1988

Chinese political movements and historiography on American history/

Wenjun Xing

University of Massachusetts Amherst

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umass.edu/theses

Retrieved from https://scholarworks.umass.edu/theses/2087

This thesis is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. It has been accepted for inclusion in Masters Theses 1911 - February 2014 by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. For more information, please contact scholarworks@library.umass.edu.
CHINESE POLITICAL MOVEMENTS AND HISTORIOGRAPHY ON AMERICAN HISTORY

A Thesis Presented by WENJUN XING

Submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

May 1988

Department of History
CHINESE POLITICAL MOVEMENTS AND HISTORIOGRAPHY ON AMERICAN HISTORY

A Thesis Presented by
Wenjun Xing

Approved as to style and content by:

Fred Drake, Chairman of Committee

Bruce Laurie, Member

Gerald McFarland, Member

Robert Griffith, Chair History Department
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis is the result of two years of reading and study, both in China and the United States, of the Chinese historiography on American history. I would like to make this opportunity to thank Professor Fred Drake who took time and pains in the guidance of the entire thesis project. My thanks also go to Professor Bruce Laurie, who gave me timely encouragement and suggestion as to the thesis idea, and Professor Gerald McFarland, who posed provocative questions that helped sharpen my analysis and understanding of some of the questions.

Special reference should be made to Professor Robert Griffith, Chairman of the History Department, Dr. Chi Wang, of the Library of Congress, Professor Lewis Hanke and Professor Milton Cantor, who took time to meet and talk with me, which helped sustain, in one way or another, my interest and determination in pursuing the subject. I would also like to thank Professor Paula Baker who gave me instructions on the use of the word processor, so that I could put my draft in the computer.

On the Chinese side, Professor Luo Rongqu, of Beijing University, and Professor Liu Xuyi, of Wuhan University and also secretary-general of the American History Research Association of China, kept me informed of the academic development in China. Professor Luo sent
me recent literature on the subject and gave me valuable suggestions.

Last, but not the least, I am indebted to Mrs. Katherine (Kit) Jennison of Northampton, who kindly provided me with a superb living and working environment. Without her generous, loving and motherly help, the present thesis would have been impossible.
ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to look into the Chinese historiography on American history since 1949. The Chinese interest and interpretation of American history has been affected by the diplomatic relations between the two countries, but more importantly, it has been closely related to China's domestic political situation. While Chinese historiography served as a footnote to politics, politics played a key role in the growing interest of Chinese historians in American history and their changing perspectives.

Chinese historians have recently published a growing number of well-documented, scholarly, comprehensive articles and books on American history. This signifies a genuine effort on the part of the Chinese historians to break away from the tradition of official historiography and contribute to the research and scholarship on American history. Within the larger picture, it signifies a growing freedom in academic research without fear of political discrimination or persecution.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ......................................................... iii
ABSTRACT ........................................................................... v
LIST OF TABLES ................................................................. vii
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS ..................................................... viii

Chapter

I. INTRODUCTION ............................................................... 1

II. OVERVIEW ................................................................. 4

III. CHINESE HISTORIOGRAPHY—A FOOTNOTE TO POLITICS ... 19
   "Politics in Command" .................................................. 19
   "Aggression" or "Friendship" ......................................... 26
   "Fundamental Structure" vs "Practical Use" ...................... 31
   "Historical Materialism" vs "Bourgeois Idealism" .............. 36
   Sino-U. S. Diplomatic Interactions ............................... 38
   "Hundred Flowers" or "One Flower" ............................... 41
   "Historicism" vs "Class Viewpoint" ............................... 45
   The Cultural (Counter) Revolution ............................... 52

IV. CHINESE HISTORIOGRAPHY—A HISTORICAL INQUIRY .... 59
   Mao: A Human Being, Not a Saint ............................... 59
   New Surge of Intellectual Life .................................... 63
   "Friendship" or "Aggression" ....................................... 67
   Capitalism—"Dying" or "Thriving"? .............................. 76
   What Can Be Learned from "Bourgeois Democracy"? ....... 80
   American Industrialization and China's Four Modernizations ................................................................. 85
   American Historiography—A Chinese View .................. 89

V. CONCLUSION ............................................................. 95

NOTES ................................................................................. 97
BIBLIOGRAPHY ................................................................. 104
LIST OF TABLES

1. Table I. The number of general articles published between 1950 and 1981. p. 9.

2. Table II. The number of research articles published between 1950 and 1981. p. 9.

3. Table III. Areas of interest in the research of American history. p. 10.
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Figure I. The number of general articles on American history published between 1950 and 1981. p. 5.

2. Figure II. The number of research articles published between 1950 and 1982. p. 7.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Reporting on the conference on Chinese historiography covered by China Quarterly at Oxfordshire in September, 1964, Harold Kahn and Albert Feuerwerker made the following comment on the so-called "ideology of scholarship":

Ideology is, rightly considered, a datum of history. When it becomes the datum of history--the end of the scholar's search as well as his means--the rules of the game change and historical inquiry becomes essentially a political exercise. The historian moves from the classroom to the platform, the natural habitat of the ideologue; historiography moves from an effort to discover what actually was (Ranke's hope) to an effort to confirm what in fact should be. The past, that is, serves the present not by illuminating it but by defining it, by justifying it.¹

No doubt the authors correctly summarized what they term as China's "new historiography" since 1949 to be a disguised form of "political exercise." But they might not have anticipated that in little over a year this political exercise would develop to such a point as to virtually terminate not only historical research but almost all kinds of intellectual inquiry. The Cultural Revolution of 1966-1976 turned out to be a "cultural counter-revolution" and its first targets were none other than a number of established historians who became the scapegoats of an unprecedented political power struggle.

The relationship between politics and historical
inquiry has always been a close one in China, sometimes so close that it is difficult to tell one from the other. In the two thousand years of China's dynastic history, Confucianism and historiography were the two leading scholastic pursuits, the former being the guiding ideology of the ruling class and the latter the officially approved recording of history. Being a member of the official-literati, the major function of a historian in writing about the past was to justify and eulogize the present. Modern Chinese revolutions, whether republican, democratic or communist, have witnessed progressive historians trying to break away from this age-old tradition of what may be termed "official historiography." Liang Qichao (1872-1929), for example, vehemently attacked the "aristocratic nature" of Chinese historiography and advocated a "liberation" of history writing from the domination of the feudal ruling class. Jian Bozan (1898-1968) challenged the erroneous idea that historical inquiry should "cater to the needs of every current political movement." While historical inquiry and writing were no longer the privileged and monopolized undertaking of a few "imperial official historians" after 1911, official historiography survived and was often called upon to justify the official government policy. Just as Confucianism has functioned as a key link in the development of the Chinese culture under different governments, official historiography
seems to be another cultural norm that has accompanied Chinese society.

The present paper attempts to look into one aspect of Chinese historiography—historiography on American history since 1949. The Chinese interest in and interpretation of American history has been affected by the diplomatic relations between the two countries, but more importantly it has been closely related to China's domestic political situation. While Chinese historiography served as a footnote to politics, politics played a key role in the growing interest of Chinese historians in American history and their changing perspectives.
Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, research on American history has undergone a development that closely followed two other patterns of change: diplomatic relations with the United States and the domestic political situation. There was a significant increase and decrease in the number of articles and books published on American history as a result of the changing diplomatic relations between China and the United States. During the Korean War period, for example, there was much less writing on American history. In contrast, since the normalization of diplomatic relations in 1979, there has been a steady and phenomenal growth of interest in the field, and the number of articles published rocketed to an unprecedented height (see Figure I).

While changes in diplomatic relations contributed to the decrease or increase of published literature on American history, the underlying factor that determined or affected the academic interest of Chinese historians was the domestic political situation and the degree of freedom enjoyed by historians in undertaking historical research and interpretation. As is shown in Figure I, between 1956 and 1957, for example, there was a significant increase in the number of articles written and published on American history as a result of the
Figure I. The number of general articles on American history published between 1950 and 1981. 

Number of general articles published
encouragement by the Party's policy of "letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend." The drop in the number of articles in 1958 and 1959 reflected the impact of the Anti-Rightist movement and the Great Leap Forward, the nationwide frenzy for an overnight economic transformation into communism. Likewise, education, cultural activities and academic research in the social sciences came to a virtual standstill during the ten years of the Cultural Revolution between 1966-1976, which explains why there was hardly anything written or published on American history during this period. The fall of the "Gang of Four" in 1976 and the nationwide movement of ideological emancipation that followed in 1978 and 1979, however, led to an unprecedented soaring of interest in the study of American history.

Figure I shows the number of general articles on American history published between 1950 and 1991 in leading national newspapers, magazines and academic journals. The number of academic research articles on American history published over the same period is shown in Figure II, which registers a similar curve of development.

The development of Chinese research in American history can roughly be divided into three major periods: 1950-1965, 1966-1976, and 1977 to the present. The
Number of research articles published

Figure II. The number of research articles published between 1950 and 1982.
number of published writings in the three periods is shown in Tables I and II. We see from the tables that in the five-year period between 1977-1981, the number of general articles published was almost equal to the total number of articles published over the previous 27 years. What is more significant is that the number of research papers published between the eight-year period of 1977-1984 was almost three times the total of the previous 27 years. This shows a remarkable revival and growth of academic interest among Chinese historians and scholars in the study of American history. In clear contrast, although there was a sizable number of general writings on American history in the 16 years between 1950-1965, less than one-fifth of these materials were research articles published by scholarly journals.

A content analysis of the existing data based on subject matter and areas of interest covered by Chinese historians again shows the impact of China's diplomatic relations with the United States and its domestic political situation. We see from Table III that, of the 538 research articles published over the past 35 years, almost one-third (188) were on American diplomatic history (with 81 on Sino-American relations). Comparing the first and third periods, the most significant increases in terms of the fields of interest are found in political and social history (from 17 to 71), the War of
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>1950-65</th>
<th>1966-76</th>
<th>1977-81</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Articles</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>611</td>
<td>1,285</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table I. The number of general articles published between 1950 and 1981.7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>1950-65</th>
<th>1966-76</th>
<th>1977-84</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Articles</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>538</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table II. The number of research articles published between 1950 and 1981.8
### Table III. Areas of interest in the research of American history.\(^9\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of Interest</th>
<th>Number of Articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1950-65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diplomatic History (Sino-American Relations)</td>
<td>42 (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War of Independence</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil War</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political and Social Hist.</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic History</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Historiography</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early American History</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Historiography on American History</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>124</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Independence (from 6 to 33), the Civil War (from 3 to 42), economic history (from 22 to 53), early American history (from 0 to 12), and American historiography (from 3 to 65). We should bear in mind that the overwhelming majority (398) of these articles were published over the eight years between 1977 and 1984. Moreover, the total of 140 published in the preceding 27 years had a prevailing sentiment of, and focus on, anti-imperialism, while the major emphasis in research was the
exposure of U.S. "domestic oppression" and "imperialist aggression." Though normalization of diplomatic relations undoubtedly contributed to the recent growth of interest among Chinese historians in different aspects of American history, this increase of interest was more a result of the significant social, political, economic, cultural, educational and academic reforms and transformation that have been underway in China.

China's growing academic interest in the United States history was the direct result of the restoration, reestablishment and expansion of teaching and research institutions. With the recovery of normal higher education since 1977, and especially since the restoration of graduate education in the following year, a growing number of research institutions on American history has been established. These include Beijing University's Center for American Studies (1983), Fudan University's Center for American Studies (1984), Nanjing University's Center for Chinese and American Studies (1986, with Johns Hopkins University), Wuhan University's Institute of American History, Nankai University's American History Research Section under the History Department, and programs in Shandong Normal University, Jilin University, Hebei University, Liaoning University, etc.10 In addition, the Institute of World History's Section of American History, and the newly-organized
Institute of American Studies (1980), both under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, concentrate on the study of contemporary American society, culture, government, policies and foreign relations. According to a survey by Chi Wang, some 50 centers are doing various types of research on the United States and many of the 97 key Chinese universities are reported to offer courses on the United States. An estimated 1,000 scholars and serious students now specialize in American studies.11

The most significant development in China's support for research in American history was the founding of the American History Research Association of China (AHRAC) in 1979. Sponsored by historians and scholars from eight institutions of higher learning (Wuhan, Nankai, Beijing, Beijing Normal, Jilin, Sichuan, Hebei, and Liaoning universities) and three publishing houses (the People's Press, the Commercial Press, and the Shanghai People's Press), the AHRAC was formally organized in Wuhan in October, 1979, after a preparation meeting earlier in the year. Huang Shaoxiang (head of the Section on American History, the Institute of World History of the CASS) was elected president (Zhang Youlun of Nankai University was elected as the new president at the AHRAC conference held in Lanzhou in the fall of 1986). Yang Shengmao of Nankai University and Ding Zemin of Northeastern University were elected vice-presidents. Liu
Xuyi, Director of the Institute of American History of the Department of History, Wuhan University, was elected secretary-general. According to its constitution, the purpose of the AHRAC is to

conduct research on U.S. history; develop open discussions; proceed with academic activities in order to promote the development and progress of history and science; enrich the understanding and friendship between the historical scholars and peoples of the People's Republic of China and the United States of America; and accelerate our Association's responsibility and doctrine in implementing the Four Modernizations.12

Since its founding, the AHRAC has held five annual meetings. Up to its fourth annual meeting held in June 1984, the AHRAC had a membership of 250. In 1980 and 1984, the AHRAC edited and published two collections of papers on American history which represent the most recent result of research in the field.

U.S. historians in China can roughly be divided into three generations. The first generation was trained before 1949, either in the United States or in Western-style universities in China. This includes historians such as Huang Shaoxiang (Columbia), Yang Shengmao (Stanford), Ding Zemin (University of Washington), Liu Zuo-chang (Furen and Southwest Associated), etc. Most of them hold the ranks of either full professor at universities or research fellow at research institutions under the CASS.
They are established "authorities and experts" in the field and have published extensively. Liu Danian, for example, published his *A History of U.S. Aggression Against China* (*Meiguo Qinhua Shi*) in 1951. It was considered to be the first narrative history of U.S. aggression against China written by a native Chinese. Huang Shaoxiang published her *A Brief History of the United States* (*Meiguo Jianming Shi*) in 1953 and *The Early Development of the United States* (*Meiguo Zaoqi Fazhan Shi*) in 1957. In 1979, she revised the *Brief History* into *An Outline History of America* (*Meiguo Tongshi Jianbian*). Ding Zemin published his *A Short History of the Chinese in the United States* (*Meiguo Huaren Jianshi*) in 1952 and *Contemporary World History* (*Shijie Jindai Shi*) in 1958. Liu Zuochang has published three monographs: *A Short History of the American War of Independence* (*Meiguo Duli Zhanzheng Jianshi*) (1956), *A History of the English Capitalist Revolution* (*Yingguo Zichan Jieji Geming Shi*) (1956), and the recent *A History of the American Civil War* (*Meiguo Neizhan Shi*) (1978).

Although these first-generation historians have reached or are reaching their ages of retirement, they are presently making a great effort in some monumental projects of publication on American history. For example, a six-volume comprehensive history of the United States
is being written by historians from five universities. Beijing University is responsible for Volume I on early American history. Volume II, on colonial history, is being undertaken by Nankai University. Northeastern Normal University and Sichuan University are responsible for Volumes III and IV. Wuhan University will cover Volumes V and VI. Liu Xuyi and Yang Shengmao are the editors-in-chief of the whole project. Although such a project might seem too ambitious, considering the lack of bibliographical materials and trained historians in the specific fields covered, the project has justifiable reasons to proceed, as explained by William B. Whiteside who taught U.S. history at Beijing University in 1982-1983:

A postponement, to be effective, might have to be for a decade or more. The enthusiasm is at a high level. Some of the senior persons involved are not young; and in view of their inability to work on such a project during the years from 1949-1979, it seems on balance best for them to proceed. Revisions can follow in later years.14

While almost invariably following a Marxist or a historical-materialist approach in the study of American history, these first-generation historians have generally documented their writings well and have achieved various levels of academic excellence in the fields covered. Although some of their interpretations have been
stereotypical, as I will demonstrate later in this paper, even in the days of direct confrontation with the United States some of their works were serious academic investigations by no means written for the purpose of propaganda.

The second generation of historians consists of those who were educated in the 1950s and 1960s. Rarely did these people have a chance to receive any training in the West, but some were educated in the Soviet Union and many have been in the United States in recent years as visiting scholars. Although these scholars may not be as productive as the earlier generation in terms of publications, most of them have assumed key teaching and research positions in their various institutions and are working on book-length projects on American history. Compared to the first generation, they tend to be less conservative, more open-minded and more outspoken. A good example of this group of historians is Luo Rongqu of Beijing University. Trained as a Latin American historian, Luo shifted his interest to American history. He was a visiting scholar at the University of Michigan during 1980-1981 and now serves as director of the American History Research Center under the Department of History, Beijing University. In 1980 he published an article, "Some Questions Regarding the Study of the History of Sino-American Relations and U.S. History"
in *Historical Research* (*Lishi Yanjiu*). This was one of the first articles by Chinese historians that pointed to the problems that existed with Chinese historiography on American history. Luo argued that the major problem with Chinese historiography had been that it was "too narrow in scope, unsystematic, strongly one-sided." He therefore advocated "comprehensive reexaminations" of Sino-American relations and U.S. history so that "a wide range of problems" might be covered—problems like the conflict between "the advanced capitalist mode of production" and China's "backward feudal mode of production," and interactions between Western civilization and Chinese traditional culture. His article, together with some others, prompted much discussion and even controversy among Chinese historians.

The third generation of U.S. historians in China mainly consists of younger scholars who have been educated in American history since 1978. They have had much more extensive access than their predecessors to different bibliographical source materials, historical approaches and interpretations. Naturally, they have tended to be the least conservative. Some have directly challenged the "low level of historical research" in terms of academic standards. This generation has not yet published as much as the older generations, but some of them now are working on book-length manuscripts on different aspects of American history. For example,
Han Jie and Shi Yinghong finished their book-length monographs, *Dwight D. Eisenhower and Modern Republicanism* and *Nixonism*, while graduate students at Wuhan University in 1984. These two studies are part of a 30-monograph project on American history supervised by Professor Liu Xuyi, director of the University's Institute of American History.
"Politics in Command"

To understand the developmental patterns of Chinese historiography on American history we need to first understand the Chinese political system and tradition, as well as the role of academic research in the context of such a system and tradition.

China's New Democratic Revolution came to a successful conclusion with the founding of the People's Republic in 1949. The new Republic was organized on the principle of the "people's democratic dictatorship"—a democracy enjoyed by the workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie (including intellectuals, professionals, small businessmen, etc.), and national bourgeoisie, the four social classes that made up the "people" at the time of liberation, and at the same time a dictatorship over the "enemies"—the compradore bourgeoisie represented by the Nationalists, the landlords, and the imperialists. A people's government was established that incorporated 23 political parties and groups other than the Communist Party in the form of the People's Political Consultative Conference established in September, 1949. The chief concern of this newly born people's government was to revive the war-torn economy, stabilize the runaway inflation and restore industrial and agricultural
production. And this had to be carried out, given the historical backdrop of the hostility and non-recognition by the West, relying mainly on her own efforts and resources and with support from the Soviet Union.

In order to ensure a quick recovery of the national economy, a highly centralized government hierarchy was established. Since the working class was professed as the leading class and the Communist Party the leading core, the government was in effect the administrative body of the Party and it assumed all three powers of the executive, legislative and judicial. For this centralized government to function, especially at a critical time of economic recovery, political campaigns or movements immediately became effective means to mobilize the Party and mass organizations from the top down to the grassroot level. And in line with the principle of "the people's democratic dictatorship," these movements invariably had their targets or enemies. The land reform was targeted against the landlords and rich peasants. The "Three-Anti" movement (anti-corruption, anti-waste, anti-bureaucratism) was an effort to streamline the inherited Nationalist bureaucracy. The "Five-Anti" movement (anti-bribery, anti-tax evasion, anti-theft of state assets, anti-cheating in labor or materials, anti-stealing of state economic intelligence) was directed against the so-called national bourgeoisie: industrialists, bankers, merchants,
manufacturers and businessmen.

Politically and economically, these movements conducted in the first few years after 1949 helped stabilize the new government, and the country achieved a rapid economic recovery by the end of 1952. But the designation of the categories of "enemies" or "targets" would soon create a potential problem contrary to the principle of a "people's democratic dictatorship": the very "people" that should be protected by their own democratic government gradually found themselves the targets of a continued revolution and dictatorial elements. As political movements intensified, more and more people realized that they themselves might be in trouble in the next political movement. As a way of self-protection and as a means to tide over successive movements, people less and less openly questioned the official policies. Instead, they would praise, justify, and follow them without much questioning.

This was especially true beginning with the massive "Socialist Transformation" period of 1955 and 1956, when individual peasants were collectivized into junior and advanced cooperatives, and when the national and petty bourgeoisie first entered into the phase of "joint management with the collective or state," and then sold their share to the collective or state. Several theories were developed by Mao Zedong and the Party to
justify this transformation. First, the idea of "continuous revolution" or "carrying the revolution through to the end" meant that the Chinese communists should not stop the revolutionary process after they secured state power. The victorious New Democratic Revolution (victorious in the sense of the seizure of political power) should develop a step further: toward socialism, toward a collective ownership of the major means of production. Secondly, with the conclusion of the New Democratic Revolution, the major contradiction in Chinese society had changed. Now it was the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, between the socialist road and the capitalist road. With such an understanding, the concept of "people" and "enemy" changed. The one time "ally" of the New Democratic Revolution—"enlightened gentry," "patriotic elements," "national bourgeoisie," "small businessmen and merchants," now became the targets of the proletarian socialist revolution. Thirdly, since the Socialist Transformation was thought to be a social revolution unprecedented in history, the successful fulfillment of such a transformation depend first and foremost on the transformation of the ideology of all participants. People needed to "transform their subjective world at the same time that they transformed the objective world." Ideological "remolding," self-criticism and denunciation were called for and practiced
among almost all levels of organization, especially in the cities and among intellectuals. In a sense, because virtually no one could be confident to declare that he or she was free of "bourgeois" influence, the Socialist Transformation and the new theory of the major contradiction rendered every member of the society, at least in the ideological sense, a potential revolutionary target.

During this period, the intellectuals, most of them trained in the West or in Western-style universities in China, were left to choose between getting "ideologically remolded" or becoming a target of the revolution. According to the Marxist class theory, the intelligentsia are not a class. They are a social stratum that is attached to and serves the interest of the ruling class. Intellectuals had served the "old society" under the Nationalist government and most of them had not changed their bourgeois world outlook, according to Mao. Based on this evaluation, they needed, more than anybody else, ideological remolding. And this meant their denunciation of imperialist, feudalist, and bourgeois democratic ideas and the cultivation of a whole-hearted willingness to unite with the workers and peasants and to serve the people and the people's government. The chief concern of academic inquiry or artistic creation was whether it served proletarian politics.

Academic research or artistic creation in the
service of proletarian politics had a number of meanings in those early years of the People's Republic. First, it invariably involved political criteria for academic and literary undertaking, and such criteria were first developed by Mao Zedong during the Yan'an Forum on Art and Literature. Mao made the dictum that literature and art are political tools and thoroughly subordinate to politics. He said that the political criteria involved for writers were whether they praise and eulogize the proletarian revolution and expose and denounce the dark and reactionary forces. A proletarian writer was bound to praise and eulogize the bright future of the proletariat. After liberation, a six-point political dictum was set forth with the understanding that in a socialist country, any scientific or artistic activity which ran counter to these six-points would not only be useless, they might even be counter-revolutionary, as was shown by the Campaign against Hu Feng and his group in 1955.

Secondly, proletarian politics meant a Marxist-Leninist world view of social development, especially the idea of class and class struggle. "Class struggle, some classes triumph, some classes perish--such is history; such is the history of human civilization for thousands of years." Intellectuals thus faced a choice in major social upheavals of class struggle: to side
with the proletariat—the "most advanced and progressive class in history," or with the bourgeoisie—the "decadent, dying and exploiting class." In reality, the choice was whether to support, or side with, the Party and government policy. Moreover, the notion of "applying the universal law of Marxism-Leninism to the concrete realities of China," first raised as a principle to avoid a mechanic and dogmatic application of Marxism-Leninism, soon became dogma itself. Marxist-Leninist formulas and stereotypes were imposed on academic fields for political purposes. Academics, especially political scientists, political economists, and historians, were encouraged to justify their research with Marxist-Leninist principles or at least fit their academic pursuit within a Marxist-Leninist framework.

Thirdly, very soon proletarian politics in practice would simply become a synonym for Party and government policies. To serve proletarian politics in effect meant to explain, propagate, and justify the Party's domestic and foreign policies. Political scientists and political economists started to provide theoretical justifications for the Socialist Transformation. Novels appeared to describe and glorify the collectivization movement in the countryside and the nationalization of industry and commerce. Historians started to reexamine and rewrite history along the lines of historical
materialism and of class struggle to justify the success of the New Democratic Revolution as well as the present socialist revolution.

Against such a background, we now can have a closer look at the situation and work of historians of the United States in China, their political status, their academic focus and interest, and their interpretations.

"Aggression" or "Friendship"

The U.S. policy toward and support for the Nationalist government in China's Civil War of the late 1940s put itself in direct opposition to the rising and victorious forces of the Chinese communists. Its policy of containment and non-recognition of the new People's Republic served as part of its global "Cold War" strategy in dealing with the emerging socialist countries after the end of World War II. Such a containment policy added scars to the wounds in the relationship between the two countries. And as the Korean War brought the United States and Chinese armed forces in direct confrontation on the battlefields, hostility became hatred, distrust became antagonism. With the deployment of the Seventh Fleet along the Taiwan Strait, and the signing of the U.S.-Taiwan Security Treaty in 1954, the United States, apart from being perceived as the bulwark of the world's imperialist and reactionary
forces, was now China's arch enemy. Exposure of the imperialist and aggressive nature of the United States, the "No. 1 imperialist country in the world," naturally became the dominating theme and focus in the study of U.S. history in general and Sino-American relations in particular.

"Proletarian politics" in fact had already set the scene and tone for historians even before the founding of the People's Republic. In August and September, 1949, Mao Zedong himself wrote a series of commentaries for the official Xinhua News Agency on the U.S. State Department's White Paper and Dean Acheson's Letter of Transmittal. Mao refuted the "phony U.S. friendship" toward the Chinese people ("'Friendship' or Aggression?", August 30) and called on the Chinese people to "Cast Away Illusions, Prepare for Struggle" (August 14). He specifically told the Chinese "democratic individualists," meaning intellectuals trained in the West who had illusions about the United States, to give up belief in the good will of the U.S. imperialists and their "hypocritical bourgeois democracy." In "The Bankruptcy of the Idealist Conception of History" (September 16), Mao suggested that Chinese historians compile a narrative history of their own to expose the American imperialist aggression against China in refutation of the claim of friendship by the United States. Subsequent
events in Korea and on the Taiwan Strait provided ready support for Mao's argument. It was only natural that anti-U.S. imperialism became the dominant sentiment in China and the exposure of U.S. imperialist aggression the guiding ideology and theme for Chinese historians and other social scientists.

A look at the titles of a number of articles will readily reveal that the focus of Chinese historians was heavily tilted toward the anti-U.S. and anti-aggression sentiment of this period. Articles such as "The Evolution of U.S. Imperialist Aggression Against China" (1951), "The Function of the Open Door Policy in the History of U.S. Imperialist Aggression Against China" (1951), "U.S. Aggression Against Taiwan in the Post War Years" (1958), "How Did the U.S. Imperialists Arm the Japanese Aggressors in the War of Resistance Against Japan" (1951), "Crime Committed by U.S. Imperialism in Helping Japan Invade China During the War of Resistance Against Japan" (1952) appeared regularly in such journals as The Teaching of History (Lishi Jiaoxue), Academia Monthly (Xueshu Yuekan), Teaching and Research (Jiaoxue Yu Yanjiu), and Historical Research (Lishi Yanjiu). But they were few in number compared to the large number of articles of similar nature published in newspapers and magazines as a direct propaganda endeavor.

During this period, a number of books were pub-
lished dealing with Sino-U.S. relations and American history. The most popular were A History of U.S. Aggression Against China (Meiguo QinHua Shi) (1951) by Liu Danian, head of the Institute of Modern History, CASS; A History of U.S. Aggression Against China (Meiguo QinHua Shi) (1953, 1956, in two volumes) by Qing Ruji, and Huang Shaoxian's A Concise American History (Meiguo Jianming Shi) (1953). Liu's book was an enlarged and revised edition of an earlier work under a different title. According to Liu, Sino-American relations had basically been peaceful prior to the Opium War (1840-1842). From the Opium War through the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905, the U.S. adopted a policy of aggression against China, but such a policy was mainly following the model of older imperialist powers such as Britain. Starting from the Russo-Japanese War, the United States gradually adopted a policy of exclusive domination over China, competing with Japan in between the two World Wars. The author's conclusion was that one of the chief characteristics of U.S. aggression in China was to keep its aggressive activities closely in step with the older imperialist powers: first Great Britain, then Japan.25

Qing's books had been meant to be a multi-volume work covering the whole period from 1784 to the time of the Chinese liberation. The author lived long enough
to publish only the first two volumes, one dealing with the period of 1784-1860 (1953) and the other with the period of 1861-1899. Qing's anti-American stance was considered "much more extreme" than that of Liu. Qing interpreted Sino-American relations as nothing but "a history of imperialist aggression, oppression, and exploitation." He further divided this aggressive history into five phases: 1) the period of "exploitation by commercial capitalism in the style of piratical looting" between 1784-1844; 2) the period of "equitable sharing of benefits" and "international condominium" with other imperialist powers between 1844-1860; 3) the period of attempting an American hegemony over China between 1861-1899; 4) the period of establishing American domination over China between 1900-1946; and 5) the period of "epilogue" for American imperialism after 1946. Qing differed from Liu in a number of major points. Qing did not agree that U.S. aggression in China largely followed the model of Britain and Japan. He argued that, from 1860 on, the goal of the United States was to keep China totally under U.S. domination and make China a U.S. colony. To him, the "Open Door" policy was the first milestone of such domination.

Other than the fact that the author held some "extremist views" with regard to the history of Sino-American relations, the published two volumes are well
documented. Sino-American relations were treated on a comprehensive basis that covered almost all major aspects of the political, social, military, economic, cultural and religious contacts.

Huang Shaoxiang's 502-page *Concise American History* was the first attempt by a Chinese historian to write a general history of the United States. As was made clear by the author in the preface, the purpose of the book was "to write about the rise and fall of the American bourgeoisie and the inevitable final victory of the working people following the central line of the capitalist development and the waging of class struggle." She claimed the basis of her analysis was "Marxist-Leninist ideology and methodology." She drew major references from the writings of the American "new historians"—Philip Foner, James Allen, Herbert Morais, Herbert Aptheker, etc. In terms of both research and analysis, it was considered to be a fairly comprehensive book. It also turned out to be not only the first, but also the only general history on America written by a Chinese for many years to come.

"Fundamental Structure" and "Practical Use"

In the early 1950s, these writings, plus a handful of articles which appeared in a few academic journals, represented almost all the published efforts by Chinese
historians. There were several reasons for the slackness of research in American history other than the political, ideological, and diplomatic reasons I have discussed earlier. Such a situation also reflected the influence of a deeper cultural heritage that looked upon China as the "middle kingdom," or center of universe. Even when the country was forced to open its doors after the second half of the 19th century, traditional forces had made it a principle that in terms of learning, "Chinese learning should remain the fundamental structure" and Western learning should be only for "practical use." While admitting to the necessity of learning from the West, this principle reflected a deep-rooted feeling of pride and superiority backed by several thousand years of Chinese culture. Learning from the West, although gradually unfolding in both scope and depth, constantly met with skepticism and resistance from the old scholar-literati and the successive ruling circles who tried to hold onto the traditional values. Changes were acceptable only within the Chinese tradition. With such a mentality, it was not surprising to find that the majority of Chinese students who had their education in the West majored in engineering or hard sciences, a tradition that has prevailed till this very day. Between 1905 and 1953, for example, a total of 31,430 Chinese students studied in the United States. Of these,
52.4 percent majored in engineering and the hard sciences. Only 11.7 percent studied the humanities, and 13.6 percent studied the social sciences.\textsuperscript{30}

The principle of "Chinese learning as the fundamental structure and Western learning for practical use" also reflected another deep-rooted cultural tradition in China: ideological control. Ideological control among the people in general, students and intellectuals in particular, was a norm with every regime in modern Chinese history. When 120 Chinese students were sent to Hartford, Connecticut, to study in 1872, they were accompanied on the one hand by old-style Chinese teachers to prepare them for the examinations in the Classics, and on the other by an obscurantist scholar whose mission was to see to it that Western contact did not undermine the student's Confucian morals.\textsuperscript{31}

Almost three-quarters of a century later, in 1944, the Education Ministry of the Nationalist government stipulated that "all the thoughts and deeds of self-supporting students residing abroad must absolutely be subject to the direction and control of the Superintendent of Students of the Embassy."\textsuperscript{32} With the attempted revival of Confucianism, the Nationalist government also tried to suppress the rising liberal ideas among young students and intellectuals through planting secret agents in universities and through the
activities of the Kuomintang Youth Corps, whose branches within the student body tried to propagate the official ideology and denounce deviant thought. For the People's Republic, political campaigns and movements became an effective means of ideological control.

Traditional suspicion about Western values and the practice of ideological control gave scholars who were trained in the West a hard time, although this was more true in the fields of humanities and social sciences than in natural sciences. The experiences of Tao Xingzhi (Tao Hsing-chih), Hu Shi (Hu Shih) and Feng Youlan (Feng Yulan), all educated in the United States, are a few ready examples to prove this point.

Tao Xingzhi (1891-1940), an educationalist and a student of John Dewey at Columbia, started a mass education movement in rural China, but was suppressed by the Kuomintang government because it feared the rise of the political consciousness of the people. Hu Shi (1891-1962), a graduate of Cornell and Columbia and also a student of Dewey during the First World War, had been a vanguard during the May Fourth movement of 1919 for the promotion of the spoken language as a written medium for scholarship and communication, and for the use of the scientific method of thought and criticism. But because he belonged to the overthrown regime (ambassador to the U.S.), cherished hope for American democracy and
was opposed to Communist ideology, he was condemned for his "bourgeois idealism" and branded as one of the "handful of intellectuals" that were controlled by the United States. Feng Youlan (1895-?), philosopher and a graduate of Columbia in 1923, was criticized in the early 1950s for his basic philosophic ideas reflected in his major writings published in the 1940s, because they were not in conformity with Marxist principles.

The low productivity in the fields of American history and history and humanities in general can also be attributed to a radically changing system of higher education. Major universities in China already suffered from the long years of war in the 1930s and 1940s. After the founding of the People's Republic in 1949, there was a major reform and reshuffling of the institutions of higher learning between 1952-1957. The direct result was a drastic reduction of departments and disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. The number of students who majored in humanities, social sciences and business, for example, fell from 47.6 percent in 1947, to 22.5 percent in 1952, 9.6 percent in 1957 and 7.6 percent in 1962.

However, judging from the turbulent and changing social and educational situations in the 1940s and early 1950s, we must admit that the limited number of publications on American history signified an initial endeavor
on the part of Chinese historians to study American history and the history of Sino-American relations. Such an endeavor did give rise to gradually growing, though in a zig-zag manner, interest in American history, be it interpreted from a positive or a negative viewpoints.

"Historical Materialism" or "Bourgeois Idealism"

In most part of the 1950s, it can be argued that Mao's series of articles commenting on the U.S. State Department's White Paper set the basic scene and tone for research in American history and the history of Sino-American relations. The underlying theory for a Marxist-Leninist historical inquiry was historical materialism enunciated by Mao himself in the above-mentioned articles and elsewhere. Historical materialism had several meanings. First, according to this theory, there exists a general pattern or universal law for social and historical development. It is the modes of production of material life that determine the general process of social, political and ideological life. Secondly, in a class society, class struggle is the direct driving force for social development. "To interpret history from this viewpoint is historical materialism; standing in opposition to this viewpoint is historical idealism." Writing history along the line of class conflict and class struggle would be following the principle of
historical materialism. Failure to do so would be falling into the "bourgeois idealist" concept of history. Thirdly, the broad masses of the people, not "heroes"—emperors, generals, ministers—are the real makers of history. "The people, and the people alone, are the motive force in the making of world history."39

Under such a principle, China's own history as well as the history of Sino-foreign relations needed to be rewritten. Historical figures needed to be reappraised. Heroes might have been portrayed as villains, and villains heroes. For teaching and research in Sino-American relations, Mao in fact called directly for the writing of a textbook to expose the imperialist aggression:

"The history of aggression against China by U.S. imperialism, from 1840 when it helped the British in the Opium War to the time it was thrown out of China by the Chinese people, should be written into a concise textbook for the education of Chinese youth."40 However, he dealt specifically and in a categorical way with the major historical events in Sino-American relations, which became the starting points of argument for most historians in the two decades to come. The U.S. "helped the British in the Opium War" in 1840;41 the Wangxia Treaty of 1844 compelled China to allow extraterritoriality and started the U.S. "spiritual aggression that extended from religious to 'philan-
thetic' and cultural undertakings;" the doctrine of the Open Door and the so-called "respect for the administrative and territorial integrity of China" meant domination by the U.S. and slaughtering of the Chinese people; "imperialist aggression shattered the fond dreams of the Chinese about learning from the West." As a result, we find that out of the 43 published articles in the 1940s, 33 directly addressed the topic of U.S. imperialist aggression, with 22 on U.S. aggression. Between 1960 and 1966, 73 articles were published on U.S. history, 45 of which were on U.S. aggression (with 17 on aggression against China). Sino-U.S. Diplomatic Interactions While the topic of U.S. imperialist aggression and domination remained a central theme among Chinese historians in the 1950s and 1960s, the specific focus and areas of interest shifted in close connection with the changing official position in its foreign relations. In 1951, for example, the year when China and the U.S. were engaged on the Korean battlefield, 10 out of 15 articles published were on U.S. aggression against China. This was part of the propaganda drive of the movement to "resist U.S. and support Korea" and to justify China's
sending of troops to Korea. Articles on U.S. aggression against Korea in history appeared in 1952 and 1953. After the armistice was signed in 1953 and France's withdrawal from Indo-China, there was a short period of relaxation in China's relations with the West. As China's domestic situation stabilized and the first Five-Year Plan (1953-1957) of economic development went underway, China started to make an effort to expand its foreign relations. The "five principles of peaceful coexistence" was formulated by Premier Zhou Enlai at the Geneva conference of 1954 and reiterated at the Bandong Conference in 1955. In line with the spirit of peaceful coexistence, China and the United States started their marathon ambassadorial talks that would last for 15 years without much fruition. However, this changed situation witnessed a clear drop in the number of articles on the topic of aggression between 1954-1957 (only two or three yearly).

During the 1960s, especially after Mao's differentiation of the "three worlds," China's diplomatic front shifted to the Third World: countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, a direct result of China's breaking away from the Soviet Union. The emphasis of struggle was against both imperialism and "social imperialism" (meaning the Soviet Union). We therefore find 14 articles published in 1963 and 1964 exposing U.S.
aggression against Cuba, Panama, the Dominican Republic and other Latin American countries. As the Civil Rights movement developed in the United States, we find eight articles written on the history of Black slavery and racial discrimination and published in 1963.

However, despite the heavy influence of the climate of opinion in domestic and diplomatic policies, there was a definite, though occasional, effort on the part of some Chinese historians to break away from the stereotyped, simplified and limited scope of coverage on U.S. history. There were attempts for a more objective and balanced interpretation of U.S. history and the history of Sino-American relations. In 1957, for example, The Teaching of History (Lishi Jiaoxue) and The Teaching of History in High Schools (Zhongxue Lishi Jiaoxue) each published an article on the American War of Independence. One was written by Liu Zuochang titled, "Reasons for the Victory of the North American War of Independence." The other was by Zhuo Miao titled, "The Progressiveness of North American Declaration of Independence." The significance of the Declaration of Independence had received positive and fairly extensive comment from Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. Even Mao himself mentioned in one of his articles refuting Dean Acheson's Letter of Transmittal that in the American Declaration of Independence, "Washington, Jefferson and others made the
revolution against Britain because of British oppression and exploitation of the Americans." This should have inspired Chinese historians to do some serious and scholarly study of the American Revolution. But under the strong anti-U.S. sentiment and propaganda, writing about the American revolution was at least "out of tune," so to speak, if not totally impossible.

"Hundred Flowers" or "One Flower"

The appearance of studies on the progressiveness and significance of the American War of Independence could be attributed to the short period of ideological emancipation in 1956-1957. The unveiling of the socialist construction movement in the form of the first Five-Year Plan called for the mobilization of all social forces, especially the intellectuals. The policy of "redemption with high wages" adopted towards the engineers, technicians, professors, and other professionals. At the same time that "ideological remolding" was emphasized for the intellectuals, the Party in early 1956 held a conference on the question of intellectuals. It was an obvious effort on the part of the government to improve the living, working and academic research conditions of intellectuals in order to encourage their initiative and contribution to socialist construction.
The "old" intellectuals had complaints over their plight in the new regime. The Hungarian incident of October, 1956, growing signs of Party and government bureaucracy and signs of dissatisfaction of the intellectuals led to Mao's idea of the differentiation of two kinds of contradictions--contradictions among the people, which are not antagonistic, and contradictions between the people and the enemy. To enliven the literary and artistic fields, he also enunciated the principle of "letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend." To solve the non-antagonistic contradictions, the Party started a movement in March 1956 for "the rectification of the Party's working style," a movement to encourage, through the media and grass-root Party organization meetings, the broad masses of the people to criticize the Party and the government. This was a short-lived movement that quickly turned into an anti-Rightist movement in May of the same year. However, there had been a year-long emphasis on speaking up under the principle of "a hundred flowers" and "a hundred schools of thought," which contributed to a temporary emancipation of people's minds in the fields of academic research.

Dedication to serious academic research by some historians, though extremely few in number, was undoubtedly another important factor that led to the
publication of scholarly works. Liu Zuochang published his *A Short History of the American War of Independence* (Meigu Duli Zhanzheng Jianshi) in 1956, the first ever written by a Chinese historian on this topic. His article, "Reasons for the Victory of the North American War of Independence," appeared in the following year and it showed that "even some of the earlier studies of American history contained a scholarly approach and were not all propagandistic." According to Liu's analysis, the American War of Independence was victorious because it was fought for a justifiable cause—to free itself from British colonial and oppressive rule. Other reasons that contributed to the victory included: the successful waging of an extensive people's war; the favorable topography of land; the internal unity of the revolutionary camp; the devotion of the revolutionary leaders and the support from the European governments and peoples.52

The Anti-Rightist movement "had an unfortunate aftermath because it mistakenly relegated a number of intellectuals, patriotic personnel and Party cadres to the category of 'Rightists'." As a result of this movement, the "hundred flowers" became one flower—the official rhetoric, and the "hundred schools" were reduced first to two: the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, and then to one: the official school. Such an aftermath
would last and occasionally intensify until after the Cultural Revolution of 1966-1976. But the Anti-Rightist movement did not solve the problems that gave rise to the short-lived Party rectification endeavor, such as the growing signs of Party and government bureaucracy, potential criticism of the Party's policies, discontent among intellectuals, and other so-called "non-antagonist" contradictions in the country. If anything, the treatment of a non-antagonist contradiction as antagonistic in the Anti-Rightist movement served only to temporarily silence the criticism and dissatisfaction of the people over the Party's policies. The subsequent economic frenzy of the Great Leap Forward and communization movement in the countryside of 1958, and the suppression of the dissident group within the Party represented by Peng Dehuai, the Defense Minister, in the following year "seriously damaged the democratic life within the Party from the Central Committee to the grass-root units."54

In the fields of historiography, the result of the Great Leap Forward was the advocacy of a number of principles in historical research. The first was the principle of "directing historical research with theory"—meaning the theory of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought. The second was the principle "to emphasize the present and deemphasize the past"—historical research
serving the present proletarian politics. The third was the principle of depicting the laboring people, rather than the emperors, generals, or ministers, as the makers of history. And the fourth principle was to join with the masses in writing popular history (histories of families, villages, communes and factories) rather than pure academic research.55

"Historicism" or "Class Viewpoint"

The economic frenzy of 1958, coupled with succeeding years of drought, flood and other natural calamities and the withdrawal in 1960 of all the Soviet engineers and technicians and their blueprints for as many as 1,000 major industrial projects, resulted in a serious economic crisis that forced the government to adopt a policy of "economic adjustment." In the rural areas, the basic accounting unit had to retreat from the level of the People's Communes back to the level of the Production Team of about 20 to 40 households. "Private plots" and "free markets" were permitted to subsidize the peasant economy. Thousands of city workers and employees of country origin were sent back to their native villages to engage in agricultural production. In the cities, a bonus system was adopted as an incentive to bring out workers' initiatives. More importantly, facing the growing feelings of disappointment and the drastic
decline of people's enthusiasm in socialist construction because of political oppression, economic disaster, inflation, and starvation; the Party and government had to adopt a number of measures to alleviate such a situation.

First, the Party started a rectification movement in 1960-1961 to fight against the so-called "five erroneous working styles" of egalitarianism, commandism, privilege seeking, blind direction of production without due regard for local conditions, and exaggeration of targets and results. Secondly, political rehabilitation was ordered in early 1962 for those who had been branded as "right-deviationists" for criticizing the Great Leap Forward in 1959. Those who had been carrying the "hats" of "Rightists" since 1957 were also relieved of their "hats" in 1962. Such political rehabilitations involved a fairly large number of intellectuals, whose importance was again emphasized. In a conference on the work of science and technology held in March, 1962 (the Canton Conference), it was for the first time established since 1949 that intellectuals were themselves "laborers who served the people and the proletariat," and therefore the category of "bourgeois intellectuals" should be done away with.

Thirdly, the quality of education was being emphasized after much talk about the principle of
"education serving proletarian politics and being integrated with productive labor" during the Great Leap period. In 1961, in a directive on college and university work, the Party's Central Committee made it clear that in an institution of higher learning, teaching and study should be the major concern, that Party organizations at all levels should unite all intellectuals in running higher education, and that the principle of "a hundred flowers" and "a hundred schools of thought" should be put into effect. As a result, college enrollment shifted from an emphasis on admitting the children of workers and peasant families at the expense of lowering the level of high school performance to an emphasis on meeting the qualifications of college enrollment. Substantative curricula, including the teaching of Western literature, culture, ideas, and history were restored or introduced, and professors had much more say in deciding on readings and curricula.

In line with the new development in teaching, academic research was also emphasized. More and more academic journals came into being and many of them were published by universities and colleges. The country's Premier, Zhou Enlai, it is reported, encouraged the study of Western history, politics, economics and literature. He asked the Ministry of Higher Education to designate universities in various regions to specialize in
different fields. As a result, U.S. history was emphasized in Beijing University and Nankai University in Tianjin; U.S. literature and German history were emphasized in Shandong University in Jinan; and U.S. economics was emphasized in Wuhan University.59

These developments were the key factors that contributed to a much freer atmosphere for academic research and discussion. And in the notable debate on "historicism" and "class viewpoint" in the field of Chinese historiography, the idea of "historicism" advocated by Jian Bozan and other leading historians was accepted by many and had a prevailing impact, though again temporarily. Between 1961-1963, Jian, chairman of the History Department and vice-president of Beijing University, and a number of established historians lamented the one-sided, oversimplified, and absolutist interpretation of history based only on class viewpoint. He pointed to the one-sidedness of the slogan of "directing historical research with theory," saying that "the starting point of research is not principle but particular concrete facts." Even Marxism could become dogmatic, he said, if its theories replaced rather than illuminated historical data and cultural patterns. Then, "rich, colorful, concrete, and lively history has been turned into a monotonous, lifeless, and insipid dogma and into a desert."60
Although Jian and a number of leading historians would shortly be criticized and even persecuted to death as the Cultural Revolution unfolded itself, their academic viewpoint of "historicism" was shared by many, and the very fact of the outspokenness of historians showed that this was another relatively free period of academic research and intellectual pursuit. A similar trend of development in the field of American history was obvious, judging from the increase of publications between 1961-1965 (see Figures I and II).

There were a number of significant characteristics of Chinese historiography on American history in this period. First, while aggression was still a dominant topic in the writings of Chinese historians, especially as the United States escalated its war in Vietnam, there were pronounced efforts in advocating a more objective and balanced treatment of U.S. history and the history of Sino-American relations. The best example was an article written by Deng Tuo, head of the Beijing Municipal Party Committee Secretariat and editor for its official theoretical journal, Frontline (Qianxian), in 1961. Being one of a series of 153 essays that appeared in a column called "Evening Talks at Yanshan" (Yanshan Yehua) of the Beijing Evening News between 1961 and 1962, it deals with the topic of "Who Discovered America?" Citing a number of ancient historical records, Deng argued that
America was first discovered by the Chinese by way of the Aleutian Islands in Alaska, in the sixth century, a thousand years before Columbus. He also speculated that the culture of the Aztecs of Mexico had come from ancient China. He was therefore pointing to a long and important tradition of Chinese-American friendship. 

Secondly, U.S. aggression against China was much less written about than U.S. aggression in Latin America, largely due to the Cuban Crisis and the dispute over the Panama Canal. In 1963-64, for example, 14 out of 40 articles listed by Yang Shengmao and Lin Jingfen were on U.S. aggression in Latin America. These include the study of the Monroe Doctrine, Spanish-American War, aggression against Cuba, Panama and the Dominican Republic, etc. Thirdly, there was a growing tendency among Chinese historians to widen their scope of interest in American history. The topic of aggression was treated along the lines of broader perspective on American diplomatic history that led to more complicated, less stereotypical conclusions. More important was the attention given to the political and social history of the United States. In 1963, for example, out of 19 listed articles, nine were about U.S. domestic policy. These included four articles about the Black struggle in America, three on Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, and two on American farmers and agriculture policy. In
this period occasional articles were published about the Civil War, anti-labor legislation, the American Communist Party and Browderism, etc.

A few book-length monographs on American history that appeared in this period are worth mentioning. One was the first volume of *A History of Foreign Imperialist Aggression Against China (Diguo Zhuyi QinHua Shi)* in 1961, produced by a research group headed by Liu Danian and Shao Xunzheng at the Institute of World History, CASS. Covering the period of 1840-1895, the book draws its material largely from primary sources and therefore is considered "far more rigorous" in the treatment of historical materials; it also involves "less propagandistic phraseology" than did its predecessors.64

Another book was *An Anthology of Literature on the Movement to Oppose U.S. Restrictive Laws Against Chinese Laborers (Fanmei Huagong Jinyue Wenji)* edited by writer and historian, A Ying. Although the book focuses on anti-U.S. feelings and Chinese nationalism, it has a rich collection of historical accounts, personal reminiscences and published literature that records the lives and sufferings of Chinese laborers in the United States.65

Because of the repeated occurrence of political movements and the potential danger of being branded as "bourgeois intellectuals," "rightists," "counter-
revolutionaries" on the basis of one's writing or publication, generally speaking there were only a very limited number of book-length, comprehensive writings on American history published in the first two decades of the People's Republic. Many historians and professionals, instead of writing their own evaluations of history and risking political discrimination, engaged themselves in the translation of books written by American historians. This, however, was significant in a number of ways. It added to the published literature on American history in general. Although the leading historians of the U.S. in China were bilingual, a considerable number of others still had to rely on translations in their research. These translated works were important channels for the introduction, though rather selectively, of American historiography. Some of these translated works on popular American history reached a far wider readership, and therefore had much more influence. Major authors translated into Chinese in the 1950s and 1960s included: William Z. Foster, Herbert Aptheker, James S. Allen, William Du Bois, Victor Perlo, Philip S. Foner, Harold V. Faulkner, etc.

The Cultural (Counter) Revolution

The Cultural Revolution of 1966-1976 was in every sense a cultural counter-revolution. Universities,
colleges and high schools closed down. Academic and popular journals stopped publication. Book-publishing concentrated on the publishing of Chairman Mao's works, policy statements and government directives. Almost all printed media copied from the Party Central Committee's People's Daily, Red Flag magazine, and the army's The People's Liberation Army Daily. Eight hundred million Chinese people had only a handful of "proletarian" movies and eight "modern revolutionary model operas" to watch for "political education" since the word "entertainment" was considered to represent bourgeois ideology. Professors and students alike were sent down to floors of factories, farms and the countryside to be "reeducated." Academic research came to a total standstill. Between the latter half of 1966, when the Cultural Revolution was in its full swing, and 1972, the year Nixon visited China, not even one serious research article appeared on the subject of American history. Even if one or two had been written, they would not have found any place for publication, for academic journals in those six years were non-existent.

How did such a gigantic scale of social disorder come about? What was the ideology behind this unprecedented "man-made disaster" in the name of "revolution?" The tragedy of the Cultural Revolution was a logical development of the inner-Party political and
ideological strife that had been apparent since the late 1950s.

As soon as there were signs of recovery from the economic dislocation of 1959-1961, Mao started to emphasize the key role of class struggle again. At the Party's Tenth Plenary Session held in 1962, he reiterated the idea that class and class struggle not only existed in the whole historical period of socialism, but he suggested that it might be occasionally quite acute. He called on the whole country to "never forget class struggle," as a counter-offensive against the opponents of "historicism" and the political force behind them. As he saw it, the liberal policies adopted in the countryside and in the cities between 1960 and 1962 were signs of "bourgeois restoration" and showed the "revisionist tendencies" of some elements in the Party. To prevent such restoration, he initiated the Socialist Education Movement of 1963-1965. With its professed aims of enhancing collectivization and ending the corruption of local cadres, the SEM was basically a movement in the countryside and it affected only a limited number of selected areas. It was not potent enough to counter the forces within the Party that initiated and supported the liberal policies.

The SEM itself signified two opposing views in the Party's top leadership. Mao drafted his "Ten Points"
directive in May 1963 and stressed the methodology of "setting the masses in motion"—organizing the poor and lower-middle peasants as the chief revolutionary forces of the movement. However, his first "Ten Points" were countered by two other "Ten Points." One was called the "Later Ten Points," drafted by Deng Xiaoping in September, 1963; the other, "Revised Later Ten Points," was drafted by Liu Shaoqi, the head of state, in September, 1964. Rather than encouraging the mobilization of the peasant masses, they emphasized conducting the movement under centralized leadership—through the organizations of "work teams" sent down to the countryside. In January, 1965, Mao issued a new directive of "Twenty-Three Articles" and introduced the idea of the struggle between the socialist and capitalist roads and directed the focus of the movement be on "those people in positions of authority within the Party who take the capitalist road." The SEM therefore became the prelude to the Cultural Revolution and the "Twenty-Three Articles" signalled the massive political persecution of 1966-67.

On a personal plane, Mao's ideas of the necessity of continued revolution in the sphere of the superstructure—politics, ideology, art, literature, the state apparatus—and of a "cultural revolution" reflected, at least in part, his concern of reestablishing his
Personal authority in the Party. After he gave up the presidency of the government in 1959, he had been working in what he termed "the second-front," leaving the "forefront" of governmental affairs to Liu Shaoqi, the new president, and Deng Xiaoping, the Secretary-General of the Party. Liu, Deng, and Chen Yun, the Party's senior economist, worked successfully to revive the dislocated national economy caused by the economic frenzy of the Great Leap Forward. As a result of their work, there was a steady increase of grain output between 1962 and 1965. Industrial production grew at an average annual rate of approximately 11 percent. There was also phenomenal progress in education, public health, science and technology (China exploded her first atom bomb in 1964, for example). 67

The success of Liu, Deng and Chen Yun was an undeclared negation of the so-called "Three Red Banners" (the People's Commune, the Great Leap Forward, and the mass production of steel). Mao was conscious of the decollectivization tendencies of Liu, Deng and Chen, and of their tendency to emphasize intellectuals and professionals. But his effort to regain authority and control in the Party through the Socialist Education Movement was largely prevented by Liu and Deng. He therefore turned to the People's Liberation Army and found the ready support of Defense Minister Lin Biao.
Using the P.L.A. publication, the P.L.A. Daily, he was able to build up a personal cult that allowed him to regain control and start the Cultural Revolution.

While Mao criticized Liu and Deng's economic policy as a retreat from the socialist road back to the capitalist road, how did he evaluate the recovery of education and the role of intellectuals on the eve of the Cultural Revolution? In February, 1964, he complained about the "book-learning" that was divorced from social reality and revolutionary practice, saying that such learning was corrupting both the minds and bodies of the young generation. He therefore demanded a reduction of the period of formal education and again stressed the combination of education and productive labor. He also demanded to reform the existing school system, the curricula, methods of teaching and examinations, saying that true knowledge came from the practical experiences of real life and not from formal education. Mao labelled the Ministry of Culture as the "Kingdom of the Dead," and the Ministry of Public Health as the "Ministry of Urban Gentlemen's Health." With regard to intellectuals, he said in June, 1964, that in the past 15 years, the intellectuals...

...have acted as high and mighty bureaucrats, have not gone to the workers, peasants, and soldiers, and have not reflected socialist reality and socialist construction. In recent years, they have slid right down to the brink of revisionism.
Unless they remold themselves in real earnest in the future, they are bound to become a group like the Hungarian Petofi Club.72

With this characterization of the role of intellectuals in China, Mao rallied support in the army, the Party and universities to wage an all-round counter attack against what Maurice Meisner calls the "Thermidorians" who were trying to negate the Great Leap Forward. As in the Anti-Rightist movement, intellectuals inside and outside the Party became the first targets. Historians in Beijing were the first group to be attacked. These historians, such as Jian Bozan, Wu Han, Deng Tuo, etc., had been most outspoken in upholding "historicism" against "class viewpoint," in direct conflict with Mao's thesis of class struggle. They had been highly critical of the Great Leap Forward. Organizationally, they were key members of the Beijing Municipal Government headed by Peng Zhen, who was considered a close follower of Liu and Deng's liberal policies. Their downfall was therefore a prerequisite in discrediting the forces behind them--Liu and Deng.
Chinese research in American history entered a completely new phase in 1978 as the result of an "ideological emancipation." Since then, though there have been short moments of hesitation on the part of historians and other intellectuals with regard to the degree of freedom in expressing themselves, the general trend has been to speak up, to criticize, to argue and debate. Before going into a more detailed examination of the post-Mao Chinese historiography on American history, a brief description of the impact of this "ideological emancipation," the underlying force that has created the flourishing of intellectual life in general and historical research in particular, is necessary.

The death of Mao and the arrest of the Gang of Four (referring to Zhang Chunqiao, Jiang Qing, Yao Wenyuan and Wang Hongwen) signified the end of a political era that was haunted by political movements, economic frenzy and political persecution in the name of "never-ending class struggle." How should Mao and his era be evaluated became a crucial and unavoidable question for the new leaders. To maintain Mao's personal cult and
stick to Hua Guofeng, Mao's immediate successor's "whateverist" principle ("whatever Chairman Mao decided, we must steadfastly support; whatever Chairman Mao directed, we must unhesitatingly carry out") was clearly a political and ideological self-confinement that would prevent any possible re-evaluation of the turbulent and chaotic ten years of Cultural Revolution that the Chinese people had just gone through. Deng Xiaoping saw the rising sentiment among the Chinese people for political stability, democracy and economic improvement, and took a number of steps as soon as he was restored to leadership in the Party in July, 1977. The first measure he took was to reverse the "reactionary" verdict against the participants of the April Fifth Tiananmen incident of the previous year from "counter-revolutionary" to "revolutionary." The people who had gathered in Tiananmen Square to commemorate the death of the late Premier, Zhou Enlai, were in fact showing their resentment against the Gang of Four.

The second step he took was the rehabilitation of most of the Party and government leaders who had been branded as "capitalist roaders," "revisionists," "counter-revolutionaries," etc. This was followed by the rehabilitation of all who had been wronged during previous political movements, including the "Rightists." Political "hats" of all kinds, such as "capitalists,"
"Rightists," "landlord," "rich peasants," "renegades," "reactionary," "bad elements," etc., were abolished. He then started to shift the focus of the Party and government to economic construction. To adopt and carry out these drastic measures, and many others that were to come, an "ideological emancipation" was necessary to break away from Mao's personality cult and reevaluate his policies. In response to a surge in demand for more democracy and a theoretical debate on the criterion of truth among theoreticians, the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Party Central Committee held in December, 1978, called for an "ideological emancipation" and stressed the principle that "practice is the sole criterion for testing truth." It was also established in this Plenary Session that the central task of the Party and the whole country was to realize the Four Modernizations of agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defense.

This "ideological emancipation" had two far-reaching effects on Chinese political and intellectual life. The first was the removal of Mao from the status of "saint" to that of a "human being." Since all human beings make mistakes, so did Mao. This was the underlying ideology that justified the series of policies undertaken to undo the wrongs of the Maoist era that
involved hundreds of thousands of cadres, intellectuals and ordinary citizens. It was also the underlying ideology for the total negation of the Cultural Revolution, the renouncement of "class struggle being the key link," the "opening up" to the outside world, and the enforcement of economic and political reforms in subsequent years.

Secondly, the "ideological emancipation" unleashed an unprecedented wakening and flourishing in China's intellectual life. Although there were occasional attempts to control and discourage the new surge of intellectual freedom, like the "anti-spiritual pollution" campaign of 1980, they never culminated in a political movement similar to those of the Mao-era. The on-going mainstream has been to emphasize more intellectual freedom. Writers and artists have been most sensitive and outspoken in this period. "Wound literature" appeared soon after the downfall of the Gang of Four, focusing on the scars and wounds inflicted on the people by the Cultural Revolution and other previous political movements. The "literature of exposure" followed, which exposed bureaucracy, corruption and evils of Party and government officials at various levels. Going hand in hand with the "literature of exposure" was a "muckraking" endeavor of journalists, and their stories appeared in leading newspapers and magazines. Different and controversial art forms and styles were being adopted and experimented with. Stream
of consciousness, realism, and expressionism in literature, impressionism, neorealism, and abstract expressionism in the visual arts were all being explored. Freedom of artistic creation, of literature, of the press, of academic research and discussion, and most important of all, freedom of speech, were discussed not only among intellectuals, but stressed by Party and government leaders. "Freedom of literary creation," for example, was formally encouraged by Hu Qili, secretary of the Party Secretariat, who spoke on behalf of the Central Committee at the Fourth Congress of Writers held between December 29, 1984 and January 5, 1985. It was subsequently stressed also by Party general-secretary Hu Yaobang and Deng Xiaoping.

New Surge of Intellectual Life

Some of the results of the "ideological emancipation" are phenomenal:

Newspapers: between January 1980 and March 1985, 1,008 newspapers were established (with a total of 1,700 by January 1986); Periodicals: between 1980 and 1984, 1,224 new periodicals were published, with a total of 3,415 by May 1984; Book-publishing tripled its annual output and sales
between 1981 and 1985 to nearly 15 billion copies of 46,000 books. 77 Between 1980 and September 1986, 288 new publishing houses were established with a total of 480 by September 1986. 78

The flourishing of academic research can be seen from the increasing number of academic journals being published in China. According to China, Facts and Figures published in May 1982, of the 2,192 periodicals published that year, 1,384 were on natural sciences and technology, 210 on social sciences, 265 on literature and art, 179 on culture and education. 79 These must have had a phenomenal increase, though not necessarily proportionately, by 1984, when the total of periodicals reached 3,415.

It is therefore not difficult to realize why, against this background of rising intellectual freedom, Chinese research on American history took a completely new turn. As I mentioned earlier in the paper and also indicated in Table II, the number of research papers published between 1977-1984 was almost three times as great as the total of the previous 27 years. Through my rough estimation based on the bibliography of Huadong Normal University, these research articles appeared in 105 academic journals. About 80 percent of these journals either resumed their publication or were newly established in the two years of 1979 and 1980. Of these,
there were 23 journals directly devoted to history and American studies. The most famous are: Historical Research (Lishi Yanjiu), Teaching History (Lishi Jiaoxue), World History (Shijie Lishi), Literature, History, Philosophy (Wen Shi Zhe), and the journals of leading universities and colleges.


Five anthologies of scholarly articles on American history and the history of Sino-American relations were

Roughly during the same period of time, over a dozen of books written by American historians were translated into Chinese. These include authors such as Samuel E. Morrison, H.S. Commager, William E. Leuchtenburg, Arthur S. Link, William B. Cotton, Peter Duignan and Alvin Rabushka, Robert Dallek, R. F. de Bedts, Dwight L.
How do Chinese historians interpret American history now? What areas of interest do they focus on? How different are their interpretations now as compared to those of the first two periods? What methodology do the Chinese historians employ in their research? How do they evaluate American historiography? What problems do they face? These questions need to be further discussed.

"Friendship" or "Aggression"

For a long time Chinese interpretation of U.S. diplomatic history and the history of Sino-American relations was a sensitive and sometimes accurate barometer of the actual relations between the two countries. The hostility and confrontation between the two countries for 30 years created a sentiment of hatred, misunderstanding and distrust. Chinese historians, partly out of patriotism and nationalism, partly under the repeated political pressure of "putting politics in command," closely followed the direction of official domestic and diplomatic policies. In the first two decades after the founding of the People's Republic, U.S. imperialist aggression was the single dominant theme. Of the 74 titles published between 1950-1971 listed by Yang
Shengmao and Lin Jingfen, for example, nearly every one treated the topic of U.S. imperialist aggression. Aggression was both the starting point and the conclusion in the discussion of U.S. relations with China, Taiwan, Korea, the Philippines, Japan, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Panama, Mexico, Vietnam, etc. Aggression and imperialist domination was described as the underlying ideology behind the westward movement, the Open Door policy, the Monroe Doctrine, the Cold War, the Peace Corps, the Vietnam War, the arms race, etc.

Although aggression is still a topic in post-Mao Chinese historiography, there have been noticeable changes in the interpretation of major Sino-American interactions in history. A typical example was the publication of an article in 1979 on "Some Questions Concerning the History of Sino-American Relations" by Wang Xi, professor of history at Fudan University. In this article, which appeared in World History (Shijie Lishi), Wang introduced a number of new interpretations in the history of Sino-American relations. Of China's territorial integrity, he says "the United States was the only one of the major imperialist powers which did not occupy China's territory." To him the Open Door policy had two major aspects: the demand for an equal chance for trade relations with China and the advocacy of respect for China's territorial and sovereign integrity. Wang
points out that because the Open Door policy was partly meant to "counteract the forces of other imperialist powers in the Far East," it had some positive function "in restricting and delaying imperialist aggression against China."\(^\text{80}\)

Wang's article, which also discusses the contribution of American missionaries in China and the traditional friendly contact between the Chinese and American peoples, aroused much controversy among Chinese historians owing to its unorthodox viewpoints. Ding Mingnan and Zhang Zhenkun, research fellows at the Institute of Modern History, made a point-by-point refutation of Wang's arguments and concluded, not without the tone of an overpowering political debate of the Mao-era, that Wang's article represented "a backward movement" in the research of the history of Sino-American relations (meaning a retreat from the "established" interpretation of major events in Sino-American relations).\(^\text{81}\) In an article entitled "Research in the History of Sino-American Relations--Moving Forward or Backward?" published in Studies in Modern History (Jindaishi Yanjiu) in the same year, they pointed out that Wang's analysis of the Open Door policy was based on a misunderstanding of the original wording of John Hay's note of 1899. He mistook "preserving" for "respecting" and "administrative entity" for "sovereign
integrity" and thus he was guilty of "Changing the essential nature of the Open Door policy." According to them, the Open Door policy was "totally imperialistic in nature."^82

Luo Rongqu of Beijing University pointed out an "important factual error" in the study of the Open Door policy by most Chinese historians. This was the mistranslated phrase of "preserving Chinese territorial and administrative entity" into "the preservation of the territorial and sovereign integrity" of China. The choice of words, according to Luo, in John Hay's original statement was therefore not without significance. But taking a much more balanced viewpoint, Luo holds that the evaluation of the Open Door policy should be made "with reference to both the intention of the American government, the actual effect of the policy in other international arena, and the historical impact of said policy on Chinese foreign policy.^83

Xiang Liling of Shanghai Normal University welcomed the debate over questions concerning Sino-American relations. But he argued that the question facing Chinese historians was not whether to move forward or backward in the terms of Ding and Zhang. Rather it was a question of how to move forward. Thus, Xiang implied that the reappraisal of certain historical facts away from the orthodox explanations did not necessarily mean a move backward. In his article entitled "How to Move
Forward--Some Questions Regarding Research in the History of Sino-American Relations," Xiang offers a few guidelines which he thinks are crucial to an overall and balanced analysis of Sino-American relations. These are: 1) The United States China policy was an on-going and changing process closely related to its political and social development. Any simplified treatment or conclusion should be avoided. 2) Even during the period when an aggressive relationship with China was predominant, certain specific U.S. policies such as Wilson's decision to quit the international banking group in 1913, or U.S. aid to China in the Anti-Japanese War, were beneficial to China. 3) The policy of a country may change drastically even when its social structure remains the same. 4) Individual Americans might have played either a positive or a negative role with regard to China, whether they represented the United States government or not. 84

In line with this new spirit of "overall and balanced" treatment of the history of Sino-American relations, Chinese historians have clearly given up the stereotyped labelling of "imperialist aggression." More important, they have widened their coverage to almost the entire history of Sino-U.S. relations since the American ship "Empress of China," first visited Canton in 1784. Accordingly, some Chinese historians have divided the
history of Sino-American relations into five periods: 1) from 1784 to 1844, when the first unequal treaty, the Treaty of Wangxia was signed, a period basically of "friendship and equality;" 2) from 1844 to 1899, when Secretary of State John Hay devised the Open Door policy, a period of American "economic expansion in China;" 3) from 1899 to 1949, when the People's Republic was founded, a period that witnessed "the overall American economic, political and cultural infiltration of China;" 4) from 1949 to 1972, when the Shanghai Communiqué was signed, a period of "direct confrontation;" and 5) from 1972 to the present, a "new period of friendly relations." 85

For the first and second periods, Chinese historians have made extensive use of available archival materials and covered such topics as the tea trade in early Sino-American relations, the first group of Chinese students in the United States, Chinese labor in the United States, interactions between the Qing government and the U.S. government over the exclusion of Chinese laborers, missionaries and their role in U.S.-China relations, etc.

"Tea Trade and Early Sino-American Relations" by Liang Biying of Zhongshan University is a good example of such a study. Basing his research on a number of primary source materials contained in the Qing dynasty archives, Liang points out that tea trade between China
and the United States reflected a number of characteristics of the early Sino-American relationship. While Sino-American relations were basically of a peaceful commercial nature, there were signs of economic infiltration that resulted from the efforts of American merchants to seek foreign markets and speed up their capital accumulation. Liang argues that early Sino-American commercial relations benefitted the United States more than it did the Chinese in that it "offered the United States, within a relative short period of time, the large amount of capital necessary for its speedy economic development." The author also argues that the facilitation of trade with China became "one of the major causes for the Westward Movement." The discovery of resources of fur on the west coast and other merchandise that could be traded for China's tea and silk, and the demand for a direct sea route over the Pacific to the Far East directly contributed to the Westward Movement. 86

How do Chinese historians deal with the modern history of Sino-American relations, particularly with relations of the 1930s and 1940s, and especially of the post-War years before the founding of the People's Republic? These are topics that have received much attention, and a closer look at the titles published before and after the Cultural Revolution readily reveals
the difference of approach and increased level of scholarly sophistication. For example, the interpretation of the United States' role in China's War of Resistance Against Japan was clearly reflected in the titles published in the 1950s and 1960s: "How Did the U.S. Imperialists Arm Japan in the War of Resistance Against Japan?" (Lishi Jiaoxue, 1951), "Crimes Committed by U.S. Imperialism in Helping Japan Invade China during the September 18 Incident" (Jianghai Xuekan, 1961), "The Aggressive Nature of the United States China Policy during the War of Resistance Against Japan" (Xueshu Yuekan, 1965). In contrast; none of the dozen articles published since 1980 on the same topic uses the term "aggression." A much more objective and balanced approach was adopted, as can be seen in such titles as: "A Preliminary Study of the United States China Policy and Its Function in China's War Against Japan" (Journal of the Second Foreign Languages Institute, 1980), "The United States and China's War of Resistance Against Japan" (Journal of Shanghai Normal University, 1980), "The Evolution of United States China Policy in 1931-1943" (Qiushi Xuekan, 1981), "F.D. Roosevelt and Hurley's Policy Toward China" (Meiguoshi Lunwenji, 1981-1983).

The sustained interest of Chinese historians in Sino-American relations of the late 1940s culminated in two recent events. One was the fourth annual meeting of
the AHRAC held in Chengdu in June 1984. Some young historians pointed out at the meeting that the change of China's strategic position in America's Pacific War began with the Cairo Conference and was completed with the recall of Stilwell. During this period, the United States made two major policy adjustments concerning China. The recall of Stilwell was a sign of compromise rather than a sign of conflict between the United States government and Chiang Kai-shek. The signing of the Yalta Agreement by the United States in 1945 was not only out of military consideration, it was also out of a political consideration to support the Kuomintang to unify China. They also pointed out that Marshal helped postpone the outbreak of the Civil War for about half a year. This was "objectively beneficial" to the Chinese people.  

The second event was the week-long conference held in Beijing in October 1986 by Chinese and American historians to discuss Sino-American relations from 1945 to 1955. Although papers presented at the conference are not yet available, this conference provided the first fruitful contacts between Chinese and American historians on this topic, and both sides agreed to make further joint efforts in order to understand all that had happened to Sino-American relations during that period.
Capitalism--"Dying" or "Thriving"?

If the Chinese feel comfortable in reducing Mao from a "saint" to a "human being" and therefore reject some of his teachings, they also are willing to renounce some of the findings and conclusions of Lenin, and even Marx. The emphasis on the principles of "seeking truth from facts" and "develop Marxism, Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought" has provided theoretical justification for such changes. Chinese historians' attempts to reinterpret Lenin's thesis on imperialism is a good example. Lenin predicted that imperialism is the highest stage of capitalism and therefore is "decadent and dying." This thesis was blindly followed in the 1950s and 1960s by Chinese historians, economists and other social scientists in their treatment of U.S. history, economy, and social-political life. The "decadent and dying nature of imperialism" was extensively applied in American studies wherever applicable. As a result, there were obvious stereotypes in the interpretation of the United States experience. Studies on U.S. economic history would invariably concentrate on the negative side of the economy: the cyclical crises and recessions, inflation, unemployment, impoverization, etc. Because of the nearly total isolation existing between the two countries for over two decades and the ideological view of the United States as a 'decadent, corrupt, and dying" society,
Chinese historians simply refrained from writing about U.S. political and social history. This explains why there was only a limited number of articles published in the 1950s and 1960s on these topics. Of the 17 articles published between 1950 and 1965 listed under "political and social history" in Table III, three dealt with American politics and government, five with F.D. Roosevelt's New Deal, and nine with racial discrimination.

In the post-Mao era, there has been a sharp growth of interest in this area. A total of 70 articles appeared, of which 32 were on U.S. political and government systems and specific policies, 13 on Roosevelt's New Deal, 14 on socialist and workers' movements, six on the role of immigrants, and five on the Civil Rights movement (see Table III). The change in the Chinese interpretation of American political and social history can best be signified by their sustained interest in President Roosevelt and his New Deal policy.

According to the traditional Marxist-Leninist perspective, the Great Depression of 1929-32 was considered as the "death bell" of U.S. capitalism and signified the general crisis of world capitalism. It was treated as the best example to prove Lenin's thesis that imperialism was "monopolistic, decadent, and dying." But, how did Chinese historians evaluate the New Deal and its architect F.D. Roosevelt? How did they
explain the recovery of the U.S. economy after the Great Depression? How did they justify Lenin's thesis when obviously the United States emerged as the most powerful industrial nation after the Second World War?

The prevailing argument in the 1950s and 1960s was a flat negation of the New Deal and F.D. Roosevelt. The New Deal was "reactionary," "beneficial only to the U.S. monopoly capitalists." It "did not in the least touch on the exploitative capitalist system," and "was a reformist movement not much different from other reformist movements in history, and therefore ended with total failure." If there was anything positive about the New Deal, it was to "prolong the life of U.S. imperialism which is doomed to collapse." Even in Huang Shaoxiang's 1979 book, An Outline History of America, the New Deal was described as "the policies and measures undertaken by the United States ruling group to save and consolidate the capitalist system at a time when the monopolistic, decadent, and dying U.S. capitalism was facing serious economic crisis and sharp class struggle." Many of Roosevelt's measures "reflected the class nature of the New Deal policy—to serve U.S. monopoly capital and squeeze from the American working masses." Such negative evaluation was heavily influenced on the one hand by Stalin's critique of the New Deal and the Soviet viewpoints, and on the other by anti-U.S. senti-
A reevaluation of Roosevelt and his New Deal was called for as early as December 1979 at the Wuhan conference on world history. The panel on American history, which was instrumental in the establishment of the AHRAC, "unanimously agreed" to the necessity or reevaluating Roosevelt and his New Deal for the following reasons: 1) the New Deal played an important role in American history in tiding over the economic crisis, promoting economic recovery and development and making the U.S. ready to side with anti-fascist forces in World War II; 2) F.D. Roosevelt played a major role in international affairs, which included his recognition of the Soviet Union and his anti-fascist war efforts; 3) Chinese historians should respect American popular sentiment toward and evaluation of President Roosevelt. 93

In the years that followed, Roosevelt and his New Deal constituted a major area of research for Chinese historians. It was a topic for discussion in each AHRAC meeting. A bibliographical study of American historiography on the New Deal was published in 1982. 94 Over a dozen research articles on this topic appeared in various journals. The most extensive study made so far has been by Liu Xuyi, secretary-general of AHRAC and Director of the Institute of American History, Wuhan University, whose views best illustrate the changing
perspective of Chinese historians on the question of the New Deal and on the nature of capitalism.

According to Liu, the nature of Roosevelt's New Deal was the "replacement of the traditional laissez-faire policy with measures of capitalist reformation, or more specifically, with measures of state interference of socio-economic life, so that the privatized monopoly capitalism of the United States could be speedily, and on a gigantic scale, transformed into a non-fascist, welfare-oriented state monopoly capitalism. With the premise of preserving bourgeois democracy, the New Deal succeeded in partially changing the relations of production, restricting the bad aspects of the old social system, and improving, to a certain extent, the political and economic situation of the broad masses of the people. It also alleviated the class conflicts and saved and strengthened the American monopoly capitalist system." For him, the transition of privatized monopoly capitalism to a state monopoly capitalism was a "new law of development for monopoly capitalism."\(^{95}\)

What Can Be Learned from "Bourgeois Democracy"?

The post-Mao ideological emancipation and opening up to the outside world since 1979 made it possible for Chinese intellectuals to study, discuss, and write about a series of hitherto "forbidden areas." In addition to
the "wound" and "expose" literature, writers started to write love stories and explore the humanistic nature of people. Philosophers started to reexamine Confucianism and other traditional Chinese philosophical thoughts, and reevaluate the ideas of Western philosophers such as A. Schopenhauer, I. Kant, F. Nietzsche, S. Freud, J.P. Sartre, Max Weber, C.S. Peirce, John Dewey, and others. The study of sociology, anthropology, political science, communications, etc., once designated as bourgeois learning, was resumed. Economists started to talk about a "socialist market economy," "the development of commodity production," "a consumer economy," "letting some people get rich first," and even "the role of stock exchanges and money markets." Historians of Chinese history are reevaluating historical figures hitherto totally criticized and negated. The most recent example was the publication of An Outline History of the Republic of China, which gives a balanced treatment of Chiang Kaishek, Wang Jingwei, Hu Hanmin and others and a reevaluation of the political, economic, diplomatic policies of the Kuomintang government. Historians of American history were encouraged by, and have contributed to this ideological emancipation. Consequently, they have begun to inquire into hitherto seldom investigated or ignored aspects and questions of American history such as the War of Independence, the Civil War, the role of the
American Constitution, the tripartite government system, Federalism, the civilian official system, immigration, industrialization, economic development, and development in science, technology and education.

The phenomenal increase in the articles published on the War of Independence and the Civil War, referred to by Chinese historians as the first and second American revolution (33 and 42 respectively as compared to six and three between 1950-1965) reflected Chinese historians' interest in drawing lessons and learning from these two "bourgeois revolutions" in the wake of the nightmare of the Cultural Revolution.

Professor Liu Zuochang of Shandong Normal University is undoubtedly the most serious, persistent, insightful and productive historian on the War of Independence and the Civil War. As mentioned earlier, Liu not only wrote on the topic in the 1950s for research journals, he also published a book in 1956 entitled *A Short History of the American War of Independence*. His first manuscript of *The History of the American Civil War*, published in 1978, was finished in 1964. Despite his personal ordeal of first being branded as a "Rightist" in 1957 and then a "bourgeois intellectual" and "-counter-revolutionary" during the Cultural Revolution, he never stopped in the pursuit of his intellectual interest even in the most difficult years. His *History of the*
The American Civil War was in fact totally rewritten in the 1970s after his first manuscripts were ransacked and destroyed by the Red Guards.  


Liu's article, "The Democratic Thought of Thomas Jefferson," for example, was the first serious and scholarly treatment of Thomas Jefferson in China since 1949. Liu follows a basic Marxist approach with the understanding that the principles of the American Revolution and the Constitution represented "bourgeois democratic thought"—serving the interests of a newly risen capitalist class against the old feudal and
colonial order, but not the interests of the working class. But the significance of the article is its in-depth analysis of Jefferson and the democratic thoughts he represented in the context of Western political tradition, and of American society both before and after the Revolution. Making an extensive use of research materials available to him then, he argues that Jefferson's democratic principles, which included the natural rights of human beings—freedom of speech, of publication, of religion and the press; people's rights of revolution and resistance to tyranny and despotism; the principle of a tripartite division of power in government; and the ideal of social and economic equality, "promoted the democratization of American politics, society and economy." Although Jefferson had his limitations (his "fanatic, backward-looking illusion" of an "idyllic society of small farmers") and even contradictory aspects of personality ("his household had no small number of slaves"), he "laid the foundation for the democratic tradition of the American bourgeoisie," and his ideas were "beneficial to the struggle of the American people for political democracy and social progress."

The scholarly attainment of Liu's research on Jefferson is appropriately summed up by John Israel from the University of Virginia:
His style is thoughtful, scholarly, and dispassionate, and he does not hesitate to express agreement or take issue with some of the dozen American scholars whose works he cites in his footnotes. Had he enjoyed access to post-1963 publications, his article would play a creative role in the scholarly dialogue among contemporary American Jefferson scholars.101

The message of Liu's article was clear: Jefferson's democratic principles, though "bourgeois in nature," supported a definite progress in human history from feudal and colonial tyranny and despotism. To prevent the recurrence of the chaotic Cultural Revolution which was characterized by the deprivation of basic democratic rights, China could learn something from the legacies of the bourgeois democratic revolution. As China went ahead in the following years with its economic reform, first in the countryside and then in the cities, reform of the political system has also been put on the agenda of the Party and government. The study and free discussion of Western political thoughts and systems such as the one conducted by Liu Zuochang has contributed to the facilitation of China's political and economic reform.

American Industrialization and China's Four Modernizations

China's national drive for the "Four Modernizations" has probably been the underlying motivation for more and more Chinese historians to study the American experience
in these fields. Unlike writings in the 1950s and 1960s, which invariably concentrated on the negative aspects of the U.S. economy, historians and economists have begun to analyze the American road to industrialization and agricultural modernization. They want to find out the driving forces behind the speedy development of the American economy, with the obvious intention of drawing experiences that might be applicable for Chinese modernization. What were the characteristics of the American industrial development in the 19th century? How did the United States achieve the status of the leading industrial power in a matter of three decades after the Civil War? What were the historical conditions that facilitated such a speedy development? How did the emerging capitalist system contribute to the development? How did American agriculture achieve mechanization? What was the historical evolution of the interrelationship between agriculture, "light" (consumer) industry and "heavy" (manufacture) industry? These are some of the questions that are being raised, studied and discussed.

In trying to find out the causes for the rapid industrial development of the late 19th-century America, Chinese historians have come up with a number of explanations. Zhang Youlun of Nankai University holds that the two American revolutions were the "fundamental guarantee" for such a development because the goals of the two revolutions were identical: "to liberate produc-
tive forces" from the shackles of feudalism and slavery. "The capitalist system established as a result of the revolutions guaranteed in a fundamental way the speedy development of U.S. industry."¹⁰² He also points out that the high speed of U.S. economic development had one important prerequisite: the priority that was given to the development of transportation and communication, which in turn stimulated the speedy development of steel and manufacture industries.¹⁰³ The author's message is: For China, the successful realization of economic reform and modernization depends on the liberation of productive forces from the shackles of feudalism and egalitarianism. In the process of such a reform, the country needs to build an effective industrial infra-structure. Inadequate transportation and communication facilities will clearly block the smooth development of the entire economy.

Zhang's argument was shared by Xu Wei, of Harbin Normal University. Xu holds that the "key to the speedy economic development of a society is the constant adjustment, by means of revolution or reformation, of the incompatible relations between the productive forces and the relations of production and between the economic base and superstructure."¹⁰⁴ In the late 19th century, he argues, such adjustments were realized through the Civil War and the series of legislation and reformist
measures undertaken in the fields of industry, agriculture, science and technology, and education.\textsuperscript{105}

Huang Annian of Beijing Normal University tried to analyze the relationship between American economic development and the wars in its history. Of the nine wars the United States went through, Huang argues, the three that were fought on its soil (the War of Independence, the War of 1812 and the Civil War) were "positive" in the sense that they opened up roads for the full and independent development of the capitalist economy. The wars against Mexico and Spain brought large pieces of land to the country. The two World Wars brought the country "windfall profits." The Korean War, as well as the Vietnam War gave stimulation to the country's economy in the 1950s and 1960s respectively.\textsuperscript{106} In another article, Huang analyzed some historical factors unique to the United States that contributed to the speedy development of its economy. These include the rich geographical and natural resources, freedom from feudalistic influence, the role of immigrants, and the stable political situation.\textsuperscript{107}

Historians are unanimous with regard to the role of science, technology, and education in contributing to America's speedy economic development. They have looked into the relationship between science and technology and economic development, between education and
scientific research. Articles have been written analyzing the structures of American scientific and educational institutions with the emphasis on how they function within the larger economic infrastructure. Theories in scientific research in almost every field, whether humanities, natural or social sciences, which hitherto had been branded "bourgeois" or "reactionary" are being reexamined. In education, for example, John Dewey and his pragmatic ideas of education, long under attack as "representing bourgeois ideology," are now being reevaluated. Formal education in the Western tradition have been rapidly resumed and developed in the post-Mao era, especially after the restoration of graduate education in 1978 and the adoption of a degree system in institutions of higher learning in 1981. According to a recent report, the total number of graduate students in 1985 reached 87,200, 138 times that of 1949, or four times that of 1980.108

**American Historiography: A Chinese View**

The emphasis on theoretical research is also clearly reflected in the interest of Chinese historians who study American historiography. While the introduction of American historiography is in a way similar to the translation of American writings since it might involve less political danger than trying to interpret American historical developments, it unavoidably invites
an evaluation and critique from Chinese historians. To Chinese historians, American historiography is important in a number of ways. First, in face of the extreme shortage of books available on American history, the introduction of historiography can at least bring Chinese historians up to date to the existence of literature published in the United States on American history. Secondly, it helps open the eyes of Chinese historians to the "hundred schools of thought" among American historians in the writings and interpretation of their relative short history. Thirdly, only when the Chinese historians have a clear understanding of American historiography and draw extensively from the American scholarship, can they make a substantial and successful contribution in this field. For these reasons, American historiography became one of the most "popular" topics in terms of the number of articles written and published between 1977-1984.

How do Chinese historians evaluate the major trends or schools of thought in American historiography? Let us briefly examine the critique and comments provided by three of China's leading historians on the historiography of the War of Independence: Ding Zemin of Northeastern Normal University, Zhang Youlun and Yang Shengmao of Nankai University.

On the "early school" represented by George Bancroft:
The description of the War of Independence was centered on the political and diplomatic aspects to the neglect of the economic background of the North American struggle against the British colonialists. This school failed to relate the political struggle of the colonial people for freedom with factors of the economic development of the colonies, and therefore could not see that the War of Independence was an inevitable result of the socio-economic development of the colonies. (Ding Zemin)

Though these authors correctly pointed out the British colonial policy to be the major cause of the War, they failed to analyze the connection between such policies with the British social system, and therefore were unable to exclude the contingency of the War of Independence. (Zhang Youlun)

On the "imperialist school" represented by George Louis:

They negated the just nature of the War of Independence and failed to offer and adequate and comprehensive analysis of the causes of the American Revolution .... Compared to the "early school," their interpretation was a step backward. (Ding Zemin)

The "imperialist school ... was utterly mistaken in distorting the fundamental causes of the War of Independence. Their interpretation served the interests of the monopoly capitalists in their search for world hegemony. (Zhang Youlun)

On the "progressive school" represented by Charles Beard:

Although the "progressive school" did not present an adequate analysis of the working people's struggle for democracy (during the War of Independence), they invariably reflected the basic question of social and class conflicts. (Ding Zemin)

It is undoubtedly a major step forward trying to
employ an economic interpretation of the War of Independence. These historians made use of numerous valuable source materials and touched on many important social questions, which should be commended. But Beard never linked economic factors with class struggle. He even distorted the concept of class struggle. For example, Beare treated the struggle between agriculture and capitalism as the key line of American historical development, and tried to differentiate historical periods along this line. (Zhang Youlun)

On the "midwestern school" or "frontier school" represented by Frederick J. Turner:

Turner was to a large extent, a geographical and environmental determinist. He neglected the "creative function" of human beings, a common weakness of social Darwinists .... The two weakpoints of Turner's hypothesis are: 1) his ambiguiy over the gigantic role played by the Westward Movement in America's social and particularly economic development; and 2) his silence about the cruelty of the Westward Movement. (Yang Shengmao)

Frederick J. Turner's "frontier hypothesis" has exerted not only a great impact on the academic circles in American history but also a far-reaching influence on the enactment of the American policy of external expansion. (Ding Zemin)

On the "consensus school" or the "new conservative school" represented by Robert Brown:

Compared to the progressive school of the early 20th century, the "consensus school" is a big move backward. (Huang Shaoxiang)

The "new conservative school's interpretation of the War of Independence was based on the ignorance of historical facts and was meant to write off the major significance of the War. (Zhang Youlun)

On the "ideological school" represented by Bernard
Bailyn:

Bailyn and his followers stressed simply the decisive role of ideology on the entire process of the American Revolution to the total neglect of the socio-economic factors that led to the Revolution. Such an approach unavoidably led them to an idealistic interpretation of the process of the American Revolution. (Ding Zemin)

It is obviously inappropriate to overemphasize the function of ideology and describe the War of Independence as an ideological revolution. (Zhang Youlun)

On the "new left school" represented by Jesse Lemisch and William A. Williams:

This school represented the progressive tendency of American historiography and their interpretation of the War of Independence was like a gush of fresh air in American historical research. (Zhang Youlun)

In domestic politics, Williams was a disciple of H. Hoover; in terms of foreign policy, he was a follower of Charles Beard. His ideology was a complex of Hoover and Beard, with some Marxist dressing. (Yang Shengmao)

These quoted passages at least reveal several features of Chinese interpretation of American historiography. First, they show a growing interest of Chinese historians to learn about American historiography and reflect their relative comprehensiveness of the present coverage and critique of American historiography. Secondly, a Marxist approach remains a basic approach for Chinese historians. Thirdly, there has been a conscious endeavor on the part of the Chinese historians to avoid a stereotyped and
simplified treatment of the different schools of thought in American historical interpretation. A much more balanced interpretation that was impossible earlier is being offered now. Fourthly, given their limited access to published literature on American history, Chinese historians have made significant progress in the study of American historiography, and this will further facilitate their research in American history.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

Chinese historiography on American history has been closely related to the domestic political situation. "Official historiography" was the norm of the Chinese polity for thousands of years. The modern Chinese revolutions, whether republican, democratic or communist, have witnessed progressive historians trying to break away from this age-old tradition, but not without sacrifice and bloodshed. Just as Confucianism has functioned as a key link in the development of Chinese culture, official historiography seems to be another important cultural norm that has accompanied the Chinese society.

Chinese historiography on American history can be divided into three periods. It served as a footnote of politics in the first period (1950-1965). It became politics itself during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). It has been the focus of an unprecedented effort in historical inquiry during the present period (1977-present).

While basically following a Marxist interpretation of American history, Chinese historians have shown an unprecedented interest in almost every aspect of American history—diplomatic, political, social, economic, cultural, scientific, industrial, labor, historiography, etc. Despite a number of stereotypes in Chinese historio-
graphy, Chinese historians have recently published a growing number of well-documented, scholarly, comprehensive articles and books on American history. The direct result of the present opening-up to the outside world and the economic and political reforms underway in China, these writings nevertheless signify a genuine effort on the part of the Chinese historians to break away from the tradition of official historiography and contribute to the research and scholarship on American history. Within the larger picture, this signifies a growing freedom in academic research without fear of political discrimination or persecution.
Notes


2. Fang, Zhiguang, "Historical Research Must Aim at Truthfulness and Applicability" (Shixue Yanjiu Bixu Qiuzhen Zhiyong), People's Daily (Overseas Edition), November 26, 1986.


5. Based on a bibliography compiled by the History Department of Huadong Normal University covering the period from October 1949 to December 1981 and my own bibliography.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.


17. Committee on Scholarly Communication with the PFC, *op. cit.*, pp. 16, 25.


34. Ibid., p. 335.
40. Ibid., Vol IV, p. 447.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid., pp. 447-8.
43. Ibid., p. 449.
44. Ibid., p. 413.
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid.
54. Ibid., p. 19.
58. Ibid., p. 81.
63. Ibid.
64. Luo, Rongqu, op. cit., p. 6.
65. Ibid.
67. Ibid., p. 280.
68. Ibid., p. 299.
69. Ibid.
72. Ibid., pp. 302-3.
73. Resolutions on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party since the Founding of the People's Republic of China, p. 35.


82. Ibid.


84. Xiang, Liling, "How to Move Forward?" (Zenyang Xiangqian Tuijin?) World History (Shijie Lishi), No. 5, 1980, pp. 72-74.

85. Luo, Rongqu, op. cit.


92. Ibid.

93. Zhang, Youlun, op. cit.

94. Hu, Guocheng, "A Brief Introduction to the Study of Roosevelt's New Deal" (Luo Sifu Xinzheng Yanjiu Zhuangkuang Jijian), World History (Shijie Lishi), No. 5, 1982, pp. 80-84.

95. Liu, Xuyi, op. cit.


97. Liu, Zuochang, "How Do I Conduct Research in American History" (Wo Shi Zhenyang Yanjiu Mei'goushi De), Literature, History, Philosophy (Wen Shi Zhe), No. 2, 1986, pp. 36-43.

98. Ibid.


100. Liu, Zuochang, "The Democratic Thought of Thomas Jefferson" (Luelun Tomasi Jefoxin De Minzhu Sixiang), Historical Studies (Lishi Yanjiu), No. 4, 1980, pp. 149-164.

101. Israel, John, op. cit.

103. Ibid., p. 127.


105. Ibid., pp. 140-155.


109. From my own notes of survey.
Bibliography


48. Journals:
Red Flag (Hongqi)
Historical Studies (Lishi Yanjiu)
Literature, History, Philosophy (Wen Shi Zhe)
Teaching of History (Lishi Jiaoxue)
New Observer (Xin Guancha)
World History (Shijie Lishi)
Studies in Modern History (Jindaishi Yanjiu)
Trend in World History Studies (Shijieshi Yanjiu Dongtai)
Outlook (Liaowang)
Chinese Studies in History
Research in Historiography (Shixue Yanjiu)
Diplomatic History
China Quarterly
Journal of Asian Studies

49. Newspapers:
People's Daily (Renmin Ribao)
Chinese Newspapers and Magazines (Zhongguo Baokan Bao)
China Daily