Academic Order in a Changing Society:
The Rise and Fall of
the Chinese Academic Normalization Movement

by

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In the end, let me dedicate my gratitude to Mr. Houghton “Buck” Freeman, Mrs. Doreen Freeman, and Mr. Graeme Freeman, Professor Alice Hadler, Ms. Terry Overton and all those who worked with the Freeman Asian Scholar Program. You made all the wonderful experiences at Wesleyan possible for me. Without you I won’t be here writing this passage. Special thanks to Professor Hadler, who helped me in so many aspects for my four year life at Wesleyan.

Despite all of the help I received on this project, I am responsible for all errors and mistakes in this thesis.

Yang, Guangshuo
Notes on Sources and Translations

This thesis is partly based on my interviews with Chinese scholars and intellectuals. All case studies in this thesis are based on published materials.

I conducted informal interviews with 21 Chinese scholars in four cities, namely Beijing, Changchun, Zhengzhou and Lanzhou. I visited six Chinese universities and spent time with local students, many of whom my acquaintances from high school. These universities include Peking University, Tsinghua University, Beijing Jiaotong University, Jilin University, Zhengzhou University, and Lanzhou University. However, due to the sensitivity of the topic, I decide not to directly quote any of my interviewees. Instead, I employ references to the published works by the interviewees, or by other who expressed similar ideas. In this case, my interviews serve as guidelines for me to create an explanatory narrative of how Chinese scholarly community evolves overtime.

I consult the following sources extensively. Yang Yusheng (杨玉圣), Zhang Baosheng (张保生) eds., A Reader on Academic Norms 学术规范读本 (Kaifeng: Henan daxue chubanshe 河南大学出版社, 2004) and Deng Zhenglai (邓正来). ed., Zhongguo xueshu guifanhua taolun wenxuan 中国学术规范化讨论文选. (Beijing: Falü chubanshe 法律出版社, 2004). In my annotation, the first book is abbreviated as

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While in China, I employed the site-intensive methods (SIMS) in ethnography and participant
When I quote an article collected in one of the two antologies, I provide the name of the journal as well as the original publication date, followed by the page number in DB or WX.

Most of the sources in the thesis are in Chinese. Unless otherwise noted, I am responsible for their translation. The use of Chinese characters in this thesis follows this principle. Chinese sources will be listed in this format:

Romanization (Chinese characters) [English translation]

The Romanization of Chinese characters follows the pinyin system. Tonal signifiers are emitted. For widely used non-pinyin Romanizations, such as Sun Yat-sen (Sun Yixian in pinyin) and Tsinghua (Qinghua in pinyin) I preserve their non-pinyin spellings in this thesis. Traditional Chinese characters will be used for materials published before 1946 within domain of the People’s Republic of China and non-officials who were born before 1949. In other cases, the simplified characters will be used.

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2 I only translate titles that are of particular importance to the readers. When the name/brand of a Chinese source (journal, newspaper, monograph, etc.) has its official English translation, I take the English translation and give the Chinese name in brackets.
## Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>551 BC</td>
<td>Confucius was born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>221 BC</td>
<td>Qin unified China, Ying Zheng became the First Emperor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>213-212 BC</td>
<td>Burning of books and burying of scholars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>134 BC</td>
<td>Confucianism was adopted as the official ideology of the Chinese Empire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>605 AD</td>
<td>The first Imperial Examination held</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>960 AD</td>
<td>Song Dynasty founded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-12 Century AD</td>
<td>Neo-Confucianism Bourgeoned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1279 AD</td>
<td>Mongolian conquered Southern Song Dynasty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1313 AD</td>
<td>Neo-Confucian philosopher Zhu Xi’s interpretation of the Confucian classics became the official textbook for Imperial Examinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1644 AD</td>
<td>Manchurian conquered Beijing, Qing Dynasty founded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840 AD</td>
<td>The First Opium War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1862 AD</td>
<td>First official institute for European language founded in Beijing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895 AD</td>
<td>Qing lost in the First Sino-Japanese War; Gongche Shangshu Movement; First modern university founded in Tianjin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905 AD</td>
<td>The abolishment of the Imperial Examination system</td>
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<tr>
<td>1911 AD</td>
<td>The Republic of China founded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917 AD</td>
<td>Peking University reformed into a research university; New Culture Movement started</td>
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<tr>
<td>1919 AD</td>
<td>May Fourth Movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>1928 AD</td>
<td>Academia Sinica founded</td>
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<tr>
<td>1937 AD</td>
<td>Second Sino-Japanese War broke out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946 AD</td>
<td>Full-scale Chinese Civil War broke out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949 AD</td>
<td>The Chinese Communist Party triumphed in the Chinese Civil War</td>
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<tr>
<td>1950 AD</td>
<td>Nationalization of private and church colleges</td>
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<tr>
<td>1952 AD</td>
<td>Restructure of Chinese academic institutions (Yuanxi tiaozheng)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955 AD</td>
<td>“Hu Feng Anti-revolution Clique”</td>
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<tr>
<td>1957 AD</td>
<td>Anti-Rightist Movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>1966 AD</td>
<td>Cultural Revolution started; Red Guard committed mass violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>1968 AD</td>
<td>Mao sent massive army of “knowledge youths” to the countryside (Rusticated Youth)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971 AD</td>
<td>Mao’s heir Lin Biao died in an accident and was labeled “traitor”</td>
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<tr>
<td>1974 AD</td>
<td>“Criticize Lin, Criticize Confucius” Movement orchestrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976 AD</td>
<td>Mao died, Cultural Revolution ended; Chinese Academy of Social Sciences founded; college entrance exam resumed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978 AD</td>
<td>Deng Xiaoping triumphed in faction struggle and launched the reform and open-door strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>1980 AD</td>
<td>Social Sciences in China founded</td>
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<tr>
<td>1983 AD</td>
<td>Toward Future Editorial Board founded; first Ph.D. in Social Sciences granted</td>
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<tr>
<td>1985 AD</td>
<td>Urban economic reform launched</td>
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<tr>
<td>1986 AD</td>
<td>Waves of student protests</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-Mao Mainland China</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>1989 AD</td>
<td>Tiananmen Square massacre</td>
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<td>1990 AD</td>
<td><em>Twenty-First Century</em> founded in Hong Kong</td>
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<tr>
<td>1991 AD</td>
<td><em>Xueren</em> founded in Beijing</td>
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<tr>
<td>1992 AD</td>
<td><em>Chinese Social Sciences Quarterly</em> founded in Hong Kong; Deng Xiaoping</td>
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<tr>
<td>1994 AD</td>
<td><em>Chinese Book Review</em> founded in Hong Kong; “The Normalization and Localization of Social Sciences” Symposium held in Beijing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995 AD</td>
<td><em>Chinese Book Review</em> dedicated a column to the discussion of academic normalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999 AD</td>
<td><em>Social Sciences in China and Historical Research</em> hosted seminar on academic normalization in Beijing; “Suggestions for Enhancing the Moral Codes for Scientists” published by five ministries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 AD</td>
<td><em>Historical Research</em> and six other leading history journals published joint statement calling for rigorous academic norms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002 AD</td>
<td>Peking University professor Wang Mingming’s plagiarism exposed; Ministry of Education published official guidelines regarding scholarly ethos; CASS passed resolution regarding scholarly norms; debate on journal citation format</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 AD</td>
<td>Tsinghua announced its “scholarly morale-building” program; <em>Yue’yang Declaration</em>; MOE 高等学校哲学社会科学研究学术规范 published; DB and WX published</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 AD</td>
<td>Wang Hui’s alleged plagiarism became a public event</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

Prelude: The Wang Hui Controversy

It was March 24, 2010. The night air in Philadelphia was much crisper than Beijing’s spring mist, but Professor Wang Hui (汪晖, 1959- ) of Tsinghua University could not fall into a fast sleep. Yes, he was about to become the first keynote speaker from mainland China at the annual meeting of the prestigious Association for Asian Studies, an honor that would mark a new chapter of his academic career. The world was becoming more and more interested in a rising China. As a result, Professor Wang, a leading scholar of the so-called Chinese New Leftists, had been gaining significant international attention for his theory of a unique Chinese model of social development.  

His insomnia was not over his coming speech. He had just heard the news: a literature professor at Nanjing University, Wang Binbin (王彬彬, 1962- ), published a polite yet precise critique of Wang Hui’s scholarship in the Southern Weekly (南方周末), a Chinese newspaper famed for its liberal stance. He accused Wang Hui of plagiarizing at least five monographs in his doctoral dissertation, which was later

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3 When I use the term “scholar,” I am referring to a specialist in social science or humanities. This research mainly focuses on Chinese social scientists. The Chinese notion of social science is different from its definition in English. For instance, history and law are considered social science in China. I will elaborate this in a later chapter.
published as Wang Hui’s first book, *Fankang juewang* (反抗绝望). As Wang Binbin pointed out, the book established Wang Hui’s reputation as a leading intellectual historian and thus was crucial to Wang Hui’s reputation and career. If Wang Binbin's allegation was true, Wang Hui’s dissertation would be put under question, jeopardizing his standing as a global academic star.4

As a matter of fact, Wang Hui had heard about Wang Binbin’s article before. Prior to the article being published by *Southern Weekly*, it had already published by *Literature and Arts Studies* (文艺研究), an academic journal based in Beijing, affiliated with the Ministry of Culture. A “friend” had told Wang Hui about the journal editors’ decision to publish Wang Binbin’s critique.

The ringing of his cell phone disturbed Wang Hui’s contemplation. It was a text message from a journalist from *Jinghua shibao* (京华时报) questioning him about the issue. Wang Hui tried not to think about it. Should he just denounce Wang Binbin’s allegation as untrue? Should he ask his friends back home for advice first? After deliberation, Wang Hui carefully worded his ambiguous reply: “I am out of [China] and right now it is the middle of the night. A friend of mine mailed me about this matter. I haven’t seen the article yet, and I don’t have this twenty-year old piece

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of writing right at my fingertips. I hope that this matter can be clarified within the scholarly community.”

Later, Wang Hui tried to focus himself on his upcoming speech at the AAS when a new e-mail appeared on his computer screen. A journalist from *China Youth Daily* (中国青年报), a popular Beijing-based newspaper thanks to its dissociation from the central government, asked him about Wang Binbin’s allegation. Wang Hui replied that he was attending the AAS and had no relevant books available for a thoughtful reply. However, he wrote that he “would like to have a face-to-face conversation in order to respond to these matters.”

Two days later, Wang Hui delivered the keynote speech at the AAS conference as if nothing had happened. While things remained peaceful in Philadelphia, Wang Binbin’s article quickly triggered a public debate back in China. Wang Hui’s supporters published an online article the very day the accusation emerged. They argued that the alleged plagiarism was merely the result of

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inappropriate citations, which were in effect, “technical errors.” They suggested that the accusation be a plot against Wang Hui by some “Neo-Liberals,” who were envious of Wang Hui’s intellectual achievements. Critics of Wang Hui refuted such arguments and demanded a public clarification from Wang Hui himself. The news media became polarized into two groups that either supported or condemned Wang Hui. The event further escalated as the two parties found endorsers from the international academic community. Both parties subsequently published public letters signed by various international supporters, many of them established scholars. 
Supporters of Wang Hui portrayed him as a victim of an organized media blitz, while critics demanded an independent panel to investigate the issue.

With sensational reports in the Chinese media with titles like “Academic Factions Become Mafias” and “War Declared by Nanjing University Professor on Tsinghua Professor for Plagiarism” appearing in the media, the academic debate spiraled into entertainment that caught the eyes of the nation. Bizarrely, however,

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8 “Nanjing Daxue jiaoshou zhuanwen zhi Wang Hui chaoxi re zhengyi, xuezhe cheng fei piaaqie [A Nanjing University Professor’s accusation on Wang Hui of plagiarism causes controversy, scholars think it is inappropriate],” Xinjingbao, March 26, 2010.
http://edu.people.com.cn/GB/11230729.html People.com.cn is associated to People’s Daily, the
throughout the escalation of the controversy there was never an official response from either Tsinghua University or the Chinese Academy of Social Science, the national institute that issued Wang Hui’s doctoral degree. Despite the mounting demands for an independent investigation, Wang Hui was able to continue his career unabated.

When I attended a seminar in Beijing University this summer, Wang Hui was invited as an expert on contemporary Chinese history. In July, Tsinghua dedicated a symposium to Wang Hui’s academic career, ignoring the ongoing controversy. In October, Wang presented himself as a representative of Chinese social scientists, signing a public letter accusing the U.S. government of failure regarding global climate change.

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Although Wang Hui appears not having been affected by the allegation, his critics and supporters are still arguing about this controversy today. Over time the primary matter of truth in this case faded as more people started to ask the bigger question: why does Chinese academia fail to address this highly publicized controversy? Some argue that this is because there is no single set of scholarly norms. But this is simply false, for there has been an influential intellectual movement among Chinese scholars, predominantly social scientists, who attempted to establish an internationally accepted norms system regarding scholarly activities. As a result, “academic norms” have become a hot scholarly topic for years and numerous academic papers have been published on the topic in the past decade. As Figure-1 shows, the number of academic papers that contain “academic norms” as the key words has been growing.

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14 It is also interesting to note that Wang Hui himself is among the early advocates of the normalization movement.

So what is this movement? How and why did it start? Why did it fail to address this controversial case? The call for academic normalization can be traced back to the 1980s. However, only in the early 1990s did it become a prominent public discourse among scholars. The movement received mixed reception in the beginning, but in late 1990s it became clear that the movement was gaining ground in mainstream academia. Political philosopher Deng Zhenglai proposes to understand the rise of the normalization movement as the result of conscious scholarly pursuit in two orientations in the post-Mao period, namely the attempt at extricating scholarship from the yoke of official ideology and as a means escalating scholarly contact with the international academic community.  

Deng’s analysis is important for understanding the normalization movement from the perspective of intellectual genealogy but appears to be insufficient for outlining the sociopolitical background of the movement. Historian Zhou Xiangsen points out that the movement must be situated in the context of the social transition that China has been undergoing. He also highlights the impact of globalization on the Chinese academic community. Zhou interprets the normalization movement from an intellectual history perspective as a paradigm shift in Chinese scholarship. Zhou is insightful in highlighting the social background of the movement but he fails to sufficient address the long-term rationale of the movement.

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At best Deng and Zhou offer only an incomplete picture of the Chinese normalization movement and no real explanation for the obvious frustration of the movement as it failed to address the Wang Hui controversy. This thesis is an attempt to fill the discrepancy.

Chapter One situates the movement in the *longue durée* of Chinese history and argues that the rise and fall of the movement has been profoundly depended on its unique historical path. Chapter Two analyzes the premise of the movement by illustrating the interplay between scholars and the post-Mao party-state from 1976 to the early 1990s, highlighting certain problematic developments in academia that were later characterized by normalists as “norm-absent.” Chapter Three is devoted to the rise and development of this intellectual movement, tracing the institutional response to the discourse of normalization until its heyday in the early 2000s. Finally, in Chapter Four I analyze the frustration of the movement, which is predicated by its contemporary sociopolitical context. The thesis will conclude with some personal experiences to underline the implication of the thesis’ findings for contemporary China and suggestions for further research.

**Terminology and Concepts**

Before proceeding to the first chapter, it is necessary to define several important concepts that will be used throughout the thesis.
**Scholar, Scholarship, Academics and Academia**

In the thesis, “scholar” is understood to refer to professional academics in the social sciences as well as the humanities, which constitute a subset of the murky term “intellectuals.” In modern times, as intellectual historian Fritz K. Ringer has noted, “Intellectuals are increasingly academics, bound in one way or another to the institutions of higher education. Their factual roles as scientists, scholars and teachers are largely shaped by these institutional ties. Non-academic and even unaffiliated intellectuals continue to survive… but even their role choices are deeply affected by the power presence of the academic context, without which highly specialized and increasingly capital-intensive research could scarcely be imagined.”

In this thesis, “scholarship” means higher level of academic study or learning in social sciences and humanities as well as the achievement of such higher study. It should be mentioned that in this thesis, “humanities” refers to the scholarly study of the humanities, which thus exclude the performing arts, such as theater, as well as creative composition of literary works. Throughout the thesis, I use “academia” to refer to the totality of professional academics as well as the institutions they work within. Here, institution is broadly defined as including higher education institutes, institutional ties, and the power presence of the academic context.

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18 In my original writing, I used the term “intellectual.” However, I quickly discovered that there were different understandings of the term. After reading scholars’ discussions regarding the term, I decided to use a more neutral word. For a succinct review of the term, see Edward Gu’s introduction to *Chinese Intellectuals Between State and Market* (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 2-5.


20 It is worth notice that in modern Chinese, “social science” is often broadly defined as both social science (in the American sense) and humanities such as literature studies and disciplines of non-natural science. The exact Chinese word for this group is 人文社会科学, which is largely used in scholarly literature, or 哲学社会科学, a term primarily used by the government.
the scholarly associations (for example, the Association of Chinese Historians), as well as the established norms and mechanisms that govern the function of the organizations and the professional lives of scholars. By definition, “scholarly norms” and “academic norms” can be used interchangeably. However, in this thesis, “scholarly norms” will refer to customs or norms regulating pre-modern scholars. “Academic norms” will be used for modern scholars, as the term “academics” represents the Western tradition of viewing scholarship as transcendent and indicates a distinctive division between the scholarly community and other social groups, particularly governmental officials.

Normalization and Normalist

_Xueshu guifanhua_ (學術規範化), or the academic normalization movement, as it was known, first arose in the early 1990s. It is a spontaneous intellectual movement growing out of the 1980s criticism of academic malpractice. Its participants were mainly professional scholars, who will be called “normalists” in this thesis. Despite their shared intellectual interest in academic normalization and/or their concern about the development of Chinese scholarship, normalists differed with one another in their understandings of academic norms as well as over the goals and the means of the normalization movement.

_Guifanhua_
The original meaning of *gui* (規), which is a compass-like tool for drawing circles, whereas the Chinese character of *fan* (範) refers to models or rules that can be used as standards.\(^1\) The portmanteau *guifan* became a widely accepted Chinese term during the Jin Dynasty (A.D. 265-420).\(^2\) As a suffix in modern Chinese, the function of *hua* is to congregate a gerund or a verb. *Guifanhua*, therefore, means “normalization,” or “to normalize.” Like the word “normalize”, *guifanhua* has two implications. First, it acknowledges the availability of the *guifan*, which implies that there must be an established set of norms or rules to observe or follow.\(^3\) Second, it indicates the lack of norms of the object subjected to normalization. Something subjected to normalization must be abnormal or deviant from the common standard, which thus ought to be ameliorated or *disciplined* according to accepted norms. However, once the term became widely used as a reference to the movement, these nuances appeared to wane among the wider population.

### Norms and Scholarly Norms

The term “norm” comes from the Latin word *norma*, which means “precept rule, [or] carpenter's square.” A “norm” means “something that is usual, typical, or standard.” Its plural form indicates “a standard or pattern, especially of social

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behavior, that is typical or expected of a group.”24 In sociology, the functional definition of norms describes them as “actions [that are] regarded by a set of persons as proper or correct or improper or incorrect. They are purposively generated, in that those persons who initiate or help maintain a norm see them as benefitting from its being observed or harmed by its being violated.”25 This definition reveals the dual attribute of norms. On the one hand, norms regulate the behavior of a certain set of social members. On the other hand, members of the social set embrace norms as a means to establish their group identity. Accordingly, scholarly norms refer to a system of rules regulating the academic activities of scholars, which not only includes the professional codes regulating the scholarly community, but also the ethical requirement for academics conducting their research.

Since the profession of a scholar is centered on knowledge, scholarly norms govern the production, evaluation, and distribution of knowledge. The production of knowledge is by nature an act of innovation and creation. However, its particular form depends on social, political, and historical circumstances. In other words, the specific form and content of a scholarly norm system evolves as time passes and varies from one society to another. Before the development of capitalism, the notion of copyright was obscured in nearly all major civilizations, for it requires the modern institution and market of intellectual property. The modern intellectual market favors originality, but the competition also encourages emulations, making “creative

imitation...a market imperative.” The function of scholarly norms can be divided into five general categories. First, scholarly norms regulate the production of knowledge, which mandates scholars to meet certain criteria in their work in producing knowledge. Commonly observed scholarly norms in modern academia include the imperative in acknowledging other scholars’ intellectual works by following a set of citation format, the importance of respecting empirical evidence, observing the basic research methodology of specific disciplines, and so on. Second, scholarly norms regulate the evaluation of knowledge production, which includes research evaluation, for instance, peer review, and academic criticism. Third, scholarly norms regulate the distribution of knowledge, including academic publication and teaching. Fourth, as professional codes, scholarly norms regulate issues regarding the definition and certification of scholar competence, the in-group hierarchy, the functional mechanism of the scholarly community, as well as the appropriate manner for a scholar to interact with other nonacademic members of society. Last but not least, since norms and identity are closely linked, scholarly norms define the end of scholarship and the social role or function of a scholar.

Unlike laws, scholarly norms are usually embodied in customs and manifest through in-group sanctions. They are thus non-coercive in the sense that no force is involved when such norms are transgressed. Scholarly norms are not necessarily codified, but are normally widely acknowledged by the members of the community.

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27 Teaching is an important part of professional life of scholars; education institute, regardless of its specific form, is closely linked to scholars. Therefore, in the later part of the thesis, I may use “academic-education establishment” to refer to the academic institution in a general way.
A violation of scholarly norms may or may not have legal consequences, but in a well-governed scholarly community, the violator is likely to be disciplined either by the collective actions of the members of his or her academic community, or by the governing body of the community according to the codified norms, implemented through its institutions.

Like other norm systems, scholarly norms arose amid the formation and development of a group of professional scholars. It is a result of the development of a scholarly community that distinguishes itself from other social groups. Scholarly norms therefore can be seen as representing the degree of autonomy that a scholarly community enjoys, which, when situated in the conjuncture between state and society, is synonymous with “academic freedom.” It is, on the one hand, determined by the in-group dynamics and, on the other, significantly influenced by the social structure of a particular society. Social status, income, political roles and social functions of scholars have a direct impact on the form and content of scholarly norms in a particular society. In addition, the status and function of academic institutes within the society also largely shape the norms of scholars. In a modern Western setting, scholars are generally perceived as intellectual professionals who receive payment by producing and transmitting knowledge within certain institutional frameworks, universities being the most typical one. Thanks to their unique role in society, universities in North America enjoy a significant degree of autonomy, economically, administratively, and legally. The last one is particularly interesting, as the courts in
the U.S. often respect the decisions made by universities regarding what might otherwise be judicial cases, such as academic dishonesty and fraud.

**Plagiarism**

In academia, plagiarism is perhaps one of the gravest violations of scholarly norms, for it negates the very notion of scholarship as an expansion of human knowledge through a cumulative process of academic innovations and discoveries. Plagiarism is a reproduction of existing scholarly literature, and thus contributes nothing to the incremental development of human knowledge. Plagiarism, especially academic plagiarism, is different from intellectual property rights infringement, although they sometimes have overlapping meanings. As Richard Posner points out, the latter always involves direct economic gains of one party and the loss of income in another.\(^\text{28}\) However, as he notes, plagiarism can also infringe copyrights, in this case it becomes “more reprobated.”\(^\text{29}\)

**Party-state**

The term “party-state” will be used frequently in the thesis to refer to the political entity that governs contemporary Mainland China. I only use the terms “Chinese government” and “Chinese Communist Party (CCP)” in specific cases. This is because although there is a nominal division between the state apparatus and the CCP, the distinction of the two is murky. Today, the CCP still monopolizes control over the national military and its hierarchical branch system overrides the parallel state

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\(^{29}\) Ibid, 48.
administration. Party branches are set up everywhere, including in many foreign enterprises. In the provincial and state-level government, the majority of posts are exclusively possessed by CCP party members. In a nation where the ranking of officials is seen as a direct reflection of the political pecking order, a party cadre always enjoys a higher ranking than his or her non-party counterpart at the same administrative level, unmistakably demonstrating who is really in charge. Through a Leninist mechanism known as the *nomenklatura*, the CCP effectively controls the “appointments, transfer, promotion and removal of practically all but the lowest ranking officials,” and thus dominates the nation’s most powerful and influential institutions. At the same time it should be noted that Chinese politics today is much more “pluralistic” than under Mao’s totalitarian rule in the sense that there are numerous special interest groups competing for their sometimes conflicting benefits. The stereotype of the Chinese party-state being a uniform entity that “would think, speak, and act with one mind, one voice, and one purpose” does not really hold for contemporary China. In fact, China’s political system is better captured by Xu Yi-chong as a “fragmented authoritarian decision-making process,” that has “overlapping jurisdictions and inconsistent waves of [centralization] and [decentralization].”

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33 Ibid., 95.
Chapter One
Historical Development of Scholarly Norms in China

The history of the recent fifty years successfully teaches people to choose silence, for it advocates that tomorrow is determined by today, which is again determined by yesterday. We cannot avert history, yet we can hardly discuss it... In the realm of education, just like in many others, we can only remain silent.

——Chen Danqing, 2005

Introduction

When interviewed about his reflections on Chinese universities in 2005, Chen Danqing (1960- ), a radical critic of the Chinese education system who has lived in New York City for nearly twenty years as a free-lance artist, talked with a tone of pessimism, burdened by his frustration with his former teaching career at Tsinghua University. Shortly before the interview, he had quit his professorship at the Academy of Arts and Design of Tsinghua to protest the current university establishment. His contentious action was covered in a national newspaper, which then fueled heated public debates

34 Xiong Bingqi, Tizhi Miqiang: Daxue wenti gao duan fangwen (Chengdu: Tiandi Press, 2005), 73.
on the state of Chinese universities. Yet Chen’s protest led to no reform. Only a few months later, his protest on the matter was forgotten, and the public enthusiasm over the issue vaporized. During the interview, he lamented the fact that his criticism of the higher education establishment could barely make a difference. “Regardless of my criticism, the reality manifested in its own logic,” said Chen. Chen urged the interviewer to look back to the history of Chinese scholarship, which he saw as the key to understanding the reasons behind his frustration.

When I met Mr. Chen in Beijing in the summer of 2010, I asked him about his views on the alleged plagiarism of Wang Hui. He shrugged. “The noisy controversy surprised me,” he said in a cynical tone. He again asked me to read more history on China, about the ancient civilization and the development of its modernity. “It’s a topic that nobody can discuss without a grasp of its history,” said Chen. He seemed to suggest that the lack of scholarly norms has a dimension of history that requires investigation.

Indeed, any study on the rise of the academic normalization movement in the 1990s must answer the following questions. Was there a Chinese system of scholarly norms before the normalization movement? If so, what was it like? What is the connection between this tradition and contemporary Chinese academia? If not, why? Indeed, some Chinese and non-Chinese scholars have argued that Wang Hui’s plagiarism is understandable given the cultural context of China, suggesting a causal

36 Chen interview, Beijing, June 25, 2010.
relationship between Chinese culture and plagiarism. One English blogger even uses the title “Plagiarism and Confucianism.” Is this true?

This chapter provides valid cases of proto-scholarly norms in ancient China that undermine the validity of such cultural determinism. Although the proto-scholarly norms are different from today’s Euro-American standards, they emphasized the due respect to authorship and scholarly originality (although this may different from what we understand today). In addition, an examination of the early modern history of Chinese scholarship also provides ample evidence of a functioning system of scholarly norms during the late Qing and the Republican (1911-1949) periods.

Traditional China, however, did not give birth to the modern regime of academic research, nor modern academic norms. Via a closer analysis of imperial Chinese society (221 BC-1911 AD), I argue that the development of scholarly norms in imperial China was fundamentally limited by the close tie between scholars and the political regime.

In summary, this chapter has two goals. One is to challenge the cultural deterministic theory that assumes a causal relationship between the rampant plagiarism of today’s China with its traditional culture, in particular Confucianism. The other goal is to develop a historical narrative for understanding the rise of the normalization movement. Both goals require historical analysis based accurate

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historical facts. The following chapter is divided into three sections chronologically, respectively addressing the development of Chinese academic norms in the imperial time, the transitional Republican time, and the reactionary Maoist period (1949-1976).

**Scholars as Politicians: Academics in Traditional China**

Contrary to the stereotypical conceptualization of a society of stasis, Chinese society underwent tremendous changes from 221 BC to 1911 AD. However, despite modulations and vicissitudes of its social, political and economic institutions, China as a civilization is characteristically known for its cultural continuity. Contrary to the absence of political unification in Europe after the collapse of the Roman Empire, China experienced six unified dynasties after the collapse of the imperial Qin and Han Dynasties. Yu Ying-shih, Emeritus Professor of East Asian Studies and History at Princeton, uses an analogy to demonstrate the dynamics of Chinese history:

If we see the plate as the external framework of tradition and the ball as the propulsion of development, then pre-1700 Chinese history is like a ball spinning in a plate: although Chinese history underwent various and sometime viciously intense ones, it never broke away from the traditional framework.39

One important component of the framework of Chinese history is the tradition of scholars playing important roles in local and national politics, which could be traced back to the function of the *shi* class in the Spring and Autumn Period (8

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Century-5 Century BC). Via the knowledge-based Imperial examination (keju, 科舉) system, a class of Confucian scholars was able to be incorporated into the bureaucratic state. This scholar-bureaucrat tradition of China was based on the principles of Confucianism, resulting in a unique relationship between academics and the political regime.

**Confucianism in a Nutshell**

Confucianism is generally attributed to Confucius, who lived in the Spring and Autumn period when the traditional sociopolitical system of the Zhou Dynasty underwent a series of profound transformations. His teachings were the philosophization of the political institutions embodied in the classics passed down overtime, which included historical records, political documents, literature, and

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40 The best term to capture this unique social class in traditional China may be the Chinese term shidafu, which is composed by shi and dafu. Shi indicates a non-noble origin and is often attached to one’s talent or capacity. Dafu is originally a specific office title, thereby indicating the identity of a state bureaucrat. Later, the word dafu could also mean a medical doctor, therefore it also suggests the knowledge one possesses. Please note the minor differences between the following concepts. Scholars (士) studied Chinese culture and may or may not participate in the government. Gentry scholars (紳) were wealthy scholars who play important roles in local communities. Scholar bureaucrats (士大夫) were those who passed the Imperial examinations and became an imperial official. Distinguished scholars who were not members of the government could also be called scholar bureaucrats for their academic excellence. In Western Sinology, this term has various translations, for instance, (Confucian) literati, gentry-scholar, official-scholar, scholar-bureaucrat, or mandarin. In my opinion, they capture certain aspects of shidafu than other. The character of 士 is composed of the numbers one (一) and ten (十) and is pronounced homophonically as the character for “matters” (事). Originally, it is a good name for a (usually young) male who demonstrated his extraordinary ability in dealing with complex things. Later shi became a general term for males who were talented in scholarship, administrative capabilities or military skills. Under the Zhou norm system, shi became a title for lower ranking bureaucrats and nobility. At the dawn of the Hundred Schools of Thought Period, most shi were indeed noble descendents. Yet as the competition among states intensified in both frequency and scale, the increase of social mobility was further accelerated. As many smaller states were annexed, those who were employed lost their previous positions and became itinerant shi travelling from one state to another, trying to earn a living by offering guidance for the ruling elite.

41 With a brief intermission in the Mongol dynasty of Jin (1115-1234).
rituals. Later Confucians synthesized the motif of Confucianism as the study of achieving two ends, namely “inner sageliness and outer kingliness (內聖外王).” \(^{42}\) “Inner sageliness” means the cultivation of one’s internal character in achieving the perfect personality that embraces a union of virtues (sageliness), whereas “outer kingliness” refers to one’s actual capacity in managing social affairs that would facilitate the world into a Utopian stage of great harmony (大同). Confucians believe that the two ends are intimately connected in a union that constitutes a desirable perfect personality (sage). With the achieved perfection of one’s humanity, the individual is able to influence and motivate people around him. \(^{43}\) The perfect personality also enables one to resolve political dilemmas in an optimized way, where power is seen as a means of achieving greater public good. Thus, true knowledge is about the management of human affairs, which includes ethics, rituals (li, 禮), and politics. The learned knowledge is meant to be put into practice into the actualizing of the Confucian vision of an ideal society.

One implication of this view is that a society should be administered by a class of well-educated Confucian gentlemen (junzi, 君子), who actively engage in the social-political life. This understanding on the role of knowledge elite differs from that in the traditions of Jewish rabbis, Catholic clergy, and Hindu Brahmans. \(^{44}\) As

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\(^{43}\) I apologize of using the male pronoun here for female readers. This is just for writing convenience. A modern Confucian is able to interpret Confucian classics in a way that incorporates feminism.

\(^{44}\) On the one hand, shidafu constituted a bureaucracy central to the secular governance of imperial China. On the other hand, the literati were themselves established classical scholars, who could claim
Max Weber observed, scholar-bureaucrats generally demonstrated less interest in speculating transcendent or ascetic Otherworldliness as they appeared to be more concerned with the arrangement of human affairs in this world. Although the specific Weberian generalization on the characters of “Confucian literati” has been contested by scholars from China and the West, Weber did capture the secular nature of Chinese gentry-scholars.  

A quotation from Confucius exemplifies this lack of interest in the Otherworld, which asserts that one could not understand death without a clear understanding of life.  

Following this ethos, the primary intellectual concern of scholar-bureaucrats was primarily about arranging social issues in accordance with ethical principles. Confucianism encourages educated elite to participate in politics, as power is viewed as a means to promote a greater good. “Whoever excels in scholarship should serve in the government” became one of the most widely known teachings of Confucius.  

Although Confucianism also proposes the possibility of a gentleman without governmental office to facilitate the betterment of the world through personal cultivation of morality, this dimension was secondary in the history.  

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a moral authority (daotong) and thus enabled them to balance or even challenge the imperial power. This moral authority can be analyzed by the notion of “charisma.” See Max Weber, From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology (Oxford University Press, 1958), 437. Modern Chinese intellectuals are sometime characterized by, in the words of Richard Hofstadter, “a sense of dedication to the life of the mind which is very much like a religious commitment.” From Hofstadter, Anti-intellectualism in American Life (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), 27. For a related discussion, see Yu Ying-shih in The Appropriation of Cultural Capital: China’s May Fourth Project (Harvard University Asia Center, 2002).  

45 Timothy Brook, “Introduction,” Praying for Power: Buddhism and the Formation of Gentry Society in Late-Ming China (Harvard University Asia Center, 1994).  


Confucianism as the Imperial Ideology

Learning from the lesson of the Qin, Emperor Wu (漢武帝, 156-87 BC) of the Han Dynasty was convinced by his Confucian advisors to adopt Confucianism as the official state ideology. The first imperial dynasty, the Qin, was based on Legalism (法家), which was a competing philosophical school with Confucianism that advocated for a despotic autocracy functioned on narrow and strict laws. The Qin was tremendously successful in social control, evidenced by massive construction projects such as the building of the Great Wall, the Lingqu Canal, and the Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor guarded by the army of terracotta warriors. The rule of the Qin Dynasty, nevertheless, only lasted for less than three decades. It was overturned by massive peasant uprisings.48

Confucianism was favored by the emperor, for he was convinced that it could help to legitimize and consolidate the imperial rule. The philosophy emphasized the importance of order and social hierarchy, justifying the rule of the well-cultured gentlemen. The adoption of Confucianism by Emperor Wu in second century BC subsequently left a profound impact on Chinese history.

The Emperor established the Imperial Academy (taixue, 太學), which was available to students who were selected based on their merits rather than on social background. He also reformed the political advisory institution known as the boshi

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(博士), which became exclusive to those who were specialized in the study of Confucian classics. This reform in effect prohibited non-Confucians from serving in the central government. After this reform, the boshi became professors in the Imperial Academy and each representing a certain hermeneutic tradition of Confucian classics. The students of a particular boshi were expected to carry on the particular scholar tradition. The original interpretation of a Confucian classic developed by the first boshi Master was called the shifa (師法) of his school. If any student further developed the shifa of the Master, the new interpretation would be called jiafa (家法) in order to be distinguished from the original teaching. This was meant to establish a clear delineation of the old to the new. All students at the Imperial Academy were required to follow a specific tradition. They could not change their teacher, nor arbitrarily interpret the interpretation on their own. If a boshi taught a different interpretation from what he was expected to teach, he might lose the teaching position. The curriculum of the Academy was primarily focused on training students to use Confucian classics in rationalizing and justifying policy decisions or administrating governmental affairs (經世致用). Students who proved their knowledge in Confucianism through a series of examination were thus allowed to become private secretaries for the Emperor, thus entering the high officialdom. Those with acceptable grades would be sent back to their hometowns as assistant officials.

The adoption of Confucianism as the empire’s official ideology marked the intermingling of scholarship with politics. In 140 BC Emperor Wu selected Gongsun
Hong (公孙弘), a Confucian commoner, as Prime Minister and later gave him the title of Marquis (平津侯), which was the first time in Han Dynasty for a commoner to become a noble by serving in the civil government. Later, it became a tradition that whoever served as Prime Minister would automatically receive a noble title.\(^{49}\) This move symbolized the Emperor’s favor in Confucianism and signaled the possibility for scholars to obtain fame and power through civil service appointment. In addition to their teaching at the Academy, the boshi also served as diplomats or senior advisors in the imperial court. The prestige and benefits of the boshi position encouraged the study of Confucianism among intellectuals which led to the flourishing of Confucian scholarship.

In Imperial China, the emperor was the ultimate authority. His authority extended into the realm of scholarship. In 51 BC Emperor Xuan of Han summoned prominent Confucian scholars at Shiquge (石渠閣) and sought to unify different versions of Confucian classics into a standardized version. During the Shiquge Council, the Emperor remained the ultimate judge of all scholarly disputes. A similar assembly was held in 79 AD at Baihuguan (白虎觀), where the Emperor again played the role of the ultimate arbitrator of philosophical and academic disputes.\(^{50}\)

\(^{49}\) Nicolas Zuffery, *To the Origins of Confucianism: The Ru in pre-Qin Times and During the Early Han Dynasty* (New York: Peter Lang, 2003), 321.

Beginning in the Song Dynasty (960-1279), the official recognition of a scholar largely depended on the examination system organized by the state, which further consolidated the connection between scholars and politicians. These scholar-bureaucrats’ political participation largely depended on the time invested on Confucian scholarship, which required memorization of a series of classics and relevant annotations. Success in the examination might take several decades of diligent work, which enhanced the ideological identification to Confucianism among candidates. When candidates successfully obtained office titles, their performance was evaluated (at least theoretically) according to Confucian principles. Political issues, including decision-making on important issues, were often justified by Confucian principles as well. Political struggles, especially those among scholar-bureaucrats, were often manifested in the form of philosophical debates centered on relevant classics. The ability in interpreting Confucian canons became essential for high officials. A prominent case was the political reform of Wang Anshi (王安石, 1021-1086). Although the reform involved personal interests, both supporters and opponents developed elaborative arguments, turning the policy debate into a philosophical case. The major motivation behind the metaphysical studies of Zhu Xi (朱熹, 1130-1200), the great synthesizer of Neo-Confucianism, was also political.\(^\text{54}\)

Scholarly debates and academic disputes often had political consequences and sometimes were used as tools during factional power struggle among scholar-

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\(^\text{54}\) Yu Ying-shih, *Zhu Xi de lishijie: Songdai shidafu zhengzhi wenhua yanjiu* (Beijing: Sanlian Shudian, 2004), 21, 495-497.
bureaucrats. The study of scholarship was utilized for politics. Politics based on scholarship. In this sense, the identities of scholar and politician became identical.

**Political Oppression and Academic Freedom**

Chinese imperial history is full of stories regarding the struggles between autocratic emperors and Confucian officials. In some cases, the bureaucrats were able to either publicly disobey the emperor or impede the enforcement of the emperor’s orders. In other cases, representatives of officials became the *de facto* policymakers, proposing motions on behalf of the emperor. Cases of loyal ministers who confronted the emperor and persuaded him to make policy changes constituted a major theme in Chinese folk literature. The founder of the Song Dynasty for instance, Zhao Kuangyin (趙匡胤, 927-976) declared his vision in developing a political system where “the emperor governs the world together with the scholar-bureaucrats (與士大夫共治天下).” He also made a categorical demand, prohibiting later emperors from executing scholar-bureaucrats unless they violated criminal laws.

The institutionalization of Confucianism, however, did not secure the personal freedom of scholars. Confucians attempted to check the autocratic imperial power by indoctrinating the emperors with Confucian principles of self-control and self-cultivation of morality through the imperial education system which was administered by Confucian chancellors. There were documented cases where the emperors assigned their power to Confucian officials, while maintaining only symbolic

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52 Liu Yizheng, *Zhongguo wenhua shi* (Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2001), 580.
honorary power. Nevertheless, Confucians never developed a constitutional system that could explicitly limit imperial power. The cause of this failure is still a contentious topic today, but the basic fact remains that classical Confucianism did not develop an effective institution to limit arbitrary imperial power.

Rulers of the Ming and Qing Dynasty are known for their oppression of the scholar-bureaucrats. These last two dynasties also witnessed the concentration of power in the hands of emperors and consolidation of the imperial autocracy. Shortly after the Manchu conquest of Beijing, Emperor Shunzhi (順治, 1638-1661) officially denied students at public schools the freedom of speech, publication and free

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association. According to his decree, all local public schools must erect a stele with written prohibitions:

Article VII, Students are forbidden to petition and comment on any political issues. Anyone found to have publicized any such comments… would be treated as anti-establishment and thus subjected to deprivation and punishment.

Article VIII, Students are forbidden to associate or to organize any party or group to criticize the government… Their works and compositions are not allowed to publish *ad libitum*…

Qing rulers were notorious for the so-called literary inquisition (文字狱), which ruthlessly persecuted scholars and their families by arbitrarily interpreting scholarly works as politically antagonistic. One of the earliest cases of literary inquisition was the so-called “Case of the Ming History.” In 1661, the Qing court received report that a local gentry-scholar Zhuang Tinglong (莊廷鑨, ?-1655) organized scholars to compile a history of the Ming Dynasty, where the writers recorded the atrocities committed by the Qing invaders. Irritated by the explicit writings, the Manchurian rulers ordered to execute those over 15 years of age in the Zhuang family, as well as those who participated in the composition, printing, publication, and selling of the book. Over two thousand people were imprisoned and nearly 80 were executed.

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55 Readers unfamiliar with the topic may start with a fascinating case study of the literary inquisition under Emperor Yongzheng, see Jonathan D. Spence, *Treason by the Book*. (New York: Penguin, 2002). His bibliography provides useful reference for further reading. For progress on literary inquisition studies in mainland China, see Zhang Bing and Zhang Yu-zhou, “A Review of the Studies on Literary Inquisition of the Qing Dynasty,” *Journal of Northwest Normal University* (Social Sciences), March, 2010, CNKI-DOI: SUN:XBSD.0.2010-03-010, accessed December 7, 2010.
There are over 110 similar cases in the Qing Dynasty.\textsuperscript{57} The Qianlong Emperor, an infamous autocrat was directly responsible for nearly 100 such cases. He directly discredited the political activism of scholar-bureaucrats by commenting on a neo-Confucian authority’s book written in the 10\textsuperscript{th} Century A.D. with words that read:

\begin{quote}
[scholar-bureaucrats] are audacious to the extent to claim themselves as bearing the responsibility for the well or ill governance of the whole of China, viewing their emperor as if he was not there: this is indeed intolerable.\textsuperscript{58}
\end{quote}

He was notorious for burning books that he considered as potentially challenge the Qing legitimacy. According to a modern statistics, he destroyed over 13,600 volumes (150, 000 books).\textsuperscript{59} The political oppression of Chinese scholars by autocratic rulers resulted in general apathy among the intellectuals on political issues.\textsuperscript{60} Many scholars during the Qianlong-Jiajing Period turned into detail-oriented text-based scholarship, reviving the tradition of the Han Learning.\textsuperscript{61}

\textbf{Scholarship and Scholarly Norms in Imperial China}

Traditional Chinese scholarship had scholarly norms, which were, understandably, different from the system used by contemporary Western scholars. Like in many other pre-modern cultures, craftsmen utilized technological knowledge, which was detested by mainstream scholars. Traditional Chinese scholarship was

\textsuperscript{57} Zhu Meishu, “Qing qianqi de wenziyu,” \textit{Journal of Liaoning University}, April and May 1979.
\textsuperscript{59} Wang Bin ed., \textit{Qingdai jinshu zongshu} (Beijing: Zhongguo shudian chubanshe,1999), 3.
\textsuperscript{60} This is also a consensus among Chinese scholars. See for instance, For a more updated discussion, see \textit{From Philosophy to Philology: Intellectual and Social Aspects of Change in Late Imperial China}, 2nd ed, (UCLA Press, 2001.), 69.
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid., 171.
centered on the textual research of ancient texts; therefore it emphasized the importance of reference to ancient scholarship. Scholarly creativity that was not in direct conflict with fundamental principles of Confucianism was revered, especially in classics interpretations and literary compositions.

Limited by the social structure of Imperial China, the level of professionalization of traditional scholars remained at a relatively low level for the following three reasons. Scholarly norms are closely linked to the professionalization level of the academic community as discussed before (See page 11-15).

Scholars in Imperial China were abhorrent to the notion of professionals and specialization for two obvious reasons. Firstly, the only profession a Confucian scholar should pursue is to become a civil official who makes contributions to the harmonization of the existing social order. In that case, he would be expected to serve any imperial government positions. This means that he must to be well-rounded rather than specializing on a specific field. Secondly an ideal Confucian scholar should be one who grasps the fundamental principle of the world (li). Therefore, he should be able to optimize his responses in any given scenario. The lack of

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64 According to Zhu Xi’s version of Neo-Confucianism, the world is divided into two categories. One is li and another is qi (氣). Li is understood as the metaphysical source of all things, the various forms of which provide the ontological basis of all things. When materialistic qi encounters li, it embodies the ontological form of a thing and realizes it in this world. However, although there are numerous forms of li, it is an ontological singularity. Zhu Xi argues that by grasping this fundamental principle of li, one can infer all knowledge of the world.
scholarly concentration discouraged the further development of professional scholarship. Without professional scholars, the development of a series of and other essential parts of a “modern” academic system is baseless, such as peer review, publishing of academic journal regime, and so on.

The development of traditional Chinese scholarly norms was also limited by comparatively rudimentary technological level and the limited economic system of the society. Without the rise of capitalism and its demand on the increasing division of labor in the economy there was no place for a high degree of professionalization or the demand for professional scholars. While universities in Europe provided professional training for lawyers, physicians and clergy, Chinese educational institutions, whether private or state-sponsored, never regarded professional training as desirable.

Last but not least, the legal regime in traditional China also limited a modern transformation of traditional Chinese scholars. Imperial China was authoritarian in nature. It was a society *ruled by law*, rather than a society with *rule of law*. A society that functioned on arbitrary power cannot give birth to the notion of intellectual property rights. Without the notion of contractual laws, there could be no foundation for intellectual rights and patents. Scholarly dishonesty and fraud would remain an issue of ethics rather than being adjudicated by a governmental body of professional functions on norms, or a legal body of disciplines. Therefore, although Chinese scholar-bureaucrats had a rich hermeneutic history, academic norms throughout
Imperial China was a problem of manners and propriety and remained in the realm of ethics.

**Technical Constraints of Scholarly Norms**

*Jian-du* (簡牘) were the major literary media at the time, which were long bamboo or other wooden slips. Each slip carried at least one column of vertically brush-written Chinese characters and was covered by a glue-like substance to protect the slip from worms and air. Multiple slips were then bounded together by threads from left to right in sequence.

The *jian-du* were notorious for the inconvenience due to their weight and size. It was recorded that Qin Shi Huang (秦始皇, 259-210 B.C.), who unified China in 221 B.C., read about 30 kilograms of administrative documents written on *jian* every day. When a political advisor of Emperor Wu of Han (156-87 B.C.) wrote a policy analysis, it took him three thousand *du*. This bound required two men to carry. A typical *jian* slip measures about 23 cm long (one *chi*, a Chinese unit of length), 0.7-1.3 cm wide and 0.2-0.3 cm high. The weight of such a *jian* slip is around 4 grams.

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65 *jian* is the narrower than *du*, and is made of bamboo. A *du* is wooden and is wider than a *jian*, which can contain several columns of characters. However, *jian* is lighter than *du* in weight.


67 Writing brush


69 Sima Qian, “Guji liezhuan: Dongfang Shuo,” *ibidem*. 
For the wooden *du*, a single slip can be as heavy as 21.8 grams. According to Hsing I-tien’s estimation, the abovementioned bamboo bound of the advisor could be as heavy as 39 kilograms.

The inconvenient *jian-du* posed a physical challenge to the development of scholarship at the time. Since it was difficult to carry around, scholars in this period were forced to memorize a set of core classics respected and utilized by most of the philosophical schools at the time. Due to the nature of Classical Chinese, a single character could denote one or sometime multiple independent meanings. Essays written in Classical Chinese are extremely laconic and concise. Since the canons were standardized, a brief reference to one or two characters from a canonic text would be enough for other scholars to identify the exact section. In this case, detailed information was unnecessarily.

**The Citation System and the Exegesis Tradition**

Mastering of Confucian scholarship became essential for civil official positions in the imperial government of the Han. This was further institutionalized by the Imperial Examination System in the Sui and Tang Dynasty. With the development of the System, scholarship regarding textual research of the classics remained an important focus of scholarly research.

During the time, scholarship was obsessed with rigorous textual investigation of ancient texts. Scholars believed that in order to best grasp the nuances in classics

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one must discover the authentic texts and interpret them with the knowledge of ancient glossology, linguistics and philology. Different versions of texts were carefully collected, interpreted, compared, and were subjected to intensive scholarly discussion and debate. According to Xin Lun, a scholar Qin Jinjun composed a book mounting 100,000 words just to interpret the title of an ancient essay.71 A student of a boshi expanded his Master’s shifa to over a million words.72 This detail-oriented scholarly tradition later became known as the Han Learning (漢學).

Western Zhou as a “delegatory kin-ordered settlement state” (294, Li) where

The dual-identity of scholar-bureaucrats limited the autonomy of scholar and the independence of scholarship. On the one hand, the imperial rulers tended to increase the autocratic power through subjugating the scholar bureaucrats. From time to time, scholarship was used for political tools in justifying the ruling elite. On the other hand, the Imperial examination and the patriarchal lineage system (宗法) reinforced gentry scholars’ and scholar bureaucrats’ identification to the imperial state and their roles as the maintainers of sociopolitical order. In short, this tension between scholarly autonomy and political regime was the constraint for the development of academic norms. In other words, it is the power structure of the imperial China that undermined the development of scholarly norms.

The curriculum of the Imperial Exam included nine classics compiled during the Warring States Period. Emperor Wen of Tang (唐文宗, 827-840) ordered the court to create a standardized version of the core texts, which included a Han dictionary on Classical Chinese. During the Song Dynasty, another book by philosopher Mencius (c. 372-c. 289) was included in the curriculum, thus creating a set of books known as the Thirteen Classics (十三經), which constitute the core of Confucian scholarship.

The original texts was called jīng (經), or the classics, most of which were standardized during the Han Dynasty. The annotations on the classic was known as zhù (注), or the note, most of which were compiled during or after the Han Dynasty. During the Tang Dynasty, scholars produced secondary annotations on both the classics and the notes, which were called shū (疏). The shū precisely preserved the annotations by various interpretative schools developed during the Han period. Every note was associated with a specific school or scholar with a clear delineation indicating the transmission process of the notes. The delineation of other classical works, such as histories and books on geography, were also carefully preserved.73 For instance, when the Tang Dynasty scholar-bureaucrat Yan Shigu (顏師古, 581-642) annotated on the Book of Han, he preserved 23 distinct scholars’ annotations, including those by less well-known authors, whose names were no longer preserved by Yan’s time. “Whatever annotations that were passed to me, I shall include the

complete texts along with mine in order to show the later generations that I [took no credit from these sources].”

The *zhu-shu* system became a standard format for classical studies in China during the Mid-Imperial Empire. Since the classics played a central role in Chinese scholarship, the *zhu-shu* became a standardized scholarly convention tradition that ought to be observed by anyone who studied classics. However, for other academic research, things could be very murky. When Chinese scholars composed articles, they at the time tended to paraphrase non-classical sources, rather than quote verbatim. When they referred to the classical texts, it was unnecessary to specify the sources as they were known to the educated. As the advent of the printing press became widely

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utilized, many more books became available to scholars. This increase of printed books gave rise to a more detailed annotation format.

The compilation of various leishu (類書, roughly translated as encyclopedia) was also a notable phenomenon during the time. The leishu encyclopedias were a collection of excerpts from a vast body of literature, sorted by the editors according to specific categories. The volumes of these leishu are usually enormously large. The earliest leishu was Huanglan (皇覽), which was compiled under the order of the Emperor Wen of Wei (187-226), and contained about 8 million characters. One of the early leishu, Beitang Shuchao (北堂書鈔), amounted to over 160 volumes, covering 851 categories. These leishu encyclopedias facilitated scholarly research and were widely used throughout the Mid- and Late Imperial Eras, although the editors, often omitted the original sources.

The primary motivation for most leishu editors was to facilitate the text-based scholarly research earning them a good reputation among scholars. They were often sponsored by the royal family or wealthy scholarly-bureaucrats. The compilation and editing of leishu was essentially nonprofit. Scholars whose works were quoted in a leishu encyclopedia received no financial payment. But not many scholars protested as they saw this as an excellent opportunity to publicize their research.

The philosophical research during the Song Dynasty was later known as the Song Learning (宋學). Scholars in this tradition criticized the Han Learning scholars for their overt efforts and time spent on detail-oriented philology and glossology.
studies. Song scholars argued understanding the philosophical dimension of Confucianism (義理之學) was more important than philological studies (章句之學). They contented that the Han Learning scholars were overtly obsessed with detail-oriented research and thus unable to grasp the philosophical nuances. However, the Song scholars still observed scholarly norms regarding annotations and other aspects of textual research developed by Han Learning scholars. Providing sources of ideas was given equal importance as providing sources of texts. For instance, when Cheng Yi (程頤, 1033-1107), a leading Song scholar, interpreted a sentence regarding the movements of the yang in The Book of Change, he noted that he was inspired by the idea of a hermit in Chengdu, whose true name was not known to him.75

Abundant academic freedom in the Song Dynasty led to unprecedentedly high level of scholarly activities including increasing academic writings, flourishing schools, and advancing scholarly publication.76 Scholarly norms regarding academic criticism, as well as the teaching and transmitting of ideas gradually developed during this period. It is however to estimate the exact level of the norm development.77

Development of Scholarly Norms in the Late Imperial Period

Due to errors in editing, copying, and transmitting, most ancient Chinese classics were full of inaccuracy that deluded their original meanings. Scholars like

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77 Benjamin A. Elman, From Philosophy to Philology: Intellectual and Social Aspects of Change in Late Imperial China, 2nd ed. (UCLA Press, 2001), 135.
Huang Zongxi (黃宗羲, 1610-1695), Gu Yanwu (顧炎武, 1613-1682), and Wang Fuzhi (王夫之, 1619-1693) intended to retrieve the original texts in classical works through the systematic implementation of phenology, textual research, and hermeneutics. Their endeavor, later known as the Puxue (樸學) School, later evolved into a major scholarly movement, called by some scholars as the “philology-turn” in the Qing dynasty.

The rise of the Puxue Movement was rooted in the political and cultural contexts of the late Imperial period. First, the political oppression of despotic rulers forced scholar-bureaucrats to retreat from the deliberation of political philosophy and circumspectly turned to intellectual endeavors that were relatively innocuous, such as philology study and classical research. At the same time, intensive philosophical disputes among neo-Confucians came to the point that more study on the classics was essential. Competing schools sought to prove that their interpretation of the classical cannons was more legitimate. In addition, certain influential scholars in the early Qing dynasty were critical about their predecessors’ academic approach. They claimed that most scholars in the late Ming dynasty were too obsessed with groundless philosophizing that they gave up their social responsibility as scholar-bureaucrats. Some even held their intellectual predecessors responsible for the downfall of the Ming Dynasty.

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78 Elman, From Philosophy to Philology (UCLA Press, 2001), 169.
79 Liang Qichao, Qingdai xueshu gailun (Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1998), 27.
The *puxue* scholars emphasized the importance of empirical evidence based on rigorous textual research. The leading *puxue* scholar Gu Yanwu argued that it was imperative for scholars to cite their sources accurately. He interpreted a sentence from an important ode in the Confucian classic *The Book of Odes* as a philosophical basis for his demand in using rigorous reference.80

Competing schools clashed through academic debate, which led to further refinement of traditional scholarly norms. Intellectual historian Liang Qichao (梁啟超, 1873-1929) summarized the “orthodoxy” scholarly norms of the *Puxue* School as such:

I. Interpretation must be based on solid evidence. Speculative theory without evidential support shall be rejected.

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III. A theory based on little evidence (*孤證*) is not considered sufficiently justified. A theory with no contrary evidence is preserved. The more evidential support one theory gained, the more valid it was considered. A strong piece of contrary evidence is sufficient to falsify a theory.

IV. Hiding or distorting evidence is considered unethical.

V. General principles can be induced from comparative studies of similar matters.

VI. Any use of existing theory must be explicitly noted. *Plagiarism* (*剿說*) is considered a grave violation of ethics (*大不德*).

VII. One with different ideas is encouraged to debate with others. A disciple who has different understanding is justified to challenge his teacher.

VIII. Criticism shall be limited to academic matters and must be polite in its tone. Respect different ideas.

.....

X. Academic writing should be plain and simple. Redundancy is abhorred.81

Chen Li (陳澧, 1810-1882) was a Confucian scholar in the late Qing Dynasty, who was known for his advocacy for a synthesis between the Han Learning and the Song Learning. While teaching at a academy in Guangdong, he composed an essay specifically promoting academic norms regarding citation among his students.

When you are thinking about using the works by previous authors, you should make a clear case of using citation (明引), rather than secretly plagiarize it without acknowledgment (暗襲). The Book of Rite says, “If you are referring to the ancient’s work, you should not plagiarize it.” Explicit citation shows one’s integrity and his solid scholarship. In addition, explicit citation corroborates one’s erudite. It will be the opposite case if one plagiarizes the works without acknowledgement. It is straightforward to see one would benefit from explicit citation and suffer a loss if he chooses to plagiarize.82

Chen emphasized the importance of the proper use of citations, quotations and references. Credit was due to earlier authors, as such, later scholars, as he argued, must demonstrate their scholarly integrity by accurately acknowledging previous

81 “1. 凡言義, 必憑證据。無證據而以臆度者, 在所必擯; 2. 證據選擇, 以古為尚。以漢唐證據難宋明, 不以宋明證據難漢唐; 據漢魏可以難唐, 據漢可以難魏晉, 據先秦西漢可以難東漢。以經證經, 可以難一切傳記; 3. 孤證不為定說。其無反證者姑存之, 得有續證則漸信之, 遇有力之反證則棄之; 4. 隱匿證據或曲解證據, 皆謂之不德; 5. 最喜羅列事項之同類者, 為比較的研究, 而求得其公則; 6. 凡採用舊說, 必明引之, 則說認為大不德; 7. 所見不合, 則相辯詰, 雖弟子駁難本師, 亦所不避, 受之者從不以為忤; 8. 辯詰以本問題為範圍, 詞旨務篤實溫厚。雖不肯枉自己意見, 同時仍尊重別人意見。有盛氣凌轢, 或支離牽涉, 或影射譏笑者, 認為不德; 9. 喜專治一業, 為「窄而深」的研究; 10. 文體貴樸實簡潔, 最忌「言有枝葉」.” Ibid., 47.
82 “前人之文, 當明引不當暗襲, 《曲禮》所謂‘必則古昔’，又所謂‘毋剿說’也。明引而不暗襲，則足見其心術之篤實，又足征其見聞之淵博。若暗襲以為己有，則不足見其淵博，且有傷於篤實之道。明引則有善，暗襲則兩善皆失也。” Chen Li, “Yinshufa shi Duanxi Shuyuan zhusheng,” quoted from Yao Jun, “Cong ‘Yinshufa shi Duanxi Shuyuan zhusheng,’ tan yinwen guihuan,” Journal of Shenyang University,
works of other scholars. Chen also highlighted the point that sufficient citations could illustrate one’s scholarly erudition.

**The Republican Period: Modernization of Chinese Scholarship in Early 20th Century**

The Opium War (1840-42) was considered by many as the beginning of modern Chinese history. The military defeat of the Qing Dynasty by the British Empire marked the “opening” of China to a global economic and political system dominated by Western powers. This foreign exposure accelerated the downfall of the imperial dynasty that was already haunted by numerous internal social, political and economic problems.

Under both international and domestic pressure, a group of scholar-bureaucrats initiated a reformist movement known as the Self-Strengthening Movement (洋務運動, 1861-1895). They hoped that by adopting Western technology, the imperial government could survive in the modern world without making any substantial changes. This movement was ill-fated due to strong opposition from the conservative in power. Zhang Hao (張灝), an influential intellectual historian, called this period between 1895 and 1925 “the transitional period from the ideological paradigm of traditional Confucianism to the paradigm of modernity.”

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The Introduction of the Western Educational System

The introduction of Western science and technology posed challenges to the traditional academic regime, which was already under criticism among political radicals. Eventually, some radicals who advocated for educational reform garnered governmental support due to the deepening political crisis of the Qing Dynasty. The first official attempt in educational reform began in 1862 when reformists established Tongwen Academy (同文館), a foreign language institute, in Beijing. Tongwen Academy became a new model known as xuetang (lit., hall of learning, translated as academy). Reformists subsequently established a series of such academies focusing on the teaching of Western military technology in various regions of China, such as the Academy of Maritime Technology (船政學堂) in Fujian Province and the Academy of Navy (水師學堂) established in Tianjin and Nanjing.

When the Qing Dynasty suffered a catastrophic military defeat by Japan in 1895, a country previously seen as barbaric and backward by most Chinese elite. When the news was reported in Beijing, the call for instant radical reform received wide support among students who prepared to take the Imperial examination. The student protest known as gongju shangshu (公車上書) broke out days later, whose leaders, including Kang Youwei (康有為, 1858-1927) and Liang Qichao, became prominent opinion leaders at the time. Motivated by the success of Meiji Reform and concerned of being overtaking over by foreign powers as in the case of India, they

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84 The name remained an official term for schools and college until 1912, which was then replaced by the term xuexiao (學校, school).
demand a reform based on Japanese experience in order to transform China from a “Strong Nation” in a highly competitive world. Among various proposals in their agenda, educational reform was a major concern. They believed that the traditional Confucian educational system was irrelevant to the modern times and was unable to train students with essential capabilities and knowledge for international competition. Their callings resonated with a visionary educationist Li Ruifen (李瑞棻, 1833-1907), who proposed the establishment of a national university in Beijing. He argued that the backward educational system of Chinese inadequateness compared to the Western system and thus establishing a new educational system was essential to meet the demand of the times.

The proposed national universities were founded in Beijing and Tianjin. Meanwhile, the xuetang academy became the inexorable trend of the time, with new institutes sprung in all major cities in China. The xuetang textbooks were based on Western books, focusing on the systematic training of modern science and foreign languages. In 1905, the Qing Court announced a major reform in scholarly institutions. The abolishment of the Imperial examination, a tradition lasted for more than 1300 years, destroyed the institutional connection between traditional Confucian education and the state. Since one could hardly establish a non-academic career, the number of students in traditional shuyuan schools dropped in the next few years. At the same time, this led to a boom of students in xuetang academies, which trained professionals with specialized knowledge suitable in a modern society.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>National University</th>
<th>Provincial Higher Academy</th>
<th>Tertiary Professional Schools</th>
<th>Specialized Academy</th>
<th>Law School</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Numbers of Public Tertiary Institutes in 1909
Data from Hu 2001, 16.

The Establishment of Modern Academic Institutions: the Germanic Turn

The Republic of China was founded upon the Qing emperor abdicated in 1911. During the Republican rule in Mainland China (1911-1949), the Republican rule was often characterized as weak, as it was accompanied by war lords, political turmoil, and the Japanese invasion. However, thanks to its relatively weak institutional apparatus and administrative capacity, the central government, being dominated by various political parties, was unable to pursue its authoritarian agenda in the realm of culture and scholarship. The considerable academic freedom during the rule of the Republic gave rise to a golden age of Chinese culture, which was characterized by its metropolitanism.

The development of modern universities during the Republican period was important for the professionalization of scholars and the development and

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86 高等專業學校, including 工科 engineering, agriculture, business, etc.
87 特殊學校 (特種學校), including School of Humanities (文學院), of Medicine, of Natural Science, and of Engineering, etc.
88 Law school is a subcategory of Specialized Institute, thanks to its predominant numbers, I list it separately. According to Hu’s statistics, law school students (12,282) accounted for 55.2% of all tertiary students in the country (22,622).
89 It would be wrong to assume the Republican time as a time of well-governance. Most of its leaders shared little with what we would like to call liberals today. Chiang Kai-shek, for instance, was notorious for the assassination of left-wing scholars and the suppression of non-KMT speech in public sphere within his domain.
systemization of scholarly norms. As Sociologist Andrew Abbott noted, universities play unique roles both as a source of scholarly professionalization and an increase to the rise of non-academic professionals. In China, the founding of modern universities facilitated the professionalization of traditional scholars and contributed to the rise of a highly internationalized scholar community.

![Figure 3 Number of Students in Higher Education](image)

The early Chinese universities were primarily based upon the imperial Japanese university system, which focused on the teaching of knowledge and training of professionals.

Cai Yuanpei (1868-1940), claimed by John Dewy as the most influential educationalist in 20th century China, thus characterized the development of Chinese education system at the time.

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91 Chen Pingyuan, *Lishi, chuanshuo yu jingshen: Zhongguo daxue bainian* (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing, 2009), 169
“It has been sixty years since our nation started learning from Europe. At first we learned about military technology then we realized the importance of military organization and subsequently the need for political reform. In the end, we came to the realization that the introduction of Western education is essential to all.”

Cai transformed the imperial legacy of Peking University into a modern research university and therefore opened up a new phase for Chinese scholarship marked by professional scholars working in modern academic institutes during his service as the president of Peking University.

Cai was well aware of the problems in imperial Chinese universities thanks to his vast experience in the system. He passed the Imperial Examination in 1892 and became an official at the imperial Hanlin Academy. Frustrated by the conservatism in the Qing court, he left his position and became a revolutionary. Cai studied abroad in Universität Leipzig in Germany on two occasions, taking classes in aesthetics, philosophy, education, world history and psychology. His experiences in Germany deeply influenced his notion of an ideal institute for higher learning. He came to the conclusion that universities should serve as a place for Wissenschaft, a place for transcendental academic research, rather than a politicized, bureaucratic institute for social networking as was the case in China at the time.

Before Cai’s presidency, Peking University was known for its “imperial ethos.” Many faculty members served because of their connections in the political elite. Students in the university mainly were of noble pedigree, and came to the university

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92 Cai Yuanpei, “Gao Beida xuesheng ji quanguo xuesheng shu” [A letter to students at Peking University as well as to other students of our nation].
in hopes of gaining a diploma that would facilitate their future careers. Cai made it clear that Wissenschaft should be the center and priority of the University. In his Peking University inaugural address on January 9, 1917, Cai Yuanpei told the students, “University is the place for conducting research on profound academic questions.”

Cai reorganized the university to better serve academic teaching and research. He dismantled the vocational programs and merged them into other institutes. Cai emulated and instituted the self-government of German universities at Peking University. Cai also actively recruited young and talented academics to be professors at Peking University. One controversial case was the recruitment of Chen Duxiu (陳獨秀, 1879-1942), the founder of the influential New Youth journal and a fervent advocate for written vernacular Chinese. As a graduate from a Japanese college, Chen was invited to serve as the Chair at the School of Humanities despite the protest from the conservative faculty in that department. Another famous case was Hu Shih (胡適, 1891-1962), who revolutionized the study of classical Chinese philosophy by systematizing schools of thoughts in a logistical linear narrative. Then a 31-year-old Ph.D. from Cornell, he was appointed as the Dean of Academics at Peking University. These cases illustrated a trend of a new generation of Western-educated scholars assuming senior faculty positions. This trend highlighted an important dimension of the institutionalization of Western-style academic system in China.

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93 Ibid..
95 Ibid., 19 and 22-23.
The training of graduate students at Peking University emphasized academic studies and scholarly research. The Research Regulations at Peking University specified that the newly founded Higher Research Institute “emulate German and American universities and adopt [the teaching philosophy of] seminars. It is an institute for concentrated research on specific realms of knowledge.”96

During the Republican times, there was a consensus among university faculty that academics should be the indisputable center of a university. Although the Republican period was besieged by political turmoil which made many faculty members active political participants or even political radicals, they nevertheless emphasized the priority of learning and studying to their students. Li Dazhao (李大釗, 1889-1927), one of the founding fathers of the Chinese Communist Party, wrote in an essay celebrating on the 25th founding anniversary of Peking University that “only advances in academics are worthwhile to celebrate for a university.”97

While restructuring Peking University according to the Germanic model, Cai announced his plan of developing graduate programs at Peking University. At that time, Chinese universities were predominantly undergraduate institutions. Cai vowed to transform Peking University into not only a leading Chinese university, but a world-class academic center.

96 “Yanjiusuo zhangcheng,” Quoted from Chen Yi’ai, Chen Yi’ai, Zhongguo xiandai xueshu yanjiu jigou de xingqi. 90.
97 Li Shouchang (Li Dazhao), 本校成立第二十五周年纪念感言, 北京大学日刊 Dec 18 1922. Quoted from Chen Pingyuan, 2009, 181.
It is worth to point out that Cai’s reform was supported by the majority of Chinese scholars in the early 20th century. After decades implementing the policy of encouraging students to study abroad, some scholars concluded the policy as a mistake. In a 1922 essay, Zhu Guangqian (朱光潜, 1897-1986) argued for the urgency to establish research departments in Chinese universities. He felt that most students who studied in Japan were mainly graduating from non-research academies and were thus less capable in conducting quality research. Students who graduated from European and American research universities were much better prepared for academic research. However, the lack of Chinese research institutes severely constrained their academic achievements. These returning scholars were unable to progress academically for the lack of rigorous graduate programs. This made them “academic toddlers,” who could only “sell the outdated knowledge to the Chinese.”

Hong Shilü highlighted that vital role of higher research institutes in the academic achievement in Europe and North America. He argued that it was essential to emulate such institutions in China for the sake of academic excellence. As a well-travelled scholar, Hu Shih long expressed his wish for establishing a university comparable to top Euro-American universities.

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99 Chen, ibid., 70.
The Modernization of the Traditional Mode of Scholarship

With the establishment of modern Western-style institutions for scholarly research, the mode of Chinese scholarship underwent a transformation from its traditional form to a modernized mode.

The traditional Chinese mode of scholarly research was characterized by its sporadic, spontaneous and individualistic approach. Scholars living in the Imperial time primarily regard scholarly research as a means to engage in political participation. Even research on what normally regarded as pure scholarship today was often politicized (See page 28-9). Research was largely conducted by individual scholars who were intellectually interested in their own personal topics. The abolishment of the Imperial examination system in early 20th century formally severed the institutional connection between traditional scholarship and governmental officialdom. The study of traditional Chinese scholarship was no longer the credential for governmental positions. One who wished to participate in the government could no longer obtain a position by taking knowledge-based exams, which led to the reduction on the demand of traditional learning. Scholars who taught traditional scholarship faced a difficult choice. If they would still like to conduct research, they either had to find patrons and sponsors to cover the cost, or they had to find an institute that still offered positions in the study of traditional scholarship.

Professional Scholarship of Metropolitanism

The establishment of the School of Sinology (hereafter referred as the School) was the first step in Cai’s plan. Contemporary historian Chen Yi’ai argued that the
establishment of the School marked the further institutional development of professional scholarship in the early 20th century. The founding of the School of Sinology was celebrated by Chinese scholars who were concerned about “academic independence.”

Cai and other faculty members were committed to launch an international academic journal based on modern Western model of academic publication. The launching of the journal demonstrated Cai and his colleagues’ grasping of the role of institutionalized academic journal in the development of modern Western scholarship. The organization of the Journal of Sinological Studies clearly demonstrated the influence of Western academic regime. The Journal was a self-governed institution managed by faculty at the School. For the first time in Chinese academic history, the Journal clearly delineated its principles in its bylaws, including the governmental organization of the Journal, editorial and publishing principles, and guidelines for submission. The Journal was published on a worldwide basis, with abstracts in French and English in an attempt to establish global reputation of the School.

The Journal attracted international scholarly attention and quickly became an important vehicle in bridging Chinese and Western scholarship. Well-established Sinologists such as Paul Pelliot (伯希和) and Baron Alexander von Stael Holstein (鋼

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100 Chen, “Introduction,” ibid., 3-5.
101 Ibid., 164.
和泰) and Yoshito Harada (原田淑人) enthusiastically supported the Journal by submitting their papers in French, English and Japanese.

The School invited top scholars in Chinese Studies as school tutors responsible for tutoring graduate students and providing academic advisory for the School’s research programs. The following chart illustrates the highly metropolitan composition of the faculty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tutor</th>
<th>Chinese Scholars</th>
<th>Non-Chinese Scholars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wang Guowei (王國維), Chen Yuan (陳原), ChenYinke (陳寅恪), Xia Zengyou (夏曾佑) Ke Shaomin(柯劭愍)</td>
<td>Baron Alexander von Stael Holstein, Aleskei Ivanovich Ivanov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correspondent Tutor</td>
<td>Luo Zhenyu (羅振玉)</td>
<td>Paul Pelliot, K. Wulff, R. Wilhelm, Therese P. Arnould, Imanishi Ryu (今西龍), Norimura Sentaro (則村專太郎), Tanabe Hisao (田邊尚雄).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Advisory Members)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Associate Scholars at the School of Sinology at Peking University Source: 研究所国学门主要任职员录,国学门概略 (1927) Quoted from Chen (2002), 82-3.

It is noteworthy

The founding of academic research institutes also facilitated Chinese scholarship. Chinese scholars realized the necessity for academic collaboration once they experienced the advantages of institutionalized research. Rong Zhaozu (), a folklore scholar, in 1923 wrote this:
We now realized that the academic research shall no longer follow the old method, which was for a single scholar to do all the research. Rather we should adopt the method of division of labor. In the case of investigation, we can now ask for more help and request responsible persons in charge local investigations...

Hu Shih knew little about the development of Sinology in Japan. Hu was shocked when he learned that a Japanese scholar reached similar conclusion on the study of an ancient Chinese novel ahead of him. Hu commented that “the greatest enemy of scholarship is ignorance of the international scholarly community! … We shall tear down the Great Wall of scholars and break the isolation attitude [prevailing among Chinese scholars].”

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Republican academia was marked by its metropolitan ethos and its open-minded approach to Chinese academic tradition. Professionalization of scholars progressed with the introduction of the modern academic system on the one hand, and the waning of the traditional scholarly system on the other. Professional scholarly organizations flourished during this period facilitating various scholarly activities and projects. With the return of Western-trained scholars coming back to China, Western scholarly norms were introduced.

Many scholars during the time were aware of the dangers of a close association of academics, education and politics. This led to a conscious effort in promoting pure scholarship. Nevertheless, the Republican period was shortlived.

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newly bourgeoned scholarly autonomy was compromised by the establishment of the Maoist regime.

**Maoist Period: The Compromise of Academic Autonomy**

The Communist military triumph in the Chinese civil war in 1949 introduced a threshold in the development of Chinese scholarship. The establishment of a Maoist regime marked a breakdown of the metropolitan Republican tradition as well as a negation of the imperial scholarly legacy. The Maoist institutional reform of the academic system in the 1950s laid out a Soviet communist institutional foundation. This totalitarian system was highly characterized bureaucratic system characterized by its remarkable capacity in social, economic and academic control.\(^{104}\)

**Maoist Transformation of Chinese Academia**

During the Maoist, the highly politicized academic establishment underwent a series of radical political movements, such as the Anti-Rightist movement, which devastated the scholarly tradition built during the Late-Qing and Republican times. During Mao’s Cultural Revolution, scholarship, from both Chinese and Western traditions, was ravaged amidst the fervent anti-intellectual atmosphere.

The reasons behind the radical transformation were multifold. With the military triumph over the Republican government in 1949, Mao and his comrades were excited by their vision of a new China and aware of the need to reform the

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education regime. Eliminating the GMD’s influence on education and academia and establishing the Party’s institutional and ideological control over the academics were among the CCP’s priorities. This happened in the context of the war with the US and its allies in Korean Peninsula, and the Party’s violent crackdown of what they considered “counterrevolutionaries” within mainland China. On a more fundamental level, CCP officers felt that the Republican universities were incompatible with the planned economy that the Party vowed to build. As an important part of the Soviet economy, universities served primarily as training plants for advanced human resources. The party-state not only controlled budget and resources for education but also decided who the universities should recruit, what classes shall taught, even how the classes were supposed to be taught. All college graduates were allocated to certain vocational positions according to the plans of the Planning Committee. None of these were the case in Republican China; yet everything became possible now: A bold reform that would fundamentally change the structure of Chinese academia was thus about to come.

Shortly before the official founding of the People’s Republic, the first plenum of the CPPCC (Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference) resulted in Gongtong Gangling, a de facto constitution for the first five years of the new state. In the section regarding education affairs, Gongtong Gangling revealed the communists’ vision for education reform, and pronounced a forthcoming break with the academic-

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106 Research, on the other hand, was the job for professional scientists and scholars who worked in various academies and institutes.
educational tradition from Republican times. Filled with extremely populist rhetoric, the document accentuated the role of the state in education and foreshadowed the Party dominance in a missive Soviet tone. For instance, Section V of Gongtong Gangling defined New China’s education as “of the nation, of science and of the people,” and should be free from the influence of “feudalism” and “agents of imperialist powers.” Article 44 encourages citizens to adopt “scientific historiography,” which is a euphemism for the Party’s ideology. Article 47 stipulates that the state would develop education “according to a plan,” and emphasizes the importance of “revolutionary political education to the young intellectuals and the old-fashioned intellectuals.”

Sovietization became the dominating motif of the reform. Held in December 1949, the first working conference on national education decided that the education system would be based on the education model developed by the Chinese Communists during their revolution that adopted “the USSR experience.” The government held a subsequent working conference in June 1950, which was specifically dedicated to the upcoming reform of the tertiary education system. In 1951, the Ministry of Education announced a detailed plan, which focused on three

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107 Gongtong Gangling was passed at a time when the CCP still felt the necessity of maintaining its wartime political alliances, most of whom were liberals and left-leaning intellectuals who did not agree with a full-scale Sovietization. Therefore, the rhetoric of Gongtong Gangling avoided explicit terms such as “socialism,” and “USSR.” However, this was a tactical concern and as we shall see, the content of Gongtong Gangling was in fact suggesting upcoming Sovietization. For a related discussion, see Gilbert Rozman, “Concluding Assessment: The Soviet Impact on Chinese Society,” in Thomas P. Bernstein and Hua-yu Li ed. China Learns from the Soviet Union, 1949-Present (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2010), 517-25, especially 519.

aspects, namely institutional reform, curriculum reform, and the reform of pedagogic methods, all of which were to emulate the Soviet education system. Through the institutional reform, the party-state not only established its dominance over Chinese academia and the tertiary education system, the party-state also Sovietized the system, which will be discussed in detail in the following sections.

**Institutional Reform (1951-52): Nationalization, Reorganization, and Relocation**

Up until the institutional reform, changes brought by the new regime were largely confined to administrative reforms, such as the change of university presidents and the reform of university governance. On the institutional level, universities were gradually incorporated into the state bureaucracy: in July 1950, the government announced that “principally, all tertiary education institutes would be uniformly managed by the Ministry of Education.”\(^\text{109}\) At the same time, CCP branches were set up on all campuses and were given significant roles in almost every aspect of campus life.\(^\text{110}\) The indication of this political move only became explicit in later years. At the time, supporters and sympathizers of the CCP constituted the campus majority.\(^\text{111}\)

The institutional reform fundamentally changed the landscape of Chinese higher education: backed by the authoritarian party-state system largely in place at the


\(^{111}\) About the attitudes of intellectuals, see for instance
time, the government directed a large scale of institutional reorganization, which involved nearly every educational institute on Mainland China. During the reorganization, institutes were nationalized, dismantled, merged, relocated, or terminated. The whole national tertiary educational system was organized according to Communist educational theories developed by Soviet educators and bureaucrats, which emphasized the concentration of resources and specialization of teaching and research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Private</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comprehensive University</td>
<td>Single-Subject College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The first phase of this transformation was the nationalization of all private universities and missionary-affiliated colleges. Nationalization did not merely mean the shift of property rights to the state but in fact institutes that were nationalized were usually forced to give up their names and ceased to exist as independent organization. Their faculty, students, administration, and equipment, and the real estate were transferred to other state-controlled universities or colleges. Missionary-affiliated and foreign universities were forced to abandon their religious and foreign
sponsorship. Later, these missionary and foreign colleges were also incorporated into state institutes.\(^{112}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Private</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University</td>
<td>College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name Maintained</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renamed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abolished</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Officials launched a second phase of reforms in 1952, which had two primary goals. First, all private institutes, which accounted for nearly 40% of Chinese universities in pre-1949 China, were nationalized.\(^{113}\) Major universities were further whittled down and transformed into two kinds of institutes known as “liberal arts universities” and specialized institutes.\(^{114}\) The first kind, liberal arts universities (文理科大学, *wenlike daxue*) only share the name with American liberal arts colleges. They were given the name because they were intended to focus on the study of “fundamental sciences,” such as math and theoretical physics, as well as humanities and philosophy. These liberal arts universities only made up a small proportion of the

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In 1949, there were 20 missionary-affiliated tertiary educational institutions (17 of them were subsidized by Americans). For a list of Christian (both Catholic and Protestant) institutions of higher learning, see Jessie Gregory Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges, 1850-1950* (Cornell University Press, 1971).

\(^{113}\) Most of them were left untouched in the first phrase of nationalization in 1950.

\(^{114}\) Comprehensive universities accounted for 41.5% of all universities and colleges in 1947. The number dropped to 8.5% in 1953. Data from Hu, *ibid*, 5.
tertiary institutes. Deeply convinced by the USSR experience, the CCP policymakers believed that the most efficient way for a university to perform its job of training experts was to specialize the institute’s teaching and research programs. Policymakers concentrated resources, including faculty to support these specialized institutes. This education philosophy was compatible with a Soviet-style planned economy.

The institutional reform resulted in a significant reduction of comprehensive universities and the creation of various specialized institutes, such as the Institute of Construction, the Institute of Mail and Telecommunication, the Institute of Oil, and others. After these reforms were implemented specialized colleges (單科大學, lit, Single-Subject University) became the predominant component of the Chinese tertiary educational system.¹¹⁵ This system remained unchanged up until early 2000.

Social Sciences and Humanities in the Early PRC

The organizational structure of universities was reorganized according to the Soviet principle of specialization and professionalization during the institutional reform. The academic focus of universities also underwent significant changes. For instance, in the Eastern China Region (華東區), departments of humanities and social sciences were the major targets, among which 55.6% were relocated to other regions and 62.6% were shut down.¹¹⁶ The abolished departments included Education,

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 5.
¹¹⁶ Ibid, 95.
Literature, Legal Studies, Political Science, Sociology, Journalism, and Anthropology from 17 universities and colleges.117

Pragmatic reasoning was the rationale to justify the expansion of technology and engineering institutes. With the pragmatic need to train as many technicians and engineers for the industrializing economy, engineering factor was significantly expanded in the new system while many comprehensive schools were transformed into specialized institutes. For instance, Nanjing University, the former National Nanjing University located at the capital of the Republic, was transformed into an institute of engineering and technology while its prestigious philosophy and political science departments were dismantled. The once-prominent national harbor of social scientists now offered majors such as Kitchen Construction (厨房工程).118

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117 For a detailed list, see ibid, 96. Hu’s data source is “Huadong gaodeng xuexiao yuanxi tiaozheng gongzuo zongjie [Working Summary of the Reorganization of Institutes and Departments in Huadongqu],” Ministry of Education Archive, Vol. 17 of 1951 Section. The use of this secondary book in the thesis is due to technical limits, for the public access to the MOE Archive is strictly regulated. According to Section Five of “Jiaoyubu wenshu lijuan guidang he dang’an liyong banfa,” Jiaodangting [2004] 8, access to the archive has to be referred by a provincial government or a ministry-affiliated university and be approved by the Ministry beforehand.

In contrast to the expansion of engineering, the social-sciences and humanities sectors shrank dramatically. As shown in Chart 1-4, the percentage of students enrolled in humanities and social science (renwen, zhengfa, and caijing combined) majors dropped significantly from 44% in 1947 to 6.1% in 1959. Chart 1-5 shows the official plan for university majors, where all humanities and social sciences took up less than 17% of all available majors. Among them, some disciplines were completely abolished, such as sociology and political science, which were officially abandoned because they were denounced in the Soviet Union as “bourgeoipseudoscience.”

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Political science was replaced by political-economics, which became a training program for administrators and assistants in governmental agencies such as the Propaganda Department. The distortion of political science was so profound, that many Chinese associate the subject negatively with the mechanical rote learning of political doctrines and bureaucratic deceit. When this writer mentioned his undergraduate curriculum include zhengzhixue, the Chinese term for political science, he often received a mixed feeling of untrustworthiness and confusion. One interviewee, who was an engineering lecturer in her mid-sixties, expressed her deep discontent. “You should cherish the opportunity of studying in the U.S.,” she said seriously, “why waste your time on such a useless discipline?”\textsuperscript{120}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Humanities &amp; Social Sciences</th>
<th>Politics &amp; Law</th>
<th>Economics &amp; Finance</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Engineering &amp; Natural Sciences</th>
<th>Medical &amp; Agriculture</th>
<th>Arts &amp; Sports</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRC</strong></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proportion</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>55.3%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>USSR</strong></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proportion</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>53.1%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 1-5: Cross-country comparison of majors and concentrations available in the PRC and USSR universities, 1954.

Source: 高等学校专业目录分类设置 草案, 高等教育部档案, 1954 年长期卷 50

The institutional reform profoundly influenced the development of the Chinese social sciences and humanities. During the Republican period, certain

\textsuperscript{120} Interview with Wang Shuhua, Zhengzhou, July 15, 2010.
Chinese social sciences achieved internationally recognized advances, thanks to a
generation of Chinese scholars who enthusiastically adopted Western scientific
methods while remaining steeped in their own Chinese scholarly tradition. Fei
Xiaotong (also Fei Hsiao-Tung, 費孝通, 1910-2005), a student of the prominent
anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski at the London School of Economics, for
instance, received international recognition for his sociology and anthropology
studies of rural China; Liang Sicheng (梁思成,1901-1972), “a pioneer in historical
research and exploration in Chinese architecture and planning, and a leader in the
restoration and preservation of the priceless monuments of his country;”121 Chen
Yinke, who was offered a professorship at Oxford University in Chinese History. Yet
all of them suffered during this period as they were forced to comply with the official
curriculum. Fei Xiaotong was particularly agonized, as sociology as a discipline was
entirely abolished.

When the Commission on Higher Education first announced that there would
be no sociology classes taught in Chinese universities, Fei Xiaotong worked hard to
preserve this discipline. His intensive lobbying resulted in the Commission deciding
in August 1950 to maintain the discipline for “the training of cadres for the
government and other relevant bureaus” for the management of interior affairs,
religion affairs and economic matters.122 In the following institutional reforms,
sociology and related courses were all abolished, however. In 1953, during a meeting

121 Princeton University, honorary doctoral degree 1947.
122 各大学专科学校文法学院各系课程暂行规定 1950-8
held in Zhongnanhai, the headquarter of the CCP, Fei seized a chance to petition Mao. He begged Mao to at least “maintain a seedling of sociology.” Mao’s reply was straightforward: sociology as a subject was to be eliminated in Socialist China.\(^{123}\)

During the Anti-Rightist Movement (1957-1959), Fei was labeled as a “rightist” and was attacked by his former friends, colleagues, and students for his “reactionary” academic points of view. He was denied the chance to conduct research for the next 23 years. Fei published his last major monograph in 1948. However it was not until 1981 that he was allowed to publish an article dedicated to his professor Malinowski in English.\(^{124}\) Sociology as a discipline was only officially revived in 1979 when Deng called for academic reforms.\(^{125}\)

As some of the most promising scholars were forced to leave their universities, their academic careers literally came to an end. The students in the “outlawed” disciplines were forced to abandon their academic interests. A generational knowledge gap was thus created. This lack of academic training in various social sciences became a major cause of the academic normalization movement during the early 1990s, and shall be discussed in greater depth in the next chapter.

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\(^{123}\) Zhang Guansheng, *Fei Xiaotong Zhuan* [A biography of Fei Xiaotong], (Beijing: Qunyan Chubanshe, 2000), 313.


Academia under Politicization

A central notion to Maoism is the ultimate power of the people. “Once the mass is equipped with revolutionary theory,

With the massive Sovietization of the university system, Soviet textbooks were revered as the authoritative sources and were widely adopted by Chinese universities. With the massive translation projects of Soviet books, some Chinese scholars randomly plagiarized various Soviet scholars’ works. In 1955, Shandong University’s President and Party philosopher Hua Gang (华岗, 1903-1972) was accused of plagiarizing in his monograph *Bianzheng weiwufa dagang* (辩证唯物法大纲, 1954). Most of the book was plagiarized from translated booklets of Soviet textbooks and journal articles. *People’s Daily* publicized the case in December 24 in a usually harsh tone:

> It would be unfair to say Hua’s monograph has no novelty. Plagiarism in such a shameless manner is definitely one of its characteristics. According to our preliminary investigation, at least one fourth of Hua’s 500-something-page-long book is plain plagiarism.”

The Hua Gang Case became an important story at the time. According to the memory of a scholar, due to the harsh punishment of Hua Gang, rampant plagiarism in academic writings dramatically waned.127

Plagiarism was not the only reason behind the public humiliation of Hua Gang.

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127 Zhu Dongli interview. See “
Prior to the publication of Hua’s plagiarism, he was already arrested for his sympatic support of thenpersecuted intellectual Hu Feng (胡风, 1902-1985). The real motivation behind the publication of the plagiarism may have actually been political. The allegation of plagiaraim of Hua directly discredited his reputation as a prominent Party philosopher, thus justifying his imprisonment. One can only wonder, had Hua was not labeled as an “anti-Partyist” (反党分子) in the first place, would his plagiarism ever be publicized? In fact, once Hua’s political case was readdress in 1980 by the reformists, he was celebrated as “an outstanding theorist of the Party,” a loyal cadre and a martyr of the “erroneous leftist path,” which is a euphemism for the crime of Mao and his radical followers. Hua’s official biography published in the early 1990 never mentioned a single word of his plagiarism. In the appendix of the biography, Hua’s Bianzheng weiwufa dagang was listed as his original monograph.

Ideology Indoctrination and Thought Reform

This was accompanied by large-scale “thought reform campaigns” that aimed to convince the faculty of the necessity of reform and Sovietization.

Soviet education is known for its dedication to ideological indoctrination. Communist education officials in the USSR were deeply convinced by the instrumental value of education in the process of building an ideal Socialist society, and they never hesitated in acknowledging that. In their eyes, education should instill the core value of the society to its students and mold them into what the society

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130 Ibid, 332.
131 Ibid, 86.
considered to be qualified citizens. In fact, all education served certain ideological ends: it’s a matter of hypocrisy that most bourgeoisie educators claimed their work as neutral or “unbiased,” which was denounced by Lenin as “lies.” The Chinese Communists fully embraced such notions. The CCP made it an official goal for universities to educate students with “patriotism and internationalism with communist morality,” in order to nurture their “dedication to the Party Leadership and dedication in serving the Socialist enterprise.” Chinese college students are required to vow to follow these ideological slogans: which is still the case today. “Political learning,” including classes on Marxism and Maoism became a mandatory part of the curriculum for students in all majors. The following table shows the teaching hours of political learning course in tertiary institutes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours of Ideological Courses in Various Kinds of Higher Education Institutes, Hu 139</th>
<th>Semester I</th>
<th>Semester II</th>
<th>Semester III</th>
<th>Semester IV</th>
<th>Semester V</th>
<th>Semester VI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>comprehensive universities &amp; normal universities</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other universities</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-year professional school</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-year professional school</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 关于全国高等学校马克思列宁主义、毛泽东思想课程的指示, 高等教育文献法令汇编 (1949-1952), 85

133 中华人名共和国教育部直属高等学校暂行工作条例草案 1962
134
Since the mid-1950s, CCP Party Secretaries have become the *de facto* leaders of Chinese universities, assuming the power of the former university Presidents. On campus, party branches were set up in every department and Leninism-Maoism enjoyed ideological prominence in Chinese academia. This was briefly reversed in the 1980s during a reform that attempted to separate the CCP branch from the university administration. However, the attempt was doomed when the orthodoxy came to power after the Tiananmen Crackdown in 1989.\(^\text{135}\) Even today CCP continues to keep its grip on every Chinese university.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Peking University</th>
<th>Beijing Institute of Mines</th>
<th>Beijing Agriculture University</th>
<th>Universities in the USSR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Working Hours per Day</strong></td>
<td>9.83</td>
<td>10.73</td>
<td>11.46</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Hours per Day</strong></td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>2.75-3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching/Working Hours Ratio</strong></td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>45.8-64.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The extensive reforms dominated by the Party in order to incorporate universities fully into the party-state structure took up considerable time of the faculty that ought to be spent on teaching and research. Non-academic activities such as organized “political study sessions” occupied a significant portion of the university schedule. A study conducted in 1954 commissioned by the Ministry of Education revealed that Chinese faculty spent 2 hours less per day on teaching than their Russian counterparts. This, however, did not mean Chinese faculty enjoyed more leisure time. As the above table shows, the total working hours of Chinese faculty were significantly longer. The discrepancy between total working hours and teaching hours was mainly occupied by various political programs, such as political indoctrination workshops and political assemblies.

Ji Xianlin (季羡林 1911-2009), a prominent pro-communist intellectual, recalls in his memoirs that the intensive “political learning sessions” were carried out on a daily basis.¹³⁶ Chen Yinke tactfully protested against the imposed ideological indoctrination in two poems composed in 1952. In these elaborately composed poems, he expressed the psychological trauma he suffered during a typical political session. Scholars, according to Chen, were like old men being forced to cross-dressed as young ladies.

How much rouge shall it take
To cover up the wrinkled face of an old man
turning him into a shining young lady?

Laughing are the audiences

when they saw the tears rolling down his face
which was irritated by the rouge
as red as blood\textsuperscript{137}

Chen also implicitly criticized those who denounced their former beliefs in
order to demonstrate their ideological identification with the new regime. In another
poem titled \textit{Nandan}, which means a type of male opera singer who played youthful
females on stage, Chen Yinke harrowingly groaned that

“Now the intellectuals became the best heirs of the \textit{nandan}!”\textsuperscript{138}

\textbf{The Cultural Revolution led to a ten year blank period of modern higher}
education, which traumatized the intelligentsia. It created a generation of scholars
(those born in the 1950s) who did not receive systematic academic training during
their schooling age. With the politicization of academics and the drastic shrinking of
autonomy within academia, scholarly norms among academics could no longer be
maintained as an independent system. The university system was shut down for four
years and scholarly research was significantly disturbed by fractional politics. In the
realm of history, scholarship became a tool for political struggle. Arbitrary
interpretation of historical sources served as a means of power.

\textsuperscript{137}”塗脂抹粉厚幾許，欲改衰翁成姹女。滿堂觀眾笑且憐，黃花一枝秋帶雨。” Hu Wenhui ed.,
\textit{Chen Yinke shi jianshi} [An Exegesis on Chen Yinke’s Poems] (Guangzhou: Guangdong Renmin
Chubanshe, 2008),666-7.

\textsuperscript{138}“改男造女態全新，鞠部精華舊絕倫，太息風流衰歇後，傳薪翻是讀書人。” Hu ed., \textit{Chen
Yinke shi jianshi}, 662-4.
Professional Life of Scholars in the Early PRC

Under Mao’s rule, freelance scholars were not permitted. Shortly after the bloody zhenfan campaign against so-called anti-revolutionaries, scholars who had not yet been recruited by the party-state were asked to either assume a teaching position in a college or join the newly established Chinese Academy of Sciences. The party-state was characterized by its totalitarian control, where power monopolized by CCP party cadres. Scholars were woven into a large bureaucratic system known as xitong (系统), which was composed of numerous danwei (单位, working unit). The regime was subjected to a dual-track management system, which was run by party cadres and administrative officials.

A danwei provided comprehensive welfare to its members, such as housing, health care and education of children. At the same time, the danwei was also in charge of various aspects of its members’ daily lives, which even included marriage intervention. The danwei assumed the role as the moral authority in the community on behalf of the Party. The totalitarian nature of the danwei effectively prevented any explicity contentious behaviors of the members. It also reaffirmed the Party authority in all aspects aspects of the social lives of scholars.

The numerous danweis constituted a goliath of bureaucracy known as xitong. On each institutional level of the xitong, there were at least six officials (a director, two vice-directors, and their party counterparts) who had “direct, concrete, visible,
face-to-face control over the ‘bread-and-butter’ infrastructure of [scholars’] lives.”139 The hierarchical structure of the xitong made it difficult for scholars to protest party cadre’s decisions. Scholars who worked within the establishment had little means to resist power of the party-state.

In conclusion, the erosion of academic norms during the PRC had four phases. The first phase was marked by increasing politicization and the establishment of the supremacy of state ideology. It was a highly politicized and bureaucratic type of university. Although universities underwent reforms in subsequent years, the basic power structure remained unchanged, with the cadres and bureaucrats occupying a central role in the system. The second phase started in 1958 with the so-called Anti-Rightists Movement, during where intellectuals were systematically oppressed for their speech, which compromised academic freedom significantly. Accompanying the movement was the Great Leap Forward, during which many scholars actively cooperated with officials in political propagandizing. This further trampled academic independence and was particularly crucial for changing the mentality of the intellectual elite, including senior researchers, professors and intellectual leaders. The third phrase was the Cultural Revolution, during which the basic scholarly norms were nearly wiped out together with the intellectual class.

Conclusion

We have examined the brief history of Chinese scholarship in this chapter, which has the following implications to the thesis.

First, due to the social structure of pre-modern China, where scholarship and politics were closely intermingled, traditional China did not give birth to a set of scholarly norms that we are familiar with today. Plagiarism, however, was widely condemned. Overtime, certain scholarly conventions and regulations comparable to those of today were developed. Therefore, the claim that traditional Chinese culture gave rise to plagiarism was incongruent with factual historical records. It is unfair to ascribe the lack of scholarly norms in contemporary China to its ancient cultural heritage.

Second, prior to the foundation of the PRC, there was ample evidence suggesting the existence of a highly internationalized system of scholarly norms.

Third, the founding of the PRC marked a tremendous shift in Chinese intellectual life. The increasing politicization of academia undermined scholarly autonomy and academic freedom, which suspended the scholarly norms developed during the Republican period.

The history of Chinese scholarship in the 20th century could be viewed as a dialectic movement. Scholarship developed during the Republican period constitutes the thesis of the movement, which is itself a synthesis between the imperial Chinese scholarly tradition and Western scholarship. Under Mao’s rule, the totalitarian party-
state became an *antithesis* to the thesis, for the continual politicization and radicalization resulted in an ahistorical approach to the Chinese tradition, as well as an intellectual xenophobia against what it perceived as the intellectual embodiment of Imperialism (Western scholarship) and Socialist Imperialism (Communist scholarship). The development of the *antithesis* gradually intensified and climaxed during the Cultural Revolution (196-76), which led to a catastrophic calamity of Chinese academics: academic intuitions were paralyzed, scholars persecuted, or were recruited to justify the political agenda of different Party factions.
Chapter Two

Bloody Fever: Abnormal Academia in the 1980s

Introduction

“Academic normalization” assumes the “abnormity” of Chinese academia, which indicates the lack of norms in the production, transmission and evaluation of knowledge, as well as the way the academics are managed.\footnote{Deng Zhenglai, “Huajie zhengtide shehuikexueguan: ‘Zhongguo shehuikexue guifanhua taolun’ de taolun,” Chinese Book Reviews, Vol.6, July 1995, WX, 250.} Why did the call for normalization become a primary discourse among Chinese scholars in the early 1990s? Why would 1980s Chinese academia be perceived as “abnormal” in the eyes of Chinese scholars in the 1990s? Was it really as some have suggested, “romantically idealistic,” “baselessly grandiloquent,” “pompously tangential,” and in general “norm-absent”?\footnote{Chen Pingyuan, “Beyond Norms,” WX, 1 & 7.}

From the perspective of historical connectedness and continuity, the normalization movement is best understood as a response to the peculiarities of academia in the eighties, namely, the intellectual movement that enthusiastically embraced the contemporary Euro-American scholarship, known as the “Cultural Fever (文化热)”\footnote{These two terms are well-discussed among contemporary Chinese intellectual historians. For a discussion on the Cultural Fever, see Xudong Zhang, Chinese Modernism in the Era of Reforms: Cultural Fever, Avant-garde Fiction, and the New Chinese Cinema (Duke University Press, 1997): 35. The “New Enlightenment” was coined as opposed to the “Chinese Enlightenment” climaxed in the May Fourth Movement in 1919. For May Fourth Movement, see Vera Schwartz, The Chinese} and the social movement initiated and advocated by intellectuals, namely the “New Enlightenment (新启蒙)”.\footnote{I attempt to illustrate the troubling}

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problems for Chinese scholars caused by these two movements in this section. However, as Liang Zhiping and others point out, Chinese scholarship might have the chance to correct the problems of the 1980s had it been given enough time, but the Tiananmen Crackdown in 1989 broke the continuity of Chinese scholarship and the spontaneous development of scholarly community. In order to understand the particular time when the call for normalization became a public intellectual discourse, this dimension of discontinuity must be addressed.

**Resurrection of Academia**

The resurrection of Chinese academia after the years of the Cultural Revolution provided the institutional basis for the resumption and development of Chinese scholarship and academic norms. Nevertheless, the newly revived system was also embedded by a series of problems, some of which evolved into rampant malpractices among certain young scholars. Scholarly reflections of these problems constituted the premise of the academic normalization movement.

**Political Background**

Chinese intelligentsia suffered political oppression of the party-state since the founding of the People’s Republic in 1949. The persecution of intellectuals and scholars culminated in the horrific catastrophe of the decade-long Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), where over 100 million people (1/9 of the whole population) were

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persecuted, and about 200,000 “advanced intellectuals,” aka intellectuals who held advanced degrees, lost their lives, according to official figures.\(^{144}\) After Mao’s death in September 1976, his political heir Hua Guofeng (华国锋, 1921-2008) aligned himself with the party elders and arrested the so-called Gang of Four, thus putting an end to the most radical political movement in the PRC history. The pragmatist Deng Xiaoping reentered the core of leadership and soon won support among party elders who were no longer interested in the Maoist ideal of continuous revolutions.

Party elders who dominated the new leadership were, however, not for democratic reform. In their eyes, resurrecting the party-state was the most important (if not the only) end of the reform and the party monopoly of power must remain unchallenged. In late 1979, posting on the Democracy Wall (民主墙), a long bulletin wall in downtown Beijing that served as a public forum for dissident opinions, was officially outlawed.\(^{145}\) Deng soon delivered a speech, announcing the “Four Cardinal Principles,” which in essence reaffirmed the CCP’s monopoly of power and set the political background for the 1980’s intelligentsia.\(^{146}\) On the one hand, the official rhetoric of “Reform and Open Door (改革开放)” legitimized the open research and teaching of foreign knowledge that had been politically blocked, and opened up the public discussion and debate on various topics that were once taboo under the

\(^{146}\) These principles include: 1. the principle of upholding the socialist path; 2. the principle of upholding the people’s democratic dictatorship; 3. the principle of upholding the leadership of the Communist Party of China, and 4. the principle of upholding Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong thought.
Communists. On the other hand, certain officials tried to maintain the Maoist intellectual policies (marked by tight state control of speech and thought,) seeking to counter what they perceived as threats to the party-state.

**Reopening of Universities**

As a major signal of the restoration of order in academics and education, the national college entrance examination was resumed in 1977. Of the six million people who took the exam, only 330,000 were admitted by colleges. The initial examination was widely perceived as a signal that the academic life in the PRC was about to be “normalized” again. The resumed college entrance examination played a key role in reestablishing the functional order in the Chinese educational system.

With the reopening of colleges and universities, China officially adopted a new academic degree system. “The establishment of the scholarly degree system has its own particular significance,” said Chen Pingyuan in an interview. Marked by the promulgation of *the Regulations on Academic Degrees* in May 1981, the new system offers Bachelor’s, Master’s and the Doctorate to college graduates in the PRC on behalf of the Ministry of Education. In 1983, the first doctoral degree in social science was granted. Prior to this reform, Chinese universities did not have the right to grant advance degrees for “graduates.” The establishment of the degree system enabled college graduates could pursue higher degrees in Chinese universities.

147 Zha, *Boshi niandai fangtanlu*, 146
The establishment of the degree system increased the number of graduate students, many of whom finished their academic training in the latter half of the 1980s. This generation of scholars was unique compared with their teachers’ generation in many ways, which left a significant impact on the 1980’s scholarship. “The degree system, along with other reforms in Chinese universities, profoundly influenced the further development of Chinese scholarship and culture,” said Chen. “It lays down the foundation of the normalization of scholarly order. It also proclaims the abandon of the traditional shuyuan institutes and the emulation of the ‘international standard.’”

“The desire to enclose oneself within artificial barriers is, first of all, to condemn oneself to stagnation and, secondly, to regression.” The post-Mao leadership was delusional to Mao’s utopian notion of a Chinese glorious isolation. The government realized that no nation could develop great universities purely on its own feet. Thus, the post-Mao reforms were aimed at adopting successful foreign institutions. After 30 years of demonizing Western education, the Chinese government decided to study and adopt Euro-American education systems and the US model became the primary goal of emulation. The government launched an experimental reform aiming at increasing the autonomy of universities called the “presidential responsibility system” in 130 universities. The new administrative system highlighted the role of the president in decision making and therefore limited

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150 Zha, 146.
153 Chen, 146.
the role of the CCP campus branch. With the transfer of power from the party secretary to the university administrators, ideological confinements were greatly relaxed. For instance, physicist Fang Lizhi (方励之, 1936- ), then the vice president of the University of Science and Technology of China, played a vital role in inspiring his students to pursue democracy. His essays regarding human rights and democracy were circulated among university students and became a major intellectual source of the 1989 student protest.

**Resumption of International Scholarly Exchange**

While pushing for changes in domestic academic policies, Deng Xiaoping also considered international scholarly exchange an important part of his reform enterprises. On June 23, 1978 while listening to the working report on Tsinghua University, Deng declared that China would send scholars and students to study abroad “in thousands and ten thousands.” On December 26, a delegation of 52 Chinese scholars was sent to the US as visiting scholars. In subsequent years, policies limiting study abroad programs were gradually loosened. With the development of various exchange programs funded by the expatriate Chinese communities, foreign governments as well as international institutes like the Bank of Asian Development, many scholars were able to study in a foreign university for one or two years as visiting scholars. The experiences helped the younger generation (who had no empirical understanding of the Western scholarly system up till then) to live in a system distinctively different from what they knew about. The process of scholarly exchange...

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exchanges facilitated the increase of Chinese scholarly activities in the 1980s. This process also helped to provide up-to-date academic information to Chinese scholars, thereby undermining their former ideological dogmas. Many young scholars who studied abroad during this period returned to China, and later became major players in the normalization movement.

As one Chinese expert observed, however, “[returned scholars] have brought home with them not only knowledge of computers and plasma physics, but also a whole range of administrative, management and institutional forms that in their minds are closely associated with the knowledge thus obtained.” Indeed, Chinese students and scholars were reportedly receiving pressure, imposed consciously or not, from their foreign hosts in the hope of “[creating] pressure on the [Chinese] government to change” once they returned home.

With the increasing number of overseas scholars and students, the party-state adopted countermeasures against what it perceived as an ideological threat to its legitimacy from abroad. The party made clear that it would stick to the Four Cardinal Principles, which was a set of ideological doctrines proposed by Deng in 1979 to safeguard the CCP’s supreme political leadership over the state. “Modernization should not and would not lead to Westernization,” as the party-state tried to only adopt “science, technology, and managerial experience” applicable to “specific

Throughout the 1980s, political Orthodoxies in the government launched several campaigns against what they called “spiritual pollution (精神污染)” and “bourgeoisie liberalization” (资产阶级自由化).158

The Cultural Fever

In the 1980s, the reforms were primarily economical, though political reform was also on the official agenda. Academics were among the first beneficiaries of these reforms, whose living standards were higher than ordinary Chinese people in the first half of the 1980s.159 The relaxed regulations enabled a minimal level of personal freedom, which was quickly utilized by academics for facilitating intellectual discussion.

Emergence of Autonomous Scholarly Groups

Once the intellectual thawing started to win official acquiescence starting in the late 1970s, the translation of contemporary Western scholarship became an intellectual fashion. A group of young scholars were inspired by the New Cultural Movement in the 1920s and decided to carry on the tradition of the May Fourth Movement of 1911. Just like their predecessors in the Late Qing period, “translating foreign books” became a priority concern among these scholars (當以譯書為第一事), which was seen as a way to be engaged in the social changes of China through the introduction of new thoughts. These editorial groups became intellectual hubs for

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159 Chen Mingyuan, Zhishi fenzi yu renminbi shidai (Shanghai: Wenhui chubanshe, 2006), chapter 3.
scholars, particularly young scholars and graduate students, who favored the reform and were eager to make a difference. These editorial groups provided an “organic” institutional structure that was independent from the official academic establishment, which, to a certain extent, helped intellectuals to reestablish a unique “public sphere,” where they could discuss sociopolitical issues freely and share their intellectual interests.¹⁶⁰ The emergence of independent scholarly groups was a direct reaction toward the danwei establishment. Under Mao’s rule, no freelance scholars were permitted. Shortly after the bloody zhengfan campaign against so-called anti-revolutionaries (1950-1952), scholars who had not yet been recruited by the state were asked to join either the education regime or the academic regime, composed by various danwei or working units. Maoist regimes were marked by a totality of control, which was monitored and monopolized by CCP party cadres. Danwei took care of everything from housing to the education of children. Its job even included marriage crisis intervention. The totalitarian nature of the danwei effectively limited the possible contentious behavior of scholars who worked within the establishment. It also insured the efficient control of the Party of various aspects of the social lives of scholars. The emergence and development of independent scholarly groups marked the rebirth of scholarly autonomy in the PRC, which had been annihilated due to political oppression.

In May 1982, the first such editorial board was formed. In January 1984, the publication of the first book in the series Towards the Future (Zou xiang weilai 走向

¹⁶⁰There are abundant memoirs regarding this period of history. See for instance, see Zha Jianying’s interviews with Li Tuo, Chen Pingyuan and Gan Yang in Bash niandai fangtanlu.
未来), which was aimed at introducing the contemporary developments in the natural sciences, social sciences and humanities to Chinese readers, became an intellectual sensation.\textsuperscript{161} Some of the books in the series sold more than a million copies, as people, especially youths and students, eagerly sought new ideas and theories. The series was edited by a commission composed of Beijing-based scholars in different disciplines, all of whom were under 45 years old at the time. One of the editors, historian Jin Guantao (金观涛, 1947-), recalled the original motivation of the editorial board:

We all went through the Cultural Revolution and were well aware of the tremendous misery it brought to our nation. When the Revolution came to an end, we all came to the realization that we could not just let [the society] function [in the Maoist way] any longer. This awareness was not just among a few individuals; it was a trend of the time. The press came to us looking for a series on general self-education, which was not what we were thinking about however. Our goal was clear: it had to be a series dedicated to enlightenment and thought (启蒙和思想).\textsuperscript{162}

This series was scheduled to include a hundred books that cover a wide array of topics, ranging from Marx Weber’s classical work the Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, the influential neo-Malthusian The Limits to Growth (1972), K.J. Arrow’s Social Choice and Individual Values (1951) to introductory booklets on Wittgenstein’s Tractatus, Popper and Lakatos’s philosophy of science, and Keynes’s macroeconomics. Empiricism, scienticism, and positivism were the major theme of this series. In total the series actually published 74 kinds of books.

After years of bombastic Stalinist and Maoist orthodoxy in history studies, *Behind the Appearance of History* was fascinating to Chinese readers, especially those who were not professional historians. The sensational success of *Towards the Future* encouraged scholars who shared the same aspiration. “Culture: China and the World” (*Wenhua: Zhongguo yǔ shijie*, CCW) and the Chinese Culture Institute (Zhongguo wenhua shuyuan, CCI) were two influential groups. CCW scholars were primarily interested in cultural studies. They translated many Western scholarly works, including those by Heidegger, Sartre and other European philosophers. The CCI was headed by prominent scholars who survived the Cultural Revolution, including Confucian philosophers Liang Shuming (梁漱溟, 1893-1988) and Feng Youlan (馮友蘭, 1895-1990), who emphasized the Chinese educational tradition of the *shuyuan*. The CCI introduced New Confucianism developed by scholars from Hong Kong and Taiwan, such as Mou Zongsan (牟宗三, 1909-1995), Xu Fuguan (徐複觀, 1904-1982) and Tang Junyi (唐君毅, 1909-1978). Overseas Chinese scholars such as Tu Wei-ming (杜維明, 1940- ) were also introduced to Mainland China. All together, the book series of the 1980s provided unprecedented access to influential foreign thoughts, especially Euro-American scholarship, to Chinese readers. Literary scholar Li Tuo (李陀, 1939- ) recalled the 1980s as a time when the whole society desirously sought “new knowledge.” According to him and some other scholars, the enthusiasm for knowledge was unbelievably remarkable. Even factory workers were reading the translations of Sartre.163

Cultural Determinism

The popularity of Western scholarship introduced by the book series induced waves of “Cultural Fever.” The first wave of the fever was in 1985, and the primary interest was about Western social sciences, introduced by *Towards the Future*. The second wave was primarily induced by the book series “Culture: China and the West,” the editors of which put an effort in introducing European philosophy. Although the editors of this series defended their works as qualified translations, a number of scholars held the series responsible for the flippant attitudes prevailing among young scholars. Zhu Suli recalled his encounter with the series.

I was a philosophy graduate student at the time and I once saw a big advertisement about a book series of translated Euro-American books. Most of the books were yet to be translated at the time. The editorial board of the book series heard that some scholars were planning to translate some of the same books so they decided to advertise their books first and then find someone for a rush translation. This is squatting. I felt ashamed of them: how could they treat scholarly works like this?  

Zhu also points out the generational character of the editors. “Most members of the editorial board were born in the late 1940s and early 1950s.”

The writings of many “enlightenment-minded scholars” during the 1980s were characterized by their favor of constructing grand narrative of history and an overtone of cultural determinism. This form of cultural determinism attributes the social problems of contemporary China to its cultural heritage. For instance, in regard

to the Cultural Revolution, cultural determinists would argue that Mao was able to come into power because of the “feudal culture” of China that undermines Chinese people’s individual independency.\textsuperscript{166} The cultural determinists’ abhorrence of absolutism embodied by Mao led them to detest the despotic and repressive elements in Chinese culture. Their scholarly works often brim with the call for freedom and democracy, but some of their arguments tend to be overly assertive without much support by solid evidence. Unlike Weber, who developed a set of ideal types of major civilizations, cultural determinists during this time often made oversimplified generalizations based on secondary sources, most of which were in Chinese. They oversimplified social phenomena into an all-encompassing narrative of “culture.” Such analytical framework was then uncritically employed to interpret various current issues. This simplistic reductionist approach led to the dichotomy between the despicable “feudal tradition” and the desirable “modern civilization.” Therefore, the predominant orientation of popular intellectual discourses during the Cultural Fever was cosmopolitan, characterized by an urge to “embracing the world.”\textsuperscript{167}

Criticism on the cultural deterministic undertone of the Cultural Fever surfaced in the late 1980s. “At the time there wasn’t many ‘hard requirement’ for

\textsuperscript{166} “Feudal” here is in its classical Marxist sense referring to the pre-capitalistic mode of society, characterized by the particular class tension between the landlords and the serfs. This theory is not applicable to Chinese historical facts, but the CCP and its historians distorted the meanings of the word in order to fit China into the Stalinist narrative of historical determinism.

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academic writing. Everyone could just roam about, easily crossing the boundaries of disciplines, or simply talked about ‘culture’ in a general way.“¹⁶⁸

**Problems in the Book Series**

Despite its colossal success, there are some profound problems in *Towards the Future* and its emulators. First, it is not certain if the translated works received formal permission from original authors. Several books were “transliterated” (编译, lit., edit and translated), suggesting the absence of legal consent.

Second, the book series embodied some major problems in the 1980 academia. Represented by Jin’s *Behind the Appearance of History*, the format of annotation does not comply with international standards. If there is a reference, the information given often includes the name of the author (usually in Chinese transliteration) and the book title. Other information such as the name of the press house and the year of publication was often emitted, increasing problems for verification.

The problems behind the sensational success of *Towards the Future* and other series were noticed by some scholars who were more familiar with Euro-American scholarship. Ding Xueliang (丁学良), then a PhD candidate at the Department of Sociology at Harvard, realized that some of the “new insights” popular during this time were not very innovative when compared with the development in the

¹⁶⁸ Zha, *Bashi niandai fangtanlu* 147
international scholarly community. He criticizes this problem in a published essay in early 1987.169

Ren Donglai (任东来, 1961- ), a faculty member at the John Hopkins University-Nanjing University Center for Chinese and American Studies, criticizes this problem in a much more acrimonious tone.

Nowadays our bookstores are full of books that address fashionable topics in general terms, most of which have little novelty… Many books run at a prolix length with fancy suffixes in their titles, such as ‘-logy,’ ‘-history,’ and ‘-ism.’ It is noteworthy that these scholars hardly offer any reference, let alone a full bibliography, as if everything they wrote in the books comes from their own innovation. However, when you compare one book with other publications addressing the similar topic, you instantly realize that it’s just a fraud. X copies from Y, Y copies from Z, and everyone copies from some foreigners, or from dear old Marx and Lenin.170

“Modern Academic Rangers” in 1980s Academia

The internal dynamics of the academic community also played an important role in the rise and development of the normalization movement. The continual radicalization during the first three decades of the People’s Republic of China created a deep generational gap among scholars. Many of today’s scholars grown up in the radical years of the majority of Chinese scholars were educated under the PRC. The academic lives of the senior professors and researchers were jeopardized by Mao’s policies. During the time, most senior scholars also suffered grave persecution during

that period. Nevertheless, for those who were still in their teens and early 20s when the Cultural Revolution was launched, their experiences were very different. Many of whom were party of the Red Guards or Little Red Guard incited by Maoist radicals, and actually participated in the persecution against senior scholars. Their normal education was also interrupted by the Revolution due to the abolishment of the national college entrance exam and the dysfunction of most universities.

When asked about the Wang Hui Controversy, Zhu Dongli (祝东力, 1962-), a research fellow at the Chinese Academy of Arts, shared his perception of the generational effect on Chinese academia.

As I recall, the scholarly ethos prior to 1985 was very good. But after that it became much worse… Plagiarism was very rare prior to 1985. As far as I know, in my research area there were only two cases. One is Hua Gang and his Bianzheng weiwulun dagang (see Section 3-C in Chapter One) in the mid-1950s, and Han Jinlian’s Hongxue shigao in the early 1980s. Both books were identified as works of plagiarism soon after their publication. During that time, plagiarism was quite rare.

The major cause was the generational shift. As the generation of Red Guards and zhiqing (Rusticated Youth of China) returned to college campuses, their particular experience with the brutal struggle and their participation in Mao’s personal cult shaped their academic approach, which is characterized by their contempt for scholarly tradition and norms. ¹⁷¹

¹⁷¹ Zhiqing, literally “knowledge youth” refers to a young person who had received a high level of education (in most cases, a graduate from high school). The term in particular refers to those who, “beginning in the 1950s until the end of the Cultural Revolution, willingly or under coercion, left the urban areas and was rusticated to rural areas to assume peasant lives.” See Cao Zuoya, Out of the Crucible: Literary Works about the Rusticated Youth (Lexington Books, 2003), 1.
From the end of the Cultural Revolution to the early 1980s, scholars in their mid and late years were the major players in Chinese academia. The generation of the Red Guards and *zhiging* was very much under the influence of their teachers (This generalization of scholars who were born in the 30s and 40s are known for their austere personality). But once they graduated from colleges, their different approach to academics was quite obvious.  

Zhu’s insightful analysis is helpful for us in understanding the generational psychology of the young scholars in the 1980s who later occupied major academic positions in the 1990s and 2000s. Many youths who were denied the opportunity of college eagerly prepared for and took the exams. Those Rusticated Youths and former Red Guards were were older than the usual college students when they were allowed to take the entrance exam. They were the ones who were sent to the countryside during the Cultural Revolution. This generation was recalled by many faculty members as dedicated and hardworking students. Some, however, were said to carry “a legacy of the Cultural Revolution.” Growing up in the most disruptive years of the PRC, they were emendated with Maoist propaganda. Although many students regretted their participation in the Cultural Revolution, and resented the “wasted decade,” many did not repent.

**He Xin: The Case of a “Modern Academic Ranger”**

A characteristic of 1980s Chinese intelligentsia was its openness to non-professionals. With the development of independent academic circles and groups,

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people without training in academic subjects were able to enter scholarly groups by various means. If they could demonstrate their “talent” or “scholarship” to the members of these groups and convince the core members of their capacity, not only could they be recommended to other influential intellectual and cultural figures, their works could also be published in major journals or newspapers. A representative figure at the time is He Xin (何新, 1949-). He Xin was a Rusticated Youth who spent his early years in Manchuria as a peasant and factory worker. He boldly wrote a *dazibao* criticizing Madam Mao (江青, 1914-1991) and was imprisoned thereafter.

He Xin claimed that he studied the works by Marx, Engels, Hegel, Croce and Milovan Đilas extensively during the Cultural Revolution. In 1985, with the help of an intellectual elder, He Xin was able to publish his first monograph interpreting Chinese mythology in Western semiotic terms, in which he claimed to have discovered the “lost secret of Sun-worship in ancient China.” He Xin argued that pre-Qin Chinese mythology could be seen as the development of an earlier monotheistic religion. Based on this hypothesis, He Xin developed a theory which enveloped nearly all Chinese mystical figures into a logically consistent system. The major implication of this theory is that China was an advanced, uniformed, cultural entity that has been occupying its current territory for over five thousand years. Such arguments were intended to fuel national pride and justify the imperativeness of maintaining political unification.

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His book was published when mainstream Chinese intellectuals first heard about semiotics. The theme of He’s book catered to the intellectual curiosity of the time, which made the book a big hit on the book market. The book was rejected by serious historians, who pointed out He’s misinterpretation of ancient sources and his fragile theoretical foundation. He established his popularity due to his outstanding ability in reducing complex academic investigation into exiting narratives accessible to normal readers rather than the respect he earned from serious scholars. With his popularity established, He Xin quickly published eight monographs from 1986 to 1989. In 1988 alone he published five books, including A New Inquiry into Chinese Ancient Mythology and History (中国远古神话与历史新探), Collected Essays of He Xin (何新集), Investigation of Human Nature (人性的探索), A Dictionary of Chinese and Western Culture (中西文化知识辞典) and A New Interpretation of Chinese Cultural Theory (中国文化史新论). After June 4, 1989, He Xin was the first intellectual figure who publically embraced the governmental crackdown, and became one of the most prominent ideologues of the party-state in the early 1990s. He wrote extensively on economics, political sciences and political philosophy, justifying the crackdown and advocating “Neo-Statism (新国家主义),” characterized

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by a Stalinist state and planned economy. However, when Deng decided to suppress the Orthodoxies in 1992, He lost influence to technocrats in the CCP. Today He Xin still aligns with the hardliners in the Party, preaching nationalism and conspiracy theory about how Free-Masons in the West are plotting against China.  

The case of He Xin highlights the endemic scholarly malpractice of the 1980s, including problematic academic writing, ahistorical conceptualization of Chinese and Western scholarly traditions, and the lack of acknowledgement of others’ research. Plagiarism occurred occasionally, but in most cases was addressed once it was discovered. In general, the scholarly ethos of the eighties remembered as as romantic, progressive, bold and sometimes blissfully ignorantly of scholarly norms. Despite the limits set by the sociopolitical circumstances of the time, this reveals that the development of a Chinese scholarly community was at a relatively low phase. He Xin’s overnight success highlights the informal mechanism of academic evaluation at that time. The function of scholarly groups in most cases depended on interpersonal relationships (guanxi) rather than impersonal institutions functioning according to codified regulations.

**Tiananmen: The Bloody Disillusion**

The sudden death of the reformist CCP General Secretary Hu Yaobang (胡耀邦, 1915-1989) fueled public resentment towards the party-state and caused a large-

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scale student protest, which quickly spread to other major cities in China. This pro-democratic movement was brutally crushed in early June of 1989, resulting in the grave loss of civilian lives. The Tiananmen Crackdown marked an internal split among the party leaders. Zhao Ziyang, the reformist leader, was under house arrest. Many of his followers and allies were purged or marginalized.\textsuperscript{178}

The Tiananmen Crackdown in Beijing on June 3rd and 4\textsuperscript{th} in 1989 was a fundamental blow to the intellectual enterprise of the New Enlightenment in the 1980s. The so-called anti-revolutionary rioters, including prominent intellectual figures such as the later Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Liu Xiaobo (刘晓波, 1955-) were arrested and persecuted. Some of whom were tried and executed. The hysteric party-state rampantly orchestrated a “tragedy with Shakespearean complexity,” reaffirming its monopoly of political power.\textsuperscript{179} As protestors were crushed by roaring tanks, many academics suffered a painful disillusionment.

When I stepped out my house to the street, what struck me was the deadly silence. I cycled down Chang’an Boulevard, the street I was once so familiar with. Every one or two meters stood a fully-armed soldier, guarding along the street, one after another forming a line of countless army… This was the essence of China, I thought. I told myself, I witnessed the essential China.\textsuperscript{180}

The intelligentsia was intimidated into deadly silence despite a few ideologues such as He Xin, who elaborated a nationalist rationale to justify the crackdown, in which

\textsuperscript{178} Liang Zhang, et al. The Tiananmen Papers (Abacus, 2002),
the protesters were portrayed as simple-minded people who were manipulated by insidious Western agents.\textsuperscript{181}

The Orthodoxyies gained power by purging the reformists after the Tiananmen Crackdown. The hardliner’s tightened political grip created a chilly intellectual atmosphere. Progressive political reforms were halted indefinitely, or reversed. Educational reform such as the “presidential responsibility system,” was limited to the 103 colleges and universities. After the Tiananmen Crackdown, it became an official policy to strengthen the CCP’s leadership on all campuses by tightening party control over key positions in all college and university affairs, in the name of “correct orientation of Chinese higher education.”\textsuperscript{182} Students at Peking University were sent to military bases for a year-long military training as punishment for their political enthusiasm in the Tiananmen protest.\textsuperscript{183} Starting in 1990, all Chinese college students were asked to take compulsory classes regarding “patriotism, modern Chinese history and China’s specific conditions (基本国情教育).”\textsuperscript{184} A system of student-informants (SIS) was created by Peking University cadres and was subsequently implemented across all Chinese universities. Recruited by the Party branch as secret informants, these students “engage in political spying on both professors and fellow students and


\textsuperscript{183} The now well-known dissident Yu Jie (余杰, 1973-) was among the students who sent to be “brainwashed.” He later composed several essays recalling the psychological experience. See for instance, “Tamen de shijie: Guanyu junxun de jiyi [The World of Theirs: Memories about the Military Training]” in the anthology \textit{Huoyu bing} [Fire and Ice] (1998).

\textsuperscript{184} Hu, Jianhua, \textit{Xiandai Zhongguo daxue zhidu de yuandian} (Nanjing: Nanjing Normal University Press, 2001), 121.
denounce professors and students for politically subversive and unconventional views.”

Under political oppression, Chinese scholars were forced to abandon their enlightenment discourse in public, and figuratively “retreat from the square.” In the 1980s, intellectuals who dared to speak against the party-state were widely revered by the public. This role of the educated to “plea for the lives of the people” (為民請命) has deep roots in the Confucian tradition. When scholars employed the language of “enlightenment,” they could posit themselves among the ancient Confucian sages and the progressive social revolutionaries in the early twentieth century, whom were worshiped in the official Communist narrative as “forerunners of the revolution.” Thus, some scholars became active players in politics, with little self-awareness. As one scholar remarked, “one obtains an exaggerated ‘sense of selfhood.’”

I remember when I spoke in the public, I was so excited. Public speaker could easily be manipulated by the audience. When I heard my audience applause, I knew what I just said was what they’d like to hear. So I would then speak more of that topic. It’s addictive. Some time when I stepped down, I would be shocked to realize what I just said.

Among “enlightenment intellectuals,” such painful reflections led some to repent their political enthusiasm and reject the possibility of scholars as vanguard and conscious of society. “What is a scholar to do? What can he do? What shouldn’t a

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185 Central Intelligence Agency, “China: Student Informant System to Expand, Limiting School Autonomy, Free Expression,” November 23, 2010. A literature professor at Peking University, Qian Liqun (钱理群, 1939- ), revealed the existence in one of his essay in Zhiwozhe wei wo xinyou (Hong Kong: Xing'erke chuban youxian gongsi, 2009), 204 and 240-1. Some of my interviewees also confirmed the existence of this system.

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187 Qian Liqun. Zhiwozhe wei wo xinyou (Hong Kong: Xingker, 2009), 150.
Questions like these haunted Chinese intellectuals in the post-Tiananmen era. In terms of social psychology, scholars as a social group suffered an identity crisis.

The post-Tiananmen intelligentsia differentiated into various factions with heterogeneous ideologies and idiosyncratic agendas. A few opportunistic ones like He Xin quickly embraced the government and rose to power. Writers such as Wang Xiaodong promoted nationalism and populism, advocating for an “independent” China free from Western influence. Some more serious scholars, in particular many social scientists, chose to cooperate with the government, thereby hoping to influence policy-making. Economists like Hu Angang (胡鞍钢, 1953-) and political scientists like Wang Shaoguang (王绍光, 1954-) proposed political-economic reforms centering on building “state capacity” (the so-called “neostatism”). Another school of economists such as Justin Lin (林毅夫, Lin Yifu, 1952-), Zhang Weiying (张维迎, 1959-) worked with state institutions, advocating market-oriented economic reforms. Social thinkers such as Wang Hui (汪晖, 1959-) and Cui Zhiyuan (崔之元, 1963-) developed post-modern discourses reflecting a changing Chinese society. Although it appeared that some scholars were sacrificing their stance as public intellectuals and choosing to work with the government, the close interaction between the government and scholars during this period in fact reflected the increase of scholarly autonomy. In the 1980s most intellectuals had no institutional approach in influencing

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188 Joseph Fewsmith, *China since Tiananmen*, Chapter 3-5. Also Xu Jilin, *Qimeng de ziwo wajie*, Introduction and Chapter 2.
189 Joseph Fewsmith, *China since Tiananmen*, 142.
governmental policy making. In the 1990s, with the founding of various “think-tanks” and other research institutes, scholars, especially social scientists, developed institutional channels to communicate with policymakers.\textsuperscript{190}

Professionalization became a major discourse in this setting because it represented a way to renew scholarly identity. Some intellectuals argued that scholars should first be aware of their profession: they were primarily researchers and teachers. The public role of scholars only should only come secondary.\textsuperscript{191} These advocates of professionalization emphasized the “consciousness of post” (岗位意识) for scholars. Just like a sentinel should first care about his or her post, a scholar must first, if not only, care about his or her job in research and teaching.\textsuperscript{192} This led to the shift of “the retreat of thought and the reenter of scholarship (思想淡出，学术凸显).” Coined by Li Zehou (李泽厚, 1930-) in 1993, this phrase captured the intellectual motif of the time, particularly among the humanities scholars. Advocates of “pure scholarship” argued that professional scholars should pay attention to the discovery and examination of empirical evidence, such as textual investigation.\textsuperscript{193} “Visionary intellectual insights” were regarded as something mysterious and thus were not worthy of scholarly pursuit. As the interest of scholars shifted from the New Enlightenment movement, “scholarly masters” such as Chen Yinke (陳寅恪, 1890-1969) and Qian Zhongshu (錢鍾書, 1910-1998) became new cultural heroes among

\textsuperscript{190} Joseph Fewsmith, \textit{China since Tiananmen}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} edition. 197.

\textsuperscript{191} Chen Sihe

\textsuperscript{192} Chin Sihe

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scholars. These intellectual idols received little official recognition from the CCP as they were considered not revolutionary enough. Known for their erudite and their mastery of primary sources, these masters were rediscovered because they were accorded with to the ideal persona of professional scholars.

In light of the major intellectual themes and discourses of the 1980s, the scholarly ethos of the time appeared to be problematic, which were primarily embodied in the lack of [awareness for proper citation, the misinterpretation of Western scholarship, and a radically romantic approach to academic research]. Thanks to economic and institutional reforms, Chinese scholars were able to form a Habermasian public sphere in the mid-1980s through various informal institutions and interpersonal relationships (guanxi), through which they wielded significant social influence.\textsuperscript{194} However, the bloody crackdown of the 1989 pro-democracy movement abruptly ended the two intellectual movements as well as the optimistically romantic motif of 1980’s intelligentsia. The resumed economic and legislative structural reforms implemented by the CCP in the following years resulted in an identity crisis among scholars. With the Party’s encouragement to pursue economic interests, the almighty power of money quickly undermined the idealistically progressive ethos of the 1980s in a society ascending from extreme poverty. A Chinese proverb highlighted the consensus among all social strata about the power of money, “With enough money, you can get spirits to work at your millstone.” The rising bourgeoisie class captured the imagination of the society with

\textsuperscript{194} Xu, 7.
their sudden wealth, scholars, especially those in humanities, suffered a sense of lost when their social status declined. Depending on the state budget, many academics felt they were marginalized and even alienated in this increasingly materialistic world. “Nowadays, what people talk is just money: getting money, spending money. Money, money, money,” complained by Li Tuo, a leading film critic.\(^{195}\) The notion that scholars should be the “enlightened” elite and thus bear the obligation to enlighten society was thereby considered obsolete. Under external pressure of the party-state along with the changing social order, professionalization became a major trend among academics. The professional mode of knowledge production was therefore given priority.\(^{196}\) As argued in the introduction, the emphasis on academic norms is essentially tied to the construction of professional identity and the function of professional groups. Some social scientists started to consciously distinguish themselves from intellectuals who received no rigorous trainings in modern social sciences. They advocated the notion for “professional threshold” that would prevent those “unqualified literati” from “messing with” their scientific research. Mastering the academic norms of Euro-American scientists became their standard for judging one’s scholar credential.\(^{197}\)

Despite the profound impact on the psychology of scholars, the Tiananmen Crackdown also marked a period where the party-state became paranoid about scholarly research which could undermine its legitimacy. With the budget limitations,

\(^{195}\) Zha, *Bashi niandai fangtanlu*, 98.


many scholars, especially those in the social sciences, were forced to seek new sources of funding to continue their research. Many turned to foreign foundations for grants, or chose to work with foreign scholars teams for co-operative research projects. These scholars had to prove their credentials by identifying and following international academic norms in order to secure these potential opportunities. In this way, the normalization movement was of vital importance to scholars who needed international funds.  

This chapter analyzes the causes behind the normalization movement by illustrating the interplay between scholars and the post-Mao party-state from 1976 to the early 1990s, highlighting certain problematic developments in academia that were later characterized by normalizers as “norm-absent,” paying attention to the voices of critics toward the malpractices, which later bourgeoned into the normalization movement.

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Chapter Three

Rise of the Normalization Movement

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section introduces the beginning of the normalization discourse. The second section analyzes the sociopolitical reasons behind the rise of the normalization movement in light of the changes in internal dynamics of Chinese academia. The third section goes back to the discourse and reviews its further development until the mid 2000s, which stresses the increasing involvement of the state in the movement.

The Rise of the Discourse on Academic Normalization

Chinese scholars still dispute who should be credited for initiating the academic normalization movement. It is generally agreed that although there were several articles relevant to the discussion of scholarly norms published in late 1980s, these articles did not attract much interest from mainstream scholars. The awareness about the absence of a set of internationally acceptable scholarly norms first arose when Chinese scholars were increasingly exposed to the international academic community. It is not coincidental that some of the earliest writings are either by foreign scholars, or by scholars who followed international academics more closely, in particular scholars of international studies and economics.

Pioneers of the Normalization Movement in the 1980s

In June 1987, the prestigious journal *Social Science in China* published an article by Yao Chuling (姚椿龄), a professor of Foreign Studies at Fudan University in Shanghai, calling for scholarly attention to prevailing problems in annotations and references. This is one of the earliest academic articles that touched on the problem of academic normality in Chinese academia, in which Yao uses the word “normalization.” Yao found that it almost became a convention for some journals to provide little to no annotations, often excused by “page limits” of the journal. He criticizes an award-winning article by a well-known economist Li Yining (厉以宁, 1930- ), which offered no sources or references.

Without a list of references, how could anyone know if [his] summary, interpretation, and analysis of the sources are correct? Mr. Li is an established scholar who may have made no error in this case. However, everyone is equal in the eyes of scholarship. Anyone, regardless of his or her reputation, is subjected to the evaluation and criticism of the readers.

Yao highlights the problem in light of the increasing scholarly exchange with foreign countries: “[some] foreign scholars are unsatisfied with our practice [of not offering sources of references].” Yao called for three requirements for academic publication:

Chinese publications regarding foreign studies must be normalized by meeting the following prerequisites: first, the writer must offer a full bibliography; second, any reference to a foreign publication must be annotated in the original language, rather than a Chinese transliteration;

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202 Ibid, 41.
third, any translation of foreign journal articles or monographs must preserve the original annotation and bibliography.\textsuperscript{203}

Although Yao’s discussion was important, he was limited by his \textit{problématique}. He formulated his concern as a technical problem for scholars who dealt with foreign publications. It is difficult for us to evaluate the perception of Yao’s article by Chinese scholars at the time, for there is little scholarly response to Yao’s article. This may explain why, when reviewing their movement in early 2000, few advocates of the normalization movement mentioned this article.\textsuperscript{204}

Titled “Some Problems in the Writing of Musicology Papers in China,” an article published in April 1988 on \textit{Music Research}, a Beijing-based national journal for music studies, is another early publication regarding academic norms. Yang Mu (杨沐), a Chinese Australian musicologist, pointed out several issues regarding academic writings among Chinese music scholars. In his article, he highlighted three problems in Chinese musicology writing, including “formatting and annotation,” “quotation,” and “empirical evidence.”\textsuperscript{205} Compared to Yao, Yang’s \textit{problématique} was no longer limited by the technical issues of annotation and reference. His concern shifted to the more general problem of not abiding by international academic norms in academic writing.

Yang was deeply troubled by some journal articles he read by Mainland Chinese scholars. By introducing the internationally accepted format of citation and

\textsuperscript{203} Ibid., 42.
\textsuperscript{204} Yu, “Xin shiqi xueshu guifan taolun de lishixing pingshu,” 2005.
annotation, Yang clearly aimed at confronting this problem. In the “formatting” section, Yang acknowledged that although academic research is characterized by the diversity in methods, approaches, and theories embodied in various schools of thought, academic writing should follow a unified format, or a set of “norms.” Yang noticed that due to years of isolation, some editors of Chinese journals knew little about the international norms regarding annotation format. He pointed out a case where the author of the article used in-text citation, but the bibliography is deleted by the editor, who failed to appreciate its important function. Yang introduced the common practice of academic writing in English speaking countries and in particular, *The MLA Style Manual*. He argued that although the scholarly norms embodied in *The Manual* may not fit the Chinese language, it was essential for Chinese scholars to develop a compatible system.

In the section regarding citations, Yang emphasized the importance of providing sources for verification. Yang also noticed that Chinese scholars were often reluctant to specify the exact scholars and works when they criticized others. This may well be a lasting consequence of the Cultural Revolution, during which the *dazibao* (大字报, lit. big-character poster) published by the Red Guards with direct *ad hominem* attacks became the nightmare of many scholars. However, Yang argued that without directly addressing the works of scholars being criticized, it would be difficult for readers to make reasonable and critical judgments.
Yang emphasized the importance of empirical evidence (实证, could also mean “substantive evidence” and “solid justification”) in the third part of his article. He pointed out a common problem shared by some scholars, which was the lack of empirical evidence. Some scholars tended to make claims without providing sufficient empirical evidence to support their claims. Yang called for more rigorous arguments supported by solid empirical evidence, including statistics and actual case studies drawn from field work.

When looking back at this article in 2000, Yang recalled his motivation:

I was deeply worried by the lack of scholarly norms among Mainland Chinese musicologists: They did not abide by the international standards; the majority of them quoted or cited others’ works without proper acknowledgement…The ethos and scholarly integrity [embodied] in [Chinese] academic writings were very problematic [at the time]. I was hoping that my efforts in introducing [international academic norms] would help foster a reform in China regarding these issues.206

Yang discussed scholarly norms with respect to the proper expression of academic research, which became the most commonly employed approach among advocates of the normalization movement. Although Yang’s article reverberated among some musicologists, his advocacy did not constitute a discourse on scholarly norms outside his discipline.

Throughout the late 1980s, criticism on the lack of academic norms in Chinese academia continued. Nevertheless, these articles were too sporadic. From a quantitative perspective, it seems that academic normalization during the time failed to capture the concern of mainstream scholars. The above figure is based on the result to the Chinese Academic Journal Database with all academic publications that contain the key word keyword “academic norms.” Compared with the normalization movement that arose later in the 1990s, the number of publication centered on the study of academic norms is almost negligible.

**The Formulation of a Discourse on Academic Normalization**

Chen Pingyuan (陈平原, 1954- ) is widely considered to be the first Chinese scholar who started the public discourse later known as the academic normalization
movement. Receiving one of the first two Doctorates in Chinese Literature issued by Peking University in 1987, Chen was a lecturer at Peking University in 1988 when he first published “On Academic Grammar” in Liaowang, a high-end magazine published by the official Xinhua News Agency, in which he systematically identified the lack of scholarly norms among Chinese scholars as a severe problem worthy of further discussion. “Businesspeople must abide by business ethics; athletes are bonded by the rule of games; doing scholarship, therefore, should also observe the grammar of academics (学术语法).” According to Chen, the grammar of academics referred to a set of basic scholarly norms, which centered on the de facto creation of knowledge. According to Chen, academia is not show business. Scholars should acknowledge the intellectual creation of their academic predecessors as well as their contemporaries.

Nowadays there is too much labor wasted on research topics that had already been studied. Everyone likes to create a “brand new” theory, and no one likes to cite contemporary research. Therefore, a significant portion of published works lacks novelty.

After enumerating what he perceived as “abnormal practices” among Chinese scholars, Chen elaborated the basic principles of academic grammar that he thought was essential to the salubrious development of Chinese scholarship. He acknowledged that these rules were not complex, and therefore could be mastered within a short period of time through professional training. Nevertheless, Chen

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209 Ibid., 3.
pointed out that nonobservance of academic grammar had become fashionable among certain young scholars, such as He Xin (see page 96-8). These scholars thought of themselves as “modern academic rangers,” who took vast liberties in violating academic grammar. Chen discussed the necessity of observing academic grammar with the following words:

One who fully abides by academic grammar may not be a great scholar; but if an academic paper is full of academic grammatical errors, it is probably not a great article.  

It seems that Chen’s initiative did not become a “public” intellectual discussion at the time, as most scholars were enthusiastically undergoing the “Cultural Fever” and fervently discussing political reform. An academic chill among the Chinese intelligentsia followed the Tiananmen Crackdown. While the most radical democratic activists were purged or arrested, the majority of scholars were intimidated into silence. The brutal oppression led many scholars to reflect on their identity as intellectuals. Only at this time did Chen’s voice start to receive greater scholarly attention. A stern person in nature, Chen seemed to recover from the Crackdown fairly quickly, which in his eyes was an opportunity for previously overly complacent scholars. In late 1991, with the funding from sympathetic Japanese scholars such as Nobuyuki Takahashi (高橋信幸), Shinobu Kubota (洼田忍), Fumiteru Ozaki (尾崎文昭) and Toramaru Ito (伊藤虎丸), Chen and his colleagues in Beijing established the first independent academic journal Xueren (学人, literally,

210 Ibid., 4.
“learning men”) entirely edited and published by professional scholars.\(^{212}\) With two other editors,\(^{213}\) Chen decided that the theme of the first volume was to be the study of doxography, or academic history (学术史). A consensus among the editors was that Chinese scholarship could be improved by consciously reflecting on its history by contemporary scholars, which is stated in the Foreword of the first volume.\(^{214}\)

The study of the history of academics and scholarship could reveal the basic context of scholarship and thus help young scholars grasp the thread of thoughts. Via the clarification of the sequential development of academic thoughts, scholars could be inspired [by their predecessors]; through the description of the history of scholarship, scholars could identify and resonate with certain academic traditions despite blind hardship.\(^{215}\)

Other editors of Xueren also saw doxography essential in building a “normal order” among scholars. “[By composing an academic history,] scholars could agree upon the norms of scholarship for them to observe… [This] is important to correct the unscrupulous ethos among scholars.”\(^{216}\) The study of academic history involves criticism, which was important to Chen: “When someone records or analyzes a

\(^{212}\) Due to the official limitation on publication, the journal took the form of a book series published by Zhejiang wenyi chubanshe.


\(^{216}\) Ibid., 5.
particular process of scholarly research, he or she is in fact revealing a set of scholarly norms embodied within in the process.”

Chen, in his article on the first volume of *Xueren*, resumed his argument regarding scholarly norms. In *Reflections on the Research on Doxography* (Xueshushi yanjiu suixiang), Chen develops his argument regarding scholarly norms.

If we agree that the 1980s is the time of passion, imagination, and great change in Chinese academic history, then we could forgive the norm-absent research that was [prevailing during the period]. However, the 1990s is probably a time that requires self-imposed academic norms [among scholars].

Chen saw the 1990s a time of increasing “professionalization,” a trend that scholars had to adapt to. Professionalization applied to two dimensions, namely the professional scholarly training and increasing level of scholarly practices conducted in accordance with a set of professional codes. Scholars should be trained in rigorous programs where they learned and implemented “a series of procedural practices” regarding the production of knowledge, which would turn the “fire of thought” of scholars into solid academic research subjected to the evaluation of the academic community based on a set of shared standards. Chen realized that this mode of knowledge production could limit the “poetic” imagination of scholars, but he believed that “norm-absent research” based on “inspiration” or “common sense” would hinder the effort in “the establishment of academic order and the development

\[217\] Ibid., 6.
\[218\] Ibid., 6.
\[219\] Ibid., 6.
\[220\] Ibid., 7.
of scholarly research as a routine that abides by conventions.” In his eyes, the latter was particularly important for a properly functioning academic community. Most academics were not “geniuses.” It was therefore important to create orderly academia, where scholarship can still advance even without the genius few. Chen argued that even for the “masters,” academic norms are still applicable. “It may appear to some that certain great masters did their research without norms, however, their research is not done entirely at will… [The embodiment of norms] are delicate and implicit.”

At the end of his article, Chen refers to George. P. Gooch’s words in his *History and Historians in the Nineteenth Century* as his vision for Chinese doxography, namely,

> to summarise and assess the manifold achievements of historical research and production during the last hundred years, to portray the masters of the craft, to trace the development of scientific method, to measure the political, religious and racial influences that have contributed to the making of celebrated books, and to analyse their effect on the life and thought of their time.

In his article in the first volume of *Xueren* in 1991, Jiang Yin (蒋寅, 1959-), then a research fellow at the Literature Institute of the CASS, agreed with Chen calling for doxography studies. “The study of academic history will forcefully promote the normalization of scholarship, which is a pressing issue today that has yet to be addressed.”

Doxography, according to Jiang, should achieve four ends. First, doxography should examine the authenticity of scholarly works, namely if the work is

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221 Ibid., 8.
222 Ibid., 8.
really by the commonly assumed author and if the work is the faithful expression of
the author’s ideas. Second, it should determine the validity of the work, making sure
that it is in accordance with verified facts and that its conclusion is reliable. Third,
doxography should reveal the novelty of the scholarly work by analyzing its position
among its contemporaries. Fourth, the study of academic history should criticize the
work and evaluate its significance in academic history and its impact on scholarship
thereafter.

With this ideal of doxography, Jiang asserted his unsatisfactory about what he
perceived as insufficient study of Chinese academic history, which became a
particularly salient problem since “the foundation of the PRC,” as political power
brutally interfered academic research.225 “In the first seventeen years (1949-1966),
scholars were busy learning the rhetoric of Marxism. Now in the New Period (1978-)
they are too busy learning [new trends in Euro-American academia]. Thus they leave
the [traditional Chinese] books unread and blabber with unfounded talks”226 Jiang
enumerated the “abnormal” practices among Chinese scholars. “Redundant
researches are so commonly observed,” Jiang wrote.227 “Redundant research” refers
to research that was simply repeating other’s works. It also referred to unimaginative
research topics.

Some scholars fail to follow the general procedure of academic
research: they have no grasp on relevant literature; they don’t know
the recent development in their discipline. These lead to their close-

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225 Ibid., 10.
226 Ibid., 15.
227 Ibid., 9.
minded research and results in the stagnation of scholarship. In some of the worst cases, certain scholars pay no respect to others’ labor. They quote others’ research without acknowledgement; they criticize others’ research without providing original sources. All these practices make it hard to tell which part of their research is based on previous scholarship and which is their own. These malpractices are becoming acceptable conventions today, which can only lead to chaos, sightlessness, and boring repetition in scholarly research. [In this case,] crude and mediocre stuff (东西) would bury those real achievements of true perspicacity.228

Jiang argued that “the construction of [academic] institutions” is essential in solving these problems. “We may look upon some prestigious foreign academic journals,” Jiang suggested, “[for instance, editors should] provide the submission date… in order to avoid disputes regarding academic innovation.”229

Chen Pingyuan’s writings on academic norms, together with Jiang Ying’s proposal of academic normalization, formed the initial discourse of the normalization movement. With Xueren’s increasing popularity among scholars, its editors’ calling for a study on Chinese doxography gradually gained recognition. While many contributors of the first volume of Xueren later became important figures in Chinese academia, more and more scholars started to respond to the proposal for academic normalization.

Chen further explored the topic of norms as limitations to scholars in his essay titled “Beyond Norms” in the monthly literary magazine Dushu, which is influential among Chinese intellectuals.230 Chen argued that academic research aimed at

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228 Ibid., 11.
229 Ibid., 12.
transcending established norms should be first based on rigorous observance of basic academic principles. Chen introduced an anecdote of his friend, Gan Yang (甘阳 1952-), a philosopher who once said “I prefer to have conversations with top foreign academics, but I dare not to debate with ordinary foreign scholars.”231 “Top scholars tend to focus on interesting ideas or thoughts, which are easy for me to tell. The quality of ideas may not be easily judged during a conversation, so both parties can have some smooth talk.” Debating with “ordinary foreign scholars,” however, involves discussion about details of text, which requires rigorous academic trainings and a mastery of relevant works. Both of these are the common shortcomings of Chinese scholars. Thus, Gan is “afraid” to debate with “ordinary scholars” in the fear of losing face. Chen then pointed out that among literary scholars there was a tendency to overemphasize one’s “talent” and thus ignore their norm-absent research. In his view, many published research articles were full of baseless assertions and loose arguments, which constituted no true scholarship. He argued that it is more important to have “secondary scholars” who may not be remarkably innovative, but are well-trained for steadfast research. He acknowledged that the emphasis on scholarly norms may limit the creativity of scholars, as some have argued. However, “[If someone would like to challenge and] transcend scholarly norms, he or she must first acknowledge the existence of scholarly norms.”232

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231 Chen did not specify Gan’s name in this essay. However, in a 2006 interview he revealed that Gan was the one he mentioned. See Zha Jianying, Bashì niándài fāngtàn lù (Beijing: SDX Joint Publishing Company, 2006), 140.

Chen and his Xueren comrades popularized the notion of academic normalization. The Xueren group was primarily composed of literary scholars, who approached normalization via the study of doxography. In their writings on normalization, they frequently referred to scholarly masters of the Republican period. Through the study of doxography, these normalists tried to re-conceptualize the legacy of Republican scholarship that was condemned and distorted by the Communist regime during the Maoist period. Professional scholars of the Republican period, such as Wang Guowei and Chen Yinke, who were previously ignored by the Communist revolutionary narrative of history, were rediscovered and appreciated by Xueren normalists. By constructing the narratives about the scholarly masters and their academic achievements, the Xueren normalists intended to develop an indigenous set of scholarly norms. In a sense, these Republican scholars were turned into legendary symbols, representing an ideal persona of academics. This revival of scholarly tradition indicated a very important psychological dimension of the normalization movement, as discussed in the previous chapter (See page 103-6).

With the publication of Xueren and Xueren normalists’ doxography studies, the discourse of normalization attracted the attention of scholars in other disciplines. On November 16, 1994, editors of Chinese Social Science Quarterly and Chinese Book Review hosted a symposium in Beijing, under the sponsorship of Miao Yiyuan (苗一元), a businessman who was student of philosophy and history. The theme of the symposium was “The Normalization and Localization of Social Sciences.” The symposium attracted more than 56 scholars, many of whom were influential Chinese
social scientists. The symposium marked a new phase of the normalization movement as a prominent public intellectual discourse with greater involvement of social scientists.

**The Development of Academic Normalization: Ascent of the Social Sciences**

**The Further Development of the Discourse**

The domination of the ideological orthodoxy proved to be short-lived. In the spring of 1992, Deng decided to stand forward and personally counterbalance the growing influence of the orthodoxy, which gained significant power after the Tiananmen Crackdown. The so-called “Southern Tour of Deng” demonstrated Deng’s paramount influence, especially among reformist officials in Southern and Coastal China.

Deng’s endorsement of the economic reform unleashed the enthusiasm of the officials in Special Economic Zones (SEZ), who already realized the great benefits of embracing foreign investment. The inflow of FDI stimulated another boom in the Chinese economy. A series of economical institutional reforms was launched, which helped to increase individual freedom. Chinese scholars were able to explore new ways to transcend the confinement of the official academic establishment.

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234 Zong ed., *Zhao Ziyang: Captive Conversations*, 40-1, 43.

235 See Chart, data source: http://www.indexmundi.com/china/gdp_real_growth_rate.html

236 Zong, ed., *Zhao Ziyang: Captive Conversations*, 146
With the further advance of the market-oriented reform, social sciences headed by economics became the center of social attention. The Chinese government under the leadership of the former engineer Jiang Zemin embraced technocracy as the governing philosophy.\textsuperscript{237} This socioeconomic background set the tone for the development of Chinese scholarship, the motif of which shifted away from philosophy and the humanities in the 1980s. The social sciences became the potent force in Chinese academia.\textsuperscript{238} Statistics on academic publication confirms this observation. According to the Chinese Social Science Citation Index (CSSCI) developed by Nanjing University, there are two tipping points. Before 1987, most citations in Chinese academic publication refer to works in the humanities and philosophy. After that, works in social sciences are quoted most frequently.\textsuperscript{239} Taken the standard of being cited over ten times in a decade, works in the humanities dropped from 60\% in the first decade (1977-1986) to 15\% in the third decade (1997-2006).\textsuperscript{240}

Deng Zhenglai (邓正来, 1956- ) was among the scholars who escaped the persecution that followed the Tiananmen Crackdown. Shortly after the publication of the first volume of \textit{Xueren}, Deng founded another independent academic journal, the \textit{Chinese Social Sciences Quarterly}, in Hong Kong, which lasted for seven years from November, 1991 to August, 1998. As its name suggests, the \textit{CSSQ} was dedicated to

\textsuperscript{238} Interview with He Weifang, Beijing, June 21, 2010.
\textsuperscript{240} Ling, 2009, 6.
the development of Chinese social sciences. Most of its contributors were economists, political scientists, sociologists and scholars of other social sciences. This contrasts with Xueren, which was primarily run by scholars of the humanities. The journal published not only works by the PRC scholars, but also submissions from Taiwan and Euro-American scholars.

Deng Zhenglai recognized the importance of academic criticism. In 1994, he founded another Hong Kong-based journal dedicated to book reviews. The publication of *Chinese Book Review* (September, 1994-May, 1996) marks another phrase of the academic normalization movement, which is characterized by the increasing publication of review articles. The *Review* dedicated a section on the topic of the normalization and localization of social science.241 “A ‘sister journal of the *Chinese Social Science Quarterly*, the only vision we have for the *Review* is to facilitate the research level of Chinese social science, to establish a regime of academic criticism, and to introduce rigorous academic norms,” Deng wrote.242

In the first volume of the *Review*, Zhang Shuguang (张曙光, 1939), research fellow at the Economics Institute of the CASS, made a distinction between “political criticism” and “scientific criticism.” Speaking of the negative implication of political power on the unfolding of contentious intellectual debate in China, Zhang warned against the fact that Chinese scholars we too beholden to political power and needed to develop an independent personality to engage in academic criticism. “There is no

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dominating/subordinating power relationship in scientific criticism… The success of science depends on the power of face, of logic and of thought… not political power. ”243 Zhang repeatedly emphasized that academic criticism is a scholarly activity. “I am not negating the importance of the official evaluation system and the role of public opinion… But scholars and experts should be the subject in academic criticism.”244 Zhang clearly made the connection between academic criticism and the credential of a professional scholar. As an economist, Zhang presented the development of modern economics as a process of competing schools of thought engaging with one another through academic criticism.

Justin Lin, Chief Economists and Senior Vice President of the World Bank, spoke highly of Chinese Book Review. “Upon its foundation, the Review has been actively facilitating the public discussion regarding the normalization and localization of social sciences in China. It subject local scholars’ publication to the international standards thus constituting a new standard for academic evaluation and criticism,” Lin wrote.245

On November 16, 1994, under the sponsorship of a successful businessman, Deng Zhenglai hosted a symposium on behalf of the editors of the Chinese Social Sciences Quarterly and Chinese Book Review in Beijing.246 At the end of the year, the Quarterly successfully published its domestic version on the Mainland, Social

243 Zhang Shuguang, “Lun jingjixue de kexuepipan he kexue pingjia.” DB 16,17
244 Ibid., 18.
245 Lin Yifu, “Pingjie xinshu, shuli guifan,” WX, 328.
246 Zhou Xiangsen, 286.
Science Journal. In celebration of the success for gaining official approval, the editorial board called for another seminar, the same of which was “the further development of Chinese social science.” According to the memory of one attendant, the scholarly consensus was that the “most pressing task” for this generation of intellectuals was to “eliminate pseudo-scholarship, to create a new academic order, and to fully establish scholarly norms.” Following the symposium, the Review published over twenty articles discussing the normalization of Chinese social sciences.

Building an “Academic Community”

With the unfolding of the normalization movement, some normalists came to the realization that scholarly norms could not be established and enforced when scholars were subjected to a state-dominated administrative regime. The notion of a Chinese academic community (学术共同体) was raised and became an important concept for some normalists. In 1998, Deng Zhenglai celebrated the progress in Chinese social sciences but raised two concerns. First he emphasized the importance of subjecting the developing system of Chinese scholarly norms to further criticism and reflection. “Once we become the subject of the norms, it is often the case that we lose our position in criticizing the norms themselves,” Deng argued. On behalf of the editorial board of Chinese Book Reviews, Deng suggested that the normalists should preserve a “critical spirit” that would question the norms regarding the

248 Liang Zhiping, “Guifanhua yu bentuhua: Dangdai Zhongguo shehuikexue fazhan mianlin de shuangchong tiaozhan,”
249 Deng Zhenglai, “Zhongguo shuping xueshu yiyi bitanhui,” WX, 326.
categorical knowledge of social sciences. Deng also noticed that the normalization movement had created a division among scholars. “An undesirable result is the coming to being of a group of academic critics and their corresponding subjects of criticism. This is due to the fact that some scholars advocate for [academic] criticism, on the one hand, and enjoy the privilege of being free from criticism, on the other.” In addition, Deng highlighted a generational difference among scholars, which led to another problem: “established scholars who participated in academic activities that ought to be based on freedom and equality often undermine the ‘credentials’ of younger scholars for attendance.”

Zhu Suli (朱苏力, 1955- ), a law professor at Peking University, argued that despite the importance of having successful academic journals, it is pressing for Chinese scholars to reflect on themselves. Contrary to Deng, Su thought that having a “division of labor among scholars” was a good thing. Su argued that in order to create a functional scholarly community, there had to be some scholars who would like to spend more time analyzing and criticizing research, and who by doing would facilitate a discourse centered on the research topic. “There are Chinese scholars and they do achieve certain fruits. But there is not yet a Chinese academic community, which involves intercommunication, interaction, as well as mutual criticism and mutual appreciation, thereby formulating certain scholarly consensuses… Chinese

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250 Deng, WX, 327.
Book Review has done some important work [regarding community-building among scholars], but it’s not sufficient to influence general academia (一般的学界).”

The Normalization of Academic Journals

As more and more articles regarding scholarly norms were published, the discourse of academic normalization attracted the attention of major state-run academic journals. In May 1996, the prestigious Historical Research and 5 other history journals run by the CASS established a foundation sponsoring the writing and publication of review articles in history and historiography. Although the foundation’s statement did not directly refer to the term “academic norms,” its one major goal was to sponsor “scholarly criticism and reviews of high quality.” In other words, the official foundation did not adopt the language of the normalists but in effect endorsed one of their major proposals.

In January 1998, the first volume of Historical Research published a review by Ge Jianxiong (葛剑雄, 1945-) and Cao Shuji (曹树基, 1956-), which evolved into a controversial case. Ge and Cao fiercely attacked the numerous errors and mistakes in a book by Yang Zihui (杨子慧) that had been hailed by its publisher as “the first monograph on the history of Chinese population.” Their criticism received mixed responses, however. While many agreed with Ge and Cao, some

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historians contested the “tone of the critique” as “overly harsh.”

Yang himself labeled Ge and Cao as “academic patriarchs (学阀)” and their criticism “mischievous.” Historian Li Bozhong (李伯重, 1949-) defended Ge and Cao. He argued that Ge and Cao’s criticisms were valid in the first place. The act of writing such a critique was essential, for if academics remained silent to “bad scholarship” then “according to the principle of ‘bad money drives out good,’ our academia would be occupied by low quality books.”

In order to justify Ge and Cao, Li Bozhong illustrated two similar cases of academic criticism in the US, namely James Hevia Case and David Abraham Case, where both scholars were accused for intentionally misreading and distorting original sources in their publications. By referring to the Hevia Case, Li argued that the kind of academic criticism Ge and Cao composed was by nature common practice in Western academia and therefore had nothing to do with defamation, as Yang Zihui suggested. By introducing the controversial case of Abraham, which involved leading American scholars such as Henry Turner, Gerald Feldman and Peter Novick, as well as popular media such as The New York Times and Time Magazine, Li highlighted the “rigorous academic disciplines” among American professional historians.

From September 9-21, 1998, World History, a national journal published by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, hosted a symposium in Nanjing discussing

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254 Ibid, 251.
255 Ibid, 251.
“academic norms, scholarly morale, and the development of the discipline of world history studies.” More than 30 historians attended the symposium.  

The editorial board of *Social Sciences in China* (SSC) and *Historical Research*, two leading journals ran by the CASS, held a seminar in Beijing in March 14, 1999 for Scholars from Beijing, Shanghai and other parts of China to discuss the rules of interdisciplinary dialogue. The background of the seminar was a controversial critique composed by historian Cao Shuji on Peking University anthropology professor Wang Mingming. Cao’s candid criticism was perceived by some anthropologists as problematic, as they thought the scholarly convention governing historical research was not applicable to a different discipline like anthropology. The discussion on academic norms was another major issue on the agenda. The organization of this symposium indicated the growing interest in the normalization discourse from the mainstream scholarly journals published by the state. Following the conclusion of the seminar, the SSC published a series of short essays by leading scholars from several disciplines. Yang Kuisong (杨奎松, 1953- ), research fellow at the History Institute at the CASS, recalled his first encounter with Euro-American scholarship.

In the early 1980s, I was struck when reading an article by Dov Bing on *the China Quarterly*. The article was only approximately ten pages long, however there were hundred footnotes and references. With greater exposure to Western scholarship, I realized that this is a basic

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257 Gao Guoxin,
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paradigm (基本范式) in contemporary Western historiography, which has become an international academic convention.\(^{260}\)

Yang therefore emphasized the importance of having a codified system of scholarly norms, which could help young scholars to become familiar with international standards.

The *Journal of Dialectics of Nature*, a journal of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, subsequently held a small seminar on December 8, 1999 in Beijing with the theme “the Construction of Academic Norms and the reaffirmation of scholarly moral codes.” The journal then dedicated a section specifically to the discussion of academic norms for eight consecutive volumes, publishing over 50 articles regarding academic normalization.\(^{261}\)

With the increasing participation of various academic journals, more and more normalists called for institutional reform of the academic publication regime.\(^{262}\) In particular, the introduction of peer-review as a reviewing mechanism occupied a central position in the normalization agenda. Prior to the 1990s, Chinese academic journals were primarily affiliated with state-sponsored professional organizations or academic/educational institutes.\(^{263}\) The reviewing and editing process is based on a system called “the three-level review system (三级审稿制),” which was officially established in 1952 and reinforced 1980 and 1997. This system is mandatory for all


\(^{261}\) Zhou Xiangsen, “WX286.

\(^{262}\) Yang Kuisong, “Zunshou xueshu guifan, ji yao jiao, ye yao guan,” WX 354.

publication institutes to follow, including journals, newspapers, magazines and other printed media. As shown in the following figure, a submission has to pass a hierarchical review system, where each level is controlled by an editor. The senior editor has the right to veto the submission reviewed by junior editors. In addition, all journals are supervised by the Administration of Publication and the Propaganda Bureau of the CCP, which ensures that anyone who violates the implicit party line or “discipline” would be held accountable. The primary intention behind the design of such a hierarchical system is to ensure the “political correctness” of the publication, rather than its academic quality and integrity, for this triple-checking process effectively censors what the CCP perceived as sensitive information.²⁶⁴

Some may argue that the three-level review system could be a rigorous system for quality control. Indeed, if the editors of the system are capable of handling academic articles, this system could have this merit. In China, however, academic

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submissions are reviewed by editors who are not professional scholars, in most cases. While a small number of prestigious journals are equipped with scholarly editors, most journal editors only have the vocational training in general editing and lack the systematic academic training required for reviewing academic articles. Some editors do have an advanced degree in related academic disciplines but are usually short of adequate research experience and thus up-to-date professional knowledge in the discipline. This limits the editors’ works, making them unable to fairly estimate the merits of submissions or to identify problematic submissions with defects, errors, or mistakes. Some editors have little understanding of modern scholarly norms, let alone reinforcing those norms during their reviewing and editing. A few editors also abuse their powers, extracting rents by publishing unqualified articles from students or junior researchers who are in desperate need of an academic publication in order to graduate or be hired.265

*Social Science in China* became one of the earliest journals that adopted a peer-review mechanism. Under this system, every submission would first be reviewed by the junior editors and once it passed the first round, it would then be reviewed by peer experts on the research topic as well as the second level editors. In effect, the new system added an additional reviewing process at the mid-level. Advocates of peer review argued that the adoption of such a system significantly promotes the quality of academic articles.266 Critics questioned the validity of the peer-review

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265 These descriptions are taken from an article written by a senior academic journal editor. See Chang Yinting, “Xueshu chubanwu bianji yu xueshuguifan,” *Academics in China*, 6 (2001), DB 315.

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process. They pointed out that the single-blind peer review system could not be impartial to the reading process. In addition, since the three-level review system was still in place, the role of outside reviewers in editing was marginal compared to that of editor-in-chief.

When interviewed in the summer of 2010, several distinguished scholars admitted that if possible, they would rather publish in international journals. This was due to several reasons. It was mainly due to the quantitative faculty evaluation system widely adopted by Chinese universities, which gave greater weight to publications in international journals. Another concern was one could benefit from the much more critical and positively constructive reviews by the peer reviewers at international journals. The quality of peer review in most Chinese journals was generally less professional. A professor at Peking University remarked that

When I get my submission back from a foreign peer reader, it is usually full of marks and comments, most of which are tremendously helpful. In China readers usually just write some general opinions. You seldom get candid feedback from the reviewers. That same professor further explained the reason for the lack of serious review by sharing his own experience:

When the first Chinese journal asked me to review a submission, I tried my best providing suggestions and criticism. But when the article was published, I found that most of the problems I pointed out were still there. It was frustrating to see your work made no change at all…The editors still have the final say in whose submission to be
published…I realized that my opinion is not as important as it should be.\(^{268}\)

At the end of this section, it is worth to mention the establishment of websites dedicated to academic criticism run by scholars also played an important role in the proliferation of the discourse of academic normalization. Their simple administrative structure significantly reduced the publication time and made it easy for serious allegations regarding academic corruption to be published. *New Threads* (新语丝, xys.org) and *Acricism.com* are two leading academic criticism websites. The first one is ran by overseas Chinese scholars and headed by the well-known Fang Zhouzi (方舟子, 1967-), who actively publicizes academic fraud and dishonesty primarily within the Chinese natural scientists.\(^{269}\) The latter was founded by Mainland Chinese scholars. Yang Yusheng (杨玉圣) is the president of the website. The website has been involved in publicizing and investigating many cases of academic norm violation. One of the most well-known cases was the plagiarism of Peking University bodao Professor Wang Mingming (王铭铭) in 2003, which shall be discussed in the following section.

**A Shamed Idol: The Case of Wang Mingming**

In the early phase of the normalization movement, some normalists optimistically predicted that with the increasing numbers of returned oversea students


and visiting scholars, Chinese academia would be increasingly normalized. In their view, these returned Chinese scholars underwent rigorous training at Western universities and had the firsthand experience with the “normal” academic order the American and European academy.

Wang Mingming (王铭铭, 1962- ) was praised as a promising student of anthropology by Fei Xiaotong (费孝通, 1910-2005), one of the founding fathers of sociology and anthropology in China. Wang went to study at University of London in 1986 and earned his Ph.D. in anthropology six years later. During that time, Wang worked to introduce modern anthropology to China, which helped him establish his scholarly reputation. In 1987, his Chinese translation of W. A. Haviland’s widely used textbook *Cultural Anthropology* was published by Shanghai renmin chubanshe [Shanghai People’s Press] and was quickly incorporated into the college curriculum in China. He spent another four years doing post-doctoral research at University of London and University of Edinburgg, moving to Taiwan in 1995 as a visiting scholar. Wang later returned to the PRC and was appointed as professor at Peking University. He published extensively on journals and public media, and his collaborative book *Grassroots Charisma* was published by Routledge in 2001. His essays were also popular among Chinese college students, making him an intellectual idol among the youth. In all, Wang was hailed by his colleagues at Peking University as an iconic figure of a new generation of Chinese anthropologists, who represented a bright future for the development of Chinese anthropology.
However, Fudan University Professor Cao Shuji criticized Wang in late 1998 for committing basic factual errors in numerous places in the monograph *Cunluo shiye zhong de wenhua yu quanli* (村落视野中的文化与权力, 1998). As a historian, Cao was shocked to discover that Wang appeared to be faking stories in the order to support his overall argument. Cao was also angered by Wang’s uncritical use of Western anthropological theories.\(^{270}\) However, Wang’s colleagues in anthropology argued that Cao was inappropriately applying the research conventions of history into the discipline of anthropology.

In 20001, a book proofread by Wang was discovered containing egregious mistakes: the author did not know the Latinized spelling of Mencius and rendered a Chinese transliteration “Men-xiu-si” for this important figure in Confucianism, who was regarded as secondary to Confucius according to Chinese tradition.\(^{271}\) This mistake is so preposterous that it is analogous to a Harvard Ph.D. student not identifying Aristotle’s German name as *Aristoteles*. Once publicized, this became a public scandal for Peking University and Wang. However, Wang remained an academic star in his department and was promoted to *bodao* Professor in 2001.\(^{272}\)

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\(^{272}\) In the PRC, *bodao* (博导) refers to a professor who is officially qualified for recruiting Ph.D. students. It already becomes a rank for “senior professor,” a title of honor and benefits (*bodao* enjoys
In 2002, a doctoral student at the Chinese Literature Department of Capital Normal University in Beijing accidentally discovered that Wang plagiarized over 100,000 characters from his translation of the Haviland book in his 1998 monograph *Xiangxiang de yibang* (想象的异邦) [*The Alien Land of Imagination*]. Wang did not mention Haviland’s name in the Acknowledgement, Preface and Postcript, nor did he mention Haviland in the Reference. The student was shocked by his finding, and after contemplation, wrote an exposé to *Social Science Weekly*, an academic newspaper based in Shanghai. 273 Cao Shuji, who formally criticized Wang before, published an article along with the exposé, praising the student’s courage in speaking up against a famous professor. Cao provided corroborating evidence supporting the allegation against Wang Mingming. Speaking on behalf of Wang’s scholarly readers, Cao demanded a formal apology from Wang, his editors, and the administrators and faculty members at Wang’s department. In the end, Cao called for the establishment of a rigorous evaluation system and a system that would hear and adjudge similar cases in the future. 274

Prior to the publication of the issue of *Social Sciences Weekly* in Beijing, Peking University got word of the case. Their reaction was to block the selling of the

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newspaper at their campus. Once the news came out, the response of Peking University was to describe the allegation as “academic criticism,” thereby overlooking Wang’s alleged plagiarism. The administration asked the Anthropology Department faculty and students to decline any media interviews.

At an online student forum of Peking University, many students boldly posted sympathetic articles supporting Wang Mingming. Their justifications, however, were tangential to the case. Some argued that Wang was a great teacher and spent many hours with his students, which was very unusual in most Chinese universities. Others argued that since Wang was already an established scholar, he had no incentive in risking his career by plagiarizing. Some other students tried to portray Wang as a martyr, who was unfairly criticized. “This is how things work in China. Officials are all busy taking money from the taxpayers. Whoever got caught was deemed unlucky. Professors are all busy copying articles and whoever got caught by the media became a sacrificial lamb for the academic community.” One student went to question the motivation of the expose writer: “whoever wrote that piece was probably hoping to be famous.” Yet another student wrote that “I don’t know if plagiarism is really that shameful. How many of you who studies humanities can surely say you never ‘used’ others’ stuff?... Prof. Wang’s reputation is authentic. He deserves respect.”

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However, the mounting public pressure soon crushed Peking University’s original stance. On January 14, a Guangzhou-based newspaper Xin kuai bao (新快报) published detailed coverage of the Wang case, making it sensational news among non-academic readers.\footnote{Yang Yusheng, Xueshu guifan yu xueshu piping, 185-6.} Other mass media quickly followed up, and the case spiraled into a public topic. Most media harshly criticized Wang Mingming and Peking University, calling it a “disappointment,” “a troubling case that worries people [who are concerned about the development of Chinese scholarship].”\footnote{Wang Junjie, “Wang Mingming zai pipingsheng zhong buduan jinsheng lingren yousi,” January 16, 2002. Jin wan bao.}

Online commentator Fang Zhouzi demanded Peking University fire Wang and suspend his Department Chair Ma Rong (马戎, 1950-) who had been publically supporting Wang. In addition, Peking University was ordered to launch a re-education program for its faculty and students. Fang sarcastically commented that otherwise he would call the University “PU, P as plagiarism.”\footnote{Fang Zhouzi, “Xianzai de Beida jiaoshou geng bu nandang,” New Threads, January 17, 2002, accessed March 27, 2011.}

Under the mounting pressure from mass media, Peking University finally suspended Wang Mingming’s daoshi position, prohibiting him from tutoring doctoral students. Wang was also removed from his various other academic positions.
The Case of Wang Mingming was hailed by some as a moderate success of the movement, as it was a step in establishing a punishment system by setting a precedent of a leading Chinese university disciplining a faculty member.²⁸⁰

Wang Mingming’s case parallels the case of Wang Hui. The difference is that Wang Mingming’s case was addressed in the end, and despite some sympathy, public opinion universally condemned his plagiarism. In light of this difference, it appears that the academic normalization movement suffered stagnation if not set back, for in Wang Hui’s case, not only did public opinion polarize, the official system that was supposedly responsible for hearing this case showed no interest in investigating it.

**Participation of the Party-state: A New Stage of Academic Normalization**

Not all scholars embraced the notion of an autonomous academic community. Even in the earlier stage of the normalization movement, there were voices that called for bringing the state officials into the discourse. Their reasoning appeared to be straightforward: in a post-totalitarian society where the government still significantly influenced the allocation of most resources, dominated the political and legislative agenda, as well as law enforcement and various policing agencies, how could a group of scholars, who were at the same time employees of the state, create a set of norms that were applicable to themselves, other scholars and journal editors?

Six months after the extensive publications on academic normalization in *Social Science in China*, the central government made its first formal response to the

²⁸⁰ Yang, *Xueshu guifan yu xueshu piping*, 213-5.
mounting call for normalization. On November 18th, 1999, five ministry-level government entities (Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Education, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Chinese Academy of Engineering, and China Association for Science and Technology) published a join-document, “Suggestions for Enhancing the Moral Codes for Scientists (关于加强科技工作者行为准则的若干意见, here after referred as the “Suggestion”).” This was interpreted by some normalists as a positive move from the government in supporting their normalization movement. Upon closer inspection of the “Suggestion,” however, such optimistic claims appeared to be exaggerated. Seven out of the ten Articles in the “Suggestion,” (Article I, II, III, IV, V, VII, VIII) called for the cultivation of personal and professional ethics among scientists. None of the articles referred to “academic norms.” Specifically, there are three sections (Article I, VII, Conclusion) regarding “pseudoscience,” “superstition,” “ignorance,” and “evil forces (邪),” all of which are official euphemisms for the anti-government Falun Gong spiritual movement. It appeared that the official intention of the “Suggestion” was to counter the influence of this spiritual movement, which was officially labeled as a “cult” and banned four months prior to the publication of “Suggestion.”

Starting in the early 2000s, some members of the NPC and CCPCC with academic background started to propose motions regarding academic corruption and

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281 In the PRC, all professional organizations recognized by the state are in fact peripheral organizations of the CCP. They receive state funding and are usually controlled by CCP party branch. Major organizations enjoy corresponding administrative rankings, whose leaders enjoy the treatment and privileges as civil servants who share the same ranking.

the scholarly ethos. “Academic norms” entered the political language of the party-state. Stories about academic fraud and dishonesty attracted the growing interest of public media. A new phase of the academic normalization movement began when the state responded to the intellectual discourse by incorporating it into the official rhetoric of reform and better governance. The state also announced that it would take the responsibility in regulating academia for the sake of the better development of Chinese scholarship.

In February 27, 2002, shortly after the highly publicized case of Wang Mingming, the Ministry of Education issued an official document, in which it symbolically acknowledged the “anomie” in academic research and the “unhealthy tendency” among scholars. Despite its symbolic meaning, the document offered little practical guidance in addressing these problems. Most of the countermeasures reminded people of the classical tone of the Party’s anti-corruption campaign, which emphasized moral and spiritual quality rather than paying attention to the institutional root of the problems. The Ministry suggested colleges and universities launch a large scale education program focusing on the study of a recent party resolution for “the construction of civil morality.” Although it mentioned the necessity of “establishing and consummating a system of academic norms,” the document stressed the predominant role of the state in this process. “[Academic normalization] must be guided by Deng Xiaoping Theory and the spirit of the [recent CCP resolution] and take the relevant laws and regulations as its basis.” The only point regarding institution-building in the document was to ask colleges and universities to establish a
system to measure “scholarly integrity and morality” of the faculty members. The measurement should constitute an aspect of the faculty’s annual evaluation and thus play a role in determining one’s income. Nevertheless, none of the suggestions in the MOE document appeared to be practical.

In 2002, there were a number of publications in *Social Science in China* that represented the government’s stance. One article reiterated the official justification of CCP rule to academia, attributing the anomic to the peculiarity of China, thus eschewing direct criticism of the party’s power. Another article called for the establishment of an academic police system, and suggested that the state should step in as the lawgiver of academic norms. In 2004, the Ministry of Education issued an official document, regulating the “research in philosophy and social science,” It adopted certain points from the previous discussion, but ignored any criticism drawn from the discourse on the academic establishment. Ironically, it emphasized the importance of the governmental ideology and required scholars “to take [the governmental ideology] as the guideline.” In 2006, the Ministry established a specific commission on “the construction of academic morale [among social scientists],” which was given official authority to define, establish, and regulate academic norms.

283 Cai Fang, “Xueshuchuangxin de maoxiguanxiaoying yuxueshuguifan de yingyong fanwei,” *Zhongguo Shehui Kexue (Social Science in China)* (CASS Press, 1999), vol. 4, pp. 53-56.


286 Jiao yubu shehui xuesheng bu xuesheng bu xuesheng bu (Commission on the Construction of Academic Morale of the Social Science Committee of the Ministry of Education).
This move further accentuated the government’s attempt to incorporate the discourse into the official academic establishment.

Some advocates of the normalization movement expressed their hope that the state should play the role of lawgiver by making a set of national academic standards.\textsuperscript{287} They celebrated the response of the state as the success of the academic normalization movement. Others, however, were concerned more by its possible aftermath. In early 2004, Deng Zhenglai (邓正来, 1956- ) published an article, expressing his concerns about the “nationalization” (国家化) tendency in the discourse.\textsuperscript{288} Deng used obscure argued that the

With the institutionalization of the movement, some leading normalists chose to cooperate with the government. For instance, Yang Yusheng (杨玉圣), the president of acriticism.com, was invited to join the MOE commission of scholarly morale. Some of his critics saw this as the surrender to state power of the movement.\textsuperscript{289}

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\textsuperscript{288} Deng Zhenglai, “Preface,” \textit{Zhongguo xueshuguifanhua taolun wenxuan}, 4.\
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Chapter Four
Frustration of the Normalization Movement

Reflecting on our bitter sufferings in the past, it is clear that the most pressing issue is not the souring inflation, not the building of a "better administration," and not even the grave mistakes in Education. The fundamental problem we face today is the contradiction between the rusty political establishment and the advancing Modernization and the institutional problem of the dictatorship of a supreme Party. What we need to confront is the challenge of Democratization. Without the resolving of unchecked Party sovereignty, how can we settle problems in education?

—— A Youth of Social Science (pseudonym), Poster at Beijing University of Aviation and Spaceflight (Beihang) April 19, 1989.

Introduction

In the previous chapter, we have reviewed the historical constraints of the normalization movement and discovered that the close relationship between scholarship and political power is a major cause for the insufficient academic autonomy among professional scholars, which in turn resulted in the lack of scholarly norms in Chinese academia. In this chapter, we will return to the present and analyze the paradoxical result of the normalization movement. On the one hand, as discussed at the end of the first chapter, the normalization movement did not achieve some of the major goals in its agenda, including the failure of the policing system to address alleged plagiarism. On the other hand, the movement did make an indispensable contribution to Chinese academia and left a considerable legacy, especially in the realm of academic publication.

290 Theory Bureau of the Propaganda Department of the CCP Beijing Municipal Committee, Zichanjieji ziyouhua yanlun jilu (Beijing: China Youth Press, 1989).
The current academic establishment in Mainland China is a fusion between politics and scholarship, which structurally confines Chinese scholars in a specific development path. The vested interests and an abnormal market further distort the academic order, compromising the efforts of the normalization movement. The current academic order is a self-reinforcing process. It seems that without a fundamental change in the political system, the current academic order in China will likely to be locked in a negative self-reinforcing path.

Between State and Market: Scholars in a Changing Society

As argued in the previous chapters, the lack of professional autonomy is the direct cause of the frustration of the movement. However, what limits the development of scholarly autonomy in post-Deng China?

With the radical advance of market-oriented reform in post-Tiananmen China, the traditional Maoist totalitarian government acknowledged the importance of the market, while still clinging to its grip on power. This partial reform created a unique societal mode, where the political elite in charge of the party-state was able to unleash the power of market while maintaining its monopoly of power. Economically, the government plays an important role in the function of markets by various means, including policy making, financial control, and direct administrative intervention.

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292 The 15th Party Congress officially adopted the term of “socialist market economy” as a euphemism for its embrace of the market economy.
293 Fewsmith, China since Tiananmen, 168-9.
While the privatization of many small and middle-sized State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) created a new economic elite, the government insisted on being the largest single shareholder of SOEs, especially in what it considers as “strategically important.” thus preserves its influence in finance, communication, oil, media and other industries. Contrary to the case in Russia, where radical economic liberalization created powerful oligarch, the gradual economic reform in China create a bourgeois elite who are themselves conspire with, and to a large extend, dependent on the party-state. Politically, the party-state officials ruthlessly suppress dissidents, human rights defenders, and even ordinary citizens who tried to complain about their unfair treatment via a series of means ranging from unfair trials, Re-Education through Labor (RTL or laogai 劳改), illegal “black jails” and mental health institutions. With the resources they gained from the rapid developing economy, the party-state grows ever aggressive and strong in implementing its control. For the growing middle-class, the government tried to pacify or encourage them to join the official effort by providing economic incentives. Officially termed “Socialism with Chinese Characters,” this system has been functioning remarkably well in terms

294 Zong Fengming ed., Zhao Ziyang: Captive Conversations (Hong Kong: Open, 2007), 373.
296 This observation is accepted even by the reformist party elders. See Zong Fengming, Zhao Ziyang: Captive Conversations, (Hong Kong: Open, 2007), 163, 348
of its ability in maintaining the general stability of the society while successfully pushing the fast-paced development of the economy despite the tremendous resources spent on domestic security. According to a recent report by *The Economist*, the state budget on law and order increased 13.8% this year to 624 billion yuan ($95 billion), larger than the nominal military budget of 601.1 billion yuan.³⁰⁰

Under this system, scholars, as knowledge elite in the society and part of the growing middle-class, constitute a major group of concern in the eyes of the party-state. Although ideological control is still in place, scholars are allowed to pursue their own research without direct intervention from the party-state on most topics. However, once their research touches what is considered politically sensitive, they may face various problems ranging from artificially impose obstacles in their research to deprivation of research position and grants.³⁰¹ Certain scholars may even face legal charges. Well-known instances include the persecution toward economist He Qinglian (何清涟, 1956- ) that led her final escape from Mainland China in 2001. More recent case includes the authority’s prohibition on film professor Cui Weiping (崔卫平, 1956- ) from her academic trip to America in March, 2010.³⁰² The notion of “public intellectual” was officially rejected and denounced. Many of those who self-identified with the title are under close governmental supervision, especially during the “political sensitive periods,” which include the anniversary of the Tiananmen

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³⁰¹ Most research grants clearly insist on holding “correct political attitudes” as a premise. See for instance, Lu Xuesong, “Bufen yuzhong daxue jiaoshi de qingkuang” [Research on some imprisoned university faculty members], unpublished manuscript, 2008.
Crackdown (June 4th) and major political conferences. Even the Presidents of major universities are not exempt from official suspicion. A Vice-President of a university revealed during an interview that the telephone lines of administrators of major universities, including the President and Vice-Presidents, are all subjected to the monitoring of the domestic public safety officials.\footnote{Interview, July 14. The interviewee insists on remain anonymous.}

Aside from political oppression, in most cases the party-state tries to buy out academics. In a 2004 article, Peking University professor Qian Liqun writes with bitter grief, “‘The last spiritual fortress [Peking University] survived the political oppression, but was about to be wrecked by … the logic of capital.’”\footnote{Qian Liqun, “Zhongguo daxue de wenti yu gaige,” November 9, 2004 \url{http://www.xschina.org/show.php?id=2306}, accessed March 29, 2011. Qian reemphasizes this problem in his 2009 essay anthology, \textit{Zhiwozhe wei wo xinyou} (Hong Kong: Xingke’er, 2009), 241.} The wage level of Chinese scholars was raised in late 1990s and early 2000s after many years of stagnation.\footnote{However, in recent years, inflation and the souring property price compromise this adjustment to certain extend. An associate professor at the Geology Department of Peking University complained about him not being able to afford a mid-sized apartment in suburban Beijing (Interview, June 24, 2010). A professor couple in Tianjin also talked about the compromised economic income (Interview, July 5, 2010).} Various state grant programs are made available for scholars, encouraging research that may consolidate the party-state’s rule. For instance, research topics qualified for the social science grant in Hubei province includes “strengthening propaganda and thought works,” “online opinion analysis and intervention,” etc.\footnote{“Hubei Sheng zhexue shehui kexue ‘shi yi wu’ guihua 2010 niandu keti zhinan.”} In addition, the decades-long economic growth accompanied by general social stability make many scholars believe that the current regime is at least somehow legitimate, and encourage them to cooperate with the state. According to
my various interviewees, the “carrot and stick” strategy works well in aligning the scholars with the party-state, or at least not alienating them. “The power to command the allocation of tremendous amount of public resources at will is an enormous lure for the [knowledge elite],” a critical magazine, Nanfengchuang thus concludes in its special report in 2006.\textsuperscript{307}

Today’s China is full of opportunities for those who would like to cooperate with the party-state. Yet any bold challenger shall face the fate of being smashed by the Leviathan embodied in the massive political organs of the state, backed by the powerful market.\textsuperscript{308} This “novelty of a hypertrophied center”\textsuperscript{309} of politics and market fundamentally delimits the possibility of development of autonomous social groups.\textsuperscript{310}

\textbf{The Institutional Dilemma: Politicization and Bureaucratization}

Chinese universities experienced a gradual process of reform. In general, the institutional autonomy increased over the years.\textsuperscript{311} Today, from a legal perspective, Chinese universities are not part of the government \textit{de jure}. However, Chinese universities are still highly bureaucratic compared to their Western counterparts. The

\textsuperscript{308} Zong Fengming ed., \textit{Zhao Ziyang: Captive Conversations} (Hong Kong: Open, 2007), 378.
\textsuperscript{309} Pamala Crosley, \textit{The Wobbling Pivot, China since 1800: An Interpretive History} (Malden, MA : Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), xiv.
bureaucratic level of the universities is even higher when compared with certain European universities, including those in Germany. Mao’s legacy, a totalitarian structure that incorporates academia into the party-state, is still well in place, despite the general relaxation of its control.

Chinese universities are predominantly state-owned with funding from both local and central governments. From this perspective, the relation between a university and the government resembles that between an SOE and the government in the sense that the state government plays the role of trustee who can exercise the legal rights of direct or indirect control and supervision over universities on behalf of taxpayers. Private colleges do exist with increase in their size and student numbers. However, these colleges are still tightly controlled by local education administration and are not allowed to provide graduate programs. Private colleges have no position in the government and therefore have no administrative level. As we shall see later, in China, a college without administrative level is doomed to be a secondary citizen in the realm of higher education, for it has little bargaining space with the government and thus be easily affected by policy change.

In order to understand the causes behind the frustration of the normalization movement, we need to first acquire some basic knowledge of the current Chinese academic establishment. According to the official categorization, the academic establishment of social sciences and humanities includes five subsystems, which include the university system, the CASS system, the party school system, the party-
state institute system, and the military institutes system. The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) is officially the highest national institute for social sciences research, which has numerous branches at the provincial and prefectural level. The CASS has some of the best scientists in the nation, conducting various research programs commissioned by the state. It enjoys various institutional privileges, such as priority in conducting certain research projects due to its superior administrative levels compared with other academic and educational institutes. For instance, when archeologists at Archeology Institute of the CASS decide to launch an archeology digging anywhere in China, their application would be prioritized in most cases. Their counterparts in leading universities usually can enjoy a similar treatment only if they apply for sites nearly their campus. The CASS has its own graduate programs and can grant Ph.D.s to its students. However, the number of their students is negligible compared with the universities. Since universities host the majority of Chinese scholars and college students (c. 90%) the university system is our major concern here.

The institutional structure of Chinese universities has changed over time. Generally, we can put them into four categories, characterized by their historical

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312 According to a 2000 census, there were over 300,000 people participating in different forms of social scientific studies. Yu Sanding “Xin shiqi xueshu guifan taolun de lishixing pingshu [A historical review on the discussion about academic norms],” Journal of Yunmeng, January 2005.
313 The CAS and the CASS are directly associated with the State Council. Although the two entities are not part of the government de jure, they have de facto administrative power on certain issues. See Margaret Sleeboom-Faulkner, The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS),(BRILL, 2006).
periods: the pre-revolutionary, the Maoist (1952-1977), the enlightening university (1977-1989), the transitional (1989-1999) and the marketized (1999- ). We have discussed the evolution of modern Chinese universities in the previous chapters up till 1989. In the coming section, we will discuss the last two phases in the history of Chinese universities. What is the impact of the Tiananmen Crackdown on Chinese universities? Are they still as bureaucratic as before? We will approach these questions from three aspects.

**Institutional Integration: University in the Bureaucratic Hierarchy**

One of the most striking features of Chinese universities is their integration into the bureaucratic hierarchy of the party-state. The central government ranks universities according to their prestige, and allocates administrative ranking (xingzheng dengji) to them accordingly. This administrative indifference between education institutes and government agency reflects the institutional position of Chinese universities as part of the government.

Administrative ranking is part of the rationalization of the bureaucratic machine, which designates a specific bureau’s position in the administrative system. As a whole, the Chinese government can be divided into two general levels, known as the central government, which is consisted of the State Council and its various Ministries, Commissions, and Bureaus. In respect to the administrative division, the government has five de facto tiers of local government, namely the provincial, the prefectural, county, township, and village. For each administrative level, its major officeholders enjoy a corresponding administrative rank, which defines the power,
benefit and position of the rank-holder. The higher the rank, the more powerful one thus is, and the greater welfare one enjoys, which includes free health service with the highest quality, significantly discounted housing, and other benefits. Each level has a corresponding sublevel for the vice-officeholder of assistant positions. In total the civil service is divided into 15 levels.317

In China, universities are generally divided into two kinds. A general university (普通大学) is directly governed by the provincial government, and assumes the administrative ranking equivalent to a prefectural government. A key university (重点大学) enjoys higher administrative rank that is equivalent to a sub-provincial government, and is associated directly with the Ministry of Education.318 Private universities and so-called independent colleges have no administrative rank. As said, a university’s administrative ranking largely determines its position in the bureaucratic system and defines its institutional capacity due to the different levels of investment it receives.319 The administrative rank is also important for the daily function of a university. In the last part of this section, we will have a better understanding through a case study of a clash between Wuhan University and the municipal government of Wuhan.

Key positions in the government require the candidates to be of the corresponding administrative level. This means that being an administrator at a university is seen as working for the government. Faculty members who become the administrators of a university can well expect to be appointed to other government positions that require same level of administrative ranking.

**Personnel Control: the Nomenklatura**

The second feature of Chinese universities that exemplifies its subordination to the party-state is the lack of autonomy in selecting their own administrations. The party-state exercises its control of university personnel through a dual-track system. On the one hand, the Ministry of Education controls the appointment of the president and vice presidents of a general university (the president of key university is directly appointed by the State Council). On the other hand, the CCP’s Central Organization Department controls the Party Secretaries of all key universities through the nomenklatura system and its provincial out-branches decide the key positions in the CCP campus branches for general universities. The dual-track design strengthens rather than undermines CCP’s domination, for the appointment of university administrators by the Ministry must be approved by the Central Organization Department at first.

According the Civil Servant Law (2005), university faculty and administrators are not civil servants. However, Article 64 specifies that

Those personnel, who are engaged in public office of state-owned enterprises, public institutions, people’s associations or private organizations, may be
transferred to the state organs to hold leading posts or non-leading posts above the deputy researcher level, or hold any other non-leading post at the corresponding level. The person transferred shall satisfy the qualification requirements of the suggested posts as prescribed in Article 11 of the present Law, and shall not have any circumstance as prescribed in Article 24 of the present Law.  

This opens up the channel for university (“public institution”) administrators and party cadres to enter the high officialdom of the party-state. For instance, Chen Xi (陈希, 1953-) the former CCP Secretary at Tsinghua from 2002 to 2009, is now the Vice Party Secretary of the northeastern province of Liaoning. His predecessor He Meiying (贺美英, 1937-) became a member of the powerful Central Commission for Discipline and Inspection of the CCP once she retired from Tsinghua.

The direct governmental control of university personnel has several implications. First of all, the administrators of the universities are bureaucrats, whose rank in the bureaucratic hierarchy is determined by the administrative rank of the university. The bureaucratic ranking is a standardized identity system. One’s rank can be translated into political power or social capital accordingly within the system.

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320 Article 11: “A civil servant shall satisfy the following qualifications: (1) having the nationality of the people’s Republic of China; (2) reaching the full age of 18; (3) upholding the Constitution of the people’s Republic of China; (4) having good moralities; (5) being in a proper health state to perform his functions and duties normally; (6) having the educational level and working capacity as required by the post; and (7) any other qualification as prescribed by laws.” Article 24: “Anyone under the following circumstances shall not be employed as a civil servant: (1) having been imposed on a criminal punishment; (2) having been dismissed from public office; and (3) any other circumstance as prescribed by laws, under which one shouldn’t be employed as a civil servant.” The Civil Servant Law of the People’s Republic of China. http://law.legaltranz.com/archives/2790, accessed April 2, 2011.


administrative rank for a general university’s president is equal to the mayor of a prefectural governor (mayor of an ordinary city 地级市), which is higher than the administrative rank of the chief of a provincial education bureau. The president of a key university enjoys the same administrative rank of a vice provincial governor or a deputy minister. Since the Chinese bureaucracy is well-known for its prevailing obsession with hierarchy (with the saying “a guy with half a ranking above you can abuse you to death,” guan da yiji yasi ren), the rank on the one hand serves the administrators with significant power and privilege. The distinguishing privilege created by the ranking system reinforces the administrators’ identification with the bureaucratic system. Secondly, the bureaucratic ranking effectively incorporates administrators into the power structure of the party-state. They must maintain the favor of their superior in order to receive the chances for promotion. Thirdly, since the government appoints administrators separately, rather than letting the president to recruit his VP, the two may not even know each other before hand. Thus, appointments sometimes create tensions among the administrators.

Within the university, the president and the party secretary share the supreme power. The president is usually in charge of the administration of the university, including the budget, the developmental strategy, and construction projects, etc. The party secretary on the other hand, controls the nomenklatura system of the university,

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323 The ministry often appoints its own bureaucrats as presidents or VPs to the universities under its direct leadership. For instance, the president of Renmin University was a director (sizhang) of a bureau. On the other hand, university presidents can also be sent to the ministry or even other political systems as leaders. There are cases that presidents later were promoted to Minister of Education, etc.
which gives him or her the power to decide personnel arrangement. Thus, the secretary holds the patronage by deciding the appointments to key positions. This system largely centralizes the power in the hands of the president and party secretary, thus encouraging paternalism and nepotism on campus. For the daily function of a university, this administration-party division creates power equilibrium in the university leadership that somehow resembles the check-and-balance. However, this balance of power may lead to tragic consequences. Stories are told in some universities about the strife between the president and the secretary, causing fierce campus political struggle among faculty members.\textsuperscript{324} In light of this, the division of power is likely to be designed to strengthen Beijing’s control of universities.

Let us now turn to the internal hierarchy of a Chinese university. Like its American counterpart, a Chinese university is usually composed of several xueyuan or colleges, which are usually named after a general discipline, say the college of social sciences. A college has several associated xi or departments. Different from an American university, a Chinese department is then divided into a cluster of jiaoyanzu, or teaching-research groups, hereinafter known as TRGs. This substructure is transplanted from the Soviet education system (jiaoyanzu, in Russian kafedra).\textsuperscript{325} The TRGs focus on specific teaching and research issues and their directors have no official administrative ranking.

\textsuperscript{324} My interview. July 15, Zhengzhou.
\textsuperscript{325} For a detailed account of the introduction of the kafedra system, see Thomas P. Bernstein, China Learns from the Soviet Union, 1949–Present (Lexington Books, 2010): 306.
As shown in Figure 2, the lowest administrative position is the vice director of a department. Usually, a department has at least two vice directors who are in charge of administrative issues (zhìwù) and research-teaching issues (yèwù) respectively.

After becoming a vice director, a faculty member obtains the administrative level (depending on the administrative level of the institute, it ranges from sub-county (fūchù) to sub-municipal (fūjū). Since being an administrator means so much power and privilege, many faculty members compete fiercely for an administrative position, contrary to the American convention. It is reported that in a university in Southern China, 30 professors competed fiercely for the chair of their department.\(^\text{326}\)

According to a recent report on *The Legal Daily* (法制日报), an average-sized Chinese university has around 150 cadres of chūzhāng, fūchù cadres of around 30, and over 1000 kejì cadres.

**The Dilemma of Wuhan University**

In May 14, 2008, Wuhan University’s 470,000 students and 3,400 faculty members received a notification from the administration. They were told that the municipal government was about to construct a trestle outside outside the campus.

The students’ assembly quickly announced that the students should get to gather to protest. A student-ran newspaper, *Future News*, published articles in harsh

\(^{326}\) For more interesting stories, see Xiong Bingqi, *Daxue you wěntì* (Chengdu: Tiandi Press, 2004), chapter 3, 7, and 9.
tones criticizing the government, calling that “Let us tell them, We Wuda people are deeply irritated!”

The Market Penetration of Academia

In the late eighties, the party-state encouraged universities to become “self-sustained,” partly because of the lack of state investment in higher education, which was reduced as more welfare systems were cut from the socialist state. Many universities started to “marketize” their properties, such as technology and real estate, and set up companies in order to sustain themselves. Faculty members were encouraged to “enter the sea of the market” (下海) and many did so by quitting their jobs and becoming entrepreneurs.

With the accelerated marketization, many SOEs were privatized or announced bankruptcy. With the downsizing of the state sector, the system that allocated college graduates directly to corresponding SOE or governmental posts no longer worked. In 1994, the Chinese government announced that from 1996 onward, all universities would start to charge students tuition and other fees, which marked the starting point of the marketization of the higher education sector. In 1999, the Chinese government announced the policy of “industrialization of education” (jiaoyu chanyehua), with the hopes of stimulating domestic consumption. Therefore, the marketization process of Chinese universities accelerated significantly. Universities were given greater

autonomy in choosing their own strategy of development. Most of them chose to
heavily invest in their infrastructure and expand the student body.

In 1999, the Ministry of Education announced that it would drastically expand
the quota of enrollments in universities, which started the process of *kuozhao*, literally
meaning “expansion of admission.” Mocked by some scholars as “the Great Leap
Forward in higher education,” the *kuozhao* dramatically reshaped the landscape of
Chinese higher education and the ecology of Chinese academia. Within ten years the
number of undergraduates grew six times from 1.07 million in 2000 to 6.11 million in
2009. During the *kuozhao*, Chinese universities increasingly become profit-seeking
and market-oriented. With the emphasis on quantitative evaluation and various
ranking systems, Chinese universities increasingly become what Bill Readings calls
“Universities of Technocrats’ Excellence.”328 The intensified intercollegiate
competition further reinforces the market orientation. Universities proposed and
implemented huge infrastructure projects. In order to attract students and state
investments, the emphasis on the volume of paper publication and other measurable
research outcomes became extremely important.

This drastic expansion however led to the imbalance of teacher-student ratio.
While new students are flooding the campus every year, the expansion of faculty fells
far behind the need of students. However, at the same time, the traditional elitist,
academic-oriented standard for college graduation remained in place. Undergraduates

328 Indeed, American readers may identify with some phenomena in Chinese universities. See Bill
are required to write a thesis, while Master candidates must publish at least two journal articles before graduation. This led to the exponential growth in academic publication, many of which were composed by desperate students. The quality of such publications is correspondingly low.

Some Western readers may find the process paradoxical: how can you have firm political control, on the one hand, and marketization, on the other? But this is precisely the point of *socialism with Chinese characteristics*. In a recent speech, President Hu Jintao highlighted the importance of Party leadership. “[Universities] must adhere to the socialist direction during their march in the education enterprise. [University leadership] must tightly wield Party dominance in ideological works on campus and strengthen political thought works in universities.”

However, economic income varies tremendously. Economists are able to earn hundreds of thousands of dollars by serving as professors at business schools and counselors to major corporations. A professor in history may have a decent income in a major university in a rich coastal region, but the monthly income of his counterpart in the hinterland may be as little as $600 per year.

Partly due to the subjective nature of evaluating humanities and certain social sciences, the academic regime introduced a quantitative system to measure the merits of the faculty. First piloted in Nanjing University, the system

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encourages the quantitative measurement of academic achievement, therefore encouraging quantity over quality. The underdevelopment of peer-review mechanisms in China leaves the regime no better alternative. [quantitative evaluation]

**Vested Interests**

As we have discussed in the previous sections, the government is perhaps the most important external constraint, not only because of its ideological control (the degree of its actual implementation is another problem) and its administration apparatus that directly governs the scholarly community, but also because of the various financial supports that are essential to the economic survival of academia. In other words, in the Chinese context, the government is the legitimate lawgiver, supervisor, and the biggest patron of academia. However, can we simply conclude that because its authoritarian nature and power, the government should be held responsible for the failure of normalization? I would argue that the government hinders the success of the normalization movement not because it intends to. Rather, it is due to the fact the administrative power is too deeply intertwined within the academic establishment and has become part of a complex of vested interest. It is therefore unable to enforce or support meaningful reform.

The current Chinese leadership is eager to promote the nation’s research capacity and soft power. An internationally recognized scholarly community therefore fits into the agenda of the central government. Thus, it is unlikely that the government would directly oppose the normalization movement. However, as Lieberthal and Oksenberg observed, “[Chinese policy] is the aggregate response of
leaders or factions of the participants, their strategies for advancing their beliefs and political interests, and their differentiated understanding of the problem at hand.”

Even within the politburo, the more conservative faction may oppose the *de facto* liberalization of the academic regime, as it may undermine the political authority of the party-state. Therefore, for the government, incorporating the normalization movement into the academic establishment without taking the risk of launching a reform that could hinder its grip of academia may serve its interests best. This strategy has been employed to deal with the growing NGOs and other civil organizations. Some believe this reflects the general vision of the government for a “civil society dominated by the state.”

Even if the leadership has a unanimous consensus in actually endorse the normalization movement, the reform cannot be in place, for it would reduce the power of those in charge of the education and academic administration. Just as we discussed in the introduction the Chinese political system is not a uniformed singularity with one mind and one end. Even before the late 1980s, the Chinese political system was already decentralized to the extent that some China experts described it as a scattered, disconnected and layered system where “any policy initiatives gain the active cooperation and support of many separate and competing

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bureaucratic units that effectively have mutual veto power."\textsuperscript{332} Within this system, the mandate from the top leaders could not effectively be carried out without the cooperation from the lower level bureaucrats. What matters to the successful reform is the attitude of the mid-level bureaucrats who actually govern the academic establishment. However, these bureaucrats’ opportunities in rent-seeking would be undermined by the imposition of rule of law, and thus encumbered their privileges.

Many advocates of normalization were aware of this institutional deadlock.

A more important reason for the abortion of

Even worse, if the scholarly norms are thoroughly carried out, some officials may face direct challenges in their careers.

When Deng set the rule that future cadres have to be “young, knowledgeable and professional,”\textsuperscript{333} officials who aspired to a greater chance for promotion started to seek higher degrees. Today, promotions in the party-state are tied to several key factors of the candidates, among which education level is an important one.\textsuperscript{334} Many colleges launched graduate programs specifically for those who had a full time job (在职研究生), most of whom are civil servants. However, these programs are highly problematic by nature, for they impose a dilemma in time management for candidates. Can anyone maintain a full time job while pursuing an advanced degree? It might be


possible for some professional degrees, but definitely not the case for most academic
degrees, such as a master in history or economics. Nevertheless, most such graduate
programs offer precisely academic degrees, including Ph.D.s. In the case of civil
servants, most of whom are simply too busy to meet the basic requirement in time
investment. Some civil servants are not even in the same city and could only attend
the program one day a week. Even if these civil servants are able to take classes every
weekend, they only have 1/3 of the time spent on class compared to their classmates.
Surprisingly, despite the divergence in time investment, it usually takes shorter time
for “official doctorate candidates” to obtain the degrees.

Due to the limited time for study, many officials received their degrees by
conducting academic fraud. Last year, Tsinghua graduate Zhou Senfeng (周森锋,
1980- ), who became the youngest mayor in China, was found to have plagiarized in
his master thesis. Textual analysis reveals that over 50% of the 2004 article is based
on another journal article published in 2002.335 Although this was not the first case of
plagiarism found in civil servants’ published articles, the case still evoked great
public resentment. Despite the mounting public criticism and criticism from the
official media, the mayor remained silent and no official investigation was conducted.
His thesis tutor declined interviews and gave no response. Mayor Zhou’s case shows
the limit of official support to the normalization movement, and indicates the
pervasiveness of academic anomie.

335 Chen Erdong, “Nianqing shizhang chaoxi yinqi de gongxinli zhiyi”, Guangming Daily. June 26, 2009,
A former president of a key university was playing bridge with his friends. He happened to ask a young assistant professor about his recent agenda. To his surprise, the assistant professor replied that he was busy preparing an exam for a local political leader. “I may have to write a graduation thesis for him,” the assistant professor said easily with a smile.\(^\text{336}\)

“I was so confused by Tsinghua’s nonfeasance at first,” when asked about his ideas regarding the Wang Hui controversy, Zheng Yefu (郑也夫, 1950- ), a sociology professor at Peking University answered as such:

[Forming an independent panel] to investigate this controversy is essential in resolving this issue and maintain the reputation of the institute. A colleague’s word enlightened me: there are quite a few current civil servants enrolled in Tsinghua’s various graduate programs. What if some of them are accused of plagiarism in the future? If Tsinghua investigates Wang Hui, it has to follow this precedent, which is beyond its ability.\(^\text{337}\)

Cai Jiming (蔡继明, 1956- ), a professor of economics at Tsinghua, proposed a bill at the annual conference of the CCPCC calling for “countering the ‘diploma corruption’ among officials.” As an “insider,” Cai revealed the scale of this particular kind of corruption. According to Cai, many civil servants did not even bother to attend the class: they send their secretaries to the class and hire other graduate students to write their dissertations.


Universities are clearly aware of the strong demand among civil servants. Some test civil servant students with significantly simplified exams. Some open up programs in Beijing, which is the city with the largest population of high level civil servants. Some granted 100% admission for applicants with official titles.\(^{338}\)

Ge Jianxiong (葛剑雄, 1945- ), a well-respected bodao (professor who is qualified to tutor doctoral students) of history at Fudan University in Shanghai, told a journalist that according to his experience, the majority of civil servant students got their degree “with a lot of water (含水分, a Chinese proverb for something that is unqualified)” and often involve “power and money.” “As a tutor for doctorate students, I know too well how challenging it is for a student with no official title to get the degree despite his or her strong academic background.”\(^{339}\)

Therefore, although top leaders may like to normalize the academic establishment,\(^{340}\) the administration has no real incentive to play its role as the enforcer of regulations. Once it starts to investigate any case that involves scholarly dishonesty, it is likely to run into a chain of such cases. If a student is found to have plagiarized, his or her tutor is unlikely to be held accountable, for which one would otherwise jeopardize the college and the students in the department. If a tutor is found for committing fraud, his or her students would be in danger of not getting degrees. In

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\(^{340}\) For instance, in mid-2000s, the Ministry of Education published a series of documents and established a commission on the regulation of “academic morale.”
other words, for those professors who take civil servants as students, they are protected precisely by that action. The education administration is unable to launch serious investigation because some of its office holders may very well be involved in such corruptions. Given the government’s reluctance toward political reform, it is understandable why normalization failed to make any meaningful progress.

From another perspective, the difficulty in establishing rule of law is not only a problem among Chinese scholars. The whole society faces the same problem. Academic fraud and dishonesty cannot be addressed without independent jurisdiction. Without a reform of some fundamental institutions of the party-state, the “normalization” of Chinese academia was doomed to fail.

My analysis on the first two dimensions of the problem aims to establish a structural framework that can analyze the normalization movement as a game between different social agents in the context of social interactions. The third dimension will focus on key agents and their behaviors. I intend to conduct specific case studies that can test the validity of the theoretical framework developed by the first two dimensions of the study.
Conclusion

*It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity...we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to heaven, we were all going direct the other way - in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.*

——Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859)

The chapters of this thesis have sought to provide an interpretive narrative for an important dimension of Chinese intellectual history by focusing on the development of academic norms. Scholarly norms are directly related to the autonomy of the scholarly community, the development of which has been limited in China and shaped by the peculiarities of its politics and society. Scholarly norms arose among Chinese scholars as a professional convention, however these scholars, as a social group, were subjected to the social and political structures of their times. They have to sustain their lives through economic activity, and their research requires certain institutions. Their scholarship is also rooted in the peculiar culture and history of China. This is not to denigrate the agency of Chinese academics; there are abundant cases in history where individual scholars defied or transcended the mainstream scholarship of the times. Nevertheless, as the key mediator between individual research (micro) and the institutions of the academic establishment (macro), scholarly norms are very much situated within the particularities of the society in which they arise and operate.\(^{341}\) The history of Chinese scholarly norms demonstrates

a remarkable degree of continuity. Although scholarly norms developed as the its
political gradually disintegrated in the late Imperial and Republican period, the
Maoist radicalization in the first three decades of the PRC reversed the trend and
consolidated the structural manacle on the development of an autonomous academic
community. The academic normalization movement has attempted to ameliorate the
lack of scholarly norms but has had only limited success because this post-totalitarian
government retains political and economic control that confines the boundaries of
scholarly autonomy, and without a substantial reform of the regime, the anomie of
Chinese academia will likely continue.

Chapter One traces the sociohistorical root of the abnormity in Chinese
academia in *longue durée*. This historical investigation corroborates the thesis by
brandishing the dialectical progression of Chinese scholarly norms in the Imperial,
Republican and the PRC periods. Chapter Two follows the development of the
academic normalization movement, in a scholarly attempt to remedy the lack of
scholarly norms. It demonstrates the rise and manifestation of the movement.
However, it confronts the claim that the movement has already achieved its goal by
exposing its actual incompetence in addressing academic abnormality. Chapter Three
elaborates an analysis about the frustration of the normalization movement by
contextualizing the problem in the sociopolitical system of contemporary China, and
argues that without a substantial reform of the political regime the anomie of Chinese
academia cannot be rectified.
There is also a wider dimension in which the violation of academic norms is relevant. Perhaps the most perilous and resilient form of violating academic norms, namely plagiarism, occurs globally. It is not a particularly new phenomenon, nor is it exclusively Chinese. Politicians, for instance, are often discovered committing various forms of plagiarism. The composition of Hilary Clinton’s book *It Takes a Village* involved at least one female ghostwriter. “Yet one cannot imagine the public caring.” The list of politicians who were found to have, or confessed to, plagiarism include figures who may be hailed by some as heroes, including Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Vice-President Joe Biden, and Vladimir Putin.343 Biden plagiarized the speech by British politician Neil Kinnock, which led to the collapse of his campaign for the presidential nomination in 1988. (Kinnock was hailed for his eloquence in Britain, but it is worth knowing today that Kinnock’s speech was in fact ghostwritten by someone else.)344 Dr. King and Premier Putin were found having “incorporated plagiarized material” in their academic dissertations.345 The latest case of plagiarism by German Defense Minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg became an international scandal.346 A recent New York Times article highlights the width and depth of the endemic problems that have become prominent in this globalized time functioning on

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343 Ibid, 9.
344 Ibid, 36.
345 Ibid, 38.

A personal story of mine may help highlight the extent of this epidemic problem. In March 2011, I ran into an online article published by a well-known Chinese magazine, the *Southern Metropolitan Weekly* (SMW, 南都周刊) in late August last year. It was an interview with an American Chinese Professor at Harvard. I was baffled by the introduction, for it contained three paragraphs which were obviously based on a blog post I composed last May after I came back from a symposium at Harvard dedicated to the retiring professor. My blog was about some interesting moments at the symposium. The authors of the article slightly modified some of the humorous sentences in my post and used them in their article without any acknowledgement. The sentences were so nearly identical that even people who don’t read Chinese can easily tell the similarity.

1. Yang: 王德威在演讲时打趣地告诫杜先生，小心被“harmonized”

   SMW: 老友王德威打趣地告诫杜先生：“小心被 harmonized(和谐)！”

   347
2. Yang: 叶文心的贺信非常personal，讲了自己和杜先生交往的一些趣事。最后说如果杜先生受不了北京的沙尘暴，或是新英格兰的暴风雪，那么伯克利的大门永远为他敞开。

SMW："如果杜先生受不了北京的沙尘暴，新英格兰的暴风雪，那么伯克利的大门永远为您敞开。"杜维明曾经的学生，现任伯克利东亚所所长的叶文心写信来说。348

My original blog post was deleted by Chinese internet censers due to my brief mockery of the official ideology of the PRC. It was truly a surprising encounter with my writings in an unexpected way.

Writing my thesis, at sometimes I was depressed due to the dark stories of academic corruption I compiled. The lack of academic norms has become very grave.

On April 5, 2011, I received an email from a friend of mine. Ming had long been thinking about studying at Peking Union Medical College (PUMC).349 Founded in 1906 with joint funding from British and American church groups, the PUMC was nationalized in the early 1950s with all other church-related colleges in Mainland China. Today, the PUMC is still the best medical school in China with an annual admission of less than one hundred undergraduates. Due to the regional discrimination policy the PUMC does not officially admit undergraduate students from his province. Ming studied like crazy in high school and fought his way in by first entering Tsinghua with an unbelievably high score in the national college


349 I create a pseudonym for my friend for the sake of his safety.
entrance exam and then applied to transfer from Tsinghua to the PUMC. When I was in Beijing last summer, he was barely able to find time to meet me. As a student coordinator of academics (学习委员), he was obsessed by his courses and research obligations. “Well, it’s somehow like high school, you know,” he smiled.

The tone of the email, however, was so depressing that I could hardly recognize his characteristic optimism.

After spending years at PUMC, I am getting tired of this place. As the top medical school in China, it is now stained by corruption and filled with depravation, inertia, and negligence… I realized that PUMC was no longer the Holy Temple of Medicine that I secretly admired for so long. The American-style medical school, the vigorous institute that ambitiously vowed for global excellence had long fallen into a communistic medical school of decadence, indifference and fatuity…

Last semester, I reported my biomedical professor to the administration because he deliberately leaked the final examination questions to students in order to earn better evaluation for his teaching. I could tolerate no more at the time, for I couldn’t bear to see an exam being turned into a tacit show by faculty and students. This semester I suffered from his suspicion. He intentionally graded the whole class down and publicized those who reported him, whose names were supposed to remain anonymous [thus he made the whole class blame us for the low GPA]. I am ok but my heart is broken now, after all witnessing all these things.

I was baffled by his e-mail. Chang’s passionate writing reveals another dimension of Chinese academia, a perspective from an insider:

It is a show. Putting on this show requires one to be indifferently cynical. I enter this school with a heart for saving patients’ lives but now find myself in this grand showcase. When I am forced to comply with the tacit rules by playing a role in this show, I just wonder, do people at this leading Chinese medical school really care about the health of their patients? Is the faculty really passionate in training competent doctors who can excel in their profession?
The problems in Chinese academia seem beyond an outsider’s gloomiest projections. The lack of enforceable academic norms may well jeopardize China’s academic ambitions. As discussed in this thesis, the political structures in contemporary Chins delimit the possibility for the development of an autonomous academic community. Without autonomy, it is difficult if not impossible to formulate the rule for self-governance let alone enforce such rules. Without academic freedom, academic norms are doomed to be dysfunctional. This problem seems more pressing then ever.

The original idea for this thesis was to explore the development of professional scholarship in contemporary China. My interest in the transformation of the identities of intellectuals persists throughout this thesis. I find myself deviating from my original plan of composing a close analysis of the normalization movement. I cannot help to situate the discourse in a broader historical context and this has led me to these conclusions. The research plan for this thesis is ambitious, but just like some scholarly works composed in the 1980s, I feel it is not rigorous enough. In the first two chapters I tried my best to support my thesis claims with existing literature, but oftentimes I was frustrated by the realization that the narrative I developed was overly ambitious. It often involved knowledge in disciplines unfamiliar to me: only by writing this thesis am I be able to crystallize my ignorance.

There are several good books about contemporary Chinese academia. For instance, Joseph Fewsmith’s *China since Tiananmen: The Politics of Transition* provides insightful analysis of the intellectual movements of the past two decades in
regard to the social transition of the country. Nevertheless, to my knowledge, there is not a single serious monograph written in English that is dedicated to the study of scholarly norm violations in China. While writing this thesis, I discovered that the study of academic norms is a uniquely insightful approach to intellectual history. The development of academic norms in China reflects the changing social conditions in of the country. Moreover, this topic is situated at the crossroads of multiple disciplines, including political science and sociology.

The change of academic norms also reflects the profound change in the epistemological basis of knowledge production. I briefly touched this dimension in Chapter Two; however, due to my limited knowledge if the philosophy of science and philosophy of history, I did not further develop this topic. Among the normalists’ literature, there are quite a number of articles that discuss this normalization movement. For instance, Liang Zhiping’s “Guifanhua yu bentuhua” (1995). They constitute the original sources for further philosophical analysis.

There is a comparative dimension in the study of scholarly communities and professional academic groups, which is worth of further inquiry. The development of professional autonomy in Germany in the 19th century was characterized by its close relationship with (sometime its dependency on) the Reich and thus constitutes a case that can be used to contrast the development of Chinese academic autonomy.\textsuperscript{350}

\textsuperscript{350} There are indeed some similarities between the Chinese case and the German. For instance, modern universities in Prussia was aimed to forge an educated class of civil servants (called by Ringer as the “German Mandarins”) who could then serve the interest of the rationalizing national state. Up till today, university faculty in Germany is viewed as a form of civil servant. The recent case of the
This thesis is more of an exposé than a policy prescription. I highlight the institutional constraints for the policing system established in mid-2000 by the Ministry of Education that is supposed to be hearing cases of academic norm violations. I analyzed why this system cannot properly function in the given sociopolitical circumstances. But it is still worth studying the potential ways of strengthening the system. Is the system reformable? If so, how? Although I give a pessimistic answer to this question, it would be nice to be proved wrong.

Postscript

余不憚淺薄妄試考證疏誤眾多乖背情理抵牾史實者俯拾即是作者已不忍卒讀況讀者乎此等幹謁文章全無價值然截稿之期迫在眉睫實不得已不忝愚昧聊略述本文謬誤之處於此博方家通人一笑其一曰阿圖色式錯誤即過分強調結構而忽視社會其他能動者之複雜交互作用此於第一章第二節尤為明顯其二曰範式陳舊費正清之所謂衝擊回應範式早已遭到有力之挑戰本文雖著意強調本土固有因素之作用然不免於第一章落入費氏窠臼其三曰隱匿證據以乾嘉之學為例康熙年間士大夫之專業化趨勢已顯明顯然囿於通篇架構於此未嘗語一語其四曰引文失當批擇材不善沙瀝金其五曰引喻失義論及規範化時文本分析失於淺陋其六曰文義晦澀語病迭出其七曰架構不彰論述散漫凡此七病自敘已然不堪何論他人噫籲戲殘篇草就時不我待景昇辛卯三月初十
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