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Cultural Studies in Modern China

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Cultural Studies in Modern China

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Series Preface

Since China's reform and opening began in 1978, the country has come a long way on the path of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics, under the leadership of the Communist Party of China. Over thirty years of reform efforts and sustained spectacular economic growth have turned China into the world's second largest economy, and wrought many profound changes in the Chinese society. These historically significant developments have been garnering increasing attention from scholars, governments and the general public alike around the world since the 1990s, when the newest wave of China studies began to gather steam. Some of the hottest topics have included the so-called "China miracle", "Chinese phenomenon", "Chinese experience", "Chinese path" and the "Chinese model". Homegrown researchers have soon followed suit. Already hugely productive, this vibrant field is putting out a large number of books each year, with Social Sciences Academic Press alone having published hundreds of titles on a wide range of subjects.

Because most of these books have been written and published in Chinese, however, readership has been limited outside China—even among many who study China—for whom English is still the lingua franca. This language barrier has been an impediment to efforts by academia, business communities and policy-makers in other countries to form a thorough understanding of contemporary China, of what is distinct about China's past and present may mean not only for her future but also for the future of the world. The need to remove such an impediment is both real and urgent, and the *Research Series on the Chinese Dream and China's Development Path* is my answer to the call.

This series features some of the most notable achievements from the last 20 years by scholars in China in a variety of research topics related to reform and opening. They include both theoretical explorations and empirical studies, and cover economy, society, politics, law, culture and ecology, the six areas in which reform and opening policies have had the deepest impact and farthest-reaching consequences for the country. Authors for the series have also tried to articulate their visions of the "Chinese Dream" and how the country can realize it in these fields and beyond.

All of the editors and authors for the *Research Series on the Chinese Dream and China's Development Path* are both longtime students of reform and opening and recognized authorities in their respective academic fields. Their credentials and expertise lend credibility to these books, each of which having been subject to a rigorous peer-review process for inclusion in the series. As part of the Reform and Development Program under the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television of the People's Republic of China, the series is published by Springer, a Germany-based academic publisher of international repute, and distributed overseas. I am confident that it will help fill a lacuna in studies of China in the era of reform and opening.

Xie Shouguang

Preface[1]

Cultural Studies has become one of the most dynamic fields of academic studies in China today. Conferences with "Cultural Studies" in their titles are held every year. Many academic journals feature a special column dedicated to "Cultural Studies", and the body of publications, including papers, monographs and book series has been expanding rapidly. There are also numerous Cultural Studies institutions around the country.

As a research methodology, path, approach and point of view, Cultural Studies has penetrated deeply into many different fields of studies in the humanities and social sciences, even those not nominally associated with it. More importantly, Cultural Studies is gaining popularity among young scholars, and quickly becoming a favorite topic of doctoral dissertations. And it is the choices by young scholars that shape the future prospects of Chinese academia.

It was, however, the establishment of the Birmingham (UK) Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham that marked the beginning of Cultural Studies as a distinct academic field of study. "Cultural Studies" so understood hasn't been in existence in China for very long at all. It first appeared on the mainland between the late 1980s and the early 1990s, though it is difficult to pinpoint the exact time, in part because we cannot say convincingly what constitutes and what does not "Cultural Studies". For instance, did the nationwide discussions about culture in the 1980s fall under "Cultural Studies"? It did in a broad sense but d did not in a narrower sense. The same ambiguity and uncertainty are true for studies of traditional culture, tea culture and food culture, to name a few.

Personally, I prefer to define "Cultural Studies" in a comparatively restricted manner; that is, as a field that began when the Birmingham (UK) Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham was established in

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[1]A book generally begins with a preface. So does this one. But it may make no sense to give an overview of the book in this part. This preface is nothing more than my personal thoughts on, instead of a systematic analysis of, Cultural Studies. It is merely what I myself think about Cultural Studies. The opinions of the other two professors who co-authored this book aren't expressed here in this preface. From Tao Dongfeng who wrote the preface.

1964 As a distinct academic subject, "Cultural Studies" is to be distinguished from studies of cultures in a more general sense. The Chinese language edition of *Postmodernism, Or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* by the American Marxist theorist Fredric Jameson (Xi'an: Shaanxi Normal University Press, 1988) and the Chinese language edition of *Dialektik der Aufklärung* (*Dialectic of Enlightenment*) by the Frankfurt School philosophers Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno (Chongqing: Chongqing Publishing House, 1990) may mark the beginning of Cultural Studies in the Chinese mainland. But at that time most people did not think of "Cultural Studies" as a term that referred to a special field of research (one with its own approach, set of problems, political stance and analytical approach, and so forth). Horkheimer and Adorno have long been recognized as masters of Cultural Studies for their criticisms of mass culture (they called it "the culture industry"). Nonetheless, back in the 1940s and 1950s when they conducted their studies of mass culture, the term "Cultural Studies" had yet to be coined. They referred ti what they did as "critical theory". It was scholars of later generations that put the works of Horkheimer and Adorno under the umbrella of what had become "Cultural Studies".

One thing is certain, which is that in the beginning Cultural Studies in China focused on mass culture . Topics included *Yearning*, the wildly popular TV series from the early 1990s, the "hooligan style of writing" by Wang Shuo and pop music. The same thing happened in the west, where when Cultural Studies first emerged it focused quite narrowly on such mass culture phenomena as Hollywood movies and pop music. Personally, I tend to think that while people back then did have different opinions on those cultural phenomena, they did not think of "Cultural Studies" as a whole field of study, nor did they try to engage in theoretical or methodological construction or reflection. It was not until around 2000 when people began to talk about what "Cultural Studies" actually is, what features it has and its relationship with literary studies. For instance, "Cultural Studies" was already used in its specific meaning in 2001 when discussions were held on "the aestheticization of everyday life" and the relationship between "Cultural Studies" and theory of literature and art. That is to say, practices preceded the conscious reflection on theories in the field of Cultural Studies.

I myself began to touch upon the Cultural Studies theory in the early 1990s and focused on mass culture. What I read at that time mainly included the aforementioned *Postmodernism, Or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, *Dialektik der Aufklärung* (*Dialectic of Enlightenment*) and works by other Frankfurt School philosophers, such as Herbert Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man*. Like other elitist-thinking intellectuals, I couldn't agree more with those authors for their comments on the features of mass culture, such as social control, being sensual, commercialized and one-dimensional and mechanical reproduction. "The Culture Industry" was a highly quoted chapter from *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. It seemed that the key to mass culture was finally found all of a sudden.

However, it is noteworthy that the Frankfurt School theory of mass culture was inflexibly copied by the Chinese academic circles; that is to say, the specific context and political and cultural functions of mass culture in China have been terribly overlooked.

Raymond Williams' *Culture and Society* (the Chinese version of which was published in 1991 by Peking University Press) was another important work for the early Cultural Studies. The book lies as a cornerstone of the Cultural Studies in the UK and plays a seminal role in the Cultural Studies in China. Williams put forth in the book his famous ideas on culture, such as "a culture is a whole way of life" and "culture is ordinary". His anti-elitist views of culture have created a legitimate foundation and methodological perspective for the Cultural Studies focusing on mass culture rather than elitist culture. The book happened to be published in China between the late 1980s and the early 1990s. Personally speaking, my studies of mass culture have been focused on civil society discussions. For me, it was a significant source, yet seemed to be left unnoticed.

Then how did I find around 1995 my mechanical copy of the Frankfurt School's critical theory at all? It was more or less coincidental as well. The Chinese academic circles (mainly sociologists in China) happened to hold discussions on civil society in the middle 1990s. Initiated by Deng Zhenglai, the then editor-in-chief of *Chinese Social Sciences Quarterly* (a quarterly journal registered in Hong Kong and published in Beijing), the discussions were warmly received by social sciences scholars, particularly sociologists, and by scholars of political sciences and law. Few humanities scholars, particularly those engaged in literature and aesthetics, took part in those discussions. Nonetheless, scholars of literary criticism and aesthetics were at the time the mainstay of the Cultural Studies in China. That may be one reason why Cultural Studies and civil society discussions couldn't communicate with each other.

A nongovernmental-style journal, *Chinese Social Sciences Quarterly* has been quite popular with insiders. Civil society discussions went under the profound influence of the democratic transformation progressing between the late 1980s and the early 1990s in East European countries, most of which were totalitarian or post-totalitarian ones. In practice, the discussions served as a theoretical response and interpretation to the transformation of the old-day totalitarian countries to democratic and liberal ones. It is worthy of ample attention, as conditions in China and East European countries had much in common. And that was why I paid much attention to the discussions. It was natural for me to do so in the then conditions in China and out of my own past experiences. One thing that interested me was: Is China a "civil society" as opposed to a "totalitarian one" or to what extent it is? It may be put in the other way round: Is China a "totalitarian society" as opposed to a "civil one" or to what extent it is? I agree more with this: China is neither a typical civil society, nor a typical totalitarian one. Instead, it is in the transition from a totalitarian society to a civil society.

This judging of the nature of the Chinese society has played a critical role in my studies of mass culture. Integrating this judging into my thoughts on mass culture in China, I formed an opinion on mass culture, different both from my previous views and the ones by other scholars at the time: In the 1980s and 90s, the Chinese society saw a mass culture that was a special-type civil culture generated in the transition of a totalitarian society to a civil society. Like the then immature civil society in China, this special-type civil culture of the time both depended upon government and stood independent from the latter. It was a folk thing unable to escape from the political force. It couldn't mind only market and business laws, despite the seeding marketization and commercialization. Thus, the mass culture in China at that time tried to challenge, but had to compromise at times, and tried to subvert, yet had to assimilate. Complicated as its content and functions were, it couldn't be simplified or put inflexibly into the mass culture theory popular in the West.

On the one hand, the power of commercial culture to undermine government sanctioned culture manifested itself amply in the late 1980s in China (according to some, including Li Zehou), when the rise and development of mass culture helped put an end to the near-monopoly of officialdom-controlled and elite culture on China's culture scene while at the same time expanding the country's cultural space government-sanctioned culture On the other hand, mass culture was subject to interference and restraints from government-sanctioned culture, thus had to yield and remain subordinate to the latter (few saw this at the time). Mass culture was primarily a bearer of commercial value (though the point can be easily overstated). Therefore, it was to a large extent within this context that I changed my views on mass culture, particularly the mass culture local to China. Looking back, the changes resulted from my integrating civil society theory with the studies of mass culture, which led me to abandon the one-sided application of the Frankfurt School's theories and to a great extent, go beyond an overly simplistic elitist mindset and narrow perspectives on humanities (civil society theory is a social theory). In this context, I wrote a number of articles on mass culture, including "Compromise and Interpenetration of Government-sanctioned Culture and Mass Culture: An Inspection of the Post-1989 Chinese Culture",[2] "Binary Opposition beyond Historism and Moralism: On a Third Stand on Mass Culture"[3] and "Critical Theory and Mass Culture Criticism in China".[4] In these articles I made substantial revisions to my previous research perspectives and conclusions. The last of these articles, in particular, gave a review of how mass culture studies in China mechanically applied the Frankfurt School's theory. I think it was this change in my

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[2]Tao Dongfeng, "Compromise and Interpenetration of Government-sanctioned culture and Mass Culture: An Inspection of the Post-1989 Chinese Culture", *Chinese Social Sciences Quarterly* (Hong Kong), August 1995.

[3]Tao Dongfeng, "Binary Opposition beyond Historism and Moralism: On a Third Stand to Mass Culture", *Shanghai Culture* (Shanghai), 1996 (3).

[4]Tao Dongfeng, "Critical Theory and Mass Culture Criticism in China", *Oriental Culture* (Guangzhou), 2000 (5).

studies that helped me see better the complexity and uniqueness of mass culture in China. I have been focusing on these two issues ever since.

Cultural Studies in China saw another important event in the early and mid-1990s when *Dushu* (*Reading*) magazine published in 1993 a series of articles introducing Edward Said and post-colonial criticism, thus helped intensifying the consciousness of the third world and geopolitics in Cultural Studies. However, some of those articles featured a sympathy for parochial nationalism. Roughly around the same time, reflections on modernity and globalization, post-modern and world-system theories were introduced to China, leading many Chinese academics to change their ideas about modernization and modernity. This was clearly seen in the field of Cultural Studies. As is known to all, modern ideology dominated the fields of humanities and social sciences in the 1980s. Large disagreements existed on the question of whether Chinese or Western cultures were more suited to modernization. Nevertheless, all the interlocutors had similar theoretical resources and model of discourse and appeared to agree on one thing, that modernization and modernity are of positive value. The only questions were whether the Chinese culture was good enough for modernization and how modernization is to unfold in the Chinese context. The Cultural Studies practice in China in the early 1990s under the influence of the Frankfurt School no longer pursued modern ideology alone. But it hardly touched upon issues of geopolitics and cultural colonialism, either.

Things were different with the post-colonial theory: Did the traditional Chinese culture lead to the backward position of China in the process of modernization? Or, was China unable or hard to get modernized under the oppression from the capitalist world system? It was no longer a self-evident question. Many "New Leftists" (mostly nationalists) often held an opinion quite different from the modern theory. According to them, China fell behind in the process of modernization, as China was marginalized in the capitalist world system, not because the traditional Chinese culture couldn't go well with modernization. They thus considered Mao Zedong's socialist modernization mode as a modern alternative to resist the capitalist modernity of the West and a great attempt to open up a way of modernization of China's own. Some others even equated China's "Charter of Anshan Iron and Steel Factory" with post-Fordism and the mass campaigns in the Cultural Revolution with mass democracy. Nevertheless, these thoughts simply seemed to be inconceivable in the 1980s.

In this sense, the introduction of the post-colonial theory into China has had a profound influence on China's Cultural Studies. For example, Said's *Orientalism* has left much impact upon China's Cultural Studies and even the entire intelligentsia of China. Not that obscure in its content, this book changed Chinese intellectuals' perspectives on the Chinese history, in general, and the modern Chinese history, in particular. Since the May Fourth Movement, the Chinese intelligentsia had seen the West-influenced modernization in China in a positive perspective by the 1980s. Then, some scholars, with the inspiration from the post-colonial theory, held that the Chinese history of modernization was actually a

process of "alienation", during which period the Chinese nation gradually lost its own identity. According to the scholars holding the aforementioned opinion, Lu Xun and other enlightenment thinkers actually internalized the Western imperialist thoughts, by trying to reshape the national characteristics, and what those thinkers advocated was the self-exile and self-alienation of the Chinese nation. Thus, the long-recognized discourse of enlightenment from the May Fourth Movement onwards was entirely and completely denied and the narration of the modern Chinese history rewritten. Nonetheless, has this theory infected with nationalist and New Left thoughts opened a new horizon, or covered up the issues not fully and deeply discussed before? It may be tested only by time.

Around the turn of centuries, China saw a rapid economic development, while consumerism swept across the country, ragingly with hedonism, utilitarianism, Cynicism and presentism (I coined this term to describe the attitudes and lifestyle totally indifferent to future and past). In the meantime, Chinese people cared less about politics, showed a weak awareness of citizenship, but got zealous about amusements and fun. By this, I don't try to deny any of these social phenomena or cultural thoughts in the previous times. Instead, those things stood out around the turn of centuries as never before. Thus, Cultural Studies needed changes once again.

It was during this period when I learned about Václav Havel's post-totalitarianism. According to Havel, the most distinct characteristic of a post-totalitarian society lies as the integration of consumerism and totalitarianism. On the one hand, the public indulge themselves in consumption and sensual fun and enjoy an unprecedented freedom in this. They "sing what they like" and they "do as they wish". While on the other hand, most people care nothing about political issues and are passionless to public participation and indifferent to civil rights. Skepticism prevails and people believe in nothing. Utilitarianism, however, pushes people to do anything, so long as there is profit. People lose interest and faith in ideological empty words and lies and skepticism are developed into nihilism and Cynicism, so that people question any possibilities to change the reality. "Post-totalitarian phenomena", as I call them, are simply found everywhere.

The mass culture in a post-totalitarian society has its own phenomena or patterns. I myself have focused more on parody and fantastic literature. Parody literature reflects a distinct mentality of young adults in a post-totalitarian society: They are radical skeptics who hold aggressively negative attitudes toward idols and authority (as shown in their copying classics in an amusing manner), and meanwhile, they muddle along, without any positive thoughts and teasing everything. Young adults seek a seemingly easy life and try to avoid any serious issues by diving into the world of fantastic literature. They hardly care about the reality or have any sense of history. Instead, they simply indulge themselves in the unreal world constructed with video games, a vacuum place without the past or future.

In some people's opinion, though Cultural Studies appears to be popular in China today, it is actually a neglected or marginalized sector, considering its systematization level and the support and recognition it receives from the national educational and research institutes. I hardly agree with this opinion, though.

Cultural Studies is popular in China, not merely appearing to be popular. The level of systematization or governmental support cannot serve as the single criterion to assess an academic sector's popularity. Or rather to say, the level of institutionalization or disciplinary specialization of an academic field doesn't suffice to illustrate whether the academic field is popular or not. It is simply because institution doesn't mean everything. So it is particularly true today. Otherwise, we may come to a conclusion as absurd as that Han Han and Guo Jingming or pop stars are not as popular as Marxism and Leninism.

This is particularly important to Cultural Studies, which is an academic field under exploration, little systematized or disciplinarily specialized, and in its nature, an interdisciplinary or even anti-disciplinary field. In today's modern disciplinary context, disciplinary specialization lies as the basic mode and symbol of systematization. It is particularly true in China. The basic pattern remains unchanged, despite reflections on the issue, though. Ministry of Education still follows a highly-specialized path of higher education (such as specialty design, undergraduate enrollment and graduate programs) and the situation is unlikely to see any radical changes in future.

In the meantime, Cultural Studies as a research methodology, path, purport and standpoint, or as a critical mentality and public concern, has been traced in every corner of humanities and social sciences, even in some academic studies that are not known as "Cultural Studies" by the name, such as studies of communication, film and television, literary theory, comparative literature and modern literature. It is easy to understand, if we take Cultural Studies as an academic research methodology and purport. In another word, it is its research purport, methodology and standpoint that decide whether a research belongs to Cultural Studies. Taking for communication studies for example, it may be or may not be Cultural Studies, all depending upon its purports, including political orientation, interdisciplinary methods, marginalized standpoint and critical and interventional tendency. So are the situations concerning literary theory and criticism. In my opinion, my literary studies and criticism and those done by some others are essentially Cultural Studies. Of course, some are not. I am delighted to see a deeper and wider application of the methodology, purport and objective of Cultural Studies in humanities and social sciences, despite various doubts and criticisms. Cultural Studies enjoys a promising prospect in China.

Cultural Studies gains its stronghold and vitality in practice, as it is highly sensitive and responsive to key social and cultural phenomena in modern China, in various applicable ways. Cultural Studies is also sensitive to and absorbs all sorts of leading-edge theories (in philosophy, sociology, linguistics and social theories). At present, Cultural Studies in China is confronted with many problems. For instance, it remains strange to leading-edge theories and not professional enough in practice or operation. The fundamental issue lies in the lack of space of speech and in the little attention to the context and issues unique to China. Western theories are still copied mechanically.

Furthermore, theoretical resources for Cultural Studies lie well beyond the field itself. Personally, I see few true masters among the Cultural Studies scholars

recognized by the Western academia (Raymond Williams, who has been seen as the Founder of Cultural Studies, is not a Cultural Studies scholar, strictly speaking. What he did for Cultural Studies was to lay the foundation for the idea and approach of Cultural Studies). None of the Cultural Studies works could be as deep or methodical in thought and theory as Heidegger's *Being and Time*, Gadamer's *Truth and Method*, Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism* and *The Human Condition*, Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Bourdieu's *Distinction* and *The Theory of Communicative Action* by Habermas. I'd like to consider Cultural Studies as "parasites" on the trees of giant thoughts like Marx, Foucault and Bourdieu. Personally, I don't think there is any master thinker or masterpiece of novel theories in Cultural Studies. To be frank, none of the Western thinkers who have exerted the most profound influence upon me or none of my favorite academic works is from or concerning the narrow-sense Cultural Studies field. For example, neither Habermas nor Bourdieu, both of whom are my favorite philosophers, is a Cultural Studies scholar, despite their unrivaled influence on Cultural Studies. Nevertheless, I've found it of more help to read their works than to read the narrow-sense Cultural Studies ones, as the former ones help shape or reshape one's academic horizon by the roots.

Bourdieu's works have to a large extent changed my opinions on literature and aesthetics. For instance, I believe now that both literature and aesthetics are social constructs. Self-discipline of literary arts in the 1980s was also a social construct. It was never born so. Instead, it created certain social conditions for self-disciplined literature and literary theory. Because of impacts from various conditions, self-discipline of literary arts was neither self-evident nor eternal. The abovementioned opinions of mine are all inspired by Bourdieu's influence, of course. Moreover, Bourdieu's influence also came from his theory of power applied to art analysis. As time passed, I grew increasingly unsatisfied with Bourdieu's theories that largely target Western countries. What are the characteristics of the Chinese society? What is the special relations among power and literature and art unique to China? It is hardly possible to answer these questions by reading Bourdieu's works. Thus, we need to make one more step and embark on a deeper investigation into China's social and cultural structures and the dispute on the relationship between culture and politics in China. This investigation covers issues such as China's social nature and structure of state, the relationships between the government and the market and between the government and the people.

To grasp the essence of these issues, I shifted my attention to Arendt's theories, particularly her arguments on totalitarianism, commonality and politics. In addition, I read about Havel's post-totalitarian theory. With these theories, we may better understand the Post-1949 Chinese society and the social and cultural status quo in China. I made more progress academically by reading Western cultural theories for full understanding.

I would like to stress here the significance of Arendt and Havel to Cultural Studies of China. As is known to all, Western Cultural Studies has been under the heavy influence of Marxism and almost all the renowned figures in Cultural Studies in the West are "Leftists" believing in Marxism, more or less. Influenced by

Western left-wing thoughts, Cultural Studies in China has seemed to be left-leaning from the very beginning. Moreover, it tends to be more so in recent years. But, situations in the West differ from that in China. Socialism has dominated China since 1949 when the People's Republic of China was founded and Marxism has been always the only officially-legitimate ideology. The political, economic and cultural patterns of China have never gone fully capitalist even in the post-Mao era. So, would it be absurd if the Cultural Studies circle in China blindly follow the West and criticize capitalism?

I think Arendt's and Havel's theories and thoughts fit Cultural Studies in contemporary China better than do post-modernism and the Frankfurt School's theories, even though I used to be a keen follow of the Frankfurt School and post-modernism.[5] With some self-reflection, I felt it insufficient to analyze the cultural phenomena in contemporary China only with post-modernism and the Frankfurt School' theories, as the theoretical discourse and the cultural reality have apparently been incommunicable, for those theories have been extracted from and for the social and cultural conditions in the Western developed capitalist countries, while China is too much different from those countries. Havel's and Arendt's theories, in contrast, make a better fit in the Chinese context, as Arendt drew her theories mainly from the social realities of Germany and Havel based his thoughts on the social and cultural phenomena in socialist and post-socialist Czech in East Europe. Evidently, the conditions in these two countries had more in common with those in China.

I have recently tried to establish a totalitarian and post-totalitarian paradigm of Cultural Studies. It is not easy, though. As previously noted, Western Cultural Studies scholars have based their theories and thinking on capitalist societies of the West, thus are largely left-leaning in political orientation. Western Cultural Studies is therefore a red sector finding its driving forces in criticisms of capitalist society and mass culture. If we mechanically transplant Western theories of Cultural Studies into China's context, taking capitalist society and mass culture as the target of our criticisms, we risk choosing the wrong objects to criticize and arriving at wrong conclusions. In my recent publications I have been trying to clarify this argument. For instance, in "To Know Our Version of 'Amusing Ourselves to Death': The Abusive Use of a Western Cultural Theory in China", I argued it is inappropriate to apply Neil Postman's notion of "amusing ourselves to death" in the Chinese context. According to Postman, people become confused by and finally drown in the excess of freedom, information and choices. Postman also thinks that Orwell's prophecy never came true in the West. The latter predicts that culture will one day die in totalitarianism. Instead, Postman points out that the West has finally seen Huxley's "Brave New World" in which human cultures die in excessive democracy, interests and choices, rather than totalitarianism. People simply enjoy too much fun and comfort in that "Brave New World". In too easy a life, one will

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[5]See Tao Dongfeng, "Desire and Degradation: Criticism on Contemporary Mass Culture", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*) (Changchun), 1993 (6).

fall into the obsession with entertainment. But I don't think it is what we have in China now. China faces quite complicated situations combining consumerism and totalitarianism with its own characteristics. Thus, present-day China is neither a Brave New World nor a typical totalitarian country. It's an integration of the two. Based on this, I try to investigate into specific cultural examples and cases in contemporary China and establish a new research model of mass culture of my own that is different from the existing Western Cultural Studies theories.

Guangzhou, China   Dongfeng Tao

Acknowledgements

Contents

Chapter 1
Context of Cultural Studies

1 Sociocultural Context of Cultural Studies in China

Cultural Studies, now an important subject in the humanities and social sciences category, has not been established as an academic discipline for long in China, as researchers have generally agreed. Though Chen Guangxing, a Cultural Studies scholar from Taiwan stresses the historical relations between the Cultural Studies and the literati tradition in China, particularly the modern tradition of cultural criticism of which Lu Xun stood out as a representative figure, such argument doesn't necessarily mean Cultural Studies as what we understand today was in existence around the May Fourth Movement (let alone in ancient China). A broad consensus in the academic community is that Cultural Studies emerged in the Chinese mainland between the late 1980s and the early 1990s. The two most important reasons for this would be the influence of Cultural Studies in the West and the birth and boom of the Chinese mass culture.

Then the immediate question we need to address is why Cultural Studies should have emerged in the Chinese mainland at this rather than at another time.

1. Emergence of Cultural Studies in China

Before defining the exact time when Cultural Studies occurred in China, we need first to understand what this field of study is about.

Like Chen Guangxing, Mr. Ding Shouhe from the Chinese mainland also believes that Cultural Studies had already been in existence in modern China by the May Fourth Movement, and the scope of research include ethics and morals in the May Fourth Movement, Sun Yat-sen' Three Principles of the People, Marxism of the People's Republic of China, restoration of order after the crash of the Gang of Four, as well as the "cultural fever" concerning China's modernization in the 1980s.[1] The "Cultural Studies" in this sense is almost all-encompassing, without

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[1]Ding Shouhe. Cultural Studies in China in the Past 70 Years. *Journal of Literature, History and Philosophy*, 1990 (2).

defining at all what cultural phenomenon to be studied, what methodology to be used, nor what theoretical background or values might be involved. This is quite different from how scholars understand the term today. There even appeared a journal devoted to the study of traditional Chinese culture in the Chinese mainland. *Chinese Cultural Research*, which was first published in 1993, carries articles on fashion, tea, the Yellow Emperor culture and regional cultures in China. Nonetheless, those researches vary greatly from "Cultural Studies" defined in this book in terms of method and object of study, standpoint and purport. It would be an impossible mission to include in this book all these forms of cultural research (as in that case, the timeline would have to be pushed back to thousands of years ago, instead of starting from the May Fourth Movement).

To provide a practical definition for this book, we would follow the common practice of Western academia, taking the establishment of the Birmingham (UK) Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham in 1964 as the beginning of Cultural Studies. The theories or thoughts that had previously influenced the Center's research, such as Marxism (Western Marxism included), psychoanalysis, semiotics and structuralism, may be used as important academic resources. In addition, what characterizes the Center's work, such as an interdisciplinary approach, political engagement/criticism, concerns for contemporary culture, particularly mass culture, defense of the cultural rights of underprivileged groups, and high sensitivity to the power relations in a culture, may be used to measure whether a piece of research falls into the scope of Cultural Studies.

By these standards, the Chinese version of *Postmodernism, Or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* by the American Marxist theorist Fredric Jameson (1988) and of *Dialektik der Aufklärung* by Frankfurt School philosophers Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno (1990) may mark the beginning of Cultural Studies in the Chinese mainland, though they were not even categorized as "Cultural Studies" by the academic circles at the very beginning. Back then people had no clear idea about this academic field, and it was not until the first half of the 1990s that the Chinese academia had come to understand how it was explored in the contemporary Western world. *Dushu* (*Reading*) Magazine organized in September 1994 the Cultural Studies and Cultural Space Symposium, the first ever academic event in China that discussed Cultural Studies in the true sense. In August 1995 another symposium, which better fits our definition of the term, was held in Dalian. Named "Cultural Studies: China and the West", this International Symposium included discussions on the history and status of Cultural Studies in the West, the relevant topics in contemporary China and the relations between comparative literature and Cultural Studies. The organizer of this symposium adopted the term "Cultural Studies" in its narrow sense in a resolutely affirmative manner. In July 1996, an international symposium on "Cultural Acceptance and Transformation" was held in Nanjing, talking about the issues like the influence of the European and American mass culture on China, the impacts of Cultural Studies and our countermeasures, cultural globalization and the research on cultural identity. These three symposiums

are milestone events that shaped the development of Cultural Studies in China.[2] Then in about 2000, the academic circles in the Chinese mainland began to exhibit keen interest on the issues such as what Cultural Studies is about and its relations with literary studies. The term "Cultural Studies" started to be in use by academia.

In the Western world, there were research findings which had been made prior to the establishment of the Birmingham Center and which are now deemed highly important work in Cultural Studies, such as the studies of mass culture conducted by early Frankfurt School theorists. However, these findings had not been recognized as Cultural Studies before the Center was established and the term widely accepted, nor did their researchers name them so in the first place. Likewise in China, research had been conducted well before it was clearly categorized by academia. That's why when we review the history of Cultural Studies in contemporary China, we shall not use the occurrence of an academically accepted definition as the starting point. Nevertheless, it is generally agreed that Cultural Studies rose in China in the early 1990s.

2. Rise of Mass Culture and the Dilemma of Literary Criticism

It is amazing to see so great a development Cultural Studies has experienced in the past 20-plus years since the early 1990s when it arose in the Chinese mainland. We find a close connection between the arising and rapid development of Cultural Studies in China and the sociocultural context unique to China. Indeed, it is a timing response to the social and cultural reality in the Chinese mainland rather than a consequence of the publication of Chinese versions of related Western works, as is indicated by the process of acceptance of Jameson's *Postmodernism, Or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* in China.

Published in 1986 (by Shaanxi Normal University Press), the book may be the first one that introduced Western Cultural Studies achievements to China. It describes in concise words the major thoughts and schools of Cultural Studies in the contemporary West. Nonetheless, the book gained little popularity at the time. Those few who noticed it didn't see it as a "Cultural Studies" work or the symbol of "Cultural Studies" in China. The academic circles began to get interested in this book all of a sudden around 1992, as mass culture local to China gained a sudden momentum at the moment. Or rather to say, the arising of mass culture local to China boosted that of Cultural Studies in the country.

Moreover, *Dialektik der Aufklärung* (*Dialectic of Enlightenment*) by Horkheimer and Adorno was first published in China in 1990. However, it had not been frequently quoted (particularly the chapter titled "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception") until 1992.

As is clearly shown by the two aforementioned examples, the Chinese academic circles have, out of their own cultural reality and needs, made selective acceptance to Western Cultural Studies theories.

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[2]Ma Zheng (2005). Cultural Studies in China. *Theory and Criticism of Literature and Art*, 2005 (1).

Then, what changes took place in the sociocultural context in China around 1992, so that China felt all of a sudden an urgent need of Western Cultural Studies theories? Scholars have all through these years been on consensus for this issue. It's been agreed that the rapid economic development China has experienced since the 1990s onwards generates and nourishes unstoppable marketization and secularization. Culture keeps changing accordingly. Popular culture, consumption culture and mass culture, particularly mass culture local to China, got prosperous (previously, mass culture in China had been mainly Taiwan, Hong Kong and American cultures). There emerged a sharp contrast to the single momentum of elite and avant-garde cultures popular with intelligentsia in the 1980s. The old-day transcendent discourse of idealism, elitism and humanism preferred by humanities scholars became pale and weak in front of new cultural reality. Therefore, many adventurous scholars turned to Western Cultural Studies theories and methodologies. That is why what interested people most in Jameson's *Postmodernism* lies in its description of the forms and text features of post-modern mass culture (e.g. being one-dimensional and the mechanical reproduction), for mass culture rose fast in China in the early 1990s.

This would be well proved with comments by scholars both at the time and of later times. Li Tuo, a pioneer scholar in cultural criticism said, "In the middle 1980s, particularly from the 1990s onwards, the culture market and industry 'rose' all of a sudden, as market economy kept fast developed in China. Mass culture then seemed to blaze across the country, radically changing the cultural landscape in China in a matter of years. How should critics and theorists respond to this? … Cultural Studies may answer these questions in a better way."[3] Dai Jinhua related her experience to her work in establishing the Cultural Studies Laboratory of Research Institute of Comparative Literature, Peking University, "We established the laboratory as a response to the challenges the cultural reality imposed upon us in the 1990s. It was also a response to my frustration at the time" that "was actually a sort of desperation or to some extent a nervous breakdown generated by the unacceptable fact that commercialization took the entire country unexpectedly". "We felt as if we were looking at a world filled with mass culture, commercial culture and culture market overnight." In this circumstance, the previous structure of knowledge didn't suffice to deal with the new challenges from the changing culture. And Dai established the laboratory to cope with the new situation and respond to Western Cultural Studies theories. As she put it, "Our attempt to introduce Cultural Studies to China was first of all aimed to deal with the reality in the Chinese society. And it happened to fit the design of a Cultural Studies institute. Secondly, we tried to deal with the dual challenges from the Chinese society and Western theories by conducting Cultural Studies in the Chinese context."[4] In

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[3]Dai Jinhua, *As If ina Mirror: Interviews with Dai Jinhua* (Beijing: Knowledge Press, 1999), p. 214.

[4]Dai Jinhua, *As If ina Mirror: Interviews with Dai Jinhua* (Beijing: Knowledge Press, 1999), p. 216.

addition, as the editorial board of *Cultural Studies* journal (the only journal specialized in Cultural Studies published in the Chinese mainland) edited by Tao Dongfeng and his colleagues put in "Preface" of the inaugural issue, "Cultural Studies emerged in China in the 1990s as a result of the local conditions of China", even though it was indeed under the Western influence. Also, Western Cultural Studies should be localized, as was stressed in the same article: "Western Cultural Studies theories and methodologies will see and has seen enormous changes, after they were introduced to China, as the context here is totally different. Cultural Studies in China must root itself in the soil of the Chinese culture."[5]

What sort of challenges did mass culture impose on critics, so that these scholars found it insufficient to deal with the new issues with old theories and methods? We may be clearer about this through the following example. Wang Shuo, who is known as the representative figure of "the hooligan style of writing", may be a "specimen" of the writers in the Chinese mainland in transition between the 1980s and 90s. In his works of the 1980s, Wang Shuo openly teased elite intellectuals and even mainstream discourse with his hooligan-like protagonists and hooligan style of writing. In this way, he put on a face different from the idealist tendency of the other writers. Four of his novels were put into films in 1988 and Wang was thought to be one of the first popular writers getting successful in film industry. He then participated in the screenplay writing and production of the TV series *Desire* and hit an enormous success. In the next years, Wang Shuo established a company to make way into the production of TV series and became the first writer to become deeply involved in the production of mass culture. Drawing on personal experience, Wang Shuo talked about how his ideas on culture radically changed during the 1980s and 90s, "The entire decade of the 1980s was filled with cultural feasts, one surprise after another… Back then, the concept of culture didn't cover mass culture, or rather, consumption culture. The idea of entertainment didn't exist either".[6] However, when it went to the 1990s, "people felt as if China fell into the era of consumption overnight. Mass culture was then no longer an implicit ray. Instead, it hit people suddenly and heavily like big raindrops." But as Wang Shuo put it, "I wasn't aware of a coming new era yet. I thought what we were experiencing was nothing more than changes in lifestyle, thanks to a prosperous economy. I was still confined to the old idea that culture would be non-industrial mental activities conducted by only a few, thus the non-returned giving, guidance and leading to the public. The other-way-round would never be possible. I kept scorning the public's tastes. But still, I tried every means to win the public, even though I refused to be part of them."[7]

But when he became a part of the typical mass culture by engaging in writing screenplays for films and TV series, Wang Shuo felt personally the challenges

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[5]Tao Dongfeng, Jin Yuanpu & Gao Bingzhong et al., Eds., *Cultural Studies* (Vol. I) (Tianjin: Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences Press, 2000), p. 3.

[6]Wang Shuo, *Gossips* (Kunming: Yunnan People's Publishing House, 2004), p. 141.

[7]Ibid., p. 143.

imposed by marketization and commercialization of culture. He joined a TV series production center equipped with a studio. However, the studio must be on full operation all through the year, to keep a balanced budget. In this circumstance, the old-day elitist way of creation seemed to be outdated.

It was no longer possible to create any carefully-conceived works, as it would be no different from relying upon Heaven for the profit. Industrial organization and production are the only guarantee of scale and economic profit. That's the operational mode of mass culture! People's desire for higher productivity drove the changes in the relations of production. Once on this crew, I felt something totally different from the past. All the members reached an agreement: What we were going to write wouldn't be a personal thing. We'd better push aside personal pursuits and values. It would be something for the public. Thus, it should follow the public's values and tastes. That was the rule of game and work ethics of mass culture! Once a writer or artist joined such a crew, he must abandon his own personality, ideals of art and even personal style of art. A writer's personality would stand as the arch enemy to mass culture, unless his personality would cater for the public's tastes and needs…[8]

Wang Shuo remembered how they worked this way.

The whole thing looked as if we were working on a mathematic equation. If there was a good man, then there must be a not-that-good man. With one character living in a *hutong*, the other would definitely live in an apartment. A passionate character would surely find another cool-headed one. A person would always be too good to enjoy a smooth life. Thus, he or she would always come across all sorts of bad lucks, simply to live on as a good person. All the characters would be pre-fabricated with certain traits. They were just like chess pieces, each with its path as ruled. We called this method typification in which each one had its position and functions. Popular literature has an iron rule of its own that can't be disobeyed by any writer, regardless of art insights and conscience of arts. The rule requires densely-knitted plots and conflicts, with every character going to the extreme. It is stupid to try to pursue one's ambitions of art in a work produced that way. Accordingly, a writer is often misjudged about his/her cultural tastes and standpoint through such a work.[9]

Wang Shuo said somewhere else that "writing TV series screenplays is something totally different… TV series are only something to make a dream for the public… A writer doesn't have a clear idea about what to write. His work goes by its own course. Actually, writing a popular TV series is not an art creation at all. It's sort of operation. It's about techniques. All the characters in a TV series are stereotyped."[10]

Those TV series are written and produced to entertain, "to make a dream for the public". Wang Shuo denied any deep meanings of his screenplay of *Editorial*

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[8]Ibid., pp. 144–145.

[9]Ibid., p. 145.

[10]Wang Shuo, *I am Wang Shuo* (Beijing: China International Culture Press, 1992), p. 47.

Board, "All what I did was for an (comic) effect. My only worry was if the audience didn't laugh. The directors and actors and actresses did their job for the same purpose, to make people laugh."[11]

The mainstream literary critics were dumbfounded by the cultural products for such a purpose and produced in such a way, as they were still immersed in the idea of elite culture popular in the 1980s. What did the cultural circles look at and like? We may have some idea in the following words of the 1980s.

At the end of the 1970s, Chinese people seemed to wake up with a start from the barbaric Middle Ages and had a thirst for the brilliant achievements of human civilizations and cultures. Symphony, ballet, Western painting and literary classics grew into vogue. Abstract art, obscure poems, opera of the absurd and modernist novels gained popularity. Even the books on philosophy and psychology authored by Sartre, Freud and Maslow hit best-seller lists. Chinese culture at the time was pioneered by the campaign of ideological emancipation and saturated with an Enlightenment-like zeal and a mentality of realistic criticism. The soul of Prometheus "the Fire Stealer" struggled and shouted in the Chinese culture in that new era, when the Chinese culture showed a humanitarian ideal and a self-awareness of aesthetic criticism, through a proactive intervention into the reality, a serious reflection on history and a revolutionary transformation of art language. Be it "trauma literature" or "introspection literature" persisting in critical realism, or "photorealistic" painting like *Father* passionate of documentary aesthetics, or the Fifth Generation Directors' films rebelling against the classical narrative pattern, or TV productions like *Revelation* and *New Stars* concerned about social issues, cultural works at that time in China demonstrated a sense of responsibility and calling to reinterpret and reshape the world and displayed a zeal for cultural progress and art reform.[12]

One may well imagine how terribly Wang Shuo's works were despised and disdained by critics who'd been accustomed to such an atmosphere in the previous 10-odd years. They condemned him for his hooligan style of writing and for his flippancy and teasing everything. They accused him of making up to the public and yielding to nihilism, as a man without any critical thinking.[13] But one can't help with feeling something wrong with those criticisms, as it would be less effective or reliable to judge mass culture with the criteria for elite or avant-garde culture. The criteria, which advocate pure art, aesthetics, ideal and subjectivity, are nothing more than empty words in front of products of mass culture, except as an angry denial of them. Any criticisms unable to go deep into its object remain pale and powerless. Wang Shuo thought that those criticisms missed the point.

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[11]Ibid., p. 49.

[12]Huang Huilin & Yin Hong, *Studies of Mass Culture in Contemporary China* (Beijing: Beijing Normal University Press, 1998), p. 2.

[13]Wang Xiaoming et al., "Ruins in the Wilderness: Crisis of Literature and Humanism", *Shanghai Literature*, 1993 (6).

Literary and art works fall into three categories. Those for publicity and education are a common practice by every government around the world and receive government support. The other two are commercialized mass culture popular with people and pure art. Some like to confuse the three. It's what popular culture does (purely for fun or entertainment, as cited from Wang Shuo above—note by quoter). You cannot ask more from it… But people like to judge avant-garde culture with the criteria for mass culture, or judge popular culture with the criteria for pure art and literature. It's absurd. Few of those criticisms hit the point, indeed.[14]

The criticisms on Wang Shuo appear to be even paler and more powerless in front of Wang Shuo's extraordinarily frank "self-criticisms". Wang showed frequently disdain for his own mass culture works. Upon screenplay writing, he commented, "If not that arrogant, I'm the most marketable playwright in China. But I've never enjoyed this job… Can you say that a famous courtesan gained this reputation because she loved this job? Isn't it true that a famous courtesan was usually the most determined to leave her past behind? Among my playwright friends in Beijing, we call ourselves scornfully as literary courtesans. The two jobs have nothing different, except what is on sale. The feeling and even behaviors in screenplay writing are the same as those of a courtesan."[15] In his later fictions, Wang Shuo even considered his works of mass culture as "spiritual opium" produced particularly "for Chinese people around the globe who slightly feel themselves inferior and have a tendency of early-stage depression, but need no medicament for treatment… and maybe for the mentally handicapped as well. Many foreigners like those works, too. Quite a number of queer research institutes in the U.S. and Europe import those works on purpose."[16] Critics may only be stunned when they try to apply pure art criticisms on mass culture that "knows itself so well" and knows so clearly about "its target of production". In this context, literary critics had to change their views to adapt to the new reality of culture.

3. A Reflection on the Discussion of "Humanism"

The 1980s was generally recognized as a decade of humanism that saw elite writers and artists and intellectuals of humanities stand as the vanguard. The reform and opening up and ideological emancipation initiated and advocated by government and intelligentsia echoed with each other and created an atmosphere for the vigorous new enlightenment movement in the circle of humanities in the 1980s. This new enlightenment movement aroused among theorists discussions on "the criteria of truth", "alienation", the theory of human nature and humanism, the subjectivity and autonomy of literature, as well as the relationship between the traditional Chinese culture and modernization. In the wake of the May Fourth Movement, the new enlightenment movement promoted, in the literary circles, humanism and

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[14]Wang Shuo, *I'm Wang Shuo* (Beijing: China International Culture Press, 1992), pp. 49–50.
[15]Ibid., p. 65.
[16]Wang Shuo, *A Conversation with Our Daughter* (Beijing: People's Literature Publishing House, 2008), pp. 78–79.

individual rights and stressed non-utilitarianism and aesthetics in literature and art. The thought fit well the political and cultural atmosphere at the time, thus pushed humanities intellectuals to the forefront of the times. In actuality, as some assert, China experienced an era of romantics in the 1980s that was an icon of idealism, radical self-criticism and an open mind and attitude toward the Western thoughts.[17]

Differences between the 1980s and 90s are described with key words:

Buzzwords in the 1980s
Passion Cordial Rebel Romantic Idealism Knowledge Dislocated Unenlightened
Muddleheaded Arrogant Shallow Crazy History Culture Naïve Simple Desert Enlightenment
Truth Ego-boost Thought Power Common sense Sense of calling Collective Socialism
Elite Humanities Thirst Bold Friendship Debate Literate youngsters Late youth

Buzzwords from the 1990s onwards
Pragmatic Profit Money Market Information New   space Clear-headed Sophisticated Fashion
Individual Power System Facelift Adjustment Astute Anxious Commerce Clamorous
The public Young cynics Capitalism Body Study Academics Economy Marginalized Feeling of loss
Integrated International Pluralistic Possibility
See Zha Jianying, *1980s: Interviews* (Beijing: Joint Publishing, 2006), back cover.

It is not a wrong idea that elite culture dominated the cultural horizon in China in the 1980s. However, it doesn't necessarily mean that there was no mass culture back then. In fact, folk cultural products have, in general, been consumed in the largest number (except during the first three decades after the founding of the People's Republic of China, particularly a period as extraordinary as the Cultural Revolution). Even in the times after the May Fourth Movement, books and periodicals with romantic themes (commonly known as the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School in the history of Chinese literature) boasted the largest circulation. So was the situation in the 1980s. With the policy of reform and opening up adopted and launched in China, mass culture in the country recovered fast from the political repression in the previous years and began to embrace the colorful daily life. Looking back into the 1980s, it is not difficult to see how active mass culture

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[17]Zha Jianying, *1980s: Interviews* (Beijing: Joint Publishing, 2006), p. 9.

was in the cultural scene at the time. Ballroom dancing was allowed into the Great Hall of the People in 1979 and aroused a dancing spree across the country. In 1980, songs titled *Xianglian* (*Nostalgia*) and *Jungang zhiye* (*Night at a Naval Port*) started heated discussion and debate. Songs sung by Teresa Teng got officially banned, yet gained more popularity among audience. The dubbed TV series *Garrison's Gorillas* aroused a craze for dubbed foreign TV series in 1981. In the following few years, Hong Kong and foreign-produced TV series were on television, such as *Sugata Sanshiro*, *Fearless*, *Akai Giwaku* and *Attack on Tomorrow*. In 1984, *The Shaolin Temple* became a hot film nationwide. In the same year, aerobic exercise, motorcycles and video parlors hit the buzzword list. Many others have left their traces on China's history of contemporary culture, such as the TV series *The Bund* of 1985, popular songs *I Have Nothing* and *The Slaves' Chant* and Shaanxi-style lyrics of 1986, the song *Winter Fire* of 1987, Wang Shuo's films of 1988 and Xi Murong's poems of 1989.[18]

Why hadn't mass culture become a key social and cultural **topic** until the 1990s, given that it had always had an active existence?

Deng Xiaoping gave his well-known Southern Tour Talks in 1992. After that, marketization reform accelerated. Against this backdrop, mass culture development rapidly thanks to a more mature market environment, and rose as a power that could not be overlooked by academics and scholars. This is only one reason, though, and a more important one, in our opinion, lies in the changed and changing relationship between government-approved/mainstream culture, elite culture and mass culture.

Mass culture wasn't seen as a challenging "issue" to be seriously dealt with in the 1980s, as it stood at the time with elite culture and even the mainstream government-sanctioned culture "in alliance" to a certain extent. Back then, reformers and conservatives both made their voices heard in the official discourse. Intellectuals allied themselves with reformers and set off a second gigantic enlightenment movement since the May Fourth Movement. Mass culture received head-on blame by the political conservatives in power, once it was first introduced to the Chinese mainland from Hong Kong and Taiwan (e.g. Teresa Teng's songs). Facing the blame from the conventional discourse, mass culture took on a tragic yet moving sense of elitism and elite intellectuals became the audience appreciative of Teng's "decadent songs". In a time when the asceticism-agitating totalitarian ideology was doubted and questioned by the majority, even "vulgar" things would be interpreted as something with the significance of "ideological emancipation". Thus, mass culture got on well with intellectuals' elite culture at the time and the two even relied on each other's power for its own development. Their differences, in contrast, didn't stand out. In fact, the commercialized mass culture local to China saw great development in the late 1980s. For instance, four of Wang Shuo's novels were put into film in 1988 alone. Wang and others began to conceive the screenplay for the

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[18]See Shang Wei, ed., *Cultural Memories: 1978–2008*, Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2009.

TV series *Desire* in early 1989. However, humanities and intellectual circles paid little attention to the phenomena as an antithesis.

Things changed from 1989 onwards. The new enlightenment movement advocated by the cultural elite suffered setbacks. The social reality forced humanities and cultural discussions to separate themselves away from politics and politically-sensitive cultural criticism. The elite, critical and politically-concerned debate and discussions lost the previous social soil and got marginalized. In the meantime, depoliticized mass culture embraced a rapid development in the process of commercialization and stepped into the spotlight on the stage of culture. Elite intellectuals, who had dominated with their critical discourse, felt terribly uneasy. What's more, they experienced a double marginalization: Old-day elite intellectuals were marginalized culturally and politically and suffered a marginalization in the social and economic status. According to some scholars, the tough economic situation they sat in had enormous impacts on their mentalities.

Drastic changes in the social structure, particularly the changed economic status, definitely have impacts on a person's mentality. Ordinary teachers felt great pressure in the early 1990s when the previously-frozen social structure was violently shaken entirely and completely. For example, we were not allowed to travel by air for a business trip back then. In addition to the limited budget, it was also an issue of rank differential. Instead, we travelled on train. I would take a taxi at the new railway station when I came back from a business trip. Knowing my destination as East China Normal University, a taxi driver would, without exception, make a sincere comment, "University teachers' life is quite hard, isn't it?" I may talk about this for many times, as that was quite ironic yet representative of that period in history. Seven or eight decades back, writers such as Lu Xun, Hu Shi, Zhou Zuoren and Li Dazhao during the post-May Fourth Movement era all wrote essays and poems to show their sympathy for laborers of a lower social grade like rickshaw pullers. It was a somewhat universal feeling among the enlightenment scholars, whose income was dozens of times that of rickshaw pullers'. Thus, they felt sorry for poor laborers. But what we had in the 1990s was totally on the other way round: Taxi drivers showed their sympathy for university teachers. At that time, a taxi driver earned RMB 3000–4000 a month, while a young university teacher's monthly income might be merely one tenth of that of a taxi driver's. There was even a saying, "A missile scientist earns less than a peddler selling flavored eggs"… Many began to feel worried about the threat of pauperization imposed on intellectuals, let alone the imminent new order of a society of commodity economy, to which scholars were largely little prepared for. Some declared, angrily, that the social ladder in the new era would be with merchants on the top, followed by merchants of culture and with intellectuals on the bottom. Many still looked down upon merchants, as the conventional idea in the Chinese society went: Scholars and officials, peasants, artisans and merchants would occupy the social ladder from the top to the bottom. As indicated by the social ladder in China before the reform and opening up as "workers, peasants, soldiers, scholars and merchants", merchants were always on the bottom. However, when the situation entirely reversed, there must be a strong sense of loss. One felt frustrated about how to evaluate his/her own

career. As those engaged in physics and chemistry put it, that was actually the loss and conflict of values.[19]

Intellectuals struggled in the serious crises of faith and identity, suffering setbacks in politics, losing voices in the cultural arena and being embarrassed economically. Having remained silent for three or four years, the Chinese humanities scholars seemed to find a breakthrough to regain their voices in "the great discussion on humanism" in 1993. "Ruins in the Wilderness: Crisis of Literature and Humanism", a symposium summary by Wang Xiaoming and several postgraduates from the Department of Chinese Language and Literature, East China Normal University, was published on *Shanghai Literature*, 1993 (6), starting the discussion on humanism. Later, *Dushu* (*Reading*) magazine published on Issues 3–7, 1994, a succession of papers under the general title of "Thoughts on Humanism". This time, experts and scholars from circles of literature, history, philosophy and even economics all participated in the discussion that evoked nationwide repercussions in the humanities circle. Many newspapers and periodicals, including *Dongfang* (*Orient*), *Guangming Daily*, *Theory and Criticism of Literature and Art*, *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*) and *Wenyibao* (*Literature and Arts*), also joined in this great discussion that lasted till the summer and autumn of 1995. During this period, the two Zhangs (Zhang Chengzhi and Zhang Wei) of the literary world joined in with "their pens as flags" and their aspiration-filled "literature of the War of Resistance", echoing with Prof. Hong Zicheng and Prof. Xie Mian from Peking University, who mercilessly criticized the contemporary Chinese literature and held a discussion on "the ideal of the contemporary literature". A theoretical debate thus resonated over the entire humanities circle. The discussion has exerted a profound influence on the way of discourse in the humanities circle since the 1990s onwards and laid a foundation for Cultural Studies of China.

The topics in this discussion may lie as follow: (I) What is "humanism" (literati's spirit, religiousness or secular ideas)? (II) Is the statement of "the loss of humanism" a true one (was there "humanism" at all before its "loss")? (III) How to recreate "humanism"? Some discussion-participants denied that "humanism" advocators targeted at mass culture. However, it was undeniable that mass culture was at least one of their major targets (if not the No.1 target). This was clearly seen in Wang Xiaoming et al., "Ruins in the Wilderness".[20] The key question here may

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[19]Chen Sihe, Gao Ruiquan, Wang Xiaoming & Zhang Rulun, "A New Discussion on Humanism", *Dongfang Daily* (Shanghai), 27 May 2012, pp. B02-06.

[20]Meng Fanhua talked about the debate between Wang Meng and Wang Binbin on Wang Shuo's novels, "popular literature or Wang Shuo's style of writing was never the major topic in discussion or the target of 'disciplining'." (Meng Fanhua, *Gods' Spree: Cultural Phenomena in China at the Turn of Centuries* [Beijing: Central Compilation & Translation Press, 2003], p. 175.) But Meng's remark is questionable, if one looks into the materials concerning the debate and the participants' memories. The article "Ruins in the Wilderness" that stirred the discussion clearly talked about "literary men going into business" and criticized Wang Shuo's "hooligan style of writing" and Zhang Yimou's films filled with "xenomania" (Wang Xiaoming et al., "Ruins in the Wilderness: Crisis of Literature and Humanism", *Shanghai Literature*, 1993 [6]). Scholars, be they engaged in intellectual history or literature, called for the reestablishment of humanism. Those engaged in

be: Why a call for humanism finally ended up with the criticism of mass culture? Chen Sihe, who participated in the discussion back then, had a review of it 18 years later.

The intelligentsia was basically inclined to advocate the reform and opening up. From 1992 onwards, the tides of market economy and commodity economy were surging up… Market seemed to be opened up overnight. Furthermore, China experienced a turmoil in 1989. The situation didn't allow the intelligentsia to make open reviews on political issues. Intellectuals thus turned the eye to the economic sphere… As a generation growing up with the anti-capitalist mentality, we were with a mindset on guard against market economy… I read Marx's *Capital* and the theories of political economics in the 1970s. Today, many lawbreakers see nothing more than high profits, in defiance of morals and laws. That's what Marx described that even scaffolds couldn't stop capitalists from risking their lives for the profit three times the cost… Back in 1994, in the face of so radical an economic reform, people's first thought was that market economy might have strong impacts on ethics, morals and customs in our daily life and hit even harder on humanism… Nonetheless, the loss of humanism we were concerned about didn't root in the germinating marketization, for sure (as marketization hadn't fully exert the negative effects at the time). Rather, it was planned economy and ideology-controlling polity in the previous five decades that led to the loss of humanism and the softening of personality among intellectuals. That was why the issue was so complicated. The discussion on "humanism" started from "thoughts" on how to find back our lost humanism. However, we hadn't been able to "discuss" about the issue until market economy rose in the country. And the first issue in discussion was our worries about the negative impacts of early-stage market economy.[21]

The above paragraph is cited from an article published nearly a decade after the discussion on humanism, thus an introspective and significant one. It first points that intellectuals back then originally felt frustrated at the changed political and

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(Footnote 20 continued)

literary studies usually equated humanism with pure literature and further saw the loss of pure literature and the vulgarization of literature as the result of marketization and commercialization. The critic Bai Ye talked with Wang Shuo and some others about what it was like at the time, "Humanism is a hot topic in these days. The sixth issue of *Shanghai Literature* this year published a dialog between Wang Xiaoming and some young scholars from Shanghai about the crisis of literature and humanism… The Association of Literary and Art Theory held the annual meeting in Shanghai recently. Many theorists attending the meeting talked about the frustration of the theory circle and the crisis of humanism. Days ago, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences organized a small symposium on humanism, to prepare appropriate topics for the large symposium in the coming year… In those talks about the crisis of literature and humanism, Wang Shuo is frequently named and cited, as a negative example of literary degradation, though" (Bai Ye, Wang Shuo, Wu Bin & Yang Zhengguang, "Freedom of Choice and Situation of Culture", *Shanghai Literature*, 1994 [4]). Virtually, it was evident that popular literature and mass culture were indeed the foci of the debates.

[21]Chen Sihe, Gao Ruiquan, Wang Xiaoming & Zhang Rulun, "A New Discussion on Humanism", *Dongfang Daily* (Shanghai), 27 May 2012, pp. B02-06.

economic situations. However, they were unable to discuss about political issues. The changed political atmosphere didn't allow intellectuals to retain their previous enlightenment-oriented criticism, while intellectuals couldn't give up their critical attitudes in a short time. Thus, they needed a new object. "Economic issues" (mass culture was simply one of them) became that new target. Seen from the angle of the social situation, it was the dislocation of political, economic and cultural sectors in the 1990s in China that made mass culture a target of criticisms. It was comparatively safe to criticize capitalism, including marketization and mass culture. Secondly, Chen Sihe gets aware of the link between the dislike of market economy and the ideological education his generation received. Chen makes a clear statement in the article that humanism got lost not in marketization of the 1990s, but in the previous planning system and ideological control. The change in thought was quite intriguing. None of the scholars advocating humanism in the middle 1990s, Chen Sihe included, got that idea (that humanism got lost in planned economy and ideological control) at the time. Instead, Wang Meng, who strongly questioned the idea of the loss of "humanism", expressed such an idea.[22]

In the discussion on humanism, the scholars who were strongly against mass culture, unintentionally or deliberately, applied the Frankfurt School's critical theory (particularly "the culture industry" idea in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* by Horkheimer and Adorno). In their opinion, as what Adorno accused mass culture of being commercialized, shallow, sensual and entertainment-oriented, the phenomena already emerged in China. Mass culture is merely the culture industry, rather than culture in its true sense, and demonstrates how spirit gets suppressed by money and how ideals die in reality. In one word, mass culture stands as a threat and challenge to culture in its true sense. Innumerable humanities scholars felt worried about and sorry for the gigantic changes taking place in the cultural horizon in China at the time. Also, they made similar descriptions to the changes:

> From the 1990s onwards, the national ideology and culture, or the enlightenment-oriented intellectual culture, or realism, romanticism or modernism, either retreated from or was forced out of the spotlight. The culture market in China was entirely occupied by diverse short-lived cultural "fast food". Popular music replaced serious literature. Subliterature took the place of pure literature. Stereotyped TV series was in place of artistic genre films. *Flirting Scholar*, a degraded film in the eyes of intellectuals was a huge box-office hit. Artists resorted to commercial means to promote themselves on the market. Then we saw *Deserted City* claimed to be the modern *The Golden Lotus*, as well as varieties of book series like "the Cloth Tiger". Subject to relentless cynical commentaries by Wang Shuo in his writing, the grave and respectable sense of responsibility and mission associated with humanitarianism was made to seem feeble and even hypocritical. As the wave of consumerism swept across the country, the tragic yet noble image of Prometheus faded away from the Chinese cultural scene. People's idea of "heroes and idols" also changed. Out are Huang Jiguang and Qiu Shaoyun of the 1950s and 60s, rebellious figures from the

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[22]See Wang Meng, "Fragmented Thoughts on Humanism", *Orient* (Beijing), 1994 (5).

1970s, or leading thinkers or art vanguards in the period of ideological emancipation of the 1980s, in are "the Four Heavenly Kings of Cantopop" of Hong Kong, Gong Li the oriental beauty, Ge You the talented comedian, Hollywood stars such as Michael Douglas and Demi Moore, and the football star Maradona. Those development marked the beginning of the era of mass culture dominance in China.

Huang Huilin & Yin Hong, *Studies of Mass Culture in Contemporary China* (Beijing: Beijing Normal University Press, 1998), pp. 2–3.

Modernism changed into post-modernism. In the meantime, "realism" tended to be "neo-realism". A trend was in the shaping. Narrative patterns drew people's attention once again. Nonetheless, it was entirely different from the popular style before. This time, it came with clearly-defined commercial objectives. The change took place in literature, music, drama and fine arts. Some writers in vogue were touted as masters of the orthodox "Beijing style". "Teasing words" such as "hanging out" and "no ifs and buts" used in quite informal occasions emerged in headlines. "Fast-food culture" was in vogue. Newly-translated vernacular versions of classics, abridged editions of the world's classics and poor love poems, essay collections and collected love letters were published, plus books with dubious contents and indecent jokes. A large number of writers were willing to cater to private publishers who paid well. These people were commonly known as "those who simply churn out words". Thus, one found on street stalls "hot topics" refusing to disappear (pornography and violence) and new "hot topics" that emerged one after another (swordsmen's stories, fictionalized histories, stock investment, tax evasion, geomantic omen, physiognomy, fortune-telling, interpersonal relations, supernatural power, high-level officials' secrets and shady deals etc.). "Those who simply write whatever" got somehow successful and their motto went that "copy whatever we could copy and paste whatever we've copied".

"Gongliu's Comments on the Cultural Phenomena in 1993", quoted from Zhang Yongqing, ed., *Literary Thoughts in the New Era* (Beijing: China Renmin University Press, 2003), pp. 191–192.

The "Introduction" of *Studies of Mass Cultural in Contemporary China* edited by Huang Huilin clearly outlined the close relationship between the discussion on humanism of the 1990s and the studies of mass culture of China. Published in 1998, the book is said to be "China's first book of a methodical and full description, analysis and evaluation of the history, status quo and development trend of mass culture of contemporary China". Yin Hong the deputy editor of the book wrote the "Introduction" titled "Keep Watch for Humanism". Accordingly, the "Introduction" clarifies the arguments of those who advocated the reestablishment of humanism. It begins with the idea that mass culture is a serious "issue" or "problem" and gives objective analyses of the fundamental reasons why mass culture rose in China: (I) Cultural production was pushed to market in the economic restructuring and

economic profit became an important parameter for cultural products; (II) Consumers of mass culture grew fast in size and power; (III) Image media kept developing; (IV) Ideological control got loosened (which was not that correct); and (V) Idealism and enlightenment lost place in a society of consumption in the shaping. The article only touched upon the Frankfurt School's critical theory and related ideas of the Birmingham (UK) Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies when it talked about mass culture studies in the West. It is noteworthy that the part concerning the Birmingham (UK) Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies actually doesn't draw a full picture of the Center's ideas. Instead, it looks more like something following Leavis's "culture and civilization": It fiercely accuses mass culture of being aesthetically valueless, exerting negative impacts on high culture, producing passive audience, pulling down the overall taste of the entire society and degrading people's sense of aesthetics. The Center's rather complicated attitudes toward mass culture are in fact terribly simplified.

Intellectuals in search and pursuit of humanism criticized, high from a position of the elite, money-oriented things in a commercialized society, and accused those things of resulting in moral degeneration and social disorder. Many of those humanism pursuers went back into the Western and Chinese philosophical classics for the ultimate concern and code of ethics. Thus, they ended up with how to secure a moral life and conduct good academic activities. Few have made in-depth analyses of the polity that had the true control over the cultural activities in contemporary China. At that time, scholars engaged in the studies of mass culture and intellectuals in search and pursuit of humanism generally had most in common in their standpoint, discourse and emotions (in many occasions, they were actually the same group of people). This was a transformed continuation of the new enlightenment of the 1980s. The attitudes toward mass culture and the selective introduction of the Western Cultural Studies theories cannot be appropriately understood, until the historical background and emotions of those who advocated "the reestablishment of humanism" are well grasped.

2   Academic and Intellectual Context of Cultural Studies in China

In addition to the sociocultural context peculiar to China, there were also academic and intellectual factors behind the emergence of Cultural Studies in China, including the introduction of Cultural Studies from the West and introspection among Chinese literary theorists.

Leaving aside the situation of the Chinese academic circles in the first three decades (1949–1979) after the founding of the People's Republic of China, the modern Western academic circles began to leave traces on Chinese academia in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The movement to liberate thinking in the 1980s in China has historically been known as another Renaissance in China, after the May

Fourth Movement toward the beginning of the century. Western thinking and intellectual traditions, particularly in the humanities, spread fast in China and were warmly received among Chinese scholars in the humanities when the country adopted the reform and opening up policy in the late 1970s. There was a spike in interests in such subjects as philosophy, literature and arts, and aesthetics. Immanuel Kant's subjectivity theory and related studies gave rise to interest in questions about freedom of the will and triggered passionate debates about writers' and artists' subjectivity in literary and art theories. The discussion on Western Marxism encouraged people to rethink about humanitarianism and alienation. Works of Nietzsche, Sartre and Freud hit the best-seller lists. Writers tried all the modern Western methods of writing in a short period of time. The reintroduction of the modern Western thoughts into China was a major part of the ideological emancipation of the 1980s in China. Without it, Cultural Studies wouldn't be what it is today in China. Those ideas from the West laid a key intellectual background of Cultural Studies in China, in spite of the absence of direct link to mass culture. For example, the ideas from the West introduced into China in the 1980s (particularly Western Marxism, existentialism and philosophy of life) resonated later in the criteria for literary criticism, such as ideals, ultimate concerns, humanism, originality and aesthetics, advocated in the great discussion of humanism.

However, relatively little discussion in about mass culture took place in the 1980s. It was not until the late 1980s that one or two articles on mass culture were published in domestic periodicals. *Cultural Studies: Articles and Data Collected from Chinese Language Newspapers and Periodicals Published in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Foreign Countries* edited by Ji Xiaofeng and Li Wenbo was a representative of the kind, which collected Ye Qizheng's "How Mass Culture Got Refined in Modern Times", Liang Qizi's "An Exploration of the French Popular and Mass Culture", Huang Daolin's "Mass Culture's Nature" and Li Zuchen's "Mass Media and Mass Culture".[23] Nonetheless, those articles either introduced the Western mass culture theories, or tried to explore the mass culture phenomena in Hong Kong, Taiwan or the West, without touching upon mass culture in the Chinese mainland (where mass culture was yet to be anything). In the meantime, some Western works that would gain popularity and power later were already translated into Chinese and published in China, without drawing much attention, though, such as Jameson's *Postmodernism, Or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Xi'an: Shaanxi Normal University Press, 1986) and *Dialektik der Aufklärung* (*Dialectic of Enlightenment*) co-authored by Horkheimer and Adorno (Chongqing: Chongqing Publishing House, 1990). The introduction of those academic resources from abroad was the prelude to Cultural Studies in China.

Cultural Studies in China have been influenced mainly by two foreign sources, namely the Frankfurt School's critical theory of mass culture originating in Germany and the American and British Cultural Studies of the Birmingham School.

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[23]See Lu Yang & Wang Yi, *An Introduction to Cultural Studies* (Shanghai: Fudan University Press, 2006), p. 313.

1. **Introduction and Application of the Frankfurt School's theories**

The criticisms on mass culture during the discussion of humanism almost exclusively quote the Frankfurt School's culture industry theory that sees mass culture in a developed capitalist society as nothing more than a capitalist industrial sector pursuing its market values, thus only a "culture industry". As a commodity, "the culture industry" has lost the transcendence and spiritual values literature and art would otherwise possess. The profit-oriented imitation and the application of reproduction techniques have deprived literature and art of originality and individuality. Moreover, mass culture serves as an instrument of mass deception and social solidification and controls the masses' spiritual awareness and unconscious mind. Thus, mass culture is neither a culture nor a thing truly for the masses. The deep-going and radical cultural critical theory has had a profound influence worldwide and also on the criticism on mass culture in modern China.

Tao Dongfeng's "Desire and Degradation: Criticism on Contemporary Mass Culture" published on *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 1993 (6), was a representative article in the early days. The author makes an abstract moral and aesthetic criticism on mass culture, without particularly targeting mass culture local to China, and his major arguments are as follows: Mass culture creates a false sense of satisfaction and lures people away from the sense of reality and critical thinking; Mass culture is in nature impoverished (as being mechanically reproduced, one-dimensional, shallow and without originality); and the audience of mass culture (i.e. the masses) is passive and without critical thinking, thus incapable of reading texts actively or selectively. Another representative article of the kind was Zhang Rulun's "On Mass Culture" that was published in 1994. Zhang quotes Heidegger, Adorno, Arendt and others on the negative position the masses take in culture and politics. The author holds that mass culture is in essence a culture industry, in which business codes replace art principles and market demands take the place of spiritual pursuits; therefore, mass culture is doomed to be mediocre and identical. In the mass production and transmission of the culture industry, the masses as consumers actually cannot decide the content or style of mass culture. Instead, they are shaped and transformed by mass culture. Under the forceful and omnipresent influence of mass culture, the masses have lost the capability of independent judgment and been reduced to completely passive consumers of cultural products. Mass culture is a monopolistic power in modern societies and invading and sucking private lebensraum, and thus exerts negative impacts on people's mentality and thoughts and cultural ecology. Therefore, it is necessary to criticize mass culture.[24] This basic judgment on the masses and mass culture has well extended into later-day critical theory of mass culture. For example, Chen Gang in his *Mass Culture and Contemporary Utopia* (Beijing: China Writers Publishing House, 1996) defines mass culture as "the shallow, stereotyped and easy-to-be-reproduced cultural products mass produced to market demands in an industrial society, which is consumed by the urban masses and spreads through

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[24]Zhang Rulun, "On Mass Culture", *Fudan Journal*, 1994 (3).

mass media". Similarly, all the other works on mass culture published during the period, such as Xiao Ying's *Image and Survival: Cultural Theories in an Era of Aesthetics* (Beijing: China Writers Publishing House, 1996), Huang Huilin's (ed.) *Studies of Mass Culture in Contemporary China* (Beijing: Beijing Normal University Press, 1998), Wang Desheng's *Expansion and Crisis: Contemporary Studies of Aesthetics* (Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 1996) and Yao Wenfang's *Criticism of Contemporary Aesthetics* (Jinan: Shandong Publishing House of Literature and Art, 1999), quote a lot the Frankfurt School's critical theory, particularly the part on the culture industry in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.

According to Liu Xiaoxin, the criticisms of mass culture at the time focus on the following issues: (1) The existence and over-expansion of the culture industry is the cultural disorder of an era and ruins the freedom of human beings (Huang Lizhi, "A Utopian Concern for 'the Culture Industry'", *Wenyibao* [*Literature and Arts*], 8 May 1993); (2) Art has lost its spirit and vitality to the mediocre, poor and vulgar mass culture and entertainment, which serves as an instrument of ideological control (Zhang Rulun, "On Mass Culture", *Fudan Journal*, 1994 [3]); (3) The culture industry forces the mainstream culture out from the mentality of the May Fourth Movement and the humanistic intelligentsia yields to the commercial capital (Yin Hong, "Keep Watch for Humanism", *Tianjin Social Sciences*, 1996 [2]); (4) The culture industry is a counter-culture that monopolizes the cultural market, squeezes serious culture out and erodes the essentials for humanism and serious art (Zhang Guofeng, "Culture Industry Is a Counter-culture", *Wenyibao* [*Literature and Arts*], 28 July 1998); (5) The culture industry is a capitalist way of cultural production, sweeping from the West, and breeds hedonism and brings down the rebellious spirit (Liu Runwei, "On the Culture Industry", *Contemporary Thoughts*, 1999); and (6) Closely linked with cultural colonialism, the culture industry assimilates various cultures around the globe into a unitary one through its globalized operation and realizes the cultural control across state, regional and national boundaries (Yao Wenfang, "Culture Industry: Criticism of Contemporary Aesthetics", *Social Science Journal*, 1999 [2]). In addition to some ideas on cultural colonialism, the aforementioned arguments are largely the mechanical copy of Adorno's thoughts. Tao Dongfeng made a concise list of them later, namely "commodity fetishism and theories of false satisfaction, poor text, lost individuality, sensual enjoyment and idiotic audience."[25]

It is not surprising that the Chinese intelligentsia would naturally turn to the Frankfurt School's theory in the early 1990s when they were hard hit by mass culture, as most of the scholars at the time in the Chinese mainland received Marxist-ideological schooling and education, as was above-quoted from Chen Sihe. Therefore, they were familiar with Marxist criticisms on capitalist modernity. Marx

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[25]Tao Dongfeng, "Three Paradigms of Mass Culture and Consumerism and Their Resources in the West: On 'the Aestheticization of Everyday Life' and a Reply to Dr. Zhao Yong", *Hebei Academic Journal*, 2004 (5).

defines politics, art and literature as "a special sector in industry"[26] in *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*. In his surplus value theory, Marx divides the artist's labor into productive labor and unproductive labor and the latter is "his (the artist's) born and conscious activity" and non-alienated labor. Productive labor, on the other hand, is employed by the capitalist "to increase the value of capital".[27] "The capitalist production is hostile to some mental production sections, such as art and poetry."[28] The Frankfurt School's critical theory is right based upon Marxist alienation theory. Thus, the Chinese intellectuals feel no difficult in accepting the Frankfurt School's criticisms of "the culture industry". Moreover, Marxism as the orthodox ideology in China creates an ideal atmosphere for this discourse to get rooted, disseminated and developed.

The academic circles in the Chinese mainland began to touch upon and accept the Frankfurt School's theory when they were engaged in the studies of Western Marxism. In 1978, an article written by a Soviet Union scholar titled "The Frankfurt School: Historical Development of the Basic Tenets of A Sociological School of Thought" was translated and published in *World Philosophy Today*, Issue 5, which provided a primer on the Frankfurt School and its theories. The sixth issue of the same journal featured a column "Frankfurt School and Criticisms" and published the Chinese translation of Herbert Marcuse's "Aggressiveness in Advanced Industrial Society" and Habermas's "Technology and Science as Ideology", plus two articles by scholars from the Soviet Union and East Germany, criticizing the Frankfurt School. In the early 1980s, the Frankfurt School's critical theory of mass culture was mentioned in Xu Chongwen's *A Review of the Frankfurt School* (Beijing: Joint Publishing, 1980) and Jiang Tianji's (ed.) *The Frankfurt School: A Critical Social Theory* (Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House, 1981). Xu Chongwen's studies of Western Marxism set off a heated debate in the philosophical circle in the middle 1980s that in turn spread Western Marxism across China. More and more humanists got keen on the theories of Western Marxism. Accordingly, the Frankfurt School as an important branch of Western Marxism gained fast popularity in the academic circles. Nevertheless, the Chinese academia at that time focused mainly on the Frankfurt School's theories of politics, sociology, philosophy and aesthetics, while its mass culture theory remained little noticed, with very few and simple articles introducing the theory.

Ouyang Qian gives in his 1986 work a brief introduction to "the culture industry" proposed by Adorno and Horkheimer, "Horkheimer and Adorno see 'the culture industry' as a new form of social control and stress that 'the manipulation of consciousness' is the form of the modern capitalist governance. According to them, the political and economic governance regarded by Marxism has been replaced by

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[26]Cheng Daixi (ed.), *Thoughts on the Aesthetics in Marx's* Manuscripts (Xi'an: Shaanxi People's Publishing House, 1983), p. 27.

[27]Complete Works of Marx and Engels, Vol. 26, Book One (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1972), p. 432.

[28]Ibid., p. 296.

'the manipulation of consciousness'."[29] Liu Ji published "The Frankfurt School's Criticisms of Culture" on *Philosophical Researches*, 1986 (5) and Zhao Yifan published "Cultural Criticisms by the Frankfurt School Theorists in Exile in the US" on *Dushu* (*Reading*), 1989 (1). Both specially introduce and study the Frankfurt School's cultural criticism. However, the cultural criticisms in those two articles cover both mass culture and ideology, enlightenment and technological rationality.[30] Ou Litong and Zhang Wei have in their *The Studies of the Frankfurt School* published in 1990 a separate section to discuss the Frankfurt School's basic ideas about mass culture, including commercialization and fetishism of mass culture; standardized and uniformed production of mass culture; as well as mass culture's dominance and force. The authors agree with the Frankfurt School's ideas of mass culture and point that "the Frankfurt School unveiled and criticized the nature of the commercialized mass culture in a capitalist society. This is of great significance for the Chinese society. We are well warned of it and should try to stop it in China."[31] Li Xiaobing expresses similar perspective and standpoint in his *Conflicts and Crisis in the Capitalist Culture* published in 1991. In the chapter focused on Adorno, Li Xiaobing elaborates on Adorno's ideas in "Mass Culture and the Culture Industry" and holds ideas basically the same as Ouyang Qian's. As Ouyang does, Li also finds mass culture an instrument of manipulation: "'The culture industry' is a rational part of capitalism and usually serves as something of 'ideological control'. It strengthens the modern capitalist civilization, rather than questioning, criticizing or revealing its nature."[32]

The introduction of the Frankfurt School's cultural criticism into China was actually attributed to the translation and publication of the School's key works. Xu Chongwen began in 1988 the compilation work of "Foreign Marxist and Socialist Studies Series", under which many translated works and monographs were published, including Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man* (1988), Horkheimer's *Critical Theory* (1989), Habermas's *Communication and the Evolution of Society* (1989), Lukács's *History and Class Consciousness* (1989), Gramsci's *Practical Philosophy* (1990), Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments (Cultural Memory in the Present)* (1990), Ou Litong & Zhang Wei's *The Studies of the Frankfurt School* (1990), Adorno's *Negative Dialectics* (1993), Habermas's *The Theory of Communicative Action* (Vols. I-II, 1994), Chen Xueming and Zhang Zhifu's (eds.) *Major Works of Contemporary Marxist Studies*

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[29]Ouyang Qian, *The Subjectivity and Liberation of Mankind: A Cultural and Philosophical Preliminary Study of Western Marxism* (Jinan: Shandong Publishing House of Literature and Art, 1986), p. 82.

[30]See You Zhansheng, "Acceptance and Misreading: the Frankfurt School's Mass Culture Theory in China", *Shandong Social Sciences*, 2011 (10).

[31]Ou Litong & Zhang Wei, *The Studies of the Frankfurt School* (Chongqing: Chongqing Publishing House, 1990), p. 291.

[32]Li Xiaobing, *Conflicts and Crisis in the Capitalist Culture: the Study of the Contemporary Humanist Thoughts* (Beijing: Press of the Party School of the Central Committee of the CPC, 1991), p. 160.

of Other Countries (Vol. I, 1996; Vols. II–III, 1997) and Feng Xianguang's *The Aesthetic Studies of Western Marxism* (1997), all of which were published by Chongqing Publishing House. Other publishing houses published the Frankfurt School's works as well, such as Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization* (1987) by Shanghai Translation Publishing House, Marcuse's *The Aesthetic Dimension* (1989) and Fromm's *Man for Himself* (1988) and *To Have or to Be?* (1989) by Joint Publishing. Among all those works, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments* co-authored by Horkheimer and Adorno may be the most frequently-quoted and best-known one in China's criticism of mass culture. Not a Frankfurt School philosopher, Jameson the representative figure of Marxist criticism in the United States exposes a purport close to the Frankfurt School's in his *Postmodernism, Or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Xi'an: Shaanxi Normal University Press, 1988), by criticizing contemporary mass culture from the angle of the political and economic structures of a capitalist society. The theories of Western Marxism and the Frankfurt School's ideas in particular have been better known to Chinese, thanks to the publication of the Chinese versions of those classic works.

Nonetheless, Chinese scholars generally retained their major focus all through the 1980s on whether Western Marxism is genuinely Marxism, even though the masterpieces by the representative figures of the Frankfurt School and Western Marxism were already translated and introduced into China. In contrast, Adorno's "culture industry" theory received little attention. It was no doubt a result of the large social context of the time. The Western Marxism followers at the time still focused on the sufferings and the alienation of human nature caused by the Cultural Revolution. In addition, the Chinese mainland hardly saw the local "culture industry" in the 1980s.

Mass culture successfully drew people's attention when it was on China's social and cultural stage against the unique social, political and economic backgrounds of the 1990s in the country. Encouraged by "the discussion of humanism", the Frankfurt School (its critical theory of mass culture in particular) was passionately studied, introduced and applied by humanists in China. The issues concerning the culture industry began to draw people's attention from 1993 onwards when *Wenyibao* (*Literature and Arts*) held discussions on postmodernism. Discussions on the culture industry went on in a larger scale between 1997 and 1998. Academic articles and works on the Frankfurt School's critical theory of mass culture were published in a large number.[33] New monographs on the topic came to readers in the

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[33]Representative articles in early days included Liu Chun's "The Frankfurt School and the Criticism of Mass Culture" (*Modern Communication*, 1992 [3]), Zheng Yiming's "An Analysis of the Frankfurt School's 'Culture Industry Theory'" (*Philosophical Researches*, 1994 [7]), Chen Zhenming's "A Changed Cultural Pattern in the Contemporary Capitalist Society: the Frankfurt School's Criticism of Mass Culture" (*Philosophical Researches*, 1995 [11]) and Xue Min & Fang Jinggang's "A Theoretical Analysis of the Frankfurt School's 'Culture Industry' Theory" (*Fudan Journal*, 1996 [3]). Representative works of the kind included Yang Xiaobin's *Negative Aesthetics: the Frankfurt School's Literary Theory and Cultural Criticism* (Shanghai: Shanghai Joint Publishing, 1999).

21st century, such as Zhao Yong's *Integration and Subversion: the Frankfurt School's Critical Theory of Mass Culture* (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2005) and You Zhansheng's *The Price of Popularity: the Frankfurt School's Critical Theory of Mass Culture* (Jinan: Shandong University Press, 2006). There are also monographs on the dissemination of the Frankfurt School's theories in China (such as Amelung's [ed.] *Kritische Verhältnisse: Die Rezeption der Frankfurter Schule in Chine* [*Critical Relationship: the Reception of the Frankfurt School in China*] [Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2011]). By December 2012, there were over 1600 articles and 64 monographs (the earliest one is *A Review of the Frankfurt School* authored by Xu Chongwen in 1980 and 43 others are dated as from 1994 onwards) that could be found on the searching page of the National Library of China under the key words "the Frankfurt School". The data well reflects the School's influence in China: It dominated the Chinese academic circles when the studies of mass culture arose in the country (between 1993 and 1999) and is exerting an influence today.

2. Introduction of the American and British Cultural Studies Theories

The studies of mass culture in China finally went beyond the single viewpoint of the Frankfurt School's critical theory, as the theory didn't fit China's social or cultural realities. Moreover, the American and British Cultural Studies theories originating from the Birmingham (UK) Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies also encouraged the trend in China. "Cultural Studies" as an academic specialty is actually referred to the academic traditions formed in the Birmingham Center. It is what China's academic circles refer to when they talk about Cultural Studies.

Jonathan Culler the famous American literary theorist says, "What's happening here is 'cultural studies', a major activity in the humanities in the 1990s. Some professors may have turned away from Milton to Madonna and from Shakespeare to soap opera, abandoning the study of literature altogether."[34] The British and American academic circles turned in the 1990s away from literary to cultural studies and the latter became an academic upstart in literary colleges and departments. Chinese humanists would naturally go under the influence of this trend, as it was a Western-influenced discipline from the reform and opening-up in the 1980s onwards. Cultural Studies was virtually introduced to China by the Chinese scholars engaged in the study of the American and British literature and in comparative literature.

What traditions did the American and British "Cultural Studies" follow as an academic specialty at all?

The Cultural Studies in the UK grew out of the interest in mass culture as well. The authority's high-brow culture dominated the traditional British society prior to the 19th century, while culture began to diverse in the 19th century when the society was being industrialized and urbanized. In this context, aristocrats' high-brow culture lost its ground to the emerging independent culture of the ruled,

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[34]Jonathan Culler, *Literary Theory*, Li Ping (trans.) (Nanjing: Yilin Press, 1998), p. 45.

which grew out from the culture industry and was in the meantime encouraged by revolutionaries. The political study of mass culture sprang up against the cultural split-up and the class struggle. Matthew Arnold and Leavis, who stood out on the side of "the traditions of culture and civilization", made observations on the emerging mass culture from an elite point of view, seeing mass culture as the collapse of the authentic civilization. Thus, according to them, the situation would deteriorate without the authentic culture and civilization. Arnold (1822–1888) holds that "culture is the best which has been thought and said in the world". In his eyes, mass culture is not at all culture and nothing more than "anarchy" or a synonym to the political turmoil. The authentic culture remains only with a minority of people, who are responsible to keep under control any uncertainties in a mass society through the power of culture. Leavis (1895–1978) was deeply concerned with the declining traditional authority and the rising mass mob culture. According to him, social chaos and cultural degeneration may be stopped only through the high-brow culture of the few to tame, regulate and control mass culture. The two's ideas look amazingly similar in nature to the discussion of "humanism" in China. Furthermore, like the discussion of "humanism" in the Chinese mainland, "the traditions of culture and civilization" were never the strict-sense "Cultural Studies"; but they served as the background of the latter and left profound impacts on the latter. "The traditions of culture and civilization" came into being much earlier than the discussion of "humanism" did in the Chinese mainland. But no evidence shows any direct impacts of the former on the latter. The similar ideas of the two may be generated in similar social situations. For instance, they may face similar problems and take similar positions.

The British Cultural Studies officially came into being in the 1950s and 60s when Richard Hoggart, Raymond Williams, E.P. Thompson and Stuart Hall had their works published. According to these scholars, "culture" was no longer the capitalized one of the few as Leavisism put it. Instead, culture is an expression of certain lifestyles and cultural analysis tries to reconstruct a certain lifestyle. In this sense, the proletarian culture and the elite culture are of the equal value. This school of thought stresses workers' (the masses') dynamic role in the production of cultural products and their recreation of those products, rather than the passive consumption of cultural products. The Birmingham theorists intended, through the analyses of specific cultures and their historical backgrounds, to reconstruct the "perspectives" of specific groups (classes) or the entire society, seeing culture as the core factor of a full understanding of specific social patterns, sociologically and historically. The Birmingham (UK) Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies came into being at the University of Birmingham in 1964 out of the work of Williams and his fellow theorists. The School shows a sympathetic understanding of mass culture and stresses the masses' dynamic role in culture reception. Thanks to this, the Birmingham School distinguishes itself from elitism advocated by Arnold and Leavis. Leavisism actually explores a new space of education for mass culture in the UK, while Williams and his fellow theorists and their Birmingham Center opens up a new research path for mass culture. Together, they set the tune of the British Cultural Studies.

Marx's theory of economic base and superstructure sits as one of the ideological backgrounds of the Birmingham Center. However, different from classical Marxism, the Birmingham Center theorists emphasize superstructure more than economic base and stress the dynamic role of man and culture. They underline the importance of culture and man's experience in knowing and grasping the essence of the social and economic structures. Soon after its establishment, the Center and its "culturalism" fell into a fighting with the structuralist pattern advocated by French theorists who emphasized the decisive role of a society's deep structure over its culture. The entanglement of these two patterns resulted in "the Turn to Gramsci" in Cultural Studies. Compared with the above two theories, Gramsci's theory of "cultural hegemony" holds a more dialectical attitude toward mass culture. Gramsci neither sees eye to eye with structuralism, taking mass culture purely as a capitalist ideological machine, nor attributes mass culture solely to the working class, like what culturalism does. Instead, he defines mass culture as something the ruling and the ruled keep fighting for and negotiating for. Both the American and British Cultural Studies take a more positive view toward mass culture after the Turn to Gramsci and agree that the masses are able to receive commercialized mass culture as something useful to them and turn it into a tool to fight against power and ideology. Mass culture then takes a positive meaning as never before. This tendency culminates in related works authored by the British scholar John Fiske and is widely accepted. Jim McGuigan devotes his *Cultural Populism* to a detailed critical analysis of the trend.

The contemporary British Cultural Studies stresses the dynamic role mass culture plays and stands as a kind of supplement to the Frankfurt School-style elitism in the discussion of "humanism" in China. In the first half of the 1990s, however, the Chinese academic circles began to focus on mass culture, for nothing more than practical problems. "Cultural Studies" as an academic specialty aroused little intellectual interest at the time in China.

Dushu (*Reading*) Magazine (Beijing) held a symposium titled with "Cultural Studies" and some other international symposiums on comparative literature in China between 1994 and 1996, thanks to which the British and American "Cultural Studies" was introduced to China. Bai Lu's "Living in 'the Incomprehensible': Some Thoughts on the *Dushu*-sponsored 'Cultural Studies and Cultural Space' Symposium in September" came to readers on *Dushu* (*Reading*), 1994 (12). Through this article, we know that attendees on the symposium from diverse professions, such as architectural history, fine arts history, sociology, TV production and modern literature, discussed some cases on the meeting, with the topics concerning race, nation-states, intellectuals, consumerism and translation. Benjamin Lee, a doctor in anthropology from the United States talked about the background of the British Cultural Studies, namely the reaction to specialized and profession-alized liberal arts in university[35] and the issue of identity politics, i.e. the crisis the

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[35]Bai Lu, "Living in 'the Incomprehensible': Some Thoughts on the *Dushu*-sponsored 'Cultural Studies and Cultural Space' Symposium in September", *Dushu* (*Reading*), 1994 (12).

United States as a cultural and political unity faces. As the myth of "melting pot" evaporated, ethnic minorities and feminist and post-colonialist intellectuals inquire, from their own angles, "what the United States is" and "what Americans are". "Cultural Studies: China and the West" International Symposium was held in Dalian in August 1995. The attendees held discussions on the history and status quo of Cultural Studies in the West, the topics of Cultural Studies in contemporary China and the relations between comparative literature and Cultural Studies. The published report of the symposium makes a brief introduction to the Western "Cultural Studies", saying that "the contemporary Cultural Studies dominates the Western thoughts, following postmodernism and post-colonialism and covers a wide range of topics, such as non-elite culture, regions, race, hegemony, post-modernity, post-colonialism, feminist literature, gender studies, studies of black people, criticism of the Third World, gay-lesbian studies and minority discourse studies, taking a considerable position in college English literature in North America as a retort to the traditional enlightenment with classics."[36] In July 1996, an international symposium on "Cultural Acceptance and Transformation" was held in Nanjing, talking about the issues like the influence of the European and American mass culture on China, the impacts of Cultural Studies and our countermeasures, cultural globalization and the research on cultural identity. With these symposiums, the Chinese academic circles got "warmed up" for the understanding of the British-originating "Cultural Studies".

The Chinese academic circles, however, achieved nothing more than "a warm-up", as no true-to-the-sense monographs on "Cultural Studies" had been published in the Chinese mainland before 1999. Special papers on the topic were hardly seen, either. Zhang Yiwu's "Cultural Studies and Mass Communication" (*Journal of Beijing Broadcasting Institute*, 1996 [2]) was a pioneering article in the Chinese mainland, to introduce the origin and development, topics, features and status quo of the British and American Cultural Studies. Zhang has an overview of the British and American "Cultural Studies" in this article that well collects the related materials in the UK and the US in the 1980s and the early 1990s. The article outlines the development of "Cultural Studies" from the establishment of the Birmingham Center onwards and briefs the major topics and latest developments introduced in *Cultural Studies* journal edited by Lawrence Grossberg and in *The Cultural Studies Reader* (no Chinese version at the time) edited by Simon During. Zhang Yiwu gives in this article his opinions on China's specific situation that the post-colonialist viewpoint in "Cultural Studies" is particularly important to China, as the new methods and attitudes of this point of view toward mass culture are different from the Frankfurt School's and "subvert the Frankfurt School's simplified repulsion against mass culture", thus go well beyond the Frankfurt School's critical model of "the culture industry". "The new methods and attitudes different from the Frankfurt School's" first of all are about Hall's *Encoding/Decoding* and Fiske's

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[36]Xu Yanhong, "Cultural Studies: a Summary of International Symposiums in China and in the West", *Tianjin Social Sciences*, 1995 (6).

ideas, which "radically changed the previous idea that 'the masses' were 'cultural dopes'". Secondly, the interpretation of mass culture itself gets more complicated and mature, with advertisements, MTVs and soap operas included into its research. Zhang also points in this article that breakthroughs are needed in the "stereotyped" studies of "mass culture" and in the outdated model of "the culture industry" criticism, so that "(the studies) may get firmly rooted in the Chinese context and focus on 'the present' with a theory of mass culture with the Chinese features". The fruitful contemporary Cultural Studies is quite helpful here.

Tao Dongfeng published "Cultural Studies: the Western Discourse and the Chinese Context" on the widely-known periodical *Literature & Art Studies* (Beijing, May 1998 [3]), focusing on "Cultural Studies" as an interdisciplinary, practical, marginalized, politics-oriented, critical and open-minded science. The materials adopted in Tao's article are somehow the same as those in Zhang Yiwu's paper mentioned above. Nonetheless, Tao's article emphasizes particularly the significance of context to Cultural Studies. According to the author, discourses, theories and methodologies take shape in their own contexts and are suitable only for the problems in the corresponding contexts. Any generalized views and standpoints regardless of the corresponding context result in varieties of misplaced problems. Tao stresses that "a critical radical theory is likely to lose its original sharpness in a totally different context and turns into a centering and conservative discourse." "Mass culture" takes a political meaning in the Chinese context different from that in the Frankfurt School's "culture industry". Moreover, post-colonialist theories are misused by the Chinese academic circles as well. What's more, Tao shows a positive attitude toward an "open-minded" "Cultural Studies", i.e. the studies that goes beyond the pure text. This arouses incessant disputes of the relationship between Cultural Studies and literary studies. The articles by Zhang Yiwu and Tao Dongfeng may be the start line from which the Chinese academic circles took the self-awareness of "Cultural Studies" in the strict sense.

Tao Dongfeng published another article in November 1998 on *Academic Exchange* (Harbin), focusing on Fiske's mass culture theory.[37] Fiske was first known to Chinese in Xu Ben's "An Aesthetics-oriented Tendency in the Current Criticism of Mass Culture" in 1995. From that time to 1998 when Tao Dongfeng published the article elaborating on Fiske's mass culture theory, the British and American "Cultural Studies" was gradually accepted by the Chinese academic circles and imposed one challenge after another on the previously dominating Frankfurt School's "culture industry" theory.

Discussions and debates concerning "Cultural Studies" seemed to "blow out" in the Chinese academic circles between 1999 and 2000. Department of Chinese Language and Literature, the Institute of Aesthetics and *The Frontier of Literature* editorial board, all under Capital Normal University, co-sponsored a "Literary

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[37]Tao Dongfeng, "Beyond Elitism and Pessimism: on Fiske's Mass Culture Theory", *Academic Exchange*, 1998 (6).

Theories and Cultural Studies" Symposium in December 1999, one topic of which was the history, features and basic facts of "Cultural Studies". School of Chinese Language and Literature of Beijing Normal University held in April 2000 a symposium on "Literature & Arts and Cultural Studies" in Beijing and in July the same year, Beijing Language and Culture University (and other institutes such as China Association of Sino-Foreign Literary and Art Theories) organized in Beijing the symposium "Future of Literary Theories: China and the World". The former focused on the challenges and opportunities Cultural Studies brought forth to literary theories (literature and arts). The latter explored the future of literary theories and paid attention to the relationship between literary theories and Cultural Studies. "Cultural Studies" has since then been a major topic on the annual meetings of the two national organizations of literary theories in China, namely the Institute of Chinese Literary Theory and China Association of Sino-Foreign Literary and Art Theories. Then, more scholars get to aware that "an in-depth and methodological investigation is needed into the cultural traditions originating from the Birmingham (UK) Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies, so that we can develop Cultural Studies of our own."[38] The inaugural issue of *Cultural Studies* was published in June 2000 by Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences Press. The issue includes the translated excerpts from Stuart Hall's "Cultural Studies: Two Paradigms" and academic papers by some Chinese scholars on their theoretical investigation and practical use of Cultural Studies. *Cultural Studies* has been published ever since one issue a year, translating and introducing foreign Cultural Studies, including Habermas's nation-state theory and visual culture studies (Vol. 3), special issue in commemoration of Bourdieu (Vol. 4), body culture/politics (Vol. 5), mass communication and commonality (Vol. 6), the pedigree of Cultural Studies (Vol. 7), subculture studies and fan culture studies (Vol. 9), space studies (Vol. 10), cultural memory (Vol. 11), celebrity culture studies and values of mass culture (Vol. 12) and "new media and youth subculture" and "urban culture" (Vol. 13).

Cultural Studies: A Reader (China Social Sciences Press, 2000) with Luo Gang and Liu Xiangyu as co-editors-in-chief was published in September 2000. It is the ever-first collection of translated works that introduces the Western Cultural Studies in a methodological way in China. The book includes the translated versions of 25 classic papers concerning the British and American Cultural Studies.

Between 2000 and 2001, Central Compilation & Translation Press published five translated works under "Collection of Translated Works on Mass Culture Studies" edited by Li Tuo, covering topics of fashion, soap operas, TV studies and Fiske's mass culture theory. "Prism Collection of Translated Contemporary Academic Works" edited by Zhang Yibing was first published in 2000 by Nanjing University Press. About 100 translated works had been published in this collection by the year of 2012. The ones directly on Cultural Studies include John Storey's

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[38]For Luo Gang's speech on the "Literary Theories and Cultural Studies" Symposium, see Tao Dongfeng, "A Summary of 'Literary Theories and Cultural Studies' Symposium", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 2000 (7).

Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction, Miller's *A Companion to Cultural Studies*, Berger's *Narratives in Popular Culture, Media and Everyday Life*, Fiske's *Understanding Popular Culture* and McGuigan's *Cultural Populism*. There are also more than 50 translated works related to Cultural Studies, concerning:

1. Consumerism: Baudrillard's *The Consumer Society* and *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*, Mort's *Cultures of Consumption* and Lury's *Consumer Culture*, etc.;
2. Globalization: Tomlinson's *Globalization and Culture*, Jameson's *The Cultures of Globalization* and Dirlik's *Global Modernity*, etc.;
3. Sociological issues concerning culture and knowledge: Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd*, Mills's *The Power Elite*, Crane's *Sociology of Culture*, Guy Debord's *The Society of the Spectacle*, David Harvey's *Spaces of Hope*, Crang's *Cultural Geography*, Bauman's *Culture as Praxis*, Featherstone's *Undoing Culture*, Michel de Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Turner's *Society and Culture*, Inglis's *Culture*, Biernacki's *Beyond the Cultural Turn*, Klein's *Crossing Boundaries*, Bourdieu's *Les usages sociaux de la science* (*The Social Usages of Science*) and Cai and Xing's *The Sokal Hoax and Science War*, etc.;
4. Information and media studies: *Essential MaLuhan*, Abercrombie's *Television and Society* and Poster's *The Second Media Age*, etc.; and
5. Cultural theories: Best's *The Postmodern Turn*, Žižek's *Mapping Ideology*, Compagnon's *Le Démon de la théorie* (*The Demon of the Theory*), Huyssen's *After the Great Divide*, Moore-Gilbert's *Postcolonial Theory*, Eagleton's *The Idea of Culture* and *Sweet Violence*, Frank's *The Conquest of Cool* and Scott Lash's *Critique of Information*, etc.

Around 2000, publishers like Commercial Press, Peking University Press, Central Compilation & Translation Press, Fudan University Press, China Social Sciences Press and China Renmin University Press began to compile and publish collections of translated works on communication. "Collection of Translated Works on Culture and Communication" edited by Zhou Xian and Xu Jun came to readers in 2000 when its first translated work *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* was published. By 2010, twenty-one Western works on communication, mass culture theory and Cultural Studies had been translated and published under this collection.

Many "introductions" and "readers" to "Cultural Studies" have been also translated and published in China. In addition to the aforementioned Storey's *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction* and Miller's *A Companion to Cultural Studies*, compiled and translated Cultural Studies introductions and readers also include *Introducing Cultural Studies* (Baldwin et al., Beijing: Higher Education Press) translated in the charge of Tao Dongfeng, *Consumer Culture: A Reader* compiled and translated by Luo Gang and Liu Xiangyu (Beijing: China Social Sciences Press), *Cultural Studies: Interviews* compiled and translated by Wang Fengzhen and Xie Shaobo (Beijing: China Social Sciences Press), *Cultural*

Studies: An Essential Reader edited by Tao Dongfeng (Beijing: China Renmin University Press), *A Short History of Cultural Studies* (Hartley, [trans] Ji Guangmao), *Fan Culture: A Reader* compiled and translated by Tao Dongfeng and Yang Ling (Beijing: Peking University Press) and *Theory of Postcolonialist Culture* compiled and translated by Luo Gang and Liu Xiangyu (Beijing: China Social Sciences Press). With more works on "Cultural Studies" translated and introduced from the West to China, many cultural criticism were subsequently recognized as "Cultural Studies", including those following the Frankfurt School's "culture industry" theory and postcolonialist and feminist criticism. The latter two are greatly influenced by the Western cultural theories. Separate chapters will be assigned to the topics later in the book.

With the translation work, China's Cultural Studies opens new fields and horizons in such as studies of body, media, gay and lesbian, youth subculture, visual culture, urban cultural space, literary classics, fan culture, cultural memory, cyberculture and advertising culture, all of which may be rooted in the rich resources of the Western "Cultural Studies".

3. Crisis and Transformation of Literary Theory-related Fields

In addition to the introduction of the Western Cultural Studies into China, the Chinese literary theorists' reflections evidently played a significant academic-intellectual role in the development of China's Cultural Studies. The rising of Cultural Studies in turn boosted those reflections.

The British and American Cultural Studies mostly originated from the studies of English language and literature. Cultural Studies theorists in China are largely engaged in liberal arts, particularly in literature and arts, a discipline with the Chinese features and with "literary theory" as its core course. However, this discipline has long been politics-oriented in China, due to what China experienced in modern times, particularly the politics-oriented academic development since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. Tracing back into history, one easily finds that the Confucian-guided regimes in ancient China always attached great importance to a politics- and ethics-oriented literature, to maintain the imperial power and code of ethics and manifest the populist thought and benevolent governance trumpeted by Confucians. Literature as a means of satire has been the ethos of Chinese literary men.

Between 1949 and the late 1970s, Chinese literary theorists basically followed Mao Zedong's 1942 "Talk on Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art" and referred to the literary theory framework of the former Soviet Union. Mao's talk set literature as an instrument serving workers, farmers and soldiers and politics and established the politics-first art-second criteria for criticism literary criticism. Mao expressed clearly a negative view on principle and criteria like the universal human nature and the freedom of art. Such was the basic tune of the Chinese literary theory in the first three decades after 1949. Born in the critical time for the survival of the Chinese nation, such a literary theory, however, gradually lost its original vigor in the post-1949 peacetime and went to extremes in the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976)

when it, together with the abused power, became the accomplice to political tactics and the murder of literature, arts and artists.

China launched the policy of reform and opening-up in the late 1970s and ideological emancipation played a critical role in pushing the reform. In this context, literature was seen as an integral part of aesthetics and issues of humanity, alienation and man's subjectivity came under the spotlight. The basic law of this trend requires the politics-free literary studies that returns to its "aesthetic features", i.e. a turn from "heteronomy" to "autonomy" and from "the external studies" to "the internal studies". It is a literary theory against any political interventions. Nonetheless, this literary theory is never politics-free. Instead, it is closely connected with the then political priority—reform and opening-up and ideological emancipation. The transition made a considerable success in the 1980s when literature was defined with aesthetics in varieties of literary theory textbooks and the studies of literary forms drew much attention. To a certain extent, the autonomy and independence of literary theory tallies with the general law of modernization, as modernization requires specialization or the independence and autonomy of fields of politics, academia and economy.

The demand of independence and autonomy of literary theory faced new crises in the 1990s. On the one hand, creative writing and literary criticism overstressed forms or the so-called "internal laws"; thus, literature got divorced from reality and became disabled to reflect or join with reality, so that its public significance diminished. On the other hand, cultural products, literature and art included, saw enormous changes in the ways they were produced, spread and consumed, at the pull of the powerful market and commercial forces. Literary autonomy was challenged accordingly. Furthermore, literature retreated from the center of cultural/significance production and consumption, to a large extent, and gave the ground to new media culture, such as television and films, advertisements, Internet and best-sellers, which replaced literature as the new dominant producers. The production and spread of literary and other cultural products then required better technology, institutional organization, practice and materials. New types of intellectuals/literary men, cultural and art professionals and "new media people" (such as art dealers, book traders and editors and journalists bridging officials, the masses and market) stood out. Organs of producing and spreading cultural products (e.g. publishing houses, galleries, concert halls and museums) changed in types and nature, while sorts of cultural and art agents (such as recording companies and TV & film production centers) emerged with the Chinese features. Literature and art turned into an industry, to a large extent, more materialized, technology-dependent and commercialized. To the contrary, the methodology of literary studies back in the 1980s stressed the interpretation of literary texts and the autonomy of forms. It paid little attention to the materials, organs or technology involved in literary activities and spared little effort to investigate into the role of cultural institutions or intermediaries in the production and spread of literary and art works. This

"internal studies" pattern looked outdated when new mass media and mass culture were arising and thriving.[39]

Also, as literature and art got commercialized and mass communication was popularized, everyday life was aestheticized; accordingly, aesthetic activities got more common in everyday life (or generalized aesthetic activities). Soap operas, advertisements and popular songs were consumed in a huge number, while urban environment was tagged with icons day by day. Thus, the boundary between aesthetics/art and everyday life diminished and disappeared. Literary/art/aesthetic activities went well beyond the limits of pure art/literature and merged into everyday life. Those activities were no longer confined in high-brow venues isolated from everyday life. Instead, they went into everyday life spaces like agoras, shopping malls, supermarkets and promenade gardens. Contemporary aesthetic, literary and art activities are in an "expansion", while the literary discourse based upon "the autonomy principle" of the 1980s was "introverted". It was under the influence of the Western theories like new criticism and formalism. In the meantime, literary studies at the time went on an "inward" trend, as intelligentsia was eager to get rid of "vulgar sociology" and found the methodology of "internal studies" a good way to take. Literary studies for the moment shifted its focus onto the investigation into literary forms, narratives, metaphors, symbols, prototypes and rhythms and stressed the detailed analysis of texts and the deep-going study and understanding of art forms and artistic skills. However, the autonomy-based literary ideas and methods often appeared feeble in the 1990s when aesthetics became an everyday thing.[40]

In general, the autonomy-based literary theory established in the 1980s made no timely or robust response to the new developments of culture and art in the 1990s. Literary studies seemed to be dislocated from real-life social and political issues, cultural activities and aesthetic and art practices and got weaker in interpreting and participating in key public issues. This went against the traditional role of Chinese literature in political issues. Also, as the Western academic circles clearly defined field boundaries and established a complete modern system of independent disciplines, more intellectuals with the critical thinking got aware of shortcomings of this system and attached more significance to interdisciplinary studies. In this condition, literary studies scholars concerned about real-life issues showed more interest in Cultural Studies and some even turned from the field of literature to the studies of broad-sense "culture" (roughly Williams' culture as "a way of life"). Others tried to introduce the vision and methodology of Cultural Studies into

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[39]See "Introduction" in Tao Dongfeng (ed.), *General Issues in Literary Theory*, Beijing: Peking University Press, 2004.

[40]Tao Dongfeng, "Aestheticization of Everyday Life and the Rising of Cultural Studies: About the Reflections of Literature and Arts", *Zhejiang Social Sciences*, 2002 (1); "Aestheticization of Everyday Life and the Rising of New Cultural Intermediaries", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 2003 (6); "Aestheticization of Everyday Life and the Reconstruction of Literary Sociology", *Literature & Art Studies*, 2004 (1); and "Aestheticization of Everyday Life and the Criticism of Consumer Culture", *Tianjin Social Sciences*, 2004 (4).

literary studies, thus created the cultural criticism in literary studies. Literary studies may give a convincing interpretation to mass culture in an era of consumption, as it adopts an interdisciplinary methodology and is active in real-life issues. Literature and arts in China deep in crisis back then urgently needed literary studies sensitive to political issues, active in social life and keen on the self-reflection of knowledge generation. When the Western "Cultural Studies" theories and practices got known to China between the late 1980s and the early 1990s, the Chinese academic circles applied them in the contemporary Chinese literary and cultural studies. Cultural Studies then became a major discourse source of the social-cultural criticism in the 1990s in China.

Chapter 2
Topics and Paradigms of Cultural Studies

1 Paradigms of Mass Culture Studies

Mass culture has been the arch-object of Cultural Studies both in the West and China since the day Cultural Studies first emerged. As was iterated above, mass culture studies in contemporary China (mainly in the Chinese mainland) arose between the late 1980s and the early 1990s and came to its heyday in the early 21st century. This chapter focuses on the paradigms of mass culture studies in contemporary China, including the Frankfurt School's critical theory, modernization theory and political economy.[1]

1. Critical Theory and China's Mass Culture Studies

The Chinese academic circles almost exclusively followed the Frankfurt School's critical theory of mass culture when they criticized and studied mass culture in the early days of the Chinese mass culture studies and criticism. The School's theory retains its influence in China till this day. The process how the Frankfurt School's theories entered into China and its profound influence on Cultural Studies in contemporary China were well told in this chapter. So we'll not go into details here. The Frankfurt School's critical theory is now in China seen as a paradigm and discussed as an object of reflection, indicating that the Chinese academic circles have to some extent left the theory's influence behind and that the theory is no longer accepted as the only self-evident truth. Thus, this chapter sees the critical theory in the Chinese mass culture studies in a critical and introspective way.

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[1]As for other paradigms, refer to Tao Dongfeng (ed.), *Popular Culture* (Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2012, Chap. 2). For the paradigms discussed in this chapter, see Tao Dongfeng, "Three Paradigms of Mass Culture and Consumerism and Their Resources in the West: On 'the Aestheticization of Everyday Life' and a Reply to Dr. Zhao Yong", *Hebei Academic Journal*, 2004 (5) and "Three Paradigms of Mass Culture and Consumerism and Their Resources in the West: a Reply to Mr. Lu Shuyuan", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 2004 (5). The author makes supplements to Tao's ideas in this chapter.

In the late 1990s, Chinese scholars began to rethink of and question the Frankfurt School's mass culture theory out of practical and academic reasons. When mass culture was securing a dominant role in everyday life, intellectuals began to get used to it and see it in a different and rational way, despite the shock, anger and doubt they'd previously experienced. In the meantime, Chinese scholars made in-depth investigation into the Frankfurt School's critical theory and got aware of its unique sociocultural context[2]; thus, they doubted whether the theory truly fit the social realities of China. They rethought of mainly three issues, namely the theory's limits, whether the theory fit mass culture in China and whether the Chinese academic circles had previously misread and simplified the theory. The latter two issues may fall into one in this chapter.

Western scholars engaged in the study of the Frankfurt School found the limits of the School's critical theory quite early. The theory is usually accused of confusing the mass culture of fascist Germany and the commercialized mass culture promoted by Hollywood. China saw in the early 1990s criticisms of elitism and romanticism in the theory.[3] Xu Ben, an America-based Chinese scholar published

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[2]The Chinese academic circles used to receive and accept the Frankfurt School and its culture industry criticism as something quite general and abstract, without a critical thinking. Misinterpretation to the theory was inevitable then. Yu Wujin and Chen Xueming co-authored in 1990 a book titled *Schools of Marxist Philosophy in Other Countries*, to "introduce the representative works of those schools in a great detail and illustrate the basic facts and views of those schools in their original faces". The Chinese version of Martin Jay's *The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research* (Shan Shilian [trans.], Guangzhou: Guangdong People's Publishing House) was published in 1996. Some held, "the study of the Frankfurt School in China never followed a scientific path until the publication of this Chinese version" (Zhao Tao, "A Review on the Recent Study of the Frankfurt School in China", *Gansu Social Sciences*, 2005 [6]), indicating the later-generation scholars' dissatisfaction of the early-day misinterpretation to the Frankfurt School in China. The study of Western Marxism in China grows more specialized and professionalized from 2000 onwards. Ministry of Education elevated "Marxist Studies in Other Countries" to a second-level discipline under "Studies of Marxism" in 2005. Many primary source-based papers, monographs and translated works were published, making deep-going analysis and study of the Frankfurt School and its mass culture theory from diverse angles, and the Frankfurt School received more objective remarks and reflective thoughts. For instance, Zhao Yong tries in his *Integration and Subversion* "to replace the Frankfurt School's mass culture theory into its original context and explain how it was consequently and rationally formed in that context. In this way, the theory remains significant in dialogues with many other mass culture theories nowadays". According to Zhao, China finds a fitting mass culture theory only by comparing various mass culture theories, the Frankfurt School's included, and by applying them into the Chinese context. See Zhao Yong, *Integration and Subversion: the Frankfurt School's Critical Theory of Mass Culture* (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2005), p. 321.

[3]Zheng Yiming, in his "An Analysis of the Frankfurt School's 'Culture Industry Theory'" (*Philosophical Researches*, 1994 [7]), confirms the significant role the Frankfurt School plays in helping the Chinese intellectuals understand the Western and Chinese mass cultures, while at the same time, holds that the Frankfurt School scholars basically see mass culture from the opposite of sci-tech civilization and mass culture. They seem to criticize mass culture to guard high-brow culture. But in essence, their criticisms are conservative. High-brow cultures in history are unexceptionally aristocrats', established upon social stagnancy and the deprivation of the masses'

"Aesthetics, Art and Mass Culture: An Aesthetics-oriented Tendency in the Current Criticism of Mass Culture" (*Literary Review*, Issue 5, Beijing). It may be China's first literary critique that questioned the Frankfurt School's "culture industry" theory and left a great influence.[4] The author calls "to go out of Adorno pattern", as according to him, Adorno's left-wing mass theory is politically conservative, due to its elitist essence. In this theory, mass culture is seen as the product of culture industry that embodies the ruling ideology, while the masses are nothing more than passive consumers of cultural products and merely the ruled. A criticism of mass culture like this defines the masses as victims who are unable to liberate themselves. Xu Ben points that non-elite criticism of mass culture (such as active audience theory advocated by de Certeau and Fiske) reviews and criticizes elite culture and holds a positive view on the creativity of mass culture and on the masses' dynamic role. It is of the practical significance to China's Cultural Studies, encouraging the Chinese academic circles to think about and look for any internal mental power of high-brow and mass culture needed by the current social reforms and to see cultural consumers as participants of social reforms and co-producers of new social values, instead of the idiot masses to be enlightened by few "cultural guardians". Xu's article remains the earliest one of the kind that talks about the positive side of mass culture from the angle of the British and American Cultural Studies.

A more practical question remains as whether the Frankfurt School's theory perfectly fits China's mass culture, as China's mass culture seems to be not as entirely negative in the country's historical and current context as what the Frankfurt School scholars accuse it of. Tao Dongfeng in his article "Critical Theory and Mass Culture Criticism in China" gives a detailed analysis of the basic ideas, historical context and limits of the Frankfurt School's theory and focuses on the issue of "the applicability of anachronism and critical theory in China". According to Tao, the object and discourse of the Frankfurt School's theory doesn't fit mass culture in China in the early days of the reform and opening-up; instead, it appears to be more applicable to the culture of revolutionary crowds before the reform and opening-up of China, particularly the time of the Cultural Revolution (when the crowds culture was indeed, as the Frankfurt School's critical theory puts it, highly controlled, unitary and stereotyped. And what's more important, the social and

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(Footnote 3 continued)

right of participation. Chen Zhenming, in his "A Changed Cultural Pattern in the Contemporary Capitalist Society: the Frankfurt School's Criticism of Mass Culture" (*Philosophical Researches*, 1995 [11]), points that the Frankfurt School's criticisms of mass culture or culture industry are one-sided and defective. For instance, the Frankfurt School takes no dialectical view of mass culture, ignoring what mass culture has achieved. The Frankfurt School scholars overstress the independence and autonomy of culture and art, and with a misunderstanding of Marx's political economy, replace the critique of political economy with cultural criticism. Also, the Frankfurt School's criticisms of mass culture or culture industry are strong of romanticism and a contemporary echo to the modern Western romanticism.

[4]He published around the time another article titled "An Aesthetics-oriented Tendency in the Current Criticism of Mass Culture" (*Theoretical Studies in Literature and Art*, 1995 [5]) that is roughly the same as this one.

cultural systems in China back then were quite similar to those in Nazi Germany). Historically, secularization and mass culture (particularly mass culture in the early days of the reform and opening-up) progress in China side by side with the process of reform and opening-up and are an integral part of the latter, helping eliminate unified ideology and cultural autocracy and boost political pluralism and cultural diversity and democracy. Recreation-oriented mass culture, as the mainstream of a secularized culture, virtually helps diminish politics-oriented culture and the controlling orthodox ideology in the transition period of China. It breaks in reality the domination of unified culture, as voluminous mass-consumed cultural products fill the masses' cultural and reading space, so that old-day unified culture loses much of its market and shares and its influence fades accordingly. Modern media plays a similar role. In the West where enlightenment was already completed, modern media may weaken values of enlightenment, freedom and individuality. However, in a country like China that is still in the process of modern enlightenment, modern media help spread values of modern enlightenment. Tao also discusses in this article about the reasons why the Frankfurt School's idea appears to be agreeable to Chinese intellectuals: For instance, Chinese humanists hold up anti-capitalist values that reject instrumental reason and weigh spiritual integrity over monetary consideration; they blindly uphold radical revolutions in thinking and culture; and the demand of literary and art autonomy in the 1980s in China are superficially similar to Western Marxist aestheticism.[5]

Wu Xuan holds a similar idea that when everyday life is pulled into market-oriented economy, both mass culture and elite culture gets "one-dimensional, commercialized and reproduced", to different extents, though. Thus, any mechanical copy of the Frankfurt School's critical theory results in feeble interpretation and "touches nothing about the substantive issues concerning mass culture in China".[6] According to Hao Jian, the Frankfurt School's theory indiscriminatingly transplanted into present-day China finds at least three misplaced things, namely a mass culture pattern misplaced in a different era, a misplaced social structure and a misplaced culture.[7] In Zhu Xueqin's opinion, the Frankfurt School's theory falls into the trap of cultural determinism and abandons political and economic criticism of the West. Thus, no matter how fierce its "cultural criticism" appears to be, "it never goes beyond theory into the real life". It is "criticism in name only and nothing more than scratches on culture's fat. Or rather, it dances on culture's fat and flirts with capital structure from faraway".[8] Xu Youyu holds that Western Marxist theorists like Marcuse, Horkheimer and Adorno "never look ahead at the modern

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[5]Other articles by Tao Dongfeng on this topic include: Tao Dongfeng, "Critical Theory and Mass Culture in China", Liu Junning (ed.), *Economic Democracy and Economic Freedom*, Beijing: Joint Publishing, 1997; Tao Dongfeng, "Critical Theory and Mass Culture Criticism in China", *Oriental Culture*, 2000 (5); and Tao Dongfeng, "Context-based Critical Theory and Mass Culture Criticism in China", *Social Sciences in China*, 2000 (6).

[6]Wu Xuan, "Mass Culture and Mass Culture Criticism in China", *Shanghai Literature*, 1998 (1).

[7]Hao Jian, "Mass Culture vs. the Frankfurt School", *Journal of Beijing Film Academy*, 2000 (2).

[8]Zhu Xueqin, "Scratches on Culture's Fat", *Dushu (Reading)*, 1997 (11).

society. Instead, they look back into the past and show strong nostalgia and romantic pessimism". Those people "stubbornly weigh spirit over material. They despise the masses and pose as someone who can representative the masses, fully showing their love for aristocracy and elitism". They "never hide their preference for Eurocentrism and a sense of European superiority". Thus, "it must be biased to assess the Western societies and cultures with such a theory and it must be inappropriate to apply it in the Chinese context".[9] As Fu Yongjun puts it, the Frankfurt School's cultural criticism is something abstract without a real and material base, thus appears to be "critical falsehood".[10] Also, as the Frankfurt School "stands entirely on the opposite to technological civilization and mass culture when it analyzes and evaluates the cultural developments and fruits since the industrialization process", its cultural criticism "is plagued with a stubborn ignorance of diehard elitism" and "preoccupied by conservative thinking and aristocratic arrogance".[11]

The Frankfurt School's critical theory demonstrates how the traditional humanities think and evaluate, while Tao Dongfeng and his fellow scholars see things from the angle of the modern society. The latter group focuses on the secular side of mass culture as well, but the values are entirely different from the Frankfurt School's. Those Chinese scholars confirm the significance of mass culture to an enhanced political situation, instead of focusing on mass culture's aesthetic values during the transition time when China gets modernized and secularized, socially and culturally (those scholars mostly hold a negative view of mass culture in the aesthetic term). In the debate concerning "humanism" and secularism in the middle 1990s, those who advocated "humanism" and criticized mass culture, basically upheld the Frankfurt School's critical theory of culture. In contrast, "secularism"-advocators (such as Wang Meng, Li Zehou, Zhang Yiwu and Liu Xinwu etc.) hold positive views on secularization, mass culture, human desire and recreation-oriented literature and arts. In their eyes, secularism, market-oriented economy and mass culture are never the opposite of "humanism". Instead, what stands opposite to "humanism" is planned economy and ultra-Left ideology. Like what Li Zehou thinks about mass culture, "mass culture concerns nothing about cultural criticism. Those who go to karaoke never think about what to change. But this attitude will definitely change something. That is… an effective erosion and deconstruction of the orthodox system and centralized theocracy."[12] In general, the positive views on mass culture are basically rooted in the relationship between mass culture and China's historical and current contexts and reform and opening-up and focus on mass culture's significance to China's political scene, rather than mass culture's

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[9]Xu Youyu, "Western Marxism in China", *Dushu* (*Reading*), 1998 (1).

[10]Fu Yongjun et al., *The Meaning of Criticism: A Study of the Critical Theory of Culture and Ideology of Marcuse and Habermas* (Jinan: Shandong University Press, 1997), p. 227.

[11]Fu Yongjun, *Control and Protest: the Critical Theory of Society and Modern Capitalism* (Tai'an: Taishan Publishing House, 1998), p. 130.

[12]Li Zehou et al., "A Dialog on the Cultural Status Quo and the Moral Reconstruction", *Dongfang* (*Orient*), 1994 (5).

textual quality or any transcendent values. This is the key point that differs from the critical theory.

Diversified angles of view in Cultural Studies replaced the previously unified critical theory of culture in the late 1990s, as reflective thoughts on the Frankfurt School's critical theory of culture kept emerging.

2. **Modernization Theory and China's Mass Culture Studies**

The critical theory demonstrates how traditional humanities think and how Western Marxism evaluates, while modernization theory gets closer to social sciences or social theory and shows the liberal values. The study of China's mass culture from the angle of modernization theory focuses on the secular side of mass culture as well, but its angle of view and values are entirely different from the critical theory. The modernization theory confirms the significance of mass culture to an enhanced political situation during the transition time when China gets modernized and secularized (instead of focusing on mass culture's aesthetic values).[13]

(I) **Secularization and Modernization**

Modernization is a widely-used yet hard-to-be-defined term. As the process of modernization in societies has shown, modernization is an overall change driven by diverse factors and happens in every corner of a society, including economic and social transition, as well as cultural and psychological evolution. Furthermore, economic growth and social development require more boost and guarantee from cultural changes and psychological adjustments.

Like what Western societies experienced, China gets modernized economically, politically and culturally and witnesses accordingly changes in its social structure

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[13]It is noteworthy that modernization theories are connected yet differ in China and in the United States. Works on modernization theory authored by American scholars were introduced to China in a large number in the 1980 s and 90 s, such as Black's *The Dynamics of Modernization* (Chengdu: Sichuan People's Publishing House, 1988, Jin Guantao [ed.], "To the Future" Collection) and *Comparative Modernization* (Shanghai: Shanghai Translation Publishing House, 1996), Eisenstadt's *Modernization, Protest, and Change* (Beijing: Renmin University Press, 1988), Huntington's *Political Order in Changing Societies* (Beijing: Joint Publishing, 1988) and Inkeles's *The Modernization of Man*(Chengdu: Sichuan People's Publishing House, 1985, Jin Guantao [ed.], "To the Future" Collection), and produced an enormous influence. The ideas involved are evidently liberal-leaning. For instance, this group advocates liberal market economy, the universal Western pattern of modernization and a dualist approach of tradition and modernity. The mass culture advocating scholars involved in this chapter are under the influence of the American modernization theory, more or less. But they may not accept those ideas fully and entirely. The situation is too complicated to be generalized. Another thing worthy of attention is about "To the Future" Collection edited by Jin Guantao. The publication of this Collection started in 1984 and completed in 1988. During the five years of its compilation and publication, the Collection was extended to a wide range of social and natural sciences. The translated and original works in the Collection were selected to support China's modernization progress. The Collection has thus produced a profound influence. Originally supposed to be a 100-book Collection, it actually included 74 books by the year of 1988. The works in the Collection were authored/translated by liberal-thinking scholars.

and values. Chinese culture turns modernized and secularized in particular, in the process. A secularized culture goes deeper into the real life; or, social values tend to be secular (in contrast to transcendent religious cultures). The rule of reason replaces theological doctrines, thanks to scientific progresses. Accordingly, people concern more about the real life and are actively engaged in it. Secularization focuses on secular life and sensational enjoyments and confirms the role of the masses in the social life. It pursues a successful and enjoyable life and immediate interests. Secularized cultural values prepare the psychological soil for social developments like market economy, democracy, legal system and community engagement.[14] Mass culture is, as a secular culture, a natural phenomenon in the process of modernization in China and strongly politics-oriented in essence.[15]

(II) **Modernization Theory and Mass Culture Studies**

Modernization theory as a paradigm of mass culture studies originated from the discussion of "humanism" and "moral idealism". Tao Dongfeng wrote and published many articles[16] on his debates with "humanism"-advocators. During this process, Tao gradually turned to social theory and changed his earlier over passionate ideas of the Frankfurt School's theories.[17]

According to Tao Dongfeng, it is wrong for "humanism"-advocators to fully deny secularization and mass culture from moralistic, aesthetic and religious angles. Instead, we need a historical perspective, placing the current cultural issues into a historical context; that is, Chinese culture experienced a historical transition from something calling for abstinence under the tyranny during the Cultural Revolution to a secular culture after the 10-year havoc. Historically, secularization and mass consumer culture (particularly mass culture in the early days of the reform and opening-up) are an integral part of the process of modernization, helping eliminate cultural autocracy and boost democracy and cultural diversity. It breaks in reality the domination of the unified culture. The bad tastes in mass consumer culture are repudiated, though. However, Tao finds that the negative things arise in mass culture, not due to the lack of "admiration for paradise" or "ultimate concerns" (advocated by "humanists"). Instead, the negative side of mass culture is created in a society without freedom and democracy and resulted from the intervention and

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[14]Shen Jie, "Mass Culture and Youth Socialization in the Process of Modernization in China", *Journal of China Youth University for Political Sciences*, 2002 (1).

[15]It is also noteworthy that modernization never fully equals to secularization. See Hu Xiaoming and Yuan Jin, "Modernization Means Secularization? Diversified Investigations in a Comprehensive Approach", *Social Sciences Weekly*, 30 January 2003.

[16]Such as "Critical Theory and Mass Culture Criticism in China: On the Issues Concerning the Localized Critical Theory" (*Oriental Culture*, 2000 [5]), "Binary Opposition beyond Historism and Moralism: On a Third Stand to Mass Culture" (*Shanghai Culture*, 1996 [3]), "What Has Humanism Concealed from Us?" (*Twenty First Century*, 1995 [6]) and "Humanism and Secularization" (co-authored with Jin Yuanpu, *Social Science Front*, 1996 [2]) etc.

[17]Tao Dongfeng's first thesis on mass culture is titled "Desire and Degradation: Criticism on Contemporary Mass Culture" and published on *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 1993 (6). The thesis evidently shows the Frankfurt School's trace.

control from the authority over mass culture. It was clear to the naked eye in the 1990s. As authority-dependent consumerism thrived, mass culture lost the vigor it had in the early days and tended to be conservative day by day. Thus, Tao Dongfeng holds that mass culture and its political role shall be seen in a historical and dynamic way; that is, mass culture shall be investigated in specific historical contexts. Anyhow, Tao always evaluates mass culture and consumerism with some key criteria, namely whether they fight against totalitarianism and promote freedom and democracy.

Other "secularism"-advocators, such as Wang Meng, Li Zehou, Zhang Yiwu and Liu Xinwu, hold positive views on secularization, mass culture, human desire and recreation-oriented literature and arts as well. In their eyes, secularism, market-oriented economy and mass culture are never the opposite of "humanism". Instead, what stands opposite to "humanism" is planned economy and ultra-Left ideology.[18] Wang Meng published "Away from Sublimity" on *Dushu* (*Reading*), 1993 (1), defending Wang Shuo who was much maligned at the time (Wang is thought to be the first icon of mass culture in the Chinese mainland). According to Wang Meng, Wang Shuo with his easy style subverted the so-called rationality and moral obligation and "tore up hypocrites' masks".

In a sharp contrast to humanists, secularism-advocators confirm the positive role of secularization in the process of modernization in China. In their eyes, secularism, market-oriented economy and mass culture are never the opposite of humanism. Instead, mass culture virtually helps eliminate ultra-Left ideology. Secularization despises the old political society and autocracy and appreciates human values, paying attention to the existence of man. In present-day China, particularly, the concern about human beings neither lies in the empty words like ultimate concern and religious spirit, nor in the blind admiration for elite literature representing "heavy and painful" experience of survival. Instead, the real concern is to create a better life for the people and pull them out from cultural autocracy, dogmatic ideology and material deprivation. In China, a game-playing attitude toward literature and life as what Wang Shuo takes may be a good way to go.[19]

(III) **Reflection on and Development of Modernization Theory**

In one of his recent articles "Lopsided Secularization and Mass Culture in Contemporary China" (*Literary Review*, 2015 [4]), Tao Dongfeng makes a deeper reflection on secularization and mass culture and creates a new framework of "two secularization approaches" and two types of mass culture. The paradigm of modernization theory thus advances substantially. Inspired by secularization and modernity theories proposed by Arendt and Habermas, Tao defines the two types of

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[18]See Li Zehouand Wang Shengde, "A Dialog on the Cultural Status Quo and the Moral Reconstruction", *Dongfang* (*Orient*), 1994 (5/6).

[19]Either team in the debate actually sees Wang Shuo from one side. The views of both teams may represent what Wang Shuo and his works truly look like. The analysis fits the other mass culture phenomena outside Wang Shuo. Mass culture in the present separates itself from the orthodox ideology and elite culture, thus is like a rapier.

secularization and mass culture in contemporary China. According to Tao, China witnessed in the 1980s the first process of secularization, socially and culturally, which was officially called as something "to do away with fetishes and superstitions and emancipate the mind". The Chinese society got liberated from the quasi-religious totalitarianism controlling the country in the Cultural Revolution (the process in this sense was like exorcism in the West, but different somehow). This process turned its back on asceticism, personal cult and highly-political private life in the Cultural Revolution and reestablished the legitimacy of the material life, so as to rebuild rational individuals aware of individual rights and public concerns and reconstruct a civil society agreeable for individual and public interests. That was a positive process of secularization. Accordingly, mass culture at that time showed great interest in individuality, material life and self-experience, but was never indifferent to political participation or reduced to depoliticized consumerist materialism. Instead, it played an active role in reconstructing the new public life in China. With Teresa Teng's popular songs as an example, Tao points out that mass culture, as the key cultural form in the first process of secularization in contemporary China, took an active part in the 1980s in constructing the new public life in the country, echoing with and promoting in its own way the enlightenment and humanitarian thoughts in intelligentsia in China. But from the early 1990s onwards, particularly the middle and late 1990s, the process of secularization in China began to get lopsided and the public interest tended to lose its ground. A new type of secularization turned up, featuring the abnormal indulgence in material and egoist comforts. People fall into a crazy pursuit of luxuries, material comforts and physical pleasure, while the public interest declines. The society remains cold and detached to public issues and shows no interest in political issues. Interpersonal contacts keep withering. Mass culture tries to sustain and move forward in such a context from the 1990s onwards. The public sphere is thus denied and betrayed in a way different from religion. People go back to physiological/physical pleasures and closed inner world, which results in a morbid narcissistic personality. Tao Dongfeng holds that the two forms of secularization discussed in the article serve as the basis for the analysis of the two types of mass culture.

Tao points out that neither the Western God nor the Cultural Revolution helps eliminate degenerative consumerism and materialism apathetic to political issues from the 1990s onwards. The only way is to reinvigorate the public spirit and to rebuild a civil society. Participation channels must keep smooth in the public sphere. The institutional obstacles to the public communication lead to nothing else except forcing people to materialism.

3. New Left Paradigm and China's Mass Culture Studies

The New Left paradigm and the moralism- and aestheticism-based Frankfurt School paradigm both hold a radical critical attitude toward mass culture, while the former focuses more on political-economic and struggle analyses, rather than abstract moral and aesthetic criticisms. The New Left theorists see themselves as the spokesmen on behalf of the vulnerable on the bottom of the society (in contrast, the moralism- and aestheticism-based paradigm poses as the capitalized abstract "Man").

The New Left paradigm of mass culture studies made its debut in China on *Dushu* (*Reading*), 1997 (2). The feature articles published on this issue under the title of "the masses, culture and mass culture" set the basic tune of the New Left theory of mass culture: Mass culture is exclusively for the middle class (white-collars)/privileged class. It is not something truly for the masses. Han Shaogong points in his "Who Are 'the Masses'" that "the masses" was previously the synonym of "poverty" and poor life. As the pattern of wealth and profit distribution is radically reconstructed in a modern and industrial consumer society, the poor becomes the minority, while the bourgeois class expands. Thus, a new affluent "majority" emerges with purchasing power. According to Han, mass culture is no longer something for the previously poor "masses". Instead, it serves the middle-class "minority" in the old sense.

Kuang Xinnian clearly states in his "'The Masses' as a Cultural Imagination" that the meaning of "the masses" has changed with the concept of mass culture. The historical term "the masses" now refers to white-collars. In the global integration, power, elites and mass culture are on intimate terms with each other as never before. Kuang published another relevant article "Cultural Studies as a 'Sun-top'" on *Frontiers*, 2003 (1), turning his fire from mass culture to Cultural Studies (mass culture included). According to Kuang, Cultural Studies and capitalism/middle class pose as nothing more than a "mistress" or "concubine" to its "husband"/patron. Cultural Studies never intends to criticize the wicked deeds of its "husband" (capitalism); instead, it only takes the latter as "something to flirt with". Kuang holds that Cultural Studies deeply roots itself in the middle class and serves as the night watchman for the latter's perceptual lebensraum. The author redirects his criticisms of "the class origin" of Cultural Studies to academic identity and academic politics. Cultural Studies plagued with academic politics remove all dynamites to the political and economic structures of capitalism and remain incapable of trench warfare to seize the cultural front from capitalism. Thus, Cultural Studies does nothing except "to attack the capitalist class as a part of the latter", so that the class struggle grows harmless day by day. In a word, Cultural Studies has turned from a life-and-death political struggle between the proletariat and the capitalist class to a rubber-bullet fight of words and culture. It is more of dazzling fireworks in a postmodern society and era of consumerism than a gunfire-filled war.

Dai Jinhua is another prominent figure of the New Left paradigm. In her "The Invisible Politics in Mass Culture" published on *Frontiers*, 1999 (2), Dai makes a smart analysis of the changing meaning of the word "plaza" (*guangchang* in Chinese) and has a sharp eye on the conspiracy of business and politics in present-day Chinese society. The Chinese translation of "plaza" indicates a diversion, rewriting, arrogation and even violation of the word "revolution" in the context of thriving consumerism and market capitalism. Previously in the Chinese context, *guangchang* ("plaza") was always a political term and linked with "revolution" and stood dominantly in the ideological discourse. An era dominated by revolution is replaced by a one of consumption. What's more than this, revolution and consumption rely on each other and are in conflict in a new historical period. So is the situation for politics and market. The author gives other examples in

advertisements and other commercial behaviors of the diversion of the previous terms for revolution, illustrating the reciprocal, mutually replaceable and linkable relationship between revolution and business and describing the relationship between mass culture/consumerism and the interest of the middle class/New Rich in contemporary China. Dai holds that mass culture and mass media in its heyday in the 1990s both served the tastes and consumption needs of the so-called middle class. As the New Left's core idea goes, mass culture is equal to bourgeois culture and mass culture in China is a practice of cultural hegemony that pushes the middle class's interest to a legitimate position. As a New Left critic, Dai Jinhua not only criticizes mass culture in her article, but also questions passive liberalism. Or, she sees mass culture and passive liberalism as conspirators, co-denying class conflicts and economic inequality and co-legitimizing the New Rich. In actuality, the New Left scholars' true focus rests not on mass culture studies, but on questioning and criticizing liberalism. In their eyes, liberalists are the spokesmen of consumerism.

The New Left paradigm of mass culture studies has an acute idea of the latest development trends in mass culture, while there are numerous problems. It sees mass culture in an oversimplified manner, equating all types of mass culture with the bourgeois mentality. Thus, it ignores the complexity of mass culture and various political and cultural roles mass culture has played in different periods. Also, the New Left paradigm features a simplified analysis of classes. Consumption culture in China is neither necessarily positive nor naturally conservative. Instead, its political role depends upon the specific historical context it sits in. Abstract market, commodity or aesthetic criticism solves no problems specific to China. Moreover, New Left critics usually see "farewell to revolution", passive liberalism, mass consumption culture and mainstream culture in the same perspective, simply ignoring the differences between them. For instance, many intellectuals who advocate mass culture and liberalism evidently hold views different from the mainstream culture when they call for freedom, democracy and political reform. Lastly and most importantly, the New Left criticism of mass culture is set on a more radical theory: China is now a capitalist society of the global market economy and consumption; therefore, mass culture in present-day China is exactly the capitalist consumption culture. However, this basic judgment is over-simplified. As many scholars state, China is now more of crony capitalism than capitalism. The ongoing market reform in China is controlled by power, without matching institutional reform and rule of law. The New Left criticism of mass culture based on a feeble judgment naturally falls wrong theoretically and empirically.

4. **Emergence of Empirical and Ethnographic Studies**

It is noted that the aforementioned paradigms, be it the Frankfurt School's critical theory, modernization theory or the New Left paradigm, or be it negative or positive about mass culture, are all clear and firm about their own values and political demands. However, none gives positive supporting evidence convincing enough, despite the seemingly-eloquent analysis. They simply appear to be too vague and general sometimes. In recent years, field study and ethnographic method grow stronger in case and empirical studies of mass culture phenomena. Ethnographic

methodology is applied, in varying degrees, in the articles concerned that hold more complicated attitudes toward mass culture in a more dialectical manner.

Cheng Wenchao gives an apt and in-depth analysis of the power relations between sneakers, PLA uniform shoes and commonly-called gym shoes in his "Sneakers and the Power Relations Hidden in Popular Culture". He first recounts the superior status PLA uniform shoes implied over common gym shoes in the early days of the People's Republic of China when only the privileged groups had access to and wore PLA uniform shoes. Sneakers later rivaled PLA uniform shoes, indicating the decline of the superior status previously enjoyed by PLA uniform shoes-wearers: Anyone could wear anything he could afford. New social ranks grew, known as economic ranks, as sneakers were at the time not affordable for all. They were something for the economically-privileged: Only those who could afford sneakers could enjoy sneakers; otherwise, one was only an on-looker. Cheng thus points out that.

We find two power relations in the fashion history of gym shoes that evolves from PLA uniform shoes to sneakers. Power changed hands from the politically privileged to the economically privileged. We see in both trends social ranks, privileges and corresponding ideas. We may draw the same conclusion in wider ranges extending from shoes to all garments.[20]

Cheng Wenchao evidently makes his analysis from a historical and developmental angle, stressing the historical path of the current popular culture, as well as the power relations ever emerging in the history of mass culture. According to Cheng, anyone who only sees one of the two power relations lacks a historical attitude and ignores historical facts and the reality. The over-simplified criticisms of China's popular culture ignoring the political privilege in the ultra-Left period fall as a hollow theory. It is equally precarious to be indiscriminatingly positive about China's popular culture, focusing only on its rebellion against the old-day political privilege and paying no attention to the new economic privilege growing out of it. The author further states that the two power relations co-exist in present-day China and are joining hands. That's what we call a power-for-money deal that plunges the society into an abyss. Cheng Wenchao actually gives an objective analysis of the power relations involved in the fashion of sneakers in China from a historical and sociological view. Scholars may adopt similar methods in the analysis of mass culture.

Xu Xu, who authors "A Carnival of Bodies in an Autumn Rain: How to Decode the Live Show of the Second Golden Eagle Awards Festival", analyzes that live show from the cultural perspective with Hall's encoding/decoding model and Barthes's semiotics. Xu categorizes the participants of the Festival into five groups, namely China Television Artists Association (CTAA) as the official participant representing the national ideology; Hunan television circles and local government

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[20]Cheng Wenchao, "Sneakers and the Power Relations Hidden in Popular Culture" in Tao Dongfeng et al. (eds.), *Cultural Studies* (Vol. III) (Tianjin: Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences Press, 2002), p. 242.

as the key or direct booster of the event; showbiz stars as the basic encoding material of the event, who took an active role, despite being dominated; business-owner sponsors, who remained clear-headed and straightforward about their interests through the whole thing; and the live audience as nothing more than the background of the live show. It was these people and institutions that co-created a television text and cultural product as a hopeful classic of the Chinese mass culture. According to the author, the CTAA and the event sponsors put forth demands poles apart, so that Golden Eagle Broadcasting System (GBS) in charge of the encoding work fell into conflicts and contradictions when it tried to meet both parties' needs, because the guidelines of Golden Eagle Awards organizer went contradicted against marketing strategies of the business-owner sponsors (i.e. entertaining and audience rating). Nonetheless, Hunan television circles smartly managed to make a reconciliation of all the conflicts and contradictions.[21] Xu sees into how the participants dealt with the conflicts and contradictions and came to terms with each other and concludes that mass culture producers, during the encoding process, selected impressive symbols and signs and smartly filled them into the narrative syntagms, so that the live show created some space for significance proliferation and reproduction. In this way, audience finds the pleasure of text reading in a TV-based popular reader. The physical pleasure the carnival-like Festival brought to people remained as its core. By way of significance encoding, it launched clever attacks by dodging, diminishing, attacking and transforming the significance of the mainstream and elite culture. Nevertheless, the Festival entertained the audience without going to the extremes. That may be the difference between mass culture in the Chinese mainland and that in Hong Kong and Taiwan.[22]

In addition, the authors of *Bars in Shanghai* choose two groups of objects of observation in their study, namely bars in the bar street on Hengshan Road and bars in proximity to Fudan and Tongji, and try to analyze the urban consumption culture unique to Shanghai at the turning of centuries, tracing the cultural past of consumerism in Shanghai by seeing into actual consumption space and literary texts, and to comb the changes in Shanghai's urban space in a modern and globalized context, interpreting the complicated social and cultural realities in contemporary Shanghai from the angle of consumption.

Following an ethnographic methodology, the authors by way of field study and interviews interpret bars in Shanghai concerning space production, cultural icon, body and gender, political nostalgia, sex and leisure and draw a number of inspirational conclusions. According to the authors, bars on Hengshan Road are evidently in a space of consumerism, in which consumer choice plays a critical role.

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[21]Xu Xu, "A Carnival of Bodies in an Autumn Rain: How to Decode the Live Show of the Second Golden Eagle Awards Festival"in Tao Dongfeng et al. (eds.), *Cultural Studies* (Vol. III) (Tianjin: Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences Press, 2002), p. 260.

[22]Xu Xu, "A Carnival of Bodies in an Autumn Rain: How to Decode the Live Show of the Second Golden Eagle Awards Festival" in Tao Dongfeng et al. (eds.), *Cultural Studies* (Vol. III) (Tianjin: Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences Press, 2002), p. 271.

But consumerism refers not only to consumer behaviors. It mainly means the production, distribution, desire, access and use of icon-things in a bar, during which process consumerism and politics tie into an in dissoluble bound. A consumption space turns into a political thing and the personal experience in the space, such as the recognition of consumer behaviors, develops into a sort of political power. For example, the authors find that the exotic touch actually ties up multiple relations in a bar: "Ideology and commercial consumption, the state power and commercial capital, and globalization and the national consciousness, entangle here (in the exotic atmosphere in a bar) into a whirling scene of mixed tints."[23]

According to the authors, the political nostalgia in bars in Shanghai, be it expressed in the intellectual discourse or elite narrative, is likely to fall into the strange loop of political nostalgia of Old Shanghai. This nostalgia does open the horizon to resist capital, consumerism, globalization and state power and rebuild local knowledge. In the meantime, nostalgia itself is, however, the reminiscence of consumerism and cosmopolitanism. The political nostalgia for Old Shanghai needs to make a response, as the other, to the cultural reality in contemporary Shanghai.[24]

The authors illustrate the complicated cultural phenomena in bars in Shanghai by field study and find an access to understanding mass culture.

Yang Ling's doctoral dissertation "Fans of Super Voice Girls and the Contemporary Consumption of Mass Culture"[25] is a typical try to study mass culture in contemporary China with ethnographic methods in a conscious and methodological way, focusing on how the fans of Super Voice Girls show their understanding of the contemporary Chinese society, construct meaning and recognition and build their community culture, by appreciating and supporting their idols. As a scholar-fan of Super Voice Girls, the author tries to redress the prevailing bias in Cultural Studies in contemporary China with an ethnographic methodology and her own experience. It is a good way to rectify the overstress on theoretical deduction and ideological criticism over the empirical investigation into cultural phenomena. The author holds that in the specific cultural practice of the fans of Super Voice Girls we see how complicated and multifaceted consumer activities are in a modern society. Consumption marks social differentiation and serves as a leverage of social control. In the meantime, it opens up a cultural space shared by different social classes to show their recognition and fuel changes. Cultural consumption/consumption culture is never merely secular, hedonistic or shallow, with which people leave in-depth thinking or emotions untouched in the pleasure of shopping. Dr. Yang's dissertation reveals the complexity of mass culture and refutes any oversimplified attitude toward or value of mass culture.

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[23]Bao Yaming et al., *Bars in Shanghai: Space, Consumption and Imagination* (Nanjing: Jiangsu People's Publishing House, 2001), p. 115.

[24]Bao Yaming et al., *Bars in Shanghai: Space, Consumption and Imagination* (Nanjing: Jiangsu People's Publishing House, 2001), p. 153.

[25]Yang Ling(Capital Normal University), *Carnivals of Recreation in an Era of Transition: Fans of Super Voice Girls and the Consumption of Mass Culture* based on her doctoral dissertation, Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 2009 and 2012.

A study of mass culture with empirical and ethnographic methodologies helps fully understand the complex richness of China's mass culture and avoid simplified, superficial and stereotyped judgements. It is a reasonable logic for the study of mass culture. No studies without their own attitudes or values have ever existed. So do empirical and ethnographic studies, despite their superiorities. Instead, values are formed in the process of in-depth and careful investigation into a specific object of empirical studies. Any prejudgement will impede the full understanding of the object, leaving the study and its outcomes less objective and scientific.

2 Ethnicity and Identity

Modern history of China, its intellectual history included, has evolved around the building of a nation-state. However, the nation-state issue was overshadowed and even replaced by the class struggle between the 1950s and 1970s and remained under-studied academically. The Chinese academic circles saw a boom of discussion of the national and cultural identity of the Chinese nation in the early 1990s. The boom swept across the field of Cultural Studies in China as well. It has substantially reshaped the discourse atmosphere and pattern in the Chinese academic circles and its influence has continued into this day.

1. **Emergence of the National Identity Issue**

In Cultural Studies, the national identity issue is generally included in "post-colonial theory"/"post-colonial criticism" or "the Third World criticism". Post-colonial theory and the theory of the clash of civilizations in the West evidently brought out the national identity issue in the Chinese mainland. The issue was first raised in Cultural Studies field in China when Said's *Orientalism* was introduced and discussed. *Dushu* (*Reading*) magazine published in Issue 9, 1993 a succession of articles introducing Edward Said and his "Orientalism" and set off the discussion of the national and cultural identity in China. Also, some attributed the emergence of the national and cultural identity issue in China to Huntington's "clash of civilizations". Related articles were published in installments in *Cankao Xiaoxi* (20–26 August 1993), an important newspaper in China, and aroused heated debates among Chinese intellectuals.

Similar to the situation of Cultural Studies in contemporary China, the national and cultural identity issue arose in China more out of the country's specific conditions than from the Western theoretical discourses. Thus, the issue cannot be fully understood without being placed in China's history and realities. In actuality, Said and his *Orientalism* were introduced no later than 1986 in the collection of Jameson's lectures. The article of a special interview with Said was published in 1988. Academic papers on *Orientalism* were published in 1990. Nonetheless, none drew enough attention or set off significant debates. After years' of silence, the debate over post-colonialism and China's national and cultural identity broke out between 1993 and 1994, during which period liberal thoughts of new enlightenment

suffered setbacks due to political reasons in the country. The "coincidence" is quite thought-provoking.

Post-colonial theory and cultural criticism deal with impacts of the relations between old-day colonial powers and colonies on the present-day racial relations, particularly cultural relations between different races in European and American countries, as well as on the cultural relations between developed European and American countries and the Third World countries. The relationship between the Chinese and Western cultures has always been a core issue in China's modernization process since the First Opium War in 1840 when China was forced into the modern world. Wang Hui clearly defines the situation, "Through the entire modernization process in China, Chinese intellectuals have, on the one hand, strived to build a prosperous and strong modern nation-state, while on the other hand, criticized traditional Chinese society and customs by the criteria of the Western modern societies and their culture and values. Thus, the modern discourse in China has sought to analyze the issues in China through a pattern of binary oppositions of 'China versus the West' and 'traditions versus modernity'."[26]

The "cultural fever" in a vogue in the 1980s in the Chinese mainland has been remembered for its two fractious and conflicting features. On the one hand, people tried to rediscover and recover the root of the traditional Chinese culture severely hurt during the Cultural Revolution. On the other hand, the enlightenment thoughts popular from the May Fourth Movement onwards were readopted to judge the traditional Chinese culture and national characteristics by the criteria of the Western cultures. It only depended upon the political and government-approved ideology and attitudes that dominated. In the 1990s, the Chinese intelligentsia shifted their attention and interest from the West to China and people saw "the revival of studies of the ancient Chinese civilization". In the meantime, the Chinese intelligentsia began to doubt and criticize the Western cultures and theories. The Chinese government trumpeted patriotism. People took on a nationalist zeal. The intelligentsia turned (from the West) to China. The country was enveloped in the 1990s in a cultural atmosphere and landscape rather different from that in the 1980s. The Western things that used to get upper hand over the Chinese ones seemed to lose the ground overnight.

Like the switch between the national salvation and enlightenment in the modern history of China, the shift of focus of the Chinese academic circles aforementioned grew out of the then social realities in the country. It was never a purely academic thing. The dissolution of the Soviet Union around the turn of the 1980s and 90s played the critical role. The socialist camp disintegrated around the globe and consequently, the former socialist European countries fell into knock-on effects. The event pushed the enlightenment discourse in China into a crisis and dragged China into tensions and frictions with Western countries.[27] Many books strong of

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[26]Wang Hui, "Thinking and Modernity in Contemporary China", *Frontiers*, 1997 (5).

[27]For example, China and the U.S. clashed around 1989 on "human rights". In summer 1993, the China-based regular container ship "Yinhe" was wrongly accused by the U.S. government of

nationalist passions were published in China, with *China Can Say "No"* and *Behind a Demonized China* as the best-known ones.[28] Some held that the shift came from the fact that some intellectuals in China at the time found themselves "empowered" with the "national" identity in a time of crisis and secured themselves with this national identity as the spokesmen of "the national culture" and "the interests of the national culture".[29] However, this intriguing analysis should also be placed in that particular context at the turn of the 1980s and 90s. As a special social class, intellectuals usually define their identity by criticizing and negating something or someone else. Their identity is defined through negation, as intellectuals distinguish themselves from the others with their critical thinking and discourse. In the 1980s, Chinese intellectuals focused their criticisms on the traditional culture and the ultra-Left ideology trumpeted in the Cultural Revolution. In the 1990s, however, they turned to the emerging "market economy" and capitalism in the West (the U.S. in particular), as enlightenment was impeded and nationalism thrived in China. That's how the discussion of "humanism", reflection on post-colonialism and modernity, as well as a fever for studies of the ancient Chinese civilization, arose. It was right at the time that cultural nationalism resurged and the idea of "the revival of the Oriental culture" emerged. Some asserted that the 21st century would be one for the Chinese culture and younger generations should learn the ancient Chinese classics from their childhood, to rebuild the Chinese "humanism". Humanists changed their ideas quietly. When *Studies of the Ancient Chinese Civilization* was first published in 1991 by Peking University, *People's Daily* made a good coverage of it in a positive manner. The mainstream changed evidently the attitude toward the traditional Chinese civilization. Later, "the studies of the ancient Chinese civilization" would become an industrial sector, as institutions like "Sinology institutions", "courses of the ancient Chinese classics" and "Confucius institutes" are established and become a cultural and industrial phenomenon at home and abroad. Academic papers and monographs on the traditional Chinese culture were published in a considerable number. The Chinese government tried to ease the tensions at home triggered by the political event in the late 1980s by redirecting cultural discussions and debates to "the outside world" (global political, economic and cultural issues). Together, the aforementioned events triggered off the heat of post-colonial theory and the national identity issue.

(Footnote 27 continued)

carrying chemical materials for weapon to Iran and met with military confrontations from the U.S. armies. In the autumn of the same year, China failed in its bidding for hosting 2000 Olympic Games. The failure was widely seen as the Western "prejudice" against China. The Chinese people got outraged at the NATO's bombardment on the Chinese Embassy to Yugoslavia.

[28]Song Qiang, Zhang Cangcang (real name: Zhang Xiaobo), Qiao Bian & Gu Qingsheng et al., *China Can Say "No": Post Cold War Political and Emotional Choices*. Beijing: China Industry & Commerce Associated Press, 1996. Li Xiguang & Liu Kang et al., *Behind a Demonized China*. Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 1996.

[29]See Xu Ben, *Toward Post-modernity and Post-colonialism*. Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 1996.

The reflection on capitalist modernity and theories of globalization, post-modernity and world system were introduced into China at that time or even earlier. More and more Chinese scholars blamed the suppression from the capitalist world system on China for the subsequent dilemma China's modernization faces. The reflection on the Chinese culture (such as the national characteristics) popular in the 1980s (the post-May Fourth Movement era included) gradually faded. That is a key turning in China's intellectual history.

2. **Problem Domain of the National and Cultural Identity Issue in China**

Post-colonial criticism surpasses the other topics, such as feminism and even mass culture, in Cultural Studies in term of intensity of dispute and controversy, as it touches how the Chinese intelligentsia has thought about modernization and revolution in China in the past century. However, the post-colonial theory has had to adapt to the Chinese context that is enormously different from that of the West. That is how the problem domain of China's post-colonial criticism distinguishes itself from the others.

(I) **Criticism of Third World Cultures**

Theory and criticism of the Third World cultures, first proposed by the American neo-Marxist theorist Jameson, remains the earliest discourse pattern of the localized post-colonial culture theory in China. Jameson's relevant papers were first translated into Chinese in 1989 and drew Chinese scholars' attention. As an American scholar, Jameson looks back into the First World cultures by studying the Third World cultures. According to him, none of the Third World cultures is independent or self-determined; instead, they have been always in the life-and-death struggle with the First World's "cultural imperialism". Thus, to study the Third World cultures is, to some extent, to study the Western cultures themselves.

However, the Chinese academic circles try to understand and discuss about the significance of the theory of the Third World cultures to China by following their own tracks. Zhang Yiwu is evidently the most prominent figure. Inspired by Jameson's thoughts, though, Zhang isn't satisfied with how the scholars from the First World interpret the Third World cultures, as according to him, Jameson cannot understand the uniqueness of the texts of the Third World. Thus, the Third World intellectuals are the right people who give the interpretation to the Third World cultures and let their voices heard in multicultural dialogues in the world.[30] Zhang began to put the term "the Third World" in frequent use in his papers of literary criticism and theory in 1989. He made a methodological elaboration on the critical theory of "the Third World cultures" in his "The Third World Cultures and Chinese Literature" published on *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 1990 (1). This article has a wide impact academically. Zhang states in the article that in a globalized world, the globally-accepted academic discourse has been actually the

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[30]Zhang Yiwu, "The Third World Cultures: A New Starting Point", *Dushu* (*Reading*), 1990 (6).

First World's discourse, which usually holds back the literary theories and creation of the Third World. The Western discourse seems to dominate in China from the May Fourth Movement onwards. The theory of the Third World cultures is thus in need. However, the author seems to be in ambivalence during his writing. He stands firmly on the Chinese position, highlighting that the theory of the Third World cultures, in his eyes, is ideological and non-academic; in the meantime, he argues that the theory is analytical and theoretical, instead of being pure political propaganda. He stresses that his theory of the Third World cultures is local and Chinese, but absorbing into it other cultures (particularly the Western deconstruction theory). Focusing on binary oppositions and antagonism, Zhang admits that the theory of the Third World cultures can survive and develop only in dialogues and exchanges. Generally, in structure and arrangement of the entire article, the author focuses more on nativism and antagonism of his theory of the Third World cultures, stressing that the theory is something critical and reflective on the side of the Third World in the confrontation between the First World and the Third World.

Zhang Yiwu, in his criticism of the Third World cultures, evidently places all confrontations concerned under the confrontation between the First World and the Third World and blames the suppression from the First World for the problems in the Third World. For instance, in his comments on Zha Jianying's novels about Chinese students' life in the U.S., Zhang holds that the novels illustrate "the predicament the Third World cultures face". But in fact, Zha's novels represent the common topics in any novels about overseas Chinese students who "flee" away from China but are unable to fully merge into or identify themselves with the American society and its values. Zhang sees in the novels a cultural control and anti-control and "the sharp binary oppositions between the First World and the Third World": While the Third World is idealist, poverty-stricken and (sexually) repressive, the First World is materialistic, wealthy and relaxed. Completed on 1 June 1989 and published in September that year, the article is thought-provoking, as the author blames the material desires generated by the First World cultural hegemony for the evaporated idealism in the Third World and China.[31] In Zhang's commentary on Liu Qingbang's novels, he sees the antagonism between desire and discourse, i.e. the antagonism between body and unconsciousness and rule, order and consciousness, as "the icon of the predicament of the Third World cultures". However, such antagonism is essentially a topic in any civilized society, in fact. Memory, a common narrative pattern, in Zhang's eyes, "becomes an indefinable ideographic thing of the Third World's predicament". Modernist novels share their distrust in realism. However, Zhang Yiwu considers this common feature of modernist novels as something distinctive of "the Third World cultures".[32] Also, he

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[31]Zhang Yiwu, "Predicament of the Third World Cultures: the World in Zha Jianying's Novels", *Contemporary Writers Review*, 1989 (5).

[32]Zhang Yiwu, "Discourse, Memory & Narrative: On Liu Qingbang's Novels", *Contemporary Writers Review*, 1990 (5).

lists postmodern aestheticism in commercial mass culture as a crisis particular to the Third World cultures produced from the control of the First World's culture industry over the Third World cultures, while other critics usually take it as a universal phenomenon.[33]

The theory of "the Third World cultures" also gives a second thought to modernity. Zhang Yiwu tries to find support in literary works for his argument about the reflection on modernity in modern literature, including "the disappointment to the Western cultures and values".[34] Nonetheless, his argumentation looks a little bit farfetched.[35] In another article, Zhang puts Jameson's "national allegory"-like writing into "modern writing" that follows the Western discourse of enlightenment and alienates an author's own nation. According to Zhang, some modern artists, such as Zhang Yimou and Chen Kaige who conduct allegory-like creation activities in their art films, identify themselves with and yield to the First World cultures,[36] satisfying the Western desire and illusion of the Third World.[37]

Scholars including Yue Daiyun and Meng Fanhua give their positive view on Zhang Yiwu's theory of the Third World cultures,[38] while some others advocating liberalism think about it the other way round. According to Xu Ben, the Third World criticism in the West and India focuses on "anti-oppression" rather than "nativism", while China's post-colonial criticism stresses nativism instead of anti-oppression. Or rather, China's post-colonial criticism struggles against only the oppression from the First World's discourse and the domestic/local cultural oppression never enters into its vision. Xu holds that the so-called "oppression" from the First World isn't a significant one faced by China today. Thus, the Third World critics in China "conceal and evade, deliberately or unintentionally, the violence and oppression local to the Chinese society… creating a cultural criticism

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[33]Zhang Yiwu, "The Moment of Dream: Back and Beyond", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 1991 (5).

[34]Zhang Yiwu, "An Inquiry into Modernity: A Trend in Literature in the 1990s", *Tianjin Social Sciences*, 1993 (4).

[35]The example Zhang Yiwu takes is Wang Anyi's *Linda the Bartender*. It is the story about Linda, a college girl in Shanghai who fancies the West. She takes part-time job in a bar where she gets to know a guy from the West. The two become somewhat a couple. But the relationship makes Linda unhappy, as she finds that the guy sees this relationship as something pure about money. Linda finally refuses the guy. Nevertheless, what Linda refuses is that specific foreigner, instead of "the modern Western values". After all, she picks up some dollar notes stealthily, to save for her dream of "going abroad".

[36]Zhang Yiwu, "Toward the Post-allegory Era", *Shanghai Literature*, 1994 (8).

[37]Zhang Yiwu, "Chinese Films in the Post-new-period: Split Challenges", *Contemporary Cinema*, 1994 (5).

[38]Yue Daiyun, "Perspectives on the 1990s: To Be Unique and Original in the World's Cultural Dialogues", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 1990 (3); "Emergence and Prospects of the Third World Cultures", *Film Art*, 1991 (1); and "Comparative Literature and Cultural Transition", *Popular Tribune*, 1991 (3). Meng Fanhua, "The Theory of the Third World Cultures and Its Dilemma", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 1990 (6).

pattern that is in great favor of the government-approved ideological control and diminishes the so-called 'antagonism'."[39]

The discussion of the theory of the Third World cultures arose as an early example of post-colonial theory in China and covered all topics raised in the field later. Zhang Yiwu's theory of the Third World cultures talks about various issues, such as the comments on Zhang Yimou's films, the discussion of "aphasia" in China's literary study, the revaluation of the New Literature germinating from the May Fourth Movement and the reflection on modernity. However, Zhang's theory is plagued with problems of confused terms and conflicting and hesitant expressions. Moreover, the theory is denounced for its one-sided focus on the international antagonism, without mentioning any domestic confrontations.

(II) Be Us, Be Others and Be Chinese: Criticism of Zhang Yimou's Films

The earliest translated Western papers on post-colonialism were first published on film periodicals[40] and Zhang Yimou's films were the first target of criticism in the field. To some extent, the post-colonial theory truly came into China accompanied by the criticism of Zhang Yimou's films. Zhang and his films won quite many international awards and became an icon of China in many critics' eyes. Wang Gan's "To Raise the Red lantern for Whom?: An Analysis of Zhang Yimou's Film" published in *Wenhuibao* (*Wenhui News*) criticized Zhang Yimou and his art for the first time from an Orientalist point of view (concepts of "Orientalism" and "Eurocentrism" came to readers in this article). According to Wang, Zhang Yimou's film *Raise the Red Lantern* is not intended for Chinese audience but was instead made with a foreign audience in mind, as the custom of raising the red lantern depicted in the film is something ugly fabricated by the director to entertain foreigners.

The period between 1992 and 1993 was key for the introduction of the post-colonial theory into China and saw an escalation of the criticism of Zhang Yimou and his films. *Dushu* (*Reading*) published a series of articles in Issue 9, 1993, which were seen as a landmark in the introduction of the post-colonial theory into China. An author points out, "Some brilliant Chinese artists try to 'bring their works to a world audience', works which portray something about China as being exciting, intoxicating or disgusting to Westerners, with an aim of generating among Western audience and readers a sense of aesthetic 'sublimity', sympathy and even

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[39]Xu Ben, *Toward Post-modernity and Post-colonialism* (Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 1996), pp. 220–236.

[40]Zhang Jingyuan's translation of Jameson's "Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism" was published on *Contemporary Cinema*, 1989 (6). Jameson holds in the article that the Third World suffered from colonial and imperial powers and the Third World literature is naturally nationalist and its narrative features the national allegories. In Jameson's new construction of the world's culture, the Third World literature shall follow its own choice and way. This article was quite a stir in the Chinese academic circles back then. Following it, magazines such as *Film Art*, *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*) and *Dushu* (*Reading*) also published articles on the Third World. (Zhang Hui, "A Journey of Theory: History and Issues of Post-colonial Cultural Criticism in China").

racial/cultural superiority. Naturally, such works have often been commercially successful."[41] Zhang Yimou and his films are evidently one of the targets of the criticism, the author stating that "we don't necessarily mean Zhang Yimou's award-winning films" notwithstanding.

Zhang Yiwu and Wang Yichuan were two prominent critics of Zhang Yimou's films at the time. Compared to his predecessors, Zhang Yiwu makes his comments on Zhang Yimou and his films from a post-colonial angle in a more theoretical, methodological and conscious manner. According to Zhang Yiwu, Zhang Yimou as an idol and wonder in the new era is actually a myth co-created by the Chinese and Western mass media, a myth to be understood in a global post-colonial context. A "post-colonial context" refers to "the impacts and control imposed on the Third World 'nation states' by the West through 'soft' ideological strategies."[42] In Zhang Yimou's case, his films "are usually produced with international investment and have to cater to the consumption needs on the international market. This pulls Zhang Yimou and his films into a global post-colonial context."[43] Zhang Yiwu gives a specific analysis of the texts of Zhang Yimou's films. According to the critic, the director illustrates in his films a dreamlike and fantastic image of China: It is a space outside history and a backward and anti-modernity world in history.[44] Zhang Yiwu wrote in another article published a decade after Zhang Yimou's *Hero* had been released that Zhang Yimou has been a globally-recognized advocate of "might makes right". That film endorses the current global cultural and social order shaped by counties led by the U.S. and represents the logic of the current world.[45] *Hero* represents the higher end of the globalized ideology, while *House of Flying Daggers* shows the lower end, i.e. ideology of consumerism/aesthetics of desire.[46]

Like Zhang Yiwu, Wang Yichuan also thinks that Zhang Yimou is a legend largely of the west's making. Accommodation policy adopted by the West creates a post-colonial context, i.e. "an enchanting cultural environment or atmosphere the West creates in 'the Third World' (e.g. China) after the colonial strategies."[47] Zhang Yimou's films are accepted by the West as "a soft advertisement to prove the charm of the Western hegemony".[48] According to Wang, the exotic atmosphere and

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[41]Zhang Kuan, "Aliens in the European and American Eyes", *Dushu* (*Reading*), 1993 (9).

[42]Zhang Yiwu, "Zhang Yimou in a Global Post-colonial Context", *Contemporary Cinema*, 1993 (3).

[43]Ibid.

[44]Ibid.

[45]Zhang Yiwu, "A Lonely Hero: A Decade-later Review on the Myth of Zhang Yimou", *Film Art*, 2003 (4).

[46]Zhang Yiwu, "Zhang Yimou and the Global Imagination", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 2005 (1).

[47]Wang Yichuan, "An Exotic Atmosphere and the Illusion of National Character", *Dongfang Congkan* (*Oriental Collection*), 1993 (4).

[48]Wang Yichuan, "Who Is Behind the Myth of Zhang Yimou?", *Genesis*, 1993 (2).

folkways represented in Zhang Yimou's films aim to please the West and are connected with colonialism.[49] Those fantastic folkways in Zhang Yimou's films satisfy Westerners' voyeurism and sense of triumph over the Third World.[50] Therefore, the national character expressed in the strong atmosphere of Chineseness in Zhang's films is in essence not a national self-awareness; instead, it is nothing more than "the otherness" in the Western eyes. "We have to face such a dilemma: The more national a thing is, the more "otherness" it features. Also, someone who wants to win the West with national things, yields to the West and loses the national character more easily."[51] "China illustrated in Zhang Yimou's films is never 'be us'; instead, it is something 'be other'. China as it is has never had a say."[52]

However, the post-colonial interpretation to Zhang Yimou's films have always been praised and blamed. Some finds it improper to make simply political interpretation to the films and calls to see art works as art works.[53] This idea would become a key one countering post-colonial criticism, holding that "post-colonial criticism focuses solely on cultural hegemony and ignores the beauty of art beyond ethnics and cultures". Another common refutation to the post-colonial criticisms of Zhang Yimou's films goes that post-colonial critics are plagued with "a sense of narrow nationalism". According to Dong Leshan, those who dislike Zhang Yimou and his films "don't want to show the dark side of China to others. Chinese people are sensitive about their reputation and unwilling to expose their shortcomings. What they would like to show is only their age-old history and brilliant culture. It is arrogant and overweening nationalism."[54] Hao Jian imposes a sharper challenge to post-colonial criticism, holding that it is a narrow cultural nationalism and "the Boxer-like moans and groans".[55]

As for the issue of "(pseudo) folkways", some hold that fabricated things are allowed in films as an art type. And why can't it be understood as the criticism of patriarchy or autocracy in pre-1949 China?[56] Others point out that there is no evidence to suggest that Zhang Yimou's films as trying to "cater to" the Western audience and that such a claim is mere speculation on behalf of Westerners.[57] Some have tried to defend Zhang Yimou's films by citing Homi Bhabha's idea of

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[49]Wang Yichuan, "An Exotic Atmosphere and the Illusion of National Character", *Dongfang Congkan* (*Oriental Collection*), 1993 (4).

[50]Ibid.

[51]Wang Yichuan, "China: Be Us or Be Other", *Chinese Cultural Research*, Winter Volume, 1994.
[52]Ibid.

[53]Zhaxiduo, "Laurie Siegel, Exotic Touches, Red Lantern and Others", *Dushu* (*Reading*), 1992 (8).

[54]Dong Leshan, "A Cantata of Orientalism", *Dushu* (*Reading*), 1994 (5).

[55]Zhang Hui, "Images and Politics: An Analysis of Post-colonial Criticism of Films in China", *The Journal of Humanities*, 2010 (2).

[56]Yi Xiaobin, "A Review on the Post-colonial Criticisms of Zhang Yimou's Films", *Movie Review*, 2007.

[57]Zhang Hui, "Images and Politics: An Analysis of Post-colonial Criticism of Films in China", *The Journal of Humanities*, 2010 (2).

"hybridization", arguing that what Zhang tries to do in his films is to give expressions to Chinese subject matters by applying Western theories and art forms and that such attempts are instrumental for ridding Chinese cinema of colonial influences and helping it achieve independence.[58] Also, some others see in the post-colonial criticisms of Zhang Yimou's films binary thinking, pitting East against the West, the First World against the Third World and self against otherness. That thinking pattern of the cultural Cold War is seemingly anti-colonialism and reinforces colonialism in actuality.[59]

Thanks to the criticism and debate of Zhang Yimou's films, the West-originating post-colonial theory gets rooted in the Chinese context. People got to know more about the post-colonial theory and see deeper into a cultural phenomenon.

(III) **Enlightenment or Colonialism: The Issue of National Characteristics**

The study of Lu Xun occupies a predominant position in the studies of modern Chinese literature. Enlightenment discourse in China got to be doubted when the post-colonial theory was introduced into China. The revaluation of Lu Xun's "criticism of the national characteristics" and subsequent disputes are particularly dramatic.

Critics holding the post-colonial theory impose inquiries into Lu Xun's theory of "the national characteristics". Their doubts stir disputes in the Chinese academic circles. The entire thing got fermented from Feng Jicai's article "Lu Xun's Merits and 'Demerits'" published on *Harvest*, 2000 (2).[60] Feng points in this article that Lu Xun drew inspirations of his theory of the national characteristics from the Western missionaries coming to China from 1840 onwards (or directly from *Chinese Characteristics* authored by Arthur Henderson Smith). But Lu Xun saw nothing about the Western hegemony hidden in the Western analysis of the Chinese national characteristics. Their analysis is one-sided, negative or reproachful.

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[58]Wang Ning, "The Post-colonial Context and Cinema in Contemporary China", *Contemporary Cinema*, 1995 (5).

[59]Li Xiaoling, "Criticism of the Post-colonial Criticism of Films in China", Social Sciences in *Yunnan*, 2009.

[60]In addition to Feng Jicai's article, there were also ones written by Wang Shuo and Lin Yutang published in the column "Have a Closer View of Lu Xun" on the same issue of *Harvest*. The two articles aroused heated debates as well. According to the writer's association, literary federation, federation of social science circles and society for the study of Lu Xun in Shaoxing, Lu Xun's hometown, those articles were "the cluster bombs belittling Lu Xun". They "defended Lu Xun" by writing open letters and holding meetings and asked China Writer's Association to make proper responses. *Wenyibao* (*Literature and Arts*) later released the news about "the Symposium of Hot Issues in the Study of Lu Xun" under the title of "Lu Xun's Revolutionary Spirit Shouldn't Be Desecrated". *Harvest* also published in the column "Have a Closer View of Lu Xun" articles like "I Love Lu Xun". The event then came to an end. It is interesting to observe the relationship between academics and politics reflected in this event. For more details, see Chen Shuyu, "Thoughts on the *Harvest* Event: On Hot Issues in the Study of Lu Xun", *Lu Xun Research Monthly*, 2001 (1).

The article caused a stir in the Chinese academic circles. Was Lu Xun fooled by the Western missionaries? Yu Jie didn't think that Lu Xun's criticism of the national characteristics came from the Western missionaries' ideas entirely. Also, according to Yu, "missionaries" were not necessarily bad guys, as quite a number of them contributed enormously to the local culture, education and medical service in China. Nonetheless, the innate weaknesses of the nation never disappeared and got even worse, fully indicating that Lu Xun "wasn't fooled" at all. Also, Lu Xun believed in the universal values in addition to cultural relativism.[61] Yu Jie's ideas would be later adopted and expanded by others. Scholars did textual research on the historical context and China-based origin of Lu Xun's criticism of the Chinese national characteristics[62] and found that Lu Xun had his own critical ideas about foreigners' criticisms of the Chinese national characteristics.[63] They held a doubtful view on the entire negation of what the Western missionaries in China did and defended them out of historical facts.[64] As for the universal values, some said that some cultures were better developed than the others and Lu Xun did nothing wrong to learn from better developed cultures.[65]

With the intervention from authorities like China Writer's Association, debates and disputes aroused by Feng Jicai's article came to an end at the end of 2000. Discussions went deeper for a while and some found that Feng Jicai learnt the idea in his article from a Chinese-American scholar named Liu He.[66] And the thinking and argumentation in Liu's article was far more complicated than that in Feng's. Liu points that the theory of the national characteristics was on the basis of the racist nationalism in the 19th century, which served as "a theoretical base of

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[61]Yu Jie, "Was Lu Xun Fooled?", *Lu Xun Research Monthly*, 2000 (7).

[62]See Chen Shuyu, "Thoughts on the *Harvest* Event: On Hot Issues in the Study of Lu Xun", *Lu Xun Research Monthly*, 2001 (1); and Liu Yukai, "The Origin and Significance of Lu Xun's Criticism of the National characteristics: On Mr. Feng Jicai's Ideas of Lu Xun", *Lu Xun Research Monthly*, 2005 (1).

[63]See Zhang Quanzhi, "Lu Xun and 'Orientalism'", *Lu Xun Research Monthly*, 2000 (7); Zhu Qianmin, "A Review on Feng Jicai's 'Lu Xun's Merits and "Demerits"'", *Journal of Zhejiang Normal University*, 2002 (3); and Chen Shuyu, "Thoughts on the *Harvest* Event: On Hot Issues in the Study of Lu Xun", *Lu Xun Research Monthly*, 2001 (1).

[64]Zhu Qianmin, "A Review on Feng Jicai's 'Lu Xun's Merits and "Demerits"'", *Journal of Zhejiang Normal University*, 2002 (3).

[65]Zhu Qianmin, "A Review on Feng Jicai's 'Lu Xun's Merits and "Demerits"'", *Journal of Zhejiang Normal University*, 2002 (3).

[66]Liu He's article is in two versions: "How a Modern Myth Came into Being: An Inquiry into the Discourse of the National characteristics" is first in *Literary History (Vol. I)* (Chen Pingyuan & Chen Guoqiu [eds.], Beijing: Peking University Press, 1993) and "Chapter 3: An Inquiry into the Theory of the National characteristics" in Liu He's *Interlanguage Writing* (Shanghai: Joint Publishing, 1999). The latter was written on the basis of the former (with some fierce words deleted) and merged with another article. The article is also collected in Liu He's *Interlanguage Practice* (Beijing: Joint Publishing, 2002), under the title of "An Inquiry into the Theory of the National characteristics". The arguments in this book are based on the last version of that article.

evolutionism for the Western conquering of the East." But this was right ignored by Chinese critics focusing on the national characteristics, "as nobody ever doubted the prerequisite of the theory of the national characteristics."[67] Liu also investigates into the relationship between Lu Xun's criticism of the national characteristics and Arthur Smith's[68] work. According to Liu, Lu Xun began to give a serious thought to transforming the Chinese national characteristics with literature after having read the Japanese translation of Smith's work. "Under his influence, Chinese intellectuals in the past century have had a complex of the national characteristics. They've kept defining, looking for, criticizing and transforming the Chinese national characteristics, without thinking about the historical prerequisite of the theory of the national characteristics. Chinese intellectuals were obsessed once again in the 1980s with the problems of the Chinese national characteristics, as if there would be any answer to this."[69] Evidently, Liu He isn't interested in the "national characteristics" at all (thinking that the issue is a wrong essentialist mindset). That is to say, whether the national characteristics are in existence at all is pushed aside from the very beginning. Liu He cares nothing about the issue of validity, as she holds a post-modern and anti-essentialist view that **discourse shapes reality**.

Stressing the influence of the Western missionaries' colonialist discourse on Lu Xun's criticism of the national characteristics, Liu He sees into how Lu Xun made use of and at the same time subverted that discourse (Liu's analysis is too complicated to be explained here). According to Liu He, those who study Lu Xun paid no attention to the complicated relationship previously. Instead, they tried to reinforce and re-prove the colonialist theory of the national characteristics. Thus, archaeology of knowledge and sociology of knowledge are advised to be introduced into the study of the relationship between Lu Xun's works and the Western theory of the national characteristics.

Objectively, Liu He gives no convincing explanation on how Lu Xun made use of and at the same time subverted the theory of the national characteristics. Nevertheless, those who try to defend Lu Xun and criticize Liu He get no awareness of the complexity of Liu's article, either. They simply put Liu's article and Feng's together indiscriminatingly and impose criticisms on Liu's similar to those on Feng's. Some scholars hold that Liu He's article is more academic yet more one-sided. The idea that the criticism of the national characteristics must be a racist discourse is evidently wrong and Smith and his book harbored no hostility to the Chinese nation.[70] Others put Liu He in the vulnerable group in the American

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[67]Liu He, *Interlanguage Practice* (Beijing: Joint Publishing, 2002), p. 77.

[68]As for the Chinese translation of "Smith", Liu chose to render it as "斯密思", an uncommon alternative to the one I adopt in this book, the almost universally accepted "史密斯".

[69]Liu He, *Interlanguage Practice* (Beijing: Joint Publishing, 2002), p. 80.

[70]See Yang Zengxian, "An Inquiry into 'the Myth of the National characteristics': On Liu He's Distorted Interpretation of Lu Xun", *Journal of Jishou University*, 2002 (3); and Wang Xuejun, "Wrong Denotation in Liu He's 'Myth of the National characteristics'", *Journal of Nanjing Tech University*, 2004 (1).

society and hold that she tries to retain and improve her own rights and status in the U.S. through a post-colonial interpretation of Lu Xun.[71]

The discussion of "the theory of the national characteristics" actually looks a bit weird. First, there seem to be quite many misunderstandings in the debates around Liu He's article. Most people appear to interpret Liu's article from the angle of Feng Jicai's article and pay not enough attention to the complexity of Liu's. In another word, the initiative and protests of the colonized peoples are ignored. Few people have noticed Liu He's investigation into how Lu Xun subverted the Western theory of the national characteristics (Liu's investigation is far from satisfactory, though). Many think nothing about Liu He except that she tries to negate Lu Xun and his criticism of the national characteristics, so that the criticism of Liu He and her ideas is, to some extent, displaced. Secondly, people lack common understanding of basic facts and standpoints. For instance, there are significant disputes over the missionaries' historical role and the nature of Sinology. In fact, quite a number of critics redirect their focus from Liu He's theory and thoughts to her attitude toward facts. Thirdly, the misunderstanding largely comes from the critics' clique thinking. They group themselves into those who doubt or defend Lu Xun, or those who focus on the modern Sino-West relations, modernity and ethnicity, and nationalism and the universal values. The last conflict between nationalism and the universal values dominates the scene, as it most concerns the reality. With innumerable ideological clashes and debates, inertial and stereotyped mindsets have played their roles in modern China: Any negative comments made about Lu Xun entail a negation of national self-criticism and by extension of enlightenment. Any doubts cast on Western cultures amounts to an endorsement of nationalism and a rejection of the value of modernity, and vice versa. This and the lack of common understanding of the pertinent facts may in fact be mutually explanatory.

Historical context is thus evidently of great significance. In the specific ideological context and reality in China, post-colonial criticism, which had originally been meant to undercut nationalism, became or was seen instead as a nationalist discourse that reinforced the binary opposition of "China versus the West" that had always been an inherent feature of the discourse in China about modernity. The phenomenon is not confined to the disputes over "the theory of the national characteristics", and exists in post-colonial debates about all topics.

(IV) Discussion of Chineseness: Nationalism versus Modernity?

"Chineseness" is a representative issue that takes a predominant position in the post-colonial cultural criticism in China: Issues of the relationship between ethnicity and modernity and that between Chinese culture and the Western cultures in the modern intellectual history are mentioned again. Some hold that "the

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[71]Zhang Jiangnan, "Overseas Chinese Students and the Crisis of Social Identity: Thoughts on Liu He's *Interlanguage Writing*", quoted from Zhang Wei, "Post-colonial Criticism and the Discussion of 'the National characteristics' at the Turning of Centuries", *Journal of Zhengzhou University*, 2007 (2).

Chineseness issue is typical in the post-colonial criticism in China".[72] The issue was first put forth in the long article "From 'Modernity' to 'Chineseness': An Exploration into the New Episteme" co-authored by Zhang Fa, Zhang Yiwu and Wang Yichuan and published on *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 1994 (2). The article aroused quite a stir.

According to the authors, the modernization process in China has been driven by the determination and efforts to regain the lost central position; nevertheless, the process has also witnessed how the Chinese nation gradually lost its own identity (i.e. an "othering" process). In the 1990s, the Western enlightenment modernity declined in China, due to its innate problems; thus, China was in need of a new dominant discourse. The authors see "Chineseness" as the new dominant discourse that is a new culture stressing China's standpoint, perspective and features. They draw a path for China to regain its central position, at least in East Asia.

The article reads much like a national strategy proposal for cultural development. Most sentences began with the plural pronoun "we", "China" or "the Chinese culture". The third part focuses on strategies and measures and contains many prescriptive sentences that begin with "we ought to" or "the Chinese culture should". The serious and solemn tone in which the entire article was written conveys a sense of authority. Secondly, the article also has political significance insofar as it provides suggestions about how the Chinese government might go about building a new international order in East Asia with the Chinese mainland at the center. The piece was warmly received mainly by government officials and mainstream media that also see in highlighting Chineseness a national strategy for cultural development. Moreover, the article is unambiguous in its endorsement of the idea that China should take greater control of the vocabulary and tone of a discourse and claims that the establishment of an epistemic paradigm with the notion of "Chineseness" as its core is instrumental for introducing a system of norms by which China's lively and dynamic cultural scene can be governed.

That post-clonial criticism, which had been a radical and anti-mainstream school of thought when it first originated in the West, should have turned into a national strategy endorsed by the Chinese government after it was introduced to the country is indeed a bit odd. It naturally becomes a target for those who are critical of the idea of "Chineseness" on political ethics ground. Some have commented sharply that this strategy amounts to cultural expansionism: "When Said criticized Orientalism, he was trying to overturn West-centrism that was prevalent in thinking about culture. While we also reject West-centrism, we have replaced it with a worldview in which we ourselves are the center of East Asia."[73] Xu Ben and other critics show their concern with the relationship between intellectuals and power. According to Xu, post-colonial criticism in China has lost much of what originally

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[72]Zhang Hui, "A Thought on the Issue of 'Chineseness' in the Current Cultural Criticism", *Journal of Jianghan University*, 2007 (6).

[73]Shao Jian, "Cultural Deviation at the End of the Century: A Discussion about Modernity and Chineseness", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 1997 (1).

made it attractive to many, including political ethical values ideals such as social reform, opposition to oppression and to cultural violence. Instead it has been preoccupied with the ostentatious display of uniqueness and trying to be what others are not.[74] Wang Hui makes a general review of the post-colonial criticism in China, "None of post-colonial critics in China has ever made any analysis of the inner structure of the Chinese culture from a marginal perspective, even though that is what the post-colonial theory truly means to do."[75] As Tao Dongfeng put it, "A radical academic theory in the First World is rather likely to lose its radical and critical edge after being introduced into a Third World country like China."[76] Such an imported theory is critical of "the other" and never of one's own. It is essentially a kind of performance and act of opportunism in academia.[77]

Many advocates of modernity hold that modernization is something universal and unavoidable in human history. China is not yet modernized now. It is not the prime time to have any reflection on "modernity" (modern culture).[78] This is evidently a typical linear view of history from the perspective of modernity ideology.

"Nationalism" may be one of the most frequent words in the criticisms of "Chineseness". According to Tao Dongfeng, "Chineseness" represents an essentialist idea of the national and cultural identity. However, the pursuit of the authentic national identity may lead to a grave crisis of values and ethnic antagonism. To this, Tao puts forth a new idea of cultural identity changing to the times, so that Chinese intellectuals may enjoy a benign cycle of striving for equal cultural relations internationally and for being liberal intellectuals domestically.[79]

Many criticize the discourse of "Chineseness" for its inner logic. Some point that "modernity" and "Chineseness" are in nature two different concepts: The former is a concept of time and the latter a concept of space. Thus, it may be unreasonable to put it in a way like "from 'modernity' to 'Chineseness'".[80] It is a paradox to attack

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[74]Xu Ben, *Toward Post-modernity and Post-colonialism* (Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 1996), pp. 202–203.

[75]Wang Hui, "Thinking and Modernity in Contemporary China", *Frontiers*, 1997 (5).

[76]Tao Dongfeng, "Illusion and Confusion of Cultural Authenticity", *Wenyibao* (*Literature and Arts*), 11 March 1999; and see Tao Dongfeng, "Cultural Studies: the Western Discourse and the Chinese Context", *Literature & Art Studies*, 1998 (3).

[77]See Tao Dongfeng, *Cultural Studies: the West and China* (Beijing: Beijing Normal University Press, 2002), p. 211; and Tao Dongfeng, "Deconstructing Illusion and Confusion of Cultural Authenticity", *Journal of Zhanjiang Normal College*, 2001 (4). Other scholars, including Zhao Yiheng, Xu Youyu, Lei Yi and Shao Jian, have similar ideas.

[78]See Shao Jian, "A Mistake in the East", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 1994 (4); and Shao Jian, "Cultural Deviation at the End of the Century: A Discussion about Modernity and Chineseness, *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 1997 (1).

[79]Tao Dongfeng, "Illusion and Confusion of Cultural Authenticity: Some Thoughts on Post-colonial Criticism in China", *Wenyibao* (*Literature and Arts*), 11 March 1999.

[80]Shao Jian, "A Mistake in the East", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 1994 (4).

"othering" with a theory discourse borrowed from the West.[81] It is also incredible to take the market force as the "terminator" of modernity in China. The market force in China has evidently emerged and developed by following the process of market economy in the West. How can it be anything marking the reduced "othering"?[82]

There are indeed quite a number of logic and semantic contradictions and ambiguities in the article "From 'Modernity' to 'Chineseness'" that sees all the political, economic and social crises in modern times as the ones generated by the lost central position. According to the authors of the article, the cultural authority of the 1980s belonged to enlightenment culture, the decline of which came from its aggressiveness and desperation. The key word "Chineseness" is evidently defined in an ambiguous way, with which the authors try to maintain a distinctive Chinese culture transcending the East and the West. The idea of the Chinese culture community in the article is said to "correspond with human nature". To this sense, is it entirely equal to "human nature"? Or does it not go against "human nature"? The latter seems to be too weak and the former sounds like brag. According to Lacan and Derrida in their post-structuralism, nobody fully expresses his ideas and what he does is only to cover up or show his desires. It is worthy of a deeper analysis to find what that text filled with numerous logic and semantic problems truly wants to say or conceal.

(V) Muted Literary Theory in China and Its Reconstruction

Chinese intellectuals engaged in Cultural Studies and cultural criticism mostly have a background of literary theory and they redirect the national identity issue in post-colonial theory to their own specialties. Some debates have exerted a profound influence since the middle 1990s, including those over "aphasia" of Chinese literary theory, "the reconstruction of modern Chinese literary theory" and "the ancient Chinese literary theory adapted to modern times".

The criticism of "aphasia" first targeted in the 1990s those newly-emerging literary criticisms in the previous 10-plus years, holding that those "post-colonial" criticisms made the academic order a mess in China by indiscriminatingly introducing sorts of "-isms" from the West to China. This criticism was later extended to a review of modernization and Westernization literary criticism had experienced since the May Fourth Movement in China.[83] Cao Shunqing may be the most prominent figure in this field. He points that the 21st century will see dialogues between the Eastern and Western cultures. Nonetheless, the Chinese literary theory has in modern days been "entirely westernized". "How can a person suffering aphasia talk with others?" Then how shall we build the discourse of "the Chinese"

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[81]Shao Jian, "Cultural Deviation at the End of the Century: A Discussion about Modernity and Chineseness", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 1995 (1).

[82]Tao Dongfeng, "Merging of Post-colonialism and Nationalism", *Hebei Academic Journal*, 1999 (6).

[83]Huang Manjun, *A History of Literary Theory and Criticism in 20th Century China* (Beijing: CFLAC Press, 2002), p. 820.

literary theory to have our voice heard in the world's literary theory circles?[84] Cao blames the anti-tradition trends since the May Fourth Movement and the Cultural Revolution and the introduction of the Western literary theories from the 1980s onwards for the breakdown and loss of the Chinese literary theory.[85] The issues of "aphasia" and "reconstruction of the Chinese literary theory" dominated national and international conferences between 1996 and 1997 and drew much attention from key literary periodicals and prominent scholars.

Many see eye to eye with the conclusion that the Chinese literary theory suffers "aphasia". Ji Xianlin the eminent professor from Peking University writes to state that the Chinese literary theory is plagued with aphasia, due to the Western cultural hegemony and its prejudice and discrimination against China. Professor Ji asks Chinese literary theorists to break up the fetters of the Western literary theories and return to the Chinese traditions, constructing a literary theory discourse of our own.[86] Qian Zhongwen appeals the Chinese academic circles "to create a modern literary theory system with the Chinese features".[87] Zhang Shaokang thinks it a sad thing that Chinese have to deal with literature and arts with the Western "discourse", without knowing about the traditional Chinese literary theory.[88]

Others think it may be inappropriate to define the take-over or citation of foreign literary theories by the Chinese literary theory circle in the 20th century as "aphasia".[89] According to those people, the introduction of the Western literary theories plays a positive role, rather than being cultural colonialism.[90] Otherwise, it would deny the building of literary theory in modern and contemporary China, including Marxist literary theory introduced to the country.[91] Some scholars hold that "aphasia" in the contemporary Chinese literary theory, if it exists indeed, may come from the disconnection between literary theory and reality, instead of being a result of the imported Western literary theories.[92] Moreover, some maintain that the

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[84]Cao Shunqing, "China's Cultural Development Strategy in the 21st Century and the Reconstruction of the Chinese Literary Theory", *Dongfang Congkan* (*Oriental Collection*), 1995 (3) (Issue 13).

[85]Cao Shunqing, "Aphasia of Literary Theory and Cultural Pathology", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 1996 (2); Cao Shunqing & Li Siqu, "A Review on the Reconstruction of the Chinese Literary Theory", *Literary Review*, 1997 (4).

[86]Ji Xianlin, "An Amateur's Thoughts on the Chinese and Western Literary Theories", *Literary Review*, 1996 (6).

[87]Qu Yajun, "Continuity with Changes: A Summary of the Symposium on 'Adapting the Ancient Chinese Literary Theory to Modern Days'", *Literary Review*, 1997 (1).

[88]Zhang Shaokang, "Take the Only Path: On How to Build the Modern Theory of Literature and Arts Based on the Ancient Chinese Literary Theory", *Literary Review*, 1997 (2).

[89]Xia Zhongyi, "Hypotheses and Aphasia", *Theoretical Studies in Literature and Art*, 1994 (5).

[90]Lai Daren, "The Reconstruction of the Chinese Literary Theory: Between Tradition and Modernity", *Academics*, 2007 (4).

[91]Dong Xuewen, "Thoughts on the Modern Chinese Literary Theory", *Journal of Peking University*, 1998 (2).

[92]Zhu Liyuan, "Go Our Own Way: Thoughts on the Construction of the Chinese Literary Theory in the 21st Century", *Literary Review*, 1997 (1).

traditional Chinese literary theory "lost its voice" in the disconnection between the traditional literary theory and the social reality in modern China.[93] To the contrary, the study of literature and arts in 20th century China absorbs various Western literary theories, "to solve its own problems, give its own opinions and express its own ideas"; therefore, there is no so-called "aphasia" at all.[94] Some say that it is impossible "to be entirely westernized" and the assertion of "entire Westernization" aims only to create a false prerequisite and illusion of the pursuit of cultural authenticity.[95]

Opinions diverge greatly deeper behind the debates and disputes. For example, what does "the muted Chinese literary theory" truly mean? For some (such as Cao Shunqing, Zhang Shaokang, Ji Xianlin and Yang Naiqiao), "aphasia" refers to the discontinuity of the traditional Chinese literary theory and the westernized literary theory in modern China. For those scholars, "the Chinese literary theory" is actually referred to **the ancient/traditional Chinese literary theory**. They call for building the contemporary Chinese literary theory on the base of the traditional one. Tao Dongfeng, Xiong Yuanliang and some others propose to reconstruct the Chinese literary theory based on the reality and theory resources of the modern Chinese literature. According to this latter group, it is critical to adapt the contemporary Chinese literary theory to the literary practice and social and cultural realities in contemporary China, while the ancient Chinese literary theory and the literary and social conditions and values it used to exist in are far more different from those at the present. Thus, the ancient Chinese literary theory is far from an appropriate base for the day.[96] The dispute is in nature over what "Chineseness" is. The former scholars define China with the traditional Chinese culture, while the latter group puts China in the perspective of "modernity".

Some scholars make a psychological analysis of numerous expressions, logic confusions and ambiguities in the debates of "aphasia" and "reconstruction" of the Chinese literary theory, holding that those contradictions and paradoxes may be generated from "aphasia"-theory advocates' "will to power"[97] "to rival the West"

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[93]Tao Dongfeng, "A Review on 'Aphasia' and 'Reconstruction' of the Chinese Literary Theory", *Journal of Yunnan University*, 2004 (5).

[94]Gao Nan, "The Study of Literature and Arts at the Turning of Centuries in China", *Literature & Art Studies*, 1999 (2).

[95]Jiang Yin, "How to Deal with the Legacy of the Classical Chinese Poetry", *Yuehaifeng* (*A Literary Wind in Guangdong*), 2002 (1).

[96]See Tao Dongfeng, "A Review on 'Aphasia' and 'Reconstruction' of the Chinese Literary Theory", *Journal of Yunnan University*, 2004 (5); Zhou Xian, *A Study of Aesthetics in Modern China* (Beijing: Peking University Press, 1997), p. 258; Qian Zhongwen, Du Shuying & Chang Guangyuan, *The Ancient Chinese Literary Theory Adapted to Modern Times* (Xi'an: Shaanxi Normal University Press, 1997), p. 23.

[97]Xiong Yuanliang, "'Aphasia' of Literary Theory: Historical Dislocation and Theoretical Mistake", *Comparative Literature in China*, 2003 (2).

and from the uncertainty deep in their mind.[98] According to Tao Dongfeng, "aphasia" theory is essentially rooted in the values of nationalism; that is, those who advocate this theory see no other higher cultural values beyond the nation-based criteria.[99]

Indeed, the ambiguous nationalism-based values lie deep behind the confusing debates over "aphasia and reconstruction of the Chinese literary theory". In actuality, similar problems and reasons are found, more or less, in the aforementioned nation-concerning issues.

Modernization dominates China's modern intellectual history and demonstrates in reality as the conflicts, entanglement and confrontations between individuality-prone enlightenment and nation salvation. In the debates over post-colonialism and the national identity, the core issue deals with how to establish the national culture and how to treat the relationship between the Chinese and Western cultures, as well as that between individual rights and the national power. The concern in those debates is evidently inside the core of China's modern intellectual history. Thus, the national and cultural identity issue in Cultural Studies in modern China is more of an innate real problem.

Nonetheless, the debates over this real problem have been often conducted with the Western post-colonial theory; thus, there are many displaced/dislocated problems, as the Western theory is not applicable to the political and cultural contexts in China. That may be something all foreign theories have to deal with after being introduced into China. That's why we shall get well aware of the specific contexts we are in. As shown above, some cultural critics in contemporary China have indeed good awareness of the Chinese context. They never blindly copy post-colonial theory from the West. Instead, they meticulously make a distinction between the Chinese and Western contexts and dig out the spiritual essence deep behind the Western critical theories, striving to build better and freer humanity and culture. In those critics and their criticism, we perceive the subjectivity of the Chinese cultural criticism that enriches and expands the post-colonial theory.

Of course, we find totally different understandings of history and reality; confusions, contradictions and ambiguities of concepts; and radical conflicts of fundamental values. The concerning debates thus are filled with discrepancies and various opinions. The debates are never reduced to something valueless in such chaos. Instead, it is such important debates that draw so much attention and generate so different opinions. That's how the debates fall into such chaos, in which we find a rich source of intellectual history. The debates are in this way much more significant than ordinary literary criticism and the most important part of cultural criticism in modern China.

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[98]Zhou Xian, *A Study of Aesthetics in Modern China* (Beijing: Peking University Press, 1997), p. 258.

[99]Tao Dongfeng, "A Review on 'Aphasia' and 'Reconstruction' of the Chinese Literary Theory", *Journal of Yunnan University*, 2004 (5).

3   Feminism and Gender Issues

"Gender" is used both in physiology and sociology and a key word in Cultural Studies. It is also an important perspective and topic in Cultural Studies in modern China. As a theory originating in the West, gender studies in modern China must be conducted in China's historical and cultural contexts, as the other West-originating theories are.

1.   Gender Studies before the Mid-1990s

The idea of gender in the traditional Chinese culture originated from the pre-Qin theory of *Yin* and *Yang* that were seen as two interacting energies to produce the male and the female. The theory was, however, little of gender discrimination. The idea of gender began in the Han Dynasty to deviate from the *Yin-Yang* theory and a new rule of male domination and female subordination took shape. This rule would later dominate China for the next 2000 years.[100] Feminism was introduced from the West into China in modern days and the country witnessed women's liberation as well. Women in the West fought for their own rights and liberation, while in China, feminism was first encouraged by men. Besides, women's liberation in China got closely linked up with the issues of national liberation and modernization from the very beginning. The middle-class men who were eager to see a modernized China thought that it was critical to have educated and open-minded women as Western countries did, to build a politically- and economically-developed independent nation. Well-educated women would make good wives and mothers and become the pride of well-bred (or westernized) men.[101] However, women were talked about as a symbol at the time by men with discursive power. Thus, women were seen as both the reason for a weak country and represented as the symbol of a backward nation. Men put forth the women "issue" (women were "an issue" then), to find a path to make China a powerful nation. Here, women were merely a carrier and means, while a powerful nation was the goal. Closely interrelated, state nationalism and gender played a significant role at the time and would leave profound impacts later.[102] In addition to nationalism, another redline going through male intellectuals' discussion of women issue was the European-imported idea of human rights. According to the idea, women's rights should be a part of human rights in a modern civilization. Confucianism was attacked during the New Culture Movement. So were the idea that "husband guides wife" as one of the three cardinal principles and five constant virtues and the rule of "male domination and female subordination". Accordingly, things concerning women, such as bound feet, arranged marriage, child brides and deprivation of women's right to education, were criticized as

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[100]Zhu Dake, *Cultural Criticism: Theory and Practice of Cultural Philosophy* (Suzhou: Guwuxuan Publishing House, 2011), pp. 230–231.

[101]Bulliet, Richard W., *The Columbia History of the Twentieth Century* (Nanjing: Jiangsu People's Publishing House), p. 70.

[102]Wang Zheng, "Gender and China's Modernity", *Wenhuibao* (*Wenhui News*), 12 January 2003.

"cannibalistic" Confucian rules, so that the Confucian traditions were fully destroyed. The discussion of women issue indeed exposed the gender discrimination and the women-fettering evils in the Chinese society. But the educated men-led discussion was defective as well: Male elites looked down upon women as a poorly-bred group and seen them as the victims of feudal ethics, so that women's contributions in the 5000-year history of China were easily denied. The discussion thus took an ahistorical attitude toward women.[103]

Revolution dominated the Chinese society from the May Fourth Movement onwards. Kuomintang and the Communist Party of China made the First KMT-CPC Cooperation during the First Revolutionary Civil War (1924–1927) when feminist topics were put forth to attract women to the revolution. However, independent feminist organizations got excluded, so that the women's organizations and activities not engaged in the revolution were defined as something of narrow-minded capitalist feminism. With some political campaigns and manipulations, the term "women's rights" was given a derogatory meaning in modern China. During the Mao-era, the women's liberation movement and the mainstream gender discourse actually carried forward what the feminist topics did after the May Fourth Movement. Many "new women" who used to be active in the feminist movement around the May Fourth Movement later became the major driving force of women's liberation in the early days of the People's Republic of China.[104] China saw enormous advances in legal and social issues concerning women's liberation between the 1950s and 70s. As Article Six of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China stipulated, "Feudal codes that fetter women are cancelled. Women enjoy equal rights as men do in politics, economy, culture, education and social life. Free marriage is encouraged." The marriage law enforced later prohibited bigamy, concubines and child brides and guaranteed the freedom of marriage and divorce. Widows were allowed to remarry. Men and women also began to enjoy equal rights in land allocation. Women in cities received vocational training and worked in various areas that used to keep closed to them. Women in rural areas were included into collective activities of production. However, the feminist movement met with setbacks between the late 1950s and the early 1960s when the economic crisis hit China. Leaders of women's liberation were asked to keep silent or told to admit that it was not the right time for their liberation.[105] The women's liberation lapsed into silence in China.

The women issue was mentioned again first in literature in the middle 1980s and soon developed into a sociological discussion.[106] The concept of "feminist

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[103]Ibid.

[104]Wang Zheng, "Gender and China's Modernity", *Wenhuibao* (*Wenhui News*), 12 January 2003.

[105]Rosenberg, Rosalind, "The Woman Question" in Bulliet, *The Columbia History of the Twentieth Century* (Nanjing: Jiangsu People's Publishing House), pp. 78–80.

[106]Li Xiaojiang, "Working Women in Contemporary Women's Literature", *Literature and Art Criticism*, 1987 (1).

literature" or "women's literature" first emerged in the 1920s and 30s. However, it hadn't been taken as something clearly-defined and controversial until the period between 1984 and 1988. It was the first time since 1949 that scholars in the Chinese mainland tried to analyze the relationship between women and literature from the angle of gender differences, aiming to sort out the gender definition and its practice in the women's liberation between 1950s and 1970s. Many critics hold that women fully enjoyed during that period equal political and social rights as men did and lived as equal-to-men subjects of the nation-state. However, gender differences and feminist discourse got suppressed culturally, as women were playing their part as someone no different from men. Women lived in an "asexual" way, historically and culturally, without any proper cultural expressions for their own existence or state of mind. Against this background, "feminist literature" separated "women" from the idea of "men and women are totally the same" for the first time. It tried to justify gender differences in culture.[107]

Due to some historical reasons, Marxist humanitarianism and the Western humanitarian theory of the 19th century became the dominant thoughts in the new enlightenment movement in the social/cultural transition in the early 1980s when scholars made a review of the period between 1950s and 70s. The liberation of "human nature" stood as an important indicator, attaching great significance to individual values and diversities. It is interesting that "gender" in China in the 1980s became a major cognitive pattern of "human nature", as a backwash to the "class" discourse.[108] According to the academic views, women did gain a social status equal to men's, thanks to socialist revolutions; nonetheless, they have yet gained any self-awareness. The women's liberation in China was always passively pushed forward, thus an accessory to men, nation-state and class liberation. Therefore, a revolution was needed, culturally and mentally, to wake up women's self-awareness.

Humanitarian discourse well prepared for the separation of individuals from the unified discourse of the nation-state. However, the topic remained as "gender equality"; that is, to discuss differences in "human nature" based on abstract Utopian concept of "human". In this theory, gender differences were basically described as those in "human nature" generated from different "natural" factors such as physiological and psychological elements, while other factors behind "human nature", like power and hierarchical relationships, were ignored. Therefore, feminist theory in 1980s in China was quite different from that of the 1960s in Europe and the U.S. Feminist theory in China targeted the nation-state's mainstream "class" discourse rather than the discourse of patriarchal power. "Feminist literature" was thought to be a good supplement to diversities of "human", instead

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[107]He Guimei, "A Brief History of Contemporary Feminist Literature Criticism", *Journal of PLA Academy of Art*, 2009 (2).
[108]Ibid.

of a doubt to the gender relationship or cultural order. Therefore, the idea of "feminist literature" seemed to be very mild and confined within the existing cultural order.[109]

China embraced the first climax in feminist theory and criticism in the late 1980s, while the Western theories of women's rights/feminism introduced into China accelerated, to some extent, the separation of the criticism of feminist literature in China from the new enlightenment discourse into a distinctive expression system and discourse. Western works on women's rights/feminism were translated and published in China in the middle and late 1980s, as a part of "the fever of the Western learning" after the reform and opening-up. However, the Western theories of women's rights/feminism were translated and introduced with prudence. Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* was the first to be translated among the four important works in the second wave of the Western feminist movement. It is this book that reveals to the then Chinese critics that "a woman is more to be formed than 'born'". Another book translated into Chinese in early days is *The Feminine Mystique* authored by Betty Friedan. However, the book drew little attention in China, as Chinese and American societies were too different. Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* produced quite an effect in China when it was translated into Chinese in 1989, as the essay initiates women's economic and cultural independence. However, it is quite interesting that Kate Millet's *Sexual Politics*, which is most closely related to literature and literary criticism, hadn't been translated into Chinese until 1999, as it was hardly accepted by Chinese critics in the 1980s for its acute and sharp attacks on patriarchy and its inclusion of male/female relation into "politics". It appeared to be too radical to be accepted by Chinese critics who strived for "gender harmony". American and British works on feminism were translated and introduced in a large number at the time, while little attention was paid to women's rights/feminist theory in France. Linguistic transition was far from being completed among Chinese critics in the 1980s and the mainstream literary criticism remained empirical and positivistic. Thus, post-structuralist critical theory of feminism, which takes (post) structuralism, psychoanalysis and deconstruction as its underlying theories and dialog objects, produced little impacts on Chinese critics of feminist literature between the late 1980s and the early 1990s. In their discussion of "feminist literature", scholars looked for distinctive features of females from women's experience, instead of doubting the authentic and essentialist idea of gender.[110]

"Patriarchy" first drew attention from the Chinese academic circles in the late 1980s.[111] This concept may remind people that "human" or "human nature" used in the new enlightenment discourse is something of patriarchy. *Emerging from the*

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[109]Ibid.

[110]Ibid.

[111]See Sun Shaoxian, *Feminist Literature*, Shenyang: Liaoning University Publishing House, 1987. The author is the first scholar who places women's issues in the unfair gender relations under patriarchy.

Horizon of History: Modern Chinese Women's Literature co-authored by Dai Jinhua and Meng Yue (Zhengzhou: Henan People's Publishing House, 1989) produces the biggest effect in the field. The authors make in "Introduction" an analysis of the power structure in the traditional social framework in ancient China, stating that "the female" as the ruled gender lay as the secret of that social order. That is, "the patriarchal order was established on the base of a complete system guarding off the female as the alienated adversary, so that it would be a secret forever that the female was enslaved in a male-dominant society". The authors reinterpret the 2000-year history of ancient China and give their understanding of the 20th-century Chinese society: Women in China never got freed from a miserable fate as "an empty signifier". As the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, Chinese women "at last finished a rather ironical cycle that started with fighting against their set gender role in a male-dominant society and ended with accepting their new asexual role in the society".[112] This conclusion goes well beyond the new enlightenment interpretation to history, human nature and human in the 1980s and is radical as never before.

In the early and middle 1990s, feminist thoughts in China went beyond literature into wider social and cultural fields and drew much attention, which has been usually attributed to the Fourth World Conference on Women held in 1995 in Beijing. Thanks to this conference, female writers' works were published in a large number. The conference was widely covered by newspapers, periodicals and TV programs, so that the entire society paid much attention to women's issues. But mass culture that boosted by market forces in the 1990s may play a more important role here. Mass culture essentially represents people's daily life and is usually eager for sex/gender and sexual love/love topics. Female authors were seen as an object and the other to be observed around 1995 when series of their books were published in a particular way of operation, design and marketing, to cater to mass culture's imagined definition and preferred way of consumption of "women". Or rather to say, gender issues were raised by market forces, instead of being purposely put forth by feminists. Confronted with the challenges imposed by mass culture, some feminist critical thoughts, methods and standpoints merge with the discussion and studies of mass culture and become an integral part of Cultural Studies in modern China.

2. Feminism and Four Gender Issues

(I) Gender and Class in "Personal Writing"

In women's writing in the 1990s, the most eye-catching subfield may be "personal writing" or "private writing". The female writers of the late 1980s, such as Chen Ran, Lin Bai, Xu Xiaobin and Hainan, were usually known as writers of "avant-garde fictions", while their autobiographical fictions focusing on their own personal experiences were seen as representative ones of "personal writing" around 1995. A protagonist's personal experiences are placed in a closed private space in

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[112]Ibid.

such a fiction, such as her family or the bedroom of a woman living alone, or about her sexual life. In such a closed space, gender is the most important and even the only identity of the protagonist. The heroines' personal experiences, those of their bodies in particular, served, in a sense, as the background and imaginary space of the discussion of women's writing in the 1990s.[113]

Scholars and writers in the Chinese mainland make little theoretical interpretation to "personal writing". Two representative female writers make some important and positive comments. Chen Ran writes on Internet, "My body is my only language" and "What's personal is what's human", or "I'd like to stand alone in a corner and observe and feel the world of individuals. That's personal writing or private writing". Lin Bai states in *Fragments in the Air*, a narrative of her writing, "Personal writing is a true surge of life and a flight and leap of personal emotions and senses, memories and imaginations and mind and body. The true human nature feels liberated as never before in this flight."[114]

According to Cheng Lirong, the statements of "personal writing" made by Lin Bai and Chen Ran are vividly imprinted with the "body writing" theories of the West (see Chap. 6 for a detailed discussion). Lin Bai and other female writers are cautious about the erotic elements in "body writing" and replace it with "personal writing" or "private writing". "Personal writing" is indeed different from "body writing" in the West. Cheng provides a brief review of the body writing in the traditional Chinese literature, including boudoir repining in the ancient Chinese literary works and "autobiographical" fictions written by Yu Dafu and Guo Moruo and other rebel-writers from the May Fourth Movement onwards. In the new era in particular, Zhang Jie and some others shift their attention from the relationship between women and the external world to women's inner strength (particularly the power of conquering hidden in women). Cheng Lirong holds that in the actual context in China, "personal writing" shows how the "marginalized" discourse has dashed to the center. People find traces of "personal writing" of the 1980s and 90s in Shu Ting's poems, in new realistic and avant-garde fictions and in Wang Shuo's novels. "Personal writing" is an integral part of the literary trend that lifted the restraints on literature as "something to cultivate" and something political.[115]

In He Guimei's eyes, "personal writing" has meanings quite different from those behind the enlightenment literature in the 1980s. The mainstream discourse that dominated the 1980s, such as new enlightenment and its idea of modernization, was widely doubted in the 1990s. "The personal is political", a rallying slogan of the feminist movement in the 1960s in the West broke up the wall between private realm and public space and pushed women's personal experiences into the political and social spheres. "Personal writing", to the contrary, strived to redraw a boundary

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[113]He Guimei, "A Brief History of Contemporary Feminist Literature Criticism", *Journal of PLA Academy of Art*, 2009 (2).

[114]Quoted from Cheng Lirong, "The Western Feminist Theory of "Body Writing" and Its Situation in China", Journal of Southwest China Normal University, 2003 (4).

[115]Ibid.

between private realm and public space and justify women's experiences by pulling them back to "private" sphere. That was an involuntary evasion from the public life after having had traumatic collective experiences. Moreover, there were both an opposition between the individual and the public and a connection between "individuals" and "women". When women's issues are justified and placed in the private realm, feminist literature has different political significances.[116]

Zhao Xifang holds a negative view on the personal writing by Chen Ran, Lin Bai and others, thinking that "the feminist consciousness (expressed in those fictions) is nothing more than women's narcissism and self-consoling and their hatred to men. The descriptions of women's secret experience and feelings may be the pure feminist consciousness. However, we may find no such a woman entirely detaching herself from the society. If there's any, that woman never comes to her self-awareness; instead, she merely alienates herself from the others."[117]

Scholars like He Guimei and Wang Xiaoming also see "personal writing" as a middle-class thing. According to Wang Xiaoming, what feminist critics called women's "liberation" in the early and middle 1990s in China, was never a thing for all the women in the country. Instead, it was something for the "well-off" women at the time who had ample time for and interest in studying gender issues.[118] In He Guimei's opinion, in 1990s China, the more radical an opinion of gender issues was, the more conservative it went concerning class/stratum. To a large extent, feminist literature gained a momentum in market and stirred a surge in society, as "personal writing" constructed and conceived a space for private life, without opening up a new horizon for the truly rebellious women. Instead, "personal writing" unintentionally played a role in constructing a new middle class-based mainstream order in China in the 1990s. The descriptions of women's experiences didn't overthrow the existing gender order. Rather, it turned to be a feminist, personal and middle-class (or rather to say "fashion") show. Thus, it was easy to see "Red Poppies" series with authors' photos and works finally evolve into Wei Hui's novels purely written about physical pleasures.[119] In this way, "personal writing" and "body writing" became an integral part of the middle-class consumption culture, thus was greatly conservative. It is of enormous practical and theoretical significance to take gender and class identity into consideration in cultural analysis.

(II) **Women's Images in Mass Media and the Study of Gender Discourse**

Cultural Studies distinguishes itself from the traditional literary study by expanding its horizon from literary classics to mass culture and from literary texts to mass

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[116]He Guimei, "A Brief History of Contemporary Feminist Literature Criticism", *Journal of PLA Academy of Art*, 2009 (2).

[117]Zhao Xifang, "Feminism in Dilemma in China", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 2001 (4).

[118]Wang Xiaoming and Xue Yi et al., "Women of the 1990s: Personal Writing", *Literary Review*, 1999 (5).

[119]He Guimei, "A Brief History of Contemporary Feminist Literature Criticism", *Journal of PLA Academy of Art*, 2009 (2).

media. Feminist literature criticism in China has focused on the analysis of women's images in literary works, while Cultural Studies extends the study of women's images into mass media.

Tao Dongfeng analyzes the power relation between men and women from a feminist angle of view when he sees into advertising culture. Through case studies, Tao concludes that relationship between men and women and that between social roles in an advertisement are usually greatly stereotyped. Advertisements are filled with unequal power relations. For example, men usually enjoy things concerning women from an observer's position (women are evaluated by men and do nothing except to try to please the others or to be enjoyed and evaluated). One finds various lies and fairy tales about "a happy life" (like the pattern in which men earn the bread and women take care of the house). Such lies and fairy tales in advertisements actually satisfy, reproduce and reinforce some outworn ideas and unequal power relations.[120]

Films and TV dramas make a major part of mass culture. Some investigate women's images in three types of costume dramas, namely time-travel dramas, "new-type" harem shows and costume romances. The authors see modern feminist ideas and subjectivity in the TV dramas, the production team, protagonists and audience of which are mostly women,[121] and feel quite optimistic about feminist consciousness in TV dramas in present-day China. Zhang Bingjuan makes an in-depth analysis, in her doctoral dissertation, of the relationship between narrative and gender in three types of TV drama texts, namely historical plays, love dramas and family plays. She finds that a historical play in the Chinese TV culture is usually a resource shared by acts of state, market forces and intellectuals and told in a way interweaving "legendary narrative", "national narrative" and "legend of heroes", saturated with male-dominant perception and prejudice that conceal the truth of women in history. Women are mostly protagonists of love dramas and crystallize the true, the good and the beautiful. They are selfless, dedicated and willing to sacrifice themselves. However, men cover up their negation of women's life, emotions and desires by sacrificing women's happiness and calling for their agreement. In her analysis of a family play, the author explores the changes of views of marriage and love by men and women, as well as some difficulties women face (e.g. domestic violence).[122]

Dr. Zhang Chenyang makes a comprehensive survey of a larger scale by sampling newspapers and periodicals, films and TV dramas and online media of the period between 1995 and 2005 and conducting a quantitative and qualitative research of the gender discourse issues within. She takes dozens of samples from three types of newspapers, namely mainstream organs of the Party, evening papers

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[120]Tao Dongfeng, "A Cultural Interpretation to Advertisements", *Journal of Capital Normal University* (Social Sciences Edition), 2001 (6), p. 72.

[121]Ma Shaopei & Bai Shaonan, "The Study of TV Culture from a Feminist Angle of View: A Case Study of Popular Costume Dramas", *Shenzhou* (*Divine Land*), 2012 (20).

[122]Zhang Bingjuan, "TV Dramas: Narrative and Gender", a doctoral dissertation, Zhengzhou University, 2004.

and consumption-related papers and finds in them great disparities in topics, gender discourse and ideas of consumption. Because of market forces and globalization, newspapers have since the middle and late 1990s been subject to social, political and economic structures and under the impacts of the traditional cultural mentality and produced a complicated scene of gender: Women are commercialized in the call for a modern idea of gender and their living conditions get ignored when the government enhances its public policy for women.[123]

Zhang makes her survey concerning three women's periodicals, namely a government-run one, a government-commercial one and a commercial one with foreign investment. In her research, Zhang finds low "sexism" in women's periodicals in modern China, despite varying and ambiguous values, though. The government-run periodical tries to get closer to readers, under the pressure of market forces, but it never abandons the gender values focusing on the development of the nation and women. The commercial periodical does nothing more than to serve as a link between its female readers and "consumption", allegedly leading women to the realm of "freedom" and "liberation". Such a periodical interweaves women's liberal idea of gender with a materialized image of women trumpeted in the fairy tale of money.

Zhang Chenyang finds that female characters in mainstream films are largely in a "no-self" status: They either devote themselves to male figures involved in revolution or affiliate themselves to the discourse of the national liberation. In a commercial film, female roles are represented as icons of "tradition", "temptress" or "the hopeless", demonstrating the true conditions women are facing in a modern society, to some extent. In a more affectionate ethical film, the heroine is extolled as "a mother", suppressed as "an individual" and ignored as "a citizen". Thus, even though the discourse of women's independence is encouraged, such a film remains obsessed with the stereotyped image of mother in the traditional gender discourse. In general, we cannot simply say that "sexism" dominates Chinese films. The national discourse, artistic pursuit, feminist perspective and traditional patriarchal culture have different shares in various film genres and play a decisive role in the features and trends of feminist discourse and gender discourse.

Zhang investigates TV dramas such as those that tell stories about common people and those that are starred with "idols" and sees in them an open, multifaceted and "ambiguous" gender discourse. That's a game between gender reflection, commercial force, modern imagination and traditional rules.

Dr. Zhang Chenyang's study may be further enhanced in terms of the number, representativeness and category of picked samples. Nevertheless, with her detailed empirical research, Zhang well illustrates the complicated gender issues in mass media in modern China and makes a preliminary study of the game between commercial, political and traditional cultural powers behind all those intertwined discourses. Such a study is thus of great values.

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[123]Zhang Chenyang, "From Utopia to Daily Life", a doctoral dissertation, Fudan University, 2006.

(III) Gender and the Study of City Culture

Urban landscapes and mentalities of urban dwellers in Chinese cities have experienced profound changes since the 1990s when consumption culture began to fast develop and grow. Scholars in Shanghai, in particular, pay more attention to and study more about the city culture of Old Shanghai (particularly Shanghai-style literature) as a representative of the modern Chinese culture, trying to revive their memories of the First Metropolis in the Far East and "integrate with the world" as soon as possible. The study takes urban space, fashion and mass culture as its objects and adopts methods of interdisciplinary and border study, with distinctive features of Cultural Studies. "Gender and Shanghai's city culture" is a hot topic, attracting numerous female scholars. Some male scholars (such as Li Oufan, Zhang Yingjin and Sun Shaoyi) are also involved and do brilliant works in this field.

Conspicuous consumption in modern Shanghai and its impacts on the citizens' social life and psychology are well discussed in Yue Zheng's "Psychology of Modern Shanghainese", Xin Ping's "Digging History in Shanghai" and Li Changli's "The Chinese Lifestyle: from the Traditional to the Modern". Lian Lingling in her "Women's Consumption and Female Consumers" and Chen Huifen in her "'Universal Department Store', 'Modern Girls' and a Modern-looking Shanghai" see into the relationship between women and department stores in Shanghai and discuss various changes Shanghai has experienced in its urban space, visual system and class/gender reorganization. According to Chen, the four department stores in Old Shanghai created a new urban space for women who used to be confined within home, so that it was justified to have women conduct their activities in the urban space. Department stores were also an icon of fashion and modern girls, a new type of women who could gain their individual identities and opportunities via the polished appearance. Thus, the traditional hierarchical system was overthrown and individual identities "reconstructed" and the mobility of social strata boosted. The fashion represented by modern girls helped form the idea of linear modern advancement, during which process the image of male elites in cities turned "westernized" to the extremes, while westernized modern girls stirred a social anxiety. Modern women were severely attacked in the campaign of "the Year of the Chinese Products" and accused of "turning traitors to their country". In the New Life Movement later, their clothes were under the national surveillance.[124] Chen actually makes a reflection on women's role and the price they've paid in the modernization process in China.

The gender perspective is also adopted in the mass culture production in modern Shanghai. The women's images on calendars and magazine covers remind people that women have been an integral part of the modern imagination in China. Women's images in films, as well as actresses' personalities, performance and "intersubjectivity", co-formed cinema, a new public sphere in China. The characters they played in films were usually "freshmen in society", while actresses themselves

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[124]Chen Huifen, "A Gender Perspective and the Study of City Culture of Shanghai", *Social Sciences*, 2012 (9).

in the actual life played the same part from their career options to lifestyle. Thus, they easily tended to be the foci of conflicts and negotiations between the Chinese and Western and new and old cultures in modern Shanghai. Modernization in Shanghai has been pushed forward by material advances and cultural negotiations and debates that found a "proper" arena in film actresses' living conditions.[125]

Zhu Dake tries to interpret Shanghai's city culture from an unusual angle, i.e. the relationship between urban architecture and gender. He sees Shanghai as a woman and a woman's buttock if we have a drawing of sensual desires of China. The Bund is then the woman's vulva, Nanjing Road her vagina and Huaihai Road and Hengshan Road her breasts. According to Zhu, femininity has historically dominated the Yangtze River Delta where feminine sensual desires have been the commoners' spiritual torch in modern times. Numerous male writers of Shanghai-style literature babbled about sensual desires in Old Shanghai. However, Eileen Chang was the only ambassador of Shanghai-style sensual desires. Courtesans such as Liu Rushi, Dong Xiaowan and Sai Jinhua living in Shanghai were even seen as national heroines sacrificing their own bodies. Sensual desires got to be oppressed in Shanghai when the People's Republic of China was founded. Wei Hui and some others write about women's desires in a bald way in the new era, marking the revival and growth of the sensual culture popular in medieval and modern Shanghai. In the meantime, the national discourse has turned from politics to sensual desires in a context interwoven with the domestic politics, international capital, consumption of modern fashion and mass communication. In Zhu's opinion, however, the call of sensual desires is nothing more than an affected lie of the city.[126] He points in another article that the map of desires and s-zone in Shanghai are tightly tied up with the power of state and the city's new sensual desires are under a high control.[127]

Zhu Dake concluded in 2003 that Shanghai was undergoing a sex reassignment surgery and turning from a feminine city to a masculine one. The political connotation of the urban landscape changed with fast-growing skyscrapers, so that the entire city gave out a strong masculine smell of capital.[128] However, feminist critics feel angry at Zhu Dake and his comments on Shanghai's femininity and female writers (such as Wei Hui). They see in Zhu's comments "a shaping misogynistic reading pattern", i.e. an attempt to continuously and methodologically abase the value of feminine texts and criminalize feminine writing by making use of all sorts of patriarchal ideologies and political and cultural capitals (such as various nationalist thought, sex/gender discrimination, exploitation, oppression and class antagonism). According to those female critics, "in the map of sensual desires of

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[125]Ibid.

[126]Zhu Dake, "Shanghai: the Scream of Sensual Desires", *Twenty-First Century* (Hong Kong, 2001).

[127]Zhu Dake, "Map of Desires and S-zone in Shanghai", *Southern Metropolis Daily*, 10 April 2002.

[128]Zhu Dake, "Phallic Politics in Skyscrapers", *South Reviews*, 2003 (8).

Shanghai (drawn by Zhu Dake), the female body seems to be merged into the metropolis. The comments are expanded from Shanghai women's sensual desires to those of Shanghai and finally to 'sensual desires of China'. In this way, male critics easily attack at first Shanghai women's making up to Western men and then criticize Shanghai and even China's yielding to selling their souls to the post-colonial global capital market, in an assumed way in those male critics' imagination."[129] Then why did Zhu Dake illustrate Shanghai as a sexy woman? And he is never the only one to do so (another critic making similar comments is Zhang Xudong). In the opinions of the aforementioned female critics, some male intellectuals have fallen into a mindset to compare the relationship between the development of a Third World metropolis (nation state) and the global capitalist powers to commodity-like women and gender relations. Male Chinese intellectuals find a secured standpoint of ethics in the image of "prostitutes" that symbolizes betrayal, pure pursuit of profits, wandering life and poverty, to criticize the corrupt and wicked state power and global capitalism. Those male intellectuals further justify their own discursive power and show off their masculinity by criticizing the image of "prostitutes", even though those men are themselves, to some extent, "prostitutes" without dignity who serve the state machine. Women in the Third World countries have been persecuted by patriarchy and imperialism. They are transferred like a gift and have to suffer unfair attacks. Zhu Dake's criticism of women that is based on the female body leads merely to more merciless oppression of the female body/feminine text.

(IV) **Gender Identity**

Despite the harsh rules for gender identity in the mainstream culture in China, transgenderism has long been in existence in alternative cultures since ancient days. According to Zhu Dake, "male scholars in ancient China liked to act like women". A huge number of poems of the Song Dynasty are in the feminine discourse in a male-dominant culture. Transgenderism in ancient China reached its zenith in *Kunqu* opera. Dramas in Shaoxing opera glorify the aesthetics in lesbianism. Women like Hua Mulan couldn't gain a social status or realize their values unless they disguised themselves as men.[130]

"Super Voice Girls", a singing contest held in 2005 aroused people's awareness and discussion of gender identity in modern China. Winning singers in this Hunan TV-sponsored show, including Li Yuchun, Zhou Bichang, Zhang Liangying and He Jie, looked "defeminized" or "asexual". Li Yuchun the champion selected by the audience via SMS votes, in particular, looked even more "masculine" than the others. Emerging from the hot program, Li has been warmly received and imitated by her fans. The sharp contrast between the image of modern women represented

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[129]He Weiwen & Yang Ling, "A Misinterpretation and Absurd Deduction of Women: To Mr. Zhu Dake", *Research of Chinese Literature*, 2007 (3).

[130]Zhu Dake, *Cultural Criticism: Theory and Practice of Cultural Philosophy* (Suzhou: Guwuxuan Publishing House, 2011), p. 242.

by Li Yuchun and that of traditional women thrust the issue of "asexuality" into the domain of public discourse.

Chinese educators largely see asexuality as a problem that needs a solution and call for efforts to strengthen gender identity education.[131] However, there is no shortage of more positive opinions on the issue. Many see Li Yuchun's win in the contest as a victory for feminism. According to He Ping and Wu Feng, "Super Voice Girls" successfully upends against traditional gender politics. Both male, the two point out that Li Yuchun's winning overturns "the aesthetic criteria and purport for the female body set by men", "fully demonstrating women's will", thus is "a victory of new feminism".[132] Liu Zhenzhen finds in a sociological sampling survey that as many as 80.0% of the male participants describe the image of an ideal woman as "being pretty and sexy" and "sweet", while 59.2% of the female participants hope that they become "independent women". The result indicates a strong consciousness of subjectivity of modern women. Majority of Li Yuchun's fans are female. The females show a much higher acceptance and recognition of Li Yuchun than the males do (as of 89.6 vs. 36.0%), while the ratio of women who don't accept Li is much lower than that of men (as of 4.8 vs. 61.0%).[133] This is a solid piece of evidence in sociology that Li Yuchun and her popularity are indeed a victory of women over men.

The sociologist Li Yinhe considers "Super Voice Girls" as a "transgenderist" victory. A pop star with a somehow blurred gender identity helps ease the oppression imposed on both men and women by the established gender criteria and reduces the pressure of men and women striving to demonstrate their "gender identities". Such a pop star is thus easily accepted and appreciated by men and women. Li elaborates on the issue further from a feminist perspective that any social group is entitled to their own recognized criteria of beauty; however, they have no right to force the other groups to accept those criteria. In many cases, men have the single say to the criteria for beauty of women and that is likely to hurt women. Nevertheless, Li Yinhe stresses little "feminism"; instead, she appreciates diversity and individuality.[134]

Zhu Dake thinks highly about "Super Voice Girls" as the debut of a gender revolution. In this contest, female singers followed their own will and ignored the

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[131]Hua Hua, "Formation and Causes of Unisex in Gender Identity", *Shanghai Research on Education*, 2006 (12). Wang Zhiquan quotes in "From Jia Baoyu to Li Yuchun: A Survey of the Unisex Youth" (*Middle School Students*, 2007 [3]) the opinions of Yue Shanyao, Director of Research and Guidance Center for Family Education of Shanghai Academy of Educational Sciences, and Zhang Deming, Director of Shanghai Education Television, both of whom hold a negative view on the unisex trend in gender identity. According to Yue and Zhang, boys and girls should behave what they should be.

[132]He Ping & Wu Feng, "'Super Voice Girls' and Gender Politics: A Perspective of Western Marxist Feminism", *Nankai Journal*, 2005 (5).

[133]Liu Zhenzhen, "Shaping and Spread of the New Image of Women: the Image of Women Represented by Li Yuchun and the Media's Role", *Ethnic Arts Quarterly*, 2006 (2).

[134]Li Yinhe, "'Super Voice Girls' as a 'Transgenderist' Victory", *Nanfang Zhoumo* (*South Weekend*), 25 August 2005.

opinions of the male audience who only appreciated women's appearance. The program attracted an overwhelming majority of female audience to the live show, as it totally ignored gender identity (neutral-looking candidates were more popular) and appearance (pretty girls were as possibly sifted out). Voice was placed over appearance. Women who tried to win the audience with appearance were defeated entirely in the program. In a male-dominant society, men see women as beauties, sexual objects, super housekeepers, great mothers and devoted wives, but never as women themselves. Women finally see what they truly are in "Super Voice Girls". In a new world with a blurred gender identity, individuals could be what they would like to be, thanks to diversified possibilities. It is good news for both men and women. "Super Voice Girls" started a gender revolution.[135]

Xiao Ying looks at the issue of gender-neutral appearance in "Super Voice Girls" from the angle of youth consumption culture and explains the interwoven resistance and merging between commercial trends and youth subculture. Two attitudes toward gender are prevalent in modern societies, namely strengthened perceptual sexual features and diminished cultural meanings of sex. The former is a "flirting" culture that dominates and is a favorite to commercial activities, so that "the image of sexy youth" permeates the society. However, modern consumers tend to push away anything commonly seen; therefore, the "flirting" culture is somehow rejected in the modern consumption psychology and "a more unaffected style of youth" is preferred. That's "an asexual style of youth", the transgenderist way of which subverts the traditional criteria for gender. Nevertheless, Xiao also points out that this subversion is generated from the consumption of "sex" in modern aesthetics of youth. "The asexual style of youth" is a practice of consumerist cultural strategy, i.e. the "de-gendered" cultural production and consumption to "re-gender". In another word, "to be asexual" is a "show of sex that covers up the true sex".[136]

Liu Zhenzhen tries to understand the spread of the new image of women in media economy. According to Liu, commercial media have to cater to the general public, masses who are so various in their likes and dislikes. Li Yuchun has evidently won quite a number of the audience. Media had to make a response to the phenomenon. Thus, media played a role in spreading the preference of Li Yuchun's fans and further exerted an influence on the others. Liu suggests that the market force in mass media in China pushes the masses used to be under the same ideological pattern to different directions in their likes and dislikes. That is a structural reason why a new image of women emerged.[137]

Similar to Li Yuchun, some popular actors, such as Xiaoshenyang and Li Yugang, are known for their neutral-looking performance. Li Yugang is recognized as an inheritor and reformer of the female impersonator role, a traditional type of

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[135]Zhu Dake, *Cultural Criticism: Theory and Practice of Cultural Philosophy* (Suzhou: Guwuxuan Publishing House, 2011), pp. 235–236.

[136]Xiao Ying, "Aesthetics of Youth: Consumption of 'Youth" in the E-time", *Journal of Renmin University of China*, 2006 (4).

[137]Liu Zhenzhen, "Shaping and Spread of the New Image of Women: the Image of Women Represented by Li Yuchun and the Media's Role", *Ethnic Arts Quarterly*, 2006 (2).

roles in *Kunqu* and Peking operas.[138] Xiaoshenyang is popular with audience for his feminine-looking shows, which cannot be explained with traditions in Peking opera. According to Li Shengtao, Xiaoshenyang satisfies aesthetic needs of different audience groups with his androgynous-looking stage image: Men feel self-confident in his femininity and feminists see the "victory" of feminist culture in modern days in his "feminized" image, while "queers" in modern societies feel a sense of belonging in him. Li thinks that Xiaoshenyang is in vogue, thanks to the comic-like impulsive, vulgar and shallow cultural personality in the current social conditions.[139]

Zhu Dongli analyzes Xiaoshenyang's success from the angle of the current social structure. He attributes the irony culture in modern China to the Cultural Revolution. All the serious dramas finally retreated from the stage when enlightenment suffered setbacks in the late 1980s and market forces began to get the upper hand in the 1990s. From then on, ironic comedy has permeated the entire society. However, irony gradually lost its challenging power over ideology and fell back to its original grassroots role of "clown", from Wang Shuo and Ge You to Zhao Benshan and finally to Xiaoshenyang. Xiaoshenyang the feminine-looking actor is a symbol of gender "degradation" and succumbing and an "ambassador" of the enormous grassroots masses hired and debased by the mainstream from the 1990s. "Those who live at the bottom of society have no say. If they want to be heard, they are only allowed to act in Xiaoshenyang's oppressed and distorted way. That may be the only way the mainstream would be willing to hear what the bottom say. Xiaoshenyang's signature word 'Hng…Ang…' is actually the emasculated voice of the bottom. He tries to amuse the audience by abandoning his own dignity. Some may feel uncomfortable and even pained, while others are amused. Xiaoshenyang belittles himself in his performance of low comedy. Technically, it has something bold and straightforward unique to Northeast China. Significantly, it reveals the changes in the structure of modern society. Xiaoshenyang goes far beyond the limits any others in cultural or showbiz circles would ever withstand. He has in him the strength well beyond conventional and mainstream powers." However, he produces the extraordinary effect not only from his own performance accomplishment, but also from the current social structure. When he imitates singers in vogue and "sings heartily, pent-up grievances are poured out and the inner hurt is soothed. Then an amusing comedy turns into a tragic tune. That self-belittled clown

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[138]See Deng Qibin, "On the Inheritance and Development of Li Yugang's Performance as a Female Impersonator", *Literature & Art Studies*, 2012 (3); Cang Miao, "An Analysis of Female Impersonators of the Mei's School in Modern-day Peking Opera", *Journal of Liaocheng University*, 2011 (2); Li Jiegang, "The Unsurpassed Beauty of the East: How Li Yugang Has Succeeded as a Female Impersonator", *Journal of Heilongjiang Vocational Institute of Ecological Engineering*, 2011 (3); and Gao Miaomiao & Dai Jingwei, "When Peking Opera Meets Modern Music: Li Yugang's Exploration of Peking Opera", *Keji Xinxi* (*Sciences and Information*), 2013 (9).

[139]Li Shengtao, "Xiaoshenyang the Man with Cash: An Ambiguous Cultural Icon", *Eastern Forum*, 2010 (2).

looks not that ugly as before." In a word, Xiaoshenyang belittles himself in his transgender performance and tells the audience that those in his stratum have no other choices than to have their voices heard in an excessive comic manner.[140] It is valuable to place Cultural Studies into the social and historical contexts specific to China.

3. **Gender Studies and the Chinese Context**

Similar to other topics in Cultural Studies in modern China, gender theories (feminism and homosexuality) in the Chinese academic circles have been mostly imported from the West, so that it is open to discussion whether those Western theories are applicable to the Chinese context.

Cui Weiping dislikes the dogmatic feminist criticism in the name of "-ism": "It claims to see and understand this world in a truly objective way. Nevertheless, it usually kills that claimed understanding well before it started the cognitive activities, as its conclusion has long been prepared and placed."[141] Cui questions the conclusion feminists have widely accepted that gender equality between the 1950s and 70s was actually a suppression of women by removing gender differences, as according to her, such a conclusion implies that the suppression of women was from men or that men were free from any suppression generated by the removed gender differences. In Cui's opinion, during that process, men fell into victims as well. Both men and women were suppressed and without any gender features. Therefore, she suggests that the strangler of Chinese women may be some ideological power, instead of men or phallocentrism.[142]

Zhao Xifang elaborates on the issue that Chinese men never enjoy any subjectivity. According to him, individuality is a modern discourse unique to the West, while the Chinese history and culture has distinguished itself with collectivism. Thus in China, neither men nor women have ever enjoyed any "subjectivity" in the Western sense. Thanks to the traditional love for individuality, Western feminism pursues the independence of women beyond the male dominance. However, feminism in China is closely connected to the nation, country and class, without any protest against the male dominance. Zhao feels no regret about this, though. According to him, to judge the situation of Chinese women with the individualist feminist criticism of the West, leads to the conclusion that the awakening of Chinese women around the May Fourth Movement was only inferior to the nation-state thought (see the ideas of Dai Jinhua and He Guimei earlier in this chapter) or that "men and women are the same" between the 1950s and 70s imposed more terrible suppression on Chinese women. Zhao holds that such a conclusion is a false question by blindly copying the Western feminist theory, thus

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[140]Zhu Dongli, "'Xiaoshenyang' in the Modern Social Structure", *Frontiers*, 2011 (5).

[141]Cui Weiping, "I'm a Woman, Not a Feminist", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 1998 (6).

[142]Ibid.

colonization of the Western theories. This leads the feminist criticism in China to an ahistorical situation when it discusses about the Chinese feminist literature.[143]

Chen Juntao points out that feminist criticism in China cannot follow the Western radical route, as feminism in China was born in a post-feminist era and under the influence of the traditional Chinese culture that is mild and prefers a middle course. Therefore, feminism in China isn't as radical or biased as pre-feminism. So it is wise to take a mild way.[144] Qu Yajun sees into the localization of feminism in China and groups the current feminine discourse in modern China into three types, namely mild and government-approved "mainstream feminine discourse", Westernized critical "feminist discourse" and the market-driven "commercial feminine discourse". She stresses the relations between the three types, "A radical feminist discourse keeps the critical attitude toward the male-dominant ideology. However, it would go to a cul-de-sac, once it copies blindly the Western patterns, ignoring the specific context it sits in and standing against the male-dominant culture, without integrating with the first discourse… Therefore, the second type of feminine discourse or feminist discourse shall find a balance between the first and the third in a modern cultural context."[145]

The scholars mentioned above, be their arguments and criticism are omnifaceted and appropriate or not, all give a thought on whether West-imported feminism is applicable to the Chinese context, so that those debates well fit into the modern intellectual history of China. In fact, the aforementioned gender issues/topics in the cultural criticism in modern China are of distinctive Chinese features. In them, we see how Chinese scholars attach significance to the specific historical context the issues in China sit in. Also, we hear the sound of "enlightenment or salvation" resonate far from the modern Chinese intellectual history. It remains to be a question which one is more important and fundamental, China or the West, individual or the nation state, enlightenment or salvation.

4   Consumerism and the Body Issue

The body issue draws more attention in the modern social and cultural theories in a consumer society. The academic circles are passionate about the body studies as never before and emerging disciplines such as "sociology of the body", "somaesthetics" and "culturology of the body" come to the horizon one after another. This chapter is focused on what the Chinese academic circles have achieved in the

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[143]Zhao Xifang, "Feminism in Dilemma in China", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 2001 (4).

[144]Chen Juntao, "Two Issues in the Chinese Feminist Literary Criticism", *Nanfang Wentan* (*Literary Circles of the South*), 2002 (5).

[145]Qu Yajun, "Something Important in the Localization of Feminist Literary Criticism" in Li Xiaojiang et al. (eds.), *Culture, Education and Gender: Local Experience and Discipline Building* (Nanjing: Jiangsu People's Publishing House, 2002), p. 168.

concerning fields, in terms of the background of the rise of the fever of body in China, mass media and body consumption, consumerism and body politics, as well as body writing.

1. **Rise of Body Studies**

(I) **The Sociocultural Context of the Fever of Body**

(1) **The body in consumption culture: from the means to the goal**

The body in consumption culture serves as the goal people pursue, instead of the means of achieving other goals.

The body seemed to be doomed in the human history before man stepped into the consumer society. In a traditional society, the agrarian society in ancient China included, people were more or less ascetic, i.e. the body and physical desires were suppressed. In an ascetic society, the body and physical desires were seen as something threatening, dangerous and filthy, causing unruly irrational desires and passions and germinating degeneration. Thus, the body must be placed under the control of reason, soul and cultural rules. Strict and harsh actions were taken to suppress and control the body, such as circumcision in African tribes, Arab costumes and foot-binding in old-day China. The body's values in a traditional society only lay in military affairs, production and reproduction. The body was thus a means to achieve other goals. For instance, the images of strong men and women in the Cultural Revolution were the ideal ones for production, in contrast to "porcelain-faced" intellectuals.

In a consumer society, however, the body has the say. Physical enjoyments become the pursued goal of life. The body indulges itself in consumption and sensual enjoyments. A consumer society strives to build the body to consume and to be consumed. Accordingly, the appearance of the body, i.e. the aesthetic values of the body regardless of production and reproduction, gains more significance. The body turns from a means to the goal and grows into an industry in a consumer society.

(2) **Changes in Economic Pattern and Industrial Setup**

In a modern consumer society, a metropolis in particular, both cultural and economic activities are conducted around the body. The economic lifeline extends and winds along the development, management, embellishment, toning, show and even trade of the body. Businesses and individuals are bustling around for the body.

The body takes an important position in modern economy, as a city is usually built with various "service businesses" like bath centers, fitness centers, beauty salons and recreational sites. Cosmetic surgery has stirred a fourth wave of consumption following housing, car purchasing and tourism. Body toning and management is an integral part of the modern life and costs a lot (particularly true in women). The sunrise "beauty industry" in the West and China is in essence a body industry.[146]

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[146]See "An Accelerated 'Beauty Industry' in Beijing", *The Beijing News*, 25 November 2003.

(3) **Modernity and Disenchantment**

Culturally, the religious and ideological doctrines in a consumer society get much weaker in defining, disciplining and controlling the body that enjoys more "freedom" and goes beyond the control of religions. This is a phenomenon of "high modernity" thanks to a higher level of modernization and secularization. We may have a much better understanding of liberation of the body by knowing more about the disenchanting power of modernity over religions. To the contrary, the body, a woman's body in particular, in some religious countries (such as Arab countries), is still under the harsh control of religious disciplines (with the political power at the same time).[147] The quasi-religious political ideology of the Cultural Revolution in China launched a harsh control over the body as well when men and women were clad in asexual costumes and any "peculiar" ones would be destroyed.

Modernity boosts the disenchantment (desacralization) in society and culture. However, religious beliefs are destroyed in the process of modernization, while no other solid faiths follow. The world seems to fall into an anarchy of faiths with "whatever since God has gone", while various values fight against each other. The culture in a consumer society lacks the core values that could guide people's life. In this way, those who lose their religious faiths and are disinterested in the macro political discourse may find something solid in the body that could be reconstructed as the reliable self in the modern world: We have nothing left except our bodies. The appearance of the body is the symbol of self in an era relying on being "young", "sexy" and "slim".

It is particularly noteworthy about the Chinese context in which the fever of body emerged. In addition to the reasons similar to those in the Western societies, China witnessed some special social and cultural contexts: Post-totalitarianism and hedonism join hand in China and dominate the society and culture. Tao Dongfeng borrows Havel's theory in his analysis. Havel gives an in-depth analysis of how post-totalitarianism generates the public's political despair, political apathy and consumerism. According to Havel, in a post-totalitarian society, people are separated from political participation, so that the latter becomes a routine show without any substantial significance. The entire society is thus plagued with apathy and despair and muddles along. Such political apathy easily slips into consumerism the authority loves to support and encourage as "the freedom of consumption". In this way, the authority may boost the economic development and more importantly, according to Havel, successfully redirect the public's focus from political and social problems, to manipulate the society in a safe way. The so-called "freedom of consumption" is evidently at the price of the loss of political freedom.

Tao Dongfeng thinks it fully applicable to the fever of body at present in China. When consumerism began to expand in China in the 1990s, the political body was

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[147]*Beijing Evening* published on 9 November 2003 an article titled "Miss Afghanistan Sued for Her Bikini Show in the Pageant": Vida Samadzai, an Afghan girl studying in the United States was to be sued in Afghanistan, as she took part in the Miss Earth Pageant 2003. The Afghan procuratorate thought that the girl violated the commandments of the traditional Afghan culture.

transformed fast into a consumerist one. The previous political narrative degraded rapidly into the fashion- and market-oriented narrative of desires (despite its slogans of feminism or "anti-moral" culture of youth). The body draws people's attention for being political, critical and radical, while it may be not necessarily so. For instance, pop songs and "peculiar costumes" were thought to be something corrupt in the late 1970s. But they are seen in another way nowadays when consumerism dominates and becomes two-and-one with the national ideology. The radical "body writing" and erotic literary works are to be discussed in the Chinese context then.[148]

(II) **Translated works on the Western theory of body**

Works on the Western theory of body were translated into Chinese around the turning of centuries, greatly boosting the body studies in the Chinese mainland.

Chunfeng Literature & Arts Press first published in 1999 the "Series of Reading Your Body", including Five Bodies: *Images du corps* (Marc Le Bot), *The Human Shape of Modern Society* (John O'Neill) and *The Body and Society* (Bryan Turner). As is put in "the Editor's Words", the series aims to translate into Chinese a number of important academic works on the body studies and introduce this new academic field into China. The editors hope that the Chinese academic circles may explore a broader horizon in those thought-provoking translated works and establish the body studies unique to China. In the meantime, the editors cannot sit by and watch the way the body is interpreted, without doing anything. According to them, the body is wronged and reduced to the flesh in a consumer society, while its higher level is neglected. The body thus is stripped to a consumption machine of sex and commodities. We need in the new century to revaluate our knowledge of the body and abandon the outdated ideas, building the healthy and beautiful body with deep and profound thoughts.

Hualing Publishing House published in 2002 "the Series of Physiology and Humanity", including *A History of the Wife* (Marilyn Yalom), *The Kiss and Its History* (Christopher Nyrop) and *A History of the Breast* (Marilyn Yalom).

Those translated works have played a key role in the development of the body studies in China. In the meantime, works on the Western cultural theories related to the body studies were also translated into Chinese, such as Foucault's thought-provoking works, including *The History of Sexuality* (Xining: Qinghai People's Publishing House, 1999), *The History of Sexuality* (Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House, 2000), *The Birth of the Clinic* (Nanjing: Yilin Press, 2001), *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (Beijing: Joint Publishing, 2003) and *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (Beijing: Joint Publishing, 2003). Chinese scholars have learnt a lot from those translated works on the body studies and related theories. Nonetheless, it

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[148]Tao Dongfeng (ed.), *Literary Thoughts and Cultural Topics in Modern China* (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2008), pp. 347–349.

remains to be solved how to adapt and apply the Western theories of the body studies (and even the entire Cultural Studies) in the Chinese context.

(III) **The Body Studies in China**

The body studies in China is generally engaged in the translation and publication of Western academic works on the body studies (as mentioned above); the criticism and study of consumption culture; and the combing and study of the traditional Chinese ideas of the body.[149] The body studies covers a wide range of disciplines, including philosophy, history, literature, anthropology, politics, sociology, intellectual history and Cultural Studies. This book intends to investigate the body studies, particularly the complicated relations between consumerism and the body, in modern China from the angle of Cultural Studies.

In general, the body studies in China faces the following problems. First, the theoretical framework is weak. Western theories are usually applied in the study of the Chinese experience and objects, caring little about the Chinese contexts, though, so that Western theories are mechanically copied, instead of being adaptively borrowed. A second problem correlating with the first one is that there is far more theoretical analysis than specific study of the body placed in everyday life in China. Therefore, some scholars hold that "there is yet to be an academic context of the body studies in the Chinese social sciences circle."[150] Also, the body studies in modern China is usually conducted from an economic and cultural angle, without being placed in a political context,[151] so that it is hard to make any accurate analysis of the complicated power relations in the phenomena concerning the body in China (the related research have kept increasing in number in recent years, as to be discussed later). Fourthly, the body studies in China relies more on criticism than construction and is mixed with the Frankfurt School's thoughts and even some moralistic and idealistic views. The aforementioned problems are worthy of our attention in the analysis of the body studies in China.

2. **Mass Media and Body Consumption**

Mass media plays a key role in the current fever of body consumption, no doubt. It spares no efforts to trumpet the idea of "a pretty body" and criteria for beauty, pulling and even forcing the public to agree with it, so that they may undergo artificial modifications to their bodies, to cater to those criteria for beauty. This section sees into how mass media trumpets the pattern of an ideal body and what criticisms it receives accordingly.

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[149]Zeng Qinglin & Chen Mi'ou, "A Review of the Body Studies in the Horizon of Sociology", *Jiangxi Social Sciences*, 2010 (2).

[150]Huang Yingying, *Body, Sex, Sexy: A Study of Young Women's Daily Life in China's Cities* (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2008), p. 18.

[151]Tao Dongfeng (ed.), *Literary Thoughts and Cultural Topics in Modern China* (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2008), p. 346.

(I) An "Ideal" Body

Mass media uses more acceptable or well-covered rhetorical means, instead of rigid trumpeting words, in its publicity of the body, including slogans for happiness, fashion, freedom and body-oriented ideas.

In the modern society, happiness lies as a scarce resource and everybody is looking for it. A healthy body evidently provides the fundamental guarantee for being happy. Mass media promotes with great efforts the idea of a healthy body. In addition to it, people strive to follow every new fashion, to be attractive and win fame and wealth. A "fashionable" body evidently copies that of someone in vogue. Mass media creates stars and fashion icons in various fashion shows, TV shows, pageants, soap operas and advertisements, repeating what a pretty and fashionable body looks like and how valuable such a body is and how proud and happy the person with such a body would feel. Thus, mass media spares no pains to talk about what stars do with skincare, beauty routines, sports and even body modification. What stars do with their bodies then is seen as the authoritative criteria. It seems that anyone may enjoy a fashionable body as stars do once he/she follows their way.

People in modern days have been pursuing freedom all the time. As shown in what we find in mass media, a person with a pretty body (a woman in particular) often enjoys more freedom; otherwise, he/she may find things more difficult (for instance, a good-looking person feels more at ease in job-hunting, his/her career path and work). Moreover, mass media advocates individuality, individual emotions and legitimate demands to be recognized, as well as individual freedom for enjoying happiness and being pretty. Any decoration or modification to the body is usually seen as the individual freedom.

Mass media also establishes a body-oriented theory; that is, the body is nothing else except itself, leaving any other things aside (such as the relationship between the body and various "-isms"). The aforementioned ideas of happiness, fashion and freedom are all body-oriented. As what we said before, the body is itself the goal, instead of a means.[152]

Many research papers make specific analysis of the propaganda and construction of the body in mass media like television, advertising and fashion magazines. For example, some investigate the programs on Channel Young of Shanghai Television and see into how the image of an ideal body being slim, young, healthy and robust is promoted and constructed basically with the aforementioned theories.[153]

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[152]Deng Xiaocheng, "The Illusion of Body in an Era of Mass Media: A Cultural Reflection on the Body (II)", *Academic Exchange*, 2010 (5).

[153]See Liu Yun, "The Discipline of the Body Made by Fashion TV Programs in an Urban Context of Consumption Culture: A Case Study of Channel Young of Shanghai Television", a master's thesis, Fudan University, 2008; Xu Min & Qian Xiaofeng, "Ads for Weight-loss and the Morbid Slimness Culture: On the Cultural Control of Mass Media over the Female Bodies", *Collection of Women's Studies*, 2002 (3); and etc.

Mass media sets up the image of an ideal body for the public. Thus, we find the unified criteria for the body in an era when the body would otherwise be free for its development: People are induced and forced to develop their bodies into the same-looking ones.

(II) Mass Media Criticism

What does mass media do to shape the image of an ideal body and conspire with commercial means? Researchers almost unanimously criticize mass media for its constructing an illusion of the surreal body impossible to gain.[154] An advertisement virtually constructs a pseudo context, so that the audience may feel as if they were truly in it: They were the exact image in the ad and able to pursue what they want and become the one they'd like to be. However, an ad is nothing more than an illusion the audience make for themselves. Thus, an advertisement crystallizes consumers' desires. In the illusion of an ad, consumers' desires are controlled, so that consumers feel as if they were the leading role in an advertisement. It is evidently what an ad pursues.[155]

In addition to the virtual "reality", the relationship between individuals in an ad is also an imagined one. "The boundaries between sciences and ideologies, real and false consciousness, and reality and imagination are disintegrated in television commercials."[156] Advertising tries to maintain and strengthen the imagined and false relationship it establishes between an individual and his/her real life. The target audience of an advertisement is built into a consumption subject as an entirety under an illusion that remains covered up. In this way, the image of body shaped in advertisements gains a destructive power to deny the reality (particularly the real body). Thus, women feel more worried about and constantly try to modify their bodies.[157]

Then how can't modern consumers see through the false advertising or the illusion of the impossible-to-get surreal body? A majority of researchers hold that mass media is hardly resistible due to its overwhelming power of control. Thus, the masses have no other choices than to accept it. Some scholars point that mass media controls a strong discursive power and may create spiritual icons, guide culture and consumption and form trends, to its own will, needs and commercial capitals. In this way, mass media controls the society's ethos and its impacts on people's mentalities and thoughts are considerably enormous. The masses have to yield to mass media's iron control and accept what they are given to. They got finally alienated into one-dimensional man.

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[154]Zhang Mingquan, "Body Consumption in Mass Media: A Case Study of Ads for Men's Cosmetics", a master's thesis, East China Normal University, 2009.

[155]Deng Xiaocheng, "The Illusion of Body in an Era of Mass Media: A Cultural Reflection on the Body (II)", *Academic Exchange*, 2010 (5).

[156]Wang Fengzhen (ed.), *Television and Power* (Tianjin: Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences Press, 2000), p. 208.

[157]Li Yuxiao, "An Aesthetic Criticism of Advertisements Concerning Female Bodies in Modern Days", a master's thesis, Lanzhou University, 2007.

Many scholars recognize the active role mass media has played in liberating the body. However, more criticize mass media for its reducing the body into an object and controlling and deceiving the masses who are unable to resist it. We clearly see the traces of the Frankfurt School's theory of mass culture. That may be a generally-accepted standpoint. Hall's encoding/decoding theory is also widely accepted and frequently quoted in Cultural Studies. Those who apply the theory in their studies still focus on the decoder's passiveness and helplessness and the encoder's powerfulness.[158] The negotiated code and the rebellious hegemony between the decoder and the encoder, however, are hardly touched. That is what's in need in the body studies in China.

3. Consumerism and Body Politics

(I) Discipline and Liberation: the Paradox of Body in Consumerism

(1) The Disciplined Body

Foucault's theory of the disciplined body[159] may be a theory the studies of body politics most rely on in modern China. Some scholar makes an analysis of how the state power disciplined people's bodies after the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. Prior to the reform and opening-up in China, the state power tried to fully tap the potentials of the people's bodies in the national construction by restricting and controlling individuals through its superiorities in economic, political, cultural and propaganda resources, such as household registration, institutionalized units and people's communes, and in forms of various campaigns, such as women's liberation, the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. Thanks to the reform and opening-up policy, market forces and instrumental rationality have taken the place of the state power in daily life and the body gets less nationalized. The body gets freed from political codes like being revolutionary, sacred, sublime or great and is given something closer to the real life. People even begin to pursue more vulgar values of consumption and their bodies by following the morbid image of somaesthetics constructed and trumpeted by consumption culture, mass media and advertisements. The body is thus reduced to a consumption machine of sex and commodity.[160]

The same scholar further points out that consumerism is a new form of discipline of the body. Different from the conventional disciplines, such as schools, hospitals, prisons, factories and military barracks, this new form is an informal and non-institutionalized system under the influence of micro-powers like market system and consumerism outside the state power. Consumerism disciplines the body

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[158]Ibid.

[159]See Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, Liu Beicheng & Yang Yuanying (trans.), Beijing: Joint Publishing, 2007.

[160]Zhao Fangdu, "The Discipline of the Body: the State Power and the Body in China's Modernization—an Example from the Jianxian County in North Sichuan Province", a master's thesis, Nankai University, 2010.

by creating the image of an ideal body, advertising in mass media and normalizing the unified body modification technologies. Consumption culture removes the old restraints on the body and liberates it for more freedom of presentation and communication. On the other hand, the unified and generalized somaesthetics imposes new oppression and violence on the body. Behind a more colorful and beautiful body, we find the power of discipline co-exerted by consumption culture, industrial production and technical rationality.[161]

This analysis based on Foucault's discipline theory is well received by many other scholars.[162] Many scholars agree that despite the liberated body, somaesthetics imposes more disciplines on the body from the modern state power and consumption culture. The disciplinary power is strong enough to lead to various uncontrollable results: It may reduce the body's resistance and meanings, so that body consumption becomes an important channel to discipline individuals. The disciplined body yields to the power and loses the ability of resistance. To a larger extent, (the disciplined) pleasure is nothing more than to deliberately blunt one's will.[163]

(2) **The Self-controlled Body**

The power of discipline seems too strong to be resisted. Is that true? Field studies have revealed the complicated reasons behind the body plan: The body is never passively disciplined. The body plan witnesses the happiness from self-identification. One feels confident about controlling his/her own body. A study conducted over the content of *SELF* magazine concludes that women in the Chinese mainland find their happiness best from the self-fulfilling process and they make initiative body training or plan as an important way of self-fulfilling. Huang Yingying makes interviews with young women in China's cities about their attitudes toward the body plan and concludes that bodybuilding doesn't necessarily mean the control or alienation of women, as many interviewees talk about how happy they feel in bodybuilding: They feel "happy", "confident", "full of energy", "comfortable" and "a vitality of life" in bodybuilding. In addition to bodybuilding, people apply make-ups or go to beauty salons for "good moods", "a better looking" or "feeling more confident". In general, women do with their bodies for multiple needs of "a good figure", "looking pretty and young", "health" and "self-confidence". This plays a positive and rational role, to some extent, in

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[161]Zhao Fangdu, "Consumerism: A New Discipline of the Body", *Journal of East China University of Science and Technology*, 2011 (3).

[162]Such as Ji Zhipeng, "A Construction of the Body by Consumption Culture", *Academic Exchange*, 2009 (5); Liu Jv, "Body's Liberation and Aesthetic Salvation in Consumer Context", *Beifang Luncong* (*Collected Essays in the North*), 2011 (4); and Bai Wei, "A Modern Paradox of the Body Consumption by Chinese Women since the Reform and Opening-up", *Academic Journal of Zhongzhou*, 2010 (5).

[163]Liao Shuwu, *Somaesthetics and Consumer Context* (Shanghai: Joint Publishing, 2011), pp. 119–121.

encouraging women to care about and present their bodies.[164] The old idea that women are controlled may be revalued in this light.

(3) Doubts about Foucault's Discipline Theory

As shown in the aforementioned analyses, the body is never an alienated, non-self or disciplined object or result, for various reasons. In addition, an individual has his/her own appeals to and even self-identification with the body. Thus, many scholars question Foucault's discipline theory, holding that the theory may be defective, despite its depth. Discipline need not b either violent or coercive; instead, it can go deeper and be more concealed. Also, people happily do what they like to their bodies. The process is not necessarily a passive or forced one. Instead, it becomes people's inner needs. Foucault talks about the possibility of a counter-discourse; however, when talking about the relation between power and body, he in general negates subjectivity and the active role a subject plays in history. In a modern society, the body and power are related and interact in a dialectical way. The body is controlled and managed by power, while it also serves as a means to struggle against and resist power.[165]

The view actually amounts to a profound insight.

As the process of modernization continues, the sense of self-awareness also grows stronger, making the body decreasingly amenable to plans, which will become increasingly concealed, but never disappear completely. People seem to be forever trapped in this dilemma. The key questions, however, are how the body is planned for, put up resistance and achieves self-construction. There has so far been too little research on these questions far. Foucault's one-sided discipline theory continues to be the major inspirations for theories about the body until this day.

(II) The Observer and the Observed: Gender Discrimination in Consumerism

Body discrimination is not uncommonly seen in body consumption in a consumer society, such as gender discrimination and the discrimination against physical disability, race and color of skin. What we talk about here is gender discrimination, which is particularly evident in advertisements and draws much attention from scholars. Please refer to related sections in Chap. 5, titled Feminism and Gender Issues.

4. Body Writing and Its Criticism

"Body writing" emerged on China's literature scene and drew much attention around 2000. But it has never simply been a subject of literary or academic attention; rather, it is a social and cultural phenomenon worthy of scholarly

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[164]Huang Yingying, *Body, Sex, Sexy: A Study of Young Women's Daily Life in China's Cities* (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2008), p. 297.

[165]Lu Yang (ed.), *An Overview of Cultural Studies* (Shanghai: Fudan University Press, 2008), p. 151.

attention. This part focuses on how body writing arose in China and related debates around it and makes a critical review of it.

(I) Emergence of Body Writing and Related Debates

Ge Hongbing is generally recognized as the one who proposed the idea of "body writing" in early days. According to Ge, "I first used the term (body writing) in a letter to Mianmian in the summer of 1995."[166] Mianmian confirmed it later in an interview, saying that body writing in Ge Hongbing's letter was generated "from my (Ge's) writing".[167]

Nanfan published "Body Rhetoric: Portraits and Sex" in 1996 (*Wenyi Zhengming* [*Debates in Literature and Arts*], 1996 [4]), making an analysis of "the body" in literary works and putting forth the concept of "body rhetoric". Body writing "builds characters' bodies in a system of meanings of particular codes" that serve as a definitive property of culture.

Ge Hongbing published in 1997 "Individual Literature and Authors of Body Writing: A Transition in Fictions in the 1990s" (*Mountain Flowers*, Issue 3). Without clearly defining what "body writing" is in this article, Ge elaborates on how authors of body writing emerged and on their characteristics. Authors of body writing listed by Ge in this article include Wei Hui and Mianmian, as well as some others earlier than them, such as Han Dong, Zhu Wen, Chen Ran and Lin Bai, male and female. Ge Hongbing actually defines authors of body writing in a broad sense.[168]

Dong Zhilin put forth the idea of "body writing" in her "Women's Writing and Historical Sites: 'Body Writing' of the 1990s and Other Literary Thoughts" (*Literary Review*, 2000 [6]) published in 2000. Dong elaborates on body writing by adopting the "body writing" theory in the Western feminist criticism, particularly the theory of Cixous. According to Dong, women's writing in modern Chinese mainland had somehow estranged itself from grand narratives before feminist theories were introduced from the West. The authors of body writing mentioned in Dong's article include Ding Ling, Ru Zhijuan, Zhang Jie, Wang Anyi and Tie Ning, without talking about Wei Hui, Mianmian, Chen Ran or others put in this group by Ge Hongbing and other scholars.

Xie Youshun published in 2001 "Literary Somatology" (*Flower City*, 2001 [6] and a summary edition in *Contemporary Writers Review*, 2002 [1]), criticizing the

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[166]Ge Hongbing, "Ge Hongbing's Memory of 'the New Generation'", http://stlib.net/dsps/disp_dsps.asp?sendid=5635.

[167]"The Life in Mianmian's Eyes: A Talk with Mianmian", http://news.21cn.com/dushi/ds/2003/07/25/1197946.shtml.

[168]Many articles hold that Ge Hongbing first put forth the idea of "body writing" in his essay titled "An Era of Individual Culture and Authors of Body Writing," published on *Mountain Flowers* in 1996, as Ge Hongbing writes in his"Ge Hongbing's Memory of 'the New Generation'" (see above for the source). However, no such article appeared in any 1996 issue of *Mountain Flowers*. Ge may have made a mistake here. What he might have meant is "Individual Literature and Authors of Body Writing: A Transition in Fictions in the 1990's," published in *Mountain Flowers* in 1997.

then literary trend focusing on physical pleasures of the body. According to Xie, the body in literary works is never the purely material flesh. The human body won't be a body in the literary sense unless it is an ethically poetic one. That's what Xie calls literary somatology.

As shown in materials at hand, the idea of "body writing" wasn't put forth or clearly defined by Chinese literary critics between 1995 and 2001 (body writing was indeed mentioned in some articles, without being used as a particular term, though). "Body writing" at that time was like an accessory to concepts such as feminine literature, women's writing and private writing. Authors like Wei Hui and Mianmian were usually discussed and criticized in a broader background of women's writing.

Wei Hui and Mianmian approached the peak of their writing in 2001, while Jiudan and Zhuyingqingtong drew readers' attention for their out-of-the-box style. Muzimei, in particular, dashed into readers' vision.[169] With those authors, body writing stood out as a clearly-defined and independent concept around 2002.[170] The number of publications, and master's theses and doctoral dissertations on the topic grew. Many symposiums on this topic were organized. Debates of "body writing" intensified ed and reached climax around 2004.[171]

As a part of the obsession about the body, body writing emerged and flourished in the same social, historical and cultural conditions that shaped the obsession about the body, including the loosening of political control, the spread pf consumerism,[172]

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[169]Wei Hui published her *Shanghai Baby* (Shenyang: Chunfeng Literature & Arts Press) and *Scream of the Butterfly* (Changsha: Hunan Literature and Art Press) in 1999 and *Virgin in the Water* (Shijiazhuang: Huashan Literature and Art Press) in 2000. Mianmian published her *Candies* (Beijing: China Drama Press) in 2000 and *Ballroom Dance* (Beijing: New World Press) in 2002. *Lower Body* magazine was founded in 2000. *Crows* (Wuhan: Changjiang Literature and Art Press) authored by Jiudan, whose works were called by some as "prostitute's literature", was published in 2001. The Internet ID Zhuyingqingtong emerged in 2002, who kept posting erotic photos and articles. Muzimei from Guangzhou began to post her sex diaries on Internet in June 2003. Body writing came to its "climax".

[170]Nobody can tell who first adopted this concept. It is hardly confirmed whether Ge Hongbing first used it in 1995. Nonetheless, it has little to do with our understanding of body writing.

[171]For more details of the symposiums, see He Yugao & Li Xiuping, "A Summary of 'the Symposium on Body Writing and the Cultural Symptoms in an Era of Consumption", *Literary Review*, 2004 (4); and Zhang Liqun, "The Symposium on 'Body Writing' in the Contemporary Poetry", *Newsletter of the Chinese Poetry Studies*, 2004 (1). Some periodicals published related articles as well, such as the sketches and notes under the title "Body Writing and Its Cultural Implications" on *Seeking Truth*, 2004 (4); the articles under the title "A Literary Investigation into Body Writing" on *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 2004 (5); and the sketches and notes of "Theories and Practices of Somaesthetics" on *Academic Journal of Zhongzhou*, 2005 (3). Doctoral dissertations and master's theses concerning the topic include Meng Gang, "Body Utopia in an Era of Consumption" (doctoral dissertation, Zhejiang University, 2004) and Ke Xiaofeng, "From 'Body Discourse' to "Body Writing'" (master's thesis, Southwest China Normal University, 2005).

[172]It may be seen as "lust economics". Chen Dingjia, *Body Writing and Cultural Symptoms: An Introduction*, Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 2011.

the growing prominence of mass media[173] and the introduction to feminist body theories of the West. The major (and even the only) influential work is "The Laugh of the Medusa" authored by the French scholar Hélène Cixous and collected in *The Criticism of Feminist Literature in Modern Days* (Zhang Jingyuan [ed.], Beijing: Peking University Press, 1992). Body writing in China may not emerge under the inspiration of the Western body writing theory. However, people tried to find in the Western body writing theory some support or proof for body writing in China when the latter sat on its peak. And Cixous's theory was thought to be the best evidence. But the specific context in China was ignored when the theory was borrowed and applied. Thus, differences in aesthetic features and philosophical connotations between Chinese and Western histories, cultures and texts are ignored.[174] It is worthy of further review and awareness.[175]

(II) Definition and Criticism of Body Writing

What is body writing? The definition may vary, as standpoints differ. Also, it varies when the object of body writing is defined in different ways. Generally, authors of body writing are categorized into three groups, namely the so-called "beauty writers" including Wei Hui, Mianmian, Jiudan and Zhuyingqingtong, who stand as the core of body writing; the writers engaged in feminine writing or private writing, such as Chen Ran and Lin Bai; and other modern and contemporary writers who write about bodies, for instance, Tie Ning, Wang Anyi and Ding Ling. However, it may be better called as the body studies in literature, not the same as body writing in a strict sense.

(1) Pornographic Body Writing

Many scholars criticize body writing or hold negative attitudes toward it, mainly against the first group mentioned above. For instance, Qian Zhongwen puts the idea of body writing "in a derogatory sense". According to him, "body writing" emerged against a particular background and is a sensationalized thing in media's manipulation. Generated from consumerism, body writing turns human bodies into commodities and morals change radically. The negative side leads to the erotic

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[173]Li Huaxiu, "How 'Body Writing' Emerged and Its Meaning", *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, 2002 (6);Yu Quanheng, "A Symptomatic Analysis of 'Body Writing'", *Journal of Yangtze Normal University*, 2011 (3); Chen Zhiping, "Phenomena of 'Body Writing' in a Communication Perspective", *Journal of Hebei Socialist College*, 2009 (2); Yan Zhen, "The Historical Context of Body Writing", *Wenyi Zhengming (Debates in Literature and Arts)*, 2004 (5); and Zeng Daorong, "Body Writing: A Business Practice of Profit-seeking Media", *Journal of Fujian Institute of Education*, 2007 (4).

[174]Ouyang Cancan & Yu Qi, "What 'Body Writing' Brought to China and Its Changes in China: from a Perspective of Gender and Body", *Journal of Southwest University for Nationalities*, 2008 (5).

[175]See Mi Ruixin, "History of 'Body Writing' in China and a Reflection", *Collection of Women's Studies*, 2010 (4).

descriptions of sex and body, hitting hard ethics and morals.[176] Evidently, Qian sees body writing as something with excessive description of sex, almost equal to "sex writing"[177] and pornography. Zhu Guohua gives a statement more clearly, "To be frank, body writing is right a euphemistic phrase for pornography. It pursues sex or sexual attraction." According to Zhu, works by Wei Hui, Mianmian and Zhuyingqingtong, are filled with strong moral nihilism that would destroy the spirit of enlightenment if people let it be.[178] Other scholars also criticize body writing for its pornographic and erotic descriptions.[179]

(2) **Positive Attitudes toward Body Writing**

In addition to the criticisms and even condemnation of body writing, some scholars hold positive attitudes toward it, from various perspectives, though. Ge Hongbing reviews the cultural transition taking place in China since the 1990s and holds that body writing has played a positive role in the transition. According to Ge, China has since the 1990s experienced a cultural transition process, during which the Chinese culture keeps turning from being collective and rational to an individual and emotional one, as demonstrated by individual literature. Body writing is a feature of individual literature, in which "my experience" takes the priority. That is, an author first sees himself/herself as an individual before representing his/her experience to readers. It is a philosophy of body that justifies the body's experience. The rules for body are personal, non-rational and about desires. The philosophy of body dominates the era of individual culture and subverts all the traditional spiritual philosophies.

More scholars see body writing in a positive light from the angles of feminism and women's liberation, in addition to the aforementioned cultural transition. In this sense, body writing demonstrates that women have successfully overthrown the male dominance. However, such attitudes are mostly held for authors like Chen Ran and Lin Bai. Xiang Rong points out in his "A Broken Mirror: Body Writing and Its Cultural Imagination in Feminine Literature" that women have long been "represented" by others, while they began in the 1990s to see their bodies through their own eyes, rediscovering what they truly are. That is the narrative motive and goal of body writing. To put it in a simple way, "Body writing aims to help women regain the right to interpret their own bodies and describe their own bodies to their own will, so as to reestablish the rhetoric for women's bodies and end the days when men had a say that 'She has a body'."[180]

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[176]He Yugao & Li Xiuping, "A Summary of 'the Symposium on Body Writing and the Cultural Symptoms in an Era of Consumption", *Literary Review*, 2004 (4).

[177]Yan Zhen, "The Historical Context of Body Writing", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 2004 (5).

[178]Zhu Guohua, "An Interrogation to Body Writing", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 2004 (5).

[179]See Peng Yafei, "A Doubt of 'Body Writing'", *Seeking Truth*, 2004 (4); and Huang Yingquan, "Destructing the Feminist Fairy Tale of 'Body Writing'", *Seeking Truth*, 2004 (4).

[180]Xiang Rong, "A Broken Mirror: Body Writing and Its Cultural Imagination in Feminine Literature", *Journal of Southwest University for Nationalities*, 2003 (3).

Other scholars hold more or less the same attitudes and even see the works by Wei Hui and Mianmian as "a vehement way of writing,[181] with which those female writers boldly unveil women's bodies and distorted souls oppressed by a patriarchal culture for too long a time. They represent women's unique experience from a marginalized position and resolutely subvert the traditional moral order, smashing the fairy tale of patriarchy and challenging the patriarchal system. In a word, body writing hits hard the long-established ideology of men's absolute domination over women in a patriarchal society.[182] It is a rebellion and liberation of women.

However, many scholars remain doubtful about the positive role body writing plays. For example, someone clearly states that body writing has nothing to do with feminism.[183] "Body writing subverts nothing. It is nothing more than a cheating fairy tale fabricated by the writers in pursuit of fame and money and by the boots-licking critics."[184]

(3) **Power Relations in Body Writing**

In addition to the aforementioned opposite comments on body writing, many other scholars try to analyze the complicated power relations behind body writing from a neutral standpoint.

Zhu Dake analyzes in his "Cultural Logics of Body Narrative" the complicated logical relations behind body writing, including logics of feminism, rebellion, hedonism and market. According to Zhu, Muzimei's body narrative was originally nothing more than indecent exposure, to cater to voyeurs, before it was forced by men into a feminist battle. And those female writers gain fame, money and power by making use of their body advantage. However, their rebellious way of narrative is filled with moral dangers and those female writers are like someone naked walking on the "discourse" tight-rope. They launch an attack all alone on the gigantic traditional community and set a fire in the male-dominant field. Ideology gradually lost its ground to hedonism. The Western middle-class dashed crazily to sexual liberation and pleasure when ideology declined. Lust got itself freed in China in such a global scene. Consumption liberates sensual desire and clears up its toxicity. Sensual desire thus takes an appearance of stability satisfying the authority. None may sit free from market forces in an era of global capitalism. Body consumption and lust economics grow fast and strong, opening an enormous

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[181]Liu Wenju, "On the Marginalized Rebellion Made by Wei Hui and Mianmian with Their Body Writing", *Social Sciences in Heilongjiang*, 2009 (2).

[182]Zhao Yanqiu, "From the Observed to the Observer: the Hit on Ideology from Feminine Body Writing", *Criticism and Creation*, 2007 (1).

[183]Zhang Guotao, "On 'Body Writing'", *Beifang Luncong* (*Collected Essays in the North*), 2005 (5).

[184]Huang Yingquan, "Destructing the Feminist Fairy Tale of 'Body Writing'", *Seeking Truth*, 2004 (4); and Yan Zhen, "The Historical Context of Body Writing", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 2004 (5).

international market for authors like Wei Hui. Market keeps a tight control over culture and turns it into an accessory to capital operation.[185]

In all, complicated power relations hide in body writing. The four aforementioned cultural logics have shaped the "nature" of body writing and are worthy of our attention when we try to know more about body writing, even though Zhu Dake makes no further elaboration. Only in this way can we find the cultural symptoms behind body writing.

Meng Fanhua puts Zhu Dake's idea of body narrative in a more vivid way, calling it "a combat": The body is actually a process of construction and deconstruction filled with incessant combats. According to Meng, the times of revolutions witnessed no combats of the body; instead, it was filled with confrontations and combats between the revolutionary/the counterrevolutionary, the progressive/the reactionary, the Left/the Right, the proletarian/the bourgeoisie, and landowners/poor and lower-middle peasants. Events in the realm of spirit were back then prioritized over body narrative. From the 1980s onwards, the narrative of personal emotions and the concern of body took the ground, in a heroically tragic manner, though. However, such a narrative confined itself within the relations between men and women. Stories of bodies remain attractive to writers and things concerning men and women seem to be the Sphinx's riddle. Combats of bodies went on in a large scale in the novels of the early 21st century. Nonetheless, the fighting scenes remained the male-dominant, while women could do nothing except to evade, accept or endure. In a "modern" society, violence, revolutionary or counterrevolutionary, came to an end and the combats aiming to hurt or eliminate bodies in flesh disappeared. Then, another entirely different combat of body kicks off around the globe. It's a continuous combat without the front and in various forms. Endless body consumption results in endless tensions. Different from the previous male-dominant combat where women's bodies were controlled, this new combat of body between men and women is fought initiatively by women.

In modern days, a female-dominant combat of body is started, such as body plans for women. It seems that women devote themselves to this combat. In actuality, a fashion or women's "own" demand is always generated by social, cultural and political powers. A combat aims to conquer. However, women fight their combat of body, to conquer men and the world by yielding. Or rather to say, women fight and conquer under the control of cultural and political powers, without being able to shape independently or grasp their personal life. We may even say that women are doomed to be controlled by culture and politics. Anyhow, combating bodies permeate our life. Women tell stories with their bodies. Men are carried away by wild physical pleasure. Body narrative lies as the core of daily life in a modern society.[186]

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[185]Zhu Dake, "Cultural Logics of Body Narrative", *Xinmin Weekly*, 8 June 2004.

[186]Meng Fanhua, "The Combating Body and Culture and Politics", *Seeking Truth*, 2004 (4).

5 Media Studies in Modern China

This chapter focuses on media studies in modern China. Media studies deals with almost all the disciplines of humanities and some of natural sciences.[187] Media studies is conducted in various paradigms. However, paradigms of Cultural Studies are less used in media studies in modern China, with little achieved. The chapter only sees into media studies conducted in the paradigms of Cultural Studies and reviews media studies in modern China from three angles, namely media production, texts and audience.

1. **Cultural Studies and Critical Media Studies**

(I) **The Critical Theory Paradigm of Media Studies**

There are usually two paradigms (or schools) of media studies, namely the traditional school or the empirical paradigm represented by media studies in the United States; and the critical theory paradigm represented by researchers in Europe.[188] The critical theory paradigm of media studies is mainly drawn from the Frankfurt School's critical theory, plus semiotics-structuralism, Birmingham School's cultural studies, political economy, as well as cultural imperialism and post-modernist cultural theory.[189] Then how are media studies conducted within Cultural Studies?

Erni points out in his "Media Studies and Cultural Studies: A Symbiotic Convergence" that Cultural Studies and media studies tend to integrate, as both: (1) Examine mass communication from the angle of critical theory of mass culture; (2) Apply the knowledge and standpoints of semiotics and ideological criticism in media studies; (3) Strengthen the identity-based media studies, such as concerns about identity politics and gender politics, as well as racial politics and sex politics; and (4) Establish a methodological framework bridging the criticism of political

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[187]Yin Hong, "Specialized, Culture-oriented and Diversified Media Studies" in Wang Yuechuan (ed.), *Media Philosophy* (Kaifeng: Henan University Press, 2004), p. 254.

[188]Scholars may categorize paradigms of media studies in different ways. Some categorize them into three types, namely objective empirical paradigm, interpretative empirical paradigm and critical theory (Liu Hailong, *Mass Communication Theory: Paradigms and Schools*, Beijing: China Renmin University Press, 2008). Some list the paradigms as positivism, interpretative sociology and critical sociology (Wu Fei & Wang Xuecheng, *Communication, Culture and Society*, Jinan: Shandong People's Publishing House, 2006), or as experience-function, control theory and structuralist methodology (Chen Weixing, *Ideas of Communication*, Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2004). Others may see the paradigms of media studies in the light of empiricism, technicism and criticism (Hu Yiqing, *Communication: Crisis of the Discipline and Revolution of Paradigms*, Beijing: Capital Normal University Press, 2004). However, it is more common to put the paradigms in two categories; see Chen Lidan, "Three Schools of Communication Methodology", *Journalism and Communication*, 2005 (2).

[189]See Yu Deshan, *Modern Media: An Introduction* (Beijing: China Radio Film & TV Press, 2012), pp. 5–15.

economy of communication and the cultural studies of media.[190] Some Chinese scholars summarize the core issue of the critical media studies as "control": "To put it simply, critical theories focus on political, economic and cultural issues. Despite varying foci, they all investigate the issues from a standpoint of Western Marxism; that is, to discuss about 'control'—'Who controls communication', 'Why do they control' and 'Who the controlling power serve'. Even today, some critics in this ideology cling on the issues of ownership and controlling power of mass media institutes. In another word, critical theories focus on 'Why do they control' or 'Why don't they control', while empirical scholars pay attention to 'How to communicate' and 'How much to communicate'."[191] We talk about media studies in China in this chapter concerning media production, texts and impacts on audience by focusing on power/control.[192]

(II) History of Critical Media Studies in China

Critical theories and methods of media studies have long been introduced to China. According to Professor Liu Hailong,[193] critical media studies drew attention from Chinese scholars as early as in the late 1970s and 80s.[194] Wang Zhixing, a student in the postgraduate program of School of Journalism and Communication, China Renmin University who later go to study in Britain, read his "An Analysis of Critical Schools of Europe and Traditional Schools in the U.S." (*Journal of Journalism*, 1986 [6]) which drew much attention on the Second National Conference on Communication. It may be the first detailed analysis of critical schools. In 1987, Guo Qingguang published in *Collection of Papers on Journalism and Communication*, Issue 11, "A New Force in the Studies of Mass Communication: An Analysis of Critical Schools of Europe". It was the first paper that talks about critical schools of communication in a comprehensive way in

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[190]Miller, Toby (ed.), *A Companion to Cultural Studies*, Wang Xiaolu (trans.) (Nanjing: Nanjing University Press, 2009), p. 154.

[191]Wu Fei & Wang Xuecheng, *Communication, Culture and Society* (Jinan: Shandong People's Publishing House, 2006), p. 113.

[192]For features of paradigms of media studies, see Qin Yi, "Criticisms Joining Hands: Changing Relations Between Cultural Studies and Political Economy of Communication", *Hubei Social Sciences*, 2009 (11); Mei Qionglin, "Media Studies in the View of Cultural Studies", *Beifang Luncong* (*Collected Essays in the North*), 2005 (5); Liu Xiaohong, "Coexisting, Confronting, Learning: Changing Relations Between Political Economy of Communication and Cultural Studies", *Journalism and Communication*, 2005 (1); Feng Ting, "Surfacing Culture: Media Studies in Cultural Sociology", *Journal of Zhejiang Party School of C.P.C.*, 2006 (4); Zhao Yuezhi & Xing Guoxin, "The Political Economy of Communication" in Liu Shuming & Hong Junhao (eds.), *Communication*, Beijing: China Renmin University Press, 2007.

[193]Liu Hailong, "'The Missing' in the Introduction of 'Communication': On Early Ideas of Communication in China 1978–1989 When Critical Theories Were Introduced", *Journalism and Communication*, 2007 (4).

[194]See CASS Institute of Journalism and CASS Lab of the World News (eds.), *Communication (Brief)*, Beijing: People's Daily Press, 1983; and Zhang Li, "Status Quo of Institutes of Communication in the U.S. and Western Europe", *Journal of Journalism*, 1986 (4).

China. *Agents of Power* translated by Huang Huang and others (Beijing: Huaxia Publishing House, 1989) is the first translated work on critical schools of communication.

In the 1990s, the academic circles began to pay more attention to critical theories and more papers, textbooks, monographs, collections and websites on theories of Cultural Studies came to sight. Critical schools of media studies witnessed substantial development as well. However, the studies conducted under critical theories remains weak compared with that under empirical theories, and seems "looming"[195] in media studies. Some scholars hold that this is because the subject of communication in China has in the past three decades had no critical thinking or organized skepticism to itself and discipline, without any substantial criticisms or reflections on the epistemological tools it adopted. Others see it as a typical result of "de-politicized politics". A critic points that in the times when the academic circles had a reflection of "the Cultural Revolution" and ideological emancipation, the press circle was too eager to discard previously politics-oriented journalism and communication, while it got blinded by the seemingly-depoliticized U.S. communication theory and practice saturated with the ideology of the Cold War.[196]

Weak paradigms may further impede the development of media studies with the Chinese characteristics.

2. **Media Production and Power Relations**

(I) **Media Production and Political Economy**

Political economy serves as the major base of the studies of media production. Here we won't go deep into the earlier conflicts between and debates over Cultural Studies and political economy; instead, political economy is seen as an integral part of Cultural Studies in the broad sense,[197] so that we may with it investigate how media is produced, spread and consumed and the power relations involved.

Media (communication) studies was first conducted in the paradigm of political economy roughly in the 1930s. In this paradigm, media communication is seen as a political economic activity, to examine the political-economic factors involved in media production, distribution, circulation, exchange and consumption and unveil the power relations between the state, society, media organs and audience. The paradigm attaches particular importance to the control and restraints imposed by political and economic powers on media production and communication. For instance, it examines how production goods are possessed and controlled in media communication, how media products are distributed and how audience consumes media products (in a passive manner).

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[195]Li Bin, "On the Schools of Communication", *Chinese Journal of Journalism & Communication*, 2001 (2).

[196]Quoted from Li Bin, "Critical Schools and China", *Youth Journalist*, 2013 (01).

[197]See in Maxwell, Richard, "Political Economy within Cultural Studies" in Miller, Toby (ed.), *A Companion to Cultural Studies*, Wang Xiaolu (trans.), Nanjing: Nanjing University Press, 2009.

The studies of political economy of communication emerged in China comparatively late. The Chinese academic circles are now yet to fully integrate with the international studies of political economy of communication, as documentation citation remains weak. In spite of some topics that may belong to the analysis of political economy of communication, Chinese scholars tend to adopt self-created methodologies and thoughts, without any schools in the making.[198]

(II) Power Relations in Media Production

Lu Ye and Pan Zhongdang illustrate the space of journalism practice in a co-authored article,[199] as shown in the following diagram:

Journalism ideas

Political publicity system   Commercial media rules
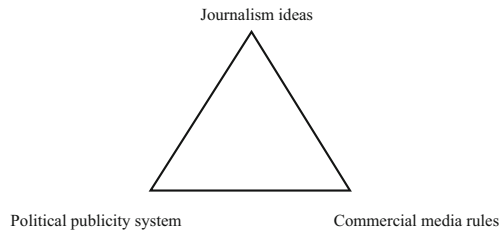
According to the authors, political publicity system, commercial media rules and press (media) practitioners' ideas stand in constant conflicts, interrelated and interdependent. The three powers co-shape the historical scene press practitioners conduct their activities in the social transition. We may make a change to the above diagram, i.e. to replace journalism ideas with media communication organs. Then in the general media production, we find the same relation pattern of the powers, fighting, coordinating and compromising.

Lu and Pan first examine how the aforementioned powers try to incorporate and counter-incorporate. According to the two authors, the reform of journalism in modern China has been launched under the CPC's leadership and publicity activities have basically followed the political power (including administrative and ideological requirements). The political power has dominated press (media) production by "force" and "incorporation". It incorporates "alternative" discourses and

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[198]Guo Zhenzhi, "My Thoughts on Political Economy of Communication", *Modern Communication*, 2002 (1).

[199]Except the otherwise annotated, the quotes in this section are cited from Lu Ye and Pan Zhongdang, "An Imagination of Fame: How Press Practitioners Build Their Professionalist Discourse in the Social Transition", *Mass Communication Research* (Taipei), No. 71, 2002. In addition, some other quotes are from Lu Ye, "A Study of the Forms of Power in News Production" in *Media Education and Media Studies in an Information Era: Collection of Papers on the Second China Communication Forum* (Vol. I), 2002; and Lu Ye and Yu Weidong, "Factors in News Production in the Social Transition", *Shanghai Journalism Review*, 2003 (3), if not otherwise stated.

practices into the dominant ideological and power system, to make them into justified routines, so that "the alternative" got finally tamed into an integral part of the existing system. News review and approval may be the epitome of "force" and "incorporation" means. A scheduled program may be changed or cancelled due to a phone call from above. That's a case of administrative power. Besides, media organs receive every day "requirements" issued by the higher or competent authority, asking them "to follow the circulation issued by XXX", or "not to report the event of XXX", or "to adopt the wire copy issued by XXX". It is the political power that plays as well.

However, neither media organizations nor individual reporters and journalists would face the spectre of being institutionalized without putting up a fight. They would always try to find ways to circumvent authorities' requirements. Nonetheless, it may be a common practice in modern Chinese society to evade, thwart or otherwise disobey orders from the higher-ups. For example, the masthead of *Beijing Daily* is written in black cursive in three columns. The front page always covers exclusively activities of the CPC and the government. Page five, titled "Beijing News", is reserved for more colorful news. The page has its own masthead in red boldface in four columns that is more eye-catching than the front pagees. A newspaper of a large circulation in Shanghai also dedicates the front page to "the routine content", while the other pages are organized in a market-oriented way.

Nonetheless, reality is usually not as that beautiful as what theory illustrates. Press practitioners may experience various difficulties and failures when they try to counter-incorporate, as in China, few media organs stand free from the political system, so that the political power exerts the direct control over media organs on every level and further over every individual involved. None can escape from being institutionalized. Compromising may sometimes be the only choice.

In the meantime, a media organ is run for propaganda under a monopoly system and plagued with administrative hierarchies; therefore, press practitioners have little chance to do the job in a way journalism should be. They feel frustrated and disappointed. Thus, press practitioners' professionalist ideas remain "the only framework able to shape journalism into an independent, open-minded and rational 'public sphere' of true and full information".[200] It is a hard task, though.

(III) **Centennial Anniversary of Peking University: A Case of Media Production**

Compared to articles focusing on generalized theories, the case study of specific press events or practice in China may better illustrate the features of media operation in the Chinese mainland, thus is of higher academic values. "The Centennial

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[200]Pan Zhongdang and Chen Taowen, "Career Assessment and Degree of Satisfaction of Press Practitioners in China's Reform: Questionnaires for Press Practitioners in Two Cities", *China Media Report* (Hong Kong), 2005 (1); cited from Xie Jing and Xu Xiaoge, "Media Organization and Communication Patterns and Their Relationship with News Production", *Journalism Bimonthly*, 2008 (4).

Anniversary of Peking University: The Analysis of a Cultural Event" authored by Xiong Hao is particularly noteworthy. The author sees the celebration activities of the university's centennial anniversary, press coverage included, as a cultural event and analyzes how social powers got involved in the production of this cultural event, such as the government, the university, media, businessmen, event planners, common people and the university's alumni. They co-created the cultural event of the centennial anniversary of Peking University and co-represented it in mass media.

The author investigates the conflicts, confrontations and games between all the powers involved in media publicity concerning this event. For the government, Peking University embraces factors "precarious" to the state ideology (such as a tradition of liberal thoughts) and is the birthplace of Marxism in China where revolutionary figures like Cai Yuanpei and Ma Yinchu worked. Those figures are important to the CPC's ideological publicity. The centennial anniversary of such a university may help the government further promote its ideology or potentially diminish the legitimacy of the regime in authority. It was a headache for the government how to deal with the event appropriately.

Peking University is always a legend-like attraction to common people and shines the glory of a unique taste of culture and a charm of intellectual personality. Some hoped to see strengthened liberal thoughts in this event and others expected an academic rejuvenation in the university. Common people held different anticipations to the university's centennial anniversary from those of the government.

Businessmen looked at the university's centennial anniversary in the same light of any other sensational stories in the Chinese society. Be it the university's political significance or cultural taste, it stood in businessmen's eyes as a chance of fat profits.

Event planners saw the event as a mega-hit and found press values in it. They were pushed forward by their impulse to make the university's celebration activities into hot products by way of modern PR means. Event planning insiders may agree that anyone who made a success in this event would set up a milestone on the history of public relations of China.

Moreover, the university's alumni may be the ones who most anticipated the anniversary. They held sincere wish for a better future of their alma mater, as they would benefit from it in turn.

Accordingly, various participants anticipated different things in Peking University's centennial anniversary and boosted different cultural production models of this event. Anyhow, all the participants strived to produce in this event some meanings favorable to their benefits. According to Xiong Hao, the anniversary celebration was designed and planned "in exchange for something" (Peking University, in particular, was able to capitalize on its long history and international reputation, to enter into a dialogue with the government). We find in Peking University's anniversary celebration, as a media event, the tussle and exchange among various political, economic and cultural powers. Nonetheless, it doesn't

necessarily mean that all social units in China enjoy the same space or freedom to dialogue with the government as Peking University does.[201]

3. Media Texts and Hegemony

There are many topics under the study of media texts and all cannot be covered here. We will focus on consumerism, identity and the public sphere.

(I) The Media and the Hegemony of Consumerism

Consumerism emerged and grew in China in complicated conditions, politically, economically and culturally. Market economy took shape and began to boom in China in the early 1990s. Since then, people have expected more to be consumed, as material products keep growing in number and variety. This laid an economic foundation for consumerism in China. In a political environment comparatively relaxed, productivity got substantially improved and the national economy was greatly boosted. Chinese people began to enjoy life as they wished and their long-oppressed desires were finally liberated. They pursued a happy life and expressed themselves freely, to a large extent, through consumption. Culturally, an entertainment trend grew out of thriving mass culture, which in turn boosted the growth of consumption. In addition, as China opened its door wider to the outside world, the global trend of consumerism played a role in pushing forward consumerism in China. Moreover, the media fueled consumerism in China as well. It has advertised for consumerism and ridden on a trend of consumerism. This mutually causal relationship between the media and consumerism is called by someone as a "conspiracy" that definitely fuels or intensifies consumerism in China.[202]

(1) Media-guided/produced Consumption

One can analyzes how the media guide and produce consumption on three levels, namely the purchase and consumption of specific and individual goods, the consumption of lifestyle, and the new fashion and consuming domains.[203]

Mass media guide people in their consumption of all sorts of specific and individual goods, from daily necessities like shampoo and batteries to clothes, food, housing and transportation. It tells consumers what to buy and what to discard and trumpets certain brands. Television programs on the shopping channels epitomize the phenomenon.

The adoption of a lifestyle goes beyond the consumption of specific types of goods. It relates a certain product to the habits and mentality of certain social groups

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[201]Xiong Hao, "The Centennial Anniversary of Peking University: The Analysis of a Cultural Event" in Tao Dongfeng et al. (eds.), *Cultural Studies* (Vol. II) (Tianjin: Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences Press, 2001), p. 187.

[202]Xu Xiaoli, "A Study of Consumption Culture in China's Media since the 1990s", a doctoral dissertation, Wuhan University, 2006.

[203]Jiang Yuanlun, *Media Culture and the Era of Consumption* (Beijing: Central Compilation & Translation Press, 2004), p. 134.

or classes (usually those who have achieved great success in life), as if ownership of the product is mark of one's adoption of some distinct lifestyle. The product is given a symbolic significance in addition to its original use value. Consumption of commodities then turns into that of symbols. Advertisements that relate the consumption of certain goods to those who have made it are ubiquitous. According to Tao Dongfeng, these ads fabricate the story of a man of "success" in a few seconds and "constructs" the prototype of a man of "success": He is 35–45 years old, slightly plump, in ruddy health and accompanied by a beauty in his own house and car. Tao points out that the story of a man of success never includes details about how he/she achieved that success. The success is a legendary accomplishment at one stroke. What's worse, the symbol of success is not spiritual, but material, i.e. a person's possession of luxury consumer goods.[204]

Also, the media deliberately open new consumption domains and encourage the masses to go there. In this way, a new consumption pattern and even lifestyle is produced, which boosts the sale of related goods, in turn. For instance, the so-called BOBOs (a group in a bourgeoisie and Bohemian style) are actually a consumer behavior or lifestyle trumpeted by mass media.[205]

(2) **The Media Riding on a Trend of Consumerism**

From the early 1990s onwards, reform and opening-up keeps advancing in China and market economy develops fast around the globe. The media guide and fuel consumerism, while they ride on a trend of consumerism as well, in the content and form of communication.

The media ride on consumerism, as there are more commercials. For example, advertisements used to be found in a corner or between two pages. Later, a whole page would be dedicated to commercials. And now, one finds an advertising pamphlet attached to a newspaper. Advertisements get more important. Many editors are trying to assert more advertisements without impeding readers' reading experience. Advertisements even become a part of reading experience for some. TV commercials seem to be everywhere whenever one turns on the television. In addition, entertainment news and programs are in a huge number as never before. There are specialized entertainment periodicals and channels. The public is thus constantly encouraged to consume material and entertainment commodities.

The consumption-oriented media try every means to stress "merchantability" of the content by seeking and creating "selling points" of news or through press speculation. Media texts are changed into color pages, numerous photos and eye-catching headers, for stronger visual impacts, to stimulate people's desire of consumption. News is reported in various ways, to encourage audience to purchase through the media's charming narratives.

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[204]Tao Dongfeng, "A Cultural Interpretation to Advertisements", *Journal of Capital Normal University*, 2001 (6).

[205]Cheng Wenchao, "Sneakers and the Power Relations Hidden in Popular Culture" in Tao Dongfeng et al. (eds.), *Cultural Studies* (Vol. III), Tianjin: Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences Press, 2002.

In a word, the media strive to shape and satisfy people's desires for material and cultural consumption by way of content and form of communication. In a modern society, media products are special consumer goods like food and an indispensable "basic living subsistence".[206]

(3) **Criticism of Consumption-oriented Media**

As was discussed above, the media trumpet consumption culture and consumerism and go toward something consumption-oriented. The two trends are interdependent on and interrelate to each other, "as there is a causal relationship between the two. Driven by profits, the media release advertisements in huge numbers and trumpet in all sorts of contents consumerist values and lifestyle to boost consumption of goods, catering to advertisers and sponsors. Meanwhile, the profits-pursuing media produce more and more low-cost, low-risk and profitable contents of entertainment and consumption warmly received by the masses, so that media culture takes on a strong sense of consumerism."[207] Some scholars see the relationship between the media and consumerism as "a conspiracy".[208] Mass media win a larger audience by trumpeting consumerism; in turn, consumerism gets further rooted in people's mind.

The media and consumption conspire around the globe. Their conspiracy in China is a political thing, however; that is, the state-controlled media in China follow the survival principle "to pursue the maximum economic profits and the minimum political risk"[209] by working hand in hand with consumption. A scholar points out that the state power imposes a strict surveillance over the media and takes a laissez-faire policy for the latter concerning economic things. An unwritten rule goes prevalent: The media do their job within the safe boundaries concerning political issues. To do nothing is much wiser than to express true ideas. To be the watchdog with the sense of social responsibility is not that easy or profitable as to cater to market demands. The media further turn away from political concerns to consumption domains. Even the ones that were previously run with the sense of social responsibility and vision shift to audience and market, pursuing economic profits easier to be gained in the current political and economic conditions, let alone those who have been always keen on economic issues.[210]

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[206]Liu Weihong, "On Mass Media and Consumerism", a master's thesis, Hunan Normal University, 2005. Also see Xu Xiaoli & Qin Zhixi, "Mass Media and Expanding Consumerism", *China Press Journal*, 19 December 2007.

[207]Qin Zhixi et al., *Perspective on Media Culture* (Wuhan: Wuhan University Press, 2010), p. 9.

[208]Cai Qi & Liu Weihong, "On the Conspiracy Between the Media and Consumerism in a Media-exposed Society", *Today's Mass Media*, 2005 (2).

[209]Ling Yan, *The Visible and the Invisible: A Study of Television Culture in China from the 1990 s Onwards* (Beijing: Beijing Broadcasting Institute Press, 2006), p. 8.

[210]Xu Xiaoli, "A Study of Consumption Culture in China's Media since the 1990 s", a doctoral dissertation, Wuhan University, 2006.

The alliance of the media and consumerism has been basically criticized. As Wang Yuechuan[211] and others put it, the media stipulate consumption by producing various desires, so that the masses receive and accept unconsciously the consumerist values and ideology the media instill into their mind in a false harmony. The media and consumption co-establish a new cultural hegemony in their conspiracy, to control people and deprive the public of their freedom and autonomy.

However, is consumption culture totally negative in the Chinese context? Scholars' opinions diverge here. As early as in the discussion of mass culture and humanism in the early and middle 1990s there were scholars (such as Li Zehou and Wang Meng) who held a positive view on the role of consumption culture in promoting cultural diversities and eliminating dominant ideology. Tao Dongfeng confirms the positive role of parody literature in diminishing the power of orthodox authority. Lei Qili makes in *Illusions of the Media* an analysis of how the fashion magazine *Creativity* consumes Ché Guevara "the cool man": In a context of consumerism, Guevara is moved from the elite discourse through "the folk" to the mass discourse and from the historical discourse through the current context to the consumption discourse, so that "the 'sublime' and 'divine' 'Utopia' in the traditional ideology gets further deconstructed".[212] Nonetheless, what values shall we establish when divinity, sublimity and taboos are removed by consumption? So Lei also points that as Ché Guevara "the cool man" is consumed, "Guevara becomes an abstract legendary 'cool man' who is charismatic behind stories". Guevara and his revolutionary spirit are terribly reduced to nothing by consumption.[213] Dai Jinhua gets to the point in her concerns.

This is an era entangling with the decaying and the newly-born. Time and again, people remove taboos and divinity and consume memories and ideologies in numerous ways of consumption and entertainment. A future rid of unbearable burdens may be delightfully. A vista free from the official control may be pleasant. But does an era without any taboos or reverence necessarily embrace a paradise?[214]

(II) The Media and the National Identity

Identity issue is a key topic in Cultural Studies. Identity is constructed under or with the power and the media serve as an important way. This section focuses on how the national identity is constructed in the media.[215]

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[211]Wang Yuechuan (ed.), *Media Philosophy: An Introduction* (Kaifeng: Henan University Press, 2004), p. 17.

[212]Lei Qili, *Illusions of the Media: An Analysis of Modern Life and Media Culture* (Shanghai: Shanghai Bookstore Publishing House, 2008), p. 53.

[213]Ibid.

[214]Wang Yuechuan (ed.), *Media Philosophy: An Introduction* (Kaifeng: Henan University Press, 2004), p. 78.

[215]As for how the image of women is constructed in the media, refer to "Chap. 5 Feminism and Gender Issues".

Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Wu Ruiren [trans.], Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House, 2005) has been considered as the key theory of the national identity. Anderson sees nation, nationality and nationalism as "distinct cultural artifacts" and defines a nation as "an imagined community". The media play a critical role in people's imagination of this community. Usually, the media arouse a universal feeling among the people by leading their attention to certain events or figures, to build "an imagined community" in the people's mind to create a sense of identification and belonging. The media often examine a certain event in a time-space framework of binary oppositions, comparing the past and the present and even the future and making comparison between the self and the others (other nations). In this way, a national community is created in the media.

One may find the binary opposition framework in many media events. A scholar points out that "Xinwen Lianbo", a news program of China Central Television (CCTV) prefers a binary opposition structure of China and the world, "domestic news reports about 'China' are deliberately prepared in a fixed pattern, while the press coverage about the international issues talks largely about local wars or disturbances, natural or manmade disasters, changes of governments, economic fluctuations and weak control, or the latest scientific and technological outcomes, literary and art news and anecdotes."[216] Thus, China seems to be the most stable and peaceful country in the best order in the world. The binary opposition narrative is the most commonly-seen one in TV series and films as well.

In addition to the above-described time-space framework of binary opposition, the media tend, in the coverage of a particular event like a disaster or national celebration, to construct family-state cohesion of unity,[217] for an image of the national harmony. Some scholar examines the press coverage of the Wenchuan Earthquake and points out that the media often built a binary opposition framework like "victims of the calamity/non-victims" and "victims of the calamity/the nation". Mutual help and unity were highlighted within such a framework: Non-victims donated to help victims and the government showed great concerns for those who suffered from the disaster. In turn, victims held gratitude toward those who gave their hands and toward the government. The state, the nation and volunteers felt a strong sense of identity in the powerful cohesion. The image of a unified and harmonious nation was represented to people.[218] Moreover, the media "crowned" Premier Wen Jiabao as "a star", through whom the cohesion of the nation/people became an integral part of an imagined community. People showed their recognition of the premier in a way they treat a pop star.

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[216]Wang Yuwei, *The Discourse of Nationalism and the Television Culture in China* (Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 2011), pp. 99–100.

[217]See Wang Yuwei, *The Discourse of Nationalism and the Television Culture in China* (Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 2011), pp. 94–97.

[218]Li Chunxia, "Disasters, Media Rites and the State", *Guizhou Social Sciences*, 2008 (6).

In the press coverage of a celebration, the media often illustrate the image of a harmonious, unified, strong and promising nation in a festive atmosphere enveloping the entire country.[219] The Spring Festival Gala may be the epitome of media rites highlighting the national unity. We'll give no unnecessary details here, as many other articles and books have made full descriptions of this.[220]

A live telecast represents symbols and icons in combinations, so that the audience immerse themselves in the represented correlations between the symbols and icons and share a common value. Thanks to this shared value, the audience unite into a spiritual "community" and the social order gets well maintained and consolidated.[221] In the meanwhile, anything unaccepted by the government-approved ideology is forgotten by the imagined construction of the nation. It is a mission of Cultural Studies to revive or rediscover the forgotten parts of history.[222]

(III)   New Media and the Public Sphere

The discussion about the media and the public sphere has kept on in the past three decades since the reform and opening-up of China,[223] on the issues such as how to define the boundary between the public and private spheres, how to build the public sphere in the media, and how to examine the hidden power relations. This section investigates the discussion about the media and the public sphere, focusing on new media[224] that plays a critical role in building the public sphere.

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[219]Zeng Yiguo, "Media Rites and the National Identity: An Analysis of the CCTV's Live Telecast of the Celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China", *TV Research*, 2009 (12).

[220]See Lv Xinyu, "An Analysis of the Spring Festival Gala 2002", *Dushu* (*Reading*), 2003 (1); Lv Xinyu, "Rites, Television and the National Ideology: An Analysis of the Spring Festival Gala 2006", *Collection of Papers on China Communication Forum 2006* (Vol.I); Jin Yuping, "The National Identity in the Media: A Case Study of the Spring Festival Galas", *Theory Horizon*, 2010 (1); Zhu Lili, "The National Discourse, Remarkable Visual Spectacles and Consumerism: the Representations and Communication in the Spring Festival Gala 2010", *The Journal of Jiangsu Administration Institute*, 2010 (4); and Li Jing, "A Gala and the Imagined Community of Nation: A Case Study of the Spring Festival Gala 2009", *News World*, 2009 (7).

[221]Yu Qian, "How a Media Rite Is Represented in the Live Television: A Case Study of the CCTV's Live Telecast of the Celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China", *Southeast Communication*, 2010 (2).

[222]See the articles in "Cultural Memory: the West and China" in Tao Dongfeng (ed.), *Cultural Studies* (Vol. 11), Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2011.

[223]See Huang Yueqin, "How the Idea of 'Public Sphere' Is Applied to Media Studies in China: A Reflection on Paradigms and Paths", *Journal of Hubei University*, 2009 (6); and Huang Yueqin, "The Public Sphere and the Study of Mass Media in the Context of Reform", *Southeast Communication*, 2010 (5).

[224]"New media" doesn't refer to certain forms of media. As for its definition, see Yu Guoming, "Key Words of the New Media", *Advertising Panorama*, 2006 (5); Wei Lijin, "New Media: A Relative Concept", *Advertising Panorama*, 2006 (6); Kuang Wenbo, "What Is New Media?", *News and Writing*, 2012 (7); and Kuang Wenbo, "Clearly-defined Core Ideas of New Media", *Journalism Lover*, 2012 (19).

(1) **The Public's New Media**

Many scholars hold an optimistic view of new media that it is likely to be an ideal public sphere in China or "further develop into Habermas's 'ideal public sphere'"[225]; or, at least, new media may take on what the public sphere should look like in Habermas's mind.[226] For example, according to some certain scholar, information is not released from the only "point" on blog, so every individual is a potential "point" to release information; therefore, "when innumerable 'points' finally form an entire 'surface' on Internet, this 'surface' would be the true public sphere in a society independent of the state".[227] During the process where "points" are linked into the "surface", all the members of a society take an active role. The previous onlookers turn into passionate participants. The public express their opinions and have a say about their rights by clicking the mouse, to repost, share, follow and reply microblogs. The seemingly scattered clicks accumulate into a power and play a significant role in witnessing and participating in the onlooker's politics. In the Weibo (a Chinese microblogging website) space, the power finally develops into a nationwide public sphere crossing regions and classes.[228]

The interactive new media create a public platform for information sharing. People are free to express their opinions on public issues and hold discussions. It is a public sphere then. In addition, the fragmented new media diminishes the power of "center" and the privilege possessed by old-day "authority" in communication. Information is freely released and opinions fully expressed in new media and it is possible to build a public sphere here.

Many scholars see new media as a possible domain for the ideal public sphere. However, it remains for discussion whether this public sphere can be built in an easy way and whether "a carefree transformation" is possible between individuals, audience and the public. Despite an optimistic view of the public's new media, scholars also see the restraints deep behind the public sphere building imposed on it by various powers. The public's new media is evidently some place filled with complexities.

(2) **Complicated Issues in Building the Public Sphere in New Media**

According to some scholar, the public sphere today, the media where the public opinions are expressed included, are entangled with too complicated power

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[225]Zheng Dawei, "Expanded Information Sources and the Current Online Public Sphere", *Contemporary Communications*, 2005 (3).

[226]Xu Guang, "Subversion or Reconstruction: the Blog Study in Communication", a master's thesis, Jinan University, 2006.

[227]Yan Chunjun, "Blogs and the Era of the Personal Media", *Fujian Tribune (The Humanities & Social Sciences Bimonthly)*, 2003 (3).

[228]Qi Zhihui, "A Study of Microblogs Based on Spatial Theory", a master's thesis, Jinan University, 2012.

relations; thus, it is necessary "to wake up from the illusion that mass media could be unrestrained."[229] Those entangled power relations are seen in politics, economy and individuals' public awareness.

First of all, in the Chinese mainland the political power usually exerts its influence on the press coverage. "The media power in China remains affiliated to the political-cultural system unique to China. It is impossible to fully examine the abnormal media power, without an in-depth analysis of the political-cultural system".[230] The political power may convey special powers to the media and be able to eliminate any media content that refuses its control. Moreover, strong market forces hold a rein over the public media. The media may fall as potential commercial resources on sale.[231]

The media have been much less public, due to the restraints from the political and economic powers. The public may concern about this issue for a while or simply for fun. There is no continuous public reason in China. In actuality, the stronger the government control gets, the more fun the public are seeking and the more urgent they feel to express their emotions. The seemingly passionate concern about the public issues is never a rational one. Some scholar warns, "We are over optimistic about the so-called enhancing public concerns."[232]

4. Audience Study

(I) Paradigms of the Audience Study

Theories used in audience study in China are mainly from the West. McQuail's classification of audiences into "structural", "behavioral" and "sociocultural" in his *Audience Analysis* is widely cited and generally accepted.[233] The use of ethnographic studies as a primary paradigm in audience study, allowers researchers to examine how different audience groups interpret and make sense of the media in different contexts. We must realize, however, that these paradigms do not stand as polar opposites to one another. Cultural Studies often borrows the methodologies and research outcomes from the former two which have, in addition to data survey and analysis, also been engaging in critical thinking, something that is inherent to Cultural Studies.

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[229]Nanfan, "Advertising and Rhetoric of Desires" in Wang Yuechuan (ed.), *Media Philosophy* (Kaifeng: Henan University Press, 2004), p. 82.

[230]Tao Dongfeng, "Mass Communication, Democratic Politics and the Public Sphere" in Wang Yuechuan (ed.), *Media Philosophy* (Kaifeng: Henan University Press, 2004), p. 139.

[231]Nanfan, "Advertising and Rhetoric of Desires" in Wang Yuechuan (ed.), *Media Philosophy* (Kaifeng: Henan University Press, 2004), p. 83.

[232]Chang Kai, "From 'Plaza' to 'Weibo': the Public Concern in the Era of New Media", *Theory Horizon*, 2012 (10).

[233]McQuail, Denis, *Audience Analysis*, Liu Yannan et al. (trans.) (Beijing: China Renmin University Press, 2006), pp. 23–24.

Audience study in China started in the early 1980s.[234] Chinese academics have focused mostly on the relationship between the media and the audience, and the latter's media behaviors (methods of access and use pattern), their media needs and mentality, which are in McQuail's classification, structural and behavioral aspects of the audience, which are typically studied either using measurements or by looking at the actual experiences and results of media exposure. By comparison, the study of the cultural aspects of an audience, which would be done primarily through sociocultural studies based on acceptance analysis is relatively underdeveloped.[235] We'll examine how audience study in modern China learned from the Western audience theories and its analysis of the audience (of new media) and interprets the complicated media.[236]

(II) **New Features of the Audience of the New Media**

The audience of new media show some new features. First, the audience tend to split up or get fragmented. In another word, they turn to more media resources, including Internet and smart phones, as there are more diversified media products when the media tend to be further specialized. The number of audience in a specialized medium decreases, even if the absolute number of total audience remains constant. That's the "split-up" or "fragmentation" of audience.[237] In the meantime, social strata keep splitting up and audience are no longer a homogeneous entirety; instead, they split up into different social strata and a same or similar stratum would further split up into various substrata.[238] Secondly, audience show diversified personalities and stronger initiative, as they are able to choose what they like, be it the media form or content. Some say that a "one-person audience" era is coming when the media serves individuals and every individual user may choose the content to his own likes, maybe with a personalized program list. Thirdly, audience participate in and interactive with the media in a more active manner. The audience of new media is both the receiver and the communicator. The original information is widely spread, as the audience get involved in the media activities by reposting, remarking and sharing the information. The information multiplies in the media, as

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[234]See Chen Chongshan, "Twenty Years of the Audience Study in China" and "On the Precedence of Audience" in CASS Institute of Journalism and School of Journalism and Communication, Hebei University (eds.), *Audience Analysis: Attitudes, Methods and Market—Papers on the Third National Symposium on the Audience Study*, Baoding: Hebei University Press, 2001.

[235]Xing Hongwen, *Television, Audience and Identity: An Empirical Study in Shanghai* (Shanghai: Shanghai Jiao Tong University Press, 2013), pp. 6–7.

[236]For more detailed descriptions and analysis of the audience study (that in China included), see Zeng Wenli & Tan Xiuhu, *A Study of the Audience's Discursive Power in China's Entertainment TV Programs* (Beijing: China Radio Film & TV Press, 2012), pp. 13–32.

[237]Ren Fei, "A Preliminary Study of the Internet Audience", *Dongyue Tribune*, 2012 (6).

[238]See Zhou Aiqun & Hu Yiqing, *Theories and Practice of the Audience Study* (Nanjing: Jiangsu People's Publishing House, 2005), p. 13.

virus does. Thus, the audience of new media are also known as "viral audience".[239] Fourthly, audience show a stronger awareness of the public concerns. Some even see new media as a starting point for public intellectuals to regain their subjectivity. The public may express and spread on Internet what they think at a low cost and anonymously. Therefore, they act as the spokesmen of their own. Any individual user is able to complete the information dissemination process all by himself. It is no longer the job of a certain institute to edit a message, make channel analysis, release a message or give comments. Furthermore, information is released in a real-time manner and people speak out their personal feelings about a public event. It is just what a conventional public sphere may be like, "to have the public talk about their feelings independent of any authority's control". Moreover, the rising "digital public sphere" hits hard the single-center pattern in the era of mass media and the discursive power pattern gets changed accordingly. The public sphere that is losing its ground in the conventional areas now sees a possibility of rejuvenation in the cyber world.

(III) Ethnography as a Tool in Audience Study

Ethnography has long been an important research methodology in audience study and Cultural Studies in the West. It was not adopted by those doing research on audience study in modern China until fairly recently, which explains the limited number of representative publications in the field so far.[240] Limited too is its scope (confined to the study of television and rural audience). There are even fewer ethnographic studies of the impact of gender, race and cultural identity. Ethnographic audience study in China has still a long way to go.

There are, however, a number of worthy works that deserve a closer look.

Li Yayu published "'Xinwen Lianbo' and Peasants' Daily Life: An Ethnographic Study Conducted in Y Village in Hunan Province" in *Southeast Communication*, 2010 (3). The author examines villagers' assessment of "Xinwen Lianbo", the CCTV's nightly news program and categorizes their reasons into four types. For the group of villagers in Y Village that watches "Xinwen Lianbo" as a nightly ritual, the experience has become an integral part of their life, even though they may not fully understand everything in the program.. This routine gives villagers a sense of belonging, dignity, self-respect and even happiness. A second

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[239]Han Enhua & Zhou Ziyuan, "New Features of the Audience in the New Media Context", *Journalism Lover*, 2011 (7).

[240]See Guo Jianbin, *Television in Lonely Villages: Modern Media and the Daily Life in Villages of Ethnic Minorities*, Jinan: Shandong People's Publishing House, 2005; Li Chunxia, *Television and the Life of the Yi People*, Chengdu: Sichuan University Press, 2007; Wu Fei, *Fire Pits, Church and Television: A Study of the Social Communication Network in an Ethnic Community*, Beijing: Guangming Daily Press, 2008; Liu Rui, "The Impacts of Television on the Social Mobility in the Rural Areas in West China: An Ethnographic Survey Conducted in the Shilan Village of Enshi Tujia and Miao Autonomous Prefecture", *Journalism and Communication*, 2010 (1); and Yuan Song and Zhang Yueying, "Television and Village Politics: A Sociological Study of Communication Conducted in the Fu Village in Central Henan Province", *Journalism and Communication Review*, Vol. 2010.

group of villagers, mostly females, watch the news program not so much because they are interested in it themselves but because they "happen to be there when their husbands are watching it". It is a sort of (patriarchal) parlor politics. A third group of villagers learn about how the government operates and what happens internationally, and use this knowledge to shape their own ideas of politics in their daily life. For instance, their awareness of certain policies may come in handy in their dealings with local officials and efforts to safeguard their own rights and interests. Similar analysis is given in the article by Yuan Song and Zhang Yueying titled "Television and Village Politics: A Sociological Study of Communication Conducted in the Fu Village in Central Henan Province" published in *Journalism and Communication Review* in 2010.

For the fourth group of villagers, watching "Xinwen Lianbo" supplies them with conversation topics. The program informs them about current affairs.

Li further points out that none of the four reasons for watching the program corresponds with a signal group of people. Indeed, any one individual may watch the program for a combination of different reasons, though possibly of varying strengths. These four reasons for watching indicate that the experience offers a combination of patriarchy, the Party leadership and state power: They accept the program's underlying ideology and enter into a state-dominated ritual field, identifying themselves with the Central Government, accepting its legitimacy. It is in essence a kind of worship toward the political authority and a natural product of the national ideology and one-party politics. It is not hard to understand, therefore, why 'Xinwen Lianbo' has a considerable number of loyal viewers in rural areas, many of whom exhibiting what might be called "Xinwen Lianbo Complex".

In the meantime, the villagers reprocess what they receive from "Xinwen Lianbo" and enjoy the happiness of initiative activities. Their interpretation may have nothing to do with "Xinwen Lianbo" itself and is only something for chats. Some villagers may have their own understanding of the program and form their own values and standpoints. "Quite limited", such an interpretation shows the villagers' self-consciousness, though.

The author points that, in the social transition, the national ideology closely connects to rural communities by way of the mass media. It controls through local cultures and creates a harmonious "vision of the nation". However, the control is diminishing, as rural communities keep progressing. With a stronger self-consciousness, grassroots peasants culturally rebel against the national ideology. The hegemony-antagonism interpretation is also found in many other ethnographic studies, more or less.

In her "Television Program Language and the Audience's Identity: An Ethnographic Survey Conducted in the Tuotai Village" (published in *Chinese Journal of Journalism & Communication*, 2012 [10]), Jin Yuping examines how the Uyghur audience construct their ethnic identity through watching TV programs. Hong Changhui investigates the impacts of television on villagers in "Television and the Rural Daily Life" (a master's thesis, Xiamen University, 2008). In her "The Yi People and Television: An Ethnographic Study of the Relationship Between

Television and Daily Life in a Village of the Yi People" (published in *Thinking*, 2005 [5]),[241] Li Chunxia examines the relationship between television and the local Yi people in Caobazi. Yuan Song and Zhang Yueying, in their article "Television and Village Politics: A Sociological Study of Communication Conducted in the Fu Village in Central Henan Province" (published in *Journalism and Communication Review*, Vol. 2010), give their critical thoughts on the television-based village politics, from the angle of the relations between traditions and modernity, and between the Central Government and local authorities. Those are remarkable outcomes of the ethnography-based media studies.

6   Study of the Urban Space

The study of the urban space is mainly conducted in two ways. Empirical studies aim to discover the innate rules and "build harmonious cities",[242] by way of questionnaires or related urban censuses. Critical studies focus on how the space is created, the powers involved in the process, the games between those powers and the outcomes of space production. The latter belongs to Cultural Studies and is the focus of this chapter.

1. **History of Spatial Studies in Modern China**

(I) **The Emergence of Spatial Studies in Modern China**

Spatial studies rose in modern China, as in practice, issues, particularly the negative ones, emerge when the urban development fast advances in the country, while the spatial theories are introduced from the West, laying a theoretical foundation.

(1) In practice, China has seen an urbanization process "forward in great leaps" since the early 1990s, leading to new and significant changes in the form and structure of the urban space.[243] One of the key changes lies in the turn from "the production of material objects in a space" to "space production" itself. Space in the urban development in modern days is no longer simply a static "container" of objects or dwellers. It becomes a critical and even scarce resource different powers are struggling for. Space is an indicator of changing social relations. In the meantime, the fast urban development has produced quite a number of negative consequences, such as pollution, ecological deterioration and the conflicts between dwellers and developers/government in

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[241]The article is part of Li's doctoral dissertation that is later published under the title *Television and the Life of the Yi People*, Chengdu: Sichuan University Press, 2007.

[242]See Li Zhigang & Gu Chaolin, *The Structural Transformation of the Social Space in China's Cities* (Nanjing: Southeast University Press, 2011), Chap. 11.

[243]There are many monographs and articles on the structural changes in the urban space in China. See Li Zhigang & Gu Chaolin, *The Structural Transformation of the Social Space in China's Cities*, Nanjing: Southeast University Press, 2011.

urban redevelopment/demolition projects. People get more concerned about spatial issues.

(2) Spatial theories introduced from the West have played an active role in promoting spatial studies in modern China. Western scholars have long been engaged in spatial studies. A trend known as "the spatial turn" was put forth in the 1970s by Henri Lefebvre, Foucault, David Harvey and Edward W. Soja. Spatial studies in modern China has been basically based on the thoughts and theories of the aforementioned scholars, particularly Lefebvre's.[244]

The Western spatial theories were largely first introduced to China after 2000 and reached a climax around 2005, as the urban development hadn't been fully launched until then. Thus, the spatial theories that have been in use for decades in the West were introduced to China in quite short a time, as the cities in China began to ride on a fast-forward development. The spatial theory thus witnesses a fast development in China, while the Western theories have been mechanically copied and reproduced.

(II) An Overview of the Spatial Studies in Modern China

The Chinese academics paid attention to the issues concerning the urban space from the 1990s onwards. Nonetheless, there was no "turn" in their study or concern at the beginning. The study was mainly conducted in areas such as geography and urban sociology.[245] A wave of the theory of the urban space production emerged after 2000, including the specialized studies of Lefebvre, Harvey and other Western spatial theorists,[246] as well as the general study of the spatial theory and the research in related fields.

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[244]Lefebvre has been known for his masterpiece *The Production of Space* first published in 1974. However, a cover-to-cover Chinese version is yet to be completed. The Chinese translation of selected parts was published in 2005. Lefebvre's *Space and Politics* hadn't been translated into Chinese until 2008 (Li Chun [trans.], Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House). Other Western works translated include Foucault's "Geography of Power" in Foucault's *Eyes of Power* (Yan Feng [trans.], Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House, 1997); Foucault's "Texts and Contexts of Different Spaces", "Other Spaces" and "Space, Knowledge and Power" in Bao Yaming (ed.), *Postmodernity and Geopolitics*, Shanghai: Shanghai Education Press, 2001. Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, Beijing: The Commercial Press, 2003; Harvey, *Spaces of Hope*, Nanjing: Nanjing University Press, 2006; and Harvey, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*, Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House, 2010. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*, Wang Wenbin (trans.), Beijing: The Commercial Press, 2004; Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*, Shanghai: Shanghai Education Press, 2005; and Soja, *Postmetropolis: Critical Studies of Cities and Regions*, Li Jun et al. (trans.), Shanghai: Shanghai Education Press, 2006.
[245]Xia Jianzhong, "Major Theories of New Urban Sociology", *Sociological Studies*, 1998 (4).
[246]Such as Liu Huaiyu, *Mediocre and Legendary Modernity: A Textual Interpretation of Lefebvre's Critique of Everyday Life*, Beijing: Central Compilation & Translation Press, 2006; Wu Ning, *The Critique of Everyday Life: A Study of Lefebvre's Philosophy*, Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2007; Zhang Zikai, "A Study of Lefebvre's Thought of 'Social Space'", a doctoral dissertation, Peking University, 2008; Cui Lihua, "A Study of David Harvey's Critical Theory of Space", a doctoral dissertation, Beijing Normal University, 2011; and Tang Xuchang,

In addition to theses and books on the spatial studies, there are some collected papers, collected translations or readers. The ones published by the Urban Culture Center[247] of Shanghai Normal University may be the representative ones of the kind, namely "Cities and Culture" (collected papers), "Urban Culture Study" (collected papers), "Collected Translated Works on Cities and Culture" and "Collected Translated Works on Urban Culture Study". Not entirely about the spatial studies, all those collected papers and translated works talk about the issues of space. There are even special topics in them concerning the spatial studies. Those publications have played a critical role in promoting the spatial studies in China.

Collected papers and readers on the spatial studies also include *The Urban Culture Studies Reader* (four volumes, Guangxi Normal University Press, 2008) edited by Xue Yi, *The City Culture Studies: A Reader* (Peking University Press, 2008) edited by Wang Min'an et al. and *Metropolitan Culture Research in China* (Shanghai People's Publishing House) edited by Hu Huilin et al. In addition, Vol. 10 and Vol. 15 in *Cultural Studies* co-edited by Tao Dongfeng and Zhou Xian both talk about the spatial studies and the urban culture study remains as a regular topic in the collection. Some other collected papers include *Urban Cultural Studies* and *China Urban Review*.

The urban space issue is now a hot academic topic in China. The interdisciplinary spatial studies covers fields of geography, philosophy, sociology and culturology and there is a long way to go to make substantial outcomes in China (as the spatial studies in China relies upon the Western theories nowadays).

2. The Study of the Political Space

We'll examine the studies of the political, consumption and public spaces in modern China in the following sections. Such a classification may not an absolute one, as the public and consumption spaces are always political ones. A space can be a political one or a public one for consumption.

(I) The State Power-dominated Production of the Political Space

A political space is produced to express political ideas. Political spaces are never uncommon in China, with Tiananmen Square as the representative that is a completely political space (or a politically-significant public space). Chang-tai Hung, a Hong Kong-based scholar investigates the reconstruction and expansion of Tiananmen Square and shows how the Communist Party of China (CPC) fit the production of this political space into its political considerations.[248]

(Footnote 246 continued)

"A Study of David Harvey's Thought of the Urban Space: An Investigation Based on Marxist Political Economy", a doctoral dissertation, China Renmin University, 2011; and etc.

[247]The center was established in 1998 and the E-Institute of Urban Culture was set up in 2002. In 2004, the center became a key research institute of the humanities in university approved by the Ministry of Education.

[248]Chang-tai Hung, "Space and Politics: the Expansion of the Tiananmen Square", *Cold War International History Studies* (2007).

Hung finds three powers in the reconstruction and expansion of Tiananmen Square, namely the CPC and its government, the Chinese architects working for the government and the Soviet Union architects. The CPC finally got the upper hand in the games and built Tiananmen Square as a standard political space. Establishing its own regime, the Party constructed a new socialist system in China and new political spaces across the country. Beijing and Tiananmen Square in particular, as the landmark political space in China, required meticulous planning. The CPC actually started the planning for Beijing before the founding of the People's Republic of China. An Urban Planning Commission of Beiping was set up, with Liang Sicheng the famous architect sitting in the commission's standing committee. Liang strongly advocated preserving the ancient architecture and cultural relics in the city proper and building a new cultural/political center in the western suburbs. However, Liang's plan was opposed and criticized by the Party and architectural circles. Some held that it was economically impractical to build a new area outside the city proper, as the new government faced financial constraints at the time. Also, Liang's plan didn't fit the Party's political considerations. The Central Committee of the CPC had set a strategy well before the founding of the People's Republic of China "to change cities of consumption to the ones of production". Thus, in addition to a political and cultural center, Beijing would be built into an industrial center as well. This strategy reflected the important status the working class occupied back then and fit the political agenda and purpose.

Furthermore, the CPC attached great significance to its new administrative center in the old city proper of Beijing. The new regime hoped to consolidate its legitimacy in this way and took the site as the symbol of a promising future China would have under the leadership of the CPC. Therefore, it had been the CPC's plan to build its political center in the old city proper of Beijing, with Tiananmen Square at the center. Liang Sicheng went against the Party's design and political considerations by proposing to build the political center in a new area in Beijing, merely out of the consideration of protecting and preserving the cultural relics.

Liang Sicheng had to face fiercer criticism when the Soviet Union experts got involved. Numerous groups of Soviet experts came to China and worked in the planning and construction of Beijing and Tiananmen Square from mid-September 1949 when the first ones arrived in Beiping (present-day Beijing) to the day when the Sino-Soviet Split took place. Soviet experts introduced and followed the planning pattern for Moscow and the Red Square and proposed that the political center of the People's Republic of China be located in the old city proper of Beijing and Tiananmen Square expanded into a venue for national ceremonies and military or public parades, as the Red Square in Moscow was. This plan was evidently agreeable to the CPC leadership. However, the Soviet experts had disputes with the CPC over how large Tiananmen Square should be and how wide the Chang'an Boulevard should be. As China and the Soviet Union fell outwith each other, the disputes deteriorated into an issue concerning national dignity. Finally, Tiananmen Square and the Chang'an Boulevard both were substantially expanded, made possible only with the demolition of a large number of surrounding buildings.

Tiananmen Square is much larger than the Red Square and the Chang'an Boulevard is much wider than any road around the Red Square.

Anyway, the reconstruction and expansion of Tiananmen Square was never a simple construction project; instead, it was a political event. The CPC consolidated its legitimacy and declared China's sovereignty through the reconstruction and expansion of the traditional sacred space in ancient China. Despite the contests among different parties during the process, the CPC prevailed in the end. "From the point of view of political history, the project demonstrated the CPC's policies, domestically (to establish and consolidate its regime) and externally (to rival the Soviet Union and imperialist powers in Europe and the U.S.)". Tiananmen Square was thus built into a typical political space.

Political authority evidently dominated in the space production in the expansion project of Tiananmen Square. However, a political space may decline or even be diverted or reconstructed for other uses, to some extent, as society keeps rolling forward. In his "Nanjing Yangtze River Bridge: A Floating Signifier",[249] Hu Daping examines the political significance the bridge used to carry and how that political significance was diverted to other uses when commercial economy surged.

According to Hu Daping, Nanjing Yangtze River Bridge was first designed and constructed for convenient transport. However, the bridge fell into an ideological signifier during the construction: It was built as an icon of the great victory of Mao Zedong Thought and the proletarian revolution. The ideological significance the bridge used to carry is still demonstrated in the four "three-red-banner" bridge-heads, four gigantic statues of workers, peasants and soldiers, eight slogans and quotations from Mao in bright-red characters, 200 cast iron reliefs depicting the construction in the early days of the People's Republic of China, as well as a huge number of sunflower-shaped ornaments and symbols of workers, peasants and soldiers. As the reform and opening-up keeps fast advancing in China, the bridge gradually lost its original political significance and even became a venue for commercial uses. For example, commercial advertisements are put up and photo-taking points are set up on the bridge. In Hu's eyes, the bridge's original ideological symbols were diverted for other uses; or, the political significance was diverted for commercial uses, indicating "a decline" of political ideology in everyday life. To put it in another way, the traditional political ideology loosened its rein and the society plagued with the highly-homogeneous revolutionary ideology tended to be open-minded.[250]

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[249]Tao Dongfeng & Zhou Xian (eds.), *Cultural Studies* (Vol. 10), Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2010.

[250]As for how political spaces were diverted for commercial uses, see Hu Heng's "Revolutionary History, Delight and Modernism" in Tao Dongfeng & Zhou Xian (eds.), *Cultural Studies* (Vol. 10), Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2010.

(II) **Resistance in Urban Cracks**

政治空间既可能会被资本所挪用或重写，甚至也可能会受到直接的挑战或抵抗，即便这种抵抗或挑战的效果是微弱的。童强，李志明等人对缝隙空间及城中村的研究正体现了这一点。

Political spaces may be op-opted or reshaped by those with capitalist might or face direct challenges or resistance, however weak, they might be. This is what Tong Qiang, Li Zhiming and some others find in their study of urban cracks and urban villages.

Tong Qiang examines the politics of urban cracks and unveils the power struggle within in "Power, Capital and Urban Cracks".[251] According to Tong, urban cracks are an irremovable objective reality always there, so long as human beings exist and conduct social activities. Urban cracks may be physical spaces like rural-urban fringe zones, urban villages, out-of-the-way alleys, bridge openings and culverts, or diverted formal or regular spaces, such as roadside stalls and illegal construction. The author examines more the latter that is in an informal, underground and uncertain form. Not allowed by policies or laws, such a space shelters itself in street corners, between walls or behind high-rises. Spaces in this form are created easily and cancelled easily.

Tong Qiang points out that "urban cracks" are often occupied and used by the marginalized groups at the bottom of society, including non-natives, scavengers and wanderers. Unable to live on formal or relatively formal jobs, those people can hardly conduct any businesses as they wish. Thus, they have to occupy and struggle to be alive in marginalized spaces such as urban cracks and corners, where the vulnerable and marginalized at the bottom of society follow their own principle of survival: They occupy any urban cracks without supervision and give up any under surveillance. They avail themselves to any loopholes and shelter themselves to any cracks. That's de Certeau's partisan tactic.

The power games in the production of urban cracks are even more evident in urban villages and illegal construction within. Li Zhiming investigates, in *Space, Power and Resistance: The Spatial Politics of Illegal Construction in Urban Villages*, the power struggle in urban villages and illegal construction within. He sees the social nature and relations in urban villages that are actually a particular form of urban space. An urban village is originally a marginalized village community in a rural-urban fringe zone. The dwellers are largely the vulnerable or marginalized ones at the bottom of society, such as migrant workers and other floating people. However, as a marginalized territorial entity, an urban village occupies and seizes the marginal space it sits in. The expropriated peasants dwelling in an urban village create a special space of their own and establish the identity politics of this marginal space. In this way, the state control and authority over this marginal space gets effectively (but temporarily, though) disintegrated and the state power has lost its governance in the territory of an urban village. "This is an action

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[251]See Tao Dongfeng & Zhou Xian (eds.), *Cultural Studies* (Vol. 10), Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2010.

art performed by the weak to challenge the venue controlled by the powerful. It is also the true social meaning of the spatial resistance."[252] Thus, an urban village is used by the powerful as a tool of power manipulation and by the weak as an arm of strategic resistance. An urban village and illegal construction within co-create an arena for power games.

3. **The Study of the Consumption Space**

Capital dominates the creation of a consumption space, to prioritize its commercial profits. However, the production of a consumption space may be more complicated, in which capital entangles with the state power, modernity and the masses' resistance. Many scholars have made in-depth analyses of this.

(I) **Disney-like Production of the Consumption Space**

The consumption space production usually makes good use of historical and cultural resources, such as "New World" city plaza in Shanghai, "1912" Pub Street in Nanjing and many other similar consumption spaces across China. For instance, "New World" city plaza in Shanghai is built on the old neighborhood with Shanghai-style residences known as *shikumen* (stone-gated multi-storeyed terrace buildings) and "1912" Pub Street in Nanjing sits in Xinjiekou Neighborhood built with architectural complexes from the Republic of China era.

In their article "The Moulding of the Urban Consumption Space in Space Production", Zhang Jingxiang and Deng Huayuan set out the reasons for the conversion of modern buildings with cultural significance [Translator's note: "Modern" is a vague term in Chinese history. The timeframe of the era often varies among historians. For the purpose of this book, it refers to the period between the mid-19th century and 1949, while "contemporary" is used for the period immediately following it], such as *shikumen* (stone-gated multi-storeyed terrace buildings) and architectural complexes from the Republic of China era. First of all, the modern period is not too remote for people alive today, many of whom still retain somewhat vivid memories of the lifestyle, ethos and other physical and cultural legacies from that time. Their ability to generate in people the mixed feelings of both distance and familiarity, and both nostalgia and curiosity makes for their biggest selling point in consumption spaces; that is, their so-called "situational value". Secondly, the old Shanghai, a potent symbol of Chinese living and culture before 1949, was almost synonymous with glamour, quality and style, exactly what the affluent urban consumers are looking for today. Developers are more than happy to capitalize on such middle-class tastes when planning out their commercial properties. Thirdly, in terms of the physical space of both architecture and cities, modern and contemporary buildings and areas tend to be reasonably well preserved in many cities. Because existing laws and regulations for the protection of cultural relics and historic cities contain no clear provisions on the protection and use of

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[252]Li Zhiming, *Space, Power and Resistance: The Spatial Politics of Illegal Construction in Urban Villages* (Nanjing: Southeast University Press, 2009), pp. 125–126.

these structures and entities, few concrete restrictions are placed on either functional retrofit on their interior or landscape reconstruction on their exterior, giving developers considerable freedom to decide what or how to develop. Moreover, the blend of Western and Chinese styles often found in buildings from the old days in "opened-up" port cities well echoes the dual efforts today of adapting to globalization while at the same time maintaining local characters. Functional revitalization of modern urban buildings and quarters is thus widely believed to work the best for reshaping a city's urban and cultural landscape.[253]

As was indicated above, culture (e.g. modern culture) has played a key role in the production of consumption spaces. However, it is no longer the historical culture in its original face; instead, it is a modified symbolic one. According to Zhang Jingxiang and Deng Huayuan, people get fascinated not by *shikumen* or architectural complexes from the Republic of China era, but by the sentiment, petty-bourgeois lifestyle and even "old romance" under literary men's pens, behind those physical buildings. Or rather to say, those buildings are actually symbols of nostalgia. Nostalgia, as a new consuming object, links people's memories and the reality ("Yesterday and Tomorrow Have a Date Today"—"New World" city plaza) and is further materialized into various commercial spaces, stimulating people's desire of consumption, so that people feel temporarily freed from everyday mess, "ascending into a ritualized sacred space of joys" and walking into a surreal land of pleasure in the public urban space. Capital and culture (mined and shaped by commercial capital on purpose) "make a perfect match" in the urban space and a city becomes a surreal "Disney-like space" intertwining cultural scenes and exotic landscapes.

In addition to the culture from the era of the Republic of China, globalized scenes are also found in the production of a Disney-like space, thus an integral part of nostalgia. Be it "New World" in Shanghai or "1912" Pub Street in Nanjing, exotic restaurants, pubs, boutiques, cinemas, fitness centers and galleries with French, American, British, Italian and Japanese features seem to be everywhere in Chinese cities. Pubs and bars in Shanghai have foreigners as their target consumers from the very beginning, thus are particularly known for being exotic. Nevertheless, those pubs and bars prioritize sentiments and styles over food and beverage quality.[254] The pub street on Hengshan Road in Shanghai, known as "the Champs Elysees in the East", "cannot demonstrate more evidently how much a consumption space cherishes the memories of and is infatuated with exotic scenes and styles. A desire to be part of 'globalization' is simply too strong to be ignored."[255] The globalized trend of fashion and consumption dominates the production of new urban spaces and trendy followers become the target customers of the production of new urban spaces.

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[253]Tao Dongfeng & Zhou Xian (eds.), *Cultural Studies* (Vol. 10) (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2010), pp. 28–229.

[254]Bao Yaming et al., *Bars in Shanghai: Space, Consumption and Imagination* (Nanjing: Jiangsu People's Publishing House, 2001), p. 54.

[255]Ibid., pp. 82–84.

The local/regional culture and globalized cultural scenes stand side by side, blend or "are pasted together" in space production in a postmodern manner, illusory, unreal, one-dimensional, shallow and ahistorical. Exotic styles in bars and pubs are fabricated and dislocated in the reality of Shanghai. People enjoy a sense of satisfaction, mentally or culturally, in such a fabricated atmosphere.[256] Therefore, the production of a consumption space is never the production of material objects. It produces illusions. Food is not the only goods consumed in such a space.

(II) **Resistance from Nostalgia and the Significance**

Then, why consumers never feel fed up with these illusions? Why are they always ready to spend? Are the masses fully controlled in modern days? Pan Lv sees into the issues from the state-society angle and well examines the generation of nostalgia and the mass resistance hiding within: Nostalgia is not necessarily controlled. It is actually "a narrative of city life long oppressed by the state discourse."[257] "It is a new native way to reexpress local modernity… *Shikumen* stands out as a local expression of modernity."[258]

According to Pan, nostalgia is not a way of looking back into history; instead, it is resistance and something that helps locate the critical voice ignored in the national narrative in modern China.[259] Pan looks back into the history of Shanghai-style culture and how the urban space in Shanghai was shaped during Mao's era and the early days of the reform and opening-up. The author sees *shikumen* in Shanghai as a typically local interpretation of the Western modernity: The design combining a traditional Chinese courtyard with a British-style terrace house crystallizes Shanghainese wisdom out of everyday life. *Shikumen* is an architectural icon of modernity of Shanghai as a metropolis.

Shanghai was seen as the most corrupt city in China when Mao's era began. In a counter-urban discourse, the old-day banks, high-rises, department stores, theaters and cinemas, theme parks, apartments and *shikumen* experienced enormous subversion physically and symbolically. In the early days of the reform and opening-up, Shanghai remained left out in the cold and saw a slow development. The city began to fast develop in the "modernization" stage from the 1990s onwards, thanks to favorable policies. "*Shikumen* looked old, shabby, outdated and out of place in a blueprint of the 'modern' development, thus must be demolished."[260] This action was a natural consequence of the long-existing counter-urban discourse, due to which *shikumen* had long been in unreasonably excessive use,

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[256]Ibid., p. 54.

[257]Pan Lv, "Reinterpretation of Political Nostalgia in Shanghai: Memories, Modernity and Urban Space" in Tao Dongfeng & Zhou Xian (eds.), *Cultural Studies* (Vol. 15) (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2013), p. 180.

[258]Tao Dongfeng & Zhou Xian (eds.), *Cultural Studies* (Vol. 15) (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2013), p. 186.

[259]Ibid., p. 180.

[260]Ibid., p. 186.

densely populated and without properly-installed sanitary facilities. As time flew by, *shikumen* gradually lost its value and local residents' life deteriorated.

Against such a background, the reconstruction project of *shikumen* into "New World" city plaza was warmly received by citizens (as was indicated by the author's survey). The advocates of this reconstruction project found their memories of the past well preserved and saw a sharp contrast to the shabby *shikumen* in old days. "'New World' or nostalgia in *shikumen* pursues the freshness the Western modernity has brought to locals and is a natural response to the counter-urban discourse permeating Shanghai. It is nostalgia to the local modernity." This nostalgia "frantically desires to retain the past and demonstrate the power, and in the meantime, pursues an alternative or resistant discourse."[261]

Thus, consumption culture is not necessarily controlling, false or unreal. "Consumption culture may be a way to disenchant history and heal some wounds in memories, the wounds from historical trauma and oppressed expressions. The consumption of a nostalgic space is usually boosted by certain counter-memories, even though such memories may be unconscious or politically ambiguous. In Shanghai's case, the trauma of its oppressed urbanity seems to be consoled in the re-emerging consumerist waves and related narratives."[262] The author well examines how complicated consumption culture is and inspires us to think more about modernity and its nostalgia.

4. The Study of the Public Space

The public space is an integral part of the urban space in a city, including streets and roads, plazas and squares, parks, greenbelts, hubs and natural corridors.[263] Streets and roads, plazas and squares, as well as parks are the most important ones. Public urban spaces in contemporary (and modern) China has gone through a zigzag road of development.[264] This section, however, will leave the history of public urban spaces aside and focus on the functions and production mechanism of public spaces in China.

(I) Parks: the Public Space as the Symbol of Modernity

Parks, as an important public space in a city,[265] "create an open space for leisure and social contacts and stand as an icon of the modern urban life, including

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[261]Ibid., pp. 190–191.

[262]Ibid., p. 192.

[263]The public urban space may be categorized in different ways. See Wan Suchun et al. (eds.), *Forms of Urban Space*, Beijing: Science Press, 2004.

[264]Zhou Bo, "A History of the Public Urban Space: A Study of the Changing Public Urban Space in China in the Second Half of the 20th Century", a doctoral dissertation, Sichuan University (Chengdu), 2005.

[265]As for the history of parks in China, see Li Deying, "Public Urban Space and Social Life: A Case Study of City Parks in Modern China", *Urban History Research* (Vols. 19–20), Tianjin: Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences Press, 2000.

everyday schedule, leisure, lifestyle and the imagination of modern city planning and modern citizens."[266] In this sense, parks are a symbol of the modern urban civilization. Many scholars have investigated the generation of parks and its significance in modern China. In general, parks "were introduced to China as something of the Western modernity" during the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China era: First, the state power got involved in the design and planning of parks, indicating that the modern power went into the microscopic level and everyday life. Secondly, parks became the hub of modern cultures and civilizations. Chen Yunxi, in her "Sun Yat-sen Parks as a Symbol of Modernity",[267] examines the modern features of Sun Yat-sen Parks shown in space production.

According to Chen Yunxi, there were no public spaces in the true sense in ancient China. Thus, parks were the first modern public space in China. Sun Yat-sen Parks emerged in large numbers nationwide in the era of the Republic of China, indicating the expanding state power and culturally-significant ideology: (1) Sun Yat-sen Parks were in a large number and with the same name across China; (2) Those parks were usually located in important urban areas, with some right on the central axis of a city. Sun Yat-sen was portrayed into a national icon widely accepted and recognized by the entire population.

In addition, a Sun Yat-sen Park evidently features deliberately-designed symbolic architectural structures, such as the portrait of and memorial hall, monument and memorial pavilion to Sun Yat-sen. In a Sun Yat-sen Park, one always finds a Pavilion of Democracy and a Pavilion to Sun Yat-sen, as well as a copper or stone statue of Sun Yat-sen in the center of the park. The base of the statue is engraved with Sun Yat-sen's will. Be it a portrait or statue of Sun Yat-sen, it is an effective way to intensify Sun Yat-sen's image as an icon. Many people, the grassroots in particular, gain their first and most direct impression of Sun by paying their respect to such a statue. Furthermore, the KMT authority endeavored to represent and integrate "the Three Principles of the People" [Translator's note: Nationalism, Democracy, the People's Livelihood] in the space of a Sun Yat-sen Park, so that the people may have a direct idea of Sun Yat-sun's thoughts by paying a visit to the park. The public were supposed to "get moralized" in this way. Thus, the national ideology was fully represented in a subtle manner in the deliberately-designed layout of a Sun Yat-sen Park. Such a park "was a symbol of a modern state and nation"[268] and "mirrored modernity of China",[269] reflecting a wish to establish a totally new nation state.

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[266]Lin Zheng, "From the Imperial Gardens to Parks: the Development of the Public Space in Beijing in the Early Republic of China Era" in Tao Dongfeng & Zhou Xian (eds.), *Cultural Studies* (Vol. 15), p. 124.

[267]Tao Dongfeng & Zhou Xian (eds.), *Cultural Studies* (Vol. 10), Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2010.

[268]Tao Dongfeng & Zhou Xian (eds.), *Cultural Studies* (Vol. 10) (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2010), p. 143.

[269]Ibid., p. 153.

A Sun Yat-sen Park was a modern thing, also because of its role in promoting modern cultures and civilizations. One found well-facilitated basketball/tennis courts in Sun Yat-sen Parks, thanks to which the people may build good bodies and minds. Those facilities may be the materialized wish for a strong nation desired by Chinese in the national crisis in modern days. Moreover, Chinese people had a dream back then to catch up with and surpass Western countries. Therefore, the Western knowledge systems and cultures were warmly applauded and followed. A park then became the place where the Western knowledge was spread and promoted to more people. Parks were under the administration of the Ministry of Education in the Republic of China era and served as the organs of social education. A Sun Yat-sen Park, maybe small in size, accommodated libraries, zoos, museums and public education centers and were turned into the space for popular education. The in-park institutions were themselves a way to enhance the people's idea of different subjects and the public awareness. The cultural relics, exhibits, books, newspapers and periodicals housed in those institutions played a key role in spreading the modern sciences, civilizations and knowledge. Thus, the public education centers in Sun Yat-sen Parks played an active role in mass education.

Sun Yat-sen Parks emerged in large numbers nationwide in the Republic of China era when the country as a modern nation state got reunified and institutionalized. These parks well demonstrated modernity in China back then. The Chinese nation endured foreign invasion and oppression for too long a time in modern days, thus was more than eager to go out of the national crisis and establish an independent and strong nation state. The nation strived to realize this goal by following the modern Western civilizations under the spirit of enlightenment. Also, modernity of enlightenment in China was best seen in the Chinese nation's instrumental rationality under the impacts of the theory of evolution. Modernity was clearly represented in the layout of Sun Yat-sen Parks that served as a political and national disciplinary tool in the people's everyday life. Those parks marked the birth of modernity with Chinese characteristics.[270]

(II) The State- and Capital-dominated Production of the Public Space

The production of a public space in modern China has been dominated by the state and capital, the two of which usually make use of each other for their benefits. In the state- and capital-dominated public space production in modern China, the public benefits from a public space are usually taken as an excuse.

Zheng Yong illustrates the history of a town's central square in his master's thesis "Rise and Fall of 'Square'",[271] depicting how the state political power and the market capital dominated the production and changes of a public square.

The square in Zheng's article is located at the central area of the Yanhu Town in the southwestern part of Shandong Province. It used to be an opening where local

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[270]Hu Junxiu & Li Yongjun, "Public Urban Space and Civil Life in Modern China: A Case Study of Sun Yat-sen Park in Hankou (1929–1949)", *Gansu Social Sciences*, 2009 (1).

[271]A master's thesis, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, 2010.

peasants winnowed and dried grain and piled up wheat straws and cornstalks before 1949. The local government built a theater in the west of the square in the early days of the People's Republic of China when collectivization was launched, so that locals might gather for various meetings. Also, the local government set up its offices in the Zhous' Residence at the northwestern corner of the square. Thus, the square took a more important position in the town and its political significance grew stronger accordingly.

The reform of the political structure was started in the Yanhu Town in May 1984 and the local government moved out of the Zhous' Residence. The square began to lose its political significance as well. As rural bazaars flourished in the country and the local aquaculture kept developing in the Yanhu Town, the square turned into a venue for economic activities.

The square couldn't accommodate the rapidly-expanding bazaar any more in the middle and late 1990s and the bazaar was gradually moved to the central street in the town. The square bazaar declined. Later, the theater was shut down and new public spaces, such as television and Internet, emerged and replaced the square. The square declined rapidly. The town's government made an overall reconstruction and renovation planning around 2009 for the public spaces in the town, the square included. However, the planning was never well materialized, as too many interest parties got involved.

The state power and the economic capital have always dominated the production and development of public spaces, as was shown in the history of a town's public square. This principle is also applicable to today's urban planning. However, many researchers of urban planning focus more on the complicated relationships and games between various powers, particularly the resistance of non-governmental forces against the political power, in urban planning and space production. In actuality, three powers get involved in the space production concerning urban planning, namely the government, developers and the public. The three parties have various conflicts and confrontations, as their demands for public spaces differ. The government pursues political gains, developers economic profits and the public more leisure space, better life and a sense of satisfaction.[272]

Xu Jiangang and others make a critical analysis of the extension project of the western part of Hankou Road in Nanjing in *Urban Transportation Engineering and Spatial and Social Relations*. In their analysis, we see how the state politics and the capital dominate the public space production and how the public, as a third party in the urban space planning, resist the government-dominated urban planning and space production. The government finds it an effective way of relieving the traffic pressure and congestion to extend Hankou Road westwards. However, the authors see little effects of the project; to the contrary, they think that the project results in quite a number of consequences, economically, socially and environmentally. The removal and construction costs of the project are huge. In addition, the project may

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[272]"The Cultural Expression in the Space Design of a Theme Park in the Vision of Consumerism", *Jiangxi Social Sciences*, 2012 (9).

lead to social inequality. The tunnel in the project is largely built with automobile driveways and only few people or only government officials would be benefited. Also, widened automobile lanes must occupy bicycle lanes and side pavements. The interest of cyclists and pedestrians is thus harmed. Moreover, the eastern end of the project is already plagued with air pollution. When automobiles queue up at the portal, the tail gas density is 10-plus times that in a normal road section. With the project completed, the new crossing will be another worst-hit area of traffic accidents and pollution.

The authors attach even more significance to the project's cultural implications, in addition to the aforementioned economic, social and environmental ones. The extended part of the road would go through the historical and cultural area covering four universities, Nanjing University included, and surrounding communities. The project would produce immeasurable negative impacts on this area and the city's sustainable development.

The authors illustrate the century-old historical and cultural area covering Southeast University, Hohai University, Nanjing University and Nanjing Normal University. The area is like a signature of Nanjing and the key cultural resources of the city. Therefore, the east-west area should be well preserved in the urban planning and remain as the city's cultural and spiritual center and icon. It shouldn't be cut into pieces. The project of extending Hankou Road westwards wouldn't relieve the traffic congestion. Furthermore, it would leave negative economic, social, environmental and cultural impacts and generate huge costs. And its negative implications on the city's sustainable development would be hardly removed.

Zhou Jiwu echoes Xu Jiangang by writing "A Reflection on the Urban Planning" and highlights the dominant role the state power and capital play in space production. According to Zhou, the development of urban space is "a power- and capital-dominated economic development pattern", which produces both innovative fruits and negative impacts. Due to those negative impacts, the economic and social goals promised by the urban planning may fail, while the people would feel unsatisfied, worried and afraid. However, the interest parties concern about their benefits in spatial development and are afraid that they would lose the space-related memories and status symbol in the ever-accelerating space production. Thus, the capital- and power-dominated and spatial profit-oriented economic development pattern is more questioned by "folk communities" day by day.

(III) The Public Space and the Public Sphere

Public spaces are usually related to Habermas's public sphere that is a political-cultural concept referring to public spaces both as physical carriers and virtual spaces like the Internet. A physical public space may be the political or cultural public sphere where people hold meetings, speeches and political discussions to express their political opinions. Such a place is known as the political public space. Or, the public sphere is a physical space for leisure and open to all the people. One finds both types in modern China, particularly the latter type. Shi

Mingzheng, Li Deying and Xiong Yuezhi examine the political activities held in the parks in Beijing and Chengdu and in Zhang's Garden in the late Qing Dynasty.[273]

There had been no public spaces where the people could have open discussions of political issues in China before the early 20th century. Politicians back then usually held secret meetings in their own houses or in quite few public places (such as restaurants and brothels as the best choices). The situation changed with parks. Social organizations and political forces preferred to hold meetings, propaganda activities and public mobilization campaigns in parks where the atmosphere was comparatively carefree and more people were attracted. For example, during the Railway Protection Movement in May 1911, the citizens of Chengdu gathered in Shaocheng Park, to resist the nationalization of the railway and safeguard China's sovereignty over its own railways. This movement was the herald of the Revolution of 1911. The Chinese Beiyang Government yielded to Japan and signed the unequal *Twenty-one Demands* with Japan in 1915. More than 300,000 people in Beijing went to the Central Park to protest.

According to Xiong Yuezhi, Zhang's Garden was an important public space in Shanghai in the late Qing Dynasty and served as the venue for various gatherings and speeches open to the public. The notice to such an activity was usually put up beforehand, to invite more people to attend. Zhang's Garden was a tourist attraction at the time. A gathering held there would thus always be a hot topic.

Xiong Yuezhi points out, however, that a public space like Zhang's Garden was never something native or natural to the Chinese society. It neither grew out of a traditional Chinese garden or theater or teahouse, nor was introduced from the West. A public space like Zhang's Garden took shape for various reasons. First of all, Chinese intellectuals traditionally were eager to get involved in politics and took the world as their duty. They held discussions in teahouses and brothels. Secondly, Western thoughts and practices, such as freedom of speech, gatherings and speeches and circular telegrams, would later turn into street politics. Concessions in Shanghai played a special role here. A concession on China's land enjoyed quite a number of extraterritorial rights and was like a crack leaving profound impacts on the unified country. Concessions became a weak point in the governance of the Qing court and the anti-government forces accumulated their power in this political space.

Thus, those at the bottom of society in China had no say to a public space. It was the state power that gave, willingly or being forced, a public space to the people. According to some scholars, two issues must receive enough attention when modern city parks as a new public space are talked about under the public sphere

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[273]See Shi Mingzheng, "From the Imperial Gardens to Parks: Changes in the Urban Space in Beijing in the Early 20th Century", *Urban History Research*, 2005 (23); Li Deying, "Social Conflicts in a Park: A Case Study of City Parks in Modern Chengdu", *Historical Review*, 2003 (1); Li Deying, "Public Urban Space and Social Life: A Case Study of City Parks in Modern China", *Urban History Research* (Vols. 19–20), Tianjin: Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences Press, 2000; Xiong Yuezhi, "Opening of Private Gardens in Shanghai and the Expanding Public Space in the Late Qing Dynasty", *Academic Monthly*, 1998 (8); and Xiong Yuezhi, "Zhang's Garden: A Case Study of the Public Space in Shanghai in the Late Qing Dynasty", *Archives and History*, 1996 (6).

theory: First, whether a city park is a public sphere in Habermas's theory depends upon if the park serves as a venue where the public express their opinions and talk about public affairs. Not all the political activities conducted in a city park represent the expression of the public opinions. The discussions held in a city park about an organization's internal affairs are not the public opinions, either. More in-depth studies are needed. Secondly, the criteria mentioned above for a city park are applicable to the public urban spaces in the entire city; that is, whether the public urban spaces are truly for the public to express their opinions depends upon the specific historical context, instead of the spaces themselves. Therefore, city parks and even public urban spaces in modern China should be examined in specific contexts, with the complicated background of the public space production in China taken into consideration.[274]

As was shown in this section, public spaces in modern China have been usually in cracks, be it a crack in the center of the national political power or a crack between the state and capital. It's been evident in the history of public spaces in modern China.

Citizens enjoy their leisure time in a public space. A field survey conducted on Taihu Square shows that citizens largely take a walk, accompany their children and enjoy the cool on the square.[275] Thus, public spaces in China are mostly "something physical"[276] closely related to people's everyday life, like the situations in public spaces in Beijing, Chengdu and Zhang's Garden mentioned above. The recreational and leisure activities may form distinct cultural patterns (e.g. teahouses), thanks to people's contacts and dialogs. Nevertheless, such activities play a role in promoting communication between people.[277]

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[274]Dai Yifeng, "Diversified Perspectives and Different Interpretations: the Public Urban Space around City Parks in Modern China", *Social Sciences*, 2011 (6).

[275]Tian Zhunjun et al., "A Study of Leisure Behaviors of People on a City Square: A Case Study of Taihu Square in Wuxi", *Human Geography*, 2009 (3).

[276]Dai Yifeng, "Diversified Perspectives and Different Interpretations: the Public Urban Space around City Parks in Modern China", *Social Sciences*, 2011 (6).

[277]Wu Congping, "The Changing Public Space and Everyday Urban Life: A Case Study of Teahouse in Modern Nanjing", *Journal of University of Science and Technology Beijing*, 2009 (3); Liu Shilin, "Citizen Squares and the Cultural Production in Urban Space", *Gansu Social Sciences*, 2008 (3); Hu Junxiu & Li Yongjun, "Public Urban Space and Civil Life in Modern China: A Case Study of Sun Yat-sen Park in Hankou (1929–1949)", *Gansu Social Sciences*, 2009 (1).

Chapter 3
Analysis of the System

1 Cultural Studies and the Reflection on Literary Theory

The Chinese academic circles made deeper reflections on the Chinese literary theory (or the study of literature and arts) during the late 1990s and the early 21st century, as post-modernism and Cultural Studies (the discussion of "Aestheticization of Everyday Life",[1] in particular) rose in China. Chinese literary theorists began to make reflections on a number of issues, including the expansion of literary theory, literary aesthetics and autonomy, and the relationship between literary theory (intellectuals included) and reality. This chapter investigates these issues one by one.

1. On the Expansion of Literary Theory

The expansion of literary theory generated from Cultural Studies occupies an important position in the disciplinary reflection. Be it called "expansion", "boundary-overstepping" or "extension" of literary theory, it refers to that of objects of literary studies; i.e. literary studies has expanded from literary classics to popular literature and further to mass culture with literary connotations. Attitudes toward this issue vary. Advocates and opponents both have their own standpoints and reasons.

(I) "Aestheticization of Everyday Life" and the Expansion of Literary Theory

"Aestheticization of Everyday Life" first entered into discussion, as an independent topic, as early as in 2000. Tao Dongfeng published "Aestheticization of Everyday

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[1]"Aestheticization of Everyday Life" may be an independent topic. However, it came into vision in China when Cultural Studies rose in the country. Therefore, we see it as an integral part of Cultural Studies in modern China. As for the discussion of "Aestheticization of Everyday Life", see Chapter XIII in Tao Dongfeng (ed.), *Literary Thoughts and Cultural Topics in Modern China*, Beijing: Peking University Press, 2008 and Chapter XXIII in Tao Dongfeng and He Lei, *A Critical Study of Contemporary Chinese Literary and Cultural Theories (1949–2009)*, Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 2011.

Life and the Rising of Cultural Studies: About the Reflections of Literature and Arts" among others on the reflection of literary theory in *Zhejiang Social Sciences* in 2002. Tao has been the first scholar who examines "Aestheticization of Everyday Life" and how literary theory should deal with the issue in the academic context of mainland China. According to Tao, aestheticization of everyday life and aesthetic activities in everyday life have left profound impacts on literature and arts and on the production, communication and consumption of culture and even redefined "literature" and "arts". Literary theory would wither and dry up when it couldn't establish a positive constructive relationship with everyday life or the public sphere, if it evades aestheticization of or widespread aesthetics in everyday life, only confined to literary classics, or if it always sees the features of literary classics as the eternal "laws". Tao Dongfeng evidently advocates the expansion of objects of literary studies. The closed theory of literary autonomy may be the major obstacle to the timely interactions between literary theory and ever-changing literary/art/aesthetic activities. Literary autonomy theory is incapable of explaining how modern literary/art activities have changed, particularly how culture and art have been marketized and commercialized and how literary/art/aesthetic activities have permeated everyday life. Furthermore, the autonomy theory leads literary theory to a narrower way, so that aesthetic and cultural phenomena in everyday life (e.g. popular songs, advertisements and fashion trends etc.) are deliberately ignored and left outside the field of literary theory (To the contrary, advertisements, popular songs and even Walkman have long been important objects of Cultural Studies in the West). Thus, it is necessary to advocate the expansion of literary theory, to break down the closed theory of literary autonomy.

The discipline of literary theory of Capital Normal University held a symposium on "Aestheticization of Everyday Life and the Reflection on Literary Theory" in November 2003 in Beijing. In the same year, *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*) editorial board organized in the sixth issue a discussion titled "Literary Theory on Life in the New Century". These two activities were the landmark of aestheticization of everyday life as an academic topic. The discussion organized by *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*) editorial board included eight articles, including Tao Dongfeng's "Aestheticization of Everyday Life and New-media Intellectuals" and Wang Desheng's "Vision and Pleasant Sensation: the Aesthetic Facts in Our Everyday Life". The topic of "Aestheticization of Everyday Life" arousing recent widespread debate in aesthetics and literary theory circles in the Chinese mainland came into people's vision.

The debate has been focused on two issues. First is about "new principles of aesthetics". The representative articles on this issue include Lu Shuyuan's "The Rise of the So-called 'New Principles of Aesthetics': the Value Issue of 'Aestheticization of Everyday Life'" (*Wenyi Zhengming* [*Debates in Literature and Arts*], 2004 [3]) and "Value Selection and Aesthetic Ideas: A Second Thought on 'Aestheticization of Everyday Life'" (*Wenyi Zhengming* [*Debates in Literature and Arts*], 2004 [5]) and

Wang Desheng's "A Defend of 'New Principles of Aesthetics': A Reply to Prof. Lu Shuyuan" (*Wenyi Zhengming* [*Debates in Literature and Arts*], 2004 [5]).[2]

A second issue is concerning the boundary of literary theory. Chen Xiaoming, Gao Xiaokang, Cao Weidong, Tao Dongfeng and some others published articles in *Literature & Art Studies*, 2004 (1) under the title "Reflections on Literary Theory". Tao Dongfeng in his "Aestheticization of Everyday Life and the Reconstruction of Literary Sociology" points out that "Aestheticization of Everyday Life" has broken up the boundary between aesthetics and life and challenged the idea of literary autonomy, so that the paradigms of literary theory of the 1980s were confronted. Tao also states that what literary theory should do is to reconstruct the connection between literary theory and social life and create new literary-social paradigms. Chen Xiaoming in "After the Fractures and Re-bridging of History: A Reflection on Modern Literature and Arts" and Cao Weidong in "Identity Discourse and Reflections of Literature and Arts" criticize essentialism and scientism in modern Chinese literary theory, holding that the reconstruction of literary theory in modern China should boost the development of "literary public sphere" in the country. In the meantime, they suggest critical theory be introduced into literary theory, so that social contexts and literature may get well integrated. The above-mentioned authors, on the whole, have a second thought on the existing literary theory and hold a negative attitude toward the essentialist mentality in it. In spite of their varying ideas on how to reconstruct literary theory, those scholars make their reflections on literary theory from the angle of social and cultural transition, as well as from the standpoint of intellectuals, and see literary theory as a modern event or place literary theory in the context of contemporary culture.

In a word, advocates of "Aestheticization of Everyday Life" have spared no efforts to establish new methodology and academic paradigms of literary theory, shaking the foundation of the traditional aesthetic studies.

(II) **Cultural Studies and the Theory of "Moving Boundaries"**

Cultural Studies-advocating scholars usually hold a positive and supportive attitude toward the expansion of the boundary of literary studies. In their opinions, it is right thanks to a clearer and deeper understanding and reflection of literature as an independent discipline that the boundary of literary theory comes into discussion. Tao Dongfeng is a representative figure in this field. In his "Moving Boundaries and the Openness of Literary Theory" (*Literary Review*, 2004 [6]), Tao talks about the early-day academic activities of the Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies

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[2]About the discussions of "Aestheticization of Everyday Life" in aesthetics, see Ai Xiumei, "Textual Research of 'Aestheticization of Everyday Life'", *Journal of School of Chinese Language and Culture, Nanjing Normal University*, 2004 (3); Sang Nong, "The Value Issue in the Debates of 'Aestheticization of Everyday Life': A Defend of 'New Principles of Aesthetics'", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 2006 (3); Ling Jiyao, "A Reflection on the Studies of 'Aestheticization of Everyday Life", *Journal of Southeast University* (Philosophy and Social Science), 2007 (6); and Pang Zengyu and Li Yueting, "Theory and Practice: A Critical Study of 'Aestheticization of Everyday Life'", *Social Science Front*), 2006 (4).

(CCCS) in the UK and the history of literary theory in China, stating that neither the boundaries, objects and methodologies, nor the concepts of "literature" and "arts", remain unchanged all the time; instead, they keep changing and moving. They are never something "objective" or concrete waiting to be discovered. They are the constructs of interweaving social and cultural powers. "Literature" has been defined and redefined, as social and cultural contexts keep changing. So has been the boundary of literary theory. Moving boundaries are seen across social sciences. Thus, the modern Chinese literary theory has to keep an eye on new forms of cultural/art activities in everyday life and makes timely adjustments to its objects and methodologies.

Jin Yuanpu has roughly the same idea and points out in "Moving Boundaries of Modern Literature and Arts" (*Hebei Academic Journal*, 2004 [4]) that "the cultural turn" in modern literary studies has been a natural result of historical and modern-day developments, as well as that of the internal development of literature. Literature has never been with a fixed boundary in history. Liberal arts as an independent discipline hadn't been in existence until the 18th century when the modern higher education was established. Also, literary genres and types have never remained unchanged. Literary boundaries have kept changing and moving. New literary genres, such as movie literature, television literature, Internet literature and advertising literature, as well as marginal styles like popular literature, pop songs (lyrics) and various leisure literature/arts, have long been included into literary studies. Jin Yuanpu published later "Advancing with a Second Thought on History" (*Social Science Front*, 2005 [1]) and "A Reconstructed Narration: A Reflection on Literature and Arts in Modern Days" (*Literature & Art Studies*, 2005 [7]), reiterating, in a more methodological and in-depth manner, that the boundary of literature has kept changing and moving in history.

Other scholars, such as Xu Liang,[3] Chen Xiaoming[4] and Yu Hong[5] have talked about the expansion of literary boundary[6] as well, holding somehow similar positive views on the cultural turn in literary studies.

In a word, in Cultural Studies, the expansion of literary theory is an objective existence and a way to promote the development of literary theory. Nonetheless, is literary theory entitled to expanding in an unchecked manner, to include whatever

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[3]See Wu Wenwei, "A Summary of the Symposium on Chinese Literary Theories 1949–1999", *Literary Review*, 2000 (4).

[4]Chen Xiaoming, "Is Literature Disappearing or a Ghost?", *Questions* (Vol. 1), Beijing: Central Compilation & Translation Press, 2003.

[5]Yu Hong, "Death of Literature and Sprawling of Literariness", *Literature & Art Studies*, 2002 (6).

[6]However, opinions vary on to what extent literary studies should expand. Those differences are left out in this section, as they are not the key issues. See Ouyang Youquan, "Expanding Boundary of Literature and Arts and Shifting Origin of Literary Theory", *Journal of Langfang Teachers' University*, 2007 (4); Ouyang Youquan, "Paradigms, Boundary and Media of Literary Studies", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 2011 (7); Jin Yuanpu, "A Reconstructed Narration: A Reflection on Literature and Arts in Modern Days", *Literature & Art Studies*, 2005 (7); and Yang Ling, "On the Paradigms Turning from Literary Studies to Cultural Studies", *Journal of Capital Normal University* (Social Sciences Edition), 2008 (5).

as it wishes? According to Jin Yuanpu, the expansion of literary studies is never a full "Aestheticization of Everyday Life". Cultural Studies only focuses on how to deal with issues in the current social context. Thanks to its critical thinking, Cultural Studies questions and even negates. It keeps highly alert to "the aesthetic hollow" in "the pleasant-looking feast" in the modern world and mercilessly criticizes "the absence of aesthetics" and "aesthetic injustice" in an institutionalized society. Cultural Studies calls for "leaving a piece of fallow land for aesthetics". And that's a basic idea of the modern cultural turn.[7] Scholars, Tao Dongfeng included, who have been concerned about "Aestheticization of Everyday Life" see eye to eye on this issue. Thus, the expansion of literary theory is never something "to enclose more land". Instead, it deals with how to review literary theory as an independent discipline and how to revaluate the relationship between literary theory (and intellectuals) and reality. These issues are covered in the debates concerning Cultural Studies.

(III) Doubts and Criticism of the Expansion of Literary Studies

Skepticism about and criticism of the expansion of the scope of the subject matter of literary studies focus on "Aestheticization of Everyday Life". Qian Zhongwen and Tong Qingbing are the main proponents of this view. While they have little sympathy for such expansionist position, they do not deny that the boundary of literature is always shifting. Tong Qingbing's argument is made from anaesthetic point of view. According to him, "Aestheticization of Everyday Life" or aesthetic activities in everyday life discussed in Cultural Studies, cannot arouse people's emotional vibrations or make them smile a hearty smile or shed true tears. Therefore, "Aestheticization of Everyday Life" is an untrue statement at all. While traditional literature is alive and active, study of literature and arts cannot turn its focus from what is alive with vitality to "Aestheticization of Everyday Life".[8] "New aesthetics" generated from "Aestheticization of Everyday Life" is nothing more than "profiteers' aesthetics". To include "Aestheticization of Everyday Life" into the studies of literary theory is actually trumpeting "the end of literature". Tong believes that literary theory will never shift from literature to "Aestheticization of Everyday Life", no matter how it changes with the ever-changing facts, issues and activities.

Some scholars hold similar views as Tong Qingbing does. For example, Zhu Liyuan and some others point out that the aesthetic prescriptiveness, boundary and scope of literature never disappear or dissolve, despite an enlarged literary landscape emerging with new literary phenomena in modern days; that is, literature is still something independent, with the boundary remaining clearly seen between it and everyday life. Thus, contemporary literary theory should keep its autonomy

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[7]Jin Yuanpu, "A Reconstructed Narration: A Reflection on Literature and Arts in Modern Days", *Literature & Art Studies*, 2005 (7).

[8]Tong Qingbing, "'Aestheticization of Everyday Life' and 'Boundary Overstepping' of Literature and Arts", *The Journal of Humanities*, 2004 (5).

around literature, rather than to expand infinitely.[9] Also, some think it's like to put the cart before the horse to replace literary studies with Cultural Studies.[10] Some critics have even gone further to draw a clear boundary between "Aestheticization of Everyday Life" and the study of literature and arts, holding that the two are in totally different disciplinary systems: The former is an issue of "life aesthetics" and "cultural aesthetics", while the latter focuses on literature, making theoretical reflections on literature. The two are thus entirely different in nature. It is hardly possible to relieve the crisis the modern Chinese literary theory faces by using the West-imported theories of Cultural Studies. What's more, this may lead literary theory deeper into a mess of generalization, so that literary theory finally loses its legitimacy as an independent discipline. Literature may fade out from the vision, as Cultural Studies keeps encroaching upon it.[11]

In a word, a basic theory of questioning the expansion of literary studies goes like this: The aesthetic connotation of literature may expand, as aesthetic activities are conducted in more ways. However, literature remains within its own clearly-defined boundary, in a firm, independent and even self-sufficient manner. Study of literature and arts will never expand into non-literary or non-aesthetic domain of life, no matter to what extent it expands. Nonetheless, quite a number of scholars question and criticize this aesthetics-oriented view that doubts the "expansion" of the study of literature and arts from the angle of literary autonomy. The debate over literary aesthetics was thus aroused.

(IV) A Complementary View of Literary Studies and Cultural Studies

In addition to the aforementioned opposite ideas, there is a third one holding that literary studies and Cultural Studies, as two different academic methodologies, can co-exist in a complementary manner, as is highlighted in "Literary Studies and Cultural Studies" (*The Journal of Humanities*, 2004 [5]) authored by Lu Yang. According to Lu, literary studies and Cultural Studies are totally different things. The former has, no doubt, its own boundary. This boundary has been and continues to be in existence. The boundary between literary studies and Cultural Studies remains open and overlapping. Lu states that literature is undeniably marginalized. But this marginalization doesn't necessarily mean the decline of literature. Literary studies concerns about heart and soul. It has reasons to stand firm on its ground, rather than making enemies or losing confidence pointlessly. Cultural Studies is rising. Be it something beloved or not, it gains momentum and vitality by seeing into contemporary societies. Despite arising interdisciplinary studies, a more commonly-seen practice is the expansion of traditional disciplines, by including so-called "others", such as studies of women, homosexuality, ethnic groups, movies

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[9]Zhu Liyuan & Zhang Cheng, "The Boundary of Literature Is the Boundary of Literature and Arts", *Academic Monthly*, 2005 (2).

[10]Hao Chunyan, "Moving Boundaries and Battle Fields of Literature and Arts", *Eastern Forum*, 2005 (4).

[11]Hu Youfeng, "Literary Theory: Current Crisis and Countermeasures", *Social Sciences in Guangdong*, 2008 (6).

and visual culture, so that those "others" are translated into popular theories and reduced to nothing powerful enough to threaten the traditional disciplines. In this way, the generalized idea of "culture" in Cultural Studies serves as nothing more than a venue where "others" are assimilated or transformed into a form accepted by the dominant culture. Thus, Cultural Studies is never something dreadful even to literary studies. Lu Yang finds a new approach to literary studies and Cultural Studies, so that the entanglements between the two are largely removed or cut off. Thanks to Lu's findings, the two may learn from and complement each other. Any deliberate confusion of the two plays no active role in solving the problem or promoting the development of theories.[12]

In a word, the debate over the expansion of the study of literature and arts isn't as simple as a boundary issue; instead, it concerns about how to rediscover literature and literary theory in a postmodern context. The theory has crystallized as something physical, i.e. *General Issues in Literary Theory* (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2004 [1st edition], 2005 [2nd edition], 2007 [3rd edition] and 2012 [4th edition]) edited by Tao Dongfeng. In this textbook, the theories and methodologies of Cultural Studies are introduced and integrated into literary theory. It is a landmark of the new era of literary theory textbooks. The author illustrates what literature and arts look like when literary and art activities keep changing in production, spreading and consumption. In the contrast, according to the author, the college courses of literature and arts (general study of literature and arts included, to a large extent) seem to stand outside literary/art activities in the current society, thus is incapable of explaining the tremendous changes in literary and art production and spreading and in the masses' cultural consumption from the 1990s onwards. The college courses of literature and arts have to be reformed.[13]

2. **On Literary Aesthetics/Autonomy**

(I) **The Debate over Literary "Aesthetics"**

"Aestheticization of Everyday Life" got doubted in the 1980s when literary theory established a discourse as setting up and applying its aesthetics and literariness as an independent discipline. Autonomy of aesthetics was accordingly produced in the tension between arts and everyday life, as "aesthetics" required the due attention from the subject and stood right on the opposite of the real life. In addition, this emotional experience of transcendence was, in a sense, seen as a way to fully achieve one's subjectivity. "Aesthetics" was evidently seen as a golden path to fulfill the personal values beyond any social restraints in the cultural context in the 1980s. As an independent discipline, literary theory had its own demands and established a cultural and philosophical discourse concerning the self, individuality,

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[12]See also Lu Yang, "A Reiteration of Cultural Studies", *Wenyi Zhengming* (*Debates in Literature and Arts*), 2010 (17); Wang Fengzhen, "Relationship Between Cultural Studies and Literary Studies", *The Frontier of Literature*, 2000 (1).

[13]Tao Dongfeng, "A Reflection on College Courses of Literature and Arts", *Literary Review*, 2001 (5).

human nature, unconsciousness, freedom and universality. That reflected the trend of "modernity" in academics back then. However, even though the study of literature and arts seemed to detach itself from society aesthetically, it fully accepted aesthetics as a taste and accomplishment and advocated to enhance an individual's personality via arts.[14] In fact, "transcendence" of aesthetics meant a social intervention in an "aesthetic" way.

The academic circles used to unanimously make critical reflections when they tried to resist "political" privileges. However, "aesthetics" began to split up in the 1990s. From then on, literature and arts have diversified and witnessed more possibilities. Mass culture has permeated everyday life, while consumption and lifestyle have been personalized in an aesthetic manner. With aestheticization progressing socially and culturally, some scholars continued to see aesthetics as something transcendental in the halo of divinity. In the meantime, the literature/society binary structure hidden in aesthetic discourse gradually took root and in later research and discussions, mass consumption replaced "politics" as the pole opposite "aesthetics" (i.e. a binary structure of aesthetics vs. mass consumption culture). Some other researchers attached unprecedented importance to the individuality and worldliness of aesthetics. Accordingly, the focus on the aesthetics-related issues in mass consumption culture was not about whether consumption culture led to moral bankruptcy or whether literary autonomy was necessarily a unified mindset. Instead, the discourse concerning "Aestheticization of Everyday Life and reflection on the study of literature and arts" was examined, regardless of what values or standpoints the debate participants were holding. A subject was examined on his/her understanding of "aesthetics", "literariness" and "Aestheticization of Everyday Life". Also, the research tried to find how the ideas took shape and what the significance of the changes was. A truly critical thinking was in need, to go beyond the academic restraints in the debate over "Aestheticization of Everyday Life" and literary theory.

(II) The Debate over Independence and Self-containedness of Literature

This issue is closely related to the above one. As was discussed above, "Aestheticization of Everyday Life" and Cultural Studies have gone beyond the aesthetic connotation in the traditional sense. The universal fact of aestheticization has received the due attention. Research objects have been retargeted, methodologies enriched and new paradigms of literary-social studies established. Those who doubt or criticize Cultural Studies and cultural criticism are largely aestheticism advocates. They thus naturally see literature as something independent, self-contained and even closed. In their opinions, Cultural Studies and cultural criticism basically deviate from literature. What that group follows is "dichotomy" first put forth by British and American New Critics and later popular with Chinese scholars in the 1980s. In the mindset of "dichotomy", Cultural Studies is "an

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[14]Wang Yuanxiang, "Culturalism and Aestheticism in Theories of Literature and Arts", *Literature & Art Studies*, 2005 (4).

external thing" opposite "the internal research". Some even see Cultural Studies as a resurgence of criticism of vulgar sociology. According to those people, Cultural Studies has deviated from the "aesthetic" nature of literature and detached itself from literature itself. Some others hold a milder opinion that cultural criticism, despite its existence, can never replace literary criticism, particularly the aesthetic/internal study of literature.

For instance, an interview was published in *Nanfang Wentan* (*Literary Circles of the South*, 1999 [4]), under the title "Q&A about Criticisms Today". The first question was "Why literary criticism is turning to cultural criticism? Do you think literary criticism will go back to literature?" To this question, many scholars saw cultural criticism as "something external" opposite "the internal criticism" or as sociological criticism opposite aesthetic criticism. And they hoped to see literary criticism would one day go back to "literature". For example, "…Cultural criticism is in nature an external research. From the angle of critical thinking, it may be no different from the previous sociological criticism. Therefore, cultural criticism remains as a threat to pollute literature by imposing excessive 'significance' and 'symbols' on literature" (quoted from Wu Yiqin); or "The 'field' of literary criticism is basically literature… Thus, I don't want to see too many critics be obsessed with 'culture', 'thought' or 'mentality' and get lost there" (quoted from Shi Zhanjun). Such opinions were not uncommon. Evidently, those critics stood firm with the idea of aesthetic/art autonomy popular in the 1980s and relied on Russian formalism and British and American New Criticism popular back then.

Yan Jingming and Wu Xuan's ideas were quite typical ones. Yan Jingming pointed out that, "Literary criticism saw few academic norms in the 1990s when literary critics active in the 1980s began to turn to numerous topics. Those topics were, however, generalized ones for literature. Critics shifted their foci onto diversified yet more generalized cultural issues." Yan questioned discussions of humanism and post-modernity, "To what extent are those academic views concerning literary criticism?" According to him, both "deviate from literature in their goals". And those deviated criticism were seen as "cultural criticism". While in the so-called "cultural criticism", literary works were fiddled by critics as "tiny circumstantial evidence". Yan called literary criticism to turn back to "what it is" and "textual interpretation", as "it may be the only way for literary criticism not to be an accessory to or drowned in cultural criticism." Here, Yan still based his argument on the idea that literary criticism and cultural criticism were totally different things and the former remained the only one for "literature itself". Nonetheless, what does "literature itself" truly mean? Is there "literature itself" in a generalized and essentialist sense regardless of historical contexts? This question remains for pondering as the prerequisite, instead of the object, of the discussion.

Wu Xuan listed "five problems" of cultural criticism in his article. The first went as "the erosive impacts of cultural criticism on the modern independence of literature". According to Wu, "'Independence of literature' satisfies the demand of 'human independence' in cultural modernization and is a logic development from 'being human-oriented' to 'text-oriented'. Culture boosts literature in this way. Also in this way, New Culture began to shake off 'its traditional duty to convey truth'

and seek independence. It was a revolution in the long-established relationship between literature and culture. In the past century, Chinese scholars have either advocated 'art for art's sake' and 'freedom of creation', by following the West for the independence of literariness and literary forms, or revealed weakness of art and dislocation in culture, by borrowing 'literature's subjectivity' and 'art form-in-itself' from the modern Western ideas of independence of literature. In this way, literature was no longer a political or cultural instrument. Furthermore, it is possible to examine the significance of the modern independence of Chinese literature." However, Wu found the modern process in literature impeded by Cultural Studies, "Cultural criticism has removed its focus from literature itself. What's worse, many scholars take it for granted cultural criticism is 'literary criticism of the day'." In Wu's opinions, therefore, cultural criticism is a non-modern or counter-modern form of literary criticism, as it "paid no attention to literature itself anymore." Wu Xuan's train of thoughts went like this: Literary autonomy lies in modernity or modernization of literature. Anything violating this "equation" goes against the reason of modernization.

Some scholar over-reacted to this issue, holding that cultural criticism is never compatible to literary theory or literary criticism. Cultural criticism is a deviation from literary studies, instead of a development of the latter, and may result in irreparable hurt to literary studies, to some extent. According to this scholar, cultural criticism stands as a threat to literary studies, as it sees literature as an ordinary cultural phenomenon and examines the ideology and socio-political functions of the latter; but this neglects the fundamental differences between literature and the other cultural forms and nullifies the foundation literary theory and literary criticism rely on. That's why that scholar saw it a senseless measure to take cultural criticism as an effective dose to help literary theory out of the mire.[15]

Another scholar called to "save literary criticism out",[16] according to whom, cultural criticism does nothing more than "textural research of culture" and fully ignores its duty of "aesthetic judgement". Therefore, "literariness" of literature is nearly gobbled up into "culturalness" of literature, and critics lose accordingly their professionalism. In this scholar's opinion, literary criticism is changing into a form of cultural criticism and losing its own features, as it pays much more attention to "culturalness" of literary works than to their "literariness". He asserted a very likely death of literary criticism with this trend going on. Therefore, he called to "save literary criticism out".

Scholars doubtful about Cultural Studies criticize the discipline, under the banner of aestheticism. According to them, literary studies is prohibited from infinite expansion, in case it wouldn't be an aesthetic thing. It is also due to aestheticism that literature should stand clear off Cultural Studies. Accordingly,

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[15]Su Hongbin, "Arising of Cultural Studies and the Future of Literary Theories", *Literature & Art Studies*, 2005 (9).

[16]Lu Wenbin, "Save Literary Criticism Out: To Lead It Back to Literature", *Wenyi Zhengming (Debates in Literature and Arts)*, 1998 (1).

Cultural Studies is useless to the development of literary studies; rather, it impedes and even gobbles up the independence and self-containedness of literature. Then, what does "aestheticism" mean indeed? And how should we see it? Aestheticism takes a central place in the confrontation between Cultural Studies and literary studies.

3. On the Involvement of Literary Studies (and Intellectuals) in Reality[17]

(I) Literary Theory and the Construction of Public Spheres

Thanks to Cultural Studies, literary studies has embraced a wider field of research and a new mode of thinking. Furthermore, literary studies stands in a changed relationship to public spheres, so that it pays closer attention and makes keener responses to reality, with a critical thinking. It gets involved more in reality, so that it is able to have a penetrating analysis of more changes in literary activities in the contemporary and better explore the social and cultural mechanisms behind the changes. In his "Challenges from Interdisciplinary Cultural Studies to Literary Theory" (*Social Science Front*, 2002 [3]), Tao Dongfeng states that Cultural Studies would help literary studies get critically involved in public and social issues. According to Tao, Cultural Studies, as a discipline with continuous self-reflection and self-deconstruction, adopts a critical language and tries to find out the history-sensitive interest-power mechanism behind the disciplinary structure and explain how the latter produces and legitimizes a dominant culture. Literary studies should review and resist any political, economic and academic interests in the established disciplines and faculties. Those interests usually well hide in the specific discipline-based patterns of knowledge acquisition and in the assessment system for scientific truths and aesthetic value. In Tao's opinion, it is easily seen in China's college education of liberal arts how disciplinization has deprived teachers and students of their critical thinking. For instance, literary theory textbooks mostly tend to be essentialist about the nature of literature. Cultural Studies resists, however, such a tendency and strives to deconstruct things. It asks us to get rid of any ahistorical and non-contextual disciplinary practice and heightens cultural and intellectual production in a historical, local and practical context. Essentialism has always been an enemy of Cultural Studies.

Tao Dongfeng further points out that experts in different disciplines fail to connect their expertise with public spheres, due to the ever-deteriorating disciplinary disintegration. To gain stronger disciplinary expertise, experts in a specific discipline usually focus on and are specialized in certain related issues, thus unavoidably stand alone away from any cultural debates in public spheres. However, in the perspective of Cultural Studies, literary studies is in essence a type of critical Cultural Studies and a way of liberation inseparable from public spheres.

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[17]The debate over this topic is not that fierce, as the academic circles basically reach an agreement that literary studies and intellectuals should be actively involved in and make response to reality. This section mainly reviews the ideas of scholars of Cultural Studies, such as Tao Dongfeng.

Intellectuals, scholars of literary studies included, actually play their roles in society and culture politically (in a broad socio-political sense, rather than the narrow partisan politics). It is crucial to reconstruct intellectuals' role inside and outside universities and colleges. Literary critics may voluntarily enter into key discussions of cultural value and integrate them into their academic research. Literary critics in today's China should particularly pay attention to newly-emerging cultural forms and practices (such as mass culture) closely related to everyday life and make an objective analysis, instead of a moody one, of their impacts on people's mentalities. Voices from literary critics should go out of classrooms and be heard in public spheres.

Cultural Studies has facilitated literary studies with a wider field of research. And what's more, it has brought the latter to a new standpoint with a new perspective of reality. "(Thanks to Cultural Studies) Literary theory has become a passage via literary studies to social criticism".[18] Literary studies has been turned into a public discourse once again,[19] rather than to indulge in self-admiration for its autonomy.

Scholars of Cultural Studies have reached a unanimous agreement that literary studies should be turned into a public discourse responsive to reality once again. Many write to criticize the tendency of essentialism and scientism in disciplines of literature and arts in modern China, such as Chen Xiaoming in "After the Fractures and Re-bridging of History: A Reflection on Modern Literature and Arts" and Cao Weidong in "Identity Discourse and Reflections of Literature and Arts".[20] In "From Cultural Criticism Back to Academic Research", Gao Xiaokang examines unchecked cultural criticism nowadays, pointing out that it is wrong to replace serious academic approaches with an emotional cultural radicalism. Nonetheless, Gao says at the same time that the pedantic style of writing detached from public spheres should be got rid of. However, to achieve this goal, "public intellectuals' sense of social responsibility and public standpoint doesn't simply mean the public opinions; it's more important to conduct intellectual explorations based on practical concerns and academic justice".[21] On the whole, the abovementioned articles tend to rethink about the established disciplinary structure of literature and arts and hold a negative view of the essentialist thinking. Despite their varying ideas of how to reconstruct literary theory, those authors review literary theory from a wider

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[18]Li Chunqing, "Literary Theory Building in the Context of Cultural Studies", *Seeking Truth*, 2004 (6).

[19]Huang Zhuoyue, "From Cultural Studies to Literary Studies: Issues to Be Reclarified", *Seeking Truth*, 2004 (6).

[20]See both articles in *Literature & Art Studies*, 2004 (1).

[21]See Tao Dongfeng, "Aestheticization of Everyday Life and the Reconstruction of Literary Sociology"; Chen Xiaoming, "After the Fractures and Re-bridging of History: A Reflection on Modern Literature and Arts"; Cao Weidong, "Identity Discourse and Reflections of Literature and Arts"; and Gao Xiaokang, "From Cultural Criticism Back to Academic Research", *Literature & Art Studies*, 2004 (1).

perspective, i.e. to see literary theory as a modern event or place it in the modern cultural context, from the angle of socio-cultural transition and intellectuals' standpoint.

(II) **The Reconstruction of the Political Lens of Literary Theory**

It is an important way of reconstructing the public sphere of literary theory to reconstruct the political lens of literary theory. A political perspective of Chinese literary theory particularly targets and is of great practical significance to the development of literary theory in modern China. Tao Dongfeng and other scholars of Cultural Studies have made in-depth reflections on literary theory in modern China in a political perspective. Tao has well investigated this issue in two articles "Reiterated Political Lens of Literary Theory" (*Literature & Art Studies*, 2006 [10]) and "Literary Theory: Why and What" (*Literature & Art Studies*, 2010 [9])[22] and in two monographs.[23]

In the aforementioned articles and monographs, Tao reexamines, in the "political" perspective in Cultural Studies, the necessity and possibility of reconstructing the political lens of literary theory. Tao finds that Chinese literary theorists have widely accepted the opposition between autonomy and political nature of literary theory. A unanimous agreement goes that only non-political literary theory could be autonomous. Tao holds that the widely-accepted idea sees "politics" and the relationship between literary theory and politics in a limited sense, misinterpreting "politics" of a specific period and in a specific context as the generalized one and further misreading the relationship between literary theory and politics of a specific period and in a specific context as the normal state. Tao Dongfeng quotes renowned Western cultural theorists (such as Eagleton and Bourdieu) and political theorists (such as Arendt and Havel) and points out that "politics" in Cultural Studies isn't the general partisan politics. It refers to the omnipresent fight between domination and anti-domination and that between hegemony and counter-hegemony. It is an interrelation between academic research (researchers themselves included) and the social context (public spheres). No research of humanities is spared from the influence or impacts from the environment it sits in (which is filled with varieties of material interests, political stands and cultural concepts). Thus, any academic research of humanities rooted in social reality, the study of literature and arts included, can hardly evade "politics" in Cultural Studies.

Therefore, Tao states that as literature and literary studies both feature an innate political nature and so does public concern-based literature and literary theory, the indiscriminate negation of literature's political nature or the encouragement of non-political literary theory would lead the study of literature and arts to somewhere

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[22]Also see "The Reconstruction of the Political Lens of Literary Theories", *Wenyi Zhengming (Debates in Literature and Arts)*, 2008 (1); and "On the Public Sphere and Publicness of Literature", *Wenyi Zhengming (Debates in Literature and Arts)*, 2009 (5).

[23]*The Public's Literary Theories: The Reconstruction of Political Criticism*, Fuzhou: Fujian Education Press, 2008; *Literary Theory and Public Discourse*, Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 2012.

the public is fully neglected, so that literature and literary theory fail to respond to key issues in everyday life and lose the capability in social and cultural discussions. Being non-political and non-public heralds a crisis in literary theory production in modern days. However, the state matches the political apathy permeating the entire society and mirrors a specific political situation. In the three decades prior to the day when China launched the reform and opening-up policy, particularly during the "Cultural Revolution", literary and art activities lost independence and autonomy due to the monopoly of the state power. There was no true-sense public sphere in literature. Later, as the reform and opening-up keeps progressing and economy boosts in China, social and economic spheres have well expanded into the political public sphere and public spheres have been transformed, so that the social life, cultural life included, tend to be non-political, widely and worse. According to Tao, the economic concern around material well-being has, to quite an extent, replaced the political public concern in the 1980s. Economic concern then becomes "the top political priority". Political apathy permeates the entire society when people's zeal for consumption soars to unprecedented heights. Any efforts on fulfilling civic duties would be evidently seen as a waste of time and energy when an economic concern-based philosophy of life wins and looks at nothing else except success and failure in the struggle for survival. Against this background, the intellectual production in humanities and social sciences, literary theory included, witnesses two trends. Literary theory tends to be pragmatic and even kitsch. It serves material and cultural consumption, interpreting and defending "somaesthetics" and "life aesthetics" that follows the principle "I consume, therefore I am". Thus, private things that in nature have nothing to do with the public get exposed to the public (for example, gossips and tidbits of celebrities are in essence something in the private sphere, but such information and news now tend to dominate the mass media), as is proved by the fast development of culture industry and agents in universities, colleges and institutes across the country. On the other hand, literary theory tends to be like a hollow décor or a piece on display in the museum/ivory tower. Scholars, who are unwilling to get critically involved in key public issues or to please the world with their knowledge of literature and arts, usually ride on this "specialized" road. Enormously different, the two trends are both non-political.

Tao Dongfeng points out that, the reconstruction of the political lens of literary theory is the only way to relieve the crisis the field is facing. The politics in Tao's statement isn't, no doubt, in the sense of "serving politics" during the "Cultural Revolution"; instead, it refers to autonomy in public spheres.

(III)   **Literary Theory Towards Constructionism**

In his "Literary Theory: Why and What" (*Literature & Art Studies*, 2010 [9]), Tao Dongfeng makes a deeper pondering over the development of literary theory and stresses the theory's reflective feature. Tao strongly advocates establishing the constructionist literary theory.

Tao Dongfeng finds that as post-modernity, structuralism and post-structuralism and Cultural Studies were introduced into China, reflections on literary theory have taken momentum. "Reflection" has been the most frequently-seen word in articles

and conferences on the study of literature and arts in recent years. According to Bourdieu, "reflection" refers to the reflexive thoughts on the existing theories and knowledge; i.e. thoughts on the person who speaks and thinks. Reflections on literary theory mean self-consciousness of literary theory. The traditional essentialist literary theory is non-reflective and sees literature as an entity independent of the researcher's activities of construction; and there is only one "correct" or "incorrect" reflection of the entity. The constructionist literary theory never holds the assumption of mysterious entity of "literature"-in-itself. It wants to know how people construct "literature". The reflexive expression of literary theory fully demonstrates the unprecedented self-consciousness the study of literature and arts has acquired. Under the reflective literary theory, as literature is something constructed, instead of an entity, constructions concerning literature and its nature follow no absolute criteria in the traditional sense of epistemology, since those "criteria" themselves are and could be only constructed, unable to free themselves from the entanglements of history, society, culture and power.

Tao further stresses the necessity and importance of starting from constructionism further to dialogism: Dialogs are necessary, there is no absolute or only "truth" about literature; instead, literature is expressed in various discourses, none of which is the absolute truth. Any construction of "the truth" has its limitations; otherwise, dialogs are not necessary. We need dialogs, as we cannot find the physical nature of literature. Dialogs concerning literary theory follow the democratic principles of cultural talks, in case a literary theory capitalizes on some non-academic factors and declares itself to be "the absolute truth". In such a case, the other literary theories would be deprived of their discursive power and tagged as fallacies. In this sense, it is wrong to assert that "literary theory is dead". What's dead is the self-enclosed essentialist literary theory. The reflective constructionist literary theory won't die. "Many shout that 'Literature's dead' or 'Literary theory's dead'. But in actuality, that's the transition of literature and literary theory." This transition is something precious Cultural Studies has endowed the reflections on literary theory.

2 Cultural Studies: Between Institutionalization and Disciplinization

Chinese scholars engaged in Cultural Studies widely agree that Cultural Studies is an anti-institutionalized intellectual and academic field. However, the authors of this book find it an issue open to further discussion, considering China's present academic atmosphere and situation of institutions of Cultural Studies. Theoretically, Cultural Studies may not be called a discipline. Practically, however, intellectual exploring activities have to be conducted in a proper lebensraum, even if they are the so-called nondisciplinary ones. As social and non-governmental organizations are far from well-established in the Chinese mainland, institutions of Cultural

Studies (institutes and research centers, for example) have been set up under the administration of universities, colleges or governmental institutions. Therefore, Cultural Studies cannot be entirely free from being institutionalized. Nonetheless, institutionalization doesn't necessarily mean disciplinization. Nondisciplinary and anti-disciplinary Cultural Studies doesn't have to detach itself from the institutional structure or even universities and colleges. In an atmosphere of institutionalized academic research, it is impossible to conduct Cultural Studies, institution-based activities in particular, totally independent of universities or colleges.

1. Institutionalization and Disciplinization

Institutionalization doesn't necessarily mean disciplinization, even though the two are closely interrelated indeed. A modern university is basically established on and run under a discipline-based college-department structure. Let's take humanities as an example. From 1949 (when the People's Republic of China was founded) onwards, a university in China usually had departments of philosophy, history and Chinese language and literature. At the turn of the century, university administrations largely tended to reorganize departments into colleges. In many schools, the departments of philosophy, history and Chinese language and literature were merged into "the college of humanities/liberal arts". However, the three departments remained in existence and separate operation within the college. The institutionalization issue of Cultural Studies thus culminates in the relationship between Cultural Studies and the discipline: Is Cultural Studies a discipline? Does it need to be included into a disciplinary structure?

It is commonly accepted that Cultural Studies is an interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary and even anti-disciplinary academic field. As is indicated by the three adjectives, Cultural Studies isn't a discipline in the strict sense, even though it is indeed closely interrelated with many other disciplines, such as literature, sociology, philosophy, political science, history, communication, anthropology and economics. Cultural Studies is vividly called as "an interdisciplinary science"[24] or "something between institutionalization and disciplinization".[25] Scholars of Cultural Studies have unanimously doubted, criticized and even condemned placing Cultural Studies under the disciplinary structure, as Cultural Studies may be weakened and finally lose the capability of getting involved in and criticizing reality. In this way, Cultural Studies will be less of or not something for the public. These conclusions are drawn on the judgement that the present disciplinary structure is a rigid one with a power of assimilation.

According to Professor Zhou Xian, Cultural Studies sees no optimistic future in the present highly-disciplinized highly-institutionalized academic atmosphere, as

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[24]As for how to look at the position of Cultural Studies in the disciplinary structure, see Jin Yuanpu, "Cultural Studies: An Interdisciplinary Science", *Social Science Front*, 2005 (1); and Luo Gang & Meng Dengying, "Cultural Studies and Anti-scientific Knowledge Practice", *Literature & Art Studies*, 2002 (4).

[25]Tao Dongfeng, *Cultural Studies: the West and China* (Beijing: Beijing Normal University Press, 2002), p. 3.

highly-disciplinized Cultural Studies has lost its rebellious and subversive nature and become somewhat "tamed knowledge" conforming to the existing disciplinary structure and rules. Knowledge of Cultural Studies is taught in classrooms, published as textbooks, consolidated as a discipline, written into academic articles published in journals and transformed into the cultural capital in career promotion. "Anti-disciplinary" Cultural Studies is being disciplined by "the disciplinary structure" and reduced to the jargon for a small group of experts and scholars. Zhou Xian states, "Cultural Studies tries to subvert and rebel against the institutionalized and college-oriented conspiracy of power and knowledge. It strives to examine social and cultural realities in an unrestrained way." Cultural Studies retains its critical thinking only by way of standing clear off the disciplinized and institutionalized structure.[26]

Theoretically, Cultural Studies may not be called a discipline. Practically, however, intellectual exploring activities have to be conducted in a proper lebensraum, even if they are the so-called nondisciplinary ones. As researchers are inside the institutional system and social and non-governmental organizations are far from well-established in the Chinese mainland, institutions of Cultural Studies (institutes and research centers, for example) have been set up under the administration of universities, colleges or governmental institutions. Therefore, Cultural Studies cannot be entirely free from being institutionalized. It must be inside one institutional system or another, such as administrative, scientific research assessment, professional title appraisal and academic funding systems.

Nonetheless, institutionalization doesn't necessarily mean disciplinization. Nondisciplinary and anti-disciplinary Cultural Studies doesn't have to detach itself from the institutional structure or even universities and colleges. In an atmosphere of institutionalized academic research, it is impossible to conduct Cultural Studies, institution-based activities in particular, totally independent of universities or colleges. In a sense, quite a number of institutions of Cultural Studies have consciously (or reluctantly) chosen to attach themselves to the university system while keeping themselves off the regular disciplinary structure. In fact, there are alternatives for nondisciplinary institutions of Cultural Studies inside the university: Such an institution may enjoy financial and other supports from the university (e.g. offices and academic sources etc.), while being independent of any disciplinary restraints. The Birmingham (UK) Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham kept the university system at arm's length for quite a long time: It had the funding sources, research concept and way of working of its own, so that it somehow detached itself from the university and there was no undergraduate recruitment. Nevertheless, the center had to rely on the university, for the access to

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[26]Zhou Xian, "Cultural Studies: Why and How?", *Literature & Art Studies*, 2007 (6). However, Chinese scholars have mainly drawn inspirations from Western resources concerning the idea of anti-disciplinary or non-disciplinary Cultural Studies. Tao Dongfeng quotes Grossberg, During, Turner and Hall in his *Cultural Studies: the West and China*, stating that Cultural Studies that is not a discipline aims to rebel against the disciplinary structure. See Tao Dongfeng, *Cultural Studies: the West and China*, pp. 3–5.

various resources and postgraduate recruitment. Also, researchers of the center had to acquire their professional titles from the university's appraisal system. So is the situation in China.

In general, it needs to investigate the relationship between the existing university system and disciplinary structure (Is the disciplinary structure mummified?), to define the relationship between Cultural Studies and the university system. The academic circles should make more detailed analysis of those issues.

2. The Organizational System of Cultural Studies in China

Despite the overwhelming disapproval of institutionalized and disciplinized Cultural Studies, the research in this field, be it at home or abroad, has fully been dependent upon universities (as an institute of Cultural Studies is either run under a college or department or directly under the university, so that it enjoys supports in human resources and materials from the established system). Universities in China are nearly all in the institutional system; thus, Cultural Studies in universities has got institutionalized, to varying extents.

Institutionalized Cultural Studies is usually conducted within a corresponding educational institution, with related academic degrees set, periodicals published and research and teaching activities conducted. However, as was discussed above, a university-based institution doesn't necessarily mean the full institutionalization, particularly the complete disciplinization of Cultural Studies; that is, Cultural Studies doesn't necessarily lose its own standpoint or space, its critical thinking and public nature included, even if it is conducted in an institution, as shown in the following examples.

Example I Cultural Studies Workshop, Peking University
Dai Jinhua set up a "Cultural Studies Workshop" under the Institute of Comparative Literature and Culture, Peking University in October 1995. The workshop had a striking official title: "Cultural Studies Laboratory of the Institute of Comparative Literature and Culture, Peking University". Dai Jinhua described the workshop this way, "For me, the workshop is more of an academic space where I can share with my students my concerns of the society, than the beginning of the institutionalization of Cultural Studies as a new academic field." That is to say, Dai Jinhua didn't see this institute as a symbol of the institutionalization of Cultural Studies. It had no authorized staff or financial allocation or other government supports. The workshop bore no defined responsibilities or duties to the university, either. Dai further talked about the laboratory's standpoint, topic and methodology of Cultural Studies: It took mass culture or popular culture as its research object and focused on the social classes, gender and races in the social transition and reorganization in China. Their research tried to find an interpretation to the rich yet complicated culture of modern China via the way of social criticism.[27] However, the laboratory was run under the Institute of Comparative Literature and Culture, a

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[27]Dai Jinhua, "Postscript" in *Cultural Heroes: Cultural Studies at the Turn of the Century* (Nanjing: Jiangsu People's Publishing House, 2000), pp. 325–326.

university-based institute of Peking University that is a key government-run university in China. The institute thus could receive financial and other supports (such as venues, books and academic materials) from the university or the college.

The workshop was expanded in December 2008 into "the Center for Film and Cultural Studies". Film studies became an integral and more important part of the new center and "mutually reinforcing" with Cultural Studies: Film studies expanded its horizon and methodology by learning from Cultural Studies and the latter got closer to traditional disciplines thanks to the former.

Example II Urban Culture Center, Shanghai Normal University
Different from the Cultural Studies Workshop of Peking University, Urban Culture Center of Shanghai Normal University set up in September 1998[28] is a more typical thing of the institutional and disciplinary system of Cultural Studies in modern China. The center focuses on interdisciplinary studies of urban culture, particularly Shanghai culture and covers almost all the aspects of urban culture, including urban landscape, urban space, urban history, urban novels, urban life, comparison of cities and urban mass culture/cyberculture. As is indicated, urban culture is evidently an interdisciplinary field transcending traditional disciplines.[29] The center was listed by Ministry of Education in 2004 as a key research institute (of humanities and social sciences) of university. From then on, as a government-run institute, it has been receiving the constant financial support. In the meantime, the center has evidently been of a stronger institutionalized color and enjoyed a status unmatchable by the other institutes of the university. It features an independent authorized staff, a dedicated leadership (such a key research institute is usually on the division level and the institute's director enjoys a division-level rank) and an academic council. Different from an ordinary discipline-based college or department in the university, the center employs its staff members both from and outside the university and the members may be permanent or part-time. There are within the center three research directions and related laboratories, namely modern urban culture, comparative study of international urban cultures and history of urban culture. In addition, the center has some supporting facilities, including archives and offices in charge of book management, routine work and foreign exchange affairs. The center's *Urban Culture Studies* (with the sixth volume published so far) is an interdisciplinary publication of an institution: It is published by the university-based institute and different from a discipline-based journal.[30]

Example III Program in Cultural Studies, Shanghai University
Established on 1 July 2004, the Program in Cultural Studies (PCS) of Shanghai University's College of Liberal Arts is the first one of the kind titled with

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[28]Website: http://www.ucs.org.cn.

[29]See Sun Xun, "Urban Cultural Studies: A Global Frontier Discipline", *Guangming Daily*, 13 September 2005.

[30]Also see "Urban Culture Center of Shanghai Normal University", *Jiangxi Social Sciences*, 2005 (3).

"Program" in China. As is indicated by its name, the PCS differs from any "schools" or "departments" in the traditional sense and covers wider ranges. The program focuses on interdisciplinary academic studies and is a multidisciplinary research institute. In the meantime, it is an integral part of the university's and college's enrollment plan and offers courses for postgraduates and doctoral candidates (no enrollment of undergraduates for now). The PCS aims to bring up open-minded talents with critical thinking about modern Chinese culture. For instance, the program aims to train doctoral candidates, who have

1. A historical and global vision of society and culture;
2. An analytical insight of the complicated operation of the dominant cultural production;
3. An open-minded (not only the Western-style) and active thinking and language capability;
4. An intention and capability to promote a sound cultural development in the current situation; and
5. A perspective and confidence of good social and cultural future.[31]

Obviously, no discipline-based college or department (such as the college of liberal arts or department of Chinese language) is able to describe its objectives this way. One may have a better understanding of the relationship between Cultural Studies and the university/disciplinary system by examining a university-based educational/research institute like the PCS.

Professor Wang Xiaoming, the PCS's founder said that the program actually "forced itself into the existing university system".[32] Wang's words well illustrate the delicate situation Cultural Studies is in: Cultural Studies must manage to be a part of the university system, no matter how hard it is. According to Wang, being anti-institutionalized is one of the fundamental principles Cultural Studies follows. However, all important resources are controlled by various government-run institutions in present-day China. It is impossible for Cultural Studies to go on, without going into and relying on the existing university system (for channels and budgets etc.). That's why Wang Xiaoming established the PCS. Nonetheless, it doesn't necessarily mean to yield to the system or indiscriminately accept what the system, particularly the disciplinary system, sets for the program. Wang Xiaoming affirms the clearly-defined principle the PCS follows: Unlike "modern Chinese literature" as a major or discipline, Cultural Studies is an approach to culture and society and an academic vision unrestrained by any disciplines. Wang and his colleagues have made efforts in this field. First of all, the PCS doesn't enroll undergraduates. Instead, it offers undergraduates with electives and encourages students to select Cultural Studies courses with the methodological training of a certain discipline completed. Then, the PCS courses set for postgraduates and doctoral candidates are

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[31]The objectives of the postgraduate program are the same, except being less strict.

[32]Wang Xiaoming, "Three Headaches in Cultural Studies: A Case Study of Program in Cultural Studies in Shanghai University", *Journal of Shanghai University*, 2010 (1).

direction-based, rather than discipline-based ones. Those courses are offered under other established disciplines. Thirdly, the PCS has only a rather small permanent teaching staff, as the program tends to offer "interdisciplinary" courses. The Program Committee, the PCS's top authority consists of 11 members (the program's director included) from five other colleges/departments of the university, namely Department of Chinese Language and Literature, Sociology Department, Department of Film & Television Art, Department of Media Communications and School of Intellectual Property. Wang Xiaoming expects to prevent Cultural Studies from being disciplinized in the institutionalized teaching. Also, the PCS keeps promoting Cultural Studies outside the university and helping it into a broader society (for instance, the program organizes various seminars and symposiums on the current issues in modern China).

Despite all the aforementioned efforts, however, Wang Xiaoming still finds Cultural Studies in an awkward situation in the university system. Thus, Cultural Studies must, first of all, be an independent "discipline", to earn itself an independent space within a university. Therefore, Cultural Studies must have the research objects and theory and methodology unique to its own. In this sense, Cultural Studies is actually more than an approach.[33]

Example IV Institute for Cultural Studies, Capital Normal University
Institute for Cultural Studies (ICS for short),[34] Capital Normal University, established on 14 February 2012 is an institute approved and fully-funded by Beijing Municipal Party Committee and Government and run under the administration of Beijing Municipal Education Commission. It is designed to be an academic research institute and policy consultation organ co-organized by Capital Normal University and Beijing Municipal Party Committee. The ICS is thus a government-run institute.

As an institute based in Capital Normal University, the ICS is different from a research institute directly under the government (such as the Policy Research Office of the CPC Central Committee or Development Research Center of the State Council). It never leans back from its independent standpoint, in spite of its quasi-official status. The ICS follows its own principle, "The ICS is rooted in academic research and aims at the top design of the national culture. It focuses on the key theoretical and practical issues concerning the development of the national and Beijing culture and provides academic support and policy consultation for the government's strategic policy. The ICS strives to be an advanced scientific research institute as an academic and research think-tank." It is thus an institute both for academic research and policy consultation, as is demonstrated in its motto as well, "Academic oriented, public oriented, capital oriented, world oriented". It is first of all an academic- and public-oriented independent (compared with government-run

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[33]Wang Xiaoming, "Three Headaches in Cultural Studies: A Case Study of Program in Cultural Studies in Shanghai University", *Journal of Shanghai University*, 2010 (1).

[34]Website: http://www.bjcs.edu.cn/cn.

policy-making institutes) and public (compared with discipline-based institutes) research institute. The ICS distinguishes itself from other similar institutes for culture industry and public cultural services through its top priorities, "The ICS is dedicated to the study of the current leading cultural issues and makes timely responses to the latest cultural development in China and Beijing. The institute has an eye on the latest literary and art forms emerging with high-tech development in the social transition and keeps pace with the latest development of humanities and social sciences in the world." Furthermore, the ICS gets engaged in social affairs: "In addition to its academic research, the institute gets actively engaged in various cultural activities, particularly the experimental and creative folk literary and art practices. It strives to enrich its cultural experience in a direct way by getting engaged in urban cultural practices, to enliven and consolidate its academic research and policy consultation and make a dialectic complementary between social practice and academic research."[35]

3. **Admissions System for Cultural Studies**

Admissions system is an integral part of the university system. It is wise to examine the differences between the admissions system for Cultural Studies and that for a discipline-based college/department, to well understand the relationship between Cultural Studies and the university system.

The university system in China is discipline-based. Cultural Studies isn't listed among first-level disciplines in the List of Disciplines issued by Ministry of Education. It is usually treated as a second-level discipline (often under Chinese language and literature) or a research field under the second-level disciplines (usually modern literature or study of literature and arts). Such a setup may be a compromise between Cultural Studies and the disciplinary system when the authority lifts the restrictions on the setup of second-level disciplines and endows universities with the power of arranging research fields.[36] Cultural Studies is now set up as a second-level discipline in some universities. Cultural Studies set as a second-level discipline and related second-level disciplines were first registered with the National Office of Academic Degrees in 2002:

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[35]See the ICS's website: http://www.bjcs.edu.cn/cn.

[36]See documents issued by the National Office of Academic Degrees (NOAD) of the State Council and the General Office of Ministry of Education (MOE), such as *Opinions on the Autonomous Setup of Sub-disciplines and Specialties under the First-level Disciplines for Doctoral Degrees* (NOAD [2002] No. 47), *Circular on the Registration of the Autonomously-setup Sub-disciplines and Specialties under the First-level Disciplines for Doctoral Degrees* (NOAD [2002] No. 84), *Measures for the Setup and Management of Disciplines for Academic Degrees and Talent Raising*, *Regulations for the Autonomous Setup of Second-level Disciplines for Doctoral/Master's Degrees and Postgraduate Programs*, *Circular on the Autonomous Setup of Second-level Disciplines for Doctoral/Master's Degrees and Postgraduate Programs* (NOAD [2011] No. 12) and *Circular on the Autonomous Setup of Second-level Disciplines* (NOAD [Informal Letter] No. 20120301). Source: MOE's website: http://www.moe.gov.cn.

Year	University	First-level discipline	Newly-established Cultural Studies and related second-level discipline
2002	Sichuan University	Chinese Language & Literature	Cultural Criticism
2004	Shandong University	Chinese Language & Literature	Study of Aesthetic Culture
2004	Beijing Foreign Studies University	Foreign Language & Literature	Comparative Literature and Intercultural Studies
2005	Shanghai Normal University	Chinese Language & Literature	Study of Urban Culture
2006	Nanjing University	Chinese Language & Literature	Cultural Studies
2007	Capital Normal University	Chinese Language & Literature	Cultural Studies

A couple of universities have made specific admission arrangements for Cultural Studies as a second-level discipline or for related research fields

Capital Normal University: First doctoral candidates for Cultural Studies as a second-level discipline were enrolled in 2009 (registered as a second-level discipline at Ministry of Education in 2007) for two research fields, namely Cultural Studies and Cultural Poetics. Later, Cultural Poetics was cancelled, though. The doctoral candidates need to pass two specialized courses known as "Western Cultural Theories" and "Literary Thoughts and Cultural Topics in Modern China" (alternatively called "Western Cultural Studies Theories" and "Cultural Studies in Modern China", with no difference in nature, though). Master's degree hadn't been set up for Cultural Studies as a second-level discipline until 2013. Master's degree had been set up before that year only for the study of literature and arts as a second-level discipline.

   Program in Cultural Studies (PCS), Shanghai University: Since its establishment in 2004, the PCS has offered Cultural Studies courses for doctoral candidates from colleges/departments of Chinese language and literature, sociology and film and arts (while the doctoral candidates receive the degree for their original specialties). The program began to co-enroll with Department of Chinese Language and Literature postgraduates and doctoral candidates for Cultural Studies in 2010 and 2011, respectively. In 2013, the PCS created its own postgraduate and doctoral programs and set up two or three research fields for each program, namely "Analysis of Urban Culture and Everyday Life" and "Analysis of New Media Culture" for the postgraduate program and "Analysis of Urban Culture and Everyday Life", "Study of Chinese Revolution and Socialist Culture" and "Gender and Cultural Studies" for the doctoral program.

Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU): First doctoral candidates for Cultural Studies were enrolled in 2008. Under the second-level discipline "Comparative Literature & Cross-Cultural Studies" (established in 2004 and first doctoral candidates enrolled in 2008) there are two research fields, namely Western Literary Theories and Cultural Studies. The doctoral program focuses more on literary theories (which have had much in common with cultural theories since the late 20th century, though). Students may choose topics for their theses concerning Cultural Studies. However, Cultural Studies is not the academic focus. Candidates take two specialized tests in the entrance examination, namely "Modern Western Literary Theories" and "Modern Western Intellectual History", which well indicate the interdisciplinary program's focus on specialized disciplines. The School of Foreign Literature was founded in 2008, under which there are two master's programs, namely "British and American Literary Theories and Cultural Studies" and "Western Literary Theories and Cultural Studies" (with the former remaining open to master's degree from 2009 onwards).

In addition, Beijing Language and Culture University (BLCU) set up the master's program "Criticism and Cultural Studies" in 2004 and enrolled the first doctoral candidates for this program in 2006. "Literary Criticism" was established as a second-level discipline for both doctoral and master's degrees in Sichuan University in 2004. Under the discipline there are "Cultural Studies" and "Operation and Management of Culture Industry" programs. Nanjing University began to enroll doctoral candidates for "Western Aesthetics and Cultural Studies" in 2006. The program was renamed "Western Literary Theories and Cultural Studies" in 2008. A program titled "Cultural Studies" was set up in 2009 and cancelled and replaced with "Modern Cultural Studies" in 2013. There is also a master's program titled "Visual Culture".

In some universities where Cultural Studies isn't set up as an independent second-level discipline, it is set up as a research field under the second-level study of literature and arts, such as "Cultural Studies and Cultural Poetics" program led by Professor Jin Yuanpu of the School of Literary Studies, Renmin University and the doctoral program "Literary Theory and Cultural Studies"[37] set up in 2007 led by Professor Lu Yang, Fudan University.

As the related policy restraints were lifted and researchers tried to expand their academic research, Cultural Studies was set up as a second-level discipline (or a program under a second-level discipline). Nonetheless, the enrollment for Cultural Studies field has been inconstant, as Cultural Studies, be it an independent discipline or a sub-disciplinary program, was given different titles, and the setup was an irregular one. Thus, it remains a question whether Cultural Studies could finally be a well-established second-level discipline. Nevertheless, Cultural Studies has been

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[37]According to Professor Lu Yang, the program was set up in 2007. However, the program hadn't been found in the catalog of programs until 2008.

an integral part of the established second-level disciplines (for enrollment and curriculum arrangement).

4. **Dilemma and Breakthroughs of Cultural Studies Periodicals**

We may also examine the relationship between Cultural Studies and institutionalization by reviewing the publication of related periodicals. There are two impressive periodicals in Cultural Studies, namely *Cultural Studies* co-edited by Tao Dongfeng (from Capital Normal University) and his colleagues and *Refeng Xueshu* (*Hot Wind Academic*) co-edited by Wang Xiaoming (from the Program in Cultural Studies, Shanghai University) and his colleagues. Both periodicals have played a significant role in promoting the development of Cultural Studies. We may better understand the relationship between Cultural Studies and institutionalization by examining how the two periodicals make breakthroughs in the institutional dilemma they were in.

Cultural Studies was first published in June 2000 as the first Cultural Studies periodical in China. Tao Dongfeng the editor-in-chief stated the periodical's mission in the "Preface" of the first issue, "The periodical aims to introduce the Western Cultural Studies (including theorists, theories and schools) and promote the development of China's Cultural Studies".[38] Specifically speaking, "the periodical introduces the history of Cultural Studies in foreign countries, the latest outcomes and important theorists; publishes the translated Western classics of Cultural Studies; examines the cultural issues in modern China (e.g. mass culture, mass media and commonality, post-colonial criticism, national and cultural identity and ethnic politics, gender politics, Cultural Studies and reconstruction of humanities, and intellectuals' role etc.); reviews the spreading and application of the Western cultural theories in China; and investigates the relationship between the Western cultural theories and China's specific conditions." As is indicated in Tao's statement of the periodical's mission,[39] the periodical is different from ordinary journals of humanities and social sciences. The latter kind largely follows the traditional discipline-based arrangements, such as literature, history, philosophy, sociology and political science.

Cultural Studies has thrived and had an enormous influence after it was introduced to China. It became a new intellectual-theoretical growth point, in addition to the old disciplines of humanities and social sciences in the country. It was a timely thing to start an academic periodical like *Cultural Studies*. However, the periodical faced enormous difficulties, despite all sorts of good wishes and its great significance. The following table lists the publication of volumes 1–14 of *Cultural Studies* as of March 2013:

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[38]Tao Dongfeng et al. (eds.), "Preface" in *Cultural Studies* (Vol. I) (Tianjin: Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences Press, 2000), pp. 4–5.

[39]Ibid.

Vol.	Published by	Date of publication	Sponsored by	Funded by
1	Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences Press	June 2000	None	None
2	Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences Press	April 2001	None	None
3	Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences Press	January 2002	None	None
4	Central Compilation & Translation Press	August 2003	None	None
5	Guangxi Normal University Press	May 2005	None	None
6	Guangxi Normal University Press	October 2006	The Nanjing University Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences	None
7	Guangxi Normal University Press	October 2007	The Nanjing University Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences & School of Literature, Capital Normal University	None
8	Guangxi Normal University Press	December 2008	The Nanjing University Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences & School of Literature, Capital Normal University	None
9	Social Sciences Academic Press	April 2010	The Nanjing University Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences & School of Literature, Capital Normal University	Project 211 of Capital Normal University

(continued)

Vol.	Published by	Date of publication	Sponsored by	Funded by
10	Social Sciences Academic Press	October 2010	The Nanjing University Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences & School of Literature, Capital Normal University	Humanities Fund of Nanjing University
11	Social Sciences Academic Press	June 2011	School of Literature, Capital Normal University & The Nanjing University Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences	"CSSCI" "A CSSCI Journal" annotated on the front cover
12	Social Sciences Academic Press	May 2012	Institute for Cultural Studies, Capital Normal University & The Nanjing University Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences	A university journal co-funded by Capital Normal University and Nanjing University
13	Social Sciences Academic Press	March 2013	The Nanjing University Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences & Institute for Cultural Studies, Capital Normal University	Ditto
14	Social Sciences Academic Press	March 2013	Institute for Cultural Studies, Capital Normal University & The Nanjing University Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences	Ditto

As was shown in the above table, *Cultural Studies* experienced sorts of frustrating things in its publication. Fourteen volumes were published by four different publishing houses. One publishing house withdrew from the work after having published only one volume. Also, the volumes were published irregularly, as it was hard to get contribution arrangements well made in advance and there were too many publishing houses involved. For instance, nearly two years had passed before Volume 5 was published by a publisher different from that of Volume 4. The periodical wasn't published in 2004 at all. Volume 8 and Volume 9 were also published by different publishers and over one year passed between the publication of these two volumes. The periodical wasn't published in 2009, either. The periodical, originally supposed to be a semi-annual one, was actually published less than one volume a year on average. Moreover, the periodical was originally edited by Tao Dongfeng and some others interested in Cultural Studies, such as Prof. Jin Yuanpu and Mr. Gao Bingzhong, who all wanted to do something for Cultural

Studies. The periodical in that stage was more or less a personalized one. Later, the Nanjing University Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences was in charge of one volume. After that, the periodical was co-published by the Institute and School of Literature, Capital Normal University. Institute for Cultural Studies, Capital Normal University was established in 2012, since when the periodical has been co-published by the institute and the Nanjing University Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences. The organizational change was partly resulted from the academic cooperation: Mr. Zhou Xian, Director of the Nanjing University Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences has made accomplishments in Cultural Studies. His engagement has well enhanced the periodical's influence. Furthermore, the periodical began to receive a stronger financial support from its new sponsors from the publication of Volume 9. From then on, the periodical was published regularly. Two volumes were published that year (2010).

Cultural Studies has been always an outstanding academic journal, despite all the difficulties it met in publication. Tao Dongfeng the editor-in-chief has always put quality before quantity of the journal. The journal is a time-tested one of the kind, as was proved that *Cultural Studies* of 2008 became a CSSCI journal 2008–2009. What the journal experienced in its publication during all these years may be resulted from the institutional reasons. Academic journals in China are under the authority of the State Press and Publication Administration. An academic journal isn't authorized to be published as a journal, without having a registration number from the Administration. That is the situation *Cultural Studies* (and other university collections) are facing. The journal then has to be published as a book by publishing houses. However, an academic journal like *Cultural Studies* is never a market winner. Also, under the current academic appraisal system, it is profitless for scholars to publish an article in such an unofficial academic journal. Thus, such a journal seems to be unattractive both to a publishing house and contributors.

Cultural Studies as a collection had to find alternative ways of cooperation, as it couldn't get an official registration number, so that the financial source would be guaranteed (it would be terrible to change cooperation patterns or constantly look for unstable temporary funds). The journal has received a constant and ample financial aid from the institute and seen a regular publication since it became the journal of the ICS, Capital Normal University.

Nonetheless, an institution-based journal doesn't necessarily lose its independence in content or objective. In another word, it doesn't necessarily fall into a hired journal. In fact, *Cultural Studies* has been following its own mission and direction, be it a journal co-sponsored by the Nanjing University Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences and the School of Literature, Capital Normal University, or the ICS journal. The editors have never given up their independent standpoint or lowered the criteria for contributions. The journal has been never run like an ordinary discipline-based one, either. In all, 229 articles, including interviews, database and keywords, are published in Volumes 1–12, or 19 articles per volume on average. All the 12 volumes except the first issue are focused on different special topics, including visual culture, body consumption and politics,

mass communication, film and television (image), subculture, culture of fans and celebrities, gender, race, cultural institutions, spatial issues, discourse analysis, cultural memory, literature and culture, culture and power, as well as intellectuals (in commemoration of Habermas and Bourdieu). The special topics have covered almost all aspects of Cultural Studies and broken up the discipline-based rule followed by the official journals of humanities and social sciences in China (The discipline-based rule actually encourages the disciplinary segmentation. Disciplines compete with one another by trying to grasp larger spaces in a journal. As a result, they have to make compromises: An issue has to allocate a certain number of articles to each discipline. This is even more true for college/university journals.) *Cultural Studies Vol. 8* is devoted to adapting Cultural Studies to the Chinese context. "Chinese issues and perspectives in Cultural Studies" are among the topics discussed in the 16 articles featured in this issue.

Unlike *Cultural Studies*, which had been beset by a great many difficulties, *Refeng Xueshu* (*Hot Wind Academic*) and related "Hot Wind" series published by the Program in Cultural Studies (PCS), Shanghai University encountered few obscales in their publication process. The first volume of *Refeng Xueshu* (*Hot Wind Academic*) was published by Guangxi Normal University Press and the other five volumes were all published by Shanghai People's Publishing House. The journal has, since the publication of the third volume, received the fund from the Third Project for the Municipal Key Disciplines of Shanghai (Modern and Contemporary Chinese Literature). Actually, the operation and publication of the journal wouldn't be difficult, were there no such special fund from the project, as the ICS would be a strong support. *Refeng Xueshu* (*Hot Wind Academic*) has been from the very beginning a highly-institutionalized journal.

The hardship *Refeng Xueshu* (*Hot Wind Academic*) has experienced is how to deal with the atmosphere for the academic research or how to organize in-depth discussions on the real issues and produce "insightful thoughts".[40] *Cultural Studies* has actually faced the same problem. The dilemmas both journals are in are in fact connected with the institutional system. For instance, an in-depth investigation into a key issue in the real life may be controlled or prohibited by the authority. And under the established academic appraisal system, few would contribute to such a journal.

With such columns entitled "Reading Now", "Back to the Scene", "Reinterpretations", "Theory-Translation", "Hot Wind-Survey", "Hot Wind-Forum" and "Literature: Inside Out". *Refeng Xueshu* (*Hot Wind Academic*) has also helped to break down further the disciplinary boundaries in its editorial philosophy, The columns are restraint-free and poetic. In "Afterword" in the first volume, the editors clearly expressed their interdisciplinary thoughts and standpoint,

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[40]For example, the journal dedicates the fourth volume to the problems in education; see Wang Xiaoming & Cai Xiang (eds.), "Afterword" in *Refeng Xueshu* (*Hot Wind Academic*), Vol. 4 (Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2008), p. 332.

from which they "make academic thoughts and responses to various issues in present-day China":

Refeng Xueshu (Hot Wind Academic) holds up an interdisciplinary academic vision and research methodology and strives to create a platform for communication between modern disciplines, including but not limited to sociology, history, politics, economics, literature and culture. Through such communication, we hope to locate the real problems China needs to face and deal with nowadays, so as to make serious, meticulous and down-to-earth responses in an academically-responsible manner. We also hope to place present-day China in a more closely-knitted global context for an academic investigation. Therefore, the awareness of "problems" or "issues" is one major academic driving force for this journal. Refeng Xueshu (Hot Wind Academic) is dedicated to examining present-day China. It never evades the enormous challenges the history and the reality have imposed on modern China. To the contrary, we try our best to make response.[41]

Refeng Xueshu (Hot Wind Academic) focuses on thoughts and issues in modern China and finds new theories and paradigms concerning issues specific to China, as as illustrated by the "Reading Now" column. The column in the published issues covers many current issues in Chinese society, including real estate and urban space, mass media and life construction, issues concerning agriculture, rural areas and peasants, education and social issues, online games and new lifestyles, as well as the significance of labor and the loss of aesthetics. All these are popular topics of conversation. However, they cannot be subsumed under the embrella of any established disciplines. For example, "Reading the Contemporary" column in Volume 3 focuses on issues concerning agriculture, countryside and peasants and publishes seven articles on the issues concerning countryside and peasants since China adopted the reform and opening-up policy. The issues/problems discussed in those articles include suicides of senior peasants; relations between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law and between spouses; peasants' religious belief; and peasants' changing identity in the society. A core issue defined in those articles goes that despite all sorts of benefits peasants have gained from the reform and opening-up policy and process, the countryside life remains relatively "hard", "poor" and even "dangerous". The original issues concerning agriculture, countryside and peasants are no longer able to solve the new conflicts and depressions peasants are facing today or to fully illustrate the class and cultural differences peasants in different regions are experiencing. Countryside life seems to be "hard", "poor" and "dangerous" in a new way: Rural culture keeps declining. Ethics and moralities that used to bind rural communities face a crisis. The focus of rural communities shifts from society to families and to individuals. The problems cannot be solved simply with the government's "preferential" policies to guarantee adequate food and clothing for the rural population. Moreover, those issues have to be examined in a broader context of globalization and financial crisis, thus get even knottier. They have gone

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[41]Wang Xiaoming & Cai Xiang (eds.), "Afterword" in Refeng Xueshu (Hot Wind Academic), Vol. 1 (Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2008), p. 264.

far beyond the issues concerning agriculture, countryside and peasants and become the ones crucial to the future of entire society and culture.[42] Thus, more importance should be attached to the cultural and mental issues concerning peasants' life, in addition to what economic benefits peasants have gained; otherwise, the gained economic benefits would be much diminished.

In addition to the aforementioned issues, *Refeng Xueshu* (*Hot Wind Academic*) also makes in-depth analyses of other key events, such as the May 12th Sichuan Earthquake and the global financial crisis, fully showing the journal's strong concerns over what happens in the actual life.

A Simple Conclusion

As was stated above, institutionalization need not spell the end of Cultural Studies. It would be unrealistic to maintain that Cultural Studies must be independent of and separate from an institutionalized system. Insisting on such separation would only lead this field of study to a dead end (the shortage of research funding alone would be enough to kill it). Future development of Cultural Studies in China calls on the one hand for a commitment to independent thinking among scholars working in this field and on the other hand for the establishment of more research institutions devoted to issue-oriented interdisciplinary studies that also feature greater public participation than has traditionally been the case. Many universities and even the government have already begun to set up these organizations. This means that Cultural Studies researchers would be able, though certainly not without some efforts, to take advantage of not only the space freed up by but also the resources available within the institution as they try to conduct their own research.[43] This requires both wisdom and tact, something that many seem to lack. Some, for example, exaggerate the need for Cultural Studies to be as "pure as possible", equate critical and independent thinking with complete separation from an institutional system, overstate the isolation and rigidity of an institutional system and portray the two as polar opposites of each other.

3 Teaching of Cultural Studies

This section focuses on the teaching and textbooks of Cultural Studies, thus is closely related to the institutionalization of Cultural Studies discussed in the previous chapter. However, what's examined in this chapter has its own features and significance. That's why a separate chapter is dedicated to the issue. It is

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[42]Wang Xiaoming & Cai Xiang (eds.), "Afterword" in *Refeng Xueshu* (*Hot Wind Academic*), Vol. 3 (Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House, 2009), p. 320.

[43]In this sense, the current institutional system in China is even more favorable to Cultural Studies than that in Birmingham University was. Back then, professors from other colleges and departments of Birmingham University even wrote a letter in joint names, to oppose the establishment of the Center for Cultural Studies.

noteworthy that Cultural Studies hasn't been taught for long in the Chinese mainland; therefore, the programs, syllabi and content of Cultural Studies teaching in present-day China are evident of the lecturer's personal likes and dislikes out of his/her knowledge, expertise and research preferences. The teaching-related things need to be further standardized. For example, courses under the same title "Introduction to Cultural Studies" may vary greatly in content. Also, the teaching programs and syllabi are mostly not open to the public, so it is hard to find full and accurate textual materials. The authors of this book then have to contact Cultural Studies teachers and instructors, to represent the teaching of Cultural Studies in the Chinese mainland as close to what it looks as possible.

1. **Curriculum**

The teaching of Cultural Studies in the Chinese mainland is now conducted in two forms: in elective courses offered in undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral programs in the department of Chinese language and literature (usually in the college of liberal arts or humanities), or in courses offered by a free-standing Cultural Studies program. The only case of the latter variety now is the Program of Cultural Studies (PCS) in Shanghai University's College of Liberal Arts. Here, Cultural Studies is not a course; instead, it is set up as a discipline that features a comparatively complete teaching methodology. In this section we focus only on the first of the two alternative, by far the more common one. Such courses are already being offered by Capital Normal University, Beijing Language and Culture University, China Renmin University, Peking University, Fudan University, Sichuan University and Nanjing University.[44]

Founded by Professor Tao Dongfeng, the curriculum of Cultural Studies in Capital Normal University has evolved over time. In the early days of professor Tao's courses (ca. 2003–2012), there were "Introduction to Mass Culture" (also as an elective course open to all students, with Associate Professor Hu Jiangfeng as the major lecturer), "Introduction to Cultural Studies", "Introduction to the Western Social and Cultural Theories of Modernity" and "Thoughts in Modern Chinese Literature and Culture", including both degree and elective courses. Among them, "Introduction to Mass Culture" and "Introduction to Cultural Studies" were mainly for postgraduates, introducing to them the basic theories of Cultural Studies or mass culture (in the West and China, but mainly the Western ones). The two introduction or overview courses have roughly remained unchanged for years. "Introduction to the Western Social and Cultural Theories of Modernity", as a course targeting doctoral candidates, made a close reading to the classics of the Western cultural theories. "Thoughts in Modern Chinese Literature and Culture" was open to both doctoral and master degree candidates and talked about the hot cultural topics and

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[44]In some universities, there are elective courses concerning Cultural Studies open to all the students. The lecturers may come from the department of Chinese language and literature (or the college of liberal arts) or the Cultural Studies program.

thoughts in modern China (such as "Wang Shuo and the hooligan-style writing" and "Aestheticization of Everyday Life and the review on literary theory as a discipline" etc.). As Tao began to focus his research on "the Cultural Revolution", particularly the novels about that period, he opened in 2012 a new course titled "Modern Literature and Political Culture". Tao adopted the method of close reading in this course and the works by Liang Xiaosheng, Yan Lianke, Wang Anyi and Yu Hua were listed as key objects.

After the Institute for Cultural Studies (ICS) was founded in Capital Normal University, ICS and the College of Literature co-launched joint master and doctoral programs. Also, as more teachers and researchers joined the faculty, new courses are developed and offered, including "Benjamin and Agamben" (available soon to doctoral students and taught by professor Wang Min'an), "Modernity and Modern Cultural Theories" (available soon to Master's students, taught by professor Wang Min'an), "British Culture" (A.P. course open to Master's students, taught by professor Hu Jiangfeng), "Study of Material Culture" (master's course with Prof. Xu Min as the lecturer), "Visual Culture" (available soon to Master's students, taught by professor Wang Min'an, "Frankfurt School's Cultural Theory" (A.P. course open to Master's students and taught by professor Sun Shicong), "New Media" (A.P. course open to Master's students daught by professor Chen Guozhan), "Modern Film & Television Culture" (A.P. course available soon to Master's students, to be taught by professor Ge Qi), "Urban Culture" (available soon to Master's students, to be taught by Dr. Zheng Yiran) and "Public Culture and Culture Policy" (available soon to Master's students, to be taught by Dr. Jiang Lu).

At Beijing Language and Culture University (BLCU) professor Huang Zhuoyue has been the mastermind behind its Cultural Studies courses. The first course, entitled "General Cultural Studies", was offered in 2001. Huang gave lectures on Cultural Studies conducted in Britain, plus activities in other regions around the globe. The course has been open to doctoral and master candidates every year so far. In addition, Huang set up for doctoral candidates some other courses, including "Classification of Cultural Studies", "Cultural Theories", "Classification of Cultural Theories" and "Cultural Studies and Translation of Criticism Classics". Huang Zhuoyue is one of the representative figures in China in the field of British Cultural Studies. He has in recent years led his doctoral and master candidates to make a close reading of the classics of the British Cultural Studies and instructed his students to write dissertations on the topic. *British Cultural Studies: Events and Issues*, a collection of essays written by Huang and his postgraduate students was published in 2012. The only one dedicated to the British Cultural Studies in China, the collection talks about theories in the British Cultural Studies, such as screen theory, moral panics, races, popular culture, cultural policy and identity theory. Other courses for broad Cultural Studies have also been opened in the BLCU in recent years, such as the ones about post-colonial theory, study of feminism and creative writing by Chinese-Americans. Those courses are basically set up for postgraduates.

Professor Lu Yang is a representative Cultural Studies lecturer in Fudan University. When he worked in Nankai University, Prof. Lu opened an undergraduate course titled "Study of Mass Culture" and the textbook was *Mass Culture and Media* co-edited by Lu Yang and Wang Yi. Lu began to work in Fudan University in 2007 and opened a course titled "Introduction to Cultural Studies" for undergraduate double-degree candidates. The textbook is the latest version of *An Introduction to Cultural Studies* edited by Lu (Higher Education Press, 2012). Prof. Lu also opened a Cultural Studies-related course for postgraduates in the Department of Chinese, Fudan University, but never for doctoral candidates (even though Prof. Lu has been a doctoral tutor in the field of Cultural Studies. The doctoral program is officially known as "Literary Theory and Cultural Studies").

Other teachers in Fudan University also opened courses in the field. For example, Ni Wei began to give lectures on "Introduction to Cultural Studies" in the spring of 2002. The course was open to undergraduates in the spring and autumn of 2002, the spring of 2004 and the spring of 2008 (specifically called "Visual Culture" as a second-major elective), without any textbooks prescribed, though. The course was cancelled in 2008. Lu Yang has been the major lecturer in the field. Ni Wei's course mainly covered two issues, namely the history and status quo of Cultural Studies, including the definition of Cultural Studies, the Frankfurt School's cultural criticism, Althusser's theory of ideology and the British Cultural Studies; and specific forms of Cultural Studies, such as visual culture, social theory of space, the urban space production in modern China and etc. In addition to lectures, there were seminars in Ni's course.[45]

In Peking University, the courses concerning cultural theories are mainly taught by Professor Dai Jinhua, who gives lectures on courses like "Study of Mass Culture" and "Theories and Practice of Cultural Studies". In addition, Zhang Yiwu and He Guimei also open related courses, such as "Modern Literature and Mass Culture" and "Guide to Cultural Theories", mainly for postgraduates majoring in modern and contemporary Chinese literature. The courses are all elective ones.

The Cultural Studies-related courses in East China Normal University are mainly taught by Ni Wenjian and Huang Ping. Ni used to open an "Introduction to Cultural Studies" for undergraduates. Huang Ping replaced Ni as the lecturer of this course about five or six years ago. As Huang is mainly engaged in modern and contemporary literature, the lectures he gives on the course are thus largely related to modern and contemporary literature; or rather to say, Huang examines modern Chinese literature with the methodology of Cultural Studies. For instance, the course in 2012 was called "Introduction to Cultural Studies: Cases of Internet Literature and Culture" (spring semester, 2012). The course plan went as "Introduction: Cultural Studies and Modern China", "Youths, Internet, Social Transition", "Resources of Internet Literature", "New Mutations of Old

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[45]http://www.xici.net/d24587698.htm.

Aesthetics", "Historical Novels on Internet", "Global Real-life Imaginations", "'Petty Bourgeoisie' and 'Innocence'" and "Prospect on Internet Literature and Youth Culture".[46] A changed course program for the spring semester of 2013 included "Introduction", "'Chinese Characteristics' and the Revitalization of the Studies of Chinese Culture", "Legend-like 'Red Classics'", "Narration of 'the Rise of the Great Power'", "Internet Literature and Other Genre Fictions", "Blockbusters and Comedies", "Changing Television", "Changing Media", "Self-governance of Youths" and "Youths' Symbolic Resistance". It was quite different from that for the previous year.[47]

In addition to the aforementioned universities, other universities also open similar courses. And we'll leave them here. As is shown, Cultural Studies courses have been set up and recognized in more universities (be it a course for a general introduction or an interdisciplinary one out of the lecturer's academic interest) and gained more influence. Nonetheless, the setup of Cultural Studies courses is not without problem. For instance, many were arranged in an irregular manner. Such courses in most universities are elective ones. Irregularly run, some were even cancelled years after they'd been opened. There is a long way to go to raise people's awareness of the course's significance and realize the regular and standardized teaching. Also, lecturers usually tend to integrate their personal academic interest into lectures. The course may deviate from the disciplinary requirements.

2. **Program in Cultural Studies, Shanghai University**

(I) **Curriculum**

Program in Cultural Studies (PCS), Shanghai University boasts the best-arranged curriculum and teaching in the field in China. The PCS doesn't enroll undergraduates. Instead, it offers undergraduates with elective courses and encourages students to select Cultural Studies courses with the methodological training of a certain discipline completed. Juniors and seniors can choose from three elective courses, namely "Introduction to Cultural Studies", "Selected Theories of Cultural Studies" and "Methodology and Practice of Cultural Studies". Since 2009, a newly-set "Introduction to Cultural Studies" has been among the four compulsory courses for all the undergraduates of the School of Literature, Shanghai University. However, as an undergraduate is required to choose two out of the four compulsory courses, this "Introduction to Cultural Studies", more or less, remains an elective.

Courses for master and doctoral candidates for Cultural Studies are listed as below:

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[46]http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_5dcf517401012yah.html.

[47]http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_5dcf51740101cucl.html.

Courses for Master Candidates for Cultural Studies

Category		Course No.	Course title	Class Hours	Credits	Semester	Others
Degree courses	Political theory	001000721	Theory and Practice of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics	36	2	1	
		001000722	Dialectics of Nature	18	1	2	Either
		001000723	Marxism and Methodology of Social Sciences	18	1	2	
	First foreign language	001000704	Public English	100	3	1,2	
		02SAA7001	Major-based English	40	2	3	
	Major courses	02SAA7002	Basic Theory of Cultural Studies	40	4	1	
		02SAA7003	New Media Studies	40	4	5	
Compulsory courses	Reading seminar		Chinese Thoughts of Early Modern Days	40	4	2	One seminar of the other majors required (4 credits)
		02SAA9003	Gender, Society and Culture	40	4	1	
		02SAA9004	Analysis of Modern Culture	40	4	4	
		02SAA9005	Methodology of Cultural Studies	40	4	3	
	Academic seminar	12S000001	Academic Seminar		2		
			Cultural Studies Workshop		4		
Elective courses	English		Not included in the program. To be selected online as scheduled by Public English Teaching Plan (10th week in the semester prior to that in which the course is open)				
Complements			Two or three tutor-designated courses from undergraduate programs (not counted on the total credits)				

Courses for Doctoral Candidates for Cultural Studies

Category		Course No.	Course Title	Class Hours	Credits	Semester	Others
Degree courses	Public basics	000000704	Chinese Marxism and the Contemporary	36	2	1	Compulsory
		000000703	First Foreign Language (English)	120	4	1,2	
	Major courses	02BAA7001	Frontier of Cultural Studies Theory	40	4	1	
		02BAA7002	Methodology of Cultural Studies	40	4	3	
Compulsory courses	Academic seminar	12B000001	Academic Seminar		5		
			Cultural Studies Workshop		4		
Elective courses	Political theory	000000801	Selective Reading of Marxist Classics	20		2	
	English	Not included in the program. To be selected online as scheduled by Public English Teaching Plan (10th week in the semester prior to that in which the course is open)					
Complements		1–3 tutor-designated courses from postgraduate program (not counted on the total credits)					

The above is the first curriculum for master and doctoral candidates for Cultural Studies. Specialized courses are all included, in spite of some possible changes. The latest arrangement of specialized course for 2013 was included.[48]

(II) An Intercollegiate Program in Cultural Studies of Shanghai

Five universities/institutes in Shanghai (Shanghai University, East China Normal University, Shanghai Normal University, Fudan University and Institute for Literature, Shanghai Social Academy of Social Sciences) jointly set up an inter-collegiate master's program in Cultural Studies in 2006. The program offered such courses as Literary/Film Textual Analysis, Selected Monographs on Cultural Studies Theories, Socialist Culture in China, as well as Reform and Modernity in China. Scholars of Cultural Studies from the five universities and institutes give lectures in the program based in East China Normal University. However, this intercollegiate program was called off in 2011. According to Wang Xiaoming, the

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[48]http://wxy.shu.edu.cn:8080/MainPage/MoreCourse.asp.

program was in suspension for the next two years, as the key lecturers happened to work abroad when the previous program came to the end. The program resumed at the end of March 2014. The venue is now in Shanghai University, with the course arrangement roughly the same as before.

This intercollegiate program evidently drew inspiration from the cross-campus program in Taiwan. Such a seemingly-simple program is actually of great significance in giving full play to the specialized teaching staff and helping Cultural Studies gain more influence. As an interdisciplinary science, Cultural Studies relies on teachers from different disciplines for a better development.

(III) **Teaching Practice**

There are workshops in both master and doctoral programs for Cultural Studies. These workshops are for neither academic writing nor discussions. Instead, students are required to personally observe and examine real life by applying what they have learnt in school. Since 2004, the PCS has organized students (mostly postgraduates) to work as volunteer teachers and conduct cultural and social surveys in rural areas (e.g. poverty-stricken regions in Shandong province and breadbaskets in Hubei province). Some students work as volunteer teachers in schools for migrant workers' children in the suburbs of Shanghai. In this way, students have gained personal experience of the rural culture, which in turn helps them achieve a deeper appreciation for mainstream urban culture. Some students have even organized special associations for the long-term engagement in the cultural reform in the rural areas they've visited. Despite obstacles and difficulties, students have benefited greatly from their participation in these workshops. *Rural China and Cultural Studies* is a collection of articles based on the surveys these students conducted, in which they document their thoughts and reflections about the rural areas they visited. For example, He Huili reviews the rural construction and senior villagers' society in the Lankao County, Henan Province. He Xuefeng examines cultural activities conducted in the rural areas. Zhang Shiyong looks at women's leisure activities. The first-hand materials collected in the rural areas facilitate students' further study of issues concerning agriculture, rural China and peasants as well as national issues. Such teaching practice is being conducted now.

3. **Websites**

The representative websites for Cultural Studies in North China is "Cultural Studies Website" in the charge of Professor Jin Yuanpu from China Renmin University and the website of the Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS, http://www.cul-studies.com/) of Shanghai University is the best-known one of the kind in South China. The two websites serve as reservoirs and teaching bases for Cultural Studies. The latter, in particular, is built with BBS and other forums, including one for homework discussion (closed now). We'll only talk about the CCCS's website here, due to the limited space.

The Official Website of the Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS)

Established in November 2011, the CCCS of Shanghai University is the first institute dedicated to contemporary Cultural Studies in the Chinese mainland. The Center and the Program in Cultural Studies (PCS) established later in July 2004 are run by the same team, with Wang Xiaoming as the director. The official website of the Center[49] went online in 2002.

As the secondary website to the PCS (which has its own official website), the CCCS's website is built as a key platform for varieties of activities and articles concerning Cultural Studies. Between 7 April and 4 December 2012 (no statistics of the other periods available from the website), over 200 articles were published on the website, be they written by teachers and students from the PCS or reprinted from other places. The articles are placed under different columns, such as "New Life-New Culture", "Urban and Rural", "Modern Catastrophes", "The Third World", "Socialist Culture", "Recreation and Literature & Arts", "Production of Modern Literature", "Culture-Creativity-Industry", "Intellectual Production" and "Uncooperative Body". Overlapping in some cases, the columns evidently demonstrate the website's strong concern over reality (as is demonstrated by the articles published as well). For example, some articles focus on the issues concerning agriculture, countryside and peasants, including "Rural Communities in Puzhou and Hanyang" by Yang Tuan, "New-generation Migrant Workers in the 'Mechanism of Migrant Workers' Labor'" by Tsinghua University's "New Generation Migrant Worker Research", "Migrant Workers and the Labor Relations in the New Era" by Wen Tiejun and "Picun Village: NGOs and Communities of Migrant Workers" by Zhang Mulan, Liu Jianmin and Yan Bing.

Many authors adopt an ethnographic method. They gain personal experience in the rural areas and draw solutions for the issues concerning agriculture, countryside and peasants, with critical reflections. "Rural Communities in Puzhou and Hanyang" is originally a speech draft. However, the author makes in-depth survey and analysis of the research object—the rural communities in Puzhou and Hanyang of Yongji, Shanxi Province—and shares with audience and readers how the communities have been well built. According to the author, the previous approach to build rural communities failed to truly empower peasants or to contain the ever-widening gap between urban and rural areas, despite the outcomes it has made. Therefore, a complete and methodological top design is in need. Disintegrated measures for specific regions cannot solve the problems agriculture, countryside and peasants are facing in China. Yang works out four aspects indispensable in this top design, namely development direction, development pattern, organization in-charge and policy and laws, and lists in the article specific measures. In the report "New-generation Migrant Workers in the 'Mechanism of Migrant Workers' Labor'", Tsinghua University's "New Generation Migrant Worker Research" puts "the mechanism of migrant workers' labor" into two basic levels, namely "split-type labor reproduction" and "factory autocracy", plus a new one known as

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[49]Website: http://www.cul-studies.com/.

the internalization of urban culture. According to the research, the new-generation migrant workers tend to be more urbanized in their lifestyle, consumption pattern, identity recognition, occupational pursuit and personal development. And they have detached themselves from the rural life and production. In the meantime, the new-generation migrant workers are better capable of actions and tend to take active actions for their own interests and civil rights. "Corporate citizenship" and "community citizenship" may be future trends.

Not all the articles are authored by the PCS's teachers or students; however, they still well demonstrate the website's focus and Wang Xiaoming's preference for the PCS's research objects—concerns and thoughts about hot topics in the society.

The PCS and the CCCS's website have jointly organized conferences, symposiums and seminars of various scales. According to the related statistics from the official websites of the PCS and the CCCS, there were more than 20 symposiums, seminars and forums between June 2011 and July 2012[50] or more than one event per month on average. The number is much higher than that for a traditional college/department. The conferences were basically on the social issues and tried to discuss and find solutions for those issues. Some conferences were held in series. For instance, "Our Cities" Forum was held on 18 August and 1 December 2012, with the thematic topics as "A City Only with Amusement Parks" and "Challenges to Our Food". "Our Cities" Forum focused on "Citizens-Life-Progress" and created a place where sincere and rational voices of creating a new urban life would be heard.

4. **Textbooks**

Textbooks play a crucial role in the teaching of Cultural Studies. They are the institutional academic outcomes of Cultural Studies. The textbooks for Cultural Studies in the Chinese mainland were first translated ones and then compiled by Chinese scholars. Also, they were concerning comparatively limited aspects of Cultural Studies at first and later covered much wider ranges.

(I) **Introductory Textbooks**

There are at present in the Chinese mainland three introductory textbooks for Cultural Studies. All of the three are co-authored or co-edited by Professor Lu Yang (from Fudan University) and his colleagues. *An Introduction to Cultural Studies* (co-authored with Wang Yi and published by Fudan University Press in 2006) is written for postgraduates. *An Overview of Cultural Studies* (Fudan University Press, 2008) designed for undergraduates is co-edited by Lu Yang and other scholars, including Professor Liu Kang (Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Duke University), Professor Zhou Xian (Nanjing University) and Professor Wang Ning (Tsinghua University). *Introduction to Cultural Studies* (Higher Education Press, 2012) is also edited for undergraduates and by Lu Yang, Tao Dongfeng (Capital

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[50]The PCS's official website: http://wxy.shu.edu.cn:8080/MainPage/ViewLecture.asp?vType=会议.

Normal University), Wang Yi (University of Western Australia) and Zhou Xian and Ouyang Youquan (both from Central South University).

An Introduction to Cultural Studies is the first textbook for Cultural Studies edited by Chinese scholars in the Chinese mainland. It is a textbook recommended by the Department of Degree Management & Postgraduate Education, Ministry of Education (MOE) and funded by the MOE Program for Humanities and Social Sciences. The book has been well received on market and by readers. According to Lu Yang, the first-printed 5000 books were sold out within a year. Its readers included both postgraduates for Cultural Studies and ordinary people interested in mass culture. Some even wrote that *An Introduction to Cultural Studies* may serve as a key to decipher the phenomenon of "Super Voice Girls" and *Titanic*.[51]

The authors try to elaborate on the history of Cultural Studies and widen and push forward readers' horizon. The book places Cultural Studies against the historical development of modernity, and in the meantime, talks about the theories and thoughts related to post-modernism in accordance with their relevance to and impacts on Cultural Studies.[52] The authors' broad theoretical vision helps readers understand Cultural Studies in the perspectives of modernity and post-modernity. Modernity and Cultural Studies are two significant academic thoughts of the 20th century. The book examines the modern thoughts of five masters, namely Descartes, Rousseau, Kant, Baudelaire and Corbusier, and reviews the institutional and cultural dimensions of modernity. The cultural dimension of modernity happens to be interrelated with Cultural Studies. In addition, the book is well-developed with specific cases, such as bars, cafes and costumes in Shanghai. Nonetheless, the textbook may need further improvements as well. For instance, the correlation between different theories and their relationship with Cultural Studies may be further clarified, so that textbook-users acquire an understanding of the issues in a more methodological way. In addition, the textbook focuses on the Western theories of Cultural Studies and talks little about Cultural Studies in China. It may see more into the thoughts and issues concerning Cultural Studies in China.[53]

An Overview of Cultural Studies written for undergraduates and was approved for nationwide use at the higher education level by the Eleventh Five-Year Plan. The book was also designated a key book by the General Administration of Press and Publication for the Eleventh Five-Year Plan period. Therefore, the book received more support from the governmental sources than *An Introduction to Cultural Studies* did. *An Overview of Cultural Studies* is organized around Cultural Studies and related topics, including the history, methodology and status quo of

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[51]Lu Yang, "Necessity of Cultural Studies", *Journal of Jilin Normal University*, 2009 (3).

[52]Lu Yang & Wang Yi, *An Introduction to Cultural Studies*, p. 16.

[53]For commentaries on this book, see Ma Ling, "A 'Mission Impossible': A Review on *An Introduction to Cultural Studies* Co-authored by Lu Yang and Wang Yi", *Teahouse For Sociologists* (Vol.18), Jinan: Shandong People's Publishing House, 2007.

Cultural Studies; culture and class; post-colonial theory, gender studies, visual culture, the study of Aestheticization of Everyday Life; mass communication; and youth subculture. It's good enough as an undergraduate textbook, even though it cannot exhaust all the topics concerning Cultural Studies. The authors elaborate on every topic in this book in a concise manner.

This textbook focuses more on Cultural Studies in China. The second chapter is dedicated to "the significance and issues of Cultural Studies in China". As is discussed in the book, Cultural Studies with a critical thinking makes insightful reflections on intellectual production and spreading, academic control and social/political/economic power relations, thus is of great significance to understand the transition of intellectual production and disciplinary restructuring in China. There have been no critical self-reflections on history and reality in circles of humanities and social sciences in China. And Cultural Studies is something known for its critical thinking. But this doesn't mean to blindly copy the Western theories into China's society. Instead, new theories and academic paradigms adaptive to the Chinese context are needed. The relations between the academic construction and politics, economy and society in modern China, particularly the entanglements between power and knowledge, should be first clarified before anything else. Then, an agenda for Cultural Studies in China is set up. At present, agendas and programs for Cultural Studies are globally designed by following the Western rules and focus on "the local issues" of the West. Cultural Studies in China needs its own agenda and theories, as China and the West are so different.

Cultural Studies, emerging in the Western humanities and social sciences as something with perspectiveness, creativity and strong concerns over society, has to spare no efforts on academic, knowledge and theoretical innovations out of Chinese history and society. Only in this way can Cultural Studies embrace a bright future in China. Wang Yichuan expresses in an article his appreciation for the textbook's focus on China.[54]

In addition to the theoretical interpretation to Cultural Studies in the Chinese context, this textbook demonstrates its awareness of Chineseness in various topics selected. For instance, Marxism with Chinese characteristics is discussed in the section concerning post-colonial theory; and youth subculture in China receives a separate review in the related part. *An Overview of Cultural Studies* actually follows the cardinal line of the development of Cultural Studies adaptive to the Chinese context and shows how to integrate Cultural Studies with China's specific reality.

Lu Yang the editor-in-chief of *Introduction to Cultural Studies* published by Higher Education Press in 2012 defines in "Postscript" this textbook as "an entirely new book" compared with the aforementioned two. First of all, the book features a well-knit structure, with the chapters basically arranged in accordance with the major topics of Cultural Studies, including feminism, youth subculture, cultural identity, visual culture, body politics, fans culture and Internet literature. Compared

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[54]Wang Yichuan, "Cultural Studies into Classrooms", *Wenhui Book Review*, 30 May 2008.

with this one, the other two textbooks are not that well-knit in their content arrangement. *An Introduction to Cultural Studies* gives not enough space to narrow-sense Cultural Studies, despite its ideas about Cultural Studies in a modern perspective. Also, too many theories are discussed in the book; therefore, it is a little too complicated and confusing for student users. *Introduction to Cultural Studies* may focus more on Cultural Studies than *An Introduction to Cultural Studies* does. Nevertheless, the structure still looks a bit confusing, as there are too many issues as well. For example, it dedicates two chapters to media communication, namely "Communication and Culture" and "Journalism and Democracy", which are somehow repeated.

Also, this textbook makes concise analysis of the issues.[55] So is the arrangement of its table of content. For example, the second chapter titled "Changes in the Paradigms of Cultural Studies" consists of four sections, namely Culturalism, Structuralism, Hegemony and Connectivism. Readers have a clear view of the changes. The section concerning Internet literature in Chapter Nine is well-knit into "Generation and Development of Internet Literature", "Differences between Internet Literature and Traditional Literature", "Patterns and Features of Internet Literature" and "Value and Limitations of Internet Literature".

Then, this textbook sees into the latest topics in Cultural Studies and adds new things. For example, some chapters in this book are never found in the previous two, including "Chapter Seven Body Politics in Consumption Culture" and "Chapter Eight Fans Culture". As is shown by the newly-added content, this new textbook follows the latest trends in Cultural Studies. In addition, to the chapters included in the previous two textbooks, this one adds new materials on the new developments concerned. For example, there is in *An Overview of Cultural Studies* a chapter on youth subculture, which confines itself to the study of subculture made by the Birmingham School, while giving few words on the later study of subculture. *Introduction to Cultural Studies* examines the development of subculture and post-subculture and elaborates on the latter in particular. The authors of this new textbook pay more attention to the latest trends in the field.

This third textbook is known for the specific cases, particularly cases from China, cited in it. In this way, it is truly a textbook adaptive to the Chinese context and easier for students to understand. For instance, well-known films such as *Avatar*, *Speed*, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* and *Hero* are examined in the chapter for visual culture. Posts written by fans for "Super Voice Girls" and *Soldiers Sortie* are cited in the part dedicated to "fans culture". Students then find the content close to their life and easy to understand. Literary works popular in early days and at present quoted in the chapter for "Internet literature" are never unfamiliar with students, so that students may have a better understanding of the issue concerned.

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[55]Lu Yang the editor-in-chief stresses this in "Postscript".

The latest textbook for Cultural Studies may be the best-written one of the kind so far. We believe that it will be well received by undergraduates and readers interested in Cultural Studies.[56]

In addition to the three aforementioned textbooks titled with "Cultural Studies", there is another textbook *A Guide to Cultural Criticism* (2008) edited by Zeng Jun. Funded by Shanghai University's Textbook Funds, this textbook on cultural criticism is designed for elective courses. It is the first groundbreaking textbook dedicated to cultural criticism, not like the precedent ones generalizing on the Western literary theories. Secondly, the book is arranged around a clearly-defined theme. As Zeng Jun the editor-in-chief points in "Foreword", the textbook focuses on the Western cultural criticism of the 20th century. However, the materials selected are closely related to the literary theory of the 20th century and concerning the issues specific to China. The book elaborates, in a smartly methodological manner, on the representative Western cultural criticism types, such as Western Marxism, structuralism-semiotics, psychoanalysis, media culture, consumption culture, sociological methodology, spatial theory and culture and traditions. The Western theories are examined in the Chinese context, so that they become more practical and applicable to China.

Moreover, in this textbook, the ivory-tower image of "cultural studies" was downplayed, while the general trends and main characteristics of cultural criticism of the 20th century became the focus. According to Zeng Jun, the literary theory circles of modern China have been "haunted" by the relationship between "cultural criticism", "literary studies" and "Cultural Studies", as the question raisers are all engaged in literary studies the research object of which rests on literature, but the methodology of which learns a lot from Cultural Studies and cultural criticism. "Cultural Studies" has kept too intimate relations with the Birmingham School. Particularly in the 1970s when Hall was in charge, Cultural Studies impressed people with a somewhat rigid thing. Thus, Zeng Jun thinks it's time to put "Cultural Studies" aside for a while and replace it with "cultural criticism", a concept comparatively more flexible that includes in it the Western cultural thoughts, concepts and practices in modern days. That's an important reason why the textbook is titled with "cultural criticism".[57]

In addition, this textbook features a structure combining "the guide to theories" and "the guide to readings", so that students may well understand the theories and read the originals. In this way, they could have a better understanding of the theories. This structure has been widely adopted for textbooks.

Nonetheless, this textbook needs more improvements in its case analysis, so that students may better apply in practice what they've learnt.

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[56]For the comments on this textbook, see Chi Baodong, "Cultural Studies and College Literary Education: A Commentary on *An Introduction to Cultural Studies* Edited by Lu Yang", *Research on Marxist Aesthetics*, 2012 Vol. 15 (1).

[57]"Foreword" in Zeng Jun (ed.), *A Guide to Cultural Criticism* (Shanghai: Shanghai University Press, 2008), pp. 1–2.

In addition to the aforementioned textbooks edited by Chinese scholars, there is a translated one to be mentioned. *Introducing Cultural Studies* co-authored by the British scholar Elaine Baldwin and others was published by Higher Education Press in July 2004. The translation work was in the charge of Tao Dongfeng. It has been the first academically-standard textbook for Cultural Studies in China and left a profound influence on China's Cultural Studies. Many schools choose this book as the prescribed textbook for their Cultural Studies courses. Peking University published in 2005 the photocopy of the book in the original.

(II) **Textbooks on Mass Culture**

In addition to introductory textbooks for Cultural Studies and cultural criticism, there are also numerous textbooks for mass culture. Some have been republished. It indicates that mass culture is thriving in modern China. Many publishing houses well known in China, such as Higher Education Press, get involved in the publication of those textbooks, showing that mass culture has entered into the regular curriculum of universities. Textbooks on mass culture that have already been published include *Mass Culture: An Introduction*, edited by Wang Yichuan,[58] *A General Introduction to Mass Culture*, edited by Tao Dongfeng,[59] *A New Treatise on Mass Culture*, written by Mo Linhu,[60] *Mass Culture: Theories and Criticisms*, written by Zhou Zhiqiang[61] and *Theories of Mass Culture: An Updated Edition*, edited by Zhao Yong.[62]

Textbooks for mass culture are basically on phenomena and related theories. Such a book usually, however, talks about both phenomena and theories.

A textbook focusing on the phenomena of mass culture usually examines the culture by types. Wang's version talks about film culture, television culture, Internet culture, pop music, popular literature, visual culture, advertising culture, vogue culture and youth subculture. Tao's volume investigates film and television culture, popular fictions, popular music, Internet culture, advertising culture, visual culture, body consumption and fans culture. Mo's volume examines popular fictions, films, popular music, ACG culture, musicals and vogue culture. In addition to the basic types of mass culture, such as popular fictions (popular literature), popular music and film and television culture, different textbooks focus on varying things. Mo's

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[58]Beijing: Higher Education Press, 2004 (1st edition), 2005 (reprinted) and 2009 (2nd edition). The two editions are quite different in content and chapter titles. For instance, chapters of "Films" and "Television" (in 1st edition) are changed into "Film Culture" and "Television Culture" (in 2nd edition); and "Image Culture" (in 1st edition) into "Visual Culture" (2nd edition), to adapt to the recognized expressions. The content is arranged in a more concise and compact way. The following comments on the book are basically based on the latest edition.

[59]Nanning: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2008 (1st edition) and 2012 (2nd edition). This textbook was listed among the Choicest Textbooks of Beijing in 2009.

[60]Beijing: Tsinghua University Press, 2011. The book is a Textbook for Liberal Education for Universities and Colleges.

[61]Beijing: Higher Education Press, 2009.

[62]Beijing: Beijing Normal University Press, 2011.

volume includes in it ACG and musicals, while Tao's volume introduces fans culture, an important type of mass culture nowadays. Products like films, TV programs and popular music are an integral part of mass culture, while fans, as important participants in mass culture, play a significant role as well. Mass culture wouldn't thrive, were there no fans. Tao's volume has filled a gap in the study of mass culture, in some sense, as it includes fans culture in it. The 2nd edition of Tao's volume distinguishes itself from the others for a newly-added chapter dedicated to body consumption. The topics picked up for textbooks reflect somehow the authors'/editors' personal interest in and understanding of different aspects of mass culture.

Secondly, textbooks vary in styles. In general, the content is basically arranged in two parts, namely an overview of the generation, features and basic theories of mass culture, usually in one or two chapters; and separate analysis of various types of mass culture, basically covering the definition, history, features and production mechanism, related theories and specific cases concerning the types of mass culture. This well-structured second part may help students understand mass culture step by step, so that they make their own judgements on mass culture based on basic knowledge of the field. This part often takes up an overwhelming space in such a textbook. Such an arrangement of content is widely adopted for textbooks for mass culture, with Tao's volume as the best typical one that features a stronger theoretical analysis. Compared to it, Wang's and Mo's volumes are both known for a separate section dedicated to case analysis in almost every chapter.

Thirdly, as for the specific content of a textbook, Tao's volume borrows from the Western textbooks (e.g. *Introducing Cultural Studies* translated by Tao Dongfeng and his colleagues). There are in Tao's volume content-in-textbox and introduction to important theorists and concepts, as good supplement (for example, content-in-textbox is mostly first-hand materials supplementary to the main body) easy to be accepted and understood by students. Each chapter is ended with a conclusion and further reading, guiding students for in-depth reading and understanding.

Fourthly, those textbooks need to provide rational theoretical analyses with pleasant readers' experience. According to Mo Linhu, the previous textbooks for mass culture are strong in in-depth theoretical analysis; however, "those textbooks pay not enough attention to the political, economic and cultural environments specific to China, when the Western theories are talked about and adopted. What's worse, many scholars know little about the development of mass culture and read few works on mass culture, so that their exposition is all on the theoretical level, without any personal understanding or review of what they are talking about."[63] Mo Linhu makes improvements to those problems in his volume, by adding case analysis to each chapter. For example, Haiyan's novels are selected for the section

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[63]"Preface" in Mo Linhu, *A New Thought of Mass Culture*, p. 3.

of popular fictions, *The Warlords* for the section of films and Jay Chou's songs for the section of popular music. The cases selected are evidently "Chinese" ones and the analysis is integrated with the author's personal understanding. Despite the importance of good readers' experience for reading and appreciation, it is also crucial to pass onto students appropriate analytical methods and value about mass culture; otherwise, textbooks for mass culture would be something simply for mass culture appreciation. Wang Yichuan stresses this point in "Foreword" for *Mass Culture: An Introduction (Revised)*, "College students may acquire accomplishments in mass culture, so that they appreciate and enjoy mass culture as individuals, while being able to make academic analysis or criticism on mass culture as intellectuals." Researchers of mass culture may join hands to find better ways to integrate theories and appreciation in the field.

Zhao's and Zhou's volumes place emphasis on theories. Zhao's volume is listed among "New Century Textbooks for Higher Education—Liberal Arts Series" published by Beijing Normal University Press. Zhou's volume is distinguished for its content arrangement. Each section begins with a Pre-reading and contains sub-sections of In-depth Reading and Review & Thoughts. The book is thus readable. Also, the color printing textbook is good to read with fine pictures and well-structured layout. It introduces in a concise way sociological, mass society and critical theories concerning mass culture.

Zhao's volume presents theories, quotes the original and arranges its content in an accurate, appropriate and clear way. Zhao Yong consulted many experienced translators for the accurate re-translation or double-check of the quotes. The quotes in this textbook are thus new materials, to some extent, as they are newly translated from the original classics. Theories of mass culture are clarified in this textbook in three categories: the original theories of mass culture, including critical theory, semiotics and Cultural Studies; the participants of mass culture, including mass media, kitsch art, bourgeois tastes, youth subculture and fans culture (according to Zhao Yong, youth subculture and fan culture are separate from the former three, as the latter two are about the reproduction of mass culture and can be seen as a type of mass culture formed by the participants of mass culture); and the theory concerning intellectuals engaged in the study of mass culture. However, whether these clearly-defined categories will be fully accepted by students remains a question. For instance, kitsch art hardly fits the theories of mass culture, even though it closely interrelates with mass culture. The chapter of intellectuals and mass culture seems to overlap with the content concerning the original theories of mass culture.

In addition, students have an opportunity to see into the Western classics of mass culture in the original through the excerpts and related interpretations in Pre-reading. In this way, they may better know about the theories of mass culture. After all, the theories of mass culture adopted in China, at least at the present stage, are mainly the ones introduced and borrowed from the West. The original ones of China are evidently in the making.

Anyhow, this textbook gives a full view of the theories of mass culture (Tao's *Mass Culture: A Textbook* dedicates one chapter to some theories of mass culture) and is of a great value for ordinary readers and student to know more about mass culture.[64]

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[64]As for the comments on this textbook, see Wei Jianliang, "*A New Collection of Mass Culture Theories*: A New Breakthrough in the Teaching of Mass Culture Theories", *China Reading Weekly*, Page 006, 23 May 2012.

Appendix
Cultural Studies in Hong Kong and Taiwan

Cultural Studies are better developed in Hong Kong and Taiwan. Its academic research and social practices are placed under well-established rules and produce positive influence on society. Scholars engaged in Cultural Studies in the Chinese mainland can learn a lot from their colleagues from Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Cultural Studies in Taiwan

(I) The Rise of Cultural Studies in Taiwan

Cultural Studies Association of Taiwan was established on 14 November 1998 as a landmark on history of Cultural Studies in Taiwan. Precisely, Cultural Studies had been in existence in Taiwan long before the establishment of the Association. Cultural Studies emerged in Taiwan, as after the lifting of the "Order of Martial Law", various social movements and cultural debates were surging and intellectuals in Taiwan began to make critical reflections over the disciplinary system.

From the middle 1980s onwards, Taiwan saw dramatic changes with the "Order of Martial Law" lifted from it. As the authorities loosened its reins over the press, cultural criticism/criticism rose quickly and got involved in social issues, linking with the thing later known as Cultural Studies. For instance, *Zili Zaobao* (*Independent Morning Post*) and some other newspapers opened the column of cultural criticism in their supplements and even outsourced a whole page to younger generation critics. Periodicals of cultural criticism included *Zhongguo Luntan* (*China Forum*), *Renjian Zazhi* (*World Magazine*), *Xinwenhua* (*New Culture*) and *Dangdai* (*The Contemporary*). The organs of some social associations dedicated to cultural criticism/criticism, such as *Funv Xinzhi* (*Awakening Women*) and *Taiwan Gongyun* (*Labor Movement in Taiwan*) emerged one after another later. There were also books of cultural criticism published, such as *Zhanzheng Jiqi Congkan* (*The Collection of War Machines*) and *Daoyu Bianyuan* (*On the Island's Edge*).[1]

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[1]Chen Guangxing, "What Does Cultural Studies Mean to Taiwan?" in Chen Guangxing (ed.), *Cultural Studies in Taiwan* (Taipei: Chuliu Publisher, 2001), pp. 12–15.

Cultural criticism/criticism surging in the 1980s began to decline, as the market shrank, the political power was reorganized, the social opposition got institutionalized and the media became more conservative. The previously critical supplements degenerated into the irrelevant ones of literature and arts. Utopian articles targeting the real issues were mercilessly crossed out. According to Chen Guangxing, it was "a crisis of the public opinions in Taiwan", i.e. only the articles in the accepted form and stand were allowed into the public vision. It was in this circumstance that intellectuals in Taiwan began to make critical reflections on the decline of the previously radical thoughts and strived to let their voices heard in the society.[2]

In addition, Cultural Studies rose in Taiwan, as the intellectuals reflected over the past intellectual practices: They felt dissatisfied with the ever-disintegrated disciplinary setup that had severely prevented intellectuals from a full and in-depth analysis of social realities. The more specific research objects were, the more knowledge pattern got restrained. Liu Jihui points out that, "Cultural Studies was born out of urgency and dissatisfaction. It may leave the area of sociology and turn to examining critical theory and literature and art; it may go further from history and well into the issues concerning literature and art, gender, politics and economy; or, it may start from literature and art and see into more complicated things, such as ethnic relations, social and historical development and political and economic issues. Be it this or that, Cultural Studies itself is an empty title and the so-called interdisciplinary research merely a phenomenon. Both are essentially driven by the passion to solve problems. Whatever the title is, the true thing remains always the ever-changing intellectual practices and activities."[3]

Interdisciplinary research was also pushed forward by foreign literary and cultural theories, such as existentialism, feminism, post-structuralism, semiotics, psychoanalysis and post-modernism, which integrated thinking modes and research objects across different disciplines and created a space for later-day interdisciplinary studies.[4]

In addition to what was discussed above, the intellectuals' awareness of social engagement and self-reflection was the inner driving force of Cultural Studies in Taiwan, as was indicated in "Foreword" to the inaugural issue of *Taiwan Studies* founded in 1988.

Taiwan studies must get rooted in the society and people and consciously separate itself from any generalized formalist propositions like "social and behavioral sciences with Chineseness". It should focus on issues specific and crucial to Taiwan and strive to mine and solve the root problems. Any steps it takes shall start from the social realities in Taiwan. Full investigations are conducted deep into the society

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[2]Ibid., p. 14.
[3]Liu Jihui, "Root and Path: Ten Years in Cultural Studies" in *Cultural Studies: Development and Doubts* (Taipei: Linking Publishing Company, 2010), pp. 52–53.
[4]Liu Jihui, "Cultural Studies and the Conditions in Taiwan", http://www.frchina.net/forumnew/forum-redirect-tid-21533-goto-lastpost.html, or http://ows.cul-studies.com/community/liujihui/200505/2000.html.

from a historical-structural angle. We shall ask, with a critical thinking, "What we are". It's a question of theoretical and practical significance.

According to Liu Jihui, the columns, except "Topics in Cultural Studies", in *Taiwan Studies* are roughly in three categories, namely thoughts on the nature and ideology of Taiwan society; issues concerning society, class, gender and labor in Taiwan; and issues concerning politics, economy, modernization and globalization. The column setup well demonstrates how passionate the intellectuals of Taiwan are to get engaged in cultural issues in practice.[5]

(II) Organizational System of Cultural Studies in Taiwan

Cultural Studies has seen a sound development in Taiwan, thanks to the well-established organizations and institutes, including Cultural Studies Association, Research Center for Asia-Pacific/Culture Studies at the National Tsing Hua University and the International Institute of Cultural Studies of University System of Taiwan etc.[6]

Research Center for Asia-Pacific/Culture Studies at the National Tsing Hua University

Established in 1992 under the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at the National Tsing Hua University, the Center[7] aims to promote the intellectual integration in Asia and Cultural Studies in the Asian-Pacific region and it has played a significant role in substantially boosting Cultural Studies in Taiwan and even across entire Asia since when it was established.

The Center has, first of all, promoted the thriving development of Cultural Studies in Taiwan, via research, teaching, academic conferences, lectures, speeches, forums and publications and through cooperation with various non-governmental organizations. For example, at its founding in 1998, Cultural Studies Association was first headquartered at the Center. The Center and Chuliu Publisher started in 2000 a two-year publication project for criticism/Cultural Studies books. In 2004, the Center co-founded with the National Central University and the National Chiao Tung University the cross-campus master's Cultural Studies program of University System of Taiwan. The Center also established an Undergraduate Interdisciplinary Program of Humanities and Social Sciences in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

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[5]Liu Jihui, "Cultural Studies and the Conditions in Taiwan", http://www.frchina.net/forumnew/forum-redirect-tid-21533-goto-lastpost.html, or http://ows.cul-studies.com/community/liujihui/200505/2000.html.

[6]And Institute of Social Research and Cultural Studies at the National Chiao Tung University (http://www.srcs.nctu.edu.tw/srcs/index.aspx), Graduate Institute for Social Transformation Studies at Shih Hsin University (http://cc.shu.edu.tw/~e62/index.html), Graduate Institute of Cross-Cultural Studies at Fu Jen Catholic University (http://www.giccs.fju.edu.tw/01_cross.html) and Graduate Institute of Taiwan Culture at the National University of Tainan (http://www.gitc.nutn.edu.tw/index.htm).

[7]Website: http://apcs.hss.nthu.edu.tw/main.php.

The Center has also made contributions to the cross-Strait cultural exchanges and to those with the Chinese-speaking groups around the world. It organized in 1998 the first conference on Cultural Studies attended by scholars from the Chinese mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao. It co-sponsored with Taipei Municipal Government two Asian Chinese Culture Forum respectively in 2000 and 2005, to build a platform for the Chinese-speaking critics in Asia. The Center organized two large-scale international conferences on Asian issues in 1992 and 1995 in Taiwan; thanks to those conferences, critics across Asia began to connect to and communicate with each other. The outcomes of the two conferences crystallized into *Trajectories: Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, a historical document on the international Cultural Studies published by Routledge in 1998. Later, Routledge invited the Center to be in charge of the editorial work of *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies: Movements* magazine established in 2000. The magazine's editorial committee has organized the international conferences on inter-Asia Cultural Studies in Taipei, Tomioka in Japan, Bangalore in India and Seoul in South Korea, substantially promoting the interactions of the Asian academic circles.

As one of the oldest institutes of Cultural Studies in Asia, the Center has strived to enhance the teaching of Cultural Studies and promote the interaction and integration of critics in Asia. Thanks to its efforts, Cultural Studies Association and the International Institute of Cultural Studies of University System of Taiwan were successfully founded. The Center has made brilliant contributions to Cultural Studies in Taiwan and Asia.

International Institute of Cultural Studies of University System of Taiwan

The IICS[8] set up in 2003 the Cross-campus Cultural Studies Program of University System of Taiwan and initiated the intercollegiate cooperation in Cultural Studies. "International Graduate Program in Inter-Asia Cultural Studies (University System of Taiwan)" was approved by the education authority of Taiwan in June 2012. International Institute of Cultural Studies (IICS) of University System of Taiwan was approved by the education authority of Taiwan in July 2012 and started to enroll students in September 2013. The IICS is an intercollegiate organization co-sponsored by the National Tsing Hua University, the National Central University, the National Chiao Tung University and the National Yang-Ming University. In each of the four participant universities there is an IICS Office, an academic committee and a program committee, in charge of academic activities and programs. The IICS is now composed of four research groups, namely critical theory and Asian modernity, gender studies, modern thoughts and social movements, as well as visual culture that has two fields of art history and film studies.

The UST IICS features a new teaching pattern of Cultural Studies by integrating four universities and is facilitated with the research power and outcomes of the four participants. Students then enjoy better educational resources. Program in Cultural Studies (PCS) of Shanghai University drew inspirations from the UST IICS and

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[8]http://iics.ust.edu.tw/index.php.

organized an intercollegiate teaching team of universities in Shanghai and opened intercollegiate Cultural Studies programs.

Cultural Studies Association

Established on 14 November 1998, Cultural Studies Association aims to promote Cultural Studies and international academic exchanges and attracts scholars, researchers and cultural workers from various disciplines, who have keen interest in "Cultural Studies", so that different disciplines can be well connected and disciplinary boundaries transcended. They try to break up disciplinary boundaries through interdisciplinary research topics, methods, awareness and practices. The Association works on collecting teaching resources; organizing lectures, symposiums and annual meetings; providing information on teaching and academic conferences; releasing newsletters; keeping in touch with related organizations in and outside Taiwan; and publishing periodicals and works.

The Association founded its semi-annual journal *Router: A Journal of Cultural Studies* in September 2005. The editorial board explains, in the inaugural editorial "Booting the Router", what Cultural Studies means to them: They aim to make the journal an interdisciplinary Chinese journal concerning modern theories and thoughts, intellectual history, social and cultural history, as well as studies of art, sciences and technology, media, urban and rural areas, gender, ethnics, Taiwan and Asia, and other related areas. To be precise, it is a counter-disciplinary journal. According to the editorial board, disciplines can be categorized and keep proliferating; nonetheless, there must be space for "counter-disciplinary" things. Be it "critical theory" of the middle 20th century or "Cultural Studies" at the turn of centuries, the space should be always there.

"Router" in the journal's title implies the "counter-disciplinary" trend of Cultural Studies, as it has something to do with connection and communication.

In addition to the periodical publication, the Association also organizes conferences, forums and lectures concerning Cultural Studies, such as the annual meetings of Cultural Studies successfully held in the past 16 years between 1999 and 2014.

(III) **Features of Cultural Studies in Taiwan**

As was indicated above, Cultural Studies in Taiwan is conducted with an international perspective and local concerns in a coordinated manner. It is something international conducted with internationalized activities and organizations like the annual meeting of Cultural Studies and the UST IICS. The curriculum, dissertations and conference topics concerning Cultural Studies in Taiwan demonstrate strong concerns over the issues local to Taiwan. Cultural Studies in Taiwan focuses on the local culture of Taiwan, while boasting a horizon at Asia and the world. That's why Cultural Studies in Taiwan has well connected itself with the outside world and played a significant role in Asia. Also, Cultural Studies is conducted in a coordinated manner in Taiwan, as is shown by the establishment of the UST IICS. Conferences and symposiums on Cultural Studies held in Taiwan attract numerous social workers, officials and NGO members, indicating a sound coordination across

the entire society. It is thanks to its close link with the society that Cultural Studies keeps thriving in Taiwan. Cultural Studies scholars in the Chinese mainland may learn something from our colleagues in Taiwan.

Cultural Studies in Hong Kong

(I) Rising of Cultural Studies in Hong Kong

Cultural Studies rose in Hong Kong out of various reasons. The fundamental one may be that Hong Kong intellectuals got aware of the native culture quite unique to Hong Kong.

An old colony of the UK, Hong Kong didn't lose its native culture, as the British colonial authority never tried to entirely replace the Chinese culture in Hong Kong with the British one. Therefore, Chinese and British cultures have well been developed side by side.[9] Intellectuals in Hong Kong thus see a large space for self-reflections on their native culture.

People's horizon got further widened in the 1960s and 70s in Hong Kong when the environment for cultural production and circulation experienced enormous changes, as media technology and electronic media boosted. The old-day cultural system and ideas of Hong Kong underwent great impact. It was at that time when Hong Kong people started to explore, discuss and reflect over their native culture.[10] From that time onwards till the 1980s, Hong Kong saw numerous marginal cultural criticism, such as the study of popular culture (i.e. mass culture known in the Chinese mainland). The criticism and comments on popular culture, concerning television, films, cartoons, pop songs, urban vogue and youth culture, were widely seen on newspapers and periodicals.

On the whole, the studies at that time were mostly a combination of authors' personal observations and the Western theories of Cultural Studies, due to limited time, resources or writing styles, thus not well-organized academic works, strictly speaking. Nevertheless, those articles and works opened up a new arena of open debates for popular culture long neglected by the academic circles. Some of the articles and works would exert a profound influence on later academic trends. Cultural Studies thus rose in Hong Kong in such an environment.

However, Cultural Studies hadn't progressed at a full speed before 1997 when Hong Kong returned to China and Hong Kong people got stuck in an "identity crisis".[11] Tang Weimin, a Hong Kong-based scholar holds that, "Cultural Studies rose in Hong Kong, culturally and politically speaking, when the handover of Hong

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[9]Luo Yongsheng, "Preface: Ten Years in Cultural Studies" in Luo Yongsheng (ed.), *Cultural Studies and Cultural Education* (Hong Kong: Step Forward Multi Media, 2010), p. 15.
[10]Ibid., p. 16.
[11]Ibid., p. 68.

Kong took place in 1997. Before that, the conditions inside Hong Kong for the development of Cultural Studies got well prepared after the June Fourth Incident of 1989. Those conditions may develop into a new level in 1999 when Macao returned to China."[12] Chen Qingqiao, a Hong Kong-based Cultural Studies scholar sees great impacts of Hong Kong's return to China in 1997 on intellectuals, "Academic people held doubts about the issue and what they've learnt and known for the whole life".[13]

The handover of Hong Kong in 1997 remained a key political event that boosted the rising and thriving of Cultural Studies in Hong Kong. Thanks to this event, Hong Kong people began to think about their identity and future and consciously conduct cultural criticism. It carried forward, to some extent, the awareness of "cultural criticism" emerging in the late days of students' movement in the 1970s, so that cultural criticism got involved in society and new culture by criticizing media and popular culture.[14]

In addition to the aforementioned cultural and political reasons, Cultural Studies rose in Hong Kong as a reaction to the academic system there. Luo Yongsheng (in his "Challenges Imposed by Cultural Education to Cultural Studies") describes the environment for humanities and academics in Hong Kong as "an asymmetrical space". Hong Kong has boasted a comparatively free and open space for politics and speech, with traditions in actionisms, social movements and public criticisms well developed in a legal system. In the meantime, the academic system in Hong Kong remained a bureaucratic house system without being effectively or fully "decolonized". Thus, "in this system, there is no discipline or research of humanities that could enjoy its own subjectivity or give ample reflections over humanities or provide rich intellectual resources for comparatively free and active actionisms or social movements. This 'asymmetrical' status is also closely related to the widely-accepted anti-intellectualism, Cynicism and the affected educational and examine system."[15]

Because of this asymmetrical status, the academic circles in Hong Kong may freely criticize its self-enclosed conditions and even enjoy easy institution-based funds. The open-minded academic system in Hong Kong has substantially helped Cultural Studies develop and thrive there. Cultural Studies can never develop or thrive in a monolithic academic environment.

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[12]Tang Weimin, "Alibis for the Presence/Non-presence of the Taiwan Question: Sidelights on the International Symposium on Cultural Studies in Hong Kong 2001", *Cultural Studies Bimonthly* (4). http://www.ncu.edu.tw/~eng/csa/journal/journal_04.htm.
[13]Chen Qingqiao, "Cultural Studies in Hong Kong: Chen Qingqiao Engaged in Cultural Studies" in Sun Xiaozhong (ed.), *Methods and Cases: Lectures on Cultural Studies* (Shanghai: Shanghai Bookstore Publishing House, 2010), p. 75.
[14]Luo Yongsheng, "Preface: Ten Years in Cultural Studies" in Luo Yongsheng (ed.), *Cultural Studies and Cultural Education* (Hong Kong: Step Forward Multi Media, 2010), p. 16.
[15]Ibid., p. 68.

(II) Organizational System of Cultural Studies in Hong Kong

Cultural Studies in Hong Kong flourished during the 1980s, and became institutionalized in 1990, as indicated by the establishment of related institutes and curriculum, and published periodicals and works in this field.[16]

(1) Institutions of Cultural Studies

Since the early 1990s, academic seminars of varying scales about Hong Kong culture were held in almost all the colleges and universities across Hong Kong, while a series of major research plans and research centers were launched. In 1994, the "Programme for Hong Kong Cultural Studies" was initiated by the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) with a grant of HK$3 million from the University Grants Committee of Hong Kong. The Programme later developed into the "Centre for Hong Kong Cultural Studies" of CUHK, which received financial support from the Rockefeller Foundation, published nine books in the book series entitled "Hong Kong Cultural Studies" as well as other books related to Hong Kong culture, and organized international conferences on Hong Kong Cultural Studies.[17] The University of Hong Kong founded the "Centre for the Study of Globalization and Cultures"[18] in 1999, and launched the "Programme for Hong Kong Culture and Social Studies", which was later funded by the University Grants Committee with the latter's second round of funding plan in 2000 to support great disciplines. Hong Kong University of Science and Technology also set up the "Centre for Cultural Studies", while the City University of Hong Kong has its "Centre for Cross-Cultural Studies". These efforts all pushed forward Cultural Studies in Hong Kong.

In addition, Hong Kong Institute of Cultural Criticism was established on 7 June 2001 to promote Cultural Studies in Hong Kong, which has "a great symbolic meaning" in terms of the organizational system[19]. The Institute boasts of scholars from organizations such as the Research Institute of Comparative Literature, the University of Hong Kong, School of Journalism and Communication, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Department of Cultural Studies, Lingnan University and so forth.

Institutionalized Cultural Studies in Hong Kong is best reflected in the establishment of the Department of Cultural Studies at Lingnan University.[20] In July 1997, Lingnan University School of General Education considered offering a degree course (BA, Hons) on Cultural Studies, and the idea was put into practice

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[16]See Zhu Yaowei, "Cultural Studies in Hong Kong in the 1990s: Institutionalization and Dissatisfaction", *Hong Kong Journal of Social Sciences* (Hong Kong), Vol. 26 (Autumn/Winter 2003)

[17]http://www.rih.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/rih/hkcs/hkcs_s.htm.

[18]http://www.complit.hku.hk/csgc/csgc.html.

[19]Tang Weimin, "Alibis for the Presence/Non-presence of the Taiwan Question: Sidelights on the International Symposium on Cultural Studies in Hong Kong 2001", *Cultural Studies Bimonthly* (4). http://www.ncu.edu.tw/~eng/csa/journal/journal_04.htm.

[20]Website: http://www.ln.edu.hk/cultural/index.php.

later in September 1999 with support from related departments of the university including Department of Sociology, Department of Chinese, and Department of English. In September 2000, the Department of Cultural Studies was set up.

(2) Conferences

The First Hong Kong Popular Culture Conference, a one-day event held at Hong Kong Arts Centre on 18 February 1979, attracted intellectuals from different backgrounds and marked the beginning of a solid presence of Cultural Studies in Hong Kong. In 1991, the Centre of Asian Studies at the University of Hong Kong (HKU) hosted the First Hong Kong Culture and Society Forum, which was met with considerable interest and enthusiasm among academics, many of who "believed the forum meant the beginning of studies on native culture in academic institutions."[21] The Hong Kong Culture and Society Conference was convened at the University of Hong Kong in the same year, which was the first academic conference dedicated to "Hong Kong culture."[22]

A symposium titled "Hong Kong and Beyond: East-West Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies" and co-organized by the department of English and department of Communication took place at the City University of Hong Kong June 4–6 2001. Many Cultural Studies scholars from around the world and different disciplines attended the symposium, including Ien Ang (University of Sydney), Meaghan Morris (Lingnan University), Lawrence Grossberg (University of North Carolina), Toby Miller (New York University), Luo Guanxiang, and Tang Weimin and Liao Binghui (Ping-hui Liao) from Taiwan. The symposium covered the following topics: urban culture and metropolitan imagination, identity of local people and politics of academia, classes and labor politics, policy and politics of media representations, political globalization, imagination across boundaries, and the trends of Cultural Studies. The symposium was a significant event in the development of Cultural Studies in Hong Kong.

(3) Journals and Books

Major journals on Cultural Studies in Hong Kong include *Cultural Criticism* published in 1993 by the Department of Comparative Literature, University of Hong Kong, *Hong Kong Cultural Studies*[23] published in 1994 under the "Programme for Hong Kong Cultural Studies", Chinese University of Hong Kong, and *Cultural Studies@Lingnan*[24] published online in September 2006 by Lingnan University. Also, *Journal of Discourse*, a journal published in book form launched in June 2008 and comes out once a year, had published four issues by 2012. In

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[21]Wu Junxiong *et al.*, *A Study of Hong Kong Culture* in Wu Junxiong *et al.* (eds.), *Hong Kong, Culture, Research*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2005.

[22]Zhu Yaowei, "Cultural Studies in Hong Kong in the 1990s: Institutionalization and Dissatisfaction", *Hong Kong Journal of Social Sciences* (Hong Kong), Vol. 26 (Autumn/Winter 2003).

[23]Till 1998, only nine issues were published, with the eighth and ninth published as one issue.

[24]Website: http://www.ln.edu.hk/cultural/about/bg.php.

addition, the Chinese University of Hong Kong started *Twenty-First Century* (bi-monthly) in October 1990, which is also a periodical of great impact.

In terms of books on Cultural Studies, we will only focus on several series that have been published, including "Hong Kong: A Reader" series, "Hong Kong Cultural Studies" series, and "Shi Wenhua" series.

The series titled "Hong Kong: A Reader" is part of the "Programme for Hong Kong Culture and Social Studies".[25] The series covers such fields as politics, economy, society, and culture. Titles published under the series have so far included *Reading Hong Kong Popular Culture: 1970–2000* (Wu Junxiong & Zhang Zhiwei, eds., 2002), *Hong Kong Literature as/and Cultural Studies* (Zhang Meijun & Zhu Yaowei, 2002), *Our Place, Our Time: A New Introduction to Hong Kong Society* (Xie Juncai, ed. 2002), *Narrating Hong Kong Culture and Identity* (Pan Yi, ed., 2003), and *Gendering Hong Kong* (Chen Jiehua et al., eds., 2004), all published by Oxford University Press.

The "Hong Kong Cultural Studies" series, part of the "Programme for Hong Kong Cultural Studies", is also funded by the Teaching Development Grant of the University Grants Committee (UGC). Published works in the series include *The Practice of Affect: Studies in Hong Kong Popular Song Lyrics* (Chen Qingqiao, ed., 1997), *Identity and Public Culture: Critical Essays in Cultural Studies* (Chen Qingqiao, ed., 1997), *Cultural Imagination and Ideology: Critical Essays in Contemporary Hong Kong Cultural Politics* (Chen Qingqiao, ed., 1997), *Whose city? Civic Culture and Political Discourse in Post-war Hong Kong* (Luo Yongsheng, ed., 1997), *Out of Chaos and Coincidence: Hong Kong Music Culture* (Yu Shaohua, 2001).

The "Shi Wenhua" series was published to mark the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the Department of Cultural Studies at Lingnan University. The series, published in 2010 by Step Forward Multi Media, consists of five books, namely *Cultural Studies and Cultural Education* (Luo Yongsheng, ed.), *Composing Hong Kong* (Ma Guoming, ed.), *Before the Next Financial Tsunami: Thoughts and Discourses* (Xu Baoqiang, *et al*. eds.), *Liberal Studies X Cultural Studies* (cult Tong, ed.), and *Cultural G Spot* (Second Edition, He Yonghua, *et al*. eds.).

(2) Reflection on Cultural Studies and Cultural Education

A prominent characteristic of Cultural Studies in Hong Kong is that it tries to combine Cultural Studies and cultural education. Education here emphasizes educating people about real life in Hong Kong, and aims to apply insights from Cultural Studies to daily life.

Luo Yongsheng, in his "Challenges Posed by Cultural Education to Cultural Studies" elaborates on this, pointing out that Cultural Studies is mainly carried out

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[25]The Teaching Development Grant of the University Grants Committee (UGC) funded the "Creative Learning and Hong Kong Culture and Society Project", which is part of the "Programme for Hong Kong Culture and Social Studies" of the Centre of Asian Studies at the University of Hong Kong. Therefore, the "Hong Kong: A Reader" series can be said to have been funded by the UGC too.

in three forms. 文化研究有三种存在方式, 一是在某些学科内, 以文化研究作为其中一种分析工具或理论进路的文化研究; 二是在不同学科的边缘地带, 文化研究起着某种挑战性或颠覆性知识的作用, 三是作为教学和研究机构之一部分的文化研究, 也可以说是以课程 (学科或准学科) 形式存在的新 "文化教育"。 岭南大学的文化研究系属于第三种。 First, Cultural Studies may serve as an analytical tool or theoretical path in certain disciplines; second, Cultural Studies may, on the boundaries between different disciplines, challenge or even potentially overthrow our idea of what we know; third, as a part of teaching curriculum and research institutes, Cultural Studies can be looked at as a new kind of "cultural education" made available in the form of courses (disciplines or quasi-disciplines). The Department of Cultural Studies at Lingnan University is an example of the the third of these three.[26]

Luo Yongsheng states that with the new mechanism for culture-knowledge production and consumption, we need to look again at the room and possibilities for the development of college-oriented Cultural Studies, and try to find out what Cultural Studies really is and what it means to be Cultural Studies scholars. Luo points out that, though Cultural Studies in Hong Kong helps shatter the colonialist myth that Hong Kong is pretty much "a cultural desert", and questions the stereotype according to which Hong Kong is the melting pot for Eastern and Western cultures, "we still need to ask, in the long run how Cultural Studies can actually contribute to cultural education/learning so as to become a source of agency instead of pure theories with which we stand on the moral high ground and make empty critical gestures." "In fact, when we look at Cultural Studies not simply as an ideal (a research scheme) of researchers (producers of knowledge), but also an ideal of 'education' (an 'education scheme'), we will then be able to examine the relationship between 'Cultural Studies' and 'cultural education'".[27]

Therefore, in the quest to find out the relationship between Cultural Studies and cultural education, in addition to emphasizing the role of teaching, it is also of great importance to combine Cultural Studies with humanism and humanities education, and facilitate Cultural Studies' involvement in the realities of Hong Kong. This is the essence and ultimate goal of Cultural Studies. Otherwise, Cultural Studies would be nothing but pedantic. At the Department of Cultural Studies, Lingnan University, many students have realized the problem too, and begin to make efforts to improve the situation. As Lu Jieling puts it, "For me, Cultural Studies is more than a discipline, a research method, but a process to retrospect and reconstruct.

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[26]Luo Yongsheng, "Challenges Imposed by Cultural Education to Cultural Studies" in Luo Yongsheng (ed.), *Cultural Studies and Cultural Education* (Hong Kong: Step Forward Multi Media, 2010), pp. 66–67.

[27]Luo Yongsheng, "Challenges Imposed by Cultural Education to Cultural Studies" in Luo Yongsheng (ed.), *Cultural Studies and Cultural Education* (Hong Kong: Step Forward Multi Media, 2010), pp. 72–73.

Everything I understand and experience about Cultural Studies relies on observing, based on my own knowledge, how a department of a university teaches the students, and its involvement in society, culture and politics."[28] This is the reason why the Department of Cultural Studies pays more attention to study the realities in Hong Kong with ethnographic methods. For instance, You Jing did a survey about serval girls in the Youth Correctional Institution of Macao, ranging in age from 12 to 16, who were "felons" according to the courts and had to stay in the institution for one or more years. The survey found out, based on the photo and video materials collected, that those girls, the so-called "criminals", "marginal people" and "trouble-makers", are no essentially different than other people. The stereotype of them is just enhanced by the state apparatus.[29] "As a Peasant: Ten Years of Lingnan Culture Studies" by Xue Cui records how the author investigated the situation of rural areas and peasants in Hebei Province and in India with ethnographic methods.[30]

In short, for scholars in Hong Kong, Cultural Studies is by no means simply about academic research; it is more of a form of education, a kind of concern about real life. It "discusses about the possibility of changing individuals and groups, and thus promises chances to transform crises into new thoughts and actions."[31]

(IV) Nativism in Cultural Studies in Hong Kong

As suggested above, an important characteristic of Cultural Studies in Hong Kong is that it values applying the studies to life of local people. Here several key concepts are involved, namely nativism, nativeness, and localization. Cultural Studies in Hong Kong is even, to some extent, developing around "nativism".

(1) Definition of Nativism

For Hong Kong scholars "nativism" is a rich concept, as there is not an a priori or self-evident concept of "nativeness" or "nativism". Different and contradicted opinions exist concerning the concept of nativism, which as society and globalization progress, still develops.

Ma Jiahui in *Journal of Discourse* (founded in 2008) points out from the perspective of etymology that nativeness is not an objective and single concept. Therefore, "when we use the word 'native', we need to be specific as to the subject and coordinates in time and space of the 'nativeness'". For instance, is it native for laborers, for women, for immigrants, or for the "Leftists"? Ma furthers explains that

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[28]Lu Jieling, "Being 'Powerless' or a 'Threat'? A Cultural Study of Elderly Women" in Luo Yongsheng (ed.), *Cultural Studies and Cultural Education* (Hong Kong: Step Forward Multi Media, 2010), p. 242.

[29]You Jing, "Drill or No Drill: Images of Youths in Prison" in Luo Yongsheng (ed.), *Cultural Studies and Cultural Education*, Hong Kong: Step Forward Multi Media, 2010.

[30]In Luo Yongsheng (ed.), *Cultural Studies and Cultural Education*, Hong Kong: Step Forward Multi Media, 2010.

[31]Liu Jianzhi, "Concerns of Cultural Studies" in Luo Yongsheng (ed.), *Cultural Studies and Cultural Education* (Hong Kong: Step Forward Multi Media, 2010), p. 307.

"nativeness" is something that needs to be built, "instead of being a priori or self-evident. It has to be created, built, explored, interpreted, and reinterpreted through 'discourse'. It is by nature subjective and diverse, and ever-changing." We can even say that "in essence, 'nativeness' equals 'native discourse'. Without 'discourse', there would be no 'nativeness.'"[32] That is why some scholars just don't bother to talk about or define nativeness or native discourse, since any definition would be exclusive and limited,[33] and thus fail to present the rich and diverse concept.

Such an attitude towards the concept of nativeness can avoid essentialism, but specific analysis is still needed to examine how nativeness is built. Cen Xuemin once mentioned there can be several different ways to understand "nativeness". For the colonial administration before 1997, the aim of advocating Hong Kong nativeness (nativism) was to a large extent promoting de-sinicization. For the "Leftists", nativeness means "sympathy with the local people living at the bottom of society, and fighting against injustice in real life." Therefore, nativeness here is closely related to the concern for the underclass. And for the academics and commentators, "nativeness" is a concept in terms of which they locate Hong Kong in the large scheme of things.

In short, it is important to clarify whose perspective Some scholars insist, therefore, that nativeness should be something grounded ultimately on one's personal experience. Based on her own experience, for example, Cen Xuemin once pointed out that to her and her peers "nativeness" refers to the popular culture (mass culture) they are consuming, which is different from the "nativeness" people are taught in the classroom.[34] In sum, as something that is closely related to personal experience, nativness means different things to different people. We should not, therefore, overgeneralize by taking what may be true of a few people to be representative of the experience of Hong Kong people as a whole.[35]

(2) Formation of Nativism

The formation of nativism in Hong Kong is is closely linked to the special place Hong Kong occupies and its political, economic and social development, and reflects an attempt to build something that is politically and economically distinct from what one finds on the Chinese mainland.

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[32]Ma Jiahui, "Can There Be 'Nativeness' Without 'Discourse'?" in Editorial Board of *Journal of Discourse* & Synergynet (eds.), *Journal of Discourse 2008* (Hong Kong: Shangshuju Publishing House, 2008), p. 5.

[33]Wang Huilin, "Words at the First Issue" in Editorial Board of *Journal of Discourse* & Synergynet (eds.), *Journal of Discourse 2008*, Hong Kong: Shangshuju Publishing House, 2008.

[34]Cen Xuemin, "Nativism: Lost in Translation" in Editorial Board of *Journal of Discourse* & Synergynet (eds.), *Journal of Discourse 2008* (Hong Kong: Shangshuju Publishing House, 2008), pp. 139–140.

[35]Chen Zhijie, "A Caution of Cultural Hegemony: the Pulses of Reconstructing the Native Discourse of Hong Kong" in Editorial Board of *Journal of Discourse* & Synergynet (eds.), *Journal of Discourse 2008* (Hong Kong: Shangshuju Publishing House, 2008), pp. 158–159.

The "localization" movement of Hong Kong is generally thought to have begun in the late 1960s and early 1970s.[36] Until then, Hong Kong residents used to see Hong Kong as temporary place of residence instead of one that can be called home. But since that time, as people there become more emotionally attached to Hong Kong, to many of them it increasingly "felt like "home".[37] Behind the shiftwas a series of political, economic and social movements in Hong Kong during the 1960s and 1970s, such as the Leftist riots of 1967.[38] After the riots, and into the 1970s there emerged two different camps on the issue of "identity construction". One, represented by the civil movements led by the youths driven by idealism and radical progressivism, advocated for "getting to know China and caring about the society", was committed to the pursuit of China's national spirit (while maintaining neutrality in regard to the Communist Party of China), and opposed colonialism. The other camp saw Hong Kong the way the Hong Kong authorities did, i.e., as a "place unto itself".[39] The British colonial government adopted policies to promote localization, improved the civil service system, and implemented progressive social policies and community development initiatives with a clear aim of fostering in Hong Kong residents a distinct local identity that is independent of and disassociated from the mainland. The ideas of "citizenship" and "society" became popular for the first time.[40] However, as the political and economic chaos caused by the Cultural Revolution in the mainland underscored the economic prosperity in Hong Kong, many Hong Kong people got the idea that "Hong Kong is better than the mainland", which boosted self-affirmation and the identity of "Hong Kong people".[41]

In addition, in the 1970s Hong Kong's baby boom generation began to search for identity, and they enjoyed the sense of identity brought by the blooming economy (as mentioned above). From the 1980s to the 1990s, as the year of 1997 drew near, the anxiety and even worry of Hong Kong people contributed more to their "special

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[36]Zhu Yaowei & Zhang Meijun, "An Introduction: Literary Studies and Cultural Studies" in Zhu Yaowei & Zhang Meijun (eds.), *Hong Kong Literature @ Cultural Studies* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. xxii, footnote 16.

[37]Zhu Yaowei & Zhang Meijun, "An Introduction: Literary Studies and Cultural Studies" in Zhu Yaowei & Zhang Meijun (eds.), *Hong Kong Literature @ Cultural Studies* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. xxii.

[38]Hong Kong 1967 Leftist riots were sparked in May 1967, when under the influence of the Cultural Revolution in the mainland, pro-Communist Leftists revolted against the British authority. Strikes and demonstrations in the early stage escalated into assassinations and bombs, killing dozes and wounding over 800. It was a watershed in the development of Hong Kong, forcing the British colonial administration to improve governance.

[39]Zhang Bingliang, "The 'Identity' Myth of Hong Kong" in Editorial Board of *Journal of Discourse* & Synergynet (eds.), *Journal of Discourse 2008* (Hong Kong: Shangshuju Publishing House, 2008), p. 75.

[40]Zhu Yaowei & Zhang Meijun, "An Introduction: Literary Studies and Cultural Studies" in Zhu Yaowei & Zhang Meijun (eds.), *Hong Kong Literature @ Cultural Studies* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. xxii.

[41]Zhang Bingliang, "The 'Identity' Myth of Hong Kong" in Editorial Board of *Journal of Discourse* & Synergynet (eds.), *Journal of Discourse 2008*, Hong Kong: Shangshuju Publishing House, 2008.

identity", and they became more aware of that identity. The June Fourth Incident strengthened the awareness of identity of Hong Kong people, and they were eager to draw a line between them and the mainland. This clearly shows the close relationship between the nativism of Hong Kong and the political and economic development of the mainland.

From 2003 to 2004, Hong Kong saw the rise of the "localism" movement, which grew out of a series of social movements beginning in late 2003. Those include calls for the preservation of the Wedding Card Street (Lee Tung Street), for which the government had drawn up development plans, and for the protection of the King's Pier and Queen's Pier. According to Chen Jinghui, an activist, "the movement centers on emphasizing the uniqueness of Hong Kong's local culture, which is different from and no reducible to the 5000-year-old cultural tradition of China. In Hong Kong, instead of putting the bigwigs and business moguls on the pedestal, the culture displays a greater concern for the ordinary people, who are considered the real makers of history. This largely reflects Hong Kong's own developmental history, which was shaped more by the actions of numberous "nobodies" than by those of a few larger-than-life figures. We need to look back at our struggles and draw on past experiences, those lessons are of great importance to Hong Kong's growth.……It is very important for us to know the stories of these ordinary folks in Hong Kong, as it is through these stories that we can understand our traditions and appreciate who we really are."[42]

The movements contributed to the local historical and cultural traditions centered on the struggles of the ordinary people, which to many people represent the true Hong Kong spirit: the spirit of the ordinary people. It indicates that the nativism of Hong Kong was nurtured by its prosperous economy and with a desire to be different from the mainland. The nativism of Hong Kong, therefore, is all about experiences and the common people, instead of abstract theories. This is a very important feature of the nativism of Hong Kong.

(3) Uniqueness of Cultural Studies in Hong Kong

The search for of Hong Kong nativism constitutes the fundamental feature of Cultural Studies in Hong Kong, which is unlike Cultural Studies anywhere else. Cultural Studies in Hong Kong does not seek to deconstruct elite culture or challenge state power, but serves as a tool for encouraging free discussions and the voices, once lost, of the local culture. Eric Kit-Wai Ma elaborates on this point by pointing out Cultural Studies in Hong Kong emerged in the social and cultural context of decolonization and renationalization. During the post-war decades, Hong Kong was a colony with a weak sense of national identity, where neither the Chinese government nor the British government intended to impose nationalist pressure on the local culture, in order to avoid political conflicts. The absence of a strong historical and national narrative for years made it hard for the people of

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[42]Chen Jinghui, "Origin of Localism" in Editorial Board of *Journal of Discourse* & Synergynet (eds.), *Journal of Discourse* 2008 (Hong Kong: Shangshuju Publishing House, 2008), p. 31.

Hong Kong to have their own sense of identity. As a result, Cultural Studies scholars in Hong Kong pay more attention to the expression of identity than the resist against the state power, which is quite distinct from the situation in the mainland where state power is highly visible in Cultural Studies. Moreover, with a surging economy and great social mobility, the boundaries between different classes are indistinct in Hong Kong, which means "the Cultural Studies theories focusing on conflict between social classes do not really relate to the situation in Hong Kong"; the condition of the mainland in this respect is utterly different too. Also, the cultural construct in Hong Kong, an immigrant society, does not highlight elite culture. There is hardly any heated argument over mass culture, or, any rivalry between elite culture and popular culture, which is yet another difference between Cultural Studies in Hong Kong and the mainland.[43] In a word, Cultural Studies in Hong Kong highlights the native discourse, and strives to apply the studies to the everyday life of local people through integrating studies and education, which gives us something to think about.

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[43]Eric Kit-Wai Ma, "Peripheral Vision: Chinese Cultural Studies in Hong Kong" in Toby Miller (ed.), *A Companion to Cultural Studies*, Wang Xiaolu (trans.) (Nanjing: Nanjing University Press, 2009), pp. 213–216.

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