to restore meaning and bridge the gap between static canon and changing world. What about the test of time to scientific truth? The importance of data to verification or falsification of scientific theories has lost much of its appeal in recent times. Instead, Kuhn claimed that normal science works within paradigms that are taken for granted by the scientific community, just like different, incompatible world views (Kuhn 1969). Lakatos specified and expanded Kuhn’s ideas: a scientific research program consists of core theories and auxiliary hypotheses. The latter explain anomalies that might refute the former which should be defended at all costs. (Burawoy 1990:777-8). A science is thus bound to a community of believers. They are educated within the scientific paradigm, and invest into its survival by creating auxiliary hypotheses to integrate counter-instances. Following this modern conception of science, Burawoy rescues Marxism as science (Burawoy 1990). But then, there isn’t much left to differentiate science from canon.

In his critical remark about the Confucian canon that I have quoted above, Mao sketched out the mechanisms necessary to and the effects of canonisation: (1) an institution or power-holder promoting the canon, (2) dissemination of the canon and its language via teaching, (3) belief in the truth or authority of the canon, and (4) reproduction of the canon’s style and content in new writing. In his talk of 1942, Mao used this depiction of Confucian teaching to criticise what he conceived of as the “new dogmatism” of foreign-trained Chinese Marxists in the CCP (see for details Chapter 3). “They [the returned students] return from Europe, America, or Japan, and all they know how to do is to *recite a stock of undigested foreign phrases*. They function as phonographs but forget their own *responsibility to create something new*. The Communist Party is also infected with this disease. [...] That is to say, they [many of our comrades] violate a fundamental principle of the repeated warnings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin: the union of theory and practice. [...] Their [many students] inclination is to regard what they have learned from their teachers as never-changing dogma. [My emphasis]”⁵⁵ In this speech, Mao points out two problems of Marxist education abroad and at home:

⁵⁵ This speech was later revised and included in the third volume of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*. Compton’s translation is based on a version published in 1945 in a collection titled *Party Reform Documents* and translated by Compton sponsored by the Far Eastern and Russian Institute of the University of Washington in 1951. The documents comprise a selection of the reading materials prescribed for the study sessions during the Yan’an rectification movement of 1942-44. The reading materials not included in this publication had already been translated into English and published prior to 1945. As far as I know, everybody in Yan’an was obliged to attend the study sessions, not just cadres. From this I

Knowledge of Marxism and the ability to quote the canon does not help to solve the actual problems of the Chinese society, and to regard the Marxist canon as “never-changing dogma” is a wrong attitude. Note, that Mao did not oppose the existence or propagation of a new Marxist canon. But he demanded that the cadre schools should teach how to use Marxist theory in practice as opposed to teaching theory for its own sake; moreover, by uniting Marxist theory and Chinese practice “something new” had to be created, which later became known as Mao Zedong Thought.⁵⁶

What is the difference between science and canon? I argue that Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought can be seen as either canon or science, and that each view was expounded and exploited by the CCP in different periods of time (see Chapter 3). Thus, after the Cultural Revolution the idea of Mao Zedong Thought as science was emphasised (by emphasising the necessity to “Seek truth from facts”, so that the truth value of each text, policy, or principle might be reconfirmed or refuted) to legitimate additions to and reductions of the canon’s core texts. During the Yan’an Rectification Campaign or the Cultural Revolution, on the other hand, Mao Zedong Thought had canonical function: only actions that could be justified by a quotation of Chairman Mao had validity.

Education

When he compared the “new dogmatism” of the foreign-trained Chinese Communists with the old Confucian dogmatism, Mao opposed a certain style in learning and quoting the Confucian canon that had become elite standard in late imperial China and was closely linked to the state’s examination system. See for example the picture of education around 1900 drawn by Bastid-Bruguère: At first, one learned vocabulary through the memorisation of the *Sanzijing* 三字经 (Three-Character-Classic). “After this the student was introduced to the classics proper: the *Classic of Filial Piety*, the *Analects*, *Mencius*, and the *Doctrine of the Mean*. Explanations were given only of individual characters and the student’s sole task was to *learn the words by heart*. Later the texts were read again with other classics, and some explanation of their general meaning was given. [...] Teaching methods relied

conclude, that the following arguments presented from these documents adhere not only to cadres but to the wider public as well.

⁵⁶ Similar views were expounded in other documents from the Yan’an Rectification Campaign: Stalin argued in “The Bolshevisation of the Party” from February 3, 1925 “When formulating any slogan or directive, the Party should not rely on memorised formulas or historical comparisons, but on the concrete conditions of the revolutionary movement”. Liu Shaoqi warned in the “Liquidation of Menshevik Thought in the Party” against “false Marxists and Bolsheviks” saying: “In speech they can appear more Marxist than anyone else. [...] When working, they invariably base their actions on books, on set phrases of Marx, Engels, Lenin, or Stalin, on a section from some regulation, or on general concepts and general theory, and not on actual experiences or calculations drawn from practical work.”, or Chen Yun in “How to be a Communist Party Member” from May 30, 1939. See for English translations: COMPTON (1952) *Mao's China. Party Reform Documents, 1942-44* Seattle: 91f, 264f, 269f.

solely on *rote memory* and repetition. Students had to know all the classics by heart and be able to write fluently, using parallel phrases and rhyming sentences. [My emphasis] (Bastid 1988:31)” The canon, it seems, was foremost learned as form without content, as quotation without meaning. Education at that time was no longer a means to self-cultivation, but a profit-seeking enterprise. “State service was the most respectable means to acquiring status and privilege, and passing the entrance examinations became the most reliable route to upward social mobility. (Lee 2000:23)”⁵⁷ The canon was studied to pass an exam which required a specialised language (*wenyanwen* 文言文), exact memorising of the classics, the ability to recognise a given quotation and copiously use further quotations, and finally the mastery of a certain form of writing called the eight-legged essay (*baguwen* 八股文). Research on the examination system in general and the eight-legged essay in particular has recently become an issue of contestation. While some scholars stress the “increasingly stupefying effects” that the state examinations caused since Ming times (Lee 2000:23 and 619-39), others try to rescue the eight-legged essay from the so-called ‘modernisation narrative’ by pointing out among other things that “examinees had to [...] show sophisticated skills in the arts of rhetoric and argumentation” (Magone 2004:586).⁵⁸ However, both factions agree on the fact that knowledge of the canon and its main commentaries was a pre-condition to examination success (Magone 2004:586). Thereby, the state examinations influenced the curricula of private and public schools, consolidating (knowledge of) the canon. The many resources that attest to the negative effects of the state examinations on learning, even if only polemically doing so, show another aspect: learning to quote but not to understand the meaning of the quotation was never an ideal. And it was not always the practice either, as the example of Hu Shi shows: by paying three times as much as others parents, Hu Shi’s mother induced his teacher to carefully explain the classics to him, and not only to memorise their form as other students were taught to (Bastid 1988:31). Research on quotation practices, on the other hand, shows another result that excessive rote memorisation of a canon may produce, namely indiscriminate quoting: classical quotations were embedded in contexts as different as the medical treatise *Bencao gangmu* 本草綱目 by Li Shizhen of 1596 (Métailié 1995), or a

⁵⁷ Elman and others have pointed out that though the state examinations were in theory open to all classes, the time and money necessary for the preparation of a candidate in fact excluded members from the lower classes. See especially: ELMAN (Feb. 1991) Political, Social, and Cultural Reproduction via Civil Service Examinations in Late Imperial China *The Journal of Asian Studies* 50, 7-28; Also ELMAN (1999) *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China* Berkeley: XXIX. On the other hand, not all that passed the examinations necessarily became officials (ELMAN (1999) *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China* Berkeley: XXIV), nor was it the only road to officialdom (LEE (2000) *Education in Traditional China: a History*, Handbuch der Orientalistik, vol. 13, Leiden).

⁵⁸ For further details on this conflict see: MAGONE Who wants to be a bureaucrat? The performative dimension of Qing civil service examinations, *Asiatische Studien/Études Asiatiques* 58, 581-595: 589.

newspaper article of 1873 on the contamination of drinking water in Shanghai (Mittler 2004:126). Quoting appears in these accounts to be more a reflex, a standard mode of textual production, than a deliberate choice made by an individual author. Such classical quotations were mere decoration, complimenting both reader and author on their learning, devoid of any “objectively verifiable” meaning.

This was the style in learning, writing and quoting that Mao opposed to in his 1942 speech at a cadres’ meeting in Yan’an titled “Oppose stereotyped party writing 反对党八股” (also translated as “Oppose the party’s eight-legged style”). Therein, Mao repeated earlier polemics against the eight-legged essay, criticising the mere ability to “recite a stock of undigested [...] phrases” which could not prove a person’s understanding thereof. These polemics Mao now directed against foreign-trained cadres. How did the Communists and others before change this system of learning, and to what extent did this entail a change in quotation practice? With the examination system, the state had effectively controlled the content of school curricula and promoted foremost state orthodoxy embodied in the Confucian canon.⁵⁹ With the abolition of the examination system in 1905, the canon did not relinquish its dominance over education, only its promotion was transferred directly to the schools. New government schools continued to teach the traditional Confucian canon, but included also the sciences or physical education that had formerly been considered working skills not prone to education. However, replacing ‘traditional’ with ‘modern’ schools was a slow progress, so that by the early 1920s still more students attended traditional schools than others, even in major metropolitan areas (Seeberg 2000:61). And although education reformers influenced by Western educational practice sought to abolish it, “rote memorisation was still the learning method of choice among both students and teachers even at the most prestigious Chinese universities in the 1980s. (Seeberg 2000:63-4, 455)”⁶⁰ Neither teaching methods, nor the curriculum of the modern schools that focused on practical knowledge appeared of much value especially to the rural population during the republican, but also the socialist period. Before 1905, a successful examination candidate raised the status and prestige of his whole extended family, regardless of the fact that he did or did not join state service (Elman 1999:XXIV). But the ability to quote the canon could also give advantage to a peasant disputing with a tax collector, business partner or even a family member (Mancall 1968:65,

⁵⁹ Note that in the decades before the collapse of the state examination system, testing of other skills than transmitted by the Confucian canon had been included. BASTID (1988) *Educational Reform in Early Twentieth Century China* Ann Arbor: 3-58.

⁶⁰ Even today, my Chinese colleagues report that they had to memorise selected quotations and use them during examinations (personal communication).

quoted after Seeberg). Memorisation and quotation skills kept their value for peasants in the PRC. In Chen village, the village leader Chen Qingfa gained the respect of the peasants not only for his physical abilities, but also for his articulateness and decisiveness: though entirely illiterate, he could accurately recount new complicated directives that had been handed down to him in a market town or at county capital meetings (Chan et al. 1984:29-30).⁶¹ When Mao quotations had to be memorised by peasants in Mao Thought Training Sessions starting in early 1966, the peasants soon discovered their usefulness in disputes with fellow peasants or superiors (Chan et al. 1984:80, 74-87; Leese 2006:124). According to Seeberg's personal observations and interviews, "[f]rom the 1950s to the 1980s the village school continued to look much like its ancestor, rows of students repeating after the teachers, swaying in rhythm with the text reading.(Seeberg 2000:84)" The content of education, however, had changed: education became more comprehensive, including sciences, athletics, and, of course, Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought. The Confucian canon was no longer central to education, but was forbidden by threat of punishment. "Yet in the elite schools for children of high Party officials, such as Zhingshan High School in Beijing, the works of Confucius remained a constant part of the curriculum." (Seeberg 2000:85). This attests to the fact that what Volland called the "information pyramid" of the media concept extends into the school system: people in higher positions were trusted with more, more detailed, more politically suspect information than those in lower positions.

Media

Right at the top of the pyramid is the Party-State's top leadership, followed by layers of cadres, and then by the people. At its bottom are foreigners (Volland 2003:210-9).⁶² The media were seen by the CCP to be "essentially about education (Volland 2003:123)".⁶³ Whereas schools would only reach the young, media disseminated the new ideology to society at large. The Party monitored information flow and access to information, it surveilled discourse and language, and applied censorship; all this

⁶¹ The effects of orality vs. literacy on culture, conservatism and creativity are discussed in ONG (1988) *Orality and Literacy. The Technologizing of the Word*, New accents, London.

⁶² Volland remarks, however, that this is a theoretical claim of his media concept, the reality of which might look very different in particular cases. This system is at work even today, when the PRC holds back information on natural disasters, industrial accidents, or the outbreak of epidemics.

⁶³ This outlook was not new to China: Liang Qichao 梁启超 (1873-1929) had considered newspapers as teaching material, repeating the stance of earlier Chinese journalists (VITTINGHOFF (2002) *Die Anfänge des Journalismus in China (1860-1911)*, opera sinologica, vol. 9, Wiesbaden: 420). During the Japanese occupation of China, Fan Changjiang 范长江 (1909-1970) promoted newspapers as tool to educate his fellow citizens (HUNG (Oct. 1991) Paper Bullets: Fan Changjiang and New Journalism in Wartime China, *Modern China* 17, 427-468). Fan later became the first director 社长 of *People's Daily*.

was done to control newspapers, magazines, books, radio, later television, and the Internet (Volland 2003:189-243). It aimed at filling the public space with correct content. In how far did this media concept affect quoting? Not surprisingly, the main content of quotation changed. Instead of quoting the Five Classics or Four Books, now the works of Marx and Engels, Lenin and Stalin, or Mao Zedong were referred to. Quotations of these new canonical sources met several requirements: Being a nucleus of the canon, they transmitted both Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought as well as correct terminology and language.⁶⁴ Canonical quotations could infuse the power of a higher authority into a common person's text. But just as a weapon, a symbol, or a ritual, they could be used by anybody with varying intentions and meanings (see above). As many studies on thought control by way of controlling the language have shown, words and phrases as the means for producing language leave space enough for alternative expression and interpretation. The same holds true for quotations that are by nature ambiguous, open to reinterpretation in between certain boundaries. An enemy might use quotations to hide his intentions as well as a true revolutionary to show his allegiance. So time and again it was declared that revolutionary action and not quotation, deeds and not words were decisive to prove one's political standpoint at least amongst the people.⁶⁵

For those creating and controlling the language, however, "often words count for more than deeds. [...] Acts that cannot be immediately sanctioned on the basis of arguments contained in canonical texts will be kept secret until the obstacles preventing such sanction have been eliminated (Schoenhals 1991:243)." One criticism levelled against Confucianism by some May Fourth intellectuals had been that the study of the ancient canon was tied to an equally ancient language (*wenyan* 文言) unintelligible to the common people. The people were cut off from their own literary heritage and contemporary writing likewise. To adopt the language of 'the people' (*baihua* 白话) in writing had been a goal of the New Culture Movement, later also propagated by the CCP. Shang, however, points out that *baihua* was no more a living language than *wenyan* had been, but the official language of the Beijing region. "The people spoke regional dialects (*fangyan* 方言). Adopting those as new written language, however, would have diverted the political purpose of

⁶⁴ Analysis of the revision process of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* show, that both the contents and its correct phrasing (terminology and grammar) were of utmost importance to the editorial board. MARTIN (Ed.) (1979) *Mao Zedong Texte. Schriften, Dokumente, Reden und Gespräche*, München: 21ff.

⁶⁵ See for example Mao's words as of 1939, quoted again in an editorial of 1969: "The last dividing line between revolutionary, non-revolutionary and counter-revolutionary intellectuals is whether or not they are willing to unite with the masses of workers and peasants and actually do so." It is action, not words that count. MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1967 (1952)) 毛泽东选集 [Selected works of Mao Zedong] vol. 2, 北京: 523; RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民日报社 (04.05.1969) 五四运动五十年 [Fifty years May Fourth Movement], 人民日报, 3.

constructing a new national language. (Shang 2002)” The CCP did not retract the steps taken in Republican times by promoting *fangyan*, on the contrary they promoted a new ‘canonical’ language represented by Mao Zedong Thought.⁶⁶ “Comrade Mao Zedong and Mr. Lu Xun⁶⁷ are models for the use of this [modern Chinese] lively, rich, and graceful language. Their work presents the *most skilled and most precise* use of our country’s modern language, and gives us many *important instructions about our language*. We must diligently study Comrade Mao Zedong and Mr. Lu Xun, [and] continue to carry on the glorious tradition of our country’s language. 毛泽东同志和鲁迅先生，是使用这种活泼、丰富、优美的语言的模范。在他们的著作中，表现了我国现代语的最熟练和最精确的用法，并给了我们在语言方面许多重要的指示。我们应当努力学习毛泽东同志和鲁迅先生，继续发扬我国语言的光辉传统。 [My emphasis] (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1951.06.06)“ In this editorial of 1951, Mao Zedong’s works were singled out not only as Chinese contribution to Marxism-Leninism, but moreover as a model for the use of the modern Chinese language. From the realm of literature another model for “diligent study” was selected in the writings of Lu Xun. The editorial introduced the 45 parts series “Introduction to grammar and rhetoric 语法、修辞讲话” by Lü Shuxiang and Zhu Dexi, two professors of Qinghua University.⁶⁸ In all the series’ 45 parts, every linguistic example is chosen either from Mao or Lu, or else created from scratch. Considering that even the first volume of Mao’s *Selected Works* was only officially published by October 1951, this series is an illuminating example of the early propagation of his works and words. Why did the CCP attach so much importance to the use of correct language? In the above quoted editorial carrying the title “Correctly use our home country’s language, fight for the pureness and health of language! 正确地使用祖国的语言，为语言的纯洁和健康而斗争!”, the argument ran as follows: “Every article, report, newspaper, or publication of an organ of the party organisation or government exists to propagate truth, instructions, assignments and methods to the masses. Because their influence on the masses is very great, in every article, report, newspaper, or publication [one] must be able to use the correct language to express thought/ideology, then the thought/ideology will

⁶⁶ For a theoretical discussion about the interdependence between standard language and canon refer to: WIENOLD (1987) *Kanon und Hierarchiebildung in Sprache und Literatur: Sprachentwicklungstyp, Diglossie und Polysystem*. In: Assmann & Assmann *Kanon und Zensur*, München.

⁶⁷ The term 先生, here translated as Mr., is in Chinese text since 1949 used to denote intellectuals, who are not members of the CCP.

⁶⁸ The series was published between June 6 and December 15, 1951. For an analysis thereof see WAGNER (1999) 中共一九四〇~一九五三年建立正语，正文的政策大略 [General outline of the CCP’s policy 1940 to 1953 to establish a correct written and spoken language]. In: Peng Xiaoyan 彭小妍 文艺理论与通俗文化 [Literary theory and popular culture], 台北.

be correctly grasped by the masses, and only then will the correct material force be produced. 党的组织和政府机关的每一个文件，每一个报告，每一种报纸，每一种出版物，都是为了向群众宣传真理、指示任务和方法而存在的。它们在群众中影响极大，因此必须使任何文件、报告、报纸和出版物都能用正确的语言来表现思想，使思想为群众所正确地掌握，才能产生正确的物质的力量。(Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1951.06.06)⁶⁹ This argumentation reminds forcefully of the Confucian idea of the “setting straight of names 正名“, time and again cited in secondary literature on language formalisation by the CCP.⁶⁹ The stress laid upon the “correct language” had different consequences: For every writer it became a constant necessity to study and master the correct kind of language. For the Party, the constant revision of the language became an ongoing task and often a power struggle.⁷⁰

Both press and language were conceived off as weapons in ideological conflicts⁷¹, but also as the most powerful tool for disseminating propaganda.⁷² Therefore, Communist education through the press did not only feature ideology, but also terminology. In theory at least the exploited masses were empowered to take part in the political discourse by teaching them the means of producing this discourse, i.e. the language and thought of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought.⁷³ Newspapers featured as kind of textbooks of Marxism for the people.⁷⁴ How this theoretical idea should be realised in practice is hinted at by Hu Qiaomu during his “breakfast talks” with young editors of

⁶⁹ For the “Setting straight of names” cf. CONFUCIUS (1979) *The Analects* London: 118. Secondary materials mentioning this connection include: SCHOENHALS (1992) *Doing Things with Words in Chinese Politics. Five Studies* Berkeley: 2; VOLLAND (2003) *The Control of the Media in the People's Republic of China* (Ph.D. thesis). Sinologisches Seminar, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität, Heidelberg: 210.

⁷⁰ Instances of revisions are stated in SCHOENHALS (1992) *Doing Things with Words in Chinese Politics. Five Studies* Berkeley: 20 and SCHOENHALS (Jun. 1991) The 1978 Truth Criterion Controversy, *The China Quarterly*, 243-268.

⁷¹ Cf. for the Marxism-Leninism view STALIN (1953) The Twelfth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.), April 19, 1923. In: Stalin Works, vol. 5, Moscow: 241. In China, the term later appears in biographical narratives: GAO YUAN (1987) *Born Red. A Chronicle of the Cultural Revolution* Stanford: 74 and FENG JICAI (1991) *Voices from the Whirlwind. An Oral History of the Chinese Cultural Revolution* New York: 88; as well as secondary literature like JI FENGYUAN (2004) *Linguistic Engineering. Language and Politics in Mao's China* Honolulu: 305 and FEUERWERKER (1998) *Ideology, Power, Text. Self-Representation and the Peasant "Other" in Modern Chinese Literature* Stanford: 45.

⁷² The believe in the omnipotence of the mass media is not exceptional to Communists, but also found in early studies on the effects of mass communication especially until World War II (SCHENK (2002) *Medienwirkungsforschung* Tübingen: 57).

⁷³ Bourdieu even argues in BOURDIEU (1982) *Die feinen Unterschiede: Kritik der gesellschaftlichen Urteilskraft* Frankfurt: 57f, that to own cultural capital – as Bordieu calls it – as manifested in education and the ability to speak the political language constitutes an essential step in taking over political power, next to the political power held by those controlling the economic means of production.

⁷⁴ Hu Qiaomu stressed this point in an article as early as of January 26, 1943 titled “Newspapers are textbooks for the people”. The article was first published in *Liberation Daily* 解放日报 and later included in a collection titled *Documents on Newspapers Work* 新闻工作文献 published in 1949, cf. to: XINHUA SHE 新华社, HUAZHONG BAN SHE 华中办社 & HUAZHONG XINHUA RIBAO SHE BIANWEIHUI 华中新华日报社编委会 (Eds.) (1949) 新闻工作文献 [Documents on newspaper work],

People's Daily at Beijing in 1955: “Or for example the topic of class struggle, one can use many different subjects, national and international events, urban and rural news ... all can be better explained from the point of class struggle. Thereby every day class struggle or Marxism on many sites can be propagated endlessly. (Xinwen yanjiu suo 新闻研究所 1978:96; 2005)” The press should translate abstract ideology into practical examples. This was done with theoretical concepts such as class struggle, but also applied to quotation. In articles analysing real problems, the explanatory value of quotations was demonstrated. I will return to this aspect in the last part of this introduction when discussing the interaction between the rules pertaining to quoting and the values attached to it.

People's Daily

People's Daily, the newspaper under analysis in my dissertation, was the mouthpiece of the Party Central. It's target group was the rank and file of the Party. Though *People's Daily* is no classified publication and its readership included non-Party members as well, it foremost addressed cadres all over China. Thus, we must understand the above introduced series on “Grammar and Rhetoric” as prototype for writing style of cadres and journalists. Accordingly, the accompanying editorial stressed that “in every article, report, newspaper, or publication [one] must be able to use the correct language to express thought/ideology“. *People's Daily* not only transmitted facts and figures, commentaries or directives, it also disseminated the new ideology, its language, and last but not least the new abbreviated script. Directly linked to the Standing Committee of the Politburo, molded after the central organ of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union *Pravda*, *People's Daily* was in content and style the prototype for newspapers all over China. For several reasons, this leading status was repeatedly challenged, for example during the Hundred Flowers (1956-57) or the Cultural Revolution (1966-76), and for some time transferred to other papers such as *Wenhuibao* 文汇报 or *Jiefangjun bao* 解放军报.⁷⁵ How influential was *People's Daily*?

⁷⁵ *Wenhui bao* took the lead during the Hundred Flowers policy (1956-7) after Mao had set it off as positive example to *People's Daily* and other papers (VOLLAND (2003) *The Control of the Media in the People's Republic of China* (Ph.D. thesis). Sinologisches Seminar, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität, Heidelberg: 318-54; CHEEK (1997) *Propaganda and Culture in Mao's China. Deng Tuo and the Intelligentsia* Oxford: 167-214). *Jiefangjun bao* was similarly promoted before and at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution (CHANG MAN (1969) *The People's Daily and the Red Flag Magazine during the Cultural Revolution* Hong Kong).

	1949	1966	1980s
Print run of <i>People's Daily</i> ⁷⁶	60-70,000	2.2 Million	100 Million
Population of China ⁷⁷	550 Million	790 Million	1 Billion
People per newspaper	8,500	360	10

Figure 1: How influential was *People's Daily*?

Figure 1 suggests that the influence of *People's Daily* on the population grew between 1949 and the 1980s as the paper became more accessible to a larger number of people. However, this picture is misleading. First of all, *People's Daily* was bought not by individuals but units (factories, communes, *danwei* etc.). As everyone was member of a unit, the paper thus was in theory accessible to everyone. This system is still in place today and has even become coercive. However, as subscriptions are only controlled once a year, many units cancel it one or two month later (Wang Zhao 2008). No common newsstand or bookstore in China sells *People's Daily* today; as an individual, one has to visit special outlets to obtain an issue of the paper.⁷⁸ Who was interested in *People's Daily*? Even Mao once acknowledged he never read *People's Daily*, as its content was dry and dull. But then he and the other members of the Standing Committee could resort to other channels of information (recall the information pyramid), and, obviously, as they incited those changes of policy that were later reported by *People's Daily*, what news could the paper bring to them? The situation was different for mid- and low-level cadres. Removed from power centres such as Beijing, Shanghai or Guangzhou, *People's Daily* was often first to inform them about new tasks, campaigns, or policy shifts.⁷⁹ And, as I tried to show above, *People's Daily* also conveyed the changing Party jargon to its members. Joining Party discourse required proficiency in its language and current topics; and this was a prerequisite to ascension in its ranks. Canonical quotations can be seen as the most authoritative

⁷⁶ Source: RENMIN RIBAO BAOSHI BIANJIZU 人民日报报史编辑组 (1988) 人民日报回忆录 1948 - 1988 [Memoirs of the People's Daily 1948-1988] 北京: 356-63.

⁷⁷ Source: CHINA STATISTICAL YEARBOOK (1999) *Population Growth, Crude Birth and Death Rates, 1949-1996*. http://www.iiasa.ac.at/Research/LUC/ChinaFood/data/pop/pop_10.htm, accessed: 18.07.2008, downloaded: 18.07.2008.

⁷⁸ WANG ZHAO (09.08.2008) 从我的工作看人民日报 [People's Daily as seen from my own work experience]. Talk given at the Institute for Chinese Studies, Heidelberg; Cora Jungbluth, a colleague of mine, tried to buy *People's Daily* in China at several places in 2006/7 without success. These facts contest statements proving the influence of *People's Daily* merely by figures, such as "As China's national daily, PD's circulation is truly gigantic, totalling nearly four million daily copies." See abstract of: YU (2001) *The role of Chinese media during the Cultural Revolution (1965--1969)* (Ph.D. thesis). College of Communication, Ohio University, Ohio.

⁷⁹ Though *Xinhuashe* was responsible for distributing information to the press, reprinting articles from *People's Daily* was also accepted. Sometimes, the orchestration of the media went so far that different papers were given different publication dates for the same news, *People's Daily* often taking the lead.

particle of this discourse, and as they were also ambiguous to some degree, could be put to repeated use in many situations.

Quotation Proficiency

At this point, I want to return to two issues raised so far only in theoretical form: It is impossible to quote the unknown; and a quotation is most intelligible, and can function as shortcut only if it is known to quoter and (implied) reader. What quotations or prototexts were known to the readers of *People's Daily*? And what quotations would a journalist of the paper have known? As argued above, quotations were made known by the paper itself. But *People's Daily* was not the only tool used to educate cadres and adults. Weekly study sessions⁸⁰ and mass campaigns⁸¹ served in disseminating Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought to adults. Rote memorisation as in children's education had not been part of this weekly study sessions, at least descriptions thereof do not emphasise this. They sometimes involved copying of texts, but mostly these were (repeatedly) read and then discussed. Participants were often asked to relate the moral of a text to their own life's experience, to criticise former behaviour and acknowledge their newly acquired consciousness.

Only with the onset of the Cultural Revolution adults engaged in memorising quotations or even whole texts⁸² by Mao, beyond trying only to understand policy and ideology delivered to them in Party documents printed by newspapers. The same holds true, as far as I know, for Party cadres. Though several sets of *Ganbu bidu* 干部必读 (trsl.: required reading for cadres) appeared either in

⁸⁰ Held since the early 1950s, these are described as “forums for the popularisation of new political mandates, campaigns, ideological stances. The discussions required participants to mimic Party documents published in the newspapers, to learn a new, abstract political vocabulary, and one which was revised repeatedly and at a moment's notice.” (SEEBERG (2000) *The Rhetoric and Reality of Mass Education in Mao's China*, Chinese Studies, vol. 14, Lewiston, NY: 87). Similar methods were tested during the Yan'an Rectification Campaign (APTER & SAICH (1994) *Revolutionary Discourse in Mao's Republic* Cambridge, Mass.: 134; COMPTON (1952) *Mao's China. Party Reform Documents, 1942-44* Seattle: 3). Ji notes that the group discussion ensured “a high level of interpretive consistence among the various levels of the hierarchy”, but broke down at the bottom of the illiterate or ignorant; see: JI FENGYUAN (2004) *Linguistic Engineering. Language and Politics in Mao's China* Honolulu: 37f. For study sessions during the Cultural Revolution, see CHAN, MADSEN & UNGER (1984) *Chen Village. The Recent History of a Peasant Community in Mao's China* Berkeley: 74-102. On the idea of “living study” initiated in the army by Lin Biao and later taken over by the larger populace, see LEESE (2006) *Performative Politics and Petrified Image: The Mao Cult during China's Cultural Revolution* (Ph.D. thesis). School of Humanities and Social Sciences, International University, Bremen: 99-121.

⁸¹ An early example is the marriage law campaign of 1953; see: ALTEHENDER (work in progress) *Popularizing Marriage Law: Trajectories of Mass Legal Education Campaign in China 1949-1953* (Ph.D. thesis). Sinologisches Seminar, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität, Heidelberg. The influence of mass campaigns on language and interpretation during the early years of the Cultural Revolution is discussed in: JI FENGYUAN (2004) *Linguistic Engineering. Language and Politics in Mao's China* Honolulu: 109-218.

⁸² I refer here to the *lao san pian* 老三篇, i.e. “Serve the People”, “The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains”, and “In Memory of Norman Bethune”, which were memorised by large parts of the Chinese population before, during and after the Cultural Revolution. See: MITTLER (2009) *A Continuous Revolution: Making Sense of Cultural Revolution Culture*, Heidelberg: unpubl. manuscript: Chapter 4. Martin condemned them as “kleinster Vulgärkanon” in: MARTIN (Ed.) (1979) *Mao Zedong Texte. Schriften, Dokumente, Reden und Gespräche*, München.

the form of article collections such as the Yan'an Rectification documents, or as a series of books including different works of Marxist-Leninist thinkers, these were reading materials.⁸³ No test of proficiency in Marxism-Leninism requiring to copiously quote the canon had to be taken in order to enter the Party as opposed to the state examinations selecting candidates for official service since the Song dynasty (960-1279).⁸⁴ In general, admission into the Party and surveillance of its members emulated the Soviet Union, not traditional China.⁸⁵ In her work on cadre education, Price contrasts “the traditional lecture format, rote memorisation, and simple questions and answers” with a new study principle developed in Yan'an called the *qifa* (trsl. mind-opening) method. “It was defined as ‘a method of investigation moving from induction to deduction.’ A practitioner of *ch'i-fa* proceeded ‘from near to far, from concrete to abstract, from part to whole,’ thereby grasping from one incident or example the law of development of a complex phenomenon. [...] Another anticipated outcome of

⁸³ The first *Ganbu bidu*, as far as I found out, was a Chinese translation of the Soviet *Short Course* during the War against Japan (QIN LIUFANG 秦柳方 (Jun. 1996) 马克思主义政治经济学在中国 [The study of Marxist politics and economics in China], 真理的追求, 8-11). The practice continued through the Yan'an Rectification Campaign and continues up to today. The Yan'an reading list comprised of 20-30 works of Marxism-Leninism. (See: LIU SHULIN 刘书林 (Oct. 2003) 关于攻读马列毛原著问题的反思 [Rethinking problems of diligently studying the original works of Marx, Engels, and Mao], 学校党建与思想教育, 8-14; Liu gives a rather detailed description of the history of the *Ganbu bidu*. The Reform Documents of the Yan'an Rectification Campaign are found in ANONYMOUS (1950) 整风文献. 订正本 [Rectification Documents. Corrected Edition] 广州. However, it is known that this 1950 reprint is edited in several places. Translations of the documents are found in COMPTON (1952) *Mao's China. Party Reform Documents, 1942-44* Seattle. After 1949, a 12 part series with this title was published. Cadres were urged to thoroughly study all 12 volumes, but according to Mao only 1 or 2 volumes per 3 years! See: QIU SHOUJUAN 邱守娟 (Feb. 2004) 毛泽东思想发展的历史经验 [The historical experience of the development of Mao Zedong Thought], 中国人民大学学报, 25-31; also LI (2006) *Mao and the Economic Stalinization of China, 1948-1953*, The Harvard Cold War studies book series, Lanham, MD: 99; the titles are found in: YE YONGLIE 叶永烈 (1994) 毛泽东的秘书们 [The secretaries of Mao Zedong] 上海: 13. The term *Ganbu bidu* is still used in 1998 when a talk given by Deng Xiaoping is recommended as “important study material for the required reading of leading cadres” (See: RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民出版社 (10.11.1998) 深入学习邓小平党风廉政建设建设和反腐败论述 [Study deeply Deng Xiaoping's discourse on the construction of honest government and against corruption], 人民日报, 1).

⁸⁴ Nevertheless, several regulations from 1942, 1955, and 1980, 1982 provide evidence that cadres' proficiency in Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought should have been tested regularly. These tests, however, were no entrance examination to the Party; they tested a cadre's knowledge before entering Party school, or her/his progress when finishing a class. Another target group were cadres in service who's headway was regularly tested, too. See: ZHONGGUO JIANGSU SHENGWEI ZUZHI BU KETIZU 中共浙江省委组织部课题组 (Apr. 1998) 建立领导干部理论学习考试考核制度研究 [Research on the establishment of an examination system for the theoretical study of leading cadres], 中共浙江省委党校学报, 3-11. The 25 year gap between 1955 and 1980 where no regulations on cadre testing seems to have appeared might be accounted for by a shift in education priorities towards repudiation of examinations, and grading SEEGER (2000) *The Rhetoric and Reality of Mass Education in Mao's China*, Chinese Studies, vol. 14, Lewiston, NY: 92-3. See also PEPPER (1996) *Radicalism and Education Reform in 20th-Century China: The Search for an Ideal Development Model* New York, NY. I haven't found descriptive or statistical data on the implementation or practice of this testing.

⁸⁵ Kang Sheng used the Yan'an Rectification Campaign to collect detailed dossiers on the curriculum vitae of all Party members. See: CHEN YUNG-FA (2003) Suspect History and the Mass Line: Another 'Yan'an Way'. In: Wasserstrom *Twentieth-Century China: New Approaches*, London; Bian et. al. argue that between 1949 and 1978 CCP membership was controlled by political screening, after 1978 educational credentials became more and more significant. See: BIAN, SHU & LOGAN (March 2001) Communist Party Membership and Regime Dynamics in China, *Social Forces* 79, 805-841.

the ch'i-fa procedure was the ability to apply abstract principles to situations in real life. (Price 1976:144)'' Studying the new ideology, it seems, featured rather the understanding of principles and their practical application than rote memorisation of quotations.

It therefore seems that before the Cultural Revolution, general knowledge of canonical quotations from Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought was rather scarce even among members of the CCP, let alone the common people. Only canonical quotations that had been propagated during one of the many pre-Cultural Revolution mass campaigns would have gained wider currency. This pertains especially to the Yan'an Rectification Campaign, its study documents and its target audience, i.e. those that had already been CCP members in the first half of the 1940s.⁸⁶ The overall situation certainly changed with the growing personality cult of Mao Zedong accompanied by the publication of his *Quotations of Chairman Mao* in 1964 and the heading of all newspapers with his quotations from Oct. 1965 onwards.⁸⁷ Mao quotations began to appear everywhere: all over the media, on items ranging from monuments, walls, posters, banners, badges, commodities; they were written, spoken, sung, danced, exercised, fought with, bowed to, sought of for daily instruction and printed bold in newspapers and books.⁸⁸ Proficiency in Mao quotations throughout the Chinese population peaked in these years. In the late 1970s, the cleansing of the Chinese language of formulations with Cultural Revolution connotations included washing away quotations (Schoenhals 1992:20, see also Chapter 2.3). The canon of Mao Zedong Thought was now, after Mao's death, again reduced in scope from everything Mao ever said or wrote to his *Selected Works*. Classes on Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought at universities and schools were drastically reduced, emphasis was given instead to economically valuable knowledge and skills. As importance attributed to the canon (and to reading the *People's Daily*) dwindled, so, I conclude, did knowledge thereof.

⁸⁶ Thus, Compton notes on the study success of CCP members that "[i]ncorrigible comrades were to be dismissed from the Party, but a second and third chance were to be given comrades who confessed and showed willingness to reform. (COMPTON (1952) *Mao's China. Party Reform Documents, 1942-44* Seattle: 35)'' Apter and Saich argue that "word and text themselves came to have iconographic significance. They not only embodied the new meaning but also represented it as artifacts, as things in themselves, with the same force as the portrait of Buddha imprinted on a tanka. (APTER & SAICH (1994) *Revolutionary Discourse in Mao's Republic* Cambridge, Mass.: 34)'' Hence, I conclude that texts and quotations studied in this early campaign were not easily forgotten by the Party members. See also fn. 83.

⁸⁷ For a concise description of the development, high time, and abolition of the Mao cult see: LEESE (2006) *Performative Politics and Petrified Image: The Mao Cult during China's Cultural Revolution* (Ph.D. thesis). School of Humanities and Social Sciences, International University, Bremen. For recent popular forms thereof refer to: BARME (1996) *Shades of Mao. The Posthumous Cult of the Great Leader* Armonk, NY.

⁸⁸ Examples of such curious quotation usage are found in: WAGNER (1996) *Song of the Red Guards: Keywords Set to Music*, Indiana East Asian Working Paper Series on Language and Politics in Modern China, vol. 10, Bloomington; LEESE (2008) *Zitatgymnastik und Pingpong-Diplomatie: Zur Instrumentalisierung des Sports während der Kulturrevolution*. In: Klöpsch, Lämmer & Tokarski *Sport in China: Beiträge aus interdisziplinärer Sicht*, Köln. For a more recent example see: CHAO (Nov. 1999) *The Maoist Shaman and the Madman: Ritual Bricolage, Failed Ritual, and Failed Ritual Theory*, *Cultural Anthropology* 14, 505-534.

Even *People's Daily* began to replace quotations from “Chairman Mao” with quotations from Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin, who succeeded Mao not only as leaders of the Party, but also as Marxist theoreticians. The Deng Xiaoping Theory 邓小平理论 and Jiang Zemin's Three Represents 三个代表 were set down next to Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought as guiding ideology of the CCP. In the late 1990s, several publications appeared that historicised Mao's writings with the aim to support future scientific research into his person and thought.⁸⁹ Though these publications show that Mao and Mao Zedong Thought were neither banned nor neglected subjects, yet they signal a further step towards de-canonisation, or as Assmann argued: “Im diffusen Licht wissenschaftlicher Forschung dagegen löst sich jeder Kanon auf. (Assmann et al. 1987:19)” In general, knowledge of canonical quotations varied according to time (see above), place (rural-urban divide)⁹⁰, age (see above education for youth vs. adults), and social status (cadres vs. people).

Selected Works of Mao Zedong

Before turning away from the issue of limiting quotation through canonisation, education and media control, a last question needs to be addressed: What does Mao Zedong Thought, one trove of canonical quotations, comprise?⁹¹ Again, this varies according to time: The first four volumes of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* published between 1951 and 1960 are the core texts of Mao Zedong Thought. They are a set of (collectively) selected, and meticulously edited articles and speeches by Mao from 1925 to 1949.⁹² After 1949, the picture is less clear. Mao continued to produce speeches

⁸⁹ For example: MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1998) 建国以来毛泽东文稿 [Manuscripts by Mao Zedong since the liberation of China] 北京. WANG ZUOXIN 王作鑫 (2001) 毛泽东著述编年索引 [Chronological index to the writings of Mao Zedong] 北京. The former contains a comprehensive, though not complete collection of writings (articles, letters, correction of manuscripts, etc.) by Mao Zedong since 1949. These writings reflected the man, not a carefully constructed image of Mao. The latter work is an index to Mao's writings in chronological order. Previously, indices were ordered by subject, stroke order, or transliteration.

⁹⁰ Seeberg argues that there was not only a difference in rhetoric and reality of mass education in China, there also was a huge gap in the accessibility of general education, including training in Marxist-Leninist ideology, between village and town. Cf. SEEBERG (2000) *The Rhetoric and Reality of Mass Education in Mao's China*, Chinese Studies, vol. 14, Lewiston, NY.

⁹¹ The core ideas of Mao Zedong Thought are analysed in: SCHRAM (1989) *The Thought of Mao Tse-tung* Cambridge; LI PING 力平, WANG ZHONGQING 王仲清 & LIANG JINZHEN 梁进珍 (1991) 田家英谈毛泽东思想 [Tian Jiaying discusses Mao Zedong Thought] 成都. The development of the term Mao Zedong Thought is given in: QIU SHOUJUAN 邱守娟 (Feb. 2004) 毛泽东思想发展的历史经验 [The historical experience of the development of Mao Zedong Thought], 中国人民大学学报, 25-31.

⁹² On selection and edition of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* see: LIU JINTIAN 刘金田 & WU XIAOMEI 吴晓梅 (1993) <<毛泽东选集>>出版的前前后后: 1944.7 - 1991.7 [The whole story of publishing the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*: July 1944 to July 1991] 北京; MARTIN (Ed.) (1979) *Mao Zedong Texte. Schriften, Dokumente, Reden und Gespräche*, München. Personal recollections of Mao's secretaries about this subject are found in: YE YONGLIE 叶永烈 (1994) 毛泽东的秘书们 [The secretaries of Mao Zedong] 上海; YE YONGLIE 叶永烈 (1993) 陈伯达传 [Biography of Chen Boda]

and articles, few of which were officially published and when at all only after thorough editing. New policies often relied on ‘secret’ speeches or texts by Mao.⁹³ Their contents were only known to (some members of) the Party and appeared only in paraphrase or a few selected quotations in the press. Probably the best known example is Mao’s article “On Contradictions” that instigated the Hundred Flowers (1956/7). This article was published only after the Hundred Flowers policy was abandoned and then only in rewritten form confirming now the counter-policy. In general, unpublished texts were not to be quoted by the press. In reverse, all published texts by Mao added to Mao Zedong Thought. The system of pre-publication censorship that applied to everything Mao said or wrote was effective until the Cultural Revolution. It constrained the enormous power that Mao held both as author of the canon and (partly) ruler defining what the canon comprised.

With the Cultural Revolution, the system disintegrated, unleashing a symbol in sole control of its symbolic power (Leese 2007:629). The canon now included everything Mao said or wrote, no matter if published or unpublished. The Red Guards raided several Party archives, infusing the public with formerly unknown words of Mao. As is confirmed by several of the following case studies, it was personal rather than textual-canonical power that was relied on in quoting during the Cultural Revolution (cf. Chapter 2.3, 3, 4). The Party re-established control over its canon as early as May 1967 and again at the end of the Cultural Revolution’s first period in 1969 (see below). After Mao’s death and the end of the Cultural Revolution, Mao Zedong Thought was cut back from everything Mao ever said or wrote to those articles that had been officially published after a process of meticulous reviewing. In the “Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party Since the Founding of the People’s Republic of China” of 1981, the historical and future role of Mao Zedong and Mao Zedong Thought were defined in detail. Therein, 43 articles of pre-Cultural Revolution origin were specifically recommended to the reader as core texts of Mao Zedong Thought. Since then, the ‘early’, pre-1949 Mao has been emphasised to the neglect especially of the late, Cultural Revolution Mao. The Party also stressed that Mao Zedong Thought was not the personal wisdom of Mao alone, but the collective wisdom of the CCP (Barme 1996:27). In 1993, it was further revealed that this was no empty claim, but that at least some important articles published under Mao’s name in

北京. A fifth volume of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong was published in 1977 under the auspices of Hua Guofeng comprising selections from 1949 to 1957. However, the volume was withdrawn shortly thereafter when Deng Xiaoping came back to power in 1978.

⁹³ Some of these speeches appeared in original form during the Cultural Revolution in Red Guard publications after Red Guards had raided archives or homes of Party members. Some of these are translated and published in: MACFARQUHAR, CHEEK & WU (Eds.) (1989) *The Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao: From the Hundred Flowers to the Great Leap Forward*, Cambridge, Mass..

the *Selected Works* were products of one or several ghost writers (Barme 1996:27-8; Schoenhals 1992:55-77). In 1991, a new normative edition of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* was published in which the annotations had been updated. Although several publications containing articles by Mao appeared after 1978, these do not possess the same authoritative value as the *Selected Works*. Moreover, they often target specific groups, e.g. journalists, militia, historians.

I have so far tried to define what is (not) a quotation, discussed why we use quotations, tried to show that though quotations are by nature ambiguous their meaning is delimited by a wide range of contextual information, and lastly I hope to have succeeded in relating how quoting is affected (in China) by canon building, education, and media control. In the following and last part of this chapter, I discuss how quoting rules closely relate to values attached to quotation, and how both influence the practice of quotation.

Innovation vs. Quotation

In a study about the poet Li Yu (1611-1680) and his stance towards and influence on innovation, Wang points out: “The Chinese ontological view of the continuity of being, although it cannot entertain the conception of creation *ex nihilo* by the hand of God, does not hinder the formulation of the Chinese conception of creation, seeing the process as a continuous transformation of all things. (Wang 1997:36)” Hence, in Chinese culture the absolute dichotomy between a divine creator and a passive transmitter dissolves. “The human being is an immanent part in, and a result of, the permanent cosmic transformation, yet at the same time he also possesses the creative power to assist the cosmic transformation and bring ‘the cosmic transformation to its fruition.’ He is transformed and also the transformer all at once. (Wu 1993:95)” These reflections return us to the quotations with which I commenced this thesis: “The Master said, ‘I transmit but do not innovate; I am truthful in what I say and devoted to antiquity. I venture to compare myself to our Old Peng.’” Thus (allegedly) spoke Confucius. And Mao Zedong (allegedly) advised: “When I write articles, I do not quote often what Marx or Engels say. As newspapers quote my words all the time, quote and quote, I do not feel comfortable. [One] should learn to use one’s own words when writing articles. Lenin seldom quoted other peoples’ words, but used his own words when writing articles.” As I had argued above, though both authors set innovation in opposition to transmission/quotation, these quotations also attest to the fact that there is no transmission without innovation, nor is there innovation without transmission. Both constitute to the “continuous transformation of all things.” At this point, I want to stress another aspect of both quotations; they express opposing preferences: should this continuous transformation rather be characterised by transmission or innovation. In the light of Kern’s conclusion drawn from his analysis of quoting in early Chinese manuscripts (esp. in the *Ziyi* 繹衣), “quotation [was] the textual equivalent to ancestor worship (Kern 2005:295)”, Confucius might be seen as worshiping the ancestors by preferring transmission, thus performing a ritual instead of expressing himself freely. In parallel, Mao’s opposition to the frequent use of quotation may be seen as opposition to this metaphoric ancestor worship, denying to bow even symbolically to his ideological forefathers.

As I have repeatedly pointed out, quoting at the time of Confucius was a highly creative activity. When citing the *Shijing*, it was the adaptation of old to new that was admired as it required skill and perception (Lewis 1999:158). Confucius himself lauded disciples for their skilled adaptation of canonical quotations. In contrast to this, quotation rules for publishing in the PRC don’t acknowledge adaptation, innovation, or transformation: “When citing quotations by Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin,

and Chairman Mao, one has to be serious and earnest, precise and without mistake, do not quote out of context, distort the original meaning, or reverse front and rear, or separate it [i.e. the quotation] wilfully. When using quotations, poems, or inscriptions of Chairman Mao to make a headline, pay attention to exercise sound judgement, and act appropriately. (Beijing guangbo xueyuan xinwenxi 北京广播学院新闻系 1978:161f)” Paradoxically, quoting rules in 20th century China were strict, allowing almost no creativity although Mao had clearly expressed his preference for innovation, while on the other hand they were ‘lax’ in the days of Confucius who ideally emphasised transmission. But maybe this is not so paradox as it appears; maybe Mao encouraged the use of ‘one’s own words’ because quotation rules left so little space for creativity, and similarly Confucius expressed his veneration for transmission because in his time it included innovation anyway. However, as rules exist to be broken, the maxims of ‘sages’ are bent by their followers. Both rules and maxims do not represent what is, but what ought to be. So, how ought quoting (not) to be in Communist China?

A Scholarly Debate

In 1956, Zhou Litian 周力田 criticised Qian Jiaju 千家驹 for having published a book on national capitalism that consisted mostly of quotations (both canonical and internal (*neibu* 内部)) without explanation and, in the case of the internal material, without source. The quotations, Zhou complained publicly in an article printed in *Dushu* 读书, substituted any analysis by the author. Such methods, Zhou argued, obstructed the advancement of scientific standards (Zhou Litian 周力田 1956). Qian replied to the accusation in *Dushu* four issues later. He explained that his book was supposed to be popular (*tongsu* 通俗) and educational, not scientific or analytical. The mass of quotations was owed to historical circumstances: at the time of writing, he and many others did not thoroughly understand the concept of national capitalism. And the only normative account on the topic was unfortunately *neibu* (Qian Jiaju 千家驹 1956). This critical exchange introduces us to a number of interesting aspects concerning the use of quotation in the PRC: (1) The opposition between innovation and transmission here appeared as one between analysis and quotation; and, at least in scientific writing, a clear preference was expressed towards analysis. A similar attitude had been taken by Mao in the early 1940s when he justified his own ideological advances in adopting Marxism-Leninism to the Chinese practice: Analysis of reality, not blind and dogmatic quotation was needed to successfully lead the democratic revolution. And the same argument is made by Deng

Xiaoping in 1978 when he tried to abolish the Cultural Revolution practice of quoting Mao excessively, thereafter emulated by Hua Guofeng's so-called "two whatevers" (see Chapter 3). (2) Qian stressed in his defence the educational and popular value of quotations in books for the 'common people'. Quotations in *People's Daily*, I want to argue, ranged somewhere in between these options: they were promoted to make a new canon *popular* within and without the Party, and to *educate* both Party members and common people in the new Maoist language and thought. But *People's Daily* was also a platform of discussion within the Party. Thus, articles *analysing* Chinese reality in respect of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought also appeared. (3) Using quotations in educating the people did not necessarily reflect the aim of linguistically empowering those formerly excluded from the political discourse (see above), it could also signify uncertainty on behalf of the author (in this case Qian Jiaju) about his subject in politically precarious times. Then, an author might even transgress one rule of censorship – do not quote material classified as *neibu* – to prevent her/himself from committing a more serious ideological error. Qian clearly accepted the power of the Party to interpret the canon for present day use, at least in an educational setting. He denied himself the freedom to write his own interpretation of national capitalism based on selected canonical quotations from Lenin, Stalin, or Mao. Instead, he referred to the only normative commentary about this topic available to himself, a political report by Li Weihan 李维汉. (4) Zhou accused Qian for the dogmatic use of quotations. Again, this accusation is found earlier in Mao's speeches and articles of the Yan'an Rectification Campaign: "Coming home from Europe, America or Japan, they [many of the returned students] can only parrot things foreign. They become [function as] gramophones and forget their duty to understand and create new things. This malady has also infected the Communist Party. [...] they violate the fundamental principle [repeatedly and] earnestly enjoined on us by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, the unity of theory and practice. [...] instead of showing an interest in China's problems and taking the Party's directives seriously, they [many students] give all their hearts to the supposedly eternal and immutable dogmas learned from their teachers. (Mao Zedong 毛泽东 1967 (1953):756; trsl. in: Schram 2005:749f)" In this speech given to a cadre meeting in Yan'an on May 5, 1941 and titled "Reform of Our Study 改造我们的学习", Mao argued that the mere ability to quote the Marxist-Leninist canon would not solve any real problem. It was mechanical, rather than creative, and henceforth criticised as dogmatic (see also Chapter 3). As I have detailed above, Mao's criticism emulated anti-Confucian attitudes of the May Fourth Movement and anti-state examination polemics reaching back to the Ming dynasty. However, what was castigated as dogmatic in 1941 and

again in 1956, would not have been erroneous in 1953, or so Qian Jiaju argues in his defence. PRC history is marked by periods of *fang* 放 and *shou* 收: “*Fang* means to let go and leave everybody free to voice their opinion, so that people dare to talk about difficulties, dare to criticise or debate. [...] *Shou* means not to allow people to voice differing opinions, and if one is uttered to immediately ‘finish her/him off with one blow’. 放, 就是放手让大家讲意见, 使人敢于说疾, 敢于批评, 敢于争论。[...] 收, 就是不许人家讲不同的意见, 发表了就‘一棍子打死’。[my emphasis] (Qiu Shi 邱石 1998:295)”⁹⁴

Using Mao Quotations

1956/57, the period of the Hundred Flowers, was such a *fang* period in which the people were encouraged to criticise and contend, followed by a Rectification Campaign that closed down any space for free discussion. ‘The’ Party authorises either *fang* or *shou* periods, often changing the modus abruptly and without warning. I write ‘the’ Party because such changes in policy are often related to inner-Party power struggles. For example, Deng Xiaoping initiated a *fang* period in 1978 to oust Hua Guofeng 华国锋, Mao’s chosen successor as Party chairman. This period came to a sudden end after Deng had won the internal power struggle against Hua with the arrest of Wei Jingsheng 魏京生(* 1950) in March 1979 and the ban of the Democracy Wall thereafter (Meisner 1996:104-36). It was especially the first policy change which directly influenced press’ quotation practice and by this we return to the Mao quotation from the beginning of this chapter: “[...One] should learn to use one’s own words when writing articles. [...]” In a speech of June 1978, Deng quoted these words of Mao condemning the excessive use of canonical quotations, not only advising people to use their own words, but to re-evaluate the truth of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought. This quotation was shot at Hua’s so-called ‘Two whatevers’, a policy sought to uphold the supreme authority by defining Mao’s every word as truth even after Mao’s death and the end of the Cultural Revolution (cf. Chapter 3). The attitude adopted by Deng and other CCP leaders resembled that of the 17th century poet Li Yu: “According to him, the truth in this world is infinite, but the expositions of sages are limited. If the truthfulness in everything comes from the mouths of the sages,

⁹⁴ This quotation is taken from a speech by Mao Zedong given to a national conference on propaganda work on March 12, 1957. The speech was included in slightly edited form in the fifth volume of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong: “*Fang* means to let go and leave everybody free to voice their opinion, so that people dare to talk, dare to criticise or debate. [...] *Shou* means not to allow people to voice differing or faulty opinions, and if one is uttered to immediately ‘finish her/him off with one blow’. 放, 就是放手让大家讲意见, 使人们敢于说话, 敢于批评, 敢于争论。[...] 收, 就是不许人家讲不同的意见, 不许人家发表错误的意见, 发表了就‘一棍子打死’。” See MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1977) 毛泽东选集 [Selected works of Mao Zedong] vol. 5, 北京: 415.

there must be thousands and thousands of sages making comments on all things on earth, and later generations would repeat the sages' words like children reciting words from a book or actors memorising lines from a script. [...] he even suggests that 'to create but not transmit,' an expression that is the reverse of Confucius's original words, should be the principle that men of letters follow (Wang 1997:17f)". Deng does not advertise Li's maxim 'to create but not transmit', but he questions the status of Mao's words (by quoting Mao, paradoxically). Mao's words are no dogma, they are not even canonical, but science, and as such their truth value has to be perpetually scrutinised by "Seeking truth from facts".

There is another point about Deng quoting Mao in 1978 that should be noted: the quotation by Mao was at that time either *neibu* or even invented. It had never before appeared in *People's Daily*, the normal channel of officially transmitting Mao's words, and it never appeared there again. This leads to speculations on the authenticity of the quotation. Were these sentences really Mao's? Who recorded them? When did Mao utter them? In the *Selected Articles on News Work by Mao Zedong* 毛泽东新闻工作文选, published in 1983, the quotation is included and some background provided: Mao allegedly said these words in January 1964 to Wu Lengxi 吴冷西 (1919-2002), at that time editor-in-chief of *People's Daily*, who recorded them for posterity. Scientists familiar with the publication practices of the CCP believe that though evidence might be withheld altogether or only partly released so as to serve propagandistic purposes, *false* evidence is in general not created.⁹⁵ Thus it seems improbable that either Wu or Deng invented this Mao quotation to serve their purposes and later let it be reaffirmed in the 1983 collection on *News Work*. Accepting the authenticity of the quotation, we are faced with another paradox: If Mao advised *People's Daily* to use fewer canonical quotations in 1964, how did the Cultural Revolution hype of quoting Mao everywhere and all the time set out? It was in fact only four month later that the first *neibu* edition of the *Quotations of Chairman Mao* were printed and distributed in the army, small enough to be carried everywhere and easing the search for appropriate quotations for every occasion. Moreover, Lin Biao's "problem-oriented learning" strategy, promoted in the army since 1961, was emulated by *People's Daily* since March 1964. This strategy promoted the search for and memorisation of de-contextualised quotations of Mao driven by everyday work problems (for further details see Chapter 3). And in October 1965, *People's Daily* began to head its issues with a "Quotation from Chairman Mao 毛主席语录", a practice also taken over from the army or rather its newspaper. It seems that in 1964 and thereafter,

⁹⁵ Personal communications with Thomas Kampen, Nicolai Volland, and Daniel Leese, Summer 2008.

the practice of quoting Mao developed in contradiction to Mao's own ideal. Obviously, the rhetoric (how one should quote) and the reality (how one quoted) differed sharply. One might argue, as I did at the beginning of this introduction, that Mao himself was not true to his judgement by referring to Lenin to authorise his stance. Why should others adhere to advice formulated so feebly? On the other hand, who knew about Mao's words? Wu Lengxi recorded them for posterity. Other editors or reporters of *People's Daily* might have attended the meeting and heard Mao's words. None of them sought to appropriate Mao's words for their own ends until 1978, when Deng Xiaoping fought the Mao cult with its own weapons: the use of tendentious (*neibu*) Mao quotations.

The line between *neibu* and *gongkai* (公开 public), was to control public discourse but also Mao – he was after all a canonical author still alive and thus able to use his own symbolical power (Leese 2007:629); but this line blurred during the Cultural Revolution. With the dissolution of state and Party organisations, the ransacking of countless archives, and the Red Guard's search for compromising material against class enemies and tokens of veneration for Chairman Mao, *neibu* material was introduced to public discourse in Red Guard magazines.⁹⁶ The 'freedom' lasted only shortly, as in May 1967 the Central Committee forbade "to publish any speeches, orders, or directives of Mao Zedong, Lin Biao, the Central Committee, or the Central Military Commission that have not yet been officially issued. (Volland 2003:408)" Noteworthy, the 'capitalist roaders' might still be criticised by quoting from unofficial, i.e. not officially published documents.

As for the use of authoritative quotations in *People's Daily* during the Cultural Revolution, the evidence presented in this thesis supports Volland's findings, namely that "the Cultural Revolution is arguably the era that saw the highest degree of published ideological conformity since the founding of the People's Republic. (Volland 2003:437)"⁹⁷ Thus, only during the Cultural Revolution, I found articles that reproduced not only quotations but also paraphrased what I earlier called the original textual context of the quotations (see Chapter 4). We must remember also the strict quotation rules given in a guide book of 1978 that I quoted above. I believe that these rules also reflect the

⁹⁶ For a critical assessment of the Red Guard publications see: VOLLAND (2003) *The Control of the Media in the People's Republic of China* (Ph.D. thesis). Sinologisches Seminar, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität, Heidelberg: 437. A 20 volume collection is found in: CENTER FOR CHINESE RESEARCH MATERIALS (Ed.) (1975) *Red Guard Publications*, Washington.

⁹⁷ Volland argued that media control in China worked primarily through what he calls the "Media Concept". And although the institutions and persons responsible for controlling the media crumbled at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, the Red Guards affirmed the Media Concept itself and attacked their enemies for violating it. Firm rules, such as the division of *neibu* and *gongkai*, are not part of the Media Concept itself, but belong to the mechanics of media control. See: VOLLAND (2003) *The Control of the Media in the People's Republic of China* (Ph.D. thesis). Sinologisches Seminar, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität, Heidelberg.

circumstances during the Cultural Revolution.⁹⁸ Few hints only point to the fact that the political climate had changed at the time of publication. Ideological conformity required not only the quoting to be “serious and earnest, precise and without mistake, do not quote out of context, distort the original meaning, or reverse front and rear, or separate it wilfully”, but also asked for the verbal embedding of quotations into the borrower text: “Whenever citing positive descriptions by Chairman Mao, in general use ‘Chairman Mao teaches 教导 (instructs 指示) us’; whenever citing exposing, warning, denouncing, or such quotations, in general use ‘Chairman Mao points out 指出’; whenever [the quotation] belongs to policy, strategy etc., in general use ‘Chairman Mao appeals to us 号召我们’; with every dignified/solemn announcement, heroic prediction etc., in general use ‘declares/proclaims 宣告’ or such words; for other quotations, directly use ‘Chairman Mao said 毛主席说’, that will do. (Beijing guangbo xueyuan xinwenxi 北京广播学院新闻系 1978:161f)” Further rules stated that the original punctuation had to be exactly reproduced. All these rules, it must be stressed again, only pertain to authoritative quotations, i.e. quoting Mao or current members of the Central Committee, but also Marx, Engels, Lenin or Stalin. They do not pertain to derogative quoting to expose the ‘evil’ thoughts of the ‘enemy’. Though the first period of the Cultural Revolution (1965-69) saw some of the most bizzare forms of popular quotation usage (quotation gymnastics, loyalty dance or quotation battles, to name but a few), to my knowledge this did not extend to *People’s Daily* and, by April 1969, was challenged by CCP leaders who saw in it a vulgarisation of Mao Zedong Thought as well as a dangerous appropriation of cultural capital (Leese 2007:632-4; Leese 2008:80-3).

Guidebooks

In their exposition on canon and censorship, Aleida and Jan Assmann differentiate between two opposing modes of returning to the past: driven by historical interest to understand the old and foreign culture; or driven by canonical interest seeing this past as one’s own, true and timeless valid (Assmann et al. 1987:16). Quotation usage in imperial China and during the Cultural Revolution both seem to have been driven by canonical, not historical interest. However, different sources attest

⁹⁸ This view is conformed in an eMail exchange with Michael Schoenhals, an expert on PRC propaganda in general and Cultural Revolution history and politics in particular. It is probable that similar guide books existed during the Cultural Revolution, however, as archives and libraries still shut many Cultural Revolution contents away, no final verdict is possible so far. An example of this kind is a 2000 pages “Index to Quotations of Chairman Mao 毛主席索引” printed in 1970 that can be found on flea markets, but is not catalogued in the National Library of China.

to the fact that people in 20th century China were aware of the historicity of the Marxist-Leninist and Maoist canon. See for example a reader's letter printed in *People's Daily* in 1963:

I often read theoretical articles in newspapers and magazines. When quoting classical works, the authors of these articles generally give annotations, which is very good. Though common annotations all indicate the quotation's title, book title, number of volume, and page, they do not indicate the year of writing and the edition of the book. I think that such annotations should not only explicate a quotation's source, but should help the reader more. For example, when quoting an article by Lenin, we generally want to know at what time and under what circumstance Lenin said this. If annotations of quotations would indicate clearly year and month of writing, and even the edition, this could help readers much more. 我经常阅读报纸和杂志上的理论文章。这些文章的作者在引用经典著作时一般都加附注，这很好。但是，常见的附注，多是注明引文的题目、书名、卷数、页数，而不注明写作年份和书的版本。我觉得，引文附注不仅是交代引文的出处，还应该多帮助读者。如引用列宁文章，我们总想知道列宁是在什么时候、什么情况下讲的。如果引文附注把文章的写作年月，甚至版本也注清楚，就可给读者以更多的帮助。(Chen Chengzhong 陈承中 1963.11.25)

Chen Chengzhong's letter shows that canonical quotations were both bound to time and circumstances of their origin, and that they might have been changed by later editorial work.

In similar manner, a 1982 *Guidebook on Editorial Work* 编辑工作手册 requested: "Quotations all need the background and context according to which the original works of the revolutionary teachers were written, clarifying that the cited meaning is complete and precise, one should also check if the use in the draft is appropriate and suitable. Do not take words that some revolutionary teacher quotes of another as his own, and even worse do not misunderstand a fallacy that is criticised in the original work as a right account. With quotations one should especially avoid to cite out of context, to stick to signs, to vulgarise. (1982:32f)"⁹⁹ As for different editions, guide books either detail which edition of canonical works is the current standard, or simply advise to use the newest edition (Beijing guangbo xueyuan xinwenxi 北京广播学院新闻系 1978:162f; 1982:32f).

Guidebooks published in the 1990s and after 2000 are concerned with more general topics: the basic task of media and press, how to report on economy, politics, law, culture, or military, how to make advertisements, or even what should not be reported. A 2004 *Guidebook on News and Propaganda* (hereafter *2004 Guidebook*), for example, includes a chapter on laws pertaining to media work. The content or style of canonical quotations is no longer part of any of these volumes.

Can we deduce from this fact that the canon is no longer of concern to journalists? Statistical analysis attests that quotations of the canon had dropped significantly after the Cultural Revolution and even had remained on a level lower than before its start. However, the canon is still referred to as authority. A striking example is the above mentioned *2004 Guidebook* itself. Its first 112 pages are a

⁹⁹ For further examples see: PING LIANG 平良 (24.08.1961) 从引证谈起 [Talking from the perspective of quoting], 人民日报, 7; RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民日报社 (05.08.1964) 要正确引证马克思主义的经典著作 [We should correctly quote the Marxist classics], 人民日报, 5.

collection of quotations on news work, the first 30 pages of which are from Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and Mao (Qiu Peihuang 邱沛篁 2004). This reminds forcefully of similar lists on certain topics handed out to school students for memorising and quoting in exams.¹⁰⁰ Cut off from their original content and prescribed for memorising, they might give good thoughts, adorn individual writings, or tease students to seek for more. But they do not convey the original context of the quotations, nor teach ideology as systematic science. They help to canonise quotations, but do they propagate the canon? As to the missing quotation rules in publishing guide books after 1982, how can we account for this fact? A simple explanation might be that after 1982 these rules had become established practice and were not changed again. To many readers the rules stated in the 1982 *Guidebook* above probably looked familiar. If no exceptions to the rules existed – as had still been the case in 1978 – why should they fill up the pages of a specialised guide on editorial or journalistic work?

Summary

In this chapter, I defined the object of my study – quotations – as seen from various perspectives: I discussed European definitions of the term ‘quotation’ and Chinese definitions of the corresponding terms *yulu* and *yinwen*; in a second step, I contrasted quotations to allusions, paraphrases, mottos, maxims, aphorisms and proverbs, to delineate which of these types of reference will be dealt with in the upcoming case studies; in a third step, I discussed the manifold functions which quotations may have in a text. Following this, the second part of the introduction inquired after the constituents which may imbue a quotation with meaning: the quotation’s formulation which itself is derived from rules of grammar and word meanings; the source text/prototext; or the author of a text; and, most importantly, the textual, personal, and historical contexts of both the original prototext and the new quoting text. In a third part, I debated which external factors might influence quotational practice in general, and which of these factors have influenced or continue to influence quotations in China – such as education and canonisation – as well as the existence of quotation indices and media control. In the final part, I attempted to show how the (changing) value attributed to quoting affected quotational practices and thereby altered the status of the canon. After thus having discussed the theoretical foundations of quotation and their historical development in China, I will now investigate the practice of quoting: In Chapter 2, I follow the many transformations which the *same quotation* may experience throughout its ‘life’. In Chapter 3, I look at the multiple interpretations which may

¹⁰⁰ Several personal communications, Summer 2008.

be given to the *same prototext* by quoting only carefully selected sentences. And in Chapter 4, I analyse the manifold histories that may be written for the *same context*.

2. Lifecycles of Quotations

Quotations are the results of intricate processes that involve various people, namely the author of the prototext, one, or several, or even hundreds of ‘quoters’, and at least one reader, but more often a large audience which may read or hear the quotations. In the following case studies, we encounter two quotations that were used by hundreds of writers and (probably) read by millions of people, at least during a certain period of time: “Seek truth from facts 实事求是” (2.1) and “The working class has to lead everything 工人阶级必须领导一切” (2.3). The third quotation, “Smash the Confucian shop 打倒孔家店” (2.2) offers a counter-example as it was a phrase that never gained mass quoters, yet was continuously employed and thus rose to familiarity in the course of several decades. This leads us to the second variable which characterises the lifecycle of a quotation, namely time. The process of quoting may be completed in a few minutes, but it may also bridge a time gap of hundreds of years. Again, the above three case studies represent three different lifecycles: Chapter 2.1 introduces a quotation which is almost two thousand years old; Chapter 2.2 investigates the (invented) life of a quotation going back to the May Fourth Movement; and Chapter 2.3 focuses on the comparatively short life of a Cultural Revolution quotation. Although I argue that this last quotation was sentenced to death by the Communist Party of China (hereafter CCP) after 1976, it is impossible, from a logical point of view, to ascertain the precise end of a quotation’s lifecycle. After all, this life consists of instances of the phrase being quoted, and therefore, the very act of declaring the death of a certain quotation represents another instance of quotation – thus prolonging its life. Hence, a closely controlled discourse community may declare or instigate the apparent ‘death’ of a quotation. But once that control is lifted or wanes, this very quotation may re-appear.

The lifecycle of a quotation may be characterised by time, i.e. the length of this life, and by the multitude of people involved in the quoting process. In the following case studies, I approach each quotation by depicting its lifecycle as a line chart of *multitude* vs. *time*. While the variable *time* is rather easy to trace, the dependent variable *multitude* is more difficult to pinpoint. How can we, for example, identify the audience involved in the quoting process? I therefore chose an approximation by delimiting the *multitude* to the instances or occurrences of the quotation in other texts. While the database of *People’s Daily* proved invaluable for finding such occurrences, I drew on other digitised text and image corpora as well, especially in Chapter 2.1 and to a lesser extent in Chapter 2.2. The quotation “Seek truth from facts 实事求是” has been used almost 20,000 times in *People’s Daily*

alone. Hence, in the analysis of this quotation's lifecycle, I concentrate on quoting trends visualised by statistical assessment. Seeing as available sources are abundant in this case, it is also possible to trace the quotation through various media such as dictionaries, encyclopaedia, books, newspapers, journals, and to find it inscribed in stone monuments, or attached to commodities. The history of "Smash the Confucian shop 打倒孔家店", analysed in Chapter 2.2, begins in 1921. As above, I attempt to trace the pre-1949 life of this quotation in republican journals. Since 1949 and the foundation of the *People's Daily*, mouthpiece of the CCP Central Committee, I concentrate solely on the quotation's usage in this text corpus. When other daily newspapers become available in full-text digitised format, it will be possible to continue this analysis by investigating in how far *People's Daily* quotation usage was normative for other media. In the third and final case study, I focus on the short-lived Cultural Revolution star "The working class has to lead everything 工人阶级必须领导一切", a quotation mainly created and promoted by *People's Daily*. I choose these three quotations for detailed investigations, because each might be called representative of a specific type of lifecycle: the lifecycle of a quotation chameleon, forever changing in usage, meaning, context, or author; the lifecycle of a vaguely familiar, but already half-forgotten quotation which everybody has some recollection of; and the lifecycle of a short-lived quotation star which is only known to its contemporary quoters and readers.

2.1 The Lifecycle of a Quotation Chameleon

Quotation, Proverb, Political Slogan, or Value: What is “Seek truth from facts”?

Every Chinese and nearly every sinologist knows the phrase to 实事求是 *shishi qiushi* (trsl.: to seek truth from facts; to work conscientiously or seriously; objective method; be objective).¹⁰¹ If asked about it, they would probably say that to “Seek truth from facts” is somehow associated with Deng Xiaoping and his modernisation program. After giving it some thought, they might also tell us that to “Seek truth from facts” is a Chinese proverb. A few people may remember that the phrase was often called the “core of Mao Zedong Thought and Marxism-Leninism”; even fewer know that the phrase in fact has its source in the *Hanshu* 汉书 (*Book of Han*, 2nd CE) and was already used in varying contexts long before the founding of the Communist Party of China (hereafter CCP).¹⁰² This short account indicates that “Seek truth from facts” has been appropriated and re-appropriated. It has thus become what I choose to call a ‘quotation chameleon’. An investigation into the history of this phrase may help to understand how it came to carry certain meanings, and why it has been (and still is) promoted by Party leaders as a core value of the Party. By tracing its history, we will be able to decode this phrase which still constitutes one of the central pieces in the symbolic universe of the CCP today.

Two main questions arise: first, how was this core value of the Party appropriated and hence promoted, and second, how did “Seek truth from facts” change during this process? The first question involves an analysis of motives, goals, agency and media: Why was “Seeking truth from facts” selected from a pool of many other proverbs? Which values, policies, ideas, etc. were to be promoted together with the phrase “Seek truth from facts”? Who in the leadership initiated the promotion of “Seek truth from facts” and at what time? Who else contributed to its popularisation? Which media – newspapers, journals, books, or monuments of the Party, universities, or commercial enterprises – sometimes inadvertently, served in carrying the ‘gospel’ to the people? How did they interact with each other? The second question – How did “Seek truth from facts” change during this

¹⁰¹ In the last part of this chapter, I discuss in detail the origin of several different English translations for this phrase. I decided to use the translation “Seek truth from facts” (or if required by grammatical constraints “Seeking truth from facts”) throughout this chapter, in order to consistently mark the quotation in my English text and to be intelligible to those who cannot read Chinese.

¹⁰² Late Qing books include: WANG TINGZHEN 汪廷珍 (Ed.) (1821) 实事求是斋遗稿, no place; ZHU DASHAO 朱大韶 (1889) 实事求是斋经义 上海. In WEI YINTING 魏胤亭 (1998) 实事求是论纲 [On the guiding principle of Seeking Truth From Facts] 北京 the pre-PRC evolution of “Seek truth from facts” is described. Western secondary sources include: WRIGHT (Dec. 1998) The Translation of Modern Western Science in Nineteenth-Century China, 1840-1895, *Isis* 89, 653-73.

appropriation process? – is related more closely to the messages created by the agents and carried in the media: How did those agents affect the meaning of “Seek truth from facts”? What meaning(s) did the phrase carry in the 1920s and 1930s when CCP leaders started to use it? How was “Seek truth from facts” appropriated by ‘the’ CCP and transformed into a powerful symbol of Party character? Why were CCP leaders made models of “Seeking truth from facts”? Whose agency had to be repudiated to make each new appropriation possible? How did the meaning of “Seek truth from facts” change when Deng Xiaoping re-appropriated the phrase after Mao’s death in 1976?

I will try to address these questions by analysing statistical data gathered from various databases.¹⁰³ On the basis of the data found in these statistics, I will engage in a qualitative reading of selected articles written by CCP leaders, as well as directives, and newspaper articles. I thus hope to enrich and partly contest the normative image of “Seek truth from facts” as constructed by the CCP in both encyclopaedia and dictionary entries. For the pre-CCP history of “Seek truth from facts”, I will mostly base my argument on secondary sources, both Western and Chinese. Furthermore, Google’s image search was invaluable in finding instances of “Seek truth from facts” used as inscriptions on monuments, for advertisement, or on commodities. Further historical background information is taken from various secondary sources.¹⁰⁴

Based on this material, I argue that to “Seek truth from facts” was promoted not so much as a proverb, quotation, or political slogan, but as a value repeatedly appropriated by the CCP. As such it was intended to instill correct behaviour in all CCP members and provide guidance for their actions. As CCP value, “Seek truth from facts” may be compared to present-day company values that are used to define a company-specific culture, by which the company sets itself apart from others, recruits staff, and to some degree controls its members.¹⁰⁵ However, the promotion of to “Seek truth

¹⁰³ The *People’s Daily* electronic edition, the *People’s Liberation Army Daily* online, the *National index to Chinese newspapers & periodicals*, the *Database of the Communist Party of China*, a full-text digital collection of Mao’s works, and the catalogue of the National Library of China.

¹⁰⁴ The fotosharing service of www.flickr.com returns 11 pictures when searching for “Seek truth from facts” (as of Nov. 12, 2008). However, in most cases few information is given, like the place of origin, that would contextualise these pictures.

¹⁰⁵ For a discussion of company values and company culture refer to: WEVER (1989) *Unternehmenskultur in der Praxis: Erfahrungen eines Insiders bei zwei Spitzenunternehmen* Frankfurt: 91-119. Another interesting aspect is mentioned by Roger Greene in his blog: He describes his change of sentiment in regard to company values. While at first, company values appeared to him “heavy-handed, or akin to Soviet era propaganda exhorting the masses to be inspired and act appropriately”, he later understood their importance for recruiting, or keeping the company on track. See: GREENE (2006) *Why Company Values Matter*. http://blogs.ipswitch.com/greene/2006/09/why_company_values_matter.html, accessed: 04.11.2008, downloaded: 04.11.2008. Current literature trace the development of company values back to Japan and its economic rise in the 1960s, however, they may have borrowed the concept from (communist) party organisations. Recently, the CCP is in turn believed to adopt company strategies such as a “corporate image” and “corporate advertising”. See: BARME (Jan. 1999) CCP TM and ADCULT PRC, *The China Journal*, 1-23.

from facts” as a kind of ‘company value’ was mainly based on its quality as ‘chameleon’. As such, its content continuously changed. Moreover, the authors and sources that the quotation was attributed to also changed. Each newly created prototext provided new symbolic capital: “Seek truth from facts” as a quotation from the *Hanshu* linked CCP values (both of the early days of the CCP and of the post-Mao period) to ancient Chinese culture. As a Mao quotation of 1941, “Seek truth from facts” represented the ‘golden age’ of Communism, when Marxism-Leninism was sinicised and the Party unified. When used as a quotation of Deng Xiaoping, Deng’s political agenda of pragmatic, realistic economic development was (and still is) emphasised. However, each quoter, i.e. the person quoting something, derived his notion of “Seeking truth from facts” from previous prototypes. When Mao, for instance, declared in 1941 that to “Seek truth from facts” epitomised the scientific approach of Marxism-Leninism, he emulated late-Qing researchers who had conceived of “Seek truth from facts” as a translation of scientific standards established by European enlightenment. Both agents ‘discovered’ the phrase “Seek truth from facts” as a *Chinese* counterpart of ancient origin to a *foreign*, modern scientific principle. Closely related to this is another aspect of the life of “Seek truth from facts” that is actually the most interesting in the broader context of this study: namely how its ‘authorship’ was repeatedly changed in an interplay of appropriation and ascription. After Mao’s death, for example, Deng Xiaoping repeatedly emphasised that to “Seek truth from facts” was the core of Mao Zedong Thought. By doing so, he created many new quotations containing “Seek truth from facts”. In later years, when “Seeking truth from facts” was quoted by others, it was *Deng* who would be referred to, and not Mao. Thus, in promoting “Seeking truth from facts” as the core of Mao Zedong Thought, the authorship paradoxically shifted to the appropriator of the quotation, i.e. Deng Xiaoping. I will therefore speak of the quoter-cum-author.

The following chapter is divided into three parts: In the first, I focus on the phrase’s change in meaning which CCP leaders generated when appropriating “Seek truth from facts” for their own purposes. In the second part, I hope to show how various agents and media supported these changes (often for their own reasons) and even added new layers of meaning to “Seek truth from facts”. In a third and final part, I investigate how the trend to quote “Seek truth from facts” converged with other trends in a ‘celebration of appropriation’. Half of my chapter resembles the peeling of an onion: layer by layer, I try to peel away the constructed history of the post-Mao CCP. In the other half, I reconstruct this history by adopting several comparative perspectives.

Normative Presents

“Seek truth from facts” is a chameleon in many respects: It is both a quotation and a proverb, a political slogan and a guiding principle. One may legitimately claim that its source is either the *Hanshu*, or Mao’s “Reform Our Learning”, or Deng’s talk to the 3rd Plenum of the 10th CCP Central Committee of 1977. It is also said to be the core of both Marxism-Leninism, and Mao Zedong Thought, but also of Deng Xiaoping Theory. How, when and why did the meaning of “Seek truth from facts” thus change? I will start my analysis with an investigation into encyclopaedia entries, because these are believed to present the reader with comprehensive information on the chosen topic, but also contain the normative view of the Chinese Party-State. Thus, Chinese encyclopaedias rather communicate how reality should have developed from the standpoint of their authors and editors, and not how it did.

According to the *Chinese Encyclopaedia* printed in the People's Republic of China (hereafter PRC) in 1987, the meaning and origin of “Seek truth from facts” are as follows: It is “a popular expression for a basic postulate of materialist methodology, and one of the basic principles of Marxism. It refers to [ideas like] in everything proceed from reality, relate theory with practice, grasp objective rules//patterns//principles through objective reality, and act according to objective rules. “Seek truth from facts” is the foundation of the proletarian world view, and it is the ideological foundation of Marxism. 唯物主义方法论的基本要求的通俗表达，马克思主义的基本原则之一。指一切从实际出发，理论联系实际，从客观实际中认识客观规律，按客观规律办事。实事求是，是无产阶级世界观的基础，是马克思主义的思想基础。(Zhongguo dabaike quanshu zongbianji weiyuanhui "zhexue" bianji weiyuanhui 中国大百科全书总编辑委员会"哲学"编辑委员会 1987:802)” The 1987 encyclopaedia entry goes on detailing the origin of “Seek truth from facts” in the *Hanshu*. But then, “in his article ‘Reform Our Learning’, Mao Zedong gave a new interpretation to this old saying from the height of philosophy, endowing it with scientific philosophical principles. 毛泽东在《改造我们的学习》一文中，从哲学的高度对这句古语做了新的解释，赋予它科学的哲理。(Zhongguo dabaike quanshu zongbianji weiyuanhui "zhexue" bianji weiyuanhui 中国大百科全书总编辑委员会"哲学"编辑委员会 1987:802)”. This normative account of 1987 conceals the fact that most of the definitions given – “Seek truth from facts” as the “foundation of the proletarian world view”, and the “ideological foundation of Marxism”, and probably even “Seek truth from facts” as “a popular expression” – are only the result of CCP usage and propaganda. Also, Deng Xiaoping is (still) missing from this 1987 account (I will return to this

aspect later). The online PRC encyclopaedia *Baidu baike*¹⁰⁶ provides a more detailed, though as we may see, equally normative account: “‘Seek truth from facts’ is the core of Mao Zedong Thought, it is the philosophical foundation of Deng Xiaoping’s theory of constructing socialism with Chinese characteristics. 实事求是毛泽东思想的精髓，是邓小平建设有中国特色社会主义理论的哲学基础。(Zhang Yulei 张玉磊 2008)” The 2008 encyclopaedia acknowledges that this notion of “Seek truth from facts” developed in a long historical process from which one may learn “how Chinese Marxists critically carried on the glorious traditional culture 中国的马克思主义者是如何批判地继承优秀的传统文化的 (Zhang Yulei 张玉磊 2008)”. The encyclopaedia then explicates several stages of this historical process: from the phrase’s origin in the *Hanshu*, over its development by Ming and Qing scholars of textual criticism, to its consolidation by Mao (as adaptation of Marxism to Chinese conditions that lead to the victory of the Democratic Revolution in 1949), and finally to its consolidation by Deng (for the construction of a new China). In comparison to the 1987 encyclopaedia, the 2008 online definition provides more information about the history of “Seek truth from facts”, and moreover it explicitly refers to the evolutionary nature of this present-day phrase. Continuity, not revolution is emphasised at this time. But it is a continuity solely constructed from the works of Mao and Deng. In accordance to the Resolution on Party History of 1981, the 2008 encyclopaedia honours Mao’s contributions to establishing a Communist notion of “Seek truth from facts” only for the period prior to 1949. Deng is portrayed as taking up the thread in 1977, leaving a gap of 28 years in which nothing happened, or so it seems. Was the evolution of “Seek truth from facts” really frozen in these 28 years? And did Mao and Deng alone introduce “Seek truth from facts” to Communist discourse in China?

A new source that might help to answer these questions – and thus peel away the next layer of the onion – is the database *Communist Party of China (CPC) Archives and Important Documents* 中国共产党重要文献信息 (hereafter also *CCP Database*). In a subsection, the “works of Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, Liu Shaoqi, Zhu De, Ren Bishi, Deng Xiaoping, and Chen Yun” can be searched (category: “works of leaders 领袖著作”). Though results for searching “Seek truth from facts” in

¹⁰⁶ Baidu Baike is a Chinese pendant of Wikipedia. It was launched in May 2006, when the Chinese government had blocked access to Wikipedia due to politically sensitive topics. Today, it is one of the largest online encyclopedia world wide. In contrast to Wikipedia, it complies with Chinese government censorship in several respects: users have to register to be able to edit articles; and Baidu employees censor pages containing politically sensitive items. See: WOO (13.11.2007) Baidu's Censored Answer to Wikipedia, *BusinessWeek*. Interestingly, the entry on “Seek truth from facts” changed at least once between September and November 2008. While the first version quoted above is close to the government’s stance on the issue, the second does not even mention Deng Xiaoping or Jiang Zemin. The only reference to communist usage is a picture of Mao’s calligraphy of “Seek truth from facts” included in the website.

this database enhance our understanding of its life within Communist discourse, it must be stressed that it is as constructed as the encyclopaedia entries quoted above. The construction derives from the sources of the database which were put through several selection processes: first, certain leaders were selected, others were excluded, for example Chen Duxiu, Hua Guofeng, Hu Yaobang, or Jiang Zemin; then, only *Selected Works* (选集 or 文选) of those leaders were included in the database, and, as the book titles imply, these compilations contain only carefully selected and in most cases edited articles and speeches. The *Selected Works* of all these selected Party leaders (with the exception of Mao) were published only after 1980 that is after the ascension of Deng and his re-appropriation of “Seek truth from facts.”¹⁰⁷ It is possible that the construction of a specific history of “Seek truth from facts”, among other reasons, affected the selection and editing process of articles for these compilations.

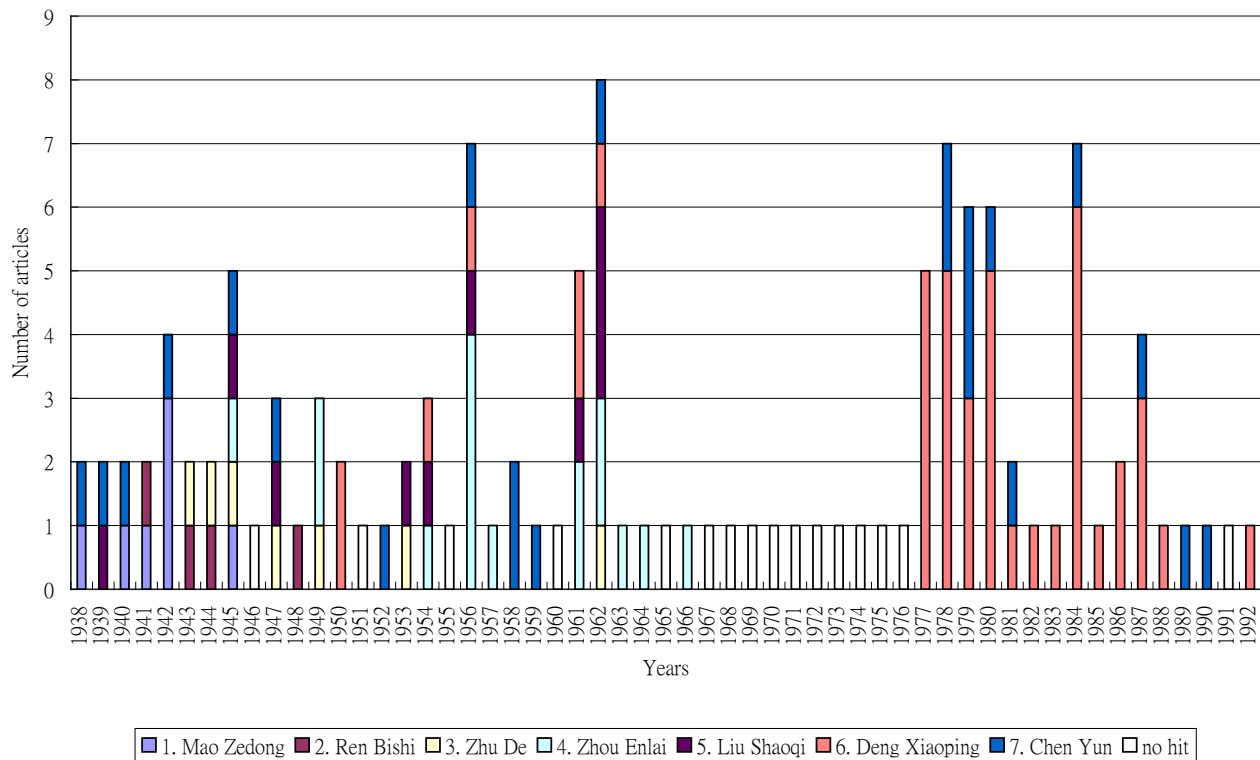


Figure 2: CCP leaders using “Seek truth from facts” in speeches and articles, 1937 to 1992 (Source: Zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi xinxi zhongxin 中央文献研究室信息中心 et al. 2006).

¹⁰⁷ The fifth volume of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* published in 1977, was later withdrawn from the market and is not included in this database. If present it would have added one article from 1955, and four articles from 1957 to Figure 1. In an analysis of Zhou Enlai’s *Selected Works*, Goldstein already mentioned that present-day politics affected the selection criteria, building up support for Deng’s policies (GOLDSTEIN (Dec. 1983) Review: Zhou Enlai and China’s Revolution: A Selective View, *The China Quarterly*, 720-30: 729).

In Figure 2, the history of “Seek truth from facts” is given in numbers according to the *CCP Database*: CCP leaders started to use “Seek truth from facts” in 1938; most hits are returned for the years 1956, 1961/62, 1977-80, and 1984; all of these periods are marked by (a return to) moderate politics. The Cultural Revolution (1966-76) is characterised by silence; however, this silence may partly be the result of manipulation, as at least one speech by Zhou Enlai of 1967 (containing the phrase) is subsumed under the year 1966 (Zhou Enlai 周恩来 1966-1973). Figure 2 also shows that Mao’s contribution to developing “Seek truth from facts” is rather small comprising 8 articles only; he was neither the first leading communist to use the phrase (Chen Yun anticipated him by two weeks), nor did he continue using it after the 7th Party Congress in 1945. Zhu De, Zhou Enlai, and Liu Shaoqi are honoured as ‘interim authority’ carrying the flame of “Seek truth from facts” onwards until 1966. But, according to Figure 2, the most important promoter of “Seek truth from facts” was Deng Xiaoping (comprising 42 articles). He did not start using the phrase out of a sudden in 1977/78, as the 2008 encyclopaedia entry had suggested, but his commitment reaches far back to the year 1950 when he was 1st secretary of the Southwest Bureau. Note also the role which was allegedly played by Chen Yun. From 1938 to 1990, he constantly used “Seek truth from facts”, even in periods in which he was the only one doing so such as the Great Leap Forward in 1958/59, or the Tian’anmen Movement of 1989/90. Though still a normative account, these statistics show a more detailed and diversified history of “Seek truth from facts”. A qualitative reading of the articles comprising Figure 2 add further clues as to how the meaning of “Seek truth from facts” in communist discourse changed and who (was retrospectively) signed responsible for these changes. From 1938 on, when, according to the *CCP Database*, CCP leaders started to promote “Seek truth from facts”, it became a main characteristic of the Soviet-style “Party character *dangxing* 党性”. It was used to describe the behaviour desired in Party members when dealing either with each other or with new (and probably less educated) Party members or with the common people. This usage differed sharply from earlier times. As mentioned above, the phrase originates with the *Book of Han* 汉书 of the 2nd CE; in part 53, the Biography of Prince Liu De of Hejian, it is described, how the prince eagerly collected Confucian works in pre-Qin script, so as to recover the true classics, burned and buried during the Qin dynasty, as basis for Confucian learning and teaching. By presenting his collection to the Han court, Liu helped to create the textual foundation of the so-called Old Text School 古文经学. Yan Shigu, a Tang Dynasty commentator of the *Book of Han*, explained 实事求是 as “to strive for reality when seeking the truth”. In the following centuries, the phrase is time and

again mentioned, mostly in narrations about Liu De and his life.¹⁰⁸ During the Qing dynasty, particularly during the reign of the Qianlong and Jiaqing emperors, “Seek truth from facts” had a first heyday as philological method of studying the Confucian classics that involved knowledge of characters and their interpretation, recognition of homophones, sentence boundaries and phrases, or investigations into phonetics.¹⁰⁹ In the late-Qing period, pro-Western reformers discovered “Seek truth from facts” as a Chinese tradition of studying the natural world (Wright 1998:657). In the 1930s, when Mao Zedong and other Communists started to make use of “Seek truth from facts”, the phrase had already gained the status of a proverb. Thus, it is contained in early 20th century proverb lexica and explained as, for example, “in handling matters to be very serious and not even a bit careless”¹¹⁰ or “See *Book of Han*. It originally points to scholarly research. Today the expression is borrowed to praise [someone] who in managing things will not be startled by empty claims, or will not follow established routine”¹¹¹ Proverbial usage, however, only points to a change in meaning and context, not necessarily to a rise in popularity. How familiar this phrase was to the common people of late Qing and early Republican China hence remains questionable.¹¹² How common and thus familiar the phrase was back then, may be approximated from its use in the media. The sources digitized so far show that the phrase was but rarely used, and then mostly in contexts related to scientific methodology.¹¹³ The same seems true for early PRC journals (see below discussion on Figure 4). Early Communist usage transformed a proverb of ancient origin into a rule of behaviour

¹⁰⁸ See, for example, the search results for 实事求是 up to the Qing dynasty in LIU JUNWEN 刘俊文 & BEIJING ERUDITION DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH CENTRE 北京爱如生数字化技术研究中心 中国基本古籍库 [Database of Chinese classic ancient books]. <http://erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/han/AncientBook>.

¹⁰⁹ WANG YINGXIAN 王应宪 清代“实事求是”学风的复兴与沉寂 [The revival and decrease of the studying style of 'seeking truth from facts' during the Qing dynasty], 安徽史学, 43-50.

¹¹⁰ GUO HOUJUE 郭后觉 (1926) 国语成语大全 [Comprehensive collection of Chinese proverbs] 上海.

¹¹¹ WU LIANMING 吴廉铭 (1936) 中华成语词典 [Chinese proverb dictionary] 上海 The transformation from quotation to proverb seems to have taken place during the late Qing dynasty. Further research might try to pin down those people and media, who sign responsible for this transformation.

¹¹² Searches in the *National index to Chinese newspapers & periodicals* returned only 32 hits for the period prior to 1930, as compared to 9,439 for the period 1931 to 2006. 25 of these 32 hits result from a standard column published in the monthly journal *Niufeng* 女峰 between 1917 and 1919. Neither the Beijing National Library or the collection of republican publications in the China-US Million Book Digital Library Project (<http://www.cadal.zju.edu.cn/Index.action>) return significant numbers for searches for “实事求是”. But all this is only evidence for the knowledge of an elite society, i.e. for people who could afford sending children to school, and/or who were themselves able to read. There are no records of the spoken language of ‘the people’.

¹¹³ The collection of Republican periodicals’ databases at Heidelberg returned as few as four hits for a search for “实事求是”. The collection comprises the following papers: *New Youth* 新青年 (Sept. 1916 - July 1922), *Weekly Review* 每周评论 (Dec. 1918 - Aug. 1919), *New Tide* 新潮 (1. Jan. 1919 - Mar. 1922), *Beijing University Monthly* 北京大学月刊 (Jan. 1919 - Feb. 1922), *Young China* 少年中国 Vol.1, no.1 (July 1919) - vol.4, no.12 (May 1924), *Guide* 向导 No.1 (Sept. 1922) - no.201 (July 1927), *Guoxue Quarterly* 国学季刊 Vol.1, no.1 (Jan. 1923) - vol.7, no.3 (Dec. 1952), *Chinese Youth* 中国青年 (Oct. 1923 - Jan. 1927), *Chinese Worker* 中国工人 (1924-1929).

for the Party rank and file. In the eyes of the commoner, this Party value might have also helped to set these party members apart from the Guomindang *and* the ruling elite of previous dynasties: Communist cadres should be “models of seeking truth from facts 实事求是的模范 (Mao Zedong 毛泽东 1938.10.14)”, they should “grasp the method of seeking truth from facts 掌握实事求是的方法 (Liu Shaoqi 刘少奇 1939.7)”, or develop “the spirit of seeking truth from facts 实事求是的精神 (Liu Shaoqi 刘少奇 1939.7)”; they should “Seek truth from facts” in “carrying out criticism and self-criticism 开展批评和自我批评 (Chen Yun 陈云 1942.11.16)” or they had to “Seek truth from facts when investigating cadres 审查干部必须实事求是 (Chen Yun 陈云 1940.11.29)”. In all of these articles or speeches, “Seek truth from facts” was not used as a quotation, i.e. it was not set into quotation marks, and no author or source were given. In retrospect, this appears to have been the first of many steps in popularising “Seek truth from facts”. It is questionable, however, how consciously this first step was taken. Although different members of the Party leadership used “Seek truth from facts”, it often appeared only as one of several phrases or proverbs. The use of “Seek truth from facts” or other proverbs either may have been motivated by the wish to cater to the language of the Party rank and file and thus attest to the phrases’ common use; but it may also have been the habitual act of an educated elite as was argued by Mittler for similar cases in early newspaper articles, attesting instead to the phrases’ high class usage (see Chapter 1).

The fate of “Seek truth from facts” in Maoist propaganda took a decisive turn when Mao in 1941 gave his speech “Reform Our Study”.¹¹⁴ In this speech, Mao not only used “Seek truth from facts” to characterise his so-called “Marxist-Leninist attitude” (which each Party member should strive to achieve), but also gave a definition or interpretation of his understanding of “Seek truth from facts”:

To take such an attitude is to seek truth from facts. "Facts" are all the things that exist objectively, "truth" means their internal relations, that is, the laws governing them, and "to seek" means to study [*yanjiu*]. We should proceed from the actual conditions inside and outside the country, the province, county or district, and derive from them, as our guide to action, laws which are inherent in them and not imaginary, that is, we should find the internal relations of the events occurring around us. And in order to do that we must rely not on subjective imagination, not on momentary enthusiasm, not on lifeless books, but on facts that exist objectively; we must appropriate the material in detail and, guided by the general principles of Marxism-Leninism, draw correct conclusions from it. 这种态度，就是实事求是的态度。‘实事’就是客观存在着的一切事物，‘是’就是客观事物的内部联系，即规律性，‘求’就是我们去研究。我们要从国内外、省内外、县内外、区内外实际情况出发，从其中引出其固有的而不是臆造的规律性，即找出周围事物的内部联系，作为我们行动的向导。而要做到这样，就须不凭主观想象，不凭一时的热情，不凭死的书本，而凭客观存在的事实，详细地占有材料，在马克思列宁主义一般原理的指导下，从这些材料中引出正确的结论。(Mao 1941.05.19, trsl. in Mao Zedong 1965a:21)

¹¹⁴ Content and quotational history of this speech are discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

While Mao was not the first to describe the working style expected of Party members as one of “Seeking truth from facts” (as I have just shown), he appropriated “Seek truth from facts” for the Communist cause by providing his own definition of the phrase. In this definition he projected Marxist-Leninist concepts (such as the objective world, internal relations, or laws) onto an indigenous Chinese phrase of ancient origin. His definition fostered on notions already inherent in the phrase and its usage (scientific standard, derive laws from nature, base research/behaviour on reality). Both encyclopaedia cited above deny the evolutionary nature of Mao’s usage, instead, they see in Mao’s definition a clear break with former meanings of “Seek truth from facts” (Zhongguo dabaike quanshu zongbianji weiyuanhui “zhexue” bianji weiyuanhui 中国大百科全书总编辑委员会“哲学”编辑委员会 1987 ; Zhang Yulei 张玉磊 2008). However, the ready acceptance of Mao’s definition by his contemporaries (see below) in my view attests to the opposite, i.e. that Mao’s ‘new’ usage absorbed enough of the ‘original’ meaning to appear both familiar and correct.¹¹⁵

The appropriation of “Seek truth from facts” by Mao was decisive for its later fate for two reasons: *First*, Mao herewith created a quotable prototext. From then on, it became *possible* to use “Seek truth from facts” according to Mao’s definition or simply as a quotation *of* Mao. Most obviously, this was done by referring either to the definition itself, or to the prototext “Reform Our Study”, or simply to Mao. Without this step, “Seek truth from facts” might have remained just one of the many Chinese proverbs used from time to time in Party propaganda. *Second*, with the translation of this text into English in 1956, the English phrase “Seek truth from facts” was probably created. This has since become the standard translation of the English writing scholarly community (see Epilogue to this chapter). Another act of appropriation, more symbolic in nature, occurred in 1941/43: The characters 实事求是 in Mao’s hand and inscribed in stone were hung above the auditorium of the Yan’an Party School.¹¹⁶ Hence proceeded the transformation of “Seek truth from facts” from an ancient Chinese proverb known to elite circles (only?) into an important value guiding the action of

¹¹⁵ Mao was not the only one who adopted “Seek truth from facts” to a new time. Hu Shi, for example, had allegedly used “Seek truth from facts” to translate Dewey’s ideas of social investigations to China. In 1948, a *People’s Daily* article took the trouble to extinguish this present-day misconception of an ancient proverb. Hu Shi, it was explained, had practiced experimentalism, but the correct meaning of the phrase was to investigate everything according to time, place, and conditions. See: DING YI 丁易 (17.12.1948) ‘实事求是’的误解 [The misconception of ‘seek truth from facts’], 人民日报, 4.

¹¹⁶ According to an article by *People’s Daily*, Mao twice made a calligraphy of “Seek truth from facts” for the Yan’an Party School, one late in 1941 and another in December 1943. The latter was then inscribed in stone and hung above the auditorium; see XINHUA SHE 新华社 (18.02.2007) 中共中央党校 [Revolutionary memory: the party school of the Chinese Communist Party’s Central Committee], 人民日报, 2: 2. This stone inscription is now on display in the Yan’an Revolution Museum 延安革命纪念馆.

all CCP members. However, after 1941/42 “Seek truth from facts” was not only used as (explicit) quotation by Mao or in the Maoist sense as defined in “Reform Our Study”. In fact, it often remained a proverb used (as adjective or adverb) to describe the correct behaviour expected of Party or army members (Zhu De 朱德 1943.08.18), if faced with problems (Ren Bishi 任弼时 1943.01.07), when investigating errors (Chen Yun 陈云 1942.11.16), or developing the economy (Mao Zedong 毛泽东 1942.12).

Mao had appropriated the phrase – among other reasons – so as to counter the superior knowledge of foreign-trained Chinese Marxists and to justify his own ideological advances. According to the *CCP Database*, the next stage in the life of “Seek truth from facts” was marked by ascriptions such as: “We have to study the objective [i.e. seeking truth from facts] and humble attitude of Chairman Mao 要很好学习毛主席实事求是和谦逊的态度 (Zhu De 朱德 1944)”, or “As for his learning attitude, Chairman Mao’s own slogan is ‘Seek truth from facts’. 毛主席的学习态度，他自己的口号是‘实事求是’。(Zhou Enlai 周恩来 1949.05.07)” While Mao had fashioned himself as quoter-cum-author of “Seek truth from facts”, others extolled him as foremost model of this principle of Party character. Certainly an act of flattery, this also could have been an effort to make Mao accountable to his own principle. Zhu De went so far as to write: “The thought of Chairman Mao is “Seek truth from facts” 毛主席的思想，就是实事求是 (Zhu De 朱德 1944) [my emphasis]”, creating an early prototype of what Deng Xiaoping would claim after Mao’s death (see below).

In Yan’an, Mao had defined “Seeking truth from facts” in opposition to dogmatism and related to the study and use of ideology (Mao Zedong 毛泽东 1941.05.19 ; Mao Zedong 毛泽东 1942.12). Others made use of the phrase especially in economic contexts: to blame reportage of false facts (Chen Yun 陈云 1945.05.09 ; Liu Shaoqi 刘少奇 1961.05.31 ; Deng Xiaoping 邓小平 1961.12.27), to denounce adventurism in economic planning (Zhou Enlai 周恩来 1956.02.08 ; Zhou Enlai 周恩来 1956.09.16) and quality loss in production (Chen Yun 陈云 1958.12.23 ; Chen Yun 陈云 1958.12.26 ; Chen Yun 陈云 1959.05.11), and to criticise bureaucratism (Deng Xiaoping 邓小平 1961.12.27). In these instances, neither Chen Yun, Zhou Enlai, Peng Dehuai, nor Deng Xiaoping referred to Mao, “Reform Our Study” or even Yan’an. However, they all must have known Mao’s use of the phrase in Yan’an, and their audience very likely remembered the subsequent promotion thereof. Thus, I believe myself justified in writing that they all consciously chose “Seek truth from

facts” as a memento, justification, or protection when arguing for a more cautious, pragmatic, objective or realistic economic policy (though with varying results; I will return to this aspect below).

From the period of economic reconstruction after the Great Leap Forward throughout the Cultural Revolution, the *CCP Database* leaves us in doubt as to the history of “Seek truth from facts”. Only thereafter, the story line is picked up by Deng Xiaoping in his talk to the 3rd Plenum of the 10th CCP Central Committee.¹¹⁷ At this crucial point in Chinese history, Deng reintroduced “Seek truth from facts” to CCP discourse as remedy to overcome the errors committed by the ‘Gang of Four’, and as principle for rebuilding the Party. He bolstered his claim not by quoting Mao, but by referring back to Mao’s symbolic act of inscribing “Seek truth from facts” into stone as motto for the Yan’an Party School (Deng Xiaoping 邓小平 1977.07.21). Two months later, Deng reconfirmed his stance saying: “In Yan’an, Comrade Mao Zedong inscribed four characters for the Party School, namely ‘Seek truth from facts’; this is the core of the philosophical thought of Mao Zedong. 毛泽东同志在延安为中央党校题词，就是“实事求是”四个大字，这是毛泽东哲学思想的精髓。(Deng Xiaoping 邓小平 1977.09.19)”. In both cases, I believe, Deng chose to refer to Mao’s stone inscription so as to set “Seek truth from facts” apart from the still omnipresent Mao quotations promoted by Hua Guofeng. Thus, he signalled that “Seek truth from facts” was not only a quotation by Mao, but a principle of his thought and action that once had helped to unite the CCP. Over the next years, Deng broadened the meaning of “Seek truth from facts” from “core of the philosophical thought of Mao Zedong” to “foundation of the proletarian world view 无产阶级世界观的基础 (Deng Xiaoping 邓小平 1978.06.06)”, and “foundation of Marxism 马克思主义的思想基础 (Deng Xiaoping 邓小平 1978.12.13)”. Between 1977 and 1980, Deng used “Seek truth from facts” in no less than 18 speeches or articles (as compared with only 7 by Mao in the *CCP Database*). Whereas earlier, the phrase “Seek truth from facts” had been one of several characteristics that Mao and his thought were said to embody, in Deng’s interpretation, “Seek truth from facts” became now a pars pro toto of Mao and Mao Zedong Thought. Only thus the phrase could be used to investigate the errors of the period under Mao as well as Mao’s thought (Deng Xiaoping 邓小平 1980.03-1981.06).

¹¹⁷ It was held in Beijing from July 16 to 21, 1977, and marks the restoration of Deng Xiaoping to various leading positions. For details of the historical background refer to SCHOENHALS (Jun. 1991) *The 1978 Truth Criterion Controversy*, *The China Quarterly*, 243-268; details of the meeting itself are given in YU GUANGYUAN (2004) *Deng Xiaoping Shakes the World: An Eyewitness Account of China's Party Work Conference and the Third Plenum (November - December 1978)* Norwalk. Studies of socialism under Deng include: MEISNER (1996) *The Deng Xiaoping Era. An Inquiry into the Fate of Chinese Socialism, 1978-1994* New York; TEIWES (Jul. 1995) *The Paradoxical Post-Mao Transition: From Obeying the Leader to 'Normal Politics'*, *The China Journal*, 55-94.

And although Deng used the phrase as reference to Mao, Yan'an, or Marxism, he nonetheless created several prototexts of his own authorship and authority on “Seek truth from facts” to be used by future quoters. Chen Yun, the only other Party leader represented in the *CCP Database* and still alive after 1976, supported Deng's cause, but only belatedly, that is after one year had gone by in which Deng had held 10 speeches about the topic (or so we are led to conclude from the *CCP Database*): “We have to carry on “Seek truth from facts”, that means to search for methods that solve our problems according to the current situation. 我们要坚持实事求是，就是要根据现状，找出解决问题的办法。(Chen Yun 陈云 1978.12.10)” In a fashion similar to Deng, Chen also referred to Mao as teacher of “Seek truth from facts”.

The two last instances of using “Seek truth from facts” which are provided by the *CCP Database* are noteworthy because they may be seen as the last round of fighting about the phrase's meaning: On May 26, 1989, Chen demanded an investigation of those cadres he held responsible for the Tian'anmen Movement. This investigation should “Seek truth from facts”, and the responsible comrades should “be brought to justice 依法惩办”(Chen 1989.05.26). 3 years later, on his so-called ‘Southern Tour’ of 1992, Deng countered this usage by declaring: “Seek truth from facts is the core of Marxism. This, not dogmatism, is what we have to advocate. The success of Reform and Opening Up does not rely on dogmatism, but relies on practice, on seek truth from facts. 实事求是是马克思主义的精髓。要提倡这个，不要提倡本本。我们改革开放的成功，不是靠本本，而是靠实践，靠实事求是。(Deng Xiaoping 邓小平 1992.01.18-02.21)” In their speeches, both Chen and Deng echoed earlier uses of “Seek truth from facts”: Chen used it as element/principle of Party character to guide the behaviour of cadres *and* judge it. Deng instead used it as principle of (economic) policy making, and he also used it as rallying cry against dogmatism, thus emulating Mao's actions of 1941/42 as well as his own actions of 1977/78.

Changing Agents and Changing Times

So far, the story of “Seek truth from facts” has been told from the perspective of the post-Mao CCP leadership. I now venture to peel away the next layer of the onion by looking for that which is absent from this story; *First*, there are rather obvious gaps in the life story of “Seek truth from facts”: lack of information on Mao's usage after 1945, on usage by others during the Cultural Revolution and after 1992 (see Figure 2). Did Mao really abstain from employing “Seek truth from facts” after 1945? What happened to the phrase during the Cultural Revolution? And how did, for example, Jiang

Zemin use it? *Second*, so far we do not know what had been the effects of propagating “Seek truth from facts”. How did a change in meaning or heightened frequency in quoting translate into other media? Did (certain) CCP leaders initiate these changes or did they only react to them? Was it the CCP who caused the popularity of “Seek truth from facts”?

Both encyclopaedia entries and the *CCP Database* suggest that Mao did not use “Seek truth from facts” after 1945. However, this is the result of selected history writing. Quite the contrary is true: Mao used the phrase most often ten years later, namely from 1957 to 1960. Figure 3 displays as many as 28 hits (in light blue) from various articles and speeches of Mao from that time.¹¹⁸

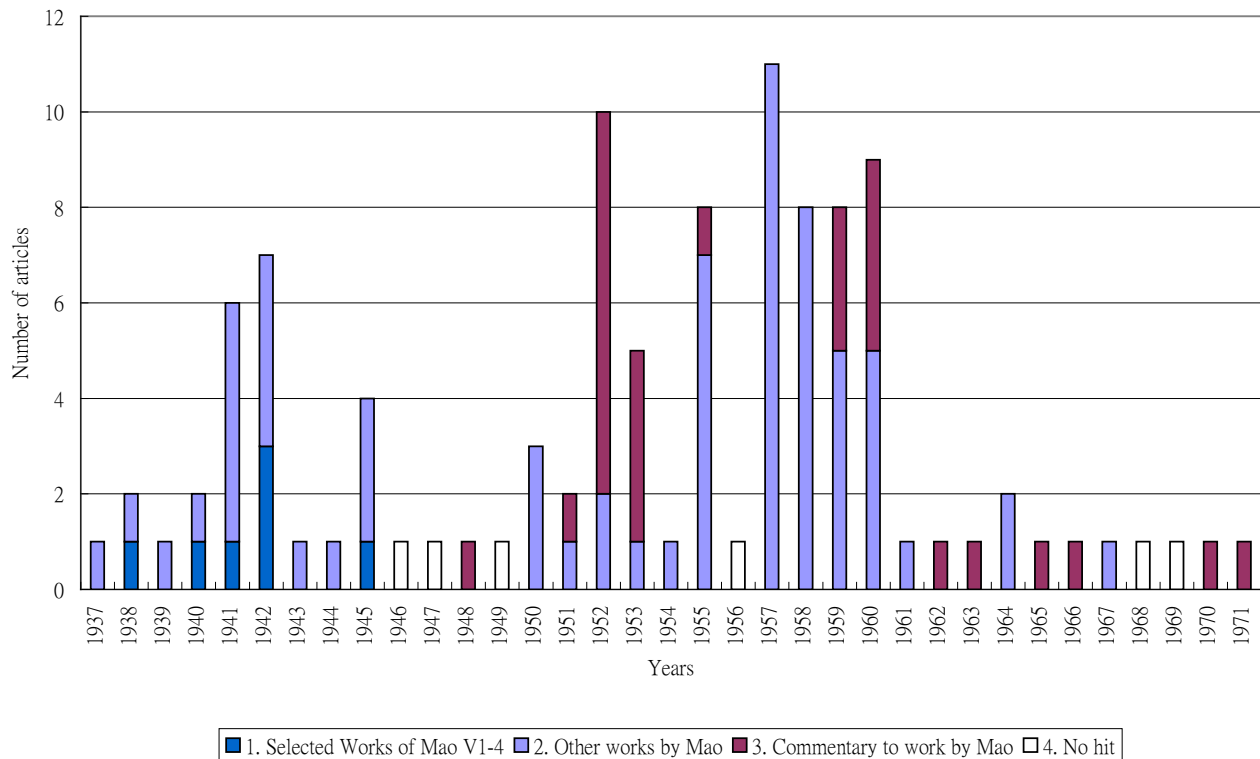


Figure 3: Occurances of “Seek truth from facts” in various works of Mao Zedong, 1937 to 1971 (Source: May 2007).

Mao quoted “Seek truth from facts” in diverse contexts such as economic planning (Mao Zedong 毛泽东 1955.10.29 ; Mao Zedong 毛泽东 1957.10.09), or policy implementation (Mao

¹¹⁸ This graph is the result of a search of Mao’s *Selected Works* (1951–60), *Selected Readings* (1961), *Selected Works on Military* (1963), *Quotations* (1964), *Selected Articles on Newspaper Work* (1983), *Selected Letters* (1983), *Collected Works* (1993), and *Articles and Documents Since Liberation* (1993) (Source: MAY (2007) *Index to Mao Zedong’s works as published by Mao Zedong Tiandi*. <http://www.maostudy.org/>, downloaded: 19.09.2007). Duplicates (some articles were published in more than one collection) were eliminated. Hits in the commentaries (all but one from the *Articles and Documents Since Liberation*) to articles are printed violet. Hits from the *Selected Works Volume 1–4* are printed dark blue, as they correspond to the hits for Mao in Figure 1.

Zedong 毛泽东 1955.11.01), arguing against a fixed quota of ‘rightists’ to be found in every *danwei* (Mao Zedong 毛泽东 1957.05.15), or solving contradictions among the people (since 1957), but also as principle for propaganda (Mao Zedong 毛泽东 1955.10.29). In his articles, the phrase stands in opposition to lies, exaggerations or euphemism; it is used as a call for telling the truth or a personal confirmation thereof; Mao relates it to investigation, analysis, and research. He does not quote himself in using “Seek truth from facts”, nor does he refer in any other way to his 1941/42 appropriation of the phrase. In his articles, “Seek truth from facts” is simply a phrase or proverb. But then, Mao rarely explicitly quoted himself even if he did use the same formulation or sentence twice. What was “Seek truth from facts” to Mao, to the CCP: a quotation, proverb, slogan, or value?

I hope to answer this question (partly) by an investigation into the use of “Seek truth from facts” by *People’s Daily*. As mouthpiece of the CCP Central Committee, *People’s Daily* communicated the views from the top down to every level of cadres and also to the common people in China. Between 1946 and 2007, “Seek truth from facts” appeared in 19,741 articles (or 1.32% of all articles) of *People’s Daily*. But what does this figure indicate, especially for an investigation into the nature of “Seek truth from facts”? A random comparison with other term frequencies suggests that it was not the proverbial quality of “Seek truth from facts” that contributed to its roughly 20,000 uses: the average use of proverbs from a set of 10 random samples was only about 500 or 0.16%.¹¹⁹ The same holds true for other quotations from Mao with one exception: “Serve the people 为人民服务” was used slightly more often than “Seek truth from facts” in *People’s Daily*. As to the frequency of occurrence, “Seek truth from facts” is more similar to political slogans¹²⁰ than to either proverbs or quotations. Even a phrase as common to the Communist vocabulary as “Chinese Communist Party 中国共产党” (or its abbreviation 中共) reached only 3.54%.¹²¹ On average, “Seek truth from facts” appeared in one article per day. This common usage may explain why the 1987 encyclopaedia

¹¹⁹ I checked the following proverbs: “Behind the fallen is a column of successors 前仆后继” (0.1%), “to come clear into view 历历在目” (0.06%), “Sloppy; slapdash 粗枝大叶” (0.05%), “Quote out of context 断章取义” (0.03%), “Feel restless 坐立不安” (0.03%), “Famous dictum 至理名言” (0.02%), “High and mighty 神气活现” (0.01%), “To quote copiously from many sources 旁征博引” (0.01%), “murder sb. for his money 谋财害命” (0.01%). Some of these proverbs have been used by Mao, others I found in *People’s Daily* articles, others I chose randomly from a *chengyu* dictionary.

¹²⁰ Among others I checked ‘evergreens’ such as “Thought liberation 解放思想” (0.77%) and “Investigation and research 调查研究” (2.02%), but also post-1984 slogans such as “Reform and opening up 改革开放” (2.98%) and “Socialism with Chinese characteristics 有中国特色社会主义” (0.56%).

¹²¹ Nouns or noun phrases most often used in *People’s Daily* include “China 中国 (34.63%)” and “people 人民 (34.60%)” appearing in every third article, or “education 教育 (12.69%)” and “time 时候 (9.75%)” appearing in every tenth article.

described it as a “popular expression 通俗表达” (see above). However, it remains uncertain if *People’s Daily* (and its predecessors) functioned as mirror or generator of this ‘popularity’.¹²² As to the interaction between leaders and *People’s Daily*, a similar question may be raised: Did leaders initiate quoting trends in *People’s Daily* or vice versa? From a statistical point of view, it can be argued that CCP leaders did affect trends in *People’s Daily* only at specific periods, but not in general. *First*, the assumption that *People’s Daily* mirrored Mao’s use of “Seek truth from facts” cannot be confirmed: There is no correlation between the graph of *People’s Daily* in Figure 4 and Mao in Figure 2.¹²³ This is most prominent for the period from 1957 to 1960 when Mao used “Seek truth from facts” most often and continuously, or during the Cultural Revolution, when we have no hits for Mao but some in *People’s Daily*. *Second*, no correlation of “Seek truth from facts” usage between hits in *People’s Daily* and in the *Selected Works* of selected CCP leaders for the period 1949 to 1992 can be found either (see Figures 1 and 5):¹²⁴ While *People’s Daily* usage of “Seek truth from facts” rose from 1955 onwards and peaked in 1957, the graphs for the CCP leaders shows a peak in 1956 and only one hit for 1957. Also, in 1961/62 the *People’s Daily*’s graph is falling while the leaders’ graph is rising. And, while the peaks in *People’s Daily* between 1949 and 1966 get lower and lower with each peak, CCP leaders on the contrary referred ever more often to “Seek truth from facts”, before remaining silent after 1966. How can we account for the fact that there is no correlation either between Mao and *People’s Daily*, or CCP leaders and *People’s Daily*? One possible interpretation is that *People’s Daily*’s promotion of “Seek truth from facts” was largely independent of the CCP leadership. However, secondary sources concerning the guidance of *People’s Daily* by the Party suggest the opposite (Schoenhals 1992 ; Wu Guoguang 1994). A second cause may be a flaw in sources: After all, the *CCP Database* only represented the *Selected Works* of selected leaders, not including CCP leaders heavily involved in propaganda such as Hu Qiaomu. Though this might account for the missing correlation between *People’s Daily* and the CCP leaders, or the missing correlation during certain periods (the Cultural Revolution, for example), it does not account for *People’s Daily* acting independent of Mao. I therefore want to propose a third

¹²² The theory of the spiral of silence provides evidence that media rather create public opinion than mirror it. See: NOELLE-NEUMANN (Spring 1974) The Spiral of Silence: A Theory of Public Opinion, *Journal of Communication*, 43-51: 51. A more detailed discussion thereof can be found in: NOELLE-NEUMANN (1980) *Die Schweigespirale: Öffentliche Meinung - unsere soziale Haut* München: 132-6.

¹²³ The correlation for the whole period is 0.57, while various sub-periods rank between -0.06 and 0.57. Results are based on searches in *People’s Daily* and my own index to the works of Mao Zedong.

¹²⁴ The correlation for the whole period is 0.51. Neither do figures for *People’s Daily* and CCP leaders correlate for the following sub-periods: 1949-66; 1966-76; 1976-1992. They range between 0.27 and 0.63. These figures are based on searches in the *People’s Daily* database and the *CCP Database*.

explanation: *People's Daily* did or could only react to the promotion of “Seek truth from facts” by CCP leaders, if *the* leadership acted in unison. This hypothesis is supported by two facts: As I argued above, from 1977 to at least 1982, Deng Xiaoping and Chen Yun joined forces in promoting “Seek truth from facts” as an old and familiar principle for their new policy. Accordingly, we find a strong correlation (0.95) between the speeches of these leaders with articles published in *People's Daily*, but with a one year delay in reaction time. On the other hand, between 1956 and 1962 there is a negative correlation (-0.88) between the use of “Seek truth from facts” by Mao and the other CCP leaders, this means when Mao emphasised “Seek truth from facts”, the other CCP leaders fell silent, and vice versa. For the same period, we find no correlation between *People's Daily* and either Mao or the CCP leaders. Either promotion of “Seek truth from facts” by the mouthpiece of the Central Committee might have been arbitrary, or more likely the missing correlation is a result of the editing process of the various leaders' *Selected Works*. Thus, more articles dating from times of struggle (than from periods of unanimity) were later deleted or revised before being included in the various *Selected Works*. This leads to a lack of correlation between these edited works and *People's Daily*.

So far, I have concentrated on the interaction between the CCP leadership as they manifest themselves in their published *Selected Work* and the leadership's mouthpiece, i.e. *People's Daily*. But how did the trend to quote “Seek truth from facts” travel through other kinds of media? How did *People's Daily* interact with other papers? Figure 4 includes the lifecycle of “Seek truth from facts” not only in *People's Daily*, but also in two other sources: the green line displays the frequency of use in *People's Liberation Army News* articles, while the pink line results from searches in the *National Index to Chinese Newspapers and Periodicals* (hereafter *Index to Newspapers*). The first database provides a full-text search to all articles of *People's Liberation Army News* (since the paper commenced publication in 1956). The latter is a (selected) title index to a selection of Chinese newspapers and periodicals provided by the Shanghai Library 上海图书馆.¹²⁵ Figure 4 shows that especially after 1976 similar quotation trends appear in all three databases, no matter if these are full-text searchable or only contain a title index. Thus, a more detailed analysis thereof seems legitimate to me. Again, it must be pointed out that databases-to-come may soon provide much better sources than those currently available to me.

¹²⁵ A more detailed discussion of this database and its contents is given below.

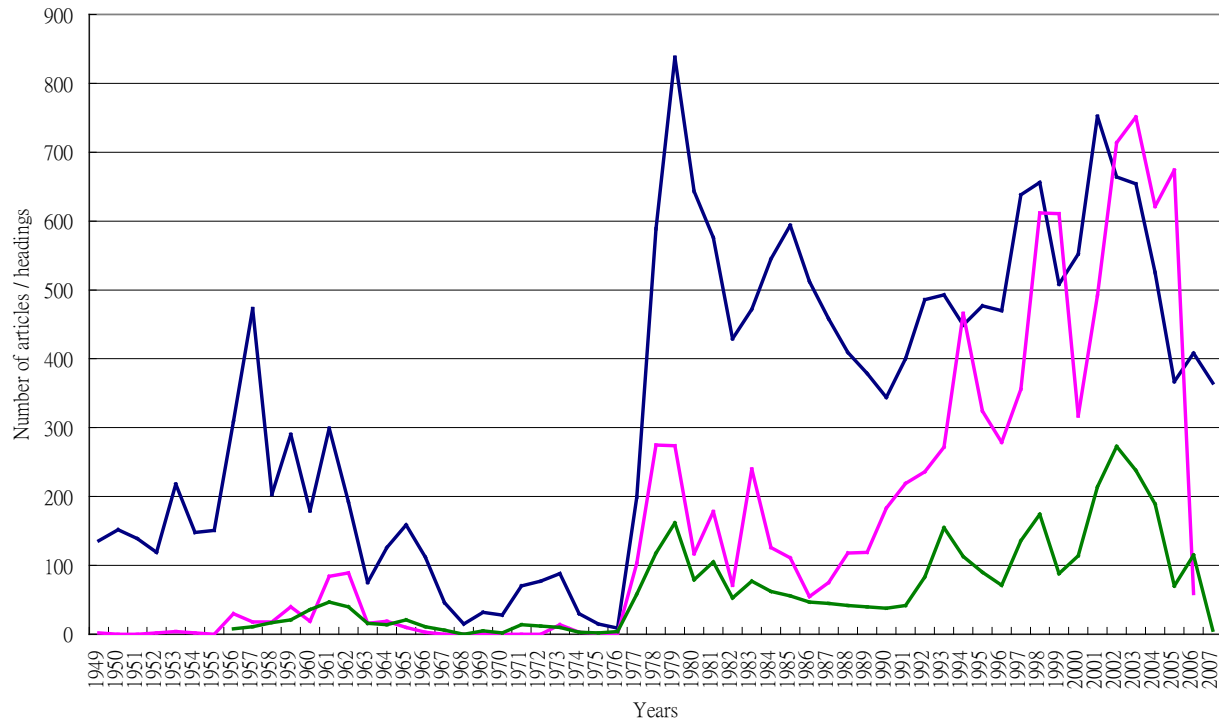


Figure 4: Quoting “Seek truth from facts” in articles of *People’s Daily* (blue line) and *Liberation Army Daily* (green line), and in the titles of articles provided by the *National Index to Chinese Newspapers and Periodicals* (pink line) (Source: Renmin ribao she xinwen xinxi zhongxin 人民日报社新闻信息中心 2007 ; Quanguo baokan suoyin bianjibu 全国报刊索引编辑部 2006 ; 2008).

According to Figure 4, one is tempted to speak of a significant change of promotion of “Seek truth from facts” in the media after 1976. While before 1976, almost every peak is lower than the preceding one; after 1976, the peaks get higher and higher especially in *People’s Liberation Army News* and *Index to Newspapers*. Also, quotation numbers are much higher for the post-1976 period. This indicates that it was foremost Deng Xiaoping’s promotion of “Seek truth from facts” that made the phrase popular. This interpretation holds even if we take into account that the number of articles published in *People’s Daily* and the number of newspapers published in China rose after 1976 which quite naturally might have led to higher numbers of quoting “Seek truth from facts”. Figure 5 shows that the percentage of all articles in *People’s Daily* (blue line) and the percentage of article titles in different newspapers (pink line) rose after 1976, even though less prominently than in absolute numbers (comp. Figure 4 and 5). Especially the low results of the pre-1949 as well as pre-Cultural Revolution period for the *Index to Newspapers* (0.0005% of titles contained “Seek truth from facts”) support my hypothesis that it was foremost the Communists who transformed “Seek truth from facts” into a proverb known to the common people.

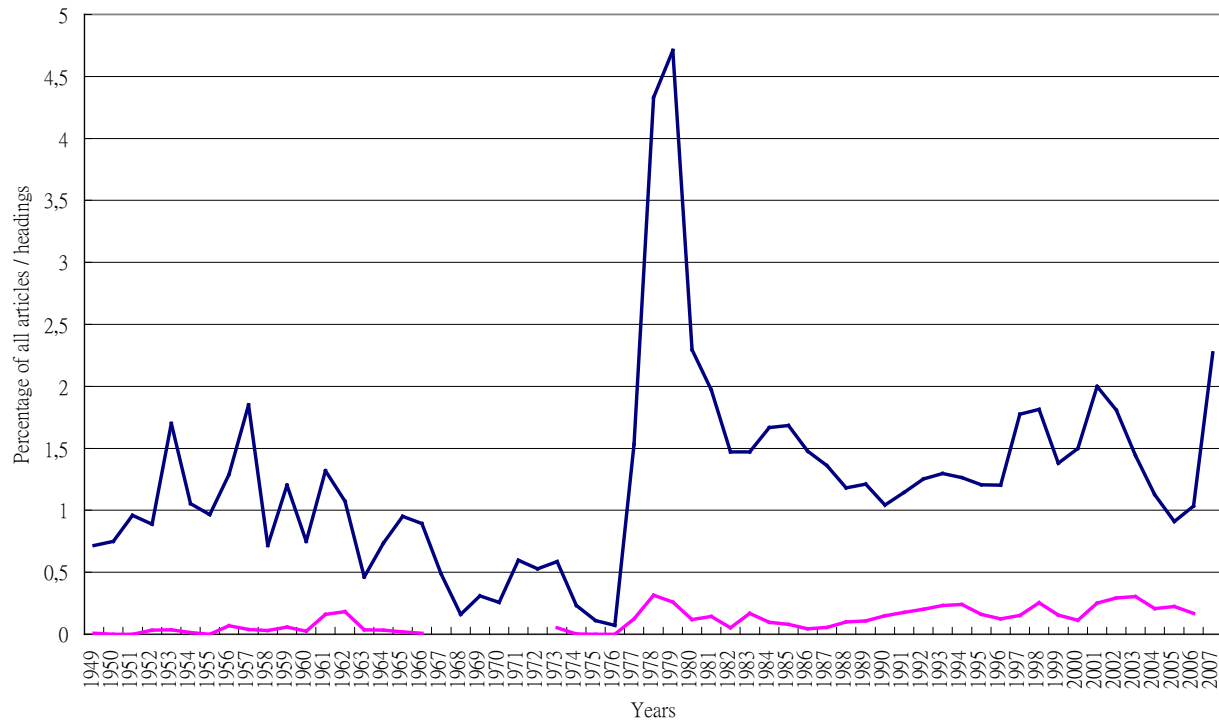


Figure 5: Percentage of articles in *People's Daily* (blue line) and titles of articles in the *National Index to Chinese Newspapers and Periodicals* (pink line) quoting “Seek truth from facts” (Source: Renmin ribao she xinwen xinxi zhongxin 人民日报社新闻信息中心 2007 ; Quanguo baokan suoyin bianjibu 全国报刊索引编辑部 2006). *Liberation Army Daily* could not be included in this statistic as the database does not provide figures of all published articles per year.

As to the interaction of *People's Daily*, *People's Liberation Army News*, and the media in general, the following preliminary conclusions can be deduced from Figure 4: *People's Daily* had no significant influence on the promotion of “Seek truth from facts” in other media prior to 1966 (see below). During the Cultural Revolution, *People's Daily* and *People's Liberation Army News* show some correlation (0.86).¹²⁶ This may be accounted for by the fact that these two papers together with the theoretical journal *Red Flag* formed the “two papers and one journal” often printing and reprinting the same articles (Chang Man 1969). The year 1989 divides the post-Cultural Revolution period into two distinct phases: there is a slight correlation (0.8) between *People's Daily* and *People's Liberation Army News* for the period 1976 to 1989, but a stronger correlation (0.88) between *People's Liberation Army News* and *Index to Newspapers*. After 1989, *People's Daily* and *People's Liberation Army News* show a stronger correlation (0.84), while *Index to Newspapers* reacts to both papers with a delay of one year (correlation of 0.9). It seems as though trends in the national media conform more with *People's Liberation Army News* than with *People's Daily*, especially

¹²⁶ The *Index to Newspapers* contains no results for this period and is thus not taken into account.

before 1989. Thereafter, *People's Daily* and *People's Liberation Army News* are more similar in promoting "Seek truth from facts", while the national media only follow the quotation trend set by these papers with a one year's delay. One should bear in mind, however, that correlation is only an indicator of a similar development. It does not indicate a causal relationship between these developments. Also, this whole analysis is only valid for the case of "Seek truth from facts". Its significance for other topics discussed in the Chinese media awaits analysis elsewhere.

After investigating these general trends, I now turn to a more detailed analysis of two specific periods: 1960-62 and 1976-78. I chose these two periods for several reasons: First, both periods witness an increase of quoting "Seek truth from facts" after a period of relative silence. We may thus be able to analyse which papers initiated or only followed these minor quotation trends. Second, in both cases the CCP returned to promoting "Seek truth from facts" so as to re-evaluate and change previous policies (the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution). Third, I hope to compare and contrast the influence of subsequent CCP leaders (Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping) on the promotion of political slogans. In this detailed analysis I put some of my previous hypotheses to test: (a) The Party popularised "Seek truth from facts". (b) Even though there is no correlation between the CCP leaders and *People's Daily* in 1960-62, the promotion of "Seek truth from facts" in *People's Daily* was instigated by the Party leadership. (c) *People's Daily* had no significant influence on the promotion of "Seek truth from facts" in other media prior to 1966. (d) Deng Xiaoping and Chen Yun revived "Seek truth from facts" after Mao's death and thereby initiated a quotation trend. The following analysis relies heavily on the *National Index to Chinese Newspapers and Periodicals*. However, this source turned out to be less reliable than I had expected. Random tests indicate, for example, that a *selection* of article titles of *People's Daily* were included in the database only. We must expect the same to be true for other papers as well. However, I could not deduce the rules that might have guided this selection process such as first page articles only, signed articles only, or no reprints.¹²⁷ Though I hope that the following analysis advances our knowledge of the life of "Seek truth from facts" and our understanding of the development of quotation trends, it is again only an approximation and, in my view, only acceptable as we lack a better source so far: Although several databases providing data for the latter period (1976-78) exist, to my knowledge there is no database containing more than one newspaper for the first period 1960-62. I therefore decided to use the *Index*

¹²⁷ The database itself does not reveal any information on the selection process, nor could any of my informants answer this question of mine.

to *Newspapers* for both periods, hoping that the selection process had remained the same throughout the whole database.

CCP		Mass organisations	I. State II. Army	University	Other political parties	Else	Total
Centre	Province						
Period I: 1960-62							
19	123	17	9	4	7	15	194
9,79%	63,40%	8,76%	4,64	2,06%	3,61%	7,73%	100,00%
Period II: 1976-78							
67	217	13	32	23	4	18	374
17,91%	58,02%	3,48%	8,56%	6,15%	1,07%	4,81%	100,00%

Figure 6: Papers of different ownership using “Seek truth from facts” (Source: Quanguo baokan suoyin bianjibu 全国报刊索引编辑部 2006). For details on the categorisation of journals cf. to Appendix 1.

In the analysis above, the data provided by the *Index to Newspapers* has been taken to represent ‘the Chinese media’ as opposed to two particular papers, i.e. *People’s Daily* and *People’s Liberation Army News*. However, at least during the two periods under investigation, roughly 75% of all hits in this database result from the use of “Seek truth from facts” in the article titles of papers either owned by the Central Committee or by Party Committees of lower levels (see Figure 6). Quoting “Seek truth from facts”, it seems, was mostly a Party trend, rarely affecting non-Party papers.¹²⁸

The monthly statistics in Figure 7 and 8 document what type of journal introduced articles using “Seek truth from facts” in their title.¹²⁹ In both periods under investigation (1960-62 and 1976-78), it

¹²⁸ Again, these figures might be due to a disproportionate representation of certain journals/danwei in the database. Unluckily, the database does not allow a combined search for the publishing danwei, which I believe would be the only method to generate an average. Though the many databases that have appeared in the last years are an indispensable tool for modern research, it must be stressed that they still lack many necessary features.

¹²⁹ I derived these types from the ownership (*danwei*) of a journal as provided by the *Index to Newspapers*. Category 1 – CCP CC – includes *People’s Daily* and *Guangming Daily* 光明日报 both belonging to the CCP Central Committee. Category 2 – CCP – includes numerous organs of provincial CCP committees like *Shanxi Daily*, *Zhejiang Daily*, or *Hubei Daily*. Category 3 – Mass – includes papers of mass organisations such as *Gansu Literature and Art* 甘肃文艺 of the Literature Federation of Gansu Province 甘肃省文联. Category 4 – State/Army – refers to papers owned by ministries such as *Finance* 财政 of the National Department for Finance 国家财政部, or by the People’s Liberation Army. Category 5 – University – refers to papers of universities, schools, or research institutes. Category 6 – OPP, an acronym for “Other Political Parties” – refers to papers owned by the democratic parties such as *Wenhui Bao* 文汇报 or *Dagongbao* 大公报; in Category 7 – else – I included those newspapers and journals of uncertain ownership. A list of categories and journal titles can be found in the Appendix 1.

Lifecycles of Quotations

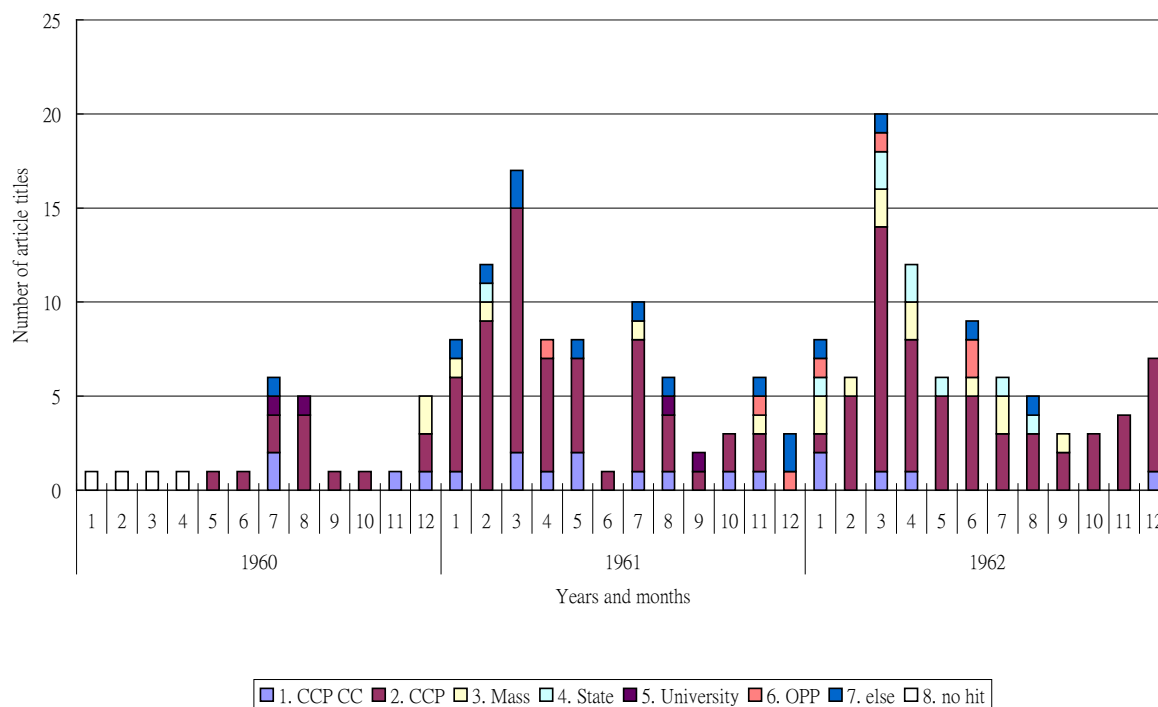


Figure 7: Quoting “Seek truth from facts” in article titles between 1960 and 1962 (Source: Quanguo baokan suoyin bianjibu 全国报刊索引编辑部 2006). CCP CC = CCP Central Committee; Mass = Mass organisations; OOP = Other political parties. For details on the categorisation of journals cf. to fn. 129 or the excel file on the accompanying CD.

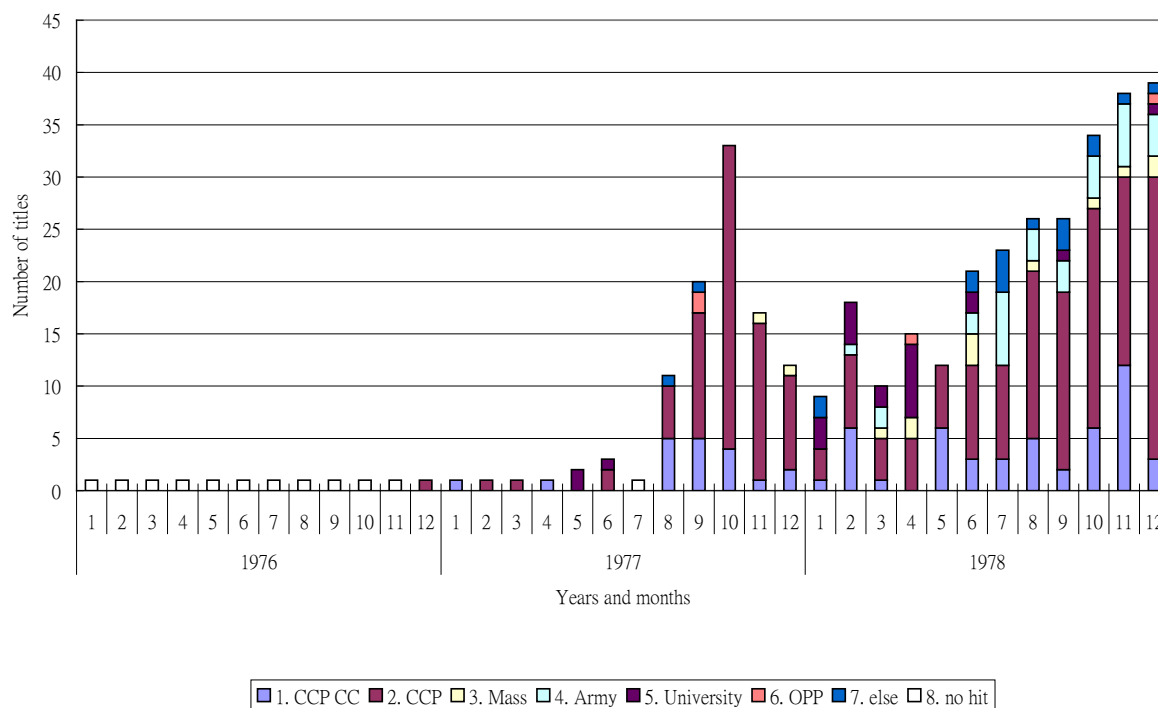


Figure 8: Quoting “Seek truth from facts” in article titles between 1976 and 1978 (Source: Quanguo baokan suoyin bianjibu 全国报刊索引编辑部 2006). Acronyms and further information as in Figure 7.

was not *People's Daily*, but other Party papers that started to use “Seek truth from facts” in article titles after a period of silence. In both cases, one might argue that the trendsetters or innovators were also stakeholders: in 1960, the trendsetters were the Party Committees of the provinces Henan and Shandong who had to cope with the worst devastation in China and were therefore most anxious to moderate economic policies (MacFarquhar 1983:322); and in 1977, the Party Committees of the city Shanghai and the provinces Guangdong and Jiangsu turned innovators, all of which later profited heavily from the policy of Reform and Opening Up. Further similarities between the two trends are their early adaptation by scholarly journals (before the first peak), whereas the organs of ministries, mass organisations, and the army may be counted among the late majority.¹³⁰

How did *People's Daily* (re)act? In the first period, it was only in July that the Centre's mouthpiece committed two articles to the trend, neither of them an editorial. The first article was a field report printed on page one and detailing how a car factory in Shanghai overcame difficulties by following “Seek truth from facts” and thus could do another leap forward (Xinhua she 新华社 1960.07.02). Interestingly, in both this and the next *People's Daily* article the phrase is introduced in connection with the still prominent formula of the Great Leap Forward, although “Seek truth from facts” rather advocates moderation than activism and would later be used as explanation for giving up Great Leap Forward policies. We may conclude that the slogans of contradictory policies overlap for some time, i.e. new trends at first grow on previous trends, before replacing them. In the second *People's Daily* article, Ceng Xisheng 曾希圣 (first secretary of Anhui) advocated the study of Mao's attitude of “Seek truth from facts”, for only this could bring success to the Great Leap Forward (Ceng Xisheng 曾希圣 1960.07.06). Ceng here used both Mao's model-like quality and the furthering of Great Leap Forward goals to justify his promotion of “Seek truth from facts”. However, the article appeared only on page 7 of *People's Daily*, confining Ceng's advance to the theory section. It was not given prominence on page one. Both the earlier articles by provincial Party papers and the authorship of the second *People's Daily* article indicate that the resurgence in quoting “Seek truth from facts” was caused by the provinces, not the centre. Secondary sources support this hypothesis. Thus in 1973, Peter Moody wrote in an article about the career of Tao Zhu, first secretary of Guangdong: “In mid-year [i.e. summer of 1960], the economic line began to moderate, and Chang [i.e. Zhang Pinghua, newly appointed first secretary of Hunan] became the first open high-ranking

¹³⁰ I here adopt the terminology of the Diffusionsmodel that divides the participants of a trend into: innovator, early adaptor, early majority, late majority, latecomer. In: MEFFERT (2000) *Marketing: Grundlagen marktorientierter Unternehmensführung* Wiesbaden: 169.

spokesman for moderation, discovering that Chairman Mao had once uttered the proverb, ‘Seek truth from facts.’ In the following months, this became one of the most widely used slogans. (Moody 1973:282)” However, this depiction by Moody is misleading in several aspects, probably caused by missing sources: (a) Zhang Pinghua had entered the Yan’an Central Party School in March 1941, and had been present when Mao transformed “Seek truth from facts” into a prominent symbol of his thought and policy. Thus, it is unlikely that to him “Seek truth from facts” would simply be a “proverb uttered by Mao”. (b) Being an old Yan’anite Zhang might have remembered, but could hardly “discover” Mao’s use of “Seek truth from facts”. And (c) if we suppose that Zhang was following *People’s Daily* reportage closely in the turbulent period of the Great Leap Forward, his memory would have been helped by as many as 9 articles appearing between 1958 and 1960 which quoted Mao’s 1941 definition of “Seek truth from facts”: “‘Facts’ are all the things that exist objectively, ‘truth’ means their internal relations, that is, the laws governing them, and ‘to seek’ means to study. (Mao 1941.05.19, trsl. in Mao Zedong 1965a:21)” Both statistical and historical facts disclaim the importance which Moody attributes to quotations in general, and to “Seek truth from facts” in particular in causing or legitimating political change. Mao could not be overruled by reference to that very canon which he (and other leaders) had created and which was emulated by the CCP. Hence, neither implicit action according to “Seek truth from facts” nor explicit reference to this concept did, for instance, save Peng Dehuai from his fall in 1959 after criticising the Great Leap Forward.¹³¹ Rules, principles and values put forward by Mao and put down in his canonical works pertained to everyone else but not the Chairman and also not to situations involving the Chairman. If we assume that others promoted Mao as model of “Seek truth from facts” in an attempt to create a benchmark for Mao himself (as I suggested above), one has to admit that this attempt failed. Mao did not accept his actions to be judged by principles he himself had put forward. Therefore one might conclude somewhat boldly that the slow downward trend visible in quoting “Seek truth from facts” in *People’s Daily* between 1949 and 1976 (comp. blue line in Figure 4 and 5) resulted from a growing sense of its meaninglessness or weakness. As to Moody’s depiction quoted above, one may rather argue that Zhang Pinghua advocated moderation by quoting “Seek truth from facts”, *because* the economic line began to moderate anyway. Quotations, it seems, only became powerful when introduced at the appropriate time, to theoretically enhance a process which already was in the

¹³¹ See: “Letter of opinion by Comrade Peng Dehuai 彭德怀同志的意见书” in: ZHONGYANG WENXIAN YANJIUSHI XINXI ZHONGXIN 中央文献研究室信息中心 & RENMIN SHUJUKU XI 人民数据库系 (2006) 中国共产党重要文献信息库 [Communist Party of China (CPC) Archives and Important Documents]. <https://erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/han/cpc/www.oriprobe.com/cpc.html>, accessed: Oct.-Nov. 2008.

making. The analysis above suggests that it was Mao who was decisive in initiating quotation trends, both in the Party and its press. So, did he influence the 1960 “Seek truth from facts” trend? And if so, how is Mao’s influence expressed in the different statistics?

At the end of an enlarged Politburo meeting from June 14-18, 1960, Mao wrote a summing up of the ten years of CCP leadership. This summary is seen by scholars as Mao’s defence when faced with the failure of the Great Leap Forward (MacFarquhar 1983:335-6). One reason of this failure, Mao believed, was that cadres had neglected to “Seek truth from facts”; but it was this principle alone that allowed people to take initiative.¹³² It was only *after* Mao wrote this document that *People’s Daily* started propagating “Seek truth from facts”, advocating to learn from Mao, and pointing to “Seek truth from facts” as remedy to the Great Leap Forward. Only the Party papers of Henan and Shandong anticipated Mao’s turn in sentiment, and used “Seek truth from facts” in headlines of articles prior to June 1960. Figure 7 indicates that the trend to use “Seek truth from facts” in article titles only reached its culmination late in 1960, early 1961. It coincided with a policy of investigation and research advanced by Mao late in 1960 (see Chapter 3). But it also coincided with the phrase “Seek truth from facts” receding from Mao’s vocabulary shortly thereafter, and gaining prominence in that of other CCP leaders such as Zhou Enlai, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping after March 1961 (see Figure 2 and 3). All these findings indicate that Mao was decisive in commencing quotation trends in *People’s Daily* at least, and in delivering them to culmination. Also, it confirms the hypothesis introduced above that political trends do not simply displace one another, but that new trends grow on the old during a time of overlap.

Are these findings reconfirmed by the analysis of the second period 1976-78? How did the central and provincial Party papers interact in this period? In what respect can we again speak of a Party trend, initiated by Party people and carried on by Party papers? Figure 8 shows that as in 1960, the quotation trend started with a provincial Party paper. And again, *People’s Daily* committed two articles to the trend in its early stage. Closer investigation, however, shows that both articles were not written by *People’s Daily* itself, but by a local Party committee in one case, and a reader in the other. Moreover, four of the five articles (that were published by *People’s Daily* in August) originate with provincial Party committees. Only late in August did *People’s Daily* actively join the trend using “Seek truth from facts” in its titles, but even thereafter about half of its ‘trendy’ articles were of external origin. However, Figure 8 also shows that the trend lingered on the margins for several

¹³² See: “Ten year’s summary 十年总结”, 18.06.1960 in: MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1998) 建国以来毛泽东文稿 [Manuscripts by Mao Zedong since the liberation of China] 北京: Volume 9.

months (Dec. 1976 to July 1977, often only one or two articles per month appeared that quoted “Seek truth from facts”), and grew significantly only when *People’s Daily* joined in. Coincidentally, Deng Xiaoping was rehabilitated on August 12, 1977, and used “Seek truth from facts” in four speeches between August and September of the same year. More articles by other leaders followed, especially by Nie Rongzhen at the beginning of September and Chen Yun at the end of the month (for further details on this period see Chapter 3), concurring with a rise in newspaper coverage. After an interim low, the trend was reinforced after June 1978, and, again, this revitalisation may be traced back to Deng Xiaoping and his talk to the all-army political work conference on June 2, 1978, which was considered by contemporaries as supportive of the “truth criterion”.¹³³ As the *Selected Works* of Chen Yun omit this article of late September 1977, it appears as though Deng Xiaoping was the only one of the CCP leadership to support the advancement of “Seek truth from facts” as slogan for a new era in China. Still, it may be argued that the media reacted most directly to Deng.

At the beginning of this part, I pointed out two aspects of the lifecycle of “Seek truth from facts” in need of further investigation: the interaction of Party and media, and the gaps in the normative story. I now want to turn to a discussion of these gaps which comprise most visibly the Cultural Revolution and the post-1992 period. Both periods are covered by the statistical assessment in Figure 4 and 5, but though such statistics may indicate trends in quotation, they don’t advance our knowledge concerning the trends’ content; or, to put it differently, *how* was “Seek truth from facts” used in the media? Take the example of the Cultural Revolution, a period unmentioned in normative accounts of the history of “Seek truth from facts” published after the Cultural Revolution. This fact in itself is not very astonishing, as the Cultural Revolution is absent in any normative account. Still, *People’s Daily* has been using “Seek truth from facts” during this time, though not as often as in previous or later decades (see Figure 4). In *People’s Daily* articles, the phrase often appears in what might be called its ‘normal habitat’: as characteristic or principle of Party members. Guided by this Party value, cadres abstain from lying or exaggerations, and instead stick to the truth. Other uses are more typical for the Cultural Revolution: Mao’s last use of the phrase in 1967 found its way into *People’s Daily* three month later as “teaching of Chairman Mao”: he had criticised the Sichuan army commander for taking too many ‘capitalist roaders’ into custody (some 27,000) and instead, Mao advised to “seek truth from facts and openly admit the wrong to the people, and correct it straight

¹³³ For further information refer to fn. 330.

away 实事求是地公开向群众承认错误，并立即改正”¹³⁴. Other Mao quotations containing “Seek truth from facts” appeared likewise, not on a large scale though. But there were also critiques of “Seek truth from facts”, most noteworthy by Yao Wenyuan, who implicitly accused both Deng Tuo and Tao Zhu to have hidden their counterrevolutionary attitudes behind a facade of “Seek truth from facts” (Yao Wenyuan 姚文元 1966.05.11 ; Yao Wenyuan 姚文元 1967.09.08). The phrase may well have lost its appeal by such accusations, because any association with a counterrevolutionary such as Tao Zhu – if only through a phrase – would have been avoided by others. Between 1971 and 1973, usage of “Seek truth from facts” increased again. This increase is accounted for by the moderate policies caused by Lin Biao’s ‘treason’, commanded by Mao Zedong and implemented by Zhou Enlai. By “Seeking truth from facts” past wrongs could be addressed, discussed, and redressed. This led, for example, to the rehabilitation of a large number of Party cadres, victims of the first years of the Cultural Revolution (MacFarquhar et al. 2006:337-57). When Lin Biao was publicly disgraced as traitor at the 10th national CCP Congress in 1973, Zhou Enlai even blamed Lin Biao for undermining the Party’s working style of “seeking truth from facts”. He pointed out that this erroneous development had since been redressed: “The working style of seeking truth from facts and the mass line and the glorious tradition of modesty and arduous struggle that Lin Biao had [both] sabotaged have received further development. 被林彪破坏了的实事求是、群众路线的作风，谦虚谨慎、艰苦奋斗的光荣传统得到发扬。(Zhou Enlai 周恩来 1973.09.01)”

The second gap in the history of “Seek truth from facts” to be filled is the post-1992 period. As has been pointed out above, Deng Xiaoping repeatedly stressed “Seek truth from facts” in the years immediately following the Cultural Revolution. He thereby transformed the phrase into a symbol of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought, and simultaneously created many quotations of his own that contained “Seek truth from facts”. Above, I pointed out that concerning quotation frequency *People’s Daily* followed the phrase’s propagation by Deng Xiaoping with a one year delay. I now want to ask if this also pertains to the contents? Did *People’s Daily* follow Deng by quoting Mao’s use of “Seek truth from facts”, or did they rather quote Deng who quoted Mao using the phrase? When did Deng, instead of Mao, become the quoter-cum-author of “Seek truth from facts”?¹³⁵ Did this coincide with the creation of the phrase “Seek truth from facts is the core of

¹³⁴ See: “印发四川省释放被捕、拘留、收容审查人员情况报告的批语” 23.04.1967 in: MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1998) 建国以来毛泽东文稿 [Manuscripts by Mao Zedong since the liberation of China] 北京: Volume 12.

¹³⁵ The real origin, i.e. the *Book of Han*, is mentioned only in 27 of the roughly 20,000 articles quoting “Seek truth from facts” in *People’s Daily*, and only 2 times in direct association with the phrase.

Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought and of Deng Xiaoping Theory”? Again, statistics are invaluable to pinpoint the time when certain language trends commenced or reached their culmination.

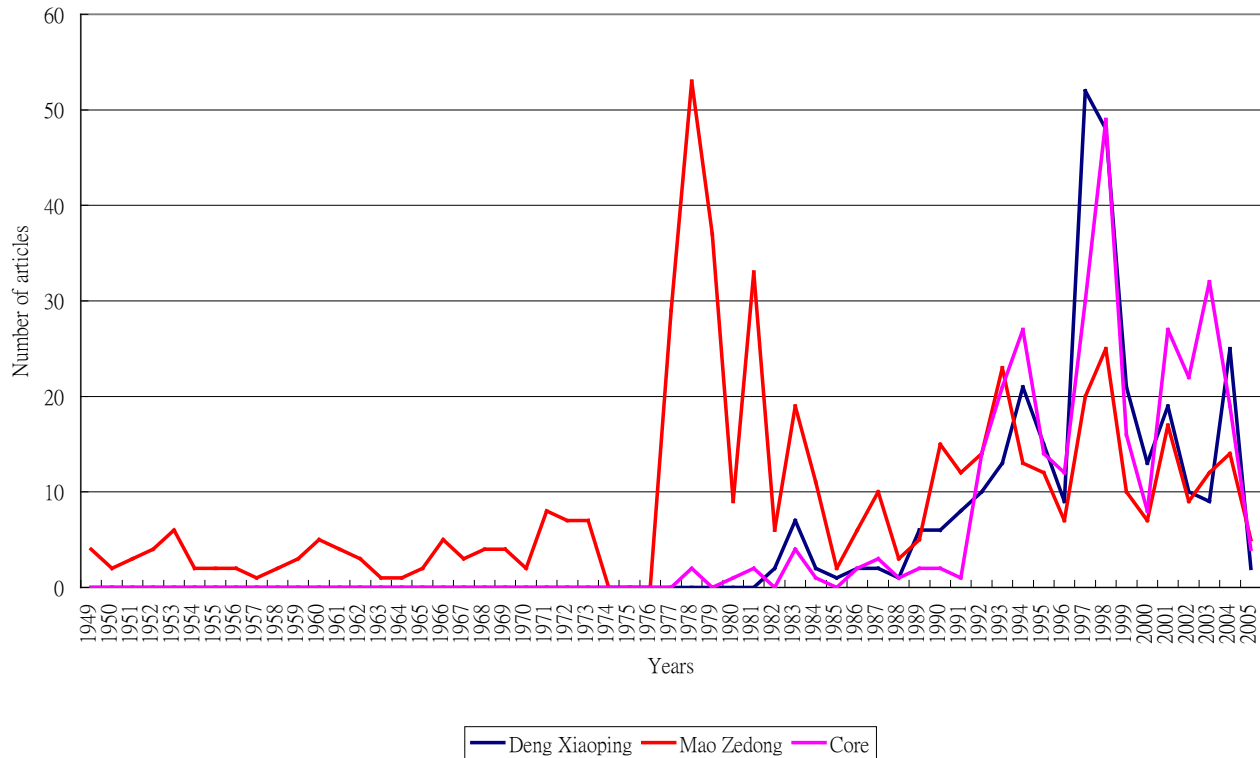


Figure 9: Who or what is associated with “Seeking truth from facts”? The different lines result from searching the *People’s Daily* database for strings as “X% 实事求是+ 实事求是%X”, i.e. X appearing in the same sentence as “Seek truth from facts”, either before or after the phrase. X stands for either “Mao Zedong/Chairman Mao 毛泽东/毛主席” (red line), “Deng Xiaoping/Xiaoping 邓小平/小平” (blue line), or “Core 精髓” (pink line) (Source: Renmin ribao she xinwen xinxi zhongxin 人民日报社新闻信息中心 2007).

Figure 9 displays an approximation as to who was associated with “Seek truth from facts”.

Unsurprisingly, before 1976 this happened to be Mao Zedong (red line); but his graph peaks only in 1978. This confirms my hypothesis that the promotion of “Seek truth from facts” by Deng drew on the usage by Mao, and resulted in making Mao the origin or author of the phrase. Accordingly, *People’s Daily* sported formulations such as: “Earnestly study the teaching of Chairman Mao ‘CCP members have to be models of seek truth from facts’ 认真学习毛主席关于‘共产党员应是实事求是的模范’的教导 (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1977.04.04)”; or “Chairman Mao also wrote the resplendent inscription ‘Seek truth from facts’ for the Central Party School in Yan’an 毛主席还给延安的中央党校亲笔写下了“实事求是”的金光闪闪的题词 (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1977.03.21)”; or “[...] the tradition of “Seek truth from facts” and the mass line cultivated by

Comrade Mao Zedong and moulded by our Party during a long period of struggle 毛泽东同志培育的我们党在长期斗争中所形成的实事求是、群众路线的传统 (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1979.12.25).”

The association of Deng Xiaoping with “Seek truth from facts” was slowly advanced in *People’s Daily* after 1981. This was caused among other reasons by events such as the publication of the first two volumes of the *Selected Works* of Deng Xiaoping in 1983 or the dismissal of Hua Guofeng from the politburo at the 12th Party Congress. This trend fostered on quoting Deng who in turn referred to Mao when using “Seek truth from facts”: “Comrade Deng Xiaoping called on us over and over: ‘We have to restore and carry on the glorious tradition and working style of “Seek truth from facts” that Chairman Mao had used for building our Party’ 邓小平同志曾一再号召：‘我们一定要恢复和发扬毛主席为我们党树立的实事求是的优良传统和作风’ (Xin Ren 欣仁 1982.04.08)”. Sentences as this partially explain why the graphs of Mao and Deng correlate after 1989 (see Figure 9), because such a sentence would be contained in both sets of hits. Yet, there are also quotations of Deng Xiaoping unrelated to Mao such as “Comrade Deng Xiaoping pointed out: The policy of thought liberation and seek truth from facts concerns the future and destiny of the Party and country 邓小平同志指出：解放思想、实事求是的方针关系到党和国家的前途和命运 (Renmin ribao she 人民出版社 1983.07.19)”. After 1989, but especially after Deng’s so-called Southern Tour and the invention of a Deng Xiaoping Theory in 1992, this trend grew in scope. In 1994, the blue line of Deng crosses Mao’s red line (see Figure 9). At that time, *People’s Daily* also published more and more speeches by Jiang Zemin, newly appointed first secretary of the CCP, containing “Seek truth from facts”. In these speeches, Jiang rather associated the phrase with Deng and recent history (i.e. the 3rd Plenum of 1977), not any more with Mao Zedong and Yan’an. However, the idea of “Seek truth from facts” as being the core of Mao Zedong Thought or Marxism-Leninism was still promoted in *People’s Daily*. Thus, instead of emphasising a clear break between the first generation leadership and the current one, the continuity of certain Party principles was emphasised. It seems as though the integration and unification of CCP members during the post-Tian’anmen Party crisis necessitated the (interim) projection of disparate ideas onto the same principles, eliciting a ‘permanence in name’ (see also Chapter 1 and 3). Deng as quoter-cum-author of “Seek truth from facts” did not replace Mao’s authorship at once, but grew in an interim period that allowed for both associations. The process of transferring the authorship of “Seek truth from facts” away from Mao towards Deng was further advanced at two highly symbolical occasions: the

death of Deng Xiaoping in 1997, and the celebration of his 100th birthday in 2004. In both years, the blue graph in Figure 9 peaks which represents the association of “Seek truth from facts” with Deng Xiaoping. While 1997 marks the birth of formulations such as “Seek truth from facts is the core of Marxism-Leninism, is the core of Mao Zedong Thought, and is also the core of Deng Xiaoping Theory. 实事求是马克思列宁主义的精髓，是毛泽东思想的精髓，也是邓小平理论的精髓。(Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1997.09.15)”, 2004 witnesses the creation of a “Seek truth from facts” tripod in honour of Deng Xiaoping (see below). In both cases, the symbolic capital of people, ideologies, or regimes of the past was projected onto “Seek truth from facts”. The 1997 creation still fits the idea of “Seek truth from facts” as Party principle or ‘company value’. As Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, and Deng Xiaoping Theory all constitute the ideological foundation of the CCP, it is but convenient to have a core value or principle like “Seek truth from facts” that is inherent to all three of them. Also it is but a continuation of a history starting more than half a century earlier, when Mao defined “Seek truth from facts” as characteristic of the “Marxist-Leninist attitude” which every Party member was to adopt. But does this explanation still hold for the 2004 “Seek truth from facts” tripod? Did the phrase appear in other (popular) media? How was the phrase contextualised? Who’s authority lent credit to the (contemporary) appropriation of “Seek truth from facts”?

Converging Trends: the Celebration of Appropriation

The year 2004 marked the achievement of yet another superlative by the Chinese Party-state: the world’s tallest and heaviest tripod (*ding* 鼎). This bombastic reconstruction of an ancient ritual object is situated in the city of Guang’an, the hometown of Deng Xiaoping (located about 100 km north of Chongqing 重庆 in Sichuan 四川). It stands in the centre of a huge memorial plaza of 35 hectare built in honour of Deng’s 100th birthday, and has been baptised “‘Seek truth from facts’ *ding*”. The tripod amalgamated the symbolic capital of various epochs into one single artefact: The earliest *ding* known to us originate from the early Shang dynasty, however, in form and ornament the 2004 tripod is more similar to early Zhou tripods such as the *Maogong ding* 毛公鼎 on display in the National Palace Museum in Taipei.¹³⁶ The newly cast, oversized Guang’an *ding* stands on a circular platform sporting one inscription from the Han dynasty, namely “Seek truth from facts”, and another from the 20th century, namely “Thought Liberation 解放思想”, both engraved in Zhou seal script. Not visible

¹³⁶ To my knowledge, it is most similar to a picture of a prototypical early Zhou tripod found in BLUNDEN & ELVIN (1983) *Cultural Atlas of China* Oxford: 60.

to the viewer, but in accordance to Zhou tradition, another inscription was engraved into the tripod: “We mark Xiaoping’s hundredth birthday by constructing and inscribing this *ding*. We will certainly develop Guang’an in a good way. 小平百岁，立鼎铭志。一定要把广安建设好。” The huge pedestal on which the *ding* stands resembles a wall of book spines. Altogether, as the *Chronology of Important Events of the CCP Database* explains, there are 94 books corresponding to the age of Deng when he died in 1997 (Renmin shujuku xi 人民数据库系 2006: “实事求是” 青铜宝鼎). Upon them is written in Deng’s hand: “Development is the ultimate principle”, a quotation of 1992 and a reference to the resurgence of his program of Reform and Opening Up. Ancient and recent past converge with the future goals of a small city of the Chinese hinterland on one bombastic monument of Party propaganda. How is such a monument to be interpreted? What does it symbolise? Is it but a late spin-off of the trend to associate “Seek truth from facts” with Deng Xiaoping that had been growing in *People’s Daily* since 1989? Or is it the result of two trends converging into one? The Sichuan branch of the New China News Agency (hereafter Xinhua) published a detailed description of the monument in 2006 that may inform us at least about an official interpretation:

Everybody knows that “*ding*” are extremely holy household utensils of China’s traditional culture [...]. The emblazonry on this tripod is that of bronze tripods of the Shang and Zhou period; it is called *goulian* [trsl. join, unite] emblazonry, giving the viewer a maze-like impression; it indicates that our road ahead will be rather frustrating and rough; if we want to solve and overcome these difficulties, we need [to embrace] the ideological line of Thought Liberation and Seek truth from facts. The core of Deng Xiaoping Theory is Thought Liberation and Seek truth from facts. Therefore, the front side of the tripod is [i.e. carries the inscription] Seek truth from facts, the backside is [i.e. carries the inscription] Thought Liberation. This huge bronze tripod was named after the core of Deng Xiaoping Theory and is called Seek truth from facts tripod. The *ruyu* [trsl. breast- or pin-like] emblazonry suggests the seizure of the fruits of victory; four *ruyu* in a row imply the “Four Cardinal Principles” proposed by Comrade Xiaoping; the 12 *kuilong* [i.e. a legendary dragon] below the neck of the tripod and the 56 *kuilong* on its foundation represent the 12 clans descending from the emperors Yan and Huang and the 56 races of the Chinese nation; the 6 *feilei* [i.e. the protruding flakes beneath the rim of the tripod] symbolise “good luck [orig. 六六大顺]”; the three feet symbolise stability; the 21 square holes stand for the 21st century. The forefront of the pedestal reads “development is the ultimate principle”, on the backside the whole text of Comrade Xiaoping’s southern speech is given, expressing the deep yearning and unparalleled reverence of all Chinese people for Comrade Xiaoping. Therefore, the Seek truth from facts tripod symbolises that the 12 clans and 56 races [i.e. the whole Chinese civilisation] will successfully seize victory under the leadership of the Party and by always holding firm to the Four Cardinal Principles, to Thought Liberation, to Seek truth from facts, to unity; [thus we will] advance with giant strides towards the 21st century! 大家都知道，“鼎”在中国传统文化中是一种十分神圣的器皿 [...]。鼎的纹饰完全是中国商周时期青铜器的纹饰，这种纹饰叫勾连纹，给人的感觉有点像迷宫，表示前进途中有不少坎坷，非常艰难；要解决这些艰难，克服这些困难，就需要解放思想、实事求是的思想路线，邓小平理论的精髓就是解放思想、实事求是。所以鼎的前面就是实事求是，后面就是解放思想。这个青铜巨鼎就以邓小平理论的精髓命名，叫实事求是鼎。这些乳钉纹意为胜利果实；四排乳钉寓小平同志一贯倡导的“四项基本原则”；颈下 12 条夔龙和基座 56 条夔龙寓中华民族 12 亿炎黄子孙和 56 个民族；6 根扉棱意为“六六大顺”，三足双耳意为稳定；21 个方圆孔意为 21 世纪。底座正面是“发展才是硬道理”，背面是小平同志南巡谈话全文，表达了全国人民对小平同志的深切怀念和无比敬仰。因此，实事求是宝鼎象征着 12 亿炎黄子孙、56 个民族，在党的领导下，始终坚持四项基本原则、解放思想、实事求是、团结一致、顺利地夺取胜利，阔步走向 21 世纪！（Shu Xianchao 舒显超 2006）

Like the monument, Xinhua imitated ancient style in using numerology for their interpretation. Some of these numerological interpretations are ancient copies, for example the 12 *kuilong* representing the 12 clans descending from the emperors Yan and Huang. Others are of more recent origin, as the row of four *ruyu* symbolising Deng Xiaoping's Four Cardinal Principles. The projection of current political slogans, future goals, or historical conditions (such as the Four Cardinal Principles, stability, or the 21st century) onto this imitation of a Zhou bronze tripod by the Xinhua article can only be called creative. It is uncertain if this interpretation accorded with that of the makers or their clients. The Xinhua article appears especially exaggerated when giving fitting interpretations to design elements that simply followed *ding* stereotypes – such as the three feet of the *ding* expressing stability – and could hardly have been a deliberate decision of the creators.

At least to my gaze and mind, the tripod and its numerological interpretation by Xinhua seem to be both artificial and bombastic, even bordering on the ridiculous. Though it may be difficult to define what the tripod symbolises, it is relatively easy to point out what it does not stand for: No reference to Communism à la Marx or Mao is left, and the foundation of the tripod and carrier of Deng's dictum are books: products of intellectual endeavour, and not industrial or peasant work. "Seek truth from facts" in this monument is associated with ancient China (especially as it is set in Zhou seal script) and with Deng Xiaoping. Labelling an ancient Chinese ritual object and giving occasion to a numerological interpretation thereof, the life of "Seek truth from facts" has become detached from notions of science and enlightenment. An interpretation no less remarkable than the one by Xinhua is given by a lawyer of Guang'an in an interview: "Guang'an's old comrades especially admire the originality of the precious *ding*. It is a summary of the experiences of the Chinese revolution, and an historical lesson to Guang'an. 广安的老同志特别赞赏宝鼎这个创意。这是中国革命的经验总结，也是广安的历史的教训。(Renmin shujuku xi 人民数据库系 2006: 家乡的事：从一座村庄，几个农民看一代伟人)"

To advance our interpretation of the Guang'an monument it is expedient to ask how the hometown of Deng Xiaoping came to pride itself by building the tallest bronze tripod in 2004 and baptising it "Seek truth from facts" *ding*. I hope to show that this was an act of converging different trends into one: the trend of emphasising "Seek truth from facts" as core of Deng Xiaoping Theory (see above), a trend of inscribing "Seek truth from facts" into stone, and a third trend of recasting bronze tripods.

The bronze tripod trend commenced in 1995. In that year, Jiang Zemin presented a newly cast bronze tripod to the U.N. for its 50th birthday.¹³⁷ In the following six years, at least 16 similar tripods were produced for different clients and addressees. While the first tripod given to the U.N. communicated Chinese ancient culture to the world, others were cast to mark the return of Hong Kong in 1997 and Macao in 1999.¹³⁸ At least since 1997, the trend encompassed state buildings in the PRC and buildings of Chinese companies in Shanghai, Beijing, Shenzhen and Xinzhu (Taiwan).¹³⁹ In 2001, the Chinese government began to present autonomous regions with large non-Han populations with such tripods: Tibet in 2001, Xinjiang in 2005, Inner Mongolia in 2007. In 2008, the two last tripods (so far) were presented to the Hui autonomous region in Ningxia 宁夏回族自治区 and to the Zhuang autonomous region in Guangxi 广西壮族自治区.¹⁴⁰ All these tripods were given in celebration of the 50th or 60th anniversaries of the founding of these provinces or regions. Thereby, the government emulated two ancient customs: casting *ding* to mark important dates and giving *ding* as gift to vassals.¹⁴¹ From ambassador of Chinese culture to the U.N. and decorative object to companies, the ‘trendy’ tripods mutated into mediators between the different ‘systems’ (Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan), and ethnicities (Tibet, Xinjiang, etc.) and the centre of China. They came to symbolise both national unity and solidarity of all Chinese ethnicities. Accordingly all tripods were called: “Tripod of national solidarity 民族团结宝鼎”. The tripods present a strong connection of these outposts of China with the heart of the nation: they are but enlarged reproductions of two others set up at the centre of the nation, i.e. the Great Hall of the People in Beijing 北京人民大会堂, in 1999 and baptised “Tripod of the Nation 民族宝鼎” and “Tripod of Solidarity 团结宝鼎”. While the “Seek truth from facts” *ding* in Guang’an emulated the idea of

¹³⁷ The tripod is about 2.6 meters high, standing on a bronze platform in a park north of the U.N. headquarters in New York. It was produced by the Shanghai Xifeng Special Art Company 上海喜丰特艺有限公司. For further information consult their homepage at <http://www.tripodking.com/>. A copy of the homepage can be found in the Digital Archive for Chinese Studies.

¹³⁸ The latter was partly financed by the “Society for the promotion of a peaceful unification of all Chinese in the World 世界华人和平统一促进会”.

¹³⁹ State buildings such as the Shanghai bureau of public security 上海市公安局, and the prosecutor’s office of Xiding district in Shanghai 上海市嘉定区人民检察院 were adorned with such tripods, but also companies introduced them to their buildings: the Hong Kong Fortune Paper Group in Shenzhen 深圳香港财富报业集团; China Construction Bank in Beijing 北京中国建设银行, or the Taiwan Xinzhu Qiaoding company 台湾新竹市乔鼎公司. These tripods are all products of the same mainland Chinese producer, namely the Shanghai Xifeng Special Art Company. See fn. 137.

¹⁴⁰ All tripods are described at LINXSONG [PSEUD.] (2008) 民族团结宝鼎 [Tripod of national union/ethnic solidarity]. http://bkso.baidu.com/view/1674851.html?tp=9_01, accessed: 29.10.2008, downloaded: 29.10.2008. Further pictures can be found with Google picture search. Some of them were again produced by the Shanghai Xifeng Special Art Company. For the others, no producer is given.

¹⁴¹ To this effect is at least the inscription of the *Maogong ding*. Conf. the homepage of the National Palace Museum in Taipei: http://www.npm.gov.tw/en/collection/selections_02.htm?docno=194&catno=19&pageno=2, accessed 28.10.2008.

marking an important date with the casting of a tripod, it was no ‘present to a vassal’, but rather the opposite; it had been contributed to the Guang’an plaza by another small town in Sichuan, called Yibing 宜宾. The local trinity of Party, state, and economy had paid the bill: the local Party committee of Yibing city, its government, and a local liquor company.¹⁴² One might even argue that it stood in rivalry to the two 1999 tripods marking the centre of the nation in Beijing.¹⁴³ But then, the significance of these two tripods became only evident with the many recasts produced after 2004. The “Seek truth from facts” tripod differs in another important aspect from its precursors and successors: it tried to promote the principles of Deng Xiaoping (and the CCP), while the other tripods promoted *national* goals. Thus, the “Seek truth from facts” *ding* appropriates symbols of traditional China already appropriated by the current Chinese state for the CCP. “Seek truth from facts” was the decisive link between all three: This core of Deng Xiaoping Theory was imprinted in seal script on the trendy symbol of the Chinese state.

A third though minor trend might also have fuelled the construction of the Guang’an tripod: inscribing “Seek truth from facts” into stone monuments. Including the tripod, at least six such monuments appeared between the 1990s and 2007: a white marble rock was placed at the east entrance to People’s University 人民大学 in the 1990s, a “stele of conviction 信念碑” was set up in front of the Local Administrative University in the city of Bijie 毕节 in Guizhou 贵州 in 2001/02, and a *zhaobi* 照壁 (traditionally a stone wall facing the entrance of houses) was set into the park of the Central Party School in Beijing in 2007, among others.¹⁴⁴ While all four monuments present the phrase “Seek truth from facts” inscribed in stone, their messages vary. Except for the tripod, all monuments recast Mao’s inscription from 1942, as conserved for posterity by the Yan’an Revolution Museum 延安革命纪念馆.¹⁴⁵ Placed in the vicinity to institutions of higher learning, these

¹⁴² The Yibing Wuliangye Group 宜宾五粮液集团公司. Their homepage is found at: <http://www.wuliangye.com.cn>.

¹⁴³ *People’s Daily*, for example, did not report on construction or ceremonial opening of the plaza and its “Seek truth from facts” tripod, though they did cover Jiang’s present to the U.N. or the 2001 Tibetan tripod. However, this is the only evidence indicating any friction between centre and periphery.

¹⁴⁴ Further examples include the “Seek truth from facts” school instruction stele “实事求是”校训碑 of the Guangxi Communist Party School and Guangxi Administrative College 中共广西区委党校、广西行政学院 built in 2007, another “Seek truth from facts” stone set in the park of Guangzhou Communist Party School and Guangzhou Administrative Institute 中共广州市委党校 广州行政学院, or a small crystal rock produced by the Beijing Rongjida Culture Development Company 北京荣纪达文化发展有限公司 as souvenir of the Central Party School.

¹⁴⁵ As the Party, so did People’s University promote “Seek truth from facts” as central value or instruction of their school (*xiaoxun* 校训). Interestingly, Mao’s writing on the white marble rock was ‘modernised’: the writing direction is left to right not right to left (实事求是 instead of 是求事实). I could not find out if this was a conscious choice or simply a mistake. Mao’s original script is set on four separate stone blocks. However, present-day pictures of these blocks displayed in the Yan’an Revolution Museum show them in the correct order. Also eye witnesses from Yan’an were still

monuments also emulate the spirit of Mao's original work and refer the onlooker to Mao's ideas on the correct learning attitude developed in Yan'an. No reference to "Seek truth from facts" as the core of Deng Xiaoping Theory is added to them, though these monuments probably result from Deng's promotion of "Seek truth from facts" after 1977.¹⁴⁶ The message of the 2001/02 "stele of conviction 信念碑" is comparatively strait forward: On a stairs' half landing, a yellow hammer and sickle symbol, signifying the CCP, is supported by a rectangular, grey stone wall as high as the symbol and triple its width. The wall's front side displays an engraving of "Seek truth from facts" in Mao's handwriting. It thus seems as though "Seek truth from facts" of Maoist appropriation builds the basis of the CCP, being in fact the foundation of the golden hammer and sickle. Both the white marble rock of People's University and the (equally white marble) *zhaobi* of the Central Party School use pre-modern media for a 'modern' message: white marble is often used in China to build bridges, lions, or pagodas in temples or palaces, though the rock was left raw. *Zhaobi* are walls generally set in front of the main entrance of a building. These walls were most popular during the Ming dynasty, protecting the entrance from wind and rain, but were also believed to obstruct ghosts trying to enter the building. Especially these connotations of superstition make *zhaobi* a curious carrier of a Party value such as "Seek truth from facts". After all, it had previously been promoted by the CCP in the fight against superstition. If we follow McLuhan and take the medium as the message, these two monuments along with the "Seek truth from facts" *ding* communicate that the CCP today associates itself much more with imperial China than with communism, be it Marxist, Leninist, or Maoist in style (McLuhan 2001). They even mimic ancient Chinese tradition of fixing canonical texts for posterity by inscribing them in stone just as Deng's 'southern speech' was written on the pedestal's backside of the "Seek truth from facts" *ding* (Shu Xianchao 舒显超 2006).

The monuments described above are but the last and largest spin-offs of the "Seek truth from facts" quotation trend. Earlier peaks of the trend already produced "Seek truth from facts" 'franchising'. The National Library of China and the Shanghai Library together comprise a collection of 73 books published between 1956 and 2007 sporting "Seek truth from facts" in their title. Here, "Seek truth from facts" is associated with Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, or Jiang Zemin; with the CCP, Marxism-Leninism, or dialectical materialism; with the Mass Line, Thought Liberation,

alive in the 1990s that might have been consulted if in doubt about the writing direction. For these reasons, I propose that changing the direction was deliberate. It seems that only later creators of monuments paid more attention to authenticity and turned back to the original writing direction.

¹⁴⁶ A calligraphy of "Seek truth from facts" by Deng does exist and might have been used for the inscriptions. However, all stone inscriptions of "Seek truth from facts" that I have found so far use Mao's script of Yan'an times.

Socialism with Chinese Characteristics, and the Three Represents; with journalism and philosophy; as principle, working style, methodology, characteristic. Or in other words, the quotation chameleon's many different colours in the 20th and 21st century are fully displayed by these books. Other adaptations include three newspapers who adopted *Seek Truth From Facts* 实事求是 or simply *Seek Truth* 求是 as their title. The best known of them is *Red Flag* magazine, the theory journal of the CCP, which renamed itself in 1988 into *Seek Truth* 求是.¹⁴⁷ A company produced small crystal rocks that are inscribed with "Seek truth from facts" (again in Mao's handwriting) and crowned by a small red hammer and sickle, probably as memoir for graduates of the Central Party School. Or should we rather say as memento of the Party's principles? So far, it seems as though no commodities were named "Seek truth from facts". But the phrase appears in online discussion forums, for example exposing the true weight of notebooks (Xu Bin 徐彬 2007).

Epilogue: Superscribing Translation

The story of "Seek truth from facts" has been one of appropriation, ascription, but also of superscription. Its author, prototext and founding myth have been repeatedly superscribed with new authors, prototexts, and founding myths. So has its definition or message been constantly adapted to new circumstances, media, and generations. However, the main agent who invested in 'updating' and popularising this symbol remains the CCP. "Seek truth from facts" is thus not a "popular expression" for a Marxist-Leninist principle, but was popularised as such by the Party. The success of Party publicity may be judged by a simple standard: the influence on the West. When writing about China after Mao, it seems that few authors can withstand the temptation to use "Seek truth from facts" at least once in their text.¹⁴⁸ As the phrase appears in so many Chinese sources as well, this behaviour is quite understandable. However, on closer look two facts undermine this explanation: Of the English books and articles quoting "Seek truth from facts", more than 98% appeared only after 1976. Though obviously works about a certain period can hardly be expected to predate this period, some works which quote "Seek truth from facts" and were published after 1976 deal with earlier periods as

¹⁴⁷ Two other examples are: the *Seek Truth periodic* (Heilongjiang University journal) 求是学刊 (黑龙江大学学报) that appeared in Harbin 哈尔滨 from 1980-1989. Another Journal adopted the title "*Seek truth from facts*" 实事求是. It was published in Wulumuqi 乌鲁木齐 (a city in Xinjiang) from 1987-1996.

¹⁴⁸ Google book search returned 740 hits containing "Seek truth from facts"; of these 731 were published after 1976. In the JSTOR archives, I got 92 hits for "Seek truth from facts", only 2 of which published before 1976. The search was conducted on October 29, 2008.

well.¹⁴⁹ Therefore, I believe we must conclude that the scholarly community was influenced by Chinese propaganda and still is. We inadvertently became a medium ‘spreading the gospel’ to our countries.¹⁵⁰ This propagandistic influence is not only evident in the many instances of quoting “Seek truth from facts”, but even pertains to its translation. While early Chinese-English dictionaries translate 实事求是 as “by verification of facts to aim at the right (Giles 1892 ; Tsang 1929)” or by “verification of the facts to get at the truth (Mathews 1943 ; Mathews 1963)”, later PRC dictionaries tend to give the by now familiar translation “seek truth from facts (Zhongguo dabaike quanshu zongbianji weiyuanhui “zhexue” bianji weiyuanhui 中国大百科全书总编辑委员会“哲学”编辑委员会 1987 ; DeFrancis 1996 ; CNKI 2008)”. So far, I could trace this translation to an English translation of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* of 1956 (Mao Zedong 1956), but not beyond. While this later translation may appear the more fluent or elegant, there exist modern translations that, in my view, unite both elegance and expressiveness: “to work conscientiously or seriously” (Liang Shiqiu 梁实秋 2003) or “objective method; be objective” (Lin Yutang 林语堂 1999).¹⁵¹ Though it is justifiable to chose a CCP translation for a CCP text, the same principle would ask for a pre-CCP translation of a pre-CCP text. However, works concerned with pre-CCP periods attest to the fact that the scholarly community sometimes gracefully accepts and further stipulates the superscription of 实事求是 as “Seek truth from facts”. Thus, the Party’s promotion of “Seek truth from facts” came full circle. Discovered as a Chinese counterpart of a foreign scientific standard in the Qing scholarly community of the Lower Yangzi Valley, it has so far been appropriated by three generations of CCP leaders, popularised through its press organs, conserved for posterity on several stone monuments, and finally re-exported to the English speaking scholarly community.

¹⁴⁹ For example: WRIGHT (Dec. 1998) *The Translation of Modern Western Science in Nineteenth-Century China, 1840-1895*, *Isis* 89, 653-73.

¹⁵⁰ Examples of pro-active uses include: “The new spirit in China is exemplified by one of Deng Xiaoping’s favourite mottos ‘Seek Truth from Facts.’ It is hard to think of a better slogan for this encyclopedia.” (KAPLAN & SOBIN (1981) *Encyclopedia of China Today* New York). The slogan also appears in titles of books or articles: LIU (1983) *China After Mao: “Seek Truth From Facts”* Harmondsworth; PEERENBOOM (2005) *Seek Truth From Facts: An Empirical Study of Enforcement of Arbitral Awards in the PRC*. In: Drahozal & Naimark *Towards a Science of International Arbitration: Collected Empirical Research*, The Hague.

¹⁵¹ Also noteworthy is the fact that students at my university said that to them 实事求是 simply meant “honest”. This might result from Party propaganda using “Seek truth from facts” in opposition to false reportage (e.g. during the Great Leap Forward, but also earlier in 1945) or nowadays using it against corruption. However this may be, it again attests to the fact that the promotion of “Seek truth from facts” as important Party value was very successful.

2.2 “Smash the Confucian shop” or the Lifecycle of a Half-forgotten Quotation

“Smash the Confucian shop”¹⁵² belongs to the category of familiar phrases generally associated with the May Fourth Movement. Other examples of this kind are “Mr. Science” and “Mr. Democracy”. As slogan of the May Fourth Movement, the formulation is referred to in *People’s Daily* from time to time either as contemporary description of past events, or as historical evidence, referred to for the purpose of reviving past attitudes or questioning their validity. After nearly 80 years of usage in the media, the quotation is written into the cultural memory¹⁵³ of the Chinese people.

However, on investigation into Chinese secondary literature the alleged May Fourth quotation is revealed (1) to be partly coined by Hu Shi 胡适 in 1921, that is two years *after* the May Fourth demonstrations in 1919; (2) to have never been used in other May Fourth writings, thus questioning the widely accepted notion of its being a popular symbol of May Fourth; (3) and to have been deliberately created as propagandistic device by Chinese Communist Party member Chen Boda in 1936/37 to revive May Fourth ideals. Investigations into primary material attest to the correctness of the first two claims. As to the third, the narrative is more complex; at least in 1929, the quotation appears to have been widely used as denominator of anti-Confucianism, probably by May Fourth intellectuals. Though Chen Boda and others in 1936/37 consciously chose “Smash the Confucian shop” as slogan to revive the May Fourth anti-Confucian legacy, they cannot be honoured with the creation of the slogan.

The quotation’s life in *People’s Daily* is not the career of a star, rising very high in short time and falling into oblivion nearly as quickly. When promotion commenced in the newly founded PRC, the allegedly popular times of the quotation, i.e. the May Fourth Movement, were past. Since then,

¹⁵² Different translations of this slogan are used in English secondary literature: “Overthrow Confucius and Sons” (Chow 1960); “Down with Confucianism” (Schwarcz 1986); “Down with Confucius and his shop” (Wagner 2001); I have chosen yet another translation for several reasons: a literal translation of the quotation would be “Smash the shop of the Kong family”. Though in this sentence 家 is translated as “family”, it also denotes “school”, as for example in “Confucian school 儒家”. Kong is the surname of Confucius. However, as few non-Chinese readers would connect “shop of the Kong family” with Confucius, I decided to translate it as “Confucian shop”. Furthermore, I prefer to translate 打倒 as smash, because a) one cannot “overthrow” a shop and b) the term “down”, in my view, does not express the violent action implied by 打 “fight, hit” and 倒 “topple, collapse” sufficiently. Thus, the wish to be both as close to the Chinese original and as comprehensible as possible to my Western readership induced me to use the translation “Smash the Confucian shop”.

¹⁵³ I here follow the differentiation made by Aleida Assmann between Erfahrungsgedächtnis (memory derived from experience) and kulturelles Gedächtnis (cultural memory). Erfahrungsgedächtnis designates the memory of eye witnesses, while the latter is organised, constructed and communicated by media and state: “Da es keine Selbstorganisation eines kulturellen Gedächtnisses gibt, ist es auf Medien und Politik angewiesen. Der Übergang vom lebendigen individuellen zum künstlichen kulturellen Gedächtnis ist allerdings problematisch, weil er die Gefahr der Verzerrung, der Reduktion, der Instrumentalisierung von Erinnerung mit sich bringt.” Siehe: ASSMANN (2006) *Erinnerungsräume: Formen und Wandlungen des kulturellen Gedächtnisses* München: 11-23.

the quotation's career resembled that of a supporting actor who allegedly had once been a famous main actor and was now called back on stage from time to time. Some figures may help to underline this notion: between 1949 and 2007, the most frequently used slogans like “Serve the people 为人民服务” or “Seeking truth from facts 实事求是” are used in *People's Daily* about 20,000 times.¹⁵⁴

Short-lived stars like “The working class has to lead everything 工人阶级必须领导一切” appear about 400 times within two years. In contrast to this, “Smash the Confucian shop” was used only 81 times in 58 years of *People's Daily* (see Figure 10). Yet these appearances are rather evenly distributed over the whole time. Some of the peaks in Figure 10 were caused by important anniversaries of the May Fourth Movement (1959, 1969, 1989). Others, such as 1974, result from the phrase being used in a contemporary campaign (see below).

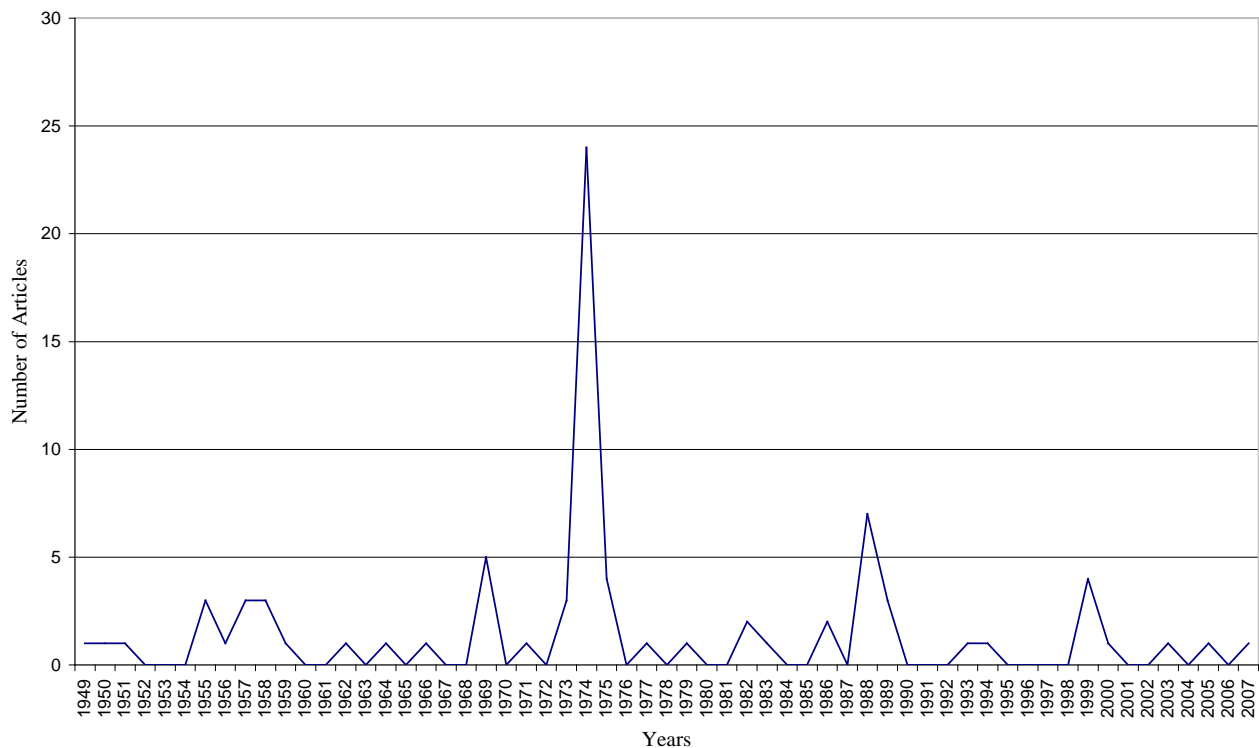


Figure 10: 58 years of usage of “Smash the Confucian shop 打倒孔家店” in *People's Daily*. (Source: Renmin ribao she xinwen xinxi zhongxin 人民日报社新闻信息中心 2007)

What use was made of this quotation which by 1949 had already lost its connection to its author and source? What life was left to this ‘supporting actor’ in the People’s Republic? I will show that by

¹⁵⁴ These figures result from searches in: RENMIN RIBAO SHE XINWEN XINXI ZHONGXIN 人民日报社新闻信息中心 (2007) 人民日报电子版 [People's Daily electronic edition]. <http://erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/han/renminribao-ext/peking.sbb.spk-berlin.de/WEB/index2.html>.

rewriting its Curriculum Vitae *People's Daily* promoted the quotation from storyteller to eye-witness of May Fourth events, and finally made it a gatekeeper of the 'Communist' ranks during the Cultural Revolution. With the resurgence of nationalism in the 1990s, however, "Smash the Confucian shop" was no longer an aide to contemporary politics, but became a burden. Accordingly those interested in Confucianism tried to devalue the quotation by doubting its origin, by tainting it with the association to the Cultural Revolution, and even by questioning its very meaning. Continued references to "Smash the Confucian shop" in *People's Daily*, however, prove how futile the attempts are to relegate the quotation at least from the Party's public memory. Without author or source, the quotation still conveys past authority to the present.

A Neglected Birth

Since 1949, the slogan "Smash the Confucian shop" recurred from time to time in the Chinese press to denote the fierce struggle of the May Fourth intellectuals against Confucianism. The same interpretation of the slogan is held by both Western and Chinese scholars: "Chiefly owing to Wu's [i.e. Wu Yu] efforts, 'overthrow Confucius and Sons' (ta-tao K'ung-chia-tien) became a popular slogan among the Chinese intellectuals during the May Fourth period. (Chow 1960:307)"¹⁵⁵ or " 'Smash the Confucian shop' was the most stirring slogan raised during the period of the May Fourth New Culture Movement. Inspired by this slogan, the sole sovereign status of the Confucian doctrine in society was overthrown, and democracy and science were widely propagated. '打倒孔家店' 是五四新文化运动时期提出的一个最富有鼓动性的口号。在这个口号鼓舞下, 儒家学说在社会中的独尊地位被推翻, 民主与科学被广为宣扬。(Fu Jing 傅静 et al. 2003)"¹⁵⁶ This view is also propagated in contemporary Chinese school textbooks.¹⁵⁷ The connection between the May Fourth Movement and "Smash the Confucian shop", however, is much more complex than these accounts suggest. The earliest instance of this phrase which I have found so far dates from 1929; a precursor can be traced back to 1921, being then raised after criticism of Confucius begun in 1915 and after the May Fourth demonstrations of 1919.

¹⁵⁵ See also: WAGNER (2001a) The Canonization of May Fourth. In: Dolezelová-Velingerová & Král *The Appropriation of Cultural Capital. China's May Fourth Project*, Cambridge, Mass.: 97.

¹⁵⁶ Also HOU MIN 侯敏 (2002) 现代新儒家文化诗学研究 [Modern research on Neo-Confucian culture and poetics] (Ph.D. thesis). 苏州大学, 苏州.

¹⁵⁷ RENMIN JIAOYU CHUBANSHE 人民教育出版社 (Ed.) (2005) 中国近代现代史 [Modern and contemporary Chinese history], 北京 112.

Tracing the hour and the circumstances of the birth of “Smash the Confucian shop”, different accounts lead us to Hu Shi writing about Wu Yu 吴虞 (1871 – 1949) ¹⁵⁸ in 1921. In 1915, anti-Confucian sentiments led to a debate between intellectuals, their most famous protagonists being Chen Duxiu, Wu Yu, Hu Shi, and Lu Xun (Chow 1960:7; Ding Shouhe 丁守和 2003). In 1921, the *Collected Essays of Wu Yu* 吴虞文录 were published, Wu’s life and work being introduced to the readership via a preface by Hu Shi. Hu argued in this preface, that the “New Thought Wave 新思潮” had to develop a critical attitude towards everything, including Confucianism. Everybody was asked to judge critically anew the value of Confucianism. The preface ends with the sentence: “I present to all young Chinese the old hero ‘from Sichuan province fighting single-handedly the Confucian shop’.” 我给各位中国少年介绍这位‘四川省只手打孔家店’的老英雄。” (Wu Yu 吴虞 1990:7) From this one might conclude that Hu Shi was the author of the slogan later becoming so famous. But on closer scrutiny, this conclusion is only partly confirmed. First, even in the so-called ‘original’ version, the term “from Sichuan province fighting single-handedly the Confucian shop” is set in quotation marks, marking it as a quotation or allusion. Chow notes that “Hu’s remarks [sic] on Wu Yü was an allusion to a fight episode in the Chinese novel *All Men are Brothers* [also translated as *Water Margin*], which, according to Wu, Hu was studying when he wrote his preface.” (1960:307, fn j). Chinese scholars express the same view and add that Hu might have been alluding to chapter 49 of *Water Margin* 水浒传: “Song Gongming hit Zhu Jiazhuang three times 宋公明三打祝家庄” (Beiguo kan shu 北国看书 2005 ; Chen Shuyu 陈漱渝 1995). However, Hu Shi was not directly quoting the novel *Water Margin*, but only alluding to its militaristic style in his description of Wu Yu as fighter against Confucianism. ¹⁵⁹ Second, another character had been added to the quotation “Smash the Confucian shop 打倒孔家店”, i.e. “topple, collapse 倒”. Thus, the verb’s meaning was enhanced

¹⁵⁸ Wu Yu 吴虞 was born in Chengdu, Sichuan; he studied in Japan and later taught at Beijing and Chengdu University. He published different anti-Confucian articles in *New Youth* 新青年 and other magazines (cf. CHOW (1960) *The May Fourth Movement. Intellectual Revolution in Modern China* Cambridge, Mass.: 300). For further information on Wu Yu see WU YU 吴虞 (1984) 吴虞日记 [Diary of Wu Yu] 成都, WU YU 吴虞 (1990) 吴虞文录 [Collected Essays by Wu Yu], 民国丛书, 上海.

¹⁵⁹ The hypothesis that the formulation “四川省只手打孔家店” by Hu Shi was but an indirect allusion to the fighting spirit of the heroes of *Water Margin* is confirmed by searches in a QuotationFinder index of a full text version thereof (SHI NAIAN 施耐庵 (2007) 水浒传 [Water Margin]. <http://www.yifan.com/yihe/novels/shuihu/shuihu.html>, accessed: 29.04.2008, downloaded: 29.04.2008). The index returned no hit for any 2-gram part string of this formulation (e.g. 只手, 手打, 打孔, 孔家, 家店).

with the expected result: “smash 打倒”, instead of just “fight 打”.¹⁶⁰ Hence, only the formulation “Fight the Confucian shop” was created by Hu Shi, who in turn was alluding to the fighting spirit depicted in *Water Margin*.

The preface by Hu Shi, introducing the life and work of Wu Yu to the public and giving birth to the formulation “Fight the Confucian shop”, was not only published in the *Collected Essays of Wu Yu*, but gained access to a wider public through publication in the Supplement of the Beijing based *Morning Post* 晨报附刊 (Ding Shouhe 丁守和 2003). It now remains to be explained, how this formulation developed from a humorous description of an individual (Wu Yu) made by the Communist Party’s ‘enemy number one’ (Hu Shi) in 1921 (i.e. two years after the May Fourth demonstrations in 1919) into one of the most famous slogans of the May Fourth period?

A Forgotten Childhood

Though an anti-Confucian attitude certainly existed during the May Fourth Movement and among its protagonists, the very slogan “Smash the Confucian shop” is not once used in May Fourth journals such as *New Youth* 新青年, *New Tide* 新潮 or *Modern Debate* 现代评论.¹⁶¹ The same holds true for the formulation “Fight the Confucian shop” introduced by Hu Shi in 1921 (see above). Anti-Confucian thoughts were expressed in these journals in terms as “Oppose Confucian learning 反对孔学”. It therefore remains doubtful if either slogan was ever shouted on the streets or written on posters during the May Fourth Movement as was claimed by later narratives.¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ The *Hanyu da cidian* traces the compound “smash 打倒” back to a Song poem, but also gives examples both from *Water Margin* and Lu Xun (LUO ZHUFENG 罗竹风 & HANYU DAZICIAN BIANJI WEIYUANHUI 汉语大辞典编辑委员会 (Eds.) (1986) 汉语大词典 [Great dictionary of Chinese], 上海: 321). In fact, the term appears in ten chapters of *Water Margin*, not however in Chapter 49.

¹⁶¹ I have checked the following full text databases: *New Youth* 新青年 (Sept. 1916 - July 1922), *Weekly Review* 每周评论 (Dec. 1918 - Aug. 1919), *New Tide* 新潮 (1. Jan. 1919 - Mar. 1922), *Beijing University Monthly* 北京大学月刊 (Jan. 1919 - Feb. 1922), *Young China* 少年中国 Vol.1, no.1 (July 1919) - vol.4, no.12 (May 1924), *Guide* 向导 so.1 (Sept. 1922) - no.201 (July 1927), *Guoxue Quarterly* 国学季刊 Vol.1, no.1 (Jan. 1923) - vol.7, no.3 (Dec. 1952), *Chinese Youth* 中国青年 (Oct. 1923 - Jan. 1927), *Chinese Worker* 中国工人 (1924-1929). In neither was the slogan “Overthrow the Confucian shop 打倒孔家店” or “Fight the Confucian shop 打孔家店” found. Neither formulation appeared in titles of articles prior to 1948 in the *National index to Chinese newspapers & periodicals* 全国报刊索引 (1857-present) of the Shanghai Library.

¹⁶² Ding Shouhe further notes that he remembers having read “Fight the Confucian shop” in various “Recollections of the May Fourth Movement 五四运动回忆录” although the formulation does not appear in those May Fourth journals accessible to me. Ding attributes the change in formulation either to error or to the wish of enforcing the formulation (see DING SHOUHE 丁守和 (2003) 对胡适研究的再认识 [New insights concerning research on Hu Shi], 安徽史学, 69-77).

The earliest instance of “Smash the Confucian shop”, which I have found so far, was in an article in the magazine *Xueheng* 学衡 (also translated as *Critical Review*) of May 1929.¹⁶³ Curiously enough, the magazine *Xueheng* was itself not opposed to Confucianism, but instead opposed the opposition to Confucianism. The magazine’s purpose was to merge Western thought with Chinese essence. Accordingly, the author Shui Tiantong 水天同¹⁶⁴ introduced the work *The Courtier* by Count Baldassare Castiglione (1478-1529) to the audience of *Xueheng*, and then set out to compare it with traditional Chinese notions of ritual propriety. In his conclusion he remarks that “It was long before the slogan ‘Smash the Confucian shop’ became popular that ritual propriety had ceased to be talked of. 礼之不讲, 早在‘打倒孔家店’口号流行之先。(Shui Tiantong 水天同 1929)” Shui’s usage indicates that the attributes ‘popular’ and ‘slogan’ were by 1929 already attached to ‘Smash the Confucian shop’. How could this be? This so-called popularity was not fostered, as far as I know, by the proponents of anti-Confucianism in May Fourth journals. The above quotation from Shui Tiantong leads to speculations about a very different early childhood of “Smash the Confucian shop”: Could it have been the opponents of anti-Confucianism who coined and circulated the formulation as derogative comment to warn the commoner against this aggressive anti-Confucianism?

Another trace of the quotation’s origin may answer this question. It is found in the pages of the Supplement of the *Morning Post* 晨报附刊. In 1924, the paper introduced a newly published volume of Wu Yu’s poetry to its readers in an article titled “Introducing the recent work of the ‘old hero fighting single-handedly the Confucian shop’ 介绍‘只手打孔家店的老英雄’底近著”, remarking that Wu’s *Collected Essays* were already very popular in China (You Chen 又辰 1924). If this description was not exaggerated, Wu’s *Collected Essays* were at least widely read in China. Thus, chances rise that his depiction by Hu Shi was also well known. About three weeks later, the *Morning Post* published an article by Qian Xuanton 钱玄同 which repeatedly used the quotation “Fight the Confucian shop”: “The Confucian shop has to be fought by all, absolutely all means, because it is the stronghold of decrepit and confused thought in China. If it is not *smashed*, the thought of the Chinese people will never become lucid. 孔家店真是千该打, 万该打的东西; 因为它是中国昏乱思想的大本营。它若不被打倒, 则中国人的思想永无清明之一日。[my emphasis] (Qian Xuanton 钱

¹⁶³ In fact, *Xueheng* only reprinted this article from the *Tianjin Dagongbao Literature Supplement* 天津大公报文学副刊. Thus, the article was probably first published even earlier than May 1929.

¹⁶⁴ Shui Tiantong (born 1909 in Gansu): entered Qinghua school 清华学校 in 1923, went abroad to study in America, Germany and France from 1929 until 1934, among others at Harvard from 1931-33; held various positions at departments of English or foreign languages at different Chinese Universities ever since.

玄同 1924)” Qian demanded not only that the Confucian shop had to be fought, but *smashed*.

Without its utter destruction, there could be no salvation for the Chinese people, so Qian argued. What do these two instances of using “Fight the Confucian shop” in the *Morning Post* attest to? In both cases, proponents, not antagonists of anti-Confucianism use the quotation. In both cases, the quotation is still reconnected with its origin, a description of Wu Yu. It is the publication of his poems that occasions the (re)introduction of the quotation to the public. The second quotation given above by Qian Xuanton may explain how by casual play with formulations Hu Shi’s quotation “Fight the Confucian shop” was transformed to “Smash the Confucian shop”.¹⁶⁵

Some Chinese scholars claim that “Smash the Confucian shop” was, in fact, a construction of Chen Boda 陈伯达 coined during the New Enlightenment Movement¹⁶⁶ of the late 1930s: “The formulation ‘fighting single-handedly the Confucian shop’, was throughout the 30s and 40s processed and remoulded by Chen Boda and others, transformed into the formulation ‘Smash the Confucian shop’, and began to be distorted and exaggerated as the guiding slogan of May Fourth’s New Culture Movement ‘只手打孔家店’ 这个提法，经过 30、40 年代陈伯达等人加工改造，变成了‘打倒孔家店’的提法，并开始被曲解夸大为五四新文化运动的纲领性口号。(Wang Dong 王东 1999)” The author Wang Dong¹⁶⁷ goes further by pointing out that in 1936 Chen Boda had been the first to use the formulation “Smash the Confucian shop” and to attribute it to the May Fourth Movement. Other Communists, he argues, succeeded Chen and thus created the later famous slogan. Wang concludes that five major changes were made to the formulation: “First of all, a humoristic witticism was transformed into a theoretical slogan; second, the introduction of Wu Yu by Hu Shi was changed into a personal opinion of Hu Shi; third, an individual formulation of a later

¹⁶⁵ With the full text digitisation of late-Qing and Republican newspapers such as the *Morning Post* 晨报附刊 or *Shenbao* 申报, it will become possible to reappraise my hypothesis through a comprehensive analysis. The full text Shenbao database is expected for early 2009. Others will hopefully follow in due time.

¹⁶⁶ For a detailed description of the New Enlightenment movement, and the involvement especially of Chen Boda and the May Fourth veteran Zhang Shenfu, see SCHWARCZ (1986) *The Chinese Enlightenment. Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* Berkeley: 195-239. Schwarcz’s analysis is enhanced with further historical facts by Yü who especially stresses the control exercised by the Chinese Communist Party on the student protests of December 9, 1935 and the New Enlightenment movement of 1936/37. He also points out that Chen had in early 1936 become chief of the Propaganda Department of the North China Bureau headed by Liu Shaoqi, and in this capacity engaged in reviving May Fourth in form of the New Enlightenment Movement; see YÜ (2001) *Neither Renaissance nor Enlightenment: A Historian’s Reflections on the May Fourth Movement*. In: Dolezelová-Velingerová & Král *The Appropriation of Cultural Capital. China’s May Fourth Project*, Cambridge, Mass.: 303.

¹⁶⁷ Wang Dong (born 1948 in Beijing) is professor at the Department of Philosophy, Peking University, specialising in the theory of Leninism, social development and modernisation. For further details cf. to his personal homepage: DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY OF PEKING UNIVERSITY (2001-2008) 王东 [Wang Dong]. <http://www.phil.pku.edu.cn/fac.php?op=profile&tid=48033>, accessed: 05.05.2008, downloaded: 05.05.2008.

period was changed into an important slogan of the May Fourth era; fourth, Hu Shi's personal saying was changed into the theoretical program of the whole May Fourth Movement; and fifth, 'Fight the Confucian shop' was changed into 'Smash the Confucian shop'. 一是从一句幽默戏言，变成了理论口号；二是从胡适对吴虞的介绍，变成了胡适本人的主张；三是从五四后期的个别提法，变成五四时代的主要口号；四是从胡适个人的一个说法，变成了整个五四运动的理论纲领；五是从‘打孔家店’，变成了‘打倒孔家店’。(Wang Dong 王东 1999)” As the usage of “Smash the Confucian shop” by Shui Tiantong in 1929 proves, the very formulation “Smash the Confucian shop” was not coined by Chen Boda in 1936; nor was Chen responsible for changing the expression of an individual of a later period into an important slogan of the May Fourth era; both changes had occurred prior to 1929 as the evidence found in *Xueheng* and the *Morning Post* (see above) as well as the articles of Chen Boda and others (see below) shows. Furthermore, Wang ignores in his account that Chen was not solely responsible for reviving May Fourth ideals in the New Enlightenment Movement, but was supported by the May Fourth veteran Zhang Shenfu 张申府.¹⁶⁸ Together with Ai Siqi 艾思奇, Chen and Zhang published various articles in 1936/37 discussing if and how the slogan “Smash the Confucian shop 打倒孔家店” could be utilised for the New Enlightenment Movement. In these articles, Chen Boda called on Chinese philosophers to form a Chinese New Enlightenment Study Society 中国新启蒙学会 which among other tasks should “adopt the call of the May Fourth period to ‘Smash the Confucian shop’ [sic], and succeed to make a systematic and all-encompassing criticism of Chinese old traditional thought and old religion; 接受五四时代‘打倒孔家店’ [sic] 的号召, 继续对于中国旧传统思想, 旧宗教, 作全面的有系统的批判; (Chen Boda 陈伯达 1936:455)” Ai Siqi declared “Smash the Confucian shop” should express the “opposition to dogmatism, to the Confucian ethical code, and to a return to the past 反独断反礼教反复古” (quoted in Zhang Yan 张艳 1997). Zhang Shenfu argued that the slogan was inappropriate for the New Enlightenment Movement, because though Confucius had been smashed in the past, the evil influence of the Confucian shop still existed and was even growing. Therefore, Zhang suggested to use the following slogan “Smash the Confucian shop, save Confucius 打倒孔家店, 救出孔夫子” (Zhang Shenfu 张申府 1937). None of these authors suggested to transform “Fight the Confucian shop” into “Smash the Confucian shop”, as being either more appropriate or forceful. Instead, in the articles of 1936/37

¹⁶⁸ An interesting source on Zhang Shenfu is his interview with Schwarcz, in: SCHWARCZ (1992) *Time for Telling Truth Is Running Out: Conversations with Zhang Shenfu* New Haven.

it appears that this transformation had *already* taken place. However, they all discussed how to use this symbol of a previous era for current purposes, how the past could serve the present (see also Chapter 4). Though not responsible for transforming the formulation, Chen Boda et. al. seem to be responsible for reviving and ‘re-presenting’ the slogan to the public and thus helping to inscribe it into the cultural memory (Assmann 2006).

First mission under Socialism

When the People’s Republic of China was founded in 1949, “Smash the Confucian shop” had been established as a catchphrase for the anti-Confucian or, in Communist view, anti-feudalist current of the May Fourth Movement (see above). *People’s Daily*, the mouthpiece of the CCP Central Committee, shaped the subsequent life of the ‘quotation’ in Communist discourse by using it in 81 articles published between 1949 and 2007. Never in these 81 instances has the phrase been attributed to Hu Shi, the author of the phrase’s precursor “Fight the Confucian shop”. Instead, it features rather prominently as slogan of the masses or indicator of the May Fourth Movement’s goals either in historical narratives of this movement or in contemporary campaigns. These campaigns were either directed against alleged followers of Confucius or, paradoxically, against Hu Shi or his alleged followers. It seems as though Hu Shi was still associated in some way with the phrase; this association had now, after Hu turned ‘traitor’, to be repudiated as strongly as possible.

From May 25 until June 8, 1949, there appeared a 15 part series called *Preface to the Chinese History Study Course* 中国历史教程绪论 (henceforth *Preface*) by Wu Yuzhang 吴玉章¹⁶⁹. It was especially recommended to the readers’ attention by an adjoining article from the editors of *People’s Daily*. The *Preface* defined the meaning, methods and material for the research on Chinese history, as well as the scope of this topic and its division into periods. In the fifth part of the *Preface*, Wu Yuzhang points out the meaning of May Fourth for Chinese history: the old style capitalist democracy had proved unable to solve China’s problems and was replaced by a new style capitalist democratic revolution during World War I and the Russian October Revolution. The proletariat as new revolutionary force evolved and Marxism was transmitted to China, creating the new thought wave of a new period. “The ‘May Fourth’ New Culture Movement was not only a literary revolution

¹⁶⁹ Wu Yuzhang (1878-1966), born in Sichuan: joined Tongmenghui 同盟会 in 1906, took part in the revolution of 1911, studied in Japan and later in France, became a Chinese Communist Party member in 1925, held several positions in the Party, Chinese government and at universities. Among others he was member of the Central Committee from 1928 to his death in 1966, delegate to the first, second and third People’s Congress, and president of Beijing’s Renmin University from 1949 to 1966.

advocating the vernacular language on its surface [or] a thought revolution of smash the Confucian shop [i.e. a revolution to overcome Confucian thinking], but it was the reflection of a new social thought, a new political viewpoint, a new revolutionary theory, a new political system. ‘五四’新文化运动，不仅是表面的提倡白话文的文学革命、打倒孔家店的思想革命，而且是新的社会思想、新的政治观点、新的革命理论、新的政治制度的反映。(Wu Yuzhang 吴玉章 1949.05.29)”

Only with the foundation of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921, the article continued, was a true and fresh revolutionary flag against imperialism and feudalism hoisted. In this preface, Wu Yuzhang used the slogan “Smash the Confucian shop” to indicate a current of thought significant to the May Fourth period. Wu advocated a broader reception of May Fourth not only confined to the two slogans “Vernacular language” and “Smash the Confucian shop”. And although Wu Yuzhang thus praised the May Fourth Movement’s achievements, in his depiction its glory was overshadowed by subsequent events, i.e. the foundation of the Communist Party.

A year later, on April 29, 1950, Deng Tuo 邓拓, at that time editor-in-chief of *People’s Daily*, published an article in memory of Li Dazhao 李大钊 to finally settle the question “Who led the May Fourth Movement? 谁领导了五四运动?” It was a reaction to an ongoing dispute during the study of the New Democracy 新民主主义 amongst students of Beijing Middle Schools and others. As might be expected, Deng arranged history according to the winners’ views; it had been the Communists, who led the May Fourth Movement: “The May Fourth Movement could only develop into a thorough anti-feudalist cultural movement, because it was simultaneously a formidable anti-imperialist and anti-feudalist revolutionary movement led by the Communists in politics and thought. The bravest and fiercest smashers of the Confucian shop, advocates of the literary revolution, supporters of democracy and science in those years were precisely the Communist intellectuals, and none other. 正因为五四运动是由共产主义者在政治上思想上领导的反帝反封建的伟大革命运动，因此，它能够同时成为一个彻底的反封建文化的运动。当年最勇猛地打倒孔家店、提倡文学革命、拥护民主和科学的仍然是共产主义的知识分子，而不是别人。(Deng Tuo 邓拓 1950.04.29)” Again, Deng Tuo as Wu Yuzhang before him, used “Smash the Confucian shop” to denote what the May Fourth Movement fought against.

Both authors used “Smash the Confucian shop” as a contemporary description of past events in a historical narrative, not as a piece of historical evidence by setting it in quotation marks and providing a source. Both articles, however, contribute to the attempt of the Communist Party to establish a generally acceptable and, additionally logical, narrative of how their party came to rule

the country. The May Fourth Movement was chosen as the starting point of the Communist dominance of politics and culture only in part because of factual truth but rather because history allowed and at the same time demanded it.¹⁷⁰ Early Chinese Communists like Chen Duxiu and Li Dazhao had in fact been prominent figures during the May Fourth Movement, responsible, among others, for the spread of Marxism in China, thus allowing the narrative to be constructed. On the other hand, the Russian October Revolution was singled out to signify the call of Marxism on China. The four year delay between the October Revolution of 1917 and the foundation of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921, however, demanded an explanation. Why did the Chinese avantgarde not react instantaneously to the call of Marxism? By portraying the Communists as leaders of the May Fourth Movement, this gap was reduced from four to one year and a half, and proved their eagerness in reacting to the Marxist call. Third, “according to the Marxist theory of history, as China entered the historical stage of capitalism, it had to experience a large-scale social expression of bourgeois consciousness similar to the French Enlightenment.(Yü 2001:305)” May Fourth, depicted as an enlightenment movement, put Chinese history in accord with Marxist theory of history. And, as a political revolution often followed an enlightenment movement, the Socialist revolution and final rise to power of the Communist Party became quite logical (Yü 2001:305).

Rewriting the Curriculum Vitae

Within a few years, the usage of the formulation “Smash the Confucian shop” changed. It was no longer used as a modern description of past events (see above), but was presented as historical evidence, conveying an air of actuality and authority, as I hope to show below. In 1954/55 a large campaign unfolded beginning with the re-evaluation of the *Dream of the Red Chamber* and soon leading to an overall discreditation of Hu Shi.¹⁷¹ In December 1954, a ‘Committee for the Investigation and Criticism of Hu Shi’s Ideology’ was established, and soon thereafter began publishing materials that criticised Hu Shi’s personality and his work. Moreover, a massive press campaign was launched, at first attacking Hu Shi, but soon turning its focus on other Western-trained intellectuals like Hu Feng.¹⁷² This, in short, is the historical context for the next three articles

¹⁷⁰ On exposure of teleological history writing in China see among others DUARA (1995) *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China* Chicago.

¹⁷¹ For more details on this campaign see Appendix III in: GRIEDER (1970) *Hu Shih and the Chinese Renaissance. Liberalism in the Chinese Revolution, 1917-1937* Cambridge, Mass..

¹⁷² On the Hu Feng case see: YANG (1956) *The Case of Hu Feng* Hong Kong; LI HUI 李辉 (1989) 胡风集团冤案始末 [The whole unjust case of the Hu Feng clique] 香港; XIAO FENG 晓风 (1993) 我与胡风. 胡风事件三十七人回忆 [Hu Feng and I. Thirty-seven people remember the Hu Feng affair] 银川.

contributing to the transformation of the phrase “Smash the Confucian shop”. On January 15, 1955, *People’s Daily* published an article by Zhang Pei 张沛 on page three entitled “ ‘Scholar’ – political conspirator – Hu Shi’s ideological and political reactionary nature ‘学者’ - 政治阴谋家 - 胡适在思想上和政治上的反动本质”. It stressed the importance for the Chinese academic world to criticise Hu Shi, as some intellectuals still followed his teachings. Regarding Hu Shi’s actions during the May Fourth Movement, Zhang argued as follows: “Being the spokesman of the right-wing capitalists, Hu Shi took part in this united front [i.e. the May Fourth Movement]; he had advocated the vernacular language, [and] had yelled smash the Confucian shop; moreover, he excelled in opportunism and deception; in a setting, where the masses’ consciousness was not yet [raised] high enough, [he] established some ‘prestige’ amongst a few intellectuals; all these are facts, they are inevitable phenomena under the historical conditions of the time. 作为右翼的资产阶级的代言人，胡适参加了这个统一战线，他提倡过白话文，喊过打倒孔家店，加上他善于投机、骗人，在群众觉悟还不高的情况下，在一些知识分子中树立了一定的‘威信’，这些都是事实，这是当时历史条件下的必然现象。(Zhang Pei 张沛 1955.01.15)” Ignoring the accusatory tone of this account, as it is of no interest in the present case, some interesting points have to be outlined: First of all, Hu Shi was said to have “yelled ‘Smash the Confucian shop’” as if being in a mass demonstration and just shouting whatever is shouted by everybody else; though it seems that nobody ever shouted “Smash the Confucian shop” during the May Fourth Movement as the exact formulation was not coined prior to 1929. Even if read metaphorically, such depiction contributed to establishing the ‘quotation’ as a piece of historical evidence. Second, the fact that Hu Shi was partly responsible for coining the quotation “Smash the Confucian shop” was, of course, not mentioned in Zhang Pei’s description of events. Hu, it seems, had merely tried to hide his counterrevolutionary nature by “yelling” an appropriate phrase.

In an article which appeared only four days later, He Lin 贺麟¹⁷³ narrates his aberrant ways in the past, finally converting to Marxism-Leninism; in this article a similar use of the phrase is found: “On this point, I was rather close to Hu Shi. Like Hu Shi, I renounced the standpoint of ‘Smash the Confucian shop’, I fully approved at that time to talk of Confucius as a religious figure and founder

¹⁷³ He Lin 贺麟 (1902-1992), born in Sichuan, philosopher and specialist on Hegel. He graduated from Qinghua University in 1926 and later studied abroad in the U.S. and Germany. Upon his return to China in 1931, he worked at the Philosophy Department of Beijing University and since 1955 at the Chinese Academy of Science 中国科学院. In: CAI KAISONG 蔡开松 & YU XINFENG 于信风 (Eds.) (1991) 二十世纪中国名人辞典 [Biographical dictionary of 20th century China], 沈阳: 1583.

of a religion. 在这一点上，我比较接近胡适，当胡适放弃了‘打倒孔家店’的立场，把孔子说成一个宗教家和教主时，我是非常赞成的。(He Lin 贺麟 1955.01.19)” Again, the connection between Hu Shi and the catchphrase was not mentioned, itself being no longer a historical description but raising to the level of a “standpoint” which one can take or renounce.

Again three months later, an article appeared by Yang Xianzhen 杨献珍¹⁷⁴, newly appointed president of the Central Party School. Its title was: “The theory of knowledge of the dialectical materialism is the theory of reflection 辩证唯物主义的认识论是反映论”. Therein, Yang discussed the relationship between thought and existence; Yang concluded by advising cadres to rely primarily on practice instead of book learning in order to gain knowledge. In the second part of his article, Yang focused on the origin of knowledge, on how one could learn to know the world. In this long discussion, the phrase “Smash the Confucian shop” is not missing: “Later there appeared also a Li Zhuowu, opposing Confucius, saying ‘You can’t take the right and wrong of Confucius as right and wrong’; at that time this was a very important insight; this insight later greatly influenced the May Fourth Movement, and from this the slogan ‘Smash the Confucian shop’ emerged. 后来又出了一个李卓吾，反对孔夫子，说‘不能以孔子之是非为是非’，这在当时是一种非常卓越的见解，这个见解后来还大大地影响了五四运动，因而出现了‘打倒孔家店’的口号。(Yang Xianzhen 杨献珍 1955.04.10)” Here, for the first time, we find a reference on how the phrase “Smash the Confucian shop” came into existence. But the evidence given is rather shallow: the May Fourth Movement was allegedly influenced by the anti-Confucian viewpoint adopted by Li Zhuowu (1572-1602), a Ming Dynasty scholar,¹⁷⁵ and hence produced the slogan “Smash the Confucian shop”. Yang thereby constructed a lineage of Chinese thinkers who had doubted the written word (esp. the Confucian canon) and sought alternative methods to gain knowledge. Starting with the Ming Dynasty scholars Wang Yangming 王阳明 (1472-1528) and Li Zhuowu, then jumping directly to

¹⁷⁴ Yang Xianzhen 杨献珍 (1896-1992), born in Hubei, joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1926, repeatedly arrested by the GMD, appointed dean of Central Party School in 1948, and its president in 1955; Yang was imprisoned during the Cultural Revolution, but this verdict was reversed in 1978; Marxist philosopher and theorist, had translated several theoretical works into Chinese. For further information see: HAMRIN (1975) *Alternatives Within Chinese Marxism 1955-1965: Yang Hsien-chen's Theory of Dialectics*. University of Wisconsin, Wisconsin; HAMRIN (1986) Yang Xianzhen: Upholding Orthodox Leninist Theory. In: Hamrin & Cheek *China's Establishment Intellectuals*, Armonk; GUAN SHAN 关山 (1987) 杨献珍研究资料 [Research Material on Yang Xianzhen] 长沙, YANG XIANZHEN 杨献珍 (1984) 杨献珍文集 [Collected works of Yang Xianzhen] 石家庄.

¹⁷⁵ Li Zhuowu is depicted as the first person in Chinese history who challenged Confucianism. See: ZHENG QIANG 正强 (Jan. 1997) 论五四思想启蒙运动与传统文化一再评“五四全盘反传统”论 [On the May Fourth thought, enlightenment movement and traditional culture - reappraise the 'total anti-traditionalism of May Fourth'], 云南师范大学学报：哲社版, 21-26.

May Fourth, the narrative culminates by introducing the thought of Lenin and Mao on the subject in question. Thus, Yang constructed a teleological narrative of one of the basic tenets of Mao Zedong Thought: the superiority of practice over theory (see also Chapter 3), the roots of which, according to Yang, lie far back in Chinese history. “Smash the Confucian shop” became one important piece of historical evidence in this chain of reasoning, linking Communist theoreticians with Ming-Dynasty philosophers. The meaning of the quotation was widened to include not only the May Fourth standpoint against Confucianism, but also against relying on a canon instead of learning by investigations into practice. And again Yang did not attribute the quotation “Smash the Confucian shop” to a single author, but referred to a faceless mass. Last but not least, Yang called the phrase a “slogan 口号”. This formulation was often used in later articles.

In the next ten years, 1956 to 1966, ten articles refer to the phrase “Smash the Confucian shop”. Each of them reflects the major tone of its time. For example, during the period of “Let One Hundred Flowers Bloom” intellectuals discuss in careful terms the validity of the May Fourth claim to fight Confucianism (cf. Feng Bailu 冯白鲁 1956.12.25). Two years later, during the Great Leap Forward Chen Boda 陈伯达 asks for a reform of the old intellectuals at Beijing University, recalling its glorious tradition of May Fourth and “Smash the Confucian shop” (cf. Xinhua she 新华社 1958.05.05). All of the ten articles use the phrase to describe the time and/or goals of the May Fourth Movement. Some go further and ask their readers to carry on the spirit of “Smash the Confucian shop”. Two articles trace the phrase back not only to a faceless movement, but to certain people, i.e. Li Dazhao and Wu Yu. As shown above, neither argument is based on historical facts.

Only one of the ten articles throws some doubt on the origin, and therefore, usage of the phrase “Smash the Confucian shop”. On January 6, 1957, following the call for an open academic debate of “Let One Hundred Flowers Bloom” a discussion about the stages of Chinese history was convened by professors from Shandong University and the *Literature and History magazine* 文史杂志. The content of this discussion was published in *People’s Daily* on January 19, 1957, thirteen days after the discussion took place. The long delay between the discussion and its publication must be accounted for by the sensitivity of the topic. The article which was finally published in *People’s Daily* still revealed that the Communist historical narrative was but one interpretation of events. One of the professors, Zhao Lisheng 赵俐生, partly contested Guo Moruo’s historical account of the Han

Dynasty overcoming the slave owning society.¹⁷⁶ “[...] But he [i.e. Zhao Lisheng 赵俪生¹⁷⁷] believed that one cannot take Confucius’ thought as representative and model of feudalist thought. He said, this was a misconception, that is connected to “Smash the Confucian shop” raised after the “May Fourth” movement. Confucian thought is a system, that constantly developed from slavery to feudalism and contains feudalist elements. [...] 但他认为不能把孔子思想作为封建思想的代表和典型。他说，这是一种误会，这和‘五四’运动后提出的‘打倒孔家店’有关。儒家思想是奴隶制到封建制不断变化的体系，其中有封建的成分。(Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1957.01.19)”

Noteworthy for our case are two points in this account. (1) The phrase is said to have been “raised after the May Fourth Movement”. (2) The phrase has to account for a current “misconception” of history, namely that Confucianism represents feudalism.¹⁷⁸ Though Zhao Lisheng is not quoted to give any details, to whom this misconception must be attributed, it may be deduced by looking at the cause and effect. Only Communists may have had an interest in defining Confucianism as Feudalism, so as to fit Chinese history into Marx’ historical materialism. One might conclude that the phrase “Smash the Confucian shop” was revived, though not created in this process of constructing a Marxist Chinese history. However, this glimpse on the true history of “Smash the Confucian shop” was soon overshadowed by the Anti-Rightist-Campaign which transferred Zhao Lisheng to Lanzhou University and labelled him a ‘rightist’ in 1958. Doubt as to the origin of “Smash the Confucian shop” did not surface again in *People’s Daily* until 1979.

Gatekeeper

With the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, the career of “Smash the Confucian shop” enters a new phase: it becomes the gatekeeper of the ‘Maoist club’, identifying, controlling and fighting an alleged lineage of enemies trying to enter and undermine this sacred space. The Urvater of this lineage of enemies was, as might be expected, Confucius, followed by Hu Shi. The Feindbild¹⁷⁹ was

¹⁷⁶ It had been published by *People’s Daily* on December 6, 1956 under the title: “The Han dynasty seriously fought the slave owners 汉代政权严重打击奴隶主”.

¹⁷⁷ Zhao Lisheng (born in Shandong in 1917) was in 1957 professor of history at Henan University; later that year he was transferred to Lanzhou University and in 1958 labelled as ‘rightist’; he retired in 1991.

¹⁷⁸ Zhao did not wholly negate the Communist claim that Confucianism was feudalism. But he questioned the clear-cut division made by the Communists between pre-Han slave owner society and the following feudalist stage. Confucianism, ‘developing from slavery to feudalism’, contained ‘feudalist elements’ and, we might add, even elements of the previous slave owner society. But Zhao’s argumentation of Confucianism as a ‘developing system’ might be carried even further by considering that it might even develop towards socialism or communism.

¹⁷⁹ SATJUKOW & GRIES (2004) Feindbilder des Sozialismus. Eine theoretische Einführung. In: Satjukow & Gries *Unsere Feinde. Konstruktionen des Anderen im Sozialismus*, Leipzig.

then projected onto Zhou Yang 周扬 in 1966 and Liu Shaoqi 刘少奇 in 1969 (see Chapter 4); and finally unfolded all its might in the destruction of Lin Biao's image from 1973 until 1975.¹⁸⁰

The criticism of Zhou Yang published in People's Daily in 1966 is constructed from of a patchwork of quotations from Zhou's articles to show his "reactionary black character". The paragraph containing the phrase "Smash the Confucian shop" is accordingly structured: "Where to turn to for knowledge? Zhou Yang constantly bears [three things] in mind, one is the warehouse in 'the backyard of the Confucian shop', one is 'the Japanese shop window' of the time of the Meiji Restoration, and another one is the Russian 'translators' burro' of the time of Peter the Great. He [i.e. Zhou Yang] said: The slogan 'Smash the Confucian shop' raised during the 'May Fourth' era, is too 'superficial', 'don't forget, that in the backyard of the Confucian shop is still a very big warehouse, containing China's many thousand years old cultural heritage'; [...] 到哪里去求知识呢? 周扬念念不忘的, 一个是'孔家店后院'的'仓库', 一个是明治维新时代的'日本橱窗', 还有一个是彼得大帝时代俄国的'翻译馆'。他说: '五四'时代提出的'打倒孔家店'的口号, 太'片面了', '不要忘记, 孔家店的后院还有一个很大的仓库, 那里有中国几千年的文化遗产'; (Wen Xincheng 文新生 1966.07.22)" What was Zhou accused of in this paragraph and what use was made of the phrase "Smash the Confucian shop" to achieve this effect? (1) The phrase functioned as shorthand of the anti-Confucian ideas and actions during the May Fourth Movement; (2) Zhou allegedly criticised this slogan, and thereby the whole movement of being too superficial; (3) Instead of fighting Confucianism, Zhou had turned back to the Confucian shop in his search for knowledge, and (4) valued it as repository of the Chinese cultural heritage. The accusation is rendered less effective, as Zhou's quotations are rather short and probably taken out of context. But why would such an argumentation work at all? For Maoists, Confucianism was a synonym of feudalism. Not to fight feudalism, but call it the warehouse of a valuable tradition was from a Maoist point of view reprehensible. Moreover, as early as 1936 some Communists had adopted the phrase "Smash the Confucian shop" to signify their renewed fight against the old system during the New Enlightenment Movement. Hence, to call this fight's slogan "too superficial" must be considered a crime worthy of severe criticism.

¹⁸⁰ It seems to have escaped the notice of former scholars that the 'Anti-Confucius and Anti-Lin Biao' campaign of 1973-75 had at least one forerunner: a short campaign against Liu Shaoqi in 1969. This would explain the question raised by Gregor and Chang why materials criticising Confucius had been collected in 1969 (see: GREGOR & CHANG (Nov. 1979) Anti-Confucianism: Mao's Last Campaign, *Asian Survey* 19, 1073-1092: 1076). It seems, however, that the campaign was an unsuccessful test balloon, stopped before really getting under way. This also explains why the material against Confucius collected in 1969 was only published in 1973/74 during the campaign against Lin Biao. In 1973 the propagandists could refer to the above described lineage of enemies already associated with the Feindbild of Confucius.

On May 4, 1969, a long editorial appeared in *People's Daily* celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement or rather called “youth movement 青年运动” by Mao Zedong. The phrase “Smash the Confucian shop” was extensively used in this article to taint Liu Shaoqi as follower of the wrong line¹⁸¹, represented by Confucius and Hu Shi:¹⁸²

The May Fourth Movement raised the slogan ‘Smash the Confucian shop’, overturning the two-thousand-year-old Chinese superstition of the Confucian shop. This slogan became the revolutionary slogan of the masses, it was a new leap in the history of the Chinese world of thought. For more than two thousand years, the dogma of Confucius representing the interests of the declined slave owner class, was considered by the feudal exploiting class as perfectly justified, as not to be violated. It was used to protect the system of slavery and the feudal system. During the May Fourth Movement, the cutting edge of the revolutionary slogan ‘Smash the Confucian shop’ was to wreck the Confucian shop on all battlefields; and even the right-wing bourgeois intellectuals, at that time represented by Hu Shi, did not dare to openly oppose this. Though [the situation] was like this, however with the development and intensification of the class struggle, with the vigorous development of the workers’ movement, the right-wing bourgeois intellectuals increasingly revealed their reactionary face, hostile towards workers and peasants, protecting the culture of imperialism and feudalism. Some persons tried to raise again the flag of the Confucian shop, to restore the Confucian shop. For many years, there has been an ongoing heated battle concerning the question of smashing or protecting the Confucian shop. In his black ‘Xiuyang’,¹⁸³ the renegade, traitor, scab Liu Shaoqi wantonly propagated the way of Confucius and Mencius, poisoning numerous cadres and young people, reviving the ghosts of the Confucian shop; this amply revealed his anti-revolutionary face, vainly attempting to restore the bourgeois dictatorship and to protect the interest of all reactionary classes.¹⁸⁴

五四运动提出了“打倒孔家店”的口号，推翻了中国两千多年来的对孔家店的迷信。这个口号变成了群众的革命口号，是中国思想界在历史上的新飞跃。两千多年来，代表没落奴隶主阶级利益的孔子的教条，被封建剥削阶级当成是天经地义的，是不能触犯的。它起了保护奴隶制度和封建制度的作用。五四运动中，“打倒孔家店”这个革命口号的锋芒所及，摧毁着孔家店在各个方面的阵地，就连当时以胡适为代表的资产阶级知识分子的右翼都不敢公然反对。虽然这样，但是随着阶级斗争的发展和尖锐化，随着工人运动的蓬勃发展，资产阶级知识分子的右翼日益暴露了敌视工农、维护帝国主义、封建主义文化的反动面目。有些人企图重新打起孔家店的旗子，为孔家店复辟。多年以来，打倒孔家店还是保护孔家店的问题，一直在进行着激烈的斗争。叛徒、内奸、工贼刘少奇在他的黑《修养》中，大肆宣传孔孟之道，毒害广大党员和青年，为孔家店招魂，充分表现了他妄图复辟资产阶级专政和维护一切反动阶级利益的反革命面目。(Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1969.05.04)

¹⁸¹ On the theory of the two-line-struggle cf. to Chapter 3.

¹⁸² Criticism of Liu Shaoqi had started in 1966, after a short interlude in June and July of the same year during which he had temporary command over the Cultural Revolution. During this time he had dispatched work teams to exercise leadership over the rising movement. Because of this, the Red Guards accused Liu of suppressing their revolutionary action. In August, Liu was criticised at the 11. Plenum of the Central Committee, but only two years later at the 12. Plenum in October 1968, was he dismissed from all his posts, excluded from the Party, and criticised by name in official documents and the official media (as contrasted by the unofficial Red Guard publications that had been criticising Liu Shaoqi since 1966). For more information see: DITTMER (1974) *Liu Shao-ch'i and the Chinese Cultural Revolution. The Politics of Mass Criticism* Berkeley.

¹⁸³ The book's full title is *On the self-cultivation of Communist Party members* 论共产党员的修养 (also translated as *How to be a good communist*) by Liu Shaoqi, published in 1939 after a lecture held by Liu in Yan'an. I will hereafter refer to the book as *Self-cultivation*, thus mirroring Chinese usage calling it 修养.

¹⁸⁴ In this first article, no content either of the Xiuyang or of the Lunyu is quoted. The accusations levelled against Liu Shaoqi are still very general. This changed with publications such as LU WEIXIN 鲁为新 (04.06.1969) 黑《修养》和‘孔孟之道’ [The black Xiuyang and the ‘way of Confucius and Mencius’], 人民日报, 4; SHI FENG 史锋 & SHI HONGQING 史红青 (28.06.1969) 刘少奇为什么要为孔子招魂? [Why does Liu Shaoqi want to call back the spirit of Confucius?], 人民日报, 4. In these articles, arguments made by Liu Shaoqi in the Xiuyang were traced back to thoughts of Confucius.

Thus disgracing Liu Shaoqi by connecting him with Hu Shi and Confucius, some interesting points must be noted: (1) In stark contrast to the earlier criticism of Zhou Yang, the May Fourth editorial of 1969 did not use any quotation of Liu to prove the validity of its argumentation; (2) instead, the quotation “Smash the Confucian shop” is introduced in the most detailed manner seen so far: it is said to have been raised by the May Fourth Movement, to have been a revolutionary spearhead to overturn Confucian superstition on all battlefields, and to have influenced even the Chinese masses and the world of thought. The two-line-struggle is portrayed as struggle between “smashing or protecting the Confucian shop”, the wrong line reaching from the time of May Fourth’s Hu Shi until nowadays’ Liu Shaoqi. (3) In this article the phrase “Smash the Confucian shop” developed from ‘evidence of historical events’ into a linguistic weapon to be used indiscriminately against enemies of Mao Zedong’s correct line, by that time called the Cultural Revolution. (4) Though the Cultural Revolution empowered words, it simultaneously devalued them by arguing that to use the correct words did not prove someone stood on the right side. Only class struggle could reveal somebody’s true intentions, argued the anonymous author of this article.

The May Fourth editorial of 1969 set the tone for four other articles criticising Liu Shaoqi. The first was published on the very next day, i.e. May 5, 1969, and called on the masses to study Mao’s work and the May Fourth editorial in order to fight the wrong line as exemplified by Liu Shaoqi: “We [that is the Masses] certainly will develop the revolutionary spirit of the May Fourth Movement’s ‘Smash the Confucian shop’, and completely bury Liu Shaoqi’s counterrevolutionary revisionist line, and the bourgeoisie’s and all exploiting classes’ old ideology 我们一定要发扬五四运动‘打倒孔家店’的革命精神，把刘少奇的反革命修正主义路线、把资产阶级和一切剥削阶级的旧思想统统埋葬掉。(Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1969.05.05)” Here again, the contemporary usefulness of the old May Fourth Movement’s slogan is evoked: by reviving its spirit, the enemy can again be successfully fought.

The next two articles quoting “Smash the Confucian shop” carry the argumentation of the May Fourth editorial further in dismantling Liu Shaoqi. The first argues that Liu tried to call back the Confucian spirit 招魂 in his 1939 book *Self-cultivation* 修养 (cf. Lu Weixin 鲁为新 1969.06.04). After briefly relating Confucian history, Lu Weixin 鲁为新 introduces the May Fourth Movement as first serious enemy of Confucianism: “Under the call of the October Revolution, under the call of the proletarian world revolution, the May Fourth Movement broke out. ‘The cultural revolution conducted by the May Fourth Movement was a movement that thoroughly opposed feudal culture; in

Chinese history, there had never been such a great and thorough cultural revolution.’ The May Fourth Movement raised the slogan ‘Smash the Confucian shop’, overturning the two-thousand-year-old Chinese superstition of the Confucian shop. 在十月革命的号召之下，在无产阶级世界革命的号召之下，爆发了五四运动。‘五四运动所进行的文化革命则是彻底地反对封建文化的运动，自有中国历史以来，还没有过这样伟大而彻底的文化革命。’五四运动提出了‘打倒孔家店’的口号，推翻了中国两千多年来的对孔家店的迷信。(Lu Weixin 鲁为新 1969.06.04)” Here again it is suggested that by raising a correct slogan, i.e. ‘Smash the Confucian shop’, a goal can be achieved, i.e. to “overturn the superstition of the Confucian shop”. The article goes on citing short sentences or words from Liu Shaoqi’s *Self-cultivation*, in order to prove to their readers the revisionist nature of the book and its author.¹⁸⁵

The above cited paragraph is but a mosaic of the 1969 May Fourth editorial. The first sentence is in its substance the same as the editorial’s third sentence of the third paragraph; both formulations are similar: “The May Fourth Movement occurred at the call of the October Revolution, at the call of the proletarian world revolution of that time. 五四运动是在十月革命号召之下，是在当时无产阶级世界革命号召之下发生的。(Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1969.05.04)” The second sentence – “The cultural revolution conducted by the May Fourth Movement was a movement that thoroughly opposed the feudal culture; in the Chinese history there had never been such a great and thorough cultural revolution.” – is a Mao quotation from “On the New Democracy”, used in the fourth paragraph of the editorial, too. The whole sentence – “The May Fourth Movement raised the slogan ‘Smash the Confucian shop’, overturning the two thousand year old Chinese superstition of the Confucian shop” – was copied from the editorial. How is this mosaic style of writing to be interpreted? What influence on the life of “Smash the Confucian shop” did this style exercise? The last question being the easier one, I will answer it first. As the context of the quotation, that is the

¹⁸⁵ On June 28, 1969 an article appeared in *People’s Daily* asking: “Why did Liu Shaoqi want to call back the spirit of Confucius?” It starts with the following words: “Half a century ago, the May Fourth Movement raised the slogan ‘Smash the Confucian shop’, overturning the two-thousand-year-old Chinese superstition of the Confucian shop. This slogan changed the revolutionary slogan of the masses, it was a new leap in the history of the Chinese world of thought. 半个世纪前，五四运动提出了‘打倒孔家店’的口号，推翻了中国两千多年来对孔家店的迷信。这个口号变成了广大群众的革命口号，是中国思想界在历史上的新飞跃。” See: SHI FENG 史锋 & SHI HONGQING 史红青 (28.06.1969) 刘少奇为什么要为孔子招魂? [Why does Liu Shaoqi want to call back the spirit of Confucius?], 人民日报, 4. Except for the first five characters, this introductory paragraph is once again an exact copy from the May Fourth editorial. Further instances of re-using formulations or thoughts from the May Fourth article can be found throughout the whole article. At least one more article with a similar writing style belonging to the same campaign can be found in: cf. SHI FANXIU 史反修 (29.07.1969) 孔家店的幽灵与现实的阶级斗争 [The ghosts of the Confucian shop and of the current class struggle], 人民日报, 3.

sentence it was embedded into, did not change in the four articles published between May 4 and July 29, 1969, the meaning attributed to the quotation by the May Fourth editorial was not changed either. One might say, the (meaning of the) quotation was frozen for a certain period of time during the Cultural Revolution. The May Fourth editorial in which the quotation reappeared after three years off stage, exercised great influence not only on the content of later articles of the same campaign, but also on their very formulation. Three of the four later articles are attributed to different authors, suggesting they had been written by different persons. However, this might only be a camouflage. The authors' names may be pseudonyms.¹⁸⁶ Then, all articles might have been written by the same person or, more probably, by the same writing group. To use similar phrases to express similar views would then become rather natural, and not the result of coercion. Recycling phrases from an editorial heralding the start of a minor campaign, moreover, connected articles rather obviously with this starting point. Thus the articles themselves made up the campaign, stressed its beginning and authorised its follow-ups. On the other hand, the May Fourth editorial itself was in part a mosaic of unmarked Mao quotations (see also Chapter 4), thus basing itself on the highest authority available at the time. Such excessive use of quotations, either from the canon or from official articles, were one technique to politically survive during the Cultural Revolution.

Lin Biao, former vice chairman of the Chinese Communist Party, became the next and most famous 'enemy' to be tainted by association with the Feindbild Confucius. The nationwide campaign to criticise Confucius and Lin Biao started two years after Lin's violent death in a plain crash, which had not been commented on in the press, and two days after the end of the 10. National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party.¹⁸⁷ The goal of the campaign was outlined in a news report on the Party Congress, published in *People's Daily* on August 30, 1973: "At present, we will continue to set the criticism of Lin and the rectification of our working style as priority. We will fully use the negative example of Lin Biao's anti-Party clique to educate the whole Party, the whole army, the whole people by carrying out class struggle and line struggle, to study Marxism, Leninism, Mao

¹⁸⁶ 史锋 = the cutting edge of history (two articles in *People's Daily* in 1969 and 2001); 史红青 = red youth of history (only one article in *People's Daily* in 1969). The authors' names fit the occasion. On the other hand, Shi 史 is a surname in Chinese, nor are the first names uncommon. However, neither biographical dictionaries nor dictionaries on writer's pseudonyms contained these names, therefore, one can but engage in speculation.

¹⁸⁷ The campaign's ultimate goals had been, according to Goldman, to achieve ideological and political unity (GOLDMAN (Sep. 1975) China's Anti-Confucian Campaign, 1973-74, *The China Quarterly*, 435-462). A detailed description of the campaign during the year 1974 is given in: STARR (Jan. 1975) China in 1974: "Weeding Through the Old to Bring Forth the New", *Asian Survey* 15, 1-19; Forster focuses on the campaign's effects in Zhejiang province (FORSTER (Sep. 1986) The Politics of Destabilization and Confrontation: The Campaign against Lin Biao and Confucius in Zhejiang Province, 1974, *The China Quarterly*, 433-462).

Zedong Thought, to criticise revisionism, to criticise the bourgeois worldview. 当前，我们要继续把批林整风放在首位。要充分利用林彪反党集团这个反面教员，向全党、全军、全国人民进行阶级斗争和路线斗争的教育，学习马克思主义、列宁主义、毛泽东思想，批判修正主义，批判资产阶级世界观。(Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1973.08.30)” Two days later, Zhou Enlai’s report to the Party congress was published, specifying the educational goals of the campaign as to heighten peoples’ understanding of true vs. false Marxism (Zhou Enlai 周恩来 1973.09.01). The campaign soon gathered momentum, creating among others the slogan “Criticise Lin criticise Confucius 批林批孔”¹⁸⁸. This slogan featured in more than 5,000 articles published in *People’s Daily* since January 1974. The campaign was further supported by specially published books.¹⁸⁹ This campaign lasting from September 1973 until roughly February 1975, set the stage for yet another thirty appearances of the quotation “Smash the Confucian shop”. All these articles used “Smash the Confucian shop” as a catchphrase denoting the May Fourth Movement’s fight against Confucianism, Confucian thought or superstition, or the struggle against the old culture in general in sentences such as “The great May Fourth Movement raised the slogan ‘Smash the Confucian shop’ and began to destroy the blind faith in Confucius that was more than two thousand years old. 伟大的五四运动提出了“打倒孔家店”的口号，开始破除了两千多年来对孔老二的迷信。(Fang Hai 方海 1974.03.20)” Some called on the people to foster the slogan’s spirit in the criticism of Lin Biao and Confucius, thereby again stressing its current usefulness.¹⁹⁰ Fighting Confucianism became a decisive factor in the history of the two-line-struggle depicted in arguments like “The over one-hundred-years-old struggle between the opposition to Confucius and reverence of Confucius 一百多年来反孔和尊孔的斗争”.¹⁹¹ The lineage of ‘Neo-Confucians’ consisting of Hu Shi and Liu Shaoqi

¹⁸⁸ Why was Confucius chosen as historical parallel to the alleged “Lin Biao clique”? Because Confucius and Confucianism stood for harmony, benevolence, compromise, and were thus the very antithesis to the continued class struggle of the Cultural Revolution, as is argued in GREGOR & CHANG (Nov. 1979) Anti-Confucianism: Mao’s Last Campaign, *Asian Survey* 19, 1073-1092: 1082-7.

¹⁸⁹ For example: RENMIN CHUBAN 人民出版社 (1974) 林彪是地地道道的孔老二的信徒 [Lin Biao was throughout a disciple of Confucius], 工农兵批林批孔文选, 北京, published as first part of the series *Documents of the workers, peasants and soldiers criticising Lin criticising Confucius* 工农兵批林批孔文选.

¹⁹⁰ For example: RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民日报社 (03.05.1974) 北京大学工农兵学员开展各种纪念活动 [Workers, peasants, soldiers and students at Peking University carry out various commemorative activities], 人民日报, 1.

¹⁹¹ BEIJING DAXUE QINGHUA DAXUE DA PIPAN ZU 北京大学清华大学大批判组 (07.12.1973) 一百多年来反孔和尊孔的斗争 [The more than one hundred years old struggle between the opposition to Confucius and reverence of Confucius], 人民日报, 2.

was continued further to include not only Lin Biao but in 1974 also Chen Boda and Chen Duxiu.¹⁹² Next to Mao Zedong, Lu Xun¹⁹³ is once again depicted as fighter for the correct line by eulogies as: “The slogan ‘Smash the Confucian shop’, that was raised by the May Fourth Movement, unfolded a violent attack against Confucius and Confucian thought. In this struggle, the great Lu Xun was the most heroic soldier. 五四运动提出了“打倒孔家店”的口号，对孔子及儒家思想展开了猛烈的进攻。伟大的鲁迅就是这场斗争的最英勇的战士。(Lin Zhihao 林志浩 1974.01.19)”¹⁹⁴ The meaning of the phrase “Smash the Confucian shop” remained stable throughout the whole campaign, though we do not witness the same kind of mosaic style writing as in the anti-Liu Shaoqi articles of 1969.

Anti-Confucian Legacy

“[E]ncouraged to reinvestigate the history of the Chinese Communist Party, [historians] gave new (and overdue) attention to Party leaders of the 1920s and 1930s who had been neglected in official Maoist historiography lest their appearance in history books serve to dim Mao’s lustre. [...] The purpose now was precisely to dim Mao’s lustre as well as to rectify the historical record. (Meisner 1996:144)” Meisner’s evaluation pertained not only to the rewriting of Party history after the Cultural Revolution, but also to that of the history of the May Fourth Movement. Since 1919, the May Fourth narrative had been reduced hero by hero, until during the Cultural Revolution two positive figures only were ever mentioned in connection with the May Fourth anti-Confucian struggle: Mao himself and Lu Xun (see above and Chapter 4). From 1979 onwards, the picture was again diversified and other positive figures such as Zhou Enlai 周恩来, Chen Duxiu 陈独秀, Guo Moruo 郭沫若, Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培, or Hu Yuzhi 胡愈之 were included.¹⁹⁵ Even Hu Shi 胡适 is given some credit as originator of the phrase “Fight the Confucian shop 打孔家店” (see below).

¹⁹² Cf. TANG XIAOWEN 唐晓文 (27.09.1973) 孔子是‘全民教育家’吗? [Is Confucius the ‘teacher of all the people’?], 人民日报, 3; TANG XIAOWEN 唐晓文 (04.01.1974) 孔子杀少正卯说明了什么? [What does it account for that Confucius murdered Shao Zhengmao?], 人民日报, 3; JIN ZHIBAI 靳志柏 (04.07.1974) 批孔与路线斗争—学习毛主席关于批孔的论述 [Criticising Confucius and line struggle - Study Chairman Mao’s treatise on criticising Confucius], 人民日报, 2.

¹⁹³ On the symbolic use of Lu Xun by the socialist propaganda and especially during the Cultural Revolution see: GOLDMAN (Sep. 1982) The Political Use of Lu Xun, *The China Quarterly*, 446-461.

¹⁹⁴ Other examples include: SHI YIGE 石一歌 (11.11.1974) 坚持古为今用. 正确评价法家 [Persist in making the past serve the present. Correctly appraise the Legalist School], 人民日报, 2. Other articles promote reprints of works by Lu Xun as the *Diary of a Madman* 狂人日记, *Stories by Lu Xun* 鲁迅的故事, or the *Outline of a History of Chinese Literature* 汉文学史纲要.

¹⁹⁵ This becomes very obvious when conducting searches in the database of *People’s Daily* like “(五四 OR 五四运动) AND 郭沫若”. Hits are returned for the whole period from 1949 until 2007, with a twenty year gap between 1959 and

The life of the quotation “Smash the Confucian shop” was affected by this change in history writing in different ways. (1) One effect was that the emphasis laid on the anti-Confucian content of May Fourth was shifted by depicting it to be only one of several important aspects: “Altogether more than 110 issues of this periodical [i.e. the *Xuelian bao* 学联报 of 1919 by Zhou Enlai and Pan Shilun 潘世纶] came out; it propagated the [following] main points: besides introducing new thoughts, it called to overthrow the warlords, overthrow old propriety, smash the Confucian shop and criticise the way of Confucius and Mencius. 这个刊物前后出了一百几十期，其宣传重点，除了介绍新思潮外，还号召打倒军阀，打倒旧伦常，打倒孔家店和批判孔孟之道。(Wang Qingming 王庆民 et al. 1979.05.05)” (2) The account of the quotation’s origin differed not only from the past, but also from article to article: It was once attributed to the 1915 periodical *New Youth* 新青年 edited by Chen Duxiu (Zheng Zemin 郑则民 1982.07.30). Another article mentions Hu Shi as originator of “Fight the Confucian shop 打孔家店”, which was sometime later developed into “Smash the Confucian shop” (Shi Ximin 石西民 1982.12.10). A third article takes the earlier standpoint that the May Fourth Movement had raised the slogan, thus accelerating the promotion of Marxism in China (Da Jiang 大江 1986.07.11). (3) And finally even the validity of the quotation was questioned, especially its current usefulness: “From the May Fourth Movement to the [19]30s, certain positions raised by some revolutionaries, for example ‘Smash the Confucian shop’ as well as Lu Xun’s call on the youth not to read thread-bound Chinese books, negating traditional Chinese medicine and herbs etc., might easily seem to be extreme or fanatic when viewed from today. But if viewed from the social conditions back then, if viewed from the task of fighting by negating the feudalist old era and old culture, it was not extreme or fanatic at all, but was a thorough break, was a revolution. 从五四运动到三十年代，一些革命者提出的某些主张，例如‘打倒孔家店’以及鲁迅的叫青年人不要读线装书、否定中医中药等，在今天看来，很容易被认为是过激或者偏激。但倘若从当时的社会条件来看，从当时否定封建主义旧时代、旧文化的战斗任务来看，却并不是什么过激、偏激，而是彻底的决裂，而是革命。(Xu Bairong 徐柏容 1986.06.24)” Here, the origin of the phrase “Smash the Confucian shop” is vaguely given as “some revolutionaries” and some time after the May Fourth Movement; its importance is further levelled by mentioning other positions; and finally its very message as seen from 1986 is allowed to be called “extreme or fanatic”. Though its

1979. In 1979, Guo Moruo is even levelled to Lu Xun and both are honoured as “great author 伟大的作家”, cf. ZHOU YANG 周扬 (07.05.1979) 三次伟大的思想解放运动 [Three great thought liberation movements], 人民日报, 2. See also below.

importance for the break with the old society and the beginning of the revolution is stressed, no life in post-Cultural Revolution China seems left to the phrase, it appears but as a relic of the past.

In the 1990s, we witness a surge of “Studies on the ancient Chinese civilisation 国学” (hereafter *Guoxue*) in academic circles. Publications like the *Guoxue collection* 国学丛书, *Collection of the great masters on Guoxue* 国学大师丛书, *Guoxue research* 国学研究, *Guoxue research series* 国学研究丛刊, or *Overview on Guoxue* 国学通览 appeared in short succession.¹⁹⁶ As the Chinese tradition became an accepted object of interest again, the legacy of “Smash the Confucian shop” had to be assessed anew: “Why during the first ten years of the Republic did especially the New Culture Movement of ‘May Fourth’ want to Smash the Confucian shop? I think, if we consciously or unconsciously evade this important question, we will not be able to evaluate correctly the status of the Confucian school of thought in the Chinese cultural legacy. 为什么民国前十年间特别是‘五四’新文化运动要打倒孔家店？我以为，如果有意无意地回避这些重大问题，那么就不可能正确估价儒家学派在中国文化遗产中的地位。(Cai Shangsi 蔡尚思 1988.07.25)” “Smash the Confucian shop”, the Communist symbol of the May Fourth Movement’s fight against Confucianism, the validity of which had over the years been repeatedly confirmed by the Party and scholars, was now an obstacle for pursuing knowledge in *Guoxue*. Understanding the reasons for fighting Confucianism which had been put forward by May Fourth scholars seemed to Cai Shangsi at least one important step in legitimising research on Confucianism 80 years thereafter. But why was it important to protect a positive validation of “Smash the Confucian shop” in China at all? Another May Fourth editorial will help to explain this: “After the May Fourth pioneers had done painful reflection on the Chinese history and reality, they came to this conclusion: If we do not smash the Confucian shop, tear apart the fetters of the old culture, not only can we not reverse China’s declining tendency, that is getting worse with each passing day, moreover we will never be able to change its tragic historical fate. [...] One can say, without the initiation of the new thought of science and democracy there would not have been the later transmission and development of Marxism in China, that overall gained a victory of decisive significance. This precious historical experience has real significance even today. 五四先驱者们对中国的历史和现实作了痛苦的思考后，得出了这样的结论：如果不打倒孔家店，不冲破旧文化的束缚，非但不能扭转中国日趋没落的颓势，

¹⁹⁶ For a detailed analysis of the academic interest in *Guoxue* and “*Guoxue fever*” refer to: ZHAO (Dec. 1997) Chinese Intellectuals’ Quest for National Greatness and Nationalistic Writing in the 1990s, *The China Quarterly*, 725-745. On the development of the populist nationalism in connection with *Guoxue* see: XU (Autumn 2001) Chinese Populist Nationalism: Its Intellectual Politics and Moral Dilemma, *Representations*, 120-140.

而且永远不能改变悲惨的历史命运。[...]可以说，如果没有科学和民主新思想的启蒙，也就不会有后来的马克思主义在中国的传播和发展，并取得具有决定性意义的胜利。这条宝贵的历史经验至今仍具有现实意义。(Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1989.05.04)” The Communist Party had portrayed the May Fourth Movement as precursor of its very own movement. Questioning the legacy of the May Fourth Movement, even if only in terms of questioning the quotation “Smash the Confucian shop”, therefore, undermined an already shaken legitimacy to rule China. On the other hand, after the 1989 Tiananmen Incident the Party press began to stress patriotism and nationalism. By coincidence, the methods of this new propaganda, namely to strengthen the pride of the Chinese people by relating the two-thousand-year-old Chinese civilisation, overlapped with the growing academic interest in its history and culture. A discussion between three *People’s Daily* reporters and seven researchers shows the lingering conflict between the new interest in *Guoxue* and the May Fourth fight against Confucianism:

Reporter: Is there a contradiction between the presently promoted traditional culture and the slogan “Smash the Confucian shop” raised by the “May Fourth Movement”? In the debate on culture since the New Culture Movement of May Fourth until the 80s, many scholars held a sharply critical view on Chinese traditional culture; but entering the 90s, some scholars displayed the flag of *Guoxue*, what do you think is the background of this change?

Ji Xianlin (83, Professor of Beijing University, Doctor of Philosophy of Göttingen University): For “May Fourth” criticising feudalist morality was essential, because at that time it already influenced the development of the productive forces. To destroy something, “one has to be overly strict in correcting the faults”. With the time of the “Cultural Revolution” the criticism of traditional culture reached the acme, this was already another issue. The metaphysical standpoint is that to totally negate the traditional culture is not correct. At present the renewed raising of “*Guoxue*” has two unrelated reasons: one is to let society comprehend the glorious culture of the Chinese race, spreading patriotism; one proceeds from a high level conception of culture.[...]

1994 记者：当前讲弘扬传统文化与“五四运动”提出的“打倒孔家店”的口号是否有矛盾？从五四新文化运动到 80 年代的文化讨论，不少学者对中国传统文化持激烈的批判态度；然而进入 90 年代，一些学者却亮出了“国学”的旗帜，您认为这种变化的背景是什么？

季羨林（83 岁，北京大学教授，曾获德国哥廷根大学哲学博士学位）：“五四”批判封建道德是有必要的，因为在当时它已经影响了生产力的发展。要破除一个东西，“矫枉必须过正”。到“文革”时期对传统文化的批判登峰造极，那已是另一码事。对传统文化全盘否定是不对的，那是形而上学的观点。如今“国学”再度被提起有两个层次的原因：一是想 let 社会了解中华民族优秀文化，发扬爱国主义；一是从高层次的文化观念出发。[...]

(Zhu Huaxin 祝华新 et al. 1994.12.06)

In this article of 1994, it is reflected how the apparent conflict between the goals of the May Fourth Movement and the current *Guoxue* studies is discussed. Ji Xianlin takes a very careful approach towards this conflict. On the one hand, he declares “Smash the Confucian shop” essential for the social and historical progress, on the other hand he uses metaphysics to negate the Cultural Revolution-like total negation of traditional culture. In between a niche is constructed for patriotic

sentiments about the glorious past and academic interest in traditional culture. The Cultural Revolution is singled out by Ji as a peak of criticising traditional culture, and thus tainted by association with the Cultural Revolution, the criticism of traditional culture can itself be criticised.¹⁹⁷ In another article published in *People's Daily* in April 1999 Chen Yong 陈涌 went a step further in devaluing “Smash the Confucian shop”; he stated that this very formulation had *not* been known during the May Fourth era, but other formulations had been used to express the same thoughts (Chen Yong 陈涌 1999.04.24). Questioning the authenticity of the quotation severed its connection to the ‘original’ source, i.e. the May Fourth Movement.

But “Smash the Confucian shop” could not be ‘sentenced to death’ as had been done with another quotation born in the Cultural Revolution, i.e. “The working class has to lead everything 工人阶级必须领导一切” (see Chapter 2.2), as it was part of the founding myth of the Chinese Communist Party itself. Therefore, the ghost of the past in form of the phrase “Smash the Confucian shop” keeps haunting academics until today. The last eight articles quoting “Smash the Confucian shop” between 1999 and 2007 attest to this fact, arguing about the phrase and its effects. In one article, both the May Fourth Movement and “Smash the Confucian shop” are defended against the accusation to have caused the “negate everything 否定一切” attitude of the Cultural Revolution (Lai Xinxia 来新夏 1999.04.20). One author declares that “Smash the Confucian shop” did not wholly negate Confucianism (Dai Yi 戴逸 1999.05.04), another saves classical poems and songs for study by stating they should not be counted as part of the “Confucian shop” and, therefore, not be counted as an object to “smash” (Yin Zaiqin 尹在勤 2000.12.23). Finally, the argumentation comes full circle as the idea was put forward that what had been fought during the May Fourth Movement with the phrase “Smash the Confucian shop” was not the way of Confucius and Mencius, but the distortions of the school’s thought accumulated over the centuries (Bi Quanzhong 毕全忠 2003.04.08). All of these authors sought to legitimise their pursuit of Confucian learning, but saw themselves confronted with a still prevalent, if subtle anti-Confucian attitude first raised during the May Fourth Movement, later fostered by the Chinese Communist Party and culminating in the anti-Confucian campaigns of the Cultural Revolution.¹⁹⁸ The slogan signifying this anti-Confucian

¹⁹⁷ Similar techniques of devaluing a quotation by association with the Cultural Revolution or the ‘Gang of Four’ are analysed in Chapter 2.2.

¹⁹⁸ It can be shown, however, that many people, especially in the countryside, came to study Confucian books only with this campaign. Thus the campaign spread not only criticism, but moreover knowledge about Confucius and his school of

attitude had by 1929 already become “Smash the Confucian shop”. The power of this symbol was strong enough that even decades later writers arguing in favour of traditional Chinese culture had in some way or other to defend themselves. As quotations live through usage, “Smash the Confucian shop” might be buried with *Guoxue*, with the revival of Confucius as national hero, with the worldwide export of Confucius Institutes. But it might as well be re-infused to public memory by another upsurge of anti-Confucianism in the future.

Conclusion

By quoting “Smash the Confucian shop” associations with the May Fourth Movement in general and its anti-Confucian attitude in particular were evoked and still are. Neither association does rely on historical facts, they are instead the result of retrospection, of memory, of propaganda. In spite of this and without having an author or a source text, the quotation has authority. This authority was time and again reconfirmed by usage in *People’s Daily*. Thus, it was first established as historical evidence, and then transformed into a gatekeeper of the ‘Maoist club’. And though after the Cultural Revolution repeated attempts were undertaken to devalue the quotation, it survived as powerful symbol of anti-Confucianism. Otherwise, why would contemporary scholars defend themselves for pursuing Confucian learning against “Smash the Confucian shop”; even going so far as to try to change the meaning of the quotation by claiming that “Smash the Confucian shop” had in fact not fought Confucianism, but the distortions of Confucianism?

How can a formulation that has neither source nor author be so persevering and steadfast? Paradoxically, I contend, it was the very absence of an origin that empowered “Smash the Confucian shop”. The quotation was ascribed to the generation of May Fourth (scholars, students, bourgeoisie and workers alike); they became the originators of “Smash the Confucian shop” in later narratives; and thus, when the quotation was revived in later years, a ghost-like multitude seemed to have already bidden allegiance to this call to action, to revolution. The victory of the Chinese Communist Party in 1949 further strengthened the quotation by bringing to power its major proponent. The quotation was now depicted as one stepping-stone of the Chinese Communist Party’s mythical rise to power. Without origin indiscriminate use could be made of the quotation as happened at least during the Cultural Revolution. Devoid of origin, no proof of misquotation or quotation out of context was left to those attacked by “Smash the Confucian shop” during the Cultural Revolution, though such

thought. See: MITTLER (2009) *A Continuous Revolution: Making Sense of Cultural Revolution Culture*, Heidelberg: unpubl. manuscript: chapter 3.

defence would probably have been futile in this period anyway. Chen Boda et. al. did wisely choose this aphorism for revival in 1936/37: Even today, with numerous journals and books digitised and searchable, with archives open to the researcher as to the public, the origin of the quotation cannot be verified; it is somewhere buried between Hu Shi's Preface to the *Collected Essays of Wu Yu* (hereafter *Preface*) of 1921 and the use of the quotation in 1929 (the first instance I have discovered so far).¹⁹⁹

Does it matter if the quotation has an author or source text and if they are known to the public or not? The revival of interest in the ancient culture of China led Chinese scholars not only to doubt, but also to investigate the origin of the quotation. In general, they accept Hu Shi as author and the *Preface* as source text; few inquire why Hu Shi himself set the alleged original sentence into quotation marks, then revealing the allusion to *Water Margin*. Only one scholar notes the absence of "Smash the Confucian shop" in May Fourth or New Culture Movement journals and speculates why later memorial texts of May Fourth come to talk about "Smash the Confucian shop". Another one accuses Chen Boda of having retrospectively created the slogan as part of the propagandistic campaign accompanying the New Enlightenment Movement, but fails to explain why some articles make common use of the slogan prior to 1936/37. Though some scholars explain from a linguistic or propagandistic point of view what effect the change from "Fight the Confucian shop" to "Smash the Confucian shop" had, none strives to find the real originator of this change; they remain satisfied to reconfirm Hu Shi's *Preface* as origin. It seems that the quotation's origin only began to matter when its message defied one's interest and only to those whose interest was defied. Tracing the origin, then, was not an object of pure, disinterested scholarly research, but driven by a particular reason. The easy acceptance of Hu Shi as originator must be accounted partly by custom – even during Mao's lifetime Hu Shi often occurred in connection with "Smash the Confucian shop". Not, of course, as author of the quotation, but as having renounced the quotation or cried it out etc. It seems the shadowy connection between this Communist 'enemy number one in the cultural arena' and the valued quotation had to be fought and fought again. And it is partly explained by renewed interest in the freshly rehabilitated Hu himself. Connecting the valued quotation to Hu justified interest in his person. The only alternative account – accusing Chen Boda of wantonly constructing the slogan in 1936/37 – followed a very different agenda of devaluing the quotation as propagandistic strategy and simultaneously devaluing its originator, i.e. Chen Boda. For the public, the truth about the creation of "Smash the Confucian shop" does not matter. As a slogan, it is ingrained into public memory and

¹⁹⁹ Refer to the journals/databases checked so far to fn. 161.

will be revived whenever its message, its rhetoric, its associations are deemed appropriate to the occasion. Through continuous re-quotation, repetition and duplication it has gained, not lost cultural capital, awaiting future appropriation.

The ready acceptance of Hu Shi as originator of the quotation by some scholars point to a peculiar problem for the study of quotation in China: the relative indifference to slight changes in formulation. The same observation is made concerning current awareness of the difference between “The working class has to lead everything 工人阶级必须领导一切” and “The working class leads everything 工人阶级领导一切” (see chapter 2.3). I can but conclude that neither author, source text, and context are unchangeable, nor is the formulation of a quotation a stable entity. In the case of “Smash the Confucian shop”, a contemporary propagandist might change “Smash the Confucian shop” back to “Fight the Confucian shop”, authorising this change with the ‘true’ origin of the quotation. This change would pave the way for arguing in favour of a critical attitude towards Confucianism (fight not smash), and allow for further investigations and promotion of this part of the cultural capital of traditional China.

Finally, I have to ask what “Smash the Confucian shop” is? Can it be called a quotation even without an author or a source text? Does it belong to the more fuzzy realm of misquotations, invented quotations or allusions? Or is it correctly labelled a bon mot, an aphorism of uncertain origin? This, I believe, is not for me to decide but is defined by each user anew. Some have and probably will use “Smash the Confucian shop” as quotation of known or unknown origin, others introduce it more cautiously as allusion, still others refer to it as aphorism of everlasting truth, and a last group unmasked it as invention. In this study on quotations in propaganda texts, it is an example of the perseverance of cultural memory in the face of the elusiveness of hard facts.

2.3 “The Working Class Has to Lead Everything” or the Lifecycle of a Quotation Star

The words “The working class has to lead everything 工人阶级必须领导一切” by Mao Zedong stand for a dramatic political shift during the Cultural Revolution. They herald the end of the reign of the Red Guards, now marked as just another generation of intellectuals, later to be re-educated in the “Up to the mountains, down to the villages 上山下乡” movement, and the return to the primacy of the proletariat.

The slogan first appeared as title of an article by Yao Wenyuan in *Red Flag* and was almost immediately celebrated as “Chairman Mao’s latest directive”. From the title of an article it soon developed into one of the most important Mao quotations of the years 1968/69. After falling into insignificance between 1970 and 1975 due to wrong implementation of the strategy, the quotation had a short lived second heyday in 1976. Soon after the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1978 it received the death sentence by being disconnected from Mao and reduced again to the title of Yao Wenyuan’s article, which then was interpreted as one of the first important steps by Lin Biao and the ‘Gang of Four’ to replace the Communist Party by a fascist regime. The quotation’s last ghost-like appearance in *People’s Daily* was staged in 1989 in the short story “Sofa” by Gao Hongbo 高洪波, in which the common habit of reducing the power of such quotations by telling fun stories about them was criticised. By following the detailed lifecycle of this quotation, the way of using quotations during and shortly after the Cultural Revolution will be highlighted.

Giving Birth

Within two days of its first appearance as the title of an article by Yao Wenyuan, “The working class has to lead everything” was promoted as “Chairman Mao’s latest directive”. As might be expected, *People’s Daily* was right in stating the quotation’s author. Yao Wenyuan, Mao’s writing brush number one during the Cultural Revolution, had been advised by Mao himself to draft a “fitting article directing present politics (Mao Zedong 毛泽东:533)” after the 7.27 incident at Qinghua University.²⁰⁰ On August 22, Yao submitted the article titled “Under the leadership of the proletariat

²⁰⁰ On July 27, 1968, on Mao’s order workers and soldiers tried to take over control at Qinghua University after more than three months of armed faction struggle between Red Guard groups. The workers were violently fought back by the students, killing some, but finally managed to end the armed struggle. Mao met with some Red Guard leaders on July 28, and warned them not to keep up their faction struggles, but to unite with each other. By August 5, Mao presented some workers with mangos. The mangos represented Mao’s faith in the workers. There exist different eyewitness’ accounts of these happenings, for example HINTON (1972) *Hundred Day War. The Cultural Revolution at Tsinghua University* New York: 185ff. Another participant in the battle as well as in the Red Guard meeting with Mao had been his surgeon Li

seriously struggle, criticise, correct” for revision. Next to some minor alterations Mao changed the article’s title to “The working class has to lead everything”.²⁰¹ Then, he ordered it to be printed first in the second issue of *Red Flag* and one day later, that was on August 26, by all national papers, including *People’s Daily*.²⁰²

The content of the article was, in short: Instead of the Red Guards, the working class is called on to fulfil the task of “struggling, criticising, correcting”. Therefore, the Party had to “fully develop the leadership function of the working class during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and in all work”. This leadership function of the proletariat, it was argued by Yao Wenyuan, had been part of Marxism since its founding days, and was termed the dictatorship of the proletariat. The current task of the working class was to end the fighting between different factions of Red Guards, called the “independent kingdoms”. This was defined by Mao’s latest directive; and at that time every directive by Mao mirrored urgent demands of the masses as Mao was leader of the Party, which in turn was and is the vanguard of the working force. Another Mao quotation defined this task in more detail: “To achieve the Proletarian Education Revolution, the leadership of the working class is needed, the participation of the working class is needed [...] The Workers’ Propaganda Teams should remain at the schools for a long period of time, they should take part in all the schools’ tasks of struggling, criticising, correcting, and moreover they should forever lead the schools. In the countryside, the most reliable ally of the proletariat – the poor and under-middle peasants ought to manage the schools. 实现无产阶级教育革命，必须有工人阶级领导，必须有工人群众参加，[...] 工人宣传队要在学校中长期留下去，参加学校中全部斗、批、改任务，并且永远领导学校。”²⁰³ The expected reaction of the students and Red Guards was also outlined by the article: “they should warmly welcome the working class to take the schools’ leading positions 要热烈欢迎工人阶级占领学校阵地”. In the last paragraphs of the article, the proletariat’s consciousness and problem solving

Zhisui, cf. LI ZHISUI (1994) *The Private Life of Chairman Mao. The Memoirs of Mao's Personal Physician Dr. Li Zhisui* New York: 498-503.

²⁰¹ Yao Wenyuan had originally titled the article: “Under the leadership of the working class earnestly struggle, criticise, correct 在工人阶级的领导下，认真搞好，斗，批，改” (MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1998) 建国以来毛泽东文稿 [Manuscripts by Mao Zedong since the liberation of China] 北京: 533).

²⁰² For the details on drafting, revision and print process cf.: MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1998) 建国以来毛泽东文稿 [Manuscripts by Mao Zedong since the liberation of China] 北京: 526-534.

²⁰³ During the next weeks, this quotation of Mao was labeled “Chairman Mao’s latest directive” together with a passage further down saying “Erect revolutionary committees of three unions, do great criticisms, clean up the revolutionary ranks, consolidate the Party organisation, simplify the structures, reform irrational regulation systems, send the administrative staff to the countryside, struggle, criticise, correct in the factories, in the main go through this process a few times. 建立三结合的革命委员会，大批判，清理阶级队伍，整党，精简机构、改革不合理的规章制度、下放科室人员，工厂里的斗、批、改，大体经历这么几个阶段。”

ability was praised above all other classes. None, not even the Party's members should underestimate the working class. Their task was widened to management in all areas, but especially the cultural domain. The guiding force ought to be the study of Mao Zedong Thought and the mass line taught by Mao. In the final paragraph, the glorious future of the Cultural Revolution and, therefore, the country was depicted in a world full of enemies and false friends. Thus was the content of the article and meaning of the quotation on August 25, 1968.²⁰⁴

Celebrating Birth

On the next day, as ordered by Mao, Yao Wenyuan's article "The working class has to lead everything" was reprinted in the whole country.²⁰⁵ The next step of propagating the new policy shift, as it was outlined in the article and subsumed under its title, unfolded in *People's Daily* on August 27: No less than seven articles quoting "The working class has to lead everything" appeared on different pages of the issue. Long reports on page two and three describe the joy of the people in Beijing and all over the country when receiving the "latest directive of the great Chairman Mao"²⁰⁶:

With your invincible thought turned into a weapon, we [i.e. the working class] are certainly able to lead everything; wherever we go, it will certainly turn red. [...] Chairman Mao's latest directive is a great call, calling on us to set up again new achievements during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution; Chairman Mao's latest directive is a great mobilisation order, mobilising us to launch a fierce attack against the enemies in all classes; Chairman Mao's latest directive is a great order to advance, heartening us to advance without fear toward the great goal of overall victory in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Many old workers everywhere, who were suppressed and exploited by the old society, are studying Chairman Mao's latest directive and the important article by Comrade Yao Wenyuan, and get extremely excited. 有您的战无不胜的思想作武器，我们一定能够领导一切，走到那里定要那里一片红。[...] 毛主席的最新指示是伟大的号召书，号召我们在无产阶级文化大革命中再立新功；毛主席的最新指示是伟大的动员令，动员我们向一切阶级敌人发动猛烈进攻；毛主席的最新指示是伟大的进军号，鼓舞我们向着无产阶级文化大革命全面胜利的伟大目标奋勇前进。各地许多在旧社会深受压迫和剥削的老工人，学习了毛主席的最新指示和姚文元同志的重要文章，万分激动。(Xinhua she 新华社 1968.08.27)

²⁰⁴ *People's Daily*, as all other newspapers, was ordered to wait one day until reprinting Yao's article, but on August 25, 1968, it at least printed the table of content of *Red Flag* on the first page of the issue in the bottom right corner.

²⁰⁵ To confirm this proclaimed fact, I checked some papers (i.e. 南方日报, 解放军报, 解放日报, 大众日报, 文汇报, 新安徽报). All of them featured the article of Yao on the first page of their August 26 issue. Moreover, all papers adorned a quarter to one third of the first page's top with a fitting Mao quotation and sometimes even a picture of him. As Mao quotation they chose either one from Yao's article or an earlier one from August 15, 1968, heralding the policy shift towards the working class: "My country has 700.000 people and its working class is the leading class. In the Cultural Revolution and in all work, the leadership function of the working class has to be fully developed. During struggle the working class has also to continually raise their own political consciousness. 我国有七亿人口，工人阶级是领导阶级。要充分发挥工人阶级在文化大革命中和一切工作中的领导作用。工人阶级也应当在斗争中不断提高自己的政治觉悟。" The quotations were either labelled "Chairman Mao's quotation 毛主席语录" or "Chairman Mao's newest directive 毛主席最新指示". Often, red ink was used for printing the quotations and the article's title.

²⁰⁶ XINHUA SHE 新华社 (27.08.1968) 伟大领袖毛主席最新战斗号令大长工人阶级志气 [Our great leader Chairman Mao most recently gave battle order to the working class], 人民日报, 2; RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民日报社 (27.08.1968) 中南海喜气盈门 [The happy atmosphere at Zhongnanhai], 人民日报, 3.

The article goes on that the peasants also joyfully took up the responsibility for the rural schools as the “most loyal ally of the working class” and the students promised “to accept forever the leadership of the proletariat 永远接受工人阶级的领导”. Pictures show celebrating workers on Tiananmen square and other places. Thus, the reaction of the people, who were involved in the policy shift, is described two days after receiving “Chairman Mao’s latest directive”. But what was the content of his “directive”? And what role was attributed to Yao Wenyuan, his article and its title?

First things first: In the first paragraph of the above quoted article, the content of “Chairman Mao’s latest directive” is spelled out as: “Erect revolutionary committees of unions of three²⁰⁷, do great criticisms, clean up the revolutionary ranks, consolidate the Party organisation, simplify the structures, reform irrational regulation systems, send the administrative staff to the countryside, struggle, criticise, correct in the factories, in the main go through this process a few times. 建立三结合的革命委员会，大批判，清理阶级队伍，整党，精简机构、改革不合理的规章制度、下放科室人员，工厂里的斗、批、改，大体经历这么几个阶段。(Xinhua she 新华社 1968.08.27)”²⁰⁸ Here, the press still makes a difference between “Chairman Mao’s latest directive” and “Comrade Yao Wenyuan’s article”, though this was more a difference in words than in content. Furthermore, the later famous quotation “The working class has to lead everything” is used only as reference to Yao’s article, but not as a quotation, directive or call of Mao.

The readers of *People’s Daily* could judge the importance of Yao’s article through another note in the August 27th issue printed on page two. This note informs the readers, that an offprint of “The working class has to lead everything” could now be bought in all the country’s Xinhua bookstores. Since the founding of the PRC until 1968, only nineteen editorials or articles had been singled out for offprint publication.

The press campaign to promote the new policy was rounded up with pictures portraying the joyful masses as well as with six “poems” celebrating the news, three of them containing the quotation in question here:

²⁰⁷ Meant here is a union of the workers, soldiers, and peasants.

²⁰⁸ The same quotation was printed in large letters on top of the second page of the August 27 issue of *People’s Daily*. As far as I found out, this passage from Yao’s article “The working class has to lead everything” was added by Mao himself during revision (MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1998) 建国以来毛泽东文稿 [Manuscripts by Mao Zedong since the liberation of China] 北京: 531-532). There seems to be no printed form of the quotation prior to August 25, 1968, when it was published in *Red Flag*. Therefore, I conclude, that the quotation was coined by Mao for this occasion and added to the article as quintessence by himself, hence it represented Mao’s latest directive and gave more authority to Yao’s article not only by propaganda, but in reality.

1	工人阶级是革命主力军（对口词）	The working class is the revolutionary main force (<i>duikouci</i> [i.e. stylised dialogue in oral performance])
2	佩浮 ²⁰⁹ 晚顺 ²¹⁰	Peifu Wan Shun
3	[...]	[...]
4	毛主席发出了最新指示，	Chairman Mao sent out the latest directive,
5	给工人阶级增添了无穷的力量。	Giving infinite power to the working class.
6	工人阶级必须领导一切，	The working class has to lead everything,
7	工人阶级能够担当。	The working class is able to undertake this.
8	教育革命，	The education revolution,
9	工人阶级要管；	The working class will manage it;
10	无产阶级专政大印，	The proletarian dictatorship's seal of power,
11	工人阶级要掌。	The working class will be in charge of it.
12	工人阶级最听毛主席的话，	The working class listens best to Chairman Mao's words,
13	工人阶级最能掌握毛泽东思想。	The working class can best comprehend Mao Zedong Thought.
14	工人阶级战斗在那里，	Where the working class fights,
15	那里一片新气象。	There is a new prevailing spirit.
16	工人阶级抓革命，	When the working class takes charge of the revolution,
17	革命一定打胜仗；	The revolution will definitely fight a victorious battle;
18	工人阶级促生产，	When the working class speeds up production,
19	生产凯歌遍地扬。	The production's song of triumph will be everywhere.
20	工人阶级抓教育革命，	When the working class takes charge of the education revolution,
21	教育革命红花开！	The education revolution will blossom in red flowers!
22	[...]	[...] ²¹¹

A mythical image of the close connection between Mao and the workers was painted in these poems. But more important for our quest, the content of “Chairman Mao’s latest directive” was for the first time subsumed under the words “The working class has to lead everything”. This usage foreshadowed the later career of the quotation: Starting as just the title of an important article, it soon

²⁰⁹ Peifu 佩浮 is the short form to Wang Peifu 王佩浮. He has been irregularly publishing 对口话 and 相声 in *People's Daily* from 1967 until 1991.

²¹⁰ The author Wan Shun 晚顺 published only three articles in *People's Daily*. All are dated from 1968, and all have a co-author. I could not find out more about Wan's biography so far.

²¹¹ WANG PEIFU 王佩浮 & WAN SHUN 晚顺 (27.08.1968) 工人阶级是革命主力军 [The working class is the main force of the revolution], 人民日报, 6.

became a symbol for the policy shift from the Red Guard terror to the reign of the working class, one important dividing line between the first and second stage of the Cultural Revolution.

Growing Up

During the first days after its publication, “The working class has to lead everything” had two competing meanings: firstly, it was used as title of an important article by Yao, for example in the standardised wording “Chairman Mao’s latest directive and Comrade Yao Wenyuan’s important article <<The working class has to lead everything>> 毛主席的最新指示和姚文元同志的重要文章《工人阶级必须领导一切》(Beijing chuandang chang quanti gongren 北京床单厂全体工人 1968.08.28)” In another passage a connection between Yao’s article and Mao’s directive is formulated for the first time: “The important article <<The working class has to lead everything>> by Yao Wenyuan conveys the latest directive of our utmost esteemed and utmost beloved great Chairman Mao 姚文元同志的重要文章《工人阶级必须领导一切》，传来了我们最最敬爱的伟大领袖毛主席的最新指示”, followed by a Mao quotation from Yao’s article. Though this passage stated that Yao’s article conveyed Mao’s directive, “The working class has to lead everything” still did not function as symbol for the directive’s meaning, but only as title of Yao’s article. Other articles again quote Mao’s own words – as they are cited in Yao’s article – for short summaries of his “directive”, but not the title of the article even though this title was also created by Mao himself. Hence, the first form of using “The working class has to lead everything” was as title of Yao’s article.

Secondly, the quotation was used as an unmarked sentence: “Our working class has to lead everything, and it is able to lead everything 我们工人阶级必须领导一切，而且能够领导一切! (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1968.08.28)”²¹² It is obvious, that “The working class has to lead everything” was at first not propagated and therefore probably not recognised as originating with Mao. Another anonymous poem published on September 7, 1968 will exemplify this point:

²¹² This usage was not only restricted to articles, but also in form of a banner at the top of a page (cf. People’s Daily of August 28, p. 4, September 3, p. 4 and September 16, p. 6).

1	欢庆胜利举红旗	Celebrate victory and raise the red flag ²¹³
2	[...]	[...]
3	欢呼胜利，	Hail victory,
4	战鼓声声急，	War drums sound fast,
5	工人阶级必须领导一切，	The working class has to lead everything,
6	我们一定要为毛主席争气！	For Chairman Mao we certainly will fight hard!
7	“工人宣传队要在学校中长期留下来”，	“The Workers Propaganda Teams shall remain for a long period of time at the schools”，
8	我们就立即占领教育阵地，	At once we will capture the battle field of education,
9	彻底铲除修正主义毒根，	Thoroughly uproot the poisonous roots of revisionism,
10	把无产阶级教育革命进行到底！	Carry the proletarian education revolution to the end!
11	“认真搞好斗、批、改”，	“Seriously do good struggling, criticising, correcting”，
12	我们一马当先，开创新天地，	We will take the lead, start a new world,
13	狠批深挖阶级敌人，	Firmly criticise and deeply dig for the class enemies,
14	革命、生产创奇迹。	In revolution and production initiate a miracle.
15	[...]	[...] ²¹⁴

The author of this poem clearly marked the two quotations in line 7 and 11 with quotation marks. These were also quoted in Yao's article “The working class has to lead everything” as something “Mao had pointed out”. The title of the article under analysis here was not put in quotation marks. I therefore conclude, that by this time it was not yet recognised as a Mao quotation. Following Mao's call to take charge, the workers started to seize power in the universities and schools. Soon, their actions were widened towards other cultural domains like the press.²¹⁵

Coming of Age

About two weeks after its first public appearance on August 25, the words “The working class has to lead everything” were slowly transformed from being a title of an article and instead presented as Chairman Mao's “historical mission”, “call”, “teaching”, “directive”, and finally as direct quotation set in quotation marks and printed in bold characters. Most interestingly, before revealing the phrase to be a Mao quotation its acceptance by the masses was publicly stressed in sentences as: “The

²¹³ On the same day, the establishment of Revolutionary Committees in all provinces, cities and autonomous regions was celebrated.

²¹⁴ RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民日报社 (07.09.1968) 欢庆胜利举红旗 [Raise the red flag to celebrate victory], 人民日报, 6

²¹⁵ RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民日报社 (05.09.1968) 工农兵是新闻战线上的主力军 [Workers, peasants and soldiers are the main force on the news front], 人民日报, 5.

working class has to lead everything, this is the great historical mission given [to us] by Chairman Mao, [this] is the important task the working class will forever undertake 工人阶级必须领导一切，这是毛主席交给的伟大的历史使命，是工人阶级要永远担当的重任。(Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1968.09.09)” I would like to suggest here, that the creation of an adequate slogan at least during the Cultural Revolution was not a purely top-down process, but one had to wait for the reaction at the bottom before carrying a strategy further. Thus, Chinese propaganda in 1968 is on the surface very similar to advertisement everywhere and at all times. Of course, most of these articles were written by journalists of *People’s Daily*, and therefore the choice of words was theirs as well. But they presented the words as if they had been the people’s.

Giving confirmation of Mao’s authorship of “The working class has to lead everything” was not left to an ordinary journalist or anonymous article, but relied on authority itself. None other than the premier Zhou Enlai reported: “Our great Chairman Mao lately called out, that the working class has to lead everything. This [now] is our basic principle in Marxism, Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought. 我们伟大领袖毛主席最近号召，工人阶级必须领导一切。这是我们马克思主义、列宁主义、毛泽东思想的根本的原则。(Zhou Enlai 周恩来 1968.09.10)” Here, the quotation was directly related to Mao and for the first time printed in bold characters as were all quotations by Mao at that time.

Further articles did not elaborate on the content of the policy shift anymore, but described either how people should or did set the directive into practice as in: “The revolutionary committee of the car factory in the Nanjing’s town Pu adheres to Chairman Mao’s teaching the working class has to lead everything 南京浦镇车辆厂革委会遵循毛主席关于工人阶级必须领导一切的教导 (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1968.09.21)” and “We certainly will use greatest strength to achieve Chairman Mao’s wise directive ‘the working class has to lead everything’. 我们一定要用最大的力量[...]实现毛主席的“工人阶级必须领导一切”的英明指示. (Shanghai worker revolution rebellion headquarter 上海工人革命造反总司令部 1968.09.25)” In these contexts, the quotation functioned as language shortcut to a rather lengthy set of rules, directions and actions outlined in Yao Wen Yuan’s article. The formal embedding of the quotation still remained unstable. In most cases it was connected with Mao, but not always set in quotation marks. Furthermore, from the birth of the quotation there appeared descriptions of people shouting the words at mass meetings or elsewhere, often together with slogans like “Long live our great leader Chairman Mao!” or “Infinitely loyal to the invincible Mao Zedong Thought!” In October 1968, the situation became more stable. 35 of the

52 articles citing “The working class has to lead everything” set the phrase in quotation marks and only nine did not directly connect the phrase with Mao. On October 15, 1968, the phrase was finally printed as header of the issue’s first page as “Quotation by Chairman Mao 毛主席语录”, thus establishing it most officially as a Mao quotation.

Jobless

The heyday of the quotation lasted for about one year until July 1969. By then, it had been firmly established as a directive by Mao and was always set in quotation marks. But in August 1969, the number of articles quoting it dropped sharply from 24 to only 4 per month, falling to zero in June 1970.

Two reasons must be called on to account for this development: history and reality. First, the Cultural Revolution did not stop after the workers were called on to take over control, but developed further, sending Red Guards, students and intellectuals to the countryside. The “Up to the mountains, down to the villages 上山下乡” movement left not only the workers managing universities and schools without task; the slogan that had authorised the workers’ seizure of the schools also became useless. Second, voices appeared criticising wrong attitudes of workers and questioning even their ability to “lead everything”, for example: “While researching where to proceed from in reforming the old schools, some comrades said: ‘We lead everything. Whatever we say, the intellectuals will do, thus the old schools will be well reformed.’ We analyzed this sort of formulation, and think it is wrong, it shows that some comrades don’t really understand the meaning of Chairman Mao’s great directive ‘The working class has to lead everything’. 在研究改造旧学校应从那里做起的时候，有的同志说：“我们是领导一切的。我们怎么说，知识分子就怎么做，旧学校就可以改造好。”我们分析了这种说法，认为是错误的，它反映了一些同志没有真正理解毛主席关于“工人阶级必须领导一切”这个伟大指示的意义。(Jilin's Fifth Middle School Workers Propaganda Team 吉林市第五中学工宣队 1969.10.11)”²¹⁶ The article goes on arguing that though the working class was the leading class in Mao’s view, it was not only called on to lead, but to improve its own political consciousness through constant study. As in this case, *People’s Daily* balanced its narration of problems by explaining how these problems were to be solved. But the very fact that critical articles

²¹⁶ This article appeared on the bottom of a page headed and totally concerned with: “How are the junior and middle schools in the cities to be managed? Problems of the working class leading the schools in struggle, criticise, correct 城市的小学及中学应当如何办? 工人阶级领导学校斗批改问题”.

appeared on the pages of *People's Daily* verify the many and real problems created by the slogan “The working class has to lead everything”.²¹⁷

In another article of July 17, 1968, the changing attitude towards the worker's leadership was subsumed in the following sentences: “[...] the workers lead everything precisely means Mao Zedong Thought leads everything. The working class has to arm their own brains with Marxism, Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, to carry out the great, glorious, right leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, only then are they able to lead everything. [...] 工人阶级领导一切，就是毛泽东思想领导一切。工人阶级必须用马克思主义、列宁主义、毛泽东思想武装自己的头脑，通过自己的伟大、光荣、正确的中国共产党的领导，才能够领导一切。(Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1969.07.30)”²¹⁸ Here again the workers are referred to the study of Mao Zedong Thought not only to improve their political consciousness, but as guidebook in leadership. Thus, the workers became only the tool for transmitting the leadership of Mao Zedong Thought.

Death Sentence

After a short second heyday from December 1975 to October 1976, the quotation's death bell began to ring with a report by Ni Zhifu 倪志福, vice chairman of the Chinese Labour Union. On October 16, 1978 he gave it to the Ninth National Congress of the Chinese Labour Union 中国工会第九次全国代表大会 (11-21 October) titled “The new great historical task of the Chinese working class”. According to the propaganda of 1968 “The working class has to lead everything” had been the last “great historical task of the working class” defined by Mao Zedong. Now, after his death and the end of the Cultural Revolution, a new task had to be formulated which went back to the politics before the Cultural Revolution and blamed everything since on Lin Biao and the so called “Gang of Four”:

²¹⁷ For later examples cf.: RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民日报社 (26.09.1970) 新中国第一艘客轮在前进 [The first passenger ship in the new China progresses], 人民日报, 4; WU PEISHENG 吴培生 (28.09.1970) 学习唯物辩证法 [Study dialectical materialism], 人民日报, 1. The second of these articles was rather prominently printed on the whole of the issue's first page. Wu Peisheng was a worker and deputy director of the Revolutionary Committee of the cement factory in Jiangshan county, Zhejiang province. In 1973, he became secretary of the Communist Youth League of Zhejiang province. No trace of him can be found after the Cultural Revolution. I therefore conclude that he was one of the model workers promoted during this time, rising high in a short time and falling back into insignificance with Mao's death.

²¹⁸ During the Cultural Revolution, the phrase “The working class leads everything” had already been used in reference to the famous directive, but never as a direct quotation of Mao. Only after the Cultural Revolution it was labeled a “slogan 口号” and printed in quotation marks. Moreover, it later even substituted the Mao quotation „The working class has to lead everything“ in historical narratives and reminiscences, cf. ZHONGHUA RENMIN GONGHEGUO DADIAN BIANWEIHUI 中华人民共和国大典编委会 (1994) 中华人民共和国大典 北京; RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民日报社 (30.10.1984) 重新认识“工人阶级领导一切”, 人民日报, 5; and PI SHUYI 皮树义 (14.03.1989) 我们还是主人吗? [Are we still the masters?], 人民日报, 5.

In revolution and construction the working class has to fully develop its exemplary pioneering function. Chairman Mao pointed out: “The working class has the most foresight, is just and fair, and fullest with revolutionary thoroughness.” *The working class will develop the function of leading class and main force*, it has to have a strong sense of responsibility, when fighting class enemies, when fighting revisionism and opportunism, during the task of socialist construction, fully embody and develop the revolutionary spirit of the progressive class, always stand in the first front of the struggle, use one’s own exemplary behaviour to influence and lead the broad masses of the people. [...] Lin Biao, the “Gang of Four” raised the flag symbol of “The working class has to lead everything”, plotted largely to usurp the power of the Party, [but] suffered the firm boycott and struggle of the broad masses of workers. Those following Lin Biao, the “Gang of Four” were only a handful of scum in the workers’ rows like Weng Senhe, Chen Ada²¹⁹ etc. This handful of scum has greatly damaged the radiant image of the working class as leading class. [My emphasis]

工人阶级在革命和建设中要充分发挥模范带头作用。毛主席指出：“工人阶级最有远见，大公无私，最富于革命的彻底性。”工人阶级要发挥领导阶级和主力军的作用，必须有强烈的阶级责任感，在同阶级敌人的斗争中，在同修正主义、机会主义的斗争中，在社会主义建设事业中，充分体现和发扬先进阶级的革命精神，始终站在斗争的最前列，以自己的模范行动去影响和带动广大人民群众。[...]林彪、“四人帮”打着“工人阶级必须领导一切”的旗号，大搞篡党夺权的阴谋活动，遭到了广大工人群众的坚决抵制和斗争。跟着林彪、“四人帮”走的，只有翁森鹤、陈阿大等一小撮工人队伍中的败类。这一小撮败类丝毫无损于工人阶级作为领导阶级的光辉形象。(Ni Zhifu 倪志福 1978.10.16)

Two important steps were taken in this report: (1) The quotation “The working class has to lead everything” was discredited through different means. First, it was disconnected from Mao and linked to Lin Biao and the “Gang of Four” instead. Second, it was labelled a “flag symbol”, not “directive” or “call”. Third, its real message was revealed as a plot to usurp the power of the Party, and not a great call to the workers to take the lead. Fourth, the workers in general were rehabilitated by stating that they had never followed this “flag symbol”, but instead fought against it. And finally, as not to wholly remodel the past according to present needs, a handful of workers were defined as followers of this wrong line. (2) The second important step taken in the report, was to define a new task for the workers: “In revolution and construction the working class has to fully develop its exemplary pioneering function. 工人阶级在革命和建设要充分发挥模范带头作用。” This sentence strongly reminds one of a similar Mao quotation from the Cultural Revolution: “In the Cultural Revolution and in all work, the leadership function of the working class has to be fully developed 要充分发挥工人阶级在文化大革命中和一切工作中的领导作用。” The new “task” of the working class was narrowed down in two aspects: The working class’s function was no longer one of “leadership”, but one of “exemplary pioneering”. The area to develop this function was, of course, not the Cultural Revolution or “all work”, but only “revolution and construction”.

²¹⁹ Weng Senhe was a worker from Hangzhou, who during the Cultural Revolution rose to member of the Communist Party of Hangzhou, deputy director of the Zhejiang trade union’s federation, and member of the Revolutionary Committee of Zhejiang; Chen Ada had a likewise biography, rising to a member of the Revolutionary Committee of Shanghai and deputy director of Shanghai’s trade union’s federation. After the Cultural Revolution, both were demounted as followers of Wang Hongwen 王洪文 and the ‘Gang of Four’.

Ni Zhifu thus alludes to at least two Mao quotations coined during the Cultural Revolution, though altering their meaning and without explicating their originator to be Mao himself. Thereby, he implicitly questions the content of Mao's political directives during the Cultural Revolution. Explicitly, Ni still refers to an authorising Mao, as for example in the second sentence of the same paragraph: "Chairman Mao pointed out: 'The working class has the most foresight, is just and fair, and fullest with revolutionary thoroughness.'" Whereas the other two Mao quotations were coined during the Cultural Revolution in 1968, this last quotation is from the article "On the people's democratic dictatorship" written on June 30, 1949, and included in the fourth volume of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*. It was thus part of the guiding ideology of the CCP, revised by its central leadership, and not part of the Cultural Revolution's Mao Cult. The fact that this quotation had often been used during the Cultural Revolution in support of the slogan "The working class has to lead everything", did not immediately stigmatise its usage after this period. But Ni Zhifu was the last one to use the above cited words from "On the people's democratic dictatorship" in *People's Daily*. A new authority for quotation had not been established by October 1978, so we find the strange situation of simultaneously criticising Mao implicitly while explicitly quoting his authority.

Articles as this one by Ni Zhifu foreshadowed the official assessment of Mao Zedong's political life collectively revised by the Party for fifteen months and finally published at the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the Chinese Communist Party on June 27, 1981. In the "Resolution on certain questions in the history of our Party since the founding of the People's Republic of China", the early years of the revolution until the Anti-Rightist Campaign of 1957 were mainly affirmed; but Mao's later political legacy was seriously criticised, especially the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. Thereby, the young Mao, the revolutionary leader, was saved as authoritative symbol for later use; at the same time the over-exaggerated form of authority built up during the Personality Cult of the Cultural Revolution was demystified and diminished. The same happened to Mao's words, i.e. Mao Zedong Thought; it was stripped of the radical and utopian later parts, to serve "the eminently practical political purpose of providing China's new leaders with considerable flexibility in ideology and policy. The meaning of Mao Zedong Thought was no longer necessarily what Mao had meant but rather now was left to the interpretation of those in power" (Meisner 1996:137-161).

Two more articles were used to finally settle the fate of the Mao quotation in question here: "The working class has to lead everything". After defining a new task for the workers replacing their

overall leadership, the source text of the quotation, that is the *Red Flag* article of August 25, 1968, by Yao Wenyuan, was thoroughly criticised by Shen Taosheng 申涛声²²⁰ on January 15, 1979:

On August 26, 1968, Yao Wenyuan wrote the article <<The working class has to lead everything>>, this has been a critical step for Lin Biao, [and] the “Gang of Four” in usurping the power of the Party. During the proletarian revolutionary movement, the working class functioned as leading force, this was due to its historical role. To hold on to the leadership of the working class, is one of the basic principles of Marxism. But then, Lin Biao, [and] the “Gang of Four” took hold of this revolutionary slogan and wantonly distorted its meaning, they created chaos in the relation between Party and working class, they agitated and organised against the Party’s seizing national power, and at last tried to overthrow the leadership of the CCP to realise their criminal intrigue to replace the Party and install a fascist regime. This was also the reactionary objective of Yao Wenyuan in concocting this article.

一九六八年八月二十六日，姚文元写了《工人阶级必须领导一切》这篇文章，这是林彪、“四人帮”篡党夺权的一个严重步骤。在无产阶级革命运动中，工人阶级作为领导力量，是由它的历史地位所决定的。坚持工人阶级的领导，这是马克思主义的一个基本原则。然而，林彪、“四人帮”接过这个革命口号肆意进行歪曲，在党和工人阶级的关系上制造混乱，煽动和组织向党全面夺权，以图最终推翻中国共产党的领导，实现他们以帮代党、推行法西斯统治的罪恶阴谋。这也就是姚文元炮制这篇文章的反动宗旨。(Shen Taosheng 申涛声 1979.01.15)

Once again, the quotation “The working class has to lead everything” was connected to Yao Wenyuan, Lin Biao, and the “Gang of Four” instead of Mao. And again, a clear distinction was made between the original and correct principles of Marxism and later aberrations during the Cultural Revolution. The slogan itself was correct, but its meaning was “wantonly distorted”. The goal of this distortion by Lin Biao and the “Gang of Four” was, according to Shen, the replacement of the Party by a fascist regime. Moreover, the words “The working class has to lead everything” were only quoted as title of article, as can be deduced by its being marked by <<>> instead of “”. This style of quotation reduced the former slogan to a title, a title of an article by the wrong person representing the wrong line. And finally, a new negative label had earlier been found for such quotations and was repeated here: “flag symbol 旗号”.²²¹

The death blow came in February 1979 with the political strategy shifting its focus from the workers towards the intellectuals. In a report by the news agency Xinhua, the progress and result of a congress on higher education and research was summed up: After relating some details about the participants of the congress and its goals, a short history of higher education and research was given.

²²⁰ So far, I could not find any details on the biography of this author. Searches in biographical dictionaries, pseudonym lexica, or on the Internet remained futile. Shen has written altogether six articles in *People’s Daily* between August 15, 1977, and January 15, 1979 in which Shen denounced the ‘Gang of Four’.

²²¹ Beneath this article criticising Yao Wenyuan’s <<The working class has to lead everything>>, a “Comment on ideology 思想评论” by Zhang Cheng 张成, was printed, titled “What does the leadership of the Party mean? 何谓党的领导?”. Three important questions of the Party’s leadership were discussed: division of power between Party and state, supreme authority of the Party secretary, supervision of the Party by the people. These unsolved questions were in part made responsible for the Cultural Revolution. Both articles belong to a discussion inside the Party on how to cope with Mao Zedong, Mao Zedong Thought and the Mao Cult of the Cultural Revolution. The discussion was closed in the early 1980s so as not to undermine the legitimacy of the Communist Party’s rule of China.

The seventeen years between the founding of the Republic and the start of the Cultural Revolution were depicted as golden age of science. The number of graduates rose steadily as did their level of knowledge and education. But then, the Cultural Revolution set in:

The congress thinks that during the eleven years of the Great Cultural Revolution Lin Biao, the “Gang of Four” seriously devastated our country’s task of higher education. They destroyed the Party’s leadership of higher education, not only by fighting the leading cadres of central or local higher education departments and colleges and universities as so called traitors, spies, capitalist-roaders, creating batches of unjust, faked or false cases, causing not a few good comrades to die uncleared of a false case, furthermore [they] raised the flag symbol of “The working class has to lead everything”, loudly debated the theory that only class status is decisive, sowed discord between workers and intellectuals, created the confrontation between teacher and students, stirred up anarchism, were against the Party and mixed up the schools. [...]

会议认为，文化大革命的十一年，林彪、“四人帮”严重摧残了我国的高等教育事业。他们破坏党对高等学校的领导，不仅把中央和地方高等教育部门 and 高等学校的领导干部打成所谓叛徒、特务、走资派，制造大批冤案、假案和错案，使不少好同志含冤而死，而且打着“工人阶级必须领导一切”的旗号，大搞唯成分论，挑拨工人反对知识分子，制造师生对立，煽动无政府主义，反党乱校。[...] (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1979.02.08)

In this context, the quotation “The working class has to lead everything” together with the “discord between workers and peasants” symbolises the devaluation of higher education, the unjust treatment of teachers and intellectuals, and finally the chaos at the schools. This, obviously, had not been the original meaning of the quotation, nor did it fit to the historical circumstances. Most havoc in the schools’ life had been created by students themselves, called on by Mao in 1965. Only three years later came the call “The working class has to lead everything”, urging the workers to take control of the schools and stop the infighting in the Red Guards’ ranks. Why, then, was this quotation used in such a context? The content of the rest of the article has, therefore, to be taken into consideration. It goes on pointing out that now during the process of the “Four Modernisations 四个现代化” the development of higher education and research will be of utmost importance. Therefore, colleges and universities have to become centres of education and research, and not, one might add, places of class struggle and political training through workers. The workers, rather than the young intellectuals formerly called Red Guards, were implicitly blamed for creating chaos at schools, because the intellectuals, old and young, were needed by the Party to realise the “Four Modernisations”.

Finally, the article reconnected the politics of 1979 with the “golden age” preceding the Cultural Revolution; for this it made again use of a Mao quotation: “We will seriously carry out the policy of Let one hundred flowers blossom, let one hundred schools contend, and develop science and democracy. 要认真贯彻百花齐放、百家争鸣的方针，发扬学术民主。” Here, the policy of “Let one hundred flowers blossom” of 1956/57 is referred to, a policy of open debate and criticism in

science and society initiated by Mao that was, by his very own will, turned into a which hunt when critique went out of control, even questioning the single rule of the Party.

Though his quotation had died, Mao's authority did not die with it. The propaganda machine used the means of connecting the words with the main targets of the time, i.e. Lin Biao and the 'Gang of Four'. In the case of "The working class has to lead everything" this was especially easy, as it had been the title of an article signed with Yao Wenyuan's name, who was a member of the 'Gang of Four'. And, as happened to the 'Gang of Four', the quotation was 'made responsible' for others' deeds. Thus, the political career of "The working class has to lead everything" ended.

Ghosts from the Past

On April 2, 1989, the short story "Sofa" by Gao Hongbo 高洪波²²² appeared in the section "Works of literature 文学作品" of *People's Daily*. In this two page long narrative, Gao philosophises about the value and function of sofas in general and, among other things, Gao remembers that during the Cultural Revolution one of his friends had an old sofa²²³ at home, where they used to hang out and play poker. One day, the friend's mother sold the furniture for five Yuan. And he reflects amused on the loss of money's value since then. Next, he retells a Cultural Revolution story, he only knows from hearsay:

A poor carpenter, a bachelor, out of a sudden [started] to go very often in and out of the old furniture shop, that specialised in the purchase of old sofas. One by one he bought them at [people's] homes, and one by one he sold them [again]. The carpenter's behaviour raised the suspicion of the revolutionary masses, so they seized him and dragged him to the police substation, [and] under the power of the proletarian dictatorship, he admitted that he had often found savings and golden or silver jewellery in the old sofas.

Maybe, the carpenter's story proceeded from mocking at "The working class has to lead everything". Anyway, since then, I often imagine a scene: deep in the night, under a dark light, a greedy person tears open an old sofa, hoping to find in the cushions and springs a role of bank notes, some golden rings...

紧接着我又听到一个沙发的故事：一个穷木匠，单身汉，突然十分频繁地在旧家具店里出入，专门购买旧沙发。他一套又一套地买到家，又一套接一套地卖掉。木匠的行为引起了革命群众的怀疑，于是将他扭送到派出所，在无产阶级专政的威力下，他承认旧沙发里时常发现存款和金银首饰。木匠的故事也许出于对“工人阶级必须领导一切”的嘲讽。不过，我自此之后常常想到一个情景：深夜里，幽暗的灯光下，一个贪婪的人拆弄着一只只旧沙发，希图从座垫下，弹簧中找出一卷钞票，几枚金戒指…… (Gao Hongbo 高洪波 1989.04.02)

²²² Gao Hongbo 高洪波 (1966-) is a prose and poem writer from Inner Mongolia. He has been publishing stories since 1971, graduating from Beijing University in 1988. He worked as reporter and editor for different literary journals, and was secretary of the Chinese Writers Association 中国作家协会. Most famous are his children stories, for which he twice won a national price.

²²³ During the Cultural Revolution, sofas exemplified a bourgeois living style. During the campaign against the "Four olds", i.e. old ideology, old culture, old customs, and old habits, some middle school Red Guards demanded, that "sofas, couches, etc., may not be produced in great quantities." SCHOENHALS (Ed.) (1996) *China's Cultural Revolution, 1966-1969. Not a Dinner Party*, Armonk, NY.

The slogan “The working class has to lead everything” had by 1989 lost all its former glory and power. During the Cultural Revolution, it had been used to justify all sorts of actions that before and after this period would have counted as crimes. Since then, people had diminished its power and the horror of its time by telling fun stories and jokes on the phrase, or so the author hints.²²⁴ The carpenter’s story told above might just be one of these mocking stories, Gao argues, thus questioning the truth of it. But instead of underlining the value of joke stories to digest unpleasant memories, for Gao these tales only give rise to unpleasant imaginations. “When it comes to sofas, people naturally feel sort of content and comfortable 一谈起沙发，人们自然而然会感到某种惬意和舒适”，Gao argues in the first sentence of the story. But since hearing the mockery story of a sofa allegedly from the Cultural Revolution, when seeing a sofa Gao cannot but imagine a greedy person tearing it open in search of valuables. Hence, his positive attitude towards sofas is overshadowed not by memories of the Cultural Revolution itself – they were rather positive: playing poker with friends on a sofa – but by later mockery of the Cultural Revolution. Though fun stories, one might argue, could help to overcome bad memories of a bad time, they might also link these memories to current goods, thus evoking the ghosts of the past. Back in 1989, the ghosts still hunt people’s imaginations, though in different shapes. It is not the image of the working class, “the power of the proletarian dictatorship”, extracting false confessions from wretches, but the image of the greedy person in search of valuables tearing open an old sofa. This part, again is interesting. Why should Gao, at least in his story, have such an unpleasant, even absurd association? Could this be an indirect critique of current politics, that proclaim “to get rich is glorious” without questioning the methods? A critique of his contemporaries, who value nothing but money?

Epilogue: Superscribing Formulations

The life of “The working class has to lead everything” in *People’s Daily* seems to be over. Mere ghost-like memories are left to the contemporaries of the quotation. Later borns might only shrug their shoulders in ignorance about stories as Gao Hongbo’s “Sofa”. Popularity lies elsewhere. Still, the slogan “The working class has to lead everything” is not unknown today. A Chinese friend of mine, reading this chapter, was more than doubtful about my analysis. First of all, she could not believe that “The working class has to lead everything” was not used anymore in *People’s Daily*. Secondly, she denied the importance of this fact arguing that the slogan still appeared in other media.

²²⁴ See, for example, the following collection of jokes about the Cultural Revolution: CHENG SHI 橙实 & SHAN CHUAN 山川 (Eds.) (1988) 文革笑料集 [Collection of Cultural Revolution jokes], 成都.

Was the slogan not dead, but only exiled elsewhere, I wondered? Was my analysis devalued by the fact that the control of the press by the Propaganda Department, best reflected in *People's Daily*, had been loosened over the last ten or twenty years? Was mine a mere historical interest without current implications? Checking the truth of my friends' assertions, I found the following 'shadow' of the former powerful slogan: "The working class leads everything 工人阶级领导一切". The difference between original and shadow is slight, but useful. The 'shadow slogan' was shortened by two words: "has to 必须". Its character is descriptive, rather than demanding. The agent of the former slogan, calling on the workers to take the lead, is erased in the later version. As "The working class leads everything" is used in *People's Daily* in negative reminiscences of the Cultural Revolution, both characteristics had their effect: In narratives the descriptive slogan exemplified the wrong line taken during the Cultural Revolution. The agent of the original slogan, Mao and the Party in general, retreated from the scene. But even this shadow of the former slogan appeared only six times in *People's Daily* since the Cultural Revolution.²²⁵

Looking for more 'popular' media, the Internet served as basis for statistical data. It confirmed my assumption, that the propaganda apparatus had successfully exchanged the slogan by its diminished shadow. Though one still gets 301 hits searching the Internet with Google for "The working class has to lead everything", its shadowy form "The working class leads everything" returns more than twice as many hits, i.e. 636 results.²²⁶ Though Chinese interview partners hardly seem to notice the difference between slogan and shadow, the Google results show that the subconsciously used form is the shadowy officially approved way of relating to this historic political strategy. To pay attention to exact formulations is still important for the Party and its propaganda apparatus, thus influencing the self-expression of the Chinese people, and therefore, it is also important for research on China.

What else can be learned by following the lifecycle of "The working class has to lead everything"? As outlined in the introduction to this chapter, "The working class has to lead everything" is, at least from a statistical perspective, prototypical for many quotations or slogans of the Cultural Revolution. It even correlates with the Mao quotation cult as a whole. More detailed

²²⁵ Its first use replacing the former slogan was in 1979, namely in the above analysed article criticising in detail Yao Wen Yuan's article from 1968 "The working class has to lead everything", see the last paragraph of YAO WENYUAN 姚文元 工人阶级必须领导一切 [The working class has to lead everything], 红旗, 1. For later uses see also footnote 218.

²²⁶ The search was conducted on December 8, 2008. The precise search terms were: "工人阶级必须领导一切"-"工人阶级领导一切" and "工人阶级领导一切"-"工人阶级必须领导一切". The ratio returned by the Chinese search engine www.baidu.com is roughly the same: 3,240 to 5,810.

analysis will be necessary to show to what extent it might also be a qualitative prototype. Compared to secondary literature on the Cultural Revolution and its post-assessment as referred to above, the following points are worthy of further study: Directives by Chairman Mao played a major role in directing the Cultural Revolution. “The working class has to lead everything” is an example of how such a new directive was established. It was not, as one might expect, directly and emphatically propagandised with its first publication. Meaning proceeded the slogan. For two weeks the later famous Mao slogan lingered between the lines, as *People’s Daily* concentrated on defining the meaning of the new strategy and waited for the masses to pick it up. Not before the slogan had been affirmed by mass usage or rather not before enough press articles reported this, did *People’s Daily* officially connect it with Mao by way of a report by Zhou Enlai, thus empowering it immensely. Like advertisement, effective propaganda is never a purely top-down process, but waits for feedback from its targets before developing any strategy further. This holds even true for the Cultural Revolution, at least on the surface.

After the slogan had been firmly established, its function became that of a short cut. Competing with three other Mao quotations originating with the same article, in the race to become “Chairman Mao’s newest directive” the above slogan carried the day. It was the shortest one, and thus the easiest to remember and the quickest to shout; yet, it was the least meaningful quotation. It became the short cut, the label for the new strategy, used to show either allegiance to Mao, or authorise one’s own behaviour with Mao’s words, thus supporting the personality cult. During the Cultural Revolution the authorship of a quotation overshadowed its source.

Although being a brainchild of both Mao and Yao Wenyan, after 1976 Mao’s involvement in creating the quotation was ignored, Yao’s instead overemphasised. Thus, the demolition of the quotation after the Cultural Revolution resembles the critique of the “Gang of Four”. Though the political strategy signalled by the slogan had originated with both, only one was made responsible for it. The slogan died, found guilty by its association with Yao, or so I argued above. Of course, one might view this process from the opposite angle and argue that the strategy and slogan “The working class has to lead everything” was just one more accusation levelled against Yao.

Looking back on the lifecycle of “The working class has to lead everything”, I want to draw the reader’s attention to a last point: Interpreting a quotation or slogan, four characteristics are of general significance: the formulation, the author, the source, and the context. The above analysis has shown that during and after the Cultural Revolution, it was important to choose the precise formulation. Similarly, in both periods the author of a quotation was consciously used to heighten or lessen the

power of a formulation. The source was a more dubious factor: At least this analysis suggests that during the Cultural Revolution the source of a quotation had to be/was personal if it was to give added weight to a slogan. An impersonal, i.e. canonical, organisational, or institutional authority would not suffice. Note again that it was not *People's Daily*, i.e. an institutional authority, that confirmed the origin of the slogan, but the individual Zhou Enlai. After the Cultural Revolution the value attributed to author and source (was) changed: While Mao quotations from the Cultural Revolution period were severely criticised, though without mentioning Mao, his canonically sanctioned *Selected Works* were simultaneously used to give authority. The source of a quotation or slogan now decided on its value, not only its author.

3. A Source of Authority

Ein allgemeines Gesetz der Überlieferung lautet: Je fester der Buchstabe, desto gefährdeter der Geist.

Denn wo Texte durch Fixierung der Ausdrucksseite erhärtet und also aus der ständigen Akkomodation an die Lebenswelt herausgenommen sind, rücken sie notwendigerweise in wachsende Distanz zur Wirklichkeit.
(Assmann et al. 1987:13)

In the motto above, Aleida and Jan Assmann point out the main problem of canonisation: it may be possible to fix a canon's formulation almost for eternity, but the meaning attributed to the formulation will have to change constantly.²²⁷ Otherwise the canon will one day become obsolete. Compensating for what I will call the "semantic gap" between a static text and the changing world is, in their interpretation, the task of "Sinnpflege" (maintenance of meaning)²²⁸. I suggest that one of the methods of Sinnpflege was and is quotation. By way of introducing selected quotations from the canon in texts of later periods, statements not only gain authority but more importantly the usefulness of the canon in solving new problems can be proven; only thus will the canon be kept alive and authoritative. The canon lends its authority to its quotations, and even more important constant quoting authorises the canon.

In this chapter, I will analyse the use of a single source text from Mao Zedong Thought in *People's Daily*. How was this text accommodated in a changing world via quotation? What meaning was given to the text by quoting its parts? How far do these interpretations taken from different periods diverge from each other? How did Assmanns' "guardians of the canon" – censorship, text maintenance, and maintenance of meaning – influence this process? How 'creative' can this process be? How did the centre itself adapt the canon to change and by thus its own legitimisation? Does the

²²⁷ I here refer to the introduction of *Kanon und Zensur* by Aleida and Jan Assmann. It has to be pointed out that their main concern and interest is in long-lasting canonical traditions such as Confucianism, Hinduism, or Buddhism. However, the introduction ends with a short discussion of the future role of canonisation, contesting the notion that we have outlived the canonical period. Accordingly, some articles of the edited volume discuss more recent and short lived canons, for example French enlightenment literature, 18th century Händel reception, or socialist realism. See: ASSMANN & ASSMANN (Eds.) (1987) *Kanon und Zensur*, München: 23-5, 138-48, 212-26, 271-83. I thus hope to be justified in describing some of the problems of canonising Mao's writings in the terminology developed by Aleida and Jan Assmann.

²²⁸ Sinnpflege (meaning maintenance) is one of Assmann's three guardians of the tradition, the other being censorship and Textpflege (text maintenance), see ASSMANN & ASSMANN (Eds.) (1987) *Kanon und Zensur*, München. A similar idea is termed by Berger and Luckmann "universe-maintenance" and practiced when the survival of a society's symbolic universe is threatened by problems of transmission from one generation to the next, by heresy or through alternative symbolic universes of other societies. BERGER & LUCKMANN (1966) *The Social Construction of Reality. A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* New York: 104-116.

canon justify these changes? What does this tell us about the function of the canon in modern China and in general? I will argue that the meaning of a canonised source text is not stable, but open to constant discussion and redefinition. In China, this discussion is carried out in *People's Daily* among other media. Although *People's Daily* is the mouthpiece of the Communist Party of China (hereafter CCP), it does not always talk with one mouth at the same time, but sometimes becomes a battleground of conflicting meanings. Moreover, in different periods of time not only are differing meanings of the same source text highlighted by quoting corresponding parts; even interpretations contradicting each other may yet be authorised by this same text. To bridge the semantic gap between canon and world, between theory and reality, rivalling groups employ differing and sometimes contradicting strategies. Adapting canonised quotations to new contexts was and still is one way of redefining a source text. This process of constant redefinition of single texts via quotation influences Mao Zedong Thought as a whole. I hope to show that changes in quotation and interpretation of source texts often reflect power struggles in the Party. The CCP and its canon are mutually bound to each other: the canon gives legitimacy to the Party, and the Party invests in the legitimacy of the canon. Therefore, those who control the interpretation or revision of the canon dominate the Party.²²⁹ After showing the flexibility of the canon, the creativity of its guardians and the fight for control over its interpretation, I will finally turn to the question why canonisation is employed at all if it only freezes the form, leaving the meaning of a canon (relatively) free for constant redefinition.

My analysis focuses on Mao Zedong's speech "Reform Our Study" from 1941. I have selected this source for two main reasons: First, "Reform Our Study" is a canonised part of Mao Zedong Thought. Since its writing, it has been included in different authoritative text selections, and finally, in 1953, published in the official *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* which form the nucleus of authoritative texts in China up to the present day. Second, the text of "Reform Our Study" is concerned with learning and using the Marxist-Leninist canon. Thus, I am not only able to analyse how this source text has been used in later contexts, but also how the issue of using the canon was discussed through time.

The chapter is divided into ten parts: After a short discussion of the advantages and shortcomings of my methodology, I start out with a statistical assessment of quoting "Reform Our Study" followed by a discussion of its content, historical context and contemporary significance.

²²⁹ Here, I follow an argument made earlier in MARTIN (Ed.) (1979) *Mao Zedong Texte. Schriften, Dokumente, Reden und Gespräche*, München.

Based on the results of my statistical analysis, I single out six high times of quoting “Reform Our Study” in *People’s Daily*²³⁰: (1) a campaign for social investigation at the end of the Great Leap Forward in 1961; (2) Lin Biao’s problem-oriented learning strategy in 1964; (3) the Party’s rectification in 1971 during the Cultural Revolution; (4) fighting to control the use and interpretation of Mao’s legacy in 1977-78; (5) in search of society’s roots in 1989-90 after the Tian’anmen movement; and (6) finally, ‘going classic’ in 2001 or existing as reference material to a new ideological creation. I hope to illuminate how in these years new interpretations of “Reform Our Study” are created through quotation. The chapter ends with a discussion of the contemporary value of a canon.

Excursus: The Generation of Statistics

Before proceeding to the actual analysis, I will first introduce my methodology and discuss its merits and shortcomings. How was Mao’s text “Reform Our Study” quoted in 60 years of *People’s Daily*? To answer this question, first of all the instances of quotation have to be found. Thanks to modern search technology and a full-text digitised version of *People’s Daily*²³¹, this is not too difficult. However, a question arises as to what constitutes a quotation of a particular source text (see also discussion in Chapter 1). How many characters in a line have to be the same in two articles, so that we can call them a quotation? In this case it is not only a question of definition, but rather of feasibility and signification. Three options might be called expedient:

Opt. 1) three to five characters constitute one quotation, for example “seeking truth from facts 实事求是” as occurs in the sentence “Such an attitude is one of seeking truth from facts. 这种态度，就是实事求是的态度。”²³²

²³⁰ 1964 and 1977/78 are in fact not only high times of quoting “Reform Our Study” but quoting the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*. In both times the use of the canon was discussed and subsequently redefined. “Reform Our Study” became by its very topic a mine of authoritative quotations.

²³¹ For many purposes I needed to use a digitised version of the article “Reform Our Study”. This was taken from MAO ZEDONG STUDY SOCIETY 毛泽东学会 (2000) 毛泽东天地 [The World of Mao Zedong]. accessed: 06.09.2007, downloaded: 06.09.2007 and was compared with the printed edition in MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1941.05.19) 改造我们的学习 [Reform Our Study]. In: 毛泽东选集 [Selected Works of Mao Zedong], vol. 3, 4th ed., 北京. No alterations or errors were found.

²³² This and all following quotations in this part are taken from MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1941.05.19) 改造我们的学习 [Reform Our Study]. In: 毛泽东选集 [Selected Works of Mao Zedong], vol. 3, 4th ed., 北京. The English translation is taken from MAO ZEDONG (1965a) *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* vol. 3, Beijing: 17-26. Throughout the whole article, Mao distinguishes between two forms of study: 学习 *xuexi* learn/study (as in “learn/study the Marxist classics”) and 研究 *yanjiu* study/research (as in “study/do research on present conditions”). This distinction divides the general notion of study into a theoretical and a practical forms. As this distinction is important to my interpretation of the article, but not

Opt. 2) part of a sentence (as divided by one of the seven symbols: . ! ? : ; , -) constitutes one quotation, for example “without investigation one has no right to speak 没有调查就没有发言权”.

Opt. 3) a sentence (as divided by one of the five symbols: . ! ? : ;) constitutes one quotation (later called “full quotation”), for example “[We] should get our comrades to understand that without investigation one has no right to speak, and that bombastic twaddle and a mere list of phenomena in 1, 2, 3, 4 order are of no use. 就要使同志们懂得，没有调查就没有发言权，夸夸其谈地乱说一顿和一二三四的现象罗列，都是无用的。”

Each of these options has its merits and its shortcomings. If we would choose option one, the set of, for example, four character long quotations (also called 4-grams) would amount to roughly 4,500 (as the article “Reform Our Study” consists of 4,506 characters). These would then have to be searched in the full-text database. Yet most of these 4,500 combinations are meaningless. Consider the sentence given in Opt. 1: 这种态度，就是实事求是的态度。Divided into four characters, we would get seven 4-grams: (1) 这种态度; (2) 就是实事; (3) 是实事求; (4) 实事求是; (5) 事求是的; (6) 求是的态; (7) 是的态度。Of these seven 4-grams only two make sense: 这种态度; 实事求是; and only one of these can be meaningfully related to “Reform Our Study”: 实事求是。Using option number one, at least 77% of the resulting ‘quotations’ would have to be rejected as nonsensical. However, the famous and much quoted phrase “seeking truth from facts 实事求是” would rightly be included in the analysis.

Following option two and taking part of a sentence as quotations, the set is reduced in number but not in meaningless quotations. From the sentence 就要使同志们懂得，没有调查就没有发言权，夸夸其谈地乱说一顿和一二三四的现象罗列，都是无用的 four ‘quotations’ would be generated: (1) 就要使同志们懂得; (2) 没有调查就没有发言权; (3) 夸夸其谈地乱说一顿和一二三四的现象罗列; (4) 都是无用的。In this case, all four ‘quotations’ make sense, but only two can be meaningfully related to “Reform Our Study”: (2) without investigation one has no right to speak 没有调查就没有发言权; (3) bombastic twaddle and a mere list of phenomena in 1, 2, 3, 4 order 夸夸其谈地乱说一顿和一二三四的现象罗列。” As for the other two quotations (1) and (4), they could appear in any text from any time. Neither formulation nor content does give them any distinction. Moreover, they are subclauses in the sense that their main referent is part of another subclause: “[We]

made in the official English translation, I added [xuexi] or [yanjiu] to the translation. Other minor alterations are marked by brackets [].

should get our comrades to understand [what?].” *What* should be understood, is missing; it could refer to anything. Similarly, the part sentence “both are of no use” lacks the referent of “both”, and is therefore ‘meaningless’. By choosing option 2, 50% of the set would have to be rejected. However, the often quoted phrase “without investigation one has no right to speak 没有调查就没有发言权” would correctly be included in the analysis.

The last option is the most restricted one: It produces oversized quotations as: “In the education at schools and in the education of cadres at work, those who teach philosophy do not guide students to do research on the logic of the Chinese revolution; those who teach economics do not guide them to do research on the characteristics of the Chinese economy; those who teach political science do not guide them to do research on the tactics of the Chinese revolution; those who teach military science do not guide them to do research on the strategy and tactics adapted to China's characteristics; and so on and so forth. 在学校的教育中，在在职干部的教育中，教哲学的不引导学生研究中国革命的逻辑，教经济学的不引导学生研究中国经济的特点，教政治学的不引导学生研究中国革命的策略，教军事学的不引导学生研究适合中国特点的战略和战术，诸如此类” And even by this option, some rather meaningless quotations would appear like “The reasons are as follows 其理由如次”. Furthermore, we would miss some famous quotations. “Seeking truth from facts 实事求是” alone is used 19,076 times in *People's Daily* articles between 1946 and 2005. However, of the resulting full quotations roughly 90% (116 out of 131) make sense *and* are significant.

In consideration of the merits and shortcomings of each option, I chose to use each of them at different stages of my analysis: I started off by gathering statistical data on the occurrence of the following search terms found in *People's Daily* from 1949 to 2005:

- 1) the title of the text in question, that is “Reform Our Study 改造我们的学习”, and
- 2) “full quotations” as defined by opt. 3

I refined the statistical data gathered under 2 by adding meaningful part sentences (acc. to opt. 2). I did not add famous quotations (acc. to opt. 1) because they tend to lead a life of their own, as the previous analysis of “Seeking truth from facts 实事求是” shows (Chapter 2.1). By continuous use, these quotations are dissociated from their source. Hence, instances of their quotational use add little to the redefinition of a canonised source text, although I suggest that they add to the canon's potency. Statistical data underline this argument: A search for “Seeking truth from facts 实事求是” returns 19,076 hits. The diachronic line chart for these hits for the most part does not correlate with the graph for “Reform Our Study” (comp. Figure 12 with Figure 4 in Chapter 2.1). I believe the reason

for this differing development in quoting the source text vs. one specific quotation is that “Seek truth from facts” does not function as a *pars pro toto* for its prototext, but is a carrier of only one aspect of “Reform Our Study”: (only) facts prove or refute theory. Thus, the heydays of “Seek truth from facts” are times that promote free thought and critique of dogmatism like the Hundred Flowers of 1957 and especially the opposition to Hua Guofeng’s ‘two whatevers’ in 1978; “Reform Our Study”, on the other hand, was also drawn on in periods that promoted changes to learning styles, i.e. rectification, as 1964 or 1971.

The diagrams and graphs resulting from my data will be further analysed in the next part of this chapter. My interest here is of a more general nature: How much of a canonised text is quoted at all? Which parts are (not) quoted? How does quoting of the text vary over time? Is it possible to distinguish peaks or high times of use? What is the relation between references to the text and references to its title? I then proceed to a qualitative analysis focusing on the high times of quoting “Reform Our Study” made visible by the statistical analysis: 1961, 1964, 1971, 1978, 1990, 2001. For these periods, I closely read all articles referring to full quotations (cf. opt. 3) and part quotations (cf. opt. 2) from “Reform Our Study” excluding only the part sentence “without investigation one has no right to speak 没有调查就没有发言权” which occurs 282 times alone in *People’s Daily* and would merit an entire study of its own. In my qualitative analysis, I did include instances of quoting those very famous phrases only in cases where the same article referred to other quotations of “Reform Our Study” as well. The overall aim of the qualitative analysis is to distinguish uses made of the source text via quoting its parts that are specific to either a certain context or a certain period.²³³ For the qualitative analysis of each time period, I rely on secondary literature on each political and historical context.

Facts and Figures

Before focusing on the semantic analysis, I will investigate the facts and figures related to the source text. The text, as published in the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, is nine pages or 4506 characters long, divided into four parts, 32 paragraphs or 133 sentences. Further down in an excursus “On the process of canonisation of ‘Reform Our Study’” different versions of this text are discussed in detail.

²³³ A similar qualitative study has been done on the source text “The foolish old man who removed the mountains 愚公移山” from Mao Zedong Thought by MITTLER (2009) *A Continuous Revolution: Making Sense of Cultural Revolution Culture*, Heidelberg: unpubl. manuscript: Chapter 4. Mittler shows that during the Cultural Revolution the words of Mao like those of Confucius in earlier times were used in different media and genres as authoritative symbols. In how far this authority was seen and felt as such by the audience, however, remains doubtful, argues Mittler.

In this section, I am using the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* edition of the text a) because during almost the whole period covered by my study, this text was seen as authoritative, and b) because the differences in content between the earlier and later editions are minor. As shown in Figure 11, 35% or 46 of the 133 sentences are never quoted in *People's Daily*. Another 40% or 53 sentences are quoted not more than five times in the 1.4 Million articles published in 60 years of *People's Daily*. Hence, only 25% or one fourth of the text gained wider currency in *People's Daily*.

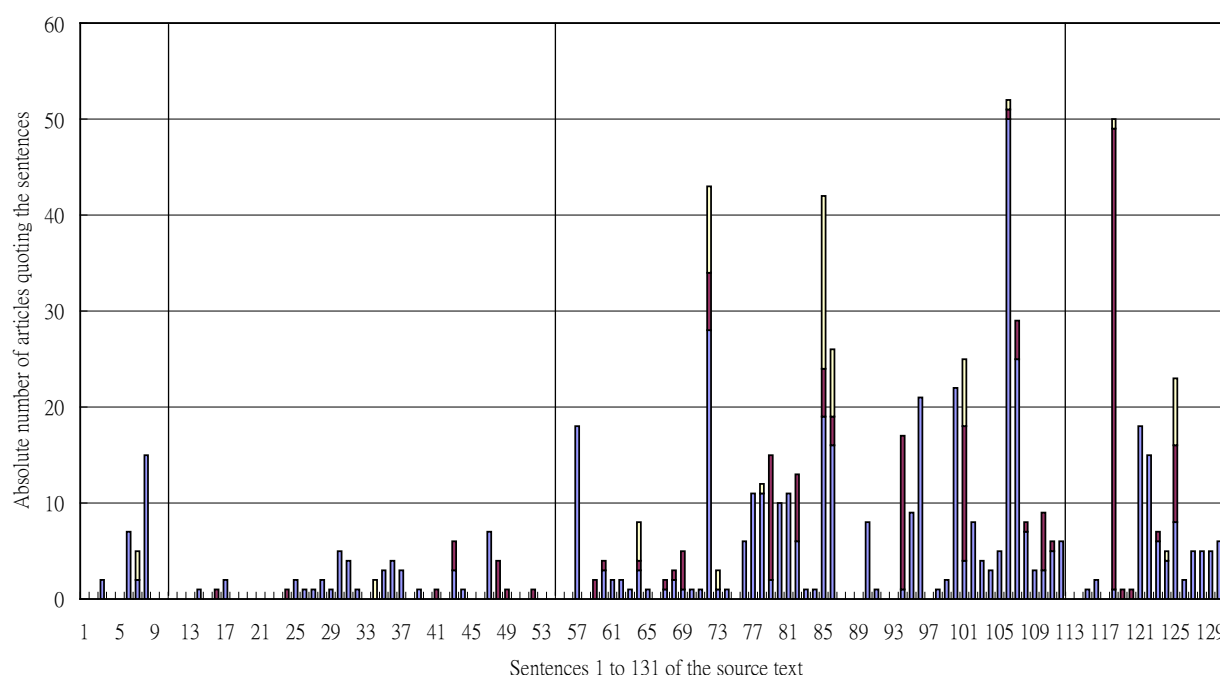


Figure 11: People's Daily quoting sentences and part sentences of Mao's "Reform Our Study"; blue – full quotations; red and yellow – quotations of sub-clauses. For a list of the sentences confer to Appendix 2. (Source: Renmin ribao she xinwen xinxi zhongxin 人民日报社新闻信息中心 2007).

What kind of sentences are not quoted? Is it possible to explain why they are not quoted? If so, what does this tell us about quotation practices and linguistic habits in China? The unquoted sentences fall into at least four categories: a) introductions and connectors, b) unspecific evaluations, c) historical passages, d) criticism.

Category a) – introductions and connectors – comprises sentences such as:

- 3) I propose that we should reform the method and the system of study throughout the Party. 我主张将我们全党的学习方法和学习制度改造一下。

- 4) First, take the study of current conditions. 首先来说研究现状。
- 5) In accordance with the above views, I would like to make the following proposals: 依据上述意见, 我有下列提议。
- 6) These are all very good signs. 所有这些, 都是很好的现象。

The examples are presented here in descending order of their specificity. Whereas the first sentence might still be identified as belonging to “Reform Our Study” (I will call such quotations prototext-specific), the second is less specific, and the third and fourth could be used in nearly any text of any contents without being recognised as quotation or as quoting the prototext “Reform Our Study”.

Considering the claim of high resemblance between formulations in the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* and other published texts – dubbed MaoSpeak – I would have expected the results of my statistics to be contrary: many hits for unspecific introductory phrases which would have to be excluded from the analysis as they are not quotations but simply MaoSpeak; and fewer hits for meaningful sentences which might count as purposeful quotations. However, the opposite is true for “Reform Our Study” at least. This calls into question the meaning of ‘MaoSpeak’.

Category b) – unspecific evaluations – comprises sentences such as:

- 7) But many of our comrades act in direct violation of this truth. 我们的许多同志却直接违反这一真理。
- 8) Of course, what I have just said refers to the worst type in our Party, and I am not saying that it is the general case. 当然, 上面我说的是我们党里的极坏的典型, 不是说普遍如此。
- 9) Such is the style of work of some [certain] comrades in our ranks. 这就是我们队伍中若干同志的作风。
- 10) Many of our people do not act in this way but do the opposite. 我们的许多人却是相反, 不去这样做。

First, all of these sentences refer to previous sentences by formulations as “this truth”, “this way”, “such”, “all I have just said”. This makes them unfit to be quoted out of their context. But neither are they quoted within a larger context. This can be partly explained by the fact that the surrounding sentences are not quoted either. A second noteworthy point is that the first three examples criticise the behaviour of some unspecified Party members. As we will see further down, critical comments are seldom quoted, too.

Category c) – historical passages – comprises sentences as:

- 11) The twenty years of the Communist Party of China have been twenty years in which the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism has become more and more integrated with the concrete practice of the Chinese revolution. 中国共产党的二十年，就是马克思列宁主义的普遍真理和中国革命的具体实践日益结合的二十年。
- 12) If we recall how superficial our understanding of Marxism-Leninism and of the Chinese revolution was during our Party's infancy, we can see how much deeper and richer it is now. 如果我们回想一下，我党在幼年时期，我们对于马克思列宁主义的认识和对于中国革命的认识是何等肤浅，何等贫乏，则现在我们对于这些的认识是深刻得多，丰富得多了。
- 13) Since the outbreak of the War of Resistance Against Japan, our Party, basing itself on the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism, has taken a further step in its study of the concrete practice of this war [orig. the War of Resistance Against Japan] and in its study of China and the world today, and has also made a beginning in the study of Chinese history. 抗日战争以来，我党根据马克思列宁主义的普遍真理研究抗日战争的具体实践，研究今天的中国和世界，是进一步了，研究中国历史也有某些开始。
- 14) Generally speaking, in the last twenty years we have not done systematic and thorough work in collecting and studying material on these aspects, and we are lacking in a [dense] climate of investigation and study of objective reality. 二十年来，一般地说，我们并没有对于上述各方面作过系统的周密的收集材料加以研究的工作，缺乏调查研究客观实际状况的浓厚空气。
- 15) There are indeed many comrades in our ranks who have been led astray by this style of work. 确实的，现在我们队伍中确有许多同志被这种作风带坏了。

All five passages evaluate the historical development of the Party. Again, such passages cannot be quoted out of context. But even when eliminating the historical reference such as “in the last twenty years 二十年来” the search result does not change. I therefore suggest that the reason for not quoting these passages was an oversized semantic gap. The world had changed, and thus Mao’s evaluation of the Party did not fit present circumstances any more. This evaluation would fit the Marxist point of view: ideology is a guide to action. Analysis of the present conditions and present problems, however, has to be exercised by each generation anew. One cannot just take a ready-made phrase of the canon and declare it to be the result of current research.

Category d) – criticism – comprises sentences as:

- 16) Many Party members are still in a fog about Chinese history, whether of the last hundred years or of ancient times. 不论是近百年的和古代的中国史，在许多党员的心目中还是漆黑一团。
- 17) There are many Marxist-Leninist scholars who cannot open their mouths without citing ancient Greece; but as for their own ancestors--sorry, they have been forgotten. 许多马克思列宁主义的学者也是言必称希腊--对于自己的祖宗，则对不住，忘记了。
- 18) There is no climate of serious study either of current conditions or of past history. 认真地研究现状的空气是不浓厚的，认真地研究历史的空气也是不浓厚的。
- 19) Unwilling to carry on systematic and thorough investigation and study of the specific conditions inside and outside the country, the province, county or district, they issue orders on no other basis than their scanty knowledge and “It must be so because it seems so to me”. Does not this subjectivist style [of work] still exist among a great many comrades? 对于国内外、省内外、县内外、区内外的具体情况，不愿作系统的周密的调查和研究，仅仅根据一知半解，根据“想当然”，就在那里发号施令，这种主观主义的作风，不是还在许多同志中间存在着吗？
- 20) Coming home from Europe, America or Japan, they can only parrot things foreign. 他们从欧美日本回来，只知生吞活剥地谈外国。
- 21) A person does not know how to apply in Fuhsien [Fuxian] what he has learned in Yen-an [Yan'an]. 在延安学了，到富县就不能应用。

All these six examples criticise the behaviour of people. The criticism is aimed at different groups: Party members, scholars, and students. However, in no case the criticism is based on reasoning. That is, we are left in the dark why the behaviour is criticised, what negative results may spring from it. What is wrong with parroting things foreign, forgetting about history, or citing ancient Greece? Thus, these examples differ from other often quoted critical sentences like “We must assert that the absence of a scientific attitude, that is, the absence of the Marxist-Leninist attitude of uniting theory and practice, means that Party spirit is either absent or deficient. 我们应当说，没有科学的态度，即没有马克思列宁主义的理论和实践统一的态度，就叫做没有党性，或叫做党性不完全。”

Some further facts and figures on the quotational use made of “Reform Our Study” are: Of the four parts of Mao’s talk (indicated in the Figure 11 by vertical black lines), part three and four are quoted heavily; the first two parts only rarely. Only five sentences are quoted without either the preceding or following sentence. This indicates that often more than one sentence in a line is quoted.

Not even half (more precisely 26 out of 87) of the quoted sentences are also cited as part sentences. And only 9 of the 87 quoted sentences are solely cited as part sentence. These results support my earlier decision to focus primarily on full quotations (opt. 3), and only secondarily on part sentences (opt. 2).

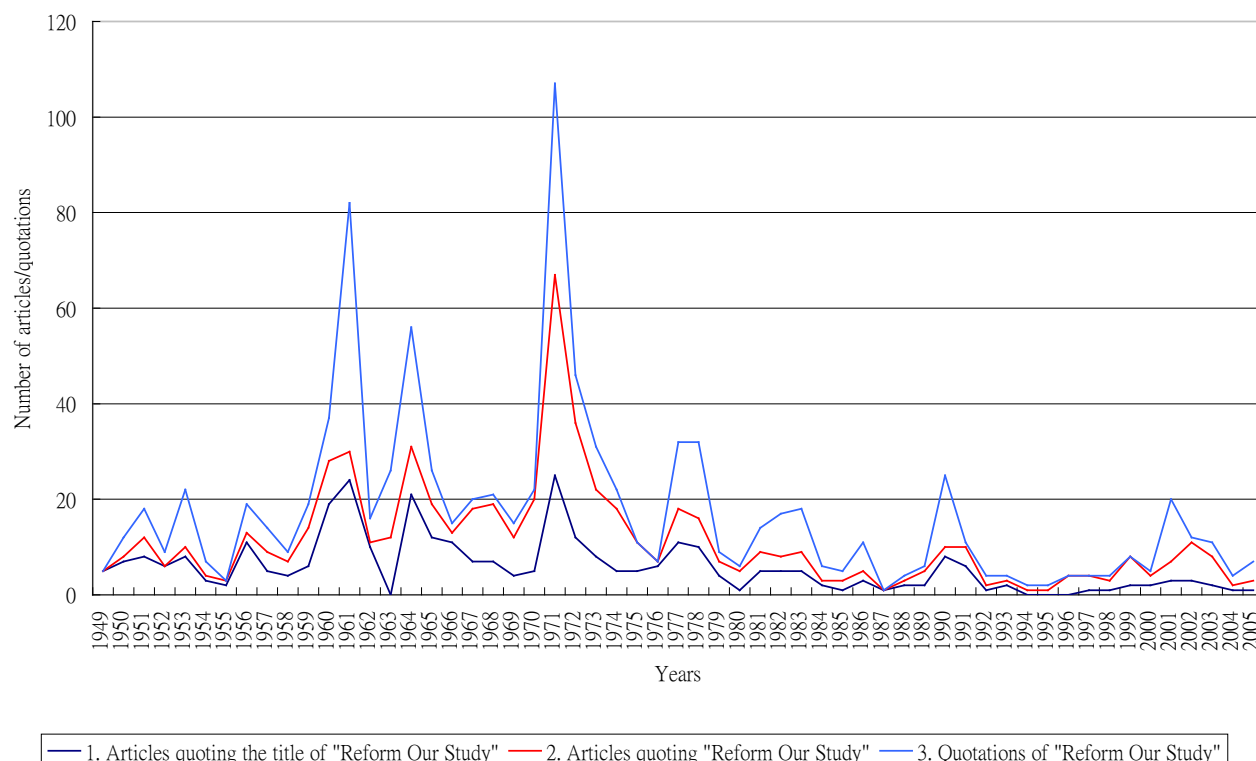


Figure 12: Quoting “Reform Our Study” in *People’s Daily* (Source: Renmin ribao she xinwen xinxi zhongxin 人民日报社新闻信息中心 2007).

The above facts and figures all reflect the relation between the text “Reform Our Study” and *People’s Daily* in general. It tells nothing about time-specific uses of the source text. This is done in the Figure 12. In yearly progression, the three graphs display (1) how many *People’s Daily* articles refer to the title of “Reform Our Study”, (2) how many articles use quotations of “Reform Our Study” in *People’s Daily*, and (3) how often quotations of “Reform Our Study” occur in *People’s Daily*.²³⁴ Why are these differentiations useful? First, for the following qualitative analysis it is necessary to

²³⁴ What is the difference between these three graphs? A hypothetical example will help to explain this: Let us assume that in 1986 one article quoted a passage from “Reform Our Study” consisting of seven full sentences (full quotations). At the end of the quoted passage a reference to the article’s title “改造我们的学习” is given for the readers convenience. Let us further assume that this was the only article in 1986 quoting the title plus one or many sentences of “Reform Our Study”. The different graphs would show the following results: In 1986, *one People’s Daily* article referred to the title of “Reform Our Study” (blue line); *seven* quotations of “Reform Our Study” occurred in *People’s Daily* (yellow line); and *one* article used quotations of “Reform Our Study” in *People’s Daily* (pink line).

find out high times of quoting “Reform Our Study”. It wouldn’t make sense to analyse quoting of “Reform Our Study” in *People’s Daily* for 1955 for instance, as there appeared only three articles featuring three quotations throughout the whole year. Even for the post-Cultural Revolution peak of 1990 it is difficult to establish a consistent interpretation given to the source text by quoting 25 sentences in 10 articles. Second, the different graphs portray the surface of quotation practices at a certain point in time. For example, the values for quoting the title of “Reform Our Study” are similar for the first three peaks: 1961 = 24, 1964 = 21, 1971 = 25; one might boldly infer from this that “Reform Our Study” was of similar importance in all three periods. However, the number of articles quoting “Reform Our Study” is more than double in 1971 (67) compared to 1961 (30) and 1965 (31). And finally, the number of quotations of “Reform Our Study” appearing throughout the year in these articles diverges further: 1961 = 82, 1964 = 56, 1971 = 107. We now get diverging pictures for each time period: In 1964, 31 articles appeared quoting “Reform Our Study”. Only 10 of these articles did not connect the quotations with their source. In 1961, the picture is similar but for one factor. The same amount of articles quote 1,5 times more sentences from “Reform Our Study”. It seems that in 1961 the content of “Reform Our Study” was more important than in 1964. In 1971, we found twice as many articles using a maximum of 107 quotations from “Reform Our Study”. However, not half of these articles refer to the source of their quotations. What does referring to the source of a quotation by naming its title indicate? In general, one can say that by naming the source text of a quotation the reader is referred to this text for further reading, further information. The quotation is but a *pars pro toto*. The meaning or authority of the whole text are transferred to the quoted text by introducing not only a quotation but also its origin. However, this general claim is challenged by particular cases, especially by cases of famous quotations or prototexts. Famous quotations tend to loose their connection to the source text and lead a life of their own (see Chapter 2.1). Reconnecting them to the source text by naming its title, in my view, is proof to the fact that this connection has been forgotten; and the prototext has to be repromoted through its famous quotation, rather than the opposite way. On the other hand, if an article is well known, then so are its quotations. Reference to the prototext then becomes obsolete. This, for example, was the case in 1971, when “Reform Our Study” was made obligatory study material for cadres. The relatively small number of references to the title of the prototext in 1971 hence signifies not the relative unimportance of the article as a whole, but the opposite. Statistics only help to identify cases worthy of further qualitative study. They may answer questions of when, what or where something happened, but not why.

The different graphs are useful for another purpose: to find false friends. In 1968, for example, the red and light blue graph (referring to the number of articles quoting “Reform Our Study” and quotations of “Reform Our Study”) show a small peak. Yet the third line shows a continuous decline until 1970. It seems that although “Reform Our Study” is quoted, the quotations are not linked to the source by reference to its title. By closer investigation, the ‘quotations’ are revealed to be the repeated use of the phrase “the Marxist-Leninist attitude 马克思列宁主义的态度”. I suggest that this hardly counts as a meaningful or prototext-specific quotation, as long as it is not related to the source text by other quotations or references.

1941-42: “Reform Our Study” and the Start of the Yan’an Rectification Campaign²³⁵: Legitimizing and Creating Mao Zedong Thought

The origin of “Reform Our Study 改造我们的学习” can be traced back to a meeting of cadres in Yan’an on May 19, 1941 at which Mao Zedong gave a report with the said title. As of this speech no written record nor tape-recording is transmitted, I must base my analysis of its content on the first published version which appeared ten months later;²³⁶ “Reform Our Study” was included in the study documents of the Yan’an Rectification Movement²³⁷ and for that specific purpose published in

²³⁵ The Yan’an Rectification Campaign is subject of many scholarly studies. Among others are COMPTON (1952) *Mao's China. Party Reform Documents, 1942-44* Seattle; PRICE (1976) *Cadres, Commanders, and Commissars. The Training of the Chinese Communist Leadership, 1920-45* Boulder; WYLIE (1980) *The Emergence of Maoism. Mao Tse-tung, Ch'en Po-ta, and the Search for Chinese Theory, 1935-1945* Stanford; SELDEN (1995) *China in Revolution. The Yanan Way Revisited*, Socialism and social movements, Armonk, NY; KAMPEN (2000) *Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai and the Evolution of the Chinese Communist Leadership* Copenhagen and GAO HUA 高华 (2000) 红太阳是怎样升起的. 延安整风运动的来龙去脉 [How the red sun rose. Origin and development of the Yan'an Rectification Campaign] 香港. STRANAHAN (Sep. 1990) The Last Battle: Mao and the Internationalist's Fight for the Liberation Daily, *The China Quarterly*, 521-537, and VOLLAND (2003) *The Control of the Media in the People's Republic of China* (Ph.D. thesis). Sinologisches Seminar, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität, Heidelberg: ch. 2, focus especially on the struggle in the press. APTER & SAICH (1994) *Revolutionary Discourse in Mao's Republic* Cambridge, Mass., draws attention to the creation of symbolic capital. CHEN YUNG-FA (2003) Suspect History and the Mass Line: Another 'Yan'an Way'. In: Wasserstrom *Twentieth-Century China: New Approaches*, London, questions the utopian Communist representation of Yan’an and portrays it instead as time of early secret service formation under Kang Sheng.

²³⁶ In Compton’s translation of “Reform Our Study” (“The Reconstruction of Our Studies”), a sub-heading to the text by Mao himself is included: “This is a speech I presented to the cadre meeting in Yanan on May 5, 1941; I have now selected the important points from that speech, worked them over, and published them for comrades to discuss.” (COMPTON (1952) *Mao's China. Party Reform Documents, 1942-44* Seattle) Several points are noteworthy. First of all, Mao gives May 5 as date of the speech. In later Chinese publications the date is given as May 19. Secondly, this first textual form of the speech was a summary of the speech’s important points, but not a one to one copy. Thirdly, I argue that Mao’s phrase “published them for comrades to discuss” does not mean a further editorial process in which other members of the Party were asked to comment on the speech, but hints at the document’s use during the Yan’an Rectification Campaign. This argument is based on the fact that Compton’s source text had been published sometime between 1945 and 1950 (Ibid. preface X), but not before the *Liberation Daily* publication.

²³⁷ The documents were originally published by *Liberation Daily* and transmitted by radio to the base areas. An early compilation of the original Chinese documents is found in ANONYMOUS (1950) 整风文献. 订正本 [Rectification

Liberation Daily on March 27, 1942. How far the published text differs from the original report remains unknown. I will first go into some detail in summarising the content of “Reform Our Study”, as this text is central to my following analysis, before outlining later exegesis of the text.

As the title suggests, the general proposition of the text is to reform the method and system of learning and research throughout the Party by uniting theoretical learning with practical application. The argumentation is structured into four parts:

(1) Mao starts out by briefly narrating the positive development of Marxist-Leninist studies in the CCP since its foundation in 1921. In these twenty years the Party has functioned as initiator, propagator and organiser of the truth, i.e. Marxism-Leninism, which has already transformed the Chinese revolutionary practice. Its truthfulness has been proven during the War of Resistance and the current situation.

(2) In typical Chinese Marxist-Leninist writing style, this overly positive introduction is followed by its very contradiction. Three major shortcomings in the research and learning carried out by Party members are pointed out by Mao, all three violating the basic principle of Marxism-Leninism to unite theory and practice. First, Mao criticises the research (*yanjiu* 研究) on the current situation. The collection of material has been fragmented and unsystematic. Therefore, knowledge of the current situation is insufficient and actions can only proceed from subjective wishes instead of an assessment of the objective reality. Second, Mao deprecates the research on history. It is not organised and scarcely done, betraying an arrogance towards Chinese history as compared to foreign history. Third, Mao finds fault with the learning (*xuexi* 学习) of the international revolutionary experience and Marxism-Leninism. Especially cadres above the middle level can only quote Marxism-Leninism, but cannot use its standpoint, viewpoint and method to analyse and solve real problems in China. Mao goes on: “Coming home from Europe, America or Japan, they [i.e. the returned students] can only parrot things foreign. They function as gramophones, and forget their own duty to understand and create new things. This malady has also infected the Communist Party.” These three shortcomings, Mao declares, cannot be corrected through education at school or work in China because here theory is dogmatically taught whereas theory’s application to practice is generally neglected. Both part one and two are later scarcely quoted, as they are either historical or critical in nature.

(3) In the heavily quoted third part, Mao sharpens his argument by discussing two opposing working styles: the subjectivist attitude which overemphasises either theory without understanding practice or practice without understanding theory versus the Marxist-Leninist attitude which unites Marxist-Leninist theory with the Chinese practice. I will outline the main characteristics of the subjectivist attitude shortly. It is, of course, the exact opposite of the Marxist-Leninist attitude. The subjectivist working style, Mao argues, is signified by a lack of thorough and systematic research on the current environment, by a lack of knowledge of Chinese history, and further by learning Marxism-Leninism for the sake of learning instead of a practical purpose. The last point is paraphrased by Mao as “shooting an arrow without a target”; the arrow, he explains, is Marxism-Leninism and the target should be the Chinese revolution. Further negative characteristics are: dividing theory and practice, cutting off history, working only through revolutionary zeal, and not by “seeking truth from facts”. ‘Facts’, Mao explains, are objective existing things, ‘truth’ is the internal relation between them, and to ‘seek’ is to do research. Finally, Mao condemns this working style as an enemy of the CCP, of the working class, the people, and the nation. It has to be overthrown to pave the way for the success of Marxism-Leninism, the Party spirit and the revolution in China.

(4) In the fourth and last part of “Reform Our Study”, Mao proposes three methods to overcome the shortcomings inflicted by a subjectivist attitude. First, an organised and thorough research of the surrounding conditions is to be carried out based on Marxism-Leninism. The fields of investigation and research are defined as economy, finance, politics, military, culture, and party activities of friends, enemies and the Party itself. This investigation is necessary so as to formulate politics for the current situation. Second, the history of the last hundred years is to be researched by talented persons 人才 in an organised way. And third, the education of cadres in the field and in school is to be reformed. It has to focus on the Chinese revolutionary reality, taking Marxism-Leninism as its basic principle and guide. For this purpose, the official *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), Short Course* will be the central learning material because according to Mao it is a “model of the integration of theory and practice”. This model has to be studied by the CCP to enable them to adapt Marxism-Leninism to the Chinese practice. Mao finishes his article by expressing his trust in his comrades to learn from their errors for a better future. Such is the content of Mao’s text “Reform Our Study” of 1941/42. No text is written in a vacuum, however, but built on recurring themes, references to other texts, and allusions to current affairs; therefore, I will now outline the historical setting of Mao’s report as provided by secondary sources, summarise previous text

exegesis by researchers of Chinese history, politics and ideology, and finally I hope to add to the picture by some comments of my own.

In the spring of 1941, traces of the many problems that finally culminated in the Yan'an Rectification Campaign of 1942-44 were already visible: (1) Fast growth of CCP membership from peasant and bourgeois background threatening the Party unity and spirit: According to Wylie, the CCP grew from July 1937 to July 1940 from 40,000 to 800,000 members (Wylie 1980:164); Price mentions CCP growth rates of 20,000 members in 1936 to 1,200,000 in 1945 (Price 1976:135). (2) Fragmentation and seclusion of base areas questioning Party leadership and discipline (Price 1976:136). (3) Japanese military pressure on the population of the fragmented base areas and on the Communist troops.²³⁸ (4) A multilateral power struggle in the higher Party echelon between Mao Zedong and his group on the one hand, and the Moscow Comintern agents and foreign trained CCP members on the other (Price 1976:175; Wylie 1980:152; Schram 1989:84).²³⁹

The issues of heightening party spirit, unity and discipline necessitated by the rapid growth of CCP membership and the seclusion of the Communist base areas (cf. point 1 and 2 in the list above) had been addressed by an unsuccessful cadre education campaign since 1939, i.e. two years prior to "Reform Our Study". Its importance was stressed again by Mao in his 1941 talk "Reform Our Study", among other speeches and articles (Wylie 1980:152; Selden 1995:155). This led to a renewed effort by the Central Committee starting in July 1, 1941.²⁴⁰ On the one hand, a social investigation campaign was set in motion by a Central Committee "Resolution on Investigation and Research 关于调查研究的决定", modelled after Mao's experiences in Hunan.²⁴¹ On the other hand, learning ideology was promoted by a "Resolution on the Education of Cadres in Service 关于职干部教育的决定" of Feb. 28, 1942.²⁴² The latter policy targeted new cadres with peasant background who could

²³⁸ The Japanese military reacted to the Communist "Hundred Regiments Offensive 百团大战" (Aug. to Dec. 1940) with a "three all 三光" policy towards Communist controlled areas: "kill all, burn all, destroy all". See: SELDEN (1995) *China in Revolution. The Yanan Way Revisited*, Socialism and social movements, Armonk, NY: 144f.

²³⁹ Both Price and Wylie identify the so-called "28 Bolsheviks" as Mao's opponents, a group allegedly lead by Wang Ming and returned after studies in Moscow to China to overtake the leadership of the CCP. The consistency of this historical narrative, however, is questioned by Kampen in KAMPEN (2000) *Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai and the Evolution of the Chinese Communist Leadership* Copenhagen. Kampen sets up Zhou Enlai as most important rival of Mao Zedong's quest for supreme power. In "Reform Our Study", Mao himself used the term "returned students 留学生" that applies to either group.

²⁴⁰ Cf. the Central Committee "Resolution on Strengthening the Party Spirit 关于增强党性的决定", July 1, 1941. For an English translation see COMPTON (1952) *Mao's China. Party Reform Documents, 1942-44* Seattle: 156-60.

²⁴¹ ANONYMOUS (1950) 整风文献. 订正本 [Rectification Documents. Corrected Edition] 广州: 57-60. For an English translation of this resolution see COMPTON (1952) *Mao's China. Party Reform Documents, 1942-44* Seattle: 69-73.

²⁴² ANONYMOUS (1950) 整风文献. 订正本 [Rectification Documents. Corrected Edition] 广州: 66-71. For an English translation see COMPTON (1952) *Mao's China. Party Reform Documents, 1942-44* Seattle: 80-7.

often not even read or write, let alone have a comprehensive knowledge of Marxism-Leninism.²⁴³ In wider perspective, “Reform Our Study” is seen as connecting the cadre education movement of 1939/40 to the Yan’an Rectification Campaign of 1942-44, of which it became an important study document (Selden 1995:155).

Education was, however, not only to be applied to ‘country bumpkins’, but middle and high ranking cadres as well (cf. point 4), as is especially emphasised by Wylie: “There was a good deal of implied insult in [the] suggestion that the Returned Students ought to return to the classroom for further instruction in what they regarded as the subject of their greatest expertise, Marxist-Leninist theory. (Wylie 1980:152)” Real-life data would enable the Chinese revolutionaries to “determine which concrete formulations of the foreign theory were directly applicable to China (Wylie 1980:154)”. By reversing the order of the study of Marxism-Leninism and Chinese reality, Mao also reversed their function: “[...] Chinese reality was to provide a methodology by which to study Marxist theory, rather than the other way around. (Wylie 1980:153)” Wylie judges this to be a point of some importance in the ideological history of the CCP as by this the classical Marxist-Leninist writing lost part of its sanctity and the position of Moscow as, in Wylie’s phrases, “keeper of seals and protector of faith” was undermined (Wylie 1980:153). That Mao introduced the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), Short Course* (hereafter *Short Course*) as study material is, in Wylie’s view, a mere token gesture towards Moscow (Wylie 1980:152). However, Price notes that the *Short Course* became the “basis of theoretical work in Marxism-Leninism” at the Central Party School in 1941 (Price 1976:156-8). I want to further question Wylie’s interpretation here: When Mao recommended the *Short Course* as study material in “Reform Our Study”, he symbolically bowed to Moscow. However, I want to argue that hidden underneath what Wylie called a “token gesture” was a more significant reason. What did Mao say in “Reform Our Study”? “Moreover, in studying [*yanjiu*] Marxism-Leninism, we should use the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), Short Course* as the principal material. It is the best synthesis and summing-up of the world communist movement of the past hundred years, a model of the integration of theory and practice, and so far the only comprehensive model in the whole world. When we see how Lenin and Stalin integrated the universal truth of Marxism with the concrete

²⁴³ A last theme of “Reform Our Study”, of little consequence to this study though, was the reform of the propaganda sector, starting with the merge of the weekly Liberation 解放 and the newspaper New China 新中华报 into *Liberation Daily* only four day’s prior to Mao’s talk. Thereby, a unified mouthpiece for the sole publication of Party news, opinions and propaganda had been established. For further details on the moulding of the party paper cf. VOLLAND (2003) *The Control of the Media in the People’s Republic of China* (Ph.D. thesis). Sinologisches Seminar, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität, Heidelberg: ch. 2.

practice of the Soviet revolution and thereby developed Marxism, we shall know how we should work in China. [my emphasis]” Though recommended as a kind of how-to guidebook, Mao in fact invoked the authority of Lenin and Stalin to justify his call for uniting Marxist-Leninist theory with the Chinese revolutionary practice; and moreover he could argue that the Chinese had to adapt Marxism-Leninism to China and create some form of Marxism-Leninism-*X-ism*, in the same way Lenin and Stalin had adapted Marxism to Russia creating Marxism-*Leninism*. Mao Zedong Thought, of course, later came to stand for this X-ism, and thus Mao established himself as leading Party theoretician, the Chinese succession to Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, in his quest for supreme power and authority.²⁴⁴ A second motive for recommending the study of the *Short Course* to the “returned students” can be seen in the similarity of criticism of rote learning voiced both in the Short Course and in “Reform Our Study”:

Mastering the Marxist-Leninist theory does not at all mean learning all its formulas and conclusions by heart and clinging to their every letter. To master the Marxist-Leninist theory we must first of all learn to distinguish between its letter and substance. Mastering the Marxist-Leninist theory means assimilating the substance of this theory and learning to use it in the solution of the practical problems of the revolutionary movement under the varying conditions of the class struggle of the proletariat. (Source: *Short Course, Conclusion*²⁴⁵)

Consequently, though they read, they cannot digest. They can only cite odd quotations [a few words and phrases] from Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin in a one-sided manner, but are unable to apply the stand, viewpoint and method of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin to the concrete study [*yanjiu*] of China's present conditions and her history or to the concrete analysis and solution of the problems of the Chinese revolution. Such an attitude towards Marxism-Leninism does a great deal of harm, particularly among cadres of the middle and higher ranks. (Source: “Reform Our Study”)

In both texts, mastering theory is distinguished from rote memorisation thereof. Not the letters, words or phrases, but the substance or method should be grasped so as to solve practical problems. Though Mao did not expressly quote from the *Short Course* in “Reform Our Study”, he expressed ideas similar to it. By referring his opponents to the study of this text, he thoroughly questioned their supposedly superior knowledge and understanding of Marxism-Leninism, implying that not only in his own view but also according to Moscow's standards they had failed to master theory.

²⁴⁴ This development is studied in detail by WYLIE (1980) *The Emergence of Maoism. Mao Tse-tung, Ch'en Po-ta, and the Search for Chinese Theory, 1935-1945* Stanford. On the early leadership cult erected by Mao's writings, flattery by other leaders and the common people, or songs (*The East is Red* 东方红), see also LEESE (2006) *Performative Politics and Petrified Image: The Mao Cult during China's Cultural Revolution* (Ph.D. thesis). School of Humanities and Social Sciences, International University, Bremen: 13-6.

²⁴⁵ COMMISSION OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE C.P.S.U. (Ed.) (1939) *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks). Short Course*, New York: 335. The work was directed and partly written by J. Stalin. A Chinese translation reached Yan'an around 1940 and was partly read by Mao: “Mao liked the *Short Course* very much, though he admitted in the 1940s that he had never read the entire book, just the concluding section of each chapter. He took pride in not having read the entire book, for he believed that by grasping just the essence of the book from the conclusions of the chapters, he was better prepared than other Chinese leaders to apply the book's ideas to the Chinese reality.” (Li (2006) *Mao and the Economic Stalinization of China, 1948-1953*, The Harvard Cold War studies book series, Lanham, MD: 101-2).

In his analysis of the development of the thought of Mao Zedong, Schram classified “Reform Our Study” as one of several writings in which Mao’s primary concern shifted away from how to adapt Marxism to Chinese conditions and towards his struggle with rivals in the Party (Schram 1989:84). This development culminated in the Yan’an Rectification Campaign and led to Mao’s absolute predominance of the CCP. In his rather short listing of events and arguments describing this shift, Schram introduces “Reform Our Study” as “criticising ‘scholars of Marxism-Leninism’ who ‘can only repeat quotes from Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin from memory, but about their own ancestors... have to apologise and say they’ve forgotten’. (Schram 1989:84)” Some further details than provided by Schram might help to understand why Mao criticised others for neglecting to learn about their own ancestors, which is but part of Mao’s call for research on Chinese history. Writing official history in China had always been a means of power control by defining the genealogy of leadership.²⁴⁶ Thus, it has also been used by Stalin in directing the writing of the *Short Course*, and the same method would be used by the CCP in publishing the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* that became a cornerstone of Mao Zedong Thought²⁴⁷ and the cult of Mao Zedong in China. Therefore, Mao stressed in “Reform Our Study” the organised and comprehensive research on the Chinese history of the last hundred years by talented persons.²⁴⁸ From a Marxist-Leninist perspective, moreover, studying Chinese history had yet another motive: to determine China’s current state on the road to Communism and thereby define who was currently friend or foe in this class-divided society.

Interesting is also the origin of what Mao presented as solution to the current problems, i.e. the method of investigation and research to solve strategic questions: “On the basis of the theory and method of Marxism-Leninism, we should carry out detailed investigation and research work of the economic, financial, political, military, cultural and party activities of our enemies, our friends and

²⁴⁶ WEIGELIN-SCHWIEDRZIK (1984) *Parteigeschichtsschreibung in der VR China. Typen, Methoden, Themen und Funktionen*, Veröffentlichungen des Ostasien-Instituts der Ruhr-Universität Bochum ; 29, Wiesbaden; ALFORD (1995) *To Steal a Book is an Elegant Offence. Intellectual Property Law in Chinese Civilization*, Studies in East Asian Law, Stanford: 23.

²⁴⁷ In a chronology of events, Schram traces the triumph of Mao Zedong Thought – seen in its inclusion into the party constitution in April 1945 – back to the very article “Reform Our Study” (SCHRAM (1989) *The Thought of Mao Tse-tung* Cambridge: 84-5).

²⁴⁸ Further evidence of Mao’s heightened interest in history is the compilation, edition and subsequent publication of selected historical Party documents in two volumes titled “Until/since the sixth Party Congress 六大以前/以来”. This work was supervised by Mao’s then new secretary Hu Qiaomu (cf. YE YONGLIE 叶永烈 (1994) 毛泽东的秘书们 [The secretaries of Mao Zedong] 上海: 3). See also KAMPEN (2000) *Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai and the Evolution of the Chinese Communist Leadership* Copenhagen: 102-3 for further details.

Publication History of Reform Our Study

May 19, 1941: Mao Zedong gives talk at cadre meeting in Yan'an titled "Reform Our Study"

→ no written or tape-records

Feb. 27, 1942: Publication of "Reform Our Study" in *Liberation Daily* 解放日报

→ part of the documents for the Yan'an Rectification Movement

→ transmission of documents into base areas through radio broadcasting

1944: "Reform Our Study" published in *Selected Works of Mao Zedong in five volumes* 毛泽东选集卷五, 晋察冀日报社

→ reprinted in (Takeuchi Minoru 竹内實 1970b:315-324); minor changes in punctuation to 1942 *Liberation Daily* edition

1947: "Reform Our Study" published in *Selected Works of Mao Zedong in six volumes* 毛泽东选集卷六, 中共晋察冀中央局编

Apr. 10, 1953: "Reform Our Study" published in *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* 毛泽东选集, volume 3

→ official edition until 1991

1966/67: new edition of *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* 毛泽东选集 in short characters and horizontal script

Feb. 25, 1969: Publication of one-volume miniature pocket edition of *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* 毛泽东选集

1969: *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* 毛泽东选集 appear with special cover: red colour and golden letters

Jul. 1, 1991: Publication of new revised edition of *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* 毛泽东选集, volume 1-4 for the seventieth anniversary of the CCP.

→ Inclusion of "Oppose bookishness 反对本本主义"; book title in Deng Xiaoping's calligraphy.

→ Exact date (May 19, 1941) added, some alterations, additions and eliminations to commentary and endnotes, no alteration to content

Dec. 7, 1998: Publication of big character edition of *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* 毛泽东选集

ourselves, and then draw the proper and necessary conclusions.” Only through thorough collection and analysis of material, Mao argued, enough knowledge on the present conditions could be gathered to decide further policies. This method of social investigations was introduced to China by John Dewey in the 1920s, taken up by Chinese intellectuals such as Fei Xiaotong 费孝通, and later employed by Mao in his investigation of the peasant movement in Hunan in 1927.²⁴⁹ Therefore, the call for social “investigation and research” was neither new to China, nor new to Mao. Instead, it had been repeatedly voiced and practiced in China since the 1920s.²⁵⁰

As mentioned at the outset of this chapter, “Reform Our Study” was included in the study documents of the Yan’an Rectification Movement. As such, it was thoroughly studied by all Party members, it became part of what Apter and Saich called the “revolutionary syllabus. People were made to study these collectively in a process we call ‘exegetical bonding.’ Not only were certain ways of thinking taught, but a specific political language was learned. (Apter and Saich 1994, XVI)” Knowledge and language were not only taught, but tested in examinations (Compton 1952:35). I therefore conclude that the text and content of “Reform Our Study” was fairly well known to all who had joined the CCP prior to 1942.

Excursus: On the Process of Canonisation of “Reform Our Study”

“Reform Our Study” originally was a talk by Mao Zedong given to other cadres at a meeting in Yan’an in 1941. How did it come to be included in the post-1949 *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, the central piece of Mao Zedong Thought? A detailed publication history of “Reform Our Study” is given in the text box above. It documents the process of canonisation of “Reform Our Study” from its first publication in *Liberation Daily* as study document for the Yan’an Rectification Campaign in 1942 until its final revision for the post-Liberation *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*. The early versions of “Reform Our Study” from 1942 and 1944 differ only slightly in punctuation. The 1953 version, however, was subjected to a minute revision process by the editorial board²⁵¹ in charge of

²⁴⁹ On Dewey cf. DEWEY & DEWEY (1920) *Letters from China and Japan* New York. The Chinese report by Fei Xiaotong can be found in FEI XIAOTONG 费孝通 (1991) 乡土中国 [China from the soil], 民国丛书; 3/14, 上海. An English translation has been published as FEI XIAOTONG (1992) *From the Soil. The Foundations of Chinese Society* Berkeley. Mao’s report on his Hunan investigation is found in MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1968 (1951)) 毛泽东选集 [Selected works of Mao Zedong] vol. 1, 北京: 12-44.

²⁵⁰ For more details, please cf. to the paragraph about the 1961 movement for investigation and research further down.

²⁵¹ In fact, the “editorial board” was officially termed “Committee for the *Publication* of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong, Central Committee of the Communist Party of China 中共中央毛泽东选集出版委员会 [my emphasis]”, as Chen Boda remarked that Mao’s works could not be revised but only published. This, however, was not reality, but rhetoric: behind the scenes Mao’s texts were minutely revised, cf. YE YONGLIE 叶永烈 (1993) 陈伯达传 [Biography of

publishing the textual foundation of Mao Zedong Thought.²⁵² What changes were made to the text by the editorial board? Did these changes influence the meaning of “Reform Our Study”? As seen in other texts, the language of “Reform Our Study” was modernised (与 → 和) and abbreviations were eliminated (i.e. 马列主义 → 马克思列宁主义; 联共党史 → 《苏联共产党(布)历史简要读本》). Other omissions or changes in formulation in my view express a more formal, respectful tone towards the Marxist-Leninist canon and its authors. Thus, the part sentence “for people who make fun of Marxism-Leninism 对于向马列主义开玩笑的人” was eliminated. The irony in the sentence “they are very able to cite proverbs from Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin 引证马，恩，，列，斯的成语是很会的” was reformulated as “they can only one-sidedly use specific expression from Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin 只会片面地引用马克思、恩格斯、列宁、斯大林的个别词句”. Note especially, the exchange of the specific term “proverb 成语” by the more general term “expression 词句” and “to cite 引证 (to prove by quotation) ” by “to use 引用”. On the whole, however, the meaning of “Reform Our Study” was left untouched by the process of revising its text.²⁵³ An authoritative interpretation was given to the text in the form of a commentary (Mao Zedong 毛泽东 1941.05.19:753). Therein, “Reform Our Study” is singled out as basic work on the Yan’an Rectification Campaign together with the articles “Rectify the Party’s Style of Work” and “Oppose Stereotyped Party Writing”. In later times, references to these articles appear together forming a kind of “cluster” (see Figure 13). It is debatable if this is due to the similarity of content and original context of the texts, or simply a result of this very commentary. The commentary further argues that all three texts form a summary on the past differences in the Party concerning the Party line. They identify subjectivist and sectarian tendencies as well as stereotyped Party writing as Petty-bourgeois

Chen Boda] 北京: 196. The board for volume 1-3 consisted at least of Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi, Chen Boda, Hu Qiaomu, and Tian Jiaying. The editorial tasks were divided as follows: Mao corrected 修改 and finalised 定稿 the text, Chen oversaw the whole process, Hu was responsible for grammar, rhetoric, style and punctuation, and Tian with the help of others annotated the texts and oversaw their translation (YE YONGLIE 叶永烈 (1994) 毛泽东的秘书们 [The secretaries of Mao Zedong] 上海: 60-62).

²⁵² For an insider account of the revision process refer to CHEN BODA 陈伯达 (1998) 陈伯达遗稿. 狱中自述及其他 [Posthumous manuscript by Chen Boda. His own account and other things written in prison] 香港: 57-63; YE YONGLIE 叶永烈 (1993) 陈伯达传 [Biography of Chen Boda] 北京: 195-8; YE YONGLIE 叶永烈 (1994) 毛泽东的秘书们 [The secretaries of Mao Zedong] 上海.

²⁵³ The editorial changes in all texts of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* are traced in TAKEUCHI MINORU 竹内实 (Ed.) (1970b) 毛泽东集 1939.8-1941.6 [Works of Mao Zedong], 东京. An analysis of these changes is provided in MARTIN (Ed.) (1979) *Mao Zedong Texte. Schriften, Dokumente, Reden und Gespräche*, München: 21ff. On the post-1949 standardisation of language in the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* see WAGNER (1999) 中共一九四〇~一九五三年建立正语, 正文的政策大略 [General outline of the CCP's policy 1940 to 1953 to establish a correct written and spoken language]. In: Peng Xiaoyan 彭小妍 文艺理论与通俗文化 [Literary theory and popular culture], 台北: 29-32.

ideology and style. Therefore, it is argued, Mao called for a movement of Marxist-Leninist education within the Party: a “great debate between proletarian and petty-bourgeois ideology inside and outside the Party” (probably a reference to the Yan’an Rectification Campaign) in the end producing “unprecedented unity” in the Party (Mao Zedong 毛泽东 1941.05.19:753).

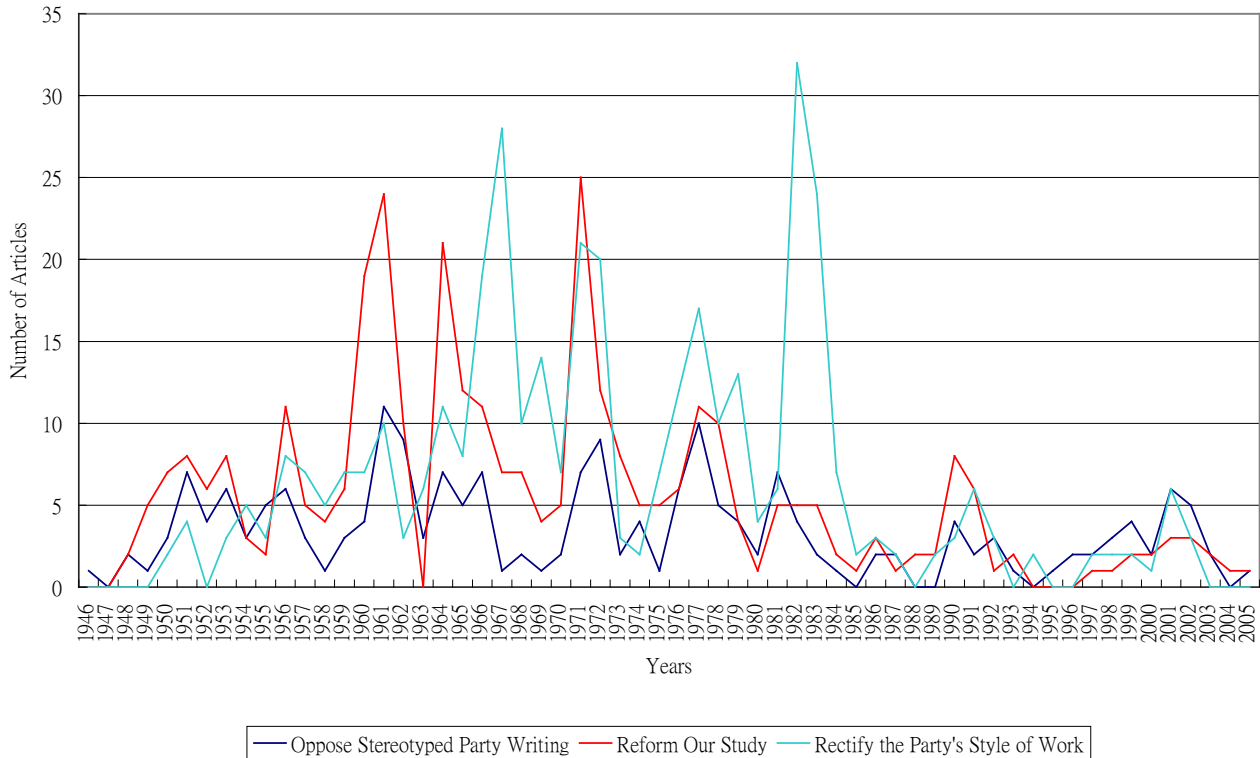


Figure 13: An exemplary cluster of quoted texts in *People’s Daily* (Source: Renmin ribao she xinwen xinxi zhongxin 人民日报社新闻信息中心 2007).

1961: Social Investigation at the End of the Great Leap Forward

After 1949, quoting “Reform Our Study” in *People’s Daily* peaked the first time in 1961: I found as much as 82 full quotations compared to the average of 16 full quotations per year. The background to this resurgence in quoting “Reform Our Study” was a press campaign featuring cadre investigation and research at grass-root level in the second of the “three bitter years” after the end of the Great Leap Forward. “Reform Our Study” was not the only canonical article used to authorise this campaign. Other prototexts providing quotations for the 1961 campaign taken from the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* include: from Volume I “On Practice 实践论” (July 1937) and “On Contradiction 矛盾论” (August 1937);²⁵⁴ from Volume III were quoted “Preface and Postscript to

²⁵⁴ Also “Problems of Strategy in China’s Revolutionary War 中国革命战争的战略问题” (December 1936).

Rural Surveys ‘农村调查’的序言和跋” (March and April 1941) and “Economic and Financial Problems 经济问题与财政问题” (December 1942).²⁵⁵ Another text by Mao that had already been published in *People’s Daily* also provided quotations for the new campaign: “On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People 关于正确处理人民内部矛盾的问题” (February 27, 1957; later included in Volume V of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*).²⁵⁶ However, as may be seen from statistics on references to the titles of these texts (see Figure 14), the lines of all texts fall significantly in 1961 with the exception of “Reform Our Study” and “Economic and Financial Problems”.

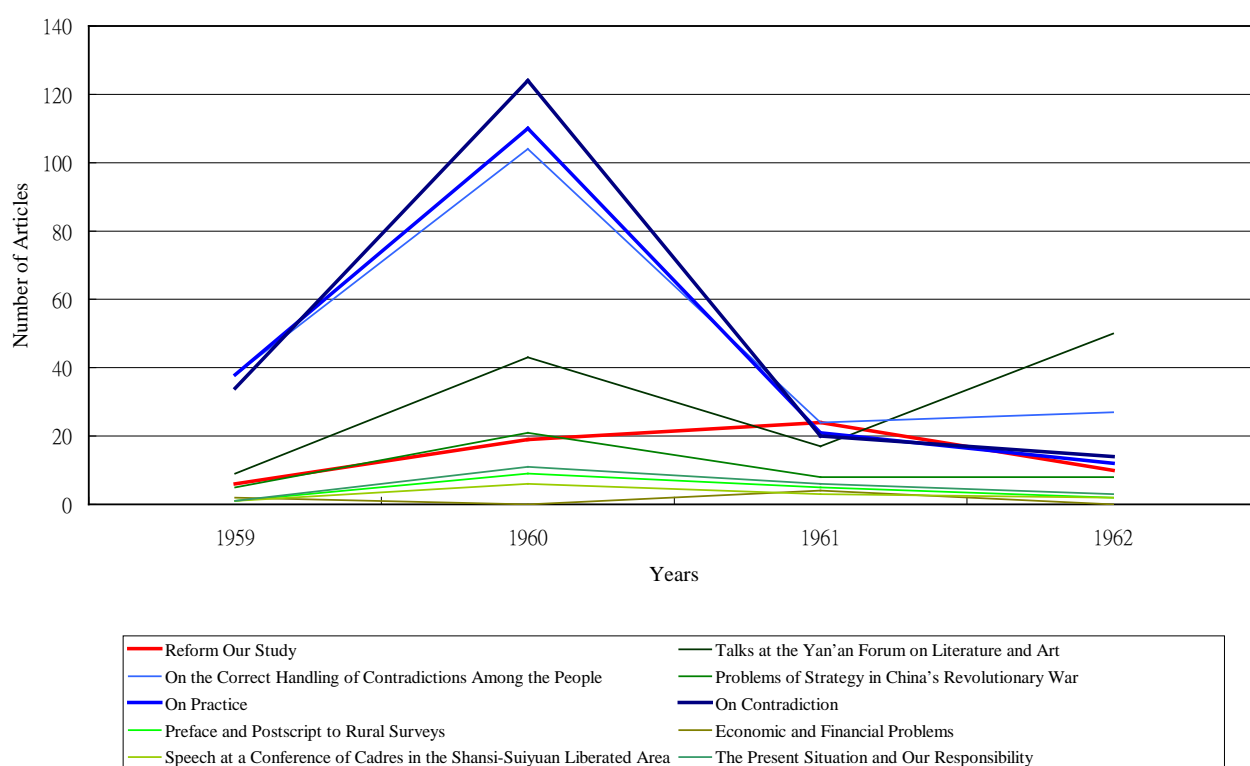


Figure 14: References to titles of articles of Mao Zedong in *People’s Daily* between 1959 and 1962 (Source: Renmin ribao she xinwen xinxi zhongxin 人民日报社新闻信息中心 2007).

²⁵⁵ Also “Talks at the Yan’an Forum on Literature and Art 在延安文艺座谈会上的讲话” (May 2, 1942). Another speech of Volume IV was referred to, namely the “Speech at a Conference of Cadres in the Shansi-Suiyuan Liberated Area 在晋绥干部会议上的讲话” (April 1, 1948).

²⁵⁶ Also “The Present Situation and Our Responsibility 目前形势和我们的任务” (December 25, 1947, later published in the *Selected Works on Military Affairs from Mao Zedong* 毛泽东军事文选 Volume IV).

The most obvious examples are “On Practice” and “On Contradiction” both of which had been referred to by title about 120 times in 1960.²⁵⁷ In 1961, figures are down to about 20, and they keep falling to about 13 references in 1962. Whereas quoting “Reform Our Study” peaked in 1961, the other articles lost out compared to previous years although there still were references. Why did the journalists and editors of the party paper begin referring to “Reform Our Study”? What sentences of the source text did they quote? And how did this usage change the public notion of the source text?

In my analysis, I want to argue that in 1961 quotations from “Reform Our Study” were used to authorise a change in strategy initiated by Mao Zedong. For journalists and probably cadres as well, “Reform Our Study” functioned as explanation to Mao’s brain and as guidebook to action.

Simultaneously, as part of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, the text “Reform Our Study” was a source of authority edited and promoted by the Party Central. Thus, arguments based on this canonical article eclipsed others which were solely based on the individual opinion of Chairman Mao, who’s authority had been seriously undermined at that time by the disastrous outcome of the Great Leap Forward policies. Moreover, “Reform Our Study” was part of the core documents of the Yan’an “exegetical bonding”. Its quotations reminded everyone of a time of “great debate” followed by “unprecedented unity” as the CCP chose to interpret this part of history (see above). In 1961, I argue, Mao used this symbolic capital bestowed on his *Selected Works* by himself *and* the Party to restore his standing as leader. The success of the new strategy guided by a 20 years-old article in turn validated this part of the canon for the time being and possibly for the future. The semantic gap between static canon and changing world was bridged by carefully selecting fitting quotations that promoted investigation and research work on all levels of the Party. Moreover, slight changes to the original argumentation were introduced: not the “returned students” or cadres with peasant background were targeted as to be in need for reforming their learning, but cadres of all levels, even Mao or Liu Shaoqi. After summarising the historical background, in the following analysis I will focus mainly on the repeated use of one quotation from “Reform Our Study” and trace how the press campaign for investigation and research enfolded and developed in *People’s Daily* throughout the first half of the year 1961.

On January 29, 1961 an editorial was published on the first page of *People’s Daily* titled “Go in for large-scale investigation and research 大兴调查研究之风”. The editorial claimed that “without investigation there is no right to speak”. In the article, this claim was not only based on the views of

²⁵⁷ Again these two texts form a kind of text cluster. Statistics on title references show a striking correlation of both data sets.

Marx, Engels and Lenin (either through quotations or paraphrases), but has been proven to be correct in practice by Mao himself. Only Mao's analysis of the objective reality made possible the development of a correct strategy during the Anti-Japanese War and the War of Resistance. And only thereby could the Chinese revolution be successful. Investigation and research, however, are not only necessary to derive a strategy but also for its implementation. Moreover, this is an ongoing process because the world constantly changes. Therefore, "the Party's leading organs and leading cadres of all levels shall intensify investigation and research work by setting themselves as example, all departments of the Central Committee, the party committees of all provinces, cities and municipalities, of all prefectures and counties, and of all army units, shall separately go down to the grass-roots, go to a commune, production team, factory, school, shop, company, and carry out systematic and thorough investigation and research work. (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1961.01.29)" This editorial was the official public prelude to an intensive effort by the Party leadership to find out the truth about the current situation in the countryside resulting from Great Leap Forward policies.²⁵⁸ It was initiated by Mao Zedong with a talk on the last day of a Central Committee work conference held in Beijing from Dec. 24, 1960 until Jan. 13, 1961.²⁵⁹ It was further endorsed by the 9. Plenum of the 8. Central Committee (Jan. 14-18, 1961).²⁶⁰ What did Mao say? Basically, he advised the members of the Central Committee on returning from the meeting to their home provinces to engage in investigation and research work. Only this would enable them to understand the current situation and solve its problems. Among other things they should check if the people's food was scarce, enough or plenty, and how their faces looked.²⁶¹ Mao himself indicated at the end of his talk that he planned to do some investigative work himself after the meeting. One week later, on Jan. 20, 1961, Mao gave directions to his secretary Tian Jiaying to discuss his article

²⁵⁸ MacFarquhar states that "the profusion of investigations at all levels [...] was unprecedented in the history of the PRC." MACFARQUHAR (1997) *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution. The Coming of the Cataclysm 1961-1966* vol. 3, Oxford: 48. The following detailed description of the investigation campaign are mainly based on MacFarquhar's analysis in the first chapter of the same book titled "The third bitter year". Further important material next to Mao's different works is BO YIBO 薄一波 (1993) 若干重大决策与事件的回顾 [Some important decisions and events in retrospection] vol. 2, 北京: 900-50.

²⁵⁹ MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1999b) 毛泽东文集 [Collected works of Mao Zedong] vol. 8, 北京: 223-7.

²⁶⁰ MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (2005) 毛泽东年谱 1893-1976 [Chronology of Mao Zedong 1893-1976]. accessed: 22.11.2007, downloaded: 22.11.2007. The plenum is also seen as marking the end of the Great Leap Forward (see MACFARQUHAR (1997) *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution. The Coming of the Cataclysm 1961-1966* vol. 3, Oxford: 13-19).

²⁶¹ By this time, the central leadership knew that millions of people were starving in the countryside. In the preceding and following month, different measures were taken to relieve the people's hardship, among others the purchase of grain from other Asian countries (cf. MACFARQUHAR (1997) *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution. The Coming of the Cataclysm 1961-1966* vol. 3, Oxford: 22-30).

“Investigation work 调查工作” (later titled “Oppose bookishness 反对本本主义”) of May 1930²⁶² with Chen Boda and Hu Qiaomu²⁶³; thereof each of them was to lead a research group of seven people to Zhejiang, Hunan and Guangdong to investigate the situation in one of the best and one of the worst communes and factories for ten to fifteen days. Afterwards, they were to come and meet Mao in Guangzhou for reporting and discussing their findings.²⁶⁴ This move is one of many instances in which Mao tried to circumvent the normal communication channels of the CCP, of the state’s bureaucracy and of the media. He rightly mistrusted the truth of reports written to please superiors. But Mao not only sent out his own secretaries, personally bound to him in long service, but started himself on what MacFarquhar called “little more than a whistle-stop tour, calling in on Tianjin, Ji’nan, and Nanjing [...] Shanghai, Hangzhou, Nanchang, and Changsha. (MacFarquhar 1997:39)” At the end of February and early March several meetings were held in Guangzhou comparing the information gathered and discussing further policies. The work was summed up in the “Work rules for the rural people’s communes (Draft)” (informally termed “Sixty articles on agriculture”) and endorsed by a central work conference, held in Guangzhou from March 15 to 23. In the following months, the scope of the investigation and research work widened. Many top leaders, including Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, Peng Zhen, Deng Xiaoping and Zhu De, travelled for weeks or even for months to the grass-roots, often turning to their native places. They reported their findings back to Mao in Beijing²⁶⁵ and finally met there again for another Central Committee work conference from May 21 to June 12. At this meeting, the high tensions between countryside and city

²⁶² This article had been lost during the revolution. Its recovery by the Museum of the Chinese Revolution was brought to Mao’s notice in January 1961 through his secretary Tian Jiaying. It was revised during the Guangzhou conference and afterwards distributed to all leading cadres as study material. In 1964, the article was published under the title “Oppose Bookishness 反对本本主义” in MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1964) 毛泽东著作选读 [Selected readings from the works of Mao Zedong] 北京, and in 1991 included in the new edition of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* vol. 1. See “Explanations and remarks on the article ‘Investigation Work’ 对《调查工作》一文的说明和批语” in MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1998) 建国以来毛泽东文稿 [Manuscripts by Mao Zedong since the liberation of China] 北京: vol. 9, 438-9, ZENG DINGBEN 增订本 (Ed.) (1991) 中国共产党执政四十年 1949-1989 [40 years governance by the Communist Party of China 1949-1989], 北京: 197; and MACFARQUHAR (1997) *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution. The Coming of the Cataclysm 1961-1966* vol. 3, Oxford: 41.

²⁶³ Besides holding important positions in the Party – Chen Boda was an alternate member of the Politburo; Hu Qiaomu was an alternate member of the Central Committee’s secretariat – both Chen and Hu had been Mao’s personal secretaries and were probably still loyal to him.

²⁶⁴ See “Letter to Tian Jiaying on organising three teams to go down for investigation and research 关于组织三个组下去调查研究给田家英的信” in MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1998) 建国以来毛泽东文稿 [Manuscripts by Mao Zedong since the liberation of China] 北京: vol. 9, 421-2

²⁶⁵ The 建国以来毛泽东文稿 of 1961 provides us with several answers or commentaries by Mao on letters written to him by his colleagues from their investigation work at different places in China (MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1998) 建国以来毛泽东文稿 [Manuscripts by Mao Zedong since the liberation of China] 北京).

– threatening even the survival of the CCP – were openly debated, leading to a major revision of the “Sixty articles in agriculture”.²⁶⁶

Having thus narrated what went on behind the scene, I now want to return to the world of public discourse visible to an ordinary cadre or citizen, to the world of propaganda by quotation in *People's Daily*. In their studies of party politics, neither MacFarquhar nor Bo Yibo mention that Mao's initiative for investigation at the grass-roots was propagated in the press. It is not clear who was in charge of directing this small-scale press campaign, but it started as early as January 29, 1961 – sixteen days after Mao's talk to the work conference in Beijing, and several days after both his secretaries and Mao himself had departed from Beijing on investigation tours. The very title of the first editorial – “Go in for large-scale investigation and research 大兴调查研究之风” – was taken from the title of Mao's talk to the Beijing conference. This fact might be seen as evidence that the press campaign in *People's Daily* was initiated by Mao himself. Quotations from and references to “Reform Our Study” gave authority to *People's Daily* articles and functioned as argumentative foundation of these articles in 1961 (see below). But the text was also excavated like a ‘phrase mine’. Reading closely the first editorial of the campaign (“Go in for large-scale investigation and research 大兴调查研究之风” of January 29, introduced above) one encounters – next to six marked quotations from different sources – a significant number of unmarked phrases taken from “Reform Our Study”, for example:

Not to investigate and do research, not to respect objective reality, this [attitude] violates the worldview of dialectical materialism. To set out from this world view, the most basic working style of a Marxist-Leninist is the working style of *uniting theory and practice*. Carry on systematic and thorough study [yanjiu] of real objects, appropriate the material in detail and, guided by the general principles of Marxism-Leninism, subject it to scientific analysis and synthesis [comprehensive research], and draw correct conclusions from it, this is the working style of *uniting theory and practice*, and this is also the Marxist-Leninist style. On the contrary, unwilling to carry on systematic and thorough investigation and study [yanjiu] of real objects, they issue orders on no other basis than their scanty knowledge and ‘It must be so because it seems so to me’, this is the *subjectivist style [of work]*, this working style also opposes Marxism-Leninism. Lenin has said, the most essential thing in Marxism-Leninism, the living soul of Marxism-Leninism, lies in the concrete analysis of concrete circumstances. [unmarked quotations from “Reform Our Study” are set in italics] (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1961.01.29)

First, it should be noted that though left unmarked, the quotations are not used subversively, i.e. their meaning is not changed by embedding them in a new grammatical structure for example. Nor are there hidden among them any sentences diverging from Mao's original argumentation (see below,

²⁶⁶ The campaign finally culminated in Feb. 1962 with the 10. plenum of the Central Committee, the so-called “7000 cadre conference.” The conference assembled an unprecedented number of party cadres even of small work teams and army units to Beijing, who provided further in-depth knowledge on economic facts and people's moods. One consequence of this campaign was that from then on the tasks of a Party member included grass-root investigation and research work of several months per year. For more details cf. MACFARQUHAR (1997) *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution. The Coming of the Cataclysm 1961-1966* vol. 3, Oxford: 137-181.

analysis of 1977). These phrases might not have been used consciously as quotation, but rather as safe formulations for a politically sensitive issue. The excessive, though unmarked use of these phrases testify that the author(s) had read “Reform Our Study” when they prepared to write the first editorial of the campaign for investigation and research in 1961 and not only polished the finished article with fitting quotations. If we assume that the authors were left to face this task by themselves after Mao and his secretaries had left Beijing, “Reform Our Study” may have provided both explanation to Mao’s ideas and guidance as to how to phrase these for the public. Other information available to them may have included Mao’s initial talk of Dec. 24, 1960 (the resemblance of both titles strongly suggests this), and the article “Investigation work 调查工作” recommended by Mao to his secretaries for discussion (see above). However, neither source had been officially published in early 1961. Using them as textual basis for a press campaign carried several disadvantages: (1) to do so was officially forbidden (see Chapter 1.3)²⁶⁷, (2) both article and speech contained only the opinion of a single leader, and were not part of the canon edited and promoted by the CCP; (3) both were unfamiliar to cadres and people alike. As the argumentation put forward by Mao in “Reform Our Study” in 1941 was similar to the strategy initiated by him in 1961, the 1941 text presented itself as a phrase mine donned with an authoritative seal.

At least twenty-seven different sentences from “Reform Our Study” were (markedly) quoted in *People’s Daily* articles between the start of the public campaign in January 1961 and its fading out in July of the same year. Next to the title “Reform Our Study”, the most often quoted sentence (8 times) in this period was “In the work of any department, it is necessary to know the situation first and only then can the work be well handled. 任何一个部门的工作，都必须先有情况的了解，然后才会有好的处理。” Why is this sentence quoted most often in the first half of 1961? What use was it put to? Why was it no longer propagated after July 1961 as was the whole investigation and research campaign in *People’s Daily*? I will try to answer these questions by narrating shortly how subsequent articles in *People’s Daily* embedded the above sentence into their argumentation, and how each of them came closer to what in retrospect appears to have been the overall aim of the campaign: to firmly establish investigation and research as an important and ongoing task not only of Party and state organs, but especially for leading cadres (MacFarquhar 1997). The propagandistic strategy is simple and often witnessed in the media of the People’s Republic of China (hereafter PRC) (see for another example Chapter 2.3). It runs like this: start off with an editorial setting the goals of the

²⁶⁷ Though officially forbidden, reports and articles not cleared by the Party for publication were still sometimes quoted.

campaign, then narrate a positive description of a model worker, a factory or a brigade; make its emulation a general claim; contrast it with descriptions of negative results if the model is not followed, and curry this with some nebulous hints at fiends; and finally declare victory as the model is widely accepted.

In the first narrative article, the model of a chemical factory in Jilin is depicted that in accordance with the present campaign has drafted a ten point task list. Every morning, every cadre of the factory has to work through this list. Such day-to-day investigation and research work, the article explained, is important in order to find correct solutions to new problems created by the ever-changing nature of the world. The article ends by expressing: “We hope that all cadres of industrial and mining establishments, especially leading cadres, will make the comprehension of circumstances the starting point of their own work. Everybody should take Comrade Mao Zedong’s words to heart: ‘In the work of any department, it is necessary to know the situation first and only then can the work be well handled.’ 我们希望所有工矿企业的干部，特别是领导干部，都把了解情况作为自己的工作出发点。都要牢牢记住毛泽东同志的话：‘任何一个部门的工作，都必须先有情况的了解，然后才会有好的处理。’ (1961.01.30)” In the manner of “Learn from Comrade Lei Feng” of 1963 onwards, cadres were thus asked to emulate a certain positive example. Those readers familiar with the quotation’s source might have seen something larger looming behind this simple advice: In the prototext “Reform Our Study”, the quoted sentence was part of the first measure recommended by Mao Zedong to remedy shortcomings in the party. The prototext went on: “The fundamental link in changing the *Party’s style of work* is to carry out plans for investigation and study [*yanjiu*] throughout the Party. [my emphasis]” The question of investigation and research, one might interpret, is not one of organising one’s working days, or the correct ordering of a cadre’s many tasks, but is one of changing the working style throughout the whole Party.

Five days later, the argumentation is sharpened in another article, which also exemplifies how the semantic gap between canon and world is bridged by selective quotation; it is argued that investigation and research are the basis not only for policy making but also for policy execution. “‘In the work of any department, it is necessary to know the situation first and only then can the work be well handled.’ Therefore, in order to achieve correct leadership, every leader and leading organ must frequently conduct in-depth investigation and research ‘任何一个部门的工作，都必须先有情况的了解，然后才会有好的处理。’ 各级领导者和领导机关，要实现正确的领导，就必须经常地进行深入的调查研究 (1961.02.04)”. It should be noted that though this reasoning can be justified by

quoting the text of “Reform Our Study”, it does not accord to the original historical context: In Yan’an times Mao advised in “Reform Our Study” to remedy two problems: the foreign trained Communists should do more investigation and research so as to become acquainted with the Chinese conditions; but simultaneously the Party fought with an education and rectification campaign against the lack of discipline and against the neglect of Party directives by lower levels in the hierarchy. In 1961, after the Great Leap Forward the problems had changed and so, according to one of Mao’s arguments, would the remedy have to be changed. The cleavage was not between foreign and home-trained cadres, but between higher and lower levels. Higher levels committed errors of Subjectivism (*zhuguan zhuyi* 主观主义), i.e. they were badly informed about the situation in the country and, therefore, badly equipped to issue correct directions and “achieve correct leadership”. The lower level cadres closely followed directions even if they were wholly unsuitable to local conditions, thus committing errors of Bureaucratism (*guanliao zhuyi* 官僚主义). As the rural situation deteriorated during the second and third year of hunger and starvation, the top leadership reacted in two ways: by gathering information and by allowing leading cadres on *all* levels to submit directives to scrutiny and adaptation to local conditions (MacFarquhar 1997:23-89).

In March 1961, the propagandist strategy in favour of investigation and research turned to the familiar topic of the bad example. It presented the story of a cadre humiliated by the people’s action: In a people’s commune production problems occur. The leading cadre attributes the problems to a shortage of fertilizer and work force. However, a commune member undertakes some investigation and research by himself and finds out that the problems instead result from wrong scheduling of delivery and manpower. This story proves what Mao has long been saying: “in the work of any department, it is necessary to know the situation first and only then can the work be well handled. (Zhen Wen 甄闻 1961.03.16)” The message of this article is obvious: It’s not things like fertilizers that are amiss, but working style that must be corrected. By following the guiding texts of Mao Zedong Thought, in this case “Reform Our Study” introduced via quotation as *pars pro toto*, such errors are exposed and in the future might be avoided altogether. Canonical texts are thus validated as useful for present and future.

After three months of contention, by April 1961 Mao had convinced the top party leadership that gathering information about the real situation in the countryside was necessary, and, in the same Spring, research teams swarmed all over China, with some even being led by Central Committee

members.²⁶⁸ Another *People's Daily* article reveals, however, that troubles in implementing the new party working style recurred in May 1961: "Some comrades believe, investigation and research are about arranging investigation material, and therefore often merely hand it to a so-called 'skilful writer'. This misapprehension is produced as a result of not understanding the purpose of investigation and research. 有些同志认为, 调查研究是为了整理出调查材料, 因而往往只交给所谓 '秀才' 去做。这是由于对于调查研究目的不明而产生的一种误解。(Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1961.05.06)" The purpose, the article goes on, is to solve practical problems. And although experts and men of letters can partake in the task of investigation and research, they cannot substitute leading cadres. If leaders excuse themselves as being busy, then their ordering of tasks is wrong: they should first of all busy themselves with investigation and research. Everything else can only follow later, the article concluded. The party's firm resolution to change this attitude – probably initiated by Mao Zedong – is found in another *People's Daily* article of July 1961²⁶⁹: "In the work of any department, it is necessary to know the situation first and only then can the work be well handled. *The fundamental link in changing the Party's style of work is to carry out plans for investigation and study [yanjiu] throughout the Party.*' [...] We will make investigation and research a regular task of leading organs, so that it becomes a working routine and a scientific working method regularly used by every cadre. '任何一个部门的工作, 都必须先有情况的了解, 然后才会有好的处理。在全党推行调查研究的计划, 是转变党的作风的基础一环。'[...] 要把调查研究当做领导机关的一项经常的任务, 使之成为工作的常规和每个干部经常运用的一种科学的工作方法。[my emphasis]" Here for the first time in six months the quotation under analysis was not used solitarily but followed by the prototext's next sentence: "The fundamental link in changing the Party's style of work is to carry out plans for investigation and study [yanjiu] throughout the Party." And the whole quotation is followed by the firm declaration to permanently change the working style of the party by making investigation and research a regular task of any leading organ. This was not only a rhetorical declaration. But methods of investigation and research were really introduced to the regular tasks of

²⁶⁸ Proof of this contention is the time gap between Mao starting investigation and research himself in January, and other Central Committee leaders as Zhou Enlai, Chen Yun etc. following his example in April. Moreover, it is reported that Mao criticised Deng Xiaoping and Peng Zhen in March 1961 for drafting plans without prior investigation; see MACFARQUHAR (1997) *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution. The Coming of the Cataclysm 1961-1966* vol. 3, Oxford: 38-71.

²⁶⁹ OU YANGQIN 欧阳钦 (21.07.1961) 加强党的建设 不断提高党的领导水平 [Strengthen Party building, continuously heighthen the standards of Party leadership], 人民日报, 7.

cadres in 1961.²⁷⁰ Backed by quotations from the canon of Mao Zedong Thought, the journalists of *People's Daily* proved that Mao's new strategy focusing on investigation and research by leading cadres of all levels was correct. With this detailed study of a single quotation I do not want to suggest that this was the only quotation of "Reform Our Study", or that "Reform Our Study" was the only source text drawn upon during the 1961 campaign for investigation and research. However, other marked quotations from the same source text mainly add up to the picture painted above concerning the use of "Reform Our Study" in 1961. They emphasise the importance of constant information gathering by every Party member;²⁷¹ they authorise the principle of the unity of theory and practice;²⁷² or they refer to the distinction between friend and foe, the Marxist-Leninist vs. subjectivist attitude,²⁷³ stressing the Marxist-Leninist attitude of "Seeking truth from facts" instead of relying on imagination and vigour only.²⁷⁴

In conclusion, I will shortly sum up the results of the 1961 analysis: The source text "Reform Our Study" was embedded by marked and unmarked quotations and phrases into the propaganda campaign "Go in for large-scale investigation and research 大兴调查研究之风". It called for a change in cadre's work style and culminated in the inclusion of yearly investigation and research work into the regular tasks of cadres. "Reform Our Study" was used in two ways by the authors writing for the campaign: as phrase mine and as authoritative backing. The unmarked use of phrases from "Reform Our Study", in my view, are testimony for the authors having read the source text shortly before writing texts for the new campaign. I suggest that this had been done not only to find authoritative quotations but also to understand Mao's idea of investigation and research and thus be

²⁷⁰ MACFARQUHAR (1997) *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution. The Coming of the Cataclysm 1961-1966* vol. 3, Oxford.

²⁷¹ By quoting: "Although we have achieved some success in our research of present domestic and international conditions, but for such a large political party as ours, the material we have collected is fragmentary and our research work unsystematic on each domestic and international aspect, on every aspect of domestic and international politics, military, economy, [or] culture. 像我党这样一个大政党, 虽则对于国内和国际的现状的研究有了某些成绩, 但是对于国内和国际的各方面, 对于国内和国际的政治、军事、经济、文化的任何一方面, 我们所收集的材料还是零碎的, 我们的研究工作还是没有系统的。"

²⁷² By quoting for example: "As for the education of cadres at work or of cadres in schools, a guiding principle should be established of focusing [such education] on the research of the practical problems of the Chinese revolution and using the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism as the guide, and the method of doing research on Marxism-Leninism statically and in isolation should be discarded. 对于在职干部的教育和干部学校的教育, 应确立以研究中国革命实际问题为中心, 以马克思列宁主义基本原则为指导的方针, 废除静止地孤立地研究马克思列宁主义的方法。"

²⁷³ See for example the argumentation in RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民日报社 (02.02.1961) 从实际出发 [Proceed from reality], 人民日报, 1

²⁷⁴ This is done by quoting for example: "They have no intention of seeking truth from facts, but only a desire to curry favour by claptrap. They are flashy without substance, brittle without solidity. 无实事求是之意, 有哗众取宠之心。华而不实, 脆而不坚。"

able to write fitting propagandistic articles. To authorise the campaign's goal before the public, the authors then included carefully chosen quotations from "Reform Our Study" into their articles such as "In the work of any department, it is necessary to know the situation first and only then can the work be well handled." Other aspects of Mao's original talk were ignored such as the call for historical research or the reform of learning Marxism-Leninism as they were at that point in time unimportant to Mao's new strategy. Only by carefully selecting those parts of a canonical text which could answer present problems, and by slightly adjusting their interpretation, could the usefulness of the canon be validated and, thus, its authority confirmed. In the next part of my analysis, we may see how only a few years later a very different strategy was able to incorporate quotations from "Reform Our Study". This strategy focused not on investigations on the grass-root level, but instead on theory learning.

1964: Lin Biao and "Problem-Oriented Learning 带着问题学"

In 1964, three years after the drive for investigation and research the statistics on quoting "Reform Our Study" in *People's Daily* show another high. Although lower than the preceding peak of 1961 and the following of 1971, with 56 quotations of the prototext in 31 articles (21 of which also mention the prototext's title) it is certainly high enough to attract our attention. The new context formed a national mass movement to study Mao's works. The movement started in the army under the auspices of Marshall Lin Biao, the new Minister of Defence and Chairman of the Central Military Commission.²⁷⁵ It took shape as a program to strengthen political and ideological learning in the army to counteract the demoralising impact of the Great Leap Forward. Soldiers were asked to learn by heart the most important quotations from Mao Zedong Thought instead of studying Marxism in a systematic and comprehensive way. This method was first proposed by Lin Biao in

²⁷⁵ As secondary sources on Lin Biao show, the assessment of how far Lin Biao himself was involved in promoting Mao's personality cult changed considerably over time. Whereas early sources attribute considerable influence to Lin himself, later texts question this narrative. They stress instead the influence of his wife Ye Qun, his son Lin Ligu, or the Party ideologue and former secretary of Mao Chen Boda. The older sources include POWELL (Apr. - Jun. 1968) *The Increasing Power of Lin Piao and the Party-Soldiers 1959-1966*, *The China Quarterly*, 38-65 and MARTIN (Ed.) (1979) *Mao Zedong Texte. Schriften, Dokumente, Reden und Gespräche*, München: 30-37. For more recent works on Lin Biao cf. to TEIWES (Jan. - Jul. 1988) *Mao and His Lieutenants*, *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, 1-80, and TEIWES & SUN (1996) *The Tragedy of Lin Biao. Riding the Tiger during the Cultural Revolution 1966-1971* London: 10-55. Probably the best source on the development of the Mao cult is LEESE (2006) *Performative Politics and Petrified Image: The Mao Cult during China's Cultural Revolution* (Ph.D. thesis). School of Humanities and Social Sciences, International University, Bremen. Leese describes Lin Biao as "one of the most enigmatic politicians of modern day China" (ibid. 99), who "used [the cult] as a symbolic medium to signal his loyalty to Mao Zedong" (ibid. 101). His contributions in furthering the Mao cult are traced through Lin's speeches and writings of the time (ibid. 106-10). While deemphasising the importance of Mao, Leese passes no judgement on the involvement of other actors (as Ye Qun, Lin Ligu, or Chen Boda) in shaping the cult.

early 1960 (Leese 2006:107), and propagated in the following years through *People's Liberation Army Daily*. It gained momentum by the publication of Volume 4 of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* in 1960 and the first internal (*neibu* 内部) edition of the "Little Red Book" in 1964.²⁷⁶ It reached national scale in the same year. The Cultural Revolution Mao worship was but the climax of this earlier cult. As in 1961, only a selection of "Reform Our Study" was quoted. This time, the strategy thus supported concerned learning theory by memorising quotations, investigations at grass-root level were of no concern. The method of learning advocated in 1964 was different from 1941, in retrospect it appears to have been almost contrary. While Mao in 1941 had harshly criticised the excessive and blind use of quotations from theoretical texts, in 1964 the memorisation of such quotations was outright propagated. On closer scrutiny, however, the contradiction can be resolved by arguing that Mao had foremost criticised dogmatic quoting, copying a foreign example as absolute rule for China, and had insisted on a more pragmatic method of investigating reality based on theory, of testing theory in practice. Propagandists in 1964 used the latter argument calling for a unity of theory and practice. However, further gaps between static canon and changing world to be bridged required more drastic measures. Thus the content of study (not Marxism-Leninism, but Mao Zedong Thought) and the reason for learning (not the Chinese revolution, but everyday problems at the workplace) were exchanged in paraphrased quotations of "Reform Our Study". As above, I will analyse some key articles of this campaign that contributed to the new image of "Reform Our Study" and outline the historical development that accompanied the propagation of "problem-oriented learning" in *People's Daily*.

After some preliminary articles,²⁷⁷ the mass movement to learn Mao Zedong Thought was kicked off by the front page editorial "Strive to study Mao Zedong Thought 努力学好毛泽东思想" of March 26, 1964: "'Strive to study Mao Zedong Thought!' has already become the thirst and pressing demand of a growing number of workers, peasants, intellectuals and the broad masses of cadres. By learning Mao Zedong Thought every person, every work unit, and every department advances one step further on the only way to revolutionise. The Chinese People's Liberation Army, under the leadership of the Military Commission of the CCP Central Committee and Comrade Lin

²⁷⁶ On the compilation, distribution and impact of the "Little Red Book" cf. LEESE (2006) *Performative Politics and Petrified Image: The Mao Cult during China's Cultural Revolution* (Ph.D. thesis). School of Humanities and Social Sciences, International University, Bremen: 122-150.

²⁷⁷ See for example: WEI SHUSHEN 魏书绅 (24.03.1964) 学习毛主席著作，自觉地改造思想 [Learn Chairman Mao's works, consciously reform our thinking], 人民日报, 2; LIAO CHUJIANG 廖初江 (05.03.1964) 学习毛主席著作的笔记 [Notes on studying Chairman Mao's works], 人民日报, 5.

Biao, hold high the great banner of Mao Zedong Thought, in the national mass movement to study Chairman Mao's works, it walks in the foremost front and procures outstanding results. '努力学好毛泽东思想！'已经成为越来越多的工人、农民、知识分子和广大干部如渴思饮的迫切要求。学习毛泽东思想，是使我们每个人、每个单位、每个部门进一步革命化的必由之路。中国人民解放军，在中央军委和林彪同志领导下，高举毛泽东思想的伟大红旗，在全国学习毛主席著作的群众运动中，走在最前列，取得显著的效果。部队工作日新月异，生气勃勃，进一步无产阶级化，进一步战斗化。”²⁷⁸ These first four sentences of the editorial convey some noteworthy facts to the public: The “movement to study Chairman Mao's works” began in the People's Liberation Army. Its initiator was Lin Biao. It is now extended to a “national mass movement” which includes “workers, peasants, intellectuals and the broad masses of cadres”. Remarkable is also the exaggerated style of the editorial that is witnessed in expressions as the “thirst and pressing demand” or “walks in the foremost front and procures outstanding results”. These phrases foreshadow what was to become the norm during the Cultural Revolution.²⁷⁹ Lastly, I want to draw some attention to the goal of the campaign: “to advance one step further on the only way to revolutionise”. The China Quarterly Chronicle judged that “the Party apparently feels the need to stir up the ‘spirit of revolution’ and cast aside the alleged bourgeois vices of ‘loving comfort and disdaining work, fearing difficulties and belittling physical labour,’ etc. (Quarterly Chronicle and Documentation 1964c:229).” At that time, at least some Party elders including Mao worried that “the revolution they led will be betrayed by their successors. (Quarterly Chronicle and Documentation 1964a:171)” The most compelling example of betrayal was the revisionism of Khrushchev in the Soviet Union.²⁸⁰ In the eyes of the CCP, the remedy to revisionism was to revolutionise society, a strategy carried to its utmost during the Cultural Revolution.

²⁷⁸ RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民日报社 (26.03.1964) 努力学好毛泽东思想 [Strive to study Mao Zedong Thought], 人民日报, 1.

²⁷⁹ Leese notes especially the influx of superlatives and elatives referring to the Chairman (LEESE (2006) *Performative Politics and Petrified Image: The Mao Cult during China's Cultural Revolution* (Ph.D. thesis). School of Humanities and Social Sciences, International University, Bremen: 144-6). Numerous other studies analyse the rhetoric and terminology of the Cultural Revolution and its impact on behaviour. SCHOENHALS (1993) *Talk About a Revolution: Red Guards, Government Cadres, and the Language of Political Discourse*, Indiana East Asian Working Paper Series on Language and Politics in Modern China, vol. 1, Bloomington; WAGNER (1996) *Song of the Red Guards: Keywords Set to Music*, Indiana East Asian Working Paper Series on Language and Politics in Modern China, vol. 10, Bloomington; JI FENGYUAN (2004) *Linguistic Engineering. Language and Politics in Mao's China* Honolulu.

²⁸⁰ The Chinese view on and arguments against Khrushchev's revisionism are best illustrated by a collection of documents on the general line of the international Communist movement. See: *Die Polemik über die Generallinie der internationalen kommunistischen Bewegung* (1965), Peking.

After three further paragraphs of adulating Mao Zedong Thought, the editorial turns to more concrete issues:

- 1) What indeed is known as mastering Mao Zedong Thought? 怎样才叫做学好毛泽东思想呢?²⁸¹
- 2) How is one able to master Mao Zedong Thought? 怎样才能学好毛泽东思想呢?
- 3) Does the principle of problem-oriented learning damage the unified system of Mao Zedong Thought? 带着问题学的原则，会不会破坏毛泽东思想的完整体系呢?

Responding to the second question the first quotation from “Reform Our Study” is introduced:

How is one able to master Mao Zedong Thought? Just by adopting the Marxist-Leninist attitude of linking theory with practice. Comrade Mao Zedong pointed out in the article “Reform Our Study”: *‘With this attitude, one studies the theory of Marxism-Leninism with a purpose, that is, to integrate Marxist-Leninist theory with the actual movement of the Chinese revolution and to seek from this theory the stand, viewpoint and method with which to solve the theoretical and tactical problems of the Chinese revolution.’* To master Mao Zedong Thought, one must adopt this attitude. Learn according to the requirement of our work, consult Mao Zedong Thought so as to solve the requirements of the class struggle, production struggle and scientific experimentation facing us. *Shooting the arrow at the target*, shoot with the ‘arrow’ Mao Zedong Thought at the ‘target’, i.e. our work. [Paragraph mark] Several years ago, following the directive of the Military Commission and Comrade Lin Biao, the People’s Liberation Army adopted the methods of ‘problem-oriented learning, lively learning and lively using, unite learning and use, in urgent need learn first, get an instant result’, to learn Mao Zedong Thought. The experience of the several years [since then] has proven: This method not only suits the broad masses, but moreover suits all levels of cadres. 怎样才能学好毛泽东思想呢? 就是要采取马克思列宁主义的态度，理论和实际相联系。毛泽东同志在《改造我们的学习》一文中指出：‘在这种态度下，就是要有目的地去研究马克思列宁主义的理论，要使马克思列宁主义的理论和中国革命的实际运动结合起来，是为着解决中国革命的理论问题和策略问题而去从它找立场，找观点，找方法的。’学习毛泽东思想，应当采取这种态度。为了我们的工作而去学习，为了解决我们面临的阶级斗争、生产斗争和科学实验的需要，去请教毛泽东思想。有的放矢，以毛泽东思想之‘矢’，去射我们工作之‘的’。 [Paragraph mark] 几年来，人民解放军根据中央军委和林彪同志的指示，采取‘带着问题学，活学活用，学用结合，急用先学，立竿见影’的方法，学习毛主席著作。几年来的实践证明：这个方法，不但适合于广大群众，并且适合于各级干部。 [my emphasis highlights marked and unmarked quotations from “Reform Our Study”]

Here, Mao’s textual authority is invoked to answer the question of “How is one able to master Mao Zedong Thought?” Preceding the very quotation, its source’s title is mentioned: “Reform Our Study”. Thus, it is hinted that Mao himself advised the Party at one point in time to reform their style of learning, tacitly concluding: now again it’s time to make some changes. The quotation stresses two arguments that are later seized on: first, one has to study with a purpose; second, one has to integrate theory and practice. By 1941, theory of course had been Marxist-Leninist theory, whereas practice referred to the Chinese revolution. Thus, the original quotation by Mao in “Reform Our Study” reads:

²⁸¹ The answer to this question was: “Just by being capable of consciously using Mao Zedong Thought to solve practical problems of class struggle, production struggle and scientific experimentation. 就是能够自觉地运用毛泽东思想解决阶级斗争、生产斗争和科学实验的实际问题。” The content of this newly coined formula is then traced back to Mao quoting Lenin in the article “On Practice”. By quoting Lenin through a text by Mao, the latter’s superiority in ideological questions is emphasised, a trend visible in many articles of this time.

“Such an attitude is one of shooting the arrow at the target. The ‘target’ is the Chinese revolution, the ‘arrow’ is Marxism-Leninism. 这种态度，就是有的放矢的态度。‘的’就是中国革命，‘矢’就是马克思列宁主义。” In 1964, the situation has changed and we witness a paraphrasing of the original quotation: “Shooting the arrow at the target, shoot with the ‘arrow’ Mao Zedong Thought at the ‘target’, i.e. our work.”²⁸² Mao Zedong Thought has replaced Marxism-Leninism, current problems of work and struggle are no longer solved by learning Marxism-Leninism, but Mao Zedong Thought. A change of conditions obviously led to a paraphrasing of the canon. But even though the changes were probably seen as positive – the revolution had been successful, Marxism-Leninism had been sinicised as Mao Zedong Thought – the paraphrase symbolised how the gap between canon and world had grown. The editorial went on detailing on the learning strategies invented by Lin Biao and tested for several years in the army.²⁸³ One of the key terms mentioned was “problem-oriented learning 带着问题学”, coined by Lin Biao in 1960-61.²⁸⁴ The idea behind this formula was that the works of Marxism-Leninism and especially Mao Zedong Thought bore the solutions to any problem of the past, present and future. The method of “problem-oriented learning” was to read, use and thereby learn bits and pieces of ideology. The process of learning was directed by the problems each learner encountered in his or her daily work. This method of learning ideology from Lin Biao was opposed by Marshall Luo Ronghuan 罗荣桓.²⁸⁵ Luo argued that because the world is constantly evolving we cannot expect to find answers for our problems in books written by earlier generations. They cannot provide us with a panacea. Moreover, Luo criticised the idea that an army could be built by learning some quotations of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*.²⁸⁶ The last criticism was directed

²⁸² The same quotation was similarly rephrased in JIEFANGJUN BAO SHE 解放军报社 (06.01.1991) 坚定政治方向，提高阶级觉悟，增强战斗意志 [Hold firm to the political direction, heighten class consciousness, strengthen the will to fight], 解放军报, 1.

²⁸³ LEESE (2006) *Performative Politics and Petrified Image: The Mao Cult during China's Cultural Revolution* (Ph.D. thesis). School of Humanities and Social Sciences, International University, Bremen: 99-121.

²⁸⁴ Sources reporting on the origin of this phrase contradict each other. All attribute the phrase to Lin Biao, but the date and source given diverge. Li Junru attributes it to the “Directive on strengthening political and ideological work 关于加强政治思想工作的指示” by Lin Biao from January 1961 (LI JUNRU 李君如 (1997) 现实：邓小平论毛泽东 [Reality: Deng Xiaoping discusses Mao Zedong], 毛泽东邓小平理论研究, 15-22). Other sources trace the phrase back to a talk of Lin Biao at a meeting of the Military Commission in Sept. – Oct. 1960 (JIN DEXING 靳德行 (Ed.) (1989) 中华人民共和国史 [History of the People's Republic of China], 河南: 319 and HUANG YAO 黄瑶 (Ed.) (2002) 罗荣桓年谱 [Chronicle of Luo Ronghuan], 北京: 808-9).

²⁸⁵ Luo was not the only Party member to criticise Lin Biao's methods of learning Mao Zedong Thought; others include Deng Xiaoping and Lu Dingyi. For a summary of their arguments see LEESE (2006) *Performative Politics and Petrified Image: The Mao Cult during China's Cultural Revolution* (Ph.D. thesis). School of Humanities and Social Sciences, International University, Bremen: 119-121.

²⁸⁶ On the Lin-Luo controversy confer to HUANG YAO 黄瑶 (Ed.) (2002) 罗荣桓年谱 [Chronicle of Luo Ronghuan], 北京: 810-1 and 815-6.

against Lin Biao's drive to emphasise ideology instead of expertise, to build an army on indoctrination rather than professionalism as Lin's predecessor as Minister of Defence Peng Dehuai 彭德怀 had done. Luo succeeded in rallying the members of the Central Committee behind him. Mao, however, neither wholly condemned nor wholly approved of the views of either opponent. In the three years from December 1960 to December 1963, the campaign spread in the army, but was not given any significant publicity in *People's Daily*. By 1964, however, the situation had changed. The main critic Luo Ronghuan died on December 16, 1963 after prolonged illness;²⁸⁷ the Socialist Education Campaign was still on the move;²⁸⁸ and with the promotion of the model soldier Lei Feng 雷锋 in 1963, tentative steps had been taken to start a campaign to "learn from the army", which was endorsed by Mao.²⁸⁹ The new style of learning Mao Zedong Thought – problem-oriented learning – was to be introduced to a wider public; the above quoted front page editorial can be seen as main starting point of the campaign.

In answering the third question – Does the principle of problem-oriented learning damage the unified system of Mao Zedong Thought? –, we find a public reflection and circumvention of the previous disputes about "problem-oriented learning" (see above): "Comrade Liao Chujiang has answered this question according to his personal experience. Problem-oriented learning is a cyclical process from the specific to the general, and from the general to the specific; 带着问题学的原则, 会不会破坏毛泽东思想的完整体系呢? 廖初江同志根据他的切身体会, 回答了这个问题。带着问题学是从个别到一般、一般到个别的循环过程;" This time, no direct quotation from "Reform Our Study" nor the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* was used to confute the criticism inherent in the question – maybe because no fitting quotation could be found. But the propagandists had carefully prepared the staging of this editorial. Twenty days in advance, on March 5, the notes of the above mentioned Liao Chujiang 廖初江 had been published in *People's Daily*.²⁹⁰ Therein, Liao narrated his way of mastering Mao Zedong Thought following Lin Biao's directive.²⁹¹ In the later

²⁸⁷ Quarterly Chronicle and Documentation (Jan. - Mar. 1964), *The China Quarterly*, 261-271: 264.

²⁸⁸ MACFARQUHAR (1997) *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution. The Coming of the Cataclysm 1961-1966* vol. 3, Oxford: 334-348.

²⁸⁹ Mao was asked and granted to contribute a calligraphy in his own hand for the propagation of the story of Lei Feng (see MACFARQUHAR (1997) *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution. The Coming of the Cataclysm 1961-1966* vol. 3, Oxford: 338). For a short overview on the planning of the campaign see *ibid.* 338f.

²⁹⁰ LIAO CHUJIANG 廖初江 (05.03.1964) 学习毛主席著作的笔记 [Notes on studying Chairman Mao's works], 人民日报, 5.

²⁹¹ Proof by individual example and calling for the emulation of model experiences had been practiced for some years in the propaganda of the army. This strategy is analysed in LEESE (2006) *Performative Politics and Petrified Image: The*

published editorial of March 26, it became possible to refer any critics of Lin's study method back to Liao's publicly available narrative. Though not quoting the characters of "Reform Our Study", this may be interpreted as an act of quoting its spirit – testing theory by practice. The press campaign in *People's Daily* was further shaped by at least one editorial and amplified by personal success stories of soldiers, workers and intellectuals often commented on by *People's Daily's* staff. I first want to shortly analyze the use of "Reform Our Study" in the editorial and then focus on the personal success stories to show how they might have changed the public perception of "Reform Our Study".

On April 8, 1964, *People's Daily* printed a synopsis of a *People's Liberation Army Daily* editorial of the day before. It was titled "On problem-oriented learning 论带着问题学". The writers of the editorial took great care to justify Lin Biao's new learning method. They used not only quotations from "Reform Our Study" for this task, but referred to three other Mao texts – "Rectify the party's style of work 整顿党的作风" of February 1, 1942; "Strategic questions of the Chinese revolutionary war 中国革命战争的战略问题" of December 1936; and "On contradictions 矛盾论" of August 1937 – before finally employing utterances of Liu Shaoqi made at his recent visit to Vietnam.

Problem-oriented learning is the embodiment of the principle of the "unity of theory and practice" always maintained by Marxism-Leninism. In his text 《Reform Our Study》, Chairman Mao pointed out two kinds of mutually opposed learning attitudes: One kind is the subjectivist attitude: "With this attitude, a person studies [learns] Marxist-Leninist theory in the abstract and without any aim. He goes to Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin not to seek the stand, viewpoint and method with which to solve the theoretical and tactical problems of the Chinese revolution but to study [xuexi] theory purely for theory's sake. He does not shoot the arrow at the target but shoots at random." The other kind is the Marxist-Leninist attitude: "With this attitude, one studies the theory of Marxism-Leninism with a purpose, that is, to integrate Marxist-Leninist theory with the actual movement of the Chinese revolution and to seek from this theory the stand, viewpoint and method with which to solve the theoretical and tactical problems of the Chinese revolution. Such an attitude is one of shooting the arrow at the target." Problem-oriented learning completely embodies just this kind of Marxist-Leninist attitude, such an attitude is one of shooting the arrow at the target. 带着问题学, 是马克思列宁主义历来所坚持的“理论和实际统一”的原则的具体化。毛主席在《改造我们的学习》一文中, 指出过两种互相对立的学习态度。一种是主观主义的态度: “在这种态度下, 就是抽象地无目的地去研究马克思列宁主义的理论。不是为了要解决中国革命的理论问题、策略问题而到马克思、恩格斯、列宁、斯大林那里找立场, 找观点, 找方法, 而是为了单纯地学理论而去学理论。不是有的放矢, 而是无的放矢。”一种是马克思列宁主义的态度: “在这种态度下, 就是要有目的地去研究马克思列宁主义的理论, 要使马克思列宁主义的理论和中国革命的实际运动结合起来, 是为着解决中国革命的理论问题和策略问题而去从它找立场, 找观点, 找方法的。这种态度, 就是有的放矢的态度。”带着问题学, 就完全体现了这种马克思列宁主义的态度, 有的放矢的态度。[my emphasis] (Renmin ribao she 人民出版社 1964.04.08)

Problem-oriented learning, here, is traced back to Mao's two types of learning elaborated on in "Reform Our Study". As in the first editorial, quotations taken from "Reform Our Study" were

introduced by naming the title of this prototext.²⁹² Here again, the title itself was used as a meaningful quotation: We have to reform our learning! The following two quotations given in the quoted paragraph above characterise not only the positive attitude, but also its negative counterpart. However, most interesting in this case is the embedding of the quotation: “Problem-oriented learning is the embodiment of the principle of the ‘*union of theory and practice*’ always maintained by Marxism-Leninism. [...] Problem-oriented learning completely embodies just this kind of Marxist-Leninist attitude, *the attitude of shooting the arrow at the target*. [my emphasis]” The first and the last sentence of the above paragraph both quote phrases from “Reform Our Study” (set in *italics*). Lin Biao’s method of problem-oriented learning is not only linked to Marxism-Leninism, but through these phrases to Mao Zedong Thought as well. Note again the exaggerated expressions “embodiment of the principle”, “always maintained” or “completely embodies”. However, without Mao’s assent it is not likely that any Chinese paper would have honoured another living member of the Party with formulations as these.²⁹³

How did the people react to Lin Biao’s call for problem-oriented learning? The propaganda machinery, of course, left none in doubt of the new method’s usefulness, success, and aid to the people. A first instance of such reporting is found on March 30, 1964, only four days after the first editorial calling for the nationwide study movement. Therein, “Reform Our Study” is promoted as guide to the people’s actions. The article reported that philosophy students from Fudan University in Shanghai went out of their classroom to learn philosophy in the company of workers.²⁹⁴ They were astonished to find that the workers had a deeper understanding of Marxism-Leninism than they themselves, who had been learning it from books for several years. They concluded that only the progressive classes can learn progressive ideology; therefore, every intellectual has first to become a revolutionary by uniting with the workers and peasants. The article is accompanied by a short commentary stressing the most important results of the students’ experience and asking everybody,

²⁹² Noteworthy, sentences taken from “Rectify the party’s style of work” and “Strategic questions of the Chinese revolutionary war” are quoted without giving a source.

²⁹³ Mao is recorded as praising Lin Biao for “proposing some very good measures for army building 提出了几个很好的部队建设的措施”. Cf. BOXUN 博讯 (2004.10.22) 林彪是政治骗子吗 [Was Lin Biao a political seducer]. <http://news.boxun.com/news/gb/pubvp/2004/10/200410221136.shtml>, accessed: 12.06.2007, downloaded: 12.06.2007. Moreover, Lin’s contribution was valued as a “creative application” of Mao’s thought (POWELL (Apr. - Jun. 1968) The Increasing Power of Lin Piao and the Party-Soldiers 1959-1966, *The China Quarterly*, 38-65: 50).

²⁹⁴ RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民日报社 (30.03.1964) 复旦哲学系同学和工人一起学哲学 [Students of the philosophy department of Fudan University and workers learn together philosophy], 人民日报, 1.

not just the young, to go out and unite with the workers.²⁹⁵ The personal narrative of the students is adorned by several quotations from the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, but “Reform Our Study” is only mentioned in title. It belongs to those articles, the students reported, that caused them to leave their classroom and unite with the workers and peasants. The commentary takes up and enlarges a quotation from “Reform Our Study” describing the correct attitude to learn Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought: “The Marxist-Leninist attitude of learning ideology, ‘is one of shooting the arrow at the target. The “target” is the Chinese revolution, the “arrow” is Marxism-Leninism. We Chinese Communists have been seeking this “arrow” because we want to hit the “target” of the Chinese revolution and of the revolution of the East.’ 马克思列宁主义的学习理论的态度, ‘就是有的放矢的态度。“的”就是中国革命, “矢”就是马克思列宁主义。我们中国共产党人所以要找这根“矢”, 就是为了要射中国革命和东方革命这个“的”的。’”²⁹⁶ Note that none of the articles of this campaign added the next sentences of Mao in “Reform Our Study”: “Such an attitude is one of seeking truth from facts. ‘Facts’ are all the things that exist objectively, ‘truth’ means their internal relations, that is, the laws governing them, and ‘to seek’ means to do research.”²⁹⁷ These sentences had featured prominently during the 1961 quest for investigation and research. They resurfaced in 1977 to end the style of quoting Mao’s works out-of-context, a style of which we witness birth and growth (see below). Lin Biao’s learning principles did not aim at “Seeking truth from facts” but rather at seeking truth from the quotations of Chairman Mao. They did not emphasise the research of objective conditions, instead, they emphasised exegetical bonding²⁹⁸ through habitualised formalistic worship of symbols as Mao, Mao Zedong Thought, or the *Quotations of Chairman Mao*.²⁹⁹

I want to introduce a last article before closing this paragraph. It was titled “Chairman Mao’s works armed my thinking毛主席著作武装了我的思想” and published in *People’s Daily* on June 7,

²⁹⁵ RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民日报社 (30.03.1964) 长知识? 还是找武器? [Acquire knowledge? Or seek a weapon?], 人民日报, 1.

²⁹⁶ RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民日报社 (30.03.1964) 长知识? 还是找武器? [Acquire knowledge? Or seek a weapon?], 人民日报, 1.

²⁹⁷ MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1941.05.19) 改造我们的学习 [Reform Our Study]. In: 毛泽东选集 [Selected Works of Mao Zedong], vol. 3, 4th ed., 北京: 759.

²⁹⁸ This terminology is used to analyse the Yan’an Rectification Campaign in APTER & SAICH (1994) *Revolutionary Discourse in Mao’s Republic* Cambridge, Mass.; for the Cultural Revolution cf. to LEESE (2006) *Performative Politics and Petrified Image: The Mao Cult during China’s Cultural Revolution* (Ph.D. thesis). School of Humanities and Social Sciences, International University, Bremen: 110-6.

²⁹⁹ Leese similarly notes that “Lin’s notion of studying theory was based on the premise that theory was not necessarily to be understood by cognitive means but in a ritualised fashion through a process of habitual action.” See: LEESE (2006) *Performative Politics and Petrified Image: The Mao Cult during China’s Cultural Revolution* (Ph.D. thesis). School of Humanities and Social Sciences, International University, Bremen: 107.

1964.³⁰⁰ In this article “Reform Our Study” is again recommended as *the* important text to understand the correct learning attitude. This time, the convert is no intellectual, but a low-level military with peasant background called Feng Fusheng 丰福生. Though he has read the works of Mao before, Feng now discovers that his understanding of Mao Zedong Thought is still insufficient. In 1964, Feng is a kitchen work leader in a department of the air force; born into a poor peasant family he hasn’t received any education or training; the CCP has saved him from starvation and has given him some training in reading and writing; finally, when the first volume of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* appeared in 1951 he rejoiced in being able to read and understand Mao’s articles: “I felt at once, Chairman Mao’s knowledge of our working people’s hardship is really clear, he speaks out the words on our mind, if the working people want to liberate themselves, they must listen to Chairman Mao’s words, and rise up in revolution. 我就觉得，毛主席对我们劳动人民的苦情知道的真清楚，把我们心里的话都讲出来了，劳动人民要翻身就要听毛主席的话，起来革命。(Feng Fusheng 丰福生 1964.06.07)” The article continues in this personal, enthusiastic style to detail Feng’s thoughts and feelings while studying one article of Mao’s after another. But in 1955, Feng joins the army and is given a job in the kitchen. As he finds his work dull, he asks for transfer. For this he is reprimanded by his superior, accused of not listening to Mao’s talks and advised to learn it better. In quest of a better method to study Mao’s works he finally reads “Reform Our Study” a second time, and light dawns on him! He has employed a subjectivist attitude of learning: “With this attitude, a person studies [yanjiu] Marxist-Leninist theory in the abstract and without any aim. He goes to Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin not to seek the stand, viewpoint and method with which to solve the theoretical and tactical problems of the Chinese revolution but to study [xue] theory purely for theory’s sake. He does not shoot the arrow at the target but shoots at random. 在这种态度下，就是抽象地无目的地去研究马克思列宁主义的理论。不是为了要解决中国革命的理论问题、策略问题而到马克思、恩格斯、列宁、斯大林那里找立场，找观点，找方法，而是为了单纯地学理论而去学理论。不是有的放矢，而是无的放矢。” Now, he sets out anew to study Mao’s works and overcomes his thinking that kitchen work is uninteresting.

As in 1961, “Reform Our Study” is recommended as basic text to remedy shortcomings in learning. The remedy this time was not investigation and research, but the unity of theory and practice as embodied in “problem-oriented learning”. In all articles, “Reform Our Study” was used in

³⁰⁰ FENG FUSHENG 丰福生 (07.06.1964) 毛主席著作武装了我的思想 [Chairman Mao's works armed my thinking], 人民日报, 5. The following description and quotations are taken from the same article.

title and partly in content to justify Lin Biao's method of learning Mao Zedong thought bit by bit and as present conditions commanded. In more than one case, the argumentation of the original text was transformed in favour of Mao. His works now replace Marxism-Leninism. And again as in 1961, it is only a part of the original source text that is referred to. The prototext was condensed to a few quintessential sentences. Their correctness was hailed to have been proven in practice not only by Mao in 1941, but again by intellectuals, militaries, and others in 1964. Thus, the propaganda campaign accompanying the "mass movement to learn Mao Zedong Thought" by problem-oriented learning followed its own method right from the beginning: The people's style of learning had to be changed. The remedy was found in "Reform Our Study", a part of Mao Zedong Thought. A few sentences were extracted from this article and repeatedly quoted to score the point. These sentences built the condensed form of symbolical capital utilised by Lin Biao in 1964.

1971: Party Building Amidst the Cultural Revolution

In 1971, the largest statistical peak of quoting "Reform Our Study" in *People's Daily* is found. 67 articles quoted 107 sentences from "Reform Our Study" throughout the year. 25 of these articles referred the reader directly to "Reform Our Study" by quoting its title. About half of the quoted sentences were short phrases as "Reform Our Study", "the unity of theory and practice 理论和实际统一" or "The Marxist-Leninist attitude 马克思列宁主义的态度". The other half however conveyed more of the content and spirit of the source text. What triggered the renewed usage of "Reform Our Study"? Was it related to the conflict breaking out between Mao Zedong and his 'closest comrade in arms and designated heir Lin Biao' that culminated in Lin's death on September 13, 1971? The first signs of this conflict were traced back by historians to the 2nd Plenum of the 9th Central Committee in August 1970.³⁰¹ Was it part of the campaign against Mao's former secretary and ghostwriter Chen Boda? Or was it just the Cultural Revolution style of celebrating the thirtieth anniversary of "Reform Our Study"? And what image of "Reform Our Study" was constructed in 1971 in quoting its sentences? In this part, I argue that in 1971 we can detect *both* images given previously to "Reform Our Study", i.e. in 1961 and in 1964. While calling for a reform of working style and recommending the method of investigation and research (as in 1961) to counterbalance the zeal and enthusiasm in work during the first years of the Cultural Revolution, the same articles also recommend the study of canonical articles. Moreover, while articles quoting "Reform Our Study"

³⁰¹ MACFARQUHAR & SCHOENHALS (2006) *Mao's Last Revolution* Cambridge, Mass.: 324-36.

ask for an objective testing of theory in practice, they simultaneously portray the emotional stimulus witnessed in individuals who studied the canon.

Early in 1971, *People's Daily* began publishing articles calling for a renewed effort to study Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought. This very fact might astonish readers familiar with Cultural Revolution history or personal narratives thereof, as both sources document the public's familiarity especially with Mao Zedong Thought, being the result of policies and group dynamics. Why in 1971 should a renewed effort to study the canon be made, in a year generally known as down-cooling period of the Mao cult? A directive from the province Heilongjiang published in *People's Daily* on January 4, 1971, might help to answer these questions:

The broad masses of revolutionary cadres in our province [i.e. Heilongjiang] were tested and trained through the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Their awareness of class struggle, line struggle and continuous revolution has thus advanced very much. But under the fast developing new conditions of the socialist revolution and construction, many *cadre's theoretical level* of Marxism, Leninism, and Mao Zedong Thought is not high. Their consciousness in carrying out Chairman Mao's revolutionary line is not strong enough. At work one can still find utter blindness unsuited to current conditions or to our undertakings. Especially among the *leading group of the three-in-one*, new members have increased who lack experience. Some old cadres have still not wholly understood how to 'correctly approach the three' (correctly approach the Great Cultural Revolution, correctly approach the masses, correctly approach oneself). Army, cadres, masses, old, middle-aged, and young, all have to learn afresh, advance unceasingly. 我省广大革命干部经过无产阶级文化大革命的考验和锻炼, 阶级斗争、路线斗争和继续革命的觉悟有了很大的提高。但是, 在社会主义革命和社会主义建设迅速发展的新形势下, 不少干部的马克思主义、列宁主义、毛泽东思想理论水平不高, 贯彻毛主席革命路线的自觉性不够强, 工作中还存在着很大的盲目性, 与当前形势和我们担当的任务很不适应。特别是在三结合的领导班子中, 新成份增加, 缺少经验, 有些老干部‘三个正确对待’ (正确对待文化大革命, 正确对待群众, 正确对待自己) 还没有完全解决, 无论军、干、群, 老、中、青, 都需要重新学习, 不断提高。[my emphasis] (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1971.01.04)

The main target, the directive shows, was the “leading group of the three-in-one”, i.e. the newly built Revolutionary Committees consisting of members from the military, the Party and the masses. Its “new members” were found to be lacking thorough theoretical knowledge of Marxism, Leninism, and Mao Zedong Thought, and some of its “old members” were accused of misunderstanding current policies.³⁰² Thus, the situation in 1971 bears some resemblance to that described by Mao in “Reform

³⁰² The target of the campaign were not the Red Guards as one might be led to suspect. They had already been disbanded and sent to the countryside and factories two years ago. Instead, this education campaign targeted Party cadres. It focused on rebuilding and remoulding the party after its disintegration during the first years of the Cultural Revolution. Party building went hand in hand with a rectification of working style and working methods. Historians note that Mao repeatedly demanded especially of high Party cadres to earnestly study Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought during the campaign to criticise Chen Boda: “Inform comrades in all places that during launching the Campaign to Criticise Chen [Boda] and Rectify the Working Style the emphasis is on criticising Chen, the rectification of working style is second to that. 请告各地同志, 开展批陈整风运动时重点在批陈, 其次才是整风。” See: MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1998) 建国以来毛泽东文稿 [Manuscripts by Mao Zedong since the liberation of China] 北京: 206-7. See also JIN DEXING 靳德行 (Ed.) (1989) 中华人民共和国史 [History of the People's Republic of China], 河南: 385. Chen was targeted for criticism by Mao for his attack on the Cultural Revolution Group and alliance with Lin Biao during the 2nd Plenum of the 9th Central Committee at Lushan (MACFARQUHAR & SCHOENHALS (2006) *Mao's Last Revolution*

Our Study” in 1941: Old Party members commit errors of dogmatism lacking experience, new members commit errors of empiricism caused by a lack of theoretical training. As in 1941, in 1971 the remedy to these shortcomings is found in a reform of learning. Next to the canonical articles “Rectify the Party’s style of work”, “Oppose stereotyped Party writing”, and “Preface and postscript to *Rural Surveys*”, “Reform Our Study” is recommended by the directive as study document so as to develop a correct learning and working style.³⁰³ All four documents had similarly been promoted for study during the Yan’an Rectification Campaign, as I have already mentioned above. The directive from Heilongjiang is no individual attempt, but the implementation of a circular issued on behalf of the Central Committee on November 6, 1970, titled “Concerning problems of learning of high-level cadres 关于高级干部学习问题的通知”. This circular advised high-level cadres to study six works of Marxism-Leninism and five works of Mao Zedong Thought.³⁰⁴ As in 1961 and 1964, “Reform Our Study” came thus to feature as guidebook for cadres on how to conduct their working tasks. But what working style were the cadres to learn from “Reform Our Study” in 1971? At least in early 1971, this working style still seemed to include Lin Biao’s “problem-oriented learning”, or so I read the new year joint publication by *People’s Daily*, *People’s Liberation Army Daily*, and *Red Flag* that called to “continuously, broadly, and deeply develop the mass movement of the living study and application of Mao Zedong Thought 继续广泛深入地开展活学活用毛泽东思想群众运动”, but also stressed the importance “in the whole Party [to] carry out education about the ideological and political line 在全党进行一次思想和政治路线方面的教育” (1971.01.01).

Another article published in March, explicated three main errors committed by the Revolutionary Committees that again remind strongly of the situation in 1961: (1) to consider oneself

Cambridge, Mass.: 332-3). It is less certain why Mao called for a rectification of the Party to go hand in hand with the criticism of Chen. As Mao’s former secretary and ideological expert, Chen had probably ghostwritten some of the articles subsumed under Mao Zedong Thought. How could studying Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought then help cadres to understand and accept the ousting of Chen? But although criticism of Chen should precede the rectification of working style, neither the name of the criticised, i.e. Chen Boda 陈伯达, nor the name of the campaign, i.e. Campaign to Criticise Chen and Rectify the Working Style 批陈整风运动, was mentioned once in *People’s Daily* throughout the whole year of 1971. No direct link is thus established between the criticism of Chen Boda and the articles quoting “Reform Our Study” in *People’s Daily*. This missing link is only established through the analysis of lately available archival material by historians.

³⁰³ Further study material recommended by the directive were: (1) Study the “Three articles 老三篇” (“Serve the people 为人民服务”, “In memory of Norman Bethune 纪念白求恩”, “The foolish old man who moved the mountains 愚公移山”), as well as “On practice”, “On contradictions”, “On the correct handling of contradictions among the people”, “Talk at the national propaganda work conference of the CCP” and “Where do correct ideas come from?”. (2) Study the history and documents of the two-line struggle to be able to understand and choose the correct line in future struggles.

³⁰⁴ These five works are the same ones as recommended under (1), fn. 303 in the directive from Heilongjiang. Cf. ZENG DINGBEN 增订本 (Ed.) (1991) 中国共产党执政四十年 1949-1989 [40 years governance by the Communist Party of China 1949-1989], 北京: 334.

as freight-station handing down directives from above without further thought or work; (2) to proceed with work and develop ideas by relying on old experiences; and (3) to be too busy to have time for squatting or in other words for investigation and research work at all levels of society (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1971.03.31). These errors of working style, the article went on, should be rectified by a two-fold strategy also reminiscent of 1961: on the one hand by carrying out investigation and research among the masses, on the other hand by studying Mao's articles on work style like "Oppose bookishness" or "Reform Our Study", and emulating Mao's prototypical rural investigations of the 1930s. It seems paradox that a canonical article as "Reform Our Study" based solely on old experiences is now promoted as guidebook of a new education campaign that criticised among others "reliance on old experiences". This paradox can be explained if one assumes that a distinction was drawn between current directives and canonical texts. Such a distinction would then also pertain to truth values: Whereas the canon is everlastingly true, directives have to be evaluated by practice. Though such a distinction is normal for cultures dominated by a ruling canon, it is not always pertained in China. The experience in 1978, and to a lesser degree in 1941 and 1961, attest to the opposite (see above and below).

Thus far, I have discussed how "Reform Our Study" as a whole article was used in 1971. Now, I want to focus on the use of marked and unmarked quotations thereof: Soon thereafter, *People's Daily* began publishing individual success stories of model learners. The message conveyed to the public by these stories, however, was multifaceted to say the least. While passages from "Reform Our Study" are quoted that stress the importance of investigation and research, the actions taken by the model learners stress the study of Mao's texts, and ritualised actions such as criticism and self-criticism. One such example singled out for his success in studying and applying Mao Zedong Thought was Zhang Dianchen 张殿臣, a political commissar of the Wuhan army corps. He wrote an article titled "Investigating is solving problems 调查就是解决问题" about his personal experience in solving disunity among political and military leaders:

Why could I not solve their [i.e. company and cadres] ideological estrangement after spending [so much] energy myself? With this problem in mind, I studied the philosophical works of Chairman Mao. Chairman Mao says: "*We should proceed from the actual conditions inside and outside the country, the province, county or district, and derive from them, as our guide to action, laws which are inherent in them and not imaginary, that is, we should find the internal relations of the events occurring around us.*" In comparison with Chairman Mao's teaching, I felt at once: My own actions were exactly contrary to the teaching of Chairman Mao. I did not proceed from objectively existing facts, *did not do thorough investigation and study [yanjiu], did not appropriate the material in detail*, and really grasp the reason why company and cadres were not united. Instead my actions were only based on things that my own subjective imagination had put forward and I had imposed these on other people. 为什么自己花了力气还不能解决他们的思想隔阂呢? 我带着这个问题学习了毛主席的哲学著作。毛主席说: '我们要从国内外、省内外、县内

外、区内外实际情况出发，从其中引出其固有的而不是臆造的规律性，即找出周围事变的内部联系，作为我们行动的向导。’用毛主席的教导一对照，我就感到：自己的作法恰恰是和毛主席的教导相违背的。我不是从客观存在的事实出发，作周密的调查研究，详细地占有材料，真正掌握连队干部不团结的原因，而是单凭自己主观想象出来的东西，强加在别人的身上。[my emphasis highlights marked and unmarked quotations from “Reform Our Study”] (Zhang Dianchen 张殿臣 1971.04.19)

The article went on explaining that whereas before studying “Reform Our Study”, Zhang Dianchen had unsuccessfully called a meeting to solve the estrangement by studying directives, discussing specific problems and talking about his own experience, he now met with the leaders and studied different works and ideas of Chairman Mao, used criticism and self-criticism and other methods and could thus easily solve all problems. Ironically, it seems that the works and ideas of Chairman Mao provided Zhang with information on “*the actual conditions*” in this case. In his article, Zhang quoted one sentence of “Reform Our Study” as clue to his ‘enlightenment’ (see the quotation above). This sentence made him “feel at once” what his own errors had been and how to change his working style. Of special significance to me seems the use of the verb 感到 that can be translated as “to feel” or “to sense”. Instead of using a verb like “discover”, “understand”, or “know”, connected to our understanding, to our brain, Zhang expresses himself in words relating to his senses, to his heart. Under the Cultural Revolution Mao cult, the truth of Mao Zedong Thought is not understood by the brain, but felt by the heart of a person. Moreover, by declaring quotations to trigger ‘enlightenment’, they gain an almost magic or religious quality, comparable to Chan Buddhist mantras. Such a quoting style resulted of Lin Biao’s “problem-oriented learning” method, and was contrary to Mao’s ideas of investigation and research as proposed in “Reform Our Study” and especially with Mao’s more recent views: At least since the 9th congress in the spring of 1969, Mao had repeatedly expressed an unwillingness to the personality cult fostered during the Cultural Revolution. In tune with Mao, the vulgarisation of Mao Zedong Thought through random application of quotations and printing of Mao’s image was criticised by different leaders. Hence, the personality cult was cooled down in the following years. This is illustrated by figures on quoting Mao. The expression “Chairman Mao said”, commonly used to introduce a quotation by Mao, was used in *People’s Daily* in 1968 about 1400 times, in 1970 980 times, and by 1972 we are down to 330 instances.³⁰⁵ On his tour to the provinces in the fall of 1971, Mao criticised the very notion that one of his sentences was

³⁰⁵ Result of search in RENMIN RIBAO SHE XINWEN XINXI ZHONGXIN 人民日报社新闻信息中心 (2007) 人民日报电子版 [People’s Daily electronic edition]. <http://erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/han/renminribao-ext/peking.sbb.spk-berlin.de/WEB/index2.html> for the phrase “毛主席%说”. For a similar argument based on further statistical data, cf. LEESE (2006) *Performative Politics and Petrified Image: The Mao Cult during China’s Cultural Revolution* (Ph.D. thesis). School of Humanities and Social Sciences, International University, Bremen: 257-261 and 266.

worth ten thousand sentences by others, a notion that had been put forward by Lin Biao. He argued “One sentence is just one sentence, how can it surpass ten thousand sentences? 一句就是一句，怎么能顶一万句。”³⁰⁶ Accordingly, one might interpret the quoting style of Zhang: By surrounding the marked quotation with further allusions and sub-clauses taken from “Reform Our Study” (set in italics in the quotation above), he may have tried to counteract the impression that it had been one sentence only of Chairman Mao’s that had made him “feel” the right way. Not one sentence by Mao taken from the Red Book for example, but the study of at least one whole article was responsible for Zhang’s ‘enlightenment’. On the other hand, it might just as well be one of the many instances of surrounding a marked canonical quotation with unmarked phrases from the same prototext showing no more than that the author had read the text. However this might be, in my view, the differing interpretations given to “Reform Our Study” by previous campaigns resurfaced in Zhang’s article causing a considerable amount of friction between quoting style and quoted prototext.

(Auto-)biographical narratives similar to that of Zhang Dianchen, written by the model students themselves or by *People’s Daily* reporters, but all claiming success in the mastery of Mao Zedong Thought filled the pages of *People’s Daily* during the next months.³⁰⁷ In the course of the campaign other authorities than Mao were called on to testify to the correctness of investigation and research work to find correct solutions. Thus, one author wrote that they could solve a problem with concrete mixers by “as Stalin says, [...] combining revolutionary sweep with practicalness. 如同斯大林所说的那样：把革命气概和实际精神结合起来 (Peng Chaoping 彭丑平 1971.05.21)”. However, this was not a quotation of Stalin, but of Mao quoting Stalin in “Reform Our Study”.³⁰⁸ We find it again in an article of June 13, 1971 describing what progress a party committee of a People’s Liberation Army unit in Guangzhou made by studying Mao Zedong Thought. The article featured as its motto: “Apply the theory and method of Marxism-Leninism to the systematic and thorough investigation

³⁰⁶ See: Mao Zedong, “Summary of talks with leading cadres from different places on the way during the inspection tour of the country 在外地巡视期间同沿途各地负责人谈话纪要”, August/September 1971 in SONG YONGYI 宋永毅 & MEIGUO “ZHONGGUO WENHUA DAGEMING WENKU” BIANWEIHUI 美国“中国文化大革命文库”编委会 (2002) 中国文化大革命文库 [Chinese Cultural Revolution Database]. <http://zo-fawkes.zo.uni-heidelberg.de/Citrix/AccessPlatform/auth/login.aspx>.

³⁰⁷ See for example: YANG ZHENSHAN 杨振山 (08.05.1971) 深入调查研究，清除唯心论的影响 [Penetrate into investigation and research, weed out the influence of idealism], 人民日报, 2; RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民日报社 (14.05.1971) 研究现状。研究历史。注重应用 [Do research on the current situation, do research on history, pay attention to application], 人民日报, 2; PENG CHAOPING 彭丑平 (21.05.1971) 在调查研究中获得真知 [Obtain genuine knowledge during investigation and research], 人民日报, 2.

³⁰⁸ “To integrate revolutionary sweep with a mind for practice” was quoted 21 times in *People’s Daily* between 1949 and 2007, 19 instances occurred during the Cultural Revolution, and ten in 1971 alone.

and study [yanjiu] of the environment. Do [orig. He does] not work by enthusiasm alone but, as Stalin says, combine [orig. combiness] revolutionary sweep with practicalness. 应用马克思列宁主义的理论和方法，对周围环境作系统的周密的调查和研究。不是单凭热情去工作，而是如同斯大林所说的那样：把革命气概和实际精神结合起来。(Renmin ribao she 人民出版社 1971.06.13)” In the article some cadres were criticised for neglecting investigation and research work during a busy period. Again we see a rhetoric similar to that of 1961, both occurring in a period of cooling down and readjustment after a mass campaign built mostly on the so-called “revolutionary sweep”. The reference to Stalin, I believe, is a mere coincidence. If name-dropping is a coefficient of authority, Stalin’s authority diminished in *People’s Daily* with his death in 1953, never to be revived. The reason for quoting the sentence above, rather seems to lie in its emphasis on *both* revolutionary sweep *and* the mind for practice. Other parts of “Reform Our Study” on the other hand leave no credit to such revolutionary enthusiasm.

A last motive triggering the renewed promotion of “Reform Our Study” was the fact that the year 1971 marked two anniversaries: the thirtieth anniversary of the article’s writing on May 19, 1941 and the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the CCP. Accordingly, on May 19, 1971, a commemorative article was printed on page one of *People’s Daily*, titled “Develop the revolutionary learning style of integrating theory with practice – study 《Reform Our Study》 发扬理论联系实际的革命学风 – 学习 《改造我们的学习》”.³⁰⁹ I will end this paragraph by an analysis of the interpretation of “Reform Our Study” given in this anniversary article. I argue that although the anniversary article of 1971 used as many as fifteen sentences grouped in eight quotations from “Reform Our Study”, and ten other quotations from Mao Zedong Thought, the terminology of the rest of the article seldom reflects Mao’s formulations of 1941, but rather Cultural Revolution terminology and sometimes content. The content of “Reform Our Study” is changed – wherever it is possible – to fit the rhetoric of the two line struggle. Thus, for example, Mao’s criticism of the foreign trained cadres is in 1971 directed against Liu Shaoqi. By changing the referent of quotations, we see again how the gap between static canon and changing world can be bridged. In the anniversary article all cadres are called on to follow Mao’s teaching and reform their working style, learn Marxist-Leninist theory, do research on current conditions and history, and heighten the proletarian Party character.

³⁰⁹ The article was written by the Writing Small Group of the Shandong Province Party Committee for the May issue of *Red Flag*.

Reviving the great work 《Reform Our Study》 during this movement [the current self-education movement] is essential for us so as to understand the historical experience of the Chinese revolution of the last half century, to take one more step in heightening our line awareness, to strengthen our ability of distinguishing true from false Marxism, to consciously carry out Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line, to take one more step in developing the revolutionary learning style of integrating theory with practice. 在这个运动中，重温《改造我们的学习》这篇伟大著作，对于我们认识半个世纪以来中国革命的历史经验，进一步提高路线觉悟，增强识别真假马克思主义的能力，自觉地执行毛主席的无产阶级革命路线，进一步发扬理论联系实际的革命学风，是十分必要的。(Zhongguo gongchandang shandong sheng weiyuanhui xiezu xiaozu 中国共产党山东省委员会写作小组 1971.05.19)

Echoing the prototext “Reform Our Study” of 1941, the 1971 anniversary article called on cadres to integrate theory with practice. This should be done through self-education in Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought as well as historical research. However, the history in question here is that of the Party's two line struggle accompanying it for the last half century. In 1941, though, the history in question was that of the last hundred years. What ought to be achieved through self-education today is a better judgement of true vs. false Marxism. Negative examples of false Marxists are, of course, Mao's opponents in the different line struggles, among others Wang Ming and Liu Shaoqi. But the problem of keeping to the right line is here reduced to a problem of learning style, or so the Writing Group from Shandong argues. The correct learning style was described as “earnestly reading the books of Marx and Lenin, earnestly studying Chairman Mao's works and using Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought to guide the practice of the three great revolutionary struggles, [as] merging with the masses and conducting investigation and research, [and as] mastering the characteristics and rules of real movements 认真读马、列的书，认真学习毛主席著作，并用马克思主义、列宁主义、毛泽东思想指导三大革命斗争的实践，深入群众进行调查研究，掌握实际运动的特点和规律” (Zhongguo gongchandang shandong sheng weiyuanhui xiezu xiaozu 中国共产党山东省委员会写作小组 1971.05.19). Noteworthy, the terminology used throughout the whole 1971 anniversary article – except in the quotations of Mao Zedong Thought – slightly differed from Mao's 1941 formulations. Thus, the Writing Small Group spoke not of “uniting theory with practice 理论和实际统一 / 理论和实际结合” but of “integrating theory with practice 理论联系实际”. In 1971, they called on the Party to “understand the historical experience of the Chinese revolution 认识半个世纪以来中国革命的历史经验” whereas Mao had used formulations such as “to do research on Chinese history 研究历史” and “to learn from the international revolutionary experiences 学习国际的革命经验”. Mao had not asked the Party to “conduct investigation and research 进行调查研究” but to “pursue investigation and research 推行调查研究”. Such terminological deviations are not unusual, even at times when terminological deviations could lead to disastrous consequences. Such a period

was the Cultural Revolution when a high degree of self-control was exercised, yet where quoting Mao empowered the quoter, leading to a familiarity with the works of Mao Zedong unwitnessed before or afterwards.³¹⁰

Other arguments that are present in “Reform Our Study”, but not clearly spelled out, are stated more overtly in 1971: “Pure work experience cannot substitute revolutionary theory; 单纯的工作经验，不能代替革命理论;” This so-called error of empiricism had been rectified in 1941 already. In those times, especially the many new Party members of peasant origin were said to have erred in this domain (see above). The opposite so-called ‘subjectivist error’ was dogmatism. It was critically mentioned in 1971 as well: “Our purpose of learning revolutionary theory is not for good-looking or to cheat or bluff people, but for the needs of the revolutionary practice 我们学习革命理论的目的，不是为了好看，也不是为了欺骗和吓唬人，而是为了革命实践的需要”. Some quotations are presented in paragraphs of their own, accompanied by an explanatory or appraising note, but barely embedded into the rest of the text. One paragraph for example reads:

Chairman Mao laid stress on pointing out in “Reform Our Study”: ‘one studies the theory of Marxism-Leninism with a purpose, that is, to integrate Marxist-Leninist theory with the actual movement of the Chinese revolution and to seek from this theory the stand, viewpoint and method with which to solve the theoretical and tactical problems of the Chinese revolution.’ This is the only correct guiding principle for us in learning Marxism-Leninism. 毛主席在《改造我们的学习》中强调指出：‘要有目的地去研究马克思列宁主义的理论，要使马克思列宁主义的理论和中国革命的实际运动结合起来，是为着解决中国革命的理论问题和策略问题而去从它找立场，找观点，找方法的。’这是我们学习马克思列宁主义的唯一正确的指导方针。

This purely affirmative new context surrounding the sentences of “Reform Our Study” appears powerless and unconvincing when compared with previous creative adaptations of quotations to new contexts. To attribute such a quotation style to the genre of the quoting article, i.e. an anniversary article, would fall short of reality. First, as I try to show in Chapter 4 on the case of the May Fourth Movement, anniversary articles of all decades between 1949 and 1999 adapt the event and/or article they are commemorating in sometimes astonishing degrees to current politics; second, the article in question here was not published to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of “Reform Our Study” alone, but belonged to a series on how to study specific articles of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought. This series was published by *Red Flag* between April 1971 and December 1972.³¹¹

³¹⁰ Another example of such deviations of the norm during the Cultural Revolution is given in MITTLER (2009) *A Continuous Revolution: Making Sense of Cultural Revolution Culture*, Heidelberg: unpubl. manuscript: Chapter 6: Chain Pictures and Chained by Pictures: Comics and Cultural Revolutions in China .

³¹¹ In fact, two such articles had already appeared in *Red Flag* in 1970 and one of them was reprinted in *People’s Daily* in March. However, the writing and publication of such articles seems to have been heavily encouraged only since 1971.

21 such articles appeared in 1971 alone, 9 of which were reprinted in *People's Daily*.³¹² Except for “Reform Our Study”, none of these articles was related to an anniversary. They were published in *Red Flag* under categories such as “earnestly read and learn – comprehend Marxism 认真看书学习 – 弄通马克思主义” or “learn from the historical experience of the Party – strengthen the ideological construction of the Party 学习党的历史经验 – 加强党的思想建设”. Unifying the Party through renewed learning of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought was one reason behind the publication of these articles. But hand in hand with the “integration of theory with practice”, Lin Biao’s teaching of “lively learning and application” was promoted in these articles. No alternative to Lin’s “problem-oriented learning” was developed in any of the articles discussed so far. They seem not to reflect the growing conflict between Mao and Lin that led to the latter’s death on September 13, 1971.

In conclusion, I will shortly summarise the results of this analysis: In 1971, a self-education movement³¹³ in Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought was carried out. Especially leading cadres were ordered to read and emulate specified articles of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought. This movement was accompanied by propagandistic articles in *People's Daily*, and even more so in *Red Flag* on how to study Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought. Furthermore, articles propagating model students and their way to success appeared in the press. The Mao text “Reform Our Study” was abundantly quoted: First, to call for a rectification of working and learning style. Second, it was used to argue that learning meant learning for the sake of the revolution, learning for application, for solving real problems. Thus, it echoed Lin Biao’s call for “lively learning and application 活学活用” (see above). Third, as in 1961 cadres were asked to update their knowledge of the current conditions by going among the masses and indulge in investigation and research work. This move was necessitated by the ever-changing nature of the world and especially by the vast changes brought upon China by the Cultural Revolution, or so the articles argued. And last, “Reform

³¹² 17 of the 21 articles were authored by writing groups of other provincial committees. The remaining 4 were signed by local Party secretaries.

³¹³ The self-education movement in 1971 can by no means be compared with the Yan’an Rectification Campaign some thirty years ago. It was not even important enough to be accounted for in the major scientific studies on that time. Those studies focus instead on the unfolding conflict between Mao Zedong and Lin Biao. The China Quarterly Chronicle Documentation of 1971 has so far been the only one to describe the campaign. Lacking other sources than the papers, it only states that “a major campaign appeared to be in progress at the philosophical/political level to study Marxist philosophy and to criticise certain ‘erroneous’ ideas”. Cf. Quarterly Chronicle and Documentation (Jul. - Sep. 1971), *The China Quarterly*, 590-607: 593; Quarterly Chronicle and Documentation (Oct. - Dec. 1971), *The China Quarterly*, 783-817: 791.

Our Study” was given prominence for another reason: 1971 happened to be the thirtieth anniversary of its first publication.

*1977/78: Fighting for Mao’s Scriptural Legacy – ‘Two Whatevers’ or Truth Criterion*³¹⁴

In 1977/78, after six more ‘earth-shaking’ years the statistic on quoting “Reform Our Study” in *People’s Daily* show another peak (see Figure 12). The historical background to this peak was a power struggle in the highest party echelon: the infight centred around Mao’s legacy as supreme leader and Party theoretician. Hua Guofeng, Mao’s last designated heir, had claimed the chairmanship for himself and purged the so-called ‘Gang of Four’. In order to secure his own position, Hua unsuccessfully tried to fashion himself in Mao’s image.³¹⁵ Furthermore, in February 1977 he proclaimed to “resolutely defend whatever policy decisions Chairman Mao made, and steadfastly abide by whatever instructions Chairman Mao gave 凡是毛主席作出的决策，我们都坚决维护，凡是毛主席的指示，我们都始终不渝地遵循”.³¹⁶ This so-called ‘two whatevers’ policy had serious consequences for the assessment of history and, if upheld, would make impossible a number of rehabilitations of (pre-)Cultural Revolution victims, among others Deng Xiaoping.³¹⁷ Deng especially is quoted as saying in May 1977 that “the two ‘whatevers’ just won’t do. [...] It just won’t do to take words spoken by the chairman at one point, under one set of conditions, and apply them to a different issue, a different event, or a different situation.”³¹⁸ Opposition to the ‘two whatevers’ and support for Deng, however, were strong enough to secure Deng’s official return to the Party leadership in August 1977. While Hua Guofeng continued to promote the ‘two whatevers’, an alternative strategy formed that was cast into the slogan “Seek truth from facts”. This slogan

³¹⁴ Studies discussing this crucial internal Party conflict which ended with the ascension of Deng Xiaoping to the Party leadership include SCHOENHALS (Jun. 1991) The 1978 Truth Criterion Controversy, *The China Quarterly*, 243-268; SHEN BAOXIANG 沈宝祥 (1997) 真理标准问题讨论始末 [Beginning and end of the discussion about the truth criterion question] 北京; YU GUANGYUAN (2004) *Deng Xiaoping Shakes the World: An Eyewitness Account of China’s Party Work Conference and the Third Plenum (November - December 1978)* Norwalk: 8-22; GOLDMAN (1994) *Sowing the Seeds of Democracy in China: Political Reform in the Deng Xiaoping Era* Cambridge, Mass.: 34-41.

³¹⁵ LEESE (2006) *Performative Politics and Petrified Image: The Mao Cult during China’s Cultural Revolution* (Ph.D. thesis). School of Humanities and Social Sciences, International University, Bremen: 278.

³¹⁶ RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民日报社 (07.02.1977) 学好文件抓住纲 [Learn the documents and grasp the key links firmly], 人民日报, 1. For a translation cf. SCHOENHALS (Jun. 1991) The 1978 Truth Criterion Controversy, *The China Quarterly*, 243-268: 248.

³¹⁷ Hua agreed informally to Deng’s return in March 1977; the rehabilitation took an official form with Deng’s instatement as vice-chairman of the CCP, vice-premier of the State Council and People’s Liberation Army chief of staff during the eleventh Party congress, held from August 12 to 18, 1977 in Beijing. See DAVIS & VOGEL (1990) *Chinese Society on the Eve of Tiananmen: the Impact of Reform*, Harvard Contemporary China Series, Cambridge, Mass.: 307; and SCHOENHALS (Jun. 1991) The 1978 Truth Criterion Controversy, *The China Quarterly*, 243-268: 251.

³¹⁸ Deng quoted in SCHOENHALS (Jun. 1991) The 1978 Truth Criterion Controversy, *The China Quarterly*, 243-268: 251.

provided its proponents with the double advantage of being both a proverb of ancient origin and a phrase repeatedly used by Mao in his *Selected Works* (see Chapter 2.1). As mentioned above, the period of 1977-78 was the fourth hightime of quoting “Reform Our Study”. As it is the only text in which Mao redefined “Seek truth from facts” (instead of just using it), I argue that “Reform Our Study” was a mandatory prototext for quotation by the proponents of this idea. It was, as I hope to show, used by leading Party members such as Nie Rongzhen, Chen Yun, and Deng Xiaoping to (1) fight Hua Guofeng’s ‘two whatevers’. This policy, I argue, was attacked abiding by the very rules which Hua had firmly installed therein, i.e. everything Mao said or wrote (published or unpublished) is accepted as normative now and in the future. (2) Deng et. al. used “Reform Our Study” among others to authorise the deconstruction of Mao Zedong Thought itself. They criticised the system from within by using selected parts of Mao Zedong Thought to authorise its own deconstruction. What message did they thus communicate to the readers? I argue that the argument made by quoting “Reform Our Study” together with the quotation style combined into a contradictory, even puzzling message: While the readers were discouraged to use quotations, nevertheless, the authority, and usefulness of canonical quotations was reconfirmed. This double bind, one might speculate, was the desired effect of the quoters. While they aimed to diminish the status of Mao Zedong Thought and transform it according to their future political goals, they did not at all intend to *abolish* Mao Zedong Thought which was their own legitimisation device, but reconfirm it for future use. I base my argumentation mainly on three articles published in *People’s Daily* in August and September 1977 before I conclude this part with an analysis of the climax of the so-called ‘truth criterion debate’ in the Summer of 1978.

On August 12, 1977, that was the opening day of the 11th Party Congress which rehabilitated Deng Xiaoping (see fn. 317), *People’s Daily* published an article titled “Communist Party members should be models of seeking truth from facts 共产党员应是实事求是的模范”. Therein, it is argued that Party members have to combine “seeking truth from facts” with “foresight and sagacity 远见卓识” to be able to finish their set tasks and not lose their progressive orientation (Propaganda Department of the municipal Party committee of Jingdezhen in Jiangxi 中共江西省景德镇市委宣传部 1977.08.12).³¹⁹ The article starts by defining the meaning of “Seeking truth from facts” by quoting the following sentence from “Reform Our Study”: “ ‘Facts’ are all the things that exist

³¹⁹ The whole article emphasised “seeking truth from facts” rather than the foresight and sagacity of party members, as is already indicated by the title.

objectively, ‘truth’ means their internal relations, that is, the laws governing them, and ‘to seek’ means to study [*yanjiu*].” Although “Seek truth from facts” originates with the *Book of Han* 汉书 (see above and Chapter 2.1), a quotation of Mao is used here to define its meaning. The phrase thus receives its authority as being a phrase of Mao, and not of the *Book of Han*. I have argued earlier that the authoritative value of a quotation can be changed, by changing its source (see Chapter 2.2 and 2.3). The same process is witnessed in the case of “Seek truth from facts”: it was appropriated by Mao in 1941, and again by Deng Xiaoping in 1977/78. By constant propaganda, *People’s Daily* and other media supported the first appropriation by Mao, and then slowly transformed it in favour of Deng. Nowadays, it is still mainly associated with Deng.

The article in question not only used marked quotations from “Reform Our Study”. Close comparison yields further traces of “Reform Our Study” in the familiar form of paraphrasing and quotation patchwork. This time, however, arguments which are not in accordance with “Reform Our Study” are woven into or rather, as I argue, are hidden among these unmarked quotations. See for example the following passage, in which one marked quotation from “Reform Our Study” is set in italics, and all unmarked quotations are underlined:

Long ago during the Yan’an Rectification Campaign, Chairman Mao pungently criticised some comrades for the subjectivist error of divorcing from reality, for only copying things foreign and out of books, for having no interest in studying [*yanjiu*] either the China of today or the China of yesterday; or for relying on sheer enthusiasm and substituting their personal feelings for policy. These two kinds of people both only depend on subjectivism, and lack the working style of investigating and studying [*yanjiu*] objective reality, they are crude and careless, content with superficial understanding, they indulge in verbiage, and are always right, they have no intention of seeking truth from facts, but only a desire to curry favour by claptrap. Chairman Mao pointed out: ‘*This subjectivist method which is contrary to science and Marxism-Leninism is a formidable enemy of the Communist Party, the working class, the people and the nation; it is a manifestation of impurity in Party spirit.*’ Every Communist party member has to profoundly understand the extreme importance of Chairman Mao’s teaching, regard the preservation and development of the working style of seeking truth from facts as one important aspect to strengthen one’s Party spirit and to transform one’s world view. [my emphasis] (Propaganda Department of the municipal Party committee of Jingdezhen in Jiangxi 中共江西省景德镇市委宣传部 1977.08.12)³²⁰

What argument is made in this paragraph? In how far is this argument correctly based on “Reform Our Study” and what was added on? The author draws a basic distinction between correct and false working style. The latter is termed subjectivism divided into two kinds – namely dogmatism and empiricism. At this point, the author weaves a first new strand into his description: Mao, the article says, had criticised some comrades “for only copying things foreign and out of books”. In “Reform Our Study”, the foreign and the bookish had gone hand in hand, as Mao had criticised the “returned students” of dogmatically relying on a foreign theory, namely Marxism-Leninism, without testing its

³²⁰ The unmarked quotations in Chinese reach from as little as four characters to as much as nineteen characters.

truth by Chinese reality. In 1977, the foreign and the bookish are separately mentioned. I conclude from this that the author aimed his criticism at comrades who uncritically copied not (only) Marxism-Leninism, but more importantly Mao Zedong Thought. This rather daring criticism in light of Hua Guofeng's 'two whatevers' is backed by attributing the whole of the argumentation to Mao himself. Only a close reading of the article reveals minor alterations. Such alteration is also found in the conclusion of the paragraph: "to regard the preservation and development of the working style of seeking truth from facts as one important aspect to strengthen one's Party spirit and to transform one's world view". In "Reform Our Study", Mao linked the attitude of "Seeking truth from facts" to the manifestation of Party spirit; but the term "world view" (*shijieguan* 世界观) does not even appear once throughout his entire article; instead, Mao proclaimed that knowing the world would enable one to change the world, not one's world view though. Whereas Mao talked about real things in a real world, the author of the 1977 article is concerned with mental changes. Again a slight change is hidden in a mass of paraphrasing and quotation patchwork which profoundly changes the meaning of Mao's ideas.

A second article used Mao's version of "Seeking truth from facts" as instrument for confining Mao Zedong Thought to specific boundaries. It appeared in *People's Daily* on September 5, 1977, as a signed article by Nie Rongzhen 聂荣臻³²¹ titled "Renew and develop our Party's fine working style 恢复和发扬党的优良作风". In it, Nie was primarily concerned with the rectification of the party after the Cultural Revolution; in order to "grasp the key link to manage the country, one first had to manage the Party. 抓纲治国，首先要治党"³²². (Nie Rongzhen 聂荣臻 1977.09.05)" The handling of Mao Zedong Thought was, in Nie's view, one aspect of this larger issue and he dedicated one paragraph to this question. He derived his argumentation from Mao's own ideas and formulations, or more precisely from the texts "On Practice", "On Contradictions" and "Reform Our Study":

The objective world is full of contradictions, full of changes. Our thinking/ideology must reflect these contradictions and changes according to the facts; *any correct ideology, is transformed according to time, place, and conditions*, otherwise it becomes metaphysics. Chairman Mao pointed out: 'Facts' are all the things that exist objectively, 'truth' means their internal relations, that is, the laws governing them, and 'to

³²¹ In GOLDMAN (1994) *Sowing the Seeds of Democracy in China: Political Reform in the Deng Xiaoping Era* Cambridge, Mass.: 231, it is noted that Nie Rongzhen, an army general and vice-chairman of the Military Affairs Commission, and Chen Yun protected Sun Changjiang, one of the authors of "Practice is the sole criterion of truth", in the Campaign against Bourgeois Liberalisation in 1987.

³²² This formulation was an unmarked quotation of Hua Guofeng's "Political report to the 11th National Congress of the CCP 在中国共产党第十一次全国代表大会上的政治报告" held at the opening day of the congress on August 12, 1977, and published in *People's Daily* after revision on August 23. Here, Hua argued in favour of a rectification of the Party on behalf of the impurity in ideology, organisation and working style.

seek' means to study [yanjiu]. We should proceed from the actual conditions inside and outside the country, the province, county or district, and derive from them, as our guide to action, laws which are inherent in them and not imaginary, that is, we should find the internal relations of the events occurring around us.' ("Reform Our Study") [...] everything is contingent on the viewpoint [defined by] time, place and conditions, *otherwise it deviates from the most basic things of Mao Zedong Thought*. 客观世界充满了矛盾, 充满了变化, 我们的思想必须如实地反映这种矛盾和变化; 一切正确思想, 都以时间、地点、条件为转移, 否则就变成形而上学。毛主席指出: “‘实事求是’就是客观存在着的一切事物, ‘是’就是客观事物的内部联系, 即规律性, ‘求’就是我们去研究。我们要从国内外、省内外、县内外、区内外实际情况出发, 从其中引出其固有的而不是臆造的规律性, 即找出周围事变的内部联系, 作为我们行动的向导。” (《改造我们的学习》) [...] 一切决定于时间、地点和条件的观点, 否则就是背离了毛泽东思想的最根本的东西。[my emphasis] (Nie Rongzhen 聂荣臻 1977.09.05)

As in the last article, Nie quotes the standard definition of “Seeking truth from facts” from “Reform Our Study”. But he also appends to the quotation one more sentence by Mao: that one has to proceed from actual circumstances to derive laws as guide to action. Thereby, I argue, Nie underlines his argument in favour of adapting theory to reality. The embedding of the quotation is even more significant: “*any correct ideology is transformed according to time, place, and conditions, otherwise it becomes metaphysics. [...] everything is contingent on the viewpoint [defined by] time, place and conditions, otherwise it deviates from the most basic things of Mao Zedong Thought.*” This reasoning directly contradicted Hua’s ‘two whatevers’, yet it was very similar to Deng Xiaoping’s position put forward in May 1977: “It just won’t do to take words spoken by the chairman at one point, under one set of conditions, and apply them to a different issue, a different event, or a different situation.”³²³ Nie tied theory in general and Mao Zedong Thought in particular to time, place, and conditions. He tried to authorise this conclusion by quoting “Reform Our Study”, though Mao had originally targeted a foreign theory, i.e. Marxism-Leninism, that was to be adapted to Chinese circumstances. A reader familiar with “Reform Our Study” and its historical context might remember that by criticising the notion of Marxism-Leninism as an immutable dogma, Mao had intended to sinify Marxism-Leninism, to create his own theory, and set himself up as leading Communist theoretician. Nie’s quoting style seems (deliberately) to imply the same, that in 1977, after Mao’s death, the time had come to adapt the old dogma, Mao Zedong Thought, to a new situation, as indeed later happened in creating Deng Xiaoping Theory.

On September 28, 1977, Chen Yun was the next high party member to use the source text “Reform Our Study” to support Deng Xiaoping and “Seek truth from facts”. In his argumentation, “Seek truth from facts” symbolised the right line in all previous ideological struggles. As a commemorative article to the first anniversary of Mao’s death, Chen used a high profile event to stage his opinion: “Seeking truth from facts, this is not a common question of *working style*, this is

³²³ Quoted above, cf. fn. 318.

the fundamental question of *ideological line* of Marxism-Leninism and Materialism. If we want to preserve Marxism-Leninism, preserve Mao Zedong Thought, we must preserve seeking truth from facts. 实事求是，这不是一个普通的作风问题，这是马克思主义唯物主义的根思想路线问题。我们要坚持马克思列宁主义，坚持毛泽东思想，就必须坚持实事求是。[my emphasis]”³²⁴ By attributing the question of “Seeking truth from facts” to the realm of ideological line instead of working style, Chen Yun basically expressed the same views as Hu Yaobang did eight months later in “Practice is the sole criterion of truth”.³²⁵ In the short quotation given above, Chen’s interpretation of “Seek truth from facts” hardly relates to its source in “Reform Our Study” or to Mao. Yet, Chen successfully based this stance on a long genealogy – given in patchwork style – of how Mao started and further developed “Seeking truth from facts”. He set out from Mao’s social investigations in Hunan of 1927, traced it further in the article “Oppose bookishness 反对本本主义” of 1930, and then narrated in detail and by quotation its development during the Yan’an Rectification Campaign; and finally Chen related the continuing value of “Seeking truth from facts” for different campaigns from 1949 until 1977. The narrative on Yan’an, of course, featured the line struggle against Wang Ming 王明 and dogmatism. “Seek truth from facts” was thus redefined to relate to struggles against

³²⁴ CHEN YUN 陈云 (28.09.1977) 坚持实事求是的革命作风 - 纪念伟大的领袖和导师毛主席逝世一周年 [Carry on the revolutionary working style of Seeking Truth From Facts - commemorate the first anniversary of the passing away of the great leader and teacher Chairman Mao], 人民日报, 1. In an article focusing on how Chen Yun supported bringing back to power Deng Xiaoping, the article’s content is also shortly summarised (cf. ZHAO SHIGANG 赵士刚 (2001) 陈云谈陈云：历史纪实 [Chen Yun talks about Chen Yun: a historical record] 北京: 160-5).

³²⁵ For further background to the writing and publication of this article confer to JIN CHONGJI 金冲及 & CHEN QUNZHU 陈群主 (Eds.) (2005) 陈云传 [Biography of Chen Yun], 北京: 1464-6; and HU QIAOMU 胡乔木 (13.7.1983) 胡乔木同志关于学习邓小平文选的讲话 [Talk by Hu Qiaomu on studying the Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping], 学术研究动态, 1-8. Both Hu Qiaomu and Jin Chongji praise Chen Yun in retrospect for having defied the “two whatevers” and held on to “Seek truth from facts” with this very article. They also note that somebody from the Propaganda Department counterchecked Chen’s every sentence against Hua Guofeng’s report given to the 11th Party congress and other documents by the Party Centre. All differing formulations were corrected, but Chen refused to let this altered article be published. The very formulation that “Seek truth from facts” was “the fundamental question of ideological line” cannot be traced back to a formulation by Hua Guofeng. In his political report to the 11th Party Congress, Hua repeatedly mentioned “Seek truth from facts” but only as “style of learning 学风”, “scientific attitude 科学的态度”, or “tradition 传统”; neither did Chen’s formulation appear in other articles of *People’s Daily* from 1977. In his argumentation, Chen seems to echo Deng Xiaoping who had brought up the topic of “Seek truth from facts” in his closing address to the 11th congress on August 18, 1977. JIN CHONGJI 金冲及 & CHEN QUNZHU 陈群主 (Eds.) (2005) 陈云传 [Biography of Chen Yun], 北京: 1463. Chen had good reasons for backing Deng Xiaoping’s view on “whatever” Mao had said. Chen was refused a seat in the politburo and the inner leading circle because Mao had allegedly accused Chen Yun of some right tendency. JIN CHONGJI 金冲及 & CHEN QUNZHU 陈群主 (Eds.) (2005) 陈云传 [Biography of Chen Yun], 北京: 1464. Through his support for Deng Xiaoping, Chen later gained considerable influence as head of the special Central Disciplinary Inspection Commission (cf. SCHOENHALS (Jun. 1991) The 1978 Truth Criterion Controversy, *The China Quarterly*, 243-268: 266).

dogmatism, struggles against the wrong line. It was only one step further to making practice the one and only criterion in evaluating truth and thus defining the new ideological line.

The struggle for Mao's legacy was further carried out in a number of articles appearing in *Theoretical Trends* 理论动态, *Guangming Daily* 光明日报, *Liberation Army Daily* 解放日报 and *People's Daily* (among others) during the Spring and Summer of 1978. It started with the widely studied article "Practice is the sole criterion of truth"³²⁶ which established an alternative strategy to the 'two whatevers': Instead of accepting as truth every spoken or written word of Mao's, theory should be tested in practice. I will not summarise this article here, as it has been studied in detail elsewhere and does not use quotations of "Reform Our Study".³²⁷ It is of importance to my narrative only, as it triggered the following comments by Deng Xiaoping to the all-army political work conference on June 2, 1978. Contemporaries assessed Deng's speech as supportive of the "truth criterion".³²⁸ This speech by Deng is of interest to us for two reasons: (1) Deng authorised his support of "Seeking truth from facts" by relying heavily on marked canonical quotations, "Reform Our Study" being just one of several quoted sources. (2) Deng used an unpublished quotation from Mao to attack Hua Guofeng's 'two whatevers', thus turning the policy against its proponents.

In Deng's talk, the first of four major points was concerned with "Seeking truth from facts". Deng attacked those who, in his view, still believe that "Seeking truth from facts" is committing a serious crime, those who "only want to copy the original words of Marx, Lenin, Chairman Mao, copy copy copy and that's it. 只要照抄马克思、列宁、毛主席的原话，照抄照转照搬就行了。

³²⁶ An article with this title was first published in TEYUE PINGLUNYUAN 特约评论员 (11.05.1978) 实践是检验真理的唯一标准 [Practice is the sole criterion of truth], 光明日报, 1, reprinted one day later as GUANGMING RIBAO TEYUE PINGLUNYUAN 光明日报特约评论员 (12.05.1978) 实践是检验真理的唯一标准 [Practice is the sole criterion of truth], 人民日报, 2. It resulted from merging two different articles on a similar topic written by Hu Fuming, a teacher of Nanjing University, and Sun Changjiang, staff of the Theory Research Office and lecturer at People's University. It's publication was mainly supported by Hu Yaobang. The controversy had sharpened over the general line for writing a party history by the Central Party School. Although the "two whatevers" policy could easily explain the 9th and 10th line struggle against Lin Biao and the so-called "Gang of Four", it did not work out for the 11th involving Deng Xiaoping in light of his rehabilitation and current powerful position. For a detailed study on the background, writing and consequences of this article see SHEN BAOXIANG 沈宝祥 (1997) 真理标准问题讨论始末 [Beginning and end of the discussion about the truth criterion question] 北京; SCHOENHALS (Jun. 1991) The 1978 Truth Criterion Controversy, *The China Quarterly*, 243-268; YU GUANGYUAN (2004) *Deng Xiaoping Shakes the World: An Eyewitness Account of China's Party Work Conference and the Third Plenum (November - December 1978)* Norwalk: 15-16.

³²⁷ This is not to say that no authoritative quotations were used throughout the article. Instead, it quoted extensively from the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Mao Zedong ("On Contradiction", "On New Democracy" among others).

³²⁸ DENG XIAOPING 邓小平 (06.06.1978) 邓副主席在全军政治工作会议上的讲话：一九七八年六月二日 [Vice-chairman Deng talks to the all-army political work conference: June 2, 1978], 人民日报, 1; Deng did not use the formulation "Practice is the sole criterion of truth", but his talk could and was interpreted in support of the truth criterion; moreover it was thus used by Hu Yaobang and his allies (cf. SCHOENHALS (Jun. 1991) The 1978 Truth Criterion Controversy, *The China Quarterly*, 243-268: 263-4).

(Deng Xiaoping 邓小平 1978.06.06)” In a style similar to that of Chen Yun, Deng set out to fight this attitude by giving a genealogy of “Seeking truth from facts” – in quotation patchwork style, too – from 1929 to the Cultural Revolution. Roughly 65% of the characters (1280 of 1990) used in this genealogy belong to marked canonical quotations of Mao Zedong. By piecing together Mao quotations that were favourable to Deng’s argument in diachronicle order – in 1937 Mao wrote article X in which he said Y; then in 1941 Mao gave a talk X’ arguing Y’ – a history of Mao’s ideas on this issue and especially a history of their consistence and continuity is constructed that sounds extremely convincing. But Deng went even further; he revealed at that time unpublished evidence of Mao’s words:

Chairman Mao always made a point of using the Marxist-Leninist standpoint, viewpoint, and method to raise problems, analyze problems, and solve problems. Chairman Mao always regarded problems according to different time, place, and conditions. Chairman Mao [once] said, *when I write articles, I do not cite often, what Marx, and Engels say. As newspapers cite my words all the time, cite and cite, I do not feel comfortable. [One] should learn to use one’s own words when writing articles. Of course I don’t say do not quote other peoples’ words [at all], but I say do not quote everywhere.* What is central that is to use the Marxist standpoint, viewpoint, and method to analyse problems, and to solve problems. 毛主席历来坚持要用马列主义的立场、观点、方法来提出问题，分析问题，解决问题。毛主席历来是按照不同的时间、地点、条件讲问题的。毛主席讲过，我写文章，不大引马克思列宁怎么说。报纸老引我的话，引来引去，我就不舒服。应该学会用自己的话来写文章。当然不是说不要引人家的话，是说不要处处都引。主要的是要用马克思主义的立场、观点、方法来分析问题，解决问题。[my emphasis]

Everything set in italics in this quotation, is confirmed to having been said by Mao by comparison with later published sources.³²⁹ From Deng’s usage, however, it is unclear what the reference includes. It is thus implied that Mao drew a clear distinction between formulation and essence, or as Deng phrased it between “Marxist words” and “Marxist standpoint, viewpoint, and method”. This distinction, we now know, goes back to Deng, not Mao. Using this reference was an exceptional move. Never in the history and future of *People’s Daily* did and would these very formulations reappear. Even in the second article written by Hu Yaobang’s ghost-writers and finally deciding the matter of the “truth criterion”, the very sentences of Mao’s (set in italics above) were omitted though the surrounding sentences were printed.³³⁰ I believe neither action was accidental but deliberate. Deng signalled that even when playing by the rules set forth by Hua Guofeng one could attack the

³²⁹ The reference was only published in 1983, cf. MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1983) 毛泽东新闻工作文选 [Selected articles on news work by Mao Zedong] 北京: 217. It goes back to a remark by Mao Zedong of January 8, 1964, and recorded by Wu Lengxi 吴冷西. Back then Wu had been editor-in-chief of *People’s Daily*. Of course, it is not impossible that this “evidence” is only constructed, although historians acquainted with publication practices in the PRC regard this as unlikely. While withholding information or evidence is common in the PRC, the fabrication thereof is a rare phenomenon.

³³⁰ JIEFANGJUN BAO TEYUE TAOLUNYUAN 《解放军报》特约评论员 (24.06.1978) 马克思主义的一个最基本的原则 [A most basic principle of Marxism], 人民日报, 1.

‘two whatevers’. Hence, they appear as a criterion of no use. This article by Deng Xiaoping heralded the end of the ‘two whatevers’ and the rise of Deng himself to supreme leader of the CCP.

After prolonged debate,³³¹ the slogan “Practice is the sole criterion of truth” was endorsed by the Third Plenum of the 11th CCP Central Committee in Dec. 1978, replacing the ‘two whatevers’. Hua Guofeng was forced to make a self-criticism on behalf of them and, thus, Deng Xiaoping was informally brought back to supreme power. Schoenhals judges this episode as having “paved the way for the CCP’s subsequent ‘demystification’ and ‘demythologisation’ of Mao Zedong, and the repudiation of his ‘theory of continued revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat.’”³³² Schram attributes to them “a fundamental change not only in the balance of forces within the top leadership, but in the Party’s line and in the whole intellectual climate prevailing in China”.³³³ I here want to add that quotations of Mao played a decisive role in this episode. They were used by powerful quoters to corrode the system from within. Authorised by Mao’s own words, the CCP could rearrange its new ideological line from worshipping “whatever Mao had said or directed” towards “Seeking truth from facts” and towards “thought liberation 解放思想”, a slogan launched with the Third Plenum in December 1978. Moreover, the excessive use of ideological quotations could be limited. But neither Mao Zedong Thought nor its quotations were abolished altogether, but were reconfirmed by Deng with his so-called ‘four cardinal principles’: adhering to the socialist road, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the leadership of the Communist Party, and Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong-Thought. These ‘four cardinal principles’ form in Schoenhals view “a legitimisation device in many respects similar to the original ‘two whatevers’”. (Schoenhals 1991:268)” This reconfirmation of the authority of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought, I believe, is already inherent in the quoting style witnessed in 1977-78: Canonical quotations were used to tie their truth value to the test of time, place, and conditions *and* simultaneously reconfirm their everlasting authority. Although with the turning of the year 1978, quotation numbers of the Marxist classics, including Mao Zedong Thought, dwindled, they are still referred to as legitimation (see further down). It took almost two decades until a new doctrine in the form of Deng Xiaoping Theory and

³³¹ See for detailed information of these debates SHEN BAOXIANG 沈宝祥 (1997) 真理标准问题讨论始末 [Beginning and end of the discussion about the truth criterion question] 北京: 150-80 and YU GUANGYUAN (2004) *Deng Xiaoping Shakes the World: An Eyewitness Account of China's Party Work Conference and the Third Plenum (November - December 1978)* Norwalk: 23-195.

³³² SCHOENHALS (Jun. 1991) The 1978 Truth Criterion Controversy, *The China Quarterly*, 243-268: 244.

³³³ SCHRAM (1984) *Ideology and Policy in China since the Third Plenum, 1978-84*, Research Notes and Studies, vol. 6, London: 5.

later Jiang Zemin’s “Three Represents” were formulated and references thereof statistically surpassed Mao Zedong Thought (see Figure 15).

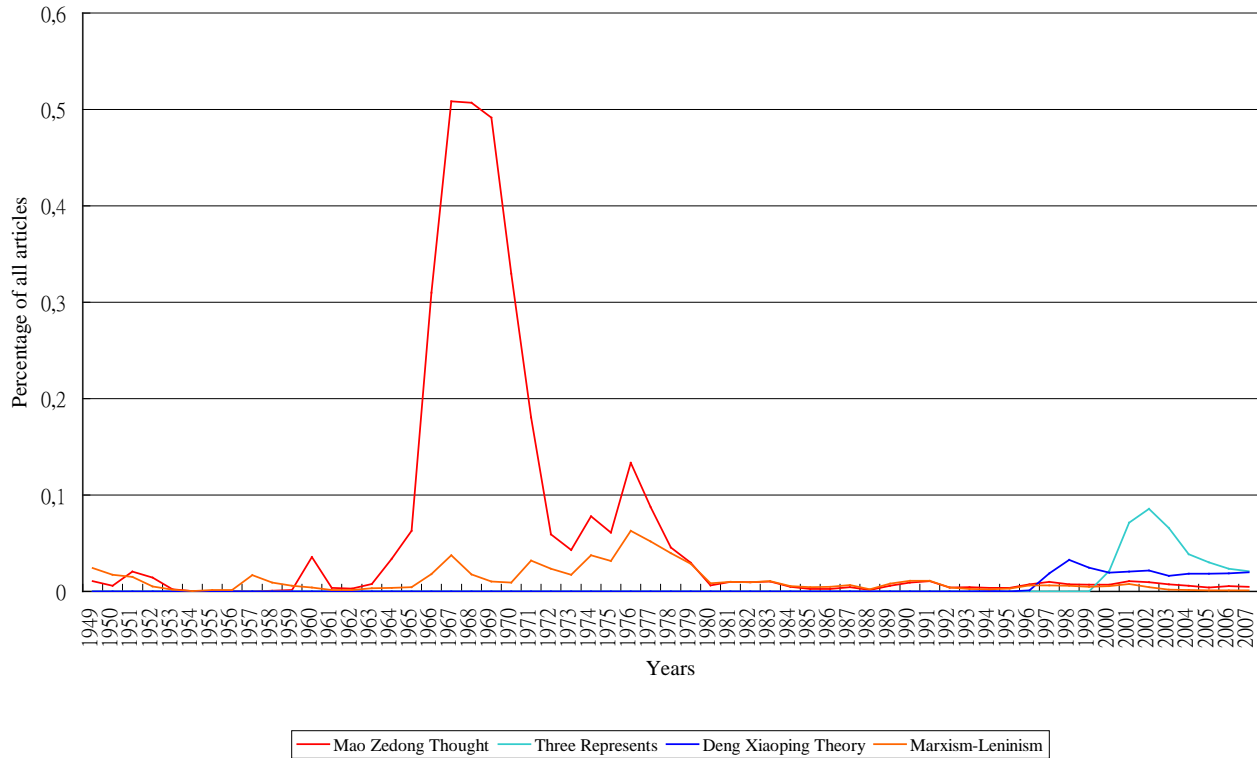


Figure 15: How often are names of ideologies referred to in *People's Daily* from 1949 to 2007 in percent of all articles (Source: Renmin ribao she xinwen xinxi zhongxin 人民日报社新闻信息中心 2007).

1990: In Search of the Roots of Society – An Investigation into the Causes of the Tian’anmen Movement

The fifth peak of quoting “Reform Our Study” is found in 1990. Compared to Cultural Revolution times, it is a rather small peak: 10 articles featuring 25 quotations. However, this is five times more as compared with the surrounding years. What had happened to allow “Reform Our Study” back on stage?

In the wake of the crackdown on the Tian’anmen Square demonstrations of June 4, 1989, the CCP faced a severe crisis. The unity of the Party, and thus its very survival was called into question. Up to 800,000 Party members had actively or passively supported the student movement. Many more were opposed to the military crackdown that ended the movement. Officers and soldiers had disobeyed the order to clear Tian’anmen Square. Workers in Beijing and other cities had joined the student movement, crossing class boundaries and abandoning ‘their’ Party. In an act of closing ranks, the highest Party and military echelon officially reacted to what they later euphemistically termed

‘Tian’anmen incident’ of June 4, ending the previous weeks of what they called ‘turmoil’. All of them but Zhao Ziyang and Hu Qili appeared afterwards as to have opposed the student movement all along and supported the military crackdown.³³⁴ However, underneath the smooth surface questions resurged that threatened to split the Party: What had caused the Tian’anmen movement? Who was responsible beside the already dismissed CCP General Secretary Zhao Ziyang? Who was responsible for the crackdown and how should it be evaluated? What measures should be taken to unite the Party, fight the causes of popular unrest, and secure the Party’s future survival? And how should the next generation be educated to prevent another Tian’anmen?

In this atmosphere, *People’s Daily* published a number of articles quoting “Reform Our Study” again. More or less veiled, different authors used references to “Reform Our Study” to support the reinforcement of ideological training of students and cadres on the one hand (as they were believed to lack just that), while simultaneously warning educators and hard-liners against the errors of dogmatism committed in 1941/2, and also during the Cultural Revolution. The authority of a canonical work specifying a correct attitude in learning theory, I argue, was again bestowed on “Reform Our Study” by quoting its sentences. However, the prototext itself was not recommended as a guidebook for renewed study, as had been done in 1942-44, 1961, and 1964 (see above). Instead, new textbooks on Marxism-Leninism were compiled. The gap between the static canon and the changed world was bridged, I argue, by selecting only a few sentences for quotation, and by changing the addressee and emphasis of the prototext. Also, the style of quoting Mao changed in many respects, some of them already witnessed in 1977/78: Quotations of “Reform Our Study”, for example, introduced new ideas that were then explicated on, or they connected two otherwise disparate argumentations. The quotation style, I argue, has become more *rhetorical*, although evidence of the older argumentative or verifying style are found as well. The writings of a history of ideas on a certain topic display another quoting style that was also witnessed in 1977/78, especially in the articles of high Party members. In these histories, Mao featured as one of *many subsequent* authorities appealed to. It is significant that Mao’s ideas (represented by selected quotations) are contextualised both by history and other authors. His writings seem no longer to represent the sole authority, nor are they a canon set apart from history. In the following analysis, I introduce four articles in chronological order. The first two exemplify what I call the rhetorical style of using quotations of Mao. The other two exemplify the style of quoting to verify an argumentation, and quoting to write a history of ideas. Although these articles do not speak directly to each other, they

³³⁴ BAUM (1994) *Burying Mao. Chinese Politics in the Age of Deng Xiaoping* Princeton: 292-5.

all belong to the same discourse; the discourse on how to react to Tian'anmen, the discourse on what has to change so the Party can survive, the discourse on the search of society's roots and the roots of the Party.

On December 26, 1989, Wang Xiangdong 王向东³³⁵ published an essay in the supplement of *People's Daily* titled "Talking about 'roots' 说'根底'".³³⁶ In narrative style, the author describes a trip from Shijiazhuang 石家庄 to Zhengding 正定 to see the 20 metre-high bronze Bodhisattva in the Longxing monastery 隆兴寺 dating back to the Song Dynasty. In front of the Bodhisattva, Wang starts contemplating on its "roots" which allowed the statue to persevere 1,000 years of wind and rain. He then asks what the "roots" of a person are? What will help people to walk through life's ragged and twisted paths without losing their direction? The author concludes that the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism constitute the "roots" of all people. Therefore, it is urgent to learn Marxism-Leninism and do research on it. What has this essay to do with the post-Tian'anmen crisis? And in how far does it use "Reform Our Study"? The opening eight characters set the scene for the article: "[I] arrived in late autumn in Shijiazhuang 深秋季节到石家庄". Shijiazhuang, the capital of Hebei, 250 km south-west of Beijing, harboured the largest military training school for officers. In the autumn of 1989 and in reaction to the student movement, the Beijing University freshman class was sent to Shijiazhuang to undergo one year of military training before commencing regular classes.³³⁷ The positive impact of military training combined with ideological education on the students could soon be reported by *People's Daily*: on December 26, one fifth of the students applied for Party membership.³³⁸ On the very same day, the article "Talking about 'roots'" by Wang

³³⁵ Wang Xiangdong, male, born Feb. 1949, is chief editor of the commentary board of Xinhua Daily 新华日报. He authored 16 essays in the supplement of *People's Daily* between 1987 and 1992, and altogether 95 articles of his appeared in *People's Daily* between 1980 and 2007. 9 collections of his essays have been published so far. Cf. CHINAZAWEN.COM (2006) 中华杂文网 [China Essay Net].

<http://www.chinazawen.com/zhgzwj/zwjjj/jj/index.asp?AuthorID=65&AuthorName=%CD%F5%CF%F2%B6%AB>, accessed: 19.11.2007, downloaded: 19.11.2007.

³³⁶ WANG XIANGDONG 王向东 (26.12.1989) 说'根底' [Talking about 'roots'], 人民日报, 8. I included this late 1989 article into my analysis for the sake of comparing it with another one quoting the same stances from Mao Zedong though in a very different way.

³³⁷ XINHUA SHE 新华社 (12.10.1989) 迎接北大新生参加军训, 石家庄陆军学院准备就绪 [Welcome to the Beijing University freshman class that takes part in our military training, the military academy of Shijiazhuang is ready], 人民日报, 1. 730 students including 260 females went to Shijiazhuang. Their time was to be divided between political, military and cultural classes and military training, one third to two thirds. For the classes some new books were compiled: *Moral character in the thought of university students* 大学生思想品德 and *The People's Army* 人民军队. Classes commenced on October 14, 1989.

³³⁸ Reported in RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民日报社 (26.12.1989) 大学生中的可喜变化 [A heartening change among university students], 人民日报, 1.

Xiangdong appeared in *People's Daily*. The narrative was connected to Tian'anmen and subsequent events by naming Shijiazhuang as starting point of the author's voyage to the great Bodhisattva. The content connects it to the ongoing discourse on Marxist-Leninist education. After relating the journey and the impression the Bodhisattva made upon on his mind, the author went on discussing the reasons that led to what he termed "turmoil" following the official Party language.³³⁹

A few comrades of us always jump from one extreme to the other in knowledge and work, they sway between this one-sidedness and that; this loss [of direction] was suffered because their standpoint, their roots are not firm and deep. Therefore, many young people cannot differentiate between right and wrong in how to regard the meaning of life, how to regard the superiority of the socialist system, how to regard the Western lifestyle and creature comforts, how to regard the imperialist strategy of 'peaceful transition' and so on and on; being in different degrees exposed to the influence of bourgeois thoughts on liberalisation, some people have even stepped on the side of turmoil; in the final analysis, this loss was also caused by not having deep roots or even having none or nearly no roots at all. 我们一些同志在认识上和工作中往往从一个极端跳到另一个极端，在这样那样的片面性之间摇来摆去，就是吃的立场这个根底不稳不深的亏。许多青年人在如何看待人生的意义，如何看待社会主义制度的优越性，如何看待西方的生活方式和物质享受，如何看待帝国主义‘和平演变’的战略等等问题上，所以分不清是非，程度不同地受到资产阶级自由化思潮的影响，有的人甚至站到动乱一边去了，归根到底，也是吃的这个根底不深甚至没有根底或者几乎没有根底的亏。(Wang Xiangdong 王向东 1989.12.26)

Lack of roots is Wang's main point of criticism; young people suffer from it in many ways. When coming into contact with Western ideas, lifestyle or policy, Wang argues, they are unable to take a firm standpoint in opposition to it. And this can even lead them to support turmoil. As cause of the youth's aberrations, however, Wang criticises "a few comrades", i.e. he sees somebody in the Party responsible for it. He accuses these "few comrades" of not having firm and deep roots themselves. No wonder that they cannot correctly guide the younger generation on their path through life; they are bad role models.³⁴⁰

But where does "Reform Our Study" come in? It is quoted to connect the allegory of the "root" of the Zhengding Bodhisattva with the quest for the "roots" of people: "Roots are the so-called foundations of standpoint. Comrade Mao Zedong once quoted a couplet that went 'the reed growing on the wall – top-heavy, thin-stemmed and shallow of root; the bamboo shoot in the hills – sharp-tongued, thick-skinned and hollow inside', [this] referred to these 'roots'. 根底者，即所谓立场基础也。毛泽东同志曾经引用过一副对联，说是‘墙上芦苇，头重脚轻根底浅；山间竹笋，嘴尖皮厚腹中空’，就说到了这个‘根底’。”³⁴¹ The use of this quotation³⁴², I suggest, differentiates the

³³⁹ Turmoil 动乱 was the official verdict on the Tian'anmen movement, pronounced in an editorial of April 26, 1989, and hitherto unchanged. See RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民日报社 (26.12.1989) 必须旗帜鲜明地反对动乱 [The necessity for a clear stand against turmoil], 人民日报, 1.

³⁴⁰ The "few comrades" denominated the scapegoats of Tian'anmen: Zhao Ziyang, Hu Qili and other mid-level cadres, who did not suppress the student movement firmly and quickly, but led it spread or even supported it.

³⁴¹ WANG XIANGDONG 王向东 (26.12.1989) 说'根底' [Talking about 'roots'], 人民日报, 8.

intention of the author. In “Reform Our Study”, Mao used this couplet to criticise two subjectivist attitudes in learning Marxism-Leninism: empiricist and dogmatist. The empiricist, depicted in the first stance, had no or little understanding of Marxism-Leninism and acted only through believe, but without proper guidance. The dogmatist, depicted in the second stance, learned Marxism-Leninism for the sake of learning. He/she could only quote phrases of Marxism-Leninism, but not use them to solve real problems. Now, in 1989, Wang criticised Party cadres and young people for their lack of Marxist-Leninist roots; this is an error of empiricism; accordingly, quoting the first stance of the couplet would suffice to emphasise this point. By quoting the whole couplet, I suggest, Wang expressed a warning to dogmatism as well, voting for a balanced course in learning instead. This conclusion is supported by the author’s criticism of both ends of extremes and different kinds of one-sidedness (see above). My interpretation is further supported by the last sentence of the article: “Harsh practice has once again proven that learning and researching Marxist theory is of urgent and real significance. 严酷的实践又一次证明，学习和研究马克思主义理论，具有紧迫的现实意义。” Significantly, the author talks about learning *and* research, the former relating to the reading and learning of Marxism-Leninism, the latter to its practical use. Again, we find a balanced view, neither dogmatic nor empiricist. Why did Wang quote “Reform Our Study”? First, he chose a quotation befitting the essayistic style of his own article. Second, the quotation had a rhetorical function as connecting two disparate trains of thought. Third, in the nervous political climate caused by the Tian’anmen movement, by adopting the manner of Hanfeizi Wang could safely express his own balanced standpoint.³⁴³

In an article of January 25, 1990, titled “Follow your own way 走自己的路”, Hang Chen 杭辰 discussed the same topic in a similar style. He used the couplet of “Reform Our Study” rhetorically to immediately introduce the topic of his article:

Comrade Mao Zedong once borrowed a couplet to portrait subjectivists in the Party: ‘the reed growing on the wall – top-heavy, thin-stemmed and shallow of root; the bamboo shoot in the hills – sharp-tongued, thick-skinned and hollow inside.’ Through this mirror of history, [Mao] dissected those people who sway from left to right the moment they encounter some political storm, it’s not hard to find out that they all have the same source of illness, that is they lack ‘roots’. 毛泽东同志曾借用一副对联为党内主观主义者画像：‘墙上芦苇，头重脚轻根底浅；山间竹笋，嘴尖皮厚腹中空。’借助于这面历史的镜子，来剖析那些一遇政治风浪就左右摇摆的人，就不难发现，他们都有一个共同的病源，就是缺乏‘根底’。(Hang Chen 杭辰 1990.01.25)

³⁴² As Wang remarks, the quoted couplet was not coined by Mao himself. It is a classical quotation from Xie Jin 解缙, a Ming Dynasty Hanlin scholar and compiler of the Yongle Encyclopaedia 《永乐大典》.

³⁴³ “When he quotes episodes to disagree with the ruler he will not be accused of crimes. 引爭而不罪.” HAN FEI 韩非 (2000) 韩非子新校注 [New school edition of Han Feizi] vol. 12 “說難第十二”, 上海: 261. See also Chapter 1.

As in Wang Xiangdong's article "Talking about 'roots'", Hang Chen depicts the lack of "roots" as the main weakness of some people. And once again, this topic is introduced by the couplet that Mao had used in his text "Reform Our Study". And again, the author criticises people for "sway[ing] from left to right the moment they encounter some political storm". What should these "roots" be? Hang's advice is twofold: on the one hand, "the state of China 中国的国情" has to be taken into account; on the other hand, Marxism-Leninism should be taken as foundation to correctly analyze and solve China's problems. As Mao had argued in "Reform Our Study" and to a certain degree Wang Xiangdong in "Talking about 'roots'", Hang Chen aspires to a union of Marxist-Leninist theory and Chinese practice, neither dogmatic nor empiricist. Such a union would not only help to keep a steady course in a "political storm" such as the Tian'anmen student movement, but also help to evade the fate of the East-European socialist countries that had crumbled throughout 1989. China, Hang points out, differs in many aspects from these socialist countries, therefore by uniting Marxist-Leninist theory with the Chinese conditions it is possible to develop an alternative for China's future, to "Follow [her] own way" as the article's title reads. Hang's use of quotation is quite interesting: He not only quotes Mao quoting, but also explains why Mao quoted. According to Hang, Mao used the quotation as "mirror of history" to criticise shortcomings in the behaviour of others. Hang copies what he identified as Mao's quoting style, but for the fact that he mirrored history through the lenses of Mao. Although Hang derives legitimacy through this historical comparison, he still dispels Mao's works to history. Both Wang Xiangdong and Hang Chen used a couplet from "Reform Our Study" to sketch out a future way for China's reform process, neither empiricist nor dogmatic. At the time of writing "Reform Our Study", Mao had used this couplet to criticise peasant cadres lacking Marxist-Leninist education as well as cadres trained thoroughly in Marxism-Leninism in foreign countries but lacking knowledge about China. In 1989/90 the target of criticism had (and was) changed: young students influenced by Western ideas lacked thorough footing in Marxism-Leninism. Therefore, some of them were sent to Shijiazhuang not only for military but also for ideological training. The same accusation was levelled at a "few comrades" who moreover had neglected their task of correctly guiding the youth. But who was accused of dogmatism? Was this a mere rhetorical warning against the opposite evil? Was it a warning towards the recently empowered ideological educators in different institutions not to turn back the clock and teach ideology in the dogmatic style of the Cultural Revolution? Or did it anticipate the reaction of students and those "few comrades" who might call their ideological re-education dogmatism? Another article from early 1990 will help to clarify these points. Moreover, it is in my view an example of a more authoritative quotation style.

“Uphold Marxism, continue thought liberation 坚持马克思主义，继续解放思想” appeared in *People's Daily* on January 22, 1990. It was an abridged article by Han Maohua 韩茂华³⁴⁴ from the magazine *Inner-Mongolian Social Sciences* 内蒙古社会科学, number 6, 1989. Han Maohua argued that to uphold Marxism did not contradict thought liberation. Some followers of the “bourgeois liberalisation 资产阶级自由化” had declared that Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought was dogmatic or out-of-date and had neither place nor use in guiding people. “Whenever we criticised capitalist liberalisation, someone would get up and ask: ‘Do you want thought liberation henceforth?’ [...] Therefore, it is extremely necessary to repeatedly explain why we have to uphold Marxism and how to do this; it is extremely necessary to expose the distortion that capitalist liberalisation has caused for thought liberation, and continue thought liberation under the guidance of Marxism. 而每当我们批判资产阶级自由化的时候，就有人站出来责问：‘今后还要不要解放思想了？’ [...] 所以，很有必要反复说明我们为什么要坚持马克思主义，怎样坚持马克思主义；很有必要揭露资产阶级自由化对解放思想的歪曲，以便在马克思主义指导下继续解放思想。(Han Maohua 韩茂华 1990.01.22)” Under the flag of thought liberation, some people had in reality been following bourgeois liberalisation. They had opposed any attempt of upholding Marxism, arguing that this contradicted thought liberation, that it was dogmatic. Who then had been accused of dogmatism in the previous two articles? I suggest that nobody was accused of dogmatic behaviour, but that the authors wanted to stress that their own standpoint of upholding Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought was *not* dogmatic. Dogmatism for Han was what Mao had criticised as early as 1941: being able to quote ideology but unable to apply it to reality.

The explanation “why we have to uphold Marxism and how to do this” enfolds in the next section of the article. It is based on several quotations from Lenin, Deng Xiaoping, Mao Zedong and even one from the new General Secretary Jiang Zemin. “Reform Our Study” provides information for the correct attitude in learning Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought:

The Marxist attitude adheres to the principle of the union of theory and practice. Comrade Mao Zedong pointed out: ‘With this attitude, one studies the theory of Marxism-Leninism with a purpose, that is, to integrate Marxist-Leninist theory with the actual movement of the Chinese revolution and to seek from this theory the stand, viewpoint and method with which to solve the theoretical and tactical problems of the

³⁴⁴ Han Maohua 韩茂华 (born 1945 in Shanxi), entered the Party in 1975. He has since held different positions in the Party branch of the Inner-Mongolia Autonomous Region: vice-head of the propaganda department, member and later secretary-general of the standing committee, vice-secretary of the Party district committee. CHINA.ORG.CN (n.d.) 区委副书记：韩茂花 [Vice-secretary of Party district committee: Han Maohua]. accessed: 14.12.2007, downloaded: 14.12.2007.

Chinese revolution. Such an attitude is one of shooting the arrow at the target³⁴⁵. The ‘target’ is the Chinese revolution, the ‘arrow’ is Marxism-Leninism.’ This attitude ‘is [what] every Communist Party member should have at the very least’. To seek truth from facts, to relate theory with practice, is the quintessence of Mao Zedong Thought. 马克思主义的态度，就是遵循理论和实际统一的原则。毛泽东同志指出：‘在这种态度下，就是要有的放矢地去研究马克思列宁主义的理论，要使马克思列宁主义的理论和中国革命的实际运动结合起来，是为着解决中国革命的理论问题和策略问题而去从它找立场，找观点，找方法的。这种态度，就是有的放矢的态度。‘的’就是中国革命，‘矢’就是马克思列宁主义。’这种态度，‘是一个共产党员起码应该具备的态度’。实事求是，理论联系实际，是毛泽东思想的精髓。(Han Maohua 韩茂华 1990.01.22)

Although the ideological training of students, workers, peasants and especially Party members had to be enforced, Han Maohua carefully pointed out that the “quintessence of Mao Zedong Thought” was to relate theory with *practice*. Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought should be consulted in order to find “stand, viewpoint and method with which to solve” contemporary Chinese problems. “Seek truth from facts”, the phrase so aptly used to dispel the dogmatic, ritualistic recitation of Mao’s every word and sentence in 1977/78 (see above), is again referred to, signalling: we do not turn back to Mao worship (although we continue to quote him). Nor do we deviate from the socialist road as so many East-European countries have done; instead, we will continue “to follow our own way in constructing socialism with Chinese characteristics 走自己的路，建设有中国特色的社会主义 (Han Maohua 韩茂华 1990.01.22)” – the latter sub-clause being a phrase introduced by Deng Xiaoping in 1982 and repeatedly used since then. Although Mao is quoted by Han to introduce an argument which is reconfirmed by a second quotation of “Reform Our Study”, the last sentence calls into question the necessity to comprehensively study Mao Zedong Thought by arguing: “To seek truth from facts, to relate theory with practice, is the quintessence of Mao Zedong Thought.” Mao Zedong Thought shrinks to two quintessential slogans that have been seized on by Deng Xiaoping since Mao’s death.

To close this chapter of quoting “Reform Our Study” in 1990, I want to present a last high profile evidence of historicising Mao Zedong Thought at the time. On June 12, 1990, Jiang Zemin, by then General Secretary of the Party, gave a talk to a forum of headmasters of national Party schools. This talk was published on the first page of *People’s Daily* two months later – and presumably after many revisions. Its title was “On some problems of strengthening the construction of Party Schools 关于加强党校建设的几个问题”. In this long article, Jiang addressed three major

³⁴⁵ As “Seek truth from facts”, “is a proverb. One phrase lexicon gives both the Shijing 诗经, and the Xunzi 荀子 as the origin of this phrase CHEN TIEJUN 陈铁君 (1996) 远流活用成语辞典 [Yuanliu lexicon of familiar idioms] 台北: 447. The online encyclopedia Baidu baike, instead, refers to a Song text by Ye She 叶适 titled *The Other Anthology by Shui Xin* 《水心别集》. However, all these three prototexts express the meaning only, but not the formulation of the later proverb. The origin of the formulation is uncertain.

points: (1) the strategic significance of Marxism as weapon of the Party; (2) the education of Party character through relating theory with practice; and (3) the necessity of every Party committee to guide the work of the Party schools. The first paragraph of part 2 gave a history of ideas/policies on correct education from Mao to Deng, from 1941 to 1990. I will quote it here at some length to show how this history was constructed by drawing on different authorities for different periods:

Comrade Mao Zedong has said: ‘It is necessary to master Marxist theory and apply it, master it for the sole purpose of applying it. [From: “Rectify the Party’s Style of Work”, 1.2.1942]’³⁴⁶ This is the basic attitude in approaching Marxism correctly. When we study Marxism, *we do not want to be able to recite several clauses from memory*, but we want to use the Marxist standpoint, viewpoint and method to analyse and solve real problems of the Chinese revolution and construction. In everything proceed from reality, seek truth from facts, relate theory with practice, this is the glorious working style and ideological line of our Party, and is also the guiding policy of education in the Party schools. *In 1941*, Comrade Mao Zedong formulated a school motto ‘seek truth from facts, don’t esteem empty talk [From: “Talk at the forum to change *Liberation Daily*”, 31.3.1942]’ for the Central Committee Party Schools of the Yan’an era; and he clearly defined the rule ‘As for education for cadres whether at work or in schools for cadres, a policy should be established of focusing such education on the study [*yanjiu*] of the practical problems of the Chinese revolution and using the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism as the guide, and the method of studying [*yanjiu*] Marxism-Leninism statically and in isolation should be discarded. [“Reform Our Study”]’ These sentences by Comrade Mao Zedong point out that education at the Party schools must preserve to relate theory with practice. *In the 1950s*, the education policy at the Party schools, a formulation masterminded by *Comrade Liu Shaoqi*, and approved by the politburo of the Central Committee, was: “Study theory, relate [it] with practice, advance in knowledge, strengthen the Party character.” *In the last 11 years*, *Comrade Deng Xiaoping* again stressed that under the new historical conditions, one has to seek truth from facts, relate theory with practice. The education work of our Party schools has to persistently carry out this policy. 毛泽东同志说过: ‘对于马克思主义的理论, 要能够精通它、应用它, 精通的目的全在于应用。’这是正确对待马克思主义的基本态度。我们学习马克思主义, 不是要会背几个条文, 而是要运用马克思主义的立场、观点和方法分析解决中国革命和建设的实际问题。一切从实际出发, 实事求是, 理论联系实际, 是我们党的优良作风和思想路线, 也是党校教育的指导方针。1941年, 毛泽东同志为延安时期的中央党校制订了‘实事求是, 不尚空谈’的校训, 并明确规定‘对于在职干部的教育和干部学校的教育, 应确立以研究中国革命实际问题为中心, 以马克思列宁主义基本原则为指导的方针, 废除静止地孤立地研究马克思列宁主义的方法。’毛泽东同志的这些话, 指出了党校教学必须坚持理论联系实际。50年代, 由刘少奇同志主持制定, 并经中央政治局批准的党校教学方针是: ‘学习理论, 联系实际, 提高认识, 增强党性。’近11年来, 邓小平同志又一再强调, 在新的历史条件下, 要实事求是, 理论联系实际。我们党校的教育工作必须始终如一地贯彻执行这个方针。 [my emphasis] (Jiang Zemin 江泽民 1990.08.12)

The sole purpose of mastering theory, one might conclude from this passage, has always been and will always be its application. The genealogy of this dictum, first formulated by Mao in 1942, is then traced through history: Mao stressed it repeatedly in Yan’an, Liu Shaoqi supported by the politburo of the Central Committee confirmed a similar formulation for the 1950s, and finally Deng Xiaoping reaffirmed it even under the new historical conditions since 1978/79. This genealogy is written against a return to dogmatism, against Cultural Revolution quotation practice, against Mao as sole founder of education policy, against Tian’anmen and the loss of roots. Quotations introduce Party

³⁴⁶ Translation of quotation taken from MAO ZEDONG (1965a) *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* vol. 3, Beijing: 38.

ideologues and their basic ideas or policies of a certain period. In this chronological order, both the development of educational policy since Mao can be shown, but also the similarities to his standpoint.

In conclusion, I want to shortly summarise my argumentation: In the wake of the Tian'anmen movement a discussion on the ideological education of students and Party cadres ensued. 'Bourgeois liberalisation' should be fought with Marxist-Leninist re-education. However, the ideological education should not be carried out in a Lin Biao style³⁴⁷ memorising of outstanding quotations. The correct attitude of learning ideology was found in Mao's talks during the Yan'an Rectification Movement, among others "Reform Our Study". Neither empiricist, nor dogmatic, it featured learning Marxist "stand, viewpoint and method" in order to solve problems, "master [theory] for the sole purpose of applying it". The authors contributing to the discussion ignored 50 years of quoting "Reform Our Study" for differing purposes. They essentially went back to Mao's own intentions. However, the antagonists in 1989/90 were different from those in 1941/42: Mao's main enemy in 1941/42 had been foreign trained Marxists in the Party. In 1989/90, the new enemy were students and cadres doubting that Marxism had any value for present-day China or hoping to escape ideological training by learning to recite a few phrases thereof.

2001: "Going Classic" – "Reform Our Study" as Reference Material for Jiang Zemin's Ideological Advances

Quoting "Reform Our Study" in *People's Daily* peaked again in 2001, the last time witnessed so far. Compared with former peaks, that of 2001 is relatively insignificant: The absolute number of quotations from "Reform Our Study" was 20 in 2001 (comp. Figure 12). The statistics show a peak relative to the surrounding years for these 20 quotations. However, only 7 articles appeared in 2001 quoting from "Reform Our Study"; and the curve showing the absolute numbers of articles quoting "Reform Our Study" did not peak in 2001, but 2002 instead. Moreover, not even half of the articles using quotations from "Reform Our Study" in this year are connecting them with their source text by adding the original article's title. And finally, 12 of the 20 quoted sentences from "Reform Our Study" appeared in just 1 article. In spite of this relative statistical insignificance, I will include this last peak in my analysis and will herewith end my narrative on how the source text "Reform Our Study" of Mao Zedong was used in *People's Daily* since its origin in 1941 until today. My justification for not leaving out this period is threefold: a) It is the last peak so far to be witnessed, b) the new context

³⁴⁷ Lin advised this as a shortcut to Mao Zedong Thought in early 1960, an advice probably derived from personal habit. See: LEESE (2006) *Performative Politics and Petrified Image: The Mao Cult during China's Cultural Revolution* (Ph.D. thesis). School of Humanities and Social Sciences, International University, Bremen: 107. See also above.

bears strong resemblance to its forerunners, but c) the embedding of quotations differs totally from all previous embeddings.

As mentioned above, one article in 2001 featured as many as 12 of the 20 “Reform Our Study” quotations appearing throughout the whole year. What was this article about? Why did it refer so often to “Reform Our Study”? Is it simply an anniversary article? What use was made of quotations in this article? The article was published on August 29, 2001 bearing the title “Mao Zedong and Comrade Deng Xiaoping discuss thought emancipation, seeking truth from facts 毛泽东、邓小平同志论解放思想、实事求是”. It was written by the editorial board of *People’s Daily*. It did not commemorate the 60th anniversary of the writing of “Reform Our Study”, but presents the reader with a collection of 52 quotations (most consisting of more than one sentence) from 31 articles of Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping divided into five different topics.³⁴⁸ For example under the heading “Link Marxism with the Chinese practice, follow your own way” the following quotation was listed:

A guiding principle should be established of focusing on the research of the practical problems of the Chinese revolution and using the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism as the guide; the method of doing research on Marxism-Leninism statically and in isolation should be discarded.

Mao Zedong: “Reform Our Study” (19 May 1941), *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* v.3, p.802

应确立以研究中国革命实际问题为中心，以马克思列宁主义基本原则为指导的方针，废除静止地孤立地研究马克思列宁主义的方法。

毛泽东：《改造我们的学习》（1941年5月19日），《毛泽东选集》第3卷第802页

(Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 2001.08.29)

What is significant about this quotational use? First, the quotations are presented without further comment save the topical heading. Second, the quotations do not all consist of full sentences. In the example above, the first sub-clause – “As for the education of cadres at work or of cadres in schools, 对于在职干部的教育和干部学校的教育，” – is cut off, excluding the topic of the original quotation. Thus, its scope was widened. What Mao had declared to be a “guiding principle for cadres at work or in schools” is valid for everyone in 2001. Third, the source of each quotation is given in detail (author, title of article, date of article, book title, volume, page of quotation), however, the publication year of the books are not given. Previously, evidence of the opposite has often been witnessed (and even sometimes complained about): The publication date of the collection containing a quoted article was given, but not the date when the article had originally been written. The problem

³⁴⁸ The quotations were selected from the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, the *Collected Works of Mao Zedong* 毛泽东文集, the *Selected Readings of Mao Zedong’s Works* 毛泽东著作选读 and the *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* 邓小平文选. The quotations from Mao’s works range from 1930 to 1964, Deng’s quotations encompass the years 1977 to 1989. For a list and discussion of these topics see further down.

of such annotation practices is outlined in a reader's letter of 1963: "I think that such annotations should not only explicate a quotation's source, but should help the reader more. For example, when quoting an article by Lenin, we generally want to know at what time and under what circumstances Lenin said this. If annotations of quotations would indicate clearly year and month of writing, and even the edition, this could help readers much more. (Chen Chengzhong 陈承中 1963.11.25)" By giving the date of writing, I argue, a quotation is historicised (see also Chapter 1). It is tied to time and conditions of its origin, losing to some degree its canonical quality. We might remember that exactly this was one of the arguments used by Deng Xiaoping, Chen Yun, and Nie Rongzhen during the 1977/78 campaign to limit the authority attributed to quotations of Mao. A similar effect has the listing of quotations in chronological order with only the date of each prototext given, as we are seeing done now in 2001. And, as in 1989/90, a history of thought is thereby construed, though this time without remarks connecting one quotation with the next and evaluating each. This might be seen as another instance of reducing Mao to a historical personage instead of paramount ideologue and leader. The same strategy is witnessed in publications like *Manuscripts by Mao Zedong Since the Liberation of China* 建国以来毛泽东文稿 in 1998 or *Chronological Index of Mao Zedong's Writings* 毛泽东著述编年索引 in 2001. Another aspect concerning the embedding of canonical quotations is significant: The title only was given, neither the date nor the number of the collection's edition was given which contained a quoted article. This helped to conceal the fact that the Party afterwards had revised those articles (in some cases considerably altering the original) and then presented a selection as collective ideology. More important is, however, that the Party refrained from stressing what edition was seen as normative at that time. One might argue, of course, that by 2001 the post-Cultural Revolution normative edition of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* had been on the market and promoted for a decade, while only one edition of the *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* existed, making such annotations non-essential.

Before focusing on the image of "Reform Our Study" conveyed in 2001, I want to delineate the historical background and reasons for publishing this quotation collection of Mao and Deng. On this basis, I argue, that the quotations were both selected as reference material to and justification of Jiang Zemin's ideological advances put forward in a speech of July 1st, 2001, to an assemblance at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing celebrating the eightieth anniversary of the founding of the

CCP.³⁴⁹ The major contribution of this speech was to admit businessmen/entrepreneurs and professionals/intellectuals into the Party. He based this idea on his theory about the “three represents 三个代表” that defined the modernising role of the CCP as its main representative of “advanced production forces, advanced Chinese culture, and the basic interests of the Chinese people”. By 2001, white collar workers and the newly emerging entrepreneurial class were included into the so-called “representation of advanced production forces”. One of the reasons for this move was to absorb those people into the ruling system who in the future were most likely to aspire politically powerful positions. If driven away by the Party, they might instead found or support groups in favour of democracy. The official justification for this move was that “what count[ed was] not the class origins of the membership, but their ideology”.³⁵⁰ Jiang’s speech caused ferocious criticism by a leftist group in the CCP led by Deng Liqun 邓力群³⁵¹. Their reaction was published in the Internet journal *People’s News* 人民报 on July 28, 2001.³⁵² They claimed among other things that Jiang had violated the Party constitution and the system of centralised leadership because he had not properly consulted the members of the Party on the content of his speech. However, this claim is proven wrong by Fewsmith’s analysis based on interviews.³⁵³ Jiang’s speech was the result of a two year research and consultation process of officials throughout China.³⁵⁴ Moreover, in the days after its publication on July 2nd it was endorsed by every member of the Politburo.³⁵⁵ In July and August, *People’s Daily* published a series of study material on the so-called “Comrade Jiang Zemin’s important July First 江泽民同志‘七一’重要讲话”. These study material included questions and answers on the speech itself, explications on the “three represents”, as well as three long articles on the thought of Marx,

³⁴⁹ JIANG ZEMIN 江泽民 (02.07.2001) 在庆祝中国共产党成立八十周年大会上的讲话 (二〇〇一年七月一日) [Speech at the eightieth anniversary conference of the founding of the Chinese Communist Party], 人民日报, 1.

³⁵⁰ FEWSMITH (Dec. 2001) Rethinking the Role of the CCP: Explicating Jiang Zemin's Party Anniversary Speech, *China Leadership Monitor* 1, 1-11: 4. The article discusses in detail the origin, content, and evaluation of the speech in question.

³⁵¹ Deng Liqun, born in Hunan in 1915, joined the CCP in 1936 and since has held many important offices in Party and government, especially in research areas (vice-president of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) and the propaganda sector (vice editor-in-chief of the Party journal Red Flag 红旗, head of the Central Committee Propaganda Department).

³⁵² DENG LIQUN 邓力群, MA WENDUAN 马文端 & YUAN MU 袁木 (28.07.2001) 邓力群率领一群共产党员痛批江泽民 [Deng Liqun leading a group of members of the Communist Party of China criticises Jiang Zemin], 人民报. For an English translation cf. DENG LIQUN 邓力群 (28.07.2001) Deng Liqun, others criticize Jiang Zemin for deciding to admit capitalists into CPC, *FBIS*. Both documents can be accessed at the Digital Archive for Chinese Studies at <http://www.sino.uni-heidelberg.de/dachs/>.

³⁵³ FEWSMITH (Dec. 2001) Rethinking the Role of the CCP: Explicating Jiang Zemin's Party Anniversary Speech, *China Leadership Monitor* 1, 1-11: 1-3.

³⁵⁴ FEWSMITH (Dec. 2001) Rethinking the Role of the CCP: Explicating Jiang Zemin's Party Anniversary Speech, *China Leadership Monitor* 1, 1-11: 3.

³⁵⁵ FEWSMITH (Dec. 2001) Rethinking the Role of the CCP: Explicating Jiang Zemin's Party Anniversary Speech, *China Leadership Monitor* 1, 1-11: 1.

Engels, Lenin, Mao Zedong, and Comrade Deng Xiaoping. The last of these three articles is the quotation collection under discussion here.³⁵⁶ It is published “for everybody to learn and do research into [...] learn in order to apply 大家学习研究 [...] 学以致用” as these quotations “link our country’s practice in revolution, construction and reform 结合我国革命、建设和改革的实际” (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 2001.08.29). Thus, the reader is prompted to learn the development of history and ideology from revolution, to construction, and reform by meditating on pre-selected quotations, a selection that represents Mao and Deng as “models of thought liberation and seeking truth from facts 解放思想、实事求是的典范” (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 2001.08.29). Such models characteristically “were never dogmatic nor rigid, [...] always went with the time, [...] always unceasingly developed and perfected their own theory according to the transformation of historical conditions. 从不教条，从不僵化，总是与时俱进，总是根据历史条件的变化不断发展和完善自己的理论。(Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 2001.08.29)” Thus, Mao and Deng are set up in opposition to Deng Liqun and his group of Leftists. Jiang’s “three represents” are just one instance of an unceasing development and perfection of theory that is seen as necessity. His speech becomes the prolongation of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, and Deng Xiaoping Theory. One year later, at the 16th Party congress, the Three Represents was added to the Party constitution in line with Mao Zedong Thought and Deng Xiaoping Theory.³⁵⁷ Thus, in his last two years in office Jiang succeeded to imprint his enduring influence on the Party. Though the above subsumed argumentative strategy to justify Jiang’s ideological advances was handy, it undermines the *canonical* status of theory in general, as by Assmanns’ definition the canon is timeless, not bound to specific historical conditions (see introduction to this chapter).

What image of “Reform Our Study” is established in 2001 via quoting its sentences? Mao Zedong Thought and Deng Xiaoping Theory, I argued above, were used and *reduced* to reference material justifying Jiang Zemin’s ideological invention. The same observation applies to quoting “Reform Our Study”, as I hope to show now. The 12 sentences quoted from “Reform Our Study”

³⁵⁶ For a full list of these materials see: RENMINWANG 人民网 (2001-2002) 学习江泽民'七一'重要讲话. 人民日报系列文章 [Learn the important 'July First' speech of Jiang Zemin. Series of articles by People's Daily]. <http://www.people.com.cn/GB/shizheng/252/5792/6127/index.html>, accessed: 17.06.2007, downloaded: 17.06.2007. This webpage features even more material on the speech. It is an early example of the extension of the Party’s propaganda and education to the Internet. The two articles on Marx, Engels, and Lenin appeared on August 13 and 17 in *People’s Daily* titled ‘Extract on the discourse of Marx, Engels, and Lenin about developing Marxism’ and ‘How Marx, Engels, and Lenin developed Marxism in practice’.

³⁵⁷ The decision to include Jiang’s theory in the Party constitution was made at a secret and informal meeting at Beidaihe between the end of July and mid-August 2001, i.e. at the same time when the study material for Jiang’s ‘July First’ speech was published. In: LAM (12.09.2001) Post Beidaihe: No Consensus on PRC Leadership, *China Brief* 1.

formed 4 quotations in the 2001 quotation collection. In content, sentences are preferred that oppose dogmatic learning and behaviour, and vote for a union of theory and practice. Especially the former argument is almost solely based on quotations of Mao and appears under the heading “Oppose dogmatism and ideological rigidity 反对教条主义和思想僵化”. From “Reform Our Study”, a long passage describing what Mao had named the “subjectivist attitude” was chosen for this topic: “Many comrades seem to study [*xuexi*] Marxism-Leninism not to meet the needs of revolutionary practice, but purely for the sake of study [*xuexi*]. Consequently, though they read, they cannot digest. They can only cite odd quotations [a few words and phrases] from Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin in a one-sided manner, but are unable to apply the stand, viewpoint and method of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin to the concrete study [*yanjiu*] of China's present conditions and her history or to the concrete analysis and solution of the problems of the Chinese revolution. Such an attitude towards Marxism-Leninism does a great deal of harm, particularly among cadres of the middle and higher ranks.” At least two reasons might have contributed to including this passage: (1) Deng Liqun’s leftist criticism of Jiang’s policy; especially the last sentence adds plausibility to this guess. (2) As a warning on how *not* to use this quotation collection (after all, it reminds one strongly of the “Little Red Book”, and I will return to this point soon).

As already noted, all quotations are divided into five topics, each headed by combinations of two famous slogans or quotations. Eight of the ten slogans originate with Mao or were used by him (those that cannot be traced back to Mao are set in cursive script):

- 1) Preserve seeking truth from facts, in everything proceed from reality 坚持实事求是，一切从实际出发，
- 2) Link Marxism with the Chinese practice, follow your own way 把马克思主义同中国的实际相结合，走自己的道路，
- 3) Liberate thought, enrich and develop theory in practice [i.e. practical work] 解放思想，在实践中丰富和发展理论，
- 4) Oppose dogmatism and ideological rigidity 反对教条主义和思想僵化，
- 5) Penetrate into practice, investigate and research 深入实际，调查研究 [my emphasis].³⁵⁸

It is interesting that only two phrases (marked bold) had in fact been used by Jiang in his ‘July First’ speech. The entire speech is almost devoid of canonical quotations. Another fact of some significance is that the first topic “Preserve seeking truth from facts, in everything proceed from reality” did not list any quotation of “Reform Our Study”. As I have argued above “Seeking truth from facts” was in general defined by the following sentence of “Reform Our Study”: “‘Facts’ are all

³⁵⁸ RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民日报社 (29.08.2001) 毛泽东、邓小平同志论解放思想、实事求是 [Mao Zedong and Comrade Deng Xiaoping discuss thought emancipation, seeking truth from facts], 人民日报, 1.

the things that exist objectively, ‘truth’ means their internal relations, that is, the laws governing them, and ‘to seek’ means to do research. ‘实事求是’就是客观存在着的一切事物, ‘是’就是客观事物的内部联系, 即规律性, ‘求’就是我们去研究。” The 2001 quotation collection, however, makes no use of this sentence, but instead introduced quotations from “On Practice 实践论”, “On Contradictions 矛盾论”, “On the New Democracy 新民主主义论” and from the “Speech at the Yan’an Forum on Art and Literature 在延安文艺座谈会上的讲话”. None of these quotations of Mao sport the phrase “Seeking truth from facts”, but in the following three quotations of Deng Xiaoping, the phrase appears 8 times. The absence of this quotation is further highlighted by the fact that the preceding three and following two sentences appear in the other topics. In my view, this selection expresses and reconfirms that by 2001 “Seeking truth from facts” is (or should be) connected to Deng Xiaoping’s policy of Reform and Opening Up, and was not associated any more to Mao Zedong and “Reform Our Study”.

The 2001 collection of quotations from Mao and Deng ironically bears strong resemblance with the “Little Red Book” officially titled *Quotations from Chairman Mao* of 1964 which by then had been banned. Both texts consist solely of de-contextualised quotations (apart from a short introduction). In both cases the quotations were arranged thematically. And in both cases the collections of quotations did not only appear in newspapers, but were printed as small single volume editions, handy to carry around.³⁵⁹ However, the differences are probably as significant as the similarities: The 2001 quotation collection is not dedicated to one author, but comprises quotations from five authors, i.e. Marx, Engels, Lenin, Mao and Deng. The quotations are not presented as the culmination of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, but focus on two special topics: How did Marx, Engels, and Lenin discuss developing Marxism; and what did Mao and Deng say about “thought liberation” and “Seeking truth from facts”. Whereas the *Quotations from Chairman Mao* were collected as guidebook for everyday problems and everyday usage, the new quotation collection functions as authoritative reference material to the ‘July First’ speech since Jiang quoted none of them himself. As no commentary on each quotation was given, the reader was left in doubt how to interconnect them to the speech or how to interpret them. Only the collection’s introduction points out: “These expositions by Mao Zedong and Comrade Deng Xiaoping, all closely link our country’s practice in revolution, construction and reform, and therefore have even more actuality and

³⁵⁹ “Extract on the discourse of Marx, Engels, and Lenin about developing Marxism” (another quotation collection of Marx, Engels, and Lenin) and “Mao Zedong, Comrade Deng Xiaoping discuss thought emancipation, seeking truth from facts” were published as a single volume edition on August 30, 2001.

focalisation. Marx, Engels, Lenin, as well as Mao Zedong and Comrade Deng Xiaoping, are all models of thought liberation and seeking truth from facts, they were never dogmatic nor rigid, they always went with the time, they always unceasingly developed and perfected their own theory according to the transformation of historical conditions. This is what we especially want to learn. Review the old and know the new. (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 2001.08.29)” The quotation collection was meant to convince readers of the correctness of Jiang’s policy, to provide justification to transform ideology according to conditions, and even to provide them with apt quotations to use against hardliners. Readers should learn from the Communist ideologues how to develop and perfect theory so as to fit it to a changing world; or in other words how to bridge the semantic gap between canon and world. The impact of the selected “Reform Our Study” quotations in *People’s Daily* itself was zero, no further articles repeated them. Therefore, this quotation collection is just one evidence of how “Reform Our Study” was used in 2001, but one can hardly talk of a concise “image” or re-interpretation thereof.

Conclusion

The world changes but “Reform Our Study” was fixed for eternity with its official publication in the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* in 1953. Only the interpretation of the text could be and was changed in later times by quoting one fourth of its sentences. In 1941, the year of origin of “Reform Our Study”, the CCP was faced with numerous pressing problems: they had to rectify the Party, to level comrades of different background and training, they had to make them work together, they needed to blend Marxism and Chineseness, and to find a Chinese way to Communism represented by a single leader: the melting-pot of Yan’an. Of these questions, Mao’s “Reform Our Study” addressed especially how to train and educate different kinds of cadres (by uniting theory with practice) and how to fit Marxism into Chinese reality (by learning history to understand the present, by reading the *Short Course* to find a method for sinifying Marxism-Leninism). What interpretation was given to the text when quoting its parts? At all occasions when “Reform Our Study” was quoted abundantly, its meaning was reduced to different shades of the “union of theory and practice”. This phrase described the correct learning attitude of a good Communist contra the erroneous attitudes of dogmatism and empiricism subsumed under the term subjectivism. But what, for example, was theoretical dogmatism? Mao defined the parroting of ideological phrases as one characteristic of dogmatism. However, in 1964 Lin Biao used “Reform Our Study” to justify his “problem-oriented learning strategy” that among others recommended the memorisation of quotations as a shortcut to

Marxism. How could this be done? By emphasising that these phrases were only learned to be applied in practical situations and would thus form a union of theory and practice. Was “anti-dogmatic” the same as “creative”? In “Reform Our Study”, Mao repeatedly requested a creative adaptation of Marxism-Leninism to Chinese conditions. But did he mean creative application of theory or creative writing thereof? Mao himself used the argument to justify his invention of Mao Zedong Thought. And with the same argument Lin Biao would later justify his creative adaptation of Mao Zedong Thought to Chinese reality that even comprised such absurd behaviour like parroting Mao quotations to bargain for tomatoes.³⁶⁰ 60 years later, then, it was Jiang Zemin who like Mao argued that his Three Represents were just a new creative adaptation of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought to current Chinese conditions. But if a theory is dependent on that which is current can it then be called a canon? And if it is dependent on local conditions as Mao had argued in “Reform Our Study” (in order to justify the Sinification of Marxism-Leninism) does this theory constitute a canon? Mao Zedong Thought had and has the advantage of being both a historical narrative and a canon. Thus, depending on the current situation, each aspect could be and was highlighted, overshadowing its respective opponent.

The meaning of the “union of theory and practice” was also prone to redefinition. The very same people used “Reform Our Study” for differing means at different periods. Whereas in 1977/78 Deng Xiaoping and Chen Yun had used “Reform Our Study” to back their claim that theory was but a guide to be tested for validity in practice, by 1989/90 they had changed their strategy. Theory, now, became an important guide for understanding and judging reality and had therefore to be taught anew to a disoriented and guideless generation of young Chinese. Both strategies were directed by pragmatic considerations: without the first strategy, the rehabilitation of Deng, Chen and all other cadres whom Mao had condemned during the Cultural Revolution would have been impossible. Only by devaluing the truth of Mao’s every written or spoken word and by tying truth to a disparate criterion could some of Mao’s legacy henceforth be ignored, counteracted or proven incorrect. After the Tian’anmen movement, the same actors used theory as gravity surrogate against the processes of disintegration in Party and country. A solid footing in Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought was seen as basis of a socialist society. “Reform Our Study” was used to defend this strategy against certain attacks which called it dogmatic and unrelated to practice.

³⁶⁰ A market place scene where a woman haggles with Mao quotations over the price for tomatoes is described in GAO YUAN (1987) *Born Red. A Chronicle of the Cultural Revolution* Stanford: 318f.

Although the process of adapting “Reform Our Study” to a changing world can certainly be called creative in itself, there are limits to creativity. Publication rules mostly withheld quotation of unpublished or not officially approved and declassified texts. The effectiveness of these rules led to quite different results. In 1961, propagandists did not quote Mao’s text “Against bookishness” which would have been most fitting to the strategy of grass-root investigation, but this article had not been cleared by the Party centre yet. Instead they drew on “Reform Our Study” and other texts from the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* for authoritative quotations. In 1978, to the contrary, none other than Deng Xiaoping used an unofficial comment of Mao concerning the bad habit of Chinese newspapers to quote him all the time instead of creating their own words. Deng herewith argued that Mao himself had opposed the deification of his every word, and, hence, seeking to abolish this practice was in line with Mao, the supreme authority, who by this very act was undermined. This quotation had never before and was never again used in *People’s Daily* even after its official publication in 1983.³⁶¹ Censorship by publication rules thus worked in two directions: It set boundaries for ordinary cadres not to be transgressed, but it did not hinder transgressions by those in power if extraordinary situations required it, like for instance the power struggle between Hua Guofeng and Deng Xiaoping. Next to censorship, how did Assmanns’ other guardians of the canon, i.e. text maintenance and meaning maintenance, keep creativity in set boundaries? As mentioned already, “Reform Our Study” was textually fixed by 1953. Later, some of its sentences found entry into Lin Biao’s minute canon, the *Quotations of Chairman Mao*. Although this textual form and its use came to be called a vulgarisation of Mao Zedong Thought, the memory of the masses testifies to a different narrative: in their view, the little Red Book could be compared to the German or French translations of the Latin bible. Knowledge of Mao Zedong Thought, even if only the knowledge of some phrases, empowered the people to talk back to erring cadres. By being able to speak the accepted political language they gained access to and influence on the political discourse,³⁶² at least as far as it concerned their everyday life.³⁶³ At least by 1970, the leadership understood that the words of the Chairman represented a formidable political capital and, more importantly, that it was dangerous to let the

³⁶¹ The reference was later published in 1983, cf. MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1983) 毛泽东新闻工作文选 [Selected articles on news work by Mao Zedong] 北京: 217.

³⁶² BOURDIEU (1982) *Die feinen Unterschiede: Kritik der gesellschaftlichen Urteilskraft* Frankfurt: 719-20; BOURDIEU (1990) *Was heisst sprechen?* Wien.

³⁶³ CHAN, MADSEN & UNGER (1984) *Chen Village. The Recent History of a Peasant Community in Mao's China* Berkeley: 74-87.

masses freely participate in wielding this power.³⁶⁴ Some excesses of the Mao cult like the many versions of the loyalty dance were henceforth restricted to one normative version. By 1978, Deng and his colleagues had re-established the leadership's authority over the canon. The most obvious sign of this was the publication of a new edition of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* in 1991 bearing Deng's calligraphy on the cover and revised commentaries on its pages. The text of "Reform Our Study", however, was conserved unaltered. Thus the three guardians of the canon – censorship, text and meaning maintenance – performed their work.

What will be the future function of the canon in China? Past usage indicates that (1) in certain limits the canon can change in meaning though not in form, (2) these limits are set by those in power, yet in general the common people and lower level cadres are excluded from this process, (3) though the once fixed textual form of the canon cannot be changed, it can be enlarged. The canon, i.e. Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, is defined by its authors as scientific method. Being scientific, as Mao pointed out, means that it is not everlasting true by some internal virtue, but proven valid by real experience. And as reality is subjected to change, thus the canon would have to be changed. But at this point, the CCP inconsequently stops to act according to its own principles. None of the articles of Mao were taken out of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* in the 1991 edition, no article was even changed. Only the *commentaries* were adjusted. The maintenance of the original text had become more important than what might be gained through fitting the text to current conditions by scientific analysis. But can Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought be both a canon and a scientific method?³⁶⁵ The paradox is often solved in China by declaring that Marxism-Leninism, and Mao Zedong Thought have been proven valid by past experience, ignoring the changing nature of the world. In times of stability and peace, this paradox has not posed and probably will not pose a problem. It instigated strife (and may keep doing so) only during crisis: when Lin Biao chose to copy Mao in order to avoid falling from grace, when Deng Xiaoping fought against Hua Guofeng for Mao's succession, when the power of the CCP was questioned by the people during the Tian'anmen movement. Hence, stability and social harmony will be more important to the CCP than the conservation of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought. But as long as the CCP does not abandon Mao Zedong Thought altogether, "Reform Our Study" will probably lose none of its appeal to future quoters: it can always be used for claiming that

³⁶⁴ LEESE (2006) *Performative Politics and Petrified Image: The Mao Cult during China's Cultural Revolution* (Ph.D. thesis). School of Humanities and Social Sciences, International University, Bremen: 258-9.

³⁶⁵ The "scientific nature" of science itself has recently been questioned, implicating the opposite of that what I seek to establish here. For a full discussion thereof see Chapter 1.

investigations are a necessary prerequisite to policy-making, or to call for a unification of theory and practice, or to justify the creation of new ideological inventions.

4. (De-)Contextualising Quotations

“Anniversaries are mental constructs. They result from a definition of the event marking its relevance within a hierarchy of values, from a comparison with competing events within the same discourse, and from a struggle with other agendas that advance other dates as important.”

(Wagner 2001a:102)

Since the Second United Front, the event of the May Fourth Movement³⁶⁶ was given anniversary status by both the Guomindang and the Chinese Communist Party (hereafter CCP), and thereafter celebrated as national Youth Day. By designating May Fourth as Youth Day and highlighting the role of youth for national salvation, both parties consciously narrowed the scope of the original movement to limits acceptable to them. Moreover, it shifted the emphasis away from alternative interpretations of May Fourth as cultural renaissance or intellectual enlightenment. During the 20th anniversary of May Fourth, Mao Zedong gave three successive talks to cadres, youth and non-Party intellectuals in Yan'an ascribing meaning and value to the movement.³⁶⁷ Thus a prototext for narrating the May Fourth master narrative during future anniversaries in the People's Republic of China (hereafter PRC) had been created. Mao's interpretation was officially endorsed through the inclusion of these three talks in the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, the textual canon of Mao Zedong Thought. By way of quoting and retelling the canonised prototext the sanctioned story of the May Fourth Movement could be transmitted anew to every young generation during future anniversaries. Thereby, each new generation could be educated in Chinese history and attain some suitable Vorbild (archetype), and simultaneously the canon might be kept alive, its interpretation of history imprinted on people's minds and alternative dissenting narratives suppressed.

However the story of remembering May Fourth is not that easily told.³⁶⁸ *First*, anniversaries are not only used to remember the past in pre-defined terminology and meaning, but this past has to

³⁶⁶ An introduction to the May Fourth Movement and research thereof is given below.

³⁶⁷ See “The May Fourth Movement 五四运动” of May 1939, “The Orientation of the Youth Movement 青年运动的方向” as of May 4, 1939, and “On New Democracy 新民主主义论” as of January 1940, later in 1952 published in: MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1967 (1952)) 毛泽东选集 [Selected works of Mao Zedong] vol. 2, 北京.

³⁶⁸ Numerous books and articles have appeared describing and analysing the May Fourth Movement itself (CHOW (1960) *The May Fourth Movement. Intellectual Revolution in Modern China* Cambridge, Mass.; SCHWARCZ (1986) *The Chinese Enlightenment. Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* Berkeley; MITTER (2004) *A Bitter*

serve the present.³⁶⁹ The description of past events provides only a framework in which to tell present-day narratives. May Fourth is thus used especially in *People's Daily* editorials as either positive or negative allegory.³⁷⁰ The former was used in 1959 where May Fourth was portrayed as *successful* fight against imperialism and feudalism. In analogy to this, the 1959 Tibetan independence movement was portrayed as the 'feudal' Tibetan rebellion supported by the 'imperialist' Indian government against which the Chinese people had to unite again. Or the story of May Fourth is allegorically used to warn against the recurrence of previous errors as was done in 1949. Back then, intellectuals were called upon to unite with workers and peasants. May Fourth, it was argued, had been an *unsuccessful* revolution because it lacked this very union. Because anniversary articles not only refer to the past, but are allegorically projected onto the present, they cannot simply quote the official prototext but have to go beyond the limits set by the canon. They have to draw on present material as well.

Second, the contemporary political climate influences what is publicly acceptable beyond the official narrative. Anniversary issues of *People's Daily* set the tone for the Chinese media orchestrated by the Party. Narrowness in form and content, however, do not necessarily attest to a high degree of control, but rather to a high degree of uncertainty. The 1969 May Fourth issue of *People's Daily*, for example, published only two articles concerning the May Fourth Movement. One of these was a reprint of "The Orientation of the Youth Movement", one of Mao's canonised May Fourth interpretations. Many reasons account for this lack of further information: from the personality cult of Mao Zedong to the public criticism and silencing of many May Fourth veterans.³⁷¹ The most important reason however was, in my view, the instable political atmosphere.

Revolution. China's Struggle With the Modern World Oxford). Its continuing influence on Chinese society is given in SCHWARCZ (1986) *The Chinese Enlightenment. Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* Berkeley; MITTER (2004) *A Bitter Revolution. China's Struggle With the Modern World* Oxford; Focusing on literature does DOLEZLOVÁ-VELINGEROVÁ & KRÁL (Eds.) (2001) *The Appropriation of Cultural Capital. China's May Fourth Project*, Cambridge, Mass.; Canonisation strategies by the students themselves as well as subsequent governments are described in WAGNER (2001a) The Canonization of May Fourth. In: Dolezelová-Velingerová & Král *The Appropriation of Cultural Capital. China's May Fourth Project*, Cambridge, Mass.; Further information and reading on the May Fourth Movement is introduced in the next paragraph.

³⁶⁹ Cf. to the Chinese historian's discussion on the concept in WEIGELIN-SCHWIEDRZIK (Dec. 1996) On Shi and Lun: Toward a Typology of Historiography in the PRC, *History and Theory* 35, 74-95: 90-1.

³⁷⁰ I here follow the terminological choice made by Schwarcz in Chapter 6 "May Fourth as Allegory" in SCHWARCZ (1986) *The Chinese Enlightenment. Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919*, Berkeley. This choice seems appropriate to me because the articles written for later anniversaries integrated selected May Fourth objects, persons, and actions; these elements were combined into a 'new' narrative of May Fourth that was significant to the present. Sometimes past and present were equated metaphorically, or an analogy was drawn, but these were just parts of a larger allegory communicating a meaning beyond the literal, enriched by symbolic references or direct quotations.

³⁷¹ On the latter argument, see SCHWARCZ (1986) *The Chinese Enlightenment. Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* Berkeley: 256f.

As words were bereft of meaning their usage became dangerous (Mitter 2004:209). Those in power could and did attribute nearly any meaning to an individual text. Reprinting the canon became the safest way to stay out of trouble. On the other hand, in 1949 the May Fourth issue of *People's Daily* featured 21 articles on the May Fourth Movement. In form, these articles encompassed reports, individual narratives, interviews with Zeitzeugen, descriptive articles, reprints from the canon, and an editorial-like article. In content, these articles introduced facts, people, slogans, and organisations of the May Fourth Movement to the readership. Simultaneously the meaning of May Fourth for the Chinese nation and its people was defined for a greater public than had been possible at Yan'an times. And the lessons to be learned from this historical event were projected onto present needs. This diversity in form and content does not attest to any free public opinion in the early PRC, as one might be led to belief, but was in fact minutely organised and controlled by Chen Boda³⁷².

Third, ideology influences the writing of history. The master narrative³⁷³ guiding any history writing under Communism was the 'Two-Line-Theory'. According to this theory, every person, action or event is divided into dichotomic categories as good/evil, progressive/reactionary, revolutionary/anti-revolutionary or winner/loser (Sabrow 2002). This world view is reflected in the early May Fourth anniversary articles that accordingly contrast the dark old Chinese society with the New Democracy, Mao Zedong with Hu Shi, oppressive feudalism with free socialism. With the ascension of Deng Xiaoping to power in the late 1970s, this black-and-white master narrative of history writing was diversified, and concepts like "seeking truth from facts" (see Chapter 2.1) or methods as "interpretation has to emerge from data" (see below) were promoted instead. However, as is shown in the following analysis, traces of the old world view still linger in the background. In the 1979 May Fourth anniversary issue of *People's Daily*, for example, Hu Shi and Wang Ming still appear as *the* antagonists of the present-day leadership. Wang was, according to Mao's theory of the 'Two-Line-Struggle'³⁷⁴, the main antagonist during the 6th line struggle between 1928 and 1945, his main error being dogmatism. In 1979, Hu Shi and Wang Ming were unearthed again symbolising

³⁷² For information on Chen Boda cf. to fn. 416.

³⁷³ An introduction to the concept of the master narrative can be found in JARAUSCH & SABROW (2002) 'Meistererzählung' - Zur Karriere eines Begriffs. In: Jarausch & Sabrow *Die historische Meistererzählung. Deutungslinien der deutschen Nationalgeschichte nach 1945*, Göttingen. In history writing, producer, transmitter and recipient define likewise what is elevated to the status of a master narrative. In the German Democratic Republic and the PRC, however, we find a special situation in which the producer alone is decisive SABROW (2002) Auf der Suche nach dem materialistischen Meisterton. Bauformen einer nationalen Gegenerzählung in der DDR. In: Jarausch & Sabrow *Die historische Meistererzählung. Deutungslinien der deutschen Nationalgeschichte nach 1945*, Göttingen.

³⁷⁴ According to the official Party history influenced by Mao's theory of the "two-line-struggle", the time between each Party Congress is marked by a struggle against one main antagonist and one main ideological aberration. Wang Ming symbolised the main antagonist between the 6th Party Congress in 1928 and the 7th Party Congress in 1945, his main error being dogmatism.

two wrong tendencies of development: “wholesale westernisation” on the one end, and ideological dogmatism on the other end. Neither of these, it was indicated, would be followed under Deng Xiaoping. Thus, in proclaiming his own future goals Deng used Feindbilder that had been established by a master narrative that Deng himself tried simultaneously to abolish.

Fourth, according to Weigelin-Schwiedrzik three methods influence historiography in China at different times. They are subsumed under the following slogans: theory has to take the lead over data (*yi lun dai shi* 以论带史); data and theory have to be combined (*shi lun jiehe* 史论结合); and interpretation has to emerge from data (*lun cong shi chu* 论从史出) (Weigelin-Schwiedrzik 1996). The first type *yi lun dai shi* was officially approved in 1966. However, history writing in 1949 and 1959, i.e. the first two May Fourth anniversaries in question here, had already been governed by the same principle. According to this first principle, Marxist theory took the lead over historical material. The second type *shi lun jiehe* was developed in 1962, but in essence goes back to 1957. Marxism here functioned as methodology to analyse historical material, its evaluations however should not be blindly projected onto Chinese history. Instead, they should be sinified. The third type *lun cong shi chu* was the most radical position. Influenced by textual criticism it argued that historical data should be used to verify Marxism.³⁷⁵ This third type was prevalent in China during the 1930s and early 1940s, i.e. at the 20th anniversary of May Fourth and Mao’s evaluation thereof (Weigelin-Schwiedrzik 1996:88). It gained influence again after the Cultural Revolution during the period of Reform and Opening Up in combination with the phrase “seeking truth from facts” (see Chapter 2.1 and 3). The *People’s Daily* issue of May 4, 1979, accordingly published the findings of two journalists who investigated material concerning Zhou Enlai’s role during the May Fourth Movement in Tianjin.³⁷⁶ Though this article fitted the overall propagandistic strategy of *People’s Daily* at the time as well as the theoretical approach, its tone was different. Instead of arguing that Zhou was a great revolutionary and now they would prove this by investigation into historical data of the May Fourth Movement, the authors argued that they had read material on Zhou in Tianjin and these data proved that Zhou was a revolutionary (Wang Qingming 王庆民 et al. 1979.05.05).

³⁷⁵ Cf. for more detailed definitions to WEIGELIN-SCHWIEDRZIK (Dec. 1996) On Shi and Lun: Toward a Typology of Historiography in the PRC, *History and Theory* 35, 74-95: 78-82.

³⁷⁶ These findings were reconfirmed by the publication of a book with similar content in 1979: TIANJIN LISHI BOWUGUAN 天津历史博物馆 & NANKAI DAXUE LISHIXI 'WUSI YUNDONG ZAI TIANJIN' BIANJIZU 南开大学历史系'五四运动在天津'编辑组 (Eds.) (1979) 五四运动在天津: 历史资料选辑 [The May Fourth Movement in Tianjin: Selection of historical data], 天津.

Finally, the Chinese Communist canon is not a stable entity. During Mao's lifetime, Mao Zedong Thought changed from representing the democratic centralism of the Party to the sacred scripture of an individual leader. After his death, Mao Zedong Thought was first re-evaluated by Mao's heirs, and then augmented by ideological inventions like Deng Xiaoping Theory or Jiang Zemin's Three Represents (*san ge daibiao* 三个代表). As the evaluation of the canon changed, quotation of this canon changed as well. And although neither Deng nor Jiang gave a new interpretation of the May Fourth Movement to be include in the canon, Mao's canonised prototexts (i.e. "The May Fourth Movement", "The Orientation of the Youth Movement" and "On New Democracy") were no longer referred to even within the highly controlled and ideologically charged environment of *People's Daily*. Even though the 1999 May Fourth issue of *People's Daily* featured more than one article stressing the importance of ideology for China's future and for the education of future generations of Chinese, none of them put this claim into practice by quoting or reprinting even part of the canonised version of May Fourth. This part of the canon, it seems, has sunk into oblivion, though it might be revived again in the future.

The five points outlined above – i.e. past serving present, historical master narratives, relation between ideology and historical data, political climate, and fluctuation of the canon – at least contribute to the construction of the May Fourth Movement for every consecutive anniversary thereof; as such they have to be taken into consideration during the following analysis. Through a close reading of the decennial May Fourth anniversary issues of *People's Daily* and supported by statistical data on the use of terminology and quotation, I hope to strengthen the following general arguments: The topic and content of an article is of less importance in determining an author's choice of quotation than current political affairs followed by the hierarchy of quotable prototexts that is valid at the given moment. Thus one might say, the present selects past images for future use. In the context of the May Fourth Movement, different prototexts were quoted to achieve different goals: Mao's official interpretation of May Fourth was used to convey the Party's evaluation of the movement to each new generation. No prototext from the May Fourth Movement itself was referred to so as to provide the narrative with actuality or proof. Instead, May Fourth veterans were interviewed or asked to write commemorative articles, of course along the lines set by the Party's interpretation, to convey actuality and emotion to the readership, to breathe life into each picture of the past. These contemporary Party-approved narratives might then be quoted in other articles. Another possibility was to quote May Fourth slogans attributed to the 'masses'; for example 'Overthrow the Confucian family shop'. Through constant propaganda this slogan had lost contact

with its original author and source (see Chapter 2.2). Thus, through carefully selected quotations³⁷⁷, the story of the May Fourth Movement became that of a mass movement, and the role of individual actors was levelled to a minimum. Only one other form of personalised quotations, i.e. quotations introduced together with their author, was used: words of the ‘enemy’ to expose his ‘evil’ character. The main antagonist in PRC propaganda texts on the May Fourth Movement was (and is) Hu Shi.³⁷⁸ Instead of letting him fall into oblivion, Hu was kept alive as a bad example in the same way that good role models were propagated. If ‘quotations’ of him appear at all in *People’s Daily*, they are, undoubtedly by design, so short and trivial that they do not convey much information about Hu Shi’s person or thinking. This propagandistic strategy is found in many similar cases in PRC propaganda history.³⁷⁹ To weave current affairs and political strategy into the narrative of May Fourth, authors drew on more recent prototexts: a late text by Mao or talk by Zhou Enlai, or during the Cultural Revolution “Chairman Mao’s latest directive;”³⁸⁰ and 13 years after Mao’s demise, in 1989 Deng Xiaoping was quoted to relate current strategy.

The chapter is structured diachronically, as not only the arguments outlined above are to be substantiated but also their development through time narrated. As the past shall serve the present, this development might be helpful to understand the present and predict the future of the canon in China and its use in quotations. After a short introduction to the May Fourth Movement and research

³⁷⁷ Quotations were not the only means to achieve this transformation. The selection of terminology used in describing the events played at least an equal role.

³⁷⁸ Hu Shi left mainland China in 1949 for the USA, and moved to Taiwan in 1958. This action as well as his previous hostile attitude to Communism and the CCP turned him into “Enemy Nr. 1” for the PRC. On Taiwan, he is of course portrayed as heroic veteran of the May Fourth Movement.

³⁷⁹ The adverse effect was achieved by the anti-Confucian campaign during the Cultural Revolution. “Black” material was distributed all over China and studied for the purpose of criticism. Many people for the first time in their life came into contact with classical Chinese philosophy and found as much to admire as to criticise in these works. See: MITTLER (2009) *A Continuous Revolution: Making Sense of Cultural Revolution Culture*, Heidelberg: unpubl. manuscript: Chapter 4: The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountain.

³⁸⁰ The formulation “Chairman Mao’s latest directive 毛主席的最新指示” appears in *People’s Daily* 2600 times between August 4, 1966 and July 30, 1976. There is only one reference to this formulation after Mao’s death and this was in a commemorative article to Zhou Enlai, mentioning how even on his death bed he had asked his secretaries to read “Chairman Mao’s latest directives” to him. The formulation is both used in instances referring to a specific call, and general calls to “earnestly study Chairman Mao’s latest directive(s)”. In a random sample of 10 such specific instances, all of them referred to statements by Mao at least 1 day old, and not older than 6 years. Significantly, *all* of these statements had been made by Mao during the Cultural Revolution. Hence, none of them is found either in the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* or the *Quotations of Chairman Mao*, and after the Cultural Revolution all of them were confirmed to originate with Mao: MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1998) 建国以来毛泽东文稿 [Manuscripts by Mao Zedong since the liberation of China] 北京. Another random sample of quotations introduced with a similar formulation – “Chairman Mao recently pointed out 毛主席最近指出” – yielded the same results. I therefore tentatively conclude that “latest directives” usually referred to statements of Mao made during the Cultural Revolution, but not before, i.e. statements not included in the older printed canonical works. Often, these statements were introduced for the first time to the public in the special category “Quotation of Chairman Mao 毛主席语录”, heading almost each issue of *People’s Daily* during the Cultural Revolution. In Chapter 2.3, the lifecycle of such a “latest directive” is analysed in detail.

on it, I will turn to its canonisation by the CCP. The main part will then focus on a detailed analysis of how *People's Daily* used subsequent anniversaries to reconstruct an ever-changing official image of the May Fourth Movement by textual collage. In some cases, I will contrast these images with competing narratives, albeit no less constructed, provided by students or other factions within the Party.

Yet Another May Fourth Narrative?

History telling is always selective. The more complex the factual basis is, the more selective the creation of a coherent narrative thereof must be. And only such coherent narratives are of interest to educational and propagandistic purposes and often even to researchers. As it is neither my aim nor my research interest to write yet another 'true story' of the complex history of the May Fourth Movement, I will only give a rough sketch of basic facts and figures. Information to further reading will be provided in annotations.³⁸¹ I tried to set all possibly judgemental or partial terminology in single quotation marks.

In a narrow sense, the term May Fourth Movement³⁸² denotes a string of (violent) demonstrations and strikes in reaction to news from the Paris Peace Conference (Jan. 1919 to Jan. 1920) held in Versailles: Shandong, the German concession, was not to be returned to China but instead given to Japan.³⁸³ Chinese hostility towards Japan had increased following China's 'humiliation' in the first Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 and again by the so-called '21 Demands' sent to China by Japan in 1915. Expectations of a fairer settlement of the situation were raised by American propaganda in China (Schmidt 1998). From a Beijing-centred student demonstration on

³⁸¹ Overviews on primary and secondary material on the May Fourth Movement can be found among others in CHOW (1963) *Research Guide to the May Fourth Movement. Intellectual Revolution in Modern China, 1915-1924*, Harvard East Asian Series 13, Cambridge, Mass.; for an overview on mainly Western material cf. to MITTER (2004) *A Bitter Revolution. China's Struggle With the Modern World* Oxford: 316-24; for Chinese material cf. to SHA JIANSUN 沙健孙 & GONG SHUDUO 龚书铎 (Eds.) (2001) 五四运动于二十世纪中国的历史所道路 [The May Fourth Movement and the Course of Twentieth-Century Chinese History], 北京: 186-97. Specialised conferences on the May Fourth Movement include "In Search of Modernity: The May Fourth Movement" held at Oregon State University, Feb. 14-15, 2003; "May Fourth and its Implications" held at Peking University, May 4-7 1999; "The Burden of May Fourth" held in Prague, Aug. 24-27, 1994; the US-China Conference on "China's Quest for Modernisation: Historical Studies on Issues Concerning the Evolution of Modern Chinese Society" held at the Shanghai Fudan University, May 25-30, 1992; "International Sinological Symposium" held at Smolenice Castle, March 13-17, 1989; among others.

³⁸² The May Fourth activists' self-styling of their protests as a 'movement' after a Korean archetype is analysed in WAGNER (2001a) *The Canonization of May Fourth*. In: Dolezelová-Velingerová & Král *The Appropriation of Cultural Capital. China's May Fourth Project*, Cambridge, Mass.. Also HARBSMEIER (1994) *May Fourth Linguistic Orthodoxy and Rhetoric: Some Comparative Notes*. Paper presented at: *The Burden of May Fourth*, Charles University, Prague.

³⁸³ On the diplomatic crisis see ELLEMAN (2002) *Wilson and China: a Revised History of the Shandong Question* Armonk, NY.

the very day of May 4, 1919,³⁸⁴ the movement soon spread via mail and newspapers to other Chinese cities; other ‘classes’ like merchants, industrialists and workers joined within a month.³⁸⁵ Direct action included the boycott of Japanese goods and in some cases violence directed against Japanese people, but also against Chinese ‘traitors’.³⁸⁶ The Chinese government at first condemned the demonstrations and arrested a number of students. But the massive public support soon forced the government to release the students and to refuse to sign the Treaty of Versailles in June 1919.

The anti-Japanese protests did absorb³⁸⁷ more general notions and ideas featuring in slogans like “Mr. Science and Mr. Democracy 赛先生，德先生。”³⁸⁸ The events of Versailles were seen as symbolic of the national ‘crisis’ caused on the surface by ‘imperialist’ powers (Japan, England, France among others) and ‘feudalist’ warlords. At the core of the crisis, however, was China’s ‘weakness’. Only if this was overcome could ‘national salvation’ be achieved. The question which theories or ideologies might help to overcome this ‘weakness’ produced many differing answers from intellectual circles that were more or less influenced by European, Russian, Japanese or Chinese thought.³⁸⁹ This plurality of ideas and relative openness of the public sphere did later pose an obstacle to Guomindang and CCP efforts to integrate the May Fourth Movement into their respective national histories (Schwarcz 1986 ; Wagner 2001a ; Wang 2001). But overcoming China’s

³⁸⁴ This is often termed as ‘May Fourth incident’ as opposed to the larger ‘May Fourth Movement’. However, neither terminology is universally used.

³⁸⁵ On the movement in Shanghai cf. to CHEN (1971) *The May Fourth Movement in Shanghai: the Making of a Social Movement in Modern China* Leiden; SMITH (1999) Nationalism, Labour and the May Fourth Movement in Shanghai. Paper presented at: *The May Fourth Movement and its Implications*, Peking University, Beijing; and SHANGHAI SHEHUI KEXUEYUAN LISHI YANJIUSUO 上海社会科学院历史研究所 (1980) 五四运动在上海史料选辑 [Collection of historical material on the May Fourth Movement in Shanghai] 上海; on Harbin cf. to CARTER (2002) *Creating a Chinese Harbin: Nationalism in an International City, 1916-1932* Ithaca; on Hangzhou see YEH (Dec. 1994) Middle County Radicalism: The May Fourth Movement in Hangzhou, *The China Quarterly*, 903-925 and YEH (1996) *Provincial Passages: Culture, Space, and the Origins of Chinese Communism* Berkeley; on Jiangsu refer to ZHONGGUO JIANGSU SHENGWEI DANGSHI GONGZUO WEIYUANHUI 中国江苏省委党史工作委员会 & ZHONGGUO DI ER LISHI DANGANGUAN 中国第二历史档案馆 (1992) 五四运动在江苏 [The May Fourth Movement in Jiangsu] 扬州.

³⁸⁶ The best known example is perhaps the Chinese Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cao Rulin 曹汝霖 (1877-1966), who’s house was burnt during the first demonstration. CHOW (1960) *The May Fourth Movement. Intellectual Revolution in Modern China* Cambridge, Mass.: 109-16.

³⁸⁷ Some researchers see the events unfolding in 1919 rather as a “distraction and impediment to intellectual liberation” and a “sacrifice of the individual to the collective task of national liberation” (YEH (1999) *The May Fourth Movement and Chinese Modernity*. Paper presented at: *The May Fourth Movement and its Implications*, Beijing University, Beijing).

³⁸⁸ GU (Jul.) Who Was Mr Democracy? The May Fourth Discourse of Populist Democracy and the Radicalization of Chinese Intellectuals (1915-1922), *Modern Asian Studies* 35, 589-621, CHAO (1999b) *The May Fourth Movement and the Banner of Democracy*. Paper presented at: *The May Fourth Movement and its Implications*, Peking University, Beijing.

³⁸⁹ Detailed studies of the import of foreign ideas to China include: ELLEMAN (1997) *Diplomacy and Deception: The Secret History of Sino-Soviet Diplomatic Relations, 1917-1927* Armonk, NY; for the time between 1919 and 1927 see PANTSOV (2000) *The Bolsheviks and the Chinese Revolution: 1919-1927* Richmond. Dewey’s diary of his travels to Japan and China in 1919 give an interesting view on China from a foreign perspective. See: DEWEY & DEWEY (1920) *Letters from China and Japan* New York.

perceived ‘weakness’ was not only a political or military question, but involved Chinese culture as well. In fact, the ‘cultural part’ of the May Fourth Movement or rather the ‘New Culture Movement’ had started a few years earlier than 1919.³⁹⁰ In many accounts it is dated back to 1915, the year of the founding of the magazine *New Youth* (*Xin qingnian* 新青年). The New Culture Movement continued at least until the mid-1920s. Its most visible achievement was the replacement of the classical written language (*wenyanwen* 文言文) by colloquial language (*baihua* 白话).³⁹¹ Another strand involved the writing of ‘new’ literature, a literature for and of the people and of a ‘new’ national history.³⁹² Other cultural and social topics addressed by May Fourth thinkers included the (abolition of the) traditional patriarchal family system, the liberation of women, romantic love and free marriage and even eugenics.³⁹³ The iconoclasm of the May Fourth era was mainly directed against Confucian thought and practice, but also included the destruction of idols and temples in the country and re-education of the ‘common people’. Both Guomindang and CCP adopted this stance against so-called ‘superstition’.³⁹⁴ In the last decade, the attempt has been made to contest the ‘May Fourth paradigm’ by presenting alternative stories of China’s path to ‘modernity’.³⁹⁵

³⁹⁰ In fact, the term “New Culture Movement” was at first used to describe the May Fourth Movement as opposed to the May Fourth incident. However, in the Chinese media and research literature the latter gained currency and has long been dominant.

³⁹¹ The liberating notion attributed to the use of *baihua* as “language of the people” has recently been challenged by SHANG (2002) *Baihua, Guanhua, Fangyan and the May Fourth Reading of Rulin waishi, Sino-Platonic papers* 117, 1-10. According to Shang, *baihua* had never been the “language of the people” but the official language in and around Beijing. Regional dialects would have served the pretension, but thwarted the aim to create a new national language.

³⁹² The literature of the May Fourth era and its influence on later works has been subject to many studies, conferences and conference volumes, among others: GOLDMAN (1977) *Modern Chinese Literature in the May Fourth Era* Cambridge, Mass., GÁLIK (1990) *Interliterary and Intraliterary Aspects of the May Fourth Movement 1919 in China*. Paper presented at: *International Sinological Symposium*, Bratislava, DANJIANG DAXUE ZHONGWENXI 淡江大学中文系 (Ed.) (1992) *五四精神的解咒与重塑: 海下两岸纪念五四七十年论文集* [Breaking the curse of the May Fourth spirit and remodelling it: Anthology to seventy years commemorating May Fourth on both sides of the Taiwan Strait], 台北. In DOLEZELOVÁ-VELINGEROVÁ & KRÁL (Eds.) (2001) *The Appropriation of Cultural Capital. China's May Fourth Project*, Cambridge, Mass. both the question of literature and historiography are addressed. Further analysis of the development of historiography during and after the May Fourth Movement are found in SCHNEIDER (Dec. 1996) *Between Dao and History: Two Chinese Historians in Search of a Modern Identity for China*, *History and Theory* 35, 54-73; WANG (2001) *Inventing China through History: the May Fourth Approach to Historiography*, SUNY series in Chinese philosophy and culture, Albany, NY.

³⁹³ Among others see LIN (1979) *The Crisis of Chinese Consciousness: Radical Anti-Traditionalism in the May Fourth Era* Madison, WANG (1999) *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories* Berkeley, DIKÖTTER (1996) *The Construction of Racial Identities in China and Japan: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* London, SAKAMOTO The Cult of “Love and Eugenics” in May Fourth Movement Discourse, *positions* 12, 329-376.

³⁹⁴ WAGNER (2001a) The Canonization of May Fourth. In: Dolezelová-Velingerová & Král *The Appropriation of Cultural Capital. China's May Fourth Project*, Cambridge, Mass.: 97-102.

³⁹⁵ See IP, HON & LEE (Oct. 2003) The Plurality of Chinese Modernity: A Review of Recent Scholarship on the May Fourth Movement, *Modern China* 29, 490-509.

1939: Creating the Communist Canon for May Fourth

“Anniversaries are social constructs. (Berger et al. 1966:103)” Personal experience or factual knowledge of an historical event, Berger and Luckmann argue, allows the knowledgeable to ascribe certain values to an event. Thus by ordering history, a symbolic universe of and for a group is constructed (Berger et al. 1966:103). In 1939/40, Mao set out to order Chinese history for the Chinese people in general and the CCP in particular.³⁹⁶ Being a participant of the May Fourth Movement – Mao had worked as assistant in the library of Peking University at the time of the May Fourth Movement – empowered his action (Schwarcz 1986:247). However, as I hope to show, Mao used neither personal experience nor factual knowledge in retelling May Fourth. In this part, I introduce those texts that later became the canonical prototexts from which to quote, the ideological foundation on which to build, the archetype on which to remodel later May Fourth anniversary articles. Moreover, I hope to provide some answers to the following questions: Which place did Mao accord and what values did he ascribe to the May Fourth Movement? Which formulations, which terminology did he choose in describing the events of 1919? How did the editorial process after 1949 change his texts before integrating them into the canon of Chinese communism? And which place should May Fourth take in the symbolic universe of the CCP from then on?

As noted above, Mao’s assessment of the May Fourth Movement evolved during a period of about one year, finding expression in three successive articles. With each of these articles, Mao’s ideas on the May Fourth Movement became more concise. Nonetheless, all three articles were later included in the post-1949 edition of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*.³⁹⁷ The earliest article was simply titled “The May Fourth Movement” and published in the Yan’an weekly *Liberation* (*Jiefang* 解放)³⁹⁸ on May 1, 1939. The second originated from a speech at a meeting in Yan’an commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement on May 5, 1939. The speech was published in no. 6, 1939, of *Chinese Youth* (*Zhongguo qingnian* 中国青年) and has become known under the title “The Orientation of the Youth Movement”. The third article was also

³⁹⁶ For further research on canonisation of May Fourth by Mao refer to SCHWARCZ (1986) *The Chinese Enlightenment. Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* Berkeley: 247-50 and WAGNER (2001a) The Canonization of May Fourth. In: Dolezelová-Velingerová & Král *The Appropriation of Cultural Capital. China's May Fourth Project*, Cambridge, Mass.: 112-4.

³⁹⁷ The most concise paragraph on the May Fourth Movement can be found in the last article/speech “On New Democracy”. This is also the most often quoted or paraphrased paragraph in latter May Fourth anniversary articles. Moreover, this article suffered fewest changes in the editing process for the post-1949 edition of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*.

³⁹⁸ The weekly paper *Liberation* was one of two predecessors of the Party paper *Liberation Daily* (*Jiefang ribao* 解放日报), which in turn was the model for the present-day *People’s Daily*.

based on a speech, viz. that of Jan. 9, 1940, at the first meeting of the Border Area Cultural Association. It was first published in the inaugural issue of *Chinese Culture* (*Zhongguo wenhua* 中国文化) on Feb. 15, 1940, under the title “On New-Democratic Politics and New-Democratic Culture”. With the reprint in *Jiefang* on Feb. 20, 1940, it became known as “On New Democracy”. This last article differs from the others not only by the addressee (a non-Party audience of intellectuals instead of Communist youth in Yan’an). It also differs in the fact that it was not related to a May Fourth anniversary. Moreover, its content was only partly concerned with May Fourth. And last but not least, it helped establishing the historical category of the “New Democracy” in Mao Zedong Thought.

The first two articles were addressed to China’s youth, and in particular to the Communist youth in Yan’an.³⁹⁹ In a drive to mobilise these young people for the ongoing War of Resistance against Japan, the United Front of Guomindang and CCP agreed in March 1939 to henceforth celebrate May 4 as national Youth Day. By styling May Fourth as Youth Day, both Guomindang and CCP picked from the May Fourth legacy one strand to the neglect of others – i.e. they selected youth, not intellectuals as proponents of the movement. Instead of leaders of the revolution, these youth were seen as the group most easily influenced by new ideas, most easily agitated for the purpose of the Party and hence very useful for propagating Communism in rural areas and organising workers and peasants against Japan (Wagner 2001a:108). The “Orientation of the Youth Movement”, of course, would be defined by the Party leadership.⁴⁰⁰ Note that Mao’s first article “The May Fourth Movement” did not mention the upcoming national Youth Day, and although Mao addressed himself to the “young people of the whole country (Takeuchi Minoru 竹内實 1970a:323; Trsl. in Schram 2005: “The May Fourth Movement” 68),”⁴⁰¹ he mainly wrote about intellectuals and students or “student masses”⁴⁰² in this article. They were credited by Mao with having first awoken during the Revolution of 1911 and the May Fourth Movement. He saw them as a valuable force for the ongoing

³⁹⁹ Wagner notes in his article that the term “youth” is fixed to the age of 16/17 to 23/24 in the PRC and 14/15 to 23/24 on Taiwan, see: WAGNER (2001a) The Canonization of May Fourth. In: Dolezelová-Velingerová & Král *The Appropriation of Cultural Capital. China's May Fourth Project*, Cambridge, Mass.: 108.

⁴⁰⁰ The necessity of leadership by the Party was repeatedly stressed in both 1939 articles. This is explained by their fear of the iconoclastic and especially anti-governmental potential of the May Fourth spirit. Mao appeased this fear by stressing that the movement was not directed against the government as such but rather against a specific government of national betrayal oppressing the people.

⁴⁰¹ Here and in all subsequent quotations of this part, I use the English translation provided in SCHRAM (Ed.) (2005) *New Democracy 1939-1941*, Armonk, NY: 66-8, 69-79, 330-69. The Chinese originals can be found in TAKEUCHI MINORU 竹内實 (Ed.) (1970a) 毛泽东集 1938.5 -1939.8 [Works of Mao Zedong], 东京: 321-3, 325-37 and TAKEUCHI MINORU 竹内實 (Ed.) (1970b) 毛泽东集 1939.8-1941.6 [Works of Mao Zedong], 东京: 147-206.

⁴⁰² Note this combination of two antithetical terms: students formerly associated with elite and minority, and (popular) mass. The “student masses” now belong to the popular masses, and set in contrast to the Party that exercises leadership over the masses.

anti-imperialist and anti-feudalist democratic revolution. But without integration with the popular masses, Mao argued in 1939, their revolutionary activism would remain unsuccessful as exemplified by the May Fourth Movement. Instead, their work had to “serve the worker and peasant popular masses (Takeuchi Minoru 竹内實 1970a:323; Trsl. in Schram 2005: “The May Fourth Movement” 68)”. “In this manner, the spirit of independent action and organisation was depicted as the [May Fourth] movement’s liberal and essentially bourgeois weakness. (Wagner 2001a:112)”

Mao then set out to define the Litmus test for intellectual behaviour: “In the final analysis, the dividing line between revolutionary intellectuals and nonrevolutionary or counterrevolutionary intellectuals is whether or not they are willing to integrate themselves with the popular masses of the workers and peasants, and actually do so. (Takeuchi Minoru 竹内實 1970a:323; Trsl. in Schram 2005: “The May Fourth Movement” 67)” This became the most frequently quoted sentence from Mao’s first article on May Fourth before 1978.⁴⁰³ Mao himself highlighted the importance of this argument and formulation by referring to it himself in his speech of May 4, 1939, only three days later.⁴⁰⁴ In this speech, he also introduced two antagonists who, in his view, had only paid lip-service to Marxism, but whose actions had in the end brought to light their true nature: Chen Duxiu⁴⁰⁵ and Zhang Guotao⁴⁰⁶. In later anniversary articles these figures are replaced by Hu Shi, Chiang Kai-shek and others. Chen Duxiu is by 1979 rehabilitated and his contributions to the May Fourth Movement and the founding of the CCP appraised. Thus changing the official evaluation of one individual exemplifies the influence of Party politics on history writing and anniversary articles that I pointed out in the introduction to this chapter.⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰³ This sentence was quoted in *People’s Daily* between 1949 and 1977 altogether 101 times.

⁴⁰⁴ To my knowledge this is one of the rare instances of Mao quoting Mao. I checked a random sample of 11 articles from the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* against an index thereof. The result is that Mao seldom explicitly refers to his own articles by marked quotation, though he repeatedly uses certain formulations, phrases or slogans repeatedly. Marked quotation, here, means that (a) the quotation is set in quotation marks and (b) Mao informed his audience/readership in some way about the source of the quotation.

⁴⁰⁵ Chen Duxiu 陈独秀 (1879-1942) co-founded the CCP with Li Dazhao, and acted as its first general secretary. Chen had to resign as Party leader in 1927 in reaction to the Shanghai massacre and his policy of ‘left opportunism’. He was expelled from the Party in 1929 as ‘Trotskyist’ and for opposing Comintern policies. He was imprisoned by the Guomindang and only released with the start of the 2nd United Front in 1937. He then again tried to become a member of the CCP, but his application was turned down on the allegation of Chen being a ‘Trotskyist’.

⁴⁰⁶ Zhang Guotao 张国焘 (1897-1979) attended the first CCP congress in 1921, and later went to Moscow with Qu Qiubai. In 1938, Zhang left the CCP for the Guomindang.

⁴⁰⁷ United Front politics feature most prominently in “The Orientation of the Youth Movement” as compared to the other two articles. A whole page is attributed to explaining slogans put forth by Chiang Kai-shek. These paragraphs were deleted in the reviewing process after 1949. Another page later deleted highly praised student activism: “The whole of China’s revolutionary movement found its origin in the initiative of young students and young intellectuals who had awakened.” The paragraph continued to describe the value of differing age-groups; an ‘old folks’ army was useful for propaganda work, a children’s army for information gathering and patrolling small areas. I propose that these ideas were

The model character of the Yan'an Youth Movement was another topic put forward in Mao's May 4 talk of 1939. Mao valued especially the unity and solidarity among the youth, moreover their "becoming one" with workers and peasant masses, and finally their devotion to studying theory combined with an active part in the production movement (Takeuchi Minoru 竹内實 1970a:336; Trsl. in Schram 2005:"The Orientation of the Youth Movement" 78). Mao's intention had been to model other national youth movements of the time according to the Yan'an prototype. But the model should have longer lasting influence as I hope to show in the discussion of the anniversary articles in 1969 and 1979 and even 1999 below.

Ordering history according to Marxism-Leninism involved not only the examination of different social forces and definition of their class nature, but also the ordering of revolutionary actions according to evolutionary stages. Mao's 1939 assessment of the May Fourth Movement as one stage of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, was focused only on developments in China itself: "the [first] Opium War [of 1840], the movement [1952: revolution] of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, the Sino-Japanese War 1894, the coup of 1898 [1952: Reform Movement of 1898], the Boxer Movement [of 1899-1901], the Revolution of 1911, the May Fourth Movement, the Northern Expedition, and the war of the Red Army [1952: war of the Agrarian Revolution] (Takeuchi Minoru 竹内實 1970a:321; Trsl. in Schram 2005:"The May Fourth Movement" 66)"⁴⁰⁸ According to Mao, the May Fourth Movement marked a new stage on the passage from a feudalism to a bourgeois-democratic society, because in that period the revolutionary forces gained a new force, "consisting of the working class, the student masses, and the new national bourgeoisie (Takeuchi Minoru 竹内實 1970a:321; Trsl. in Schram 2005:"The May Fourth Movement" 66)". One year before, the formulation of Mao's concept of the "New Democracy", the May Fourth Movement had already been singled out by Mao among other revolutions as the most decisive event, as break point between modern and contemporary history (Schram 1989:6). As Wagner notes, this was done in opposition to

deleted as they undermined the Communist world view of dividing society into classes not age groups. Children, therefore, were only useful if they belonged to a revolutionary class TAKEUCHI MINORU 竹内實 (Ed.) (1970a) 毛泽东集 1938.5 -1939.8 [Works of Mao Zedong], 东京: 331f; Trsl. in SCHRAM (Ed.) (2005) *New Democracy 1939-1941*, Armonk, NY: 73f

⁴⁰⁸ The same assessment is found in Mao's May 4 speech, see TAKEUCHI MINORU 竹内實 (Ed.) (1970a) 毛泽东集 1938.5 -1939.8 [Works of Mao Zedong], 东京: 328; Trsl. in SCHRAM (Ed.) (2005) *New Democracy 1939-1941*, Armonk, NY: 71f. Note that terminological differences exist between both 1939 versions: movement vs. war of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom; the coup vs. the Reform Movement of 1898. And although the first version was changed during editing in 1952 (as highlighted in the quotation above), the second version was left unaltered. The often claimed terminological standardisation of the post-1949 edition seems not to have been as stringent as generally assumed.

the Guomindang who had chosen 1911⁴⁰⁹ as starting point of the new era. Another motive, according to Wagner, was that May Fourth was closer to the founding of the CCP in 1921.⁴¹⁰ Theoretical and utilitarian motives might also account for the fact that Mao appropriated May Fourth as major turning point in history. As Schram points out, Mao repeated in “On New Democracy” the Leninist view that a bourgeois-democratic revolution might be led by the proletariat (a communist party, for example) instead of the bourgeoisie. China being a pre-capitalist society, May Fourth provided ‘historical evidence’ of a union between petty bourgeoisie (i.e. the protesting students), workers and bourgeoisie (workers and merchants had joined the movement in June 1919) that had culminated, in Communist view, in the founding of the CCP. The latter could hence style itself as heir of the May Fourth Movement, and leader of the bourgeois-democratic revolution empowered by a politically active working class. A utilitarian and rhetorical motive might be detected in Mao’s claim that “the May Fourth Movement came into being at the call of the world revolution of the time, of the Russian Revolution and of Lenin (Takeuchi Minoru 竹内實 1970b:194; Trsl. in Schram 2005: “On New Democracy” 361)”. Schram argues that Mao hoped thus to gain material and moral assistance from the Soviets (Schram 1989:77). I would like to add a rhetorical motive to this picture: By placing May Fourth in a chronology of World War I and the October Revolution, alternative European and American ideological influences on May Fourth thinkers are discredited. This is further stressed by dividing the May Fourth revolutionaries into three sections: “Communist intellectuals, revolutionary petty-bourgeois intellectuals, and bourgeois intellectuals (Takeuchi Minoru 竹内實 1970b:194; Trsl. in Schram 2005: “On New Democracy” 361)”. The liberal “bourgeois intellectuals”, in Mao’s view, failed the union and compromised with the enemy whereas the former two continued their fight against imperialism and feudalism.

The most concise *evaluation* of the events of May Fourth are found in “On New Democracy”:

The May Fourth Movement was an anti-imperialist as well as an antifeudal movement. Its outstanding historical significance is to be seen in a feature which was absent from the 1911 Revolution, namely, its thorough and uncompromising opposition to imperialism as well as feudalism. The May Fourth Movement possessed this quality because capitalism had developed a step further in China and because new hopes had arisen for the liberation of the Chinese nation as China’s revolutionary class saw the collapse of three great imperialist powers, Russia, Germany, and Austria-Hungary, and the weakening of two others, Britain and France, while the Russian proletariat had established a socialist state and the German, Hungarian, and Italian proletariat had risen in revolution. The May Fourth Movement came into being at the call of the world revolution of the time, of the Russian Revolution and of Lenin. It was part of the world proletarian revolution of the time. Although at the time of the May Fourth Movement the CCP had not yet come into

⁴⁰⁹ Note that in each of Mao’s three articles, May Fourth is declared to have been superior to the Revolution of 1911.

⁴¹⁰ On the discourse about fixing May Fourth in the Chinese calendar cf. to WAGNER (2001a) The Canonization of May Fourth. In: Dolezelová-Velingerová & Král *The Appropriation of Cultural Capital. China’s May Fourth Project*, Cambridge, Mass.: 105-15.

existence, there were already large numbers of intellectuals who approved of the Russian Revolution and had rudiments of Communist ideology. In the beginning the May Fourth Movement was a revolutionary movement of the united front of three sections of people – Communist intellectuals, revolutionary petty-bourgeois intellectuals and bourgeois intellectuals (the last forming the right wing at that time). Its weak point was that it was confined to the intellectuals, and the workers and peasants did not participate in it. But as soon as it developed into the June Third movement, not only the intellectuals but the mass of the proletariat, the petty bourgeoisie, and the bourgeoisie joined in, and it became a nationwide revolutionary movement. The cultural revolution ushered in by the May Fourth Movement was uncompromising in its opposition to feudal culture; there had never been such a great and thoroughgoing cultural revolution since the dawn of Chinese history. Raising aloft the two great banners of the day, “Down with the old ethics and up with the new!” and “Down with the old literature and up with the new!,” the cultural revolution had great achievements to its credit. At that time it was not yet possible for this cultural movement to become widely diffused among the workers and peasants. The slogan of “Literature for the common people” was advanced, but in fact the “common people” then could only refer to the petty-bourgeois and bourgeois intellectuals in the cities, that is, the so-called urban intelligentsia. Both in ideology and in the matter of cadres, the May Fourth Movement paved the way for the founding of the CCP in 1921, for the May Thirtieth movement of 1925, and for the Northern Expedition. (Takeuchi Minoru 竹内實 1970b:193f; Trsl. in Schram 2005: “The Orientation of the Youth Movement” 361)

This paragraph is the foundation upon which later assessments in *People’s Daily* were based. The value of the May Fourth Movement in Communist view lay in its thorough anti-imperialism and anti-feudalism. As had been argued by Mao in 1939, May Fourth was another step in the development of the Chinese revolution, but in 1940 it was also seen as influenced by World War I and the October revolution. But probably most important was that Mao accredited the May Fourth Movement with paving the way for the founding of the CCP in 1921. He did this by arguing that during the time of May Fourth, Communism had spread to China and that the revolution had even been led in part by Communist intellectuals. Its major weakness was overcome when with the transformation into the June Third movement workers and other classes had joined the movement (cf. to Schwarcz 1986:248). In the so-called June Third movement, we may see an alternative anniversary to May Fourth arising on the symbolic horizon of CCP historiography that to my knowledge was never propagated further. The *cultural* strand of the May Fourth Movement, which Mao had sidelined in his earlier articles, was in 1940 portrayed as a result of the May Fourth Movement, not one of its causes.⁴¹¹ Its significance was seen in its anti-feudal nature, its weakness in the lack of “common people” participating in shaping Chinese culture. Mao also changed the terminology from “new culture movement” or “cultural reform movement” into “cultural revolution”, substantiating this change of terminology with “revolutionary slogans” of May Fourth calling for the overturning of old ethics and old literature. As protagonist of this cultural revolution, Mao singled out Lu Xun: “The *chief commander* of China’s cultural revolution, he was not only a *great* man of letters but a *great* thinker and revolutionary. [...] on the cultural front, he was *the bravest and most*

⁴¹¹ A similar statement is found in the “May Fourth Movement” of 1939: “The cultural reform movement which grew out of the May Fourth Movement was only one of the manifestations of this revolution.”

correct, the firmest, the most loyal and the most ardent national hero, a hero without parallel in our history. (Takeuchi Minoru 竹内實 1970b:191f; Trsl. in Schram 2005:"On New Democracy" 360) [my emphasis]" Mao checked his praise of Lu Xun in superlatives by containing him to the cultural front only.⁴¹²

Before analysing the May Fourth anniversaries of subsequent years, I want to draw the attention of the reader to a last text of the Mao canon that contributed to defining and using May Fourth in later times: "Oppose Stereotyped Party Writing 反对党八股" of Feb. 8, 1942. It should be noted that this text is only partly concerned with the May Fourth Movement and comparatively seldom referred to in the May Fourth context. Moreover, the article did not define the significance of or meaning to May Fourth for future times, but used the May Fourth allegory that Mao himself had created in his earlier articles. The context of "Oppose Stereotyped Party Writing" was the beginning of the Yan'an Rectification Campaign. In his fight for supreme Party leadership, Mao accused his enemies of employing Marxism-Leninism dogmatically instead of relating it to the Chinese conditions.⁴¹³ This foreign dogmatism, according to Mao, found expression in stereotypical articles and speeches. Mao declared that this "stereotyped Party writing" was a reaction to positive May Fourth elements (the fight against *wenyanwen* and Confucianism) and simultaneously a continuation of its negative elements (bourgeois formalism). In Mao's view, "the struggle against the old stereotype and the old dogma remains one of the great achievements of the May 4th Movement. (Mao Zedong 1965a:54)" Its weakness, he argued, was that many leaders lacked the critical spirit of Marxism using bourgeois formalist methods instead; they had rightly advocated science and democracy, but ordered current conditions, history, and 'foreign things' according to a binary world-view of bad/good, and black/white (formalist approach). This latter argument was, in my view, one reason for the relative unpopularity of "Oppose Stereotyped Party Writing" to propagandists: May Fourth was later used by them to paint exactly such black-and-white pictures, of protagonists and antagonists, to educate the masses. Mao's relativist position of the Yan'an period that I outlined above was not always welcome in the PRC. Moreover, Mao's argumentation was directed against the Party itself and not against intellectuals. After Mao's death, when relativism became fashionable again, it was rather the

⁴¹² See also SCHWARCZ (1986) *The Chinese Enlightenment. Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* Berkeley: 249; on the political use made of Lu Xun in the PRC, particularly during the Cultural Revolution, cf. to GOLDMAN (Sep. 1982) The Political Use of Lu Xun, *The China Quarterly*, 446-461; for the Republic of China on Taiwan cf. to MARTIN (1999) The May Fourth Movement, Lu Xun and Taiwan. Paper presented at: *The May Fourth Movement and its Implications*, Peking University, Beijing.

⁴¹³ For further background refer to Chapter 3.

memory of the Hundred Flowers policy, than the Yan'an Rectification Campaign to be used to mobilise intellectuals.

In the last part of "On New Democracy" Mao defined the role which history should play in the future: "Respect for history means, however, giving it its proper place as a science, respecting its dialectical development, and not eulogising the past at the expense of the present or praising every drop of feudal poison. As far as the masses and the young students are concerned, the essential thing is to guide them to look forward and not backward. (Takeuchi Minoru 竹内實 1970b:203; trsl. in Schram 2005:"On New Democracy" 368)" The masses and young students by this definition were not to acquire a thorough understanding of the Chinese feudal past including the May Fourth Movement, but this past should serve in guiding present and future. How this was done on the canvas of May Fourth is the content of the following parts of this chapter. Mao's texts on the twentieth anniversary of May Fourth might be read as blueprint of how to accomplish just this: to guide the present through past images, allegories, and examples. These texts conveyed very little information about history, but a lot about Communist ideology, current strategy, and policy towards the youth. The symbolic universe that Mao had thus created would in future times be maintained by the canonisation of his texts and, as far as possible, their meaning. Quotation and allusion thereof, I argue, kept this canon alive, and censorship more or less silenced dissenting views. However narrow this Communist canon was, the May Fourth narrative that was created from this basis for every following tenth anniversary was astonishingly diverse and creative.

1949: Intellectual Crossroad

Retelling the history of the May Fourth Movement in 1949, I argue, served multiple means: *First*, it contributed to constructing and especially popularising a watershed date of national history. This historical construction explained in a linear, logical, and simple way how the present victory of the CCP came into being. The narrative was thus more shaped by the present than by the events of the past.⁴¹⁴ History became a legitimisation device. The historical construction was based on Mao's interpretation of events from 1939/40 (see above) transported into the 1949 *People's Daily* issue by quotations, and supported by Zeitzeugen (contemporary witness) accounts of recent creation. No 'original' prototexts from the time of May Fourth were quoted or reprinted. *Second*, the basic

⁴¹⁴ See also the analysis on May Fourth in 1949 in SCHWARCZ (1986) *The Chinese Enlightenment. Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* Berkeley: 251. For a broader analysis of how past history served present nation-building in China cf. to DUARA (1995) *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China* Chicago.

message of this story telling, conveyed most authoritatively by quotation, was that with the victory of the “bourgeois-democratic revolution”, intellectuals had reached a crossroad: they could either follow the Party in serving the people or become reactionary and be excluded from the people. Henceforth, in China no other path would be open to them.⁴¹⁵ However, especially the editorial-like article by Chen Boda⁴¹⁶ on the first page of *People’s Daily*⁴¹⁷ carried a second, more lenient, message for the intellectuals. The country needed intellectual expertise for reconstruction and education. Thus the integration of intellectuals into the masses was made an urgent task for Party cadres. They should not exclude intellectuals from the masses. Again, this strategic information is introduced in Mao’s own words. But while history was often introduced by quoting canonical texts, such present strategy was authorised by references to texts of more recent origin. *Third*, the May Fourth anniversary provided a motive to introduce parts of the new canon,⁴¹⁸ consisting principally of Mao Zedong Thought, to Party members and the Chinese people at large. This was done on many levels: by retelling canonised narratives, by reprinting parts of Mao’s texts, and by using canonical quotations to recommend further texts as study material to the readers. Simultaneously, quotations and allusions in combination with excessive praise were used to propagate Mao’s writing as the new Chinese canon and to establish Mao Zedong, the leader of the revolution and nation-to-be, as wise and prophetic. After shortly introducing the historical background of the 1949 anniversary, I will introduce the *People’s Daily* issue of May 4, 1949 in detail to show how quotations of Mao and others were employed to construct a linear history from 1919 to the present that legitimised the CCP, promoted its leader, Mao Zedong, and his new canon, and finally conveyed the future mission of China’s intellectuals to the public.

⁴¹⁵ This Party policy changed after Mao’s death. The change of policy was reflected in the use or rather ‘unuse’ of certain quotations as “The working class has to lead everything” (cf. Chapter 2.3) and Mao’s quotation from “May Fourth Movement” defining unity with workers as decisive behaviour for a revolutionary (see also below).

⁴¹⁶ Chen Boda 陈伯达 (1904-1988) arrived in Beijing in March 1949 together with the Red Army, Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai. At that time, he held the position of vice-president of the Marxist Leninist Institute (later named Party School of the Central Committee). Informally, he acted as advisor to Mao and became his personal secretary in the same year. YE YONGLIE 叶永烈 (1994) 毛泽东的秘书们 [The secretaries of Mao Zedong] 上海: 166f. For the propagation of May Fourth in the ‘new China’, Chen was a natural choice as he had been mainly responsible for the “New Enlightenment Movement” of 1936-7 (SCHWARCZ (1986) *The Chinese Enlightenment. Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* Berkeley: 195-239, esp. 222-239).

⁴¹⁷ CHEN BODA 陈伯达 (04.05.1949) 五四运动与知识分子的道路 [The May Fourth movement and the course of the intellectuals], 人民日报, 1. In style, argumentation and presentation, this article is similar to later editorials in *People’s Daily*. However, it is not marked as an editorial in the issue. As no other editorial was printed in this issue of May Fourth, I will use Chen’s article for comparison with later anniversary editorials.

⁴¹⁸ Mao Zedong Thought had been written into the Party constitution as ideological foundation next to Marxism-Leninism in 1945. The textual basis, the post-1949 *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, were only published after 1951. The Mao quotations used in 1949 were probably taken from the 1948 edition of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*.

In May 1949, Communist victory in the civil war was imminent. The armies of the Guomindang had been defeated in different battles throughout 1948/49. Chiang Kai-shek resigned as president of the Republic of China in January 1949 and retreated with followers, army, and the treasures of the Forbidden City to Taiwan. The peace talks were left in the hands of Li Zongren 李宗仁 and the Nanjing government. When negotiations failed in April, the Red Army crossed the Yangzi river and conquered Nanjing, the Republican capital, on April 24. Three days later, Shanghai was taken as well (Twitchett et al. 1987:774f). Beijing had been ‘liberated’ by the Communist army in January, and by March it had become headquarter of the Central Committee of the CCP following Mao’s directive to shift party work from rural to urban areas. With victory in sight, the Party leadership and its mouthpiece⁴¹⁹ turned their attention towards (re)construction. According to Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, the bourgeois-democratic revolution would propel China into a new period, i.e. socialist construction that would develop the present democratic society into a socialist society. In this period, the bourgeoisie, previously counted as ally against feudal forces, changed now into the main enemy of the proletariat. However, the help of the intellectuals and of the old bureaucracy was needed to govern and rebuild a country devastated by decades of war and civil war. This contradiction set the tone for the May Fourth anniversary of 1949.

A national history is one of the various criteria by which a nation may define itself (Anderson 1991). On the eve of becoming a nation again, the anniversary of the May Fourth Movement provided Communist propagandists with an opportunity to popularise⁴²⁰ their version of May Fourth events. Simultaneously, they propagated the Party’s claim for hegemony over history writing. Both contents found expression in various forms: Four paragraphs (amounting to over 4,000 characters) by Mao were reprinted of those May Fourth articles that I have summarised above, namely “On New Democracy” and “Oppose stereotyped party writing”.⁴²¹ Both articles were later included in the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*. The new Chinese canon by “Mao Zedong, the great leader of the

⁴¹⁹ *People’s Daily* was by this time not the Central Committee mouthpiece, but functioned since June 1948 as the official newspaper of the northern bureau of the Central Committee (Zhonggong huabei zhongyangju jiguanbao 中共华北中央局机关报) (LI ZHUANG 李庄 (1990) 我在人民日报四十年 北京: 1). However, the 1949 May 4 issue of *People’s Daily* reveals the heavy influence that Mao exercised on the paper through Chen Boda, his personal secretary to be (YE YONGLIE 叶永烈 (1994) 毛泽东的秘书们 [The secretaries of Mao Zedong] 上海: 151-236). On Chen’s involvement in the editing of an May Fourth anniversary volume in 1949 see SCHWARCZ (1986) *The Chinese Enlightenment. Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* Berkeley: 251f.

⁴²⁰ The national circulation of *People’s Daily* in 1949 is stated as about 60-70.000 copies in RENMIN RIBAO BAOSHI BIANJIZU 人民日报报史编辑组 (1988) 人民日报回忆录 1948 - 1988 [Memoirs of the People’s Daily 1948-1988] 北京: 357.

⁴²¹ Three paragraphs were taken from “On New Democracy”, one about cultural issues from “Oppose stereotyped party writing”.

Chinese people 中国人民伟大领袖毛泽东 (Renmin ribao she 人民出版社 1949.05.04)” was commended to the reader for study and research so as to learn “how we are to understand the nature of this movement, appraise its historical significance and influence, and henceforth how to continue and further develop the glorious tradition of the ‘May Fourth’ movement 我们怎样认识这个运动的性质，估价其历史意义和影响，今后如何承继并发扬‘五四’运动中的光荣传统 (Renmin ribao she 人民出版社 1949.05.04)”. Mao’s authority over interpreting Chinese history for its ruling party and people was thus proclaimed. As the texts reprinted from Mao transported only limited factual knowledge, further articles of the same *People’s Daily* issue provided readers with information fitting Mao’s interpretation: examples include an “Introduction to the May Fourth Movement 五四运动介绍” and “What one should know when commemorating the thirtieth ‘May Fourth’ anniversary 纪念‘五四’三十周年应有的认识”. Both articles attest to the fact that by 1949 the education of CCP members both in ideological as well as factual knowledge was one serious problem facing the leadership (history being but one field thereof). Although the leaders seemed to have agreed on Mao’s historical assessment of May Fourth, it still had to be communicated to both cadres and people. Reprinting the most important articles by Mao and recommending them to collective study became one method for the popularisation of the canon before its publication and circulation in the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*.⁴²²

Further information about the May Fourth Movement was conveyed by a number of May Fourth veterans who had been recruited by Chen Boda to write articles on different strands of May Fourth. Mao Dun portrayed May Fourth as a political mass movement, Hu Feng described how Marxism developed from small stream to main current, Ye Shengtao gave an account of May Fourth as a youth movement, and Yang Zhensheng and Yu Pingbo wrote about *baihua* literature and personal development during the May Fourth period respectively, to name but a few.⁴²³ Although their articles did not question the CCP May Fourth interpretation, they still conveyed some of the diversity of the original movement enriching and, to some degree, exposing the simplistic Communist narrative.

⁴²² The same method was used to circulate post-1949 texts of Mao.

⁴²³ All these articles appeared in *People’s Daily* on May 4, 1949. Moreover, the same authors wrote articles for a commemorative volume edited by Chen Boda that was published in July 1949 titled ‘WUSI’ SA ZHOUNIAN JINIAN ZHUANJI BIANWEIHUI ‘五四’卅周年纪念专辑编委会 (Ed.) (1949) ‘五四’卅周年纪念专辑 [Special Memorial Collection for the Thirtieth Anniversary of ‘May Fourth’], 上海.

In recruiting these *Zeitzeugen* information about the May Fourth Movement was not only circulated in a more vivid form, but these people were exemplarily set against other veterans and intellectuals less willing to accept communist dominance in their field of knowledge.⁴²⁴ As was made eminently clear in Chen Boda's page one article, however, Chinese intellectuals had come to a crossroad: either to subordinate to or divorce themselves from the CCP, and thereby the Chinese people and their country (Chen Boda 陈伯达 1949.05.04). Here again, history and quotation were used to strengthen an argument. Since 1919, Chen argued, intellectuals had played an important role in leading the revolution. But, and here we see Mao's master text emerge, soon after May Fourth intellectuals divided into three factions: revolutionary (or early Communists), democratic and bourgeois.⁴²⁵ Communist victory proved the course of the revolutionary faction correct. The other intellectual course, along the Two-Line-Theory master narrative employed by Chen, had failed. Its cultural leader, Hu Shi, was portrayed by Chen through misquotations like "Talk more about problems, less about isms 多谈问题，少谈主义".⁴²⁶ This argument, or so Chen claimed, had been used by Hu Shi to suppress emerging communist and socialist thought at the time of May Fourth. The quotation signalled that although Mao had later in Yan'an times expressed a similar view – remember his call for a reform of learning, prioritising the investigation of China's problems instead of the study of Marxism-Leninism (see Chapter 3) – it would be no correct stance for intellectuals under the Communist rule to come. The list of bad intellectual examples is further populated by: Chen Duxiu, praised not for founding the CCP but for anti-capitalism during May Fourth, who had faltered under the strain of revolutionary struggle; Zhang Guotao who had become a counterrevolutionary spy; and Chiang Kai-shek and Wang Jingwei, the reactionary political and military leaders.

⁴²⁴ Further pressure came from the Chinese researchers association who called on researchers to conform to CCP views in an open letter published on page one of the May Fourth issue: RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民日报社 (04.05.1949) 纪念'五四'. 中国科学工作者协会发表公开信. 号召加强团结, 消灭帝国主义战争罪行。[Commemorating 'May Fourth'. The Chinese research workers association published an open letter. Called for strengthening unity, eradicating the war crimes of imperialism.], 人民日报, 1.

⁴²⁵ Although not quoting him directly, Chen described the revolution before May Fourth along Mao's narrative, starting with the first Opium War (s.a.). For the period after the May Fourth Movement, Chen altered some aspects to stress the importance of Mao and the CCP even more. Thus, while Mao had stipulated that the unification of revolutionary intellectuals and workers had taken place during the June Third movement of 1919, Chen described it as a result of the founding of the CCP and Mao Zedong Thought.

⁴²⁶ The original formulation by Hu was: "Do more research on problems, talk less about 'isms' 多研究些问题，少谈些'主义'" (*The Weekly Review* (Meizhou pinglun 每周评论) 31, 20.7.1919. Mao had repeatedly stressed similar ideas in Yan'an times and later by commending a new style of study for party members of less empty Marxist talk and more research on Chinese real conditions (see Chapter 3). I suggest that Chen did choose, though not coin, the misquotation as it was less similar to what Mao had said. It should also be noted that in 1939 quoting Hu Shi as authority in some matters had still been possible for Chen (SCHRAM (Ed.) (2005) *New Democracy 1939-1941*, Armonk, NY: 38f).

The correct behaviour for intellectuals was defined in another Mao quotation from his article “The May Fourth Movement”: “In the final analysis, the dividing line between revolutionary intellectuals and nonrevolutionary or counterrevolutionary intellectuals is whether or not they are willing to integrate themselves with the popular masses of the workers and peasants, and actually do so.” The Chinese history of the last thirty years proved this judgement of comrade Mao Zedong to be correct, or so Chen confirmed the reader. Ironically, this judgement of Mao was at that time but ten years old. However, there was another aspect to the future of China’s intellectuals: The CCP “has to attract and take in large numbers of intellectuals. Worker and peasant cadres should be persuaded to swallow them and not be afraid of them; without the help of revolutionary intellectuals, workers and peasants cannot improve themselves; without intellectuals, the work of managing the country, the Party, and the army cannot be done. 一定要吸引和收容大批革命知识分子。要说服工农干部，吃得下，不怕他们；工农没有革命知识分子帮忙不会提高自己；工作没有知识分子不能治国治党治军。”⁴²⁷ Again, Chen added, that Mao’s wise judgement had been proven by history, without giving further details on the quotation. Such quotation usage, in my view, fostered the early personality cult of Mao and undermined the strategy later adopted to portray the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* as a result of the Party’s democratic centralism. Similar rhetoric reappeared as early as 1961, in the drive to study Mao’s work introduced by Minister of Defence Lin Biao and peaked during the Cultural Revolution (see Chapter 3).

In the second and third part of his article, Chen Boda turned away from history and towards the present and future of the nation-to-be. In this part, Chen’s argumentation was based mainly on the most recent strategy outlined by Mao in his “Report to the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the CCP” of March 5, 1949. Chairman Mao, portrayed via quotation as guide and educator of the Chinese people, had therein posed a new problem to be solved: “We are not only able to destroy an old world, but will also be able to construct a new world. 我们不但善于破坏一个旧世界，我们还将善于建设一个新世界。” Every intellectual, previously revolutionary or not, now has the singular chance to prove (anew) his or her allegiance to the proletariat by actively

⁴²⁷ This quotation originates from Mao’s report “Outline on Opposing Capitulation 反投降提纲” of June 10, 1939. It was included in the 1948 *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* and an edited version was in 1999 reprinted in MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1999a) 毛泽东文集 [Collected Works of Mao Zedong] vol. 2, 北京: 196-237. The translation, as far as it corresponds to the version above, can be found in SCHRAM (Ed.) (2005) *New Democracy 1939-1941*, Armonk, NY: 139. Attracting intellectuals into the Party, expressed in the quotation, however, was soon overshadowed by the necessity to become a proletarian party not only in name but composition. Hence the attempt was made in the early 1950s to draw in large numbers of real flesh-and-blood workers. See for further details: SCHRAM (1989) *The Thought of Mao Tse-tung* Cambridge: 92.

supporting the future industrial, agrarian, and cultural revolution. The intellectuals were offered a “heroic” position in the new society; if they were willing to get to know its people, they could become “heroes with a place to display their prowess 英雄用武之地 (Chen Boda 陈伯达 1949.05.04)”. For those familiar with its original use by Mao, i.e. intellectuals present at his “Talks at the Yan’an Forum on Literature and Art” on May 2, 1942, the use of this paraphrase bore a threat: re-education through criticism and self-criticism of all those who were not willing to subordinate their intellectual pursuits to the Party. In the last part of Chen’s article, this threat is repeated and further authorised by three quotations of different authors: Marx, Mao, and Nietzsche. To Marx’s dictum that “Educators have to receive education first 教育者先要受教育”, Chen added Mao’s words about the necessity “to adopt a suitable method to educate them, let them acquire a new standpoint, a new method, [i.e.] to serve the Chinese people 是采取适当方法, 教育他们, 使他们获得新观点, 新方法, 为中国人民服务” and finally introduced Nietzsche’s notion of “newly assessing all values 重新估定一切价值”. Although one might read into this quotation collage of different authorities some form of intellectual diversity, Chen’s explanations immediately reduced this diversity. Through hard study the “standpoints and methods of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, dialectical and historical materialism” should be acquired. In sessions of criticism and self-criticism intellectuals were to “newly assess” the value of all things by using these standpoints and methods. Intellectual choice, intellectual liberalism were past. Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought would dominate the future.

Although some reportage on Youth League festivities were published to celebrate the national Youth Day, in 1949 May Fourth functioned mainly as an allegory for the unsuccessful attempt of all non-CCP intellectuals to save the nation. “Chen Boda added a nice touch by claiming that in fact Mao Zedong was the finest sprout of May Fourth as an individual, as much as the CCP was such a fine sprout in terms of organisation. (Wagner 2001a:113)” Both allegorical use and Mao’s dominance are also visible by the choice of prototexts to quote from: “On New Democracy” and the “Talks at the Yan’an Forum on Literature and Art” had been directed towards an intellectual audience. Also quoted was the article “The May Fourth Movement” that was primarily concerned with defining the value of May Fourth to present-day China, and only at the end a mobilisation call on the youth was uttered. Not quoted, in contrast, was “The Orientation of the Youth Movement” which was the canonical article connecting May Fourth most closely to the young. Though it seems natural to choose source texts befitting a new context, this selection shows that the quotations were

not only chosen for their formulation and meaning, but because they had a specific origin and overall aim. The original source text was thereby recommended as study material to the readership, most clearly done in the case of “On New Democracy” where part of the original text was simply reprinted in *People’s Daily*.

It should also be noted that the *People’s Daily* issue of May 4, 1949 under discussion here, contained the highest amount of articles – 21 altogether – touching upon the “May Fourth Movement” or “May Fourth” (see Figure 18). And even though it was restricted to the normative version of the CCP, the picture of May Fourth thus created was still diverse and rich in information, or so it would appear to the young reader or someone unfamiliar with the events. Another 165 articles in *People’s Daily* (see Figure 16) and several book publications were used throughout the year 1949 to amplify this impression. This first May Fourth anniversary issue in *People’s Daily* as well as the articles by Chen Boda might have become style guides for later propagandists as to how to propagate May Fourth or how to use it allegorically for propagandistic purposes. But was it used? Were later anniversaries modelled after Chen’s example? In the following years the Communists were busy with constructing their ‘new’ China; this preoccupation along with campaigns, war, and manmade disaster, remarked Mitter, dominated everyday life. “As a consequence, this was a time when May Fourth values largely disappeared from view in China. (Mitter 2004:198)”

1959: Tibetan Feudalism and Indian Imperialism

In 1959, the fortieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement collided with another anniversary more important to the present leadership: the tenth anniversary of the founding of the PRC. The importance of May Fourth to current propaganda was further reduced by the Great Leap Forward economic policy as well as the Hundred Flowers policy and the subsequent Anti-Rightist Campaign. Whereas the former drew attention away from a thoroughly uneconomic historical event as May Fourth, the latter had thoroughly undermined what little confidence the Party had in intellectuals.⁴²⁸ A quiet anniversary might have been the result, had not the Tibetan rebellion in March 1959 changed the internal and international situation and furthered the creativity of propagandists to find yet another interpretation of May Fourth. I argue that in 1959 the image of May Fourth (evoked by allegories, quotations, heroes or enemies) was employed to argue several causes that are otherwise scarcely connected. *First*, propagandists used the May Fourth Movement as an allegory for the

⁴²⁸ May Fourth had even given a cover to intellectual “criticism of the Communist Party’s monopoly over cultural and political life” (SCHWARCZ (1986) *The Chinese Enlightenment. Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* Berkeley: 278).

people's successful fight against foreign imperialism (Japan, England, France, etc.) and domestic feudalism (warlords, landlords). This allegory was then used to direct popular opinion against a new form of imperialism and a new form of feudalism: The 'feudalist' Tibetan uprising supported by 'imperialist' India and Britain. This representation as provided in the May Fourth editorial of *People's Daily* and in two speeches reprinted in the same issue was, however, purely present-day rhetoric and was not supported by historical evidence (even if only constructed) or by canonical quotations. *Second*, the May Fourth anniversary provided a pretext to demonstrate Party domination over political and cultural life. Thus, not the May Fourth Movement itself was brought back to memory but – via quotation – Mao's interpretation thereof. Similarly, the Anti-Rightist Campaign, rectification through work during the Great Leap Forward, and the 'Hundred Flowers' under the guidance of the Party were referred to. *Third*, in contrast to 1949, May Fourth as national Youth Day was emphasised once more. As the Party had lost confidence in the 'old' intellectuals, i.e. those people educated before 1949 and influenced by more than just Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, the idea of building a new 'red-and-expert' intellectual force was advanced.⁴²⁹ A new generation of intellectuals was to be raised from proletarian background and trained in Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought. This idea was introduced into the 1959 May Fourth editorial by quoting a political report by Zhou Enlai of recent origin. As in 1949, current strategy was conveyed through recent words of the top-leadership, not authorised with canonical references. *Fourth*, by comparing China in 1919 to China in 1959 not only similarities were pointed out, but more importantly the differences between the 'dark' May Fourth era and the 'bright' new China could be revealed. Different articles featured for example the changes introduced to Tian'anmen, the birth place of the May Fourth Movement and the PRC, to substantiate this claim. Thus, May Fourth had to symbolise *both* the heroic union against aggressors *and* the darkness of society. *Fifth*, the editorial's diversity was stretched further by a last topic: relations between the PRC and USSR. By quoting Mao's positive assessment of the October Revolution's influence on the May Fourth Movement, the topic was not only introduced, but a bold statement made: China had in the past successively followed the Russian path and therefore should continue to do so in the present. However, the *People's Daily* editorial of May 4 continued that Mao Zedong Thought should be studied foremost as it was the unification of Marxism-Leninism with the Chinese practice. One might draw the conclusion that it was rather Mao's path than Russia's that should be taken. This inconsistent use of

⁴²⁹ The effects of this policy on literary production are described in GOLDMAN (1967) *Literary Dissent in Communist China* Cambridge, Mass.: 243-271.

the canon, I suggest, rather questioned than supported its authority. While the anniversary of the May Fourth Movement occasioned the construction of these manifold arguments, its image could hardly contain all of them at the same time and in the same issue of *People's Daily*. Emblematic use of May Fourth had previously helped to reduce the complexity of the original story down to a propagandistically useful narrative.⁴³⁰ The result of the 1959 anniversary issue was, in my view, unconvincing in many respects: it lacked almost any evidential proof, even if constructed;⁴³¹ canonical authority was used inconsistently; and the diversity of its usage questioned the very simplicity of the emblem. Again, I will first introduce the historical background before turning to an analysis of the *People's Daily* anniversary issue of May 4, 1959, and the use of quotations made therein.

One decade had indeed brought “earth-shaking”⁴³² changes to the PRC and its people. Internationally, the ‘eternal’ union of the socialist block was deteriorating fast in the wake of the secret speech of Khrushchev in February 1956. The Chinese state was further isolated by the diplomatic crisis with India caused by the Tibetan rebellion in March 1959 and two China-Indian border-conflicts shortly thereafter. India had granted asylum to the Dalai Lama. But Chinese leaders suspected that it had also directly supported the rebellion.⁴³³ Moreover, China was internationally criticised for suppressing the uprising in Tibet through the People’s Liberation Army. The rebellion in Tibet itself was not seen by the CCP as challenging the legitimacy of Chinese rule over Tibet or endangering the integrity of the country. Instead, it provided a motive to enforce military dominance and democratic reform (Chen 2006:69-80). Internally, the CCP leadership was shaken by the sharp criticism brought forward by intellectuals and numbers of the populace during the Hundred Flowers policy in 1956/57 and especially by the Party Rectification Campaign in spring and summer 1957. The Party answered by launching an Anti-Rightist Campaign on the cultural front and the Great Leap

⁴³⁰ For the use of emblems and differentiation to categories cf. to WEIGELIN-SCHWIEDRZIK (1984) *Parteigeschichtsschreibung in der VR China. Typen, Methoden, Themen und Funktionen*, Veröffentlichungen des Ostasien-Instituts der Ruhr-Universität Bochum ; 29, Wiesbaden: 52-9.

⁴³¹ Neither the editorial, nor the other articles in the same issue gave evidential support to the four different topics mentioned.

⁴³² The *chengyu* “fan tian fu di 翻天覆地” or “tian fan di fu 天翻地覆” translated as “earth-shaking” appears more than once in almost every May Fourth anniversary issue to describe the changes introduced to China since May Fourth. This usage cannot be traced back to Mao. Chen Boda used this description in his 1949 article. Later usage might attest to the prototypical function of this article for later anniversaries.

⁴³³ On the change of China-Indian and China-Russian relations before and after the Tibetan rebellion see CHEN (Summer 2006) The Tibetan Rebellion of 1959 and China's Changing Relations with India and the Soviet Union, *Journal of Cold War Studies* 8, 54-101. A comprehensive history of China-Tibetan relations is given in GRUNDFELD (1996) *The Making of Modern Tibet* Armonk, NY and GOLDSTEIN (1997) *The Snow Lion and the Dragon. China, Tibet, and the Dalai Lama* Berkeley.

Forward on the economic. Simultaneously, provoked by de-Stalinisation in Russia and popular protest movements in Eastern Europe, the Party leadership decided to decrease Mao's elevated status. Accordingly, Mao Zedong Thought was deleted from the Party's constitution at the eighth Party Congress in September 1956. In spring 1959, Mao stepped down from the chairmanship of the PRC, ceding his place to Liu Shaoqi.

Thus was the background to the May Fourth issue of *Renmin Ribao* in 1959. The issue itself featured ten articles about the May Fourth Movement: one editorial, one report about a May Fourth celebration by the Youth League, three speeches held at this celebration by Guo Moruo, Kang Sheng and Hu Yaobang; three Zeitzeugen accounts, one small piece on a new May Fourth badge, and one poem.⁴³⁴ The addressees of this issue were foremost the “young people at every post all over the country (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1959.05.04)”. To them the significance of May Fourth was shortly outlined. Mao's somewhat lengthy narrative on the development of the revolution through its different stages had by 1959 been shrunk: One paragraph of 250 characters was enough to convey the forty years of history since 1919 until present-day in the page one editorial “Carry forward the glorious tradition, construct a great fatherland 发扬光荣传统建设伟大祖国”. The anti-feudalist, anti-imperialist revolution under the wise leadership of the Party and Mao Zedong featured prominently in this account. Does this shortness attest to the fact that by 1959 the history of May Fourth as told in the PRC had become general knowledge making further repetition unnecessary? Or rather the adverse tendency: had the story been further shrunk so as to allow even fewer interpretations thereof? Following this short historical assessment, the page one editorial immediately projected May Fourth allegorically onto present needs: “But the fight is not yet over. Today, taking the so-called Tibetan question as pretext, imperialism and foreign reactionaries madly interfere in our country's domestic affairs and conspire to divide the solidarity and unity of our great fatherland. 但是，斗争并没有结束。今天，帝国主义和外国反动派，正在借口所谓的西藏问题，疯狂地干涉我国内政，阴谋分裂我们伟大祖国的团结和统一。” Remembering May Fourth, the editorial continued, young people have to close ranks, pacify Tibet, fight against the “reactionary group” in the Tibetan superstructure and shatter advances by imperialism and Indian reactionaries to interfere in China's domestic affairs. The aggressive reaction by the Chinese against what they perceived as “interference into domestic affairs” was one product of May Fourth nationalism. The

⁴³⁴ Throughout the year 1959, 127 articles appeared in *People's Daily* containing either the phrase “May Fourth” or “May Fourth Movement”. It was the last year in which the topic May Fourth got a high-profile. From 1960 until 1979, the topic was sidelined in *People's Daily* or even silenced (comp. Figure 16 and 17).

Chinese saw the suppression of the Tibetan rebellion not as an imperialist act itself, but as supporting the Tibetan people to liberate themselves from a feudalist superstructure consisting of clergy and gentry. Simultaneously, the rebellion was stripped of its “popular” notion and attributed to a Tibetan-Indian conspiracy against China and against the Tibetan masses.⁴³⁵

The USSR had first supported the Chinese strategy in Tibet, but the Chinese reaction to the Indian conspiracy theory promulgated in the Chinese media since April 24 found no echo in the Russian media. “Chinese officials noticed that the Soviet media eschewed any mention of India’s alleged connections with the Tibetan rebellion and instead published many reports by Western news agencies ‘attacking China’s policies toward Tibet and India.’ (Chen 2006:91)” On May 7, a meeting between Chinese leaders and senior officials of the USSR and ten other socialist countries was held to explain Chinese policy towards Tibet and India (Chen 2006:91). The May Fourth issue of *People’s Daily* reflected this uncertain state of affairs between China and the USSR by claiming to follow the “Russian path” and, simultaneously, Mao. The editorial called on its readers to study Marxism-Leninism as history since the May Fourth Movement proved that Marxism-Leninism was the key to China’s problems; the editorial then continued:

Just as comrade Mao Zedong said: ‘The October Revolution’s roar of guns carried Marxism-Leninism to us. The October Revolution helped the progressives of the whole world and also the Chinese to analyse their countries’ fate with the proletarian world-view, consider anew their own problems. Walk along the Russian peoples’ path – this is the conclusion.’ [...] When studying Marxism-Leninism, first we should study the great works of Mao Zedong that integrate the Marxist-Leninist theory with the concrete practice of the Chinese revolution. 正如毛泽东同志所说的: ‘十月革命一声炮响, 给我们送来了马克思列宁主义。十月革命帮助了全世界的也帮助了中国的先进分子, 用无产阶级的宇宙观作为观察国家命运的工具, 重新考虑自己的问题。走俄国人的路 --- 这就是结论’ [...] 我们要学习马克思列宁主义, 首先要学习马克思列宁主义的理论同中国革命的具体实践相结合的毛泽东同志的伟大著作。(Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1959.05.04)

How should one interpret this paragraph? On the one hand, it argued that forty years had proved the usefulness of Marxism-Leninism for China and concluded with Mao to “walk along the Russian people’s path”. Similarly, the origin of the quotation – it was taken from “On the People’s Democratic Dictatorship” written by Mao in commemoration of the twenty-eighth anniversary of the CCP in 1949⁴³⁶ – might recall a time of unity between China and the USSR to the reader. These pro-

⁴³⁵ Though no authoritative quotations were used, the CCP leadership and especially Mao had advised this strategy for the propaganda apparatus as of Apr. 25. Several enlarged politburo meetings were held to discuss Chinese strategy towards India between Apr. 25 and May 5; a detailed explanatory essay on this topic written by a special group under Hu Qiaomu (the secretary of Mao) and Wu Lengxi (by then editor-in-chief of *People’s Daily*) was published on May 6 in *People’s Daily*. CHEN (Summer 2006) The Tibetan Rebellion of 1959 and China’s Changing Relations with India and the Soviet Union, *Journal of Cold War Studies* 8, 54-101: 86-8.

⁴³⁶ MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1967 (1960)) 毛泽东选集 [Selected works of Mao Zedong] vol. 4, 北京: 1405-19; translated in MAO ZEDONG (1965b) *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* vol. 4, Beijing: 411-25.

USSR signals were undermined, however, by the sentences following the quotation which prized Mao Zedong Thought above Marxism-Leninism. It may well have been difficult to read this as an unambiguous statement. In my view, such argumentation furthered neither the objective of strengthening the union with Russia nor that of promoting the superiority of Mao Zedong Thought to the Chinese people. Instead, such constructions might have undermined the authority of the canon by displaying its historicity.

What else did the propagandists of May Fourth in 1959 portray as proven by history either of the last forty years, i.e. since the time of the May Fourth Movement, or by the history of the last ten years since the founding of the PRC?

Just as comrade Mao Zedong said when commemorating the 20th anniversary of the ‘May Fourth’ movement: ‘But the intellectuals will accomplish nothing if they fail to integrate themselves with the workers and peasants. In the final analysis, the dividing line between revolutionary intellectuals and non-revolutionary or counter-revolutionary intellectuals is whether or not they are willing to integrate themselves with the workers and peasants and actually do so.’ ‘A true revolutionary must be one who is willing to integrate himself with the workers and peasants and actually does so.’ [paragraph mark] Since liberation, under the leadership of the party and comrade Mao Zedong the intellectuals have diligently carried on the remolding of thinking, and already achieved comparatively great success. ‘正如毛泽东同志在纪念“五四”运动二十周年时说过的：“知识分子如果不和工农民众相结合，则将一事无成。革命的或不革命的或反革命的的知识分子的最后的分界，看其是否愿意并且实行和工农民众相结合。”‘真正的革命者必定是愿意并且实行和工农民众相结合的。’ [paragraph mark] 解放以来，知识分子在党和毛泽东同志领导下，努力进行思想改造，已经取得了相当巨大的成绩。(Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1959.05.04)”⁴³⁷

Integration with the working class, canonised with Mao’s words on the “May Fourth Movement” in 1939, thus hung like a Sword of Damocles over the heads of the intellectuals yet again. But however hard they would try in the future to show their true revolutionary spirit, the government’s hopes lay elsewhere: “Premier Zhou Enlai pointed out in the ‘Work Report of the Government’ [of April 18, 1959]: ‘To establish a working class intellectual rank of ten million people is a great historical task on the cultural and educational front. The emergence of this rank will depend on the nurturing of new and remolding of old intellectuals.’ 周恩来总理在‘政府工作报告’中指出：‘建立一支成千万人的工人阶级知识分子队伍，是文教战线的一项伟大的历史任务。这支队伍要依靠培养新知识分子和改造旧知识分子而产生。’” A new intellectual force should be raised with proletarian background. It would fulfil the criteria of being both ‘red’ and ‘expert’ and thus be more reliable than the old remolded intellectuals had proven to be. The study of Marxism-Leninism, and foremost Mao Zedong Thought would arm this force, and help them to “thoroughly break with all sorts of

⁴³⁷ The translation of the Mao quotation is taken from MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1967 (1952)) 毛泽东选集 [Selected works of Mao Zedong] vol. 2, 北京: 238.

bourgeois world-views, [and] sincerely use the world-view of the working class 彻底同各式各样的资产阶级观点决裂，真正用工人阶级的世界观” (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1959.05.04). As in the 1949 May Fourth issue, present-day tasks were authorised by present-day quotations. In 1959 as compared to 1949, the quotation on current strategy was not even taken from Mao but premier Zhou Enlai. It seems as though the criteria for selecting an appropriate quotation included that not only the content, but also the source fitted the argumentation. Zhou’s report was the most recent governmental assessment of the situation of intellectuals in China, summing-up the successes of the Anti-Rightist Campaign, and describing the future strategy. Authorship, I suggest, was only a secondary criterion, though balancing Mao quotations with quotations from other senior politicians might have been an objective as well.⁴³⁸

With each campaign new convicts were added to the list of bad elements. During the May Fourth anniversary celebrations, convicted intellectuals were on display as a warning to younger generations. In 1949, Party intellectuals had been contrasted by Hu Shi, Luo Jialun, and Fu Sinian. In 1959, Hu Feng 胡风, criticised in 1955 for demanding more intellectual freedom than the Party allowed, replaced Hu Shi as worst exemplar of his kind. In a long article on literary developments since the May Fourth Movement, Lu Xun and Guo Moruo were constructed as protagonists of their time in contrast to Hu Feng. The article concluded that the Party had to lead future literary production to serve the people. “For a while, the allegory of May Fourth [had] provided a cover for their [i.e. by intellectuals] criticism of the Communist Party’s monopoly over cultural and political life. (Schwarcz 1986:278)” By 1959, the cover had been lifted, and the intellectuals themselves had been criticised. May Fourth now became an allegory of patriotism to palliate the People’s Liberation Army’s military actions in Tibet and the CCP’s political advances in the international arena.

⁴³⁸ In this respect, there is a noteworthy difference between the three May Fourth anniversary speeches by Guo Moruo, Kang Sheng and Hu Yaobang (back then Youth League secretary) reprinted in *People’s Daily*: Kang’s speech was laden with Mao quotations, eulogising Mao in every possible sentence; both Guo and Hu were more reserved. Hu was the only one expressing his belief that as Mao was state chairman no longer, he would have more time and energy left to consider and advise strategies and policies for the Party and country.

(De-)Contextualising Quotations

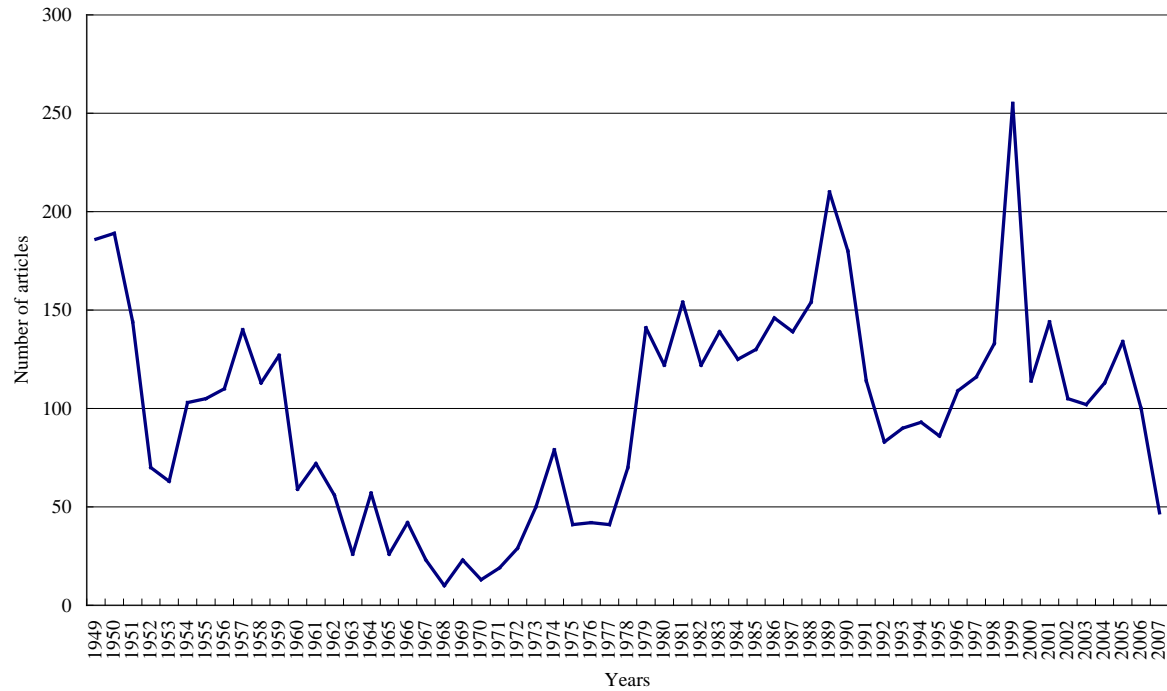


Figure 16: Using either the term “May Fourth 五四” or the term “May Fourth Movement 五四运动” in articles of *People’s Daily* per year (Source: Renmin ribao she xinwen xinxi zhongxin 人民日报社新闻信息中心 2007).

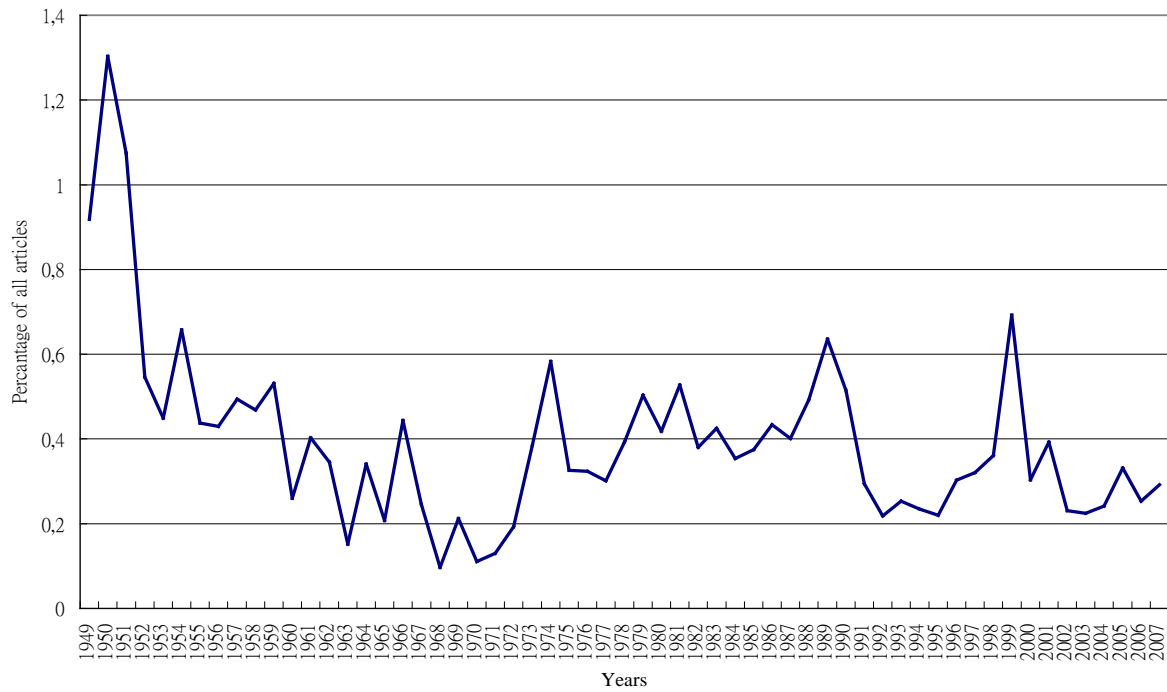


Figure 17: Usage of either the term “May Fourth 五四” or the term “May Fourth Movement 五四运动” in percentage of all articles published in *People’s Daily* per year (Source: Renmin ribao she xinwen xinxi zhongxin 人民日报社新闻信息中心 2007).

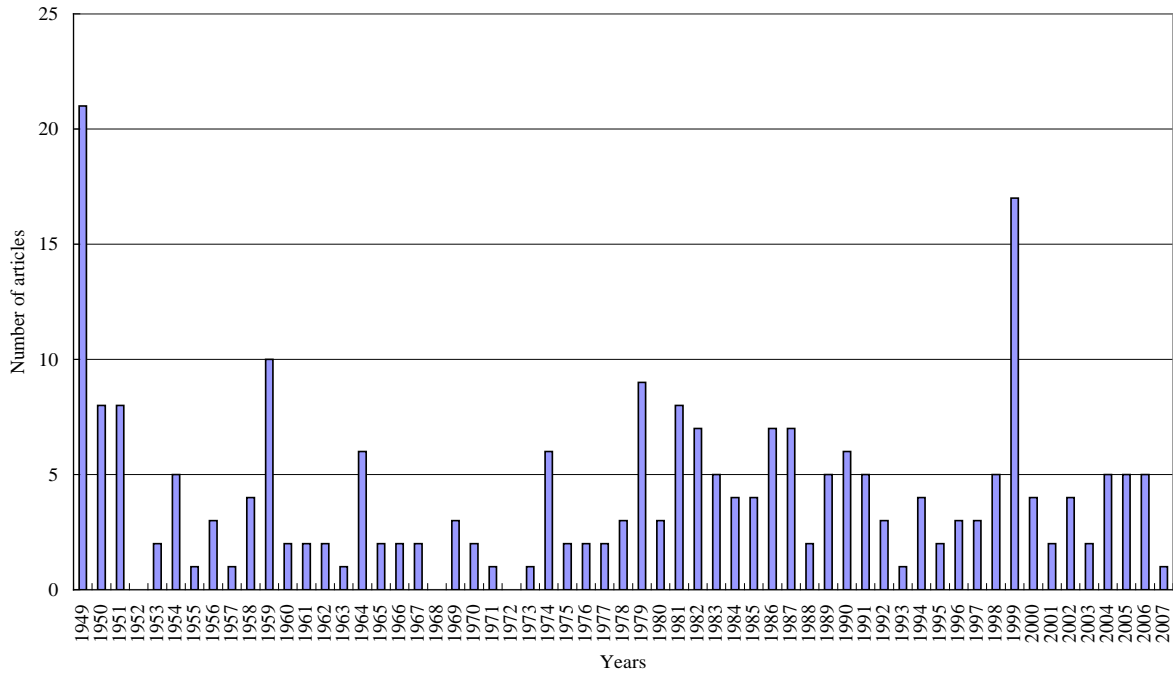


Figure 18: Using either the term “May Fourth 五四” or the term “May Fourth Movement 五四运动” in the May 4th issues of *People's Daily* per year (Source: Renmin ribao she xinwen xinxi zhongxin 人民日报社新闻信息中心 2007).

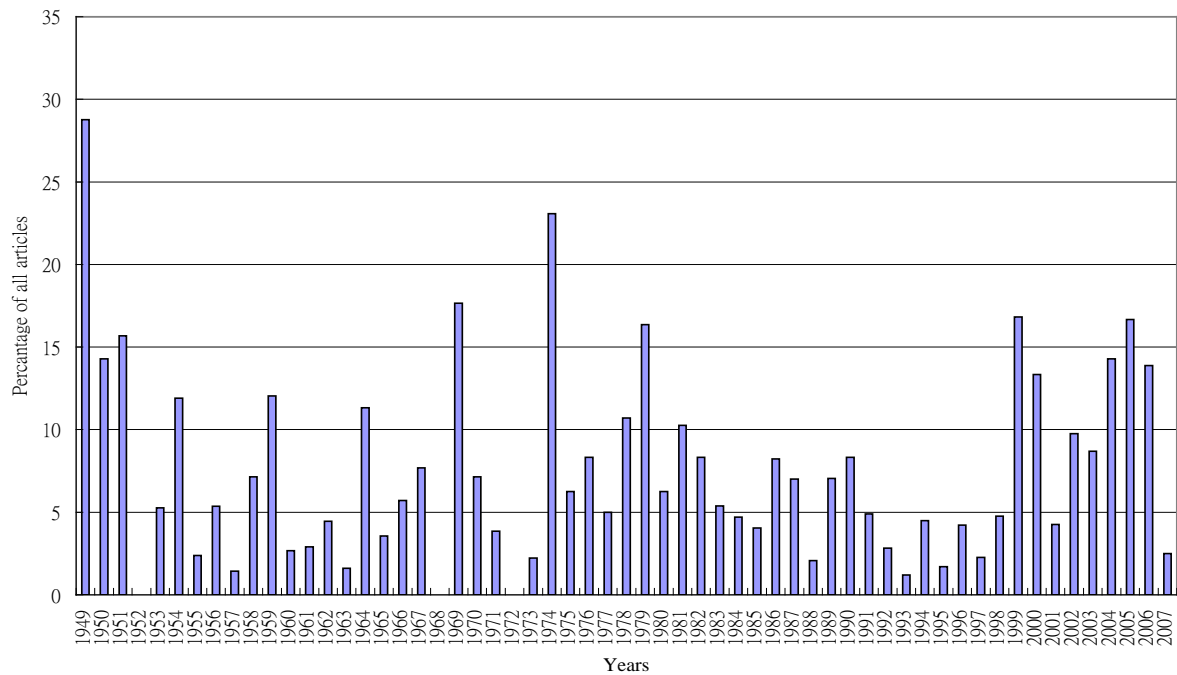


Figure 19: Articles using either the term “May Fourth 五四” or the term “May Fourth Movement 五四运动” in the May 4th issues of *People's Daily* per year in percentage of all articles published on that day (Source: Renmin ribao she xinwen xinxi zhongxin 人民日报社新闻信息中心 2007).

1969: Another 'Cultural Revolution'?

1969 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement and the third year of the Cultural Revolution. History seemed to repeat itself, as students, the so-called Red Guards, rebelled against superiors and revolutionised China by discarding its traditional culture. But there were also many marked differences.⁴³⁹ Here I will only point out three of them: It was Chairman Mao Zedong, the highest authority in China of the time, who called upon the students to rebel. The enemy was no foreign 'imperialist' power and its 'collaborators' within China, but the CCP and the government of China itself. China's intellectuals, some of whom had been participants and leaders of the May Fourth Movement, were another target. The revolution's effects were a total albeit intermediate destruction of the government body, but had nothing to do with a search for a 'Chinese enlightenment'.⁴⁴⁰ Still, an onlooker might expect that the students as well as the mass media would take advantage of the famous "Cultural Revolution" precursor, and style themselves as heirs to the May Fourth Movement. But the contrary seems to have been the case. The May Fourth Movement was almost off topic during the whole of the Cultural Revolution.⁴⁴¹ Especially the years 1968 to 1970 witnessed the lowest numbers in terms of articles about May Fourth in *People's Daily* (see Figure 16). On the very day of May 4, 1969, the fiftieth anniversary of the famous events, only 3 articles appeared in *People's Daily* containing the phrase "May Fourth 五四" or "May Fourth Movement 五四运动".⁴⁴² If we take the whole year into account, this figure rises to 23 or 0,2% of all

⁴³⁹ Mitter listed the following values as similar during May Fourth and especially the first phase of the Cultural Revolution: stress on youth, anti-Confucian values, iconoclasm (smashing of temples and other 'feudal' relics), European romanticism (idea of a transcendent hero contributing to Mao's personality cult, belief in the forces of sheer will). Among the differences he stressed foremost the xenophobia of the Cultural Revolution vs. the openness to the outside world during May Fourth. The second phase of the Cultural Revolution was dominated by an obsession with technology (atomic weapons and space technology, four modernisations). MITTER (2004) *A Bitter Revolution. China's Struggle With the Modern World* Oxford: 200-43.

⁴⁴⁰ The term is taken from Schwarcz study on the May Fourth Movement, in which she develops the idea of May Fourth and its legacy as a still incomplete enlightenment movement, falling prey to national salvation (cf. SCHWARCZ (1986) *The Chinese Enlightenment. Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* Berkeley).

⁴⁴¹ This is true at least for *People's Daily* as well as the Red Guard publications. Statistics on May Fourth show only one small peak in 1974 that was caused by the campaign against Confucius and Lin Biao. The Cultural Revolution database covering the years 1966 to 1976 returned 115 hits for 五四 OR 五四运动. Most of them are either connected to a May Fourth anniversary or to the speech of a political leader at an institution of higher learning. Sometimes, they appear in self-criticisms or notes on Red Guard interrogations either as point in time (phrases like "during May Fourth I moved to Beijing and joined the revolution") or as negative reference to the errors of intellectuals that Mao even traced to the May Fourth Movement.

⁴⁴² 3 articles seem very few compared to 21 articles on May 4, 1949, however, relative statistical results show a smaller difference: 29% in 1949, 18% in 1969, 16% in 1979. Though I argue that May Fourth was off topic during the Cultural Revolution in general especially in comparison with earlier periods, this is not true for anniversary issues of *People's Daily* that often contributed relatively more articles to May Fourth than previous major anniversaries (1954, 1959, 1964) and later ones (since 1979) (comp. Figure 18 and 19).

articles. In 1949 in comparison, 21 such articles had appeared on May 4 alone and 186 or 0,9% during the whole year. With the sixtieth anniversary in 1979 numbers rose again to 141 or 0,5% articles per year. Why was the May Fourth Movement in *People's Daily* off topic at the high time of the Cultural Revolution, although we are again referred to a “Cultural Revolution”? And how was the memory or emblem of the May Fourth Movement used at its fiftieth anniversary when the topic finally emerged in the media?

In 1969, May Fourth was, in my view, used to link the positive notion of a cultural revolution driven forward by student activists with the negative connotation of an unsuccessful intellectual movement unsupported by ‘the people’. This was done implicitly by reprinting Mao’s canonised prototext “The Orientation of the Youth Movement” in the May 4 issue of *People's Daily*, and more explicitly in an editorial of the same day. Reprinting “The Orientation of the Youth Movement” might have signalled hegemony over the interpretation of May Fourth as a patriotic youth movement to be directed by Mao instead of independent, anti-government action by students. On the other hand, I believe that the reprint of this canonised text on page one also testified to unease rather than control because a) being an act of devotion⁴⁴³ it could not be criticised and b) the independent and new informative value was as little as possible, especially when one recalls that by 1969 every Chinese family owned a set of *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* and could partly memorise the canon.⁴⁴⁴ The May Fourth anniversary also provided a pretext to invoke old hatred against Confucius and Hu Shi, two Feindbilder that had been established in the past. These were in 1969 connected with Liu Shaoqi. This ‘beating the dead dog in the water’ style of propaganda served to create a genealogy, a ‘species’ of antagonists that by then was not yet extinguished. These enemies formed the dark opposition to Chairman Mao, the superior good. The Cultural Revolution was controlled by repositioning individuals or groups of people either in (relative) vicinity to Mao, the superior good, or to his enemies. Accordingly, the Red Guards, formerly the closest allies of Mao, were by association with May Fourth counted as intellectuals of uncertain reliability.⁴⁴⁵ A patchwork of Mao quotations was

⁴⁴³ It was printed in red (i.e. communist) ink and enlarged characters. The latter, though attributable to guidelines for printing Mao’s articles, further reduced the space left to propagate the May Fourth Movement or fill the issue with different content. Similar guidelines existed that all quotations from Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao had to be printed in bold characters since 1965. The article reprinted in 1969 belongs to Mao’s canonised texts on May Fourth (see above).

⁴⁴⁴ What else could they have printed: May Fourth veterans were by 1969 criticised into silence and sent to the countryside for education through labour SCHWARTZ (1986) *The Chinese Enlightenment. Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* Berkeley: 256. There is no report about a May Fourth commemorative celebration in *People's Daily* either. Thus, the usual anniversary reporting on May Fourth had to be replaced.

⁴⁴⁵ This change of position did, of course, not occur on May 4, 1969, but goes back to the political change expressed by Mao in his directive that “The working class has to lead everything” (see Chapter 2.3). In this argument, I somewhat

used to evoke this association.⁴⁴⁶ The number of Mao quotations used to construct this image of May Fourth was high as compared to previous and later anniversaries, a fact that is not surprising as the numbers of Mao quotations rose dramatically during the Cultural Revolution in *People's Daily* and other papers. Another result of my analysis is more significant: Mao quotations were perfectly merged in language, content and context with the *People's Daily* articles. *People's Daily* quotation use, at least in this May 4, 1969 issue, differed totally from what is generally perceived as typical Cultural Revolution style quotation use: out-of-context, for everyday purposes, and sometimes even bordering on the ridiculous.⁴⁴⁷ Moreover, a high degree of formalisation in the use of quotations is visible throughout the issue that raises speculations about an underlying template or guide book.⁴⁴⁸ After shortly summarising the historical situation in China at the time, I hope to substantiate the argumentations that I just outlined above.

In April 1969, the 28 day-long Ninth National Congress of the CCP was held in Beijing.⁴⁴⁹ It brought about a precarious balance of opposing factions in the new standing committee of the

challenge earlier descriptions of the fiftieth anniversary to be claimed by the Red Guards “as their own event, even as they berated, beat and, at times, killed the Western-trained intellectuals who were their teachers. Taking Mao's views as legitimation, the Red Guards stated unequivocally: ‘May Fourth created a totally new era, just like the Cultural Revolution today. Even such rightists as Hu Shi, who represented the capitalist intelligentsia, did not dare oppose it directly.’ SCHWARCZ (1986) *The Chinese Enlightenment. Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* Berkeley: 256” This passage from a Red Guard magazine echoed only the *People's Daily* editorial. In view of the changed position of Red Guards by 1969, I view the fiftieth May Fourth anniversary rather as a display of Party hegemony, than of independent student creation.

⁴⁴⁶ This argument is developed in more detail below. It is based on the analysis of the editorial “Fifty Years May Fourth Movement 五四运动五十年” written by the “two papers one journal” 两报一刊社论, the threefold mouthpiece of Party and government during the Cultural Revolution consisting of the *People's Daily*, the *People's Liberation Army News* 解放军报, and the *Red Flag* magazine 红旗杂志 (For further information see also CHANG MAN (1969) *The People's Daily and the Red Flag Magazine during the Cultural Revolution* Hong Kong). The authorship of the editorial is unknown, however, there is evidence that at least *People's Daily* and *Red Flag* were controlled by the radical faction, lead by Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wenyuan, and Jiang Qing, see JI FENGYUAN (2004) *Linguistic Engineering. Language and Politics in Mao's China* Honolulu: 230f.⁴⁴⁶ Therefore, one may suppose that the editorial in question adhered to their political agenda. The readership of the editorial was nearly everybody in China, as regional newspapers were forced to reprint editorials by the “two papers one journal”.

⁴⁴⁷ See for example the quotation stories in GAO YUAN (1987) *Born Red. A Chronicle of the Cultural Revolution* Stanford: 319; the background of this usage formed the movement to “revolutionise daily life” as described in GAO YUAN (1987) *Born Red. A Chronicle of the Cultural Revolution* Stanford: 317; FENG JICAI (1991) *Voices from the Whirlwind. An Oral History of the Chinese Cultural Revolution* New York: 88; Also LEESE (2006) *Performative Politics and Petrified Image: The Mao Cult during China's Cultural Revolution* (Ph.D. thesis). School of Humanities and Social Sciences, International University, Bremen: 218-53.

⁴⁴⁸ In 1977/78, guidebooks appear regulating the use of quotations, i.e. which verbs to use for introducing different quotations, to quote whole sentences rather than sentence part, what source to give, etc. Cf. ANONYMOUS (1977) 编辑工作手册 [Guidebook on Editorial Work] 北京; BEIJING GUANGBO XUEYUAN XINWENXI 北京广播学院新闻系 (1978) 广播编辑工作手册 [Guidebook on Broadcasting and Editorial Work] 北京. It is likely that these rules were developed and used during the Cultural Revolution, but only printed officially after Mao's death.

⁴⁴⁹ For a descriptions of the congress cf.: Quarterly Chronicle and Documentation (Jul.-Sep. 1969), *The China Quarterly*, 144-168: 144-168. On the climate in Beijing from a foreign perspective see LEYS (1972) *Maos neue Kleider. Hinter den Kulissen der Weltmacht China* München: 238

politburo. The Chinese populace was further kept in suspense about the future direction of the Cultural Revolution as the list of new members of the politburo was published only in lexicographic order.⁴⁵⁰ The indistinct political climate was not cleared on May 1 either, as *People's Daily* avoided to publish an unequivocal political editorial. With the fiftieth anniversary approaching, the topic of May Fourth could not be avoided in the press. However, Mao's policy regarding the revolting students had already changed as of mid-1968: accelerating deathly violence between student factions were, on Mao's order, countered by soldiers and workers taking control over schools and universities (Hinton 1972). And at the end of 1968, students were sent to the countryside to be re-educated by peasants. Thus, the burden of May Fourth had been reduced. It was no longer to be expected that students might use the symbolic capital of May Fourth to rebel against the government and even Mao. Instead, May Fourth came to symbolise the unsuccessful student activism, unsuccessful because it lacked the participation of the working class.⁴⁵¹

On page 2 of *People's Daily's* May Fourth issue, right after the reprint of Mao's article "The Orientation of the Youth Movement", an editorial stated the current strategy related to May Fourth and based on Mao Zedong Thought: young revolutionary intellectuals have to unite with the workers, peasants, and soldiers (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1969.05.04). This call was based on different subsequent arguments. First and foremost, it is Mao's call and Mao is the only one, who is able to correctly guide the revolution. The editorial's second argument was a historical one: Since the May Fourth Movement, Mao has repeatedly appealed to the youth movement to unite with the workers, peasants, and soldiers. The most arduous example is the 1939 talk given by Mao in Yan'an and reprinted on the previous page. Now again students are appealed on to unite with the other classes. Persuasion started to drift towards threat with the third argument introduced in the editorial: The history of the Chinese revolution – from the May Fourth Movement, New Democracy and Socialist Revolution, to the Cultural Revolution – proves: only if the young intellectuals unite with the proletariat can the revolution be victorious. The correct way to achieve this unity is re-education of the young intellectuals by workers, peasants, and soldiers. Otherwise, and here the threat became most evident, even revolutionary youth can become counter-revolutionaries, can be lured from

⁴⁵⁰ Normally, the members' names were listed according to their importance and influence. One could thus gain insight into the balance of power inside the Politburo. In 1969, only a growing majority of military cadres in the Central Committee was recognised, however, these were not supporters of Lin Biao, but represented another political power.

⁴⁵¹ The question here arises as to how and what the students did know about the May Fourth Movement anyway. If May Fourth to them was only a failure, as Mao had argued, because of the lack of peasant and worker involvement, they might not have wanted to emulate it. At least the students in the first period of the Cultural Revolution saw themselves as avant-garde, and as far as I know, few if no attempts of uniting with other classes were made.

Mao's correct way into the trap of the people's enemies. Who were these "people's enemies", the "black" antagonists to "our wise leader Chairman Mao (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1969.05.04)"? The 1969 editorial named Liu Shaoqi. But he was presented in the editorial only as the youngest 'offspring' in the 'genealogy of enemies' that included also Confucius, who was criticised during the May Fourth Movement, and Hu Shi, who's true face was revealed during the revolution of the New Democracy, i.e. the revolutionary phase before the Communist victory in 1949. Therefore, the editorial concluded, it is of utmost importance in leading the Cultural Revolution to a successful end that the young intellectuals unite with workers, peasants, and soldiers, because only the working class guided by Chairman Mao and Mao Zedong Thought can lead the revolution to victory. In this editorial, quotations of Mao were used to suggest to the reader a steady and unerring policy. As Mao exemplified the ulterior good and correct, so was the image of Liu Shaoqi built up to exemplify the opposite, incorrect line. The loyalty of the students towards Mao was questioned by attaching certain adjectives such as "intellectual" both to the Feindbild and the students. Thus, their position in the Cultural Revolution was severely undermined.

Mao Zedong Thought was omnipresent in the editorial. Every new argument was accompanied by a Mao quotation. Moreover, a quotational hierarchy was visible in their formal embedding and seems to have been based on a guide book.⁴⁵² The following categories can, in my view, be differentiated for the May 4, 1969, editorial (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1969.05.04):

- (a) Official quotations from Mao's works: printed in bold characters and marked with quotation marks; comply exactly to the official prototext.⁴⁵³ None of the quotations was taken from *Quotations from Chairman Mao Zedong*.⁴⁵⁴ As the quotations' source is given only "Chairman Mao 毛主席"; there is no reference to either date, title, or publication. The verbal introduction of the quotations is standardised. Three forms are alternatively used: Chairman Mao "teaches us 教导我们 / points out 指出 / summarises 概括". These forms of introducing quotations of Mao became fashionable with the Cultural Revolution. For example, in the year 1969 the form "Chairman Mao teaches us" was used in 1,649 articles in *People's Daily*. In comparison, in 1962 it had only been used 5 times, the average for the years 1946 to 1963 being 25 times. After the

⁴⁵² Guide books on journalism or editorial practices are only available for the time before and after the Cultural Revolution. Archival material from the Cultural Revolution is still closed off from scientists. Therefore, I can only indulge in speculations on the existence of such books on the evidence provided by *People's Daily* articles.

⁴⁵³ The prototexts were either the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* or articles in *People's Daily*.

⁴⁵⁴ Only three of the nine quotations used in the editorial can be found in the *Quotations* as well as the *Selected Works*, but in either elongated or abbreviated form. Therefore, I conclude, that the quotations were not taken from *Quotations*, but out of the original context as presented in the *Selected Works*.

Cultural Revolution this form of introducing Mao quotations literally extinguished. In the 23 years between 1979 and 2003 it was only used 8 times

- (b) ‘Calls’ by Mao: printed in bold characters, but not marked by quotation marks. Mao as author of the quotation and also a reference to the time of its creation is given.⁴⁵⁵ Both ‘calls’ used in the editorial had previously been published in articles of the *Red Flag* magazine. These calls conveyed current strategy to the masses.⁴⁵⁶
- (c) Non-Mao but marked quotations: one example only, marked with quotation marks, but not printed in bold type. The May Fourth Movement is referred to as origin, though it can be traced back to Hu Shi (see also Chapter 2.2).
- (d) Unofficial quotations: Throughout the editorial numerous unmarked quotations and allusions are included. They are either taken from Mao’s *Selected Works*, Lin Biao’s “Political Report” as published in *People’s Daily* on April 28, 1969, or they seem to be set phrases used during the Cultural Revolution. None of the unmarked Mao quotations fully matches with the original. I therefore assume that they were rather used unconsciously by the author. If anything they testify that the author had read these articles shortly before writing the editorial. I found similar evidence in a number of articles of different periods.⁴⁵⁷

The usage of Mao quotations was not only perfected in form, but also in the merging of old and new contexts as well. Two examples, the highest and lowest on the scale of linguistic perfectionism, will serve to support my argument. The first example is taken from the historical evaluation of May Fourth given in the editorial. A quotation from Mao made visible by quotation marks and bold type dominates the paragraph. A detailed comparison, however, reveals the text to be a mosaic of Mao quotations, taken from two of his three May Fourth texts. I used different formatting to highlight this sentence mosaic: **Bold type** = official quotation by Mao; *italics* / SimHei + bold = unmarked Mao quotations taken from “On New Democracy” and “The May Fourth Movement”; normal type = new characters, words or sentences; [x] = number of sentence:

[1] The *May Fourth Movement* of 1919 was an anti-imperialist, anti-feudalist mass movement. [2] As Chairman Mao pointed out: “**The outstanding historical significance of the May Fourth Movement was that it had an attitude not existent in the Xinhai revolution, that was its thorough and uncompromising anti-imperialism and its thorough and uncompromising anti-feudalism.**” [3] *The May Fourth Movement occurred at the call of the October revolution, at the call of the proletarian world revolution of that time.* [4] This movement symbolises, that China’s bourgeois people’s revolution reached

⁴⁵⁵ An exemplary reference read like “During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution Chairman Mao issued the great call 毛主席在无产阶级文化大革命中发出的...伟大号召”.

⁴⁵⁶ The lifecycle of such a ‘call’, i.e. how it was introduced to the public, a connection to Mao established, and then used in different articles, is in detail analysed in Chapter 2.3.

⁴⁵⁷ For example, 1961, 1964, and 1977 (see Chapter 3).

a new phase: [5] as the revolution of the old democracy developed to the revolution of the new democracy, [6] the Chinese revolution became part of the proletarian world revolution. [7] It [the May Fourth Movement] marks an absolutely new era in the Chinese history. [8] During the May Fourth Movement Marxism-Leninism started to spread extensively in China through the revolutionary intellectuals, [9] the working class started to step onto the political stage as a conscious, independent political force.[10]

一九一九年发生的五四运动，是反帝反封建的群众运动。正如毛主席所指出的，“五四运动的杰出的历史意义，在于它带着为辛亥革命还不曾有的姿态，这就是彻底地不妥协地反帝国主义和彻底地不妥协地反封建主义。”五四运动是在十月革命号召之下，是在当时无产阶级世界革命号召之下发生的。这个运动，表示着中国资产阶级民主革命发展到了一个新的阶段，即由旧民主主义革命发展到新民主主义革命，中国革命成为无产阶级世界革命的一部分。它在中国历史上，划出了一个完全新的时代。在五四运动中，马克思列宁主义通过革命知识分子开始在中国广泛传播，工人阶级开始作为觉悟了的独立的政治力量登上政治舞台。(Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1969.05.04) [my emphasis]

The first sentence sets topic and purpose of the following argumentation: To portray the May Fourth Movement as an anti-imperialist, anti-feudalist mass movement. The first two constituents of this characterisation adhere to Mao's original words, twice used in "On New Democracy" and twice quoted – unofficial and official – in the editorial. The "mass" attribute was harder to establish. In the original context, Mao differentiated between May Fourth Movement (confined to students only) and June Third movement (involving working class, see above). By dissolving these movements into one, the "mass" attribute could be established. Following the official quotation [2], an allusion [3] to another sentence by Mao is found: "The May Fourth Movement occurred at the call of the world revolution, at the call of the Russian Revolution, at the call of Lenin."⁴⁵⁸ Here, the camera zooms in from the broad situation, the world revolution, and focuses on Lenin. In the 1969 allusion, history was fitted to present needs. Lenin was omitted since nobody equalled Mao. Then, the direction of focusing was reversed from the smaller, the October Revolution⁴⁵⁹, to the broader context of the world revolution. Thus, it was signalled that China had taken up the call of 1919, and after Stalin's death the centre of the world revolution had shifted from the Soviet Union to China.⁴⁶⁰ The next sentence in the editorial [4-6] is a masterpiece of patchwork: The first part up to the colon is the introductory sentence from "The May Fourth Movement", the last is a subtitle of "On New Democracy". The part in between is at least not new, but has been used in *People's Daily* before.

⁴⁵⁸ In the original text, a somewhat lengthy description concerning the current international situation is placed between official quotation [2] and sentence [3].

⁴⁵⁹ To use the term "October Revolution" instead of "Russian Revolution" seemed more to adhere to common usage and precise wording, than to have ideological reasons. The first term had been used in *People's Daily* ten times as often as the second even before the Sino-Soviet split in the early sixties. This figure rose to twenty during the Cultural Revolution (cf. RENMIN RIBAO SHE XINWEN XINXI ZHONGXIN 人民日报社新闻信息中心 (2007) 人民日报电子版 [People's Daily electronic edition]. <http://erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/han/renminribao-ext/peking.sbb.spk-berlin.de/WEB/index2.html>)

⁴⁶⁰ This is but one example for the hyperbolic writing style before and during the Cultural Revolution, centring everything round Mao, using the old technique of inventing new versions of history, fitting to the changed present.

Though I could not trace the precise phrase back to Mao, the content does adhere to his thought.⁴⁶¹ In this case, the phrases from Mao were de-contextualised, but pieced together they accorded again to Mao Zedong Thought. As the editorial sought to diminish students' achievements in contrast to workers and peasants, the same notion reflected onto the May Fourth interpretation. Whereas Mao had praised the intellectuals as “the first to awake 是首先觉悟的”⁴⁶², and “political leaders of the bourgeois-democratic revolution 资产阶级民主革命的政治指导者”⁴⁶³, in sentence [9] the intellectuals are grammatically reduced to tools, and not agents of change. Their role becomes comparable to a mere radio device transmitting an important message: Marxism-Leninism. The last sub-clause [10] alludes again to words used by Mao.⁴⁶⁴ Hence my conclusion that marked quotations by Mao were fused completely with the new context by content, style, and phrasing.

A second example shall demonstrate the other extreme of quoting Mao. At first reading, Mao is here quoted only by a sub-clause that was taken out-of-context. By close reading, however, we might be able to trace the new contextual embedding entirely back to Mao:

The Chinese Bourgeoisie and its political representatives are always looking for weapons in its worn-out ideological depot of the declined slave and land owner class to attack the proletariat; this happens, as Chairman Mao pointed out, because in China those people, [1] who cling to taking the capitalist path, [2] who oppose the dictatorship of the proletariat, [3] who attempt in vain to restore the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, [4] **“are in fact ready to capitulate to imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucratic capitalism.”** But history destined the fate of these restauration movements that reverse the verdict on the Confucian family shop and all overthrown exploiting classes: they have to loose. (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1969.05.04) [emphasis as in the original]

By placing the sentence parts [1-3] behind “Chairman Mao pointed out”, all of them were presented as Mao's opinion. However, they were not printed in bold, and thus the reader knew they were no quotations. By comparison with the original context it appears that they are in fact a summary:

The number of intellectuals who are hostile to our state is very small. *They do not like our state, i.e., the dictatorship of the proletariat*, and yearn for the old society. Whenever there is an opportunity, they will stir up trouble and *attempt to overthrow the Communist Party and restore the old China*. As between the proletarian and the bourgeois roads, as between the socialist and *the capitalist roads, these people stubbornly choose to follow the latter*. In fact this road is impossible, and **in fact therefore, they are ready to capitulate to imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism**. Such people are to be found in political circles and in industrial and commercial, cultural and educational, scientific and technological and religious circles, and they are extremely reactionary.” (Mao Zedong 1966:28-29) [My emphasis]⁴⁶⁵

⁴⁶¹ May Fourth was seen by Mao as turning point in the development from old to New Democracy and as part of the world revolution of the time (see above).

⁴⁶² MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1967 (1952)) 毛泽东选集 [Selected works of Mao Zedong] vol. 2, 北京: 523

⁴⁶³ MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1967 (1952)) 毛泽东选集 [Selected works of Mao Zedong] vol. 2, 北京: 633

⁴⁶⁴ For the original see MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1967 (1952)) 毛泽东选集 [Selected works of Mao Zedong] vol. 2, 北京: 633, 658

⁴⁶⁵ Printed in bold characters is the Mao quote as used in the editorial, printed in italics are the sentences similar to the three sentence parts in the editorial, that are said to be his opinion, though not marked as an exact Mao quote.

What is different between the two versions? First, the editorial's wording is shorter than the version included in the *Quotations of Chairman Mao*. Then, the order of arguments is different, taking the last argument of Mao as first argument in the editorial. And lastly, the subject has been changed: Whereas Mao talked about intellectuals, the editorial's subject of accusation was the "Chinese Bourgeoisie and its political representatives". Finally, the editorial leaves out that Mao measured the enemy to be only small in number. Did these alterations impair the content, or were they only rhetorical? First, being the end of a denunciation of Liu Shaoqi (see below), he and his associates were also the target of this quotation; the subject of the new version ("the Chinese Bourgeoisie and its political representatives") attached itself like a label to Liu. Earlier in the editorial, Liu Shaoqi was already established as an intellectual. Therefore, the new subject of the quotation seems to be only a specification of the original subject's meaning ("intellectuals who are hostile to our state"), not a change. Second, the editorial used Liu Shaoqi to characterise the main enemy. But, one may find hints in the editorial that this characterisation might be applied to the Red Guards in the future (see below). Giving a small number for the enemy would counteract this scheme. Third, the ordering of the three arguments in the new version ("[1] who cling to taking the capitalist path, [2] who oppose the dictatorship of the proletariat, [3] who attempt in vain to restore the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie"), in my view, follows a rhetoric strategy: the enemies' crimes are enumerated from the lightest to the worst, thereby creating suspense and even hatred. The suspense is then resolved, by stating that all the enemies' crimes are in vain, they can lead to nothing. So even when only a sub-clause of Mao is cited, the "new" sentence parts can be traced back to Mao's original formulations.

Next to excessive praise of Mao in words, allegories, and rhetoric, the 1969 May Fourth editorial introduced one important argument to the public discourse: it connected the Cultural Revolution Feindbild⁴⁶⁶ of Liu Shaoqi with the May Fourth Feindbild of Hu Shi, the "Party person in authority taking the capitalist road" with the "representative of the right wing intellectuals" by accusing both of a pro-Confucian standpoint. Thus, the negative attribute of 'right-wing intellectual' was added to the Feindbild of Liu Shaoqi. Simultaneously, the editorial identified the former 'Red Guards' and avant-garde of the Cultural Revolution simply as "young intellectuals 青年知识分子". From now on, the editorial argued quoting Mao, "The working class has to lead everything",⁴⁶⁷ and

⁴⁶⁶ Satjukow defines Feindbilder as "Propagandamedien mit freien Valenzen, was ihren Produzenten die Möglichkeit gibt, Attribute des einen Feindbildes mit Elementen eines weiteren Feindbildes narrativ, visuell oder verbal zu verschmelzen." See: SATJUKOW & GRIES (2004) Feindbilder des Sozialismus. Eine theoretische Einführung. In: Satjukow & Gries *Unsere Feinde. Konstruktionen des Anderen im Sozialismus*, Leipzig: 42.

⁴⁶⁷ For detailed information on the origin and usage of this directive by Mao cf. to Chapter 2.3.

it warned in Mao's words that "[t]he last dividing line between revolutionary, non-revolutionary and counter-revolutionary intellectuals is whether or not they are willing to unite with the masses of workers and peasants and actually do so." These quotations were used in combination with the Feindbild of the 'right-wing intellectual' Liu to threaten former 'Red Guards' into compliance with the "Up to the mountains, down to the villages" campaign.⁴⁶⁸ Only by compliance with the Party, by uniting with workers and peasants, could the students escape the fatal fate that had befallen a part of the May Fourth generation of intellectuals. Here, the Cultural Revolution was controlled by simultaneously changing the attributes of a Feindbild and those of a group of people.

1979: Chinese Relativism Instead of Foreign Dogmatism

In 1979, the 'new' CCP leadership, which had been dominated by Deng Xiaoping since the Third Plenum of December 1978, revived memories of the May Fourth Movement for their own means:

First, May Fourth now became a positive symbol for openness. Thus, the current political goal of opening China to the outside world was equated with the openness of the May Fourth period. This policy also expanded the boundaries of the narrow May Fourth narrative for Zeitzeugen (Schwarcz 1986:259). Possible fears and criticism of this policy were calmed by historical metaphors. No Hu Shi-like whole-sale westernisation would be attempted, but instead China's leaders were going to return to the relativism that Mao had advocated during Yan'an times and again during the Hundred Flowers policy. This relativism was expressed in the similarly revived phrases "thought liberation" and "seeking truth from facts" (see Chapter 3: 1977/78). Quotations from the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* were used to evoke this parallel. However, the canonised interpretation of the May Fourth Movement by Mao from 1941 (see above) was not invoked by quotation as had been done at previous anniversaries. Instead, current policies were tied up with May Fourth via the model of the Hundred Flower's policy of 1956/57. By portraying Yan'an as the first reincarnation of May Fourth ideas, another, though negative, parallel was constructed: Hu Shi had introduced Western ideas to China in a dogmatic fashion, Wang Ming had "erroneously" done the same with Marxism-Leninism (as pointed out by Mao), but today, ideological dogmatism would not be followed again. Thereby, Hua Guofeng and his 'two whatevers' policy, i.e. using Mao Zedong Thought as dogma, were implicitly criticised. Instead relativism was advocated even when it came to Mao Zedong Thought.

⁴⁶⁸ The campaign had started in December 1968. Graduates of junior and senior middle schools and universities were sent to factories and the countryside for re-education. As this also included permanently switching an urban with a rural residence card, reaction to the campaign was unenthusiastic. A comprehensive analysis of this movement is found in: BERNSTEIN (1977) *Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages. The Transfer of Youth from Urban to Rural China* New Haven.

Second, the Four Modernisations were legitimised in 1979 by declaring them to be the integration of Mao Zedong Thought with Chinese conditions, just as Mao Zedong Thought had been declared the integration of Marxism-Leninism with Chinese conditions in the 1940s. This legitimatising act, however, questioned the canonical status of Mao Zedong Thought: Mao Zedong Thought had to be adapted to China in 1979, because it was out-dated. And adaptation might result in writing a new Communist theory, a new canon, as had happened earlier. Promoting the Four Modernisations as follow-up to Mao Zedong Thought entailed promotion of Zhou Enlai, because he had originally developed and propagated them as early as 1963.⁴⁶⁹ Thus, in 1979 we find him suddenly portrayed as a May Fourth hero in a poem, a research report and a history book. Later, with Deng Xiaoping's further ascension to power, this teleology was abolished in favour of Deng Xiaoping Theory. The anniversary was a pretext to retell May Fourth history and there elevate contributions made by historical figures other than Mao, for example Zhou Enlai and Li Dazhao. This served the purpose of reducing Mao's exalted position in the Party and would in future make criticism of Mao's thoughts and policies possible. Out of the same motive *People's Daily* seemed to pay less attention to quotations from the Mao canon. Thus, out-of-context quotations and even slight misquotations of Mao were printed in the May 5 issue of 1979. Though out-of-context quotation had been prevalent in everyday practice during the Cultural Revolution, *People's Daily* had been following a different standard.⁴⁷⁰ Misquotations of Mao would have been deemed an act of defilement during the Cultural Revolution, open to severe personal criticism and punishment.

The dual leadership of the CCP by the powerless head figure chairman Hua and the second line power holder vice-chairman Deng found expression in the way that *People's Daily* propagated May Fourth. On the day itself, the pages of *People's Daily* were filled with reports about commemorative celebrations and reprints of speeches by CCP chairman Hua, Youth League secretary Han Ying 韩英, and May Fourth veteran Xu Deheng 许德珩⁴⁷¹. The strategic May Fourth editorial supported by informative articles was only published on the second day, i.e. May 5, 1979: "As we shift the emphasis of work to the Four Modernisations, encourage to liberate thought, develop the democratic and scientific spirit, commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement has a

⁴⁶⁹ On normalising the formulation of the Four Modernisations in 1963 see ZHONGYANG XUANCHUAN BU BANGONGTING 中央宣传部办公厅 (Ed.) (1994) 党的宣传工作文件选编. 1949-1966 [Selected documents of Party propaganda work, 1949-1966], 北京: 459.

⁴⁷⁰ See the discussion on quotation rules in Chapter 1.

⁴⁷¹ Xu Deheng (1890-1990) is portrayed by Schwarcz as one of the May Fourth veterans most compliant to PRC demands on their memory (SCHWARCZ (1986) *The Chinese Enlightenment. Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* Berkeley: 267).

particular meaning. The May Fourth Movement is a great patriotic movement, it is a great New Culture Movement, it is the first great liberation of thought. 正当我们把工作重点转移到四个现代化上来, 提倡解放思想, 发扬民主精神和科学精神的时候, 纪念五四运动六十周年, 具有特殊的意义。五四运动是伟大的爱国运动, 也是伟大的新文化运动, 它是一次思想大解放。(Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1979.05.05)” Thus opened the page one, May 5 editorial entitled “Liberate thought, cut your own path – commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement 解放思想, 走自己的道路——纪念五四运动六十周年”. In this editorial, the allegory of the May Fourth Movement is used to legitimise the recent shift in politics to the Four Modernisations, Reform and Opening.⁴⁷² May Fourth is accordingly portrayed as patriotic, democratic and scientific, and as liberating thought, three elements also envisaged in the new policy. The picture drawn of the May Fourth Movement is then set into its historical context and enlarged by a teleological development from 1919 to 1979. Current policy is further legitimised through invoking Mao’s authority by allusions and quotations. Here, I will retell this history and thereby try to show how historical facts, symbols, and quotations amalgamated into an argumentation befitting current policy. The first period, described in the editorial, encompassed the years from 1919 to 1949: During the time of the May Fourth Movement, opening-up to the outside world had brought not only the whole-sale modernisation of Hu Shi to China, but more importantly Marxism-Leninism. The positive impact of ‘opening-up’ was thus unquestionably established. Thereafter, “[t]aking Russia as teacher, we followed the path of the October revolution. 以俄为师, 走十月革命的道路。(Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1979.05.05)” Overcoming Wang Ming’s ‘blind worship’ of Marxism-Leninism during the Yan’an Rectification Campaign, Mao Zedong Thought emerged, described in the article by the canonical formulation as the “integration of the universal principles of Marxism with the reality of the Chinese revolution”. Thus, the editorial argued, the Yan’an Rectification Campaign inherited the May Fourth idea of “thought liberation”. The victory of the CCP in 1949 was proof of the correctness of Mao Zedong Thought. Note that no official quotation from the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* or the canonised May Fourth interpretation was used for this historical description. Only allusions to strategies coined by Mao were made such as “encircle the cities from the countryside, with the national bourgeoisie unite as well as fight 农村包围城市, 对民族资产阶级又团结又斗争”. Thereby it was, in my view, suggested that pre-1949 Mao Zedong Thought was

⁴⁷² The Four Modernisations in agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defence were launched by the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee in December 1978.

generally true, though maybe not very useful anymore.⁴⁷³ Reviving the bad examples of both Hu Shi and Wang Ming served on the one hand to calm the ‘leftists’ fears of a “whole-sale westernisation”⁴⁷⁴ and, on the other hand to repudiate Hua Guofeng’s strategy of the ‘two-whatevers’ as dogma à la Wang Ming on the other.

The editorial further legitimised the current policy of reform and opening-up by criticising the Russian path in historical perspective: “Recently the Soviet side revealed some shortcomings and mistakes in their process of socialist construction, do you still want to walk the detour they have taken? Previously we could walk less detours in view of their experience’s lessons, now of course we should learn even more lessons from their previous mistakes. 最近苏联方面暴露了他们在建设社会主义过程中的一些缺点和错误，他们走过的弯路，你还想走？过去我们就是鉴于他们的经验教训，少走了一些弯路，现在当然更要引以为戒。”⁴⁷⁵ With these words, Mao had warned the Party in 1956 and was cited again in 1979. Moreover, the editorial added, Mao had “absorb[ed] the lessons from the Soviet Union’s experience, [and] point[ed] out the direction of our own socialist way”. This direction “a Chinese way of modernisation” had been delivered to the Chinese in three articles by Mao from 1956, the time of the Hundred Flower’s policy. In 1979, it was again recommended to the reader’s interest, signalling a return to pre-Cultural Revolution and pre-Great Leap Forward policies.⁴⁷⁶ In this case, not Mao Zedong Thought in its entirety was appealed to for future guidance, but three articles of a specific time were singled out for emulation.

After sidelining the time between 1957 and the present as detour from the correct path – the superstition and religious-like deification of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought during the Cultural Revolution, its xenophobia and bad influence on the economy were pointed out as especially negative – the editorial saw a new era dawning, “a new Long March 新的长征” to be

⁴⁷³ This foreshadowed how the Party later assessed Mao in the “Resolution on some questions regarding the history of the Party since the founding of the PRC 关于建国以来党的若干历史问题的决议” that was adopted by the 6th Plenum of the 11th Central Committee on July 27, 1981.

⁴⁷⁴ This must be seen in the light of PRC-USA rapprochement since Nixon’s visit to China in 1972, and advanced by Deng’s visit to the USA in January 1979. Mitter stresses that the ‘new era’ of 1978 to 1989 was characterised not only by economic reform, but by openness especially towards influences from the USA: MITTER (2004) *A Bitter Revolution. China’s Struggle With the Modern World* Oxford: 244-84.

⁴⁷⁵ These sentences from the May 5, 1979, editorial originate with Mao’s talk to the Party “On the ten great relationships 论十大关系” of April 25, 1956. It was only published in December 1976, three month after Mao’s death and after revision by Hu Qiaomu and Deng Xiaoping, but still with the approval of Mao Zedong. See: MAO ZEDONG 毛泽东 (1998) 建国以来毛泽东文稿 [Manuscripts by Mao Zedong since the liberation of China] 北京: commentary to ‘On the ten great relationships’. This article presented a relatively moderate position on economic development, which is said to have been arrived at by Mao in compromise with other Party members SCHRAM (1989) *The Thought of Mao Tse-tung* Cambridge: 114f.

⁴⁷⁶ These three articles mentioned were: “On the historical experience of the proletarian dictatorship” by the Party Central, and Mao’s “On the ten great relationships” and “On the correct handling of contradictions among the people”.

undertaken. And again Mao's authority of 1956 is appealed to for guidance: "The strong points of every race, every nation should all be studied, all really good things in politics, economics, science, technique, literature, art should all be studied. But they must be studied analytically and critically, they should not be studied blindly, nothing should be copied word by word, mechanically transported. Their shortcomings, their defects, of course should not be studied.' Moreover, even concerning the good foreign things, it has to be considered during study if they comply with the Chinese circumstances. Only then are the foreign things of use for China. 一切民族、一切国家的长处都要学, 政治、经济、科学、技术、文学、艺术的一切真正好的东西都要学。但是, 必须有分析有批判地学, 不能盲目地学, 不能一切照抄, 机械搬运。他们的短处、缺点, 当然不要学。" 不仅如此, 即使是外国的好东西, 在学习的时候也要考虑如何适应中国的情况。这才是洋为中用。"⁴⁷⁷ Opening-up and critically studying the West, it was thus argued, was a strategy not only of the May Fourth Movement, but advised by Mao himself. By calling for compliance with the Chinese circumstances, Mao's own sinification of Marxism-Leninism was alluded to (see Chapter 3) as well as the idea of "seeking truth from facts" (see Chapter 2.1). This quotational use, I argue, was designed to communicate two messages to the reader: Quoting Mao signalled that he was still an authority to refer to. But by critically assessing the quotation in the following sentence, it was also signalled that this authority was not unquestioned, that its correctness had to be constantly re-evaluated (for a similar observation see Chapter 3).

Immediately after the editorial had thus repudiated various paths for China's modernisation and established the notion of "openness" as to the methods for future modernisation, it set the boundaries of this "openness" by fencing in the meaning of three May Fourth catch phrases, namely patriotism, democracy, and science: from 1979 onwards, the editorial proposed, (1) patriotism should mean to love socialism ardently, not China, (2) democracy, of course, should be socialist democracy under the leadership of the Party, not Western-style freedom and democracy,⁴⁷⁸ and (3) science should hold

⁴⁷⁷ See for origin of quotation fn. 475.

⁴⁷⁸ The importance of leadership by the CCP and the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought (as opposed to concrete policies) for China's future development was also repeatedly stressed in the speeches reprinted in the 1979 May 4 issue of *People's Daily*. This emphasis was the result of developments in the spring of 1979 when activists around Wei Jingsheng had called for a 'fifth modernisation', i.e. Western style democracy, on 'democracy wall'. In March, Wei Jingsheng was arrested, democracy wall restricted to a highly controlled area and the 'four basic principles' (1. Keep to the socialist road; 2. uphold the dictatorship of the proletariat; 3. uphold the leadership of the Communist party; 4. uphold Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought) were reaffirmed by Deng Xiaoping. For more information on the Mao-Deng transition cf. to BAUM (1994) *Burying Mao. Chinese Politics in the Age of Deng Xiaoping* Princeton; DAVIS & VOGEL (1990) *Chinese Society on the Eve of Tiananmen: the Impact of Reform*, Harvard Contemporary China Series, Cambridge, Mass., Baum, 1994 #536; TEIWES (Jul. 1995) The Paradoxical Post-Mao

on to practice as criterion of truth and to the Four Modernisations, i.e. the unity of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought with present Chinese conditions; thus science was subordinated to present-day needs as well as ideology. In its concluding paragraph, the 1979 editorial paid a last tribute to the fact that May Fourth was China's national Youth Day by calling onto the young generation to develop the May Fourth spirit and enthusiastically build a new China under the leadership of the Party. Thus, the Party reclaimed hegemony over the interpretation of May Fourth just moments after successfully questioning the dogmatism of previous times.

The boundaries of May Fourth accounts were enlarged by the policy of opening-up and “seeking truth from facts” (the latter strategy was at that time primarily legitimised by Mao's own use of this *chengyu*; see Chapter 2.1 and 3). In *People's Daily*, however, a careful selection of alternative or ‘new’ accounts were printed serving apparent present-day purposes. For the first time, to my knowledge, historians and journalists investigated the personal history of Zhou Enlai during the May Fourth Movement, the late premier of the PRC and founding father of the Four Modernisations. In *People's Daily* not only the results of the investigation (i.e. Zhou had in 1919 already been an anti-imperialist, anti-feudalist Communist personality) were published, but the article claimed that these results were proven by history, by an investigation into primary material (Wang Qingming 王庆民 et al. 1979.05.05). The authors summed up their findings in a concise history of Zhou Enlai during the May Fourth Movement in Tianjin. Further facts testifying to the truth of this report were published in the book “The May Fourth Movement in Tianjin: Selection of historical data 五四运动在天津: 历史资料选辑” (Tianjin lishi bowuguan 天津历史博物馆 et al. 1979). Li Dazhao, another Communist May Fourth veteran, reappeared on the public stage as well.⁴⁷⁹ A May 5 *People's Daily* article listed among his contributions to the revolution Li's investigations into the working class and his call to the intellectuals to follow his example, go to the countryside for study and research, and unite with workers and peasants. All these labels had in former times been monopolised by Mao: this monopoly was now broken up and Mao's qualities and contributions to the revolution were distributed among a growing circle of rehabilitated veterans of the Communist revolution.

In comparison with the anniversary issues of 1959 and 1969, the 1979 issue displayed a large diversity of articles not only in content but form as well: editorial, speeches, reports on

Transition: From Obeying the Leader to 'Normal Politics', *The China Journal*, 55-94; MEISNER (1996) *The Deng Xiaoping Era. An Inquiry into the Fate of Chinese Socialism, 1978-1994* New York.

⁴⁷⁹ See the article LI YIBIN 李义彬 (05.05.1979) 他高举着火炬走来: 李大钊烈士在五四运动中 [He went on holding high the burning torch: The martyr Li Dazhao during the May Fourth Movement], 人民日报, 6.

commemorative activities and research findings, Zeitzeugen accounts, and even poems. Herein, it resembled the 1949 anniversary issue (see above). The commemorative diversity, using May Fourth as a pretext to inform and indoctrinate, was carried even beyond the realm of *People's Daily*. A movie week was to be held throughout major cities in China that showed a selection of twelve films about the May Fourth period. One of them, a documentary entitled “Lacerate the dark dawn 划破黑暗的曙光” had been newly filmed in 1979 for the purpose of explaining the current May Fourth interpretation to the people. This present-day picture was enlarged by feature films from pre-Cultural Revolution origin such as “The family 家” (1956), “A revolutionary family 革命家庭” (1960), or “The song of youth 青春之歌” (of 1959). Again, the present leadership reconnected their narrative with the so-called ‘golden age’ of Communism. Simultaneously, intellectuals persecuted during the Cultural Revolution such as Ba Jin 巴金, the author of the 1933 novel “The family 家”, were reintroduced to the public sphere.⁴⁸⁰

A last point concerning the use of quotations should be noted. Though the argumentation of the above analysed editorial is based solely on quotations from Mao, and more than one article confirmed the importance of Mao Zedong Thought for the future, the significance attributed to this canon, I argue, had waned as early as 1979. I base my argumentation on the following two observations: a Mao quotation used in the editorial was de-contextualised, and the May 5 issue contained at least one misquotation. Let us look at both cases in detail: (1) The first Mao quotation used in the May 5 editorial is part of the introduction of the article “On the ten great relationships”: “Recently the Soviet side revealed some shortcomings and mistakes in their process of socialist construction, do you want to walk the detour they have taken? Previously we could walk less detours in view of their experience’s lessons, now of course we should learn even more lessons from previous mistakes. (quoted in Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1979.05.05 ; Mao Zedong 毛泽东 1977:267)” In his introduction, Mao discussed the following question: Who are the positive elements in- and outside of China and on whom can the CCP rely in the future? The “Russian detour” mentioned in the quotation above was discussed in this respect. Whereas in the editorial it was instead argued: “Our only wing was the Soviet Union, to study them was a must. But how to study? Copy blindly, or study them analytically and critically? 我们唯一的榜样是苏联，要学习苏联，这是肯定的。但是怎样学？是盲目照搬，还是有分析有批判地学？” The context of the original

⁴⁸⁰ Ba Jin 巴金 (1904-2005) was one of the most popular of the left-wing writers during the 1930s and 1940s. Being an anarchist, he was criticised during the Cultural Revolution, but rehabilitated again in 1977.

quotation – whom to trust in the future – was of no interest in 1979 and therefore ignored. Instead, Mao’s critical statement was introduced to prove that Mao had not practiced “blind copying”, but favoured analytic study so as to “walk less detours”. In 1979, the same strategy was advocated. It was authorised, however, not because Mao had *said* the same, but because he had *done* the same. The above quotation had to be re-contextualised to suffice this purpose, while other quotations of Mao would have yielded themselves directly to it, especially from Yan’an times when Mao had criticised the “foreign students” for blindly copying Marxism-Leninism, instead of adapting it to Chinese conditions (see Chapter 3). In view of these considerations, one is led to ask why the 1956 quotation was chosen at all? I believe that it was chosen for its dating, to show that certain actions and thoughts had been valid at a certain period. This quotational use, however, questioned the everlasting truth attributed to a canon because it highlighted that the canon’s validity was time-bound.⁴⁸¹ (2) In his article “Commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement 纪念五四运动六十周年”, the May Fourth veteran Xu Deheng quoted the following passage: “[In its development, the May Fourth Movement] divided into two currents. One section inherited its scientific and democratic spirit and transformed it on the basis of Marxism; this is what the Communists and some non-Party Marxists did. Another section took the road of the bourgeoisie[; this was the development of formalism towards the Right]. [五四运动的发展,] 分成[了]两个潮流。一部分[人]继承了五四运动的科学和民主的精神, 并在马克思主义的基础上加以改造, 这就是共产党人和若干党外马克思主义者所做的工作。另一部分人则走到资产阶级的道路上去[, 是形式主义向右的发展。] (Xu Deheng 许德珩 1979.05.05 ; original in Mao Zedong 毛泽东 1967 (1953) ; transl. in Mao Zedong 1965a:55. Characters in square brackets were omitted in Xu’s quotation.)” Xu or the *People’s Daily* editor had not only cut off the first and last sub-clause, the Mao quotation was also two characters short: a particle indicating a changing situation (*le* 了) and the Chinese character for “people” (*ren* 人). Omitting sub-clauses, though not considered best practice, was not new to *People’s Daily*. On the other hand, *People’s Daily* had always been careful to avoid misquotations; during the Cultural Revolution they would even have counted as an act of blasphemy; therefore, quotations had to be double-checked by editors.⁴⁸² In this case, the editor either failed to double-check or handled the matter carelessly. The meaning of the sentence was not altered

⁴⁸¹ I discuss the effects of historicising the canon in more detail in Chapter 1.

⁴⁸² To facilitate double-checking Mao quotations, a 2145 pages index to the quotations of Mao appeared in March 1970. See ANONYMOUS (1970) 毛主席语录索引 [Index to quotations of Chairman Mao] no place.

significantly through the lack of two characters, but nonetheless the textual integrity of the canon was slightly impaired.

1989: Science and Democracy with Socialist Characteristics

Who inherited the May Fourth Movement? Who could credibly claim the right and ability to define the meaning of events that were seventy years apart for present-day use? Who was able to carry on the unfinished tasks of May Fourth? In 1989, students demonstrating in Beijing and all over the country contested the Party's narrative of portraying the CCP as heir of May Fourth, socialist China as embodiment of May Fourth values, and the students as objects of education. In action rather than narration, the students tried to draw a parallel between the past and the present, thus legitimising their protest against the authorities. The Party, of course, had always claimed to have inherited May Fourth itself and continued to do so. Zhao Ziyang acknowledged, however, that the students' demonstrations were patriotic and just (as the May Fourth Movement had been), but on the other hand he warned that their actions threatened unity and stability (as imperialism, feudalism and the Cultural Revolution, not the May Fourth Movement, had done) and thus hindered the (political) reform process.⁴⁸³ *People's Daily* gave publicity to the views of both students and the Party.⁴⁸⁴ While the Party's narrative dominated the May 4 issue, the student actions and demands were prominent in the May 5 issue. Which part of the May Fourth legacy did each side employ for their purpose? How convincing did they present themselves as heirs to May Fourth? How did they authorise their differing images of May Fourth?

May Fourth in 1989, I argue, was a burden to the Party. The ongoing student demonstrations forced the Party into the role of the corrupt government and chief villain suppressing a righteous and patriotic movement, and questioned the Party's position of heroic inheritors of the spirit of May Fourth. But instead of using the anniversary issues in *People's Daily* to contest this role decidedly, the paper became a battleground of diverging opinions. For example, socialism was portrayed as the

⁴⁸³ An almost day-to-day history of early May 1989 is given in NATHAN, LINK & ZHANG (Eds.) (2001) *The Tiananmen Papers*, New York: 132-59 and HAN & HUA (Eds.) (1990) *Cries for Democracy: Writings and Speeches from the 1989 Chinese Democracy Movement*, Princeton: 129-94.

⁴⁸⁴ *People's Daily* had begun objective reporting on the student demonstration's after a meeting with Hu Qili 胡启立, the Politburo member in charge of ideology and newspaper editorials, and Rui Xingwen 芮杏文, the secretary of the Central Secretariat, on April 27. The heads of the Xinhua News Agency, Guangming Daily, and other newspaper had also taken part. The media heads were frustrated being denounced by both students and reporters for not printing stories about the demonstrations. Hu then allowed editors-in-chief to decide themselves what should be printed. He also agreed to hold a dialogue with media representatives on how to reform the media. After June 4, Zhao Ziyang, Hu and Rui were blamed for misguiding the press, and *People's Daily* was criticised for supporting the students instead of expressing the Party Central's viewpoints. See: NATHAN, LINK & ZHANG (Eds.) (2001) *The Tiananmen Papers*, New York: 108f and 512.

superior successor to democracy, in line with the portrayal of the Party as inheritor and developer of the May Fourth Movement. This image was questioned in another article that introduced three principles – rule by the majority, the rule of law, and protection of the minority – which should be used to evaluate if a state was democratic or not; and judgement on the case of the PRC was left to the reader. The editors of *People's Daily* used subtle means to support the students and attack the Party, but also to shield themselves from future retributions. *Second*, in comparison to previous May Fourth anniversaries, *People's Daily* did not follow the established 'anniversary mode': Only one lengthy speech from the Beijing anniversary celebration was printed,⁴⁸⁵ no use was made of the black-and-white contrast to describe present-day antagonists of society, no present-day May Fourth model heroes were singled out for emulation,⁴⁸⁶ no May Fourth Zeitzeugen memoirs appeared or canonical accounts of May Fourth to educate the young generation.⁴⁸⁷ Even reportage on the official May Fourth celebrations that were held every May 3 in Beijing for the very purpose of filling the pages of newspapers on May 4 was shrunk to a minimum.⁴⁸⁸ As in 1969, I believe this lack of reporting was caused by the foggy political atmosphere. Again as in previous anniversary articles, no use of original May Fourth sources was made. Instead, the Party cited the canonised May Fourth interpretation by Mao; present strategy was conveyed in Deng Xiaoping's words of two years before. The students authorised themselves by invoking parallels to May Fourth (of time, place, activity, and phrasing). Thus, the 1989 anniversary was an occasion to negotiate the future. The past itself was neither of informative nor of educational value. Although Mao's canonised interpretation of May Fourth was quoted in the editorial on May 4, both content and style of this quotation stood in remarkable contrast to its new context. *People's Daily* no longer described the past in Maoist phrases. Mao's authority to evaluate this past, however, was not yet contested. The gap between canon and reality had widened and at least in its editorial, *People's Daily* made little effort to conceal this fact. Moreover, since 1979 Deng Xiaoping had evolved not only as the de facto leader of the CCP, but

⁴⁸⁵ This was the speech held by Zhao Ziyang on May 3. At other times, the speeches of the youth league secretary and other high Party members were fully reprinted as well. For a translation of Zhao's speech see OKSENBERG, SULLIVAN & LAMBERT (Eds.) (1990) *Beijing Spring: Confrontation and Conflict: the Basic Documents*, Armonk, NY: 244-251; for evaluations see NATHAN, LINK & ZHANG (Eds.) (2001) *The Tiananmen Papers*, New York: 145f.

⁴⁸⁶ At least, the model heroes and their qualities were not displayed in *People's Daily*. The usual May Fourth celebration on the evening of May Third was held. And the model youth's decoration with medals by Zhao Ziyang was at length and for the whole nation televised on May 4 (WAGNER (2001a) The Canonization of May Fourth. In: Dolezelová-Velingerová & Král *The Appropriation of Cultural Capital. China's May Fourth Project*, Cambridge, Mass.: 113).

⁴⁸⁷ There was only one reference to informative sources about the May Fourth Movement on page 6 of the May 5 *People's Daily* issue. Heading a list of 9 newly published books, the "Short history of the May Fourth Movement 五四运动简史" written by Peng Ming 彭明著 and published by the People's Press 人民出版社 was announced.

⁴⁸⁸ Compare the report YUAN JIANDA 袁建达 & HE WEI 何伟 (04.05.1989) 首都青年集会纪念五四 [Youth in the capital assemble to commemorate May Fourth], 人民日报, 1.

also as a new authority for quotation.⁴⁸⁹ This authority, however, was used by *People's Daily* in 1989 in an ambiguous manner; the authors or editors cut out pro-democracy quotations from anti-democracy articles; in one case, they even slightly misquoted Deng's statement. Thus, although Deng's authority was invoked by quoting his words, this authority was simultaneously undermined by the ambiguous style of quotation, open to opposing interpretations. It can again be argued that this quotation style was deliberately chosen by the authors to shield them from criticism whatever way the political winds might turn. However, this rhetoric may also have undermined the authority it invoked and proved the elusiveness/ambiguity of ideology.

During previous decennial anniversaries, the Party had used careful selections of May Fourth history for present-day strategic purposes. The Party itself had always figured in these narratives as the rightful inheritor of that which was seen as positive in May Fourth. 1989 was different. The students' self-fashioning as May Fourth inheritors promoted by the parallelism of place, date, activists, and criticism pushed the Party off stage, or rather confined them to the part of the corrupt government of 1919. The Party's uncompromising stance, published in the *People's Daily* editorial of April 26, had turned public opinion further against the state and its leaders. Since his return from a visit to North Korea on April 30, CCP secretary Zhao Ziyang had started to work towards a peaceful conciliation with the students and softened the tone of public Party statements.⁴⁹⁰ *People's Daily* had been given leeway to publish objective accounts of the student demonstrations as of April 27.⁴⁹¹ However, Zhao could not persuade his colleagues to reverse the April 26 verdict on the student demonstrations of being "anti-Party" and "anti-socialist". In a May 1 meeting of the Politburo, Zhao clashed with Li Peng on the question whether to respond to demonstrations by accelerating political reform or setting the restoration of order as precondition; Li Tieying expressed the hope that the movement would fizzle out after May Fourth (Nathan et al. 2001:132, 137 and 142f). Influenced by these differing views as well as a sense of insecurity, *People's Daily* reportage on May 4 and 5 turned out to be highly ambiguous.

⁴⁸⁹ A first volume of *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* 邓小平文选 had appeared in 1983, containing speeches and articles from 1975 to 1982. In August 1989, another volume would be added of early works from 1938 to 1965. In 1993 and 1994 the later official three volume edition appeared. The canonisation process drew to a close in 1997 when Deng Xiaoping Theory was finally written into the Party's constitution as guiding ideology.

⁴⁹⁰ Note especially Zhao's public speech to the board of governors of the Asian Development Bank at their annual meeting in Beijing on May 4. For a summary see OKSENBURG, SULLIVAN & LAMBERT (Eds.) (1990) *Beijing Spring: Confrontation and Conflict: the Basic Documents*, Armonk, NY: 254-6; for excerpts see HAN & HUA (Eds.) (1990) *Cries for Democracy: Writings and Speeches from the 1989 Chinese Democracy Movement*, Princeton: 132-4; NATHAN, LINK & ZHANG (Eds.) (2001) *The Tiananmen Papers*, New York: 151-3.

⁴⁹¹ See fn. 489.

How did *People's Daily* reinterpret May Fourth? What part in the historical drama did it attribute to the Party? The paper used a threefold strategy of dissociating the Party from the corrupt government of 1919, of fashioning it as child and thus heir of May Fourth, and of mapping May Fourth goals onto the current policy of reform and opening-up. I will translate the editorial's paragraph about the May Fourth Movement in full, as I want to draw the reader's attention not only to the content of the paragraph, but also to its logical construction, subtle argumentation, and unusual rhetoric.

70 years ago the May Fourth Movement did not break out *by chance*. On the one hand, the imperialist invasion, the darkness of society and the *corruption of the northern warlord government* had already reached a stage no one could bear anymore; the country faced the danger of subjugation, therefore the Chinese people of all social strata desired to change [lit.: end] this miserable destiny. On the other hand, modern civilisation had enforced enlightenment; [this] had led the Chinese progressive intellectual world to painful self-examination and awakening. Everybody deeply felt that *without change one could neither pursue renewal nor self-strengthening*. Hence, the *patriotic democracy movement* [i.e. the May Fourth Movement] could not but break out. Two years later, *bred/procreated by May Fourth* and roused by the victory of the October revolution, the CCP saw the light of day. Thus opened a new page in the patriotic democracy movement of modern China. In Chinese history, people of no era had ever been able to reach such ideological self-consciousness and unanimity, no force whatsoever could shake the Chinese people's firm resolution to save and transform China. This is what Mao Zedong has said in "On New Democracy": **"The outstanding historical significance of the May Fourth Movement was that it had an attitude not existent in the Xinhai revolution, that was its thorough and uncompromising anti-imperialism and its thorough and uncompromising anti-feudalism."** One can say that the *May Fourth Movement was the harbinger of the modernisation movement*; for the first time in modern China, the intense hope and firm conviction of the Chinese people in demanding national liberation and social progress, in demanding modernisation to be pushed forward had been abundantly announced.

The past is over. Today, 70 years later, *China has achieved* total independence and is walking on the path of socialism; China also faces the task of an even wider, deeper and longer social change. Only thereby will it be able to thoroughly shake off poverty and backwardness, and *build a prosperous, democratic, civilised socialist state*. Thus the Chinese nation will bloom and join the ranks of modern states fast. This is the new chapter that history asks us to compose. Comrade Deng Xiaoping pointed out: **'If China is to be developed, it has to persist in opening up to the outside, reforming inside. [These] reforms include a reform of the political system of the superstructure.'** Beyond doubt, the modernisation movement that started 70 years ago offers us rich *experience and inspiration*.

70年前爆发的五四运动不是偶然的。一方面，帝国主义的侵略，社会的黑暗和北洋军阀政府的腐败已经到了忍无可忍的地步，国家面临着亡国灭种的危险，因此中国社会各阶层的人们一致要求结束这种悲惨的命运。另一方面，近代文明裹挟着思想的启蒙，已经使中国进步知识界有了痛切的反省和觉悟。大家深切地感到，非变革不能图自新图自强。于是这场爱国民主运动不可避免地爆发了。在五四的孕育下，在十月革命胜利的鼓舞下，两年后中国共产党诞生了。近代中国的爱国民主运动掀开了新的一页。在中国历史上，还没有哪个时代的人民群众能够达到这样的思想自觉和一致，没有任何力量可以动摇中国人民拯救中国、改造中国的坚定决心。正如毛泽东在《新民主主义论》所说的那样：“五四运动的杰出的历史意义，在于它带着为辛亥革命还不曾有的姿态，这就是彻底地不妥协地反帝国主义和彻底地不妥协地反封建主义。”可以说，五四运动开现代化运动先河，在近代中国第一次充分显示了中国人民要求民族解放，社会进步，要求推进现代化的强烈渴望和坚定信念。

往事已矣。70年后的今天，中国既是一个实现了国家完全独立、走上了社会主义道路的中国，又是一个面临更为广泛、更为深刻、更为艰巨的社会变革任务的中国。怎样才能彻底摆脱贫困和落后，建设一个富强、民主、文明的社会主义国家，使中华民族焕发青春，尽快步入现代国家的行列，这是历史要求我们谱写的新篇章。邓小平同志指出：“中国要得到发展，必须坚持对外开放、对内改

革。改革，包括上层建筑领域的政治体制的改革。”毫无疑问，70年前开始的现代化运动，给我们提供了丰富的经验和启示。(Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1989.05.04) [my emphasis: quotations are marked bold; unusual rhetoric is set in italics]

The general argumentation of these two paragraphs is to explain what caused the May Fourth Movement, what has been achieved since the movement thanks to the CCP, and what will be done in the future. As causes of the May Fourth Movement, the editorial denoted “the imperialist invasion, the darkness of society and the corruption of the northern warlord government”. Whereas the former two appeared often in May Fourth accounts, the latter was and still is unique.⁴⁹² Generally, “feudalism” did conclude the list of causes. However, corruption was one of the charges levelled against the CCP in 1989. By frankly denoting corruption as one cause of May Fourth, the editorial gained in credibility. Simultaneously, by attributing corruption to a specific government of warlords, the differences between them and the CCP were highlighted. The parallelism was further challenged by declaring May Fourth the ‘biological mother’ of the CCP: “Two years later, bred/procreated by May Fourth and roused by the victory of the October revolution, the CCP saw the light of day.” Note again that though this idea is common, the very formulation “bred/procreated by May Fourth” was and still is unique.⁴⁹³ The CCP here claimed the natural right of inheriting May Fourth; to protest against the CCP thus was equated with protesting against May Fourth as well. The positive image of the CCP was further enhanced by pointing out what they had achieved for China and the Chinese people. They had partly fulfilled the goals attributed to May Fourth in this article, i.e. to pursue renewal and self-strengthening change was imperative. In 1989, change again was needed to “shake off poverty and backwardness, and build a prosperous, democratic, civilised *socialist* state“, the editorial stated. The goals of May Fourth were equated in the editorial with the goals of the Party, which were also partly the goals of the demonstrating students. May Fourth was even called the “harbinger of the modernisation movement”. However, current public demands were also cautioned by arguing that the reform process was wider and deeper and would therefore take longer than previous changes. Hence, *People’s Daily* reconstructed an image in which the Party inherited May Fourth, and certainly was not to be equated with one of the causes of May Fourth.

In the construction of this pro-Party May Fourth narrative translated above, the reader will have noticed the use of two quotations (marked bold in my translation), in fact, the only quotations employed throughout the whole editorial. The first one had been used in earlier May Fourth

⁴⁹² Unique for *People’s Daily* at least, as searches in the database for a combination of these phrases confirm.

⁴⁹³ Again, I here refer to *People’s Daily*, and my argument is based on the fact that searches in the database for these phrases remained without any result but this editorial in 1989.

editorials and articles; it was taken from Mao's evaluation of May Fourth of 1940 in "On New Democracy": "The outstanding historical significance of the May Fourth Movement was that it had an attitude not existent in the Xinhai revolution, that was its thorough and uncompromising anti-imperialism and its thorough and uncompromising anti-feudalism." Back in 1969, this quotation had been embedded in a paragraph full of allusions to and quotations of other statements by Mao about May Fourth (see above). In the 1989 editorial, the same quotation catches the eye as 'outdated' in style as well as content, because no other formulations nor ideas of Mao did surround the quotation. Moreover, the editorial 'translated' the meaning of the quotation for its readership even before introducing the quotation itself: "no force whatsoever could shake the Chinese people's firm resolution to save and transform China. This is what Mao Zedong has said in 'On New Democracy': [quotation]" It seemed that without such guidance and interpretation, Mao Zedong Thought was not longer accessible to the people. While often the gap between canon and reality could be bridged by changing the references of the quotation and embedding it in a new context, in this case, the gap between canon and reality was (had to be?) bridged by 'translation'. However constricted, Mao was still called upon to give authority to the editorial's May Fourth narrative as he had written the canonical article on this subject and had been a student during May Fourth himself. And no original May Fourth source was quoted or referred to. It is possible though that a second motive induced the author to use this quotation: to make an allusion to the source, i.e. "On New Democracy". 'Democracy', one might interpret the allusion, was no term belonging to the Western hemisphere or to the students. The Party had created its interpretation thereof and made it part of their canon.

The second quotation was taken from Deng Xiaoping and used to delineate current and future strategy: "If China is to be developed, it has to persist in opening up to the outside, reforming inside. [These] reforms include a reform of the political system of the superstructure."⁴⁹⁴ Deng, not Mao authorised present strategy. As Mao had been dead for thirteen years, clearly there could be no "latest directive of Chairman Mao" to refer to. Deng Xiaoping, on the other hand, had used these years to create his own enhancement in ideology and was on the way of imprinting it as new canon on the Party and its constitution.⁴⁹⁵ The quotation, however, was ambiguous. Its content argued in favour of political reform, and thus it could be read as support for the student's demands for

⁴⁹⁴ This quotation contains five characters that were later eliminated in the third volume of Deng's *Selected Works*: [中国] 要得到发展, 必须坚持对外开放, 对内改革[。改革], 包括上层建筑领域的政治体制的改革。Neither alteration changed the meaning of the sentence in its context. As no official version of the article had yet been published, I do not treat this as a misquotation.

⁴⁹⁵ See fn. 489.

democracy. The readership was left in doubt as to the origin of the quotation. In fact, neither source nor quotation had yet appeared in *People's Daily*.⁴⁹⁶ Deng had spoken these words in a conversation with President Mugabe of Zimbabwe, on January 20, 1987 and they were later published in an article in the third volume of the *Collected Works of Deng Xiaoping* entitled “Strengthen the teaching of the four fundamental principles, hold on to the strategy of reform and opening 加强四项基本原则教育, 坚持改革开放政策”. The article contained Deng’s judgement of the student demonstration of December 1986 that had led to the fall of Hu Yaobang. Deng had therein argued that Hu’s opposition to bourgeois liberalisation had not been firm enough. He promised, however, that the affair would not impair China’s reform process and opening-up to the world. Thus, the quotation could also be interpreted as support for the April 26 editorial (that had been written on Deng’s demand and censured the demonstration as “anti-Party” and “anti-socialist” “turmoil”) and a firmer stand against the students. I believe that this ambiguous rhetoric was deliberately chosen to guard the author(s) of the editorial against later reproof whatever interpretation the Party might decide to adopt.⁴⁹⁷

If the Party claimed inheritance of May Fourth, instead of acting as the villain of the drama, what role did they allow the students to adopt? The April 26 editorial had declared the demonstrations to be “a well-planned plot ... to confuse the people and throw the country into turmoil” (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1989.04.26 ; Nathan et al. 2001:100). Zhao Ziyang used May Fourth as pretext to affirm “the patriotism of the student demonstrators and the legitimacy of their desire for democracy and opposition to corruption” (Nathan et al. 2001:145f). The students fashioned themselves as patriotic inheritors of the May Fourth spirit in their “May Fourth manifesto”.⁴⁹⁸ In unison, the editorial claimed that the May Fourth Movement had also been a “patriotic democracy movement”. By attributing this phrase to May Fourth and describing it as a

⁴⁹⁶ As the identity of the author(s) is unknown, so it is uncertain how they could have known about this quotation.

⁴⁹⁷ At the time, foreign observers believed that the ambiguous media messages reflected an intra-Party struggle. The leadership itself was aware of this interpretation and sought unsuccessfully to change it (NATHAN, LINK & ZHANG (Eds.) (2001) *The Tiananmen Papers*, New York: 140).

⁴⁹⁸ Thus the manifesto started: “Seventy years ago today, a large group of illustrious students assembled in front of Tian’anmen, and a new chapter in the history of China was opened. Today, we are once again assembled here, not only to commemorate that monumental day but more importantly, to carry forward the May Fourth spirit of science and democracy. Today, in front of the symbol of the Chinese nation, Tian’anmen, we can proudly proclaim to all the people in our nation that we are worthy of the pioneers of seventy years ago.” And it ended with “Our views are not in conflict with those of the government. We only have one goal: the modernisation of China. [...] Fellow students, fellow countrymen, prosperity for our nation is the ultimate objective of our patriotic student movement.” HAN & HUA (Eds.) (1990) *Cries for Democracy: Writings and Speeches from the 1989 Chinese Democracy Movement*, Princeton: 135-7. Note that the students did not freely use May Fourth symbols against the Party, but encapsulated the Party’s May Fourth narrative in their manifesto. It seems either that the Party’s version of history was accepted by the students or else that they could not liberate themselves from the prevalent discourse.

natural and just event, some of the glory of May Fourth shed onto the student movement; their claim of inheriting May Fourth, too, was acknowledged. As May 4 was also national Youth Day, and the May Fourth Movement had formerly been hailed as youth movement by the Party, further comments on the role of youth were compulsory. This was expertly done in the last two paragraphs of the editorial. There, the youth's sense for transformation and justice, as well as their spirit for sacrifice were lauded. Moreover, the experience from the May Fourth Movement, the Chinese revolution, and the construction work all proved that the young generation was always easiest to accept new things, or so the editorial argued. This strength, however, was also the youth's main weakness, the editorial went on: they were too easily influenced, lacking experience, in-depth knowledge, and calmness. Note that no quotation was used to authorise the argument nor an allusion to any historical example thereof was made. Finally, the Party entered the stage (i.e. the editorial) as wise leader of the young and inexperienced. But, someone might object: Was the editorial talking about those students demonstrating on Tian'anmen or rather about the young model workers and students hand-picked and honoured by the Party at the May Fourth celebrations of May 3 and 4 (Wagner 2001a:113)? I believe that the demonstrating students on Tian'anmen square were targeted both by this narrative *and* by the promotion of the model heroes. The model heroes had already accepted the Party's guidance and leadership whereas the demonstrating students were demanding a dialogue with the Party Centre; a dialogue about democracy and corruption, and on equal terms. In fact, they thus demanded to guide the Party and not vice versa.

People's Daily went even further in support of the students: In its May 5 issue it reported on page 1 how the students had commemorated the seventieth anniversary of May Fourth. Again, the editors tried to balance the report about the students' May Fourth parades by also briefing on other commemorative activities like visiting parks or museums. But then, they reprinted some of the slogans that were shouted and banners that were carried by the students and even by journalists:⁴⁹⁹ Calls to "Support the CCP, develop our country" and "Deepen reform", were contrasted by others demanding an "Equal dialogue" with the Party, "The people's government should be controlled by

⁴⁹⁹ The rectification of the Shanghai based *World Economic Herald*, and sacking of its editor-in-chief Qin Benli by the Shanghai Party Committee under the leadership of Shanghai Party Secretary Jiang Zemin had enraged media circles and caused about two hundreds to join the student demonstrations in Beijing on May 4. For further details see WRIGHT (1991) *The Political Undoing of Shanghai's World Economic Herald*. In: Unger *The Pro-Democracy Protests in China: Reports from the Provinces*, Armonk, NY, NATHAN, LINK & ZHANG (Eds.) (2001) *The Tiananmen Papers*, New York: 120-5 and 148-50, HAN & HUA (Eds.) (1990) *Cries for Democracy: Writings and Speeches from the 1989 Chinese Democracy Movement*, Princeton: 188f.

the people”, and “News should tell the truth”, or even warning “If corruption is not rooted out, there will be no peace” (Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1989.05.05).

“Mr. Science and Mr. Democracy 赛先生，德先生” had featured prominently during the May Fourth Movement. In updated formulation as “Science and democracy 科学，民主” they were mentioned in nearly every major article on the May Fourth Movement in *People’s Daily*, nor was the term avoided in 1989. The signification of democracy, however, was defined differently by students and Party. Even the reform-minded Zhao Ziyang stressed during a meeting of the Politburo Standing Committee on May 1: “If the Party doesn’t hold up the banner of democracy in our country, someone else will, and we will lose out. I think we should grab the lead on this, not be pushed along grudgingly. We must, of course, insist on Communist Party leadership and not play around with any Western multiparty systems. This basic principle can allow no compromise.” (Nathan et al. 2001:141). *People’s Daily* used the May Fourth anniversary as pretext to print the ambiguous opinion of an equally ambiguous personage, who was both a Party member and a professor of sociology at Renmin University 人民大学 in Beijing: “On the meaning of democracy 试论民主的涵义” by Zheng Hangsheng 郑杭生 appeared on page 6 of the May 5 issue of *People’s Daily*. Though Zheng acknowledged the existence of a socialist democracy in China, he traced its origins back to the political system of the Greek city states, the English and French Revolution, and the European enlightenment movement. Moreover, he based democracy on three principles: majority rule, rule of law, and minority rights. Zheng went on that by these three principles, every state’s democracy including the PRC could be measured. But he failed to reaffirm that China was, of course, a democratic state.⁵⁰⁰ The reader was left to contemplate this question. In his use of quotation, the ambiguous nature of Zheng’s article found expression, as well. Only one quotation was provided: “Without democracy, there will be no socialism, and no socialist modernisation. 没有民主就没有社会主义，就没有社会主义的现代化。” This quotation was presented to the reader as common knowledge gained from forty years experience. It was embedded in a paragraph that, on the one hand, praised the socialist democratic system in China, on the other, criticised its shortcomings such as

⁵⁰⁰ Two months later, a theory meeting was held in Beijing to discuss some chaos that had appeared in ideological and theoretical work during the previous months. This seems to have been a measure to reprimand intellectuals and Party members for their support of the student movement. In a statement published in *People’s Daily*, Zheng emphasised his allegiance with the Party by distancing himself from the student movement, and declaring that their anti-Party, anti-socialist actions had been carried out under the flag of ‘democracy’. See RENMIN RIBAO SHE 人民日报社 (02.07.1989) 首都理论界举行座谈会 - 反思理论工作 - 澄清理论是非 [Theory circle of the capital holds forum - rethinking theory work - clarifying theoretical disputes], 人民日报, 2.

excessive power concentration or the custom of lifetime and even hereditary Party posts. Reforms of the political system were therefore imperative, Zheng wrote. A fact, which, to some extent he proved by quoting the statement above. The source of the quotation, however, reveals its double-nature as weapon and shield. It is in fact a quotation of Deng Xiaoping's speech to the 1979 Theory Conference, given on March 13, 1979, and to some extent closing the first liberal period after Mao by announcing the so-called Four Cardinal Principles.⁵⁰¹ The original context of the quotation was Deng's elaboration on the second principle "adhere to the dictatorship of the proletariat". Socialist democracy, Deng argued, was the dictatorship of the proletariat, and it was the most extensive democracy witnessed in history so far. At the same time, i.e. March 1979, the 'Democracy Wall' was restricted and its main protagonist Wei Jingsheng 魏京生 arrested. Thus, the quotation chosen by Zheng or the editors of *People's Daily* seemed pro-democratic on the surface, but anti-democratic by scrutiny of its source and original historical context. Here again, I believe, we witness how *People's Daily* and its authors tried to support the student demonstration while at the same time guarding themselves from possible future accusations by deliberate quotation. During late April and early May, *People's Daily* had become a battleground for or rather an open forum of differing opinions.

1999: By Winning the Youth We Will Win the Future

In 1999, the last decennial May Fourth anniversary was held so far. It is the last allegory of May Fourth to be analysed here. How did *People's Daily* tell the story of May Fourth in 1999, the 80th anniversary of the May Fourth Movement, the 40th anniversary of the founding of the PRC, the 10th anniversary of the Tian'anmen movement, and the last year of the 20th century? How much of Mao's canonised interpretation of May Fourth was still integrated into this narrative? And how much of May Fourth was still valuable to present-day China?

In 1999, the allegory of May Fourth was again revived to authorise present-day purposes. Current policies as "Invigorate the country through science and education 科教兴国" and "Administer the country according to law 依法治国" were equalled with the May Fourth ideals of science and democracy. Others, such as patriotism and development, were simply stated to be in accordance to the May Fourth agenda. Another such example of authorising present or future action by past events was the fight against superstition. It was in 1999 portrayed as one of the primary goals of May Fourth, foreshadowing the ban of Falun gong that was to come in July 1999. That this claim

⁵⁰¹ The four were: adhering to the socialist road, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the leadership of the Communist Party, and Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought.

was only partially concordant with the historical facts and had not appeared in previous accounts of May Fourth told by *People's Daily*, did not obstruct/hinder the claim being made. It seems as though the image of the May Fourth Movement as giving birth to 'modern' China had by 1999 become so prevalent that each 'new' policy had to be in some way reconnected with May Fourth. The allegory worked rather well as May Fourth had featured a multitude of differing agendas. Arguably, the justification thus gained might have been lost again soon by its selectiveness (only those points on the May Fourth agenda were revived that fitted current strategy) and by its variation (every anniversary highlighted different points according to present needs). As to quotations, the canonised interpretation of May Fourth by Mao had in 1999 lost its power over historiography. The story of May Fourth was told in different words and concepts, and only one quotation of the former canon was referred to, but only in the theory section on page 9. As the May Fourth veterans were safely dead by 1999, commemorating May Fourth was freed from all restraints and left to the imagination, being neither bound to history nor to the canonisation thereof. While professions of commitment were given to Deng Xiaoping Theory and the current Party leader Jiang Zemin, these remained professions only, and were not substantiated by quotation. Was the goal of May Fourth, to overcome the classical canon and reach the age of pure logic, of enlightenment, finally attained? As May 4 was also national Youth Day, *People's Daily* quite naturally wrote about China's youth. By May 4, 1999, this youth was not the Red Guard generation of the Cultural Revolution politically indoctrinated by Maoism, nor the 1989 demonstrators on Tian'anmen trying in vain to intervene in politics. The post-Tian'anmen generation was more interested in realising personal pursuits, than meddling in politics, or so opinion surveys tell us.⁵⁰² The CCP, on the other hand, acknowledged the importance of winning over this young generation as the future belonged to the youth. The 80th May Fourth anniversary provided a pretext to propagate social values impersonated by new role models for this young generation. These role models combined in career and standpoint a mixture of Confucian, May Fourth, and Communist values. Yet, these diverse sources were not emphasised. The role models were rather presented to the readership as 'new', 'modern' heroes. Other topics of the past, both of May Fourth and Tian'anmen, crowded into the present: thus, the necessity of 'isms', i.e. ideology, for the present was discussed reminiscent of the 'problems and isms' debate of the May

⁵⁰² ROSEN (Jan. 2004) The Victory of Materialism: Aspirations to Join China's Urban Moneyed Classes and the Commercialization of Education, *The China Journal*, 27-51.

Fourth era;⁵⁰³ another article warned of corruption and excessive spending for anniversary celebrations. Both topics, in my view, were ghosts of the past hunting the present leadership.

Since 1989, the world and China had changed considerably.⁵⁰⁴ The east block and USSR had broken down in one chain-reaction. China had answered this threat with campaigns on socialist education, and simultaneously fostered its people's nationalism. Though its ideology was challenged, economic success had given China the status of a regional power in East Asia, and opened up the future possibility of world power status. Confucianism and even Mao had become fashionable again.⁵⁰⁵ Deng Xiaoping had prior to his death in 1997 planted Hu Jintao as successor to Jiang Zemin into the Politburo Standing Committee. Compared to 1989, the 80th anniversary of the May Fourth Movement in 1999 was a quiet and peaceful event. Articles about May Fourth had increased by 100% compared to previous years (see Figure 16). On May 4 itself, 17 articles appeared that were related to May Fourth, which was more than three times as much as on previous anniversaries (see Figure 17). May Fourth certainly gained publicity because it was a decennial anniversary. Accordingly, Figure 16 and 17 show peaks at decennial anniversaries, but none had been as high as 1999. A second motive of the Party in stepping up propaganda on the May Fourth Movement was, in my view, that it coincided with the 10th anniversary of the Tian'anmen movement. Thus, images of a youth movement acceptable to the Party filled the media, and no space was left for memories of the alternate movement.⁵⁰⁶

1989 had presented the Party with a young student generation that was not only interested in politics but willing to stand up for their ideals. Ironically, the same behaviour of the May Fourth students had originally been praised by the Party. The crack-down on the 1989 student movement had caused the young to turn away from politics. Instead, their attention focused on pertaining personal pursuits. This disinterest in politics and ideology, however, was not to the liking of the Party either. Thus in 1999, the May Fourth anniversary edition oscillated between two positions:

⁵⁰³ On the May Fourth debate see CHOW (1960) *The May Fourth Movement. Intellectual Revolution in Modern China* Cambridge, Mass.: 218-221.

⁵⁰⁴ An insightful account of the changes occurring in China at that time in relation with the May Fourth Movement see MITTER (2004) *A Bitter Revolution. China's Struggle With the Modern World* Oxford: 285-314. A collection of essays on China under Jiang Zemin including questions of Party and army, economic reform, nationalism and legitimacy is found in TIEN & CHU (2000) *China Under Jiang Zemin* Boulder.

⁵⁰⁵ A detailed description of the popular, unofficial posthumous Mao cult is found in BARME (1996) *Shades of Mao. The Posthumous Cult of the Great Leader* Armonk, NY. How the Party claimed Confucius as 'teacher' and 'advocate of profit and economic growth' cf. to MITTER (2004) *A Bitter Revolution. China's Struggle With the Modern World* Oxford: 285-314.

⁵⁰⁶ The method of filling space to block the unwanted was used on Tian'anmen square itself. It was simply closed down for renovation on the 1999 anniversary of the massacre. See MITTER (2004) *A Bitter Revolution. China's Struggle With the Modern World* Oxford: 285-314.

Guidance and control of every youth movement belonged to the Party, but on the other hand activism was a positive feature of a young person. It was acknowledged that “socialism could only gain the future by winning over the youth 社会主义只有赢得青年才能赢得未来。” (Fang Qinghua 方精华 1999.05.04). The goal of winning over the youth to socialism was pursued in established ways: ideological indoctrination at school and in all media, awarding medals to model heroes and propagating to study them in the manner of “learn from Lei Feng”.⁵⁰⁷ Form and content, however, had changed. TV and Internet, popular especially among the young, were new tools for disseminating ideology. Qin Wengui 秦文贵, the model hero propagated in 1999, represented a combination of Confucian and Communist ethics with a modern Curriculum Vitae. He had graduated from Huadong Oil School in 1982, joined the CCP in 1987, went to Canada for study in 1992, and received the May Fourth medal in 1997. By 1999, he was a senior engineer working for an oil company and studying part-time for an MBA in Beijing. His CV thus included higher education, natural science specialisation, foreign experience, and political commitment. Such a CV was as desirable in 1999⁵⁰⁸ as it had been in 1919. However, it would have been condemned as bourgeois by Mao, but for the political commitment. A mixture of Communist and Confucian values were attributed to the model hero Qin Wengui and thus propagated: selflessness, self-sacrificing, uniting with the people and serving the people, living an ascetic instead of a good life, diligence in study, life-long learning, patriotism.⁵⁰⁹ Neither in describing his CV, nor in telling valuable stories, did *People's Daily* emphasise the fact that the values propagated were Confucian, May Fourth, or Communist.⁵¹⁰ Instead, Qin was presented as ‘new’ and ‘modern’ hero for an equally ‘new’ and

⁵⁰⁷ Socialisation through the model Lei Feng was reemphasised in the media after the Tian'anmen massacre. Its effectiveness on youth values is questionable. See the result of Chinese surveys in ROSEN (Jun. 1993) The Effect of Post-4 June Re-Education Campaigns on Chinese Students, *The China Quarterly*, 310-334: 319-21. It should be noted that Lei Feng never ‘died’ in *People's Daily* reportage as did so many other Cultural Revolution symbols after 1978 (one such example is given in Chapter 2.3). Lei Feng's name still appeared in about 50 articles per year during 1984 and 1989, the lowest scores after 1978 so far. In comparison, 585 *People's Daily* articles mentioned Lei Feng in 1990 and 104 in 1999.

⁵⁰⁸ Note, that though interest in politics among students had dropped after 1989, interest in joining the Party had increased as it opened job opportunities. Equally, the Party had shifted member recruitment to the university as opposed to peasants or workers. ROSEN (Jan. 2004) The Victory of Materialism: Aspirations to Join China's Urban Moneyed Classes and the Commercialization of Education, *The China Journal*, 27-51: 43-6.

⁵⁰⁹ See: TANG WEIHONG 唐维红 (04.05.1999) 在实干中成才 [Become a useful person during work], 人民日报, 3; HU XIAOMENG 胡晓梦 (04.05.1999) '五四奖章'获得者与首都大学生 [Winner of the 'May Fourth medal' with Beijing university students], 人民日报, 5; TANG WEIHONG 唐维红 (04.05.1999) 把个人理想追求融入祖国伟业 [Harmonise personal ideals and pursuits with the country's great tasks], 人民日报, 4; CHEN CHANGMING 陈畅鸣 (04.05.1999) 秦文贵被授予“优秀共产党员”称号 [The title of "excellent member of the Chinese Communist Party" is bestowed upon Qin Wengui], 人民日报, 4.

⁵¹⁰ As what Wang called the ‘post-communist personality’ had been caused by discrediting socialist and Communist values by the Party itself, it would be self-contradictory to counter the effects by promoting socialist values. WANG (Jan. 2002) The Post-Communist Personality: The Spectre of China's Capitalist Market Reforms, *The China Journal*, 1-17: 15.

‘modern’ generation. Though *People’s Daily* did not fail to report that everybody who listened to Qin’s story was deeply moved, it is questionable how much appeal Qin’s ascetic lifestyle of solely devoting himself to the country and its people had for an ordinary student.⁵¹¹ The amount of publicity given to Qin in *People’s Daily*, in my view, proves instead the growing distance between Party and youth and the urgency with which the Party tried to overcome it. Though the young would take to the streets just two days later to support the government’s position against the bombing of the Chinese embassy by NATO forces, this showed rather the effect of patriotic propaganda, than any ideological bond.⁵¹²

Patriotism had been propagated as basis of legitimacy of the CCP, substituting to some degree ideology. Hence, in 1999 the patriotism of the May Fourth Movement was foremost emphasised:

The May Fourth Movement was a great patriotic movement, and was also a great movement of thought liberation. Slogans as ‘Defend the country’s rights against the outside, punish the national traitors within’ raised by it [i.e. the May Fourth Movement] and its struggles against imperialism and feudalism constitute the first awakening of the Chinese people; the May Fourth Movement advocated new culture, opposed old culture, advocated science and democracy, opposed superstition and autocracy; it gave an important impulse for the dissemination of Marxism in China and the birth of the CCP. Over the years, the influence of May Fourth on the progress of Chinese history grew. [Therefore,] it is of great significance to commemorate the May Fourth Movement, carry on the May Fourth tradition, infuse the spirit of May Fourth into today’s projects of reform and opening and the construction of socialist modernisation, so that they will shine even brighter. 五四运动是一场伟大的爱国运动，又是一场伟大的思想解放运动。它所提出的“外争国权，内惩国贼”的口号，它所进行的反对帝国主义、反对封建主义的斗争，是中华民族的一次大觉醒；五四运动提倡新文化，反对旧文化，提倡科学民主，反对迷信专制，对于马克思主义在中国的传播，对于中国共产党的诞生，起到了重要的推动作用。随着时间的推移，五四运动对于中国历史进程的影响，日久弥大。纪念五四运动，弘扬五四传统，把五四精神注入到今天的改革开放和社会主义现代化建设事业中，使之发扬光大，具有重要意义。(Renmin ribao she 人民日报社 1999.05.04) [my emphasis]

In this paragraph, a patchwork of allusions was used to construct a useful image of May Fourth. The May Fourth Movement provided the phrases “Defend the country’s rights against the outside, punish the national traitors within”, repeated in a later sentence in the opposition of democracy vs. autocracy;

Rosen notes moreover the disbelief in communism and socialist values among the populace ROSEN (Jan. 2004) The Victory of Materialism: Aspirations to Join China’s Urban Moneyed Classes and the Commercialization of Education, *The China Journal*, 27-51: 46. As his work is based on Chinese surveys, the inefficiency of such propaganda strategies was known to the Party.

⁵¹¹ Models endorsed by the CCP and the Chinese Youth League had already lost their appeal on the youth by 1992 (ROSEN (Jun. 1993) The Effect of Post-4 June Re-Education Campaigns on Chinese Students, *The China Quarterly*, 310-334: 321-7). The Party tried to overcome this loss of political authority by creating new youth models like Qin Wengui, who combined in his person values a la Lei Feng with a modern Curriculum Vitae.

⁵¹² The problems of ideological indoctrination were discussed in two articles of the same issue. See JIANG JINQIANG 蒋金铨 (04.05.1999) ‘主义’不能不讲 [One could not but talk about ‘isms’], 人民日报, 9; FANG QINGHUA 方精华 (04.05.1999) 赢得青年才能赢得未来 [Gain the future by winning over the youth], 人民日报, 9. Rosen notes that professional and economic concerns and the search for ‘the good life’ were paramount for China’s youth in the 1990s. Thereafter, youth turned to nationalism, searching the ‘meaning of life’, politics or even ideology. ROSEN (Jan. 2004) The Victory of Materialism: Aspirations to Join China’s Urban Moneyed Classes and the Commercialization of Education, *The China Journal*, 27-51: 27, 30.

the New Culture Movement contributed the fight against old culture; to use science in fighting superstition, a propaganda strategy mainly derived by the Guomindang, found an echo; and Mao's interpretation of May Fourth as anti-imperialist and anti-feudalist struggle, paving the way for the founding of the CCP was repeated. Each stone in this historical mosaic had a present-day counterpart. Thus, in another paragraph it was declared that the May Fourth ideas of science and democracy were emulated in the current policies of "Invigorate the country through science and education 科教兴国"⁵¹³ and "Administer the country according to law 依法治国"⁵¹⁴. Of course, democracy is not simply the 'rule of law'. And 'science' in 1999 implied education in natural sciences and import of high-technology. The future use of May Fourth terminology in the fight against *Falun gong* was prepared by reintroducing the antagonistic relationship between science and superstition to the May Fourth image. Ironically, Confucianism which had been a target of the May Fourth fight against superstition was in 1999 reinvigorated.⁵¹⁵ The image of May Fourth as awakening the people, and as border between old and new contributed to the notion of May Fourth as the ultimate beginning of modern China, closely tied to the birth of the CCP. Hence, present-day policies gained in authority by equalling them with May Fourth goals. Again, the present selected past images for future use.

The May 4 editorial closed with the formula: "let us hold high the great banner of Deng Xiaoping Theory and closely rally around the Party Centre with Comrade Jiang Zemin at its core 让我们高举邓小平理论的伟大旗帜，紧密地团结在以江泽民同志为核心的党中央周围".⁵¹⁶ Mao Zedong Thought was absent. The formula "Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory 马列主义、毛泽东思想和邓小平理论" officially guiding the country since 1997 (see fn. 489) was significantly shortened to Deng Xiaoping Theory. However, *People's Daily* was not consistent in the usage of this phrase. Some articles of the same issue still used the version containing all four theoreticians. Moreover, Mao and Deng drew level on quotations, though the words "Deng Xiaoping Theory" were referred to 17 times in the May 4 issue alone, compared to

⁵¹³ For information on this strategy see XINHUA WANG 新华网 (2003) 科教兴国战略 [Strategy to invigorate the country through science and education]. http://news.xinhuanet.com/zhengfu/2003-02/09/content_720066.htm, accessed: 08.04.2008, downloaded: 08.04.2008, EMBASSY OF THE PRC IN THE UK (2003) *Science and Technology Policy*. <http://www.chinese-embassy.org.uk/eng/kjll/t27122.htm>, accessed: 10.04.2008, downloaded: 10.04.2008.

⁵¹⁴ For more information see for example KEITH (Mar. 1991) Chinese Politics and the New Theory of "Rule of Law", *The China Quarterly*, 109-118, LI (Mar. 2000) The "Rule of Law" Policy in Guangdong: Continuity or Departure? Meaning, Significance and Processes, *The China Quarterly*, 199-220.

⁵¹⁵ MITTER (2004) *A Bitter Revolution. China's Struggle With the Modern World* Oxford: 295 and 309.

⁵¹⁶ On the symbolical power transferred to Jiang by designating him as "core" see TEIWES (2000) The Problematic Quest for Stability: Reflections on Succession, Institutionalization, Governability, and Legitimacy in post-Deng China. In: Tien & Chu *China Under Jiang Zemin*, Boulder: 74-6.

only 1 reference to Mao Zedong Thought. In comparison with previous anniversary editions, canonical quotations had by 1999 been confined to the back matter (the theory section on page 9), and they were no longer attached to editorials or other guiding articles as a kind of authoritative seal. And although Deng Xiaoping Theory was often referred to in name, its quotations were as few as Mao Zedong Thought: two only. Jiang Zemin, the successor of both Mao and Deng, was referred to as leader of current politics, not as Party theoretician. The ideological vacuum created by omitting Mao quotations from articles was not filled either by Deng or by Jiang. Thus, *People's Daily* articles seem finally to have achieved one of the goals of May Fourth: to get rid of the old habit of constantly quoting the canon.

On the pretext of May Fourth, another topic entered the scene: Was Marxism outdated?⁵¹⁷ Hence, one article rhetorically asked: Did it only get people into trouble? Did it not help to solve problems? And was Marxism inferior to gaining material benefits? No, on the contrary, the article stated, “one could not but talk about ‘isms’ ‘主义’不能不讲”. Marxism was not outdated, as it was continually developed according to the change of time, practice, and science. And society’s problems could only be solved by adopting a solid, Marxist standpoint, or so the article’s author Jiang Jinqiang 蒋金镛 proposed. Under cover of the old May Fourth controversy – should one talk less about ‘isms’ and use more time to investigate into the nature of problems – it was possible to venture an attack on those Party members who advocated to abolish ideology in favour of Realpolitik. However, the stance of Jiang Jinqiang and others was not carried far: it did not leave page 9 of *People's Daily* dedicated to theoretical topics. Though in the theory section, ideology was identified as necessary part of education and of society, the principal works of this ideology were no longer propagated by quotations on the primary pages of *People's Daily* or in its editorials, the most normative articles.

Conclusion

History has seen eight decennial May Fourth anniversaries pass, six of them have been celebrated under the aegis of the CCP. *People's Daily*, the mouthpiece of this ruling party, produced six decennial anniversary issues commemorating the May Fourth Movement. Each issue represented a May Fourth narrative that differed (slightly) from previously written narratives. Each narrative was used allegorically to convey to the reader why and in what aspects May Fourth was still meaningful for present day China. Thus, the fight against “Chinese feudalism” and “Western imperialism” during May Fourth was in 1959 projected onto the Tibetan conflict and China’s armed suppression

⁵¹⁷ See: JIANG JINQIANG 蒋金镛 (04.05.1999) '主义'不能不讲 [One could not but talk about 'isms'], 人民日报, 9.

thereof justified as fight against “Tibetan feudalism” and “Indian imperialism”. Although such rewriting of history in the interest of (state or party) propaganda is not unusual, some side effects are noteworthy: The early May Fourth narrative constructed by Mao Zedong in 1939-41 which was canonised in the early years of the PRC, became a prototype on how to use the past for the present, rather than a normative account of an historical event. Mao’s method is always ‘quoted’ (a method that again did not originate with Mao), but his formulations continued to loose their hold on the rewriting of history with every passing decade. While in 1949 and again in 1969 parts of the canonical May Fourth prototexts were simply reprinted in *People’s Daily* (albeit, I believe, for differing reasons), the 1989 *People’s Daily* issue of May 4 sported only one Mao quotation in its page 1 editorial, and the 1999 issue quoted Mao only once in the theory section on page 9. Quoting the canon did not only change in amount, but also in function. While between 1949 and 1979 quotations of Mao’s May Fourth prototexts and other canonical articles were used to introduce or legitimise strategic arguments, in 1989 and 1999 they appear as relics of the past. Another effect of using the past for the present, in my view, was that no prototexts of May Fourth itself (such as newspaper articles, posters, or pamphlets of 1919) were referred to so as to write a lively portrait of the movement. Instead each decade sought out veterans of the movement to contribute personal accounts to the latest reconstruction of May Fourth. These accounts were influenced or even controlled by present day propaganda. Thus, they were closer connected to the present than the past.

Conclusion

In the introduction to my thesis, I pointed out that I do not attempt to close an extant field, but open a new one for future research. As investigations into the lifecycles, sources, and contexts of quotations are eased by a constantly growing number of full-text digitised sources, they may become a standard to any textual analysis. In order to make such analysis faster, easier, more reliable and more feasible, I engaged in designing and writing a computer programme called QuotationFinder during the last two years. This computer programme comprises several of the approaches which I developed and validated in this thesis. The QuotationFinder supports searching for quotations in a text by comparing it to a user-specified text corpus, the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* for example. The results of such a comparison may be presented to the user as a HTML-text in which all quotations are hyperlinked to their original prototexts. Another possibility is the generation of quotation statistics, such as I have used throughout my thesis, to visualise the lifecycle of one specific quotation (see Chapter 2). The QuotationFinder may also generate statistics answering questions as: Which authors or prototexts were quoted in a text? What parts of the text are in turn quoted in later works (see, for example, Figure 11)? How did quoting this text develop through time (see, for example, Figure 12)? When did the text's reception change, at least from a statistical point of view? Of course, such statistical approaches cannot substitute textual analysis. However, statistics may aid in the identification of changes noteworthy of further analysis. They may help in the selection of articles, support the visualisation of trends, or highlight similarities and differences in quotational practices worthy of further analysis (see, for example, Figure 13).

Throughout my thesis, I repeatedly argued that quotations are the most important tool in bridging the growing gap between a static canon and the changing world. If a canon is no longer quoted, it will disappear first from the media, then from education, finally from people's memory; and thus it will lose its canonical status. A forgotten canon may be revived during a period of political or cultural renaissance, but just as likely it may fall into oblivion. The last case study analysing May Fourth anniversary editions in *People's Daily* has shown, how throughout the 20th century the number of quotations from Mao Zedong Thought dwindled, suggesting that the Party Central is about to abandon this part of the Chinese Communist canon. Accordingly, the Communist past is erased from Chinese school books. And the opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympic games, which may

be seen as the latest large scale CCP propaganda production eagerly watched by people in the whole world, did not contain any reference to Mao, Mao Zedong Thought, socialism or communism. Are we about to witness the end of the canon of Mao Zedong Thought? Will it only survive in bits and pieces appropriated by successive leaders of the CCP?

The evidence of Chapter 2.1 tells a slightly different story: The quotation “Seek truth from facts”, though not coined by Mao, had been appropriated by him (and other Party leaders) and transformed into a principle of party character. It became part of Mao Zedong Thought. One may claim (and I have done so) that today this quotation is rather associated with Deng Xiaoping and even Jiang Zemin, yet some recently erected stone monuments emphasise another aspect of the quotation’s life: The phrase’s appropriation by Mao in 1941 as scientific attitude towards studying. This connection is established by inscribing “Seek truth from facts” in Mao’s handwriting onto the stone monuments. Moreover, the monuments are set up at the entrances to institutions of higher learning or in the middle of parks belonging to such institutions. They bypass Deng’s appropriation of the phrase who first used it to legitimise the demythologisation of Mao Zedong and Mao Zedong Thought in the first years after the Cultural Revolution, and then turned “Seek truth from facts” into a slogan of his program of economic development.

The case studies presented in Chapter 3 and 4 highlight another quality of the canon that may turn out to be decisive for the canon’s survival: its adaptability to new situations. Bridging the gap between canon and world by quotation entails recontextualisation, interpretation, transformation, alteration. By quoting Mao’s article “Reform Our Study” (among other canonical texts), almost opposing policies were legitimised, such as the 1961 grass-root investigations after the Great Leap Forward, the “problem-oriented learning” approach of Lin Biao before and during the Cultural Revolution, and even the abolition of this very approach by Deng Xiaoping et. al. in 1977/78. In all three periods, Mao’s notion of relating theory to practice was advanced to address different problems. Here, the same prototext was adapted to particular situations, it authorised differing solutions, and thus it could in turn be promoted as authoritative. In Chapter 4, we saw how the story of May Fourth was told and retold by generations of propagandists. Each time, the same story was slightly transformed to create an allegory which helped to explain and analyse contemporary problems. Again, by adapting a canonised historical narrative to new situations, the propagandists underlined its usefulness for explaining present conditions or solving current problems.

From these studies we may conclude that quotation and canon form a reciprocal relationship of authorisation: Though the authority of a quotation derives from its canonical origin, yet this authority

is bestowed upon the canon by quoting its parts. The lifecycle of “Seek truth from facts” may be seen as the most striking example thereof: As canonical quotation from Mao Zedong Thought, it was used to legitimise de-canonisation of Mao Zedong Thought; Mao was called on to discredit himself. The resulting double bind – discouraging the use of canonical quotations while at the same time reaffirming their authoritative value – may well have been the effect targeted by the CCP leadership. After all, they aimed to *diminish*, but not abolish Mao Zedong Thought. However, the lifecycle of “Seek truth from facts” also attests to the fact that quotations may switch authorship. Thus, they may become detached from their ‘original’ canonical source and attached to a different author, a new prototext, and potentially a new canon. One thus has to ask which parts of Deng Xiaoping Theory or Jiang Zemin’s Three Represents are quoted from Mao Zedong Thought, although they may be presented to the audience as integral part of the newer doctrine without reference to the origin. Will Mao Zedong Thought stay alive and authoritative only in selected quotations embedded in more recent doctrines? Do these quotations hide changes in content by construing a permanence of names? Future research may answer these questions. Anyhow, we may even now note that it is the quoter who selects certain quotations as quotable; it is the quoter who decides to connect a quotation with a specific origin or to quote without giving a source. By embedding canonical sentences into new contexts the quoter imbues authority to the canon. We saw this process at work in Chapter 2.2, where I described how Chen Boda and later quoters invented, repeated, and reconfirmed the quotation “Smash the Confucian shop” and established the May Fourth masses as source of this quotation. And again in Chapter 2.1 I tried to show that it was the quoter Jiang Zemin who transformed “Seek truth from facts” into a quotation of Deng Xiaoping. And even during the Cultural Revolution, *People’s Daily* suggested through its reportage that it were the masses who chose “The working class has to lead everything” as slogan for the new policy, as I narrated in Chapter 2.3. In Chapter 4, it also became apparent that the choice of quotations mostly depends on the current (political) situation. A second factor that seemed to affect the choices made by *People’s Daily* journalists was the hierarchy of quotable prototexts which changed repeatedly throughout the 20th century. The topic of an article, in my case commemorating the May Fourth Movement, seemed to be of minor importance to choosing an appropriate quotation.

The quoter’s power of choosing the ‘quotable’ and thus confirming its authority is checked by several other forces: next to canonisation and education mentioned above, the CCP exercises a multi-layered media control. This forbids quoting statements, speeches or articles that are not yet officially published. However, just as Mao could not be held accountable for rules and values put forward in

his own canon, so may the mechanisms of media control be circumvented by those in power. Moreover, the CCP black-lists certain phrases, slogans, or quotations; “The working class has to lead everything” is but one example. Furthermore, media control comprises not only censorship, but also involves actively filling public discourse with accepted, educational, positive content, leading to the reprinting of canonical articles. The CCP also controls the accessibility of its canon both by print runs, and by (not) providing an index to the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*. The media, such as *People’s Daily* act as educator of the people, communicating among many other things the formulation, content, and practical use of canonical quotations, yet the Party acknowledged at one point in history the danger of thereby empowering the people to quote back to the authorities of state and Party. Hence, early in the Cultural Revolution, when quoting Mao became the standard mode of expression, the CCP sought to re-establish its control over the cultural capital encased in Mao quotations, banning various quotational practices (see Chapter 1).

Since Mao’s death, and even more so since Deng Xiaoping’s so-called ‘Southern Tour’ quotational practice has become less formal and less controlled. At least that is how it would seem. Take for example the following three descriptions on the use of quotations by Mao:

One insecticide, for example, was advertised with the slogan “Away with all pests!”, a line from an anti-imperialist poem penned by Mao in 1963. Similarly, a make of vacuum cleaner was promoted with a TV commercial voice-over telling viewers that “dust won’t disappear of its own accord”, a phrase taken from a famous Mao quotation about reactionaries who, like dust, would not disappear of their own accord. And in 1995-96, the Great Leader’s immediately-recognized calligraphic inscription for the expression “the People” (*renmin*) was used by the Haicheng Pager Company in advertisements which read “Haicheng Pagers, wholeheartedly serving the People”. (Barne 1999:19)

The shaman then began to sing: “I came to save the madman because I pity him! The madman is one of the wretched masses! We invite Mao Zhuxi [Chairman Mao], Zhou Enlai, and Deng Xiaoping to come and save the madman!” In doing this, she symbolically replaced a local ritual structure comprising the gods of heaven, mountain, and earth with a nationalized ritual structure presided over by this deified postrevolutionary trinity. [...] Before the anthem was finished, she began singing verses from an anti-Japanese war hymn, during which she dramatized a mock decapitation: “We’ll wield our knife toward the demons and cut off a demon’s head! One-two, one-two-three, one-two-three-four!” She marched as if in battle, singing this strange medley interspersed with extracts from *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung* (Mao 1969), sung to the tune “Do-Re-Mi” (from *The Sound of Music*), and exhortations to emulate Lei Feng. (Description of shamanistic ritual in a Naxi village in the late 1990s, in: Chao 1999a:509)

[Title:] 18 Quotations from Mao Zedong

[Topic:] Too tired to go to school

[1. Quotation] One should allow students to read novels in class, allow them to doze off, and cherish students’ health. Teachers should talk less, and let students read more.

I believe that this student of yours will accomplish something in the future.

He dared to miss a meeting on Saturday, and he dared to return too late on Sunday.

After your return, tell this student that returning to school at eight or nine is too early, he can return at eleven or twelve o’clock.

[Source:] Talk with comrade Wang Hairong, June 4, 1964

毛泽东语录十八条

上学太累

要允许学生上课看小说，要允许学生上课打瞌睡，要爱护学生身体。

教员要少讲，要让学生多看。

我看你讲的这个学生，将来可能有所做为。

他就敢星期六不参加会，也敢星期日不按时返校。

回去以后，你就告诉这学生，八、九点钟回校还太早，可以十一点、十二点再回去。

和王海蓉同志的谈话 1964, 6, 4 (Pseudo Mao quotation published on a Chinese blog: Bugu zixu 布谷子 虚 [pseud.] 2006)

What does such casual quotational practice tell us about the presence and future of the canon of Mao Zedong Thought in China? Do certain forms of quoting undermine the authority of the canon? Has the canon lost its authority by becoming too familiar, by being embedded in commercial contexts, being joked about, or being used in superstitious rituals? Has it finally reached the popular consciousness as people seem to voluntarily quote from it? Or, has it been turned into a linguistic device that may help raise the sales figures of any commodity?

While over decades the number of Mao quotations in *People's Daily* has dwindled, it seems as though Mao's words conquered other public spaces: commercial advertisement, shamanistic ritual, or students' blogs, to name but a few examples. While the CCP still prohibits the use of any leaders' images for advertisement, this control does not extend to the use of canonical quotations. While the commercial use of Mao's words may be interpreted as a vulgarisation or exploitation of canonical articles, this use also attests to the fact that Mao is still part of the everyday life of everyday Chinese. The advertisement feeds on the familiarity of the audience with Mao's words: To some, these words may evoke cherished memories, in others they may instead trigger a smirk about the unlikely event of Mao advertising a vacuum cleaner, to others such an ad will be symbolic of the distance between China today and China in the age of Mao. In the second example given above, the shaman similarly used quotations from Mao as a mnemonic device, argues Chao. However, for various reasons the Naxi villagers did not accept this ritual; they believed that by quoting Mao the shaman tried to re-invoke values of an era which they had long since rejected (Chao 1999a:511). Here, it was not the inauthentic amalgamation of traditional ritual with Maoist rhetoric which reduced the authority both of the shaman and the Maoist canon. It was the people's resentment to the message created from these elements. It was not current quotational practice that damaged the canon. Rather, history (or practice) itself had done so; the shamanistic ritual (unintentionally) conjured by means of quotation a historical context beset with negative associations. The third example of quotation use given above, i.e. the student's collection of 18 'Mao quotations', is probably the strangest piece of evidence. Closer investigation reveals it to be a fake: the 'quotation' is an invented one, yet published under

Mao's name. However, the author quoted the style of Mao's talks as recorded in the *Manuscripts by Mao Zedong since the liberation of China* 建国以来毛泽东文稿. In former times, the CCP would have viewed faking Mao's words as a sacrilege, as an act of wanton subversion. Thus, the mere existence of such fakes on the Internet attests to the fact that Party and state control has subsided to a considerable degree. But a different perspective may likewise be adopted: Through this fake, the student invents 'her/his' Mao; she/he creates an authority complete with authoritative quotations to be employed when talking back to her/his teacher. In a playful manner, the student's imagination seems to 'quote' the late Mao who had once styled himself as a student leader and empowered Red Guards to "bombard the headquarters" and heavily criticise teachers. An investigation into such casual, popular, everyday uses of quotations may reveal how the once authoritative canon is perceived by today's scattered quoters.

Appendix 1: Categorization of Journals

The following gives details on the categorization of journals used in Figure 6.

Journal	Catego- rization	Journal	Catego- rization	Journal	Catego- rization
人民日报	1. CCP CC	福建日报	2. CCP	厦门大学学报:哲社版	5. University
光明日报	1. CCP CC	红与专(福州)	2. CCP	四川大学学报:哲社版	5. University
红旗	1. CCP CC	红与专(西宁)	2. CCP	安徽劳动大学学报:哲社版	5. University
中国青年	2. CCP	羊城晚报	2. CCP	安徽大学学报:社科版	5. University
云南日报	2. CCP	群众	2. CCP	安徽师大学报:哲社版	5. University
内蒙古日报	2. CCP	解放日报	2. CCP	实践	5. University
前线	2. CCP	贵州日报	2. CCP	山东师院学报:社科版	5. University
包头日报	2. CCP	辽宁日报	2. CCP	山西师院	5. University
北京日报	2. CCP	重庆日报	2. CCP	延边大学:哲社版	5. University
南方日报	2. CCP	长春日报	2. CCP	文史哲	5. University
吉林日报	2. CCP	陕西日报	2. CCP	杭州大学学报:哲社版	5. University
四川日报	2. CCP	青岛日报	2. CCP	理论战线(武汉)	5. University
大众日报	2. CCP	青海日报	2. CCP	经济研究	5. University
天津日报	2. CCP	黑龙江日报	2. CCP	西北大学学报:哲社版	5. University
奋斗	2. CCP	上海戏剧	3. Mass	语文战线	5. University
宁夏日报	2. CCP	中国妇女	3. Mass	辽宁大学学报:哲社版	5. University
安徽日报	2. CCP	中国摄影	3. Mass	郑州大学学报:哲社版	5. University
山西日报	2. CCP	中国青年报	3. Mass	大公报	6. OPP
广州日报	2. CCP	工人日报	3. Mass	文汇报	6. OPP
广西日报	2. CCP	工农兵评论	3. Mass	文艺报	6. OPP
成都日报	2. CCP	歌曲	3. Mass	体育报	7. else

Appendix 1

新华日报	2. CCP	河南文艺	3. Mass	合肥报	7. else
新湘评论	2. CCP	甘肃文艺	3. Mass	奋进	7. else
新疆日报	2. CCP	福建教育	3. Mass	文艺轻骑	7. else
杭州日报	2. CCP	解放军报	4. Army	新湖南报	7. else
江西日报	2. CCP	农村工作通讯	4. State	旅大日报	7. else
沈阳日报	2. CCP	冶金报	4. State	时事手册	7. else
河北日报	2. CCP	山东教育	4. State	虚与实	7. else
河南日报	2. CCP	水利与电力	4. State	西安日报	7. else
济南日报	2. CCP	财政	4. State	西藏日报	7. else
浙江日报	2. CCP	世界经济	5. University	长江日报	7. else
海南日报	2. CCP	中山大学学报:哲 社版	5. University	革命故事会	7. else
湖北日报	2. CCP	北京师范大学学 报:社科版	5. University	鞍山日报	7. else
湖南日报	2. CCP	南开大学学报:哲 社版	5. University		
甘肃日报	2. CCP	历史研究	5. University		

Appendix 2: “Reform Our Study” divided into sentences

The following is a legend to Figure 11. It lists all sentences of Mao Zedong’s article “Reform Our Study” excluding the annotations. Sentences in square brackets were excluded from Figure 11, either because they were too unspecific (Nr. 56, for example) or because the results achieved were much higher than the rest. In the latter case, the results are given in the following listing.

1. [改造我们的学习] 333
2. 我主张将我们全党的学习方法和学习制度改造一下。
3. 其理由如次：
4. 中国共产党的二十年，就是马克思列宁主义的普遍真理和中国革命的具体实践日益结合的二十年。
5. 如果我们回想一下，我党在幼年时期，我们对于马克思列宁主义的认识和对于中国革命的认识是何等肤浅，何等贫乏，则现在我们对于这些的认识是深刻得多，丰富得多了。
6. 灾难深重的中华民族，一百年来，其优秀人物奋斗牺牲，前仆后继，摸索救国救民的真理，是可歌可泣的。
7. 但是直到第一次世界大战和俄国十月革命之后，才找到马克思列宁主义这个最好的真理，作为解放我们民族的最好的武器，而中国共产党则是拿起这个武器的倡导者，宣传者和组织者。
8. 马克思列宁主义的普遍真理一经和中国革命的具体实践相结合，就使中国革命的面目为之一新。
9. 抗日战争以来，我党根据马克思列宁主义的普遍真理研究抗日战争的具体实践，研究今天的中国和世界，是进一步了，研究中国历史也有某些开始。
10. 所有这些，都是很好的现象。
11. 但是我们还是有缺点的，而且还有很大的缺点。
12. 据我看来，如果不纠正这类缺点，就无法使我们的工作更进一步，就无法使我们在将马克思列宁主义的普遍真理和中国革命的具体实践互相结合的伟大事业中更进一步。
13. 首先来说研究现状。
14. 像我党这样一个大政党，虽则对于国内和国际的现状的研究有了某些成绩，但是对于国内和国际的各方面，对于国内和国际的政治、军事、经济、文化的任何一方面，我们所收集的材料还是零碎的，我们的研究工作还是没有系统的。
15. 二十年来，一般地说，我们并没有对于上述各方面作过系统的周密的收集材料加以研究的工作，缺乏调查研究客观实际状况的浓厚空气。
16. “闭塞眼睛捉麻雀”，“瞎子摸鱼”，粗枝大叶，夸夸其谈，满足于一知半解，这种极坏的作风，这种完全违反马克思列宁主义基本精神的作风，还在我党许多同志中继续存在着。
17. 马克思、恩格斯、列宁、斯大林教导我们认真地研究情况，从客观的真实的的情况出发，而不是从主观的愿望出发；
18. 我们的许多同志却直接违反这一真理。
19. 其次来说研究历史。
20. 虽则有少数党员和少数党的同情者曾经进行了这一工作，但是不曾有组织地进行过。
21. 不论是近百年的和古代的中国史，在许多党员的心目中还是漆黑一团。
22. 许多马克思列宁主义的学者也是言必称希腊，对于自己的祖宗，则对不住，忘记了。
23. 认真地研究现状的空气是不浓厚的，认真地研究历史的空气也是不浓厚的。
24. 其次说到学习国际的革命经验，学习马克思列宁主义的普遍真理。
25. 许多同志的学习马克思列宁主义似乎并不是为了革命实践的需要，而是为了单纯的学习。
26. 所以虽然读了，但是消化不了。

27. 只会片面地引用马克思、恩格斯、列宁、斯大林的个别词句，而不会运用他们的立场、观点和方法，来具体地研究中国的现状和中国的历史，具体地分析中国革命问题和解决中国革命问题。
28. 这种对待马克思列宁主义的态度是非常有害的，特别是对于中级以上的干部，害处更大。
29. 上面我说了三方面的情形：
30. 不注重研究现状，不注重研究历史，不注重马克思列宁主义的应用。
31. 这些都是极坏的作风。
32. 这种作风传播出去，害了我们的许多同志。
33. 确实的，现在我们队伍中确有许多同志被这种作风带坏了。
34. 对于国内外、省内外、县内外、区内外具体情况，不愿作系统的周密的调查和研究，仅仅根据一知半解，根据“想当然”，就在那里发号施令，这种主观主义的作风，不是还在许多同志中间存在着吗？
35. 对于自己的历史一点不懂，或懂得甚少，不以为耻，反以为荣。
36. 特别重要的是中国共产党的历史和鸦片战争以来的中国近百年史，真正懂得的很少。
37. 近百年的经济史，近百年的政治史，近百年的军事史，近百年的文化史，简直还没有人认真动手去研究。
38. 有些人对于自己的东西既无知识，于是剩下了希腊和外国故事，也是可怜得很，从外国故纸堆中零星地检来的。
39. 几十年来，很多留学生都犯过这种毛病。
40. 他们从欧美日本回来，只知生吞活剥地谈外国。
41. 他们起了留声机的作用，忘记了自己认识新鲜事物和创造新鲜事物的责任。
42. 这种毛病，也传染给了共产党。
43. 我们学的是马克思主义，但是我们中的许多人，他们学马克思主义的方法是直接违反马克思主义的。
44. 这就是说，他们违背了马克思、恩格斯、列宁、斯大林所谆谆告诫人们的一条基本原则：
45. [理论和实际统一。] 84
46. 他们既然违背了这条原则，于是就自己造出了一条相反的原则：
47. 理论和实际分离。
48. 在学校的教育中，在在职干部的教育中，教哲学的不引导学生研究中国革命的逻辑，教经济学的不引导学生研究中国经济的特点，教政治学的不引导学生研究中国革命的策略，教军事学的不引导学生研究适合中国特点的战略和战术，诸如此类。
49. 其结果，谬种流传，误人不浅。
50. 在延安学了，到富县就不能应用。
51. 经济学教授不能解释边币和法币，当然学生也不能解释。
52. 这样一来，就在许多学生中造成了一种反常的心理，对中国问题反而无兴趣，对党的指示反而不重视，他们一心向往的，就是从先生那里学来的据说是万古不变的教条。
53. 当然，上面我所说的是我们党里的极坏的典型，不是说普遍如此。
54. 但是确实存在着这种典型，而且为数相当多，为害相当大，不可等闲视之的。
55. 为了反复地说明这个意思，我想将两种互相对立的态度对照地讲一下。
56. [第一种：]
57. 主观主义的态度。
58. 在这种态度下，就是对周围环境不作系统的周密的研究，单凭主观热情去工作，对于中国今天的面目若明若暗。
59. 在这种态度下，就是割断历史，不懂得希腊，不懂得中国，对于中国昨天和前天的面目漆黑一团。
60. 在这种态度下，就是抽象地无目的地去研究马克思列宁主义的理论。
61. 不是为了要解决中国革命的理论问题、策略问题而到马克思、恩格斯、列宁、斯大林那里找立场，找观点，找方法，而是为了单纯地学理论而去学理论。

62. 不是有的放矢，而是无的放矢。
63. 马克思、恩格斯、列宁、斯大林教导我们说：
64. 应当从客观存在着的实际事物出发，从其中引出规律，作为我们行动的向导。
65. 为此目的，就要像马克思所说的详细地占有材料，加以科学的分析和综合的研究。
66. 我们的许多人却是相反，不去这样做。
67. 其中许多人是做研究工作的，但是他们对于研究今天的中国和昨天的中国一概无兴趣，只把兴趣放在脱离实际的空洞的“理论”研究上。
68. 许多人是做实际工作的，他们也不注意客观情况的研究，往往单凭热情，把感想当政策。
69. 这两种人都凭主观，忽视客观实际事物的存在。
70. 或作讲演，则甲乙丙丁、一二三四的一大串；
71. 或作文章，则夸夸其谈的一大篇。
72. 无实事求是之意，有哗众取宠之心。
73. 华而不实，脆而不坚。
74. 自以为是，老子天下第一，“钦差大臣”满天飞。
75. 这就是我们队伍中若干同志的作风。
76. 这种作风，拿了律己，则害了自己；
77. 拿了教人，则害了别人；
78. 拿了指导革命，则害了革命。
79. 总之，这种反科学的反马克思列宁主义的主观主义的方法，是共产党的大敌，是工人阶级的大敌，是人民的大敌，是民族的大敌，是党性不纯的一种表现。
80. 大敌当前，我们有打倒它的必要。
81. 只有打倒了主观主义，马克思列宁主义的真理才会抬头，党性才会巩固，革命才会胜利。
82. 我们应当说，没有科学的态度，即没有马克思列宁主义的理论和实践统一的态度，就叫做没有党性，或叫做党性不完全。
83. 有一副对子，是替这种人画像的。
84. 那对子说：
85. 墙上芦苇，头重脚轻根底浅；
86. 山间竹笋，嘴尖皮厚腹中空。
87. 对于没有科学态度的人，对于只知背诵马克思、恩格斯、列宁、斯大林著作中的若干词句的人，对于徒有虚名并无实学的人，你们看，像不像？
88. 如果有人真正想诊治自己的毛病的话，我劝他把这副对子记下来；
89. 或者再勇敢一点，把它贴在自己房子里的墙壁上。
90. 马克思列宁主义是科学，科学是老老实实的学问，任何一点调皮都是不行的。
91. 我们还是老实一点吧！
92. [第二种：]
93. [马克思列宁主义的态度。] 78
94. 在这种态度下，就是应用马克思列宁主义的理论和方法，对周围环境作系统的周密的调查和研究。
95. 不是单凭热情去工作，而是如同斯大林所说的那样：
96. 把革命气概和实际精神结合起来。
97. 在这种态度下，就是不要割断历史。
98. 不单是懂得希腊就行了，还要懂得中国；
99. 不但要懂得外国革命史，还要懂得中国革命史；
100. 不但要懂得中国的今天，还要懂得中国的昨天和前天。
101. 在这种态度下，就是要有目的地去研究马克思列宁主义的理论，要使马克思列宁主义的理论和中国革命的实际运动结合起来，是为着解决中国革命的理论问题和策略问题而去从它找立场，找观点，找方法的。

102. 这种态度，就是有的放矢的态度。
103. “的”就是中国革命，“矢”就是马克思列宁主义。
104. 我们中国共产党人所以要找这根“矢”，就是为了要射中国革命和东方革命这个“的”的。
105. 这种态度，就是实事求是的态度。
106. “实事”就是客观存在着的一切事物，“是”就是客观事物的内部联系，即规律性，“求”就是我们去研究。
107. 我们要从国内外、省内外、县内外、区内外的实际情况出发，从其中引出其固有的而不是臆造的规律性，即找出周围事变的内部联系，作为我们行动的向导。
108. 而要这样做，就须不凭主观想象，不凭一时的热情，不凭死的书本，而凭客观存在的事实，详细地占有材料，在马克思列宁主义一般原理的指导下，从这些材料中引出正确的结论。
109. 这种结论，不是甲乙丙丁的现象罗列，也不是夸夸其谈的滥调文章，而是科学的结论。
110. 这种态度，有实事求是之意，无哗众取宠之心。
111. 这种态度，就是党性的表现，就是理论和实际统一的马克思列宁主义的作风。
112. 这是一个共产党员起码应该具备的态度。
113. 如果有了这种态度，那就既不是“头重脚轻根底浅”，也不是“嘴尖皮厚腹中空”了。
114. 依据上述意见，我有下列提议：
115. 向全党提出系统地周密地研究周围环境的任务。
116. 依据马克思列宁主义的理论和方法，对敌友我三方的经济、财政、政治、军事、文化、党务各方面的动态进行详细的调查和研究的工作，然后引出应有的和必要的结论。
117. 为此目的，就要引导同志们的眼光向着这种实际事物的调查和研究。
118. 就要使同志们懂得，共产党领导机关的基本任务，就在于了解情况和掌握政策两件大事，前一件事就是所谓认识世界，后一件事就是所谓改造世界。
119. 就要使同志们懂得，没有调查就没有发言权，夸夸其谈地乱说一顿和一二三四的现象罗列，都是无用的。
120. 例如关于宣传工作，如果不了解敌友我三方的宣传状况，我们就无法正确地决定我们的宣传政策。
121. 任何一个部门的工作，都必须先有情况的了解，然后才会有好的处理。
122. 在全党推行调查研究的计划，是转变党的作风的基础一环。
123. 对于近百年的中国史，应聚集人材，分工合作地去做，克服无组织的状态。
124. 应先作经济史、政治史、军事史、文化史几个部门的分析的研究，然后才有可能作综合的研究。
125. 对于在职干部的教育和干部学校的教育，应确立以研究中国革命实际问题为中心，以马克思列宁主义基本原则为指导的方针，废除静止地孤立地研究马克思列宁主义的方法。
126. 研究马克思列宁主义，又应以《苏联共产党(布)历史简要读本》为中心的材料。
127. 《苏联共产党(布)历史简要读本》是一百年来全世界共产主义运动的最高的综合和总结，是理论和实际结合的典型，在全世界还只有这一个完全的典型。
128. 我们看列宁、斯大林他们是如何把马克思主义的普遍真理和苏联革命的具体实践互相结合又从而发展马克思主义的，就可以知道我们在中国是应该如何地工作了。
129. 我们走过了许多弯路。
130. 但是错误常常是正确的先导。
131. 在如此生动丰富的中国革命环境和世界革命环境中，我们在学习问题上的这一改造，我相信一定会有好的结果。

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