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Introduction

We are pleased to send you this copy of the 2009 Conference on Political Change in China, organized by York University and the University of Toronto.

The Proceedings summarize two days of panels and discussion by specialists from Canada and the People's Republic of China focused on five areas: the Party, state institutions, law, human rights and civil society.

Our conclusion is that significant political change is taking place in China at the present time, although China will remain an authoritarian political system for the foreseeable future. There is progress in political liberalization. However, the prospects for Western style democratic outcomes are uncertain. The Party's control of the levers of power appears relatively secure and at this point in time it has the support of most Chinese citizens.

Our group will continue its efforts to learn more about these issues through our ongoing research and discussion, and expects to hold further workshops and conferences on the themes that were raised at this Conference.

A copy of these Proceedings will shortly be available online, along with a selection of the Conference papers. We are also currently compiling an edited volume for publication.

Special thanks to the York Centre for Asian Research at York University, the Asian Institute at the Munk Centre at the University of Toronto, the Dr. David Chu Program in Asia Pacific Studies at University of Toronto, and the Asia Pacific Foundation for their support.

Bernie Michael Frolic
Conference Organizer

October 18, 2009
Conference Welcome

Bernie Frolic (Professor Emeritus, Political Science, York University and Senior Researcher, Asian Institute, University of Toronto)

Welcome to the Conference on Political Change in China, sponsored by York University, the University of Toronto, the David Chu Programme, and the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada.

This Conference follows from the exploratory workshop that we held last April in Toronto. We looked at five areas: Party reform, the development of state institutions, the rule of law, civil society, and human rights. To focus our discussion we referred to the study edited by Randall Peerenboom, *Is China Trapped in Transition?* (Oxford, 2007) that examined Pei Minxin's thesis that China may be stuck in a "partial reform equilibrium," from which it will have difficulty extricating itself. As a group we were not convinced of his argument. In our workshop, we concluded that political change was taking place in China, although it is slow and incremental, and China is likely to remain an authoritarian political system with doubtful prospects for the realization of Western democracy for some time. There is a political "transition" taking place in China; not necessarily "trapped", but also not "democratic". The full workshop discussion was circulated to participants in our Workshop Proceedings of May 2008.

At this Conference, we once again take a look at political change in China, this time through the lens of research papers by individuals who have spent a significant part of their lives studying and living in China. We have assembled many of the leading Canadian sinologists to tell us what they have learned, and to assess in more depth the prospects for political change in the PRC. In addition, we are fortunate to have papers from three scholars from the PRC who will provide their views on this important topic.

In the recent period, China's great economic growth has commanded the attention of the outside world. China has adapted quickly to globalization and international business culture. We have benefited from, and are impressed by this remarkable economic growth. Many are less pleased, however, with the changes taking place in the political area, and have criticized China for its lack of progress in political liberalization, human rights and the promotion of democracy. These critics happen to include our current Canadian government. As a result, our bilateral relationship today is at a low ebb and you will notice a piece in today's *Toronto Star* by Charles Burton, one of our Conference participants, which urges our government to strengthen our relations with China.

Is it not our intention at this Conference, however, to offer policy prescriptions to governments, nor to confront Chinese officials with our concerns over human rights and democracy. We are here to learn more about today's Chinese political system, based on our research, and to offer informed assessments about the future path of China's political development. We have a full programme of eight panels and 15 papers, and enough time for discussion. We welcome audience participation and contributions to what should be two fascinating days.
DAY ONE: MORNING SESSIONS

The Party and Political Change I

Gordon Houlden (Director, China Institute, University of Alberta)

This is an ambitious topic to examine for several reasons. Of course, there is the dominant role of the Party over the history of the People's Republic of China, the size of the Party, its internal complexity, relative secrecy, although somewhat reduced in recent years, combined with the rise of China, which makes this prime territory for academic study and for study that is of significance to this country and to the world.

We have three panelists. Charles Burton is an Associate Professor at Brock University, specializing in comparative politics, government and politics of China, and Canada-China relations. He served as counselor at the Embassy in Beijing, twice, and studied at the University of Toronto, Cambridge University and Fudan University. He has published extensively on Chinese affairs, and on China-Canada relations.

The second panelist, Alfred Chan, is an Associate Professor of Political Science at Huron College at the University of Western Ontario. He has published in the China Journal, China Quarterly, Studies on Contemporary China, and Pacific Affairs and is author of China's Great Leap Forward. His chapter in the book titled, Was Mao Really a Monster? will be published later this year.

Our third panelist, Jeremy Paltiel, is Professor of Political Science at Carleton University. He has published extensively on civil-military relations, China's accession to the WTO, Party politics and Chinese tradition, and human rights. His recent book, The Empire's New Clothes: Cultural Particularism and Universal Value in China's Quest for Global Status, examines the symbolic importance of sovereignty in China and its implications for China's political evolution.

The panel discussant is Bernie Michael Frolic, Professor Emeritus, York University, and Senior Researcher, Asian Institute at the University of Toronto. Author and co-editor of several books on China, he is currently completing a book on Canada-PRC relations, and working on a long-term study of political change in China.

Internal Party Debates on the Reform of China's Political Institutions

Charles Burton (Associate Professor, Political Science, Brock University)

Victor Falkenheim advised his students that when you don't understand what is going on in Chinese politics, make a factional model. So I've done that. It doesn't have any basis in survey
data. It's just speculations based on my time at the Central Party School, and with other Chinese colleagues.

In this factional model, I identify four different groups. First, those that I call "status quo" who believe that the Party can, through its existing Leninist institutions, accommodate to the governance of China and everything will be okay. Secondly, the "Socialist New Left", which believes that the Party can only sustain its power if it better responds to the demands of social justice by the urban and rural sectors through more state intervention in the economy, and more focus on domestic development versus economic strategies. The third is the group I am most interested in, whom I call "Liberal Democrats." Its members believe that China should adopt democratic institutions, encourage freedom of expression, create an independent judiciary and allow for civil society and human rights in China. The fourth group is the future of Chinese politics, which I have characterized as "National Socialists", who would support a populist authoritarian, nationalistic military regime to restore conservative Chinese cultural values domestically, and assert China's power in East Asia and globally as a dominant, and what one might characterize as a "civilizing" force.

The model might be more like a model of tendencies of thought. It provides one way to sort out different views. Based on my subjective observations, the Liberal Democrats are a relatively small group, as are the Socialist New Left.

Certainly among the populace at large there isn't a lot of interest in the notion of democratic political reform. Most people see Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao as virtuous men who have the best interests of the people at heart. There is also a view that the children of senior communist officials are worthy successors to political leadership. They are perceived by many as a respected natural elite, having the legitimacy to rule on the basis that they share the charisma of their revolutionary ancestors. They have been well nurtured in China, enjoying the best of education, so they are the most qualified and deserving of high office.

For the most part, the pervasive shortcomings of China are not attributed to the senior leadership, Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao, as such. Most believe the senior leaders are failed by venal local officials, the true source of persistent, serious problems of social and economic injustice and corruption. Few think that the reform of political institutions is the way to resolve these issues. Certainly for those who have been educated in China since 1949, the system has not led them to understand themselves as citizens with entitlements to human rights. The Chinese educational system tends to give people the impression that promoting universal values such as human rights and Western-style democracy is a foil for defending the West's interests against the rightful rise of China.

Many Chinese believe it is standard international practice for nations to be dishonest about their true intentions with regard to human rights promotion. As the Economist put it, the PRC's official propaganda response to foreign criticism of the Chinese government's violent suppression of recent Tibetan protests is that the entire edifice of Western liberal democracy is a sham, and that using its tenets to criticize China is sheer hypocrisy. Most think that benevolent administration by efficient and honest pure officials is better than messy democracy. You don't see a Chinese
middle class rising that has consolidated the values of entitlement to rights to protect their property.

You have the idea, when talking to people in China, that China plans to become democratic, that it accepts Western understandings of the nature of democracy, but that this will take a long time. For example, last October, Zhou Tianyong, Deputy Head of Research at the Central Party School, stated that by 2020, China will basically finish its political and institutional reforms. He said that the Party has a 12-year plan to establish a democratic platform. There will be public, democratic involvement at all government levels.

Details about the implementation of this 12-year plan are hazy. They don't say when they will be holding their first free and fair elections, when the press will be freed from Party control, when the judiciary will be independent of the Party, and when the strict regulations for registration of NGOs will be lifted. They don't tell you what the plan is, but they say that we should be patient.

The other idea is that China is an eastern country with a different culture and traditions, with the claim that there is no one standard for democracy. This claim, however, is wearing thin. If you look at Taiwan, South Korea and Japan, those Eastern Asian nations have adopted political systems highly compatible with international norms of democratic governance and human rights. The standard for measuring democracy is defined by the U.N. Human Rights Covenants, all of which have been signed, and most of them ratified by China. There is nothing in the articles of the U.N. Covenants that is at odds with Chinese culture and history, based on what I learned in the History of Ancient Thought programme at Fudan University in the class of 1977.

The third is that due to Chinese historical and developmental factors, democracy is not feasible for China. I was told by a senior Party official, "We can't do it here because of the nature of the Chinese character." A Chinese scholar at the Central Party School said that if China created an independent judiciary, the country would be unstable, luan, for 20 years. There is also the notion that even with economic and social transformation, unless China engages in meaningful political reform and creates new institutions, the current system will threaten China's political stability if it cannot respond to the ongoing corruption and the increasing gaps between rich and poor, rural and urban, and coastal and interior China.

In my paper, I mention Charter '08 and the challenge of increasing acceptance of the universal validity of rights discourse to the regime, and also cite the East Asia Barometer Project which indicates that 94.4 per cent of Chinese citizens agree with the statement, "our form of government is best for us." However, the same study also demonstrates that the Asian exceptionalism or Asian values discourse seems to have little or no resonance among those questioned. Chinese citizens think that political equality, a free press, and universal social justice are ideals that they expect to see realized in the years ahead. There is optimism that the political future is bright, with enthusiastic predictions for more democracy and less political corruption. Chinese respondents generally saw their regime as in transition, and were optimistic about the future.

Cheng Li of the Brookings Institute raises three questions in his introduction to the English translation of Yu Keping's *Democracy is a Good Thing*. First, he asks, "What incentives do
Chinese leaders have for pursuing political reform?" Second, "What factors or obstacles will prevent them from doing so?" Third, "What measures should China adopt to overcome these obstacles?"

During my visits to the Central Party School these past two years I saw a concern that the united front policy may be failing to address the alienation of significant fractions of the Chinese population, such as ethnic Uighurs and Tibetans. The incapacity of the political system to accommodate those with interpretations of history at variance with the Chinese Han mainstream is troubling. They are not going to buy into Confucianism or communism because they have a different interpretation of their histories, and completely different cultures.

The current policies which seek to appease minorities through promises of prudent governance by the Han, and through large economic transfers, appears to be backfiring because the ethnic minorities who rise to middle class status, or who overcome the burden of poverty, are inclined to be more nationalistic and more actively opposed to Han ethnic rule than their poorer co-ethnics. The Chinese government's policy of making them feel grateful that their current political (and economic) situation is better than it was before liberation has the opposite effect to what was intended.

Let me conclude. The Party has been in power for 59 years and there are many potential crises that could cause it to lose the support of Chinese citizens. An economic downturn in China could lead to the underclass becoming less tolerant of the pervasive corruption among the ruling communist elite and less tolerant of government foul-ups, like suppressing information about melamine in baby formula. Brutal suppression of protests could lead to a crisis situation if one of the elements in my factional model, such as the Socialist New Left faction, might choose to align itself with protesters.

I see two paths for resolving the increasing political alienation of the Chinese population. First, make the government more accountable by putting more checks on its power, providing better feedback mechanisms to relay the popular will to those in power. This means making the executive answer to an elected assembly, giving independence to the judiciary, allowing a free press, and permitting NGOs to articulate public opinion. None of these institutions currently exist in anything approaching a mature form. It would amount to a comprehensive political and social transformation. There is no political faction within China or abroad which could assume the reins of government from the present status quo type Communists, bringing about a smooth transition to a genuinely democratic political system. There is no Solidarity Union and no Chinese dissidents comparable to Vaclav Havel.

The second would be a military takeover led by a charismatic strongman figure appealing to populist and nationalist sentiments. Such a person would promise to crack down on corruption, and would engage in a programme of massive economic transfers and social benefits. This regime could rally support through strong nationalistic appeals, particularly with regard to Taiwan and the presence of U.S. forces in Japan and Korea, and would emphasize economic protectionism. This is the most plausible post-Communist form of government that is likely to emerge. You can look at the excellent work of Alfred Chan and the views of Liu Yazhou to get a sense of some of these strains of thought within the Chinese military.
With charismatic political rule, we would see strong crackdowns on ethnic Tibetan and Uighur separatist tendencies and the emergence of a form of Peronism through state intervention in the economy to rally the urban and rural underclass. This could impact on China's role in the global economy, as the Chinese economy would be less efficient, and would require fewer foreign inputs.

If any of these regimes emerged, they would be less likely to comply with China's terms of admission to the WTO, would play a less constructive role in the U.N. Security Council and would, in general, be hostile to the application of human rights standards to measure China's regime behaviour domestically or internationally. A strong non-democratic nationalistic China that attempts to impose non-democratic norms on the international order in an increasingly globalized world would be very damaging to global peace and stability. A wealthy and powerful democratic China would benefit global prosperity, the environment that we all share, and the cause of furthering international human rights.

17th Party Congress: Personnel Realignment and Political Change

Alfred Chan (Associate Professor, Political Science, Huron University College, University of Western Ontario)

My focus is on personnel changes following the 17th Party Congress and the 11th National People's Congress. These are not mere Potemkin exercises, but rather the accumulation of nationwide personnel changes from top to bottom that took over one year to complete. By observing these two Congresses and their personnel changes, we can obtain a sense of the changes in the power structure at the top, and the shifts in the distribution and the exercise of power. Also, we can shed light on the nature of formal and informal politics at the top. These changes also reflect the priorities of the top leadership. Without going into too much detail, I will focus on five issues.

The first is the issue of dual successors. We know the two young leaders, Xi Jinping, 54 years old, and Li Keqiang, 52 years old, will become the top leaders at the next Party Congress. The Chinese like to use the word "helicopter" to describe such a sudden and meteoritic rise into the Politbureau's Standing Committee.

In his interpretation of the dual leaders' setup, one analyst argues that the intention is for Xi and Li to compete with one another for the top post to inject some dynamism into Chinese elite politics.

This is not convincing because Xi Jinping is clearly placed in the Party affairs track. He was named Executive Secretary of the Secretariat, President of the Central Party School, Chair of the Central Party Building small group and Deputy of the Foreign Affairs leading small group very quickly after the 17th Party Congress. Furthermore, he was put in charge of the Olympics, and in March 2008, was made Vice-President of the PRC. Barring any sudden contingencies, he is
slated to succeed Hu Jintao as general secretary in 2012, and because of his relatively younger age can then serve two more terms.

Li Keqiang, on the other hand, is slated for the State Council or Premier track. He was made Deputy of the Finance and Economic Leadership small group, and he was also put in charge, by the end of 2007, of the formation of the new super ministries. He was made Executive Premier at the National Party Congress. The idea that it was the intention of the top leadership to have the two leaders compete to be the heir apparent is not very convincing. Encouragement of inner-Party elite competition is perceived to be disruptive, destabilizing and unpredictable, and is not the operational style of the Chinese Communist Party with its obsession for political stability. Xi is clearly in the dominant position and we can refer to him as the heir "semi-apparent", if not yet heir apparent.

The second issue focuses on the so-called two polarizing coalitions. Li Cheng has put forward the view that elite politics since the 16th Party Congress is based on competition and co-optation between two diametrically opposed coalitions in terms of background, ideology, characteristics and policy orientations. According to Li, the first is the elite coalition, led by former Party chief Jiang Zemin, Zeng Qinghong and so on. This elite coalition is led by the princelings (taizidang), the Shanghai Gang, and now by Xi Jinping. It supposedly is elitist in its orientations and policy preferences. It is supported by entrepreneurs that favour market liberalization and economic development, in addition to some foreign-educated returnees, and leaders representing the interests of the urban and coastal areas.

The other coalition that Li identifies is the populist coalition, led by Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao, now including Li Keqiang. It is supposedly led by the tuanpai, those leaders who rose through the Communist Youth League (CYL) including Party functionaries, propaganda organizations, United Front organizations and new left intellectuals. Because they come from the rural and inland areas, Li argues, they are essentially critical of market reform. In general, they sympathize with the general population and are in favour of policies of income redistribution, social justice, social welfare and so forth.

The elite/populist coalition model is not particularly convincing. For one thing, it is unclear why and how career backgrounds and attributes are translated directly into policy preferences and priorities. Second, if we examine the attributes, past experiences and career advancement patterns of members of these two large coalitions, there is a great deal of overlap. Many princelings, for example, have Communist Youth League experience as do the Shanghai Gang.

Third, many of these younger generation leaders, the Fifth Generation--to which I will return a little later on--share common formative experiences. They were sent down to the countryside and engaged in hard labour during the Cultural Revolution. For instance, Xi Jinping, supposedly in the elite coalition, spent six years in Shaanxi, working as a farm labourer, truck driver and barefoot doctor. Bo Xilai, who is also identified as a member of the elite coalition, spent five years in prison, and then was sent down. I am not sure how they suddenly became "elitist" in Li's sense.
The two line struggle was a familiar approach used in understanding Chinese politics in Mao's time, but has long since been discredited as simplistic. The range of choices in each policy area is always more than two. I prefer to use Andrew Nathan's metaphor that policy choices are like an array of dials on which fine tuning and different combinations are always possible. The options are multiple and complex, not always reducible to only two choices. Similarly, Chinese leaders simply cannot be classified into diametrically-opposed coalitions. Li's major contribution in identifying the two coalitions is to highlight the socio-political fault lines of Chinese politics. The two coalitions are ideal types, useful as heuristic devices, but it would be a mistake to equate them with reality.

The third issue is the notion of the institutionalization of political succession--even of Chinese politics. Recently, much has been made about the alleged institutionalization of Chinese politics because the transformation of power from Jiang Zemin to Hu Jintao appears to be peaceful, as has the rise of the Fifth Generation leaders. Many see this as the institutionalization of political succession as well as of Chinese politics. They point to the evidence that term and age limits are now generally being observed by the Party.

As well, it is a fact that Politbureau and Central Committee memberships are becoming increasingly predictable. Job slots in the Politburo and the Central Committee are apportioned according to training, experience and occupation of key portfolios. For example, the Premier, heads of the National People's Congress, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, the CPP Propaganda Department and the Organization Departments are always "elected" to the Politbureau. The same applies to Central Committee membership. Party and government leaders of the 31 provinces head the 70 odd central and state council commissions. Important PLA officers are always elected into the Central Committee, consisting roughly 20 per cent of that body.

Yet, there is increasing predictability and observance of rules in the conduct of politics. It has been recently claimed that political succession and even Chinese politics have been institutionalized according to set rules. To take such a view is to set the bar really low. In reality, members of the Politbureau and the Central Committee are not elected, but because of the job allocation system they are automatically appointed. If there were real elections based on the Party Constitution, personnel outcomes would likely be more unpredictable. Age and term limits can change; rules can be changed by the oligarchy. In fact, the political process is largely determined by a small group of people.

A fourth issue concerns factional balance. The new Politbureau is comprised of leaders with different backgrounds, the result of careful balancing among different geographical units, institutional representation and so on. A popular current interpretation is that the balance is now tilted in favour of the rising tuanpai, the Communist Youth League and the princeling group, whereas the Shanghai faction is irrevocably weakened.

I would argue that the princelings are not a cohesive group with a common outlook interested in policy orientations. The tuanpai also requires further analysis. The Party is a mammoth organization comprising 73 million people. The tuanpai is a reserve force--virtually all CCP members once were CYL members. The Communist Youth League does not have any policy
orientation or bureaucratic interests of its own, unlike the Ministry of Finance or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Furthermore, central and regional Communist Youth League linkages are not particularly strong, and the linkages not that close.

Hu Jintao served less than three years in the Communist Youth League, and his main career experience occurred elsewhere. The practice of identifying anyone who had some experience with the CYL, no matter how brief or shallow, as a member of Hu Jintao's CYL faction, is not particularly satisfactory. Liu Yandong, the only female representative in the Politbureau, had a substantial career within the CYL, yet is also a princeling, because her father is the former Executive Vice-Premier of Agriculture. Li Keqiang is both a princeling and a tuanpai. We can see there is a great deal of overlapping.

Finally, there is the issue of the rise of the Fifth Generation, regarded as China's "lost generation", whose members were born between 1947 and 1960. Now they have risen to the top. We assume they shared common life experiences because they suffered from the Great Leap Forward and the subsequent famine, and they were socialized with the Lei Feng model that valued self-sacrifice and asceticism and so on. During the Cultural Revolution, they were Red Guards, and were influenced by varying degrees of radicalism. When Mao turned against the Red Guards in 1969, they were sent down to the countryside to the poorest areas to be re-educated as peasants. Many of them suffered hardship and had to do menial labour.

As noted previously, Xi Jinping spent six years in the poor province of Shaanxi. Li Yuanchao was a Red Guard. Among the princelings, Bo Xilai suffered tremendously because his parents were persecuted during the Cultural Revolution, and he was sent down to the countryside. Bo's father was jailed for 15 years; Bo himself was also jailed for five years and was sent to the countryside. Ultimately, these princelings clawed their way back to the top, and despite the trauma they suffered during the Cultural Revolution, were motivated to join the CCP again.

In today's Politbureau, seven members can be identified as belonging to the Fifth Generation, and six were sent down youths. The Fifth Generation is a unique cohort with shared life experiences. Many of its members will occupy top leadership positions in 2012, and the phenomenon of a group of top leaders who have performed manual labour and menial jobs in the countryside, and who have spent time in prison, will likely never be repeated in China. It is thus tempting to generalize about the attitudes, psychological state and policy preferences of this group. It is fair to assume they still suffer psychological effects because of their ordeal, and might have strong personal qualities of adaptability and perseverance. Beyond that, it would be hazardous to generalize about their policy preferences as a group.

Finally, we can say that the new leaders are better educated, younger and more competent. Many high intellectuals are now in the Politbureau: the Chinese call them gaozhi. Holding PhDs and MAs, they have studied subjects like law, politics, management and economics. So engineers are no longer dominant in the top leadership. In generalizing about their credentials and their policy preferences, however, we have to be careful because we know that higher education in the 1980s and long afterwards was not very well-developed, and political studies was akin to propaganda. Those who claim to have studied law may never have had real legal studies nor ever were
practicing lawyers. Many of them obtained their degrees in Party schools and most studied on a part-time basis, primarily because they were already officials seeking promotion.

We know there is a rejuvenation and renewal. We know that the succession is proceeding on schedule. That is rare for authoritarian regimes. However, we need to put this into context. With the Fifth and Sixth Generations now in place, there can be a great deal of continuity in the top leadership. Chinese leadership succession is very different from that in the Western world where alternating parties take power. Chinese leadership succession is more like a relay race with the current leaders having been cultivated in the 1980s and 1990s. Now they have come to the fore.

In this talk on personnel changes and Party rejuvenation, I have referred to some of the important issues. While we can identify elements of institutionalization and change, the CCP remains a tightly knit organization. Its monopoly on power is still the only game in town, so we should not exaggerate the extent to which this modest institutionalization is weakening Party power. Rule by man by means of the Party-dominant political system still remains the main characteristic of politics at the top in today's China.

How the Party Markets Itself in China

Jeremy Paltiel (Professor, Political Science, Carleton University)

I will shift the focus a little bit, and also will follow up on two themes that have been raised previously. Charles Burton discussed elite legitimacy and Alfred Chan's paper is about institutionalization, both of which figure strongly in my own work.

My paper is not based on high-level elite politics. My conceptual puzzle begins from how a Party that was centered first on revolution, and then in administering a "traditional" socialist planned economy is able to adapt to the tasks of governing a radically new political economy in the twenty-first century. For those of us old enough to have studied Chinese politics back in the 1960s and 1970s, our bible used to be the work of Franz Schurmann. In his book, *Ideology and Organization*, he said that if the Party didn't exist, with respect to the Chinese political economy, it would have had to be invented. That political economy has changed dramatically over the last 30 years, yet the Party is still functioning strongly as the unchallenged leader of the current political system.

My conceptual puzzle has been, "How does the Party adapt to the new political economy?" I see a big change between this year's paper and my contribution at last year's workshop. I now realize there is a parallel between the transformation of the political economy and the transformation of the Party's adaptive strategy. If we look at the transformation of the Chinese political economy, at the larger level, you go from a phase of decentralization and opening up, crossing the river by groping the stones, that is the trend of the 1980, and then, beginning in the 1990s--I'll credit Zhu Rongji for that process--growing institutionalization and transformation of the political economy along regulatory lines, with the state changing its focus from administration to regulation.
When we look at what the Chinese Communist Party has done with respect to its relationship to its base, something similar was at work there too. In the 1980s, in conjunction with the change in the focus of Communist Party work after the third plenum of the 11th Central Committee, you get the abolition of class labels. This opened up recruitment at various levels to the Party, especially to cadre status.

At the same time, mindful of the fact that a Party premised on modernization needed people who were technically skilled, the Party began a much more focused orientation on recruiting those people who were better educated, while retiring those who were less educated. So you have two processes going on simultaneously: one is opening up space, which is done through the policies of retirement, and the other is selective recruitment on the basis of education.

What you had in China was a blocked promotion system because seniority counted and no one retired. The policy of forced retirement began in 1982, and when you force retirement, you create space to enable recruitment of the better educated. But seniority still counted--how long you had been a Party member still counted for promotion; and there was an acute shortage of educated personnel because of the hiatus in education during the Cultural Revolution. We should note the fact that in those days the better educated were not always trusted. As China entered the reform period, however, the Party needed new blood, and young people could become a prime target.

In order to overcome the blockage in promotion, management of the nomenklatura system was decentralized. When seniority dominated, and personnel decisions were made two levels up, this meant it would take two years before you could promote anyone. When the system was decentralized, you could promote people more rapidly. The effect was to raise the average age of Party members dramatically, from 34 to 44 by 1987. The average age of a Party member in 1992 was about 47 years.

The first new norms had to be ones of education and retirement. Yet recruitment was stalled. There were two reasons. First, traditional recruitment on the basis of ideology among the front line workers was less important, especially in the countryside, because peasants were now producing for themselves and didn't need to become cadres in order to become rich. They didn't bother with Party membership. What if you had a Party and no one came? That was the evolving situation in the Chinese countryside.

Why weren't university students joining? The recruitment of university students into the Party drops in the 1980s, and is much lower than in the 1950s and 1960s. When the emphasis shifted to modernization and enrollment was restricted by infrastructure, in 1980 only one in a 100 could get into university. Those who graduated were virtually guaranteed an elite job. You didn't have to join the Party in order to have a future. Recruitment of university students stalled and there was even a bias against Party member university students. You can see some of the results of this in Tiananmen in 1989.

Between 1995 and 2000, the danwei system, which was the core of the Chinese political economy and social system since the 1950s, was dismantled. One of the largest reservoirs of Party members was laid off or retired. Eventually they were thrown onto the garbage heap of history. Recruiting new elites still remains a problem for the Party. It has gradually coalesced
around a core of state cadres. In fact, the one constant in post-1949 Party recruitment is the correlation between Party membership and cadre status. The number of cadres in China has actually increased, not decreased. China has one of the highest ratios of population to officials of any country in the world. There are 39 million cadres in China, and some 74 million Party members. Since the vast majority of cadres are Party members, basically half of the Party are cadres.

I haven't touched on the growth of the private sector, where there is much less incentive to join the Communist Party. Jiang Zemin's "Three Represents" policy was intended, at least at one level, to increase recruitment among private entrepreneurs and those in the private sector. Yet today there are less than one million Party members and relatively few Party organizations in this sector, the largest growing part of the new Chinese political economy.

In my view, the Party in recent years has gone back on a healthy track, mainly due to the institutionalization of recruitment into the state bureaucracy. Since the 1990s, a number of policies having the effect of increasing Party membership among educated elites were put into place. State jobs became subject to competitive, general examinations, making them more attractive to university graduates. In addition, there was further institutionalization of term limits and retirement age, imposing rigorous limits on how old you can be, in state jobs down to the level of county chief, and on the number of terms you can serve in each of those jobs. That means that permanent turnover in cadre ranks has been institutionalized.

Then you had a parallel process that also affected Party recruitment, when Zhu Rongji, in response to the Asian financial crisis of 1998, tried to soak up unemployment by increasing university enrolment. With the transformation of the political economy, the old danwei-focused job assignment system, whereby university graduates were assigned a job, and there was no unemployment among university graduates, was winding down and they were subject to an increasingly competitive labour market.

So you have five times as many graduates and no guaranteed jobs, and you have a civil service examination. Your chances of getting into university if you apply are good--actually less than two to one. You are virtually guaranteed entry into tertiary education if you have graduated from senior high school. The most competitive exam that people will face in their lives is the civil service exam in which the success rate is 40 to one. What you have is a bifurcated elite structure and a bifurcated labour market in which those who have majors that are most in demand in the private sector are guaranteed a job. They will go to the private sector. They don't necessarily join the Party. Some do. If you major in engineering, you don't have to join the Party, but if you major in political science, you might want to think about it.

In taking the civil service exam for certain job categories, it says on the application, "Party membership required." It will help you get a job if you join the Party, but this is not guaranteed. Still, since the beginning of the twenty-first century, there has been a massive rise in applications among university students to join the Chinese Communist Party. Between 30 to 50 per cent of students apply to join. Interviewees also tell me, "If my major had been in engineering or industrial management, I wouldn't have applied, but since I am a political science major, I'd better apply."
This linkage between social mobility and Party membership has the effect of increasing the legitimacy of the Party, not just because it provides an avenue to a career, but it also links together merit and social mobility with Party membership. This may help explain Charles Burton's conundrum about why people respect the Party. These are the people who are successful in education and who have passed the civil service examination. These are the "good guys."

The civil service exam is a serious thing. I've read the questions. It asks real public management questions. If you pass the civil service examination, you know something about management. I am not saying that patronage and clientism doesn't apply, but those who pass the examination are smart people who have some skills in public management. Anyone who has dealt with the Chinese bureaucracy over the past 20 years knows that the skill and competence of Chinese public servants has risen dramatically.

Here is the catch. If there is a correlation between social mobility and the legitimacy of the Party, what happens if social mobility is blocked for economic reasons? Over one million unemployed students from last year's graduating class and another six million who are graduating this July will be looking for jobs. If this problem is not addressed, how will this affect the rising legitimacy of the Communist Party?

**Discussant**

**Bernie Frolic** (Professor Emeritus, Political Science, York University and Senior Researcher, Asian Institute, University of Toronto)

Yesterday at the National People's Congress Wen Jiabao announced that the Party-state will help unemployed students by putting them into the military, or placing them into the countryside as cadres-in-training. They would give them subsidies and forgive their student loans. Finding jobs for university graduates will be a major task during the recession.

Trying to take the measure of the Communist Party is a difficult task, nobly attempted by our presenters today. Ruling communist parties are closed systems to non-members like ourselves in this room, even though they are the centre of power, the core of every organization, the policy maker, the coordinator, purveyor of official values, dispenser of regime justice. The Party is revolutionary in origin and authoritarian in practice.

What do we actually know about how these parties do business? How decisions are made? What they really think about democracy or transparency or accountability? The Party is a closed organization, not about to share its secrets with outsiders. These three papers today provide us with important new information about the Party as it responds to forces of marketization, globalization and decentralization. We can only speculate, however, on how the Party makes its decisions, and how it interacts with non-Party governmental and state institutions in the policy making and governance arenas.
This is not surprising. In the aftermath of 1989, when communist parties collapsed throughout the Soviet world and ex-communists were suddenly unemployed, how many studies of the internal workings of these former ruling communist parties were later written by these former insiders? Hardly any. What happened in Budapest stayed in Budapest, to coin a phrase. You never really found out. In fact, we don't know very much about how a communist party operates today even as, in the case of China or in Vietnam, it marketizes, becomes more accountable, transparent, abandons class struggle, admits capitalists as members, adjusts to the forces of globalization, marketization and even now, civil society.

We have been training Party officials for nine years now at York University, 2,500 of them, primarily provincial and municipal younger cadres, the Fifth and maybe even the Sixth emerging Generation of Party members. We've learned something about the Party from this experience. They are university educated, getting younger, open to new experiences, willing to talk about political change, if not ready to open up China's political system the way that many in the West have in mind. Twenty years ago, maybe even 10 years ago, such a dialogue was just not possible. We were two solitudes. They could not engage us, nor we them. So there is change, at least there is more openness and dialogue.

Does that mean the Party is democratizing and China with it? None of these three papers suggest this is about to happen. I think that is correct. The road from authoritarianism is long and hard. The Party may be becoming less ideological, more pragmatic, more rules-based internally and more dependent on economic development than on being "socialist" for its legitimacy.

There are no challengers to the Party's authority. We like to think that it is a rising middle class that brings about civil society and democracy. Well, China has a middle class of at least 200 million, yet we see that this group has minimal interest at this point in challenging the Party. As one of our presenters noted, not only does over 90 per cent of the population support the Party's right to rule, there is no viable opposition, no contender for power waiting in the wings. The lessons of 1989 in Eastern Europe and Russia remain profound for Chinese, both Party members and ordinary citizens: regime collapse, economic turmoil, possible national fragmentation. To avoid another Tiananmen crisis, the Party had to rebuild itself as Jeremy Paltiel pointed out. Eliminate factionalism, restore popular confidence in its leadership. That this has happened is remarkable and was greatly facilitated by two decades of tremendous economic growth that has inspired public confidence in the Party's leadership. In the past 15 years or so, the Party rejuvenated itself, cast off aging leaders, developed massive internal training programmes for its cadres, linked Party membership with competitive civil service exams, made professionals and managers the majority of Party members. One sometimes wonders whatever happened to the workers and the peasants? Whatever happened to the working class? Where did the ideology go?

The following points are worth noting. First, university youth are increasingly becoming Party members. Civil service careers are becoming more attractive and Party membership enhances job prospects. A couple of years ago when I was researching a project in Beijing, to my surprise, all three of my young Beida student researchers were either Party members or about to be admitted to the Party, even though they were also advocates of democratization and improved human rights practices. As one of them said, "We join to support the Party, and also because it makes it
easier to get a job." Whatever the reason, the Party today is able to bring in younger, higher educated members. It is hardly dying on the vine as some would have it.

Second, the Party cannot be fully unified ideologically or politically. There will always be multiple points of view, coalitions, as it was pointed out, even the possibility of organized factions, the bane of Leninist parties for 100 years. Surely an organization of 74 million members will have ideological and policy differences. This was noted in all the papers. Are these differences deep enough to threaten the Party's cohesion? Compared to the Cultural Revolution or the Tiananmen crisis of 1989, the current differences, it seems, are presently contained within the fabric of the Party.

Third, the Party has re-thought its partnership with the institutions of governance, the state system, if you will. At the upper levels, it has encouraged more separation of Party from state, giving state institutions the space and legitimacy to execute policy. At the local levels, as pointed out in one of the papers, we may be seeing a somewhat different phenomenon--a fusion of Party and state at the village and the urban community level to provide much needed effective government, to fill in a vacuum, to improve the qualifications of Party cadres, and help train state cadres.

Fourth, the Party must come to terms with an expanding civil society. We will see that in tomorrow's Conference papers dealing with civil society, religion and human rights. The rapid rise in social and spatial mobility is stunning. You can go almost anywhere now in China pretty much all the time. In the new market socialist economy, property ownership becomes a key factor committing people to the regime, or to criticizing it. Cell phones, text messaging, the internet are transforming the relationship between the Party and citizens, between state and society. We might enjoy this item from yesterday's Washington Post: "In his first online chat with China's 1.3 billion citizens this weekend, Premier Wen Jiabao tried to charm his audience."

Wen Jiabao is now online! Is Stephen Harper online? I don't know. Wen talked about advice he got from his mother, disclosed that he no longer had time to cook at home, and admitted he was a little bit nervous as it was his first time talking directly to citizens on the internet. How extraordinary is this? Could you ever have imagined something like this happening?

Information is power. The old elite had most of that information. Not anymore. The new Party has to adapt to this situation, not just continuing to erect firewalls to block what it considers dangerous to its power. Any resourceful Chinese citizen can read anything blocked by the regime. Now the Party itself has joined the bloggers.

Fifth, there are many types of Party members. Half of the 74 million are officials, over half are cadres in the government, or full-time Party workers. Maybe 10 percent are full-time Party workers. They are the key people in the Party, the ones who make the Party policy and set the direction for where the Party is going. They are employed by the Party to carry out its business. There is crossover back and forth between Party and state cadres. The vast majority of Party members work in non-Party jobs. They may attend Party meetings and pay dues, but they are not the front line Party workers.
Finally, where is the Party weakest? Not at the centre, at least not from my perspective. Those whom I have met and who work in the Party's central agencies can compete with the very best CEOs anywhere in this world. It is at the lowest levels that the Party falters. Generally, here corruption festers along with incompetence and localism. Heaven is high, and the Emperor is far away. What was a Chinese problem before communism was ever invented continues to infect China today. It is not easy to escape your past, although China has made extraordinary efforts to do so. Can the Party change how it governs and how it adapts to these new forces? Will these changes bring democratic outcomes that are familiar to us? There is progress along that path, but it is slow and there are many obstacles along the way.

**Question:**

I want to draw a parallel to another one party state, Japan. Under the LDP Japan has failed in the last decade and arguably will continue to fail for the next decade and a half to address Japan's economic problems. I would argue that one of the reasons is the lack of ability in both the bureaucracy and the public sector, but also in the private sector, for handling a condition other than growth in the economy. So my question, drawing a parallel to the Party in China, is how do the discussants feel about the Party's ability to handle a situation of much lower growth, or looking at the latest data, a potentially no-growth economy?

**Jeremy Paltiel:**

The obvious answer is "growth at all costs." That has been the response of the Chinese Communist Party over the past 20 years. If China successfully manages this downturn, one of the consequences will be a vast recentralization of fiscal and political power, because the fiscal capacity of the local state is collapsing under the current crisis and only the central government can borrow money and can print money. What is going to be happening is that the central government will acquire more power, and through expanded social programmes will be extending its reach down to the lower levels.

It's not Japan circa 1990 because they haven't even got to Japan circa 1980 yet. There is still a lot of room for expansion and the population is still growing. The question you posed actually looks 20 years down the road when the age structure of China will become stagnant and growth will slow down naturally. This nexus between legitimacy and social mobility, the crux of my paper, is going to weaken, and at that point, the Communist Party will have to think of something very different.

**Charles Burton:**

University students are important, but I am more concerned about the apartheid-like system in China between the urban and rural sectors, and how the migrant labourers are going to feel after returning to their native places and being forced back into farming. This is a potential source of discontent against Party rule.
Alfred Chan:

Until the 1990s, the efficient bureaucracy in Japan dominated the political system and together with the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), they were the two major pillars of a developmental state. The Chinese Communist Party-state, because of its emphasis on economic growth and its sponsorship of economic development, can also be regarded as a variant of a developmental state. Both China and Japan, Japan in particular, have encountered challenges in the 1990s. Japan seems to have rebounded in the early twenty-first century by restructuring its financial and banking systems. Of course now it is undergoing another crisis. The LDP is still in power due to one landslide election in 2005, and the bureaucracy has been reformed. The iron triangle is still in place (the third pillar of this triangle is big business), but it is still perceived to be one of the best means to promote economic development. This is not exactly the same case in China.

Question:

My question is for Alfred Chan. I believe President Hu Jintao is to finish his term in 2012. Would Li Keqiang be his likely successor? Which Party member is likely to succeed Premier Wen?

Alfred Chan:

It is always hazardous to predict the future, but for now it seems that the succession is being prepared and set. Xi Jinping is on the Party track as General Secretary. This year, he will probably acquire the position of civilian Chairman of the Central Military Commission and that would prepare him for 2012. Hu Jintao's succession took 10 years to complete; Xi has to compress the same process into five years. There is a great deal of work for him to do to establish his authority with the Party and with the military. He has not done this yet, especially considering that in the new Politbureau, apart from Hu and Xi virtually no one has any connections with the military. Li Keqiang is slated for the state premier track, but of course there might still be accidents. If Xi falters, for example, Li might be his replacement.

The pool from which high Party leaders are drawn from is tiny, very tiny. The CCP has 74 million members, but the Central Committee has only about 400 members, and all of the leaders in the Politburo have to be picked from this 400. Members cannot be picked from outside the Central Committee, so the choices are limited. Chen Liangyu, for example, was young and supposed to serve another two terms, but was purged because of a scandal in Shanghai, and the Politbureau lost one member. Wang Ju was scheduled to serve one more term, but he was gone because he died of cancer. The elevation of Xi and Li was an expedient because they were lifted from the Central Committee and placed right into the Politbureau, skipping three steps, quite atypical of the CCP's rules of succession order. It was an emergency and had to be done. It is hard to predict what will happen in the next five years, but the Party succession appears to be on track.
Jeremy Paltiel:

While it is hard to make predictions Xi has an inside track on renewing the entire Central Committee and Politbureau for 2012, given that the average age structure is high enough so that another generation will have to be brought in. Since he is the one person who straddles the generations, he has lots of latent power--youth and position.

Question:

Charles Burton alluded to this issue but did not have time to expand on it. I'm referring to the ethnic minorities in Tibet and Xinjiang. How do the inner workings of the CCP see the resolution of these conflicts? Are Tibet and Xinjiang viewed as internal sovereignty issues? What is Party thinking on how to resolve these two problem areas? Personally, I believe that Tibet and Xinjiang cannot attain general autonomy unless China democratizes.

Charles Burton:

When I was at the Central Party School, we addressed the issue of Tibetans and Uighurs. The Party's policy is to try to govern these areas well through economic development, while claiming that previous governance by Tibetan and Uighur elites oppressed the people. Secondly, they are finding that the economic development policies have not led to an improvement of the situation. United Front policies exclude significant fractions of those ethnic populations from political participation, and there is a debate at the Central Party School about how to do things better in the future. I cannot speak about any debates inside the Politbureau.

Jeremy Paltiel:

My own research may strengthen what Charles Burton just said. If we look at the rate of job placement among various university majors in China, the lowest rate of employment is in minority studies. Also, since the civil service examination is written in Chinese, the success rate of minorities in their own autonomous areas, who are graduates, will be (and is) lower than those of the Han who live in these minority areas. One of the perverse effects of the civil service exam has been to discriminate against the minority peoples in their own areas. The middle class of the minorities are thus frustrated in their efforts to attain appropriate careers. This is a serious issue.

Question:

It is a loaded question, but I am asking for a very simple answer, yes or no. If China would have adopted a democratic system 30 years ago, would China have achieved what it has today?
Alfred Chan:

Probably not.

Jeremy Paltiel:

Probably not, but it's a moot point.

Charles Burton:

I don't know.

Question:

Two questions about the Fifth Generation leadership. I agree that the classification of princelings versus tuanpai may be oversimplistic for the next generation, not only because there is overlap between the two groups but because there is so much diversity within each group in terms of class background, education, political networks and also policy priorities. Can someone comment on how this diversity within the Party leadership will impact Party dynamics? There is an argument out there that implies that there will be more checks and balances because of this diversity, but I am not completely convinced. My second question is whether you see any significant differences between the leadership style of the Fifth Generation and the current generation of leaders?

Jeremy Paltiel:

I've read Cheng Li's work and am not convinced that the Fifth Generation itself is going to make a difference. The implication seems to be that it is likely to be more populist because its members spend time down with the people. If Hu Jintao was selected for the elite early and spent his time in the system, these people spent their time out of the system. Whether that will make a difference is purely speculative. Xi Jinping has done nothing and said nothing to suggest that he has a different agenda, but on the other hand, he may have learned very well from Hu Jintao who basically said nothing and did nothing until he actually sat in the seat of power.

Alfred Chan:

Yes, the Fifth Generation is more diverse based on educational background. Many studied economics, management, politics, and law, differentiating them from the old crowd of engineers in the 16th Politbureau. It is frequently claimed that people in the social sciences take a more holistic view of problem resolution, whereas engineers are more incremental. This divergence, however, should not be exaggerated. The Politbureau is a very cohesive organization, even if
members may disagree with one another. Following the principle of democratic centralism, once a decision is made, the majority view prevails. I think it would be more useful to conceive of the Politbureau as a kind of a board of directors. Members have different backgrounds and perspectives but it seems to function as a fairly cohesive group.

Regarding coalitions, the litmus test is to have more specific policy studies. We can then see which policies the Politbureau favours, and the effect of individual backgrounds on policy decisions. Unfortunately, we do not have that kind of information. Policy making at the very top is still opaque and policy debates are not open to the public, fueling a great deal of the speculation and misunderstanding about Party elite politics.

Charles Burton:

My answer is no. I don't see a significant difference between the Fifth Generation and previous generations. The issues in the Party are not issues of generational change, but are systemic issues stemming from the relationship between political authority, and social and economic factors.

The Party and Political Change II

Richard Stubbs (Professor, Political Science, McMaster University)

We have two presenters at this panel. Gregory Chin is Assistant Professor of Political Science at York University. He previously served as the First Secretary in the Canadian Embassy in Beijing, responsible for foreign aid to China and North Korea. He is most recently published in the *Journal of International Affairs*, *Foreign Policy* and the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, and his book on China's automotive industry, *China's Automotive Modernization: The Party-State and Multinational Corporations*, is scheduled to appear later this year.

Cui Zhiyuan is Professor at the School of Public Policy and Management at Tsinghua University in Beijing. He was recently a visiting professor at Cornell University Law School. He has a number of publications, in particular, *The Dilemma of the Invisible Hand Paradigm; The Second Thought Liberalization Movement and Institutional Innovation*; and *Whither China?*. He is co-editor of *China and Globalization: Washington Consensus, Beijing Consensus or What?*

The discussant is Joe Wong, Director of the University of Toronto's Asian Institute and Canada Research Chair in Democratization, Health and Development. His publications include *Healthy Democracies: Welfare Politics in Taiwan and South Korea*, and a forthcoming volume, *Political Transitions in Dominant Party Systems: Learning to Lose*. 
Beyond the Fragmented, Decentralized, Weakened Chinese State

Gregory Chin (Assistant Professor, Political Science, York University and Senior Fellow, Centre for International Governance Innovation)

The first panel focused on the return of the Party. The 1990s was all about localization and the fragmentation of the Chinese state. In the post-Tiananmen scenario, it was as if the Party had disappeared in the 1990s--except for those who studied elite politics, and Western studies that centered on the state. There was little written about the Party in any explicit way. Expectations, perhaps in American circles, that the regime would change in China meant there was little analysis on how the Party could remain in power by adapting to changing circumstances.

This morning's presentations highlighted the return of the Party in China studies. My presentation follows on that theme to some degree. In my research, I basically use qualitative methodology along with quantitative triangulation methods. Fortunately, it was possible to get access inside what used to be called the State Planning Commission, and to other key economic planning and policy bodies in China's government. For the auto sector, I was able to interview former senior executives of Volkswagen and General Motors in China and other auto corporations. The Chinese would tell me certain things, the foreign CEOs and Vice-Presidents would tell me other things—and combining that with the existing literature, newspaper accounts, policy statements and statistics, I have tried to get as accurate a story as possible. Today I hope to do two things. One is a conceptual rethinking about Chinese politics, the Chinese political system, how we make sense of the Party-state in the study of China, and second, the presentation of new empirical findings.

My paper is entitled, "Beyond the Fragmented, Decentralized and Weakened Chinese State," and the auto sector is my case study. I look at the Party-state's role in China's automotive modernization. The question leading this presentation is how we conceptualize the nature of the Chinese Party-state. In the literature on China's economic and industrial development over the past 20 years, there has been much talk of a fragmented, decentralized, and weakened state, following Lieberthal and Oksenberg's influential work that looked at the growing vertical and horizontal coordination challenges inside the Chinese decision making process and governance structures.

That study also looked at central-local fiscal relations, and the decentralization of taxation control to local areas. These are contemporary issues that Lynette Ong will be discussing later at this Conference. In the late 1980s, in the wake of Zhao Ziyang's reforms, authority began to be decentralized to the local levels.

Wang Shaoguang, for example, has discussed state involution. Did this decentralization in the 1990s weaken the Party-state, and would Beijing have to recentralize taxation control and rebuild its fiscal capacity? This is the portrait of a weakened, fragmented, decentralized Chinese Party-state; yet in fact the system appears to have absorbed the decentralizing tendencies of the reforms without appreciably weakening the Party's power.
The Party has survived. There is enormous coordination and leadership capacity in China. In fact, there is a lot more going on behind the scenes with respect to coordination than has been written so far, especially when viewed from a political economy standpoint. Strategic sectors, pillar industries, financial sectors—in other words, not the low-tech, export-oriented cheap goods exported to the world, but rather the fundamental sectors that will underpin the sustained growth and rise of China over time.

If you look at how resources and state investment are reallocated to key industries in China, this is not a story about a decentralized, fragmented Party-state. Yes, there are elements of central-local tension, but there is something behind it all, providing leadership and coordination. That is the idea of the developmental Party-state, not a new idea, but there is a need to return to this concept.

In the early 1990s, after Tiananmen, central authorities fashioned a new foreign investment utilization strategy to remake China's auto industry. Beijing central planners had learned something. Partly it was the political lessons of Tiananmen, and partly the problems of inflation. Zhu Rongji was brought to Beijing for a reason. Economically, things were not fully in control. In that period you saw Deng Xiaoping in 1992 pushing economic reform (gaige kaifang).

What is important is how the Chinese Party-state effectively mediated between the foreign auto makers and its own domestic auto group, and how the Chinese Party-state, through leveraging and bargaining in a coordinated, centralized process, was able to exert pressure on the multinationals to transfer complete car manufacturing technology to China. Largely, it had to do with the Automotive Industrial Policy of 1994 (AIP), which demanded that foreign investors meet local content requirements. If you wanted access into China, you had to agree to localize—first 40 per cent, then 60 per cent, and even higher if you wanted the tax breaks.

Most people who study the Automotive Industrial Policy, like Huang Yasheng, see it as a failure. He says the auto industry didn't rationalize and they haven't overcome the miniaturization problem. You still have 200 assemblers, 800 parts suppliers. There have been high levels of concentration and centralization of production inside the Chinese auto industry. It depends on the time frame. Aside from the AIP, the Party-state adopted the Foreign Capital Utilization Strategy, designed to leverage international resources for domestic growth and to extract optimal transfers from foreign assemblers and parts suppliers.

The result was an auto industry in China that has been transformed. Anyone who goes to China knows this. You see the cars all across China, even in western China. China has a new generation of home-grown branded models. Not only Chery, but Shanghai Automotive, First Automotive. They have been trying to create their own so-called "home brands."

How has the Chinese state been able to act in such a coordinated way to leverage foreign capital? The argument, counter intuitively, is that this is the return of the Leninist Party-state. Leninist methods of centralized control and coordination have been selectively brought back. Everywhere else in the world, you saw these regimes collapsing. That's not to say that this is the same Leninism that we used to study. The Chinese Party-state contains elements that marry together Leninist means of centralized control and coordination with a market orientation.
Eric Thun has produced a wonderful study of the Chinese auto industry, *Changing Lanes in China*. He looks at local variations: why Shanghai succeeded in the auto industry development and Beijing did not. Why Guangzhou did not, nor Wuhan nor Zhongshan. He makes the argument that there is something special about the local developmental state, for example, local institutions in Shanghai. I don't deny those important points about the importance of local variation, but in my view the key variable was strong centralized Party-state direction of China's automobile industry. In the midst of decentralizing tendencies unleashed in the new political economy, the Party-state held firm.

My paper examines these mechanisms of centralized coordination and control. One is the State Planning Commission. It used to be called the *Guojia jiwei*, now the *Guojia fagaihui*. It plays an important role as the interlocutor between the Party and the bureaucracy through which the Communist Party and top economic decision makers provide coordination to the economic development process. Party and government officials played important roles. One example was Zeng Peiyan, chairman of the Planning Commission and then Vice-Premier.

He linked auto sector issues with national strategies on infrastructure development, steel, energy. Also, Lu Jian, head of the Shanghai Auto Corporation, was a key player ensuring local-central coordination.

Two sets of conceptual implications come out of my research. One is the need to recognize that there is more to the China story than fragmented authoritarianism, decentralization and a weakened state. The Chinese story is very much an effort to find a balance between encouraging local innovation while maintaining political coherence. We come back to what Susan Shirk was originally thinking about in the 1980s, balancing the two when you conceptualize the Chinese Party-state. You must drill behind the bureaucracy to understand the inner workings of the Party, and how the Party intersects with the state. Therefore, in my view, we should call China a modified Leninist Party-state, where the Party utilizes Leninist (centralizing and authoritarian) means of policymaking and control.

Second is the idea of comparative developmental state models. In some ways, China shares with Korea and Japan the developmental state model—the idea of the purpose of the state, of trying to lead and coordinate development; yet the Chinese case also is different, for example, reliance on outside foreign investment, not just selectively drawing in capital to build your own industry, but a much more robust use of foreign assets, then linking that investment through joint ventures into China.

*Chinese Perspectives on Political Reform*

**Cui Zhiyuan** (Professor, School of Public Policy and Management, Tsinghua University)

I have to apologize because in the last two months, I have been heavily involved in the policy debates for the Chinese response to the financial crisis, and did not have time to finish my paper.
Yesterday, I emailed Conference participants my old paper in Chinese as well as English. I am also finishing a new paper, just for this Conference.

How to perceive and conceptualize today's China is a big intellectual and moral challenge. Intellectually, it is very difficult, like a shooting a moving target. Things change so fast and conceptual frameworks often tend to be out of date. Morally, it is very challenging. I have been teaching in the United States for many years, and only returned to teach in China in 2004. I have never been a member of the Communist Party as a professor. In the early 1980s, when I was in college, it wasn't a very popular thing to do, unlike today, to join the Party.

I sincerely think the Communist Party is an extremely important organization. We cannot understand today's China, economically or politically, without trying to gain a deeper insight about the evolving mechanism of the Chinese Communist Party. How does it operate? But it is so complicated, I feel that it is like an elephant, and we researchers are like blind men, including myself, and also including Chinese researchers and Westerners. But maybe Westerners can provide a perspective from outside, like de Tocqueville, the Frenchman who became the greatest contributor to the analysis of American politics. I feel that we researchers can just touch only a small part of this elephant. Each person's perspective is very much limited, including my own. What I am trying to say in these two papers, actually, is that I am just a blind man touching two parts of this Chinese elephant and reporting my findings to you.

I do think we need some new conceptual schemes if we want fully to understand the complexity of today's China. The Chinese article that I emailed to Conference participants is entitled, "Mixed Constitution and the Three-level Analysis of Chinese Politics." What do I mean by "mixed constitution"? The dominant perspective of China in the former communist states in Eastern Europe and Russia is the focus on the hotbed between state and civil society. In my view, we need another perspective because the focus on state versus civil society limits our understanding.

A new perspective, I argue, can be borrowed from the older Western political tradition. Go back to Aristotle for the idea of "the mixed constitution." As you may know, in Aristotle's Politics he has a classification of political regimes based on rule by one, rule by a few, and rule by many.

So rule by one is the king and kingship. Rule by a few is oligarchy, and rule by many is democracy. Aristotle claimed that the best political regime is actually none of these three, not a pure type, but a mixed constitution--a combined version of rule by one, rule by few and rule by many. Why does this seem so out of date? Very simple. Contemporary Western political theory has become the lens used for judging China today. For example, for several years now, the Chinese government has officially published local protest statistics. There were 80,000 such protests last year, and they are increasing. I received many calls from Western journalists located in Beijing or Shanghai who ask, "Do you see the imminent collapse of the communist regime?"

If we only employ the perspective of state versus civil society, we will be overlooking the complexity of these local protests. Many actually are grassroots people protesting to support the central government's laws and regulations, because they think local oligarchies are violating them by not fully implementing these laws and regulations. In my view, we should consider
Aristotle's rule by one today. This is complicated and I face many conceptual difficulties. We can think of the Party as one, and the local elites, mostly those included in the Party culture, but also the new capitalists, the industrial magnates as the oligarchy--as this term "oligarchy" is widely used in the Russian post-communist studies. Russians themselves describe their system as "rule by financial oligarchies," like the former President and current Prime Minister Putin. Maybe the one tried to crack down on the oligarchy, but the result is full success, I think, and Putin, of course, made an alliance with the many.

The greatest thinker after Aristotle to carry on the tradition of the mixed constitution was, of course, Machiavelli. He wrote The Prince as well as Discourses on Livy. The latter is about the republican form of government. Because he wrote The Prince, many could not understand why he could write both books at the same time. The Prince suggests he is not for a republican form of government. However, if we have the current Chinese political changes and Russian political changes in mind, we can gain a deeper understanding of the development of Machiavelli's thinking.

For Machiavelli, the possible political alliance between the one, the few and the many encompassed a variety of combinations. He was particularly interested in the political alliance between the one and the many. By the one, he means the new Prince, the force of political innovation. The Italian communist leader, Gramsci, studying Machiavelli in prison, argued that the Communist Party should be understood as Machiavelli's new Prince--not a single person, but a political force for innovation in political and social structure.

In a preliminary way my paper tries to address the one, the few, and the many in Chinese politics. Relevant for a discussion of the democratization of China is the rather amazing fact that Aristotle and Rousseau do not identify competitive elections as a method of selecting officials in a democracy. Aristotle said that the method of selecting leadership in democracy should be via random selection. As for the method of elections for leaders in oligarchies, Aristotle gave a good explanation. It was because democracy means rule, the people ruling themselves. The rulers and those being ruled are one in the same, so only random selection can reflect the "averageness" of the population, by and large. In elections, by virtue of the very logic of competition, you cannot elect average people. You have to elect people with some particular features, with some prominence. Maybe they are wealthier, maybe just more beautiful, maybe a famous actor like the Governor of California. You cannot elect someone with just average qualities.

The Canadian government recently ran a programme with the National Peoples' Congress of China introducing a new Canadian democratic experiment, the so-called "Citizens' Assembly." British Columbia has instituted the randomly-selected Citizens' Assembly, to deliberate and make recommendations to the provincial Legislature regarding legislation. The Legislature is obliged to reply to the recommendations of this Citizens' Assembly.

In China, in several cities, we have a prototype of Citizens' Assembly--not quite the same as the Canadian, British Columbia type. For example, a city will have a mayor and deputy mayor. Their performances are evaluated by someone at a higher level, in the provincial level organization department. In several cities, higher level organization departments recently hired public opinion polling agencies to send questionnaires asking urban residents about the performance of the
mayor and deputy mayor in several areas of their work. If the mayor and deputy mayor receive a negative or low grades in these public opinion polls for two consecutive years, the higher level organization department will remove the mayor or deputy mayor from their posts. I say this is a prototype because this is a public opinion survey that contains some randomness, is similar to the Canadian Citizens' Assembly, and also resembles the original democratic ideals of Aristotle.

In the final few minutes, I would like to talk about the paper I haven't been able to finish. In this paper, I try to focus on the mechanism of accountability for the Communist Party. It is a widespread opinion in the West, but also in China, that unless you have competitive multi-party competitions, the ruling party is not accountable to anyone. I recently reread the classic book by Albert Hirschman, a leading economist and political philosopher, published in 1970 called *Exit, Voice and Loyalty*. It is a classic book in political economy and political philosophy, but people tend to forget or not talk about it. He has this study about exit and voice as two different mechanisms in response to the decline of a product or of enterprises, and then he applies it to party systems and states.

If you do not like a product, you may exit through the market and you may buy a product from another firm, that's exit. Alternatively, if you have some loyalty to this brand, you may not immediately exit. You may complain to the manufacturer of this product to voice your complaint. Hirschman studied the delicate matter of exit/voice. If the first option is always exit, because the cost is heavy, if you don't like Product A, you buy Product B or Product C, or in the end, you may wind up buying Product D. Maybe Product A's manufacturer did not get enough pressure to improve product quality when conditions were not perfectly competitive. He has a wonderful chapter saying that the monopoly can be confronted by competition, and he applied this to the American two-party system.

Hirschman also observed that when there is lack of exit, you have to rely on voice to push the manufacturer of a product, or the ruling party to improve quality, to improve performance. Hirschman is not so naïve as to say that voice will always be effective. The complication that comes into the picture is that unless you have some threat of exit, your voice will not be heard. In China, the Party seems quite responsive in recent years, as it tries to respond in economic and political terms to give people voice. As a result, the threat of exit, how could it become possible? How to conceptualize the threat of exit and effective voice is a challenge, but tentatively, I have argued that paradoxically, because of the global dominance of this Western ideology, unless you have multi-party competitive elections, it is argued that you are not legitimate rulers.

I think the global dominance of this Western ideology has had a psychological effect on the Chinese leaders. They may think they are not fully legitimate because they are not elected by multi-party competition. Exactly because of this they face a kind of threat of exit in a broader sense, and they have to perform and respond quickly to popular demands. This is in contrast to the situation in many "democratic" countries. For example, a recent delegation from India came to my university, and the speaker said that the Indian government was legitimate, yet in the interval between elections it was not responsive to the people's demands. He said that Indian officials believe they are legitimate because they have elections and don't have to worry about being accountable on a continual basis.
The point of my two papers is that I think we need to bring some new perspective for understanding how to make sense of the evolving Chinese political context. Of course, as I mentioned, I am still a blind man and only believe 80 per cent of what I say.

**Discussant**

**Joe Wong** (Associate Professor and Canada Research Chair, Political Science and Director, Asian Institute, University of Toronto)

Let me begin by saying that it is an honour to be on this panel. I am actually woefully ignorant of Chinese politics and really have nothing to contribute except for some external and extraneous thoughts and some reactions with respect to the papers. I am not just blind; I am blind, deaf, devoid of all other senses with respect to China, so will approach this discussion from more of an outside perspective.

We have just come out of a very exciting year for China, a year of highs and lows, with serious discussion about the rise of China providing us with a China model, a new model of understanding political and economic modernization. Both of these fascinating papers get at this, maybe not directly, but certainly by the implications they are drawing from their analyses. For instance, Gregory Chin tells us that Lieberthal and Oksenberg were right; they were reflecting on a particular moment in time. The subsequent literature that has been dealing with the fragmented authoritarian state is not wrong, but what he is finding in an important sector is an alternative way of thinking about this, an alternative not only to the Western liberal democratic ideology of the advanced industrial countries, but also distinctive from the East Asian developmental state variant. This is a striking and bold assertion.

Cui Zhiyuan talks about how we should rethink part of the Western canon, and derive from that new ways to reflect upon the institutions that order political economic life, again suggesting that there are no right answers and there are a multitude of answers to we tackle modernity's problems. This is a very compelling way to think about the rise of China and the centrality of the Party.

Gregory Chin has written an excellent paper. It is a must read and will contribute to what will be an important book. He presents a set of counter intuitive findings, because conventional wisdom, as it is explained in the literature, sees China as an example of fragmented authoritarianism. In his empirically rich story, he demonstrates that the Chinese Party-state, at the national level, and in terms of central-local relations, was able, with respect the modernization of China's automobile sector, to coordinate across different ministries and across different levels of government.

A single case study is always prone to counter-factual reasoning. I am not going to suggest that counter-factual reasoning necessarily will challenge the veracity of his empirical claims or prove him wrong, but rather want to encourage him to describe more precisely the mechanisms of the story that he is telling us. For instance, he finishes off his paper by saying that what is revealed is
an optimal foreign investment policy implemented by the Chinese state. Now, what if I were to say, look, what you are really explaining is that multinational corporations simply want to get into China, as you indeed demonstrated to us. In the course of a decade and a half, China has become one of the largest markets in the world. Maybe this is really just capital push saying that we want into China, and that the threshold of coordination on the China side need not be too high to facilitate this.

For instance, let's think about Taiwan's efforts in the automotive sector. They were awful in the 1970s and 1980s and they failed entirely. The standard conventional view is precisely what he is arguing against--policy coordination within the state, or in this case, lack of policy coordination within the state. However, one could conceivably argue, and some of my recent interviews suggest that this may not be completely wrong, that the potential foreign investors that Taiwan desperately needed decided in the end that the market was not big enough for them, and there was no reason to be in Taiwan. In this case, the lack of policy coordination may not have been a critical factor. We need to get a better sense of what is meant by optimal foreign investment policy.

Second, in terms of counter-factual reasoning, you want to ask, "What is the role of the Party? and I know what you are going to say, that, "Well it is a Leninist party-state, so it is the fusion of the Party and the state." Then what is it about the Leninist party-state, what particular mechanisms allow for the type of policy coordination that you describe? The examples that you give in the paper deal with, for instance, the Leninist mechanisms employed by the Chinese Party-state in the 1990s. You talk about the centrality of a particular committee and you give examples of particular champions.

Now, what if I was to ask you, as one of our colleagues did earlier on, is this institutionally impossible in any other set of political economic institutions besides the Leninist party-state? I've been thinking a lot about this because my students ask me all the time, "Was authoritarianism a necessary precondition to the developmental state?" The conventional wisdom back in the 1980s and 1990s was that, "Yes, it was." When you actually begin to think about it, what were the instruments of authoritarianism that were necessary? Well, mainly labour repression and it was an effective instrument only up to the 1970s, after which light manufacturing in places like Korea and Taiwan was being priced out of their market. Thus, the instrumental utility of authoritarianism really runs out by about the 1970s.

It's not entirely clear to me what is unique about Leninist political economic institutions that led to these results. I can give you another example about how I am inferring this. The literature on the political economy of the NICS and the Dragons has become woefully scarce in the last 10 years. I have yet actually to see a very good study that tells me about the impact of democracy on the bureaucracy in places like Taiwan and South Korea. This suggests that either people aren't thinking about it or they aren't finding anything, and further suggests that maybe the political regime, in terms of its institutions, not in terms of its purposes, might have had less to do with it.

Is it possible to see a "champion" in a set of institutions that aren't Leninist? Could we not visualize a policy-coordinating committee that brings together, particularly in turnkey operations
and technology transfers that has to accommodate multiple interests? I am not entirely convinced, but that is the counter-factual response.

Where Gregory Chin's paper is grounded in on-the-ground empirical analysis, Cui Zhiyuan is forcing us to think more expansively. He is using the Western canon to describe our intellectual deficiencies and what we see as being important. Let me begin by saying that most academics don't understand the term "Western-style liberal democracy," and most academics don't understand the term "consolidation". These are convenient categories created and promoted by pundits. Francis Fukuyama is an academic, but the "End of History" thesis was not the construction of intellectuals or of academic thinking. The idea of Western-style liberal democracy, at least for this particular thinker, is one I really don't understand. What are the specific political economic institutions that would make a Western-style liberal democracy? What seems to me to be important and in fact, compatible with how many different people think about this, are two ideas that emerge from Cui's writing, which he touched on today in his talk--legitimacy and experimentation.

Let's talk about legitimacy first. The beauty of the Machiavelli paradox that Cui Zhiyuan raises is that not only is legitimacy something constructed from above, but it is also something derived from below, an insight which you acknowledge. In that respect then, legitimacy is predicated upon choice. That is precisely what he is talking about, that there are alternatives. Legitimacy can be derived from the negation of lesser alternatives--the basis of accountability.

The second is the idea of experimentation. Hirschman not only provides for us the institutional mechanisms of choice, but puts forth a theory that is predicated on choice, and the presupposition of choice. In that respect, then it seems to me that what democracy is about, in the most expansive way of thinking---not in the Western liberal way that pundits would think about it--democracy is about the revelation of imperfections. That's what democracy really is. Anyone who thinks that democracy is perfect is lying or is trying to feed you a line. The core of democracy is the continued revelation of imperfections.

This is where Rousseau and Hobbes echo each other. They really were not into dissent, nor in the revelation of these continual imperfections. The imperfections may be a particular president, it may be a particular constitutional rule, it may be a particular socio-economic outcome. But it is about the continual revelation and portended corrections of imperfections. Now this understanding of legitimacy and experimentation does not necessarily mean what our colleagues mean by Western-style democracy, but rather it is the presupposition of choices and alternatives, and therefore, in my mind, is what the core of democracy is all about.

The thorny question that Cui Zhiyuan is grappling with is, how do you push forward experimentation beyond an intellectual exercise? This is what we as academics are allowed to do, and we face no repercussions for it. This is probably one of the reasons why we are generally irrelevant. Really, how do we think about experimentation in the real world? Well, in democracies, whether you call them multi-party, competitive democracies or not, you are dealing with choices. We have institutions to deal with experimentation; that is to say less optimal solutions are usually rejected. They are voted out. They are mobilized against. However, these
are the institutionalized mechanisms through which we make political choices. Democracies are a continual experiment.

I am sensing that Cui Zhiyuan, like me, is grappling with this as well in the case of the Chinese Communist Party. How do you experiment when there are few institutions that allow you to reject less optimal options? That seems to be the core. This is not an underhanded way of saying that you need more democracy. I am merely saying that if you are about to embark on the road of institutional experimentation, then you need the right institutions to allow the rejection of sub-optimal outcomes. That is something we have in democracy: it's called losing. It's something that you have rightly pointed out. In the absence of exit, it is something that the Chinese Communist Party has to deal with as it continues to govern China.

Question:

When I was teaching in Shandong a couple of years ago, a friend of mine bought a car called a Maple and it had a blue maple leaf on it and it was built by what I understand is an independent company. I don't know where it stands now. My question is ultimately about the direction that the automotive industry will take in China. Is it not conceivable that General Motors might become a Chinese company in North America? Do you see an independent Chinese company surviving? Do you see General Motors or the automotive industry in China becoming sinified, ultimately?

Jeremy Paltiel:

In the last part of Cui Zhiyuan's presentation, he suggests the exit option is provided by forces outside China. That reminds me a lot of Japanese social scientists and politicians in the 1980s who talked about the benefits of *gaiatsu*, *waiya* in Chinese, *wailai yali* (external pressure) basically because they had a one party-state. They said they needed to internalize foreign pressure in order to accomplish the reforms that are necessary for their system. In Japan, it was legal to say that and the Japanese government, while it was uncomfortable, didn't stop people from saying it. The Chinese Vice-President and upcoming number two, Xi Jinping, in his recent speech in Mexico, said that some people who've had their fill and have nothing better to do, turn their attention to us. The problem is that your exit option depends on legitimating external criticism, which the Chinese Communist Party explicitly rejects, both in terms of foreign criticism and in echoing it internally. How are you going to overcome that dilemma?

Question:

This is for Cui Zhiyuan and the other panelists, including the chair. There is the perennial question, what might democracy look like in China in this century? China is a big place and it has to be ruled well. The fact is that China has a long history--it's over 2,000 years old. It is not that China has not experimented with democracy. Post-1911, it tried to democratize according to the Western way with a parliament, but then was overrun by circumstances beyond its control.
Gregory Chin:

Joe Wong's points are valid as far as going to the next level of analysis. It's unfortunate that I had to pick and choose what to present today. It's not just a story about the Party-state but also the market. In the Shanghai-General Motors case, you get the details of what GM was originally offering versus what they ended up agreeing to after the Planning Commission intervened and pressed them. You had to open up the value chain in the manufacturing of an automobile. GM probably would have provided more concessions to secure entry into the China auto market, but the combination of pressure from the Planning Commission and Shanghai authorities was critical.

Your second point about the actual mechanisms of the Leninist Party-state, pushes me beyond mid-range observations and conclusions to more full-blown theory building. Bernie Frolic has raised this point to me many times in the last couple of months, to clarify the nature of this "Market Leninism." I'm not yet at point to try to argue, or rearticulate a complete full-blown theory of modified Leninism in China. At this stage, I talk about Leninist means of control and actually try to get at the functional logic of how it worked, for example, such mechanisms as democratic centralism, adherence to the correct line, the Party's senior cadre management system, the nomenklatura system and so on. How did those Leninist means of control influence Lu Jian, for example, the Shanghai boss? Why did he conform, largely, to Beijing's main priorities, even when they conflicted with local interests?

As to whether this would be possible under a non-authoritarian system is a comparative question that I'm not trying to answer. That is not the focus of my study. I've just been trying to get the details of the China automobile story right so far, and that has taken almost seven years.

Regarding the question that there are rumours that China or Shanghai or one of the auto companies might buy the Hummer division of GM, I hope they don't. There are also rumours that some Chinese company may buy Chrysler. I hope not. You have several models now of innovation--trying to build homegrown models in China, for example, Chery, the so-called independent. They will produce for export, as well as for the domestic market. Shanghai Automotive used a large part of its accumulated investments and state-allocated from Beijing support to acquire Rover. Then you have the First Automotive Works-Volkswagen trying to resuscitate the Hong Qi (Red Flag), using Toyota. At the end of the day, the question is whether Toyota and Honda will ultimately take over the Chinese auto industry and to what degree the Chinese can continue the leveraging that they have been able to maintain so far. I am not so optimistic about the capacity of the Chinese government to continue the way it did in the 1990s. Part of that is actually because of WTO. Its rules and norms and requirements ultimately restrain them in several areas.

Cui Zhiyuan:

Thank you for these very interesting questions. I have two brief answers. The first is that the Chinese leadership, even without explicitly acknowledging many of the criticisms against it, actually has implicitly adopted them. A prominent example is the SARS crisis. The government
was not very transparent with SARS. After last year's earthquake, most Western commentators thought China's response to the earthquake in Sichuan was quite transparent. Many people said--even in the United States--that China behaved better than President Bush's response to Hurricane Katrina.

From a theoretical point, it is a delicate matter to reach an equilibrium between exit and voice. If the exit choice is too strong, then you lose the potential of relying on voice. Hirschman had this macroeconomic graph to synchronize the equilibrium between voice and exit. In applying this to China, my main point is that outside criticism is certainly beneficial, and would be even better if the Western critics tried to be constructive and had a more sympathetic understanding of what is going on, not trying to occupy a moral high ground to begin with. Constructive criticism, I think, will serve better for the democratization of China.

**Question:**

Wealth has been created through globalization and trade. On the question of corruption, would bribes and let's say "gifts" to Party gatekeepers be necessary to implement business enterprises?

**Question:**

This question is for Gregory Chin. There is a company by the name of BYD, and through its own initiative, it came up with an electric car. Six months ago, Warren Buffet invested USD 2.5 billion. Does this mean that the state is losing control, or is it allowing private initiatives?

**Gregory Chin:**

The BYD case study represents the limits of how far Party-state led modernization can go. You are getting at the whole issue of the electric car, a different type of fuel. What has always been interesting in the Chinese case is how much outside financing the Party-state would allow, how much domestic financing it could secure, and then the degree of management control reflected in the equity shareholding arrangements. BYD probably has access to preferential financing from the Ministry of Science and Technology in China to drive the innovation agenda and create partnerships with investors such as such as Warren Buffet. They were able to bring in the Americans and the Germans without having the Chinese auto industry taken over by the foreigners. The Japanese, however, waited for a long time, wanting to protect their intellectual property rights. Finally they came in when they realized that they probably would miss the boat. Now Honda and Toyota, with their very strong production systems and innovation capacities and experience in dealing with China are making major gains.
Cui Zhiyuan:

Yes, there is a lot of corruption and we need to crack down. However, in the scheme of things, corruption is a secondary matter. I didn't get a chance to talk about the Chinese economic system. I disagree with the dominant Western view that Chinese economic reform is just turning into capitalism. China is building a socialist market economy. We do differ from advanced capitalist economies in many respects, although given the current global economic crises, these capitalist economies may now need to increase their commitment to the public sector. Alan Greenspan just said that nationalization is the only choice for the United States banking system, although it would be a temporary solution. However, I ask the question, how temporary could it be? President Hoover, in 1932, said that the Reconstruction Finance Corporation would only last two years, but, in fact, it lasted 25 years. The current crisis shows that a socialist market economy, with significant public ownership of assets, can coexist with private entrepreneurship. This is even relevant for Western economies.

The Alberta experience of public ownership of financial resources is most relevant. I have been arguing in China that we should start some sort of trust fund along Alberta's line so as long as we have public assets and the public assets bring in revenue, we can reduce the income tax, therefore encouraging private entrepreneurship, because as long as you have revenue from public ownership, the government does not have to rely so completely upon highly taxing enterprises and individuals, thereby encouraging private entrepreneurship.

Local and Regional Institutions and Issues

Eric Walsh (Director, North Asia Relations, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Government of Canada)

We have two panelists for this session. The first is Sonny Shui-hing Lo, Professor of Political Science at the University of Waterloo. His three new books are: The Politics of Cross-Border Crime in Greater China (M.E. Sharpe, 2008), Political Change in Macao (Routledge, 2008), and The Dynamics of Beijing-Hong Kong Relations: A Model for Taiwan? (Hong Kong University Press, 2008). He is currently involved in a project focused on Canada and southern China.

The second panelist is Lynette Ong, Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Toronto, and currently An Wang Postdoctoral Fellow at the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies at Harvard University. She has published in China Quarterly, Pacific Affairs and the Journal of East Asian Studies. She is completing a book on the politics of rural credit, rural industrialization and uneven development in China.

The discussant is Susan Henders, Director of the York Centre for Asian Research and Associate Professor, Department of Political Science at York University. She is the editor of Democratization and Identity: Regimes and Ethnicity in East and Southeast Asia (2004) and author of the forthcoming book, Territoriality, Asymmetry and Autonomy: Catalonia, Corsica, Hong Kong and Tibet.
My paper is about political reform in Hong Kong. Since its return to Chinese sovereignty in July 1997, there has been a clash of two major perspectives on political reform and democratization. The first, if you like, is a kind of Western perspective, adopted by a majority of the pro-democracy elites who claim that Hong Kong Chinese are mature politically, and that Hong Kong should accelerate its pace of democratic reform through direct election of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage as soon as possible. They also believe that the entire Legislative Council should be directly elected and that the functional constituencies should be phased out or abolished as soon as possible. "Functional constituencies" refers to professional groups such as lawyers, accountants and engineers who form associations and elect their representatives to the Legislature. Basically the Hong Kong democrats are adopting a Western perspective, if you like, a Schumpeterian perspective, saying that the Chief Executive should be directly elected by the people through universal suffrage.

The central government in Beijing and the Hong Kong SAR government want to adopt a more "Chinese" perspective towards political reform in Hong Kong. First of all, from the perspective of Beijing, if you have direct election of the Chief Executive through universal suffrage, there may be a possibility that an "unpatriotic" Hong Kong person could be elected who may be operating independently from the political control of the central government in Beijing. Central government officials do not voice these views explicitly, but some of the Beijing legal experts have done so from time to time. The bottom line of the Central government in Beijing is clear.

Second, both Beijing and the Hong Kong government believe that political reform in Hong Kong should proceed gradually, or if you like, in an "orderly and gradual process," the catch phrase in Hong Kong's political reform. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the central government in Beijing and also the Hong Kong government believe that the Legislative Council should have a "balanced" representation. The key word is "balanced", by which they mean the functional constituencies like labour groups, professional groups. All these groups need to be preserved in the medium and even the long term, so that political participation will be balanced.

I argue that the definition of the "political" in Hong Kong is very narrow. In fact, if we take a closer look at political reform in Hong Kong, and also in Mainland China in the longer term, "political reform" actually encompasses many issues--for example, the empowerment of political parties in Hong Kong. They are relatively weak, especially the business political party. In the last Legislative Council election, the business political party--the Liberal party--was utterly defeated. The business leadership changed hands and another business woman was defeated. How can Hong Kong progress towards democratization if the business representation in direct elections is not really there? How we can empower business political parties is a crucial middle-range solution. In Hong Kong, political parties are registered under the company's ordinance. There is no political party law in Hong Kong. That's very strange.
If a political system is moving forward, then in the medium term the Hong Kong government and even the central government in Beijing should consider enacting a political party law, or political party legislation, so that political parties will be empowered in Hong Kong.

Another problem is that the mini Constitution, the Basic Law, empowers the central government in Beijing, particularly the National People's Congress Standing Committee, to interpret the Basic Law. In the past 10 years the National People's Congress Standing Committee interpreted the Basic Law twice, or made decisions twice on Hong Kong's democratic reform. The most recent interpretation or decision was made on December 29, 2007. The NPCSC said that the Executive Law and the whole Legislature in Hong Kong would not move to universal suffrage in 2012, and that the Hong Kong government would retain the half and half ratio Legislature divided between the functional constituencies and geographical constituencies. In the short run, we won't see any progress towards democratic reform, but the NPCSC decision opens the door to the possibility of electing the Chief Executive by universal suffrage in 2017.

The earliest possible year for having the Chief Executive elected by universal suffrage would be 2017 and the likelihood of having the whole legislature directly elected by universal suffrage would be 2020. Supporters of the central government are now saying that it is open to democratization in 2017 and 2020. Critics, however, including the Hong Kong democrats, argue that actually there is no timetable set for democratic reform by Beijing, so by the time 2017 and 2020 arrive, democratic reform may be further postponed. It is quite unfortunate to see that Hong Kong's democratic reform has reached an impasse, a deadlock that cannot easily be resolved. In fact, I would argue that the Hong Kong political elites, including the Hong Kong government think tanks, Beijing and the pro-democracy elites, should perhaps have adopted a more politically creative approach. What is needed is to design an institutional system which can move Hong Kong forward, using the Hong Kong model, perhaps to shape the Mainland political system in the foreseeable future.

The first possibility for the harmonization model that I propose in my paper is the possibility of adopting a Hong Kong style of bicameral system. In Canada, the Senate is regarded as an institution that needs further reform. In the Hong Kong case, if you take a look at the Legislative Council with 60 members, there are actually two chambers: the one elected from the functional constituencies and the chamber elected by direct elections. In a sense, a kind of shared mini-bicameral system already exists in Hong Kong.

In the future, if there is real political change in Hong Kong, perhaps all sides should consider a Hong Kong-style bicameral system in which there will be a true upper house and a lower house with 50 elected members. A Hong Kong upper house would not be similar to the American Senate, which is very powerful. A Hong Kong-style Senate could perhaps veto some of the bills proposed or even passed by the lower House in the future. Unfortunately, a few years ago when the Hong Kong government set up a strategic development committee to study the possibility of instituting a bicameral system, the bicameral model was rejected on the grounds that was too complicated, and that any bicameral system, if adopted, would necessitate a revision of the Basic Law. From Beijing's perspective, any revision of the Basic Law would be very difficult.
A bicameral model has at least two major advantages. The first is that representation in an upper chamber would protect business interests in Hong Kong. Second, allowing the lower chamber to have fully directly elected members would satisfy the demands of the pro-democracy elite. This is a win-win situation. Of course, the technicalities of such a bicameral system would have to be debated, for example, how many bills could be vetoed by the upper house, and which areas of proposed legislation.

The most problematic issue of Hong Kong political reform is the direct election of the Chief Executive. If you take a look at the recent Chief Executive election, a democrat named Alan Leong from the Civic Party was nominated and he could not really compete against the pro-Beijing candidate, Donald Tsang, who eventually became the Chief Executive. It will be difficult to reform Chief Executive elections. I don't see any way out. One option is to maintain the current threshold of allowing one or two democracy candidates to be nominated, but the election committee is overwhelmingly occupied by the pro-Beijing members, and any pro-democracy individual nominated by the Committee will not be successful.

Another suggestion is to nominate more pro-democracy candidates to stand for the election of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage. This option is dangerous because you open the door for the election of candidates hostile to Beijing. The central government would defiantly reject such a proposal. Beijing could increase the size of the Election Committee to screen out the undesirable candidates. The Election Committee, fully controlled by the central government in Beijing, would therefore ensure that no undesirable candidates would be nominated, and the people of Hong Kong would have to elect a Chief Executive who would follow the Beijing line. Of course, this filtering mechanism would be rejected by the Hong Kong democrats.

I would like to propose a middle range solution for all sides to consider, that is, to empower political parties in Hong Kong. The first task for Beijing, for the Hong Kong government and even for the Hong Kong pro-democracy elite, as well as for the business community, is to improve the performance of political parties in Hong Kong. There is no political party law in Hong Kong. Political parties are registered under company ordinance and this is unsatisfactory. If you take a look at the Canadian election law, it allows political parties to register, and also gives subsidies and tax incentives to political parties. Perhaps the Hong Kong government should consider enacting a political party law in which citizens are encouraged to donate their money to political parties, and to join political parties through tax exemptions and incentives.

Unfortunately, in the last several years, we haven't seen any political discussion on how to enact a political party law, which is frustrating.

The second aspect of political reform is that the very respectable anti-corruption work in Hong Kong can perhaps be transplanted to Mainland China. It is worth looking at the State Council's January 2009 report on the Pearl River Delta Region, encouraging Hong Kong, Macao, Shenzhen, Zhuhai and the Pearl River Delta area to coordinate and cooperate in all areas: infrastructure, logistics, industrial development, IT development, governance, anti-corruption, police work and combating cross border crime.

If you take a look at the definition of political reform adopted by the State Council, there are some progressive signs. The definition of "the political" has widened to other areas. It is
conceivable to say that the Mainland can learn from Hong Kong, and that Hong Kong can also
learn from the Mainland. If the Hong Kong elite can grab this window of opportunity further, the
anti-corruption agency can be experimented with in China, where anti-corruption work is shared
by multiple agencies like the Central Discipline Inspection Committee and the Ministry of
Supervision. If this Hong Kong model can be adopted or experimented with in the Mainland,
perhaps they can learn from each other.

Another interesting aspect of Hong Kong's vibrant and strong political system is the performance
of the Audit Commission. The Hong Kong Audit Commission plays a crucial role in checking
the expenditures of government agencies, and as we know, the Audit Office in Mainland China
is now becoming more assertive. Perhaps both sides can also learn from each other in this area.

It is unfortunate that Hong Kong's political reform is reaching a deadlock because of the clash
between Western and Chinese perspectives on democratization. I am proposing that the Hong
Kong elite, the central government in Beijing, the pro-democracy elite, and the people of Hong
Kong become more politically imaginative and bolder in designing an institutional system for
Hong Kong, and perhaps for Mainland China. Developing a Hong Kong-style bicameral model
is one way forward. Another possibility is enacting a political party law in Hong Kong so that
political parties could function more effectively, to keep Hong Kong moving on a path towards
future democratization.

The Communist Party and Local Financial Reform

Lynette Ong (Assistant Professor, Political Science, University of Toronto and Postdoctoral
Fellow, Harvard University)

It is my honour today to talk about the Chinese Communist Party and local financial reform,
focusing on the rural credit cooperatives, particularly the institutional design of post-reform rural
credit cooperatives.

A number of scholars have written about the role of the Chinese Communist Party and the
allocation of financial resources. Nick Lardy wrote a seminal book in the late 1990s arguing that
the central government directed state banks to provide lending to state-owned enterprises, and
then, in turn, get the state-owned enterprises to provide a range of social services to their
workers, which is a roundabout way of using state banks to play a fiscal role. Victor Shih more
recently has analyzed elite financial politics and elite factional politics, and the lack of financial
performance in China, and of course, Kellee Tsai has written about informal credit and local
governments.

My research looks at the rural credit cooperatives (RCC), which are a set of local credit
institutions, grassroots institutions, in rural China. Although they are not frequently heard of,
compared to the state-owned banks, I will illustrate that they play just as significant a role as
state banks for the Chinese population, particularly for those in the rural areas.
These RCCs are the major, and often the only formal providers of credit in rural China, particularly in the late 1990s, after the withdrawal of rural networks by the Agricultural Bank of China. There are about 35,000 RCCs spread out in China, about one in every township. Rural populations require credit for a range of production and consumption needs. Very often in most places, the only place they can get loans from is from the RCCs. From the 1980s to the 1990s and until today, over 80 per cent of the capital of the RCCs has come from household savings. On the other hand, a large proportion of RCC loans have been directed towards township and village enterprises (TVEs), from 40 per cent to 50 per cent throughout the period.

What are these township and village enterprises? Until the late 1990s, you had the privatization of TVEs; prior to that, they were largely government-owned collective enterprises. Yasheng Huang has a recent book arguing that TVEs were very much a private phenomenon, which I agree with to some extent. Collectively-owned enterprises account for about 10 per cent of the overall TVE sector, but they accounted for over 50 per cent in terms of the number of employees engaged in that sector, and over 60 per cent in terms of production value. They accounted for more than 90 per cent of the bank loans directed towards the TVEs.

The RCCs are really a basket case in terms of financial performance. At the end of 2002, more than half were technically bankrupt, meaning they had more liabilities than assets, and the non-performing loan rate reached as high as 50 percent. This is an official estimate. We have every reason to believe that the actual non-performing loan rate was much higher. There are some existing explanations for why loans have gone to large borrowers instead of to more households. Some have argued that such an urban-biased policy is very common in developing countries as well as in transition economies where governments readily shift resources from the rural agricultural sector to rural industry.

This paper is part of a larger study on the local political economy of credit that I have been working on in the last couple of years to explain how RCCs are accountable to multiple bosses. I learned three things: first, the influence of local governments in loan allocation decisions; second, insider control, the number of RCC employees, to what extent they could influence the decisions in the organization; and third, the collective action problem in the organization. A common set of problems is that shareholders in these organizations are spread out in a township and there could be from 5,000 to 10,000 of them. There is very little incentive to get to know the organization, the financial performance, how they are run, how decisions are made, and so on.

I collected data from a set of semi-structured interviews with RCC officials and government officials across townships and counties in five provinces in early 2000. If you compare the structure of pre-RCC’s with the state-owned banks, it is clear that the RCCs are mostly grassroots organizations located at the township level, the lowest level in terms of administrative hierarchy. They are managed by credit unions at the county level, the next level up. The state-owned banks have a very rigid hierarchical structure, from Beijing to the provincial level, to prefecture, county and then township—even though the township branches of most state-owned banks have closed because they are trying to become more commercially oriented and the township branches are costly to manage.
Since the 2003-2004 reform, RCC unions are being set up at the provincial level to manage these grassroots credit organizations. Along with that, rural commercial banks and rural cooperative banks have been introduced. Some RCCs in southern Jiangsu, some of the better performing ones, have been transformed into rural commercial banks. Some of the RCCs with a poor financial performance record still maintain the original model.

What are these provincial RCC unions? They are quite an interesting animal. First, they are purely administrative organizations, not banks. They don't accept savings and don't issue loans. Basically, they represent the interests of the provincial government and they accept the delegation of management rights from the provincial government. They have a whole range of prerogatives, including appraisals and dismissals. They have the right to veto big loans, rights over major capital expenditures as well as industry management.

If you look at the pre-reform corporate government structure of the RCCs, the highest bodies, in theory, were to be the members' representatives meetings, but these are mostly made up of township and village cadres. In my survey, I asked the households, those who were members, how many had actually participated in these members' representatives meetings. The answer was usually "never", or between one and 10 per cent. When I asked the same question in households which happened to contain township or village Party cadres, it was something like 90 per cent. You have this supervisory board, which is supposed to play a supervisory role over the board of directors. It is often made up of township cadres. As a consequence, in these credit organizations, the key decisions are invariably made by the local Party Committee.

Post-reform, in terms of government structure, there were some improvements. There was a power deconcentration, a separation of function between the board of directors and the bank governor's office. Now big loans have to go through both the bank governor's office and the board of directors. Along with that, some external shareholders, who don't hold shares in the bank, are allowed to sit on the board. Independent directors have also been included in the rural commercial banks, not unlike the cases of the Shanghai Pudong Development Bank and China Merchant Bank that also have independent directors on their board.

This shows that the collective action problem has been lowered to a greater extent in the rural commercial banks than in the rural cooperative banks. This is because of restrictions on the maximum number of shares that individuals and company shareholders are allowed to hold. The shares by employees have been significantly reduced, more so in the case of rural commercial banks than in rural cooperative banks.

Who are the people in the internal Party committees? They are typically the same batch of people, the key executives. You have the heads of the board of directors who are also the Party Secretaries. Then you have the deputy heads of the board of directors, who are also the assistant Party Secretaries; so these people wear two hats. Interestingly, the head of the supervisory board is supposed to play a supervisory role over the board of directors. He is a member of the Party Disciplinary Committee. I will illustrate in a minute that there is a conflict between the two roles.

These key executives are evaluated by two sets of criteria. One is a set of bank institution criteria, which are profit-oriented, aimed at increasing savings and lowering non-performing loan
rates. They are also evaluated by another set of criteria, the Party evaluation criteria--the cadre management system that emphasizes Party discipline and loyalty, the objectives of the CCP at this point in time.

In terms of personnel decisions, these key executives are subordinated to Party Committees that will make the major financial and capital expenditure decisions like constructing a new building. Those decisions are not made by these key executives but by the Party Committee.

How about loan approvals? The people I have spoken to all say that the Party Committee is not involved in loans, but it is a little counter intuitive that they could be involved in personnel and capital expenditures, yet staying away from loan approvals. More interesting is the issue of checks and balances. It is difficult to expect the head of the supervisory board, who is only a Party member, to be supervising the board of directors, which has a Party Secretary who outranks him. The former is clearly inferior in terms of Party ranking, and this surely presupposes an awkward conflict situation between Party institutions and bank institutions.

I want to look briefly at executive appointments, how practice differs from theory. Theory says that candidates are supposed to be nominated by the board of directors, but in fact they are hand-picked by the provincial unions who consult with the local Party Committee, either before or after the candidates are picked. Their qualifications are assessed by the CBRC, a body that has taken over the banking sector supervision role from the central bank. The predetermined candidates are then endorsed at the shareholders' meetings.

Gregory Chin referred earlier to the fragmented authoritarianism or matrix model as Kenneth Lieberthal has termed it, the \textit{tuai-kuai} relationship and Party accountability. That is also obvious in the case of the RCCs, because these grassroots organizations have to listen to their bosses at the vertical level from above, but at the same time, they must respond to a different set of orders coming locally from the horizontal level locally.

\textit{Discussant}

\textbf{Susan Henders} (Associate Professor, Political Science and Director, York Centre for Asian Research, York University)

This is a great opportunity to comment on important work. With these papers, our discussion turns to the local level in various ways: the struggle for accountability and responsiveness, checks and balances, and so on. One commonality of the papers was how both of them point to a critical nexus in terms of both the possibilities for reform and the bottlenecks for reform. While this is partly the actions and responsibility of the central Party-state, it is also the local manifestations of the Party-state and its relationship with local capitalists, local oligarchs, local conservatives--crucial relationships that come out as the focal point where many of these struggles ultimately will be decided.
Let me start with Lynette Ong's paper, since it is freshest in our minds. It is a rich paper, a detailed account presenting valuable empirical data painstakingly gathered on the ground over a long period of time. The research reveals the complexity of what is going on, the distinct types of reforms being tailored to particular types of rural financial institutions, and the variation across different parts of China. I can't quibble with her conclusions about the Party's role in both enabling and disabling reform. She makes a convincing case.

We need to know more about what you have discovered about the relationship between the problem of collective action and insider control as she developed it in the paper. Would some reflection on the experience of corporate governance in liberal capitalist economies be instructive, because corporate governance problems are endemic in all capitalist systems in general, as well as insider control and collective action problems? Her collective action problem focuses on firms that have small dispersed shareholdings, not an unfamiliar problem elsewhere. If you think of Canada, one of the ways in which governance attempts to overcome the problems associated with this situation, admittedly not always successfully, is by finding ways for votes to be exercised in blocs so that you can exert some control over the board of directors. Often this is done through various systems of proxy votes. The point of doing this is not merely supervision, but ultimately that these dispersed shareholders could actually hold the board of directors and chairperson accountable.

This is a question of shareholder democracy, so we are back to the problem of democracy, albeit in firms, or in Lynette Ong's case, rural credit cooperatives and rural banks. It made me wonder whether this problem is a collective action problem or a democratic deficit problem. Because no matter how much you solve the collective action problem, if you can't use your voting power exercised in blocks to throw out management or throw out the board of directors and the chair--and their equivalents in the RCCs--what have you accomplished?

There has been progress in solving the collective action problem in RCCs, particularly on the bank side. It made me wonder if that is the most politicized side of this issue. The further strengthening of the ability of members to exercise their votes in a bloc, perhaps through some proxy system or other ways of overcoming the collective action problem, might eventually put pressure on regulators at multiple levels and within these organizations as well as at the Party-state level and on the financial institutions themselves, to enhance the democratic accountability within. If they can't solve the democratic accountability problem directly in these firms because of the strength of the Party and the complexity of that, whether they could work more on solving the collective action problem that might, long term, have effects on the other.

One of the great values of Sonny Lo's work, besides his encyclopedic knowledge of Hong Kong and its politics, is that he encourages us to get beyond the notion of one liberal democratic way of solving problems in China or in Hong Kong, and the notion that reforms are an all or nothing situation. He encourages us to think about realistic comprises and creative hybrid possibilities. Of course, this approach is fraught with danger. Sometimes there are just potholes, and other times downright cliffs. If our hope is that Hong Kong will eventually develop a more democratic, if not completely democratic political system, we have to evaluate these hybrid possibilities against criteria that still point towards a goal of robust democratic institutions and culture somewhere down the line, even if the end point doesn't look exactly like a "pure" liberal model.
How might a second chamber be structured so that it would advance democratic institutions and culture beyond the current double majority situation in the Hong Kong Legislative Council system? On the other side, how to address the concern that bicameralism, if it is to bring any sort of democratic accountability, would water down and delegitimize Executive-led government in Hong Kong, surely a main concern of the government in China and for many in Hong Kong?

Would bicameralism in any way address the key problem in Hong Kong right now of having an Executive that has no democratic legitimacy, but must have the support of the Legislative Council, which is "partly democratic"? How would bicameralism address the tensions, difficulties and complexities that such a situation creates? How would this solve the apparently intractable problem of democratically choosing a Chief Executive?

I totally agree with Sonny Lo about the importance of strengthening the Hong Kong party system and with his remarks about protecting the business interests, this being one of the bottleneck points in Hong Kong democratization. In his paper, he asked whether Hong Kong's parties could learn from the Chinese Communist Party in China, as a way of strengthening the party system in Hong Kong. I must admit this alarmed me, unless there is something that I did not understand, because it seems that the conduct of the CCP in recent Hong Kong Legislative Council elections, both the CCP itself and its supporters in Hong Kong, revealed a lack of commitment to real democracy or to real democratic culture. Of what might this learning from the CCP actually consist?

Finally, regarding the Western democracy and Chinese democracy or the West-China dichotomy that was in the paper, while we know what he means, and it is convenient shorthand that we have all used in some way or another at some time, would not it be useful to think of better ways of utilizing those two dichotomous terms? One of the problems is that this encourages people to think there is only one monolithic form of democracy and that everyone in China isn't democratic or doesn't think in terms of democracy. We need to find terminology that breaks down barriers to our thinking, with the long term goal of thinking beyond pure models and rigid understandings of democracy in order to move things forward in Hong Kong.

Jeremy Paltiel:

The literature on democratic transitions shows that parliamentary regimes tend to consolidate better than presidential regimes. What are the lessons for this for Hong Kong? Why not have some kind of Chief Executive responsible to a broader legislative chamber as at least an interim step and a step towards full democratization? This would not necessarily perpetuate Executive-led government in its current form.

Regarding Lynette Ong's suggestion that perhaps the Chinese Communist Party would be interested in more shareholder control, I think the current result is exactly what they want. The reason is not to do with Party control, as such, but rather with the incentive system for becoming a rural cadre. If rural cadres have no discretionary power, why join the Party? Why get elected? Why do anything? And the Party would lose its local base. The Party is actually interested in
allowing rural cadres to have discretionary power over such things as rural credit cooperatives. The current result addresses the collective action problem in terms of allowing collusive lending to some extent, while actually skewing lending towards certain kinds of formal bodies. This is a perfect result because you overcome one problem and you give discretionary power, which enhances the power of rural cadres. Think about it.

Question:

Before coming to Canada, I was a legislator in Hong Kong and also actively participated in advocacy for direct elections in 1989. That was a very crucial year and it was the time that the Hong Kong government published the Green Paper on Representative Government. The Executive was to be accountable to the Legislature and the Legislature accountable to the people. That is the spirit of British democracy. They wanted to have it developed in Hong Kong gradually, so they introduced the idea of the representation of the functional and geographical constituents, instead of all being appointed by the British government. I agree with Sonny Lo that today there is a deadlock in Hong Kong as far as democracy is concerned, if not a reversal of the spirit of the Sino-British Declaration.

First is the timetable. Why it taking so long for Hong Kong to implement democracy or direct elections? More than 20 years have passed since the concept was developed. Second, after all these years of advocacy, we now have two important dates, 2017 for the election of the Chief Executive and 2020 for universal suffrage. Nothing has changed as far as the progress towards democracy. Second, can we work inside rather than outside? We are talking about a bicameral system, which to my knowledge, has already been introduced because inside the legislature now, whenever there are important bills, there have to be two votes. One is people voting in geographically directly elected constituencies, and the second is voting for the functional consistency, which is indirect, more like a parliament in disguise. So why not try to cooperate with the political scientists and the participants in Hong Kong to find a way to work within the system, within the timetable, rather than to introduce ideas which the Chinese are too sensitive about, and which, in their view, would weaken their control over Hong Kong?

Question:

My question comes from my experience working in a Leninist state with rural credit cooperatives for many years in Taiwan. I don't see the Party as being an issue because these credit cooperatives in Taiwan, whether they were credit unions or farmers' associations at that time and still are, for the most part, were controlled by the Party. What I am interested in is what I saw a lot of in Taiwan. The reason supervisory commissions didn't work was mainly because the highest rate of non-performing loans was among the members of the board of directors and the supervisory committees themselves. They were the last people who were going to rock the boat, because they saw rural credit cooperatives as basically an easy form of credit where no one was going to come and break your arm or confiscate your house if you don't pay it back.
That leads to another interesting phenomenon, that when the supervisory commission--which, of course, has the right to call a members' meeting to impeach the chair of the board of someone else who has been on the take or has mishandled accounts--would call a members' meeting, it was almost always to do with a political campaign that had nothing to do with the cooperative. The purpose was to get the politician who was the chair of the board of directors, and the easiest way to get this politician was to nail him with some corruption charge. So these rural credit organizations in Taiwan often served political functions that had nothing to do with offering credit. I was wondering if you have seen any of this in your research in China?

Sonny Lo:

Let me respond to the questions in a group form. With regard to whether bicameralism will be legitimized in an Executive-led government, in Hong Kong now, there is bicameralism in disguise. Within the Legislature, there already are two chambers, one elected from the functional constituencies, and the other from geographic constituencies. Susan Henders has asked me what will be my institutional design to break this deadlock. My design, which is very tentative, is that the Hong Kong elite as well as the Legislative Secretariat, have to calculate in each year how many bills proposed by the legislators are actually rejected by the group elected from functional constituencies.

From my research, in 1999, 30 bills proposed by the legislators were rejected by the group from functional constituencies. Quite a lot actually. So in other words, one way forward is that the Legislative Secretariat has to calculate a period of time, say 10 years, and in this time period how many bills were rejected by functional constituencies. From that statistical data, we can deliberate the extent to which a kind of upper chamber in disguise will have that veto power.

Number two, since the central government in Beijing and the Hong Kong government both do not want to see any possible amendment of the Basic Law, one way forward is to amend the Standing Order of the Legislative Council. This will bypass all the legal problems. If the Standing Order is amended, then inside the Legislature representatives from both chambers could sit together in sub-committees and try to hammer out solutions. In this way, the Basic Law will not have to be amended. Only the Legislative Council Standing Order will possibly be amended. This is my design, if you ask my personal view.

It is difficult to say whether bicameralism will deal with Executive-led legislative problems, because now Executive and Legislative relations are in a deadlock. In the Legislature, the Hong Kong people elected at least three "radical" democrats, and they always confront the Executive branch. In my opinion, bicameralism will only strengthen the Executive-led government. It will not weaken it. Of course, it depends on the design.

With regard to my suggestion that Hong Kong political parties learn from the Chinese Communist Party, of course we do not want to learn from the secretive operating style of the CCP. For those who are close to Hong Kong, if you understand the Hong Kong political parties really well--the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong--they actually have already learned all the tactics of the CCP in mobilizing people to vote. They
penetrate deep into the grassroots, deep into all of the housing committees. From this angle, the political parties, especially the business political parties, have to learn from the mobilization and penetrative tactics of the CCP. Without that, I don't see how any political party, especially representing the business sector, will perform well in Hong Kong direct elections.

Finally, with regard to the philosophical and theoretical dichotomy between Western and Chinese democracy, of course if we develop our political theory further, perhaps we can use other language which can encapsulate this interesting debate between democratization along Western lines versus the Chinese example. If you take a look at the Hong Kong case in the past decade, unfortunately the language employed has used this dichotomy.

Lynette Ong:

Thanks for a range of fascinating suggestions and feedback about carrying the paper forward. You are right in pointing out what the collective action problem would tell us about the democratic deficit in some places, but not in other places. That is probably the next thing that I want to do, to look at different places, for example, in more economically developed areas. In terms of the state and society dichotomy, some areas will have a stronger society where there is a stronger capitalist group that serves as a counteracting force for local forces. In those places, they will have a bigger say in the shareholders' meeting, rather than being dominated by local Party people. In most parts of rural China, where there still aren't large private capital groups, society remains rather weak and the local state is still relatively strong.

Regarding Jeremy Paltiel's questions, I have not thought of looking at this from the presence or absence of types of Party membership. I will tell you a very short story. Among my 120 interviewees, there is only one bank executive who was not a Party member. He climbed to position of bank governor of a major commercial bank in Beijing, which I won't name. He said to me, "I am not a Party member but they need me because I have technical competence." He is well trained, has a graduate degree in finance and so on. In a way, he feels like an outsider because he is not participating in Party Committee meetings. There are certain documents that he isn't allowed to see. He able to do it, yet he remains a relative outsider.

Do RCCs serve a political function? Most definitely so. We see the relationship between state-owned banks and state-owned enterprises at the national level. At the local level, there are parallels between the RCCs and collectively-owned township and village enterprises. Local governments encourage local banks to lend to enterprises, which are local enterprises. These local enterprises, in turn, contribute taxes to the local government, and they can use this money to do the sort of things they are supposed to do--funding basic education, health care, so on and so forth. There is a strong nexus between politics and finance, even at the local level.
DAY ONE: AFTERNOON SESSIONS

Human Rights and Law

Gerald Wright (Chair, Organizing Committee of the Canadian International Council Ottawa Foreign Policy Initiative)

This morning Charles Burton, at the end of his remarks, hazarded the possibility that China might lead in the advancement of international human rights. An ambitious hope. The papers that we have before us this afternoon give reasons for both optimism and pessimism. On the one hand, they are frank in setting out the emphasis that political authorities place on economic development in the application and interpretation of human rights in China. At the same time, what is evident from reading both of these excellent papers is that China is firmly embedded in a discourse on human rights, both internationally and at home.

We have two speakers this afternoon in this panel on human rights and law. Pitman Potter, with us by virtue of technology, is Professor of Law and Political Science at the University of British Columbia. His published works include From Leninist Discipline to Socialist Legalism: Peng Zhen on Law and Political Authority in the PRC (Stanford, 2003), Globalization and Local Legal Culture (Routledge, 2001), and editor of History in the Making: the Dalai Lama Dialogues in Vancouver 2004 (Institute of Asian Research, 2007).

Sun Zhe is a Professor at the Institute for International Studies and Director of the Center for U.S. and China Relations at Tsinghua University. He is the author of many publications and is considered one of the leading scholars in the People's Republic in the field of American Studies and U.S.-China relations. His most recent books include The Remaking of the National People's Congress in China, 1979-2000 (2004) and American Studies in China: 1979-2006 (2007).

The discussant is Jeremy Paltiel, Professor of Political Science, Carleton University.

Law and Human Rights: Selective Adaptation and Official and Non-Official Discourses

Pitman Potter (Professor of Law and Political Science, University of British Columbia)

I am pleased to join you by video conference, and hope you'll bear with me as we go through this interesting exercise. The purpose of my paper is to examine new, relatively recent developments in human rights practices in China, and to view these in light of their challenges, and also potential opportunities. As I suggest in the paper, the Chinese government's policies and practices on human rights continue to prioritize the dominance of the Party-state. If we look at recent pronouncements on the Human Rights Action Plan, which we will hear about later, and presentations to the United Nations Human Rights Council, I would suggest these underscore the regime's commitment to maintaining Party rule. There are contradictions, I would suggest,
between the ideals that are expressed in official doctrine and practices, which many conclude fall short of international standards.

This continues to pose a challenge for regime legitimacy both at home and abroad. Conflating human rights notions with priorities about development invites analysis about conditions in China where disparities of wealth, environmental degradation, expanding costs and the resulting inaccessibility of housing and health care and deteriorating labour conditions all raise questions about the capacity of the Party-state actually to deliver the conditions of development that are meaningful for the vast majority of people. This paper examines a few of these developments and suggests potential ways forward.

As a basic context for appreciating human rights policy and practice in China, I would like to review the normative and organizational frameworks that I've used in this analysis. This will be familiar to some of you who have read other parts of my work. For the sake of putting us all on a level playing field, so to speak, I thought I would share this. Essentially, there is a normative dimension and an institutional or organizational dimension. When we think about international human rights discourse, it is customary to consider the inclusion of both political and civil rights on one hand, and economic, social and cultural rights on the other hand.

"Selective adaptation" has been, for me, an approach to understanding the way in which international standards expressed in texts such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights are interpreted locally, because that interpretation goes through a process by which local elites, what might be referred to as interpretive communities, receive, understand and implement those received texts. The perspective that I bring to the table on selective adaptation is that this process involves factors of perception of the text and perception of the norms that underlie the text. It also involves issues of complementarily, the relationship between the non-local and the local, and also factors of legitimacy.

The long and the short of it is that we should be careful not to assume that the interpretation of international textual standards, such as those articulated in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, will be received, interpreted and implemented by interpretive communities in China in the same way that they would be elsewhere. The reason is that these texts involve underlying norms. It is one thing to sign off on a text; it's quite another to assimilate the norms that underlie that text. That tension between the reception of rules on one hand, if you will, and the assimilation of norms is quite complicated.

It seems that China's normative framework for human rights draws heavily on the discourse of the "right to development," and this has implications for the centrality of the state as a source of rights and the determinant of the beneficiaries of rights. If we look at the State Council White Papers, we see again formal statements that tend to elevate the right to subsistence and development over others. I mention the year 2000 White Paper, but the year 2005 is also a good example where the right to development and the right to subsistence are considered priority goals taking preference over other rights in the area of civil and political relations. It is also the case that the Chinese government has worked assiduously to build legitimacy for its discourses, limiting the conditions for political rights, and subordinating them to the right to development. In
anticipation of the review by the U.N. Human Rights Council, there has been discussion of an
Action Plan on protecting human rights.

If you look at China's U.N. report to the universal peer review process, we see a recitation of
achievements in promoting democracy and supporting civil society and ethnic equality, and a
wide range of other achievements in social economic development. The responses by the Human
Rights Council were varied. A number of those were accepted by China; others were headed off
at the review stage, and a number were not accepted. It is fair to say that China's approach in the
U.N. peer review session was to highlight China's achievements in what we might call socio-
economic development, and also to note purported achievements in rule of law and democracy.
However, I would suggest the normative framework for those is quite different than the
normative framework that underpins the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

It also seems to be the case that the coverage within China--the media reports on the periodic
review--contains very few if any of the critical comments received from many of the U.N.
members, so there is still an effort to control the normative environment in which human rights,
particularly on the civil and political side, are discussed. When we look at the civil and political
rights side--and it is fair to say that it has been a preoccupation of many NGOs and certainly
many reviews of China's human rights, coming from the United States in particular, and it is only
a partial picture of the international human rights discourse--in that area selective application
helps us to understand the tension between international standards on one hand and the norms
that not only underpin those standards, but the norms through which those standards are
interpreted in China. So with civil and political rights, it is more a question of normative
perspective and selective adaptation.

With respect to economic, social and cultural rights, those normative ideals are perhaps more
consonant with official norms of development in China. But the achievement of these ideals has
still been constrained by factors of organizational structure and performance, and institutional
capacity is a useful perspective to examine China's achievements in the areas of economic, social
and cultural rights.

I discuss judicial decision-making and the role of the courts, and the institutional organizational
challenges they face, and also describe the ways in which institutional capacity affects the
recognition and enforcement of economic rights in areas such as contracts and property, as well
cultural rights for national minorities. Whereas in the civil and political rights side, you have the
normative dynamic, in the economic, social and cultural side, there is more of a dynamic of
institutional capacity. In a broad matter of context, those are useful approaches to examine
China's interaction with the international human rights discourse.

I examine three examples of human rights practices, looking particularly at issues of social
welfare, development and legitimacy. The examples I give here are of labour rights, political
development and participation in rights discourses, and then will say a few words about Charter
'08.

The challenge for labour rights in China has been driven, in part, by the very successes of
China's development. For example, the expansion of the economy, the privatization of industry
and the pursuit of better efficiencies have in many instances been seen as affecting labour conditions to the detriment of workers' rights. This has been documented by a number of sources, which I note in the paper, and is also expressed through the public order disturbances, many of which are related to labour rights, often the issue of unpaid wages. If we look at China's labour law, we see that the Party-state is heavily implicated in ensuring labour discipline.

The right to strike was entrenched in the Chinese Constitution back in the 1970s and then removed in 1982. That was justified by the fact that enterprises were all state owned, so there was no real purpose for private unions and going on strike. Querying whether that is still a legitimate way forward in light of the increased privatization of production in China, we can address a few questions about the labour law and the trade union law. We see that the very consequences of the booming economy have created deteriorating labour conditions in many of China's production settings.

The newly enacted labour contract law is clearly an effort to address this issue. Ironically, it was opposed by many of the same foreign partners that are most vociferous in citing the importance of civil and political rights, which shows the paradox of this whole struggle. The labour contract law formalizes principles on written labour contracts, provides remedies for violations and so on. It is clearly an effort to improve labour conditions. But can the institutional capacity questions can be addressed--in terms of consensus on the purpose of regulatory bodies, in terms of the different enforcement potential in different locations, in terms of the reliance on formal regulation versus informal networks to control labour conditions and also the issue of institutional cohesion, the corruption problems and so on? To what extent will meaningful enforcement of the labour contract law be compromised because of those difficulties in institutional capacity, which we have noted earlier?

With regard to political development, and the question of public participation in rights discourse, the regime's response has been less than welcoming. Social conditions reveal a number of challenging and disturbing conditions, declining disposal income, unemployment, income gaps and so on. There is concern that the current economic crisis could threaten to increase unemployment and social protests.

We think of critics of the government on issues ranging from corruption to the Sichuan earthquake, even still, echoes of the Tiananmen massacre and the Tiananmen Mothers Movement, and challenges to local election processes. This reflects the extent to which members of society have become disenchanted with the government's performance in areas of social well-being; yet the government has been less than welcoming of those efforts. One very interesting process has been the emergence of rights defenders in China, lawyers who take on human rights cases. But again the government's response has been less than supportive. The new Lawyers Law, enacted in 2007, does little to reverse government efforts to restrict the law to challenge policies and practices of the state. The example of Gao Zhisheng and others who have challenged regime orthodoxy is a salient illustration of the state's exercise of its power to discourage public use of the legal system to further human rights aims.

So we have the economic development side, which is labour rights, and we see challenges in labour law and the way the law responds to those questions, although potential opportunities in
the area of labour contract law remain subject to institutional capacity. In the area of political
development, we see a trend towards broader political participation by the public and by lawyers,
but we also see efforts to restrict that by the government. Then finally there was the recent
challenge to regime legitimacy in Charter '08, I provide a bit of a summary of Charter '08. What
it says is that what I refer to as the "development bargain", where the state offers social and
economic well-being in exchange for political orthodoxy and loyalty, is seen as unfulfilled
because social and economic conditions are deteriorating and the state's ability to make good on
that bargain is comprised by the very factors of normative discourse and institutional capacity
that I mentioned earlier.

What Charter '08 essentially stands for is that in order for the government fully to deliver on its
promises of development, significant political reform is necessary. One of the things that Charter
'08 does quite skillfully is to borrow from the orthodox discourse of rights. So many of the
suggestions and principles articulated in Charter '08 in terms of freedom of the press, freedom of
assembly and so on are already recognized in the Chinese Constitution and in the socialist rules
discourse. What Charter '08 essentially says is that they have to be more than high ideals for
democracy or public participation. They actually have to be carried out in practice, and that is
where the central challenge lies.

Charter '08 creates opportunities for the regime to engage in political reform in ways that make
more effective its delivery of social and economic welfare. However, in part because of the way
Charter '08 was framed, its legacy of Charter '77 and its association with critics of the regime, it
has been received with something less than enthusiasm by the Party-state. Nonetheless, the ideas
that it contains provide useful opportunities for the government to move forward in areas not
only of normative adjustment so that state norms on political as well as socio-economic
development are addressed, but also on the institutional capacity front, in a way that actually
makes social and economic development for the broad collective of people in China more real.

One of the most challenging proposals in Charter '08 is the call for a truth and reconciliation
process to restore the reputations of political targets. This may be the most dramatic proposal in
Charter '08 and raises opportunities for building political unity in China. It also creates
significant challenges for regime legitimacy and will be addressed with some difficulty by the
ruling regime.

The fundamental challenge posed by Charter '08 rests on the conclusion that China's
development cannot be fully and equitably realized without far-reaching legal and political
reforms. Over the past several decades, particularly since the disaster of Tiananmen in 1989, the
Party-state has offered the trade-off of economic well-being in exchange for loyalty. This is
similar to what Tang Tsou referred to as the "zone of indifference" about social autonomy. Here,
I refer to it as a development bargain. Charter '08 suggests that the bargain is remaining
unfulfilled, in part because of normative issues, and also because of the inability of the state to
overcome its preoccupation with control.

The examples of labour, public participation in rights discourse, and Charter '08 reveal the extent
to which China's policies and practices on human rights involve issues of development, social
change and legitimacy. The normative and organizational dimensions of China's engagement
with international human rights standards remain present as dynamics of selective adaptation continue to privilege local official norms on development over enforcement of international standards on civil and political rights, while the achievement of economic, social and cultural rights remains conditioned by factors of institutional capacity.

Yet issues of development, social change and legitimacy continue to pose significant challenges for the ruling Party-state in the areas of labour law, public participation in rights discourse and Charter '08. While complementarity of international standards and local official norms seems possible in some cases, such as the labour contract law where the government seems willing to support broader protections for workers, questions about sustainable enforcement remain. The regime's resistance to the popular use of law to protect human rights suggests significant normative tensions as well as organizational limitations in the reception of international standards on human rights. The government's response to Charter '08 suggests that normative conflict will require resolution before the process of building institutional capacity can begin.

By looking at these three examples in the context of the normative dimension of selective adaptation and the organizational dynamic of institutional capacity, I have tried to suggest how recent developments offer both challenges, which are clear, and also opportunities that may be less certain, for the regime. I hope that is a helpful contribution to the discussion.

**China's Human Rights Agenda**

**Sun Zhe** (Professor, Institute for International Studies and Director, Center for U.S.-China Relations, Tsinghua University)

I have learned a lot from the comments made here today. I think China is both beauty and beast, and the longest journey is the journey inward. It is good to have Canada play a leading role to criticize China. We lose courage when we live in China, but I hope our Canadian friends don't lose their courage to continue to criticize the Chinese government. This is good for China because those who criticize us are those people who care about us.

The part to keep in mind is that China made great progress in the area of human rights development under conditions of limited political reform. My question is, is democracy "made-in-China" also possible? How far can this model go? If you take a look at the record of the human rights agenda in the first part of my paper, I am trying to present what happened in China in the last 30 years.

I list three significant events. Number one is in 1978, the 11th Plenary Session of the Party Congress. That was the decision to open up the country. The Chinese Constitution was amended in 1982. A lot of articles related to human rights are written into the 1982 Constitution. Also the "sleeping beauty," what I call the National People's Congress, woke up. A man named Peng Chen was already over 80 years old. He tried to remake the Congress to make it work. So Party and Legislature relations began to change in the 1980s.
The second significant event was the issue of the White Paper on Human Rights in 1991. That Paper gave Chinese scholars a chance to continue to study human rights in China. Since 1991, almost 30 White Papers have been issued. At least five of them are on Tibet and on other policies, like minority rights. That gave scholars a chance to study the work of Western scholars and see what they think about human rights' issues, what were their standards. The China Society of Human Rights Studies was established in 1993 and many foreigner scholars come to China to have open dialogue with Chinese scholars.

The third event was the most significant. In 2004, the Constitution was amended again. Twelve of the 14 articles are related to human rights' issues. This has changed human rights from a good word to a legal term. The Constitution formally says that human rights are goals that the Party is supposed to pursue. These are the three major events that happened over the past 30 years.

In the first part of my paper, I also say there are certain trends in the policy orientations of Chinese scholars in recent years. We begin to care about the rights of disadvantaged groups, the rights of protection of food safety and human rights. How to work with the international community in these rights issues. How do you begin in Asian countries? For example, if you say you share some of the same values with Singapore, with other Asian countries, can we have a human rights dialogue? There is talk on regional cooperation on human rights issues. So that is a recent trend and part of the internal debate among human rights scholars in China.

In the second part of the paper, I analyze what I call "selective adaptation" or the issue of selectivities in evaluating China's human rights development. I, myself, criticize some parts of Chinese performance in my chapter in Daniel Bell's book. I entitled my chapter, "Normative Compliance and Hard Bargaining in China's Response to International Criticism." China signed a lot of international treaties, but sometimes you really want to bargain with the international community. You prioritize the different categories of rights, emphasizing the right to survival, the right to development, something like that. That isn't good enough.

I also discuss the issue of priorities, what China and the Chinese government demands, and also the selection of issue of human rights. Also, I discuss some of the tactics used by the government in dealing with international criticism. The first tactic was when the United States criticized and published China's human rights record. China then did the same thing and began to criticize the United States record on human rights. You are actually comparing apples and oranges. I hosted a guest academic visiting Shanghai seven or eight years ago. He began to criticize China. One of my students stood up and said, "Do you give any credit to Chinese performance in economic development? Besides your criticism, do you have any concrete suggestions or proposals? Can you send some experts to China to help us deal with corruption? We would love to do that." His response was very smart and he said, "I have taught at university for over 20 years. I fully understand what you have achieved." His first visit to China had been in 1978. He continued, "After 20 years, I give a lot of credit to China. However, I am talking about civil and political liberties. In this area, you have a long way to go." So he is very smart. So you can see the different perceptions on the issue of human rights. That is the first tactic that the Chinese government used.
The second tactic is a Chinese emphasis on developing countries—we have to focus on the right to development. If you are in my shoes, you have to deal with the poverty issue first.

In the third part of my paper, I present some views on the challenges to China's human rights development in the future. In my opinion, the Chinese government faces four dilemmas. First, because the government plays a very important role in dealing with the right to development it must think about including the NGOs and the media in future policies in this area. The Chinese government is very powerful. When we are talking about human rights issues, you pay a lot of attention; you emphasize the key role the government must play in the future. However, the government itself doesn't want to set up limits, or share power with NGOs, or with the media. It doesn't want the media to supervise its performance. That is one dilemma I think the Chinese government has to face.

The second dilemma is how to improve our international image in this area. We receive a lot of international criticism, as Pitman Potter just pointed out. The Chinese government cares about this and is trying to work out a national action plan, trying to counter argue with the international community, trying to use its human rights action plan as a tool for public relations, to establish a good image in the international community. Do you really want to improve the human rights situation in China, or do you just want to have better public relations, smoother relations with the United States and Canada? That is the second dilemma.

Also, China signed a lot of international covenants and treaties on human rights issues, but there is no human rights education in China. For example, what is the content of these international treaties? People are not aware of what the international standard is. That is something the Chinese government is supposed to do, to develop a campaign to educate the public in the area of human rights in China.

The third dilemma is that there is a paradox between the modern trend of human rights standards and the government's lack of psychological preparation for change in this area. What do I mean? China is proud of its performance in the pursuit of modernization, but when you get to a certain level of modernity, you have to apply new human rights standards, measurement, indicators to evaluate your performance, for example, the right to clean energy and a clean environment. That is something I don't think China is well prepared for, at least the government.

The fourth dilemma is related to sensitive human rights issues like Tibet and Falun Gong. You have to find a legal way to deal with these issues, not political, to give these people a channel to voice their complaints, but that is the fourth dilemma.

There are also four proposals made by a group of human rights scholars in China who meet regularly. Some suggested the construction of a human rights system, beginning with the Constitution. Put everything together—what is listed as a basic right as written in the report of the 17th Party Congress about a year and a half ago. The right to survival, the right to know, the right to participate, the right to express, the right to supervise. You have to put this right into the Constitution if it is amended in a couple of years. Some say that because Western people care about ecological conservation, environmental rights should also be added to the list of basic rights.
The second proposal is made up of urgent tasks that China needs to do. The National People's Congress needs to approve China's acceptance of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as soon as possible. You have to get people like People's Deputies to sit down and review the content of the Covenant and get it approved as soon as possible.

The third proposal is to get the National People's Congress and other government agencies to extend rights and protection to include rural areas and the agricultural population. They have to pay more attention to migrants, to the rural areas. As a policy, there should be a comprehensive social security system and labour protection system for the peasantry.

The fourth proposal is to facilitate the building of a national human rights agency and a National Human Rights Committee established under the NPC, which is supposed to be the highest level of state power.

That is what I discussed in my paper. I truly believe that constructive Chinese performance can help the Chinese government improve its record.

**Discussant**

**Jeremy Paltiel** (Professor, Political Science, Carleton University)

In some respects, the papers by Sun Zhe and Pitman Potter observe the same reality and arrive at complementary positions, but where Pitman Potter states that the glass of human rights is half empty, Sun Zhe avers it is half full.

I will start with the observations on which they agree. As Sun Zhe says, everyone knows it is unlikely that courts will listen to common people who go to court to vindicate their rights on sensitive matters. He goes on to say that if we have rights only because the government or leaders say we have rights, then are they really rights? Pitman Potter puts it somewhat differently. The image of rights is circumscribed by what he calls "selective adaptation" in the interest of what he calls "patrimonial sovereignty," that is to say that raison d'être prevails over everything else. Both ask, and here I use the language of Professor Sun, whether the stronger words now used in the Chinese Constitution and even by leaders can ever be matched by their practical experience of law as something to which powerful people, as well as common people, are held to account.

The crux of the disagreement between these papers is whether China is evolving incrementally towards increasing respect and greater institutional recognition of human rights, or whether it is trapped by the exigencies of the regime and its instrumental approach to law. As I see it, Sun Zhe sees incremental evolution at the normative level, in terms of the understanding of rights by citizens and leaders, from a cultural context that was estranged from the language of rights in the past, and from the level of state institutions that was, in the recent past, hostile to prospective rights' claims. Pitman Potter sees increasing normative convergence, both at the popular level
and at the professional level, with Western concepts of the purposes and practices of the rule of law. He remains skeptical, however, about the Party-state's commitment to institutionalized rights' claims in any manner consistent with making the Chinese state accountable, whether before its own citizenry or before the normative community of states that uphold the liberal vision of state, and what he calls "responsible agency", where the state is responsible to its people.

Pitman Potter is careful to concede that resistance of the Party-state is not conditioned just by ideology and the desire of the regime to protect its political monopoly and official privilege. It is also constrained by the capacity of a transitional state to respond effectively to the demands of rights' claimants. He therefore accepts the notion that there are developmental imperatives in the scope and degree of human rights protection. This does not, however, excuse the efforts of the Party-state to grant or arrogate to itself blanket immunity from unwelcome rights claims.

Both see China caught up in a dynamic process where, because of globalized economics and the limitations of state discretion embodied in market economics, the Chinese state is under persistent pressure, both from the inside and from the outside, to conform to liberal norms of constitutionalism and rule of law based on human rights. Where Sun Zhe sees the treatment of Charter '08 as an exception to a general trend of growing acceptance of rights language and rights claims, Pitman Potter, on the other hand, sees it as symptomatic of a political context where the Party's claims of immunity, couched in the language of cultural relativism, are challenged from within.

Charter '08 refutes the view that Chinese generally uphold a notion of human rights at variance with that of the West. Moreover, Pitman Potter also calls attention to the efforts of the Chinese state to construct an interpretive community around its claims of patrimonial sovereignty through its influence on the evolving structure and procedures of the United Nations Human Rights Council. Where Pitman Potter speculates whether China's increasing political power may in fact dilute the content and commitment to international human rights norms, Sun Zhe looks optimistically towards the creation of a Chinese Human Rights Commission in the near future that will independently examine human rights' claims. Both authors claim that the human rights train has left the station. Sun Zhe thinks that it is scheduled to arrive at a liberal destination, while Pitman Potter sees many sidings to which it might be switched along the way.

What I would like to see in the Chinese human rights action plan now being proposed is the identification of some specific station markers against which we can measure not just the normative commitment of the Chinese state towards some idea of human rights, but the also the construction of an institutional structure where non-state actors can hold the state to account.

I want to end by speculating about the context for change and dynamism. I published a book a little over a year ago which traces Chinese commitments to rule of law and sovereignty over the past century and a half. The premise is that China today has a very strong sovereignty commitment because it entered the international community from a position where its sovereignty had been disregarded and abused. So it was a badge of membership in the international community to uphold standards of sovereignty. I also speculated if power holders ever wanted to hold themselves accountable, under what conditions would they actually put
themselves under the rule of law? The rational response is that this can only come under circumstances where the power holders hope that they can get more compliance through law than they could under direct coercion or administration.

China is rapidly reaching the position where the ability of the state directly to force compliance is limited by its capacity in many areas, and therefore rules may be more preferable to direct administration. We can see that already. China has come from a position of being a price taker internationally, to becoming a price giver or maker— from being a debtor internationally to being a creditor internationally. Now if you think about it, debtors and creditors are not on the same level. Debtors are constantly looking to renegotiate the terms of their loan. Therefore, from a debtor point of view, the universality of rules is not what they want to hear, nor are they looking for accountability. Creditors, on the other hand, really want specific performance. As China comes to a position of creditor in the globalized world, it may be more willing to look at the universality of rules rather than exceptionalism in rules, partly because then it would want specific performance.

Question:

I always appreciate Jeremy Paltiel's metaphors and I like his metaphors about the station markers along the way and earlier, the half full/half empty glass. I want to ask both Sun Zhe and Pitman Potter about one specific marker, how the Party might deal with the issue of police brutality? In many of these cases, whether it is local protests or some of the democracy advocates, it is police brutality that attracts international criticism, and also discourages people from using the laws that exist to try to uphold their rights.

It seems that in a system where you still have a Party-state, that the Party could play a useful role in saying this type of police brutality is no longer acceptable, and, in fact, is undermining the state and its ability to deliver on that bargain of developmental rights. Do you see any prospect for the Party being a locus of reform and pressure to end the grosser forms of political brutality in China—not that we don't from time to time have to confront this issue in Canada today?

Pitman Potter:

Efforts to reign in abusive power at the local levels have been a feature of governance in the People's Republic of China since 1949, and probably of Chinese governance for many decades and centuries before that. One example that I touch on in the paper is the role of the Administrative Litigation Law in providing for judicial review against abuses of administrative authority by local officials. There are significant institutional capacity problems around that. There may be the willingness, but the question of capacity still remains, in part because of the dynamic between local support or lower level support for higher level officials, patronage networks and so on. There certainly have been signs that the Party and the state want to reign in the abuses of local officials.
Sun Zhe:

I have to make myself clearer. I presented the glass as half full, that is the Chinese government's view. I, myself, am concerned about the bottom half and the ways we can improve the performance. In talking about the role the Party plays, I think the Chinese government prefers to use the term "Party system." I think we are taking different strategies to encourage the Party to do well. Something like in the Canadian House of Commons. Members of Parliament criticize the Prime Minister. They criticize China and I really appreciate it.

However, my strategy is that I watch what the Party says and I read their lips and I try to tell them, "Hey, you have to keep your promises." Sometimes when direct criticism doesn't work, you have to change strategy. Mine is one of telling the Party-state that there is a constitutional soft-landing strategy that you can use. You can reproduce in the political realm your success stories from the arena of economic reform. So I tell the government officials, "You are doing well." In 1979, I knew nothing about what was a market economy. Deng Xiaoping and the Party made the decision to open up the economy. Three days after he made up his mind to establish diplomatic relations with the United States on December 15, the 11th Plenary Session convened. That opened up the country.

Why did Deng want to have a good relationship with the United States, which was considered the number one enemy, at least an imperialist country at that time? Deng said that those countries that follow the United States are getting rich, so we have to reform, we have to open up our doors. So my strategy is to tell them, you opened up special economic zones, you began to import foreign Western technology. After 20, 30 years you see that you are doing well. Now it is time to think about importing some more of the Western political skills. How to do hearings, for example, how to use media to supervise local government officials, and how to set up special political zones, testing a little bit, to see if it works. I am trying to tell the government, as long as you have the Constitution, try to promote whatever you promised to the people. That is my strategy and I think that is more practical.

Question:

This question is for both presenters. It touches on religion and the politicization of religion overseas. I think we talk about the whole range of human rights: civil, political, social, economic, cultural, and are particularly interested in the latter three, especially to do with religion. Falun Gong becomes a major problem because of the circumstances, perhaps a misstep from both sides, which brings us to this present stage, a clash between CCP and the Falun Gong followers outside China. Falun Gong, because it has certain objectives, is willing to work with the far right in the U.S., with the late Jesse Helms, and in Canada it is also working with right wing conservatives, also religious fundamentalists. It is a very powerful and explosive mix for this kind of approach--on the idea that the enemy of your enemy is your ally. How do we resolve this explosive cocktail?
Sun Zhe:

I think we need to work out some ways to work with Falun Gong. The government needs to be more tolerant, should listen to their complaints. That is my personal opinion. I am not sure if the next generation leaders will listen to me. I think the way I am telling them is something like this: "China is more mature than before so it should be more tolerant. Listen to different opinions and if you have complaints and disputes, try to work with them. Politics of compromise, the art of comprise. You have to talk to the Dalai Lama, talk to the Falun Gong people and try to solve the problem, or at least to work on the problem." That is my personal view, but I don't think that the government will change its policy in the near future.

Pitman Potter:

I did have a thought or two about that. As some of you know, I have written on this subject before, not on Falun Gong so much, but on the regulation of religion. I have two thoughts. One is that the government's basic approach to the regulation of religion is to distinguish between principle and action, and to say that there is freedom of religious belief but there is not freedom of the action that stems from that belief. There are many people of faith, of which I am one, who believe that action is a component of belief and that therefore is inseparable from it. In the Christian tradition, the Book of James is an example of calling for faith in action. There is a strong discourse in faith communities that action is important.

I think the government has a legitimate point to say that where action, motivated by faith, violates laws in terms of popular well-being, in terms of financial fraud, in terms of other sorts of abuses, that such action cannot be justified, even by a faith commitment. The distinction between faith and action is a reasonable one, but the question becomes how to regulate action in reference to a belief system.

So the criticism of Falun Gong, in effect, says that anyone who has a Falun Gong belief--you could apply it to other religions as well--must unavoidably be pursuing actions which are unacceptable to the state. That is a bit of a problematic "guilt by association" approach which could stand to be revised. But the basic approach of looking at behaviour rather than thought processes has the potential to be a basis for relatively nuanced regulation.

The key is that the Party does not like competition from other organizations, no matter if it's religious groups or organized labour or competing political parties. It resists this sort of competition. When you look at religion, you are looking at competition for loyalty and that creates a very significant dilemma for the Party, particularly in light of legitimacy deficit problems that it is already facing. Until that perception is resolved, I would agree with Sun Zhe, I don't expect changes anytime soon but I think the Party can show confidence in its legitimacy, can show confidence in its leading position, can show confidence in its achievements by recognizing that loyalty to competing groups does not necessarily mean disloyalty to the Party. Having a more nuanced view might be a helpful step.
Question:

As we are having this academic discussion on human rights, Tibet is in lockdown, there are no tourists allowed. Every day, there have been house arrests, making unwarranted arrests all over Tibet. In regards to education on human rights, last year an ethnic Tibetan tried to use the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and was imprisoned just for the translation. I am very pessimistic about how serious China might want to deal with Tibet. Why is China hesitant to take a serious look at Tibet? Is it just because it's an internal affairs issue? Are there other issues behind this? Also, recently there has been a "strike hard" campaign in Tibet. You also mentioned that China was not really open. Why is this so? Simply legitimacy issues? The issue is not going to go away. I've talked to many Chinese and they talk about the economic development brought to Tibet, and don't understand why the Tibetans are protesting. But in my view, it isn't only about economic development.

Sun Zhe:

I am not an expert on Tibet, but would welcome you to go back and take a look at what has happened in Tibet. Let us know, share with us your thoughts. If you have any policy proposals I would be happy to help you submit to the higher authorities in China. I always tell the Chinese government, we do have an opposition party already, it's based in Washington or Toronto or in Vancouver. Over the past 30 years, the government's record is quite successful in dealing with criticism from Washington and from different human rights organizations. If you can handle that kind of tough job, you can handle internal disputes. That is what I am telling the Chinese government. Try to learn from your international experience, try to do more PR work domestically. Some of the government officials have different opinions. For example, whenever I talk to them about related issues, they say we have one million copies of Bibles circulating inside China so we do have religious freedom, but I am not an expert on that, and I would rather listen to others' opinions.

Pitman Potter:

I've also written and published a bit on this and I continue to do so and as everyone knows, it is an extremely complicated issue which probably can't be addressed in the few minutes that we have today. One approach to dealing with the issue of Tibet, and a useful approach in dealing with human rights generally, is to implement the laws that China has already enacted and to follow the international principles that is has accepted. I do have some broader comments in response to Jeremy Paltiel's comments but I will save those for the end.

On the Tibet side, China does have a law on national regional autonomy areas. It is a fairly well-established system of rules for governance and for autonomy. It would be useful to have discussion around those rules and texts and what are the norms that underlie them and allow for a wider viewpoint as to how those items might be interpreted. In particular, the meaning of the word autonomy, whether it is zizhi or zizhu for one example, is a very important issue that can be discussed. One of the difficulties is that because of the perceived sensitivity around issues of
separatism and religious extremism, the room for diversity, the scope for airing genuine
differences of viewpoints on issues of Tibet and Xinjiang is quite limited. The government
would help itself as well as its minority nationality populations by encouraging a broader
diversity of views to be a part of the discussion.

**Question:**

On a scale of one to 10, how would you rate China's human rights record, say 30 years ago, 15
years ago and now? And I don't know whether you have the figures also rating the human rights
for the U.S. for the same periods.

**Sun Zhe:**

Thirty years ago, the human rights record in China, before the reform, I would put at two. Fifteen
years ago, four and now, six. The United States, now seven, probably in terms of general
protection of human rights, 15 years ago, 1994, probably 6 or 5. Thirty years ago, probably 5 or
6.

**Pitman Potter:**

I would generally concur with Sun Zhe's assessment but I would depart in one way. I actually
think the record of human rights in the United States, in part because of U.S.'s position
internationally and also because of the changing structure of the economy domestically, could
very easily be argued to have declined over the last 10 years. That is a debated issue. A broader
question has to do with the standards that we consider when assessing the human rights record of
any economy do not remain static and are continually evolving because human rights are not
really about taking a set rule and saying how do we apply this. It is about aspirations,
encouraging a sense of how can we meet human rights expectations in the best way possible. We
should be thinking about how we imagine a society should be, how we can imagine a better
society than the ones we are confronting now.

**Question:**

We are here talking about the same subject, yet are talking past each other. That comes partly
from tradition. The Chinese come from a tradition of *renzhi*, while Western society came from
*fazhi*. One is the rule of man, the other is the rule of law. Who writes the laws, if not man? Those
are the two different sides of the same coin. Let's go to the marxist definition. Marx is very
straight. Law is written by the ruling class. Now the ruling class could be the capitalist class,
bourgeoisie class or even the proletariat. What we are talking about are the interests of the
different groups struggling to define the issue for each other. Can you address this?
**Sun Zhe:**

I didn't expect to talk about Marx here in Canada. Let me simplify this. I am teaching at a Chinese university. I used to teach at Fudan, now I am teaching at Tsinghua. From my contact with the younger generation, I have learned that half of the Chinese population is under 30 years old. That means they are a product of open door reform policies. From my contact with them, I am more confident, more positive about the future development of human rights in China.

**Pitman Potter:**

The renzhi-fazhi dichotomy gives us food for thought. There are examples in the West where presidents or national leaders have considered themselves not to be bound by particular laws. There are also examples in China's history where legal texts were considered to be an important source of authority. It is important not to oversimplify it, but it is a useful way of thinking about it.

In terms of Jeremy Paltiel's comments, I would say two or three things. Rather than saying the glass is half full or half empty, we should think about who is pouring the water. It's not so much a question of measuring "progress" on a one to 10 scale or renzhi-fazhi scale, it is a question of what are the normative and institutional contexts for looking at this dynamic process that we call human rights policy and practice. I'd like to think my view is critical in an academic sense, if not in a literary/philosophical sense. It's an attempt to understand what is going on and help us point the way to the future. That brings me to the issue of the constitutional provision on socialist human rights. As long as the Constitution retains its fidelity to the Four Basic Principles, the most important of which is Party rule, human rights as a limitation on the Party will be very different than if there wasn't that fundamental bedrock principle of Party rule and socialism written into the Constitution.

That terminology leads to particular conclusions in terms of normative and institutional factors makes China distinctive and also subject to analysis and extrapolation about future behavior. There is a symbiotic relationship between creditors and debtors and it is difficult to surmise that one prefers universality and the other prefers particularity of rules because again, there is a symbiosis. On balance, it is useful to think about these things in terms of a process, about this dynamic in terms of the normative conditions and the institutional conditions, and it's useful to look at benchmarking and signposts of change. However, we can not necessarily expect that China's human rights records, its policy or its practices will follow along a uni-dimensional trajectory that looks familiar or even comfortable to a Western liberal perspective. China is entitled to its own perspectives and will undoubtedly follow its own historical trajectory. Our task as scholars and observers is to try to understand what is happening and why it is happening. That is the approach I try to take and this discussion today has been most useful in that regard.
DAY TWO: MORNING SESSIONS

Emerging Civil Society I

Razmik Panossian (Director, Policy, Programmes and Planning, International Centre for Human Rights & Democracy)

For this panel we have two speakers. The first is Qing Miao, Institute of Sociology, Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing and Executive Director of the Center for Civic Studies at Shandong University. He has experience working with street committees and NGOs in China, has written a dozen articles on civil society and bottom-up participation, and is completing a book in Chinese on citizen participation. Qing Miao was unable to attend the Conference and his paper will be read by Bernie Frolic, who has collaborated with him in his work on civil society in Beijing.

The second panelist is Dan Koldyk from the University of Oxford, where he is completing his DPhil with a focus on grassroots and class politics in contemporary China. Earlier he spent four years in Washington and Ottawa working on China-related political issues, and published articles on community development in China.

The discussant is Steve Trott from the University of Toronto. He is completing his doctoral dissertation on innovations in Chinese local government institutions, and the development of civil society, based on extensive field research in several Chinese cities.

Grassroots Civil Society in China

Qing Miao (Institute of Sociology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Center for Civic Studies, Shandong University) Read by Bernie Frolic

The emergence of civil society as an important part of China's social and political development is the subject of this paper, part of a book Qing Miao is completing on citizen participation from a sociological perspective. The two of us have previously collaborated on research in this area, so I am familiar with his ideas and methodologies. Still, it is an awkward task to read someone else's paper so please bear with me.

The main conclusion is that bottom-up or grassroots civil society is widening its sphere in urban neighbourhoods in large cities for a number of reasons--urbanization, the rise of markets, property ownership, value change, the policy of opening up, and decentralization of administration.

Research on the development of civil society in China can be divided into three periods. The first stage began in the mid-1990s, focusing on what was "civil society" and asking whether Western frameworks could be applied to China. At that time in the 1990s, we were all looking at China
and saying, why can't China follow what's going on in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union? What about civil society against the state?

We were looking at China from that perspective and trying to discover Chinese civil society. Did it exist, and if so, what was its role? This was based on analysis of the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Most Chinese, however, were unfamiliar with the term civil society. It was translated variously as minjian shehui, gongmin shehui, shimin shehui, and it has taken some time for the phrase and the concept to spread through China. Some Western studies said that civil society in China had little traditional basis. Others said that associational forms had emerged under tight Party and state tutelage, and coined the term "state-led civil society" (see Brook and Frolic). That is, civil society from the top down, serving the needs of the state and not challenging it.

According to Qing Miao, the second stage, in the early 2000s, sought to connect new forms of community development—the shequ—with civil society organizations, especially in urban neighbourhoods. He mentions direct elections of residence committees, the establishment of rules and procedures of neighbourhood committees, an increase in what he calls "rights talk," becoming sensitized to the fact that rights exist for individuals and one can explore possibilities for how to attain them. He cites the popularization of the idea of "small government, big society" as the state began to withdraw from many local level policy and programme areas. The example is the reduction in state-owned enterprises and therefore, the fading away of the danwei system that is connected with these enterprises. In the danwei system, housing was provided and services free or subsidized. A different concept of the relationship of the individual to the state existed, as opposed to the newer housing and the new developments which we will talk shortly.

At this time, NGOs, which he refers to in Chinese as "social organizations," began to develop rapidly. In 1978, there were 6,000, and in 2005, close to 200,000. If you add private non-state enterprise organizations and foundations, the number reached 341,000. Using different methods, by 2003-2004 you could say that the number of civic organizations in China, broadly defined, reached as much as eight million. Defining exactly what is a NGO is difficult—whether it is registered by the state or not is a key. Other characteristics include its non-profit status, voluntary membership and what Qing Miao refers to as "bottom-up orientation."

The third and present stage began in 2005. The Beida Conference on Civil Society Development in Transitional China confirmed the growth of civil society in China, and the emergence of new forms that were no longer to be defined as only "state-led". Organizations with a grassroots bottom-up orientation were now emerging, potentially creating a new form of civil society. These two forms, bottom-up and state-led, were now developing together. We made that assessment in a paper we presented at the 2005 conference. Qing Miao writes, "In my work in 2004 in Beijing, I found that community members, journalists, university students and volunteers in NGOs warmly welcomed the ideas of small government, community self-direction and civil society. When I asked the audience to give some examples of civil society, three interpretations were proposed: volunteerism, social work practice and democratic participation."

He asks, "Why is civil society developing now, and does China have the indigenous resources for its successful development?" He cites three particular trends: the continuing spread of
urbanization and the market economy; second, the emerging new values of individualization, and third, the changing role of the state at the community and local level. These forces are interrelated and further discussion is needed in a socio-cultural analytical framework. I am sure some of the other papers today will dwell on that last point, the changing role of the state at the community and local level. His observations and conclusions are based on a major study of six Beijing neighbourhoods that he conducted in 2004-2005 together with a team from the Institute of Sociology and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. Researchers looked at "old" and "new" neighbourhoods. New neighbourhoods had commercial apartments, condos, private housing and new housing construction. Old neighbourhoods were still the remnants of the *danwei* system--old housing still under the state-owned enterprise system in transition--but not new housing.

The most significant change in personal behaviour in China is what he calls "individualization", the process of self-realization in daily life. This was based on a number of things: his own research, also the research of another Chinese scholar from the PRC who did his PhD at York, Song Xingwu, who interviewed 1,000 Shandong University students to find out what their values were. He concluded that their values had changed, and they were now more individualized and less focused on both family and state. Qing Miao has continued this research and considers the current emphasis on individual needs, wants and rights to be a major part of the value change taking place in a new China, where personal needs increasingly take precedence over societal and other considerations.

In his work, he shows how ownership of property represents a key step in the emergence of civil society. Privatized housing is linked to civil society as individuals mobilize to protect their property against the state, against corrupt officials, or bad household managers who are managing it for them. You are protecting your property and your interests in a changing context. This is one of the hallmarks of the emergence of so-called "bourgeoisie" civil society--individuals moving to preserve their property and property ownership in general. He writes that if citizen engagement is to be a basic component of a vital neighbourhood life, the core values of bottom-up participatory discourse, individual independence, advocacy of citizen rights and the perception of empowerment or political efficacy--the younger and more educated residents are more likely to be the strongest advocates of citizen rights.

In his research on property ownership, individualization and value change, he asked residents to comment on a number of statements, for example: "Compared to the national interest, individual interests are of minor importance. Do you agree or not?" Respondents disagreed. In response to the statement, "We would like to know more about how decisions are made in community affairs" residents strongly agreed, wanting to know more of what it means to be a citizen. They also agreed with the statement that, "Taxpayers have a right to discuss government expenditure."

He identifies five new trends in the emergence of grassroots civil society. First, relief work, a public sphere where people can learn bottom-up participation. In the past, this was considered to be the responsibility of the government in the Chinese, state-led, top-down tradition. It is hard to imagine that ordinary citizens would do much to help victims. During the Sichuan earthquake, however, thousands of people came from all over China to help. This was a real awakening--that a public sphere existed where people were practicing bottom-up citizen engagement. We all
remember the great outpouring of support for the victims, at least in the short term until the state began to rein this in. He quotes the *Globe and Mail* at that time, "A historic moment. The first signs of broad-based civil society in a country where emperors and autocrats have ruled for centuries." An event, according to him, which brought civil society out of our imagination and into real lives in action.

Second, public opinion in carrying out supervision online. At the end of 2008, China had nearly 300,000,000 internet users and the number is growing. A large majority of internet users are concerned with supervision issues like anti corruption online. Ninety-three per cent choose the internet to criticize undesirable practices. More and more, government officials are listening to grassroots voices online. Yesterday we mentioned that Wen Jiabao has now appeared in a blog talking about his mother and whether he can cook or not. Further examples are emails, e-columns and online dialogue, but he also notes that the promotion of communication via the internet should be cautious and institutionalized. People from both sides have to identify what kinds of questions are suitable for online dialogue, and establish regulations for proper feedback.

Third, a widening public sphere, public debate and public hearings. The common core of civil society is a rules-governed society based on the consent of individuals. Individuals, law, urbanization and property are the key factors in the composition of civil society. How to engage in negotiations and debates about the nature of rule and the process of expressing voice? In addition, notions of social capital, trust, operation and networks are essential. Qing Miao gives examples of public debates and hearings where people are learning how to express their opinions. For example, a programme last month on CCTV debated the question, "Should a person accessing the internet use his or her real name?" Currently, people are learning the rules of debate, exploring a widening area of acceptable topics and experiencing a growing capacity to challenge authority publicly in these areas, without individual (political) risk.

These public debates, he says, are functioning as a public space, citing Habermas, who is also quoted by Chinese writers. The debates provide good opportunities for citizens to learn about participatory democracy. They require a favourable and supportive environment, equality, openness, transparency. Also, they raise the awareness of citizens, not only about expressing their own opinions but about respecting opposing opinions and interests. Finally, they provide training for how to deal with differing opinions, often conflicting, and trying to find compromising solutions. He adds that these public debates and public hearings provide a good opportunity to exercise participatory political skills and to air new political ideas. It is commonly acknowledged that one potential pathway for the development of democracy in China is that both government officials and community grassroots organizations are needed to develop a public space wherein the ideas and techniques of democracy may be practiced.

Fourth, new attempts by government to cooperate with grassroots organization. While the public seems more willing to expand the frontiers of civil society, the government is understandably more cautious. The Chinese government still favours vertical control, but new attempts to connect with social organizations can be found at different levels of authority. Since 2005, new terms such as "social building" and "new public services" are increasingly emerging in official documents. The government is looking for better ways of cooperating with social organizations.
Traditional *danwei* control is basically out of date. Further exploration is needed to develop new forms of organization and a new mechanism of mobility.

Fifth, an emerging new theoretical framework and research agenda on bottom-up participation. The discussion of civil society is shifting from "what is" to "how to achieve." The term itself is gaining prominence. He proposes a socio-cultural analytical framework with emphasis on indigenous resources, the interaction of multiple forces and the new values inherent in bottom-up participation. He wants to conceptualize citizenship and bottom-up participation involving social innovation and soft power. He wants to discuss further a Chinese pattern of strengthening these multiple forces, moving away from top-down and state-led values.

He notes, however, that we can't ignore the contribution of culture. He cites a recent interview he gave to *China Economic Herald*, where he said it was not correct to say that civil society principles and applications did not exist in China's past. There was a degree of civil society tradition and today's activities in this area can be linked to this part of Chinese culture.

In practical application, one promising area is working with migrants in cities. A systematic support system is needed, based on cooperation among government, community and citizens. Another area is food safety and he cites the recent Sanlu milk scandal.

The challenges. While there is progress, the development of grassroots civil society still has a long way to go, and we need to learn more about citizen participation. People still require more information to increase their self awareness, and to establish new boundaries for action. There will be ups and downs. The NGOs are a good example of this. State-led civil society still exists and top-down direction continues, but bottom-up civil society is emerging faster than what we observed in our 2005 paper, which was a slow drip, drip, drip of change. The drips are larger and faster now.

Finally, democracy and political change. There may be more opportunities for democratic transition in 2009, but some people don't want drastic change, not just those in power. Measures such as reforming the judiciary and direct elections are discussed, but the time might not be right for these major changes. He says, as an alternative, if you want to change the game, you have to develop new regulations and a safety net. Bottom-up civil society is helpful for building such a net. The awareness of citizen participation as an option in social life provides a possible future democratic transition with a fundamental base. This may be the most fruitful strategy for strengthening those multiple factors associated with bottom-up citizen engagement such as rule of law, private ownership, focus on the individual, social and political rights and capacity building.

He concludes by saying China still favours vertical government control. Even community development, the *shequ*, is really a vehicle for top-down social control. In his words, "Unlike analyses that use a dichotomy of authoritarianism or democracy, or that propose immediate transformation, or talk about trapped transition, or how to break from the grip of authoritarian culture, at the urban grassroots level we see not only a dialogue of participation discourse between East-West, but also a changing configuration of Chinese culture that is slowly creating social resources that will enable this transition to take place."
Inclusion is the process whereby individuals and groups take part in the political process and influence the decision-making apparatus. It includes specific events like elections and public hearings as well as membership in committees or associations, but it is best thought of as an overarching process. The most prolific scholar on the issue of inclusion in Leninist systems is Ken Jowitt, who contended that Leninist systems experience three stages of development—transformation, consolidation, and finally inclusion. Jowitt argued that greater levels of inclusion become unavoidable as a Leninist society moves away from class-conflict and revolutionary politics toward a more stable period of development.

Many of the alternative frameworks used to describe grassroots political change in China, such as civil society and democratization, are limited by their failure to account for the historical trajectory of Leninist states, and as such overlook key aspects of contemporary Leninist politics. For example, the fact that China had slim to no autonomous civil organization for decades has certainly influenced its political culture and limited the influence of the "civil society-esque" organizations that do exist today. The democratization debate, simply put, is not helpful since urban China is not in any sense democratic, nor are there any indications that it is becoming so.

The inclusion concept, on the other hand, allows us to consider critical realms of politics that liberalization frameworks omit by focussing attention on insider-type institutions or the subtle negotiations between outsider-type institutions and the party-state. This is significant since some of the most important agents of change are located within the Leninist state as opposed to being autonomous from, or in opposition to, the state.

Ding Xueliang, for instance, demonstrated this very well with the example of the Institute of Marxism and Leninism. He was able to demonstrate how "some of the state's conventional instruments for political control, such as trade unions and youth organizations, were taken over by critical elements and turned out to be organizational vehicles for mass protest" in the run up to Tiananmen.

These sorts of organizations continue to exist and thrive today. I have spent two and a half years working out of the Institute of Contemporary Socialism at Shandong University, which is a central level research institute under the Ministry of Education. Head of the institute and editor-in-chief of its influential journal, Ding Xueliang has throughout his career critiqued the party-state's narrative and supported the work of other critical intellectuals. Yet, his generous funding comes entirely from the party-state itself. As such, there are critical organizations within the
Leninist system that have both the ears and the trust of the party-state's key decision-makers, and as such have an unparalleled ability to influence its decision-making process.

I have attempted to advance the concept of inclusion by developing three ideal-type models. These are "state-led inclusion", where change is controlled by state agents, like the Institute of Contemporary Socialism, "society-led inclusion", where non-state agents are instrumental in pushing change, and "organic inclusion" where change is arising as a result of evolutionary processes that are blurring the boundaries of established categories like "party versus non-party."

Today, I only have enough time to discuss one of these models and that will be "society-led inclusion" as it is the most relevant to the theme of property on which I will focus. More specifically, I will talk about the Xiamen Haicang affair, which occurred between 2004 and 2007. This event is an excellent case study of society-led inclusion, not because it is representative, but because Xiamen's homeowners expanded the boundaries of inclusion and in the process illustrated how homeowner groups are involved in a subtle negotiation with local party-states.

More specifically, I will examine how Xiamen's homeowners became included in the decision making process of a Leninist political system that jealously guards its power and seems instinctively to exclude rather than include.

The Xiamen Haicang affair dates back to early 2004 when the Xianglu Tenglong Fangting Company, which I will simply refer to as Xianglu, formally applied to build a chemical plant in Xiamen's Haicang District. The sheer scale of this investment was incredible. In financial terms, Xianglu was making a US$1.5 billion investment in a plant that was set to increase Xiamen's annual GDP by 25 per cent. This made it the largest industrial project in Xiamen's history at a time when Xiamen was underperforming relative to other cities in its class in GDP terms.

Unfortunately for Xianglu, the plant planned to produce and store massive quantities of volatile carcinogens that were linked to birth defects. Homeowners were also deeply concerned about the dreadful effect the plant was going to have on local property values and the dangers of living beside an enormous Molotov cocktail on the banks of the Taiwan Strait.

What happened was quite remarkable. Beginning in 2006, homeowners opposed the construction of the plant, and over the course of 18 months organized themselves, publicly articulated their opposition, and held two days of public protests in front of the city government. All of these actions forced the local party-state to reconsider its decision, hold public hearings, and ultimately order a cessation to all construction.

I do not have time to get into details, but what I can say is that the Xiamen affair itself illustrated how homeowner groups can play an instrumental role in developing society-led inclusion in at least two ways. The first was by distributing information about undesirable projects. By educating residents on the environmental dangers of the chemical plant and the legal options available to them, homeowner groups allowed residents to develop considered positions. The second way homeowner groups were instrumental in Xiamen was by posting information about consultations, debates, hearings and "collective walks" on community bulletin boards and
websites. By doing so, they helped to mobilize residents by coordinating the movement in a strategic fashion.

Even more important is what the Xiamen case seems to suggest about the evolution of society-led inclusion. In particular, it reveals how boundary lines seemed to exist which shaped the manner in which homeowners engaged the local party-state. Three such boundary lines were thematic, physical and socio-economic.

The thematic boundary can be noticed in the language used by homeowners in the titles of their groups and slogans. One particularly active homeowners group was the "Xiamen 611 Volunteer's Coalition for Environmental Protection." Those who participated in the march carried banners that read "Oppose PX; Protect Xiamen." One of the more popular online groups was named "Give Blue Water and Blue Skies Back to Xiamen."

The fact that key problems outside the scope of the environment were rarely discussed publicly suggests that homeowners were aware of this invisible boundary line. For instance, a series of prickly issues surrounding Xianglu's dirty environmental record in Xiamen, the government's close relationship with the plant owner, who is on Taiwan's most wanted list for corruption related charges, or the obvious legitimacy concerns of the environmental impact assessment system which requires residents blindly to trust the integrity of the local party-state, which was not long ago disgraced in a massive corruption scandal that included much of the city's senior leadership, were barely addressed publicly.

By adopting an environmental theme, especially after "sustainable development" became one of the key themes of the 2007 National People's Congress, Xiamen's homeowners in effect appropriated the party-state's own discourse to criticize the plant. By doing so, they were able to make the claim that their actions were patriotic or legitimate.

The physical boundaries were the walls around shequ compounds. Homeowners were free to organize and demonstrate as much as they pleased as long as their actions remained encased by the compound walls. Luigi Tomba noticed how the physical boundaries of compound walls could influence homeowner politics in Shenyang and Beijing. Within the walls, he observed, homeowner protests were allowed to take place as they were considered to be private disputes between private interests. However, when homeowners breached the compound walls and entered public spaces, a private dispute between homeowners and other private interests turned into a public one that could have contagion effects.

The experience of Wu Xian demonstrates the harshness of the physical boundary. Wu regularly posted heated comments that stated his opposition to the PX plant. As it turns out, he was being monitored, but he was not interfered with until he tried to organize a march in downtown Xiamen. As soon as he did so, he was picked up and thrown in jail without the opportunity to defend himself. Similarly, suspected organizers of the collective walks were also jailed.

The final boundary was socio-economic in nature and the one that I am particularly interested in when it comes to society-led inclusion. This boundary is one that exists among urban residents as opposed to one between resident and party-state. In a survey of more than 800 urban residents
spread out across 48 urban neighbourhoods in Wuhan, Jinan, and Liaocheng, I investigated how socio-economic stratification can influence society-led inclusion with three variables.

The first variable, presence of resident run property related institutions, measured whether or not homeowners' committees existed in the respondent's neighbourhood. The purpose of this was to use the presence of homeowners' committees as a proxy for degree of resident mobilization. Other useful institutions may also be present that would suggest mobilization, such as online communities, but these institutions do not require the same degree of effort and commitment to organize and register as do homeowners committees and thus are not as effective a proxy.

The results for this variable were telling. A small minority of respondents who were classified as low- and middle-income lived in communities that had homeowners committees (19.7 per cent and 22.5 per cent respectively). However, nearly half of high-income residents (45.5 per cent) lived in communities that had these committees.

As such, we can see that there is a strong correlation between socio-economic stratification and the presence of institutions that can facilitate society-led inclusion.

The second variable focused on the actions of residents who have experienced property related disputes. As such, this indicator allows us to see how different socio-economic classes behave when property related disputes arise.

The most noticeable observation that was made was the high income group's comparative readiness to take action when a dispute arose. On average, members of the high income group employed 2.6 methods of dispute resolution when a problem arose whereas members of the middle and low income groups employed just 0.7 and 1.6 methods of dispute resolution respectively.

The types of dispute resolution mechanisms employed also varied by income. In particular, the high income group was significantly more likely to employ private forms of dispute resolution then either the middle income group or the low income groups.

This was particularly the case when it came to the use of homeowners' committees and the legal system. As such, we again see high-income residents both more willing to take action when their propertied interests have been infringed upon and more likely to rely on society-led institutions to resolve disputes. Poor residents, on the other hand, are relatively inactive and more likely to rely on traditional methods of state-led dispute resolution.

The third variable was designed to investigate how wealth influences potential efficacy. This is an important variable since it captures the overwhelming majority of residents who have not had any direct experience with property related disputes. This was done by collecting information on a residents understanding of property related issues.

All three indicators suggest that there is a strong correlation between socio-economic stratification and political efficacy, which in turn suggests that the socio-economic boundary is very significant when it comes to society-led inclusion.
In conclusion then, homeowner politics is an area where society-led inclusion has evolved considerably since the early 1990s, when the housing reforms provided urban residents with powerful new incentives and space to mobilize when their interests were threatened. In the Xiamen case, this inclusion seems to have been shaped by invisible boundary lines. The concentration on environmental concerns, for instance, added a degree of legitimacy to their grievances, especially in the wake of the 2007 National People's Congress. The privatization of property on the other hand depoliticized organization and conflict that occurred behind the walls of the housing compounds.

Both of these factors allowed homeowners to organize, articulate, and advocate in defence of their interests. Yet, as the socio-economic boundary suggests, society-led inclusion seems to be significantly limited by cleavages that are internal to homeowners. For the vast majority of urban residents who lack the resources to organize, articulate, and advocate in defence of their interests, the thematic and physical boundaries are largely irrelevant. To the contrary, these residents remain dependents of local party-states and are effectively excluded from the decision-making processes.

This raises some important questions about the party-state's capacity effectively to govern the grassroots. If urban China's new middle classes are beginning to enjoy new levels of society-led inclusion, how will this affect the party-state's capacity to govern in the interests of the wider population? Put differently, is stratified inclusion causing the party-state to govern with blinders on?

The conclusion of the Xiamen affair suggests that may be the case. The chemical plant was not cancelled, but instead moved down the coast to the poverty stricken Guxue Peninsula in Zhangzhou County. Unhappy with the decision to relocate the plant there, residents tried to follow in the footsteps of Xiamen by holding a collective walk of their own on March 1, 2008. Unfortunately for them, the walk was a dismal failure. Protesters were dismissively told by officials via local television that the plant was not a danger to them and it would be a boon the local economy. This response infuriated residents and the ad hoc unorganized movement degenerated into a violent clash between residents and police. At no time were residents there able to establish a running dialogue with the local political apparatus.

It is thus hardly surprising that many of the one million residents who live within the internationally recognized danger zone of the projected site had a difficult time accepting the claim made by Xiamen's middle class residents that their affair produced a "win-win" result. According to one Zhangzhou resident, "When I heard the PX [chemical plant] was moving out of Xiamen, originally I was very happy for the Xiamen people, but who knew it would be moved to my front door? May I ask, since it cannot be built in Xiamen, why should it be built in Zhangzhou?... I hope the decision makers will think about the poor districts."
**Discussant**

**Steve Trott** (PhD Candidate, Political Science, University of Toronto)

Let me begin with Qing Miao's paper. First, he starts with his periodization of scholarship and civil society in China, breaking it up into three different phases: the 1990s, the early 2000s and post-2005. This periodization is reflective of the underlying, even normative goals that affect the scholarship that we do. In the 1990s, a lot of discourse on civil society in China was responding directly to the Tiananmen Square suppression of the democracy movement, or the protest movement at the time. So it was a normatively-fueled debate, given the state repression of these societal movements. What were the prospects for this type of societal engagement to affect political change in the future? This was an underlying concern—would China democratize?

Getting into the 2000s, we see that debate moving into China. The underlying motivation seems to be more concerned with social developments—civil society and participation in community initiatives, how to foster better forms of societal engagement, community development. It's moving away from an explicitly "democratic" change type of theme. Then post-2005 we have, in part, a fragmentation, as he mentions that is increasing the differentiation of different types of civil society organizations, yet also the expansion of the public sphere.

Challenging in his paper was this movement between different discourses of civil society, the public sphere, citizen engagement, participation and so on, with a lot of overlap in these terms. To push the debate further, it's important to clarify some of the conceptual boundaries that we use. If we understand civil society as an organizational sphere between family and the state, his research is focusing not so much on that organizational aspect, but on the sociological underpinnings, the motivations to greater participation, as is illustrated by his survey research. He is talking more about public sphere and citizen engagement than about organizations.

The example of the Sichuan earthquake reflects that clearly, because we see a mass popular movement, spontaneous, in which people go and assist their compatriots in their time of need. While we can view that as civil society engagement, the question in the back of my mind is how much of that is actually organized, to what extent is it organized, and to what extent is it simply a spontaneous moment in time when people express a common instinctive response to a certain situation? The longer term question is that lacking an organizational structure, how enduring or how sustainable is this type of engagement? He does cite survey research showing that the number of civil society and participatory organizations is expanding rapidly. There is a two-sided story there.

In his survey research he distinguishes between "new" neighbourhoods and "old" ones in Beijing. In a way, he is testing the modernization thesis. The "new" neighbourhoods are more middle class, more educated, affluent, residents own their own property or apartments. They are more likely to be white collar workers, versus the "old" neighbourhoods, where the blue collar workers lived, the old danwei society, where private ownership" of housing did not exist. Differences in educational qualifications—university education in "new" neighbourhoods versus community college-type education or less in the "old" ones—are significant. In his research in the
"new" neighbourhoods, he notes the rise of what he calls the values of individualization. That is a very important finding.

He asks whether people feel they have a right to engage in debate on, for example, state spending. To what extent should individual rights be subordinated to state interests? We find that in these new neighbourhoods there is a more individualistic tendency. The differences were not as huge as we might expect in terms of the numbers. It's a moderate trend, I would say, but likely to increase as modernization and urbanization proceeds in China.

Qing Miao shows clearly that his research supports a much broader context for civic engagement and participation in civic and community life. The extent to which that is actually supportive of political change and "democratization", as the word comes up several times in the paper, is unclear. Some of my own research has shown counter-intuitive findings when looking at these old-style neighbourhoods. I've looked at the introduction of grassroots elections for residents' committees--direct elections--which are spreading in Chinese cities. I found they are introduced more in these older neighborhoods than in the newer ones where one might expect them to emerge, an interesting counter-intuitive finding. What it suggests is that while there may be a growing societal basis or underpinnings, as he calls it, for a kind of democratic society and system that is quite different from the actual adoption of democratic political institutions. So we need to think about state interests, and where and when the state will introduce those types of institutions. Interesting findings and good things to think about in his excellent paper.

Dan Koldyk's paper also provides us with important survey research findings. He speaks more to the organizational side of civil society, differing in focus from Qing Miao. Dan Koldyk emphasizes the importance of the homeowner committees, more in the paper, actually, than in his spoken comments, and how the existence of these homeowners' committees provides a channel for the expression of their interests.

One comment that he made was very insightful, that these existing channels can be activated when an issue comes up, as in the case of the plant in Xiamen. It provides an additional area for citizen engagement and participation in political decision-making. That speaks to the importance of institutions in explaining political change and how these institutions, which are changing at the grassroots level, need to engage with institutions at higher levels of the state that may not be changing quite as quickly.

So we have maybe two different cultures, more participatory at the grassroots level, and more hierarchical at the official level. These local institutions, as he has shown, are clashing with the predominantly Leninist structure of the state at higher levels. When those two interact, it can lead to all sorts of tension.

His findings on socio-economic cleavage and how this is important in resolving or determining the outcomes of negotiations between state and society are significant. We need more surveys in this area as sometimes the sample size is quite small, so it's hard to know how representative they are. Of course, these are the challenges of this type of research in China.
In his paper, he addressed the importance of legitimizing this type of protest. I found that to be a crucial, strategic point. The homeowners' committees provide a role in distributing information and mobilizing residents as mentioned in his talk, but in the paper he talks about how beyond the walls of the *danwei*, political elites and academics were instrumental in helping make the next jump, to legitimate the process. This may represent a competing interpretation as to how these protests actually happen and can be resolved. Is it so much a function of different levels of socio-economic development, or the extent to which these different "groups" are well connected within the state? The middle class communities in Xiamen seemed to have the support of academics that backed them politically, whereas in Zhangzhou it was not clear what type of political connections the residents, who were much poorer than in Xiamen, had to support their cause.

**Jeremy Paltiel:**

Ken Jowitt was my supervisor, and the inclusion model is very much focused on preemption of the results of this social mobilization by the state and by the Party. Ken Jowitt wrote at a time when you had planned economies in Eastern Europe, so there were few autonomous spheres available in those societies. What I want to ask you about is how you would triangulate the inclusion literature, which is based on co-optation, and the social mobilization literature--Charles Tilly, Sidney Tarrow. I'm glad that Steve Trott put in this intermediate variable. The social mobilization literature suggests that there is a risk factor in social mobilization and there are tipping points at which people overcome their fear of the risk of social mobilization and then come into confrontation with the state. The inclusion model is actually focused on never having that happen because the last thing the Party wants is to have to be in a bargaining relationship with autonomous organizations. So the question is how do you fit those two together in terms of what you call societal inclusion?

**Question:**

My research has been on the development of environmental NGOs in China. In your three classifications of inclusion, you talked about the state-led inclusion model. I'd like to ask a question about CEPA, China's state environmental protection agency. How would you evaluate the role of CEPA? What role did it have in Xiamen? How effective has it been in engaging civil society?

**Question:**

Steve Trott already raised the question of *guanxi*--to what extent are better-educated, better-off people able to get better results, not because of their education or economic background, but because they have a champion on the inside? In addition to inclusion, there are a series of social movements, and one of the maxims is that people that kick down the door are never the ones that go inside to sit down and negotiate. A successful social movement always ends up having champions on the inside who bring it to a result.
Dan Koldyk:

State-led inclusion is more along the lines of what Ken Jowitt was talking about, whereas I am trying to expand it to include different forms that he wasn't discussing, such as society-led inclusion, which I don't think is much different than what I think civil society would expect us to see happening. It's a pretty hard question.

As for CEPA, I only looked at the Xiamen example, and haven't looked at CEPA outside of Xiamen, so it's difficult to evaluate what it does as an organization based on my case study. According to what happened in Xiamen, it was not very effective in engaging the wider public, including other community groups of any sort until the residents had mobilized and received the support of different influential people in Beijing and Xiamen. At the beginning, CEPA, different central level agencies and the local government in Xiamen were conducting an environmental impact assessment (EIA). There are supposedly regulations that require public participation in this process, but in fact, it seemed like very little happened since residents didn't find out about the proposed construction of the plant until after it was already being built. After this happened, they had a collective walk and it became a big issue, and the press became involved. A second EIA then included a public hearing. That happened only after they had been exposed for being negligent.

Social champions. Yes, the ability to gain social champions on your side has an important impact on the results, but certain communities, wealthier ones, tend to have more access to social champions. They have more relationships with the media, more powerful friends, and tend to understand how to manipulate or how to play with the system since many of them had grown up working in the system. Many times in the wealthier neighbourhoods, you have cadres that still have their contacts in government. Even if they don't have very many contacts, they know how the system works. In poor neighbourhoods, it tends not to be so much the case. They have less access to people who can either push buttons in the government, or know how to make the system work. It goes both ways.

In Xiamen, what happened was the committees first organized themselves, had letter writing campaigns, petitioning and tried to contact the media. In fact, it didn't happen so much in Xiamen. One of the differences in this neighborhood was that they had different ways of mobilizing. They had different incentives, they had wealthy property to protect but they also created their own websites, agitated locally and eventually caught the attention of people in Beijing and academics.

Bernie Frolic:

Qing Miao didn't deal directly with some of these issues, and it might be useful to add a few additional comments about his work.

First of all, he doesn't really talk about protest. He's talking about the entitlement of rights of individuals and participation. It's not just civil society by protest, but civil society by people
becoming aware of an expanding area where they can begin to exercise their rights as citizens under the law.

Second, according to Qing Miao, it's not just individuals and organizations that want to expand public space and negotiate something with the state, but the state itself. People have to be trained at the local level, Party officials, how to deal with this. This is a major issue, since there is a shortage of good cadres--officials who can step in and deal with a potentially fluid situation that is changing all the time. Local issues can crop up over almost anything. This is becoming an ever-expanding challenge for the Party-state as it seeks to train its cadres in the subtle and not-so-subtle ways of dealing with emerging confrontations between state and society at the local levels.

That raises the question of community development, which didn't really get talked about--the shequ. This was an attempt by the authorities to promote communities in cities to develop new ways of people relating to one another, in part as an extension of the old communist system of neighbourhood control, and also to combat the individualization that Qing Miao is writing about. I'm not sure that this policy has been very successful. The forces of urbanization tend to limit community development in large modern cities.

Two more points. Beijing is not China. So what goes on in Beijing in its neighbourhoods is not necessarily typical of a large part of China. Beijing is a special place. Maybe Xiamen can be a better barometer. The question is what is happening in the rest of China? Major, rich cities may be the pace setters, but political development is moving more slowly elsewhere in China.

Finally, individuals are okay, they can do things, but organizations, you have to watch out for them. If you are the Party, organized activities are more of a concern than individual actions in this area of civil society. This is why there is a yoyo effect for NGOs. You let the NGOs increase, suddenly you knock them down. You make NGO registration more complicated, then you loosen the regulations again, then you knock them down once more. This has been a problem, how to deal with organizations in civil society, as opposed to individuals.

**Question:**

Could video journalism and the internet be used as tools to educate and mobilize protest marches before the state could roll out the police to beat down the people?

**David Ownby:**

To make a follow-up comment on the basis of Jeremy Paltiel's question and Dan Koldyk's frustration in the face of that question, it seems to me that it is immensely complicated in China. In situations like the one that you described, and it's not the only one that I've read about, often times "rights language" might be developed in a think tank in Beijing or Shanghai by young people who have studied abroad and who might or might not really believe it. For political reasons, higher level leaders use this rights language hoping to call local officials to account. If
someone is lucky, like in Xiamen where they caught on to this, you can use rights language to challenge the local officials.

This gets beyond the language of state inclusion and social mobilization because what's happened here is the central state has enunciated a principle hoping that the local state will transform itself in some way. When local groups use this language and win their challenge, they are included in the central state, but are empowered vis-à-vis the local state. This is not your grandfather's Leninism, is what I am coming to believe. It is a very healthy process and hope it continues. It's certain that this will not work in every instance, but I can see why you are seeing it as state inclusion and social mobilization, because it's both at the same time, although not necessarily going in the same direction that Ken Jowitt or Charles Tilly would have imagined.

Dan Koldyk:

One of the important differences between the different types of neighbourhoods that exist is that wealthier neighbourhoods tend to have different forms of resources to use when they have a problem. These developments take place only after a dispute occurs. If there is no dispute then there is really nothing to evaluate. Once a dispute occurs, we see different responses. In poor neighbourhoods, you tend to have people relying on traditional institutions such as residence committees. Or they just feel as though there is nothing they can do, in which case nothing happens, or they respond in different ways, which can produce different forms of protests. Sometimes it's violent and sometimes it's sit-ins inside the institution they are angry with. In the wealthier neighbourhoods, they respond to the issues in ways that are less politically risky. They have a stronger role in articulating and engaging the state.

Razmik Panossian:

This discussion has been very useful for me. I am responsible for programming at the Centre for Rights & Democracy to reinforce democratization and human rights, so it's extremely useful to have these kinds of ideas and to see the encouraging signs emerging from below. The one substantive point that I would make is that the tendency seems to talk about democratization a bit divorced from human rights, when in fact they are two sides of the same coin. Human rights mobilization is an element of democratization, not just elections. There is a whole other side of democracy building based on human rights.

**Ideas and Intellectuals**

**Victor Falkenheim** (Professor Emeritus, Political Science, University of Toronto)

For this session on Ideas and Intellectuals we have two panelists. Daniel Bell is Professor of Ethics and Political Theory at Tsinghua University. Born in Montréal, he is the author of *China's New Confucianism: Politics and Everyday Life in a Changing Society* (Princeton, 2008); *Beyond
It's been lovely conference and I have learned a lot so far. This is a huge theme, Ideas and Intellectuals, and I can only cover a tiny portion of what is really going on. As a general point one can say that there has been a revival of tradition in China. Compared to the 1980s, it's quite striking just how much intellectuals are engaged with traditional ideas, whether it's Confucianism or Buddhism or Daoism. This phenomenon is not necessarily distinctive to China--you have other modernizing states, whether in the Middle East or India or Russia where there is a similar re-engagement with tradition. Shi Tianjian has been in Beijing for a couple of years--normally he's at Duke University--and he found, on the basis of survey data, that people in mainland China are becoming more attached to traditional political values as their society is modernizing economically. He didn't expect such results. He's found a similar tendency in Taiwan. According to his survey data, as Taiwan becomes more democratic people become more attached to traditional political values. Why does that happen?

For Confucianism in particular, why is there a revival? I think there are several reasons. One is that as the country becomes more modern, the view of traditional values is changing, now those values are seen as helping to promote some of that modernity. For most of the twentieth century, China viewed itself as a kind of "sick man of Asia" and blamed its traditions for this sorry situation. The one thing that held intellectuals together, whether liberals or marxists, they thought the West was the answer to their needs to be a modern society. For 100 years, this was a kind of totalizing critique of tradition--a long time--and now people look at that period and say, why did we do that? Then they say, maybe some of the traditional values, like education, hard work and savings actually helped promote economic modernization, not that different, maybe, from other East Asian states that have become economically modern. Maybe the Confucian heritage, instead of undermining modernity, can actually help to promote it.

The problem with economic modernization, and it is similar elsewhere, is that it makes people more individualistic and many intellectuals are worried about that. Businessmen too make their
money and then say, why have I been doing this? Is money the end of life? No, of course, it's just the means and they think, what should I do with my money now? They say, maybe I need to think about the source of ethical resources that could promote a sense of social responsibility that could combat the excessive individualism of modernity.

I think that among the different traditions, Confucianism is the most obvious resource to combat this type of excessive individualism. It is really an ethic that emphasizes social responsibility. Confucianism is a very diverse tradition, like the liberalism or Christianity, but I think there are certain core values, like the idea that you should treat people according to their roles, rather than some sort of abstract idea of how to treat people. Because they are a person who is fulfilling certain roles, I should treat them in this way. I should treat a teacher differently than a mother, and so on. The idea that we learn about morality through particular relations, especially starting with the family, where we learn about care and love, and this is extended to non-family members. There is this dialogue between the care feminists and the Confucians because there is a very similar idea in care feminism. There is also a more political idea that the best way to govern is by using informal means, rather than coercion, that it is best to use moral example or rituals or persuasion. Only if those informal mechanisms fail, can we use more coercion means to maintain social order. Just some basic values that I think are shared by most of the different strands of Confucian tradition.

I'd like to move from a more descriptive mode to a more normative one. An exciting debate in China now is between the New Leftists, who are inspired by socialist values, and Confucians. Twenty years ago, it would have been inconceivable to think that Socialists and Confucians would talk to each other, to try to learn from each other. We are witnessing the development of a new interpretation of Confucianism, what we can call "Left Confucianism."

What are some of its features? There have been liberal Confucians, especially outside of China. Tu Weiming, Theodore de Bary and others. They are more attached at the end of the day to liberal values and will pick and choose those parts of Confucianism that are compatible with liberal values, while rejecting the ones that are not. That is using liberalism as the moral standpoint. If you are really interested in the Confucian moral framework, you want Confucianism to be more than that, not just a means for promoting liberal values. So now there is this question of what Socialists can learn from Confucians and what Confucians can learn from Socialists, and the sorts of ideas that could develop from this dialogue.

One of the key issues is social criticism. There is always this worry that Confucianism could justify more authoritarianism. The opening ceremonies of the Olympics had lots of quotes from Confucius. It's true that not many people today view Marxism as an ideal to pursue for China, so I think it's true that the Party is increasingly looking to draw upon Confucianism as a source of legitimacy. There is a worry that this could be misused to justify blind obedience, conformity, patriarchy and so on.

What sort of interpretation can provide a more critical perspective? Historically, the early Confucians were radical social critics. Confucians roamed from state to state hoping to persuade political rulers to rule more wisely. The Book of Mencius opens with Mencius scolding the ruler for being immoral. It's a very blunt social criticism, and of course, the Socialists also have this.
critical perspective. Historically the record of Confucianism, like other traditions such as liberalism, is mixed. Sometimes it has been misused and bound with legalism to justify a semi-totalitarian rule. However, there is also this critical tradition in Confucianism, which was institutionalized to a certain extent.

Today, what sort of form would it take? When we think about social criticism, we think about having a more independent media, for example, and there is widespread recognition among journalists for the need to have a more independent and critical media. There is also the widespread feeling that we don't want to follow the Western model where it is all about reporting the bad news, or at least most of it is. The Confucian view is that the role of government and public authorities is to set a moral example and inspire people with desirable values. Using contemporary language, this means promoting morally desirable values like the need to be concerned for the disadvantaged members of the community--who can object to that? The model of media that might emerge from this sort of dialogue might be more privately funded media, which will be more critical and less subject to government control. However, there is also a need for publicly-funded media that can use their resources to promote widely shared values like concern for the disadvantaged.

On one hand, the language of democracy and authoritarianism doesn't really capture what is going on here. If you want to think of appropriate Western terminology, some sort of paternalistic model is better. The idea would be that private media could report whatever they wanted on social problems, but publicly-funded media would have a special task of promoting morally desirable values.

I will give an example. The Olympics were interesting but even more interesting were the Paralympics that followed. There was blanket coverage of these almost heroic, disabled athletes on Chinese television, an important exercise in the raising of social consciousness. I was watching it together with people who were learning a lot about the plight of the disabled and how to respond to their concerns. I think you can also observe it in Beijing now. The disabled are more out in public than they used to be. If it was a pure market model of the media, you wouldn't have had all that coverage of the Paralympics. I know Singapore journalists who wanted to report on the Paralympics, but her editor told her that their readers did not care about coverage of the disabled, so her stories did not get published. I think this combination of free private media with some sort of public funding for media that has the task of promoting values like concern for the disadvantaged is not necessarily so problematic.

Confucianism also emphasizes the value of meritocracy. What does that mean? The idea is that everyone should have an equal opportunity to be educated. In Confucianism, there is a saying that there are no social classes when it comes to education. But not everyone will emerge from this process with the equal capacity to make morally political judgments. The task of politics is to identify those that have an above average capacity to make morally informed political judgments.

In Confucianism, not all hierarchies are bad. Hierarchies that are based on age, for example, are justified. Why is that? As we get older, we experience different roles and through experiencing those different roles, we enrich our moral understandings. For example, if I care for an elderly
parent, it's an important way of learning about care and empathy, which is then extended to others. I also deepen my experience in particular roles. If someone is a medical doctor for 10 years, he/she should be a better medical doctor than someone who has been a medical doctor for just one year. As we get older, we should become more wiser, so to speak.

For the Confucian, the idea that the elderly should have extra voting power is not such a crazy thought, but it would be crazy from a liberal perspective. If you look at the history of Western political thought, there really isn't a good argument for the idea that an 18-year-old should have the same voting right as a 60-year-old. I don't know any thinker who put forward a good argument that we stop growing morally after we are 18 years of age.

How do we institutionalize that? Jiang Qing proposes a tri-cameral legislature. His basic idea is that we need more democracy, more workers, and farmers to have their interests represented in some sort of legislature, but we also need more meritocracy to represent the interests of "non-voters" whose interests are typically neglected in the democratic process. Politics doesn't just affect the voting community, it also affects foreigners. The United States, its crisis affects other countries. Pollution from China affects other countries. Who is going to represent the interests of those who are affected by policies who are not members of the voting community? There is a need for their interests to be represented in the political process. So he proposes a kind of house of government that would represent the interests of non-voters. Future generations, foreigners and so on, all those whose interests are typically neglected in the democratic process.

This is a very creative way of thinking about political development in China. As long as we keep in mind that Confucianism is always being reinterpreted and reinvented, it's not just a matter of retrieving things blindly from the past and implementing them.

In this Confucian-Socialist dialogue, how could we promote concern for the disadvantaged, besides the media model that I was referring to earlier? There are different ways of thinking about what it means to be disadvantaged. It is not just a question for the Confucian of lacking material resources, it is also one of lacking essential social relations. The good life involves having rich social relations and those who lack them, especially key family relations, are very vulnerable. They are the ones who should be helped first and foremost by the state. Mencius was very clear about this and, to some extent, you can find that sort of idea in history as well. The disadvantaged are not just those who lack resources but also those who lack social relations.

How could we implement care for the disadvantaged? Again, Mencius was very clear that we need to look at the distribution of land as key. And if you look as Mencius's proposals for distribution of land, they aren't that different from the sorts of land reform that were implemented by Deng Xiaoping in the late 1970s. Some of the time you work on your own land and you can sell it in the free market. Other times, you work on public land and you give a quota for the non-farming classes. The idea that everyone should have a plot of land to go back to is still very much on the Socialist agenda in China. Again, it's not that different from the Confucian ideas.

Perhaps the more distinctively Confucian idea is that if you want to think about how to promote the concerns of the disadvantaged, it is not just a matter of having the right laws in place, it is a
matter of having an affective bonding between the powerful and the disadvantaged. How do we establish this sort of emotional bond? In China, there are beautiful laws, but how do we get people to obey the laws? Particularly, how can we get the powerful to obey the laws? That is where Confucians say that social rituals that involve members of different statuses are important. If they engage in common rituals, eventually it is a way of transforming the motivation of the powerful and getting them to care more about the disadvantaged.

Things that seem so trivial are not necessarily trivial. If you are a member of a company--they have this in South Korea and Japan--the bosses and the workers go together to sing karaoke after work. There are hierarchical rituals, meaning that the boss gets more applause, but eventually, the workers sing too, and they all drink together, and afterwards there is a sense of bonding. Part of it is to make the workers more loyal to the company, and part is to make the company more loyal to the workers.

In China, and to a certain extent in South Korea and Japan, the large companies and the banks do not fire workers as a first resort in times of economic difficulty. They will think of various other ways, such as cutting back everyone's salary communally, or cutting back vacation time. I know people who work for Western banks in Beijing and they were given orders from New York that they had to fire 20 per cent of the workers. This was in early February. This is not how the Chinese state banks or many of the large companies work. One does not want to glorify this, but it is worth thinking about these alternative approaches to social relations.

Let me end here just by asking, how do we reinterpret Confucianism in a way that is plausible and desirable for the modern world? Can we measure these things empirically? One of the new developments in Beijing is that philosophers and social scientists with similar concerns are talking to each other. How do we measure things like, "Is it true that if I care for an elderly parent that it will lead to an increase in empathy and that this will be extended to others?" Can you measure this?

What are the political values that most Chinese care about? Once we have more empirical evidence, then there is a better reason to favour interpretations that are supported by behavioral data. It is not just empirical, it's also normative. It is also an interpretation of what are China's most pressing needs. If it is true that one of the pressing concerns in China is that there is a need for some sort of new ideological foundation, then it is best to think about interpretations that help to fulfill those needs.

I'm often asked how relevant this is for the rest of the world. I am pretty skeptical because I do think that it's only when a country faces severe crises that it becomes more open to learning about the rest of the world. For most of the twentieth century, China was very open to learning about the rest of the world but is the West really open to learning about China? There was no sign up to now that this was the case, but as the crisis of capitalism worsens--and I attended this conference in Paris last week where a journalist from the Financial Times jokingly said, "Don't worry, just wait, we only have three more months of humiliation, just give us a little time and then we will be willing to learn more from China." It is possible that we might be more willing to learn.
**Political Change in China: The Current Situation and Future Directions**

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**Tiananmen Resonance: Memory and Voices in Exile**

**Rowena He** (Postdoctoral Fellow, Fairbank Centre, Harvard University)

I am not a political scientist so if my approach is different from yours, please bear with me. I am interested in the state-society relationship, but more interested in the relationship between societies and individuals. Second, I am going to speak quickly because there are so many things to cover in such a short time. And third, while I am not going to address the issue of human rights directly, I am afraid we can't avoid the topic of human rights when we talk about Tiananmen.

The paper I am going to share with you today is based on my SSHRC-funded dissertation on the political socialization experiences of three Tiananmen student leaders. Drawing on data collected through in-depth interviews, group discussions and my collaborative experience with the exile student community in the past seven years, the study explores how their political ideals and personal values were shaped by institutionalized education and social agents in China, led to action and punishment, and were revived under the changing context of exile.

Findings of the study indicate that exiled students see themselves as patriots betrayed by the Beijing regime. They did what they had been taught—to sacrifice for a high cause such as communism and the nation, but ironically, they were then punished by the very system that instilled those values. They used to live with hope for future justice when China will progress with the emergence of the younger generation. However, such a hope is confounded by the rising tensions between them and the new generation: while students in the 1980s were highly critical of their own government and pushed for political reforms, those of the post-Tiananmen generation tend not to distinguish between the regime and the nation and reject any serious criticism of the Chinese government.

The world witnessed such generational differences in 2008 with the heroic images of Chinese youth represented by the lone student confronting a tank near Tiananmen Square giving way to a global emergence of "China-defenders" raising red flags and cursing the Dalai Lama. For example, on April 13, 2008, thousands of overseas Chinese students gathered at the Parliament Hill in Ottawa demonstrating against the Canadian media's "biased China coverage."

In the following part of my talk, I will first quickly summarize the contexts of the gradual build-up of historical amnesia and nationalism in today's China and I will then draw on related concepts and literature, to addresses the implications of what I term "a curriculum in exile." In a broader sense, this study joins the current discussions in China studies concerning political implications of public opinion on nationalism and democratization, which is inseparable from a collective memory (truthful, selective or manipulated) of the nation's most immediate past.

You all know what happened in 1989. Right after the military crackdown, the government started to launch campaigns on all fronts, especially news media and education, to create and enforce the official version of June 4 and to make sure that this version officially became part of the national memory. Another campaign was launched to enforce patriotic education in which the 1989
crackdown is described as a necessary measure against the Western conspiracy of splitting China. To a great extent, they have been successful in suppressing and distorting memories of 1989 and silencing voices in exile.

After the military suppression, the security system tried to identify and intimidate those who were caught up as activists in the protests. Student leaders, together with intellectuals who were considered "Black Hands", were thrown in jail. Arrests were followed by the "verdict first, trial second" practices. At least 10 workers in Beijing were summarily tried and executed within 10 days after the arrest. At the same time, university students were forced to attend "political study" sessions each week, confess the number of times they had joined demonstrations, resist calls to inform on friends, and study the speeches of Deng Xiaoping. Among the top leadership, the former General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, Zhao Ziyang, was ousted.

An intense purge of media personnel who had supported the Tiananmen demonstrators started right after the crackdown. Propaganda officers of the People's Liberation Army took over control of major newspapers in Beijing. Although many editors made efforts to shield and protect their journalists, high-level decisions were soon made to remove these editors, so that the purge might proceed more smoothly. Two Chinese Central TV anchors who reported the events of June 4 in the news were fired. Wu Xiaoyong, son of the former foreign minister and vice premier, was removed from the English Program Department of China Radio International. Qian Liren, director of the People's Daily, the official organ of the Communist Party, was also removed from his post because some reports in the paper were sympathetic towards the students. Dai Qing, a well-known woman journalist, was imprisoned in July 1989. Even before the official crackdown, Qin Benli, the outspokenly pro-reform chief editor of World Economic Herald, had been dismissed.

A number of China's best-known writers and intellectual figures, as well as many of its prominent student leaders, fled the country after the June 4 crackdown. They developed an intellectual diaspora "not seen in the Chinese world since the Community Party came to power on the mainland and the National (KMT) government withdrew to Taiwan in 1949." A group of Hong Kong citizens played important roles in helping these dissidents to escape into exile. At the time of the massacre, an under-ground railroad known as "Operation Yellowbird" was organized. Operation Yellowbird helped 133 of China's leading dissident students and intellectuals escape to the West under the noses of the Chinese secret police. It is believed that the successful Great Escape of dissidents demonstrated the silent resistance from both the army and civilians in 1989. Otherwise, nobody would have been able to escape from China under the tightened military control.

On June 9, 1989, Deng Xiaoping met commanders above the corps level of the martial law enforcement troops and congratulated them for a job well-done. He said emphatically: "We should never forget how cruel our enemies are." In the same month, Deng granted the award, "Guardians of the Republic" (共和国卫士), to 10 army soldiers who it was claimed, were killed by "rioters" during the "counter-revolutionary riot." Three months later, a book entitled The Most Lovely Men in the New Era: List of Heroes of the Beijing Martial Law Enforcement Troops (新时期最可爱的人: 北京戒严部队英雄录) was published. Students at all levels, including
undergraduate and graduate students at universities and colleges, were called upon to learn from these national role models. The government also orchestrated a gathering of thousands of Young Pioneers on Tiananmen Square as a gesture to show that China's revolutionary young had symbolically taken back the Square from the student demonstrators. Among other things the youngsters chanted their credo, called simply "The Three Loves", that is: "Love the motherland, love the people and love the Communist Party." ("热爱祖国, 热爱人民, 热爱中国共产党")

The Beijing propagandists started to blame foreign forces for the Tiananmen protests. Western media were accused of spreading rumours and attempting to undermine China's efforts to restore order. An editorial article entitled "Rumours and the Truth" was published in the official *Beijing Review*, in which Western media were accused of lying.

The Chinese official's version of the "true story" was stated in an editorial note in the *Beijing Review* right after the military crackdown:

"The plotters and organizers of the counter-revolutionary rebellion are mainly a handful of people who have for a long time obstinately advocated bourgeois liberalization, opposed Party leadership and socialism and harboured political schemes, who have collaborated with hostile overseas forces and who have provided illegal organizations with the top secrets of the Party and state…Taking advantage of students' patriotic feelings…this handful of people with evil motives stirred up trouble."

The authorities charged that students were motivated not by their anger at the corruption and inefficiency of the government, but by the poisoning "bourgeois liberalization"-- shorthand for universal values, which the authorities dismissed as foreign and fake. The official understanding of universal values is demonstrated in an article in *Guangming Daily*: "What are human rights? As understood by Western scholars, they are the innate rights of human beings, or the basic rights and freedoms enjoyed by a person as a human. They primarily consist of the rights to life, freedom, equality, property, self-defense, happiness and the right to oppose persecution. These rights are innate, permanent, universal and nontransferable. They cannot be taken away…In the context of Marxism (however), such an interpretation of human rights is unscientific, incorrect, contrived, biased and ideologically metaphysical…Human rights, like democracy and freedom, are concrete and class-oriented."

While the Beijing government brings all its state machines into play to wash away people's memory of June 4, Ding Zilin, the mother of a Tiananmen victim, "launched a one-woman campaign to find out the names of those killed and wounded on June 4, onlookers as well as demonstrators, workers as well as students, and to establish the facts that determine who should be held responsible for what had happened." Ding's son Jiang Jielian, aged 17, was shot and killed by the government troops while crouching behind a rosebush on the night of June 3. Over the years, Ding had to overcome escalating government repression, including police surveillance, dismissal from her job and expulsion from the Communist Party, to gather information about the victims. The information about 186 victims is documented in Ding's book, *In Search of the Victims of June 4*, published in Hong Kong. Through this book, the world got to know stories of the victims and the family they left behind. Among them, Xiao Bo, a Beijing University lecturer, was killed on the night of June 3, his 27th birthday, when he biked to Tiananmen Square to make
sure his students were safe. He left behind his twin sons who were only 70 days old when he died. Wang Jianping, another victim, was killed on the same night, leaving behind his nine-month old twin daughters. The two girls were raised by their grandparents. The family had been struggling for survival and they hadn't been able to afford a second-hand color TV for the two girls until 2004 when they turned 15 years old.

In June 2008, an official web site for the Tiananmen Mothers group was launched by a group of overseas volunteers. The web site was blocked inside China several hours after it was launched. The site distinguishes itself with two maps—one map is of the locations where all the known victims killed in 1989; the other one is of the locations of hospitals where the bodies of the victims were found. The maps were the joint effort of the victims' families with a hope to tell the truth of history. The web site also posted letters from readers. One letter signed by "a group of overseas Chinese students" described the Tiananmen Mothers as "criminals" who had raised their children to become running dogs of the United States; similarly, another letter claims that as mothers of criminals, the Tiananmen mothers have no right to blame the Beijing government for executing their children; yet another letter criticizes the Tiananmen Mothers group for "taking the wrong side" to be against the Chinese people.

The 1989 protests triggered the formation of overseas Chinese student organizations. These groups were initially motivated by the outrage at the military assault and founded with an aim to maintain the struggle for democracy in exile. The Independent Federation of Chinese Students and Scholars (IFCSS, 全美学自联) in the United States has been the largest of such groups.

IFCSS had been influential for years among overseas Chinese students. However, the organization's membership has decreased dramatically in recent years. Tensions are felt between the older generation of overseas Chinese students and the younger ones who have just come out of China. The two generations of overseas Chinese students have very different attitudes towards the Beijing regime and hold different memories and views about what happened in 1989. Despite the obstacles, the remaining members of IFCSS have been making continuous efforts to provide humanitarian aid to families of the Tiananmen victims. As a result, several board members were denied entry to China, and some others' family members were harassed. Among the many reported cases, Tao Ye was one of them.

Tao Ye is a low-profile IFCSS member who had been helping to collect donations for the June 4 orphans to finish their high school and college education. He is one of those who chose to keep his Chinese citizenship after living in the U.S. for over 20 years. In November 2006, when he tried to enter China with his Chinese passport, he was forced to re-board on the plane that had just taken him to China to return to the United States. The purpose of his trip to China was to make arrangements to place his mother and aunts in seniors housing. He published an essay online about his experience which he ended with the expression of sadness: "I didn't feel the bitterness for having to die in a different country, but I can't help missing my Mum and my aunts. And I feel very sorry that I wasn't able to make any arrangement for the last chapter of their lives. That was how the Chinese government maintained its so-called "harmonious society" (和谐社会). Is there anything sadder than this?" (Tao, 2006, with my translation)
In the wake of the Tiananmen crackdown, the Chinese government started "a state-led nationalism" campaign to seek legitimacy. Within the centrally-controlled curriculum, political education efforts stepped up to re-establish the government's authority. Contents of textbooks for political education were greatly revised. The patriotic theme was significantly intensified as reflected in the promulgation of a series of documents, such as the well-publicized "Outlines on Patriotic Education" issued by the Department of Propaganda of the CCP's Central Committee in August 1994. Official interpretations of Chinese history have been changed accordingly to underscore patriotic themes. Lee brings the idea of patriotism and nationalism explicitly into the discussion of Chinese conceptions of citizenship in the post-Tiananmen era. In his study of patriotic education in a Chinese middle school, Fairbrother's findings show that teachers expect students to "feel pride in China's recent rapid progress towards prosperity" and "to uphold national dignity, as did those students participating in an international academic competition who refused their gold medals because the flag of the Republic of China was displayed, or those students who protested at a foreign teacher's display of a map showing Tibet as an independent country."

Along with the development of the official patriotic campaign, an unofficial nationalist discourse started to emerge in the late 1990s in response to events of China-world relations. This discourse was articulated in such books as *China Can Say No*, all of which portray Western powers, the U.S. in particular, as hostile to China and hence justify the militancy of Chinese nationalism. The language of these books was often vulgar but more effective than official propaganda in arousing nationalistic sentiments among the populace. This development was generally "unofficial", although official acquiescence and even manipulation did exist in some cases. The popularity of the unofficial nationalism was also reflected in the series of student protest against alleged "anti-China" countries such as the U.S. and Japan.

The topic of Tiananmen has remained a political taboo within China in the past 20 years. Academic discussions on Tiananmen are still not possible inside China. As Curran and Cook (1993) argue in their study on conducting research in the post-Tiananmen China, the greatest challenge confronting social scientists in the 1990s has less to do with research design or the quality and quantity of data than with the skills of reading political signals sent by the CCP government (p. 72). They conclude that one cannot simply publish findings because it could mean the end of another academic career or the punishment of respondents. In extreme cases, editors and authors used pseudonyms for their works on the topic of Tiananmen. For example, editors of the book *Cries for Democracy* (1990) are under Chinese pseudonyms of Han Minzhu and Hua Sheng, meaning "democracy for China" and "voice of China" respectively.

While researching the Chinese student exiles in North America, I found myself being exiled from academia in China. Researching a politically sensitive topic means no opportunities for any academic activities in China, such as conference presentations and publications. It could also mean denial of entry into the country. As researchers we are aware of the implications of not being able to have ongoing involvement in the research site. Friedman describes the situation as "studying China is dangerous."

A narrative concentration of professional power over funding, invitations to second channel talks in China, and conference monies is heightened by the policies of the CCP. It denies visas to
critically-minded international academics. No one who works on China wishes to be excluded from visiting the PRC and from doing research there—as have scholars Perry Link and Andrew Nathan. As a result, certain discourses are muted, while others, friendlier to certain CCP policies, are almost hegemonic.

Historical Amnesia. Growing up with its generational memory influenced by the presentation of historical facts and the intensification of the patriotic education, the younger generation grew up with little knowledge about what happened in 1989. It is not uncommon for Chinese, especially younger Chinese who live far from Beijing, to be entirely unaware of the Tiananmen protests. With the popularity of the internet, students studying in elite universities and big cities may manage to get bits and pieces of information about 1989, but they tend to accept the authorities' "riot" version and believe that the military crackdown was necessary for social stability and development. Tiananmen protests appear to have created something of a generation gap. Those who were in their 20s at the time of the protests tend to be far less supportive of the Beijing government than younger students who were born after the start of the Deng reforms.

In 2006, Yuan Weishi, a history professor at Zhongshan University, published an article in *Freezing Point* (冰点), a liberal weekly supplement of *China Youth Daily*, criticizing Chinese textbooks for teaching an incomplete history that fosters blind nationalism and closed-minded anti-foreign sentiment. He describes the younger generation as, "sheep still being raised on wolf milk." Two weeks after the publication of Yuan's article, *Freezing Point* was shut down by the propaganda department of the CCP, and its editor Li Datong had to resign from his position.

Madsen compares the Tiananmen protests to a drama "with an unexpected, incorrect ending" because the right didn't triumph the evil. By "drama" he means "a moral story", and he argues that citizens in a democracy understand their responsibilities toward the future by debating the moral meaning of history. The unfolding stories in the post-Tiananmen era are a continuous tragedy because the victims are no longer considered victims and the perpetrators are no longer perpetrators. Rather, the perpetrators have become heroes in the official version of the history of 1989.

If the exiles agree to sign something or agree that they are not going to talk about politics, that they will not express certain views, then they will be able to go back to China, to do business, lead an ordinary life and give a better life to their family and children. One of my participants chose to do that and has been very successful. Most continue to exist as exiles, many suffering from Post-traumatic Stress Disorder.

Political socialization. On the one hand, voices are silenced in prison or in exile and on the other, a new version of history or a new interpretation is presented to the younger generation. If we look at political socialization theory, we know that the junior members of a group are taught certain values. It is a process. The political self, political literacy and early orientation are shaped by this political socialization process. Political socialization agents, such as media, schools, curriculum, families and peers, shape our beliefs of who we are, the way we think, the values, and perspectives. It is like the lens that you have been wearing. Political socialization is important for inter-generational continuity.
We need two conditions for "de-socialization" to happen: incongruence and inconsistency. "Incongruence" means early socialization is different from the later one, for example, if I learned something from China when I was a child, then came to Canada and learned that human rights are important. That will be a reality shock, causing me to re-consider what I had learned in the past. Inconsistency means that two agents say different things. For example, if Daniel Bell says that democracy is good, and Rowena He says that democracy is not good, then the individual would start to ask questions. However, if we look at the socialization context in China, as John Dewey argued, without freedom of expression, no proper methods of social inquiry can be developed. If people have to run the risk of being imprisoned, of having to be in exile in order to express different views, they will think twice and decide to be quiet. Teachers, educators and even parents don't want to tell their children something different from the official version because they don't want themselves or their children to get into trouble. I heard a story of a friend who said that his father had been telling him all his life that the Communist Party is good. On the day he left for the United States for his graduate studies, his father said at the airport, "If you can, just stay in the U.S. and never come back to China."

I didn't get a chance to talk about John Dewey's work on individual thinking and social political context. It is two-way traffic. On one hand, the social political context will influence an individual's thinking; on the other hand, a generation growing up in particular political social contexts will influence social and political reality. We know informed citizens are a critical part of the democratic process and critical thinking is important. It is not possible to be informed if all socialization agents are tightly controlled. If the journalist doesn't want to tell the truth because he doesn't want to lose his job, and the researcher doesn't want to research certain topics because she doesn't want to be imprisoned, and if an activist or NGO member hesitates to do certain sensitive activities because otherwise he/she would be harmonized, then who is going to inform the younger generation?

Critical thinking is not possible if you know that if you are critical you will be "harmonized". That is why I quote Ed Friedman and Joe Wong's argument--those in charge will have to learn how lose. In order to change, we need to stop this vicious circle. Does the CCP need to learn to lose in order to win again from the perspective of creating a new relationship among government, society and individuals--the development of civil society? We need to start this process. It is true that the development of civil society takes a long time. Institutional and constitutional changes can happen overnight, but it takes generations to change peoples' minds. We need to have informed citizens, teach them to think critically, and to assure them that if they do so, they will not be put into prison or sent to exile.

I don't have the time to talk about history, memory and identity, but would like to share with you my favourite quote: "I am a willful child. I want to paint the earth full of windows to let all of the eyes that are accustomed to darkness become accustomed to light."
Discussant

Charles Burton (Associate Professor, Political Science, Brock University)

With regard to Daniel Bell's paper, my general comment is that I love Daniel Bell, but I hate this paper. I see it essentially as inheriting the nineteenth century perspective by Westerners resident in China at the time, who proposed schemes to make things better for China in accordance with Chinese mores as they defined them—like Arthur Smith's *The Chinese*. There are a whole lot of these books, all of them out of print.

I don't buy the idea that there is a tendency towards political Confucianism in China. As was pointed out in Qing Miao's paper, the tendency is towards individualization and less focus on family and the state by young people today. I think that Daniel Bell's paper conflates two different things: first, ideologies that allow us to seek meaning in our life, like Confucianism; and secondly, the political institutions that ensure a good and just society. They really are not the same. I am a Christian. I have a lot of faith in Psalm 72, which says, "He shall serve the children of the needy and shall break into pieces the oppressor." Very meaningful for me, but I don't suggest it be written into any constitutional document.

I do think that Daniel Bell has Confucianism on the mind. For example, on page two of his paper, he says the government has been promoting Confucianism via branches of the Confucius Institute. Actually, the Confucius Institutes are a function of the Ministry of Education, Guojia Hanban, to promote the study of Chinese language and culture. The Germans have the Goethe Institute and the Spanish have the Cervantes Institute, so the fact that it is called the Confucius Institute does not mean that the Chinese government is trying to promote the study of Confucius. They are trying to promote the study of Chinese language, literature and culture in general. I think that one shouldn't draw too much out of this.

Can Confucianism offer a compelling alternative to Western liberalism? I really don't consider the two as being the same. I see Confucianism as a way of understanding the meaning of life, but I do not find anything in Confucianism that is relevant to contemporary politics. Really nothing, zero.

On page four, he says that, "I do not deny that such 'Western' values as social democracy, solidarity, human rights and the rule of law need to be adopted in China. They also need to be adapted in China, they need to be enriched and sometimes constrained by Confucian values." I disagree that social democracy, solidarity, human rights and the rule of law should be constrained. While there might be some cultural spins on the rule of law, or on what social democracy is, or what solidarity is, enriching and constraining these Western values by Confucian values strikes me as a justification for authoritarianism.

Finally, with regard to his proposal for a meritocratic house of government with deputies selected by such mechanisms as free and fair competitive examinations that would have the task of securing the interests of foreigners, future generations, ancestors and minority groups typically neglected by democratically selected political decision makers. I am not sure about the
motivation for this. The Canadian Senate was originally designed as a house of meritorious people to constrain the Canadian House of Commons, which was people based and it hasn't worked out as we hoped.

I think the concern about tyranny of the majority has problems. If one is concerned that the majority of Chinese who are not foreigners, future generations, ancestors or minority groups, would be unfairly treated in a democratic system, the normal way in most countries for addressing tyranny of majority in a democratic system is a charter of rights and freedoms, rather than relying on the rule of virtuous men.

I think that Left Confucianism is able to be defined by whatever one wants to ascribe to it because the Confucian tradition is a very varied and rich tradition that says many contradictory things. What is Confucianism? It's in the eyes of the interpreter. I studied the history of ancient Chinese thought at Fudan University and worked on Neo-Confucianism, which is not really Confucianism at all. There are many strains there, and when you have such a huge, diverse and rich cultural tradition, you can pull a lot of things out of it to justify your own agenda.

He does mention that Jiang Qing says that Marxism no longer grabs the people and Confucianism is most likely to do so. I think that there could be some justification for that because Marxism-Leninism Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory and the Three Represents, which are encapsulated in the Chinese Constitution and the Constitution of the Party, are largely discredited and something else would be more appealing. Actually anything else would be more appealing. The question is, do we need another ideology to legitimate patriarchal authoritarian rule? If Marxism isn't working, why try Confucianism to justify a non-democratic society?

On the plus side, and your final point, which I do agree with because I love this stuff, you refer to the current crisis of confidence in the West that might lead Western intellectuals to turn to Confucianism for hope and inspiration. I am actually not expecting large numbers of Western intellectuals to turn to Confucianism for hope and inspiration, but I wish they would. That is my assessment of your paper and I am sure we can discuss it later.

With regard to the second paper, I love the woman, I love the paper. The whole issue of nationalism and irrationality and interpretations of history is very interesting. Many of you will remember the 1999 Belgrade bombing where NATO dropped the bomb on the intelligence section of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade that was providing information to Mr. Milosevic. Most of us think that didn't happen on purpose. Most Chinese people think it was a deliberate act to insult China. I am sort of one way or the other. Then there was the American spy plane incident of 2001 where an American spy plane was going along Chinese air space and a Chinese fighter challenged it as normal procedure. I used to work in the communications security establishment of Canada and we did a lot of that sort of monitoring. Tragically, the spy plane crashed into the Chinese plane. It crashed into the sea and was lost. My interpretation is that the American spy plane did not mean to crash into the Chinese plane, that it would be extremely unlikely that American spy planes would purposefully do this, but most of my Chinese friends believe that the Americans did it on purpose. It is very difficult to have a depiction of history that is going to be rational when you are dealing with nationalistic fervour.
Similarly with the Tiananmen exiles, Rowena He and I were at a conference a couple of years ago discussing the legacy of Zhao Ziyang. Many of the participants had worked for him in the State Council Political Systemic Reform Small Group Seminar, which was supposed to be preparing for political systemic reform. At the time, I knew these people in China in the mid-1980s and subsequently met them in exile in Victoria, because when Zhao fell, they were also in trouble. I remember having a discussion about the doctrine of Neo-Authoritarianism that they were considering at that time. I was not a supporter of the Neo-Authoritarianism doctrine. However, subsequently in the conference, some of the scholars produced documentation from people who claimed to have interviewed Zhao when he was under house arrest. They had transcripts of the interviews, but they claimed that they had lost the tapes or something went wrong and they couldn't produce the actual tapes. Most suggested that when Zhao was a very senior leader in the Chinese Communist Party, he was actually a closet liberal democrat who sought to undermine the basis for Chinese communist rule.

Because these people are themselves abroad and working in Western universities, to justify their current existence they have to reinterpret their history in a way which suggests they were not Communists who were hoping to become officials in the existing system, but that they were all along supporting liberal democratic values. You do see a tension between what I perceive as reality and how people depict it.

In terms of the June 4 movement, I had hoped it would succeed. When the movement failed, I thought, well, remember the April 5, 1976 Movement. That one also started off badly, yet by 1978 it was reevaluated as a revolutionary action. So maybe by 1991 the Tiananmen incident would be reassessed, or possibly when Qiao Shi became supreme leader (which I was predicting, but did not happen). Then after Deng Xiaoping died in 1997, maybe in 1998 Jiang Zemin would go for systemic political reform, and the Tiananmen incident would be reevaluated. Then I thought, once Hu Jintao consolidated his political position, Tiananmen will be reassessed. Now we are coming to the twentieth anniversary of the Tiananmen incident and my expectation, with some regret, is that this will pass more or less unnoticed.

Daniel Bell:

It is hard to respond to you, Charles as you used some polemical words without engaging in the argumentation. Charles, also as a person, I have no problem at all with you either. I just wonder, the idea that we should question our own political values when we consider what is good for China doesn't seem to have occurred to you--or maybe that is unfair?

Charles Burton:

No, no, fair. Go ahead, I'm not going to answer, please carry on.
Daniel Bell:

You say you hope Westerners can learn from Confucianism, but what do you think they could learn that challenges your preexisting moral standards?

Charles Burton:

Well, I wasn't planning to do a question and answer here. I think Confucianism is valuable as a spiritual doctrine, and as a way to understand the nature of the human condition, but I don't see it as a guide to political institutions. I think that the best political institutions are the ones that allow the inclusion of people that have different interpretations of history over particular territories and have different values. For example, our system works quite well in accommodating Canadian Confucians and Canadian Muslims.

Daniel Bell:

You know when Matteo Ricci first came to China, he was so impressed. He thought the Confucians he met were much more tolerant than any of the Christians he knew in Europe. He found agreement that everyone has some sort of dao, but the Buddhists and the Daoists and the Confucians all have their own way to get there, and they don't seem to mind. Often they mingled in the same temples and so on. Ricci was impressed with how Confucianism was much more tolerant and open-minded than the Christianity of his day.

Charles Burton:

I visited Ricci's tomb, which is in the former Catholic seminary, now the Beijing Municipal Committee Party School. At the Party School they have one person who is an expert on the Christian missions in China. I think that if Matteo Ricci had decided that he wished to abandon his Catholic faith and become a Confucian, which would have been a valid choice to make, it wouldn't have had anything to do with politics.

Gordon Houlden:

I enjoyed both papers very much. As someone who has wrestled for a long time with the Chinese version of Marxism-Leninism, I was delighted to see a turning to something that has resonance within Chinese culture. It opened up a well spring of thoughts, which has particular relevance to politics as well as almost every aspect of Chinese life. It even may have resonance and relevance for foreigners as well. We are only beginning to see the global influence of China. The one nagging concern I have though is, speaking of someone who spent most of his life in government, isn't it a risk that the government might misuse Confucianism in a way that will discredit this revival? Is there not a risk in that? I would feel rather more comfortable if it was out of the reach or direct control of the government.
In terms of Rowena He's comments, for those of us who were part of the policy response or were there 20 years ago, this has great resonance. I am perhaps more optimistic than Charles Burton. I think perhaps I will live to see wreaths of memorial laid in Tiananmen Square. It was such a perfect revival of the May 4 Movement. In my view, much of the hesitation in dealing with the students was precisely that it had historical resonance. Was it a dead end for China? If one looks back, the China of 2009 is so much further ahead in so many ways than the China of the 1980s. To me, it strikes me as unfair to characterize this as Deng Xiaoping's legacy. I had the good fortune to meet him on a couple of occasions as well as other players, including Zhao Ziyang. Obviously, Tiananmen was fatal for those involved and it blighted the careers and lives of those directly involved, but things have moved forward.

One curious comment Deng Xiaoping made publicly not long after the event, was dismissed at the time as simply an apology and a throwaway line: "If I had had the means to end this peacefully, I would have used that." There was an attempt, very early on, to use unarmed soldiers to clear the square. Immediately thereafter, there was an acquisition by China of means of civil dispersal—water cannons, shields and all those sorts of things. We debated in the Canadian government at the time whether we should sell them to China. It was a debate that went on for weeks, for months and we decided yes, finally, that it was better to provide this police equipment to enable them to deal with protests because other options would be more lethal.

I agree that this was a terrible event. Will there be an apology eventually by the Chinese government? I can't put a date on that. Is it fair to pin the label of this repression onto Deng Xiaoping who to me is one of the great figures of the twentieth century, who has left us with a net positive influence?

Rowena He:

I think the 30-year reform should be divided into two periods. As Huang Yasheng argues, the first was before 1989 which was towards liberalism. Then after 1989, it was the opposite, away from liberalism. Yesterday, we talked about achievement, but what kind of achievement? It all depends on how we define achievement. At the same time, when we talk about Confucianism or traditional Chinese culture, Taiwan might be a better place. Mainland China after 1949 has been a wasteland of Chinese culture for a long time. All of a sudden you are telling me that there is Confucianism in Chinese culture. There was not much Confucianism during the Cultural Revolution and many things were destroyed.

Daniel Bell:

Liberalism was misused to justify the invasion of Iraq, freedom and democracy. You always have to be careful about governments misusing ideas. The question is how can we prevent misuse? One important way is to have room for independent social criticism. I completely agree that there is a need for more freedom of expression in China that would allow such independent social criticism.
Daniel Bell:

There has been a remarkable opening of intellectual discourse. Of course there are a few taboos, including June 4, but overall, there is more space to discuss issues than before. Even concrete issues like the rights of migrant workers and the environment. You can discuss those issues and, more importantly for academics, you can discuss alternatives in a way that couldn't be done before. If you can't publish it in book form, then the internet is much freer than before.

We also agree about the need to have checks on political power. Here I think my colleague Cui Zhiyuan has it right. It is a little bit dogmatic to think only of competitive elections acting as checks on political power. There are lots of other ways--term limits and retirements, strict financial audits and so on.

Confucianism is not just a spiritual thing. In fact, in early Confucianism, that was a very minor part of the tradition. It's very much a social ethic as well as some sort of political ethic, and it's an educational ethic too. Now there are lots of experiments around the country, some of which are government funded, but some privately funded, for teaching the Confucian classics in different forms. There is room for experimentation and diversity to see what works and what doesn't. So long as it's not made into an orthodoxy, which is strictly enforced and meant to prevent some sort of critical perspective, then it is worth pursuing and we needn't worry as much.

We tend to be a bit righteous about our Western ways of doing things. We are so diverse and realistic and critical. Are we really? There are many debates here where I think there are taboos, not directly enforced by the state. There are issues that are much harder to discuss in a public way here, and easier to discuss in China, strangely enough. Some of my articles get published in The Global Times, and I try to send them to Western papers, and there is no interest in publishing them.

Joe Wong:

A comment and an observation. This dialogue between Charles Burton and Daniel Bell reminded me of an opinion piece by Maureen Dowd in the New York Times in the run-up to the recent American presidential election, where she was saying, "What's wrong with elite?" This was when the Republican attack on Obama was that he was too elitist. She said, "We have had our share of the "down home" presidents, I think it might be time for America to remember that presidents are supposed to be elites and it is not altogether a bad thing."

Second point is, if you look at what Charles Burton pointed out, if you want to protect minority rights, you do it through a charter. A wonderful colleague of ours here, Ran Hirschl, wrote a book four or five years ago called Towards Juristocracy, in which he pointed out that the global trend now, precisely for that particular normative view, is the protection of these rights that are arbitrated, mediated and judged by nine to 11 virtuous men, and maybe a couple of women. The reason that I bring this up is to say that we are academics and the dialogue that has begun through this exchange is precisely what we should be doing. One of the problems today is when we bring up these sets of ideas we are forced to, as we all do, to stylize them. To think of
Confucianism, for instance, as being more of a moral enterprise, whereas liberal democracy is more a legalistic rights-based enterprise, neither view is accurate. We all know that, but whenever we have these sorts of conversations these lines begin to be inferred.

I would encourage us to keep that in mind that we are not here as pundits, we are here as academics to probe these ideas. It is best, and Daniel Bell's work has been very influential, precisely to break down those lines to begin to have a conversation. To say that something can be infused with culture or to say that cultures can change, as my colleague Ed Friedman has repeatedly pointed out, if you want to look at the greatest history of intolerance, you look at the West in terms of a cultural infusion of intolerance. However, things change. The point is to have the dynamism built into the conversation from the get-go, which will, at least in this room—if not in the pages of dailies, or the opinion pieces, or in conversations amongst politicians and in conversations amongst intellectuals, lead to a more fruitful outcome.

**Question:**

I am a graduate of Cornell University as was Hu Shih, leader of the May 4, 1919, New Culture movement. Living in Toronto, I must claim a lineage of broad liberal values with Chinese Asian sensitivity. My question is to Daniel Bell and Rowena He. I would like to intermingle my questions with some broad statements. Cornell published a full script with commentary of the 1988 famous or infamous Heshang (River Elegy), 河殇, of Xiaokang Su and Zhu Hong. Xiaokang Su also wrote his biography, Memoirs of a Misfortune, during his exile years in the States. After 1989, many of the Chinese dissidents fled to the United States, and many became pastors. They feel that to save China, they have to convert the Chinese to Christianity. Xiaokang Su romanticized the West, talking about the blue oceanic civilization taking over the outdated yellow earth civilization. He actually doesn't know much about the West being in China. This coming May will be the ninetieth anniversary of the May 4 Movement and to me, June 4, 1989, and Charter '08 of last year were inspired by May 4, 1919.

I am quoting Rowena He. You say that sacrificing for a great cause of living an ordinary life, that was the inspiration of June 4 and also Charter '08. I feel they would rather die as heroes than live as a Maoist. I personally felt that there is some difference between northerners and the southerners. Southerners are said to be more rational because we have an international outlook because of the Zhou Dynasty. What do you think of this broad comparison of Chinese northerners and southerners?

**Question:**

I worked and lived in China for five years. I came to Canada in 1989 right after the Tiananmen massacre. I presently serve as a commentator for media on China affairs. My question is more directed to Rowena He. The Chinese government has historically been equating the three concepts of state, people and the Party. It has also been effectively utilizing the nationalistic and patriotic sentiments of the Chinese people in directing public attention away from internal social problems. What would you consider to be the impact of a growing Chinese nationalistic
sentiment on the shaping of public opinion of China, and on the political dynamics of multicultural societies in North America?

Question:

I would like to make a brief comment to Daniel Bell. I admire Confucianism. It is a great process where a young person has to defer to the older one, and when he becomes old, others do that to him. You can start in the society as an uncivilized person and can advance to be a gentleman. This is all possible, but how do we allow women to exit their gender? I would like to address Rowena He's paper in several ways. She attacks Chinese nationalism as a product of the Communist party's work. In fact, Chinese nationalism was created from outside China. We deliver the Chinese lots of reasons to be nationalistic. Let us go back to the Opium War, to the imperialist intervention, to the Shanghai parks where Westerners posted signs that said "Chinese and Dogs not Allowed." Now we are preaching human rights to them. These are all great controversies that do not allow for a good penetration of Western ideas into China. Are the Chinese responsible for NATO bombing their embassy or for the spy plane--the two things already mentioned?

I would like to bring attention to another aspect of this Tiananmen incident. We all remember the tank in the Peking streets and the students trying to stop it. I prefer the video version over the still picture. You see that the tank is trying to go around the person rather than running him over. I would like to invite anyone who is so enamored with human rights to try to do that to American tanks in Baghdad, dressed like an Arab, please.

Daniel Bell:

I appreciate the comments, but there are different ways of prioritizing, whether we use legalistic mechanisms to resolve social problems or use informal means. In actual situations, the different ways of prioritizing things may produce different outcomes. We have to consider that as important.

About women and Confucianism, I do think one of the most interesting debates now is between feminists and the Confucians. Of course Confucianism's Achilles heel is that there was a very patriarchal value system at the time, but it was also the case when liberalism emerged. Aristotle said that women are the biological inferiors to men. You have feminist thinkers today who say, let's look at the core values of Confucianism, such as the view that everyone should strive to be a morally exemplary person. Today, we think that women and men must have equal opportunity. Who is going to deny that? It is the same as reinterpreting liberalism or Christianity to make both more compatible with modern ideas of gender equality. I do think that Confucianism, because of its affinity with feminism, actually allows for that to happen in an interesting way.
Rowena He:

When I make arguments it's not about right or wrong, it's the nature of problems and trying to understand issues and experience in context. It doesn't matter to me who Chai Ling or Wang Dan is, or what I think about this or that, it is more about the implications of the general picture. If you really want an answer from me, I think Chai Ling was better than those who opened fire to unarmed citizens--that's my quick answer.

Second question, you talk about what would the alternative end be? It seems to me that if people like Hu Yaobang or Zhao Ziyang were still in power, it would be a totally different picture. The CCP lost the good opportunity for change in 1989, and to move toward the direction of liberalism. Perry Link wrote an article about the silence of intellectuals in the early 1990s and the value vacuum as a result of the Tiananmen crackdown. There is lots of literature on this.

When talking about values, I think that is closely related to the current situation. After the 1989 crackdown, many people xia hai (jumped into the sea) to do business. One 1989 exile told me that if he had been taught to love money more than his country, he would not have gone to Tiananmen Square and would not have ended up in exile. That's the kind of values they were taught.

Of course nationalism exists across the whole world and throughout ages, but my focus is the current version of Chinese nationalism. Historically, I am aware of the fact that there are different types of nationalism. One is the Chinese sense of nation of victimhood. The nationalism I talked about just now is associated with the concept of a "rising China." For many, a rising China represents a China that has suffered from, and has been despised by foreign powers and is now perceived as dangerous by those who want to weaken and divide it. China can only survive and develop under an authoritarian regime, which may have moral and political weakness, but can guarantee the country's unity and development. For the first time since the Opium War China can enable its people to raise their heads (tai qi tou lai), especially for those abroad. Its military and political power becomes increasing recognizable. Rising China has revived its old glory of being the world's oldest continuing civilization. This is the new rising China national identity.

Regarding the last question about sacrifice for a great cost and longing for an ordinary life, I didn't touch on the difference between civic education and political indoctrination. In modern democracies, citizenship education is understood as teaching about being a citizen in a democracy through educational programs in schools. Through both formal and informal curriculum curricula, schools offer an opportunity for young people to learn civic knowledge and values and to become more actively engaged in democracy. In totalitarian nations, formal political instruction within the school curricula, on the other hand, is concerned more about "the learning of a specific political ideology which is intended to rationalize and justify a particular regime," and it is more like political indoctrination.
DAY TWO: AFTERNOON SESSIONS

Emerging Civil Society II

Gregory Chin (Assistant Professor, Political Science, York University and Senior Fellow, Centre for International Governance Innovation)

For this second panel on civil society we have two panelists. The first is Marie-Eve Reny, PhD Candidate in Comparative Politics at the University of Toronto. Her research explores variance in central government responses to collective protests. She will be doing fieldwork in Hong Kong and then in China for 14 months, beginning in April 2009. She has published in the journal Ethnic and Racial Studies.

The second is David Ownby, Professor of History and Director of the Centre for East Asian Studies at the University of Montréal. He is the author of a recent book, Falun Gong and the Future of China (Oxford University Press, 2008); Brotherhoods and Secret Societies in Early and Mid-Qing China: The Origin of a Tradition (Stanford, 1996) and co-author with Qin Baoqi and Susan J. Palmer of The Millennium and the Turning of the Kalpa: The Historical Evolution of Apocalyptic Discourse in China and the West, which was published in Chinese in Fuzhou in 2001.

Our discussant is Feng Xu, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Victoria. After completing her undergraduate work in China, she received her PhD from York. She is the author of Women Migrant Workers and China's Economic Reform (Macmillan/Palgrave, 2000) and is currently working on a project on unemployment, shequ building and urban governance in contemporary China. Recent publications include articles in Journal of Contemporary China, Governance, International Feminist Journal of Politics and Comparative Labor Law and Policy Journal.

Central Government Responses to Local Protests

Marie-Eve Reny (PhD Candidate, Comparative Politics, University of Toronto)

In the last 15 years, some scholars of political regimes have sought to explain the conditions under which autocratic regimes are resilient and the ways that effective coercion and the capacity of leaders to keep their allies in line are crucial for authoritarian rule resilience. Andrew Nathan emphasizes, among other factors, the growing role of meritocracy in the promotion of elites, as well as the separation of spheres of authority among political institutions. Several other scholars have also stressed a regime's ability to co-opt parts of the opposition. These scholars have, nevertheless, left underexplored how the complexity of government responses to the rise of collective mobilization helps further to secure regime legitimacy and in turn, resilience.
When we talk about state response to mobilization, it leads us to think about the social movement literature. Yet most studies of collective mobilization have so far been predominantly developed from the perspective of mobilizers. Based on case studies coming from liberal democratic settings, though many more social movement studies now focus on non-democratic settings too, these studies have suffered from two democratic biases that I will be talking about, and which prevent their ability actually to travel to remaining authoritarian settings like China. In doing so, they have mistakenly treated the state as a place, rather than both a place and an actor, which Mann would say was a predominant characteristic of the pluralist literature in the 1960s and 1970s. I argue that the disaggregated state as an agent ought to be brought back into our analyses of collective protests in authoritarian settings, better to account for the complexity of outcomes of resistance.

Bringing the state back in has two advantages. The first is that it allows us to reflect upon the conditions under which, and the ways in which certain state actors may choose to withdraw from contention when it suits them. I take a particular look at the central government's behaviour. The second advantage is that it helps us shed light on the mechanisms linking the diversity of interests within the state apparatus and the complexity of government responses to protest, which increasingly involves accommodation.

Let me say a few words on the two democratic biases that I see as problematic in the social movement literature. The first is that many scholars have assumed that societal actors in non-democratic settings have the tools to be the primary actors shaping the outcome of mobilization and reducing the state to a relatively stable structure embedded within a broader political environment. Rationalist analyses have given societal actors predominant control over their ability to reach their goals. The resource mobilization approach sees what determines the success of mobilization as lying in the internal organization of movements, the formation of alliances between groups and the mobilization of human and material resources.

Scholars of framing look at how mobilizers voice their messages and the extent to which these messages resonate with central government priorities. For instance, O'Brien and Li view that rightful resisters in China's rural areas have strategically chosen to formulate their demands in ways that invoke anti-corruption and rule of law frames in order to increase their bargaining potential with central government authorities.

While these scholars do not entirely neglect the state as playing some sort of role in the process of mobilization, they overlook the mechanisms by which the state interprets, categorizes and responds to culturally framed societal demands in potentially different ways.

The second democratic bias that I emphasize is the fact that scholars have indirectly assumed that opportunities for mobilization in authoritarian regimes are likely to be in contrast to the opportunities for mobilization in liberal democratic settings. This has had an important implication, which is that scholars have treated state repression as an inherent aspect of an autocratic regime's opportunity structure and have assumed that state response to protests ought to be equated with repressive reactions to such protests.
If we understand a regime's opportunity structure as lacking coherence and as complex, we could start looking at authoritarian regimes as providing the space for the representation of certain societal interests under certain conditions. This would allow us as scholars to ask questions like: "Under what conditions is an authoritarian state more likely to repress or accommodate mobilizers? Are these conditions ideational, structural, institutional? Are there policy areas where the costs of societal mobilization under an authoritarian regime are low or high?" The latter questions are slowly becoming the object of scholarly attention in the literature on contentious politics in China, but still remain very much underexplored.

There are two ways in this paper that I seek to bring the state back into the analysis of collective mobilization in China. The first is by looking at the ways in which the central government chooses to withdraw from contention when it suits it. I focus on two tools it uses to do so: media and internet censorship as well as decentralization. In the second section I emphasize three dimensions of the complexity of government response, which I think should serve as a potential basis for future research on the topic.

Let me talk about the two tools that the government uses to withdraw contention when it suits it, and allows it better to control affects of mobilization. We all know that media and internet censorship have played a crucial role in limiting information about contentious events amongst the Chinese population.

This has had three implications. The first one is that by controlling access to information about cases of protest in other parts of the country, Beijing has been successful in limiting the spill-over effects of protests. We all know that to this day, cases of cross-regional protest are empirical anomalies. Actually the Tibetan protests in March and April 2008 were an empirical anomaly. Limiting the spill-over effects of protests also reduces the costs of any state response to such protest, whether it be accommodation or repression. It is easier to accommodate or repress smaller groups that are geographically confined.

Another implication is that the policy of silence has helped the central government to remain autonomous from society when convenient, by not publicly acknowledging the existence of particular problems based in resistance. Erasing a problem is like erasing state responsibility in some ways.

The third implication is that in certain situations, where information about a sensitive issue could not be hidden, censorship has taken the form of information distortion for purposes of legitimacy promotion.

I also look at how decentralization has helped the central government better to control certain effects of mobilization. The freedom to control, whether or not it should be involved in responding to contention, and controlling its level of embeddedness in autonomy from society. The central government decides which contentious events are worth responding to on a short-term basis exclusively, and which ones are worth responding to on a longer-term basis via policy making.
Another way in which decentralization has allowed the central government to control the effects of mobilization is by resorting to the politics of blame avoidance. Decentralization permits the regime not to be blamed for the mismanagement of contention and the suppression of dissent at the local level. Blame avoidance has helped it further to maintain and protect its legitimacy.

So far I have talked about some of the mechanisms of control used by Beijing to reduce its intervention in areas of contention. Out of his recently gathered sample of 74 protest cases, Cai found that nine cases out of these 74 resulted in state concessions, and 10 other cases involved concessions with discipline. This tells us that state responses to protest are actually more grey than they are black or white.

In the process of transformation that China is undergoing, despite the absence of liberal democratic transition, mobilization outcomes can only be properly understood, if we take certain aspects of state responses into consideration.

Scholars must treat state reaction to contention as a process involving different responses relying on the basis of their nature, the timing and their source. The nature of state response may involve different degrees of accommodation, of repression. The timing of state response may involve short, medium or long-term reactions. The sources of state response are many fold. As we know, there are different levels of the state: local government, provincial government and the central government. We actually have to think about this element of complexity and of what it entails to incorporate this within an analysis of state responses to protest.

We also have to keep in mind that scholars must consider the nature of state responses as likely to change depending on their source. Short-term accommodation or cooperation is likely to be very different if it comes from the local government or from the central government. The timing of state responses is also likely to depend upon the source of such response. While the local government is usually used to responding on an immediate basis to collective protests, the central government generally responds from a longer term view and in a more subtle way.

The other point that I want to raise is that to the extent that state responses may involve varying degrees of accommodation and repression over time, short-term repression does not entail the absence of long-term accommodation.

I use the case of Fujian's Longquan land disputes to illustrate this reality. In 2002, the township government in Longquan informed many peasant households that their land had been categorized as wasteland and would be expropriated to develop the city. It actually happened to be some of the most fertile lands in the area. In 2004, despite villagers' appeals to the local authorities, conversations with the director of the Office of Letters and Complaints and early attempts to contact CCTV asking for help, the township government sent two bulldozers to the village. About 500 peasants mobilized and succeeded in blocking those bulldozers. The relocation team left and said they would come back with a better offensive. Farmers continued to resist and they contacted a lawyer who submitted their case to the State Council. The central government authorities agreed to review the case. Upon review, the reaction was to contact the leader of the movement and to send two delegations to the locality to investigate the case. In early 2007, the State Council made its final decision stating that the township and provincial governments land
acquisition procedures were wrong, that they ought to revoke their claims to expropriate village land, and that the land should be re-categorized as farmland and not wasteland.

Similar cases of accommodation are common in Mainland China. Yet, our samples of protest cases have under-represented those. I believe that this empirical under-representation or bias stems from some of the democratic biases that characterize the literature on social movements. I could talk about other literatures too, but this is the one I am interested in.

Authoritarian states are more flexible than scholars have so far assumed. Authoritarian states go through a process of transformation where negotiations with an increasingly active civil society are absolutely necessary to support their sustainability. This transformation of political interests is particularly notable in the complexity of the Chinese state's response to instances of collective protest.

In China, I believe that it is the strategic mixture of withdrawal, accommodation and discipline and its interaction with society in lower levels of the Chinese bureaucracy that have so far allowed the central government to maintain its legitimacy.

Religious Revival and the Rule of Law

David Ownby (Professor, History and Director, Centre for East Asian Studies, University of Montréal)

I am going to continue our discussion on China's civil society by talking about religion. As everyone knows, a major feature of China's post-Mao society has been a religious revival, which has developed in the same social order which has permitted the growth of entrepreneurship and "socialism with Chinese characteristics."

It is hard to get definite numbers describing this revival. A survey done in China in 2007 or 2008 admitted as many as 300,000,000, triple the number that China's leaders had been giving for the past 25 years. Many headline-grabbing events in China in the recent years have been related to religion. One only need think of Tibet or the Falun Gong. Probably equally important stuff has been happening outside the headlines, for example, the rise of Protestantism and the linking of China's faithful to religious believers elsewhere in the world via globalization and the internet.

China's leaders have sought to deal with the religious revival through the rule of law--the same watch word we have heard many times throughout the conference. Rule of law in the context of religion in China can mean and has meant many things. Pitman Potter summed up the policy towards religion used by the regime over the first two decades of the post-Mao period as "belief in control" in an important article published in 2003 in China Quarterly. By belief in control, he meant that as a play on words. A belief in control of religion and belief in control.

I decided to revisit this question because recent statements made by Chinese leaders seem to suggest that they are envisioning a more positive role to be accorded to religion. More precisely,
since 2005, and particularly in 2006, religion has been heralded for its potential to make a positive contribution to the realization of a harmonious society. On the face of it, this suggests the possibility of a paradigm change, moving away from belief in control, and toward something else.

My response was to read through several hundred pages in English and Chinese on "harmonious society" and on religion to see what I could find. By the way, I noticed that in no point in those hundreds of pages on harmony was Confucius mentioned. They had a perfect opportunity to talk about it and they chose not to.

In any event, what I found over the course of my reading was disappointing in that there seemed to be no genuine paradigm change. The authorities have made a series of rhetorical gestures acknowledging, for instance, that religious believers are people and thus must be well treated and well served like the rest of China's people. They have acknowledged the historical capacity of China's religion to absorb foreign religions, suggesting perhaps that some of the regime's traditional paranoia regarding foreign religions may be fading. They have acknowledged religion's link with Chinese tradition and have affirmed both. In sum, religion is seemingly invited in as a partner in social development, rather than an object of control.

At the same time, when you read this literature a little more closely—you don't have to look hard, it's not hidden in the footnotes—the welcome is undercut by an express desire to transform religion, among other things, through the rule of law. Religions themselves are to be remade, to reinforce harmonious elements within their heritage and teachings. Religious teachers and believers are to be re-educated yet again as to what "proper" religion is. What that religion is, is a religion that respects the regulations on religion. A proper religion constrains religious activities so as to always be subservient to state needs and priorities, even if this means limiting the growth of that religion, which would otherwise tend to proselytize.

To sum up the new view on religion, it has created the potential to contribute to harmonious society, but the realization of this potential will require transformation under the continued supervision of the Party-state. It's quite striking, this simultaneous embrace of religion coupled with a utopian plan to remake religion as it currently exists. If I was dating a woman who similarly claimed to love me, but had plans to remake me, I would be very nervous.

How should we interpret this? We could use an analysis like that of Pitman Potter discussing claims to rights or institutional capacity issues. We could, like Jeremy Paltiel, talk about patrimonial sovereignty. As a historian, I prefer another approach, which could be largely compatible with either of these, but which has the advantage of looking beyond the Communist experience in placing the religion question in the context of modern Chinese history.

My argument is that the Chinese state has been struggling with issues of religion and secularism in the context of nation building since the early twentieth century. Despite much talk about the rule of law in post-Mao China, China is not much closer to resolving these issues than it was in 1898. The struggle has thus been inconclusive. I am not sure to what extent Chinese society or even the Chinese state might be accurately characterized as secular, by which I mean having arrived at a point where science and rationality are commonly accepted as the core values of state
and society, and a compartmentalized space is allotted for religion, which respects the values of science and rationality.

Now I am going to go through a little of modern Chinese history to bring us back to the present day. Like many traditional societies, traditional China had no word for "religion" or for "secular" or "lay", even though it was a fairly religious society. The idea that Confucians were not religious was invented by Jesuit missionaries for their own purposes and would have made no sense whatsoever to traditional Confucians who considered their faith superior to, if still of a piece with Buddhism, Daoism and other teachings. Traditional China fell apart during the nineteenth century with a little help from you know who, and toward the end of that century the Chinese elite began a serious search for solutions. Among the institutions that Chinese reformers desired to import so as to hasten the arrival of modernity was religion. But it was religion as understood and symbolized by Westerners, particularly Protestant missionaries. Although Christianity caused many problems in China--we might think of the little incident known as the Taiping Rebellion, by the late nineteenth century, many Chinese were impressed by the social engagement, the scientific knowledge, the activism and energy displayed by Protestant missionaries like Timothy Richard, who was a good friend of Kang Youwei.

It was from these missionaries that China learned what a proper religion looked like. A "proper" religion had an educated clergy, a historically tested canon or body of scriptures, and a well-articulated ecclesiastical structure. The Chinese wanted it because the Westerners would respect it as a symbol of highly evolved modernity, because it was a source for social reform. Note that these are instrumental ends and do not involve questions of rights for believers as opposed to systemic benefits to state and society.

The problem was that China didn't have that kind of religion. China instead had local, diffused, popular religion, and lots of it. Local cults, redemptive societies. Much of it soon came to be condemned as superstition. So since the early twentieth century, the Chinese state has sought, in fits and starts, to transform Chinese religion along Western lines, meaning religion that would be well organized and compartmentalized, respectful of scientific knowledge, engaged in social reform and organized in such a way as to be readily controlled by the state. The problem was that China bit off more than it could chew, and the Chinese state never achieved its goal.

Beginning in 1912, the Chinese Republic enshrined freedom of religion in its Constitution and encouraged China's existing religions to transform themselves along the lines of Western churches. Buddhism did the best job. Reforming monks redid Buddhism along the lines of Protestantism. Christianity changing Buddhist mediation into social gospel, changing studies of Buddhism from monastic studies to studies with institutions. Taiwanese Buddhism today is largely the fruits of these efforts. There were also attempts by Daoists and Confucians to set up national associations to reform and modernize their faiths. Chinese Christians and Muslims had it easier as monotheistic groups inspired by religions from outside China had already organized a bit along Western models.

Many Chinese religions sought to conform to the vision put forward by the state. Redemptive societies were probably the most successful during this period. Examples of these are the Tongshanshe, the Red Swastika Society, the Yiguandao. These are all syncretic faiths that
combined all major Chinese and several foreign religions in nationwide organizations. They engaged in philanthropy and taught traditional morality, body technologies and rituals. There were tens if not hundreds of millions of people involved in these activities in the 1920s, '30s and '40s, some of which were recognized as religions by the Republican state.

In the Nanjing era, the Republican state was stronger than under the warlords and intervened more actively than the warlords had. Most of the redemptive societies which had flourished were discouraged, and confiscation and destruction of local temples continued. Some 50 per cent of local temples were confiscated and destroyed between 1900 and 1950s alone, according to the work of one of my colleagues. There was a wonderful 1927 law passed on which temples to keep and which to get rid of. The ones which were to be kept were those that looked like Western religions, or had some connection with the glories of China's past civilization. Everything else was decided to be superstitious and gotten rid of. The problem was when they went out in the countryside to do this, they found that three out of four temples were full of many different deities and they could never decide which one was the most important one, so they just argued about it for awhile and went back and had tea.

So the struggle was inconclusive, and then war intervened and put things on hold. Redemptive societies re-emerged during the Sino-Japanese war. After the war, the Communist regime was established. Religious policy was almost completely continuous with the Nationalists except the Communists added atheism and were more effective organizationally. They suppressed the redemptive societies again for political reasons as much as anything else and they organized new national religious associations that were built on those set up during the Republican period--the Buddhist, Daoist, Islamic, Protestant, Catholic Associations--the big five in China. The Communists set up a United Front more securely to bind religion to state purposes. They removed foreign elements from the scene, making sure that even imported religions such as Christianity become patriotic religions bound to the state. The fate of village religion in China of the 1950s remains somewhat vague and mysterious, but some research is beginning to suggest that it survived largely intact throughout the Cultural Revolution.

In fact, the Cultural Revolution is often taken by us as symbolic of Chinese Communist policy on religion. But instead, it is exceptional in terms of its violence and its complete denial of social space and purpose for religion. In the 1950s, it's true that religion was not a priority in China by any means, but if we believe the biography of K.H. Ding, the Christian leader who worked together with the Communists during that period, there were sincere efforts to put together a working coalition that would allow Christians to practice some of what they wanted to practice in return for supporting Communist policy.

In the post-Mao era, as China has reengaged with the world and abandoned Maoist revolution, religion has re-emerged and the current Chinese state finds itself in the same position as its Republican predecessor, in other words, hoping to exploit religion for statist ends. Both the Western-type religions and the more diffused form more common in China's past have returned, although Chinese authorities encourage religions that conform to Western organizational and ecclesiastical models. One response by smaller religious groups hoping to avoid state sanction is to try to pass themselves off as Buddhists or Daoists in hopes of being recognized and thus allowed to practice in peace. It is the Wild West in China on the religious front as every little
group figures out what the registration requirements are, dresses up in costume, goes to get photographed, and then takes off whenever he/she wants. It's an amazing thing to watch.

Religious discourse emphasizes rule of law instead of attacks on superstition, perhaps because the religious revival now is largely urban and Protestant, but a state of equilibrium, where the rules of the game are clearly defined and accepted by all parties is far from being reached. This again suggests to me that while China would dearly like to be a secular regime, directing a secularizing society, I am not at all sure that is the case.

One example of what I mean is the qigong boom, which ended in the Falun Gong disaster. David Palmer, who is the leading scholar of qigong, sees it as a new religious movement and I concur completely. In fact, looked at from a historical perspective, both qigong and Falun Gong represent the revival of the redemptive societies of the Republican period. We find similar mixtures of traditional morality, body technologies, syncretism. The religious dimension is hidden under a veneer of science in the case of qigong. But for 20 years, between the late 1970s and the late 1990s, hundreds if not thousands of charismatic qigong masters led a mass movement of hundreds of millions of people who believed that they could transform themselves and their world through moral behaviour and a proper set of breathing exercises.

Many Chinese political leaders, military leaders, scientific leaders, intellectual leaders--the father of the Chinese atomic bomb, for heaven's sake--shared these beliefs, and even secular leaders believed that qigong was a new Chinese science that was going to change everything. At the heart of the official support for this boom was less a cynical effort to exploit a spiritual movement to statist ends, than a utopian belief that the two could coincide. In other words, this was a religious movement not recognized as such because religion was taken by Chinese authorities to refer to the big five of Daoism, Buddhism, Islam, Protestantism and Catholicism. Qigong looked very appealing to many Chinese for a variety of reasons, and thus it flourished for 20 years winding up in the Falun Gong disaster.

Qigong and Falun Gong in effect snuck up on China's party-state because they were not, and still are not seen as religions in China. In part because of the explosiveness of the situations in Tibet and Xinjiang, and partly because of the nervousness engendered in the rise of Protestantism, which is, after all, foreign, China's leaders remain much more on their guard when faced with religions that are recognized as such.

Yet the embrace of religion as a positive force on one hand, and the continuing effort to channel religious expression through ever finer regulation reveals to my mind an ongoing struggle to create a secular order, and perhaps an ongoing hope to assume the realm of religion within the secular state.

The difference between the vision I am suggesting here and the more commonly heard argument that the Chinese Communists as atheists don't really like religion, and paranoid rulers don't like independent social organizations, is that while the latter view assumes that the CCP knows what it wants and struggles to find the best strategy to get there, I am less sure that it knows what it wants. I am not sure they understand what religion is and how they might best use it. I think the
intellectual and social struggle to create a secular society to establish boundaries between secular and lay life continues, both within the state and society.

**Discussant**

**Feng Xu** (Associate Professor, Political Science, University of Victoria)

In the course of this conference, we have heard calls to break down the binaries--authoritarianism and liberal democracy--because neither system is static. Both systems are dynamic and complex and often times when I teach Chinese politics to mostly Canadian students, I emphasize this and they always walk away with a completely changed view of China. It is so complex. The metaphor used in one of yesterday's sessions about a blind man feeling the elephant is appropriate because I don't think anyone can have a total understanding of China. Personally, I think that it is not just the binaries between liberal democracy and authoritarianism that must be broken down, but also China versus the West and Chinese culture versus Western culture.

With the two presenters, the first common thread is the argument for breaking down the binaries between authoritarianism and liberal democracy because those kinds of categories and labels really do not capture the dynamic, complex nature of the Chinese state and how it interacts with an increasingly complex, polarized society and increasingly marketized economy.

For David Ownby, you want to go beyond the Cold War human rights framework, and understand China's religious policies on their own terms, not just through a lens of Cold War human rights discourse. You argue that the CCP's religious policies are really not unique and therefore you adopt an historical explanatory approach. You argue that the CCP's religious policies are a continuation of a nationalistic project that can be traced to the early twentieth century. There is more to the continuity than to the structure. This is the first common thread that I can see rising from the two papers.

The second thread is that, as I read the two papers, the CCP makes freedom of assembly and freedom of conscience a qualified right dependent on statements of loyalty to the Communist leadership. Sometimes, this is explicit as was the distinction between the underground religions, which are considered illegal by the state, and the officially recognized groups, which are legal. But sometimes, perhaps at the local level, it may appear that this is simply a matter of different levels of tolerance of political risk on the part of the officials in question. In Marie-Eve Reny's paper, it was not explicit but implicit. More critical observers might go further to suggest that this inconsistency represents some kind of deliberate strategy of divide and rule. This is the second common thread I can see coming from the two papers.

The third thread, there is evidence the state is resilient and adaptive. We have had a lot of papers saying that the Chinese state is resilient and adaptive because it uses a mixture of new and old techniques of governance in order to govern, in an increasingly marketized economy and socially polarized society. I am glad that Cui Zhiyuan says that we have to go back to Machiavelli and
Gramsci because the Chinese state faces the problem of how to govern. This is not any different from other states. On the one hand, we have a mixture of old and new techniques of governance. In an emergency, the state may resort to exhortations or coded messages that seem more at keeping with much earlier decades. For example, the official description of the SARS crisis was a "people's war," using a Maoist vocabulary no longer in vogue today.

One the other hand, China increasingly draws for everyday purposes on rule of law practices to set the parameters for the exercise of previously disallowed freedoms, such as religious observance. In terms of directly handling burgeoning levels of public protests, the central government leaves more discretionary authority to local government, provided that this discretion is exercised to meet centrally established performance requirements.

My own research shows that the Chinese state relies increasingly on non-binding international best practices in such matters as local employment policies. The Chinese government sets up public employment agencies, an international best practice set up by a national labour organization, to deal with unemployment of residents. Here again what is new is that the central authorities are more willing to allow ordinary citizens or even campaigns to require citizens to act on their own in the officially stated version of their own interests.

In this regard, I am not surprised that David Ownby quoted Ye Xiaowen, head of the State Authority of Religious Affairs. I love these quotes. You didn't get a chance to quote them in your presentation. On page 11, you quoted Ye as saying: "Can the masses of religious believers be turned into an active force to build a harmonious society and can religions become a positive factor to spur social harmony?"(p. 11) I am gratified to see such a clear parallel emerging from your research in what is such a different policy area from what I study, which is employment policy. The unemployed are encouraged to become active participants in the labour market. We have been hearing a lot at this conference about the kind of new institutional forms that the state adopts to deal with new problems. There is also a need to look at what new identities are desired to help the state to govern.

One key point of partial disagreement I have with David Ownby is that this technique of rule stands in continuity with utopian yearnings to transform society. For me, this kind of rule is as much in keeping in the new liberal trend towards self-regulation, which indeed does have this coercive and utopian aspect, but which is more commonly associated with Western policy styles. It is not particularly utopian to allow large numbers of the population to practice beliefs to which the ruling party is officially opposed. Maybe we are using different meanings of utopia here and it would be good to clarify what he meant by it. The way I read it is that because the Chinese government has a strong desire to transform society, that's utopian, but that's a very conservative definition of utopian.

These are the three common threads that I can see arising from the two papers. I will end with one question and one comment for each paper. For Marie-Eve Reny, I would like to know about the actual policy content of the reforms you discuss. You have emphasized the study of the government's techniques and mechanisms but there can be a cost in not considering the possibility of making distinctions between putting down protests by spiritual sects like Falun Gong and putting down spontaneous workers' protests and strikes. Suppressing the first flows
from a long standing historical view by China's rulers that mass-based religious or spiritual sects present a threat to policy and governance. The latter are still part of the Chinese population that the CCP feels obliged to treat as a core constituency whose interests must be defended. You are starting to disaggregate the state. I wonder if you think it is valuable to also disaggregate the protests. On the basis of what kinds of claims will the state make concessions?

For David Ownby's paper, I am particularly drawn to a historical approach and so I am very sympathetic to the way you approach your paper. If we take the point of view that secularization with Chinese characteristics has much longer continuity in Chinese religious policy, what we to make of the lengthy periods of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution? We know from page 29 that you think they are basically exceptional. But what are their explanations and causes exactly?

For me, a couple of possibilities present themselves. One is the personality cult around Mao, the outburst of revolutionary violence in the same category as a series of other spiritually based outbursts of reforms, such as the Taiping Rebellion. Another logical possibility is that the Cultural Revolution was a purely anti-religious anomaly, perhaps an inevitable popular backlash orchestrated by a small elite against what was perceived to be remnants of a corrupt and colonized pre-revolutionary society. Those are simply two possible logical analyses, not particularly my own.

**Question:**

I have a Caucasian acquaintance who is a Marxist, who visited China a couple of years ago and loved it. I believe he was able to develop relationships because he is a left-wing activist. My question to Marie-Eve Reny is, would Chinese participation in the World Social Forum help to embolden the Chinese delegates to address social justice and sustainability issues despite government reactionaries?

**Question:**

I always feel uncomfortable when historians confront me and ask me to defend my historical claims. Let me ask you, David Ownby, to defend your normative claims. What exactly is the normative perspective that informs your paper? Is it that the state should never interfere with religion, or is it really problematic for religion, for example, if the state uses extra resources to promote religions that do social welfare as George W. Bush wanted to do? If you could say a bit about what normative perspective actually informs your findings.

For Marie-Eve Reny, what do you think of Cui Zhiyuan's argument that competitive elections can make the state less accommodating to protests outside of election time because once they get legitimacy from elections, they don't feel as responsible to the population in between elections. Could that be a factor that makes the Chinese state relatively accommodating to protests, the fact that they lack that kind of democratic legitimacy?
David Ownby:

As for a normative perspective, I am not conscious of having one in the writing of this paper. I grew up as a fundamentalist Christian and abandoned that I suppose have been jealous ever since of people who have found something in religion, which is maybe where my interest comes from, but I have handled this well. I don't lose sleep over it.

In the case of China, I don't have a view of what they should do. If they came and asked me, I would say that for reasons of policy and for the reason of conscience, a hands-off approach seems to work out a lot better than trying to manage religion. There is a wide range of choices available throughout the world, even in the Western world. Policies differ greatly among the United States, France, Germany and the United Kingdom. I don't take sides one way or another.

With respect to what I am saying about China, I am describing their evolution. Chinese leaders in the early twentieth century decided that a secular state on a model much like that of England, the United States or Canada was something that they dearly wanted because you had a state that was based on science and reason, and you had these useful religious people doing all sorts of stuff that was good for everyone. They set up a series of mechanisms by which they tried to get there. I don't think they ever did.

What is utopian about what they are doing right now? If they were to say we don't like religion, for whatever reason--because it's not scientific or because they don't like big social organizations--and hence they were to design a body of regulation that will keep religion small and under control--I might dislike such a stance from my own personal normative point of view, but that's a consistent, logical statement. They can do that, they have done that for some time.

What is utopian is to imagine that they can say: "Religion is great. Religion can contribute to social harmony. Let's encourage religion." Then when you read the regulations, they are still very seriously constraining the free practice of religion. It's utopian to imagine that the religious communities will read those regulations and come to the same conclusions as the regime. I read that some local authorities decided that their goal for religion was for it to be isolated, scattered and insignificant. This is not something that the religious communities can jump on board with. Maybe this line about a positive role for religion is completely silly propaganda that they designed during the run up to the Olympics so that George Bush would leave them alone, which is entirely possible, but I wanted to look at it from the inside. Can we understand this in some other way? When you read their thoughts about how they are going to transform religion, they treat religion like it was a new recipe; instead of putting in the green peppers, we will put in red peppers and Christianity will be more harmonious. It's just utter silliness when you read this stuff.

As for the normative stuff, I know what I would prefer them to do, but in the paper I am not hiding any agenda whatsoever. I am just holding them to their own standards about trying to arrive at a secular regime and saying that the policy that they seem to be putting forward right now is not going to get them there.
Marie-Eve Reny:

Is it a fact that because the government is not elected that it feels more responsible to respond to protests? It's tempting to say yes. I would say yes and no, because if we stop ourselves there, we disregard the subtleties and complexities in how the state responds to protest. When I speak about the state, I am referring to the central government. It is willing to make concessions on the basis of particular claims and less so on the basis of others. If we look at patterns of central government responses to religious protests in the last decades, we see that it has been relatively constant in punishing often peacefully mobilizing religious protesters.

On the other hand, we see an evolution and changes in how it responds to other collectively articulated claims like land based claims. It is showing greater openness to negotiate on the basis of these ideals. We have to take that variance into consideration. We also have to think whether there are certain protest characteristics that are more likely to make the central government respond and be accommodative than others. The more large scale the protests are, if people mobilize on the basis of the "right" ideas, the more likely the central government is going to be accommodative. Large scale land based protests would be accommodated. Large scale religious protests would not be accommodated.

The way in which the question was framed suggests that democracies are less preoccupied with political stability or with government legitimacy, and this is not necessarily true.

To respond to Xu Feng, because authoritarian regimes are undergoing processes of transformation that do not entail a change towards some non-authoritarian outcome, we can't assume that repression is a constant characteristic of authoritarianism. I am looking at one aspect of the complexity of state response, what it actually means to disaggregate the state, and looking at the different ways in which different state actors may respond to protests at the same time over time. An aspect of the complexity of state response to protests has to do with the variance in how the state responds to certain claims. My puzzle is why the central government has been constant in punishing often peacefully mobilizing religious protesters on the one hand, yet is showing greater openness to negotiate with increasingly disruptive and violent mobilizers. I agree with that. I have to look at the content of policy reforms and what it means when the state accommodates certain societal ideas and not others. I don't have an answer to this question.

Question:

I wish I had seen from David Ownby a distinction that all religions in China are not equal as far as the Chinese government is concerned. There is clear evidence that they would prefer many smaller religions rather than one big one. For example, religions that have foreign connections are seen as potential threats, not to mention Falun Gong, which is an exhausted topic. The Catholic religion is fine in China if it is not Roman Catholic, which would be directly under the Pope's influence and then will pose a threat because it is an organized religion with wishes to expand and proselytize within China. The Pope has wanted to go to China. That is one religion that is not equal.
The other is Islam, which also has foreign connections. It is necessary for a Muslim to go on pilgrimage to Mecca if he can afford it. The one billion Muslims abroad are radicalized and there is evidence of terrorism in Xinjiang as well as separatism based on both ethnicity and religion. The Chinese government has also done something to accommodate Buddhism. Buddhism is by far the largest religious group in China. I was surprised to see a Taiwanese monk establishing temples inside China and bringing outside investment. Even though this is a foreign connection, they don't seem to fear it.

David Ownby:

I wasn't attempting to give a broad overview of everything that is going on in China. Yes, lots of Taiwanese groups, be it the one you mentioned or the more secularized *Ciji gongdehui* or *Foguangshan*. They are in China a lot. So there is a lot going on back and forth. It is an immensely lively landscape. I didn't mean to suggest that all religions were equal. I don't think anyone in China is under that impression either.

Question:

I am not sure that the democratic bias, as Marie-Eve Reny says, comes from the fact that religions are not studied in authoritarian systems. There is a huge literature on social movements in Latin America, not necessarily democratic Latin America, Eastern Europe and even South Korea during the authoritarian days there. There has not been a deficit in the studies of social movements in authoritarian states. If there is a bias, it is because of the problems that all researchers in the field face and you probably will too. It is easy for a social anthropologist to go to a social movement and ask to sit in, take notes at a meeting and study what they say and do. It's not so easy to go to some government councilman and ask to sit in on your meeting and take notes.

I would like to take David Ownby's talk as an infomercial for an upcoming symposium that the York Centre for Asian Research at York University is organizing this year on religion and rights in China. We are trying to bring together scholars, human rights activists and religious believers to look at religion and religious policy in China. Not just how the state represses religion or religion as an object of state policy, but in what way religions in China are active participants in building a "harmonious society", in building human rights in China, since religions are essentially social movement organizations.

Question:

I was very interested in the comments about protest in China. One of the things that struck me when you were saying that one reaction that the central government takes to protest is basically to shut down the information so that the information doesn't spread and the protest doesn't then spread. I am wondering if the incidents that we know about are only the tip of the iceberg for what is really happening.
Second, Daniel Bell wondered why the central government was so responsive to protest and we have to keep in context that according to your figures, 19 of 78 protests resulted in some accommodation, which meant that three-quarters were met with repression and no accommodation. That is important to keep in mind. Sometimes there is accommodation but it is not the general response.

Finally, in terms of why these protests are happening--and you were wondering why there are different responses--I am wondering if part of it is that the religious protests in many cases are contravening government policy. The land protests, I believe, often are people simply standing up for their rights under Chinese law. In that case, the fact that there would be any accommodation would be perfectly natural. If people have no access to depoliticized law, if they cannot go to the court as we can here, their only response is to do something violent that risks their lives and risks others lives. If after that three times out of four all they are met with is repression, this is not a sustainable way of running a society.

Razmik Panossian:

I am not going to ask a human rights question. I am a lapsed political scientist. As I was listening to David Ownby's talk, my mind started wandering off in different directions and I ended up in Russia and the historical parallels you were doing for the period and how religion was treated in Russia in the twentieth century. In the 1920s and '30s, there was a very severe crackdown trying to impose atheism in the Soviet Union. The difference was that it was Religion with a very big "R". Later, when it was deemed useful to use religion, it was seen as something positive that could reinforce Soviet identity or authority. What emerged eventually was Religion as an institution that could be co-opted, and therefore tolerated and even encouraged (within limits), and religion that was deemed subversive, a threat, on which the state cracked down. I am wondering to what degree this has any kind of resonance in terms of the dynamics in China?

There is obviously a relationship between how a central state responds to protest and what the protest is about. It seems to me again, as a non-specialist, that there is a general trend: if the protest is about social economic rights, the state is more or less accommodating and can be reasonable; sure it cracks down, but it can also find some sort of compromise. On other issues, such as political rights, it cracks down more severely, puts people in prison. If it is an ethnic issue, the tanks are out. To what degree do you think that this is something that could inform your research?

David Ownby:

For the accommodation between religion and the state, I went as a guerrilla reporter to an anti-Falun Gong conference in Beijing in the fall of 2000 or 2001. No one knew than I was studying the Falun Gong. My goal was to witness state suppression of religious groups in action. The Chinese state has done things like this over the centuries. I just wanted to see how and with which foot they jumped first. Representatives of other religious groups were present at the
meeting saying that Falun Gong is terrible, we have to nip this in the bud. You could see it in their eyes. Nip it in the bud before it gets to us.

To its credit--China doesn't get much credit on Falun Gong affairs as far as I know--neither Falun Gong nor qigong were ever called a religion. Even when Falun Gong fell under the knife, it was called a heterodox cult. The word "religion" was never invoked except to make the distinction between a cult, which is bad, and religious, which can be good. Even as China was arresting and persecuting its practitioners, the more positive discourse on religion itself continued to develop, although things went into abeyance for awhile. It was a fairly short period of time that the regime got it under control. To some extent, I wonder if the emphasis on the positive role of religion can play was not speeded along because they had such an example. Falun Gong, definitely negative, we don't want that. You other guys go do your stuff and we'll be glad to have you in.

Marie-Eve Reny:

I have been told that starting my study with a criticism of the social movement literature and criticizing it for its focus on mobilizers is a bit problematic because the point of social movements' scholarship is to study mobilizers. Increasingly, social movement scholars are acknowledging there are many actors involved in shaping the many stages of the process of mobilization. These actors are not just mobilizers, the state and the relevant targets, but also other societal groups in the surrounding environment. On the basis of this assumption I make the claim that we have to start paying greater attention to the role of the targets of mobilization at a particular stage of the process. In a non-liberal democratic context like China, it is obvious that the state is important in shaping what happens at that stage so aspects of my questioning of the exclusive focus on mobilizers is still relevant.

Are the incidents we know about the tip of an iceberg? Yes, they are as far as the Western media are concerned. The story might be a bit different when it comes to the Chinese media, though. The problem of under reporting of cases of collective protest is huge and will make the selection of protest cases much more difficult for field research, because there are so many biases inherent in the information about protest cases in China. We have to deal with this by analyzing this information because this is all we have. I don't expect to knock on the PSB's door and ask for that data because they won't give it to me.

Cases of concessions and state discipline out of 74 examples. A quarter of the total number of cases is a huge amount given that this is not a liberal democratic context, and given some of the biases in the literature. A quarter of cases being accommodated is significant. It constitutes a puzzle in itself and the causes ought to be addressed.

David Ownby:

Liberal democratic regimes put down uprisings too. We don't always accommodate them. We can think of many instances, like prison riots. I'm supporting your case here.
Marie-Eve Reny:

It is true that we can look at it from the perspective of religious protesters mobilizing against the state. I am not sure what "against state policy" means. Some are actually against the political regime, others embrace the regime and seek to work within it, so I think we are actually simplifying religious claims. We are also simplifying land-based claims because these are not always embracing the existing laws and policies. Some people mobilize in favour of privatization. It is something that central government officials are not willing to implement anytime soon. I don't have a straightforward answer to your question but we have to think about the diversity of claims, religious and land-based, and took to see whether the central government responds differently to certain land based claims too, and to the ones in favour of privatization. Does the central government always act to repress claims that question the existence of certain laws and policies? I am not sure. I don't think anyone is sure because no one has done the research. I don't think anyone has gathered a large enough sample of protest cases to analyze patterns of state response to different kinds of claims.

David Ownby:

I don't read the material that Marie-Eve Reny reads, but if it's true that protesters who base their protests on religious claims are more often suppressed than those who base their protests on other things, that is significant. We have heard several instances over the past couple of days of protesters who see their land claims validated by the central government who base their protests on rights language enunciated by the central government--the same thing this morning with Dan Koldyk and his ecological protesters in Xiamen. To my knowledge, this has not happened, or it does not happen with religious based claims, despite the fact that it is a right.

According to the Constitution, the Chinese have the right to believe and not to believe. During the Maoist period, the emphasis on the right "not to believe" was emphasized. In the post-Mao period, a huge thicket of regulation has grown up to try to control the fact that more people have embraced their "right to believe," and this right stands out more in documents from the post-Mao period than in documents from the Maoist period. At the same time, at no point over the past 30 years have the Chinese authorities allowed the "right to believe" to become a positive right that can be insisted on by believers. Those who follow developments on the Chinese religious scene closely believe that this is because they are afraid that millions of people will stand up the next day and demand their rights be acknowledged.

Land claims, by their very basis, tend to be claims to a discrete, individual piece of land, and are not readily generalizable. By contrast, if all house church Protestants were to be mobilized by the notion that they have the right to believe and practice, this might constitute social mobilization or even a social movement. Estimates of the numbers of underground Christian believers reach something like 50 million--which is probably an exaggeration--but imagine if it is only 20 million. If 20 million stood up tomorrow morning and said, "Yes! I have the right to my belief" it is not clear that the Chinese state would be ready to manage such claims. Chinese authorities have thought about this and are making distinctions between rights-based claims based on land
or on ecology, and rights-based claims, which may be construed to be a claim by a largish independent social organization.

**The Current Situation and Future Directions**

**Bernie Frolic** (Professor Emeritus, Political Science, York University and Senior Researcher, Asian Institute, University of Toronto) and **Victor Falkenheim** (Professor Emeritus, Political Science, University of Toronto)

**Bernie Frolic:**

Let's start with authoritarianism and democracy, this continuum. I was struck by Cui Zhiyuan's comment that we are fixated on authoritarianism and should move away from that as we look at political change in China. I went back to my notes to remember what we said about authoritarianism and the Chinese political system. Is there a better word to use than authoritarianism, with less ideologically-driven terminology? Here are some of the terms we have employed: "adaptive Leninism", "modified Leninism", "flexible authoritarianism", "patrimonial sovereignty", "adaptive authoritarianism", "paternalism", "meritocracy", "soft authoritarianism", "Party-state", and "Neo-authoritarianism". We have created this whole vocabulary to describe the Chinese political system as "the other"-- not like us, not democratic. Trying to get at what China is today and what it might be tomorrow. In the last panel, I was intrigued by the idea of big A and small a, from big R and small r. Why not think of big "A" and small "a"--big Authoritarianism and small authoritarianism, maybe getting smaller over time?

Then there is democracy. Our Chinese colleague raised the question of our own inconsistency in defining democracy--mentioning Machiavelli and the different ways he looked at our political system. The Western canon isn't always clear. We seem to think we are clear when we talk about liberal democracy, elections, civil society, rule of law, human rights, qualified rights, hierarchies of rights (though that tends to be a Chinese position), rights talk, participation and liberalization. These concepts and issues lie on the other side of this so-called democracy/authoritarianism dichotomy. So changing from one "binary" to the other may require more clarification as to what is meant by "democracy".

The second thing that struck me was institutionalization. Political scientists think in terms of institutions and values. Institutionalization in China, developing rules and legislation, the rule of law versus the rule of man--these emerged in our conference as necessary conditions for, or barometers of political change. Someone said the discussion of institutionalization didn't help us understand everything in China, and that maybe we need to look further. This was especially noted in the discussion of value change. The creation of institutions by themselves is only one step along the path of democratization. For institutions to be successful they have to be linked to action, to changing values and political culture.

We talked about decentralization, central-local interaction, and how to measure political change in evaluating this relationship. One participant analyzed the very top of the Party-state system,
showing that some change is occurring within the Party at that level. Others saw changes taking place at the local level. Another participant pointed out that amidst forces of decentralization, in building China's auto industry the central state maintained its dominance. We looked at local level corruption, at protests. We heard that the Party-state at the local level is being restructured to deal with community development and civil society and how it has to finesse this, mobilizing cadres at this most sensitive level, where the greatest potential for continuous disruption and open regime confrontation exists.

The third point concerns new values and culture. We see a Chinese culture that is changing towards materialism and individualization, as its socialist values seem to be dribbling away. As China enters into the world, new values come in from outside and new values emanate from inside. We identified individualization, nationalism, Confucianism, and harmonization. One of the papers talked about "trust". The old totalitarian system was based on fear--the regime feared the citizens and the citizens feared the regime. As you moved into authoritarianism and soft authoritarianism, and forward into political liberalization, that fear began to change into trust. The regime begins to trust its citizens and the citizens begin to trust the regime. We didn't talk about that much, but I felt that was an important point. And finally, Western culture intersecting with non-Western culture in China. Is there a gap and how do we deal with this as political scientists?

The fourth point that struck me--I mentioned it yesterday, although it didn't seem to resonate at the time--is the effect of the market. A lot of this is about the market and how it is going to transform ideology, culture and the political system. The market, privatization, ownership, massive inequalities, ideology, culture. Some people say that the market is more powerful than Marx or Confucius. The market, as it emerges, brings fundamental changes in culture, values, and the political system. It brings civil society, liberalization, the information revolution, Does this lead to democracy? That is always the issue. Does economic choice in the market produce political choice? We didn't get into that. It's a big debate in political science. The two are inextricably linked. Certainly, it is in the back of our minds. We think about it all the time.

Technology has an impact on political change. That came up a number of times. Technology transforms the content of information, how people access that information, how they communicate with each other. They get information, they can start organizing themselves. They can organize protests. Formerly only top leaders, the key people in the system, had this information. Information is power. It was power in the old system. That power now increasingly has to be shared. Today we talked about civil society and the emergence of grassroots civil society and how the regime is going to have to deal with this phenomenon. At the local level, text messaging, the internet, cell phones are redefining relations between state and society.

There is a lot of change going on. Tremendous change in all areas giving us headaches as we try to figure out exactly what is going on and how to provide an informed view of political change in China. Yet we are still seeing veneers of change. We are looking at surfaces, not able to penetrate very deeply. We only scratch the surface with respect to how the Party governs, how it is making decisions While we had excellent papers on the Party, we haven't really gone into how the Party directs and coordinates everything. What decisions it has to make. There are too many secrets and the system is reluctant to encourage transparency.
We also didn't deal much with the rural areas. At this Conference we have been almost exclusively urban, and why not? China's close to 300 million middle class seems to be our focus. The urban areas are the modern sector and we are looking at a modernizing system. When searching for political liberalization we automatically look to the most advanced sectors and it resides in the cities. However, we need also to consider the heavy rural tail that drags behind these cities, how 800,000,000 rural dwellers can be integrated into the emerging political culture of modern China.

We also didn't talk about the minorities. That five or six per cent of China's population causes so many problems for China and for its relations for the outside world, and the two per cent in particular--the Uighurs and the Tibetans. We didn't have much to say about that.

On "transition theory" did we progress beyond what we did last year in our workshop? Have we gone much further? Have we acquired new information, new ideas to move to the next step? Last year we talked about trapped transition--Pei Minxin's work and the Oxford study. We concluded that change was taking place, it was incremental, it was slow, it certainly wasn't democratic, but there was modest liberalization. No one was prepared to predict how long this would take. Waiting 80 years for Chinese democracy, as suggested by Wen Jiabao, is too long, and maybe 20 years is still too short.

How does political change in China relate to the outside world? The perception of China as a superpower, or as a threat, or China's actions in the international arena as an authoritarian political system. A lot has been written about China as an authoritarian developmental model, a major player in the international system. Is this good or bad for the international system? In their think tanks Chinese specialists are speculating that China should develop a new way of acting internationally that won't necessarily follow the rules set out by those who have dominated the old world order. The Chinese can say that you don't have to be democratic to be a major player and maybe the Chinese authoritarian model is more acceptable to many countries in the Third World, among who most have authoritarian governments. Throughout Africa and Latin America, there is China, looking for resources and investing.

Victor Falkenheim:

I am equally perplexed in attempting to summarize not so much the conclusions, but the implications of what has been presented to us over the past two days. For those of you who remember the television series of the 1970s, "Welcome Back Kotter." It was the story of an inner city classroom where John Travolta played Vinne Barbarino, one of the slower members of that inner city class and his plaintive, "I am so confused." I came in here confused and my confusion has been elevated to a somewhat higher level.

I was wondering through the course of some of the discussion if one were to assemble a group of social scientists to assess the changing social and political reality of Canada, whether or not we would collectively invoke this well-known parable of the blind man and the elephant. I very much doubt that we would hear people talking about all of us operating in the dark with these
compartmentalized realities that defy integration and understanding. We are not blind. China is not an elephant, although it is obviously quite large. It would be quite interesting to know whether the elephant is moving forward, backward or standing still? Whether it is a harmonious elephant? But in fact, we know a good deal. I suspect if we were to devise a questionnaire on the quality of governance in China today and were to circulate it among us, we would probably arrive at a fair consensus. That this is a strong, responsible government that has a variety of blind spots, challenges and difficulties and we would have a pretty good sense at what type of authoritarianism it is.

In order to move forward, I am tempted to say that we need common paradigms, common language and a common vocabulary so that we can speak to one another directly. Particularly, we need a dialogue with our Chinese colleagues in social and political sciences. Having studied China for over 40 years, having gone back frequently, I feel that I don't know very much, and the more I go, the less I know. But someone must know. Hu Jintao knows more than I do and I would think that many social scientists operating in Chinese universities and academies have a pretty good sense, though they might not be willing completely to share their honest perceptions. They have a pretty good sense about where things are going.

In the early 1990s, I was reading what was then Peking Review, before it became Beijing Review, and I saw a particularly interesting short account of a landmark early meeting on the subject of civil society in Beijing, sponsored by the New York-based Social Science Research Council. It reported an extremely lively exchange that took place in the context of this early meeting. The notion of a "lively international academic exchange" seemed quite improbable to me. I was intrigued by the description and I called up Fred Wakeman who was identified as a key figure. He was a well known sinologist, then head of SSRC in New York. I called him up and asked, was it really lively? He said, yes, and there was quite a story here. We sponsored this panel on civil society in China, and one month prior to the meeting, the Chinese informed us that they didn't want to use the term "civil society". It was inflammatory. We pointed out to them that the donations were predicated on civil society and it was either civil society or nothing. The Chinese in their characteristically flexible way said fine, you call it civil society and we will call it "public management" and this wording will appear in very small English at the bottom of the programme and it will be in large Chinese characters.

I was at the same conference that Bernie Frolic was at in 2005 on civil society at the founding of the Peking University Centre for the Study of Civil Society. I thought the exchanges were interesting. There were Chinese papers and papers presented by Westerners. Taiwan contributors to the conference said, we know what civil society is in Taiwan and it usually amounts to some blood in the streets. The Hong Kong university contributors also said, we know what civil society is, it's a million people in the streets on July 1. Then the younger Chinese contributors got up and they said to the Western participants, you guys are too respectful of our government. You are talking about state-led civil society, Chinese civil society. We know what civil society is, it's what those other guys said it is. It was an interesting exchange and I think if we can build on these kinds of frank exchanges, we would learn a great deal more. I am somewhat chastened by Cui Zhiyuan's contribution since most of us political scientists who were trained in recent decades haven't read Aristotle or Machiavelli and would be at somewhat of a disadvantage in that exchange since they obviously educate you better at the University of Chicago.
Political change is in fact proceeding in China. For example, at the local level we are told that the central state enjoys some substantial legitimacy and trust and as you move down the political system, there is decreasing trust. That is reflected in Tony Saich's survey research, some of which was published recently in the *Chinese Journal of Political Science*. It shows that if you ask the same question at different levels to draw perceptions of transparency and accountability, there is a fairly high level of trust at the central level. At the provincial government, there is a fair amount of trust. By the time you get to the county, it has declined to 20 or 30 per cent, and the further down you go, the less trust there is.

On the other hand, how do we account for the success that largely is a function of local governments in China? My own experience in training programmes through CIDA is that local officials are extraordinarily competent and responsible. I go and drink with them in their dormitories, talk about life, their studies. I haven't met a comparably capable group of people in a Western setting. These are dedicated civil servants. Maybe I am missing something. I don't ask them what kind of cars they drive. I don't ask them about their Swiss bank account. I don't know what's happening in their personal lives, but I have this very powerful sort of conviction that a lot is going right in local level government in China.

I was particularly intrigued by Sun Zhe's description of how he pushes the envelope a bit advocating reform, and the analogy he drew between the experimental process of crossing the river by feeling the rocks, the way in which the risks of market reform and economic reform were essentially negotiated over a 20 or 30-year period, then pressing that model of economic reform in the political realm. There are multiple experiments that are going on, innovative experiments and I think we are all aware of these. How are they being received at the upper levels of the system? To what extent are they translating into effective country wide change? The data are there, at the level of the State Council and the Bureau of the State Council in research organizations within provincial governments, and in strategy and policy research offices. They have hundreds of these organizations. They track them, they monitor them, they know what is going on. Somehow, it is important to plug into this kind of existing research to get a sense of change.

I fall into the camp of optimists. The Chinese government, for all of its failings and its many utterly reprehensible acts, is doing a pretty good job. I would really like to have a more solid foundation on which to feel confidence in that judgement, but that is our collective challenge.

**Bernie Frolic:**

If Victor Falkenheim is giving you the optimistic scenario that the Chinese political system is at this point relatively successful in managing its development, that is an important statement. Are we willing to make that statement? Secondly, are we prepared to make that statement and project that over the next X years that it will continue that way? We are political scientists and we are supposed to predict things as well as summarize them.
Susan Henders:

I am dodging the prediction question, but as a quasi-outsider to the conversation, I want to offer two observations about what I learned at the conference, or things the conference helped me think about and I offer as this as starting points for discussion.

The first is whether or not China is becoming a liberal democratic state or should become a liberal democratic state. We know there isn't a consensus in the room on that. Regardless of that question, I think several of the papers and much of the discussion pointed out the value of trying to think outside the language and categories and analysis of liberal democracy in order better to understand what is happening on the ground. I am setting aside the normative, political question of where you want China to go or where it is going, just to point out that getting outside the categories is helpful in terms of good analysis.

You may recall Garry Rodan's chapter on oppositions from the early 1990s, where he tried to get away from the idea of a formal parliamentary opposition as being the only type of opposition in various parts of Asia and look at other ways in which society is becoming more open to contentious politics, more types of pluralism. When I say pluralism, I don't necessarily mean liberal pluralism but more types of diversity evident in more realms--the papers pointed to this--within the Party-state, within society, economic actors, state-society relations, territorial dimensions.

The second observation, maybe simplistic but also important if we are trying to map political change in China, is that for me the papers pointed to multiple speeds at which change is occurring in different realms in China. Much of the tensions that the papers identified have to do with how different realms and various elements of political life change in different ways at different speeds. That asks us to step back from prediction and first think about description, more about what is happening and what language we might want to use. That is a way to focus upon the analytical questions we might want to ask, and then prediction if you choose that dangerous route.

Jeremy Paltiel:

I want to offer two words: "dynamism" and "adaptability". What I hear here today is not a single trajectory and not a final end point or resting place. I haven't been in the business as long as our two panel chairs, but even as long as I have been in the business, China has always been dynamic. I think that is one reason why we do this, because it is the most exciting place we know and it keeps on being so. The dynamism doesn't just occur at the social level. There is a certain tendency to refocus or recast this in a state and society form. Society is dynamic and the state is rigid. That is not entirely true with China. The state is rigid in many ways, but we also hear about how the state is adapting in different ways, so there is both some institutional adaptability and a lot of conceptual and perceptual experimentation going on. Thought experiments, if not actual experiments.
We should bring to the public that sense of dynamism, because if the perception is one where dynamism is only social and the state is only rigidity, then you have an ideological cast to the discussion, which in some sense, prejudges where things are. If we are talking about the elephant, that is not the elephant that I see.

I would change the title to "dynamism and adaptability", with adaptability being more of a question mark. Secondly, I would try to bring to the public, the policy makers and everyone else a greater sense of the dynamism that we are well aware of and the fact that essentially we are a part of a conversation that the Chinese people, including the government and the society, are having with themselves.

**Victor Falkenheim:**

Let me respond by saying that I like the two words you have chosen. They are an interesting variant on a theme or a kind of contradictory labels, terms that are applied to processes of change in China. I am particularly thinking of Pei Minxin's early work where he talks about disintegration and renewal. "Simultaneous", "parallel", these are concurrent processes and in a sense it's a race to see if the system can reinvigorate or renew itself institutionally while these disintegrative pressures are at work. It's quite clear from his book, *Trapped Transition*, that he finally thinks that there is sufficient evidence to draw a pessimistic conclusion that the regime is ultimately trapped.

There is the more recent contribution by David Shambaugh on the Chinese Communist Party, *Atrophy and Adaptation*, which goes back to a rigid state. But he doesn't conclude that it is a rigid state. He sees that various processes are at work, undermining the government and the state, and others that involve renewal. So it is atrophy and adaptation.

**Jeremy Paltiel:**

For us, China has been this giant cloud chamber. We are looking at the traces. We are still looking at that cloud chamber but some of the people out there are not aware how fascinating that cloud chamber is.

**Comment:**

I used to own a bookstore specializing in Asia, particularly China, and work daily in the media as a commentator. I have one observation and one suggestion. The discussions today and yesterday were overwhelming. The diversity and also the dynamic was excellent. It is the best forum I have attended in Canada in the past 10 years.

The comment I want to make is how can we articulate and synthesize our understanding of China. Whether it is a white elephant or a big elephant or whatever it is. It is important for
Canada and I am overwhelmed also by the ignorance of the Chinese people about Canada and also the ignorance of the Canadian government about China.

Razmik Panossian:

I do not want to advocate censorship but please ban the word "complex" from your discussion. I have been told 40 times today about how complex China is. I don't want to know it is complex because quite frankly, China is not any more complex than most other countries in this world.

The metaphor that you used, the blind man and the elephant--in this room everyone understands and sees the elephant. From the perspective of policy makers or someone who is engaged in global politics, the elephant is the world and China is one of the pieces in that world. It is an important piece and yet how does China fit? Bernie Frolic referred to it as China's role in the world. I think that is terribly important to understand, including the role of the diaspora and how this is having an impact in China.

The third point that many of us are going to take away from this conference is the Charles Burton-Daniel Bell debate earlier today. It reinforces the importance of speaking the correct language, because quite frankly, the Prime Minister or any other government official is not going to devote more than five minutes in a day to China. They need to understand in those five minutes or 10 minutes or half an hour why an issue is significant and in a language that is understandable. This is not dumbing down; this is speaking a language that is relevant to policy makers and programmers.

Victor Falkenheim:

I very much agree. To say that China is complex doesn't help us at all. On the subject of how to convince the current government about how to describe China's reality, I think in some ways, as ideologues, they are rather immune. It is going to cost Canada to approach China as an unreformed Leninist state. It won't cost us greatly but it will cost us substantially.

Comment:

I believe that China will be slow to change, given the large population. The climate change issue will be very big, given that there will be many health problems. It is possible that there could be a war over Taiwan, given that the U.S. has staked out positions around China and has warned China. I believe with the new competition in the world markets, China will emerge stronger after this crisis and there will be more anti-Chinese sentiment, as happened over the Olympics. It is in the media that China is perceived as rising and posing a threat, and people will express concern and anxiety over that.
Razmik Panossian:

The very way this conference is organized is sending a signal to people in Ottawa. I am very grateful that you invited me to be a chair, but did you invite people who are actually the decision makers in power in Ottawa? Not to have a policy panel or to have two papers on that, but to integrate the policy makers into the discussion. That doesn't cost more money; it is a different conception of a conference.

Bernie Frolic:

We had that concept originally in mind but it fell by the way side because there were so many papers and we felt that we needed to be clear that this is an academic enterprise first. What do we really know about political change in China as researchers who are investigating this important topic? We are not politicians, nor journalists, nor ideologues. We are researchers trying better to understand what is going on in China and presenting this information to others. Maybe the next step will be to take our results and to somehow interact with policy makers.

Razmik Panossian:

The policy makers get annoyed when they are thought of as an add-on, that you need to do the research, think it through and then tell them your conclusion. Then they say, excuse me, we would like to be involved in the entire process. It is a strategic decision on your part how to involve them.

Bernie Frolic:

The original intention was to have a three-day conference with one full day devoted to interaction with Canadian policy makers but we couldn't afford it, and I'm not sure they would have come.

Alfred Chan:

How we perceive China depends on our perspectives and our own conceptual lens. China is not liberal, not democratic and not likely to be democratic in our own sense. If we take the approach of social democracy, China might have begun to increase its social welfare, but it is not likely to be democratic either. If we take the third approach, the East Asian developmental model, China is doing fairly well. It has provided economic growth, certain social stability, benefits for the people. However, democracy would be something in the future. Democracy would be something that China will think about when it achieves a certain level of economic and social development.
Comment:

I used to go to school at the old East Asian Department here at U of T and Victor Falkenheim was actually one of my first teachers about China. I came from Hong Kong in 1970 and lived in Hong Kong but never really looked at China in an analytical context. I have been here for 40 years now. My request is that in your next conference you could involve some of the scholars who are in diaspora studies as well. Having come from Hong Kong, I have felt that it has had a tremendous role to play in terms of political change in China. I would have loved to have heard a bit more about the connection between the changes that took place in Hong Kong and Taiwan and the Mainland.

For us who have been living in Canada, it is important to know that China is not a monolithic kind of entity. By the same token, we have multiculturalism in Canada and it is important to know more about the Chinese diaspora here, the links with China. What do we know about Chinese culture, the connections we have in China, our role as a "bridge" between the two countries and how we live in Canada.

Bernie Frolic:

Perhaps it was a shortcoming to not have more people from the diaspora here to talk about their links to China, particularly the ones that go back and forth, because they may well have a better and deeper understanding of what is going on.

Gordon Houlden:

I worked on the execution of the China policy for many years under every Prime Minister from Trudeau to Harper. One of the things, trying to look forward, is the pace of events. I have this sense that it is quickening. I left the government six months ago but in that first six months, we dealt with the Tibet uprising, the earthquake, and then with the complication of what we were going to do about the Olympics. Three big events. China is changing so quickly, it is by definition not a stable place. Nothing that is evolving that quickly. I don't mean it in a bad sense; it is just not a stable entity and it is going to continue to throw surprises at us.

I take Jeremy Paltiel's point about the cloud chamber, but China is now so integrated globally, that chamber has somewhat been lifted. That adds another level of complication. It is not a sealed vessel. It is now being actively acted upon others and acting on others, yet another level of complexity.

In terms of the economy, we don't know what is happening in our own rather open economic systems in North America. We don't know the longer term social and political implications and we certainly don't know what will be in the case of China either. There will be comparisons, to be sure, with what happened in the Great Depression, God forbid we go in that direction, but I just have this sense that when we meet a year or two or three from now, there may be a lot of talk about these recent developments.
I had to be non-partisan throughout my career and still, it is in my bones. But I am a bit resistant to the idea that changing one person or changing one government fixes everything. There are problems in the relationship that run much more deeply. Canadians lack of understanding of China, the lack of subtleties. The Chinese lack of understanding of Canada. China's disinterest in Canada compared to the early days, as they begin to see themselves as counterparts of America or maybe of Europe. You can change the Prime Minister, you can change the government, but big tough issues are still going to have to be dealt with.

Daniel Bell:

There seems to be a widespread feeling that the current Canadian government's policies via-á-vis China are seriously mistaken and that it is grounded in misconception. If that is true, what Chinese intellectuals would do, either in Hong Kong or in Mainland China, is to get together, write a letter condemning the mistaken policy, sign it and publish it in newspapers. Why can't our two senior scholars write an op ed in the *Globe and Mail*. We will sign it.

Comment:

A couple of reactions to the summaries of our two venerable leaders. The first is for Victor Falkenheim. You came up with a set of questions that you think most of us believe. You should put them to us as a straw poll to see the mood among the specialist group representing some really good scholar, to see what they think, to see if your three or four propositions are what we agreed to.

The second is a question that I have been wrestling with for some time, whether there is a Canadian school of Chinese studies, and whether there are ideas that are in some way distinctive or coloured by the Canadian experience. I don't have a final answer but my initial answer is "no, there isn't." The theoretical and conceptual material that he cited, everyone was an American. What I think is distinctive is our reaction as a community to our interaction with China. Bernie Frolic got it to about how we are reacting or should react to China on a global scale.

It's not just our public, it is ourselves that are deeply either hung up or tied to a number of the values-based issues. It is what is distinctive about us for better or worse. How will get around that is going to take a lot of education. It is not just Mr. Harper. His views reflect the views of a lot of Canadians. The Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada asks the question in our surveys, a crucial question, about the human rights situation in China, "Better now than three years ago? We have asked this question over several years. Every year until recently, the answer has been, that however bad it was in China it was getting better. However, when we did the last poll, 60 per cent of Canadians said that it is getting worse.

The larger point about how we connect to the public on these things afterwards is a question for the Foundation. We have a new website. The Foundation has created a new website that has the technical capacity to provide short videos about key issues to viewers. As for who this will get to, I don't know, but it sure gets to some young people in ways that our other approaches don't. If
we can find a way to do it, I suspect Mr. Harper's family watches YouTube. It's a chance for us to mobilize some people.

**Bernie Frolic:**

Is there a Canadian school of Chinese studies? The field is dominated by Americans. America sets the stage. American scholars define the questions asked. They have the methodology. They have the money and the research centres. They are the ones who interact with China the most directly, the most often and at the highest level. Most of us are trained in the United States.

Nevertheless, I believe there is a Canadian perspective. We have a more positive view of China than many Americans who are caught up in the whole superpower thing, in the competitive aspect, the Taiwan issue, and the military threat. We do have a more open view of China. That is just my own opinion. I can't generalize for everyone. That may put us at odds, perhaps, with our current government that has a more polarized view of China.

It would be useful for us to explore this further. Graham Johnson once wrote an article in *China Quarterly* about Canadian studies of China, basically cataloguing what we were doing, but he did not say there was a Canadian perspective.

**Comment:**

I love China. I love this elephant as we have described it. As a young scholar, I feel I have an emotional connection to China. I think everyone here feels that as well. I think this energy needs to spread, how we engage and how we mobilize our knowledge needs to be thought about. I feel very energized by this conference because it brings back a lot of my memories of China.

One or two ideas that we didn't really get into was the emerging relationship between China and Africa. China is becoming one of the largest donors in Africa and this is changing the balance of power. China is challenging the World Bank and the IMF with its development assistance and lending policies. As we consider the future, we need to think about this new balance of power that is emerging, challenging the United States.

**Comment:**

I have one word, "cooperation". To build a relationship of friendship and trust between Canada and China. This can be done in terms of the environmental and development operation. Chongqing is twinned with Toronto so we have to capitalize on that relationship into the western region where Chongqing is a gateway. There is one area for environmental cooperation. We can utilize IDRC and other organizations in terms of grassroots projects like tourism, national park management, nature conservation, ecological cooperation and also medicinal plants.
Comment:

I came to this country as a refugee from Tibet and Canada has been great in offering me protection and the basic freedoms. One thing to realize is when researchers go to China and do their research, there is a fundamental difference regarding the values of freedom, our values must not be compromised.

Earlier today I was speaking to a Mainland Chinese student and I asked what she thought of this Conference. She thought it was okay, but felt that the real issues that people are facing on the ground were not being addressed. For example, how do citizens interact with lawyers? She said she wanted more discussion of concrete instances involving citizens and the Party-state. Many in China face these issues on a daily basis and in the future this deserves more attention.

I hope in the near future that political change comes from both levels, from civil society and from the Party. We should also look at political change in other regions of China. Researchers should look at some of those issues critically. I know that everyone says these are sensitive topics, but researchers should be challenged to dig more deeply into these areas.

Bernie Frolic:

I appreciate your point of view, certainly because of your Tibetan background and your concern about Tibet. We didn't really deal with Tibet much at this conference because the scholars that were available just weren't doing deep research in this area and because many of them can't work easily in Tibet. This goes back to the point that we are studying China, not trying to change it. Maybe that is the problem. Maybe we have to do both, or maybe that is why we are scholars in the first place and not public servants and policy makers. Maybe for better or for worse at best we stand on the boundary between the two.

Comment:

I am not a political scientist. I am a doctor from Mainland China and have been in Canada for 10 years. This is my first time at a scholarly conference in Toronto. First, would like to ask everyone to be patient with China. Second, as a Chinese Canadian, I really care about this country and I want to share this with you.

If we talk about China now and look back in its history, China was the first republic in Asia. We Chinese people really did something for modernization. When you look back in history and compare it with the present, is history repeating itself?

Bernie Frolic:

History repeats itself but not always in the same way. I first went to China in 1965. It was a poor, backward country compared to the Soviet Union where I had been living for a year. Isolated,
China wanted little to do with foreigners. The only thing they knew about Canada was Norman Bethune. I lived in China during the Cultural Revolution and it wasn't a pleasant experience. If you compare those times to now, there are changes in every way: how people dress, how they walk, how they talk, body language, mobility, the economy, political system. From my point of view, the changes are spectacular, but it doesn't mean we should be content with those changes, or Chinese people should be content with them, or that they are going to have the same kind of political system that we have today or tomorrow.

I noted the point about pace and speed. The pace of change and the speed is truly unbelievable. Not just the buildings going up but what people are doing, what people are saying, what people are saying about politics. The landscape changes every few months. History is fine to look back, but I am also happy to look forward and see where China is going.

**Comment:**

There are two ways to think about history repeating itself. Even during the end of the Qing Dynasty, China's social and economic development was faster and we learned from the West very quickly. After the Revolution, everything was crushed down. Many Chinese people still worry about being crushed down. What do you think about keeping traditional culture and at the same time, modernizing a country?

**Bernie Frolic:**

We did have a discussion about bringing back traditional culture, bringing traditional values into the modern political system inside China. We have scholars here studying precisely that and we debated the political implications of reintroducing Confucianism. As far as China's role in the world, China has "de-isolated" itself and has now become a major player. This makes some countries nervous, yet China today is behaving in a mature way in the international realm, as far as I can see. This is an extraordinary achievement.

**Victor Falkenheim:**

Our questioners left some challenges. One is to formulate questions about what we have learned about political change in China at this conference and circulate them to our participants, an interesting exercise. The other challenge is to consider drafts or statements to better inform our policy makers about the current situation in China based on what we are currently researching and what we have learned over the years.

**Bernie Frolic:**

This has been an inspiring experience. It was a revelation to learn so much about China from the colleagues attending this Conference, and from those in the audience. We have an outstanding
group of Canadian academics with a deep knowledge of China. We will move forward in our examination of political change in China, hopefully, with a book on this theme, drawing on the research and ideas discussed here these past two days. I hope that it will be possible for us to meet again as a group in the near future.
Appendix

Conference Participants

Daniel Bell
Professor, Ethics and Political Theory, Tsinghua University

Charles Burton
Associate Professor, Political Science, Brock University

Alfred Chan
Associate Professor, Political Science, Huron University College, University of Western Ontario

Gregory Chin
Assistant Professor, Political Science, York University and Senior Fellow, Centre for International Governance Innovation

David Dewitt
Professor, Political Science and Associate Vice-President, Research and Innovation, York University

Paul Evans
Director, Institute of Asian Research, University of British Columbia

Victor Falkenheim
Professor Emeritus, Political Science, University of Toronto

Bernie Frolic
Professor Emeritus, Political Science, York University and Senior Researcher, Asian Institute, University of Toronto

Rowena He
Postdoctoral Fellow, Fairbank Centre, Harvard University

Susan Henders
Associate Professor, Political Science and Director, York Centre for Asian Research, York University

Gordon Houlden
Director, China Institute, University of Alberta

Dan Koldyk
DPhil Candidate, Comparative Politics, St. Antony's College, University of Oxford

Sonny Lo
Professor, Political Science, University of Waterloo
Qing Miao  
Institute of Sociology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Center for Civic Studies, Shandong University

Lynette Ong  
Assistant Professor, Political Science, University of Toronto and Postdoctoral Fellow, Harvard University

David Ownby  
Professor, History and Director, Centre for East Asian Studies, University of Montréal

Jeremy Paltiel  
Professor, Political Science, Carleton University

Razmik Panossian  
Director, Policy, Programmes and Planning, International Centre for Human Rights & Democracy

Pitman Potter  
Professor of Law and Political Science, University of British Columbia

Marie-Eve Reny  
PhD Candidate, Comparative Politics, University of Toronto

Richard Stubbs  
Professor, Political Science, McMaster University

Steve Trott  
PhD Candidate, Political Science, University of Toronto

Eric Walsh  
Director, North Asia Relations, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Government of Canada

Joe Wong  
Associate Professor and Canada Research Chair, Political Science and Director, Asian Institute, University of Toronto

Gerald Wright  
Chair, Organizing Committee of the Canadian International Council Ottawa Foreign Policy Initiative

Feng Xu  
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