

中国 研究

Zhongguo Yanjiu

Revista de Estudos Chineses

Número 7



INSTITUTO
PORTUGUÊS
DE SINOLOGIA

Lisboa, Porto

2011

Revista de Estudos Chineses

PUBLICAÇÃO DO INSTITUTO PORTUGUÊS DE SINOLOGIA
LISBOA/PORTO

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Revista de Estudos Chineses

Instituto Português de Sinologia

Morada: Rua Brito Capelo, 1012

4450-069 Matosinhos

Endereço electrónico: ipsinologia@gmail.com

Preço: 15 €

Título: Revista de Estudos Chineses – ZhongguoYanjiu

Editor: Instituto Português de Sinologia com o apoio da Fundação

Macau e Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia

Tiragem: 500 exemplares

ISSN: 1646-6748

Depósito Legal: 254284/07

Execução Gráfica: Rainho&Neves, Artes Gráficas

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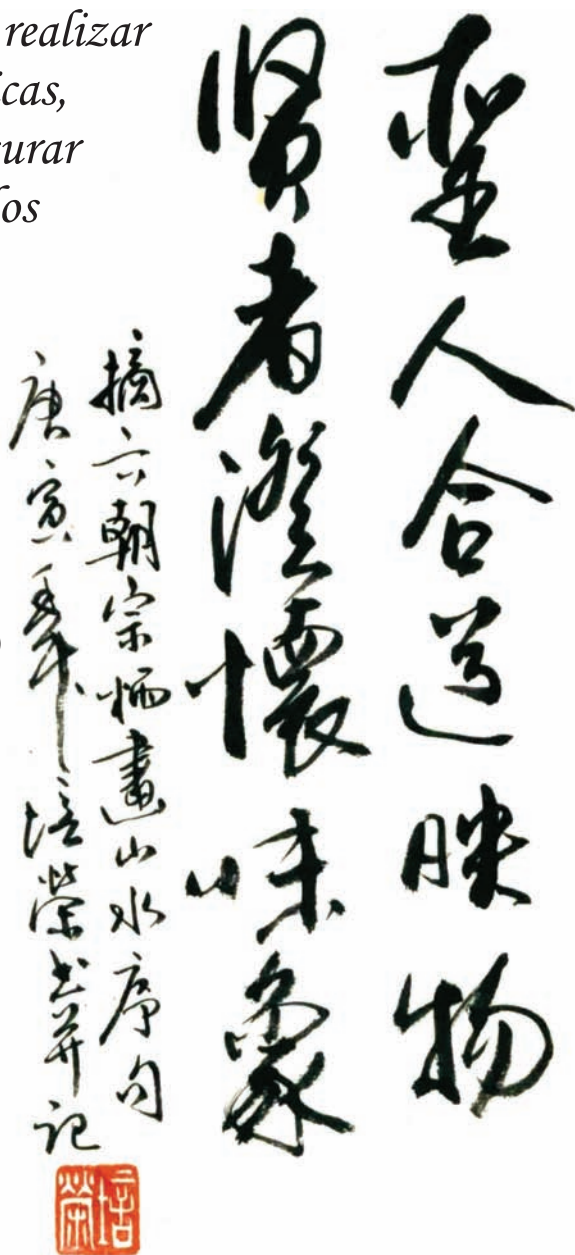
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Editorial

O IPS (Instituto Português de Sinologia) cresceu. Ultrapassou as fronteiras de Portugal e, por esse motivo, exigiu mais tempo para dar resposta às suas actividades.

Para valorizar a *Revista de Estudos Chineses – ZhongguoYanjiu* foi criada em 2012, e aprovada em Assembleia Geral, uma nova equipa redactorial constituída por Zélia Breda, Jorge Tavares da Silva e Carla Fernandes, à qual foram confiados os textos que os vários autores nos enviaram para publicação da revista n.º 8.

Estamos certos de que em Fevereiro de 2013, durante a próxima edição do Fórum Internacional de Sinologia, estejam disponíveis os números 7 e 8 da nossa revista, já com um novo formato, rejuvenescida, que a todos seguramente agradará. Assim o esperamos.

Ana Maria Amaro

The IPS (Portuguese Institute of Sinology) has grown. It has gone beyond Portugal's borders and, for this reason, more time was needed to organise its activities.

A new Editorial Board was created in 2012 to make our *Journal of Chinese Studies – ZhongguoYanjiu* even better. The new team appointed by the IPS General Assembly comprises Zélia Breda, Jorge Tavares da Silva and Carla Fernandes, who have been entrusted with the texts sent by a number of authors for publication in issue no. 8.

I am therefore pleased to announce that during the next edition of our International Forum on Sinology in February 2013, issues 7 and 8 of the *Journal* will be available in a new, more attractive format. I am sure you will all like it.

(Trad. João Paulo Galvão)

Homenagem a Pierre Gentelle



Breves Notas curriculares¹

Nascido a 7 de Julho de 1933, Pierre Gentelle formou-se em Geografia em 1959. Estudou Chinês em Pequim antes de entrar para o CNRS (Centro Nacional de Investigação Científica) em 1962. Em 1967 foi laureado com o Prémio André Siegfried da Fundação Nacional de Ciências Políticas. Investigador sobre a China Contemporânea na Escola de Altos Estudos em Ciências Sociais, Pierre Gentelle integrou, em 1964, a unidade de investigação do CNRS – Arqueologia na Ásia Central: Ambiente, Povoamento e Técnica.

Convidado para uma dezena de outras missões arqueológicas no Oriente foi associado, a partir de 1993, ao Laboratório de Arqueologia da Escola Normal Superior. A partir de 1999 passou a director de investigação e mérito no CNRS e relator científico no Clube Ásia Oriental. Publicou numerosos trabalhos sobre a China Contemporânea e, como geógrafo, participou até aos nossos dias em projectos de investigação arqueológica na Ásia Central, Iémen, Síria, Uzbequistão e Turquemenistão. Foi ainda director da colecção *Ásia Plural* e co-director da colecção *Terre de Villes*, das Edições Belin.

1 Texto de Paola Gentelle.

Modesta mas sentida homenagem

Ana Maria Amaro

Presidente do Instituto Português de Sinologia

Conhecemos o Professor Pierre Gentelle nos anos 80, era eu assistente na Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas da Universidade Nova de Lisboa. A seu convite tive a honra de colaborar no seu livro *L'État de la Chine*, publicado em 1989 pela editora La Découverte, com um pequeno texto sobre Macau e os Macaenses.

Dois anos depois de termos criado o Centro de Estudos Chineses, no Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas, organizámos, em 1998, a 1.ª Semana Cultural da China. Outras se seguiram, sendo o Professor Pierre Gentelle o primeiro sinólogo de renome internacional a acreditar em nós, aceitando o nosso convite para participar, apresentando uma comunicação com o título «Le Rapport Ambigu de la Chine à la Mer», que resumiu em três linhas: «On dira plusieurs choses, soit historiques, soit actuelles, qui mon trent que l'idée que nous nous faisons en Occident de la relation de la Chine avec la mer n'est pas toujours très équitable.»

Depois do Professor Pierre Gentelle, e por sua influência, outros vieram. Muitos deles, de grande mérito, continuaram a honrar estes fóruns organizados num pequeno país como Portugal. Devemos-lhe, por isso, o sucesso obtido nas nossas semanas culturais e, mais tarde, nos fóruns. A sua colaboração, os seus conselhos e ensinamentos foram para mim, aprendiz de sinologia, de incalculável valor. Foi também o primeiro mestre a apoiar o nosso trabalho, cujas dificuldades, com a sua inteligência brilhante, rapidamente avaliou. Ficámos amigos, e eu em dívida de eterna gratidão, impossível de saldar.

Lamentamos profundamente a sua morte. Perdemos um amigo. Perdemos um mestre. Com saudade e dolorosa sensação dessa perda, lembremo-lo neste VI Fórum Internacional de Sinologia no qual tinha aceitado participar, mas em que apenas o seu nome e a sua memória se mantêm presentes.

Discurso de abertura do VI Fórum Internacional de Sinologia

Zhang Beisan

Embaixador da República Popular da China em Portugal

É para mim uma grande honra poder participar na secção inaugural deste Fórum Internacional de Sinologia. Em primeiro lugar gostaria de transmitir, em nome da Embaixada da República Popular da China em Portugal, cordiais saudações e os melhores cumprimentos aos especialistas do ciclo académico, bem como aos amigos interessados na Sinologia; quero ainda transmitir os meus sinceros agradecimentos ao Instituto Português de Sinologia e ao Museu do Oriente, por organizarem este Fórum.

O Fórum tem como tema *A Revolução de 1911, um Século de Mudança e Continuidade na China*, e visa fazer uma retrospectiva interessante do caminho que a China tem feito em diferentes aspectos: social, político, económico, ideológico e cultural. As palavras «Mudança» e «Continuidade» são exactamente as palavras-chave da História da China no último século.

A Revolução de 1911, ano que de acordo com o calendário lunar chinês correspondeu ao Ano do Porco, foi um grande acontecimento na História recente da China. Nesse ano a China ainda se encontrava a viver a sua última Dinastia Feudal. Esta Dinastia ia sobrevivendo pobre e fraca, devastada internamente, sofrendo as causas da ocupação humilhante no seu território pelas potências imperialistas.

Contudo, um grupo sábio e consciente de pessoas encabeçado pelo Doutor Sun Zhongshan, pioneiro da Revolução Chinesa, também conhecido no Ocidente por Sun Yat-Sen, fizeram ouvir as suas palavras de ordem: «Revitalização e Reunificação da China». Conseguiram derrubar o regime do Imperador, escrevendo um novo preâmbulo da história revolucionária democrática da nação chinesa, impulsionando o progresso em todo o país.

Cem anos depois da Revolução de 1911, e com o objectivo da «Revitalização e Reunificação da China», diversas gerações chinesas têm lutado por um país rico, democrático e unificado, por uma vida mais feliz e mais digna. No decorrer destes anos a China passou por enormes mudanças, se compararmos com há cem anos atrás. Apesar das dificuldades ainda a serem superadas, o seu

desenvolvimento económico alcançou êxitos notáveis, reconhecidos hoje em dia no mundo inteiro; estes êxitos transformaram a História da China quer económica, quer socialmente.

Hoje a China está a alimentar 22% da população mundial, com apenas 10% de terra lavrável do planeta Terra. A sua indústria fabrica um décimo da produção industrial mundial. A China conseguiu um lugar de liderança nos sectores da alta-tecnologia, nomeadamente a tecnologia espacial, energia nuclear, mega tecnologia informática e ferrovias de alta velocidade. O PIB chinês subiu do quadragésimo para o segundo lugar do mundo e já é considerado um importante motor do crescimento económico mundial. A vida do povo chinês teve um grande avanço, ultrapassou a falta de comida e de alojamento, e passaram a ter uma vida razoavelmente confortável. Hoje em dia o povo goza de plenos direitos políticos, económicos, sociais e culturais, usufrui ainda de um conjunto de serviços públicos cada vez mais aperfeiçoados. A democracia socialista e a participação ordenada dos cidadãos na vida política estão a avançar a seu tempo, contribuindo a cada dia que passa para o aperfeiçoamento do sistema legal nacional. Para acompanhar este progresso, a China tem desempenhado um papel activo e responsável nos assuntos internacionais. Na sua qualidade de grande país em desenvolvimento, vê o seu estatuto e influência mundial chegar a um nível sem precedência.

Perante os pioneiros revolucionistas, hoje podemos proclamar com satisfação que a «Revitalização da China» excedeu as palavras de ordem. O povo chinês, com o seu espírito lutador, trabalhador e sábio, está a escrever um capítulo glorioso na sua História.

Ao mesmo tempo, e tendo em conta cinco mil anos de civilização, a filosofia e a cultura tradicional têm vindo a ser preservadas e enaltecidas na China moderna. Comemorámos há pouco tempo a chegada do Ano do Coelho no calendário lunar chinês; li as interessantes reportagens, aqui em Portugal, sobre a Grande Movimentação Nacional durante a Festa da Primavera na China, onde centenas de milhões de pessoas se deslocaram a caminho da sua terra natal, lotando todos os meios de transporte. Para um conhecedor da cultura chinesa, não é difícil compreender o que está por detrás disso. Na cultura chinesa prevalece sempre a tradição de valorizar a família, de tratar bem os velhos e os menores. Há milhares de anos, os chineses que viviam fora de casa tentavam todos os meios para voltarem a casa, reunindo-se com os pais, irmãos e os filhos, para assim compartilharem em conjunto a alegria e a colheita do ano. A Festa da Primavera é o símbolo da cultura tradicional da China, que constitui uma riqueza espiritual da nação chinesa, trata-se de uma filosofia que transmite uma coexistência harmoniosa entre a individualidade e a família, também entre a

sociedade e eventualmente entre o ser humano e a Natureza. Ao mesmo tempo esta filosofia defende que o individual deve participar nos assuntos sociais para materializar o seu valor da vida. Isto é uma forma de promover um desenvolvimento sustentável do ser humano.

No âmbito do rápido desenvolvimento socioeconómico da China, a cultura tradicional chinesa é cada vez mais apreciada e seguida por pessoas de diferentes sectores e idades, pela sua beleza ideológica e artística e pela sua função de fomentar uma sociedade organizada e pacífica, na qual o relacionamento entre as pessoas possui uma característica harmoniosa; temos, por exemplo, cada vez mais pessoas a praticarem caligrafia ou *Tai-Chi*, como forma de conseguirem um relaxamento físico e paz espiritual.

Entre os jovens há cada vez mais adeptos das óperas tradicionais, como a Ópera de Pequim e a Ópera KunQu. Nas livrarias de toda a China, encontram-se livros tradicionais de ensino pré-escolar da China antiga, como por exemplo *San Zi Jing (Prosa de Três Palavras)*, e de *Bai Jia Xing (Os Cem Nomes da Família)*; estes livros voltaram a ser os mais procurados pelos pais. E para nossa satisfação, a cada dia que passa, temos cada vez mais conhecedores e seguidores estrangeiros da cultura chinesa. Em cidades como Lisboa, o povo local comemorou a Festa da Primavera juntamente com a comunidade chinesa. O Instituto Confúcio, que é o canal de ligação para a divulgação da cultura chinesa, está a enraizar-se em muitos países do mundo, incluindo aqui em Portugal. A cultura milenar chinesa está a dar novos contributos ao desenvolvimento da civilização mundial.

O relacionamento entre a China e o Mundo passou por uma mudança histórica. O desenvolvimento da China depende do Mundo lá fora. A prosperidade e a estabilidade do Mundo também precisa da China. O futuro da China e do Mundo está cada vez mais interligado. Nos últimos anos, viu-se um grande progresso nas relações entre a China e os países europeus, incluindo Portugal. A visita do Presidente Hu Jintao a Portugal, em Novembro do ano passado, veio dar um grande impulso ao desenvolvimento da Parceria Estratégica Global entre os dois países. Na conjuntura da multipolarização e globalização económica, a China e a Europa possuem cada vez mais interesses comuns e têm cada vez mais espaço para a cooperação e para lançarem projectos conjuntos em todas as áreas e, desta forma, enfrentarem os desafios da crise financeira internacional em conjunto.

A diversidade é a força impulsionadora para a integração e avanço das civilizações. Uma pessoa que não conheça a História da Antiga Grécia ou do Império Romano tem dificuldade em entender o conceito enraizado de liberdade e democracia na vida europeia.

Do mesmo modo que uma pessoa que não estude os cinco mil anos da história chinesa não consegue entender a aspiração do povo chinês à harmonia, unificação do país e à auto-determinação do seu destino. Actualmente, quer a China quer a Europa precisam de melhorar os seus estudos e os seus pensamentos sobre a história, tradição e cultura uma da outra, para assim compreenderem a lógica que está por detrás dos caminhos do desenvolvimento do sistema social de cada potência.

É motivo de satisfação que a Sinologia, temática recente que visa estudar a influência histórica e cultural da actualidade chinesa, está a ganhar cada vez mais atenção pela sociedade europeia. Há cada vez mais académicos e institutos de pesquisa a dedicarem estudos aos artigos escritos pelos grandes pensadores antigos da China, como Confúcio e Lau-Ze, mas também aos pensadores mais recentes como Sun Zhongshan, Mao Zedong e Deng Xiaoping, e à influência que tiveram no mundo. Portugal foi o primeiro país europeu a iniciar relações com a China, e esta é já a sexta edição deste Fórum, ao lado dos diferentes seminários e palestras sobre a China, realizados em Portugal. Estas actividades académicas alcançaram grandes êxitos, construindo um alicerce sólido para o desenvolvimento das relações bilaterais e para o aprofundamento da amizade entre os dois povos.

Os amigos aqui presentes desempenham um papel importante no conhecimento e no entendimento mútuo entre a China e Portugal, e entre a China e a Europa. Estou confiante de que os vossos estudos ajudarão o povo europeu a conhecer melhor a China. Com uma integração económica contínua e com o avanço tecnológico mundial, a China e a Europa, apesar das suas diferenças históricas, culturais e dos seus modelos de desenvolvimento diferentes, vão certamente conseguir um relacionamento baseado na aprendizagem recíproca, no benefício partilhado e no respeito pelas diferenças. Este relacionamento de complementaridade e desenvolvimento conjunto das culturas Oriental e Ocidental vai contribuir para um mundo de paz duradoura e prosperidade comum.

Palestra Inaugural: Mo Yan ou la mise à l'épreuve du politique

Zhang Yinde

Université Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris 3

Mo Yan (1956) est sans doute l'un des écrivains chinois les plus marquants, dont les publications frappent par une imagination puissante et par un effort constant de renouvellement. Ainsi, du *Pays de l'Alcool* à *La Loi du Karma* en passant par *Le Supplice du Santal* ou *Beaux Seins Belles Fesses*, la rénovation se poursuit, non comme jeux formels fortuits, mais comme quête de l'adéquation de l'expression avec la thématique, permettant notamment de dire les rapports complexes entre la fiction et le politique. Au-delà des aspects fréquemment visités, tels que le cannibalisme, la cruauté, la violence, l'œuvre de Mo Yan recèle de fait une dimension politique, qui s'accroît au fil de sa création pour donner lieu, dans son dernier roman, *Les Grenouilles (Wa)*, à une fictionnalisation inédite du point de vue diégétique comme imaginaire¹.

Mo Yan ne cache pas ses préoccupations politiques, que l'on peut observer dès ses premiers écrits, comme en témoigne l'épigraphe de *La Mélodie de l'ail paradisiaque (Tiantang suantai zhi ge)* publiée en 1987: «Le romancier cherche toujours à se tenir à l'écart de la politique, mais le roman, lui, s'en rapproche inexorablement»². Même si le mot «politique» est moins affiché par la suite, l'auteur n'a jamais renoncé à son intime conviction, qui ne se traduit pas tant par des engagements directs ou des prises de position ouvertes que par une implication scripturaire reconfigurée. Si *La Mélodie de l'ail paradisiaque* émane d'une impulsion de plaidoirie en défense de paysans honteusement exploités, en revanche, le reportage cède le pas à la création littéraire, où se mêlent le chant d'un aveugle, le discours médiatique et le travail de réimagination. Le filtrage et la reformulation du politique rapproche Mo Yan de Yan

1 Mo Yan, *Wa (Les Grenouilles)*, Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 2009. Les paginations mises entre parenthèses renvoient à cette édition.

2 Mo Yan, *La Mélodie de l'ail paradisiaque*, traduit par Chantal Chen-Andro, Seuil, 2005. Notre traduction diffère légèrement de celle de Chantal Chen-Andro. Pour le texte original, cf. Mo Yan, «Préface» à *Tiantang suantai zhi ge*, Dangdai shijie chubanshe, 2003, 1.

Lianke, auteur du *Rêve du Village des Ding* (*Dingzhuang meng*), fiction engagée mais détournée du documentaire³.

Les Grenouilles semblent néanmoins marquer encore un pas dans cette «mise à l'épreuve du politique» et dans ce rapport dialectique où la politique est soumise au prisme du discours littéraire (Lefort 1992). Le roman, divisé cinq parties, se déploie en deux volets, relatant les drames produits autour des avortements forcés et d'une mère porteuse. Sous forme épistolaire, il se compose des correspondances que le narrateur adresse à un ami écrivain japonais, nommé Sugitani Yoshito, pour se clore par une pièce de théâtre éponyme du roman. L'ancrage référentiel n'autorise aucun doute: certains événements restent trop présents dans la mémoire collective pour se lire comme une pure fiction. L'allusion est ainsi transparente par rapport à certains épisodes de l'histoire récente, comme les campagnes abusives de stérilisations et d'avortements forcés menées à Linyi, dans le Shandong⁴. De la même manière Chen Mei, la mère porteuse défigurée dans un incendie qui a ravagé l'usine de peluches Dongli, dans le sud de la Chine (230), rappelle impérativement, par le paronyme, le feu qui avait détruit le 19 novembre 1993 les ateliers de fabrication de jouets Zhili à Shenzhen (*Shenzhen Zhili wanjuchang*) et au cours duquel 87 ouvriers, dont 85 ouvrières, ont trouvé la mort⁵. Si ces drames s'apprêtent à une identification aisée, d'autres évoquent des faits de société aussi diffus, donc répandus, que préoccupants, comme le commerce qui prospère en tirant profit de la procréation artificielle. La perméabilité aux réalités politiques et sociales, pour autant, ne conduit ni à un roman à clef, ni un roman à thèse, mais à un réseau signifiant où le politique reçoit une transfiguration totale.

A cet égard *Les Grenouilles* attire notre attention au moins sur trois aspects. Le roman stigmatise d'abord un Etat coercitif qui, sous son lourd héri-

3 L'auteur a renoncé au reportage, après avoir réalisé plusieurs enquêtes, au profit d'une œuvre de fiction pour dénoncer le scandale du sida qui a ravagé les villages au Henan, victimes des collectes de sang non règlementées. Cf. Yan Lianke, *Le Rêve du Village des Ding*, traduit par Claude Payen, Philippe Picquier, 2007. Pour une lecture critique du roman, voir Sebastian Veg, «Yan Lianke, *Le Rêve du Village des Ding*», *Perspectives chinoises* [En ligne], 2009/1 (consulté le 20-01-2011).

4 Leïla Choukroune, «Ces courageux avocats chinois», *Libération*, le 5 décembre 2006. Liu Xiaobo a pris la défense de l'avocat en écrivant le 10 septembre 2005 «Mumang xinliang de Chen Guangcheng xiansheng» (Monsieur Chen Guangcheng, aveugle mais lucide). Web 20/01/2011. <http://www.boxun.com/hero/liuxb/430_1.shtml>.

5 Qui a attiré l'attention des sociologues sur les conditions de travail et de vie précaires des ouvrières migrantes. Cf. Tan Shen *et al.*, «Qixue zhuizong: yuan Shenzhen zhili wanjuchang 11. 19 dahuo shouhai dagongmei diaocha jishi» (Mémoires de sang et de larmes: enquêtes sur les anciennes jeunes travailleuses migrantes victimes de l'incendie de l'usine de jouets Zhili à Shenzhen), *Tianya* (Frontiers) 3 (2001): 4-22; 4 (2001): 71-81.

tage totalitaire, met en place une politique démographique provoquant des conséquences meurtrières. Les avortements forcés révèlent ainsi une gestion dictée par un biopouvoir qui transforme la biopolitique en tanatopolitique. Parallèlement, l'ultralibéralisme économique, terreau d'innombrables dérapages et d'excès, tels qu'ils se manifestent dans le trafic organisé au nom de la gestation pour autrui, détruisent la dignité humaine par l'aliénation et la marchandisation du corps. Les effets dévastateurs du marché, favorisés par l'incurie du gouvernement et par l'inexistence d'un libéralisme politique, mettent en péril les libertés individuelles et les valeurs humaines. Le roman tend à proposer enfin, par le truchement d'un travail de symbolisation complexe, la réhabilitation de la vie perçue à la fois comme droit fondamental de l'homme et comme signe d'inscription communautaire contre les agressions politiques et contre le délitement moral. Mais loin de l'essentialisme communautariste, la bioéthique qui interpelle le groupe conduit à l'émergence d'un humanisme relationnel qui se profile à travers la reconstruction des liens sociaux et d'un espace public.

1. Critique du biopouvoir comme héritage totalitaire

Le biopouvoir mortifère, que l'auteur incrimine, s'incarne par un personnage singulier, la Tante. C'est en effet la personnification d'une politique démographique incohérente et paradoxale, qui, tout en améliorant les conditions de vie de la population, dégénère en tanatopolitique. La posture réquisitoriale est toutefois assortie d'une représentation nuancée, révélatrice d'une figure ambivalente d'exécutant, accoucheuse autant qu'assassin, qui impose un acte expiatoire complexe.

La contextualisation s'allie à la figuration pour donner à cette politique répressive en une assise historique. Une périodisation scrupuleuse permet de dater et de pointer les mouvements de basculement et de radicalisation dans une succession de mesures prises par le gouvernement.

Le récit incite ainsi à une lecture dichotomique qui s'opère selon une césure aisément repérable dans le déploiement chronologique: les mesures draconiennes mise en œuvre vers la fin des années 1970 en matière du contrôle des naissances sont décrites comme la conséquence directe d'une politique anti-malthusienne qui s'est exacerbée dans les années 1950. Les incohérences conduisent à une série de décisions inverses et outrancières. Progressives et modérées dans leur phase liminaire, les opérations se durcissent devant la réticence de la population, soumise désormais à la stérilisation et aux avortements forcés.

La Tante aura ainsi épousé cette politique répressive pour en devenir un instrument efficient⁶, légitimé de surcroît par un parcours qui aura confondu son histoire personnelle avec celle de la République populaire. Fille d'un père héros de la résistance contre les envahisseurs et formée dans une école d'infirmière créée dans les zones libérées, elle officie après 1949 en qualité d'obstétricienne avant de diriger le service gynécologique du dispensaire de la Commune populaire. Les aléas politiques, dont elle a été victime elle-même – fuite de son fiancé vers Taiwan en 1956 et séances d'humiliation publique pendant la Révolution culturelle – n'affectent que superficiellement le titre de Sainte-accoucheuse, à qui on doit la naissance de tous les bébés du canton appartenant à la génération du narrateur. Un pedigree irréprochable et une fidélité infaillible au Parti confèrent donc à la maïeuticienne une qualité morale aveugle, qui ne tarde pas à la transformer en une force destructrice, à la merci d'une idéologie et d'une machine d'Etat purgées de toute considération humaine.

Le bourreau révolutionnaire accomplit les hauts faits par trois opérations commandos qui illustrent l'ampleur et la violence du désastre causé par la politique restrictive. Si la stérilisation masculine prend une tournure burlesque, les avortements forcés se soldent par des incidents dramatiques dans la mesure où l'élimination inconditionnelle des fœtus provoque la mort des mères. Trois scènes – Geng Fenglian, morte noyée en fuyant la poursuite, comme Chen Dan, décédée dans les mêmes conditions en laissant orphelin le bébé né prématurément, ainsi que Wang Renmei, tuée sur le bloc opératoire du dispensaire – déclinent les mêmes actes de folie meurtrière.

L'un des épisodes les plus sanglants de l'héroïsme assassin de la Tante se trouve au chapitre 9, de la deuxième partie: la capture de Wang Renmei, femme du narrateur, enceinte d'un second enfant, laisse percevoir l'impassibilité d'un exécuteur fanatique, doté d'un don hors du commun dans la conduite des opérations. La campagne qui vise à débusquer la réfugiée révèle un personnage hypnotisé par une violence démoniaque. Le discours tenu par la Tante, au

6 Le thème de la politique de l'enfant unique trouve sa forme embryonnaire dans une longue nouvelle datant de 1985, intitulée Baozha (Explosion). Elle fait allusion à la situation démographique explosive, qui expliquait la mise en place des mesures draconiennes, et aux sauts d'humeurs du père du narrateur lorsqu'il a appris l'intention de sa belle-fille d'avorter pour sa seconde naissance. Le personnage de la Tante qui y fait sa première apparition reçoit dans le roman une amplification qui modifie d'ailleurs l'orientation thématique puisque, d'une attitude compréhensive et résignée qui caractérise la nouvelle, le roman passe à une posture plus sceptique, voire réquisitoire, à l'encontre d'une politique mortifère dont la Tante devient un fervent héraut et exécutant. Mo Yan, Explosion, traduit du chinois par Camille Loivier, préface de Chantal Chen-Andro, Caractères, 2004.

commandement de l'opération, renvoie d'abord à un porte-voix assujéti à la propagande. A travers le mégaphone, cette voix «rauque» (*siya*) transmet, répète et amplifie les directives du gouvernement. Le message mêle l'incitation à la menace, puisqu'au rappel de la réglementation succède l'annonce de mesures punitives. Les vociférations accompagnent l'injonction pour mettre en demeure la fugitive de sortir, comme pour orchestrer le travail de démolition, d'une intransigeance absolue: «il n'y a aucune explication à donner» (*zhe mei daoli*) (130); il ne reste plus qu'à «obéir» ou à «s'exécuter » devant la «grande raison de l'Etat», soucieux de l' «avenir de la nation». La tyrannie verbale se mêle à l'impétuosité d'une gestuelle martiale. L'investissement du village comporte en effet, à tous égards, les aspects d'un raid, lancé par un détachement composé entre autres de «six miliciens costauds». La présence d'un minibus monté d'un haut parleur et celle d'un tracteur à chenilles matérialisent une double force de dissuasion verbale et effective. A l'appui d'un tel contingent, ressort l'envergure d'un chef militaire «capable de diriger une armée de mille soldats et de dix mille chevaux» (130). Son geste, impérial et catégorique, ne laisse d'ailleurs planer aucune ambiguïté quand elle enjoint le chef adjoint du service d'armement de la Commune populaire d'attaquer: «elle rabat d'un coup sec la main droite en fendant l'air» (128). Ce mouvement corporel précède la torture et la mise à mort, métaphorisées dans ce passage par l'arrachement du sophora, auquel tient le «destin» de la famille voisine, et qui, avant de tomber, «gémît de souffrance», sous l'effet du «câble incrusté dans le tronc», «arrachant l'écorce et dévoilant les fibres blanches de la chair» (129). L'humanité se perd au profit d'un «démon» qui paralyse les villageois cloués sous la terreur.

La Tante, néanmoins, loin d'être soumise à la seule diabolisation, est habitée par des ambiguïtés profondes, imputables conjointement à la complexité de la politique démographique et à ses propres affects. Mi ange, mi démon, le personnage a les mains couvertes, selon ses propres termes, de deux types de sang antagonistes, «parfumé» et «maculé». Au terme d'une course-poursuite qui provoque l'accouchement prématuré de Chen Dan sur un radeau déguisé, la poursuivante se défend «avec calme» devant le mari de la victime qui traite de « griffes de démon» (*mozhua*) la main qu'elle tend pour sauver le bébé du péril: «ce n'est pas les griffes de démon, mais la main d'une gynécologue» (174). Le bourreau et la maïeuticienne cohabitent en elle, tour à tour Guanyin, Déesse Donatrice d'enfants, Dame qui accorde des fils (Songzi niangniang), comparée d'ailleurs à la statue conservée au Temple dédié à la Déesse. Mais à la différence de cette dernière représentée dans sa tenue immaculée, la Sainte Tante s'habille en noir (234), laissant présager une vocation ambivalente, salvatrice autant que funeste: 2800 avortements contre près de dix mille accouche-

ments (269). Les statistiques semblent pencher en faveur de notre administratrice, qui n'hésite pas de fait à superposer à la rationalité d'Etat la sienne propre, selon une logique moins implacable. Elle confine certes à l'insupportable en faisant fi, dans le foeticide, du stade, souvent avancé, de grossesse, car un fœtus qui ne franchit pas la «porte de la marmite» (*guomen*) ne doit susciter aucun état d'âme, selon une bioéthique toute singulière. Elle décrète en même temps qu'un bébé né est une vie digne de toute protection, comme en témoigne l'adoption qu'elle a faite de la fille orpheline de Chen Dan, abandonnée par un père déçu par une seconde naissance féminine⁷. Les fibres compatissantes l'éloignent de la banalité du mal.

La complexité du protagoniste oriente l'auteur vers les interrogations sur la culpabilité individuelle et collective, qui justifie une écriture expiatoire en guise de condamnation du système totalitaire.

Le roman donne à lire une construction bipartite : la première moitié du roman voit la Tante prises dans les actions successives, qui contrastent avec une vie recluse du protagoniste qui, dans les deux dernières parties, se livre plutôt aux activités de méditation. Si l'héroïsme aveugle et sanglant caractérise la phase dynamique, les souvenirs culpabilisants, dans la retraite, tenaillent le personnage en le plongeant dans la peur et les remords. Il est vrai que la résipiscence se mêle d'abord aux sentiments de sacrifice, à telle enseigne que le bourreau, oublieux de la persécution perpétrée sur la population, se positionne comme martyr, malmené par les villageois récalcitrants qui lui promettent les enfers (124). Un hiatus s'introduit pourtant au début de la quatrième partie, faisant surgir une peur jusqu'alors ignorée: la Tante qui n'avait pas froid aux yeux est prise de panique à la vue des grenouilles. L'épouvante, sous forme souvent fantasmagorique, trahit un sentiment de culpabilité qui la poursuit jusqu'à la fin du roman. Troublée dans son sommeil, hantée par les défuntes et par les coassements déchirants qui ressemblent plus aux pleurs de bébés qu'aux cris des batraciens anoues, elle assume sa pénitence dans une existence justifiable désormais par la seule nécessité de «racheter ses fautes», «dans la souffrance et la torture» (339).

Ce repentir permanent est cependant relayé par le narrateur qui pose le problème de la responsabilité collective. Le narrateur réitère en effet son *mea culpa* à l'égard de son épouse, victime autant de l'accident médical que de sa soif carriériste qui, par le refus de cette deuxième grossesse, a fait de lui un offi-

7 Cf. la nouvelle qui traite le même sujet: «Bébé abandonné» (Qiyang), in Mo Yan, *Enfant de fer*, nouvelles traduites du chinois par Chantal Chen-Andro, Seuil (2004): 207-222.

cier modèle. La mauvaise conscience accentuée (281) l'incite à s'interroger sur la responsabilité et la liberté, métaphorisées par les réminiscences littéraires. Ainsi les références aux *Mains sales* et aux *Mouches* de Sartre, loin d'être une coquetterie, renvoient-elles à la délicate question des rapports entre le totalitarisme et la liberté d'action.

La Tante se sent en effet poursuivie par les mouches attirées par le sang putride dont elle est couverte; elle est par ailleurs vêtue de noir (269), sans doute en signe de deuil et de contrition à l'instar des habitants d'Argos. Mon Yan, cependant, n'est pas sans la ménager en impliquant plutôt la politique étatique, auquel il attribue tous les maux, mais tout en y apportant des circonstances atténuantes: le radicalisme en la matière est interprété comme un mal nécessaire, voire un sacrifice que la Chine a bien voulu consentir en soulageant le poids démographique de la planète⁸. On comprend mieux la démarche de l'auteur: associative dans la réquisition, celle du processus répressif par celle de la frénésie de la Tante, mais dissociative dans la disculpation, voire dans le déplacement de la réflexion: l'allusion faite aux *Mouches* rapproche ainsi la Tante d'Oreste dans le choix de son acte, lui révélant la liberté dont elle est capable. La Tante dépasse dès lors sa propre condition pour devenir le paradigme de l'individu, qui oppose le sens de l'existence aux contraintes politiques. La clause du roman exemplifie la sécession : la mort symbolique de la Tante, par le truchement d'un suicide manqué, confirme l'enterrement du régime totalitaire tout en ressuscitant un(e) Hoederer qui se réaffirme sans avoir eu vraiment peur de salir les mains.

2. La bioéthique face au libéralisme

Mo Yan ne se contente pas de fustiger une politique dictatoriale en l'isolant dans les épisodes d'avortements forcés et meurtriers. Il la relie aux scandales des mères porteuses, volet symétrique révélateur de la mutation de l'héritage totalitaire en libéralisme ravageur. La marchandisation du corps sous couvert de la gestation pour autrui se révèle comme le fruit de la complicité entre l'Etat et le capitalisme sauvage, dévoilant les inégalités sociales camouflées par une prospérité flamboyante et, au-delà, l'alliance insidieuse de l'idéologie officielle et les croyances populaires⁹.

8 Le machiavélisme, que l'on peut redouter, est toutefois évité dans la mesure où l'auteur vise à accuser l'histoire qui, selon lui, «ne montre que le résultat en effaçant les moyens utilisés» (145).

9 La critique de la Chine continentale se focalise sur les conséquences de la politique étatique du contrôle des naissances, sans aborder le deuxième aspect du roman concernant la gestation pour

L'auteur dénonce la pratique des mères porteuses en la plaçant d'emblée sous le signe du commerce du corps, fût-elle motivée par une noble cause: Chen Mei loue son ventre afin de couvrir les frais de soins pour son père malade et ruiné. Cette procréation artificielle, censée aider un couple stérile, en l'occurrence, au narrateur et à Xiao Shizi (Lionceau), sa seconde femme ménopausée, est organisée clandestinement par une société écran d'élevage de grenouilles-taureaux (*niuwa*) (*rana catesbiana*). La mère porteuse sera victime d'un subterfuge qui la prive des honoraires promis: le bébé est mort né. L'épisode n'est pas sans rappeler l'histoire célèbre, «Le prince héritier remplacé par un chat» (Limao huan taizi, appelé aussi Limao huan zhu)¹⁰, mais dans une version entièrement remaniée puisque les complots au palais cèdent la place à un drame moderne: la rivalité, dans l'architexte, qui pousse l'une des deux concubines à spolier l'autre de son nouveau-né en faisant croire qu'elle a accouché d'un chat monstrueux, dans le but de mettre le sien propre sur le trône, trouve une reconfiguration totale dans la mesure où on présente à la mère porteuse un chat écorché afin de simuler un bébé mort-né.

Les récits comportent des critiques explicites contre les exactions mafieuses, sans pour autant esquiver d'autres aberrations juridiques et bioéthiques. A la légende du chat écorché se superpose en effet la fable du jugement de Salomon: un procès opposera la mère porteuse et la mère d'intention pour déterminer l'appartenance du bébé. Le déroulement du procès requiert ainsi un examen attentif dans la mesure où il brasse une multitude de références qui en font une parodie révélatrice. La scène, qui se déroule à l'acte huit, sur une pièce qui en compte neuf, visualise une justice en simulacre, qui frappe d'emblée l'ensemble par la fausseté de la situation. On constate d'abord un brouillage sophistiqué au niveau formel puisqu'on assiste à un tournage de feuilletons télévisuels, représenté à l'intérieur d'une pièce de théâtre, faisant partie elle-même de l'univers diégétique du roman. A ce récit gigogne s'ajoute un déplacement temporel important, non seulement à cause d'un décor qui date de l'époque de la République, mais aussi d'autres indices anachroniques: la cour

autrui. Cf. Zhang Meng, «Shengming zai minjian: Mo Yan Wa pouxi» (La Vie revient au peuple: analyses des Grenouilles de Mo Yan), *Nanfang wentan* (Southern Cultural Forum) 3 (2010): 52-54; Wu Yiqin, «Yuanzui yu jiushu: du Mo Yan changpian xiaoshuo Wa» (Le péché originel et le salut: à propos des Grenouilles de Mo Yan), (id.): 43-45.

10 Elle provient d'une pièce de théâtre anonyme datant des Yuan, *Jinshuiqiao*. «Chen Lin bao zhuanghe (Chen Lin porte dans ses bras un coffret à toilette sur le Pont aux eaux d'or).» Choix de pièces de théâtre des Yuan. Zang Jinshu Ed. Web. 9-9-2010.

<<http://club.xilu.com/wave99/replyview-95048430758.html?PHPSESSID=a0c038a5614238ed0f4bec6662bf5ae>>

est nommée selon les termes de l'ancien régime, «résidence du sous-préfet» (*xianya*), tandis que les sbires vêtus de costumes Sun Yat-sen tiennent dans la main une arme ancienne, un «bâton à eau et à feu» (*shuihuogun*), peint en noir et en rouge. Les didascalies revendiquent d'ailleurs ces distorsions, en caractérisant ces extravagances vestimentaires par le qualificatif «grotesque» (328).

Le jeu doublement affirmé, théâtral et cinématographique, dans ces dispositifs scéniques, favorise donc l'installation d'un faux-semblant, confortée par le travestissement du procès. La scène, en regard de l'acte trois, se révèle comme un duplicata falsifié: Chen Mei était à la recherche d'un magistrat d'une impartialité exemplaire, à l'image du légendaire juge Bao, sans s'attendre à le rencontrer ici. Or l'illusion s'installe non seulement à cause de la nature théâtrale du juge, mais encore d'un jeu improvisé auquel il est livré: l'acteur devant jouer le juge Gao Mengjiu devient le juge Bao au pied levé, au surgissement de la plaignante.

L'improvisation laisse percevoir un scénario astucieux qui, sans se contenter de pointer le trompe-l'œil, dévoile les coulisses, mettant ainsi à jour la nature corrompue de la procédure et de la sentence. Les commanditaires sortent en effet de l'ombre pour intervenir publiquement sur la scène: de Yuan Sai et Chen Shou, patrons de la société d'élevage de grenouilles-taureaux, à Têtard et Xiao Shizi, en passant par le metteur en scène, leur apparition successive a pour effet la juxtaposition du procès en façade et de l'envers du décor, montrant comment la corruption gagne la séance et conduire à une issue retorse. La scène fait penser au *Cercle de craie* (*Huilan ji*) de Li Xingdao, plus subvertie que pastichée: la pièce des Yuan¹¹ érige l'instinct maternel comme critère d'impartialité pour trancher dans la dispute de l'enfant, alors que le procès, dans le roman, s'assimile à un piège: c'est une cause perdue d'avance pour Chen Mei, face à une instance qui vend au plus offrant. Le juge n'est pas dépourvu de compassion en faisant preuve à l'égard de la plaignante d'«une sorte de sympathie mêlée de tristesse» (*beice de*) (331), comme l'indique la didascalie. Le personnage n'est pas non plus sans rappeler la figure de Azdak, le juge dans *Le Cercle de craie caucasien* de Brecht¹², inspiré lui-même par la pièce chinoise: truand, légèrement fou, porté sur le siège du juge grâce aux troubles civils, sachant toutefois par moment donner raison aux humbles. Les sentences loufo-

11 Pour la traduction française, voir Li Hsing-dao, Hoei Lanki ou l'histoire du cercle de craie, traduit par Stanislas Julien, Londres, Oriental Translation Fund, 1832.

12 Bertolt Brecht, *Le Cercle de craie caucasien*, texte français par Georges Proser, in *Théâtre complet* 6, L'Arche, 2005, 83-180. Rappelons que Brecht a été précisément inspiré par la pièce chinoise de Li Xingdao, traduite et adaptée en allemand par Klabund. Sur la figure du juge corrompu en relation avec la pièce de Brecht, cf. Sebastian Veg, *Fictions du pouvoir chinois*, Editions EHESS, 2009, 167.

ques que les notables locaux lui ont octroyées vont dans le même sens: en dépit de son inconstance – vent, pluie, ciel bleu (*yi zhen feng yi zhen yu yi zhen qingtian*) – et de sa brutalité – il brandit sa fameuse semelle comme arme dissuasive et punitive, le juge Gao Mengjiu est d’un esprit enclin à la justice. La différence qui le sépare d’Azdak se trouve dans un environnement corrosif sans précédent: l’époque de la République, «époque trouble» (*luanshi*) (329) connue pour la noirceur du monde judiciaire, a raison du magistrat chinois, l’ayant soumis in fine à la loi du genre sans l’autoriser, comme le fait Azdak, à devenir l’heureux exemple du hasard contre l’impossibilité de la justice dans une société corrompue.

Dans ces conditions l’attribution de l’enfant au couple d’intention n’obéit à aucune considération juridique ni bioéthique. Si *Le Cercle de craie*, dans sa version chinoise, privilégie les liens du sang, et si Brecht, tranchant en faveur de Groucha, fille de cuisine, au détriment de la femme du gouverneur, répond avant tout aux critères de la bonté, le juge Gao, chez Mo Yan, se porte garant de la loi de l’argent. La gestation pour autrui, telle qu’elle est décrite dans le roman, invite donc à réfléchir sur les inégalités sociales, souvent occultées par ses incertitudes juridiques. L’échec de Chen Mei s’explique en effet en grande partie par son statut socio-économique que le procès tait. Elle rejoint ces mères porteuses sans défense en cas de litiges, comme en témoigne Matter of Baby M¹³, dont le tribunal du New Jersey a tranché en faveur des parents d’intention au motif des «intérêts de l’enfant», contre une mère porteuse en situation matérielle fragile. Dans ces conditions, comment aurait-on confié l’enfant à une migrante intérieure (*mingong*), doublement handicapée, sur le plan physique comme économique. Un autre détail interpelle aussi: pourquoi la société d’élevage de grenouilles s’efforce de tenir ses services secrets alors que le secteur connaît une prospérité toute légale, en l’absence totale de dispositif législatif et, partant, d’interdiction officielle, proposant les bébés à la carte, avec le choix du sexe et le ventre à louer sur catalogue¹⁴? Mo Yan dénonce en vérité une entre-

13 «Case10: The Case of Baby M.» Tom L. Beauchamp & James F. Childress ed., *Principles of Bio-medical Ethic*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, 430-431. Cf. aussi Li Junmin, «Daiyun hefahua de lunli wenti yanjiu xianzhuang» (Etat des lieux des questions éthiques autour de la législation sur la gestation pour autrui), Web 16/11/10. <<http://www.daiyunchina.com/newsview.asp?id=252>>.

14 Il n’existe en effet actuellement en Chine aucun encadrement juridique en la matière. Les décrets et règlements administratifs interdisent la pratique aux personnels et services hospitaliers, en dehors desquels les «contrats» sont établis, en toute légalité, à la libre initiative des parties par l’intermédiaire des agences ou des organismes opaques. Cf. «Renlei fuzhu shengzhi jishu guanli banfa» (Règlements de gestion sur la procréation médicalement assistée), publiés par le Ministère de la Santé publique le 20 février 2001 et «Renlei fuzhu shengzhi jishu yu renlei jingziku xiangguan jishu guifan, jiben zhunze he lunli yuanze» (Règles techniques, normes fondamentales et principes éthiques relatifs à la procréation médicalement assistée et à la banque de spermés), publié par le même

prise qui exploite sans scrupule ces jeunes ouvrières défigurées, vivant désormais en parias, et à qui il ne reste plus que le corps pour se vendre. Les motifs condamnables, perçus déjà par le policier dans l'acte trois, semblent précisément liés au dérapage mafieux sur des terrains connus: réseaux de prostitution et de trafic d'enfants sous couverts de l'honorable procréation artificielle: on explique au narrateur ingénu différents services proposés aux candidats, avec entre autres, «fécondation par contact physique», *youxing huaiyun*, entre le père d'intention et la mère porteuse (302, 304). Chen Mei qui s'est refusée de vendre son charme dans le sud de la Chine pour s'enrichir n'a pas réussi à échapper à ce commerce suspect du corps (237-238).

La farce judiciaire, tout en révélant les inégalités sociales, renvoie à une pratique ancestrale qui s'actualise en jouant le jeu de l'idéologie d'Etat. Le verdict se révèle en effet comme la résurgence d'un souci millénaire en matière de perpétuation du patrilignage. La reconnaissance du droit de la parenté pour le couple d'intention renouvelle d'une certaine manière l'«adoption thérapeutique», selon laquelle un bébé pour grandir sainement doit être séparé de la parturiente, femme rendue particulièrement déséquilibrée voire polluante après son accouchement. Ecarter l'enfant de cet être dangereux en le confiant à des nourrices ou à des parents adoptifs devient une nécessité qui, pour obéir à un certain discours médical et à des croyances populaires, n'en est pas moins déterminée par un dispositif social qui voit en la jeune femme un être mal dégagé des influences du clan étranger. L'abandon à visée prophylactique consiste donc à «neutraliser le pouvoir dérégulateur de la sexualité féminine et ancrer les enfants dans leur patrilignage»¹⁵. Ainsi dans le roman la nature démoniaque qui disqualifie la génitrice dans sa revendication du droit à la parenté s'exprime-t-elle par sa «folie», doublée d'un physique monstrueux qui lui interdit de vivre à visage ouvert: elle n'est un être humain que voilée et un démon une fois découverte, selon son propre aveu¹⁶. A contrario, il paraît donc autrement raisonnable de remettre l'enfant à Xiao Shizi, grand-mère sèche et asexuée,

ministère en 2003. Cf. aussi?Meng Haiyan et al., «Daiyun jishu de lunli et falu sikao» (Réflexions éthiques et juridiques sur la technique de la gestation pour autrui), *Yixue yu zhexue Medecine and Philosophy* 7, vol. 29, (2008): 42-44.

15 Françoise Lauwaert, «Abandon, adoption, liaison. Réflexions sur l'adoption thérapeutique en Chine traditionnelle», *L'Homme* 137 (1996): 143. Comme en témoigne aussi la littérature vernaculaire, dont Françoise Lauwaert fournit une analyse éclairante.

16 Les questions que se sont posées la Tante et le narrateur, à la fin du roman (337), quant à savoir s'il serait judicieux de confier l'enfant à une femme frappée de «démence», de surcroît au «visage hideux et terrifiant» (*zhengning*), restent sans réponse. La défense tardive de la Tante qui affirme que «quelqu'un de dément est aussi capable d'aimer ses enfants» ne pourra être considérée au mieux que comme l'aveu des remords par rapport à un faux témoignage qu'elle avait apporté.

figures rassurantes, élevée au-dessus de la condition féminine troublée. Ce statut de nourrice protectrice n'est pas seulement lié à son âge mais davantage à la différence générationnelle occultée par la confusion troublante qu'a provoquée la procréation artificielle: Xiao Shizi qui dispute la maternité de l'enfant avec Chen Mei n'était autre que la mère adoptive de cette dernière, lorsque Xiao Shizi travaillait comme assistante aux côtés de la Tante, s'étant acheté, bien plus tard, une figurine façonnée à l'image du bébé Chen Mei (186-191). Enfin, l'attitude du narrateur n'autorise aucun doute sur l'ordre patrilinéaire. Il en a la prescience, confirmée par l'avis péremptoire, ultime et définitif, qu'il émet à la fin du roman alors qu'il est resté en retrait des imbroglios: «c'est dans l'ordre du Ciel et de la Terre que le père élève son enfant» (*tianjing diyi*), car malgré tout «sur le plan biologique, c'est moi le père» et même la «cour suprême aurait adopté cette décision» (337).

La suprématie de l'ordre agnatique reflète en réalité le consensus établi et sans cesse réactualisé: la descendance mâle justifie le corps un et indéfectible du père et du fils, en excluant la sexualité perturbatrice de l'accouchée et les rapports mortifères du couple mère-enfant. Le désir d'enfants, c'est avant tout celui d'un fils. Tous les cas de contravention dans le roman s'expliquent par ce désir impérieux, qui, dans le contexte rural, correspond à des soucis matériels, mais qui n'est pas sans traduire le rêve de puissance le plus profond. La procréation artificielle l'exauce de façon assez inattendue pour révéler un fantasme de domination partagé par l'Etat, la société et les individus. La politique de contrôle des naissances s'accompagne dès le début d'un discours affiché d'eugénisme, que l'Etat justifie par le projet de modernisation et de renforcement du pays réclamant les enfants de qualité. Or la population, notamment rurale, identifie plus volontiers ce discours à la naissance des garçons qu'à l'égalité des sexes¹⁷. Ainsi a-t-on fait croire à Chen Mei qu'elle portait un embryon aux «génomes nobles», dont on a la certitude du sexe fort. C'est d'ailleurs en ces termes que Xiao Shizi tente de se défendre devant un mari qui lui reproche d'avoir recouru à un autre ventre en déroband son sperme (347-348). Si les deux grossesses parallèles, celle de la mère porteuse et celle, imaginaire ou nerveuse, de la mère d'intention, sont au centre de toute attention, c'est d'abord lié à l'enjeu du sexe en ce qui concerne le futur enfant. Dans le même ordre d'idée, la prouesse biotechnique est réalisée grâce à une entreprise qui, en dépit de son opacité, se targue de glorifier la nation par sa puissance financière et technologique. Yuan Sai, son PDG et ancien condamné pour

17 Isabelle Attané, *En espérant un fils... La masculinisation de la population chinoise*, Les éditions de l'INED, 2010.

avoir enlevé illégalement des stérilets, pavoise ainsi la réussite de son entreprise d'un petit drapeau national, posé sur son bureau, en désarçonnant le regard dubitatif du narrateur: «même un truand a le droit d'aimer sa patrie» (274).

L'alliance insoupçonnée entre l'Etat et la mafia est à la mesure de ce fantasme de puissance, qui convainc les plus sceptiques par la juxtaposition de l'élevage industriel de grenouilles et de gynécologie. La proximité entre l'Hôpital sino-américain pour femmes et enfants (*Zhongmei hezi fuying yiyuan*) et l'usine d'élevage attache d'emblée la procréation à une fabrication technique qui fait fi de la loi humaine. C'est d'ailleurs après une visite fascinée de l'établissement que Xiao Shizi postule, non sans le consentement de son mari, pour aller travailler à l'usine d'élevage, où elle aura accouché. La maîtrise technique, qui sépare la procréation de la sexualité, donc de l'altérité, traduit, selon la psychanalyste Monette Vacquin, le fantasme infantile le plus archaïque de la toute puissance, à savoir la reproduction du même. Si l'on en croit à la permutation étymologique des deux mots de «descendance» (*si*) et de «ressemblance» (*si*), pierre angulaire de la piété filiale, la continuité père-fils se passe, par le biais de la procréation artificielle, de toute différenciation, dans un auto-engendrement dé-sexué. De quoi amadouer «l'inconscient le plus archaïque dans la science la plus pointue»¹⁸, et de quoi combler le désir le plus insensé chez les héros de *success stories* en patriotisme, en affaires et en vie privée, comme le laisse entendre le discours si édifiant tenu par le démarcheur de la société pendant une promenade aquatique (224-230).

3. La Refondation de l'humanisme

Mo Yan jette un anathème sur un totalitarisme toujours vivace, générateur du délitement moral par sa complicité avec un capitalisme sauvage. Mais au lieu de construire un modèle politique alternatif, l'écrivain se livre à un jeu de déplacement pour reformuler les questionnements. Il exprimer notamment le souci de refonder l'humanisme, en convoquant le mythe et les pratiques anthropologiques. Il s'agit de réhabiliter la vie, dans son inaliénabilité et dans son intégrité, tout en valorisant le bios, envisagé comme intégré dans une communauté recomposée, susceptible de prémunir la vie contre les destructivités et de permettre aux individus atomes de sortir de leur insularité pour devenir des sujets sociaux. La bioéthique, et corolairement, la dignité humaine, s'inscrivent dès lors dans une perspective où le social rejoint le politique.

18 Monette Vacquin. *Main basse sur les vivants*. Fayard, 1999, 14-15.

Le roman préconise d'abord, ne serait-ce que par la voie métaphorique, la réhabilitation de la vie, constitutive des droits fondamentaux des individus. L'heure est à la reconstitution et à la régénérescence, après tant de crimes perpétrés. Il est peu anodin à cet égard que la Tante, gynécologue célibataire mais au palmarès double et au comportement digne du docteur Jeckyll, s'offre un mari et un amant, l'un et l'autre artisans sculpteurs de statuettes de bébés. Hao Dashou, le mari, porte un nom qui signifie une grande paire de mains «bonnes» et sans doute réparatrices, pour avoir modelé tous les bébés du canton. L'artisanat sert le deuil (268-270), lorsque l'atelier de fabrication se transforme en sanctuaire, où les 2800 figurines, représentant autant de fœtus tués, sont alignées sur les étagères comme sur un autel, afin de recevoir les prières: trois «bâtons d'encens ont été allumés» tandis que la Tante, suivie de ses visiteurs impromptus, se prosterne devant les figurines. Le deuil se poursuit d'ailleurs avec un travail d'individuation accordant un nom à chacune d'elles. Le baptême, néanmoins, dépasse déjà l'affliction pour annoncer la renaissance. Chaque nom donné engendre de fait un récit étiologique qui situe les statuettes dans une longue chaîne karmique: leur ascendance généalogique (cf. aussi p. 217) étant suivie par une description sur leur destinée respective, la biographie triomphe sur le déterminisme biologique. La réincarnation se réalise ainsi par un parcours tracé avec précision: à l'issue de 49 jours d'exposition au soleil – le temps nécessaire pour les mânes dans leur séjour au monde chthonien avant leur réincarnation – et des cérémonies du deuil, ces figurines transmigrent pour la majorité dans les familles d'accueil où elles mènent une existence heureuse (270), à moins qu'elles ne restent dans leur forme terrestre, mais dansant au clair de lune dans un corps vivifié par le sang que Qin He distille en perçant son doigt (184).

La résurrection des fœtus assassinés, grâce aux figurines de terre, n'est pas sans implication mythique. Elle fait penser à Nüwa, la déesse qui créa les hommes à partir de l'argile. Mais en remodelant la totalité des bébés du canton à la manière de la divinité créatrice, les sculpteurs non seulement restituent la vie individuelle, mais aussi dotent l'être humain ainsi ressuscité d'une dimension sociale en invoquant une figure tutrice pour la communauté.

C'est sans doute cette imagination communautaire qui est à l'origine de la chaîne analogique reliant «bébé», «grenouilles» et «Nüwa la déesse» à travers l'homophonie *wa*. Si le rapprochement entre les deux premiers est attesté par des ressemblances physiques biaisées – entre les têtards et les fœtus à certain stade de développement, entre les cris de bébés et les coassements – en revanche, celui des deux dernières relèvent d'une pure juxtaposition, qui ne saurait être qu'un acte de totémisation. Associées ainsi avec la déesse Nüwa de façon

quelque peu saugrenue, les batraciens anoures se défont pour se hisser au statut d'ancêtres, sinon de l'humanité, du moins du canton Nord-Est de Gaomi. Le culte établi à la faveur de cette divinisation donne la possibilité aux habitants de s'identifier au fondateur de leur communauté, de la même manière que le clan des mangeurs de pailles qui érige une jument sur l'autel des ancêtres¹⁹.

L'invocation vise à recimenter une communauté en dislocation. A la différence des romans précédents enclins à une topographie mythique, le Gaomi originel et ancestral disparaît sous le rouleau compresseur d'une urbanisation forcenée qui transforme les villages en centres financiers et en quartiers commerciaux. La demeure parentale est préservée, mais muséifiée, au milieu des tours, pour satisfaire à la curiosité touristique. La reconstruction communautaire, à laquelle s'évertue Mo Yan, se détourne de la chimère cartographique pour s'orienter vers la reconstitution d'un corps, qu'il s'agit littéralement de «remembrer». Ainsi le retour du narrateur au pays, après un séjour frustré à la capitale, a-t-il inspiré moins une revisite de lieux que celle des «membres» de cette communauté dispersée. L'onomastique des personnages, appelés dans leur quasi-totalité d'après une partie de leur corps, Chen les sourcils (Chen Mei), Chen le nez (Chen Bi), Yuan la joue (Yuan Sai), Wang la bille (Wang Dan), Wan le pied (Wan Zu), Xiao les lèvres supérieures (Xiao Shangchun) et inférieures (Xiao Xiachun), père et fils, se motive précisément selon cette double logique: pris dans leur individualité ces noms pâtiennent du démembrement tandis que l'écriture, qui les agglutine, accomplit un travail de remembrement. La force d'agrégation se traduit par la restitution du réseau d'anciens camarades, qui, partageant les souvenirs «intestinaux» – enfants, ils grignotaient tous des morceaux de charbon à une époque de disette – se resserrent les liens en prêtant le secours à Chen Bi, le déchu et le laissé pour compte de la réforme. La solidarité, même parfois velléitaire, donne la lueur d'espoir au rétablissement d'un social artificiel, susceptible de compenser le social spontané, qui, tel la famille, se déracine, au risque de s'évaporer.

La refondation communautaire entretient néanmoins un rapport lointain avec le communautarisme. Il est vrai que la communauté imaginaire est empreinte de réflexions morales, comme un rempart collectif dressé contre les agressivités étatiques ou capitalistes. Mais nullement signes de repli, elle construit espace où la vie se réaffirme dans ses droits fondamentaux et où un humanisme relationnel se dessine à travers le renouvellement des liens sociaux.

19 Mo Yan, *Shicao jiazou* (Le Clan des mangeurs de pailles), Beijing, Dangdai shijie chubanshe, 2004, 113.

L'ambivalence propre à l'image de grenouilles favorise une meilleure appréhension de cette moralité humaniste illustrative du souci premier de la vie. Les batraciens anoures sont d'abord assimilés à l'espèce à protéger, voire à vénérer, en raison de l'être vivant qu'ils incarnent. Elus totems, ils sont couronnés de l'aura sacrée qui rejoint *Le Dieu Grenouille* de Pu Songling²⁰, auteur fétiche de Mo Yan: divinités bienveillantes, les grenouilles engendrent et bénissent l'humanité à condition que la réciprocité soit établie avec le devoir de témoigner à leur égard culte, respect et protection. Ce sentiment émerge chez le narrateur qui passe devant la statue de grenouille-taureau dressée à l'entrée de l'usine de l'élevage et dont les «grands yeux globuleux et sombres semblent véhiculer des messages de la nuit des temps» (196). L'interdit de la consommation de cet animal – le narrateur décline le banquet dont l'hôte voulait l'honorer avec un menu spécial grenouilles-taureaux – dépasse dès lors les seules préoccupations écologiques pour se mettre à l'écoute des oracles: on ne mangera pas un être avec qui l'humain entretient des rapports de fécondation et de permutation, comme l'appréhende la Tante sous l'emprise des légendes (215) et comme le laisse penser Têtard, le nom même du narrateur (197-198). Le respect de la vie humaine s'impose ici à titre du tabou de l'anthropophagie, qui radicalise la critique déjà formulée dans *Le Pays de l'alcool*²¹, en y adjoignant une vision élargie sur le vivant.

Les grenouilles, néanmoins, revêtent des aspects antinomiques, par leur bestialité répulsive. A la différence d'une interspécificité positive, observable dans les *Quarante et un coups de canon* ou *La Dure loi du karma*²², l'animalité sert davantage de paradigme discriminatoire pour tracer les limites des frontières de l'humanité. La peau noire, poisseuse et froide du batracien inspire la répugnance, au même titre que ses yeux sombres et menaçants, sans parler de l'odeur nauséabonde qui se dégage du vivier de l'élevage couvert de bulles

20 Shiniang, La Dixième, réincarnation des divinités grenouilles, a épousé Kun Sheng, le bachelier Kun, tandis que la maison fut envahie de ces batraciens. Celle-ci aura connu une série d'événements malheureux du jour où le mari en vint à les offenser tout en infligeant la maltraitance à sa femme. La paix et la prospérité revinrent lorsque l'épouse fit de nouveau l'objet de respect et que les rites furent correctement pratiqués au sanctuaire dédié au dieu. Elle donna dès lors naissance à deux garçons. Voir «Qingwa shen » (Le Dieu Grenouille), in Pu Songling, *Liaozhai zhiyi* (Chroniques de l'étrange), Beijing, Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1989, 1446-1450. Voir, pour la traduction française, «Le Dieu Grenouille», in Pu Songling, *Trois contes étranges. Récits chinois et illustrations inédites*, préface et traduction de Rainier Lanselle, PUF/Fondation Martin Bodmer, 2009, 101-111.

21 Mo Yan, *Le Pays de l'alcool*, traduit du chinois par Noël et Liliane Dutrait, Seuil, 2000.

22 Mo Yan, *Quarante et un coups de canon*, traduit du chinois par Noël et Liliane Dutrait, Seuil, 2008; *La Dure loi du karma*, traduit du chinois par Chantal Chen-Andro, Id. 2009. Cf. aussi notre étude, Yinde Zhang, «La Fiction du vivant. L'homme et l'animal chez Mo Yan.» *Perspectives chinoises* 3 (2010): 134-141.

savonneuses et repoussantes. Les monstres viennent ainsi hanter la Tante qui, dans ses nuits cauchemardesques, devient la cible des attaques réitérées de cet animal en rage de vengeance. Mais les agressions fantasmagoriques s'expliquent sans doute par les représailles de ces victimes de malmort, mais elles révèlent déjà les forces du mal qui s'incarnent en cette animalité. Le vol, les trafics, les attaques ne sont-ils pas commis par un adolescent féroce au torse luisant comme un «maquereau-bonite noir» qui lui a permis de s'échapper «comme une loche» (195, 256).

La bestialité du vilain garçon fait l'objet de stigmatisation à la fois dans son comportement individuel et dans son environnement néfaste. Capable de s'emparer de l'aumône fait à un mendiant, il en vient à inverser le noir et le blanc, en criant au voleur. Il a les «yeux de coq de combat» (*douji yan*), yeux loucheurs, qui, exprimant une violence cruelle, menacent de détruire la justice. Les exactions qu'il commet ne sont pas étrangères à un cadre délétère, en l'occurrence au village Dongfeng, repaire de bandits et de brigands, à l'écart de bonnes mœurs qui régnaient jadis sur le reste de la région. La saleté qui caractérise cette progéniture «démoniaque» dans son physique comme dans ses «propos orduriers» (*zang hua*) fait de lui l'incarnation de la souillure, donc de l'impur, qu'il s'agit d'expurger du groupe, si l'on entend préserver l'espace pur où les individus peuvent s'épanouir dans leur humanité commune²³.

L'expulsion du sale, de cette «mauvaise graine» et de la «honte» de Gaomi (256; 263) n'aura pas lieu, sauf sur un mode contrastif, dans la mesure où la solidarité des anciens camarades se met en place pour rappeler le potentiel d'une communauté morale. L'aide de Chen Bi, infirme et réduit à la mendicité, exprime ainsi moins les dons individuels que la conscience morale qui resurgit chez ses anciens camarades, révélés à leur propre humanité grâce à la réactivation de leur rôle social. Cet humanisme se détourne d'un manichéisme qui assignerait les personnages à une nature préformatée. Les principes, tels que compassion, tolérance, solidarité, s'actualisent à la sollicitation d'un contexte qui appelle à les réaccorder à la condition humaine. Les gestes humanitaires, dans le sillage de Kenzaburo Oe – la référence est transparente à travers l'exemple d'un fils handicapé dont il s'occupe – se veulent stimulateurs de relations intersubjectives, particulièrement importantes dans la crise morale qui traverse la société chinoise d'aujourd'hui.

23 Julia Kristeva, Pouvoirs de l'horreur, p. 80. Cf. aussi Mary Douglas, Purity and Danger, An Analysis of Concepts of Purity and Taboo (1966), trad. par Anne Guérin, De la souillure, Paris, Maspéro, 1971.

C'est donc un humanisme relationnel, doublé d'une critique sociale, que l'auteur met en scène. Le dernier épisode, loin d'être une pièce postiche, acquiert dès lors sa dimension réflexive où se confronte et se confondent la scène sociale et la scène théâtrale. L'espace scénique tient lieu d'un véritable forum, espace public où une quinzaine d' «acteurs», sociaux, entrent dans un dialogue «conflictuel» tout en se resserrant les liens. L' «éthique de la discussion»²⁴, qui dégage plus la tension que la cohésion chimérique, différencie l'œuvre de Mo Yan d'une série télévisuelle, *Les liens du sang* (*Xuemai*), focalisés sur une histoire similaire de mère porteuse²⁵: effaçant le fossé social qui sépare les deux parties de la transaction, au demeurant parfaitement normalisée, les feuilletons se terminent par les retrouvailles inespérées entre un demi-frère et une demi-sœur, l'un le père d'intention et l'autre la mère porteuse. Le *happy end*, dans cette série, fait triompher l'«éthique familiale»²⁶, par un scénario factice dont le verdict, concernant l'appartenance de l'enfant, est prononcé en faveur de toute la famille tout en écartant de justesse le scandale d'un inceste, alors que Mo Yan s'approprie le sujet pour en faire une réflexion critique, qui relie les égarements bioéthiques à l'incurie des autorités face aux disparités sociales criantes et à une déliquescence morale désespérée.

Les jeux de déplacement et de glissement, chers à l'auteur, mettent toutefois en garde contre toute tentative d'aboutissement herméneutique. L'indéterminé s'accroît par la seule juxtaposition du genre épistolaire, qui donne l'illusion du vrai et de la sincérité, et de l'écriture théâtrale, qui procure la certitude de l'illusion. L'histoire a d'ailleurs reçu une transfiguration et une dramatisation trop complexes pour livrer tous ses secrets. Une série de questions demeurent en suspens, à la tombée du rideau. Qui est au fond ce mauvais garçon du village, aussi menaçant que glissant ? L'auteur est-il versé dans le catastrophisme à travers un imaginaire posthumain²⁷, détruisant sur son passage

24 Jürgen Habermas, *De l'éthique de la discussion*, traduit de l'allemand par Mark Hunyadi, Flammarion, 1999.

25 *Les Liens du sang*, série télévisée en 30 épisodes, réalisée par Chen Weixiang (Malaisie), et diffusée à la télévision de Jinan à partir du 4 juin 2010. Cf. «Xuemai kaibo daiyun mama huati yingping yin zhengyi». La diffusion des Liens du sang provoque les polémiques sur les mères porteuses. (2010-06-10) <<http://www.26lady.com>>.

26 Que l'on peut observer dans les débats autour des questions de clonage, comme source de réticence principale. Cf. Mireille Delmas-Marty, «Le Débat en Chine sur le clonage humain.» Mireille Delmas-Marty et Pierre-Etienne Will, *La Chine et la démocratie*. Fayard, 2007, 663-680, notamment p. 673. Cf. aussi le numéro spécial «Chine», *Journal international de bioéthique* 4, vol. 19, 2008.

27 Dominique Lecourt, *Humain posthumain: la technique et la vie*, PUF, 2003. En tout cas l'auteur attribue le mal aux conséquences bioéthiques inédites, en le considérant comme émanant de la perturbation de la parentalité et de la filiation. Tué par l'avortement forcé, le garçon se réincarne en changeant de position générationnelle: fils de Zhang Quan et frère de sa fille Zhang Laidi, il devient le

toute conviction humaniste, ou, au contraire, cette figure maléfique ne consiste-t-elle pas plutôt à réintroduire une altérité axiologique susceptible de mettre en alerte notre conscience quant à l'urgence de retrouver les valeurs communes fondées sur un agir communicationnel transcendant les limites familiales? Mais l'être étrange au pouvoir de nuisance et de domination exponentiel, terrassant un narrateur innocent et désarmé, n'offre-t-il pas un autre accès à la polysémie inexhaustible du titre ? Des myriades de batraciens autorisent ainsi, ultimement, à soupçonner un message crypté en la personne de Jean-Baptiste Grenouille, qui gît en palimpseste²⁸, et dont Têtard (Kedou) constitue, au fond,

petit-fils du premier et le fils de cette dernière (271), à la suite d'une décision prise par la Tante. Le mélange de la politique de contrôle des naissances, de l'alchimie de la gynécologue et de la manipulation biotechnologie a provoqué l'avènement d'un mutant malfaisant, capable de détruire les organisations familiales, tout en transgressant les interdits culturels de la communauté.

28 Mo Yan évoque son admiration pour Le Parfum de Patrick Suskind à propos de l'hypertrophie sensorielle qui caractérise l'écriture romanesque. Cf. «Odeurs de roman». Ecrire au présent. Débats littéraires franco-chinois. Annie Curien dir. Editions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme.

Baozha 爆炸
 beice de 悲惻地
 Chen Bi 陳鼻
 Chen Mei 陳眉
 Chen Shou 陳手
 Dongli maorong wanjuchang 東麗毛絨玩具廠
 Douji yan 鬥雞眼
 Gao Mengjiu 高夢九
 Gaomi 高密
 Geng Fenglian 耿鳳蓮
 Guanyin 觀音
Guomen 鍋門
 Hao Dashou 郝大手
 Huilan ji 灰欄記
Jinshuiqiao Chen Lin bao
zhuanghe 金水橋陳琳抱狀盒
 Kedou 蝌蚪
 Li Xingdao 李行道
Limao huan taizi 狸貓換太子
Limao huan zhu 狸貓換主
 Linyi 臨沂
 luanshi 亂世
 mingong 民工
 mozhua 魔爪
 niuwa 牛蛙 (*Rana Catesbiana*)
 Nüwa 女媧
 Pu Songling 蒲松齡
Qingwa shen 青蛙神

Qiyi 棄嬰
 Shenzhen Zhili wanjuchang 深圳致麗玩具廠
 shuihuogun 水火棍
 si 嗣
 si 似
 siya 嘶啞
 Songzi niangniang 送子娘娘
 Sugitani Yoshito 杉谷義人
 tianjing diyi 天經地義
 wa 蛙
 wa 娃
 wa 媧
 Wan Zu 萬足
 Wang Dan 王膽
 Wang Renmei 王仁美
 xianya 縣衙
 Xiao Shangchun 肖上唇
 Xiao Shizi 小獅子
 Xiao Xiachun 肖下唇
 Xuemai 血脈
 yi zhen feng yi zhen yu yi zhen
 qingtian 一陣風一陣雨一陣青天
 youxing huaiyun 有性懷孕
 Yuan Sai 袁腮
 zang hua 髒話
 zhe meiyou daoli 這沒有道理
 zhengning 獐獐
 Zhongmei hezi fuying yiyuan 中美合資婦嬰醫院

moins une métonymie qu'un oxymore: à l'opposé de cette créature sans humanité, gonflée du rêve de conquête, Têtard choisit de grandir en enfant, refusant de devenir un adulte infantile, happé par le fantasme régressif de puissance.

*Cultural and Political Nationalism, and the
Creation of a “Harmonious Society”*

Bart Dessein

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Abstract

After the concept of 'cultural nationalism,' i.e. the concept that Confucian China is the culturally most developed region in East-Asia, and can thus claim the moral legitimacy to, through the so-called system of 'tribute relations,' rule over its neighboring regions, had been the dominant political viewpoint of imperial China, this concept was shattered in the aftermath of the Opium War (1839-1842) and the ensuing 'unequal treaties'. Especially since the May 4th Movement of 1919, this 'cultural nationalism' was substituted with 'political nationalism,' aimed at the creation of a new (Han centered) Chinese nation out of the rubble of the Qing Dynasty. Sun Zhongshan's (1866-1925) identification of this new state with his Nationalist Party made the Nationalist Party an instrument in power politics, and created the concept of 'dangguo' (party state).

Due to the weak reaction to the Japanese aggression in the beginning of the 1930s by the Nationalist Party and its determination to rather continue the civil war against the Chinese Communist Party, however, the power balance shifted to the latter. Although, in these circumstances, the CCP also appealed itself to Sun Zhongshan's ideology of a Han centered nation state before coming to power, after 1949, it turned to Marxism-Leninism to build this new nation state, now identified with the CCP. In its refusal of traditional Chinese (Confucian) culture and its claim on modernity, CCP state nationalism of the Maoist years can be defined as 'iconoclastic nationalism'.

The economic reform that started after the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, has resulted in the appearance of different new types of nationalism. Greater regional power to strengthen economic growth has made ethnic nationalism flare up in those minority regions that, in the Maoist years, were forced into the Marxist endeavour to, through class struggle, integrate into the new nation state. This, combined with the fact that the capitalist economic development under CCP rule has made the Marxist-Leninist ideology of the Party to a great extent obsolete, has made the CCP reformulate its 'state nationalism' as 'patriotism,' i.e., the love shared by Han and non-Han alike for the unified country. In its continued emphasis on the historical Han Chinese heritage, this new patriotic 'state nationalism' on the one hand embraces some concepts of the 'cultural nationalism' that characterized imperial China, and on the other hand integrates some viewpoints of New Confucianists and Han nationalists.

Contemporary China thus shows to be balancing between the different dynamisms of cultural nationalism, political nationalism, state nationalism, Han nationalism, ethnic nationalism, and patriotism. It are these dynamisms that will be addressed in this paper.

Resumo

Apesar do conceito de «nacionalismo cultural» (i.e., o conceito de que a China Confucionista é a região culturalmente mais desenvolvida da Ásia-Oriental, e que por essa razão pode reclamar para si a legitimidade moral para, através do chamado sistema de «relações tributárias», governar sobre as regiões vizinhas) ter correspondido à perspectiva política dominante da China Imperial, foi posto de parte após o resultado da Guerra do Ópio (1939-1942) e dos «tratados desiguais» que se seguiram. Especialmente desde o Movimento de 4 de Maio de 1919, este «nacionalismo cultural» foi substituído por um «nacionalismo político» visando a criação de uma nova nação Chinesa (centrada nos Han), que surgiu das ruínas da Dinastia Qing. A identificação que Sun Zhongshan (1866-1925) estabeleceu entre este novo Estado e o seu Partido Nacionalista tornou o Partido Nacionalista um instrumento de poder político, e criou o conceito de «dangguo» (Partido-Estado).

Devido à fraca reacção do Partido Nacionalista à agressão Japonesa nos inícios dos anos 1930 e devido à sua determinação em continuar a guerra civil contra o Partido Comunista Chinês, o poder caiu nas mãos deste último. Apesar de, nessas circunstâncias, antes de ter chegado ao poder, o Partido Comunista Chinês também se ter aproximado à ideologia de Sun Zhongshan de um estado-nação de supremacia Han, após 1949 voltou-se para o Marxismo-Leninismo para construir este novo estado-nação, agora associado ao PCC. Pela sua recusa da cultura Chinesa (Confucionista) tradicional e pela defesa da modernidade, o nacionalismo de Estado do PCC dos anos Maoístas pode ser definido como «nacionalismo iconoclasta».

A reforma económica iniciada depois da morte de Mao Zedong, em 1976, resultou na emergência de novas e distintas formas de nacionalismo. O fortalecimento das administrações regionais, com o intuito de incentivar o crescimento económico, originou um florescimento dos nacionalismos étnicos nas províncias habitadas por minorias; as mesmas que durante a era Maoísta foram forçadas a integrar o estado-nação chinês através do empreendimento marxista da luta de classes. Esta realidade, combinada com o desenvolvimento económico capitalista que sob a tutela do PCC tornou a ideologia Marxista-Leninista obsoleta, levou a que o Partido decidisse reformular o seu princípio de «nacionalismo de Estado» como «patriotismo», i.e., o apego de Han e não-Han pelo país unificado. Na sua contínua ênfase no legado histórico da China Han, este novo «nacionalismo de Estado» patriótico abarca, por um lado, conceitos do «nacionalismo cultural» que caracterizava a China imperial e, por outro, pontos de vista dos Neo-Confucionistas e nacionalistas Han.

Assim, a China Contemporânea aparenta estar apoiada numa estrutura conceptual em constante reconfiguração, abrangendo diferentes dinâmicas de nacionalismo cultural, nacionalismo político, nacionalismo de estado, nacionalismo Han, nacionalismo étnico e patriotismo. Dinâmicas estas que serão abordadas de seguida.

Cultural and Political Nationalism, and the Creation of a “Harmonious Society”

Bart Dessein

1. Introduction

On April 21, 2006, at the occasion of the launching of the Olympic Slogan “One People, One Dream”, Liu Qi, member of the Politburo of the Chinese Communist Party and president of the organizational committee of the Beijing Olympic Games, commented as follows: “It is a slogan that conveys the lofty ideal of people in Beijing as well as in China to share the global community and civilization and to create a bright future hand in hand with people from the rest of the world. It expresses the firm belief of a great nation, with a long history of 5000 years and on its way towards modernization, that is committed to peaceful development, a harmonious society and people’s happiness.” This comment contains three important claims with respect to contemporary Party rhetorics: the concept of a Chinese nation that has a history of 5000 years; its desire to become part of a peaceful globalized world; and the claim that it is modernization that will lead to a national and international harmonious society. These three claims are exponent of two types of “nationalism” that will be addressed in this article: cultural nationalism that is rooted in China’s history; and political nationalism that originated along with the modernization concept in the early 20th century.

2. Cultural Nationalism and the Confucian Concept of “Harmony”

The use of bronze to make agricultural tools, a skill which the Chinese most likely learned from the northern Eurasian mobile pastoralists around 1700 BCE (Fitzgerald-Huber 67), enabled them to both increase the area of agricultural land that could be tilled and the efficiency with which this could be done. As a result, the agricultural output saw a major increase in what has been labeled “the era of regional development” by Leon E. Stover (42), a period stretching

from roughly 1700 to 770 BCE. The possibility to nourish a larger number of people resulted in a population growth. After a primary phase of regional growth, however, the unremitting necessity for an ever-larger agricultural output to feed this growing population headed for a major crisis. Given the limited area of available farmland, “Chinese” civilization being concentrated in the fertile plains of the Yellow River and its affluents, the point came where expansion of the farmland of one of the many different “states” (*guo*) that constituted “China” at that time, was only possible to the detriment of the neighboring “state”¹. This period has become known as the period of the “Warring States” (*Zhanguo*) in Chinese political history (435-221 BCE), and as the period of the “One Hundred Philosophical Schools” in Chinese intellectual history². The latter shows that Chinese philosophies are primarily concerned with the *Diesselts*, not with the *Jenseits*: their aim is to (re)-establish good order in society.

Sheer military power made the ruler of the Qin state the final victor in the battle between the different warring states. He successfully united the then Chinese territory, whereupon he established the first Chinese imperial dynasty – the Qin – in 221 BCE, and proclaimed himself the “First Emperor of the Qin” (*Qin shi huangdi*). Contrary to all other philosophies that had been formulated in the preceding period of the “One Hundred Philosophical Schools”, Legalism does not take a eulogized historical period as example for establishing good order in society (Bauer 37). It moreover emphasizes severe laws to uphold social and political stability. The applicability of these propositions to consolidate a unified empire under one central leadership – a political undertaking that was without precedent in Chinese history – explains why the First Emperor turned to Legalism as political philosophy³.

For the Confucians, the fall of the Qin Dynasty in 206 BCE after having been in power for only 15 years, proved that the Legalist philosophy that neglects the authority and the moral example of the words of the wise kings of antiquity, and that values laws over moral conduct (*li*) was unsuited as political philosophy. The failure of Legalism to uphold the empire made room for

1 On the notion of “state” (*guo*) in this cultural period: see Dessein (forthcoming).

2 This period was coined the “*Achsenzeit*” by Jaspers 1949, as similar philosophical theories on the universe and mankind were proposed in the Western, Indian, and Chinese cultural contexts around this time. See in this respect also Dessein 2001.

3 Katz (43) remarks that in the Qin-Han era, “written legal texts began to be used in place of oaths in order to command assent and obedience”, and that this era further witnesses an increasing prevalence of state-sanctioned violence, as is evident from the mention of punishments in legal texts of that period.

Confucianism to come to the foreground in the Han Dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE), and to become the official orthodoxy in 136 BCE. For the Han Confucians, most important exponent for the creation of state orthodoxy of whom is Dong Zhongzhu (ca. 179-104 BCE)⁴, morality is the fundamental value to safeguard social harmony and, by extension, political stability. In his “*Chunqiu fanlu*” (Abundant Dew of the Spring-and-Autumn Annals), a commentary on the Confucian “*Chunqiu*” (Spring-and-Autumn Annals), a chronicle of the Lu state, birthplace of Confucius, between 722 and 481 BCE, Dong Zhongshu conceives this social and political harmony in terms of an intricate connection between earth, man, and heaven conceived as the collective of forefathers (Bauer 122). He thus presents a holistic worldview, labeled “cosmological Confucianism” by Joseph Needham (281-2)⁵, in which a change in one of the constituents naturally has its effect on all other constituents. It is the task of the ruler (*wang*) to safeguard the harmony between all constituent parts through his moral example, as exemplified in the wise words of the ancestors⁶. This moral virtue is philosophically articulated in the concept *ren*: “humaneness” (Schwartz 75-85), and is ritually materialized in the rules of ancestor worship (*xiao*) that has become identified with Confucianism. The continued potential of the ancestors to interfere in this world make heaven (the collective of forefathers) not only the last example of the ruler, but also his last judge: it is from heaven that the ruler, the son of heaven (*tianzi*) obtains his mandate to rule (*tianming*), and it therefore also is heaven that can, ultimately, withdraw this mandate (Schwartz 23). Interpreted in this way, the concept of the “Mandate of Heaven” makes government a sacred institution, and any disruption in the social and political harmony is an infringement of a sacred order. The emphasis of morality is such that, for the Confucians, penal law is inferior, and serves to settle infringements on the moral standard⁷. The concept of “moral virtue” to govern is expanded to all who aspire to an official function. All functionaries of the Han bureaucracy, as this would also be the case in later dynasties, were to be recruited on grounds of their Confucian moral conduct, verified

4 See Chan (271); Needham (281-2).

5 Schwartz (364) defines this type of cosmology as “essentially a belief that political and social irregularities can invoke important disturbances in nature”. See also Dessein 2008.

6 See Lloyd and Sivin (193). It is a common characteristic of all Chinese philosophies that, in trying to re-establish a eulogized historical period, they are oriented towards the past, not towards the future. See Bauer (37). The latter is coherent with the cyclical concept of history that characterizes Dong Zhongshu’s philosophy.

7 On the difficult balance between moral conduct (*li*) and penal law (*fa*) in imperial China: see Bodde and Morris (27-9).

through the Confucian examination system⁸. The idea that it is the personal moral value of an individual that will bring about social and political harmony (*he*) can, e.g., be read in the chapter “Zhongyong” (The Correct Middle) of the *Liji* (Records of Ritual), a work compiled in the Han Dynasty:

When joy, anger, sadness or pleasure are not vented, this is said to be the Middle. When they are vented, however stay within the correct limits, this is said to be Harmony. The Middle is the fundamental basis of all under heaven (*tianxia*). Harmony is the way to be achieved by all under heaven. When the Middle and Harmony reach perfection, heaven and earth will have their appropriate position, and all things will be nourished. (own translation B.D.)

The traditional Chinese state thus became one in which public life was dominated by a Confucian political elite, and in which membership of this elite depended on knowledge of the Confucian ideology. This emphasis on “harmony” does not imply that the Confucian society was an egalitarian one. Confucian state ideology philosophized social and political distinctions in terms of primary (literati and farmers) and secondary (craftsmen and merchants) professions (Bodde 1990). Farmers were unable to take part in the Confucian examinations because of economical restraints, and people who belonged to the secondary professions were until the Mongolian Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368) excluded from doing so (Elman 240-7). In circumstances in which the Confucian ideology had become the shared ideology of the ruling elite, to the exclusion of the common people, a variety of popular beliefs, Daoism, and Buddhism became the alternative for their religious aspirations⁹. Confucian society thus developed into an organization (the Weberian *Gesellschaft*) consisting of different communities (the Weberian *Gemeinschaften*) that each had their own sentiments of solidarity¹⁰, i.e. Confucianism created different sub-cultures in society, each forming a separate “epistemic community”, articulated in terms of a uniform Confucian state ideology and a variety of popular

8 Dull (3) remarks that the reign of Emperor Wu (140-87 BCE) is the period in which Confucianism for the first time was recognized as the “*ism*”, “to the exclusion of all others, that was to be acceptable to the state and was to become the object of study for those who hoped for official careers”.

9 Also members of the Confucian elite were, in private, not seldom adherents of Daoism or Buddhism. See on this Dull (12, 14-5, 19). Tu (5) remarks that, in traditional China, the boundary between private and public has never been clear.

10 See Weber (40-1).

cultures respectively (Thompson 113-4)¹¹. This social stratification was culturalized to such extent that once merchants could take part in the Confucian examinations, the result was that the successful examination candidates identified themselves with the ruling Confucian elite and merged with them, and thus did not change the social stratification¹². Put differently, the Confucian road to upward mobility being closed for the masses of the people and the absence of an institutionalized political opposition made the “Confucian harmony” one of an ultimate mutual non-interference of the different sub-cultures, and of a non-interference of the individual sub-cultures with the overarching class of the Confucian elite, which, for them, could be perceived as one of an external political force. This also explains why law in imperial China was only in second instance interested in the defence of an individual or a group against another individual or another group, and was not at all interested in the defence of one individual or a group against the state. Traditional Chinese law focused on activities against morality and criminal infringements that according to traditional Chinese interpretation were actions against the cosmological harmony, and therefore were subject to juridical outcome (Bodde and Morris 4)¹³.

As alluded to above, the Confucian correlative worldview implies that any disruption of the normal order of things for one of the social and political sub-groups is symptomatic of a rupture of the holistic all. Given, further, the interpretation of government as a sacred institution, any such disruption entails a moral judgement by “heaven” and, as such, questions the legitimacy of the “Mandate of Heaven” of the ruling emperor. In practice, the common people’s discontent with the ruling elite was channeled through messianic movements, peasant rebellions and secret societies that, not seldom, fell back on the popular beliefs that were shared by the members of the concerned social and political sub-group. For the ruling elite, religiously inspired movements were a hard to be solved difficulty. For them, the question was where religious implications ended and where politically organized resistance started. As a religious legitimation of a socially motivated opposition was hardly possible, the formation of

11 Gramsci (324) states that “In acquiring one’s conception of the world one always belongs to a particular grouping which is that of all the social elements which share the same mode of thinking and acting. We are all conformists of some conformism or other, always man-in-the-mass or collective man”. See also Gramsci (419-20).

12 Dull (23), meaningfully characterizes the changes in the Confucian orthodoxy during the Yuan as an issue not of “an *ism*, but of a culture”.

13 An important consequence of this concept is that traditional Chinese law does not regard citizens as juridical subjects. Only those individuals who infringe on morality have – through their very criminal act – a juridical position vis-à-vis the state. See Weggel (228).

secret societies was, given the philosophical background of Chinese law, interpreted as a criminal fact (Weggel 127-8; Ownby 1996; Perry 2001).

On an “international” level, the accession to the throne of the Han emperors started a first period of extended cultural growth. The Han court gradually spread its influence southwards, into the region of the valleys of the Long River (*Changjiang*), and the newly occupied territory was brought into the Chinese cultural tradition, *i.e.*, it was “sinisized”. The spread of Han culture to those territories that lay beyond the traditional Chinese heartland of the Yellow River was, conform the Confucian worldview and in accordance with the interpretation of the relation between an older and a younger brother as one of the “five cardinal relations” by Dong Zhongshu, philosophized in cultural more than in political terms: The idea that the ruler, the “son of heaven” (*tianzi*), has to safeguard the harmonious relation between the different parts of the Chinese holistic world, was extended to the relation between China and its neighboring territories. The latter was interpreted as the relation between an older brother and a younger brother, in whom China is the older brother and the non-Chinese territories are the younger brothers. As in a family, the older brother sets the moral example for the younger. Economical and political relations with the so-called “tribute states” were philosophized in similar terms¹⁴. In periods in which the cultural luster of the Chinese Confucian elite in the capital was waning, the “cultural model” based on moral virtue no longer worked. As a result, the Chinese political elite could no longer maintain its cultural authority over the newly sinisized territories and also the “tribute states” no longer had a political, economical or cultural profit in maintaining their relations with China. The more recent and the less thorough the connection with China had been, the easier Chinese culture disappeared again (Fairbank and Teng 129-30).

When the Manchus conquered China and established themselves as the Qing Dynasty in Beijing in 1644, they ruled over a territory that was larger than that of any previous dynasty, including as it did the domains of the former Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), Manchuria, Mongolia, Tibet, and a part of Muslim Central Asia. As a foreign force, the Manchus could not claim hereditary descent from Han culture¹⁵. They therefore accentuated another Confucian

14 See Fairbank (137-9). While, for China, these tribute relations were a proof that the Chinese emperor excelled in Confucian virtue, and added to the cultural prestige of the empire – thus also serving an internal political agenda, for the so-called “tribute states”, this relation primarily was of economical importance. For them, engaging in a “tribute relation” with China, the regionally most important political and economical power, was a necessary condition to be able to establish commercial relations.

15 This explains the activities of anti-Manchu rebellious groups who claimed descent from the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) or even the earlier Song royal house (960-1279).

value in their claim to legitimation: “virtue” (*de*), understood as the harmonious co-existence of the different people in their empire. They thus remoulded the “intra-cultural” Confucian concept of “harmony” as an “inter-cultural” concept, in choosing to rule all these domains through native elites, using their respective traditions and languages, so as to accommodate these different peoples with their peculiar political, cultural, and religious traditions, into the newly established Qing empire (Harrison 36-8)¹⁶. They crafted their dynasty as a “universal empire”, with this, providing a possible model for later ethno-political policy.

3. The Emergence of Political Nationalism and the Struggle for National Harmony

In the middle of the 19th century, the Qing model of Confucian harmony was heavily challenged when the waning internal luster of the Qing court was combined with the incursions of the Western colonial powers. The economical and military dominance of the West having become painfully visible in the Chinese defeat in the first Opium War (1839-1842), the Western powers spread their influence to the traditional Chinese “tribute states”, and enlarged their economical and cultural presence in China proper through the so-called “unequal treaties” (*bu pingdeng tiaoyue*).

Against this background of foreign presence on China’s territory and the calamities and humiliations this brought about, such young intellectuals as Kang Youwei (1858-1927), Liang Qichao (1873-1929), and Sun Zhongshan (Sun Yat-sen) (1866-1925) developed their political theories. For them, the Confucians could no longer be seen as the protectors of the cultural norm, and, impressed by Western dominance, they aimed at establishing a “New China”: a modern, independent, Chinese “nation state” (*guojia*), led by a new class of intellectuals, schooled in Western sciences and ideologies¹⁷. This is sympto-

16 For the specific case of Tibet: see Norbu (65-85). On the role of the *Lifanyuan*, the “ministry ruling the barbarians”, as a bureau working towards the preservation of the separate cultures and political structures of the different parts of the Manchu empire, see Harrison (38-44).

17 This 19th century Chinese nationalism can be defined as “reactive nationalism”, *i.e.*, nationalism, the coming to consciousness, of a group that suffered mistreatment, discrimination, and abuse at the hands of another group. “Reactive nationalism” is different from “organic nationalism” that arises naturally as a result of time, inbreeding, and geographic isolation, and is still different from “constructed (or artificial) nationalism” that is a deliberate and conscious creation by the state from above, via the systematic mass dissemination and inculcation of a nationalist ideology. See Chang (24). On the difference between bottom-up and bottom-down political nationalism: see Kruithof (233-4).

matic for the fact that membership of a culture has, as Will Kymlicka (7) stated, “a high social profile”, meaning that self-identity is shaped by how others perceive and respond to us. Decline of respect by others of one’s culture leads to a depreciation of the own cultural values. It has, in this respect, been suggested that it, indeed, are typically intellectuals who are most susceptible to such feelings of humiliation of national proud, as the illiterate masses, through their illiteracy, remain more insulated from the full psychological impact of imperialism. It is the intellectual who, outraged by imperialism and appalled by the great discrepancies in standards of living and culture between his people and the West, feels the need for action (Shils 251, 258-60)¹⁸.

When Kang Youwei claimed that Confucianism does not negate the possibility of human development and progress, with this theoretically breaking the social *status quo* that had characterized Confucian China (Spence 225), he opened the way for social progress within a Confucian framework. His appeal to the Chinese *huaqiao* in South East Asia to contribute to the build-up of the national industry, further, contained the claim that the primary loyalty of the *huaqiao* was to their native homeland¹⁹. He thus backed away from the intercultural interpretation of the Confucian concept of “harmony”, and gave the concept an ethnic interpretation. This emphasis on ethnicity was further strengthened by Liang Qichao, one of his former students, who supplemented the Darwinian concept of “the survival of the fittest”, a concept that had been given a social interpretation by Herbert Spencer in 1864, with an ethnic component (Spence 290-1). In terms of Herbert Spencer, according to whom the evolutionary process worked between groups that, therefore, had to work together, Liang Qichao saw collaboration between the Han people as the only means for them to survive as a group (Harrison 103-4). For Sun Zhongshan (186) ethnicity (*minzu*) was fundamental in the creation of a nation. In his understanding, *minzu* was synonymous with *guozu*, “statism”, as, so he claimed, “China has been a state comprised of one people since the Qin and Han Dynasties” (Sun 186). This redefined the new Chinese “nation state” as a Han ethnic state (Harrison 103-4)²⁰, comprising the territories of the traditional

18 On the inclination towards the flaring up of social conflict in situations where there is an absence of bureaucracy to mediate in social conflict, see Kuhn (182-3).

19 On the importance of redefining the notion of *huaqiao* in terms of loyalty to the Chinese nation state, see Harrison (110).

20 A nation is, by political nationalists, thought to be better able to secure the well-being of its constituent members if it has its own state, as a state essentially has its own administrative system, fiscal system, juridical system, army and police. In these fields, it does not tolerate interference by other states. See Kruihof (231-2).

Han culture and inhabited by ethnic Han people. For Sun Zhongshan, the political system that had to govern and guarantee the survival of the Han Chinese state of his imagination, was to be a Republic²¹. This new nationalist ideology typically interpellated its subjects, the Han citizens, to the exclusion of the non-Han citizens of the empire, to become the agents to achieve a political change (Therborn 6, Thompson 16). Nationalism, it has been shown, aligns itself with the large cultural systems that precede it and out of which – as well as against which – it emerges (Anderson 127-8)²². This historical connection makes the “nation” appear as the most natural and most timeless political alternative for the “dynastic empire” in the minds of most people (Thompson 1986: 49). The dissatisfaction with Late Qing rule naturally discredited the Manchus, and shifted the attention of the reformers towards the Han. It therefore comes as no surprise that Sun Zhongshan was supported in his political movement by those secret societies that had been formed in the beginning years of Manchu rule, had agitated against them, and had remained underground Chinese nationalistic forces throughout the Qing Dynasty (Teng and Fairbank 1954: 7-12). When Sun Zhongshan, in his inaugural speech on the first congress of the Nationalist Party in January 1912, declared that he no longer wanted to “govern” the state through the Party (*yi dang zhi guo*), but to “establish” it through the Party (*yi*

21 The fact that, unlike other reformers, Sun Zhongshan was not a member of the traditional Confucian elite, may help to explain his more radical viewpoint. Sun Zhongshan’s approach is illustrative for what Matossian (113), described as necessary questions that have to be solved before developmental nationalism can be successful: (1) What is to be rejected of the West? (2) What is to be borrowed from the West? and (3) What elements from the past should be retained – specifically what characteristics, habits, and behaviors of the population are to be encouraged? The key to answering these questions, she states, lies in the following: a pragmatic attitude that accepts what is supportive of national interest and strength. See also Walker 138, who quotes Hu Shi (1891-1962), one of the major figures of the May 4th Movement, as follows: “The problem is: How can China adjust herself so that she may feel at home in that modern western civilization which has become the civilization of the world? The problem suggests three possible ways or solutions. China may refuse to recognize this new civilization and resist its invasion; she may accept the new culture whole-heartedly; or, she may adopt its desirable elements and reject what she considers to be non-essential or objectionable. The first attitude is resistance; the second, wholesale acceptance; and the third, selective adoption”. Walker (138), remarks to this that “this attitude of cautious selection is an impossible one, and also quite unnecessary. A civilization by its very magnitude affects necessarily the vast majority of the people who are invariably conservative. By the natural workings of the law of inertia of great masses, the majority of the people will always take very good care of the traditional elements which are dear to them. It is, therefore, gratuitous and absolutely unnecessary that the thinkers and leaders of a nation should worry about traditional values being lost”.

22 A late reference to Han China’s dominance can be read in the 1716 CE *Kangxi Huidian* (142): “When our Dynasty first arose, its awe-inspiring virtue gradually spread and became established. Wherever its name and influence reached, there were none who did not come to Court”.

dang jian guo) (Fitzgerald 185), he actually gave expression to the fact that he saw his Nationalist Party as having evolved from an ideological movement to an instrument of power politics. Nationalist feelings for the state were thus identified with the Nationalist Party that came to be regarded as the incarnation of the new state. The new term “*dangguo*” (party state) incorporated this situation, and was further symbolized in the party flag that also became the national flag (Harrison 190-3)²³. This implies that the only way for the citizens to respond to the nationalist appeal and to contribute to the “establishment of the state” was to become member of the Party.

Popular protest against the stipulations of the Versailles Treaty to transfer the rights in the Chinese province of Shandong from Germany to Japan erupted within all different social sub-cultures of Han Chinese society, and was channeled through the anarchist, socialist and Marxist study groups that were established throughout the country. It can therefore be claimed that what has become known as the May Fourth Movement of 1919 is the real birth of “Chinese political nationalism”. This political nationalism further expanded during the 1930s and 1940s, a period in which also the major political parties of China – the Nationalist Party (*Guomindang*) and the Chinese Communist Party (*Zhongguo Gongchandang*; hereafter CCP) grew in membership and organizational strength. As argued by Chalmers Johnson (1962), the weak reaction to Japanese aggression in the early 1930s by the Nationalist Party and its determination to rather continue the civil war against the CCP, convinced the rural population that only the CCP provided them with the leadership needed to resist the Japanese. They were supported in this claim by the fact that the Communists had been very successful in building power bases especially in rural North China. The rural population’s anti Japanese sentiments were mated with feelings of resentment towards the urban elite who allied with the Nationalist Party and who adapted Western fashion and customs (Harrison 165-6, 216-7). Not only the rural population supported the CCP, but also the proletariat working in Western factories sided with them. Mismanagement in the cities, inflation, corruption, and incompetence of the Nationalist government further weakened support for the Nationalist Party also in circles of the new industrial elite and the new intellectuals who, in their support for the CCP, were sustained by the fact that the Nationalists did not live up to their mission of creating a strong Han centered nation state. Different social sub-groups of Han China as intrinsically different ideological communities thus joined forces out of different motiva-

23 This new identification also remained important in the People’s Republic of China, where the Chinese Communist Party is identified with the state.

tions. To accommodate these different sub-groups, the CCP did not primarily accentuate an economical policy in its battle against Japan, but a nationalist policy²⁴. This means that in China, where on the eve of the 20th century, class consciousness and political nationalism were unknown concepts, they were joined in the 1930s and '40s because these new social classes were receptive for the CCP's mission to create a Han nation state as a new haven of social harmony and justice (Fitzgerald 316). Where Liang Qichao had emphasized collaboration between the Han people as the only means for the Han to survive as a group, for the CCP, it was mass movement that would lead to its final victory over the Nationalists. With this, they were in line with Marx and Engels (495) who had claimed that “Though not in substance, yet in form, the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is at first a national struggle. The proletariat of each country must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie”²⁵.

Having enjoyed a relative autonomy for about 300 years, the non-Han citizens of the former dynastic empire did not feel interpellated by the Han ethnic nationalist rhetoric, urging to replace the Manchu government with a modern Han Republic. They rather saw this ethnical focus as a threat. In these circumstances, some already highly acculturated non-Han communities assimilated with the Han, but for the citizens of the non-Han domains of the Qing Empire, the case was completely different. Against the background of decreasing Manchu authority, and strengthened by the policy of cultural differentiation and autonomy that had characterized the Qing Dynasty, different ethnic and religious nationalisms developed in these domains. The still embryonic new Republic was thus confronted with the problem that the Han-centered national rhetoric that emphasized an intra-ethnic harmony strengthened precisely that tendency it tried to overcome. This explains why, after Republican leaders had advocated a “Republic of five nations” (Han, Manchu, Mongol, Tibetan and Muslim) at the occasion of the inauguration of Sun Zhongshan as first president of the Republic, Yuan Shikai, on the occasion of his inauguration as president in 1912, accentuated modernity as characteristic for the new state, a quality that

24 It has been observed that the most successful revolutionary movements have been those which have managed to combine their appeal with that of nationalism. See Thompson (48-9).

25 Karl Marx, in the *New York Daily Tribune* of 14 June 1853 (“Revolution in China and in Europe”) wrote: “It is almost needless to observe that, in the same measure in which opium has obtained the sovereignty over the Chinese, the Emperor and his staff of pedantic mandarins have become dispossessed of their own sovereignty. It would seem as though history had first to make this whole people drunk before it could rise them out of their hereditary stupidity”. See Avineri (68). See also Fitzgerald (317).

could appeal to all ethnic groups, while at the same time trying to convince the Mongols and Tibetans that they would enjoy the same amount of autonomy in the Republic as they had done during the Qing period (Harrison 145)²⁶. This notwithstanding, the new Republican government could not consolidate its power in these domains, and some of them broke away from central power and proclaimed their independence: Xinjiang had broken away from Manchu rule already in 1864, with the rebellion of Yakub Beg, and again saw the proclamation of independence under an “East Turkestan Republic” in Kashgar in 1933 and once again in Yining (Ghulje) in 1944 (Gladney150; Benson 1990). In 1911, Outer Mongolia declared its independence in the form of a monarchy, led by rJe-btsun-dam-pa QutuÁtu, a Tibetan by birth, but from a theological viewpoint a descendant of âinggis Khan (Sagaster 422). Between 1905 and 1930, the usual presence of China in Tibet was almost absent²⁷. Although the ?nation? had become the idealized ideological community in the minds of an increasing number of intellectuals²⁸, it thus was clear from the outset that the creation of a Chinese nation state from the ruins of the Qing Empire would be a very difficult undertaking.

4. Harmony in a Classless Society

Although the CCP had appealed itself to Sun Zhongshan’s ideology of an intra-Han nationalism in its resistance against Japan, once having come to power in 1949, it turned to Marxism-Leninism to build up a “New China”, now called “*Zhonghua renmin gongheguo*” (People’s Republic of China), a newly created name that, in contradistinction to the former concept “Zhongguo” that essentially refers to the “central plains”, comprises the fifty-six ethnic groups that live in the territory of the former Qing empire²⁹. In a broader sense, build-

26 Sun Zhongshan was interim president of the Republic from January 1, 1912 to February 13, 1912, when Yuan Shikai succeeded him. See Spence (274).

27 On the question of the extent of Tibet’s autonomy *vis-à-vis* China and the British and Russian policy on this issue: see Norbu (165-76).

28 Gellner (169) remarks: “Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it *invents* nations where they did not exist.”

29 Chang (45) remarks: ““*Huaxia*” was the earliest name for the Chinese people until it was supplanted by “*Hanren*” (People of Han). Today, “*Huaxia*” denotes a cultural identity; whereas Han is an ethnic term, differentiating the Han from the other ethnic groups in the People’s Republic of China. As scholars of the People’s Republic of China insist, “The Chinese culture, with Huaxia as its core [...] includes the cultures of all the members of the big family of the Chinese nation”, but the “Han race

ing on the concept “*huaqiao*” as it was defined in the Republican period, this new name also comprises the overseas Chinese, and the people of Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan³⁰. The choice for Marxism-Leninism was not self-evident: Marx and Engels had anticipated that a workers’ revolution would occur in a highly developed capitalist society, after which a socialist state would be installed whose primary function would be the equalization of wealth rather than dealing with the problem of production (Chang 142-3). In 1949, China was far from being a capitalist industrialized nation. However, it has been observed that Marxism has particular appeal for uprooted peasants and those caught in transition between tradition and modernity, as “Marxism gives them the promise of an idealized future in which the coercive institutions of state and factory have both withered away” (Ulam 1955-56).

Marxism did provide an answer, though, for the apparent insolvable difficulty of bringing the different non-Han peoples of the former Qing Empire into one nation state: the Marxist emphasis on class struggle enabled the equation of all the different ethnic groups of the former empire as, in the class struggle, not the opposition between the various ethnic groups and the Han is highlighted as the most fundamental opposition, but the class differences within each of these individual ethnic groups. The concept of the class struggle makes all ethnic groups identical, and gives the working class, the agents of the industrialization process and thus the vanguards of modernization, a historical mission and a prominent place³¹. In its appeal to the Marxist class struggle, the CCP pictured itself as the representative of the modernistic vanguard that assists the Han and non-Han alike to realize their own liberation within a reunited classless nation state³². The CCP’s imagined classless nation state thus coincides with its proper ideology and with the Party as political structure and instrument, *i.e.* the

(*Hanzu*)” is China’s “mainstream or host (*zhuti*) nation”. Contemporary Chinese call themselves Huaren (Hua people), and the overseas diaspora Chinese call themselves Huayi (Hua posterity). The combination of “*Zhongyuan*” (Central Plains), the word from which the concept “*Zhongguo*” [...] is derived, and “*Huaxia*” produces “*Zhonghua*” (China or Chinese), a word that is also part of the name “*Zhonghua Minguo*” (Republic of China”).

30 Therefore, Fitzgerald (57) claims that the People’s Republic of China is a state without nation, since, with the unity as state, there is no corresponding uniform nation.

31 Also the Guomindang had given the working class a prominent place. However, while the CCP stressed their role in the class struggle, the Guomindang saw their role as one of cooperation with the capitalist class to develop the economy of the Chinese nation. See on this Perry (172).

32 Chen Duxiu (1880-1942), a founder of the CCP, wrote in *Xin Qingnian*, vol.VIII/1 (September 1920): “I recognize the existence of only two nations, that of the capitalists, and that of the workers;” and “At present, the “nation” of the workers exists only in the Soviet Union. Everywhere else we have the “nation” of the capitalists”. Quoted from Schwartz 28. See also Fitzgerald (321, 348).

CCP “party state” (*dangguo*) replaced the Han ethnic party state of the Nationalists³³.

Just as the liberal thinkers of the 19th century, Marx was of the opinion that the future of mankind is connected to great nations that are characterized by highly centralized political and economical structures, because it are such structures that make the development of a bourgeois class, and thus of a capitalist society, possible. In a later phase of historical development, a proletarian revolution is predicted to occur in these nations, after which wealth will be evenly distributed, and both the nation and the state will have become historically outdated (Nimni 66-7, 71-2). Because smaller nations are backwards and cannot play an independent role in this historical development of building up their own national state, their only option is to assimilate with a greater nation that, by definition, is more vital (Kymlicka 5-6; Nimni 63; Chang 23-4; Mentzel 10).

In practice, the attempt to create a “classless harmony” to a more or lesser extent, and at different moments, resurfaced the borderlines between the traditional social and ethnic sub-cultures that had constituted Confucian China. Where, in imperial China, Confucianism had been the uniform ideology of the ruling elite, the political class of New China shared the Marxist-Leninist ideology as indisputable truth. Similar to the situation in imperial China, further, also the CCP regards the nation as greater than the sum of its individual citizens. As individuals, citizens are therefore subject to the state, and the state incarnates the nation, and state interests prevail over the individual interests of social and ethnic sub-groups (Chang 23-4, 103).

“Popular” protest that rose against the implementation of the new economic policy in the 1950s, centered around those persons who were the focus of CCP policies, such as landlords or rich farmers during the land reform movement, and who developed to be the leaders of protest movements that appealed to their recruits on the basis of popular religion (Perry 285-6). Especially when

33 Fitzgerald (348): “The question at issue was how to essentialize the national self, which was to be represented by the state and awakened as a mass community”. In fact, building one single political party has been proven to be more efficient for political institutionalization than immediately proceeding to a multiparty system is. In Samuel P. Huntington’s (478) words: “Where traditional political institutions are weak or non-existent, the prerequisite of stability is at least one highly institutionalized political party. States with one such party are markedly more stable than states which lack such a party. States with no parties or many weak parties are the least stable”. It should, in this respect, also be remarked that tolerance and mutual security are more likely to develop among a small elite sharing similar perspectives than among a large and heterogeneous collection of leaders representing social strata with widely varying goals, interests, and outlooks. See for the latter Dahl (36).

some of these communities declared themselves to be mutual aid teams (*huhuzhu*) and put their community interests above those of the state, such movements were seen as contra-revolutionary by the CCP, in the same way as they had been seen as movements that challenged the “Mandate of Heaven” in imperial times (Perry 277-81)³⁴. This undeliberate re-introduction of the traditional loyalty to kinship groups and communities was further strengthened by the imposition of migration restrictions through the *hukou* system in 1958 (Lewis 463; Perry 287-8). Also the disastrous outcome of the Great Leap Forward (1958-1959) strengthened the old kinship groups and community loyalties. The main difference with the imperial period in this, was that the leaders of the new communities in the aftermath of the Great Leap Forward were no longer lineage elders, but rural CCP cadres (Perry 293). Many people reverted to such old pre-revolutionary religious activities as worshipping deities, divination, or fortune-telling, and violence between enemy lineages and communities was often accompanied by religious rituals that served to express kinship and community solidarity (Perry 288-94)³⁵. All in all, however, popular resistance remained much smaller than this had been in the imperial period or the Republic. This on the one hand testifies the strength of the CCP state in the 1950s – at least in the traditional Han domains, but on the other hand also shows that the great majority of poor peasants were satisfied with CCP policy (Perry 286).

The fact that the CCP was (and still is) an above all Han dominated organization gives its vocation to be the vanguard of modernization a flavor of patronism and, in some sense, re-introduces the old culturalistic idea that the Han are the older brothers to whom the different ethnic groups stand in an older brother-younger brother relation. Put differently, the degree to which the PRC becomes a modern state depends on the CCP’s success to bring all its citizens to the level of development of the Han (Nimni 57-61). Therefore, although a special administrative status was developed and implemented for the domains that are predominantly inhabited by non-Han people (Tibet, Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, Guangxi and Ningxia), in practice, also these domains had to join in the agricultural, industrial and political campaigns engineered by the Party, be it at moments in a slower pace. The practical result of this was that, in the 1950s,

34 Perry (280-5) remarks that, as this had been the case for centuries, some of these sectarians opened herbal pharmacies. Also the use of protective charms and “holy water” that could heal members’ ailments and ensure invulnerability in battle was a feature of many of these sects. Notice that some of these features can also be discerned in the later Falun Gong movement.

35 This stands in contrast to the situation in the 1950s, when religion was an element of inspiration and identity to members of discredited social groups.

the minority regions were much more closely integrated into the Chinese state and state policy than they had been in any moment in history. Ethnical nationalist resistance against this policy for the first time exploded during the “One Hundred Flowers” Campaign of 1956-57, with this confirming Gramsci’s observation (324, 419-20) that the spontaneous philosophy of the masses, and popular religion, are resistant to efforts to assimilate them in the ideological communities that derive from the culture of the dominant classes or their intellectual strata. The “Anti-rightist Movement” of 1957 that followed, showed the limits of ethnic and religious tolerance within a state of classless harmony.

5. Patriotism and a New “Confucian” Harmonious Society

When Mao Zedong died on September 9, 1976, China was not more a fully industrialized nation than it had been when he had come to power. The failure of class struggle to create a modern nation having become visible, and the country being in dire need of economic progress, Deng Xiaoping (1904-1993) appealed to another Marxist concept than Mao had done. He emphasized the concept of “productive forces”, and thus managed to bring economic reforms into a Marxist framework, as “productive forces” encompasses more than only the working class, and gives room for the introduction of capitalist instruments. This new emphasis redefined Marxism as a “developmental nationalism”, which reconnected it to the theories of social Darwinism, and to the CCP’s modernist claim. According to Deng, not class struggle but industrial development had to make China into a modern nation state³⁶. In its need for invest-

36 Schurmann (22-4) observed that the CCP divides its ideology into two parts: The first is “theory” (*lilun*) (= pure ideology) comprised of ideas that are claimed to be universally applicable and for all time; the second is “thought” (*sixiang*) (= practical ideology), the practical application of universal theory to concrete circumstances or a particular time and place. Chang (64) develops on this as follows: “for much of its history, the CCP considered Marxism-Leninism to be its guiding theory, while the ideas of Mao Zedong served as its thought. In March 1999, however, the party elevated the reformist ideas of Deng to the level of theory when it incorporated “Deng Xiaoping Theory” into the preamble of its constitution. In so doing, the Communist Party appeared to signal its formal adoption of developmental nationalism as its ideology. The next year, in 1993, Deng’s stature appeared to have been elevated to yet a higher level. That May, in a speech at the Thirteenth National Congress of the Chinese Communist Youth League, CCP Standing Committee Member Hu Jintao characterized Deng’s collection of ideas on “building socialism with Chinese characteristics” as “theory” (*lilun*). That “theory”, Hu maintained, was the “newest fruit” produced by the union of Marxism with China’s concrete conditions. It was “Marxism of contemporary China”, and the “tool for leading the party to realize its new historical mission”. In effect, Deng’s ideas were no longer mere “thought”, but had attained the rarefied status of “theory”, previously accorded to only Marxism and Leninism”.

ments, Deng appealed to, among others, the *huaqiao*, in this not primarily focussing on their Han ethnicity, but, as Kang Youwei had done earlier, on their connection to the “Chinese nation”. He claimed (51): “No matter what clothes they wear or what political stand they take, all Chinese have a sense of pride and identification with the Chinese nation and would want the People’s Republic of China to become strong and prosperous”.

The “open door” policy that started at the end of the 1970s also fundamentally changed the CCP’s ethnic policy. Class struggle increasingly being regarded as a relic from the past, and industrialization being brought to the foreground, the non-Han domains have gradually been given a greater degree of autonomy, and economical development of these territories has to avoid that they break away from central Party rule. Greater autonomy coupled with economical development thus have to strengthen the cohesion of the People’s Republic of China as “Chinese” nation state. A good relation between the central government and the territories inhabited by ethnic minority groups is also of strategic importance in China’s foreign relations, as the ethnic minorities are not seldom of the ethnic group that inhabits the bordering foreign country. This policy thus serves both a national and an international aim³⁷.

The backside of this policy of increased regional autonomy is that it feeds ethnic nationalism among some ethnic groups that feel themselves supported in their “unicity”. This is especially true for those regions that had enjoyed a greater degree of autonomy also under Qing rule: Xinjiang, Mongolia and Tibet. This explains why the CCP continually emphasizes its role as binding factor of the Chinese nation state, and why “patriotism” has come to the foreground of political rhetorics. Patriotism affects the nation state as a whole, not a single national/ethnic group. As the CCP, through the concept of “*dangguo*”, is identified with the People’s Republic, patriotism affirms its position as ruling party and is an instrument to counter the centrifugal powers of ethnic nationalism. Historical memory is an important element in this: it is the CCP that, after the period of Western domination, unified China. Therefore, a weakened position of the Party is portrayed as a virtual threat to territorial unity as in these circumstances, China might, once again, fall prey to Western dominance³⁸.

37 For remarks on the religious consequences of this international relation: see Potter (16).

38 Deng cautioned that if China were to descend into “turmoil”, the situation would be far worse than during the Cultural Revolution because the country no longer had “prestigious leaders” like Mao and Zhou Enlai to hold it together. Chang (163), suggests that this is also the reason why Deng Xiaoping did not completely denounce Mao Zedong, and why, although he did not seem to object to Western democracy in principle, he rejected it in practice.

It is ironical that it precisely are the economic reforms that, also among the Han citizens, are undermining the CCP's legitimacy. As mentioned, Marxism claims that it is the historical fate of a nation that it develops to a phase of fully developed capitalism, after which a proletarian revolution will follow. It therefore is a paradox that, in China, it is the CCP that has to establish a capitalist society. More importantly, as the state and its institutions have increasingly become instruments to organize a capitalist society, their legitimacy increasingly depends on their ability to produce goods and services for the growing number of consumer-citizens whose general sense of well-being has to be increased (Poggi 134; Thompson 59-60). In eyes of these consumers, the legitimacy of the CCP and the continuation of the Party state have thus become the extension of their success of creating a capitalist society. Capitalist economical development, however, has led to an increased wealth gap between different social groups in China. This wealth gap not seldom also follows ethnic divides, with the domains of the non-Han citizens of the PRC that lie in the West of the country, remaining relatively less developed. It is further not without importance that those people who have suffered the most from economic reforms and social inequality in the new era, are not seldom precisely those people who have been the greatest advocates of CCP rule in the Maoist era. Moreover, given the contemporary global character of the economy, it is necessary that the Party cooperates with the West to achieve its economic goals. This new internationalism stands in contrast to the Party's historical nationalist claim. In circumstances in which the Han identification of the Party and its call to be the Party of the working class have become increasingly obsolete, consumerism and religion have become a valuable alternative for a growing number of citizens, and the post-Mao era has witnessed a burgeoning of religious belief, both in traditional Han China and in the regions inhabited by non-Han citizens (Potter 27, 30)³⁹. For the latter regions, religion may fuel the ethnic nationalism mentioned above. Where nationalism was the instrument to re-establish a Chinese state after the fall of the dynastic empire, patriotism has now increasingly become the instrument to block centrifugal powers that threaten to break national unity. Or, as observed by Max Weber, the state can only survive in so far as it harnesses the feelings of solidarity of the national community in support of its power (Thompson 59).

The contemporary emphasis on patriotism goes along with a re-appraisal of the past – China's 5000 year long history. Where, in the beginning years of its

³⁹ The Falun Gong is a special case in this respect, as it also developed into a social and political movement.

existence, the CCP was characterized through its “iconoclastic nationalism” that radically broke with the Confucian model and strove for the creation of a new nation state under its leadership and with a social order according to Marxism-Leninism, the CCP now defines Han culture as an essential part of Chinese patriotism. This explains why, although in the not too far past, Confucius was condemned as a reactionary enemy, he is now increasingly embraced by the CCP. In this respect, the term “*Xiaokang shehui*” which refers to the economical policy of the Hu Jintao era, builds on the Han Dynasty Confucian Classic *Liji* (Records of Ritual). The passage concerned (Chapter VII, *Liyun*) runs as follows:

This is why Yu, [Cheng] Tang, [King] Wen, [King] Wu, king Cheng, and the Duke of Zhou were selected. Of these six gentlemen (*junzi*), there is none who does not obey the rituals (*li*). They have manifested their justice, tested their trustworthiness, manifested those who had done mistakes, executed benevolence, made [people] give way to each other, and have instructed the people to constantly do so. Those who did not do so were chased away by those having power and position, and they were regarded as misfortunate by the masses of the people. [Then came] what is said to be a “peaceful era” (*xiaokang*). (own translation B.D.)

In fact, the term “*xiaokang*” can be traced back to the Confucian classic *Shijing* (Classic of Poetry). In the section “*Min lao*” of the part *Daya* of the *Shijing*, we read (Legge 495):⁴⁰

The people indeed are heavily burdened,
But perhaps a little ease (*xiaokang*) may be got for them.

The message the “*Xiaokang shehui*” conveys thus is that the masses of the people resort to a moral leadership that will guide them to a peaceful era through economic development and social redistribution. Marxist rhetoric (the egalitarian society) is thus brought within a Confucian framework. The same type of fusion of Confucian doctrine and Marxist dogma is also evident in the

40 The first stanza of the ode goes on as follows (in the translation of James Legge): “Let us cherish this centre of the kingdom. To secure the repose of the four quarters of it. Let us give no indulgence to the wily and obsequious, In order to make the unconscientious careful. And to repress robbers and oppressors, Who Have no fear of the clear will [of Heaven]. Then let us show kindness to those who are distant, And help those who are near; – Thus establishing [the throne of] our king.”

maxim: “*Hexie shehui*”, translated as “harmonious society”. Although there is no direct reference to this concept in the Confucian literature, the maxim is generally accepted to be related to the concept “brotherhood” (*datong*) of the same chapter VII, *Liyun*, of the *Liji*:

When the big road of virtue was followed, all under heaven (*tianxia*) was public good (*gong*). Functionaries were selected according to their abilities. Their words were trustworthy, and they cultivated harmony. Therefore, people did not only treat their own relatives as relatives, did not only treat their own children as children, and made sure that elder people had all they needed until the end of their days, that grown-ups had all they needed, that children had all they need to grow, that widowers and widows, orphans, and sick ones all had what they needed to sustain themselves. They made sure that men had a job, and women had a place where they belong to. They disliked that the harvest was left in the field; but neither did they want to store it for themselves. They disliked that their power was not made useful for others; but neither did they want to use it for themselves. Therefore, bad plans were not put into practice, there were no robbers, thieves, nor traitors. Therefore, outer doors were not closed. This is what is called the universal brotherhood (*datong*). (own translation B.D.)

The new form of CCP state nationalism, voiced in terms of patriotism, claims that although the Han people comprised the “mainstream” of the original Huaxia people who inhabited the central plains of the Yellow River, they have amalgamated with the surrounding ethnic minorities to “gradually form a bigger nation”. Through interbreeding, the various ethnicities in China have merged into one single people⁴¹.

As Daniel Bell (1) claims, “Communism has lost the capacity to inspire the Chinese, and there is growing recognition that its replacement needs to be grounded at least partly in China’s own traditions”.

An increasing appreciation of Confucianism as part of a redefined Han nationalism also characterizes Chinese academic discourse (Bell 2). Marxism-Leninism, a Western ideology, is blamed for having created a growing social and economical inequality in contemporary China, as well as for having led to an increased presence of Western values. Moreover, the Marxist emphasis on

41 See on this Chang (185). During the 1980s, even the cult of the Yellow Emperor was revived. See on this Harrison 260.

class struggle is seen as contrary to Confucianism that is an ideology of harmony. Re-installing a “Confucian” harmonious society thus requires the abolition of the Communist dogma, or, at least, to make it compatible with the traditional Chinese values. Han nationalists may find support in the fact that, where in the Republican period and in the People’s Republic traditional culture was seen as an obstacle for development, in much of Southeast Asia the presence of elements of traditional Chinese culture, often labeled “Confucianism”, is used to explain precisely the success of business and commerce within the Chinese communities (Harrison 262). It is illustrative for the fusion of tradition with contemporary reality that these Han nationalists, while opposing CCP ideology, do accept the territorial state as created by it. In circles of Han nationalists, an “indigenous Chinese culture” has been recreated, complete with national symbols, rites and practices, a historical discourse and historical heroes, traditional values and a historical collective memory. Being “Chinese” means being part of this heritage and sustaining these “Chinese” values⁴².

Data of the World Value Survey, most recently carried out in China in 2007, show the CCP’s success in its patriotic appeal. The Party continues to enjoy the patriotic feelings of most of its citizens. An average of 34,9% of the Chinese valued “maintaining order in the nation” as the most important task of the government. It is not without importance that “maintaining order in the nation” was valued higher (47,5%) by people aged 15-29 than by people of 50 and more years (31,7%). One element to explain this may be the fact, mentioned above, that it especially are those citizens who are now in their 50s who were the first advocates of CCP policy and who have suffered most under the economic reforms. The higher educated one is, further, the more highly “maintaining order” is rated, with 50,0% of the Chinese having enjoyed higher education seeing “maintaining order” as the most important task of the government. The East-Asian Barometer Survey (most recent data 2002) further showed that, in

42 On the strategy of “archaism”, *i.e.* the attempt to define oneself through a return to tradition whereby the ancient culture is “exhumed”, see Shils (260). Also the philosophical current of New Confucianism is related to this Han nationalism. This current originated in circles of overseas Chinese and in Taiwan, and, recently, gains adherence also in the People’s Republic of China. The New Confucians strive for a restoration of the Confucian nation. Equally within circles of Han nationalists, supporters of revaluing the old language and reintroducing non simplified script are active. With this, they act against the CCP that, in 1956, introduced simplified script, and they strive for a restoration of the “linguistic” unity of all ethnic Chinese over the world. A re-introduction of the non-simplified script would also restore the bond with the own past. Post colonialists, further, are a Han nationalistic movement that rejects every Western influence that does not fit in the “Chineseness” as defined by them. They act against “internal colonialists” as the 5th generation of film makers and against Western scientific theory.

China, economic development is generally valued higher than democracy is, with those who are better off, more educated and younger giving greater priority to economic development over democracy (Freeman and Geeraerts 22-6). This tendency is also reflected in terms of actual political development: it has been observed that regions which are relatively poor and less economically developed are valuing democratic developments higher than economically affluent regions are (Young 156-9). As stated by Duncan Freeman and Gustaaf Geeraerts (31), “The deterministic view that economic development brings demands for human rights is likely to be falsified. Even the less deterministic position adopted by writers such as Inglehart, which argues that economic development and values are linked or that the relationship is probabilistic, may not fully take account of the process occurring in China, where history, culture, and, perhaps more vitally, the policies adopted by the government, may bring about very different results compared to other parts of the world”⁴³.

6. Conclusion

Contemporary China shows a tension between ethnic nationalism, new state nationalism and Han nationalism on the one hand, and between cultural nationalism and political nationalism on the other hand⁴⁴. The question how China positions itself as new power in the contemporary world and how it will position itself in the future, is to a considerable degree also the question how the CCP’s Marxist-Leninist ideology will evolve within this area of nationalist tension. With regard to the different forms of ethnic nationalism (Han and other) that are present in contemporary China, the People’s Republic of China is not exceptional in its being multi-ethnic. Actually, most if not all countries of the world are to some degree heterogeneous (Connor 91-8; Connor 12). Virtually all existing states are either multilingual, multiracial, multireligious, multinational, or a combination of some or all of these. Rather than creating a nation state for each of these individual groups, state doctrine has to provide a place for these groups as an intermediate between the individual and the state, if not, existing states would have to be split up in thousands of mini-states,

43 Freeman and Geeraerts, *Europe, China and Expectations for Human Rights*, 31. See also Inglehart (45).

44 Townsend 1996, differentiates four types of nationalism in contemporary China: (1) official state nationalism that concerns all members of the People’s Republic of China, (2) Han nationalism, (3) nationalism of the People’s Republic of China, and the inhabitants of Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao, and (4) nationalism that also concerns the overseas Chinese all over the world.

which might, in their turn, jeopardize the good functioning of the international community. This implies that the state should be conceived as an agency for recognizing such groups (Van Dyke 52). As history shows, dynastic weakness is not the result of tolerance of pluralism and diversity, but of the impossibility to give the right answer to socio-economical changes (Potter 30).

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*Should Nora Leave the Iron House?
Revolution and Individual Action in a
Collectivist Society Based on Constant Change*

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Abstract

The 20th century in China was marked by struggles to implement social changes that would on one hand enable the state to reinforce its national, political and economic strength, while on the other hand bridge the gap between Western modernity and Chinese tradition. A large role in the quest for a modern China was played by Chinese intellectuals after the Revolution of 1911, namely the May Fourth Movement which included both Mainland and overseas communities. The social revolution was followed by literary movements which embodied the rise of individual intellectual consciousness. One of the main concerns of the authors was whether there is any use in attempting a revolution or individual political engagement in a society which is based on a strong collectivist tradition and an ideology that presupposes constant change. A logical step in dealing with this issue was rejecting all tradition and adopting either completely new ideologies, or ideas from the West. However, any social change, although based on individual action, would have to be implemented onto the nation as a whole, which meant that it could only be grafted onto the existing worldview. Also, the intellectuals were aware that completely rejecting the past might weaken the state's national strength. This meant that modern individuality and revolution had to be considered in light of the traditional view on society and change.

In this paper we consider the use of literature as a vessel for social change in China between the two World Wars. Through the interpretation of Western ideas, literature and characters in Chinese writing, we examine the way authors attempted to balance the Western individualist ideals with the Chinese collectivist ideology. We focus on essays and literary works written by prominent Chinese intellectuals in their attempt to find the best possible way to raise awareness for the need for social change. We explore the methods used to convey social issues, while also discussing the actual value and effect of writing as a mode of instigating social change through individual action. The interpretation of Western theories and concepts in the Chinese context is also considered, especially the application of the Western idea of female emancipation onto the idea of the general liberation of individualism. The results of these intellectuals' struggles are interpreted in the context of the formation of modern individuality in China, which represents an exemplary model of a Western notion with Chinese characteristics – an approach that was later used for the adoption of other ideas and ideologies from the West.

Resumo

Na China, o século XX foi marcado por lutas para a implementação de mudanças sociais que, por um lado, permitiam ao Estado reforçar a sua força nacional, política e económica e, por outro, procuravam colmatar lacunas existentes entre a modernidade ocidental e a tradição chinesa. Após a Revolução de 1911, os intelectuais chineses tiveram um papel determinante na demanda de uma China moderna; foi o chamado Movimento Quatro de Maio, que incluiu tanto o Continente como as comunidades do ultramar. À revolução social seguiram-se movimentos literários, que incorporavam o surgimento de uma consciência intelectual individual. Uma das principais preocupações dos autores era a tentativa de revolução ou o compromisso político individual a ocorrer numa sociedade que se baseava numa forte tradição colectivista e uma ideologia que pressupõe uma mudança constante. A primeira etapa para lidar com este problema era rejeitar toda a tradição e adoptar por completo novas ideologias ou ideias do Ocidente. No entanto, qualquer mudança social, embora baseada na acção individual, teria de ser implementada na nação como um todo, o que significa que só poderia aglutinada na visão de mundo já existente. Os intelectuais estavam também cientes de que rejeitando completamente o passado poder-se-ia enfraquecer a força nacional do Estado. Isto significava que a individualidade moderna e a revolução tinham de ser consideradas à luz da visão tradicional sobre a sociedade e a mudança.

Neste trabalho consideramos o uso da literatura como um navio para a mudança social na China entre as duas Guerras Mundiais. Através da interpretação de ideias ocidentais, literatura e personagens na escrita chinesa, examinamos os autores e de que maneira estes tentaram equilibrar os ideais individualistas do Ocidente com a ideologia colectivista chinesa. Baseamo-nos em ensaios e obras literárias escritas por eminentes intelectuais chineses na sua tentativa de encontrar o melhor caminho possível para o despertar da consciencialização para a necessidade da mudança social. Exploramos os métodos utilizados na transmissão de questões sociais, mas também discutimos o valor real e o efeito da escrita como forma de instigar a mudança social através da acção individual. A interpretação de conceitos e teorias ocidentais no contexto chinês também é considerada, especialmente a aplicação da ideia ocidental da emancipação feminina na ideia da libertação geral do individualismo. Os resultados destas lutas «intelectuais» são interpretados no contexto da formação da individualidade moderna na China, o que representa um modelo exemplar de uma noção ocidental com características chinesas – uma abordagem posteriormente utilizada na adopção de outras ideias e ideologias do Ocidente.

Should Nora Leave the Iron House? Revolution and Individual Action in a Collectivist Society Based on Constant Change

Jelena Gledić

1. China at the Beginning of the 20th century

One can say that the beginning of the 20th century represented the culmination of a crisis that the Chinese civilization had been facing for more than a century. The dynastic rule was overthrown in 1911, without a strong stable governing system to replace it, while at the same time imperialism was growing strong across the world. The Chinese nation was struggling with designing and implementing social changes that would on one hand enable the state to reinforce its national, political and economic strength, while on the other hand bridge the gap between Western modernity and Chinese tradition, thus avoiding being completely westernized. In this environment, a new generation of intellectuals appeared as the leaders of a movement to reestablish the Chinese national identity. In history, the quest for social, economic and political change was often linked with the emergence of new literary and artistic movements, and the rise of modern Chinese literature is one of the strongest recent examples of such a connection (see *e.g.* Denton). Social turbulence seems to be often triggered, and certainly boosted, by strong expressions of fresh revolutionary consciousness.

The rise of intellectual consciousness had to be consolidated with two major aspects of the Chinese tradition – collectivism and the philosophy of constant change. In a society aimed towards the group, rather than the individual, the new intellectuals were doubtful whether a single person can achieve anything on their own. Long after the great Chinese author Lu Xun, whose work we will analyze in more details, started writing, he still wondered whether literature can actually awaken people, or if it is just noise on paper (see *e.g.* Denault). On the other hand, the Chinese philosophy of constant change made ideas of revolution redundant, in the sense that things do change regardless of our involvement, and often in spite our involvement considering that they have a predetermined path. Thus, Chinese intellectuals were faced with the dilemma of partic-

ipation and the dilemma of action. In this paper, we consider the interpretation of Western ideas with the strongest influence on Chinese literature between the World Wars, in light of the two dilemmas.

The actions of the intellectual movements in China in the first half of the 20th century were in accordance with modern theories of social action (*e.g.* see McAdam and Diani). It has been stated that there is a tendency to borrow elements from similar movements cross-culturally (McAdam and Rucht), which the Chinese literati did by writing about Nora – the symbol of female and individual emancipation in the West. It has also been stated (Wright and Taylor) that groups usually do not respond to collective injustice without an outside influence, which was the case in China. Considering that most of the intellectuals involved in the movements were educated abroad, and there was support from overseas Chinese. Having these similarities in mind, and the way Chinese intellectuals successfully managed to collaborate with governing authorities and help lead China to the formation of a strong national identity, their methods could prove to be useful experience upon which we can base our assumptions on the outcomes of certain social actions in similar national situations.

2. Dilemmas: Should One Be Involved and How Should Changes Be Made

Although organized in groups, such as the May Fourth Movement, the new Chinese intellectuals were very independent, in the sense that they were authors of individual texts (either literary or non-fiction) which were individually signed (by real name or pseudonym of a single person). This rise of individualism was very new to China – a very collectivist society. Considering that they did write and that they were involved in the social and political revolution, it is clear that they did decide to act. However, their writing still shows traces of doubt regarding the purposefulness of their actions.

The intellectuals were put in a position to speak in their own name, but in a way that would affect millions, both in Mainland China and overseas. They used literature as a vessel for social change, through which they attempted to balance the Western individualist ideals with the Chinese collectivist ideology, trying to find the best possible way to raise awareness for the need for social change. For this they used different methods. We will try to show that they identified the need to change China's national identity in the country, but also internationally – by trying to establish its global strength and status, and thus accordingly developed the most efficient methods to achieve those two goals.

3. Metaphors of China: Should Nora Leave the Iron House?

The dilemmas of Chinese intellectuals in the first half of the 20th century have been widely discussed and analyzed, by themselves, their contemporaries and later research (for literature and intellectual activism see *e.g.* Goldman, Mazur, Guo; for Ibsenism in China see *e.g.* Schwarcz, Chang, He). Nonetheless, we believe that the significance, complexity and currency of the topic allows for reinterpretations. We will analyze the problem by combining two concepts presented in Lu Xun's works – the Iron House and Nora's leaving home. Lu Xun is considered one of the greatest authors of Chinese literature and a symbol of revolutionary intellectual spirit throughout the turbulent 20th century (Lee). We believe that the metaphors he presented are essentially linked, as the question whether and how Nora should leave is linked to our perception of the Iron House.

The term Iron House appears in a preface to Lu Xun's collected stories (*Call to Arms*), in which he writes about a conversation which he had with his friend on the purposefulness of trying to change China's difficult situation. Lu Xun says:

Imagine an iron house without windows, absolutely indestructible, with many people fast asleep inside who will soon die of suffocation. But you know since they will die in their sleep, they will not feel the pain of death. Now if you cry aloud to wake a few of the lighter sleepers, making those unfortunate few suffer the agony of irrevocable death, do you think you are doing them a good turn?

The Iron House can be interpreted as China, its tradition, its political system, its current situation etc. In any case, Lu Xun wonders what one is to do in such a seemingly hopeless situation. This dilemma is also expressed in his first short story "A Madman's Diary", in which the main character believes everyone around him is a cannibal and he ponders whether to eat or be eaten (analyzed at length in Sun). Critical of China's tradition in his writing, Lu Xun also adopts a more Western, nature-conquering stand in his very approach to the problem – if the Iron House is indestructible by nature, then trying to destroy or change it is trying to change the course of nature.

The influence of Ibsen's "A Doll's House" on early 20th century Chinese literature have been widely researched, as referenced. Here we focus on Nora's leaving home. Her subsequent destiny was the topic of a lecture given by Lu Xun (*After Nora walks out, what then?*), in which he uses Nora as a starting

point for considering what the Chinese people should do in order to become independent individuals, free of the burden of tradition (*Pavlović 105*). Lu Xun introduces the question of responsibility, and is critical of the idea of simply leaving without considering the options one has. He considers what Nora can do after leaving – return to her parents or husband, which would be going back to what one initially left, or turning to amoral ways of earning a living, which might be worse than one's original state.

Thus, the question at the time was whether Nora should leave the Iron House. The meaning of Nora and her leaving (or staying) is connected with the way we perceive the Iron House. If the Iron House is China, then Nora represents the Chinese people in the face of rising individualism, an interpretation present in many works of modern Chinese literature (*e.g.* Ba Jin, Cao Yu etc.). However, we can also perceive Nora as China, and the Iron House then becomes the state China was in at the time. This can be confirmed by Lu Xun's account of China's situation, which reminds one of the fate of the residents of the Iron House:

China simply is not going to move of its own accord. I believe this lashing is going to come sooner or later (whether or not it's a good thing is another matter), but China is definitely going to be hit hard. As for where this blow will come from, how it's going to come, I really cannot say with any certainty (*After Nora walks out, what then?*).

So, the residents/Nora/China can leave, but Lu Xun warns of another danger:

[...] these days, if somebody like Nora were to leave home, she probably wouldn't have too much trouble surviving, because this is a special person we're talking about – many people will sympathize with her and help her sustain a living. But relying on other people's sympathy for a living already implies giving up one's own freedom. (*Ibid.*)

In the face of imperialism, it was clear that if China were to denounce its tradition and even its problems completely (*i.e.* leave the Iron House), it would almost certainly become dependent of a foreign power and thus lose the opportunity to reestablish its national identity. Thus, leaving was not the best option. Lu Xun gives an alternative:

The most painful thing in life is to wake up from a dream and have nowhere to go. [...] It is at times like this that lies and dreams serve a

great purpose. For this reason, I believe that if there is no way out, then what we need is a dream. [...] So I believe that if there is no way out, then what we need is a dream – not a dream of the future, but a dream in the present. (*Ibid.*)

The dream Lu Xun speaks of is something he himself is doubtful of, but he is nonetheless willing to try. What is important is, as he states, to focus on the present. This is also contrary to Chinese tradition, which tends to focus on the long run. Lu Xun's association with the Communist Party of China was probably one of the ways of trying to act in the moment, through a very current political and social revolution. This can be seen as a more intense and practical application of Liang Qichao's pioneer ideas of conducting a revolution through literature at the end of the 19th century.

The original goals of the first revolutionary movements – to completely abandon the traditional society – were soon abandoned. The Iron House cannot be completely abandoned, but it should be remodeled to enable one to live there without suffocating. Nora cannot leave and take time to think what to do, since she would be struck by the imminence of economic issues. Completely rejecting the past might weaken the state's national strength, and thus destroy any chances for a future. Also, although based on individual action, any social change would have to be implemented onto the nation as a whole, which meant that it could only be grafted onto the existing worldview. The intellectuals were aware that this meant that modern individuality and revolution had to be considered in light of the traditional view on society and change. We believe the Chinese intellectuals adopted a moderate approach, having in mind the risks of completely deconstructing the system – Nora can leave (or live) only when the Iron House is no longer Iron, *i.e.* once it has been changed.

4. Methods of Change: Freeing Nora from the Iron House

In rebuilding the Iron House, Chinese intellectuals had a twofold approach which can be compared to the original metaphor. We believe that the lack of windows on the Iron House gives rise to two areas that need to be remodeled – the inside and the outside. The lack of windows disables the inhabitants from breathing, but also from seeing what is on the outside. On the other hand, similarly, it prevents people on the outside from knowing what is actually happening inside. At that time inside China there was, as Hu Shih states:

[...] a situation where an ancient civilization has been forced against its own will into daily and intimate contact with the new civilization of the West; where the old civilization has clearly proved itself hopelessly inadequate in solving the pressing problems of national existence, economic pressure, social and political disorder, and intellectual confusion; and where, for reasons hitherto never fully understood, the new invading civilization has not yet succeeded in either grafting itself upon the traditional culture or being extensively adopted in working out a new cultural equilibrium on a national scale. (*The Chinese Renaissance*)

In the same period, the popular book “The Outline of History” practically announces that the end of China has come to a close after almost a millennium of decline:

China’s civilization had already reached its culmination in the seventh century A.D., its crowning period was the Tang period; and though it continued to spread slowly and steadily into Annam, into Cambodia, into Siam, into Tibet, into Nepal, Korea, Mongolia, and Manchuria, there is henceforth little more than such geographical progress to record of it in this history for a thousand years. (Wells)

Thus, it was clear the Iron house should be dealt within and without. We believe that Lu Xun’s method of writing – criticizing and confronting the society with its faults and shortcomings – was primarily focused on the inside. Although he was against tradition, he employed many classical Chinese literary methods to convey his views, *e.g.* criticizing the present through talking about the past. This was most likely his keen observation of the most efficient method of reaching those who should either change or facilitate change. Also, he took the position of authority, similar to that in traditional Confucian social relations. In one of his texts he states: “We can’t go around telling everyone to become a fighter. That why it’s useful to have some kind of peaceful method – by this I mean the use of parental authority to free our children.” (Lu, *After Nora walks out, what then?*). The parental authority is the state authority when it comes to adults.

In contrast to Lu Xun’s successful attempts to strengthen the Chinese national identity from within, there was a group of authors working and publishing abroad, mostly in English. At times their activities might have been even seen as traitorous, but we believe that they were actually working on dismantling the Iron House from the outside. Authors such as Hu Shih, Lin

Yutang and others greatly contributed to changing the way foreign powers viewed the Chinese civilization in the 20th century. From the image of a dying civilization, through their works China managed to gain the status of a relevant culture capable of establishing its place in the modern world. Their works can be read as contrastive analyses of cultures, paving the way towards China's place in a global world.

The changes in Chinese society could be conducted in different ways, which can all be summed into four directions – keeping the traditional system (which was practically impossible with the implemented political changes), completely adopting a foreign culture (which would erase the Chinese national identity), adopting a completely new ideology or combining Chinese tradition and Western modernity. It is interesting that, in his keen assessment of China's status at the beginning of the 20th century, Bertrand Russell does not even consider the possibility that China can do anything more than either disappear/be assimilated or develop a culture which is a combination of Eastern and Western features and values, an option he prefers (1922). This is similar to a view proposed by Hu Shih – that of organic assimilation. The Chinese intellectuals did base their revolution on many foreign ideas, but they were wise enough to functionally combine them with the existing culture. As Hu Shih states “The product of this rebirth looks suspiciously occidental. But, scratch its surface and you will find that the stuff of which its made is essentially the Chinese bedrock which much weathering and corrosion have only made stand out more clearly” (*The Chinese Renaissance*).

We might say that the movements managed to find a balance between the impulse to completely denounce everything connected with the negative sides of traditional society and the conformist desire to solve things as easily as possible by adopting an existing foreign model.

5. Implications

The results of China's intellectuals' struggles in the first half of the 20th century can be interpreted in the context of the formation of modern individuality in China. Individualism in China represents an exemplary model of a Western notion with Chinese characteristics – an approach that was later used for the adoption of other ideas and ideologies from the West. The literary movements realized early on in their attempts to change society that revolution is intense and can produce radical changes temporarily, but in order for those changes to be successfully integrated in the development of the nation one must

keep in mind the underlying tradition. Also, if one is to work on issues from different angles – like the example of remodeling the Iron House both on the inside and on the outside – there is a good chance that the system need not be dismantled and completely deconstructed. It can, rather, be reconstructed without the phase of destruction. The modern Chinese national identity is rooted in these approaches, although it has been heavily and essentially influenced by the social and cultural trends after the formation of PR China, which is outside the scope of this paper. Nonetheless, reviewing the roots of a nation's identity is certainly significant, so expanding research of the origins of Chinese modernity might prove to be useful.

A second benefit of expanding research on this problem, potentially into different fields, is the possibility of establishing a mechanism for cultural and social change. As mentioned in the discussion, if we were to discover general patterns in China's example we might be able to predict the appropriateness and potential success of applying certain policies in critical situations.

Lastly, by establishing the specifics of China's adaptation to Western modernity, we might be able to predict the possible outcomes of the West's response to China's cultural expansion. Chinese culture is undoubtedly gaining global significance, and as such we believe it will at one point significantly influence Western culture. Although there will hopefully be no pressure of war, we believe the economic and cultural forces will push the global cultures towards merging in certain areas. Analyzing China's response to modernity might give as insight into the possibilities of the future development of global culture.

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*Women's Rights and Historiography during
China's Revolutionary Era*

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Abstract

Almost one hundred years ago, Xu Tian-xiao (1886-1941) published his Shenzhou Nüzi Xinshi (New History of Chinese Women, 1913) in Shanghai. This book is considered to be “the first systematic investigation on Chinese women’s history from ancient times to the early twentieth century,” in China. Unfortunately, very few scholars have paid attention to this book so far. This paper attempts to answer the following questions: (i) what the word Xin “New” refers to Xu Tian-xiao’s history book; (ii) why he wanted to write about Chinese women’s history during a tumultuous era; (iii) what are the specialties of this book on the traditional and new historical writings. This case study will provide us an opportunity to review the role of women’s historiography and feminist movement during Chinese Nationalist revolutionary era.

Resumo

Em Xangai, há aproximadamente cem anos atrás, Xu Tianxiao (1886-1941) publicou Shenzhou Nuzi Xinshi (A Nova História das Mulheres da China, 1913). Esta obra é considerada “a primeira investigação sistemática sobre a História das mulheres chinesas desde a antiguidade até o início do século XX”. No entanto, poucos estudiosos até hoje têm dedicado a sua atenção a este livro. No presente artigo tentamos responder às seguintes questões: (i) o que significa a palavra «Nova» no livro de Xu Tian-xiao; (ii) porque quis ele escrever sobre a História das mulheres chinesas num período de tumultos; (iii) quais são as especificidades deste livro sobre os novos e os tradicionais escritos históricos. Este estudo de caso permite-nos rever o papel da historiografia das mulheres e dos movimentos feministas na era nacionalista revolucionária da China.

Women's Rights and Historiography during China's Revolutionary Era

YI Jo-lan

Introduction

In April 1913, the second year after the establishment of the Republic of China, Xu Tian-xiao 徐天嘯 (1886-1941) had his *Shenzhou Nüzi Xinshi* 神州女子新史 (New History of Chinese Women, hereafter *SZNXS*) published in Shanghai by Shenzhou Press House. This book is regarded as “the first systematic investigation on Chinese 2 women’s history from ancient times to the early twentieth century”¹. However, it is a pity that this book has been ignored.

The most significant characteristics of this book are: (i) it fit women’s history into an anti-Manchu revolutionary historical framework; (ii) it challenged the traditional view that women’s history means only writing about women’s virtues but rather believed that history can enlighten women; (iii) it used a new chapter style of organization instead of a traditional annals-biographical style in writing.

Therefore, this book offers us insights on how literati used Chinese women’s history as a medium to invoke revolutionary ideas, and it allows us to review the role of women’s history during the revolutionary era in the early twentieth century of China.

Sketch of His Life

Xu Tian-xiao was born on December 6th, 1886 in Changshou 常熟, Jiangsu 江蘇 Province. Unlike some other writers in the early 20th century of China who studied abroad, he obtained his education from his father and passed the lowest civil service examination in 1901. From 1902 to 1904, he attended

1 Bao Jia-lin 鮑家麟, “Xu: Zhongguo diyibu funü shi — Tian-xiao de *Shenzhou Nüzi Xinshi*,” 序 中國第一部婦女史—天嘯的神州女子新史 in Xu Tian-xiao, *SZNXS* (Taipei: Daoxiang chubanshe 稻鄉出版社, 1993), 5.

Yunan Normal School 虞南師範學校 with his brother Xu Zhenya 徐枕亞 (1889-1937) and there he met one of his best friends in his life, Wu Shuang-re 吳雙熱 (1884-1934). They were sworn brothers and were called “The three strange characters from Haiyu.” (Haiyu sanqiren 海虞三奇人). The first part of *SZNXS* might have been completed in October 1909². From 1909 to 1912, he was a teacher in a private elementary school in Changshou. In 1912, he went to Minguo Law School in Shanghai and joined KMT later. He did not finish his school as he was recruited as an editor in *Minquan bao* 民權報; this newspaper was banned in 1914 for criticizing Yuan Shikai’s 袁世凱 authority regime. 1915 was a tough year for Xu Tian-xiao as he lost his wife and 4-years-old daughter in succession. Later, he married Zou Zhi-yun 鄒志雲 (1902-2003) and raised a daughter Xu Yi-wen 徐懿文 (1923-) and a son Xu Cheng-zhi 徐成治 (1924-)³.

Tianxiao was good at calligraphy and his works include plenty of styles, such as fiction, drama script, history and sphragistics, for example: *Tianxiao canmo* 天嘯殘墨, *Tianya lunluoren yinhua* 天涯淪落人印話, *Hushang bairiji* 湖上百日記, *Ziyong meng* 自由夢, and *Xutianxiao yinpu* 徐天嘯印譜, etc. He was also the editor-in-chief of some magazines and newspapers such as *Xiaoshuo congbao* 小說叢報, *Huanghua xunbao* 黃花旬報, *Wu tongyuan* 五銅圓, *Haiyu zhoukan* 海虞周刊, and *Datong bao* 大同報.

His brother Xu Zhenya is seen as one of the leading writers of the “Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School”⁴. Zhenya’s book *Yuli hun* 玉梨魂 is about the conflict between love and familial obligations and was very popular in 1920s-30s China. People believe the brother of the leading character in this novel who was a revolutionist should be based on Xu Tian-xiao⁵.

In 1916, Xu Tian-xiao joined the army in Guangzhou 廣州 and fought against Long Ji-guang 龍濟光 (1868-1925) in 1917. Also in this year, Yao Min-ai 姚民哀 (1893-1938) introduced him to join Nanshe 南社, a revolutionist society.

2 Xu Tian-xiao, “Shenzhou Nüzi Xinshi jielun” 神州女子新史結論, in his *Tianxiao canmo* 天嘯殘墨 (Taipei: Guangwen shuju 廣文書局, 1980), 15.

3 I am grateful to Xu Cheng-zhi for being willing to do interviews with me in June 2009 and December 2010. Also while doing research on this project, I gained plenty of benefits from Zhou Wen-xiao’s 周文曉 book, *Xu Tian-xiao yu Xu Zhen-ya yanjiu ziliao* 徐天嘯與徐枕亞研究資料 (Huhehaote 呼和浩特: Yuanfang chubanshe 遠方出版社, 2003).

4 Regarding to the Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies school, see Perry Link, *Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies: Popular Fiction in Early Twentieth Century Chinese Cities*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981.

5 Li Qing-guo 李青果, “Qinggan, geming, guojia: Xu Zhen-ya *Yuli hun*, *Xuehong leishi ji qi zhou-bian*,” 情感·革命·國家: 徐枕亞《玉梨魂》、《雪鴻淚史》及其周邊 *Qinghua daxue xuebao: Zhexue shehui kexue ban* 清華大學學報: 哲學社會科學版 6 (Beijing, Nov. 2008): 82.

In 1930 he was recruited as the secretary of the Examination Yuan. During the Sino-Japanese war, the Xu family moved to Zhongqing 重慶 where he died on 24th November 1941, aged 56.

Writing Women's History for National Revolution

In his book, Xu Tian-xiao collected about 390 women in the Chinese history from ancient times to 1912. Eagerly keeping the record of Chinese women in the history, he sighed that there were so many women in Chinese history such as filial daughters, faithful women, various women and heroines etc., but only few were recorded with their names. He thought it is a shame that there are still numerous anonymous heroines who died for the country but not being recorded and well known by people, especially those women who were brave, perseverated, adventurous and patriotic⁶.

Xu Tian-xiao put women's history into an anti-Manchu revolutionary history framework in this book. His central claim in *SZNXS* is to promote the glory of China and to advocate women's rights⁷. In the advertisement of his book, it says that: "Shenzhou 神州 has a long history. Four thousand years onwards, there are numerous famous men who have left biographies for the posterity. But historians always ignored heroines, or did not record the details about them"⁸.

He had the idea of superiority of China and took only Han ethnicity's history as Chinese history⁹. Therefore, his historical writing is based on the rise and fall of Han Chinese. In *SZNXS*, his words are full of anti-Manchurianism. For example, he said: "the history of Manchurians' invasion into the inner plain, occupying we Han Chinese's land, and torturing us, is too much to tell"¹⁰. He criticized that some women like the wife of Shen Bao-zhen 沈葆楨 "serving Man Qing, would get irony, due to their hurting country folks and not been seen as a great person from the nationalism point of view"¹¹. He also collected a lot

6 *SZNXS*, Part I, p. 109, "nüshishi an" 女史氏按; Part II, 58, "nüshishi yue" 女史氏曰.

7 Wu Shuang-re 吳雙熱, "xu er," 序二 in *SZNXS*, 2.

8 See *Minquan bao* 民權報, 9 Jul. 1913, 1.

9 *SZNXS*, Part I, p. 143, "nüshishi yue." When rewriting Chinese history in late Qing China, the elite normally put citizens and China in the new frame of knowledge of race. Liang Qi-chao is a good example. Please refers to Peter Zarrow, "Liang Qichao and the Conceptualization of 'Race' in Late Qing China," *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo jikan* 中央研究院近代史研究所集刊 52 (Jun. 2006): 111-164.

10 *SZNXS*, Part II, "Faduan," 發端, 2.

11 *SZNXS*, Part II, p. 41, "nüshishi yue."

of facts concerning rebellion to Man Qing (e.g. Qiu Jin 秋瑾 and Zhang Zhu-jun 張竹君) in order to outthrust women's participations in the revolution.

Xu Tian-xiao tried to awaken women in *SZNZXS*. At the beginning of this book, Xu praised the world in the new century and emphasized that the world was built by both men and women. He addressed that the 20th century is the moment for women to be outstanding¹². He encouraged women to be independent in economy and participate in politics. For example, he seconded Tang Qun-ying 唐群英, Lin Zong-su's 林宗素 fighting for suffrage in a violent way. Regarding the footbinding of Chinese women, he thought it is a shame of China. He appealed to stop it in order to correct the weakness and dependence of Chinese women¹³.

One scholar has concluded the concept of Chinese women's right in four modes: (i) being the mother of the nation, (ii) paying the same duty as men, (iii) figuring out the new role, (iv) rejecting to be a female citizen¹⁴. According to such perspective, Xu Tian-xiao's idea on women's right is not "being the mother of the nation" but close to "paying the same duty as men." But he did not overthrow the past of China and only believed in new revolutionary feminist thoughts¹⁵.

New Goal: From Textbook of Women's Moral Education to Textbook of Women's History

Xu Tian-xiao meant to write a book on "new *history*." In the preface of his book, he emphasized: History is very important and very complicated. It is particularly more difficult in this book as [I] tend to write more about the facts of women.

12 *SZNZXS*, Part I, "Xulun," 序論, 1, 3.

13 *SZNZXS*, Part II, p. 19, "nūshishi yue." Concerning the discourse of footbinding in early modern China, see Dorothy Ko, *Cinderella's Sisters: A Revisionist History of Footbinding*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005.

14 Sudo Mizuyo 須藤瑞代, "Jindai zhongguo de nüquan gainian," 近代中國的女權概念 in Wang Zheng 王政 and Chen Yan 陳雁, eds., *Bainian zhongguo nüquan sichao yanjiu* 百年中國女權思潮研究 (Shanghai: Fudan daxue chubanshe 復旦大學出版社, 2005), pp. 37-57. Sudo Mizuyo, *Chugoku joken gainen no henyō: kiyosueiminsho no jinken to jenda* 中国「女權」概念の変容: 清 末民初の人権とジェンダー (Tokyo: Kenbun shuban 研文出版, 2007), chaps. 2-3.

15 Refer to Wang Zheng 王政, Gao Yan-yi (Dorothy Ko) 高彥頤, Liu He (Lidia Liu) 劉禾, "Congnüjiezhong dao nanjiezhong: nanxing zhuti, guozu zhuyi yu xiandaixing (daixu)," 從女界鐘到男界鐘: 男性主體、國族主義與現代性 (代序) in Wang Zheng and Chen Yan, eds., *Bainian zhongguo nüquan sichao yanjiu*, p. 6.

From the beginning of the history in our country, there have been plenty of facts about women to be recorded; however, so far, there is no systematic women's history [published]. Besides, until now, we do not have a good history book of Manchu for reference, so it is hard to get facts of women in that period¹⁶. He was keen on writing a women's history book in an organized way but he also faced the problem of shortage of source materials in Qing dynasty.

No matter what, he planned to write a history book on women, and for women. In the late Qing era, people started to emphasize the necessary of studying history in girl's schools¹⁷. However, compared to those history textbooks, Wu Shuang-re argued, *SZNXS* fits women more in the Republican as it is not so outworn¹⁸. A scholar has pointed out that this book was once used as a textbook¹⁹. But so far we do not have any information how it was used²⁰.

It is worth noting that the purpose of Xu's book on women's history is different from those in the past. *SZNXS* targets at women's history instead of women's moral education. In the late Qing period, there was moral education *xiushen* 修身 class in the girls' schools. The textbooks of moral education normally contain quotations of female virtues and role models from Han to Qing dynasty in China or even from overseas²¹.

However, Xu Tian-xiao argues some conductive book like *Lienu zhang* is not a complete record of women or of a history but some little pieces of women's life, just like a collection of women's epitaphs and it is nothing to do with the development of political situations or the rise and fall of a dynasty. He criticized the standards of this kind of books are in terms of weakness and infe-

16 *SZNXS*, Part II, "Faduan," 4.

17 In the late Qing China, there was history class in girl's schools for not only let girls acknowledge of history in China but also wish this class would connect to what girls have learnt in moral education class. See Xuebu zongwusi anduke 學部總務司案牘科, ed., *Xuebu zouzi jiyao* 學部奏咨輯要, juan 3, Xuanton yuannian 宣統元年 (1909) chun 春, in Qu xin-gui 璩鑫圭 and Tang liang-yan 唐良炎, eds., *Zhongguo jindai jiaoyushi ziliao huibian: xuezhi yanbian* 中國近代教育史資料匯編:學制演變 (Shanghai: Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshe 教育出版社, 2007), pp. 594, 586. Also refer to Li Xiao-qian 李孝遷, "Lun wanqing nüzi lishi jiaokeshu," 論晚清女子歷史教科書. *Huaxia wenhua* 華夏文化, 2007 no. 1. ¹⁸ Wu Shuang-re, "xu er", in *SZNXS*, p. 2.

18 Wu Shuang-re, "xu er", in *SZNXS*, p. 2.

19 Li Xiao-qian, "Lun wanqing nüzi lishi jiaokeshu," p. 23.

20 Shenzhou tushu press had textbooks but *SZNXS* was not on the list of "advanced elementary history textbooks," see *Minquan bao* 民權報, 15 Jul. 1913: 1.

21 Xuebu zongwusi anduke, ed., *Xuebu zouzi jiyao*, juan 3, Xuanton yuannian (1909) chun, in Qu xin-gui and Tang liang-yan, eds., *Zhongguo jindai jiaoyushi ziliao huibian: xuezhi yanbian*, 585-586. Concerning research on women's education textbook in 20th century China, refers to Joan Judge, "Meng Mu Meets the Modern: Female Exemplars in Early-Twentieth-Century Textbooks for Girls and Women," *Jindai zhongguo funiushi yanjiu* 近代中國婦女史研究 8 (Jun. 2000): 133-137.

riority of women. Therefore, on the one hand, this will not be able to encourage women's ambitions. By contrast, it will confine women's mind and body. On the other hand, this will not be able to develop women's spirits but only help for cultivating women's morals²².

Xu Tian-xiao presented his ideas on "women's history" in his book. He thought those female education books in the past are only moral textbooks but not books in historical writing style (*lishi zhi ticai* 歷史之體裁)²³. In other words, in his mind, the "new history" means women's history book which is opposite to the "old history" that collects wise praises and exemplary conducts about women's virtues.

New Writing Style: From Annals-Biographical Style to Chapter Style of Organization

Not only is *SZNXS* creative in the context and purpose but also in the writing style. Xu Tian-xiao used a new writing style which was raised in the late Qing China – the chapter style, instead of annals – biographical style in organizing this book²⁴. In the first part of his book, there are four sections and each section contains three to four chapters. That is:

Section 1 Antiquity times 上古時代 (Chapter 1 Taigu 太古 Period [pre-history], Chapter 2 Xia-Shang Dynasty, Chapter 3 Zhou Dynasty);
Section 2 Medieval times 1 中古時代 (上) (Chapter 1 Qin Dynasty, Chapter 2 Han and Sanguo Dynasty, Chapter 3 Jin Dynasty, Chapter 4 Nan-Bei Dynasty and Sui Dynasty);
Section 3 Medieval times 2 中古時代 (下) (Chapter 1 Tang Dynasty, Chapter 2 Wudi, Chapter 3 Song Dynasty, Chapter 4 Yuan Dynasty);
Section 4 Premodern times 近古時代 (Chapter 1 Ming Dynasty).

In the second part of this book, organized as:

Chapter 1 – The Rebellion of Ming Citizens Period 明臣起義時代²⁵,

22 *SZNXS*, Part I, "Jielun," 結論 3.

23 *SZNXS*, Part I, "Jielun", 2.

24 This writing style was not invented by Xu. It was from the West and was transferred through Japanese. It had an influence on the writing of Chinese history textbook. Xia Ceng-you 夏曾佑 (1863-1924) used it to write his famous textbook *Zuixin zhongxue zhongguo lishi jiaokeshu* 最新中學 中國歷史教科書 (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan 商務印書館, 1904-6).

25 It is about more than one hundred years concluding Ming-Qing conflict, the southern Ming and Taiping Rebellion.

Chapter 2 – The Building of Taiping Kingdom Period 太平建國時代,
Chapter 3 – The Set-up of Republic of China Period 民國成立時代.

This organization of chapters shows his ideas on the development of history and linear periodization²⁶. In the early 20th century China, there was a “modernization turn” on Chinese historical writings that is writing from the history of dynasty style to history of nation style. At that time, scholars tried to write history from the perspective of nation which states collective history of a country instead of individual behaviors²⁷. From this point of view, Xu Tian-xiao used a new periodization frame and tried to write a collective Chinese women's history in *SZNXS* as well.

The timetable in this book also reveals his racial idea. In the second part, he used “The Rebellion of Ming Citizens Period” rather than “the late Ming and early Qing” since he wanted to show the Ming dynasty [Han Chinese] was not terminated yet²⁸. He used “The Building of Taiping Kingdom Period” to replace “the Qing dynasty” and “The Set-up of Republic of China Period” to identify years of Guangxu 光緒 and Xuanton 宣統. This all shows his anti-Manchurianism.

In *SZNXS*, Xu Tian-xiao described the history from Fuxi 伏羲 and Nüwa 女媧²⁹, rather than Pangu 盤古 and Sanhuang Wudi 三皇五帝, which was normally taken as the beginning of Chinese history textbook in the late Qing period³⁰. He wrote the book in a chronological order and put one or two women's facts in every section. At the end of each section he ended it with *nüshishi yue* 女史氏曰 which is like *lunzan* 論贊 (author's comments) in traditional Chinese history books.

26 The western idea of linear periodization in historiography was passed to China from Japan and had strong affection on Chinese concepts of periodization and development. Refer to Wang fan-sen, “Jindai zhongguo de xianxing lishiguan: yi shehui jinhuailun wei zhongxin de taolun,” 近代中國的線性歷史觀—以社會進化論為中心的討論 in his *Jindai zhongguo de shijia yu shixue* 近代中國的史家與史學, pp. 49-58.

27 Yu Ying-shih 余英時, “20 shiji zhongguo guoshi gainian de bianqian,” 20世紀中國國史概念的變遷, in his *Renwen yu lixing de zhongguo* 人文與理性的中國, ed. He Jun 何俊, trans. ChengNen-sheng 程嫩生 and Luo Qun 羅群 et al. (Taipei: Lianjing chuban gongsi 聯經出版公司, 2008), pp. 565-575.

28 *SZNXS*, Part 2, p. 33, *nüshishi yue*.

29 *SZNXS*, Part 1, p. 2, *nüshishi yue*.

30 Peter Zarrow, “Ci meng ‘xinshixue’: Zhuaxingqi zhong de zhongguo lishi jiaokeshu,” 啟蒙「新史學」—轉型期中的中國歷史教科書 in Wang Fan-sen ed., *Zhongguo jindai sixiangshi dezhuanxing shidai: Zhang Hao yuanshi qizhi zhushou lun wen ji* 中國近代思想史的轉型時代: 張灝院士七秩祝壽論文集, Taipei, Lianjing chuban gongsi 聯經出版公司, 2007: 51-80 (see pp. 64-65).

Reevaluate Female Exemplars

Most of the women Xu Tian-xiao featured in his book are old types of exemplars, such as wise mothers, chaste women and so on, which we would already have read in ancient conductive books. However, there are two kinds of exemplary women he emphasized on, those dying for propriety (yilie 義烈) and martial warriors (wude 武德). He encouraged women to devote themselves to armies, such as Hua Mu-lan 花木蘭 and Qin Liang-yu 秦良玉. He claimed that female warriors are the pride of China who would wash out the shame of women's names in weakness and dependence³¹.

If we compare the elite in late Qing China invented a list of national hero images in two types: fighting with foreign countries and promoting the pride of China³², Xu Tian-xiao focused on all the martial heroines, but not just those ones fighting with foreigners³³. Also, as Joan Judge has pointed out, two modes of female representations which are most prevalent in biographical narratives in the late Qing women's journals were of social heroines and martial warriors³⁴, Xu Tian-xiao was also concerned about women who devoted themselves to the country.

It is worth noting that although Xu Tian-xiao promoted some new modes of female exemplars, he thought the most honorable deed of women is fidelity.

He claimed that is the glory of China and criticized: Since the West has an influence on China, some young women misunderstand the spirit of liberty and despise the old morality. They abandon themselves, view divorce and remarry as a right behavior and do not know what virtue is³⁵.

Also, unlike some other elite in modern China commending "good wife and wise mother"³⁶, Xu Tian-xiao did not highlight them so much. However, even

31 SZNXS, Part 1, p. 67, nüshishi yue.

32 Refer to Shen Song-qiao 沈松橋, "Zhen dahan zhi tiansheng: minzu yingxiong xipu yu wanqing de guozu xiangxiang," 振大漢之天聲—民族英雄系譜與晚清的國族想像 *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo jikan* 中央研究院近代史研究所集刊 33 (Jun. 2000): 77-158.

33 In the traditional Lien? Zhuan, there are only few women related to martial virtues. In the late the Qing, the elite tried hard to dig out the images of Chinese women. One scholar has pointed out, heroine is a typical imagination of women in revolutionary movement. See Ke Hui-ling 柯惠鈴, "Xingbie yu zhengzhi: jindai zhongguo geming yundong zhong de fun?" 性別與政治：近代中國革命運動中的婦女, pp. 51-59.

34 Joan Judge, "Expanding the Feminine / National Imaginary: Social and Martial Heroines in Late Qing Women's Journals," *Jindai zhongguo funüshi yanjiu* 近代中國婦女史研究 15 (Dec. 2007): 1-33.

35 Xu Tian-xiao, "*Qianchuang leiying*, shuobu xu," 《茜窗淚影》說部序 (1914), *Tianxiao canmo* 天嘯殘墨, 45-46.

36 Regarding discourse on "good wives and wise mothers" in modern China, please refer to Chen zheng yuan 陳延媛, *Cong dongya kan jindai Zhongguo funu jiaoyu: zhishi fenzi dui 'xianqi liangmu' de*

though Xu Tian-xiao tried to use women's history as an agent to encourage women to stand up and devote themselves to the country, he still had the ideas of *nühuo* 女禍 (female evils that will destroy the government)³⁷, which claimed that the fall of Ming dynasty and the reason why Chinese became under barbarians' control are all due to women's seduction³⁸.

Regarding women's exemplars in the early 20th century China, Joan Judge concludes in four modes from the perspective of source materials: eternalist, meliorist, archeomodern, and presentist³⁹. Xu's book does not fit any of these modes though he praised filial daughters, chaste women, wise wives and good mothers, but he did not reject new female virtue like eternalist. He is not meliorist as he praised female chastity. He is not archeomodernist as he admired both western exemplary women (eg. Louise Michel, Joan of Arc, Madame Roland, Queen Victoria, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Sofia Perovskaia) and also Chinese talented women (eg. Ban Zhao 班昭 and Cai Wenji 蔡文姬). Furthermore, he did not appropriate western examples and despised Chinese women in the past like presentist.

In sum, *SZNXS* reveals that revolutionists tried to rediscover Chinese women in the history to invent the tradition that fits their expectation of the "modern time." But it is a pity that this book was not so popular in early Republican China era⁴⁰. In Chen Dong-yuan's 陳東原 *Zhongguo funü shenhuoshi* 中國婦女生活史, he only cited three paragraphs from *SZNXS* in the section of reformation era⁴¹. *SZNXS* is still underestimated now, not so visible as *Zhongguo funü shenhuoshi*.

gaizao 從東亞看近代中國婦女教育：知識份子對「賢妻良母」的改造 (Taipei: Daoxiang chubanshe 稻鄉出版社, 2005). Also Sudo Mizuyo, *Chugoku joken gainen no henyō: kiyosue-minsho no jinken to jenda*, chap. 4.2 "Liangqi xianmu lun," 良妻賢母論.

37 *SZNXS*, Part I, p. 18, nüshishi yue.

38 *SZNXS*, Part II, p. 8, nüshishi yue.

39 Joan Judge, *The Precious Raft of History: the Past, the West, and the Woman Question in China*, pp. 12-16. Prasenjit Duara also pointed out, in late Qing China, nationalists had an patriarchal attitude towards women's issue. The way of expression was to put women as the core of authenticity in a national linear historical narrative. In this mode, women are all timeless and look similar. Refer to Prasenjit Duara, "The Regime of Authenticity: Timelessness, Gender, and National History in Modern China." *History and Theory* 37:3 (August, 1998): 299-308. Also, "Of Authenticity and Woman: Personal Narratives of Middle-Class Women in Modern China." *Becoming Chinese: Passages to Modernity and Beyond*. Wen-Cin Yeh, ed. Berkeley: University of California Press. 2000, 342-347.

40 Due to the shortage of material recourses, so far we still do not know the reason why it was not popular.

41 Chen Dong-yuan 陳東原, *Zhongguo funü shenhuoshi* 中國婦女生活史 (Taipei, Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan 商務印書館, 1994), 351-352, 355-356.

Concluding Remarks

It has been commonly accepted that *A History of the Lives of Chinese Women* written by Chen Dong-yuan in 1928 was the most influential book on Chinese women's history. However, it is worth pointing out that prior to its publication, Xu Tian-xiao (1886-1941) had written his *SZNXS* in 1913, which is considered to be "the first systematic investigation on Chinese women's history from ancient times to the early twentieth century." It is a pity that few scholars have paid much attention to this book.

In summary, in the outer form of *SZNXS*, the author chose a new style, which is chapters and new periodization, rather than using dynastic annals-biographical style in writing Chinese history. However, in the context, Xu still put women's facts into dynastic history frame instead of put women in the central to tell "her story." He attached a commentary at the end of every section makes this book a combination of traditional and new historical writing.

From the perspective of Chinese women's movement, either Foreign affairs group, reformists or revolutionists, they were all concerned about the women issue and tried hard to find the weakness of modern China from it⁴². Xu tried to awaken Chinese women by writing Chinese women's history. His ideas on women issues were close to revolutionists who combined anti-Manchurian, fighting for republican and promoting women rights⁴³. He attempted to compile the history of Chinese women for facing the new road in the 20th century and in some points of *SZNXS* he showed his anxiety on national crisis. This is similar to most of revolutionists in the late Qing who appropriated civil rights as women's rights while doing propaganda⁴⁴. However, Xu Tian-xiao, like them, never thinks about gender issues.

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42 Bao Jia-lin *et al.*, Chen San-jing 陳三井 ed., *Jindai Zhongguo funü yundong shi* 近代中國婦女運動史 (Taipei: Jindai zhongguo chubanshe 近代中國出版社, 2000), 67.

43 Bao Jia-lin *et al.*, Chen San-jing ed., *Jindai Zhongguo funü yundong shi*, 69.

44 Ke Hui-ling, "Xingbie yu zhengzhi: jindai zhongguo geming yundong zhong de funü," pp. 39, 67.

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*Discourse of nü ningxing:
Womanhood and female sexuality in 1930s
Shanghai and 2000s Hong Kong*

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Abstract

This article analyses the discourse surrounding female stars (nü mingxing), beginning with a historical example, the Shanghai film industry in the 1930s – “a film-mad town, with newspaper supplements devoted to movies, hordes of film magazines, get-rich-quick entrepreneurs, a star system of its own, scabrous gossip sheets, and glamorous premieres.” There was also a legacy following negative discourse originating from the 1920s that constructed actresses as “degenerate, corrupted, and deceptive ‘starlets’ – amateurs who, like prostitutes, were morally and sexually suspect.” By the 1930s, sound cinema had arrived and some female movie stars were re-evaluated as skilled performers, and good women with “true character” (bense, literally “original color”). The rise of the printed press and photography created an urban mass media that promoted the stars as media darlings, “centered and knowable subjects.” While this new discourse might apply to some performers, the negative stereotypes persisted, such as the “sour” beauties and “bad girls”, exemplified by Bai Guang. Even the “sweet” beauties such as Zhou Xuan often fell short of the ideals of femininity. Coming from a complex background, Zhou made her name as a singer-actress through early work in Shanghai such as Street Angel (Yuan Muzhi, 1937) but in her private life suffered from mental illness and depression, broken marriage, unsuccessful love affairs and bearing illegitimate children, eventually dying in a mental hospital in China in 1957, aged 39, in line with “the combination of glamour and tragedy” that befell many Chinese women stars. Stars are often held up as or thought to be exemplary individuals who bring together the personal and public spheres. Cleavages along gender differences manifest in media scandals, in which private transgression may become public. Female celebrities’ status in the media therefore represented transformative notions of womanhood and femininity, and how they related to the wider cultural contexts. This can be illustrated by a media incident in Hong Kong, a city that dominated Chinese language film production after Shanghai fell to the Japanese in 1937. A scandal broke out in 2008 concerning the illegal distribution over the internet of private photographs of the young star Edison Chen and several other female celebrities and models who were his sexual partners. The photographs might have been stolen when Chen’s computer was taken to a shop for repairs. The scandal prompted media frenzy with one online discussion generating more than 25 million page views and 140000 comments. The careers of the stars suffered as a result but the reaction towards the female “victims” was markedly different from that regarding Chen. This paper examines the continuity and changes between Shanghai, Hong Kong; the 1930s and

2000s, in relation to women's status in the media and the concept of scandal. Firstly, what was the discourse of womanhood and femininity exemplified by ideas about nü mingxing in the media in Shanghai and Hong Kong during these decades? Secondly, how did female stars' image in the media, especially the entertainment press, relate to the changing social and cultural landscape? Thirdly, how do new means of image making such as the internet affect the circulation of the public discourse of gender?

Resumo

Este artigo analisa o discurso em torno de estrelas femininas (nü mingxing), começando com um exemplo histórico: a Indústria Cinematográfica de Shanghai nos anos 1930 – «uma cidade obcecada por cinema, com suplementos de jornais dedicados a filmes, montanhas de revistas cinematográficas, especuladores-do-ganho-fácil, o seu próprio estrelato de artistas, páginas de mexericos escandalosos e estreias cheias de glamour». Existia também um legado deixado pelo discurso negativo que teve origem nos anos 1920 e que apontava as atrizes como «degeneradas, corruptas, e “vedetas” enganosas – amadores que, tal como as prostitutas, eram moral e sexualmente duvidosas». Nos anos 1930 apareceu o cinema sonoro e algumas estrelas de cinema femininas foram reavaliadas como artistas qualificadas, e boas mulheres com «carácter verdadeiro» (bense, literalmente «cor original»). O aumento das publicações de imprensa e fotografia, criaram um grupo de mass media urbano que promovia as estrelas com claro favorecimento, «personalidades de destaque e facilmente reconhecidas». Se por um lado este novo discurso se podia aplicar a algumas das artistas, por outro lado também se mantinham os estereótipos negativos, como beldades «arrogantes» e «meninas mal-comportadas», com o exemplo de Bai Guang. Mesmo as beldades «queridas» como Zhou Xuan, muitas vezes ficavam aquém dos ideais de feminilidade. Saída de um passado complex, Zhou ganhou nome como atriz-cantora nos seus trabalhos em inícios de carreira em Shanghai, como por exemplo Street Angel (Yuan Muzhi, 1937), mas na sua vida privada sofreu de doença mental e depressão, passou por um casamento desfeito, casos amorosos sem sucesso e filhos ilegítimos, acabando por falecer num hospício na China em 1957, aos 39 anos de idade; uma «combinação de glamour e tragédia», que recaiu também sobre muitas outras estrelas femininas Chinesas.

As estrelas são frequentemente tidas ou elevadas ao estatuto de indivíduos exemplares não se distinguindo as esferas pessoal e pública das suas vidas. Clivagens entre os géneros manifestam-se em escândalos mediáticos, que trazem a público transgressões da vida privada. O estatuto das celebridades femininas nos media representava então noções em constante transformação de feminilidade e do que é ser mulher madura, e a forma como estas noções se relacionavam com o contexto cultural. Isto pode ser ilustrado por um incidente mediático em Hong Kong, uma cidade que dominou a produção dos filmes em língua chinesa após a liderança de Shanghai ter sido ultrapassada pelos Japoneses em 1937. Em 2008 rebentou um escândalo relacionado com a distribuição ilegal na internet de fotografias privadas da jovem estrela Edison Chen e de várias outras celebridades femininas e modelos, suas parceiras sexuais. As fotografias terão sido roubadas quando o computador de Chen foi levado a uma loja, para ser reparado. Este escândalo resultou num frenesim mediático que surgiu de uma discussão online que recebeu mais de 25 milhões de visitas e 140 000 comentários. As carreiras das estrelas foram afectadas em consequência desse episódio, mas as reacções dirigidas às «vítimas» femininas foram marcadamente diferentes das que foram dirigidas a Chen.

Esta comunicação trata a continuidade e as mudanças entre Shanghai, Hong Kong, os anos 1930 e os anos 2000, em relação ao estatuto das mulheres nos media e o conceito de escândalo. Primeiro, qual era o discurso acerca de feminilidade e do que é ser mulher madura exemplificado nas ideias acerca das nü mingxing nos media em Shanghai e Hong Kong durante essas décadas? Segundo, como se relacionava a imagem das estrelas femininas nos media, especialmente na imprensa cor-de-rosa, com a mudança geral do panorama social e cultural? Por último, em que medida é que os novos meios de criação de imagem como a internet afectam a circulação da discurso público de género?

Discourse of *nü ningxing*: Womanhood and female sexuality in 1930s Shanghai and 2000s Hong Kong

Leung Wing-Fai

Nü Mingxing

The discourses surrounding female stars' status in the media illustrate the transformative notions of womanhood and femininity, and how they relate to the wider cultural contexts, as they are often held up as or thought to be exemplary individuals who bring together the personal and public spheres. John Ellis (542) notes, "Stars have a soldering function: they hold the news and the personal together by being both public and intimate, by being news only in so far as they are persons". Since stardom relies on ideas around individuality in society and their manifestation in public (such as in media reportage), scandals are manifested incongruence between the private and public lives. Ari Adut for instance suggests that scandals arise when private transgression becomes public (52). Richard Dyer's discussion of stardom (8) starts from the premise that stars are related to ideology that promotes a particular account of human individuality based on a unique essence. Further, these unique individuals are in command of their lives, and stars embody this account of individuality (Lovell 260); paradoxically, stars exemplify the contingent nature of individual identities in contemporary society as their "selves" are represented in public and are in constant flux:

Stars, after all, are always inescapable people in public. If the magic, with many stars, is that they seem to be their private selves in public, still they can also be about the business of being in public, the way in which the public self is endlessly produced and remade in representation (Dyer 14).

Stars are people who are frequently in the public eye and whose "authentic" selves are performed in public. Their representations change all the time, whether as onscreen characters or figures in entertainment news and adverti-

sing. The result of these contradictory demands is that the “persona is elastic rather than plastic, closer to a procedure for surviving, a heuristic of the self, than an essence” (King 60).

Existing studies of stardom are based mostly on American culture where the “self seems to be characterized by individualism” while “the traditional Chinese self, on the other hand, appears to be relatively more orientated towards the significant others” (Chu 257, 258). The notion of the relational self that is central in traditional Chinese culture has been written about widely (Blowers; Leung 49-73; Sun 1989; Tam 57; Tu), particularly in how it should contribute to a strong collective view of society (Tam 58):

[The] Confucian view reveals a strong sense of collectivism [...] the self is defined mainly as a relational role-self, but not as an independent individual self. The realization of the self lies in the realization of one’s role, which is culturally prescribed.

I agree with Hsu that human beings exist somewhere between individual, social and cultural orientations (27) and “the interpersonal concept *jen* is more useful as a basis for understanding human behaviour with reference to social and cultural stability and change than the individualistic concept of personality” (Hsu 33)¹. The issue is not simply about the determination of the exclusive existence of traditional Chinese ethics or western individualism but how and to what extent social and cultural changes might have influenced the discourse of the self. In this paper, I will examine the discourse of the self in the case of media stardom and argue that female stars were expected to fulfil their relational roles in their private lives, and it was the consistency between the public and private realms that formed the basis of authenticity. Female stars continued to be expected to be “authentic” in public, and this authenticity could only be discerned through media representations. Stars thereby demonstrated the struggle for individuality within and against the relational or contextual ideas of the self. This paper analyses the discourses surrounding female stars (*nü mingxing*), examining the continuity and changes between Shanghai, Hong Kong; the 1930s and 2000s, paying particular attention to the conceptions of individuality,

1 The writer uses Wade-Giles system of romanisation. *Jen* is *ren* in *hanyu pinyin*. The possible definitions of *ren* are (1) “human being”, “man”, “person”, “people”; (2) “personality”, “character”; (3) “everybody”, “each”, “all”; (4) “benevolence”, “kind heartedness”, “humanity”. See *A Chinese-English Dictionary* published by Beijing College of Foreign Languages. This explains Hsu’s comment that individuals are understood in relation to their societal and communal roles.

authenticity and women's relational roles. Firstly, what were the discourses of womanhood and femininity exemplified by the media representations of *nü mingxing* in Shanghai and Hong Kong during these decades? How did cleavages along gender differences manifest in media scandals? Secondly, how did these discourses about female stars in the media, especially the entertainment press, relate to the changing social and cultural landscape? Thirdly, how did new means of image making such as the internet affect the circulation of the public discourse of gender?

Stars and Femininity in Shanghai of the 1930s

Shanghai in the 1930s has been described as “a film-mad town, with newspaper supplements devoted to movies, hordes of film magazines, get-rich-quick entrepreneurs, a star system of its own, scabrous gossip sheets, and glamorous premieres” (Elley 127). Many popular publications perpetuated “an entire imaginary of urban modernity by printing more and more photos of modern Shanghai” (Lee 52) and stars were part of the discourse of modernity given their association with consumer culture and western lifestyle. In 1930s urban China, the movie stars became what Leo Lowenthal calls “idols of consumption”, embodying modern life, with its glamour and excitement, as well as its vices and hedonism (cited in Fu 13). However, there was a long tradition of prejudice towards *xizi* (entertainers) in Chinese society, and film stars were no exception, most of whom having come from humble backgrounds; they became famous and represented glamour but continued to have no real social status. “In compensation, they expressed their ambition through conspicuously displaying their pursuit of leisure and pleasure. Their public lives were thus invariably linked to consumerism, while their private romances (with the rich and famous or scandalous) became the stuff of popular consumption (in gossip columns)” (Fu 13).

There was also a legacy of negative discourse originating from the 1920s that constructed actresses as “degenerate, corrupted, and deceptive ‘starlets’ – amateurs who, like prostitutes, were morally and sexually suspect” (Chang 129)². By the 1930s, sound cinema had arrived and some female movie stars

2 See also Andrew D. Field, “Selling Souls in Sin City: Shanghai Singing and Dancing Hostesses in Print, Film, and Politics, 1920-49,” *Cinema and Urban Culture in Shanghai, 1922-1943*, ed. Zhang Yingjin. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1999. The fascination for the world of high class courtesans in Shanghai could be seen in literature, such as Bangqing Han, *The Sing-Song Girls of Shanghai*, trans. Eileen Chang and Eva Hung. New York: Columbia University Press, 1893/2005.

were re-evaluated as skilled performers, and good women with “true character” (*bense*, literally “original colour”) (Chang 1999). The rise of the printed press and photography created an urban mass media that promoted the stars as media darlings, “centered and knowable subjects” (Chang 152)³. Female stars therefore were expected to be modern centred subjects whose professional lives should reflect their *bense*, the media representation of authenticity being through the consistency between the private and the public, and media scandals were usually of their private, moral and social transgressions.

For female stars, their authenticity was additionally judged against prevailing gender discourses. While the new “positive” media discourse of the 1930s surrounding *nü mingxing* might apply to some performers, the negative stereotypes persisted, such as the “sour” beauties and “bad girls”, exemplified by Bai Guang (Reynaud). Even the “sweet” beauties such as Zhou Xuan often fell short of the ideals of femininity, which were connected to women’s traditional, relational roles. I shall examine the scandals surrounding two performers, Ruan Lingyu and Zhou Xuan, and argue that it was their failure to conform to the ideals of femininity, especially the normative heterosexual monogamy, which brought them to the public as objects of scandal in the media. Despite their skills and status as examples of capitalist success, their *bense* was shown to contradict their expected public image as centred modern subjects.

The power of the gossip press was reflected by “the New Woman Incident”; Ruan Lingyu committed suicide in 1935 at the age of 25, forced by scandals surrounding her. Her last film was *New Woman* (*Xin Nüxing*, Cai Chusheng, 1935) in which she played a writer who refuses to prostitute herself when her child falls ill; she becomes the victim of malicious gossip when her child dies, all of which drives her to commit suicide. *New Woman* was inspired by actual events, namely the suicide of a female star Ai Xia (Reynaud 25). As *New Woman* attacked the tabloid press, it in turn hounded Ruan about her personal relationships.

The story was adapted by the director Hou Hsiao Hsien as *Flowers of Shanghai* (1998). The translator Eva Hung notes that, “Leading courtesans in Shanghai were minor celebrities and trend-setters in fashion” (541). See also Gail Hershatter, “Modernizing Sex, Sexing Modernity: Prostitution in Early-Twentieth-Century Shanghai,” *Chinese Femininities, Chinese Masculinities: A Reader*, eds. Susan Brownell and Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom. Berkeley, L.A. & London: University of California Press, 2002.

3 The modern subject occupies positions in relation to the discursive formations of identities, which are not fixed. See Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony & Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*. London & New York: Verso, 1985: 115.

Ruan's first common law husband Zhang Damin was the son of the family her mother worked for as a servant. Zhang was a gambler, and the star often had to pay his debts. After her professional life as an actress began to succeed, Zhang extorted money from her through threats of scandal. In 1933 Ruan agreed to pay Zhang \$100 a month for two years in order to "divorce" him. She then met and started to co-habit with a tea merchant Tang Jishan, a relationship that was reported by the gossip press. Zhang continued to demand money from Ruan, finally leading to a court case against Tang and the actress for adultery. By this time, the star was making *New Woman* and her last film *National Style* (*Guo Feng*, Luo Mingyou), and exhausted from filming. Ruan already suffered from depression and had attempted suicide. It was most likely that she took her own life because of the reports in the tabloids, Tang's violent outbursts and the fear of humiliation in court.

Christian Henriot claims that high-class courtesans in Shanghai often committed suicide to prove their honesty, so Ruan's suicide might have come from her identifying with the prostitutes she played onscreen (cit. in Meyer 67). Ruan's suicide note contained the words, "Gossip is a frightening thing" (*Renyan kewe*), which prompted intense condemnation of the power of the tabloid press including a rebuke from Lu Xun, a writer closely related to the 1919 May Fourth Movement (Harris), who criticised the newspapers for the scandals against a "helpless" celebrity (Meyer 65). Berenice Reynaud (1993) suggests that the combination of glamour and tragedy was a longstanding feature of Chinese female stardom; Ruan's "failure" at heterosexual monogamy was seized upon as transgression that was worthy news for the gossip columns, despite reverence for the actress' professional work. The combination of glamour and tragedy stems from female stars' position in society that is caught in the overlapping space between patriarchal and capitalist ideologies. They are the success model of capitalist dream, but yet are expected to conform to the patriarchal order. Ruan's death could be argued to be an example of the oppression of feudal and patriarchal society; her public assertion of modern subjectivity was exposed by the media as inconsistent with her private life. The new discourse in 1930s Shanghai of the skilled, centred and morally "pure" woman was therefore a fragile one.

Female stars further symbolised the vulnerability of the modern subject in 1930s Shanghai as women were often treated as metaphor for a nation in literature and films (McClintock; Liu). Ruan's "life and work symbolized the social currents of Shanghai and the tragedy of China during its long downfall" (Meyer back cover). Ruan starred in many films for Lianhua Film Company, a popular studio in the early 1930s that hired May Fourth writers and artists and

produced films about social problems of the time. For instance, she was one of the leads of *Three Modern Women* (*Sange Modeng Nüxing*, Bu Wancang) that was supposedly the first “left-wing movie”. The actress was caught between the progressive politics of the intellectuals and filmmakers around her, and a press that reflected the continuous discourse of ideal femininity as wife and mother within marriage, roles which Ruan and my second case, Zhou Xuan, both failed to fulfil in their personal lives.

Zhou Xuan made her name as a singer-actress through early work in Shanghai such as *Street Angel* (*Malu Tianshi*, Yuan Muzhi) but in her private life suffered from mental illness and depression, broken marriage, unsuccessful love affairs and bearing illegitimate children, eventually dying aged 39 in a mental hospital in China in 1957, in line with “the combination of glamour and tragedy” (Reynaud) that befell many Chinese women stars. Zhou came from a complex background (Stock). She was sold by her opium-addicted uncle aged three, and subsequently, the young girl was “adopted” more than once, narrowly escaping prostitution when she was apprenticed to the *Mingyue* (Bright Moon) Song and Dance Troupe based at Shanghai’s notorious Great World entertainment centre. Her graduation from the troupe coincided with the Japanese military action in Shanghai in 1932, and the rise of patriotic films, many of which featured songs. Zhou became known as “Golden Throat”, acted in over 40 films and recorded more than 100 songs. Her relationship and marriage to Yan Hua became headlines in the 1930s and 1940s press. They met while both at *Mingyue*; Yan was nine years older than Zhou Xuan, a composer and singer, and the two performed together after leaving the troupe. Their relationship began when Zhou was still a teenager and they became a “celebrity couple” when they married in 1938.

However, the media attention on the couple was partly responsible for their subsequent separation and divorce, as the press reported rumours of Zhou’s relationships with several male co-stars, to which Yan responded with jealousy and even violence. The marriage lasted only three years, and they divorced in 1941 in Shanghai during the Orphan Island period⁴. She moved to Hong Kong after the Second World War, where she met a silk merchant Zhu Haide. Zhou gave birth to their son, Zhou Wen, but Zhu left the star after exploiting her for money. The star was reported to be heartbroken and soon returned to Shanghai.

4 When Japanese army invaded Shanghai in 1937, all studios but Xinhua closed down and many filmmakers and actors went to Hong Kong. Some isolated filmmaking activities were possible only within the foreign concessions, hence the term “Orphan Island”. The period ended with the beginning of Second World War (1941) and Japan’s full occupation of Shanghai.

In 1950, she played the lead role in *Dove of Peace* (*Heping Ge*), and during the filming began a relationship with the film's art director, Tang Di. The two planned to marry but Tang was imprisoned for deception and Zhou was left pregnant again. She suffered a nervous breakdown, and the film was never finished. Zhou Xuan spent the rest of her life in and out of mental institutions, and died of encephalitis in Shanghai, 22 September 1957. Zhou Wen and his half-brother Zhou Wei were brought up by the star's friend Huang Zhongying although Zhou Wei would take Huang to court later for exploiting Zhou Xuan's estate.

Ruan Lingyu seemed to empathise and embody the tragic figures she played to the extent that she suffered emotionally and killed herself; her suicide at the time was embraced by intellectuals and left-wing filmmakers as symbolic of the ills of feudal China and the gossip press. Female stars in 1930s Shanghai were expected to embody the ideals of femininity and the specificity of the media sphere, being constrained within the limits of capitalist and gender discourses. These female stars' heuristic selves explain the seeming contradiction between their powerful social positions by virtue of relative wealth and fame and their vulnerability to exploitation by men, and the capitalist media sphere. Stars achieved material success, and sometimes, like Ruan and Zhou, were recognised for their performance skills and success as modern subjects. The press celebrated their beauty and skills, but yet hounded them when they failed as wives and mothers; these private transgressions became the material for public scandals, exposing the stars to be inconsistent as centred and knowable subjects. Their personal failure at the ideal of heterosexual monogamy, which was discursively the natural state of femininity, became the subject of media attention, often contributing to an end to their career (and in both the stars' cases, the end of their lives).

From Shanghai to Hong Kong

Shanghai and Hong Kong had been the epicentres of Chinese language filmmaking at different times, with a historical connection between the two cities from 1935 to 1950 (Fu). Under the shadow of a war with Japan in the late 1930s, Shanghai film directors, actors and actresses started to migrate to Hong Kong where many Cantonese films had been produced after the coming of sound cinema in 1933. Shanghai émigré and locally based directors collaborated to make patriotic national defense movies until 1941 when the city also fell under the control of the Japanese army (Teo 8-27; Zhang 89-92). After the Second World War and the Communist Revolution, the centre of commer-

cial Chinese film-making decidedly shifted to Hong Kong. Since then, the city was central in producing Chinese language cinema until the mid-1990s when the increasing cultural power of mainland China and the rise of Korea and Taiwan as producers of pop culture decentred Hong Kong's position in the Asian and global media landscape. Hong Kong therefore has produced many celebrities since the 1940s from Cantonese opera *laoguan*, Mandarin musical singer/actors to the 1970s and 1980s television-trained multi-media pop and film stars, martial arts global icons, and waves of teen idols. Within the scope of this paper, I focus on the relationship between media scandals and the press that played an important part in the circulation of stardom in recent years. I analyse the gender discourse as illustrated by the media exposure of the clashes between the public and private realms, using a recent case from the late 2000s.

In the 1970s entertainment news in Hong Kong focused on television stars and local films though there was no specialist supplement in the main daily papers (阮記宏 Ruan). For instance the daily newspaper *Ming Pao* had separate columns on opera, cinema and television news. Entertainment journalists had good relationships with stars to the extent that they might construct "news" collaboratively, by incorporating promotional materials from television stations, record and film companies (阮記宏 Ruan 125). Newspaper publication had since become increasingly market driven and editorial content went into decline due to ownership by wealthy profit-seeking investors. The watershed came in 1995 when a local business tycoon Jimmy Lai established *Apple Daily*, a mass market newspaper that produced at least three pages of entertainment coverage. *Apple* initiated the trend of mainly image-based features, short and simple news items with colourful design and graphic layout, and an abundant availability of photographs, which prevailed over editorial and other written content. It is "well known for its brazen, sensational news coverage ... legitimate political and social topics have been supplanted ... by sex, sensational crimes, the rise and fall of celebrities, scandalous paparazzi investigations, rumors, and even sham news" (Lo 29). *Oriental Daily* and *Sing Pao* soon followed and even increased their entertainment content in order to compete. *Apple* also started a series of price wars in the first few years that led to the closure of several rival publications.

The media environment in Hong Kong had transformed since the mid-1990s, especially the decrease in popularity of traditional media, pop music, film and television, while newspaper and magazine publications underwent radical change. The means to circulate news about stars proliferated, and the printed press became a major avenue for the circulation of stars' images, direc-

tly impacting on the production and consumption of stardom. The New Woman Incident in the 1930s indicated the longstanding practices of tabloid journalism; entertainment press in Hong Kong had come to dominance due to the competitive, crowded field of magazine and newspaper publication since the mid-1990s, and paparazzi journalism had become the prevailing practice. By 2000, *Apple* published eight pages of entertainment news while most of the high circulation newspapers employed 50-80 journalists/paparazzi to follow the stars. In 2004, 32 per cent of the population in Hong Kong read weekly magazines that were dominated by infotainment and entertainment (So). The entertainment press aimed to discover sensational stories, scandals, and publish revealing photographs of the stars when they were caught unawares, often damaging their “official” image (阮記宏 Ruan). In 1991 a court hearing became known as the “Miss ABC” case that “revealed an active trade between pimps pressuring hopeful starlets and wealthy customers” (Lilley 269). The newspapers were saturated with details of the evidence given by five actresses and beauty contestants who testified against businessman Chin Chi-ming for blackmailing them for sex. Rozanna Lilley (270-271) criticises the press coverage of the case as evidence of double standards towards women and voyeurism. In November 2002 the magazine *Eastweek* published a topless photograph of a star taken when she was kidnapped many years ago. The printed press, alongside other stars, united in condemning the magazine.

The media’s fascination with sex scandals was epitomised in an incident in Hong Kong in 2008. The scandal broke out concerning the illegal distribution over the internet of private photographs of the young star Edison Chen and several other female celebrities and models who were his sexual partners. The photographs might have been stolen when Chen’s computer was taken to a shop for repairs. The scandal prompted media frenzy with one online discussion generating more than 25 million page views and 140000 comments (Watts). The careers of the stars suffered as a result but the reaction towards the female “victims”, as they were known, was markedly different from that regarding Chen (*Eastweek Entertainment Editorial* 7 March 2009). Some of the female stars’ careers effectively ended.

The incident was quickly followed by the singer-actor Chen publicly apologising to the female victims on 21 February 2008 and announcing that he would be away from the Hong Kong entertainment world “indefinitely”. Part of his statement during the press conference stressed the point that stars might be thought of as exemplary individuals (though many would fail) (Chen): “I know young people in Hong Kong look up to many figures in our society. And in this regard, I have failed. I failed as a role model [...] To all the young people in our

community, let this be a lesson for you all. This is not an example to be set for you”.

There was much criticism against both Chen and the female stars though the public remained fascinated. The subsequent trial in February 2009 had to take place in Chen’s native Canada as he received death threats in Hong Kong. Much of the outrage was directed at the “disgusting images” and there was public expectation of the government to stop the circulation of them. While Edison Chen was described as *jiannan*, vulgar man, the responses to the female victims were diverse, and often contradictory depending on how they managed their public appearance. Although they were all seen to be exploited by Edison Chen, the more they appeared as authentic (that is, consistent in their private and public lives) and conforming to the family ideal, the more positive the public seemed to respond to them. One of the stars involved, Bobo Chan, had already left the entertainment industry by the time the photographs were exposed. She was also engaged to be married, with the ceremony postponed due to the scandal. Being looked after by her new fiancé (*zhaoqi*) seemed to earn her sympathy. Another of the celebrities, Rachel Ngan, left modelling, and became an undergraduate law student at the City University; she received relatively little negative response in the media and internet discussion forums because she was seen to live a “healthy” life.

The female stars and models involved also included singer-actresses Gillian Chung (of the girl band Twins) and Cecilia Cheung. When the scandal broke, Chung’s appearance in public and a television programme generated hundreds of complaints to TELA (Television and Entertainment Licensing Authority). The negative response to her appeared to relate to her previous *yunü* image (“virginal young woman”). Derogatory terms commonly used in sexual innuendos were directed at Chung by the fans. She was accused of hypocrisy because she publicly spoke about pre-marital sex at the same time when she was photographed with or by Chen. Chung eventually waited a full year before returning to film and advertising. Cecilia Cheung married in 2006 and became a mother in 2007, so she by comparison seemed to receive much support by the opinions expressed on internet forums and the printed press. She repeatedly talked about how her family had supported her, and she would repent, write a diary every-day in order to show her son when he grew up. Her husband is actor-singer Nicholas Tse, whose parents are also well known actors Patrick Tse and Deborah. Public opinion also appeared positive after she was interviewed on a cable channel in February 2009 during which she became distraught several times, and accused Chen of hypocrisy, and therefore showing herself in a positive light.

The media attention focused on how the female victims' male partners responded; those remained supported by families and boyfriends/husbands and therefore stayed within the realm of heterosexual monogamy were portrayed as deserving victims by the media discourse. These stars of the 2000s continued to be similarly treated in the media as their Shanghai counterparts in several ways. The media scandal was a result of a breakdown between the public/private interface. No matter how successful their professional life was, these women were not viewed by the media discourse and debates by the public forums on the net as centred and knowable subjects in their own right. Instead they continued to be objects (of desire) whose relationships with their families and male partners, and with a particularly powerful man in this case, defined their identity. In particular, the way they were assessed by the media (including the press, internet and other inter-media commentaries) depended on whether they failed at the heterosexual family ideal; those who were supported by these personal relations appeared authentic and therefore the incident was an aberration and exploitation by the vulgar, sex-mad Chen.

Illustrated by the recent media scandal in Hong Kong, women in public and their authenticity continued to be judged by their relational roles and whether they succeeded in maintaining these private roles. Although female stars were expected to be "true" (to show their *bense*) in public, this true personality could only be discerned through media representations. In the case of the photo scandal, sex outside of marriage was not the central issue but it was the consistency between the public and private realms that mattered. Between Shanghai of the 1930s and Hong Kong of 2000s, the continuation of heterosexual monogamy as the feminine ideal overshadowed the changes in the social, cultural and political contexts of the two epochs and the two metropolises.

New Media and Old Discourse

My third research question asks how new means of image making such as the internet affect the circulation of the public discourse of gender. Once the Edison Chen scandal broke out, the online discussion soon turned to a debate about the public and private lives of the celebrities involved, but it also spurred a facet of public discourse which advanced the condemnation that the press in Shanghai in the 1930s received, namely a discussion about internet use, freedom of speech and government intervention. Censorship and police crackdown were aggressive in Hong Kong and China though there was no stopping of the images appearing or the public discussion; a discussion thread on the Tianya

Bulletin board alone attracted 25.8m views (Watts). As the Hong Kong police tried to crack down on the uploading of new photographs, the online discussion criticised their perceived heavy-handed approach. While the internet helped to circulate the images, and paradoxically condemned the scandalous contents, the Tianya site suggested that “mass voyeurism” might equate with democracy (Watts):

One poster said it proved mainland-style politics are better than the democracy of Hong Kong and UK, “Britain has democracy but the biggest selling newspapers there are tabloids, which report all the private matters of the royal family. The US has democracy, but its internet is filled with the Paris Hilton sex video. We have more democracy than Hong Kong”.

The internet was therefore full of contradictory claims; the scandal became a contested site for discussion of the power of the masses. Nonetheless, both mainland Chinese and Hong Kong posters agreed that the women stars were “fair game” for the masses’ attention while the government’s control over the internet in China was proffered as better than the free-for-all democracy in Hong Kong and the west. The public discourse surrounding female stars therefore was once again the metaphor for the (quasi-)nation. In effect, in both China and Hong Kong the images were circulated and consumed freely, being shared through blogs, Flickr, emails and memory devices; the images were also circulated further afield in the USA and Australia. There was little space for the stars to assert consistency between the private and public when the latter was now literally open to millions. If scandal symbolises the breakdown between the public and personal lives of these stars, then this recent case demonstrates that literally the public (the people) are now part of the mediating process, the continuity between the present and the past being that both the media and the masses circulated the scandal while simultaneously condemned it.

My discussion of The New Woman Incident in the 1930s indicates the longstanding practices of tabloid journalism. In between the two time periods and metropolises under discussion, the rise and spread of the internet provided a forum in which the public, not only intellectuals, was able to comment on media power and debate press freedom, stars’ private lives and discourse surrounding femininity as national concerns. At the same time, the speed and distance media discourse travelled (especially through the internet) were unprecedented in the 2000s. The Edison Chen scandal, often only a footnote in western media, spread widely among Chinese diasporas. Millions of Chinese

had no way of knowing or meeting each other but they nevertheless shared a mediated space and time as an imagined community (Anderson). Though there was widespread condemnation of Edison Chen, the group of female “victims” nonetheless bore the burden of being the symbols for the imaginary nation again. Their authenticity continued to be measured against consistency between the private and the public, and whether they fulfilled women’s relational role in the frame of heterosexual monogamy.

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*Podem a História Económica e a Economia
Política Contribuir para a Montagem
do Quebra-Cabeça Chinês?*

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Abstract

In 2008, the famous historian Giovanni Arrighi wrote a book named “Adam Smith in Beijing”. It was an attempt to go back to Smith’s fundamental ideas on the market economy. Arrighi was able not only to come up with a new perspective on China’s development path, but to present a refreshing analysis on Smith’s theoretical assumptions.

The idea of this paper is to do the same “exercise” with Marx, Keynes and Schumpeter “in China”. In other words, it seeks to look at the Chinese economy, trying to check out to what extent Smith, Mark, Keynes and Schumpeter would contribute to grasp some of the main features of this quite peculiar, dynamic and ever changing economic development path.

However, it is not reasonable to just pile up these very different perspectives, what would lead to a sort of “easy eclecticism”. Acknowledging that, the paper, at the end, attempts to discuss the possible complementarities and contradictions among these contrasting views. If, on the one hand, each of them may stress some dimensions of the Chinese development path, the main theoretical assumptions of these schools cannot be integrated without frictions. It’s our aim, then, to point out that China is made out of different sub-economies, using the triadic structure of the economic life as conceptualized by Fernand Braudel. Furthermore, the fact that each school may shed some light on China’s economic development path seems to show that it is still not stabilized, opening room for distinct alternatives.

Resumo

Parte este artigo da seguinte premissa: a ascensão da economia chinesa – e de suas várias regiões, setores econômicos e frações de mercado, em constante conflito e interação, os quais reverberam sobre o território da economia capitalista global – aparece como um fértil campo para uma revisão crítica das várias vertentes da economia política, e quem sabe até um debate entre estas, para além das abstrações estéreis.

Ao invés de tentar converter à força o real variegado - no nosso caso, a economia, ou melhor, as várias economias chinesas - a princípios supostamente universais, até porque ele reage à maneira confuciana; parece-nos mais adequado aprender com sua resistência, e alargar as hipóteses e aplicações conceituais, pois o que está em jogo, em última instância, é a nova feição da economia global.

Trata-se ainda de uma ótima oportunidade para demonstrar a contribuição de historiadores não da economia, mas para além da economia – como no caso de Braudel, mas também de Wallerstein e Arrighi –, revelando a natureza multifacetada dos mercados no contexto de uma economia-mundo capitalista em constante mutação, mas que preserva certos princípios norteadores.

O que segue tem, pois, o formato de notas de leitura, ou melhor, de um quebra-cabeça ainda repleto de lacunas e pontos de interrogação.

O texto encontra-se organizado da seguinte forma. Na primeira parte, discute-se a complexa interação entre capitalismo e mercado, de modo a precisar estes conceitos, situando-os nos seus devidos contextos históricos. A segunda parte procura realizar um debate entre as várias abordagens que se detiveram a explicar porque o “capitalismo não se desenvolveu na China” ao longo dos séculos XVIII e XIX. A terceira parte realiza um confronto entre duas interpretações smithianas – Arrighi (2007) x Huang (2008) - acerca do desenvolvimento recente da economia chinesa, partindo inclusive dos escritos do filósofo escocês acerca da China sua contemporânea. A quarta parte do texto questiona se não haveria espaço para Marx, Keynes e Schumpeter na tentativa de elucidar o cenário econômico da China pós-1978. Proceda-se então a um rápido apanhado das reformas econômicas iniciadas por Deng Xiaoping, de modo a confrontar as interpretações destas várias tradições do pensamento econômico. Nas considerações finais, pretende-se apontar como este debate teórico pode se mostrar relevante de modo a ressaltar as contradições e os impasses vividos pela(s) economia(s) chinesa(s), fugindo das generalizações e da pretensa universalidade dos conceitos da teoria econômica.

Podem a História Económica e a Economia Política Contribuir para a Montagem do Quebra-Cabeça Chinês?

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Our Celestial Empire possesses all things in prolific abundance and lacks no product within its own borders. There was therefore no need to import the manufactures of outside barbarians in exchange for our own produce. But as the tea, silk and porcelain which the Celestial Empire produces are absolute necessities to European nations and to yourselves, we have permitted, as a signal mark of favour, that foreign honges should be established at Canton, so that your wants might be supplied and your country thus participate in our beneficence.

Carta do Imperador Qianlong para o Rei George III, 1793, apud Chanda, 35.

Introdução

Este artigo não pretende destrinçar a economia chinesa em toda a sua complexidade. Como afirma Huang, «a economia chinesa é tão complicada que aquilo que parece óbvio e certo na superfície, deixa de sê-lo assim que se começa a escavar os detalhes» (2).

A maior dificuldade para se compreender a economia chinesa, entretanto, não reside tanto na ausência de informações ou de conhecimento sobre a forma de operacionalização das empresas, instituições e do Estado – tarefa nada fácil, diga-se de passagem –, mas na insuficiência das ferramentas conceituais disponíveis para permitir com que se ingresse, sem preconceitos e principismos, neste universo socioeconómico bastante peculiar.

Daí a tentativa do presente texto: lançar hipóteses e tecer conjecturas sobre a transformação chinesa recente, partindo de um debate no seio da história económica e das várias tradições da economia política. Desta forma, a China aparece aqui como o palco onde as várias abordagens teóricas no seio da econo-

mia política são forçadas a um diálogo. Pode a China auxiliá-las à medida que exige que alguns de seus pressupostos sejam revistos?

Qualquer tentativa de navegação pelo universo da economia chinesa por um não sinólogo, e ademais não-filiado de maneira cega a algum cânone teórico da teoria económica, leva inevitavelmente a uma sucessão de tempestades num mar bravio rodeado por um deserto de certezas. Isto se deve ao facto de que a maioria dos textos de autores ocidentais parte de premissas demasiado rígidas, como se a China devesse se conformar aos seus modelos. Por outro lado, os economistas e historiadores chineses pensam à sua maneira, muitas vezes inclusive se referem a um «modelo chinês», geralmente apodado de «socialismo com características chinesas», sem se preocuparem em traduzir as suas hipóteses de modo a permitir um diálogo com a rica tradição ocidental consubstanciada nos terrenos da história económica e da economia política.

Para além da distância entre os pensadores chineses e ocidentais – uns olhando para a China a partir de si mesma e nos seus contactos com o mundo, outros procurando inserir a China no sentido global da história, como sugere Faure (2) – insistimos que o nó do desentendimento se situa no terreno das categorias conceituais. O que se entende por capitalismo, mercado e socialismo em cada universo cultural e ideológico? Pode a China contribuir para que precisemos os termos do debate contemporâneo, combatendo o viés eurocêntrico, mas sem que tenhamos que adoptar a perspectiva dos estudiosos chineses? Esta é a perspectiva do presente trabalho.

Estimulado pelo brilhante estudo de Arrighi, *Adam Smith em Pequim*, comecei a conjecturar se talvez não necessitássemos de acrescentar Marx, Schumpeter e Keynes – além de uma forte dose de conhecimento de filósofos e pensadores chineses (do qual não disponho, diga-se de passagem!) – caso tivéssemos a pretensão de montar o quebra-cabeça da transformação económica vivida por este país nos últimos trinta anos. Obviamente que tal empreitada se faz impossível no escopo deste artigo. Exigiria um grupo de pesquisa e um projecto de longo prazo, de maior envergadura.

Parte este artigo da seguinte premissa: a ascensão da economia chinesa – e de suas várias regiões, sectores económicos e fracções de mercado, em constante conflito e interacção, os quais reverberam sobre o território da economia capitalista global – aparece como um fértil campo para uma revisão crítica das várias vertentes da economia política, e quem sabe até um debate entre estas, para além das abstrações estéreis.

Ao invés de tentar converter à força o real variegado – no nosso caso, a economia, ou melhor, as várias economias chinesas – a princípios supostamente universais, até porque ele reage à maneira confuciana; parece-nos mais ade-

quando aprender com sua resistência, e alargar as hipóteses e aplicações conceituais, pois o que está em jogo, em última instância, é a nova feição da economia global. Trata-se ainda de uma óptima oportunidade para demonstrar a contribuição de historiadores não da economia, mas para além da economia – como no caso de Braudel, mas também de Wallerstein, Arrighi e Harvey –, revelando a natureza multifacetada dos mercados no contexto de uma economia-mundo capitalista em constante mutação, mas que preserva certos princípios norteadores. O que segue tem, pois, o formato de notas de leitura, ou melhor, de um quebra-cabeça ainda repleto de lacunas e pontos de interrogação.

O texto encontra-se organizado da seguinte forma. Na primeira parte, discute-se a complexa interacção entre capitalismo e mercado, de modo a precisar estes conceitos, situando-os nos seus devidos contextos históricos. A segunda parte procura realizar um debate entre as várias abordagens que se detiveram a explicar porque o “capitalismo não se desenvolveu na China” ao longo dos séculos XVIII e XIX. A terceira parte realiza um confronto entre duas interpretações smithianas recentes – Arrighi [*Adam Smith in Beijing (ASIB)*] x Huang [*Capitalism with Chinese Characteristics (CWCC)*] – acerca do desenvolvimento recente da economia chinesa, além de trazer à luz a concepção do filósofo escocês acerca da China sua contemporânea. A quarta parte do texto questiona se não haveria espaço para Marx, Keynes e Schumpeter na tentativa de elucidar o cenário económico da China pós-1978. Proceda-se então a um rápido apanhado das reformas económicas iniciadas por Deng Xiaoping, de modo a confrontar estas interpretações oriundas das várias tradições do pensamento económico. Ao final do texto, pretende-se apontar como este debate teórico pode se mostrar relevante de modo a ressaltar as contradições e os impasses vividos pela(s) economia(s) chinesa(s), fugindo das generalizações e da pretensa universalidade dos conceitos da teoria económica.

Capitalismo e Mercado: uma Complexa Interação

A teoria económica convencional sempre rejeitou o termo capitalismo. Segundo o economista John Kenneth Galbraith, ao longo do século XX, teriam optado os representantes dessa corrente pela insossa denominação de «sistema de mercado».

Para Galbraith (18-23), a substituição se justificava, pois na Europa capitalismo denotava conflito de classes, enquanto nos Estados Unidos este termo possuía a conotação de monopólio. A mudança terminológica agia como uma fraude não de todo inocente. Ao invés de poder económico e de interesses

sociais em confronto, existiria tão-somente o mercado impessoal, auto-regulável e neutro.

O historiador Maurice Dobb, em seu estudo clássico originalmente publicado em 1945, ressentia-se de que o termo «capitalismo» seja usado de forma tão variada, não tendo prevalecido «qualquer medida comum de acordo quando ao seu uso» (11-14). Alguns historiadores inclusive se absteriam de utilizar o conceito face à sua indeterminação conceitual.

Dobb sustenta, entretanto, a necessidade de reconhecer o capitalismo enquanto categoria histórica. Mas o problema não pára por aí, já que são várias as periodizações, assim como as hipóteses acerca do «início do capitalismo», na medida em que modos diferentes de interpretação levam a «histórias causais-genéticas» também distintas.

Seguindo à risca a interpretação marxista, Dobb (18-22) aponta, que ao invés do lucro como motor da actividade económica ou do investimento aquisitivo da moeda, o que caracteriza o capitalismo é a sua relação de produção típica, que por sua vez ancorada numa nova forma de diferenciação social.

Neste sentido, para Dobb (25, 30-32), o percurso do capitalismo como sistema socioeconómico pode ser traçado a partir de distintas etapas de seu desenvolvimento histórico. Teria este sistema começado a desabrochar na segunda metade do século XVI e início do século XVII, quando «começou a penetrar na esfera da produção em escala considerável». Entretanto, tratava-se ainda de um «capitalismo adolescente», já que o *putting-out system* ainda predominava e a burguesia ainda não aparecia como detentora do poder político. Seria apenas com a Revolução Industrial que poderíamos localizar «as dores do parto do capitalismo moderno».

A interpretação de Dobb acabaria se firmando como uma síntese aceitável da evolução do capitalismo em termos históricos segundo o prisma marxista. O seu principal diferencial em relação à teoria convencional é de que esta se presta a analisar qualquer sociedade de trocas, capitalista ou não, transformando o mercado numa esfera autónoma e isolada das relações sociais. Um conjunto de relações abstractas seria impingido sobre sociedades as mais distintas possíveis. Não existiria qualquer noção de transformação das estruturas e toda e qualquer sociedade deveria e poderia caminhar rumo ao sistema de mercado, codinome da livre iniciativa.

A perspectiva de Braudel reconhece o esforço de Marx e da interpretação de Dobb, mas a considera demasiado esquemática e, no limite, a-histórica. Ou melhor, captariam apenas um dos tempos da história, sem dar o devido valor aos vários momentos e manifestações diferenciadas do capitalismo e às suas relações complexas com os demais níveis da vida económica.

Começamos pela definição de Braudel. Para o historiador francês, o «modo de produção industrial» ou a relação salarial não são as particularidades essenciais e indispensáveis do capitalismo. Este seria caracterizado antes como «o lugar do investimento e da alta taxa de produção de capital» (Braudel, *O Jogo das Trocas (OJDT)* 197 e 199-200). Ou seja, ao invés de um sistema com uma dinâmica própria e uma relação de classe plenamente configurada, um lugar ou um degrau no topo da hierarquia económica.

Indo directo ao ponto, Braudel (*OJDT* 197) define o capitalismo como a «zona do contramercado», onde o monopólio campeia, enfim onde predomina «o reino da esperteza e do direito do mais forte». Esta afirmação dá pano pra manga, pois o capitalismo ao invés de depender da livre iniciativa, se aninha justamente onde se encontra a intersecção entre o Estado e o mercado, restringindo-o.

Num degrau abaixo, encontra-se a «zona mais representativa da economia de mercado», responsável pelas ligações mais constantes entre os agentes económicos e por um certo automatismo ligando oferta, procura e preços. Aqui viceja a concorrência, as inovações utilizadas como formas de obter maiores fatias do mercado. Escavando um pouco mais, podemos encontrar, segundo Braudel, um enorme andar térreo da vida material, a zona do inframercado, «onde o mercado lança suas raízes, mas sem o prender integralmente». Aqui predomina «o signo obcecante da auto-suficiência» (Braudel, *OJDT* 7 e 197).

Neste sentido, o capitalismo aparece como uma constante da Europa, desde a Idade Média. Inicialmente teria vivido enquistado, sem poder ou se aventurar a conquistar a sociedade inteira. Acumulando capital em terminados sectores – mais propriamente na esfera da circulação, onde «se sentia verdadeiramente em casa» – sem avançar pela economia de mercado da época. Caracterizando-se mais pela diferença com relação a «um não-capitalismo de proporções imensas». Esquecer a «topografia antiga do capitalismo», para dizer que este apenas aparece quando penetra na esfera da produção – «quando está em casa alheia» –, seria contar apenas parte da história (Braudel, *OJDT* 200, 207, 216).

Vejamos que Braudel navega no universo criado por Marx, tentando superá-lo, por meio do estudo da história. Recria a teoria sem se preocupar com o rigoroso e, às vezes, limitador esquema de reprodução do capital do pensador alemão. Preocupa-se antes com os espaços de reprodução do capital, variáveis histórica e geograficamente. Poderíamos até sugerir que ao voltar o capital a residir, ainda que não de maneira prioritária, mas de maneira sistémica na esfera financeira ao final do século XX, Braudel estaria «dando o troco» a Marx.

Este preâmbulo serve para ressaltar que, segundo a perspectiva braudeliana, «não há uma história simples e linear do desenvolvimento dos mercados»

(Braudel, *OJDT* 12). Mais importante ainda, o avanço de uma economia de mercado não tem por que espontaneamente engendrar o capitalismo, mais uma vez, segundo o enfoque braudeliano. Esta disjuntiva abre novas hipóteses para se reconsiderar a economia chinesa antes da Revolução Industrial e discutir porque esta não se desenvolveu no sentido do capitalismo.

Podemos inclusive dizer que o conhecimento da experiência chinesa é o que habilita Braudel a compreender a história do capitalismo na Europa na sua especificidade. Fornece ao historiador o distanciamento necessário para situar o universal em sua particularidade. Do contrário, ele não poderia sentenciar que «a China é a demonstração perfeita de que uma superestrutura capitalista não se instala, *ipso facto*, a partir de uma economia de ritmo animado e de tudo que ela implica. São necessários outros factores» (Braudel, *OJDT* 535).

Por que o Capitalismo não se Desenvolveu na China?

Que factores seriam estes? Vejamos antes alguns relatos históricos sobre a pujante economia de mercado chinesa. Os trechos abaixo falam por si mesmos:

O comércio também se desenvolveu de maneira espectacular. O controlo estatal foi relaxado e isto permitiu que nas cidades os mercados não estivessem situados exclusivamente em uns poucos lugares estabelecidos pelo governo, tendo florescido pequenos comércios em todos os bairros. Ao mesmo tempo, se estabeleceram centros comerciais em todo o país e rotas de distribuição e intercâmbio em todo o império.

A especialização na produção e a comercialização fizeram com que se formassem grupos relacionados com um produto, algo similar às guildas europeias.

Foram muito importantes as rotas de navegação, fluviais e marítimas, que possibilitaram à China olhar mais que nunca para o mar e para o intercâmbio com o Sudeste Asiático e mais além.

A China se converteria em uma grande potência marítima, muito antes que qualquer país europeu.

Estas passagens, retiradas de Cervera Jimenéz (155-158), não seriam de todo surpreendentes em si mesmas, não fosse por um detalhe: elas se referem ao

período da Dinastia Song, situado entre os anos 960 e 1279. O autor ressalta ainda que na base desta transformação económica estava o aumento da produtividade da agricultura, o que permitiu que o país chegasse a uma população de 100 milhões de habitantes no século XII! Paralelamente, a indústria têxtil viveria um grande auge, ao passo que a China se tornaria o grande centro mundial de fabricação da porcelana fina. Vejamos ainda outro excerto, este colectado em Jacques:

A urbanização progredia rapidamente, ao ponto de que no século XII a maior cidade chinesa, Hangzhou, tivesse uma população de quase 7 milhões de habitantes, fazendo da China de longe a sociedade mais urbanizada do mundo, já que as cidades abrigavam cerca de 10% da sua população (76).

Avançando um pouco mais no tempo, deixemos Braudel aplicar a sua teoria à história, ou vice-versa. «Assim, os chineses também têm seu “comércio do Levante”, e por muito tempo a China do comércio de longa distância nada teve de invejar à Europa. No tempo de Marco Polo, a China consome, diz ele, cem vezes mais especiarias do que a longínqua Europa.» (Braudel, *OJDT* 109)

Nestes casos, em diversos lugares e tempos, «as aventuras do mar são cúmplices de certo capitalismo chinês que só assume sua verdadeira dimensão quando escapa de uma China vigiada e opressora» (Braudel, *OJDT*. 519-520). Ou seja, «então não há capitalismo a não ser no interior de grupos definidos, caucionados pelo Estado, por ele vigiados e mais ou menos à sua mercê, tais como os mercadores de sal do século XIII ou o Co-Hong de Cantão», no século XVIII (Braudel, *OJDT* 525).

E conclui Braudel afirmando que pode haver até uma «certa burguesia» e, inclusive, um «capitalismo colonial» dos emigrantes chineses, mas jamais um lugar privilegiado, que possa avançar sobre a economia de mercado, conquistando-a, e alterando seu desenvolvimento endógeno e espontâneo.

Duas questões nos parecem pertinentes: primeiro, por que este lugar não se desenvolveu na China, levando à irrupção do capitalismo? E, depois, seria possível imaginar uma economia de mercado eternamente dinâmica sem abrir espaço para o capitalismo?

O próprio Braudel fornece duas respostas à primeira questão, uma económica e espacial, e outra, política e social (Braudel, *OJDT* 519). Primeira resposta: em virtude do espaço superabundante, as «zonas semimortas do subdesenvolvimento se fazem mais amplas», tornando necessário um volume de acumulação de capital extremamente elevado – apenas obtido via conexões externas poderosas – para transformar sua dinâmica essencialmente incremen-

tal. Faltaria, enfim, «a realidade mercantil alta tensão», típica do comércio de longa distância, e que tende a se isolar frente aos territórios imensos do continente (Braudel, *OJDT* 522).

A segunda resposta é mais complexa e aprofunda a primeira diferença da China com relação à Europa. Em síntese, o argumento de Braudel se estrutura da seguinte maneira: o poder chinês está todo ele concentrado numa camada, a sociedade burocrática. Não se trata de inexistência de comerciantes, já que o comércio, inclusive de longa distância, floresceu em vários momentos. Entretanto, nenhuma classe pode disputar o poder com os mandarins letrados, estando todas subordinadas a este como que estamento burocrático. No máximo, uma «acumulação vitalícia». Mesmo os mercadores abastados impõem seus filhos para ocupar estas posições de destaque, «traindo» a sua classe (Braudel, *OJDT* 531).

Dando um passo além de Braudel, Arrighi (333) aponta que a diferença chinesa com relação à Europa não está na ausência de comércio ou sequer na sua liberalidade – lembremos que o comércio de longa distância europeu se fazia à base de privilégios –, mas na incapacidade da classe de mercadores para subordinar o Estado aos seus interesses expansionistas.

David Faure (12-13, 16, 19-20) sugere que o problema não estava numa atitude inata do governo imperial contra o comércio. Neste ponto, ele concorda com Arrighi e Braudel. O problema residia no reduzido poder político dos comerciantes que buscavam proteção junto ao Estado, submetendo-se aos rituais de patronagem no seio da burocracia. Como resultado, as cidades ao invés de entrepostos comerciais, funcionavam como sedes governamentais, como já notara Weber. O sociólogo alemão apenas não percebera – ainda segundo Faure – que os comerciantes é que geriam as cidades, transformados em burocratas.

Entretanto, Faure carrega demais nas tintas ao jogar toda a culpa na ausência de «instituições do capitalismo», tais como sociedades financeiras, lei comerciais e de incorporação. Seria o caso de inverter o seu raciocínio: por que deveriam surgir estas instituições se os lugares de acumulação de capital eram severamente regulados pelo Estado e a China não se ressentia da necessidade de aumentar seu volume de capital?

Arrighi, de facto, leva a formulação teórica de Braudel ao seu limite. Como Braudel, que já se diferenciara da visão tradicional marxista, porque conhecia a experiência chinesa; também Arrighi, partindo da mesma, revela aspectos não antevistos pelo historiador francês. Vejamos porquê.

No seu entender, uma economia de mercado dinâmica pode desembocar em dois padrões de desenvolvimento: economia de mercado capitalista, caso euro-

peu, que levou à Revolução Industrial; e economia de mercado não-capitalista, caso chinês, que teria engendrado uma Revolução Industriosa, conceito inicialmente desenvolvido pelo teórico japonês Kaoru Sugihara (Arrighi 24-25, 32-33, 329).

As premissas de Arrighi são as seguintes. Ao longo do século XVIII, e no início do século XIX, os dois espaços económicos ter-se-iam expandido de maneira correlata. O diferencial não deve ser buscado em instituições capitalistas ou pró-mercado de um lado, e excesso de participação do Estado, no outro, mas em trajetórias de desenvolvimento que, a partir de então, passaram a divergir (Arrighi, 30-32, 331-332).

Na Europa, uma «peculiar combinação entre capitalismo, militarismo e territorialismo» faria com que o padrão de desenvolvimento assumisse um carácter mais extrovertido. Para tal tendência, o sistema de relações inter-Estados jogou um papel decisivo. A competição económica entre as nações europeias se dava por meios políticos, a guerra assegurando a expansão dos mercados. Esta tendência à extroversão explicaria ainda o tipo de relação desenvolvida entre as burguesias e os Estados Absolutistas europeus.

Na China, onde o foco era a manutenção da unidade interna e de relações amistosas com seus vizinhos, teria emergido um sistema pautado na ausência de competição, articulado por meio do comércio tributário em torno da China, responsável ao mesmo tempo pelo desequilíbrio de poder entre os Estados e pela paz de quase 300 anos no Sudeste Asiático. Ao invés de extrair recursos de suas periferias, o Estado chinês optava, por questões de segurança, por investir nas mesmas (Arrighi 314-320).

Isto explica porque na dinastia Ming (1368-1644) tratou de cortar as asas dos comerciantes, o que pode se ilustrado pela mudança da capital de Nanjing para Beijing e pela construção do grande Canal, de modo a valorizar a integração do mercado nacional, ligando o Norte ao Sul, e centralizando os recursos para investimentos em infra-estrutura. Ou seja, as buscas de novos mercados externos não era fonte de riqueza e poder como na Europa. Ao contrário, poderia questionar inclusive a unidade do Império e desviar as atenções das ameaças de invasões provenientes do Norte (Arrighi 322-324). Paralelamente, o triunfo do neoconfucianismo – ao afirmar a superioridade da civilização chinesa – teria contribuído para a valorização da centralização do poder e para a desconfiança com relação aos estrangeiros (Botton Beja 192-196).

Esta tendência introspectiva ter-se-ia reforçado durante a dinastia Qing (1662-1911). Depois de algumas idas e vindas, o comércio exterior privado é proibido em 1717, enquanto em 1757 Ghangzhou se converte no único porto legal para o comércio com outras nações.

No dizer de Braudel (*OJDT* 320), a saída chinesa resultaria na criação do Co-Hong – grupo de mercadores habilitados a intercambiar produtos com o estrangeiro –, que funcionava como uma espécie de «contra-Companhia das Índias», impedindo que a riqueza dinamizasse a economia continental, ao mesmo tempo em que procurava “controlar” a expansão europeia.

Ao invés de partir da hipótese de que a diferença entre os padrões de desenvolvimento da China e a da Europa se encontrava no passado pré-capitalista, como Braudel (*OJDT* 522-523) inicialmente sugere; Arrighi (*ASIB*) assume o ponto de vista, também defendido em Jacques (*When China Rules the World*), de que as economias de mercado de ambas as regiões económicas teriam seguido trajetórias radicalmente distintas apenas ao longo do século XIX. Acreditam estes autores que ambas as economias apresentavam tessituras semelhantes, marcadas endogenamente pelo aprofundamento da divisão do trabalho.

Interessante notar que Braudel (*OJDT* 111), ao fim e ao cabo, chancela este ponto de vista, quando atesta que em termos de dinamismo das trocas, no século XVI, «as regiões povoadas do mundo parecem-nos mais próximas umas das outras, como que em igualdade, ou quase». Entretanto, no momento de aceleração da história, o peso do passado e da geografia teria feito a diferença. A distância entre o Ocidente e os demais continentes ter-se-ia «cavado apenas tardiamente» e não seriam as instituições ou a «racionalização do mercado» (Braudel, *OJDT* 112) os responsáveis pela divergência de trajetórias, como a historiografia feita por economistas tende a indicar. Vejamos o relato de David Faure sobre a China do Século XVIII.

Os visitantes da China por esta época perceberam a abundância criada pelo comércio interno, a elevada produtividade da população rural, as suas cidades magníficas e, apesar dos baixos níveis de impostos, os vastos recursos do governo imperial. Para a Europa do século XVIII, a China era um modelo de sociedade racional, na qual o imperador governava por meio de uma classe de burocratas recrutados por meio de concursos e onde as pessoas comuns reconheciam a sua posição social (11).

Para vários europeus ilustrados do século XVIII – este certamente era o caso de Adam Smith – a China parecia mais avançada economicamente, mais próxima de um «padrão natural de desenvolvimento» (Arrighi 57-59), como veremos adiante.

Uma leitura teleológica da história – ou seja, informada pelo desenvolvimento económico e tecnológico da Europa e dos Estados Unidos, mas também pela gestão da economia chinesa nos anos Mao Tse Tung – teria invertido o sentido da interpretação de modo a explicaria a divergência de trajectórias. A simplicidade da argumentação beira ao rudimentar. Para caminhar no sentido do «capitalismo», uma nação precisa possuir instituições favoráveis ao «livre-mercado». E para que estas possam vicejar, ela deve se situar no Ocidente, ou então, se ocidentalizar.

A interpretação de David Landes (*The Wealth and the Poverty of Nations*) caminha neste sentido. A sua interpretação é esquemática, sem evidências empíricas e precisão histórica, apenas factos esparsos e números agregados. Salta o autor de um período a outro, deixando séculos como vácuo.

Em poucas palavras, a desigualdade começa na natureza, considerada de forma estática. Estamos longe da geografia humana braudeliiana alterada pelo peso do tempo e das forças sociais. A Europa teve sorte, nasceu nas zonas temperadas, com clima saudável e bons padrões pluviométricos, repleta de florestas.

Quanto à China, «aqui está um país com 7% da terra arável do mundo a qual abriga 21% da população mundial. O antigo ditado chinês não poderia ser mais sucinto: ‘a terra é escassa e a população em demasia» (Landes 23). Daqui ele se lança para a história da construção dos grandes canais e para a ligação entre água e poder. Uma expansão meramente quantitativa, ancorada no «orientalismo despótico» (Landes 23-28). Mas nem só de *fortuna* teria vivido a Europa. Já a *virtú* pode ser localizada nas instituições – palavrinha sagrada nos tempos que correm –, especialmente aquela encoberta em manto angelical, a propriedade privada. Esta, a responsável quase exclusiva por «uma sucessão de inovações e adaptações organizacionais», provenientes do chão social desde a Europa medieval (Landes 44). Daí até a glória definitiva seria apenas um passo.

É então que nosso «historiador» prepara sua afirmação solene: nestas circunstâncias, não seria de se surpreender que «a própria noção de desenvolvimento económico seja uma invenção ocidental» (Landes 32). E completa, referindo-se por analogia à China, «esta era uma sociedade homeostática culturalmente e intelectualmente: isto é, podia viver com mudanças pequenas», já que qualquer mudança de maior envergadura seria brecada pelo Estado, que restauraria o *status quo* (Landes 38).

Impressiona a simplicidade da argumentação deste historiador que escrevera um grande livro de pesquisa e argumentação histórica, *The Unbound Prometheus*, e que agora decide caminhar rumo ao sucesso, ou melhor, ao senso

comum, criando mitos que outros historiadores teriam que desfazer mais à frente. O embate com esta proposta mostra-se necessário, se o nosso objetivo é o de desmontar a afirmação de que a China não pode se desenvolver economicamente por falta das «instituições certas».

Neste sentido, cabe lembrar o título sugestivo – *To Change China* – da obra escrita por um dos maiores especialistas de história da China, o inglês Jonathan Spence (2002), que procura mostrar as tentativas fracassadas de ocidentais, em diversos momentos, para alterar o padrão de desenvolvimento, as técnicas e instituições chinesas à sua revelia.

Como a história é feita de surpresas e acontecimentos inusitados, e tudo indica que estejamos bem longe do fim da história, a recente ascensão chinesa – evidente em qualquer revista de negócios publicada em qualquer idioma – exige ao menos uma revisão crítica da perspectiva etnocêntrica adoptada por Landes, a não ser que acreditemos que a velha China, no fim da vida, tenha decidido se curvar, como crente tardio, ao Deus do livre-mercado. Ou então há quem preferia fazer o giro contrário e adoptar um weberianismo bastardo, descobrindo uma sinergia essencial entre confucianismo e capitalismo, como Daniel Bell (*China's New Confucianism*) parece sugerir em texto recente.

É, neste sentido, que o enfoque de Martin Jacques (8-11) se revela frutífero, ao contestar a suposta identidade entre modernização económica e ocidentalização. Segundo o autor, não haveria nada de especificamente ocidental na modernização ou no desenvolvimento económico. A actual ascensão chinesa estaria inclusive a provar que vivemos num mundo de «modernidades em disputa», no qual a excepcionalidade europeia não faz mais sentido.

Daí a necessidade de buscar, a partir de Braudel e Arrighi, o porquê da divergência de padrões de desenvolvimento a partir do século XVIII entre a China e a Europa, resposta que como vimos inclui uma interacção assaz complexa entre geografia, história e estrutura de classe, com lugar – e por que não? – para as instituições, se vistas sob este prisma mais amplo. O que exige também uma reconsideração do significado de conceitos como economia de mercado, padrão de desenvolvimento e capitalismo, de modo a libertá-los do uso pouco criterioso ao qual estão sujeitos.

Voltando a Jacques (26-30), a dianteira ou a diferença europeia ter-se-ia iniciado ao longo do século XVIII, e se consolidado durante o XIX, em virtude de algumas características que a Inglaterra, e depois a Europa teriam, e que não se encontravam na China. Características não significam pré-condições, insiste nosso autor.

Estas características, que conformam a excepcionalidade britânica e europeia, seriam o acesso a vastas quantidades de carvão, e mais importante, a utili-

zação do sistema colonial como mecanismo para obtenção de alimentos e produtos primários a baixo custo. Se o processo de desenvolvimento da economia de mercado europeia possuía certa endogeneidade, a fáiisca a consumir a ruptura viria do mercado externo (Hobsbawm 28-29).

A interpretação de Jacques talvez seja materialista demais, ou exageradamente técnica e operacional, mas ela auxilia – desde que robustecida pelos argumentos de Braudel e Arrighi – a explicar porque o lugar do capitalismo se avantajou na Europa segundo Braudel, ou porque se caminhou no sentido de uma economia de mercado capitalista de acordo com Arrighi, ao ponto de se jogar lenha na fogueira de uma economia de mercado interna pujante, no caso da Europa, enquanto na China teria faltado a fáiisca essencial.

No caso chinês, capitalismo e economia de mercado teria se apartado segundo Braudel – ou um padrão de economia de mercado não-capitalista se teria configurado na China no entender de Arrighi – para apenas se misturarem por obra da invasão inglesa quando das Guerras do Ópio, e depois de uma maneira ainda mais complexa, no bojo das reformas económicas de Deng Xiaoping, quando então se poderia discutir se o padrão de desenvolvimento se teria mantido não-capitalista, ou se teria cruzado a cerca no sentido capitalista, como cogita Arrighi, ainda que acabe por descartar esta hipótese.

Desta forma, procurar as «sementes do capitalismo» em diversos momentos da história desta civilização, como se este fosse um sistema pronto e acabado pronto a desabrochar desde que estejam dispostas as instituições «corretas» e as condições «adequadas», como faz boa parte da história económica, ocidental ou não, faz perder de vista que o capitalismo é ou um lugar privilegiado de acumulação de capital, sequioso de se libertar das fronteiras que o separam da economia de mercado circundante, ou então um padrão de desenvolvimento com dinâmica própria e capaz de vicejar em diversos ambientes institucionais. Quiçá sejam ambas as coisas.

Tampouco nos parece apropriada, ao menos deste ponto de vista teórico, a pergunta sobre «quão capitalista é a China» dos dias de hoje, como faz Huang (*CWCC*), pois supõe que um país possa ser mais ou menos capitalista. Neste sentido, a nova vertente teórica, desenvolvida por Boyer & Hollingsworth (*From National Embeddedness to Spatial and Institutional Nestedness*) e por Amable (*Les Cinqs Capitalismes*), dentre outros – e que parte das «variedades de capitalismo» – aponta para caminhos de pesquisa mais férteis, ainda que se mantenham restritos aos exemplos dos países desenvolvidos.

Dois Smiths em Pequim

Neste tópico, apresentamos a interpretação de Arrighi (*ASIB*) que descobre um Smith em diverso do tão propalado defensor da mão invisível. Arrighi amplia o foco de visão smithiano, desmistificando as análises ahistóricas dos economistas neoclássicos, que inventaram um Smith de manual, sem corpo e alma, obcecado pela eficiência do mercado, como se esta não necessitasse de um certo terreno social para frutificar.

Em seguida, apresentamos a interpretação do economista chinês do MIT, Yasheng Huang (*OJDT*), que também procura o espectro de Smith no seu «capitalismo empreendedor», detonado junto com as reformas económicas, mais especificamente aquelas que transformaram a vida rural chinesa ao longo dos anos 80 do século XX. Ambos lêem a sequência das reformas económicas encetadas por Deng Xiaoping a partir da obra de Smith, de dois Smiths bem diversos e por vezes quase opostos.

Este diálogo entre as duas almas de Smith, reencarnadas onde menos se poderia esperar, é prenhe de resultados interessantes do ponto de vista teórico. Permite não apenas reconsiderar os conceitos de capitalismo, socialismo e economia de mercado, mas até quem sabe recunhá-los, partindo da especificidade da economia chinesa, englobada pela economia-mundo capitalista.

Isto porque Adam Smith é muito mais que «o pai da economia», como se costuma alardear nos cursos introdutórios desta disciplina pelo mundo afora. Smith é também importante inspirador de cada uma das principais correntes económicas em voga, por mais que estas se confrontem de maneira ardorosa.

Trata-se de um autor profundamente complexo, cujo todo é quase indecifrável para nós que estamos fora de seu tempo, mas cujas partes vão sendo desenvolvidas em novas totalidades, à medida que se adaptam a outras vestes teóricas e outros tempos históricos.

Tanto assim que o mais fiel seguidor da doutrina do livre-mercado, do alto de seu rebuscado modelo matemático, se sente um herdeiro de Smith, responsável pela cunhagem da metáfora da «mão invisível» como orquestradora natural da vida económica, ou seja, sem a necessidade de recurso ao poder do Estado.

Da mesma maneira, todo marxista que se preze reconhece a importante lição que Marx aprendera de Smith. Marx teria inclusive «solucionado» alguns dos impasses com os quais deparara Smith, há quem sugira... Entretanto, parece inegável que em Smith já existe uma teoria do desenvolvimento da «economia de mercado», escudada no papel dinamizador da divisão do trabalho, que Marx converteria para o seu jargão conceitual, ampliando o seu alcance e dando-lhe novo sentido. Para este, ao invés da estabilidade, a economia de

mercado «capitalista» levaria a constantes rupturas.

De facto, são duas as almas de Adam Smith, conforme apontam Screpanti e Zamagni (73-75), as quais teriam aberto campos diferenciados de reflexão ao longo do século XIX. De um lado, o componente macroeconómico, derivado da teoria do excedente, e de outro, o componente microeconómico, fundador do equilíbrio competitivo individualista.

Estes dois enfoques – ao invés de reflectirem uma suposta incoerência no universo teórico do autor – iluminam a tensão criadora que permeara o nosso personagem, dividido entre o ser da história e das instituições e o ser da ordem natural. Divisão aos nossos olhos, que vemos duas almas, enquanto ele a tinha uma única, porém múltipla.

A aparência de dualidade na obra smithiana deve-se não somente à posterior fragmentação da ciência económica (Sen, 1999), mas também se refere à complexa relação entre história e economia. Para o filósofo escocês, se existia uma natureza económica, que vale para todos os períodos históricos, como parecem sustentar os economistas neoclássicos de hoje; também havia espaço para que o processo histórico aperfeiçoasse estas tendências pretensamente inatas no sentido de aproveitar todo o potencial de desenvolvimento e de expansão do mercado, construindo novas instituições e atentando para as especificidades dos processos económicos, como insistem tantos historiadores e os economistas heterodoxos.

Em uma palavra, em Smith, os problemas da natureza económica e da história conformam um todo indissolúvel. Contradição? Não, pois o processo histórico para este iluminista se manifestaria a partir da revelação – no sentido de visibilidade progressiva – da realidade. Nem o mundo estático dos economistas neoclássicos e tampouco a fúria homogeneizante do capital *à la* Marx. Abrindo, antes, espaço para trajectórias divergentes das várias economias de mercado a partir da sua interacção com o Estado e as instituições sociais, segundo a abordagem neosmithiana de Arrighi.

Para Arrighi (25-33), Smith não estaria consciente de uma ruptura trazida pela Revolução Industrial e responsável pela conformação de um padrão capitalista de desenvolvimento. Neste sentido, tanto a Europa como a China viveriam – ainda que sob padrões diversos – a mesma dinâmica de expansão do mercado motivada pelos ganhos de produtividade e pela crescente especialização a partir de uma tecnologia intensiva em trabalho.

Ou seja, Smith não teria teorizado sobre uma economia capitalista, mas sobre um sistema de mercado, capaz de se amoldar a diversas instituições, e que depois de um forte dinamismo tenderia a um estado estacionário, a não ser que novas instituições pudessem gerar novas fontes de expansão económica.

Arrighi (42-43) não reconhece em Smith o autor dos mercados inerentemente auto-reguláveis, do capitalismo como sistema de expansão incessante e livre da intervenção do Estado e muito menos o defensor irrestrito da divisão técnica do trabalho espelhada no famoso exemplo da fábrica de alfinetes.

Encontramos na sua leitura de Smith um defensor da economia política como «ciência do homem de Estado», que deveria assegurar o funcionamento de uma economia de mercado, sem privilégios ou monopólios por parte do sector privado. O mercado seria, pois, o instrumento do governo para impedir as coalizões sociais antidesenvolvimento.

Mas tanto os lucros baixos, por conta da concorrência excessiva, como os demasiado altos, em virtude dos monopólios, tenderiam a constranger, em algum momento, o desenvolvimento do mercado no sentido de uma maior divisão do trabalho. A única solução possível no longo prazo para os constrangimentos ao crescimento viria de factores não-económicos relacionados às instituições, à própria estrutura social ou ao papel do Estado (Arrighi 41-43, 49-50). Lembremos que o Estado criticado por Smith é o do mercantilismo e não qualquer Estado em si.

Ainda segundo Arrighi (54-55), mais importante que a divisão técnica do trabalho no âmbito da fábrica, Smith tende a priorizar a divisão social do trabalho, tornando passível a emergência de novas unidades especializadas, especialmente no campo da produção de novas máquinas e da própria pesquisa científica. A emergência destas novas unidades depende, é claro, do tamanho do mercado, mas não necessariamente vem acompanhada de um maior tamanho dos estabelecimentos produtivos.

A melhor descrição deste processo pode ser encontrada em Jane Jacobs (38-39), para quem «a vida económica se desenvolve por meio da inovação e se expande por meio da substituição de importações» genericamente falando. Um misto de concentração e diversificação permite que novos sectores e produtos sejam crescentemente gerados, ampliando a densidade das cadeias produtivas e potencializando a divisão social do trabalho.

Chegamos agora à transcrição literal de Smith (3: 479-484) com relação à China sua contemporânea. A China de Smith seguiria «o caminho da maturidade económica», a partir do emprego do capital «na sua sequência natural» – da agricultura, para a indústria e para o comércio externo. Entretanto, segundo Smith, ao não aproveitar o mercado externo como via para ampliar a divisão social do trabalho do seu mercado interno a China teria se absterido de seguir o padrão natural de desenvolvimento.

Como ressalta Arrighi (57-59), em nenhum momento, Smith caracteriza a China como retrógrada ou tomada por um Estado anti-desenvolvimentista. Mas

ressalta que, com outras instituições e políticas, poderiam ter superado os limites inerentes ao crescimento não-capitalista, seguindo a terminologia arrighiana. Smith, como veremos, chega inclusive a defender a prioridade do emprego do capital investido no comércio interno em relação ao externo, antecipando o conceito de multiplicador adiante desenvolvido por Keynes.

O argumento smithiano está calcado num viés anti-urbano, que encara estes espaços territoriais como mais propensos a atitudes anti-competitivas e monopolistas, minando a continuidade do processo de expansão da economia de mercado, além de banalizarem o uso repetitivo da força de trabalho, reduzindo o potencial de novos empreendimentos (Arrighi 60-62).

Ao contrário, a Europa seguiria o padrão anti-natural do desenvolvimento. Da indústria para o comércio externo, e apenas depois impactando sobre o desenvolvimento agrícola. Na leitura de Arrighi (24-25), a China não saberia lidar com «a armadilha do equilíbrio de longo prazo», experimentando a estagnação numa economia pouco capaz de gerar capital, mas bastante hábil para mobilizar recursos humanos de maneira intensiva. Já a Europa daria no padrão de desenvolvimento capitalista, ampliando via mercado externo a acumulação de capital e expulsando os trabalhadores do campo, proletarizados à força. Encontraria na Revolução Industrial a sua válvula de escape, ao mesmo tempo em que permitiria via expansão do comércio engordar as receitas dos Estados interessados na corrida armamentista (Arrighi 64-68).

Em síntese, a «derrota» chinesa não viria da menor eficácia dos mecanismos de mercado, mas da maior força dos Estados activados pela acumulação de capital e pelo intercâmbio comercial. Segundo Arrighi (77), Marx e Engels teriam errado ao dizerem, em *O Manifesto Comunista*, que o capitalismo com sua artilharia comercial de baixos preços teria detonado todas «as muralhas chinesas». Tratar-se-ia, ao contrário, de uma vitória essencialmente militar – consubstanciada na Guerra do Ópio, como o próprio Marx admitiria mais tarde no primeiro volume de *O Capital* –, que abriria espaço para a conformação de diversos padrões de desenvolvimento, os quais apenas voltariam a se encontrar ao longo do século XX.

Vejamos com mais vagar o raciocínio smithiano contido no capítulo 5 do volume II e nos 4 capítulos do volume III de *A Riqueza das Nações*. Smith concebe um sistema de mercado avançado ou progressivo, como aquele que melhor permite o emprego de capitais de maneira a potencializar o «trabalho produtivo». Como cada capital permite empregar quantidades diversas de trabalho produtivo, o que muda é o nível agregado de utilização do trabalho produtivo.

O capital, para Smith, pode ser aplicado em quatro actividades diversas: agricultura ou mineração; manufactura; e no transporte de mercadoria de um

ponto a outro por meio do comércio, seja no atacado ou no varejo. Estas actividades são interdependentes entre si.

Sem agricultura e manufactura, não existe comércio. Sem comércio, estas actividades não podem se reproduzir. Todos aqueles cujos capitais são empregados nestas actividades são considerados «trabalhadores produtivos» (Smith 2: 459-461). Não existe, portanto, capitalismo no sentido que leva à expropriação dos pequenos empreendedores, nem muito menos um local privilegiado da acumulação de capital como em Braudel. Existe um mercado com espaço potencial para todos à medida que o sistema económico se amplia e se diversifica.

Para Smith (2: 463-465), nenhum capital coloca em movimento, em termos proporcionais, mais trabalho produtivo, do que aquele associado à agricultura, vindo logo em seguida a manufactura. Ao contrário, «o comerciante de atacado não parece ter residência fixa em lugar nenhum, podendo vagar de um sítio a outro, desde que possa comprar barato para vender caro».

Chegar ao nível de maturidade ou opulência significa ter quantidade de capital para empregar em todas estas actividades. Até este estágio, o capital deve ser aplicado nas actividades mais geradoras de trabalho produtivo, de modo a activar as interdependências entre os vários sectores económicos.

E aí chegamos ao Smith «descoberto» por Arrighi: em nenhum lugar este estágio foi alcançado, «a não ser que acreditemos nos relatos maravilhosos sobre a riqueza e o cultivo agrícola na China, no Egipto e na Índia». Em nenhum deles, insiste Smith (2: 467), o comércio externo cumpriu papel de destaque.

Merecem também destaque as várias formas de comércio de atacado: o local, o externo para consumo e o comércio por meio de entrepostos. Dentre estes, apenas o primeiro é capaz de activar o trabalho produtivo de uma nação. O externo para consumo activa alguma actividade local voltada para fora, mas possui uma rotação menor. Já o comércio via entrepostos é retirado da circulação interna não activando a demanda interna. O exemplo deste caso é a Holanda cuja adição ao produto interno apenas se dá por meio dos lucros do mercador, a não ser, pondera Smith, que o transporte seja feito em navios nacionais. Apenas desta forma, completa o inusitado Smith, referindo-se aos Atos de navegação britânicos, poderia o comércio de entreposto se mostrar vantajoso (Smith 2: 467-471).

Todos estes segmentos do comércio são importantes desde que sigam «a ordem natural das coisas», não se devendo conferir relevância ao comércio externo sobre o local, e muito menos ao comércio de entreposto sobre os demais, antes pelo contrário. Desta forma, o comércio de entreposto apenas deve se desenvolver quando o estoque de capital de um país crescer de tal forma

que não mais puder desenvolver o poder de consumo e o trabalho produtivo internos. Smith (1986 2: 472-473) então arremata: o comércio de entreposto é sintoma e não causa do desenvolvimento, confusão que teria acometido os homens de Estado do seu tempo.

Como se não bastasse, Smith afirma que o mercador tipo ideal do comércio de entreposto tem como única preocupação o seu próprio lucro privado, contribuindo de forma marginal para o desenvolvimento do mercado interno. Entretanto, como o seu limite não está no poder de consumo do seu país, a sua possibilidade de expansão é infinita, já que depende do excedente exportado por todos os países do mundo (Smith 2: 474).

Que circunstâncias teriam levado a Europa, pergunta-se Smith (2 e 3: 475, 482-484) – já que não se trata de uma opção idealista –, a inverter o sentido natural das coisas, ao ponto de as manufacturas se desenvolverem nas cidades estimuladas pelo comércio de longa distância, para somente então dinamizarem a agricultura? A única explicação para este caminho «retrógrado», segundo as palavras do próprio Smith, estaria nas instituições humanas.

Este caminho, ainda que lento e incerto, teria permitido a dissolução das relações feudais. Ou seja, junto com o comércio e as manufacturas teria vindo «o bom governo», a liberdade e a segurança dos indivíduos. Ao invés de secundados por servos, os grandes proprietários passaram a activar uma cadeia de artesãos e comerciantes (Smith 3: 508-512, 515).

Já a China, ao contrário, possuía um mercado interno vasto, em virtude da sua vasta população, das variedades climáticas, permitindo a produção nas suas vastas províncias, e um meio de comunicação eficaz por meio de canais, permitindo uma expressiva produção manufactureira com certo nível de especialização. A tal ponto, que «o mercado interno chinês não deve ser muito inferior em extensão ao mercado de todos os países europeus reunidos» (Smith 4: 267).

Entretanto, pondera Smith (4: 266) os chineses conferem pouco apreço ao comércio exterior. Não fosse assim, provavelmente, o mercado interno poderia ser vitaminado pela expansão do comércio externo, especialmente se realizado em navios chineses. Da mesma forma que na Europa, o curso natural das coisas deve se adaptar à interferência das instituições humanas. E, em ambos os casos, se subverte o progresso da sociedade no sentido da ampliação da riqueza, além de diminuir o valor real – em relação ao potencial – da produção anual (Smith 4: 273).

Não pretendemos, aqui, encontrar em Smith a «correta» – se é que esta existe – interpretação dos factos históricos de sua época. Tomando, por exemplo, o relato de Braudel [*O Tempo do Mundo (OTDM)* 45], percebe-se que desde a Idade Média a Europa já se encontrava atravessada por fluxos de

comércio poderosos, accionando «zonas complementares de uma economia-mundo» e engendrando «uma hierarquia das produções e das trocas».

Certa ou não, em termos históricos, a «sacada de Smith» sobre a divergência entre o Império do Meio e a Europa permite a Arrighi lançar um novo olhar para a China pós-Deng Xiaoping. Recuperemos o raciocínio do sociólogo e historiador italiano.

A China teria perdido o bonde da história – afinal o capitalismo ganhara fôlego na Europa, em virtude da maior sua competitividade económica e bélica, ainda que não gerasse o melhor emprego do capital em termos de geração de trabalho produtivo – porque recorreu a uma «Revolução Industrial», cujo traço distintivo estava na gestão de uma estrutura institucional e tecnológica voltada para a absorção de mão-de-obra. O foco estava, tanto nas comunidades rurais como nas cidades, na mobilização de recursos humanos. Protegida do vendaval da Revolução Industrial, ao menos até meados do século XIX, a China seguiria na sua «armadilha de equilíbrio de longo prazo», sem recorrer às mudanças institucionais, pró-comércio externo, recomendadas por Smith.

Quando este chegou o fez por meio da invasão militar inglesa e pelos tratados desiguais. A saída japonesa, ao longo do século XX, e da China nas últimas décadas, foi a de fundir os dois padrões de desenvolvimento. Surgem então redes de indústrias e empresas com variados níveis de utilização de capital e trabalho, focadas sempre no incremento da competitividade. Trata-se não de substituir capital por trabalho, mas de ampliar a divisão social do trabalho na direcção das actividades intensivas em conhecimento altamente geradoras de emprego (Arrighi 366-367).

Desta feita, o mercado externo não seria desprezado, mas vitaminaria – a partir, por exemplo, das zonas de processamento das exportações – o crescimento intensivo em trabalho que vem de dentro e propícia, graças aos ganhos de escala, excedentes vultosos. A China aperfeiçoa e amplifica o modelo japonês, contando para tanto com o apoio vital da diáspora chinesa, que havia fertilizado em Hong Kong e Taiwan, durante o período pós-Revolução, uma rede de interacções sociais e económicas, transplantada para o continente com a abertura. As empresas transnacionais chegariam bem mais tarde. Ao Estado chinês caberia promover o encontro entre empresários, funcionários públicos e trabalhadores chineses, mais o capital da diáspora e as empresas «imperialistas» (Arrighi 346-352).

Seria, portanto, ingenuidade imaginar que o diferencial da China se encontra na mão-de-obra barata. Não fosse a capacidade de estimular a expansão da oferta e da demanda, via investimento estatal, atracção de capital externo e formação das empresas rurais não agrícolas, de forma gradual no tempo e no espaço. Ou de realizar reformas no sistema agrícola e fiscal, conferindo maior

poder às comunidades rurais e aos governos locais. E a o motor da acumulação não teria sido accionado.

Finalmente, pasmem!, a China pode ser descrita como um caso de acumulação sem expropriação. Arrighi não desconsidera a super-exploração dos imigrantes rurais e nem a apropriação corriqueira pelos novos magnatas do sector privado de propriedades e benefícios públicos. Mas ressalta que a transformação chinesa teria se processado a partir das transformações do campo, melhorando as condições de vida dos produtores rurais. A criação das «empresas comunitárias locais» (*township and village enterprises-TVEs*) teria travado a ampliação exuberante do exército industrial de reserva, além de assegurar investimentos em infra-estrutura, encadeamentos fiscais e o uso intensivo em força de trabalho (Arrighi 361-365).

Desta forma, o comércio exterior viria como complemento da dinâmica accionada pelo mercado interno e pela crescente especialização poupadora de capital, tal como Smith almejara. Falta explicar, entretanto, a tendência à concentração de capital, a especulação imobiliária, deslocando camponeses, e a massa de trabalhadores precários nas cidades. Não seria isto um capitalismo adaptado às condições chinesas, integrado à uma economia-mundo capitalista, e buscando novos paraísos de acumulação com expropriação, apesar do dinamismo do mercado interno?

Arrighi admite que existem contradições internas à sociedade e ao Partido Comunista, as quais podem levar a uma afirmação do capitalismo selvagem na China. Esta tendência parecia inclusive provável durante o governo de Jiang Zemin. Já a nova geração de líderes, que assume o poder em 2002, vem defendendo de forma exaustiva os princípios confucianos de «sociedade harmoniosa», tendo inclusive lançado a proposta de «um novo interior socialista», que congrega um conjunto de acções voltadas para a expansão da educação, da saúde e de programas sociais no campo. Trata-se, não de um movimento espontâneo, mas de uma reacção do Estado – a partir da combinação de medidas repressivas e de concessões – num contexto de crescentes lutas sociais no campo e nas cidades.

Em síntese, Arrighi desmonta cada um dos mitos perpetrados pela mídia ocidental sob a sociedade chinesa, sem cair na repetição monótona das fórmulas gastas utilizadas pela burocracia do PC chinês. A sua recusa em ver capitalismo na China tampouco se faz categórica. «O resultado da social da modernização titânica da economia chinesa permanece indeterminado», afirma (Arrighi 24). Entretanto, completa: «capitalismo e socialismo, ao menos quando interpretados tomando como base as experiências do passado, não parecem servir de guias capazes de captar o sentido da transformação chinesa».

A sua interpretação sobre o capitalismo está informada pelo texto clássico de Robert Brenner (*The Origins of Capitalist Development*). Este texto surge de uma crítica a Wallerstein, que teria, segundo Brenner, adoptado uma espécie de «marxismo neo-smithiano». Na leitura de Brenner, Wallerstein assume que Marx estaria errado ao supor que o capitalismo só poderia se expandir plenamente em escala mundial ao destruir os demais modos de produção remanescentes na periferia. Ao contrário, o capitalismo poderia se alastrar, recriando o subdesenvolvimento nas áreas periféricas integradas. A desigualdade de classe se faz substituir por uma desigualdade entre nações ricas e pobres. Isto porque, para Wallerstein, o capitalismo seria «sinónimo de produção para o mercado com vistas à obtenção de lucro» (Brenner 27, 29, 32).

O problema de Wallerstein estaria em encarar o mecanismo do desenvolvimento económico, no âmbito do capitalismo, como meramente quantitativo e oriundo das relações de troca. Para Brenner (31-33), o capitalismo implica uma mudança qualitativa, accionado por meio da inovação, levando a ganhos de produtividade e ao barateamento dos produtos. Este processo por sua vez exige uma configuração de classe específica. Em poucas palavras, exige, em termos marxistas, a generalização das relações capitalistas de produção. No entender de Brenner, mesmo sem alterar as relações de produção, um país poderia se conectar à economia-mundo, mantendo a sua estrutura de classe, sem deixar inteiramente para o mercado a responsabilidade na subsistência de seus trabalhadores e consumidores.

Para se engendrar um mecanismo de acumulação endogenamente capitalista, e sua correspondente estrutura de classe, três condições se fariam necessárias: 1) a separação dos produtores directos dos seus meios de subsistência; 2) as possibilidades de lucro via novos métodos produtivos deveriam superar aquelas feitas apenas por meio da cooperação do trabalho; 3) mesmo que os novos métodos produtivos avançassem, outras possibilidades de aplicação do capital poderiam continuar existindo, não havendo pressão generalizada para o reinvestimento (Brenner 34-37).

Ou melhor, uma alteração na estrutura de classe se faz condição *sine qua non*, para que o capitalismo possa se expandir de forma indefinida, levando à concentração do capital e exigindo a crescente incorporação de progresso técnico, minando outras formas de acumulação. No entender de Arrighi, estas condições ainda não existiriam na China do início do século XXI. Por aqui, Smith ainda estaria derrotando Marx. Porém, será mesmo possível retroceder a um padrão de desenvolvimento smithiano no contexto de uma economia-mundo capitalista a pleno vapor?

Vejamos agora a interpretação de Huang (CNCC), que encontra um Smith

bem diferente na China de Deng Xiaoping. O Professor Yasheng Huang, do MIT, nos brinda com um olhar tão instigante quanto o de Giovanni Arrighi, possuindo o mesmo apetite por quebrar os mitos propagados especialmente pela mídia e academia ocidentais.

Entretanto, Huang tampouco assume a perspectiva do *establishment* chinês, muito pelo contrário. A sua fonte conceitual é basicamente Smith, ainda que também se filie de alguma forma à corrente da economia institucional mais próxima ao pensamento neoclássico. É a partir deste prisma que ele vai lançar nova luz sobre a economia chinesa, auxiliado por um esforço inaudito de reagrupamento dos dados, algo que só se faz possível a partir da leitura dos originais de documentos governamentais e balanços das empresas e bancos.

A sua tese é de que o milagre chinês ocorreu, mas por motivos bem diversos dos geralmente apontados. Ou melhor, não haveria nenhum milagre, apenas «aquele clássico e convencional» supostamente encontrado em qualquer local e período histórico, relacionado ao processo de expansão do sector privado numa economia de mercado que tem ao seu dispor as «instituições corretas» (Huang 55). Para Huang (26), a abordagem tradicional tende a superestimar a análise macroeconómica, basicamente quantitativa, sem explicar as fontes do crescimento chinês, em média de 10%, no período de 1980 a 2010. Superestima também o papel da abertura dos mercados, assim como a especificidade das instituições chinesas. Ora, a pobreza teria caído na China de forma drástica durante os anos 80, quando o país era pouco aberto às importações, sequer havia iniciado as negociações com a OMC, e não possuía investimentos externos de maneira expressiva.

Huang também questiona o suposto viés gradualista das transformações institucionais chinesas. No seu entender, por volta do início dos anos 80, uma verdadeira revolução económica teria acontecido a partir de novas políticas e incentivos, cuja orientação teria mudado de sentido a partir dos anos 90. Neste segundo momento, seria priorizada a acumulação de capital nos espaços urbanos sob a liderança de empresas estatais. Daí o seu capítulo «O que Há de Errado em Shanghai», no qual se refere à elite política que teria chegado ao poder junto com Jiang Zemin.

Finalmente, Huang questiona a crescente importância conferida ao sector privado na China – para o que propõe uma revisão estatística –, ao mesmo tempo em que nos oferece uma nova interpretação sobre as «empresas comunitárias locais» (as TVEs em inglês). Sua interpretação revela-se vigorosa, permitindo segmentar as diversas fases da política económica chinesa no período recente, além de fornecer a sua própria interpretação acerca da seguinte questão: existe capitalismo na China contemporânea?

O seu modelo não deixa margem para dúvidas. A resposta é francamente positiva. Segundo ele, após 1978, a China estaria rumando de vento em popa no sentido de um «capitalismo empreendedor», puxado pela dinamização do mercado nas áreas rurais. Dez anos depois, a revolução teria sido abortada. Novas políticas seriam accionadas, vitaminando um «capitalismo de Estado», com elevada interferência política e voltado para a construção de grandes conglomerados paraestatais (Huang xvi-xvii, 9).

O seu livro encontra-se repleto de estórias que demonstram um raro conhecimento da economia chinesa, o qual é processado por meio de uma interpretação de como as instituições funcionam num modelo de capitalismo dinâmico e eficiente. Neste sentido, a Lenovo, tão propagandeada pela imprensa global, seria uma empresa 100% de Hong Kong, favorecida pelo acesso ao mercado de capitais e pela defesa dos direitos de propriedade que reinam na ilha (Huang 1-7).

Da mesma forma, o espírito empreendedor proveniente do vibrante mundo rural chinês pode ser ilustrado, a partir do exemplo de Nian Guangjiu, um pequeno produtor rural do pobre estado de Anhui. O criador das «sementes de idiota» conseguiu popularizar o consumo de sementes de girassol, fritas e salgadas, diferenciando seu produto num mercado alheio a qualquer noção de *marketing*. Em pouco tempo, seus produtos seriam encontrados nas principais cidades chinesas, gerando lucros de 1 milhão de yuans em 1986 (cerca 3,1 milhões em valores de 2003) (Huang 50-51).

O sector privado chinês, aponta Huang (13-15), é um vasto e complexo mundo, reunindo «empresas comunitárias», empresas verdadeiramente privadas, empresas com participação privada, *joint-ventures* entre empresas locais e transnacionais e empresas 100% transnacionais. No seu cômputo, a participação das empresas privadas na economia chinesa teria aumentado bastante no período pós-reformas chegando a 50% do valor adicionado industrial em 2005, mas bem abaixo dos 71% calculados pela OCDE. Entretanto, entre 1990 e 2002, esta participação – especialmente quando analisados os investimentos – teria se reduzido de maneira drástica.

Isto porque teria se alterado o ambiente económico – até os anos 80, marcado pela defesa dos direitos de propriedade, desregulação económica e liberalização financeira, com foco para as áreas rurais –, levando, nos anos 90, a uma menor eficiência microeconómica e um crescimento macro acelerador das desigualdades (Huang 24-25). Ao contrário, no período de «liberalismo direccional» dos anos 80, a China experimentaria «uma explosão de empreendedorismo local e privado, se expandindo do campo para as cidades» (Huang 50-51).

Haveria, inclusive, uma «disposição da China rural para o capitalismo», já que mesmo no período maoísta as comunas não teriam logrado destruir completamente os incentivos privados. Mais que o sistema de responsabilidade familiar, o factor decisivo seria o acesso a crédito e, mais importante, a credibilidade de que as reformas «eram para valer». Deng Xiaoping teria atuado como a figura certa no local correto, já que era visto como diferente de Mao, possuindo um apreço quase automático, justamente por ter sofrido «na carne» durante os excessos da Revolução Cultural (Huang 33-38, 61).

Esta dinâmica proveniente de baixo, associada à crescente expansão e diversificação do mercado, pode ser analisada pelo lado da demanda, em virtude da expansão da renda dos produtores rurais em virtude dos preços maiores cobrados pelos seus produtos e dos ganhos de produtividade; mas também atua do lado da oferta, em virtude da sua maior capacidade de resposta aos estímulos do mercado, ao ponto de rapidamente se converterem em fornecedores das áreas urbanas, se transformando em importantes homens de negócios das cidades. Isto explica o aumento da desigualdade no campo nos anos 80 num contexto de redução das disparidades de renda entre as áreas rurais e urbanas (Huang 60-66).

Huang também se detém sobre o fenómeno das «empresas comunitárias locais». Autores de prestígio como Joseph Stiglitz e Douglass North teriam se «enamorado» das TVEs, dispensando uma enorme energia analítica para tentar, inutilmente, compreendê-las (Huang 27-8, 69-71).

Segundo nosso autor, o nome «empresas comunitárias locais» viria de uma mudança semântica com relação às comunas estabelecidas durante o «Grande Salto Adiante». Uma mudança sutil anunciando uma perspectiva completamente nova. O problema da interpretação ocidental está em «olhar» para as TVEs como empresas de propriedade das comunidades, públicas ou colectivas, quando, na prática, segundo a definição geográfica ou locacional chinesa, estas se referem às empresas tão-somente situadas nas áreas rurais, o que inclui todo o tipo de negócios, tais como «empresas apoiadas pelo governo local, as oriundas de associações entre os camponeses e de outras associações privadas ou empresas individuais» (Huang 31, 73-74).

Huang nos mostra como, em 1996, de 23 milhões de TVEs, apenas 1,5 milhão eram colectivas. Até o final dos anos 80, as privadas estariam inclusive avançando sobre as colectivas. Cabe ressaltar ainda a seguinte correlação: quanto menor o PIB *per capita* do estado chinês, maior a participação das TVEs privadas no cômputo total destas empresas.

Os anos 90 inverteriam a tendência: os poderes locais passariam a interferir na gestão destas empresas, muitas vezes tomando-as para si, segundo o

relato de nosso autor. Até então, a China teria experimentado a ascensão de um «capitalismo virtuoso», capaz de expandir a economia de mercado e de reduzir a pobreza (Huang 77-85), bem à maneira smithiana, segundo pretende implicitamente o economista chinês.

Mas este dinamismo de baixo seria abortado, a partir dos anos 90, com a inversão do sinal das políticas, inclusive com a repressão de pequenos empreendedores rurais e urbanos, forçados a liberar os seus terrenos para grandes capitalistas geralmente mancomunados com o Estado local ou central e com o PC Chinês.

A conclusão de Huang, diferentemente de Arrighi, não leva a nenhuma indeterminação. Isto não atende pelo nome de socialismo. É capitalismo, diz ele, mas à sua maneira, «um capitalismo de compadres construído à base da corrupção sistemática e do uso mais cru do poder político para fins privados» (Huang 236-237). Coincidentemente ou não, a década de 90 presenciaria uma substancial piora dos indicadores de desigualdade, uma elevação dos custos de educação e saúde e uma reconcentração dos recursos fiscais (Huang 246-250, 256-260).

Como parte de um modelo dualista e ahistórico, Huang concebe ser possível voltar atrás e accionar, por meio de políticas e incentivos, o «capitalismo empreendedor». Também ao contrário de Arrighi, não existe uma definição precisa de capitalismo. Existe o «bom» e o «mau» capitalismo, ambos travando uma batalha campal sem fim. Um capitalismo vem de baixo, se espraia do campo e conta com instituições eficientes; o outro que vem de cima, é repressor, está repleto de intervenção política, transformando privilégios em lucros. Se esta oposição já estava em Smith, ele conseguia trabalhá-la partindo de padrões de desenvolvimentos diversos – Europa vs. China –, e analisando os constrangimentos institucionais a partir de cada situação específica.

Apesar de partir de outro extremo, concebendo o capitalismo como um padrão de desenvolvimento que permite ampliar a lucratividade a partir da maior divisão técnica do trabalho e da crescente expropriação dos trabalhadores, Arrighi de alguma forma mantém a mesma esperança de que a China possa se curvar à sua utopia, de uma sociedade dinâmica, pautada numa crescente ampliação da divisão social do trabalho e onde a expropriação se mostra ao menos controlada. Daí afirmar, partindo de outra elaboração conceitual, que o «capitalismo» ainda não venceu na China.

É possível sair do impasse? Ambos os autores nos fornecem evidências que merecem ser levadas em consideração. A influência smithiana abriu-lhes o campo de visão. Mas pode Smith nos explicar o funcionamento de uma economia capitalista com todas as suas *nuances*, ele que escrevera quando a criança ainda engatinhava? Conforme ressalta Heilbroner (58 e 71), apesar de toda a

riqueza analítica e complexidade de sua obra, Smith foi o economista do pré-capitalismo industrial, não podendo servir de guia para a transformação histórica que viria adiante.

O problema de Arrighi está em ver um padrão de desenvolvimento não-capitalista numa economia que se integra de maneira vigorosa na economia-mundo capitalista, ainda que com cautela e definindo as formas de interacção.

O de Huang reside na tentativa de equiparar capitalismo com livre iniciativa. Além desta equação não condizer com a evolução histórica – como nos ensina Braudel (*OJDT*; *OTDM*), e mais recentemente Chang (*Chutando a Escada*) –, isto se torna ainda mais inviável num país caracterizado pela centralização do poder e pela busca da unidade a qualquer preço.

Ou seja, o «capitalismo virtuoso e empreendedor» de Huang não teria fornecido outra coisa senão uma base social e económica para que o capitalismo propriamente dito emergisse. Um capitalismo que reúne várias economias regionais e institucionais em constante competição, com tarefas alocadas pelo Estado e uma noção de panejamento directivo bastante peculiar que estabelece critérios para a abertura de mercado e para a atracção de investimentos externos. Ou seja, que apesar disto tudo, não deixa de espelhar à sua maneira as contradições do capitalismo, inclusive levando à expropriação real de centenas de milhões de migrantes rurais nas áreas urbanas, apesar e por conta da sua ascensão global na economia-mundo capitalista contemporânea.

Marx de Mãos Dadas com Schumpeter e Keynes: As Várias Economias Chinesas no Pós-Abertura

Antes de prosseguirmos, vale à pena retornar a Braudel, nosso guia durante esta digressão teórica, que pretende acima de tudo encontrar uma nova perspectiva para se olhar o real – as economias chinesas em mutação – de maneira menos viesada.

No seu livro «Gramática das Civilizações», Braudel (1989) nos fornece pistas preciosas para a compreensão da China contemporânea, o que deriva essencialmente da aplicação do seu método na interpretação da história desta civilização específica. Estamos nos referindo à «dialéctica peculiar à história, fundada na diversidade dos próprios tempos históricos». Segundo o historiador francês, «enquanto uma história próxima corre ao nosso encontro em largas passadas, uma história distante nos acompanha a passo lento» (Braudel 18-20). Se isto vale para toda sociedade humana, no caso chinês parece uma afirmação quase tautológica.

Para Braudel (191): «como toda sociedade global, a chinesa se apresenta como um complexo de sociedades, como um encaixe de formas, vetustas umas, progressistas outras, e cujo devir (quando devir há) depende de uma lenta e imperceptível evolução». Sobre a China, mais especificamente, «se poderá dizer que é, ao mesmo tempo, patriarcal, escravocrata, camponesa e moderna, muito distante, certamente do “modelo” das sociedades ocidentais» (Braudel 191).

Sobre a China de Mao, o que vale também para a actual, ainda que sob uma nova direcção económica, e inclusive emprestando mais sentido ao diagnóstico braudeliano, presenciasse “um dos raros momentos em que uma civilização se renova destruindo-se, sacrificando algumas de suas estruturas», mas mantendo-se fiel a «formas de pensamento e de sensibilidade que lhe são próprias» (Braudel 201). E é, justamente no período actual, que se põe a prova aquilo que Braudel classificara como um «nacionalismo de civilização» (208), agora reforçado pelos indicadores de desenvolvimento económico.

E completa, «não podemos impedir-nos de pensar que eles são herdeiros da grande tradição burocrática do Império milenar» e que «uma nova *intelligentsia*, actuante e ousada, eliminou a antiga, livresca e esclerosada». Desta forma, «a mais antiga civilização viva tornou-se a força mais jovem, mais progressista de todos os países subdesenvolvidos» (Braudel 210).

Estes trechos foram escritos para a primeira edição do seu livro de 1963, antes, portanto, da Revolução Cultural, que viria a ceifar outra geração, até que uma nova surgisse, ainda influenciada pela interpretação das contradições primárias e secundárias *à la* Mao, mas voltada, em última instância, para o desenvolvimento das forças produtivas (Cornejo, 11).

Juntando o Braudel analista da China com o Braudel historiador para além da economia, podemos dizer que a China passa hoje a ocupar papel de destaque na economia-mundo capitalista, servindo de laboratório privilegiado para se compreender como «o capitalismo e a economia de mercado coexistem, se interpenetram, sem nunca se confundirem» (Braudel, *OTDM* 26), por vezes inclusive se conflituando, poderíamos acrescentar, como parece ser o caso da China contemporânea. As várias Chinas – a patriarcal, a escravocrata, a camponesa e a moderna – se transformam de maneira vigorosa, se complementando e se atraindo.

Existe, portanto, uma «dialéctica oscilante entre a economia de mercado que se desenvolve quase por si, espontaneamente, e uma economia predominante, que coroa estas actividades, que as orienta e as têm à sua mercê» (Braudel 28-29), assimilando-se, deslocando-as ou simplesmente reprimindo-as. Isto é o que não percebe Huang quando opõe de maneira dualista o «capita-

lismo empreendedor» do campo ao «capitalismo de Estado» das grandes cidades. Ele conhece os dados, mas seu esquema teórico não dá conta da realidade complexa que tem pela frente.

Mas seria o capitalismo apenas um lugar privilegiado da acumulação, circunscrito aos níveis superiores da sociedade e da economia, como parece sugerir Braudel (*OTDM* 583-584) ou poderia interagir com a economia de mercado em volta, redireccionando-a e se aproveitando dela, ao mesmo tempo em que ocupa novos espaços na economia global, como parece sugerir Arrighi, ainda que não admita ter se instaurado um padrão de desenvolvimento capitalista na China?

Esta segunda formulação é a que passamos a assumir após a elaboração deste texto. Ou seja, não é definitiva. Em síntese, capitalismo, sim, por sua conexão global, retirando dinamismo de uma economia de mercado vibrante, mas cerceada pelo poder do Estado, que escolhe seus vencedores, os quais devem se mostrar competitivos dentro e fora da China. A mão-de-obra barata faz parte do arranjo, mas não explica tudo. Existem não apenas na China várias sociedades, mas também vários «regimes de trabalho» encaixados nas suas dinâmicas de acumulação económica específicas.

Esta perspectiva – além de bater de frente com a visão construída pelo conhecimento ocidental, especialmente pelos economistas que utilizam os conceitos de capitalismo e economia de mercado de maneira indistinta – difere bastante da esposada pelos analistas chineses, economistas ou não.

Depois de acompanhar durante três dias seguidos os debates do *IV World Forum on Chinese Studies* (SASS, 2010), organizado pela Academia de Ciências Sociais de Shanghai, tive a oportunidade de constatar algumas regularidades acerca da sua maneira de pensar o «modelo chinês de desenvolvimento».

A visão predominante – o que demonstra a íntima relação entre intelectuais e partido, ainda que isto não implique ausência de divergências e nem tampouco um suposto monolitismo – é a que propaga a noção de «socialismo com características chinesas».

Socialismo é geralmente entendido como Estado forte, o que na China é o mesmo que partido forte. Um Estado forte que não pode deixar o mercado sem direcção, sob pena de levar à «anarquia» que se referia Marx ou à formação de novos grupos e classes sociais sem controle do Estado, pondo em xeque o partido. Trata-se, portanto, de uma equação político-ideológica, a ser recheada com os dados empíricos de cada situação concreta.

A melhor formulação a embasar este modelo chinês de desenvolvimento parece ainda ser a teoria de Chen Yun, chamada de «pássaro na gaiola», e formulada no início dos anos 80 (McGregor 37-38; e Zhang 63-64). Segundo

esta teoria – bem chinesa, fundamentada em um *slogan*, que permite actuar sobre o real, de maneira pragmática e sem ceder a visões extremas, antes abrindo caminho para várias interpretações e acções políticas –, a gaiola poderia ser ampliada, de modo a deixar mais pássaros entrarem, conferindo-lhes maior ilusão de liberdade, mas jamais se cogitaria na sua retirada. Seria uma forma de dizer que a China jamais adoptaria plenamente reformas no sentido de uma economia de mercado à maneira ocidental, o que para os chineses tendem a ser sinónimo de capitalismo.

Em linhas gerais, o modelo chinês distancia-se tanto do socialismo soviético quanto dos países capitalistas do Sudeste Asiático, ainda que possa ter elementos dos dois. É marcado pelo experimentalismo e pelo gradualismo. O objectivo é a modernização económica no sentido de aprimorar o socialismo (Li 2001-2006). No actual momento, o país poderia ser considerado uma economia subdesenvolvida, ainda situada no «estágio primário do socialismo», com um imenso caminho a percorrer no sentido do desenvolvimento pacífico (SASS, 2010). Este seria o «mantra» das elites políticas que comandam o Partido Comunista Chinês, ainda que existam *nuanças* e diferenças expressivas.

Outra visão parte de um panorama histórico mais amplo de modo a situar o modelo de desenvolvimento chinês. Este não se compreende sem algumas características básicas: Estado civilizacional, grandeza populacional, geografia específica e tradições políticas (meritocracia), económicas (forte base rural) e culturais (predominância do colectivo sobre o individual). Seria um modelo de desenvolvimento chinês, nem capitalista e tampouco socialista.

Uma terceira visão encontra-se centrada no aspecto económico. O modelo chinês apoia-se na transição de uma «sociedade de subsistência» para uma «sociedade moderna». Neste sentido, a China teria logrado, ao utilizar mecanismos de mercado, instaurar um modelo de desenvolvimento centrado nos investimentos e na inserção externa. Para lograr sustentabilidade no longo prazo, faz-se necessário migrar para o consumo e o mercado interno (Chi 1-13).

Uma quarta visão, mais próxima do pensamento ocidental, acredita que esta transição apenas seria possível por meio da maior liberdade dos mecanismos de mercado, de modo inclusive a resolver os desequilíbrios estruturais da economia global. Acreditam na especificidade chinesa, mas defendem a sua crescente transformação numa «economia de mercado».

Por último, há aqueles mais preocupados em não encapsular o suposto «modelo» chinês numa mercadoria a ser exportada para os demais países em desenvolvimento. Independente do que seja, ele não deve se transformar num «Consenso de Beijing».

Serviria apenas para consumo chinês, não sendo passível de generalização. Os mais cépticos inclusive apontam que seria possível rotular «qualquer categoria com o complemento características chinesas» (SASS, 2010).

Este breve relato, algo impressionista, retirado de notas colectadas num seminário com a presença de alguns dos principais pensadores chineses, revela que discutir a gestão económica neste país não pode prescindir de uma discussão acerca das ideologias desenvolvidas no seio do partido, as quais não seguem os figurinos ocidentais.

Ao invés de tentar proteger o país da economia-mundo capitalista, algo que se intentara até o século XVIII, tornando-se esta, durante os séculos XIX e XX, presa fácil das conquistas internacionais; o que a China pós-Mao – e a de agora comandada por uma nova elite política e intelectual – parece pretender é um engajamento externo a partir de uma visão própria de soberania, algo que Leonard (200: 130-133) chama de «mentalidade amuralhada». O debate económico acima pode ser lido como uma síntese das várias visões sobre como viabilizar este ideal colectivo.

Não se entende o debate sobre as reformas económicas na China sem um mergulho no universo ideológico deste país. Para Zhang (1996: 1-2), a ideologia importa na China mais do que em qualquer outro lugar por quatro factores: as elites políticas são ideologicamente treinadas, cumprindo a retórica marxista um papel de destaque; existe um compromisso institucional das elites com o partido no seio do qual se dão os debates; qualquer mudança institucional deve ser precedida por novas directrizes definidas ideologicamente; há ainda a noção de superioridade moral daqueles que gerem o Estado/Partido, a qual deve orientar qualquer renovação ideológica, antes de se transformar em resultados práticos.

Existe, portanto, «uma filosofia das reformas económicas chinesas», a qual se origina do debate ideológico que pode tanto fazer avançar, quanto travar, o ritmo das mudanças económicas (Zhang 3-4). Para abrir fendas na ortodoxia maoísta, é preciso renová-la. Do contrário, a própria unidade do partido correria risco.

Ou seja, a ideologia é parte do processo de abertura económica, delimitando o seu próprio ritmo e alcance. Desta forma, o debate chinês é parte do real. Como consequência, ainda que essencial para se compreender a mesma realidade, não nos fornece o distanciamento necessário, já que se encontra imbricado ao próprio processo de mudança. Procuremos então tecer alguns traços da modalidade peculiar de capitalismo internalizado pela China – de maneira complexa, contraditória e sem um padrão determinado de evolução –, mas apenas possível por se engatar à economia-mundo capitalista contemporânea.

Importa salientar que a noção de economia-mundo capitalista, desenvolvida por Wallerstein (74-75), parece-nos mais adequada do que a braudelina, já que aponta para uma mutação fundamental ocorrida a partir dos séculos XIX e XX.

Capitalismo e economia-mundo teriam se tornado dois lados de uma mesma moeda, universal, mas com diversas ramificações e sentidos. Entretanto, a noção de economia mundo capitalista deve saltar do horizonte limitado de Wallerstein, que a encara apenas como produção para o mercado voltada à maximização do lucro, tal como já apontara Brenner (*The Origins of Capitalism Development*); de modo a incorporar a expansão quantitativa e qualitativa do capitalismo, returbinado pelas novas tecnologias e pelos novos ajustes espaciais (Harvey 33-36), para o qual a China fornece o principal exemplo.

Para Arrighi (355-361), de facto, a economia chinesa conseguiu se aproveitar de um mercado interno em expansão que conseguia se nutrir de um mercado externo complementar, onde diferentes empresas já dinâmicas internamente, logravam ganhar espaço em virtude de sua maior competitividade sistémica, motivadas por ganhos de escala e crescente diversificação.

As várias economias – as estatais ajustadas, as transnacionais, as empresas comunitárias locais, sob várias roupagens, seja no Delta do Rio Pérola, onde estão as mais intensivas em trabalho, seja no Delta do Rio Yangtze, onde estão as mais intensivas em capital, seja no pólo tecnológico de Zhongguan em Pequim – aparecem combinadas a partir de uma divisão social do trabalho, jamais estática, já que todas podem ascender, desde que se mostrem competitivas para tanto, aos degraus mais altos da estrutura económica, sempre supervisionadas pelo Estado, é claro, ou às vezes reprimidas ou constringidas por suas regulações.

De um lado, o dinamismo das áreas rurais, em actividades agrícolas ou não. De outro, o controle do Estado sob o crédito, assegurando a centralização de capital que permite o aproveitamento combinado da expansão dos mercados interno e externo articulados no sentido de uma economia mais intensiva em capital e conhecimento. Vale lembrar que tanto as exportações líquidas como o investimento externo directo, apenas passam a crescer de forma substantiva a partir de 1992, apresentando mesmo assim participações pequenas quando comparadas ao PIB ou ao total de investimentos, respectivamente (Lo 11-14).

Manuel Castells (353) adopta uma perspectiva semelhante. Para o sociólogo espanhol, o novo dinamismo chinês é resultado da fusão histórica entre um novo «Estado Desenvolvimentista» com o antigo «Estado Revolucionário». A transformação económica chinesa não se explica, portanto, sem a conexão das várias regiões com a diáspora chinesa e com as empresas transnacionais – geralmente em associação com empresas estatais ou comunitárias locais – a

partir de uma aliança política estruturada com a participação dos governos locais e do central, interconectados pelo partido e pelo Exército, porém sujeita a atritos de toda ordem. Logra-se, portanto, uma estrutura de mercado onde as empresas são oligopolistas nos mercados locais e competitivas nas esferas nacionais e internacionais (Castells 358-361, 366).

Mas estas várias economias não se combinam de maneira estática, elas antes evoluem de maneira conjunta, ainda que por vez conflituosa, à medida que se alteram os padrões de desenvolvimento.

Como nos demonstra Lo (4), a China apresentou uma trajetória própria de transformação económica desde as reformas de 1978. Três períodos parecem evidentes. Um primeiro (1978-1992), onde o consumo puxou a expansão da demanda. A dinâmica era a seguinte: o consumo gerava mais investimento, potencializando a expansão da demanda, permitindo a transferência de mão-de-obra do campo para a cidade e também a geração de ganhos de escala. Crescia o emprego, enquanto os salários estagnavam. Os estrangimentos principais se encontravam no lado da oferta (Lo 194-1998).

Um período de transição ocorre entre 1992-1998. Durante este período, ocorre um forte enxugamento das empresas estatais e a China sofre as pressões deflacionárias decorrentes da crise asiática. Um início de abertura financeira tem lugar. Novos segmentos de classe passam a deter o controlo da agenda económica, sugerindo a substituição dos mecanismos de controlo do mercado pelos mecanismos de adaptação de mercado (Lo 5 e 31).

A partir de 1998, um novo padrão tem lugar. O investimento puxa a demanda, ao passo que o consumo cresce menos. Os salários em alguns segmentos se elevam, mas o nível de emprego se expande a ritmo mais lento. O estrangimento agora aparece do lado da demanda. O Estado atua, agora, de maneira keynesiana, liberando crédito, e de maneira schumpeteriana, forjando novos conglomerados industriais, geralmente estatais, voltados para a assimilação tecnológica.

Ao contrário do que esperaria a teoria convencional, um país «escasso» de capital e com mão-de-obra abundante passa a ocupar posições de destaque nas exportações de alto valor adicionado e intensidade tecnológica. Mais que capacidade produtiva, a China passa a moldá-la a partir de um sistema nacional de inovação, composto por um conjunto coerente de mecanismos institucionais (Lo 12 e 16). Ao contrário de Huang, Lo (20), aponta que este padrão é resultado da desigualdade verificada no padrão anterior, ainda que admita que este indicador, sob o novo padrão, possa se acirrar, especialmente em virtude da menor capacidade de absorção de emprego e da pressão exercida em alguns segmentos mais intensivos em trabalho e voltados à exportação por um «exér-

cito de reserva» de trabalhadores proveniente das áreas rurais, a grande parte dos quais sem acesso a quaisquer tipos direitos (Lo 199).

De qualquer forma, um novo padrão emerge, mais intensivo em capital e conhecimento, e que depende de inovações de modo a reduzir o custo do capital e permitir a ampliação dos investimentos e da demanda (Lo 22). Ao invés da diversificação industrial, a maior eficiência na produção de bens de capital passa a dar a tônica (17).

Ainda que de forma estilizada, importa mencionar que as orientações de política económica – além da disputa ideológica mencionada por Zhang – também dependem do papel das classes e grupos sociais e da sua força/fraqueza com relação ao Estado.

Com a nova liderança empossada em 2002, o objectivo passa a ser o de assegurar o controle do Estado sobre os níveis superiores da economia, sem deixar de avançar novas preocupações «socialistas» com a situação de pobreza nas áreas rurais e com a crescente desigualdade social e regional (Lo 32). Esta mudança de padrões de desenvolvimento, conforme nos relata Lo, encontra alguma semelhança com os modelos de crescimento económico e os esquemas de reprodução do capital marxista.

Caberia, então, perguntar se não poderia a China contemporânea de alguma forma – tal como fizemos com Smith – contribuir para uma revisão dos argumentos marxistas? E no caso de Schumpeter e Keynes? O que segue são breves conjecturas realizadas a partir do contexto da digressão teórica aqui realizada.

Não se trata de propor um eclectismo do bom senso, algo que não existe. Mas de utilizar ferramentas conceituais destes teóricos do capitalismo para se fornecer novas perspectivas acerca do funcionamento complexo da economia chinesa que, ao se transformar, afecta a dinâmica da economia-mundo capitalista, especialmente a partir da primeira década do século XXI. Tentamos, pois, lançar estas novas perspectivas que ainda não se pretendem totalizantes.

Marx assume, desde o início, a impossibilidade teórica da economia estacionária dos clássicos, assim como do conceito de equilíbrio. Já Schumpeter (31-32), ressalta o «achado» de Marx, de que progresso económico, numa sociedade capitalista, se dá por meio de rupturas. Na verdade, o que lhes diferencia de Smith, segundo Arrighi (87-90), é a concepção para a expansão contínua do capital, superando as barreiras que ele próprio encontra pelo caminho.

No entender de Arrighi (83-84), o aumento da dimensão e do controle do capital, junto com a formação de um exército industrial de reserva e a expansão do capitalismo em escala internacional, desorganizam a própria estrutura social. Marx, ao desenvolver o seu programa de pesquisa, teria mudado o tópico e a natureza da conversa – tal como encetada por Smith – deixando de lado a

questão nacional, para focar num duplo processo de fortalecimento do capital e empobrecimento da classe operária, ao passo que o palco da análise se transplanta para a escala internacional (Arrighi 73-74).

No modelo marxista de reprodução ampliada do capital, o incremento do capital variável (salários) se dá de maneira menos proporcional que o do capital constante (máquinas), o que permite um aumento vigoroso da massa de capital e de excedente, ainda que possa levar à queda da taxa de lucros. Paralelamente, emerge a tendência à ampliação do tamanho das fábricas, assim como das unidades de controlo – concentração e centralização do capital, respectivamente.

Schumpeter (33-34) tece loas a Marx por ter integrado os dois processos e tendências – centralização e concentração – mesmo não tendo à sua disposição os conceitos de oligopólio e estrutura de mercado, já que parte dos capitalistas tomados individualmente.

Entretanto, a luta incessante pelo incremento de mais-valia, por meio da incorporação de progresso técnico e da elevação da composição orgânica do capital (capital constante/capital variável), que reduz a base de trabalho vivo, gera instabilidade e crises recorrentes. Diferentemente dos clássicos, não se trata mais de uma escalada crescente em direcção a um planalto de estabilidade (Heilbroner 158-161).

Schumpeter formulou como saída para a camisa-de-força neoclássica o conceito de ondas de inovações que quebravam a calmaria da economia estacionária. Estas explicariam ainda a natureza cíclica das economias capitalistas, já que levariam num primeiro momento a lucros excessivos, erosionados no momento seguinte pela multiplicação da produção e queda dos preços. Por outro lado, abaixo da superfície, mesmo no momento de maior criatividade tecnológica, uma destruição acometeria os sectores tradicionais, deslocados pelos novos. Ou seja, as mudanças de preços, taxas de juros e emprego seriam epifenómenos do processo de «rejuvenescimento recorrente do aparato produtivo» (Schumpeter 68).

O sistema como um todo é transformado de dentro, a partir de um fluxo de novos produtos, que incrementam a renda da colectividade, mas não de forma igual ao longo do tempo e dos sectores produtivos. Revoluções periodicamente redefinem a estrutura de produção existente ao mobilizarem novos métodos de produção, formas de organização, fontes de insumos e rotas de comércio. Este conjunto de factores explica como a máquina capitalista entra em movimento (Schumpeter 68 e 83).

Na realidade, a concorrência capitalista mostra-se bem diferente da descrição fornecida pelos manuais, como também não parece captada pela análise daqueles que vêem os oligopólios apenas como uma forma de administrar as

estruturas existentes, quando de facto resultam das opções tomadas – em termos de novos produtos, formas de produção, tecnologias, fontes de insumos e mercados – num mundo em constante mutação. E, conclui nosso autor, «esta concorrência é tanto mais eficiente quanto o é um bombardeio comparado com o se forçar uma porta» (Schumpeter 84).

Como reler Marx e Schumpeter a partir da China? O descrito acima pode ser interpretado a partir do padrão de desenvolvimento descrito por Lo, como fundamentado no «aprofundamento do capital». Ao invés de uma economia de mercado smithiana, que leva à diversificação e à crescente especialização do trabalho, e à multiplicação de empresas e de agentes económicos, o que parece predominar durante os anos 80; na virada do século XX para o XXI, e de alguma forma como resultado da evolução em relação àquele padrão, apenas possível por meio de políticas públicas e de um modo específico de inserção na economia-mundo capitalista, a economia chinesa passa a funcionar no ritmo do capitalismo, ainda que de maneira bastante peculiar. Salta aos olhos a capacidade de atenuar as contradições inerentes à acumulação capitalista, logrando ao menos prorrogar as crises de realização e de superprodução.

Uma das válvulas de escape é a conexão exitosa entre mercado interno e mercado externo das várias economias chinesas, logrando inclusive drenar parte desta cadeia para os fornecedores do Sudeste Asiático.

Isto permitiria, à maneria schumpeteriana, atenuar a destruição dos sectores tradicionais, ao mesmo tempo em que se potencializa ao máximo o aproveitamento das novas técnicas produtivas por meio da sua difusão generalizada nos sectores mais intensivos em capital, em expansão tanto no mercado interno como no externo, propiciando ainda a queda do custo dos bens de investimento.

A China, ao invés de produzir inovações tecnológicas, drena para o seu território parte dos lucros possibilitados pelas mesmas, por meio de novos métodos de organização produtiva e de suas redes comerciais, gerando um fluxo de novos produtos padronizados que inundam o seu mercado e o mundial, vistos como complementares. Se a inovação lhe é exógena, ela a internaliza e amplia o seu alcance, reduzindo os lucros globais, mas abocanhando parte expressiva da massa de lucros propiciada por sua eficiente organização económica.

Mesmo assim, o fantasma da superprodução não está ausente. É aí que entra o Estado keynesiano pilotado de maneira cuidadosa pelas novas elites políticas do Partido Comunista Chinês. Para que este possa se viabilizar, a China estrutura um vasto colchão de reservas internacionais, superior a US\$ 2 trilhões, graças ao controle de sua moeda é à regulação da entrada de capitais. Graças a isto, pode aparecer como a única nação do planeta capaz de implementar políticas keynesianas efectivas.

Com a economia em crescimento, para fora e para dentro, o controle do crédito, nas mãos dos bancos públicos, e com recursos orçamentários crescentes, este país consegue accionar um conjunto de pacotes fiscais keynesianos de modo a estimular a demanda interna, inaugurar novos programas de bem-estar, expandir a infra-estrutura e revitalizar as empresas do sector estatal, no sentido da sua concentração, racionalização e maior eficiência (Lo 201-202).

Os limites à acumulação eterna, e o avanço das contradições sociais e produtivas, pontuados por Marx, entretanto, e apesar das saídas schumpeterianas e keynesianas, continuam a existir, se é que não se tornam mais expressivos. A crise global de 2008, apesar de enfrentada com sucesso pela China, anuncia que as válvulas de escape não podem mais se repetir de maneira indefinida.

Usando a terminologia de Arrighi e Wallestein, é como se parte do centro, da semiperiferia e da periferia da economia global, tivessem sido transplantadas para o território chinês, afectando as demais parcelas do centro, da semiperiferia e da periferia da economia-mundo capitalista.

Se, desta forma, a China logrou expandir sua economia de mercado e instaurar um sector capitalista, a partir da conexão com a economia-mundo capitalista, conferindo novo ritmo e sentido à sua transformação económica; a continuidade da expansão da economia chinesa – e das várias economias que ela engloba – passa a depender agora de um conjunto de decisões tomadas não mais pelo seu Estado keynesiano, mas pelo poder económico global, do qual ela participa, mas não possui a palavra final.

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Population Development Changes in the Course of Economic Reform in the PRC

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Abstract

The analysis of Chinese population development from the founding of the Chinese People's Republic in 1949 to 2009 shows a wide range of issues connected with demographic situation, the principal trends, evolution and implementation of population policy, as well as new tendencies in marriage and family planning in China.

The main realities of modern China are huge population and a shortage of nature resources. From demographic point of view China is unique country, its enormous population exerts constant pressure upon economic, social and ecological situation. Population growth rate determines prospects of modernization of the country in this millenium. That is why optimization of population reproduction, strict control of population growth are basic features of population policy.

Since 1949 until now five population censuses and a number of sample surveys have been carried out. They are a good base for the analysis of changes in population reproduction. Beginning from the 70's the Chinese authorities carry out population policy aimed at decreasing population size. During the period of 25 years fertility decreased from traditional level of 6 children to 1,8 children per one woman. In the world history there was no case of such a rapid fertility fall.

The main problem for China now is the necessity to avoid the demographic crisis, the achievement of the population size which may cause acute aggravation of food supply, living conditions and unemployment. Chinese scholars consider, that the optimal population size for China on the territory of 9,6 million square km should not be more than 700-800 million people. In 2009 population size of China was 1,3 billion people. The report of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, 2000, pointed out that it was necessary to limit population size at the level of 1,6 billion people, this is "the line of destiny for Chinese nation".

The present day China is in the process of embracing the contemporary pattern of population reproduction with its moderate demographic indices. Low birth rate and low population growth rate must invariably contribute to China's social and economic reforms. Despite the contradictions of one-child family policy, yhe present population trends are positive for the national development plans.

Resumo

A análise do desenvolvimento da população chinesa, desde a implantação da República Popular da China, em 1949, até 2009, mostra uma ampla gama de questões relacionadas com a situação demográfica, as principais tendências, evolução e implementação da política de população, bem como as novas tendências relativamente ao casamento e planeamento familiar na China.

As principais realidades da China moderna passam pela enorme população e pela escassez de recursos naturais. Do ponto de vista demográfico, a China é um país singular, a sua enorme população exerce uma pressão constante sobre a situação económica, social e ambiental. A taxa de crescimento populacional determina as perspectivas de modernização do país neste milénio. É por isso que a optimização da reprodução da população e um controle rigoroso do crescimento da população são elementos básicos da política demográfica.

Desde 1949 até hoje, já foram realizados cinco recenseamentos da população e um grande número de inquéritos, os quais constituem uma boa base para a análise das mudanças na reprodução da população. A partir dos anos 70 as autoridades chinesas têm levado a cabo uma política demográfica que visa diminuir a dimensão da população. Durante um período de 25 anos, a fertilidade passou de 6 filhos para 1,8 filhos por mulher. Na história mundial não houve mais nenhum caso em que houvesse uma queda tão rápida na fertilidade.

O principal problema para a China é a necessidade de evitar uma crise demográfica; o tamanho da população pode causar um agravamento agudo no fornecimento de alimentos, nas condições de vida e no desemprego. Estudiosos chineses consideram que o tamanho ideal da população chinesa, para um território de 9,6 milhões de quilómetros quadrados, não deve ser superior a 700-800 milhões de pessoas. Em 2009, o tamanho da população foi de 1,3 mil milhões de pessoas. O relatório da Academia Chinesa de Ciências, de 2000, salientou que era necessário limitar o tamanho da população ao nível das 1,6 mil milhões de pessoas, sendo esta «a linha do destino para a nação chinesa».

A China de hoje está em processo de adoptar o padrão contemporâneo de reprodução da população, com índices demográficos moderados. As baixas taxas de natalidade e de crescimento da população devem contribuir para as reformas sociais e económicas da China. Apesar das contradições da política do filho único, as tendências populacionais actuais são positivas para os planos de desenvolvimento nacionais.

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Excessive population growth is a serious problem facing the contemporary world. The global emergence of the population problem poses a great challenge to many countries and regions. For a populous country like China the challenge posed by the population problem not only has an influence on the survival and development of the Chinese nation but also affects the stability and prosperity of the whole world.

The population situation touches upon the success or failure of China's modernization drive as well as the coordinated and sustainable development between the population on one hand, and the economy, society, resources and environment on the other. It is a choice that the Chinese government has made implementing family planning, control of population growth and improvement of population quality a basic state policy on the basis of a wish to make the state strong and powerful.

China is a developing country with the largest population in the world. Its vast land of 9,6 million square kilometers is inhabited by 56 nationalities. In 2009 China's population accounted for 1,33474 billion people, which was 20% of the world's total. Due to the huge population base, China's annual net population growth in recent years has still been around 8 million. China's population is also very unevenly distributed, with the most part of it living in the south-eastern part of the country, which occupies 43% of the country's total area. 53% of the population (according to statistics in 2009) live in the countryside, so the level of urbanization is not very high (*Zhongguo tongji zhaiyao* 2010: 40-41).

China's arable land is 7% of the world total; per capita fresh water is ? of the world average. For over four decades, China has witnessed dramatic economic development, but due to rapid expansion of the population size, the indices related to people's living standards are still low. China occupies the 93-d place by Human Development Index in the world. China has at least 15-20 million people reaching working age every year. Insufficient employment has produced surplus labor force of over 200 million in the countryside.

The huge population base and annual population growth of 8 million constitute a problem for China, a country that has small cultivated land, limited natural resources, whose development is regionally imbalanced. The negative impact of China's over-abundance of population has influenced all aspects of social and economic life, environmental protection; in fact, many difficulties China has experienced in economic and social development were directly related to population problem. Population has become a major factor that restricts socio-economic development and the improvement of people's quality of life in China.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, due to the stability of society, the development of production and improvement of medical and health care conditions the death rate was reduced substantially and the number of population increased rapidly; high birth rate, low death rate and high growth rate were typical for the demographic situation. At that time China lost the chance to solve the problem of over-rapid population growth in the first birth peak period. There was still the lack of a deep understanding of the seriousness of the population problem and the government had not worked out a clear population policy, family planning was not effectively carried out all over the country.

From the early 1970s the Chinese government had become increasingly deeply aware than over-rapid growth of population was unfavorable for economic and social development and took a decision energetically carry out family planning in both urban and rural areas and integrated plan for population development into the plan of national economic and social development. Family planning and population control have been incorporated in the Constitution of the People's Republic of China. Consequently, family planning work entered a new phase of development.

China has undergone a gradually developing process in its understanding towards population and development issues: while striving to develop its economy and productive forces, China must practice family planning, curtail the rapid growth of population and improve quality of life. Only in this way its population can develop in proper proportion to the country's socio-economic development, utilization of resources and environmental protection and only thus will sustain socio-economic development and achieve the improvement of living standards.

Family planning is a basic state policy of China. Article 25 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China stipulates that "The state promotes family planning in order to make population growth compatible with the plan for socio-economic development". Article 49 of the same Constitution and the Marriage Act of the People's Republic of China both stipulate that "Each married couple is obliged to practice family planning" (*Population and*

Family Planning in China 1997: 2). The main content of China's current family planning policy is:

1. To promote late marriage and late, fewer but healthier births.
2. To advocate postulate "one couple, one child".
3. To encourage rural couples who have practical difficulties and who wish for a second child, to have proper spacing.
4. The specific regulations and measures for minority nationalities to practice family planning shall be decided by governments of the relevant provinces and autonomous regions in accordance with local conditions.

The current family planning policy has been made to meet the needs of a special period at present. Because of the huge population base and the incredible annual increase, China has been advocating one child for each couple since the 1980s in order to effectively control the size of rapidly growing population. This has been accepted by urban citizens who have a better cultural and educational background and social welfare. As a result of the reform, opening to outside policies and transition to market economy, some people at childbearing age in some economically and culturally developed rural regions also voluntarily give birth to one child.

Classified guidance for family planning is also provided. Guidance is being given, helping people to decide the number of children to be born and appropriate spacing, according to the local conditions in different areas. Minority nationalities usually tend to have two or three children. There is no specific requirement of family planning for minority nationalities with small populations. China's family planning policy cannot simply be generally understood as "one child policy".

During the 30 years of China's reform and opening up policy, social and economic changes are simultaneous, interactive and complementary with population changes. Family planning and the great changes in social-economic development and mode of production have worked together to help the country achieve 400 million fewer births, which is also a great achievement of China's reform and opening up policy as well as the reform of family planning.

For 30 years, the family planning workers have made great efforts to promote family planning and decrease fertility rate, thus making an important contribution to effective alleviating the pressure of population on environment and socio-economic development. It must be noted that China's population problem has always been a major economic and social development issue, and

the fact that China has a large population has not changed yet. It is necessary to stabilize low fertility level and on this basis to improve the population quality, to optimize population structure and promote rational distribution of population. Besides, more attention is paid to increase the contribution which human capital and labor quality make to economic growth, turning the pressure of a large population into advantages of rich human resources. Now family planning workers strengthen and improve such measures as rewards and assistance system, “fewer births, faster prosperity” and special assistance system to families that practiced family planning. Moreover, the prenatal and postnatal care work is carried out to guarantee the quality of the new-born population. In addition, the problem of high sex ratio at birth is addressed with a global view. And the public policy to ensure gender equality in economic and social activities must be put into effect. Above all, great importance is attached to problems brought about by population aging. Strategies for decision of the problems of population aging and insurance for the aged need to be elaborated and fulfilled. Since the mid-1980s the sex ratio of China and some other Asian countries has been on the rise. This has caught the attention of China’s policy-makers and population scientists. Relevant research shows that high sex ratio is caused by failure to register baby-girls. This phenomenon usually happens in rural areas where fertility rate drops quickly, where family planning consultations and good services are scarce and where people have a preference for baby-boys. If left unattended, the problem will affect the health and status of women and the stability of society in future. Therefore, efforts should be kept on publicity and education, on implementing the relevant laws and ensure the correct recording of statistics (Bazhenova, 2010: 145-151, 160-172).

The main contents of the current family planning policy in China are advocating delayed marriage and delayed childbearing, fewer and healthier births; and advocating one child for one couple. Some rural couples with actual difficulties are allowed to give birth to a second child a few years after the birth of the first child. The national minorities are also required to practice family planning, and concrete demands and approaches to the policy are elaborated by each autonomous region or the province in which the national minorities live. There are practical differences in the family planning policy between urban and rural areas, and between the Han and the ethnic minorities, *i.e.*, the policy for rural areas is more flexible than for urban areas; for national minorities more flexible than for the Han people. Each province (autonomous region or municipality) will formulate the corresponding policy and regulations in accordance with the state policy and the actual local conditions and form its local legislation through legal procedures.

One child for one couple is a necessary choice made under China's special historical conditions to alleviate the grim population situation. One child for one couple does not mean to have one child under all circumstances, but rather, while encouraging couples to have only one child, to plan arrangements for couples who have real difficulties and need to have a second child to do so. In China's cities and towns where family planning was introduced earlier and economic, cultural, educational public health and social security conditions are better, the overwhelming majority of couples of child-bearing age, who are pleased with a small family have responded to the government's call and volunteered to have only one child.

China's reform and opening to the outside world as well as its economic development have created favorable socio-economic environment for family planning while the achievements of family planning have in turn created favorable population environment for the continuous development of the economy, improvement of the people's living standards as well as the overall progress of society.

1. Family planning has effectively checked the trend of over-rapid population growth

Population growth has been effectively put under control, increasing slowly in a descending manner. Since the fertility level has been below the replacement level for a long time, the growth rate of the total population is marked with a significant slow-down. As a result, the average annual net increase of population is less than 8 million people (comparing with 13 million in 1996). China's fertility level dropped to the replacement level in 1992, it remains low for 20 years – 1,8-2,0 child per one women of reproductive age (it was 5,8 children in the middle of the last century). Compared with 1970, in 2009 the birth rate dropped from 33,43 per thousand to 12,13 per thousand; the natural growth rate from 25,83 per thousand to 5,05 per thousand.

China's urban population has basically accomplished the change-over to the population reproduction pattern characterized by low birth rate, low death rate and low growth; and rural population is currently in this process of change-over. And it is expected that the population growth will slow down and end up in zero growth around 2030, while the total population will reach its peak of around 1,5 billion. From then on, population will fall to a negative growth.

In terms of space, the achievement of China's population and family planning should be evaluated against the backdrop of changes in global population.

As China's population accounts for 1/5 of the global population, its changes will exert a significant and far reaching influence on the world's pattern of changes in terms of trend, speed and scope. For example, according to the statistics of the U.S. Population Reference Bureau, if China included, in 2010 the birth rate in developing countries is 22‰, the natural growth rate is 14‰, the total fertility rate is 2,7 and the infant fertility rate is 50‰, life expectancy at birth is 67 years. However, if China is not included, the birth rate in developing countries is 25‰, the natural growth rate is 17‰, the total fertility rate is 3,1, the infant mortality rate is 54‰, life expectancy at birth is 65 years. Therefore, the influence rate of China's population change over that of the developing countries ranges from about 15 to 20% (see table 1).

Table 1
Birth Rate, Mortality Rate and Life Expectancy in Developing Countries in 2010

	Birth Rate	Natural Growth Rate	Total Fertility Rate	Infant Mortality Rate	Life Expectancy at Birth
China Included	22‰	14‰	2,7‰	50‰	67 years
China is not Included	25‰	17‰	3,1‰	54‰	65 years
Difference	-3‰	-3‰	-0,4‰	-4‰	+2 years

Source: Yuan Xin 2010:14

2. Family planning has promoted the change of people's concepts regarding marriage, birth and family.

Since the implementation of family planning policy in China, profound changes have been occurred in people's concepts of marriage, birth and family in the course of the reform and opening to the outside world. The traditional ideas of "early marriage and early births", "more children, greater happiness", and "looking up on men and down on women" are being discarded by more and more people at child-bearing age. Late marriages and late births, fewer and healthier births, equal rights for male and female children, establishing perfect

and harmonious small families and seeking modern and civilized way of life have become an irresistible trend of the time. The family size has become gradually smaller and nuclear family is becoming the major form of modern Chinese family. According to data of China's national censuses, the average size of family in 1953 was 4,33 persons, in 1990 – 3,96 persons, in 2000 was 3,44 persons (*Zhongguo tongji nianjian* 2006: 102). The major reason for the reduction of family size is a reduction in the number of births. Therefore, the general trend of population development goes like this: while the total population keeps growing, the intergenerational change in number of births is decreasing. Besides, people's attitude towards the family planning has also changed; from passive acceptance in the 1950s and 1970s gradually to initiative involvement at present. In terms of time, the impact of family planning will extend to several generations. For instance, in the 1960s and 1970s (1962-1975) annual number of births averaged 25,83 million; in the 2000s (2000-2009) – 16,33 million.

3. Family planning has created favorable conditions for the development of China's economy and the improvement of people's living standards.

In vigorously promoting family planning, China strives to make the speed of population growth much lower than the speed of growth of the gross national product, thus gradually raising the per-capita level. Apart from the reform and opening to the outside world, family planning has been a factor for the sustainable economic development of China and the steady improvement of its people's living standards over the past 30 years. Thanks to improvements in the quality of people's lives and the rise in their purchasing power, China's consumer goods market expanded. China has become a market with the greatest potential in the world. Compared with 1970s, living standards have markedly improved, the urban people's per capita income for living expenses increased from 1510 yuan in 1990 to 6280 yuan in 2000, to 15 781 yuan in 2008, 17 175 yuan in 2009, 21 033 yuan in 2010. Average annual salary for workers and employees per head in urban areas in 2009 was 32 736 yuan. The per capita net income for rural families went up from 686 yuan in 1990, 2253 yuan in 2000, 4761 yuan in 2008 and 5153 yuan in 2009. Personal deposits per head in banks increased from 623 yuan in 1990 to 5076 in 2000, 16 407 in 2008 and 19 537 in 2009. In Chinese cities and towns the per-capita housing increased from 3,6 square meters in 1978 to 27,1 square meters in 2009; and in

rural areas it increased from 8,1 square meters to 33,6 square meters in 2009 (*Zhongguo tongji nianjian* 2010: 340-341, 376, 485, 562-563).

For the overwhelming majority of families the basic needs of living, such as food, clothing, daily-use articles and housing, were met. A number of personal computers per 100 urban households increased from 9,7 in 2000 to 65,7 in 2009, per 100 rural households from 0,5 in 2000 to 7,5 in 2009. Telephone popularization rate (including mobile telephone, set/100 persons) increased from 1,11 in 1990 to 79,89 in 2009. A number of automobiles per 100 urban households (unit) increased from 0,50 in 2000 to 10,89 in 2009 and motorcycles per 100 rural households – from 0,89 in 1990 to 56,64 in 2009 (*Zhongguo tongji nianjian* 2010: 340). The possession rate of durable goods, such as TV sets, refrigerators and washing machines approached to the level of the developed countries (see table 2).

Table 2
Basic indicators of the Chinese population living standards growth (1990-2009)

Basic indicators	1990	2000	2008	2009
Annual per capita disposable income of urban households (yuan)	1510	6280	15781	17175
Annual per capita net income of rural households (yuan)	686	2253	4761	5153
Per capita balance of saving deposit (yuan)	623	5076	16407	19537
Household's Engel's Coefficient (%)				
– urban	54,2	39,4	37,9	36,5
– rural	58,8	49,1	43,7	41,0
Number of automobile per 100 urban households (unit)		0,5	8,83	10,89
Number of motorcycles per 100 rural households (unit)	0,89	21,94	52,45	56,64
Popularization rate of mobile telephone (set/100 persons)	0,002	6,77	48,53	56,27
Coverage rate of population with access to gas (%)	19,1	45,4	89,6	91,4
Coverage rate of population with access to tap water (%)	48,0	63,9	94,7	96,1
Number of color TV per 100 households (set)				
– urban	59,0	116,6	132,9	135,7
– rural	4,7	48,7	99,2	108,9
Number of computers per 100 households (set)				
– urban		9,7	59,3	65,7
– rural		0,5	5,4	7,5

(cont.)

Table 2Basic indicators of the Chinese population living standards growth (1990-2009) (*cont.*)

Basic indicators	1990	2000	2008	2009
Rate of entering higher school (%)				
– promotion rate from senior secondary schools to higher education	27,3	73,2	72,7	77,6
– promotion rate from junior secondary schools to senior secondary schools	40,6	51,2	83,4	85,6
– promotion rate from primary schools to junior secondary schools	74,6	94,9	99,7	99,1

Source: *Zhongguo tongji nianjian* 2010: 340, 341

4. Family planning has promoted the improvement of the quality of the Chinese population in terms of education and health as well as the overall development of the people.

China's family planning has always included the two aspects of controlling the population size and improving the population quality in terms of education and health. While making efforts to control the population at an appropriate size, the Chinese government has devoted great attention to developing educational, medical and other services in order continuously to improve the quality of population. Before 1949 the mortality rate was as high as 20 per thousand, while to the end of the 1970s it had dropped to 6,21 per thousand and in 2009 it was 7,08 per thousand. From 1949 to 2000 the life expectancy rose from 35 years to 67,77 years (68,55 for males and 71,40 for females), making China a country, where the life expectancy increased the most rapidly.

Great improvements have been witnessed in the basic facilities for public health in China. Throughout the country, the average number of hospital beds in health centers per 10 000 population increased from 13,3 in 1970 to 23,2 in 1990 and 30,6 in 2009. The number of licensed (assistant) doctors per 10 000 population went up from 15,6 in 1990 to 17,5 in 2009. The incidence of various contagious diseases has markedly dropped. The diet of urban and rural people throughout the country has greatly improved. Household's Engel's Coefficient (the share of expenses for food in disposable income of households) in urban areas decreased from 54,2% in 1990 to 36,5% in 2009; in rural areas – from 58,8% in 1990 to 41,0 in 2009 (*Zhongguo tongji nianjian* 2010: 340--341).

Health care for women and children has continuously expanded. Nowadays family planning as well as maternity and child care networks have been basically formed in China's urban and rural areas. The child mortality rate dropped from 200 per thousand living births prior to the founding of the People's Republic in 1949 to 35 nowadays (*Family Planning in China* 1995: 11). The major indexes of medical care and health have already far outstripped countries at the same level of economic development and the gap with the developed countries is being gradually narrowed.

The Chinese government has taken education as a strategic key for the country's development and great progress has been made in this field. China is now accomplishing the goal of nine-year compulsory education in a planned and systematic way. The illiteracy rate of young and middle-aged people dropped from 33,58% in 1964 to 6,72% in 2000. During the period of 1990-2009 promotion rate from primary schools to junior secondary schools increased from 74,6% to 99,1%; promotion rate from junior schools to senior schools increased from 40,6% to 85,6%; promotion rate from senior schools to higher education increased from 27,3% to 77,6% (*Zhongguo tongji nianjian* 2010: 98, 341).

5. Family planning helped to improve the status of women

Family planning in China has extricated women from frequent births after marriage and heavy family burden and provided them with more opportunities to receive education and take part in economic and social development activities, hence greatly promoted the improvement of the Chinese women status in economic and social affairs as well as in their families. The employment rate of women has steadily increased and sphere of employment has continuously expanded. The overwhelming majority of Chinese women are located in the countryside and they are the major force of agricultural production and diversified economy in the country. They are than part of the population to benefit most from the policy of family planning.

6. Family planning has accelerated the process of eradicating poverty in rural China

In China's poor areas economic and cultural backwardness and too many births often interact as both cause and effect. The Chinese government has

taken an important step in giving support to the development of poor areas to alleviate poverty by promoting family planning, holding population growth under control, and raising the life quality of the population in those areas. Since 1978 the state has adopted a series of measures to make those living below the poverty line drop from 250 million (26,0% of population) to 70 million in 1995 (5,8%) and 3,6 million in 2009 (3,8%; “the level of poverty” – 1196 yuan) (*Zhongguo tongji zhaiyao* 2010: 40, 109; *Family Planning in China* 1995: 12). The Chinese government has combined the solution of the problem of decreasing the share of society living under the poverty level with family planning to free families from the vicious cycle of “the poorer they are, the more children they give birth to, and the more children they give birth to, the poorer they become”. In this respect, marked achievements have been obtained. In the communities that have extricated themselves from poverty, farming households that have implemented family planning are often in a clearly advantageous position.

The positive impact produced by family planning on Chinese society is wide and profound. With the passing of time, the benefits of family planning for the people and for future generations are bound to be more apparent. Further efforts to seek solutions for problems in population structure are necessary.

Beginning from 1980s China as the most populous country in the world began to take strict measures to contain population growth in the period of the reform and opening up policy to the outside world, in order to accelerate transformation in population reproduction. Thirty years later, China has fulfilled two tasks: its economy enjoys rapid and stable growth and its population reproduction has undergone rapid transformation. Therefore, the intended goals of accelerating economic growth and slowing down population growth have been achieved.

China is home to one-fifth of the world’s population. It thoroughly understands the responsibility it bears in stabilizing world population growth and the essential role it should play. Family planning as an effective solution to China’s population problems is more than just responsibility towards the well-being of the Chinese people and future generations; it is a duty owed to maintain the stability of the world population.

Thirty years have passed since family planning program was launched at the end of the 1970s. The Chinese government has made new progress in implementing this program. The rate of growth of China’s population has been further slowed. But population control remains an urgent and difficult task. China will continue to work and to carry out family planning program with the aim to make positive contribution for stabilization of world population.

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*Social and Economic Development of China:
From Guomindang to Modern Economic
Reforms*

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Abstract

Earlier during periods of Qing Dynasty, Guomindang and the CCP China was economically backward country with low living standard of population as in the period of Guomindang ruling and of anti-Japanese war. For 30 years after liberation economic situation in China had been the same as before. Chinese leadership tried to work out a new model of economic development in order to create a powerful state, promote living standard of population and catch up economically developed western countries and Japan. In 50's China chose "catch-up" development strategy and began to speed up branches of heavy industry by forms of so-called "mobilization economy". "The Great Leap Forward" in 1958-1960 and "The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" in 1966-1976 were an extremely bright manifest of it. But fast economic development of four "new industrial countries" (NIC) – Singapore, Republic of Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan showed, that there are other, more effective measures to stimulate economic development and to achieve a goal of creating powerful state with well-to-do population in the region of Confucianism culture.

Chinese leadership after studying these positive examples changed its economic strategy of "catch-up" development and shifted to a new strategy of "comparative advantages". This change of economic strategy was the basis of economic reforms of 80-90's. As a result of its own model of economic reforms, which was not worked out on a base of the "Chicago model", China had a great economic success for 30 years of reforms in spite of the world financial crisis and now is going to be one of powerful states like the USA and Japan.

In the beginning of the XXI century China continues to develop economic reforms. They fulfilled the tasks of the first and second stages of the "program of three steps" (sange buzou) and it helped them to "feed and warm" (wenbao) people and to promote living standard of population. Judging by the program by 2050 China is due to achieve the following strategic aims: comprehensive socialist modernization, that is necessary for ripeness of social and economic development, to promote the level of the state in the international arena, to take the first place in the world by joint economic strength, to become one of the countries with average level of GDP per capita, to create wealthy happy life for population and to become a powerful state with high level of material, spiritual and legal civilization (See: 1996-2050 nian. Zhongguo jingji shehui fazhan zhanlue – zouxiang xiandaihuade gouxiang (1996-2050. Strategy of Social and Economic Development of China – an Assessment of Modernization Ways), Beijing, 1996, pp. 24-25). In our opinion as a result of the fulfillment of this

program China step by step could make a transition from the level of “feed and warm” (wenbao shehui) society to the level of “small prosperity” (xiaokang shehui) society.

Resumo

Durante o início dos períodos da Dinastia Qing, do Guomintang e do Partido Comunista Chinês (PCC), a China era um país economicamente pouco desenvolvido, apresentando um baixo nível de vida da população, tal como no período de governo do Guomintang e da guerra contra o Japão. Trinta anos após a libertação, a situação económica na China manteve-se inalterada. Dirigentes chineses tentaram elaborar um novo modelo de desenvolvimento económico, a fim de criar um poderoso Estado, promover a qualidade de vida da população e alcançar os países ocidentais economicamente desenvolvidos e o Japão. Na década de 1950, a China optou por uma estratégia de desenvolvimento «catch-up» e começou a acelerar os ramos da indústria pesada através da chamada «economia de mobilização». «O Grande Salto em Frente», entre 1958 e 1960, e «A Grande Revolução Cultural Proletária», entre 1966 e 1976, foram reflexo dessa mesma estratégia. Mas o rápido desenvolvimento económico dos quatro «novos países industriais» – Singapura, Coreia do Sul, Hong Kong e Taiwan – revelou que havia outras medidas mais eficazes para estimular o desenvolvimento económico e para alcançar o objectivo de criar um Estado poderoso com uma população próspera, numa região de cultura confucionista.

A liderança chinesa, depois de estudar estes exemplos bem-sucedidos, mudou a sua estratégia económica de desenvolvimento «catch-up» e adoptou uma nova estratégia assente em «vantagens comparativas». Esta mudança de estratégia económica esteve na base das reformas económicas das décadas de 1980 e 1990. Como resultado do seu próprio modelo de reformas económicas, que não foi trabalhado com base no «modelo de Chicago», a China teve um grande sucesso económico durante os 30 anos de reformas, apesar da crise financeira mundial, e torna-se num dos estados mais poderosos, como o Japão e os EUA.

No início do século XXI, a China continua a desenvolver reformas económicas. Estas cumpriram as funções da primeira e segunda fase do «programa das três etapas» (sange buzou), que ajudou a «alimentar e aquecer» (wenbao) as pessoas e a promover o padrão de vida da população. A julgar pelo programa, em 2050 a China deverá atingir os seguintes objectivos estratégicos:

uma completa modernização socialista, que é necessária para a maturação do desenvolvimento social e económico; a promoção do Estado na esfera internacional; a ocupação do primeiro lugar no mundo pela força económica conjunta; a transformação num dos países com um nível médio de PIB per capita; a criação de uma vida feliz e próspera para a população; e a transformação da China num poderoso Estado com uma civilização de elevado nível material, espiritual e jurídico (Ver: 1996-2050 nian. Zhongguo jingji shehui fazhan zhanlue – zouxiang xiandaihuade gouxiang [1996-2050. Estratégia de Desenvolvimento Económico e Social da China. – Uma Avaliação das Formas de Modernização], Pequim, 1996, pp. 24-25). Na nossa opinião, como resultado do cumprimento desta etapa do programa, passo a passo, a China poderá fazer a transição de um nível de sociedade «alimentar e aquecer» (wenbao shehui) para um nível de sociedade «pequena prosperidade» (xiaokang shehui).

Social and Economic Development of China: From *Guomindang* to Modern Economic Reforms

Andrey V. Ostrovskiy

The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences promulgated its report, where made a statement, that by 2050 China would be the second state by its aggregate power after the USA, by 2020 would strive for the place in the group of five leading states of G20.

Earlier Chinese scholars gave their forecast of the world economic development, where economic potential of the PRC was appreciated as high enough. For instance, in the beginning of 2010 they wrote in the report of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, that “by 2040 China could reach the level of developed countries, by the middle of the XXI century living standards of the population would be well-to-do, they could implement social and economic modernization and average income GDP per capita would reach the developed countries. By 2040 GDP income would be 20 000 US\$ per capita, by basic economic indicators China would be in the first group of forty countries, coverage of social and medical insurance would be about 100%, higher education level would be about 80%, life expectancy – more than 80 years, by Human Development Index (HDI) would be among the first 20 countries in the world”. Now China successfully emerged from the world financial crisis and its economic growth rate of GDP is high – 10%, that is more comparing with the USA and other developed countries. In 2010 by GDP China left behind Japan and took the second place. It is quite possible, that by 2050 China can leave behind the USA and take the first place.

Nowadays building a “small prosperity society” (*xiaokang shehui*) is one of the highest priorities for China. The “small prosperity society” is the first stage for building so called “general unity society” (*datong shehui*). In the opinion of J. Ramo, China, “instead of choosing ‘growth model’ recommended by ‘Washington consensus’ or like East European countries used “shock therapy model” – those strategies of reforms, which destroyed economies in different countries from Argentine to Russia and Indonesia, began to develop economy by its own way ignoring opinions of other countries” (Ramo, J. 2008: 45).

Just after the 3rd Plenum of the CPC Central Committee of the 12th Convocation (December, 1978) Chairman **Deng Xiaoping** proclaimed, that “the goal of special Chinese socialism would be reaching a level of a ‘small prosperity society’ (*xiaokang shehui*) by 2000. Term *xiaokang* was a loan-word from rural areas of medieval Northern China. In that period of history term *xiaokang* meant twenty *mu* of land, one head of cattle (*ershi mu di yi tou niu*) and warm bed for the young and the old (*laopo haizi rekangtou*) (*Renkou yanjiu* 2003: 1-4).

After that at the XVI Congress of the CPC (October, 2002) Chairman **Jiang Zemin** in his summary report proposed a goal to build a “small prosperity society” (*xiaokang shehui*). This goal had been proposed twenty years ago, since 1980 to 2000 gross value of industrial and agricultural output (GVIAO) was quadrupled and GNP per capita in China reached 800 US\$ in 2000. At the XVI Congress of the CPC a new goal of increasing gross domestic product (GDP) four times by 2020 in comparison with 2000 was proposed, and GDP per capita should be more than 3000 US\$.

Twenty years ago GDP per capita as 800 US\$ was a basic criteria for a “small prosperity society” (*xiaokang shehui*). Now in China they proposed a goal to build a comprehensive (*quanmian*) “small prosperity society”. But there are a number of problems on the way of achieving necessary economic indicators such as economic structure, a gap between industry and agriculture, between coastal and inland provinces, between rural and urban areas.

On the opinion of famous sinologist L. Perelomov, “**Deng Xiaoping** connected his reforms with the first social Utopia in interpretation of Mencius, but **Jiang Zemin** introduced into political vocabulary of contemporary China reviving Confucius term “moral” (*de*) (Perelomov 2009: 212-213). The essence of **Jiang Zemin’s** thought was as follows: ruling the state should be not only by law (*yi fa zhi guo*) but by moral principles (*yi de zhi guo*). It was expressed in published document of the CC of the CPC entitled “Building “*Gongmin Daode*” Program. It can be translated as “Building “Civil Morals” Program”.

The XVII Congress of the CPC (October, 2007) approved a concept of the development of Social Harmony (*Shehui Hexie*), which based on the principles of ancient Confucianism. For the first time official documents of the CPC proclaimed necessary social conditions for people to have education, to earn money for living, to undergo a cure, to have material guarantees in old age, *i.e.* all necessary conditions for harmonious society (*hexie shehui*). L.Perelomov considers, that the most part of fresh wording of the XVII Congress of the CPC “was borrowed from the second social Confucian Utopia – “general unity society” (*datong shehui*), **Hu Jintao** and Chinese leadership inherited Deng

Xiaoping's thoughts developing Confucianism in the CPC ideology from “*xiaokang*” to “*datong*”. Meanwhile, a basic principle of legism (*fajia*) – “right and duty of the state to keep government levers in hands as a base of stable development of China” leaves in force in the XXI century” (Perelomov 2009: 216).

Revolutionary socio-economic program of reforming society was elaborated by Sun Yat-sen, who proposed three people's principles – nationalism, democracy and people's prosperity. These three principals became a base for Guomindang Party's Program. It took power after Xinhai Revolution in 1911 and ruled till 1949. Now it is a ruling party in Taiwan. The base of Sun Yat-sen and his followers' concept were ideas of “state socialism” with a combination of advantages of capitalism and socialism, simultaneous development of state sector and private sector. State government should manage basic branches of economy and large enterprises, middle and small entrepreneurship should be private. But state government should regulate distribution functions, restrict export of food-stuffs, make reserved funds etc. Chang Kai-shek proposed similar model of economic development and he was going to “implement industrialization under planning economy and state management of the capital”. State authorities should control over education and social security functions, which by tradition were carried out by families and clans (Pei Changhong 2009: 588).

But this socio-economic model was not Utopia, it was realized after running away to Taiwan. For many years state sector in Taiwan played a vital role in economic development. There were 12 branches of industry like production of oil, steel, fertilizer, sugar, tobacco, alcohol, salt, ships, transport and communications (Ostrovskiy 1999: 45-46).

By 1936 Guomindang government played an important role in managing some economic sectors like banking, transport, defence industry. By data published in Wu Chengming's work, in 1935 state sector owned 72 enterprises with 37,5 thousand engaged workers (Wu Chengming 1955: 125). Total sum of state capital in industry was 318 mln. yuan (15% of total national industrial capital) in 1936 (*Guomin jingji shiyong cidian* 1953: 2036). State sector became real economic force and could press on foreign capital. Nevertheless, Guomindang government could not change feudal system of Chinese village. As earlier, economic development of China had a lot of constraints like low level of commodity agricultural output, slow development of productive forces in industry, absence of united national market in China.

After the defeat of Japan in the Second World War all enterprises of Japanese capital in China and Chinese comprador bourgeoisie were transferred to the possession of Guomindang government. It took place in Mainland China from September to December 1945, in Taiwan – in November 1945, in the

North-East China – in May 1946. More than 2000 industrial enterprises with value of more than 2 mln. US\$ were transferred to Guomindang government (Cheng Yu-kwei 1956: 110). After that state sector became a leading force of Chinese economy within the country.

As a result of Anti-Japanese and Civil Wars by the end of 40's problems of Chinese economy aggravated. Agriculture played leading role, ratio of industry in China's gross national product (GNP) was only 12,6%, in China's gross value of industrial and agricultural output (GVIAO) – 30,1% (*Noveyshaya istoriya Kitaya 1928-1949* 1984: 335). Handicrafts, domestic industry and manufacture took the most part of industrial enterprises. By production of primary industrial goods China was far behind developed countries, by production per capita – far behind developing countries. China was a backward agricultural country with prevailing pre-capitalist socio-economic structure both in urban and in rural areas.

During 30 years after liberation economic situation in China was the same as before. Chinese leadership tried to work out a new model of economic development in order to create a powerful state, promote living standards of population and catch up economically developed western countries and Japan. In 50's China chose "catch-up" development strategy and began to speed up branches of heavy industry using forms of so-called "mobilization economy". "The Great Leap Forward" in 1958-1960 and "The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" in 1966-1976 were an extremely bright manifest of it. But fast economic development of four "new industrial countries" (NIC) – Singapore, Republic of Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan showed, that there are other, more effective measures to stimulate economic development and to achieve a goal of creating powerful state with well-to-do population in the region of Confucianism culture.

In spite of comparatively high growth rates of national economy in 1953-1983 (GDP average annual growth rates – 8,0%, GVIAO average annual growth rates – 8,2%, national income – 6,2%, gross value of industrial output – 10,1%, gross value of agricultural output – 4,0%), population living standards were very low. In 1978 national income per capita was only 315 yuan, average income of peasants was 134 yuan per capita (65 US\$ per capita), workers and employees – 316 yuan (110 US\$ per capita). There was a rationing system for all kinds of goods from food to radio-sets and bicycles. The most prosperous Chinese families had so called "three rolling things and one sounding thing" (*san zhuan yi sheng*) (clock, bicycle, fan and radio-set).

In comparison with the period before liberation in 1949-1978 there was dynamic production growth of value and natural indices excluding 1960-1962

after the failure of “The Great Leap Forward”. But by absolute figures and by figures per capita China was behind not only developed countries including the USSR, but many developing countries (see table 1).

Table 1
Basic Indicators of People’s Economy of the PRC in 1952-1978

	1952	1957	1965	1978
Population (mln. people)	574,8	646,5	725,4	962,6
Gross Domestic Product (bln. yuan)	101,5	160,6	269,5	684,6
Gross Value of Industrial Output (bln. yuan)	34,9	70,4	140,2	160,7
Gross Value of Agricultural Output (bln. yuan)	46,1	53,7	83,3	102,7
Grain (mln. tons)	163,9	195,0	194,5	304,8
Cotton (mln. tons)	1,3	1,64	2,1	2,17
Cloth (bln.m)	3,83	5,05	6,28	11,0
Coal (mln. tons)	66	131	232	618
Crude oil (mln, tons)	0,44	1,46	11,31	104,1
Electricity (bln. kwh)	7,3	19,3	67,6	256,6
Rolled steel (mln. tons)	1,35	5,35	12,23	31,78
Cement (mln. tons)	2,86	6,86	16,34	65,24
Metal-cutting Machine Tools (thousand units)	13,7	28,0	39,6	183,2
Bicycles (mln. units)	0,080	0,806	1,838	8,540

Source: *Zhongguo tongji nianjian* 1982: 5-11

By the end of 70’s it became clear, that the development of economic policy based on planning economy, state ownership, people’s commune system and enterprises without their own banking accounts, large enterprises as parts of ministries and departments, equalizing distribution and isolation from outer world with a little volume of foreign trade could not provide China for achieving main goals. Under such conditions the PRC leadership began to conduct economic reforms and to make transition from planning to market economy using advantages of socialist economic system. The basic characteristic feature of the economic reforms in China was utilization of industrial complex built in 50-70’s like enterprises of heavy and war industry, fuel and power industry,

transport. These enterprises provided China for effective economic activity in transition period from planned to market economy.

The 3-rd Plenum of the CC of the CPC (the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China) adopted a decision about family leasing and production responsibility system in Chinese village. It helped stability and development of Chinese economic system as a whole at the end of 70's and in the beginning of 80's. At the XII Congress of the CPC (September, 1982) they worked out and made a decision, that China would build socialism with Chinese mode (*tese Zhongguo shehuizhuyi*). Communist Party of China made important amendments into the theory of socialism and pointed out a new statement of goals. China did not make radical transition to a new economic and political system, but implemented reforms connected with transition from planned to market economy step by step divided into four stages.

For more than thirty years of reforms they worked out three basic economic slogans according to three main stages of economic reforms. **The first stage** (December, 1978 – September, 1984) used the slogan **“Planned economy – a base, market regulation – a supplement”**. This period of time they paid attention to rural areas, but in urban areas they conducted experiments on developing cost account for enterprises, founded special economic zones (SEZ). For **the second stage** (October, 1984 – December, 1991) of the reforms they used the slogan **“Planned commodity economy”**. At this stage economic reforms were moved from rural areas to urban areas, state owned enterprises became a basic link of the reforms as a whole, and price reform became a principal point. Meanwhile, the reforms step by step began to spread for social sphere, science, engineering, education, health. **The third stage from 1992 to 2003 was conducted under the slogan “Socialist market economy”**. At the third stage they began to build a new economic system, where there were market development, a new management system and a new system of macroeconomic control from state administrative bodies.

In 1992, Deng Xiaoping visited South China, where studied an experience of SEZ Shenzhen. One month later after this visit the leadership of the CPC made decisions concerning this experiment. After this trip Deng Xiaoping made up his mind, it was necessary to speed up economic reforms by expanding market economy. Deng Xiaoping proposed his opponents to answer three questions: 1) can the reforms promote to develop productive forces; 2) can the reforms strengthen state power; 3) can the reforms raise the living standards of population. Comparative analysis of Shenzhen, which was granted special rights comparing with other Chinese areas proved to be in favor of Shenzhen. It gave vent to spread economic reforms over China.

At the XIV Congress of CPC (October, 1992) they proclaimed a course to develop economic reforms. The 3rd Plenum of the CPC Central Committee of the 14th Convocation (October, 1993) declared the beginning of a new stage of “transition from planned commodity economy to socialist market economy”. Since that time a new economic system with market development, new system of enterprise management and new system of state control and regulation were created.

Theoretically for 15 years China went away from the theory of socialist planned economy to the theory of socialist market economy, in other words, realized the necessity of transition from plan to market. They realized that the main essence of socialism was not planned economy, but constant development of productive forces, which provided the growth of population living standards. They realized that it was necessary to combine plan and market for people’s economy. After the failure of “The Great Leap Forward” in 1958-1960, Deng Xiaoping when proving the necessity to throw away centralized management and to grant more economic self-management for enterprises used to say: “It does not matter, a black cat or a white cat, it must catch mice”. In this case a new theory about basic goals of economic reforms gave new priorities for economic development, which were not determined by speed of economic transformation and planned indicators but qualitative changes in people’s economy. New maneuvers of economic policy from 1992 were connected with a role of market mechanism for distribution of resources and perfection of state management to raise economic effectiveness.

The fourth stage of economic reforms began since 2003. The 3rd Plenum of the CPC Central Committee of the 16th Convocation (October, 2003) called it as “a stage of developing socialist planned economy”. As we can see from statistical data on employment in China, by the beginning of the XXI century together with state forms of ownership there were a lot of enterprises of different non-state forms of ownership like self-employed individual enterprises (not more than 7 employees) and private enterprises (more than 7 employees). By the end of 2009 there were 55,44 mln. people engaged at private enterprises in urban areas and 30,63 mln. people in rural areas, 42,45 mln. people engaged at self-employed individual enterprises in urban areas and 23,41 mln. people in rural areas. As a result, the ratio of self-employed individuals and employees in private enterprises was 19,4% of economically active population (see table 2).

Table 2
Employment Structure in the PRC by Forms of Ownership, 1978-2009

Forms of ownership	Employment (mln. people)				Ratio (%)			
	1978	1992	2002	2009	1978	1992	2002	2009
Economically Active Population	401,5	655,5	737,4	780	100	100	100	100
Urban Areas including:	95,1	172,4	247,8	311,2	23,7	26,3	33,6	39,9
1) State-owned units	74,51	108,9	71,63	64,20	18,6	16,7	9,7	8,2
2) Collective-owned units	20,48	36,21	11,22	6,18	5,1	5,5	1,5	0,8
3) Cooperative units			1,61	1,6			0,21	0,2
4) Joint ownership units		0,56	0,45	0,37		0,08	0,06	0,04
5) Limited liability corporations			10,83	24,33			1,5	3,1
6) Share holding corporations Ltd.			5,38	9,56			0,73	1,22
7) Private enterprises		0,98	19,99	55,44		0,15	2,71	7,1
8) Units with funds from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan		0,83	3,67	7,21		0,13	0,5	0,92
9) Foreign funded units		1,38	3,91	9,78		0,21	0,53	1,25
10) Self-employed individuals		7,40	22,69	42,45		1,13	3,1	5,4
Rural Areas including:	306,4	483,1	489,6	468,8	76,3	73,7	66,4	61,0
1) Township and village enterprises	28,3	106,3	132,9	155,9	7,0	16,2	18,0	20,0
2) Private enterprises	...	1,34	14,1	30,63		0,2	1,9	3,9
3) Self-employed individuals	...	17,3	24,74	23,41		2,6	3,4	3,0

Source: *Zhongguo tongji nianjian* 2010, pp. 118-119

In the beginning of the XXI century China continues to develop economic reforms. The program of China's economic development has three stages (or "three steps"). The first two steps were made in the XX century, they were consisted of modernization at the first stage and the fulfillment of strategic goals at the second stage. In 1996 they began the 9-th Five-Year Plan, which opened the beginning of the third stage of socio-economic development. The third stage of socio-economic development of China is divided into three

periods: 1) 1996-2010; 2) 2011-2030; 3) 2031-2050. At the first stage they set a few tasks: to implement industrialization in general; to create perfect system of socialist market economy; to develop connections with the world economy; by income per capita to enter the group of the countries with income “below average” (*zhongxiadeng*); people should be more prosperous in comparison with a “small prosperity society” (*xiaokang shehui*); by combined state power China should take the fourth place in the world. At the second stage China should finish industrialization, step by step implement modernization, create competitive economic system, by income per capita to enter the group of countries with income “above average” (*zhongshangdeng*), people should be comparatively prosperous, by combined state power China should take the second place in the world. By 2050 China on the base of the results of socio-economic development at the first and second stages judging by the reality of international situation and its level of economic development should realize strategic goals and tasks of socio-economic development of the country (*1996-2050 nian: Zhongguo jingji shehui fazhan zhanlue – zouxiang xiandaihuade gouxiang* 1997: 35-43).

Now we can compare the results of the PRC socio-economic development at the first stage – by 2010 with indicators of planned program in 1996. In 2009 China exceeded GDP figure – 33,5 trln. yuan in comparison with planned indicator for 2010 – 20 trln. yuan, by GDP per capita – 25188 yuan in 2009 in comparison with planned figure – 14000 yuan. Average growth rate of total investment in fixed assets in 2001-2009 was only 22,6%, that was less the planned 30% per year (*Zhongguo tongji zhaiyao* 2010: 52, 20-21). By structure of GDP in 2009 China achieved planned figures of ratio between the first, second and third spheres by GDP structure – 11:47:43 in comparison with planned – 11:49:40 and by employment structure – 38:28:34 in comparison with planned – 34:32:34. We should add, that in 2009 China almost reached a ratio between urban and rural population 46,4:53,6 in comparison with a ratio 50:50 by plan 2010 (*Zhongguo tongji zhaiyao – 2010* 2010: 40, 45, 22).

China also exceeded indicators on volume of foreign trade for 2010. For example, in 2008 China’s volume of foreign trade was 2563,3 bln. US\$ instead of planned 1300 bln.US\$, that had been achieved in 2005. Output value ratio of processing industry was 94,5% of the volume of foreign trade, that was higher than planned 90% for 2010, and the ratio of half-finished products was 32% of import volume, more than planned 26% (*Zhongguo tongji zhaiyao – 2010* 2010: 66-67). Living standards of population have been raising by high speed. In 2008 by average level of population consumption – 8349 yuan per year China exceeded planned indicator for 2010 – 7400 yuan. But they could not

decrease a gap between income of urban and rural population. Moreover, despite the growth of urban and rural population income, income gap between them increased from 3,4 times in 1996 to 3,7 times in 2008. The significant part of urban population has a car – 10% of urban families, in 2006 average square per person in urban areas was 27,1 sq.m, in rural areas – 30,7 sq.m in comparison with planned 14 sq.m for 2010 (*Zhongguo tongji nianjian* 2009: 315; *Zhongguo tongji zhaiyao* 2010: 38). As we can see from table 3 below, economic results of the last three five-year plans showed us reality of fulfillment of the program for social and economic development of the PRC.

Table 3
Basic Figures on People's Economy of the PRC in 1978-2009

	1978	1984	1992	2002	2009
Population (mln. people)	962,6	1043,6	1171,7	1284,5	1334,7
Gross Domestic Product (bln. yuan)	684,6	720,8	2692,4	12033,2	34050,7
Gross Value of Industrial Output (bln. yuan)	160,7	278,9	1028,4	4743,1	13524,0
Gross Value of Agricultural Output (bln. yuan)	102,7	231,6	586,7	1653,7	3522,6
Grain (mln. tons)	304,8	407,3	442,6	457,0	530,8
Cotton (mln. tons)	2,17	6,26	4,5	4,91	6,38
Cloth (bln.m)	11,0	13,7	19,07	32,24	75,34
Coal (mln. tons)	618	789,0	1116	1455	2973
Crude oil (mln. tons)	104,1	114,61	142,1	167,0	189,5
Electricity (bln. kwh)	256,6	377,0	753,9	1654,0	3714,7
Crude steel (mln. tons)	31,78	43,47	80,94	182,37	572,18
Cement (mln. tons)	65,24	123,02	308,2	725,0	1644,0
Metal-cutting Machine Tools (thousand units)	183,2	...	229,0	309,0	586,0
Motor vehicles (mln. units)	0,149	...	1,067	3,251	13,795

Source: *Zhongguo tongji nianjian* 1982: 5-11;
Zhongguo tongji nianjian 2010: 5-11, 38, 562-563, 485.

Conclusion

Chinese leadership after studying these positive examples changed its economic strategy of “catch-up” development and shifted to a new strategy of “comparative advantages”. This change of economic strategy was the basis of economic reforms of 80-90’s. As a result of using its own model of economic reforms, which didn’t used the “Chicago model”, China reached a great economic success for 30 years of reforms in spite of the world financial crisis and now is going to be one of powerful states like the USA and Japan.

In the beginning of the XXI century China continues to develop economic reforms. They fulfilled the tasks of the first and second stages of the “program of three steps” (*sange buzou*) and it helped them to “feed and warm” (*wenbao*) people and to promote living standards of population. According to the program by 2050 China is due to achieve the following strategic aims: comprehensive socialist modernization, that is necessary for ripeness of social and economic development, to promote the status of the state in the international arena, to take the first place in the world by joint economic strength, to become one of the countries with average level of GDP per capita, to create wealthy life for population and to become a powerful state with high level of material, spiritual and legal civilization (*1996-2050 nian. Zhongguo jingji shehui fazhan zhanlue – zouxiang xiandaihuade gouxiang (1996-2050) 1997: 24-25*). In our opinion as a result of the fulfillment of this program China step by step could make a transition from the level of “feed and warm” (*wenbao shehui*) society to the level of “small prosperity” (*xiaokang shehui*) society.

China threw away out of date Soviet model of planned economy and used Chinese way of development – economic reforms before, political reforms after. In our opinion, Chinese way is the third way of development (it is neither plan, nor market), which determines a new strategy of development. As a result of working out its own model of economic reforms on the base of “Peking Consensus”, not “Washington Consensus”, China achieved a great success in its economic development and seriously pretends to take the first place in the world both by GDP volume and by the level of state power.

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Growth, Consumption and Political Stability in China

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Abstract

A highly successful investment- and export-led growth strategy has positioned China as the second largest economy and as the largest exporter in the world. Households' consumption has played a minor role in its growth strategy, which is reflected in its unique and very high saving rates. In this paper we argue that the low weight of consumption in total expenditure is the result of the pervasiveness of the state in the economy, which aimed at impairing the growth of middle classes and, therefore, at preserving political stability. Nonetheless, an increase in purchasing power and the cultural individualisation of vast portions of the population is leading to an increase in popular mobilisation and social unrest. This indicates that, contrary to common pessimist analyses, prospects for democratization are perhaps stronger than usually presumed.

Keywords: *China, growth, savings, financial markets, political stability.*

Resumo

Uma estratégia altamente bem sucedida direccionada para o investimento e exportação posicionou a China como a segunda maior economia e a maior exportadora do mundo. O consumo familiar tem desempenhado um papel menor na sua estratégia de crescimento, que se reflecte na sua única e muito elevada taxa de poupança. Neste artigo, argumentamos que o baixo peso do consumo no total das despesas é resultante da penetração do Estado na economia, visando enfraquecer o crescimento das classes médias e, por conseguinte, preservar a estabilidade política. Todavia, o aumento do poder de compra e individualização cultural de uma vasta fatia da população está a levar a um aumento da mobilização popular e agitação social indicando que, contrariamente às comuns análises pessimistas, as perspectivas de democratização são provavelmente mais fortes do que habitualmente esperado.

Palavras-chave: *China, crescimento, poupança, mercados financeiros, estabilidade política.*

Growth, Consumption and Political Stability in China

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1. Introduction

The rise of China was one of the most important changes in the global economy since the Second World War (Ferguson, 2009). In 2010 China's was the third or the second largest economy in the world, depending on the measure used to evaluate its share in total world output, and it was the world's largest exporter. The astonishing economic performance of China, since the end of the 1970s, was the result of an investment-led strategy, of openness to international trade and of the introduction and development of market institutions.

Although the extraordinary economic performance in the last three decades provides support to the growth-strategy followed by the Chinese State, several authors have questioned the sustainability of this model – see, for example, Blanchard and Giavazzi (2006), Prasad (2009) and Rajan (2010). These critics have been emphasising the need and the benefits of rebalancing China's sources of economic growth, namely, the need to increase the weight of consumption in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in order to guarantee a stronger growth in the future, gains in job creation, a more equal income distribution, and a reduction in global economic imbalances.

Since 2004 China's leaders have mentioned the need to change the country's growth strategy, namely, the necessity of rebalancing the sources of economic growth (Lardy, 2007). In fact, both the 12th Five-Year Plan and the previous one aimed at increasing the share of consumption in GDP. However, as noticed by Qi and Prime (2009) private consumption expenditures were not positively affected by reforms and Roubini (2011) mentioned that the 12th Plan still relies on investment as the driving force of growth. In fact, an appraisal of the various components of China's GDP growth suggests that despite government rhetoric to expand the domestic market, private consumption is not prioritized.

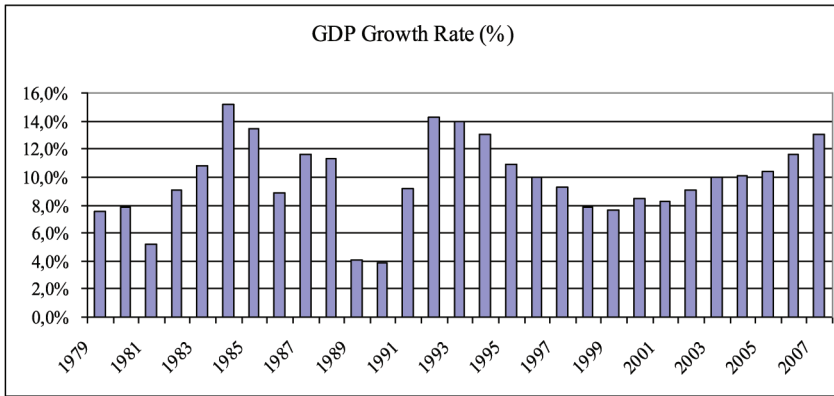
In this paper, we argue that the low weight of consumption in total expenditure that has resulted from the State's growth strategy, aimed at impairing the

growth of middle classes and at preserving political stability. However, given the limits of an ever increasing investment strategy, China will have most likely to increase the weight of consumption in GDP in order to keep the growth pace of the recent decades. Such a change in the growth strategy of China might have a significant impact on political stability. Therefore, this paper discusses the potential effects of an increase in the weight of consumption on political stability through its impact on the development of middle classes.

Section two will contemplate China's rise to great power status. Section three will highlight how this rise is predicated on savings and government allocated investments rather than on household consumption. Section four examines the role of the middle classes and prospects for democratization, with the investment-led economic strategy in mind. Section five concludes.

2. Growth: A rising world superpower

The rise of China as a world superpower is probably the most conspicuous economic and political event of the last two decades. Between 1978 and 2010 the average GDP growth rate of the People's Republic of China (PRC) was approximately 10%, rising at a rate higher than 10% in sixteen years and reaching a maximum of 15,2% in 1984. However, as can be gleaned from the analysis of figure 1, the GDP growth rate was quite uneven throughout the period. The lowest GDP growth rates were attained in 1989 and 1990, 4,1% and 3,8%, respectively, down from 11,3% in 1988 – those years were marked by political instability, namely, the Tiananmen riots and massacre. In 1991, the growth rate accelerated to 9,2% and in the next two years the GDP growth rate was above 14%. In 1994 the growth rate decelerated and was always below 10% between 1997 and 2002, averaging 8,3% and with a minimum of 7,6% in 1999. From that value the growth rate increased steadily to 13% in 2007. Despite the importance of international trade to the PRC's economy, the impact of the international financial crisis was only to reduce the growth rate to 9% and 8,4% in 2008 and 2009, respectively. The very high GDP growth rates translated into an average increase in per capita GDP growth of more than 7% per annum, in the last two decades.

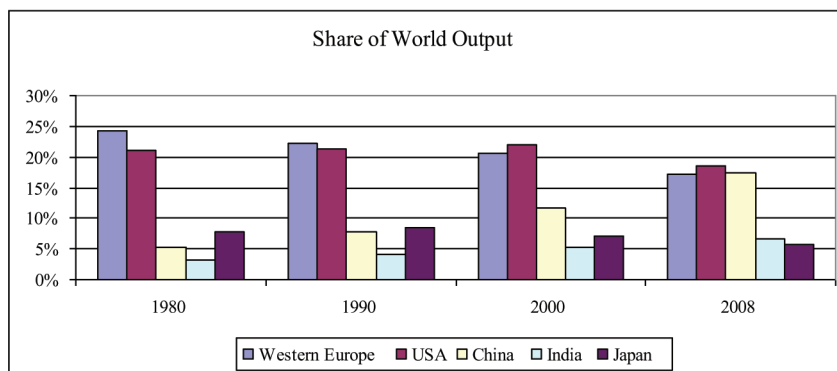
Figure 1

Source: National Bureau of Statistics of China (2010)

The economic performance of the PRC has positioned China as one of the three largest economic areas in the world, alongside the European Union (EU) and United States of America (USA). Economic growth is the basis for the emergence of the PRC as an international great power. Between 1980 and 2008 its share of total world output, as defined in Angus Maddison's database, increased from 5% to 17%, approximately the same share of Western Europe and close to the 20% share of the USA economy, which during the 1990s became the most important economic area in the world (see figure 2).¹

According to several forecasts, China will become in the near future the largest economy in the world. For example, according to the forecast of the Nobel Prize in Economics Robert Fogel, by 2040, China will produce 40% of the world GDP whereas USA and the European Union will account for 14% and 5% of the total world output, respectively (Fogel, 2010). Albert Keidel from Carnegie Endowment for International Peace predicts that China's economic size will equal the USA by 2035 and double it by 2050 (Keidel, 2008). All these economic growth projections point to the global economic preeminence of China in a very near future.

¹ Using nominal exchange rates the share of China in world output would be approximately 11% and it would be the third largest economy far behind the European Union and the United States of America. However, as discussed below, there is evidence that the Renminbi has been significantly undervalued, at least in the last two decades, thus it is favourable to use adjusted measures of exchange rates such as Purchasing Power Parities.

Figure 2

Source: Maddison (2010)

The international financial crisis seems to have reinforced the role of China in global politics, that is, as a world superpower.² In fact, in the G20 meetings that followed the financial crisis, looking for cooperative solutions in the regulation of financial markets and measures to accelerate the economic recovery, China and the USA have led works and discussions in many circumstances giving rise to the term G2. But, even though China is becoming progressively assertive in the international sphere, it still attempts, in a Deng Xiaoping fashion, to downplay its real capabilities, and does not feel comfortable with the G2, as it does not intend to publicly acknowledge parity of power with the USA.

The Chinese leadership, and scholarly community (Xia, 2001), seems to acknowledge that their country's rise to great power status depends on the maintenance of economic growth and on the continuing amplification of interdependence. After an official trip to the USA in 2002, Zheng Bijian, a senior official and director of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) – affiliated China Reform Forum, began to propagate the notion of China's "peaceful rise". He realised that perceptions in the West on China's emergence were polarized, at one extreme, around the idea that the global power transition represents a major threat to USA security, and at the other, around the expectation that China will inevitably collapse due to internal socio-economic contradictions.

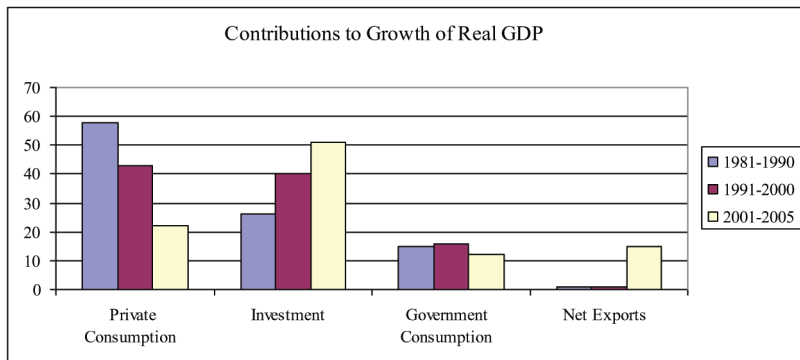
² The economic performance of China during the international financial crisis seems to corroborate the decoupling hypothesis, according to which emerging economies are less sensitive to the business cycle of developed countries, in particular to the US business cycle (Kose et al., 2008).

Both hypotheses, of threat and collapse, work against a stable ascension. Therefore “peaceful rise” was proposed as a publicity slogan to assuage international fears and attempt to convince foreign audiences that economic development is the prime national interest, and will supplant policies that hinder the construction of a stable foreign and domestic environment conducive to growth. The domestic dimension of “peaceful rise” involves rebalancing the country’s growth model. In 2003, during a speech at Harvard University, Wen Jiabao (quoted in Glaser & Medeiros, 2007:298) claimed that expanding the domestic market and converting huge citizen savings into investments were essential aspects of China’s peaceful rise. Although the term ‘rise’ was subsequently replaced by ‘development’, in an attempt to erase the threatening connotations of rise, the core policy priorities underlying the slogan remain. And so seems to remain the mitigated role of the domestic market in China’s growth strategy, which we discuss in the next section.

3. A successful and unique growth strategy: investment not consumption

In figure 3, we present data on the contributions to real GDP growth of private consumption, investment, government consumption and net exports in the 1980s, in the 1990s and in the period 2001-2005. The most striking feature of these data is the steady increase in the contribution of investment expenditures to real GDP growth, increasing from approximately 25% in the 1980s to more than 50% in the period 2001-2005. In fact, investment in fixed capital

Figure 3

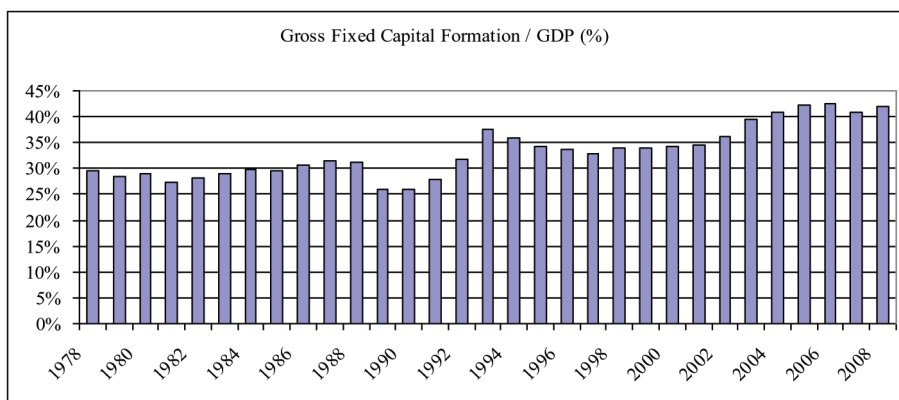


Source: McKinsey Global Institute (2006)

formation, that is, new factories, infrastructures and housing, has been the main driver of economic growth since the end of the 1980s. This role of investment was reinforced during the international financial crisis in order to compensate for the decrease in exports.

Although a strong capital accumulation or an investment-led growth strategy has characterized other East Asian countries, such as Japan, Korea and Malaysia, similar values for the investment rate (the ratio between investment and GDP) have occurred for very short periods. The very high investment rates of China make it singular in the history of economic growth: throughout the period 1978-2008 the average investment rate was approximately 33%, rising to more than 40% in the period 2004-2008 and reaching 43% in 2006 (see figure 4).

Figure 4



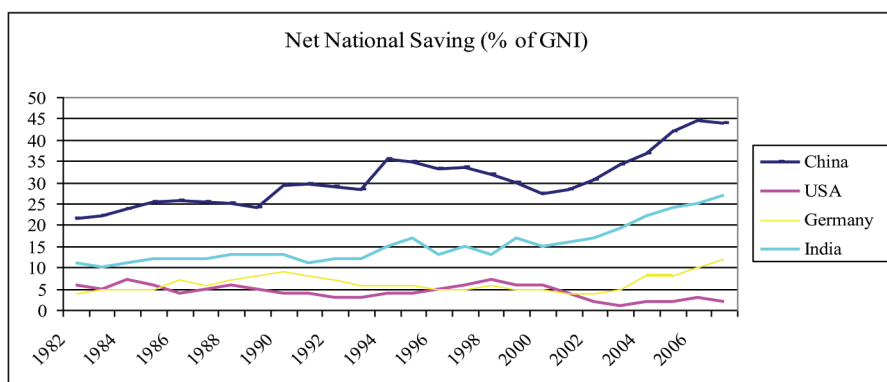
Source: National Bureau of Statistics of China (2010)

The expansion of the domestic market, aiming at rebalancing the country's long-term growth model, is allegedly one of the key objectives of ongoing reforms and of the 11th and 12th Five-Year Plans. However, the plummeting net contribution of private consumption to real GDP and the prioritization of fixed capital formation over household consumption can be taken as evidence that so far the government has not abandoned its investment- and export-led strategy.

The high investment rates have been financed by very high domestic savings by households, firms and the Government. In figure 5 we show net

national savings as a percentage of gross national income (GNI) for China, India, USA and Germany, since the beginning of the 1980s. Domestic savings in China have been very high when compared to developed countries like the USA (which is known for its very low saving rates) or Germany, but also when compared to countries of similar development such as India. Additionally, the saving rate has increased from 21% in 1982 to 44% in 2008. The increase in the saving rate was very strong since 2000, when it was 27%.

Figure 5

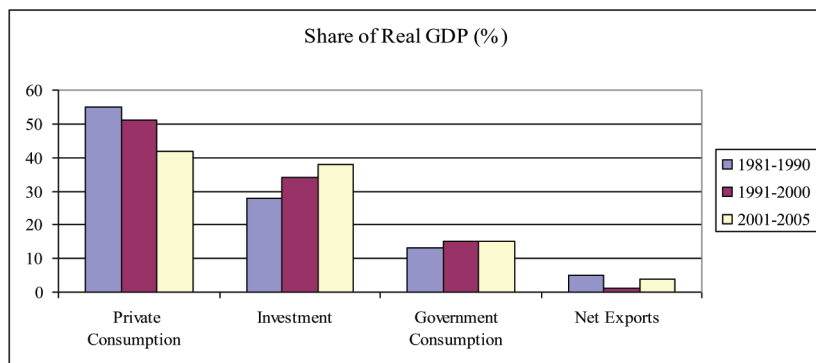


Source: World Bank (2010)

Several authors have been investigating the factors behind the very high saving rates in China's economy. According to Modigliani and Cao (2004) the absence of a national public pension system is an important determinant of the high saving rates. Chamon and Prasad (2008) analyze the factors behind the rising saving rates of urban households and conclude that precautionary motives in face of rising health care and education expenditures are the main explanation (see also Qi and Prime, 2009). These authors also suggest that the transition to a market economy has increased uncertainty, which might have had a positive effect on saving. Finally, Chamon and Prasad (2008) emphasise the role of the underdevelopment of financial markets and the limits it imposes on households borrowing, namely to buy durable goods and housing. Therefore, to circumvent borrowing constraints households have to save. These analyses of the causes of high saving rates in China suggest that a shift in its rising trend requires an increase in social expenditures by the government, namely on health care, education and pensions, and more developed and deeper financial markets.

The other side of the saving rates equation is private consumption behaviour. Despite advances toward a market economy and the recent declarations of China's leaders defending on several occasions the strengthening of domestic consumption (*e.g.* Lardy, 2007), the weight of consumption in GDP has steadily decreased since the beginning of the 1980s, when it represented approximately 55% of total expenditure. In the period 2001-2005 it averaged only slightly more than 40%. According to data from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the rate continues to drop. In 2008 consumption accounted for only 37%. This share of consumption in GDP is very low when compared to developed countries and also when compared to countries of similar development levels as India. For example, in 2005, household consumption in USA, United Kingdom and Japan accounted for 70, 60 and 57 percent of GDP, respectively. In India the weight of household consumption in GDP, in 2005, was 61%, even though its GDP per capita was less than half of China's.

Figure 6



Source: McKinsey Global Institute (2006)

Figure 6 shows that government consumption as a share of GDP has been fairly stable and is also very low, compared to other major economies in the world, averaging around 14 percent of GDP throughout the period. Between 2001 and 2005, the growth of net exports of goods and services has also been a major source of economic growth, increasing from 1,7% of GDP in 2004 to more than 4,6% of GDP in 2005. In 2006, net exports represented 6,7% of GDP and approximately a fifth of China's growth (Lardy, 2007). While investments and trade blossom, in relative terms consumption dwindles.

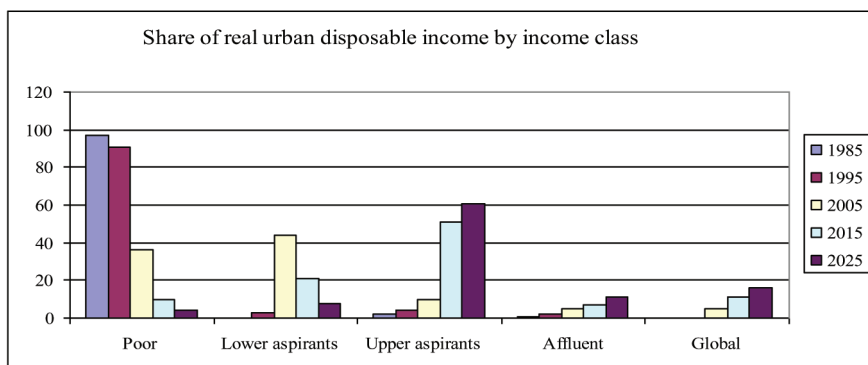
All these measures would contribute to the development of middle classes. Although they are becoming more populous and richer, when the pace of overall growth of the Chinese economy is taken into consideration, it seems middle classes have not been the primary beneficiaries of economic reforms. In fact, it seems that the government's growth strategy has been indirectly constraining the power of the middle classes. The 1989 and 1990 slumps in GDP growth revealed to senior decision makers the great threat that political stability represents to China's rise. Given the role middle classes play in provoking unrest and demanding regime change, for example in Hong Kong, China's investment-led growth strategy might also be understood as a mechanism to reduce middle class consumption and power, and to maintain political stability.

4. Middle classes and the quest for democracy

According to a Euromonitor report (Hodgson, 2007) widely publicised by Chinese media, in 2007 China's middle class included 80 million people. But this sum is estimated to reach 700 million, or half of China's forecasted population, by 2020. Even if the estimation turns out not to be correct – among other factors, that estimation will depend on the government's decision to effectively rebalance the country's long-term growth model –, China's intermediary social stratum is bound to widen. This has implications for political stability, but scholars do not agree on what those may be. Conventionally, two widely encompassing approaches to the correlation between middle class growth and political stability prevail (Tomba, 2009a: 2). On the one hand, optimists believe the intrinsic and structural characteristics of middle classes lead them to value positively political choice and democracy. On the other, pessimists argue that, on the contrary, middle classes bring stability and prevent regime change. In any case, it is necessary to ask who the middle classes are.

Yang (2010) contends that the Chinese middle class does not yet have a cohesive identity or class culture. There are internal divisions and three main groups can be identified. The new middle class is comprised of party officials, entrepreneurs and senior-level bureaucrats and technocrats. The traditionally self-employed form the old middle class. The marginal middle class includes the majority of urbanites that have recently experienced upward social mobility and work in the commercial or service sectors. Yang stresses how the middle class as a whole tends to have high expectations in terms of social justice and a fairly positive attitude to democracy. However, it is not possible to make this attribution to all segments of the middle class.

Figure 7



Source: McKinsey³ Global Institute (2006)

Many authors (for example, Wright, 2010) stress the fact that most sectors of society in China have benefited from the country's massive creation of wealth. From this viewpoint, the better-off are happy with what they have gained and the middle classes are waiting for their 'slice of the cake'. Governments can legitimize their rule and maintain political stability by means of performance or by mass persuasion, and usually a combination of both (Brady, 2009, 434). To put it in Bakken's terms (quoted in Tomba, 2009b), the legitimacy of the post-Mao Communist Party lies in its simultaneous effort to develop material civilization and spiritual civilization, or social control. China's economic performance is a major source of legitimacy and attraction both domestically and internationally. The government realizes this and strives to maintain growth. In fact the ancient 'mandate of heaven' doctrine, which has been invoked for centuries in China to correlate legitimacy with performance (Glanville, 2010), has recently appeared in various forms in official governmental discourse.

However, wealth has been unequally distributed. Figure 7 shows that disposable income is still concentrated in the hands of the lower middle class

3 The McKinsey Global Institute (2006) definition of economic classes in China groups urban households into five annual income ranges: Poor, less than 25 000 renminbi; Lower aspirants, 25 000 to 40 000 renminbi; Upper aspirants, 40 000 to 100 000; Affluent, 100 000 to 200 000; and Global, greater than 200 000 renminbi. Middle class refers to lower and upper aspirants, that is, households earning between 25 000 and 100 000 renminbi per year (this is equivalent to a household annual income between \$13 500 and \$53 900, using purchasing power parity exchange rates).

and the poor, but this is shifting rapidly as the aspiring middle classes hoard wealth changing their class status into affluent. They have clear economic incentives to demand change. Despite a comparatively high level of political stability, social unrest is on the high. The number of “public order disturbances” increased by nearly 50% between 2003 and 2005, from 58,000 occurrences to 87,000 (Lum, 2006). Although it is hard to infer what these numbers actually mean, due to methodological uncertainties in Chinese statistics-making, they do highlight a significant degree of social tension in China. The government is very cautious of any potential triggers of social unrest and public mobilization, and has blocked access to information on the internet regarding the Jasmin revolution and other revolts in Maghreb. After anonymous calls for mass protest were made on networking sites and social media, security forces were amassed in locations of suspected public gatherings in various cities (Jacobs, 2011).

Scholars of China’s social structure are offering mixed pictures. Li (2010) argues consumption of real estate is a major sociological phenomenon in China. The current middle-class fever for home ownership in gated communities, or “private paradises”, on the one hand results in a trend towards privatized living and collective or political apathy. On the other hand, it has triggered public activism against encroaching developers. Kuah-Pearce & Guiheux (2009) emphasize that social claims are becoming increasingly institutionalized and political mobilization gradually more organized. However, the institutionalized activities of lawyers and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) can both challenge the current regime and offer means for the middle classes to vent off frustration, increasing stability.

According to Tomba (2009b), the government intends to create subjects that are independent enough to choose what to consume but responsible enough not to contest the political status quo. But, private consumption figures indicate that the government does not want the domestic market to expand too much, most probably because it recognizes the threat to stability inherent in middle classes. There have been numerous mass demonstrations with democratic strands in Hong Kong on an almost annual basis. For example, on July the 1st 2003, half a million people gathered to protest against an anti-subversion law. The democratic movement in Hong Kong is backed primarily by the middle classes (Lin, 2006:170), giving the central government in Beijing one more reason to be worried about growing middle class power. Businessmen are also present in the Hong Kong democratic movement. Over on the mainland the entrepreneurial class is assuming increasingly important roles in the CCP, although none in the top leadership.

Hong Kong has a very significant role in the mainland as a beacon of exemplary middle class consumer behavior. The nouveaux riches often cross the border to spend their newly found wealth in Hong Kong shopping outlets. While in an intensely transnational environment, new social values and political ideas are encountered. Furthermore, values related to consumer culture are often closely related to political values. If the social structures found in Hong Kong are gradually exported to China, increased consumer choice may translate into an urge for greater political choice. The pace at which these changes will take place will depend on China's government economic policy options, namely on its resolve to rebalance its growth model towards households consumption and social expenditures.

5. Conclusion

The State has channeled households' savings to finance public investments in infrastructures and private investment, hindering private consumption and the development of middle classes, through the control of the bank-based financial system. This growth strategy makes China's economy closer to a centralized and planned economy rather than to a decentralized economy. In China's economy, high savings signify a constraint on consumer choice, with disposable income being transmuted into fixed capital investment instead of being spent on household consumption. Ultimately, wealth created by workers is allocated according to state priorities, in detriment of potential consumer power and choice. In this paper, we argue that although the astonishing performance of the Chinese economy provides support to the growth strategy followed so far, it may also be explained by the goal of political stability.

In fact, once the middle classes have greater access to goods, vastly increased consumer choice can lay the motivational foundations for people to want greater political choice as well. This process affects each individual consumer, gradually, but could eventually trigger an orchestrated middle class claim for regime change and democratization.

The early 2011 revolutions in North Africa demonstrated to the world that economic growth is not enough to curb social unrest. On the contrary, greater wealth, especially when it is unequally distributed, can strengthen dissidence. Although the central government in Beijing has swiftly quelled any reverberations of the African uprisings on Chinese soil, the potential for similar movements is realistic and increases in probability with the rise of the middle classes. Arguments vary as to whether the middle classes and their private consumption

foster stability or unrest, but one incontrovertible fact is that Beijing is willing to spend as much as deemed necessary to maintain social equilibrium. During the 2011 plenary session of the National People's Congress (NPC) the public administration category of *wei-wen*, which encompasses maintenance of law and order, civil surveillance and crackdown on dissent, was highlighted like few times before (Lam, 2011). For the first time, the *wei-wen* budget exceeded the official military budget, reaching a total of \$95 billion dollar, a 13,8% increase in relation to 2010.

The preoccupation with quelling civil unrest is dominating the 2011-2015 Five Year Plan. There is little evidence that political reforms and the adoption of Western style freedom and democracy narratives will gain any significant weight in the near future. The swift and powerful People's Armed Police reaction to calls for protests and mass agglomeration, stimulated by the Jasmin Revolution in North Africa, demonstrates China's obsession with maintaining 'social harmony' and conformity at all costs. This may hinder the recently announced objective in its Five-Year Plan of increasing the weight of consumption on total expenditure. Therefore, it seems that the Chinese authorities may face a dilemma between high growth rates and political stability: to attain the first objective they may be obliged to rebalance the growth model towards an increase in consumption which, in turn, will favor the development of middle classes, which may give rise to political instability.

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*Steering through troubled waters:
the PRC's global economic crisis management*

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Abstract

The financial crisis and its impact on the real economy, on a world scale, led the People's Republic of China (PRC) to adopt measures and find alternative solutions to its growth model, which was based on exports. Although the PRC's economic growth had accelerated due to globalization, it was still able to consolidate its world position in a period when globalization suffered important setbacks.

In this context, it is important to analyze whether the PRC's current status in the world order is a result of its resiliency or, on the contrary, whether its postponement of the absorption of the impact of the crisis is insufflating a new economic bubble, whose ripple effects have yet to spill over the world economy in the short to mid-term.

Resumo

A crise financeira e os seus reflexos sobre a economia real, ao nível mundial, obrigaram a República Popular da China (RPC) a adoptar medidas e a encontrar soluções alternativas ao modelo de crescimento baseado nas exportações. Tal levou a que a RPC, cujo crescimento se havia acelerado em resultado do fenómeno da globalização, conseguisse consolidar a sua posição, no período em que essa mesma globalização mostrou sinais de recuo.

Perante o actual contexto, importa analisar se o actual estatuto da RPC resulta da sua capacidade de resiliência, ou se, pelo contrário, o adiar da absorção do impacto total da crise levou ao insuflar de uma nova bolha na economia mundial, que falta ainda eclodir, no curto ou médio prazo.

Steering through troubled waters: the PRC's global economic crisis management

Gil Torcato

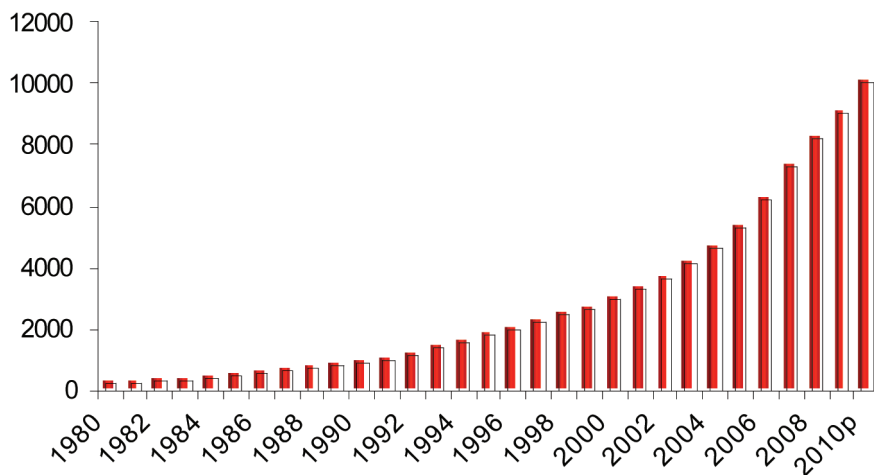
2008 will be remembered as the year when a certain model of financial system collapsed. Today, we live in a globalized economy, where problems that take place in one country rapidly affect others. Since the financial crisis started in the major world economy, the United States (US), it only made things worse. Now in 2011, signs of the crisis are still visible, but if we look at the People's Republic of China (PRC), we may say that the country is now better off than in the period before the crisis. That is true, not only in absolute, but also in relative terms, which translates into more power and influence in the political and economic realms.

We should be able to recognize that the PRC was perhaps the country that benefited the most from growing globalization in the world economy. However, as the crisis emerged, in 2008, it created several obstacles to the model of economic growth that the PRC had been following for the past three decades. Therefore, we are interested in understanding the way that the PRC drove its economic policy, which was fit for a context that no longer exists, and the solutions it put in place in order to counter these sudden hindrances, to evaluate its successes and make some considerations for the future. First of all, we should analyze the Chinese economic growth issue.

In the first decades of the PRC, under the rule of Mao Zedong, the regime was mainly compromised with doctrinaire issues. After his death, as it was facing severe economic problems, the ruling elite decided to make some concessions in the dogmatic arena. In fact, with the rise of Deng Xiaoping, who had a more pragmatic approach, economic success and its consequences became the cornerstone for the legitimization of the regime. For that, the latter implemented several reforms with the aim of improving the economic environment, which gained the support of those, among the population, who most benefited from these advances in the economic field. On the whole, during the past three decades, some setbacks notwithstanding, the economy grew at a fast pace and the purchasing power of the population increased. These improvements became most obvious after 2001 (see Chart 1).

Chart 1

GDP evolution in the PRC (1980-2010). Adjusted to purchasing power parity (PPP)

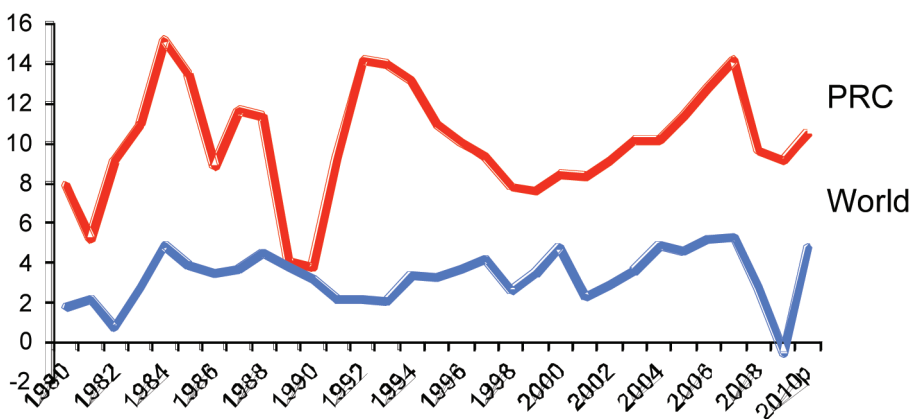


Source: IMF, 1980-2010. Units: Billions of international current dollars based on PPP.

If we consider the evolution of the Chinese economic growth rate (in real terms), we see some volatility before 2001. After that, we see an acceleration that reaches its maximum in 2007 (see Chart 2).

Chart 2

GDP growth rate in China (1980-2010). Real terms



Source: IMF, 1980-2010.

If we compare that with the world's economic growth rate (including the PRC), it immediately becomes clear that China has been contributing positively to that global growth since its rates always surpass those of the world as a whole.

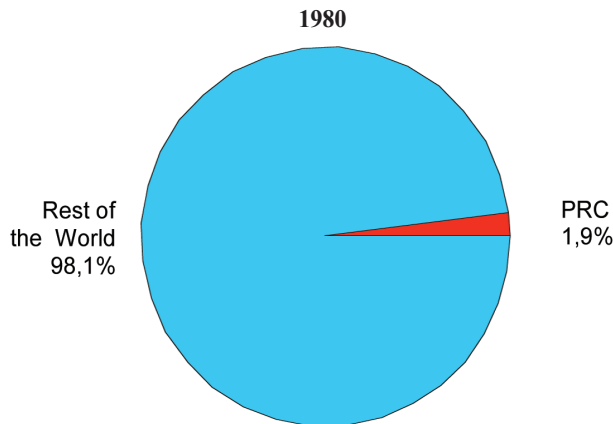
In fact, over the past three decades, China has been countering the stagnation in large economies and economic blocs, like Japan and the European Union. Since its economy is becoming larger, this effect is also becoming stronger.

In spite of the world financial and economic crisis, the PRC maintained high annual growth rates, with official figures always above 9 per cent. This prevented a bigger impact of the crisis on the world economy. However, there was a growth rate decline in 2008 and 2009, which is a consequence of the world's economic contraction, because it led to a decrease of the international demand for Chinese goods.

In order to better understand the meaning of the PRC's economic growth, we should be aware of its growing weight in the world economy. While in 1980 it represented no more than 2 per cent of the world's total, this value suffered a more than four-fold increase in the following 30 years. Therefore, in 2010, the PRC was responsible for 9,3 per cent of the world economy, which is remarkable (see Charts 3 and 4). Nevertheless, we should bear in mind that China's population represents about a fifth of the world's total, and so its per capita value remains below the world's average.

Chart 3

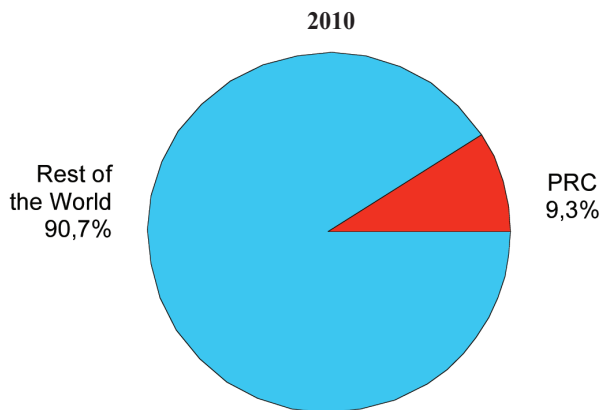
PRC's share in the World Economy, 1980



Source: IMF, 1980.

Chart 4

PRC's share in the World Economy, 2010



Source: IMF, 2010 (estimate).

Let us now focus on the beginning of the crisis, in 2008. There are several interesting aspects we may notice when we compare a set of countries and regions with the PRC, regarding their GDP growth rates. First, the PRC has been growing at a much faster pace than the group of the major economies, since the beginning of the 1990s. As such, and with a starting point that was lower than that of those economies, it has been closing the gap and surpassing almost all of them. Today, the PRC is the second biggest economy in the world. Secondly, in spite of some deceleration between 1992 and 2001, the PRC's admission into the World Trade Organization (WTO), in 2001, helped to give some momentum to China's economic growth, which remained sound until the burst of the crisis. Last but not least, we should pay special attention to the crisis period.

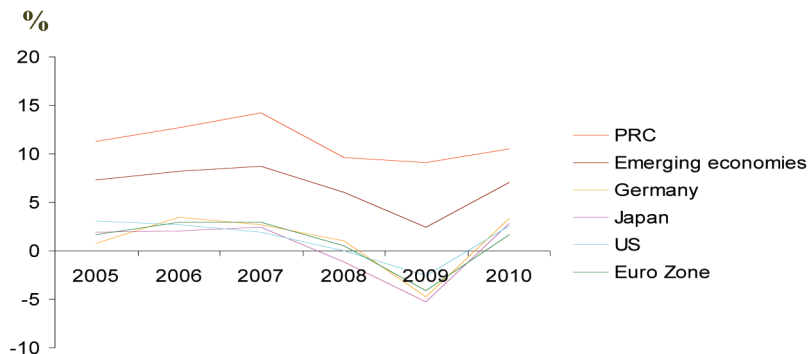
This crisis, as is widely known, started in the US. In its early stages it was a financial crisis, centered on the subprime mortgage crisis. This led to a growing lack of confidence between financial institutions, namely banks, of which the final result was a shortage of liquidity in the market. Actually, the subprime mortgage crisis was characterized by a lack of transparency that made economic agents unaware of the real quality of the financial instruments that were being transacted or that they actually owned in their portfolios. As a matter of rationality, when the problem emerged and became visible, financial institutions started to act according to defensive strategies that fueled them to stop granting credit. Owing to this behavior, companies had problems in financ-

ing their projects and investments and so this was no longer solely a financial problem, but a problem to the real economy. In an environment characterized by a globalized economy, with production relocated to China, which turned into the “factory of the world”, the contraction of the US economy caused an immediate decrease of the foreign demand for Chinese goods. This had both an internal and regional impact.

This author maintains his perspective of 2009 when he said that China was not responsible for the crisis. However, as more data becomes available, he tends to share the view of those, like Giles Chance, who say that China did not cause the credit crisis, but without China, the credit crisis would not have happened. In fact, the impact of the PRC's entry into the WTO may have been misevaluated. Actually, the perspective that the WTO would open the way to a market with a population of 1,3 billion people turned into a distinct reality, where Western firms had to face Chinese competition in their own markets in Europe and in the US and were forced to relocate their production to the Middle Kingdom, in order to survive.

The flow of goods at competitive prices contributed to a lower inflation in Western countries, namely in the US. Probably, and Professor Chance argues this in his book, there may have been a misconception regarding the PRC that led to a failure to consider its impact on the world economy. After the burst of the bubble of the dotcom industry, the decision makers were focused on the recovery of the economy and failed to address the challenges posed by China.

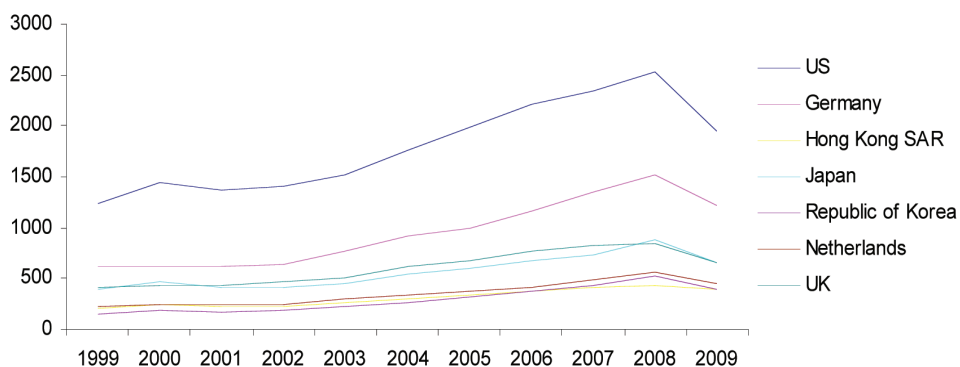
Chart 5
Growth Rates. Percentage



Source: IMF, 2005-2010* (*estimate)

Let us now focus on the period between 2005 and 2010 (see Chart 5). We can easily recognize that the crisis affected different countries in diverse ways. In the case of China, we have first to realize that 2007, which was the year immediately before the start of the global crisis, was an exceptional year for the PRC. According to official figures, its GDP growth rate reached 14,2 per cent, which made it too high to be used as a benchmark year. Then, with the beginning of the crisis, developed economies, namely the US and Europe, which were major export markets for the PRC, suddenly diminished their acquisition of Chinese goods, since they had entered a period of economic contraction. Because China depended heavily on its exports for its growth, this situation put the PRC's model at stake. Nevertheless, it should be noted that its yearly growth rate continued to be quite high, always above 9 per cent, and that the perceived threat regarding these lower rates were related to social and political issues that could emerge. This fact, which is in parallel with the economic contraction in developed countries, led to the closing of the gap between the PRC and this group of nations. Therefore, today's China is the second biggest economy in the world. In more general terms, the crisis is leading to an effective change of the axis of power and influence from the West to the East, because of Asia's and particularly China's growing relative economic strength.

Chart 6
Evolution of imports. Billions of dollars



Source: IMF, 1999-2010* (*estimate)

The PRC's deceleration of economic growth, which is clearly visible in 2008, was contained in 2009. This was a result of the mechanisms that were

implemented by the Chinese State, in order to counter the effects of the crisis, namely the fall in exports. This contrasts with a sudden deceleration of economic activity in the other countries and economic blocks considered in our analysis. It should be remembered, at this point, that the PRC had started to implement some measures in order to avoid the overheating of its economy. Therefore, the unexpected change of the economic environment, in mid-2008, required a full adjustment and inversion of those same policies.

If we consider the level of imports among those countries that constitute China's main commercial partners, we see a strong decrease in their imports in 2009, which is a natural consequence of the crisis. While we are dealing with aggregate values (and not the imports from the PRC solely) this diminishing of imports is equivalent to a decrease in the demand for Chinese goods in the international market, since the PRC was best described, especially before the crisis, as "the factory of the world".

Let us now focus on the specific situation of the PRC, in the context of the global crisis. First, let us reflect on how the country promoted its economic growth. The model based on exports became attractive for both domestic and international investors, who channeled their funds to industries that turned into hubs, which import raw materials and intermediate goods and that mainly export final goods. The integration of the PRC in the world economy took globalization to a new stage, but we must give credit to China's WTO accession in 2001 for this outcome. In fact, the importance of the PRC's exporting sector increased substantially after this event. The reinforcement of China's exporting role allowed the accumulation of net commercial balance surpluses. Besides, if we consider its current account balance since the beginning of the reforms, we see that it became moderately positive since the start of the 1990s. However, after 2001, the figures just took off and became very expressive. While there is clearly a decrease in these values after the beginning of the crisis, we still witness a phenomena that permits the accumulation of assets denominated in foreign currencies, even if at a slower pace.

Nevertheless, in order to address the crisis, the Chinese Government announced a stimulus package, partially funded by the State, valued in 4 trillion renminbi. Its aim was to compensate the reduction of demand in the export market. Therefore, it encouraged domestic demand, namely through the investment in infrastructures and an increase in support to strategic sectors.

Meanwhile, the Chinese Government tried to find alternative ways to counter the crisis and its effects, namely interest rate cuts, which has been done since September 2008. Another measure with a similar objective was the reduction of the required reserve ratios of deposits. We should notice that these meas-

ures were in direct contradiction to the policy in the period immediately before the crisis. In August 2008, the ratio was set at 17,5 per cent. After that it was reduced several times and reached 15,5 per cent. However, due to the rise of inflation, this policy suffered a turnaround and the ratio went up as far as 19,5 per cent as of February 24, 2011. In fact, the policy followed until the crisis may have aggravated its initial consequences and nowadays the main objective is again to restrain the inflationary trends.

If we consider the situation of the Chinese economy and take into consideration all other countries, we see the existence of unbalances. Because of their impact, these were addressed during the G-20 meeting of financial ministers, which took place on February 20, 2011, in Paris. The PRC has been put increasingly under pressure by developed countries, namely the US and some European countries, in order to appreciate its currency. There is some logic that lies behind this demand. First, the PRC does not allow the free float of its currency. Moreover, it presents high surpluses of its current account, while there is a perception that Chinese prices are too low when we consider the purchasing power parity. If the PRC would appreciate its currency, the exported goods would be more expensive, because labor costs would rise. This would mean that Chinese exports would decrease due to a downfall of competitiveness. In principle, the PRC would not plainly benefit from this situation, and so it is rational that it remains reluctant to make such concessions.

However, in face of the crisis and the lower level of global demand for its goods, there was a clear decline of the exporting sector in the total of China's GDP. We should keep in mind that the PRC still presents high economic growth rates, so it becomes obvious that there was an increase in the production that targets the domestic market. Actually, in 2006 and 2007, exports represented no less than 39 to 40 per cent of its GDP. But in 2009 that value was under 27 per cent, which is the lowest value since 2002, that is, pre-WTO levels.

The PRC had been adjusting its exchange rate towards an appreciation of its currency. However, with the beginning of the crisis, this process was stopped and the exchange rate stabilized around 6,8 RMB per USD. The adjustment resumed later in mid-2010. In this context, it should be remembered that the international demand for Chinese goods suffered a contraction because of the crisis. As such, the freezing of the exchange rate against the dollar seems wise, to say the least, since it would avoid the deterioration of the economic situation of the country. Furthermore, it demonstrated a sense of responsibility, since the PRC did not alter its currency valuation policy, in spite of the emerging difficulties. It merely postponed it.

Regarding this subject, it may also be important to underline the differences

among different actors in the PRC and the fact that this is not something that simply opposes Chinese authorities to the US and the European Union. On one hand, we have the ministers and party members, who actually tend to prefer a weak currency, in order to stimulate industry, which depends on exports. On the other, we have the central bank that stands for its appreciation.

However, the pressure towards the valuation of the yuan falls increasingly under a fallacy, which is to assume all else constant. In fact, we have other variables that are changing. Right now, China seems to have got over the worst part of the crisis and the country faces a growing inflation, which was around 5 per cent, in February 2011. Therefore, the existing gap towards an equilibrium between the yuan and other currencies is eroding.

Besides, we should not forget that the PRC's surpluses in its current account balance have been used to purchase foreign assets, mostly in US dollars, which ran against the appreciation of the yuan against the dollar. Nevertheless, this trend is currently changing.

Also the PRC's interest rate went up, after October 2010 and is now around 6 per cent. While it is still distant from its value in 2008 – circa 7,47 per cent –, market conditions that allowed it are again emerging.

In the future, we should expect some deceleration of the economy. First, because these high growth rates in parallel with a growing inflation lead to the adoption of contractionary measures. To that end we have seen, so far:

1. The rise of the loan-to-deposit ratio
2. The rise of the interest rate

In addition, the PRC's main exporting markets are slowly recovering, but this occurs in parallel with a period of instability in the Middle East and North Africa, which may hinder this process, due to the escalation of crude oil prices. Of course the valuation of the yuan also contributes to the deceleration. However, the possibility of a devaluation of the US dollar should not be excluded, although this is something that goes beyond our focus. As a result, while this does not mean a constant value, we may achieve a new balance and a certain stabilization of the exchange rate.

We may assume that the domestic market will tend to become more important, since the exporting sector will have difficulty in increasing its share of the GDP in the next few years.

While it may be exaggerated to talk about bubbles in the Chinese economy, we should not exclude some market corrections in the near future. The correction of imbalances will tend to accelerate them.

On the whole, all these trends will tend to reduce global imbalances. However, we should be careful to recognize this does not depend exclusively on the PRC, but also on the policies being adopted in other countries and regions, namely the United States, the European Union and Japan. The reduction of cheap Chinese exports to those markets may provide some clues to Western policy makers regarding the need to adjust their interest rates.

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*O caso das chinesas curandeiras de Lisboa
que queriam pôr os cegos a ver no primeiro
ano da República Portuguesa*

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Resumo

Em Novembro de 1911 estavam em Lisboa duas curandeiras chinesas que diziam extrair das pálpebras dos cegos os vermes causadores da cegueira, o que ocasionou longas filas de invisuais diante do hotel onde estavam alojadas para se submeterem ao tratamento.

As autoridades policiais procuraram acabar com o exercício ilegal de acto médico, mas alguns políticos manobraram os cegos para reclamarem o direito a submeterem-se àquela prática, ao abrigo da liberdade de culto. Quando correu a notícia de que as chinesas tinham sido detidas, houve um comício de protesto na Rotunda e, no dia seguinte, uma manifestação de cegos e operários no Rossio que foi reprimida pela polícia, e de que resultaram mortos e feridos. Na realidade, o que estava por detrás destas alterações da ordem pública eram as diferentes concepções de sociedade que os próprios republicanos defendiam e a demora que o povo sentia em ver concretizadas as suas promessas, ficando assim à mercê dos agitadores que o utilizavam em acções de rua para tomarem o poder. Tudo valia para tal, até à acção de duas pobres chinesas que apenas prometiam pôr os verdadeiros cegos a ver. A metáfora, se aceite e entendida, foi demasiado trágica para os tempos que então se viviam. Mas não há dúvida que, certamente sem o quererem, duas chinesas estiveram no centro das atenções da imprensa durante os primeiros tempos da implantação do regime republicano em Portugal.

Abstract

In November 1911, two Chinese healers who claimed to cure the blind by extracting worms from their eyelids were in Lisbon, what caused long rows of blind people in front of their hotel searching for the treatment.

The police tried to finish with the illegal situation but some politicians manoeuvred the blind to claim for the right to be submitted to that practise, under the cover of the freedom of worship. When the news of the Chinese women arrest spread, there was a protest meeting at Rotunda and, on the following day, a protest of blind and workers in Rossio repressed by the police and causing several deaths and injuries. In fact, what was behind these changes in public order were the different conceptions of society hold by the republicans and the delay people felt in the fulfilment of their promises, being like that vulnerable to agitators who used people in street actions to be empowered. Everything suited that purpose, even the action of two poor Chinese women who only promised to cure the real blind. The metaphor, if accepted and understood, was too tragic for those times. But there is no doubt that certainly without wanting it, two Chinese women were in the focus of the press during the first times of the implantation of the republican regime in Portugal.

O caso das chinesas curandeiras de Lisboa que queriam pôr os cegos a ver no primeiro ano da República Portuguesa

J. A. Gonçalves Guimarães

1. Lisboa e a implantação da República

Em 1911, Lisboa vivia os meses mais agitados da implantação da República em Portugal, iniciada pela revolta de 4 de Outubro do ano anterior e que triunfara, após uma série de equívocos, no dia seguinte¹. Passados pouco menos de três meses do novo regime o ano começava com um surto grevista duramente reprimido. Em Março, o governo provisório de Teófilo Braga procede à reforma do ensino e no mês seguinte é promulgada a Lei de separação entre a Igreja e o Estado. A 28 de Maio elege-se a Assembleia Nacional Constituinte que em Agosto proclama Manuel de Arriaga como primeiro presidente e aprova a Constituição Política da República. Em Setembro, João Chagas preside ao primeiro governo constitucional quando são já evidentes as cisões no Partido Republicano, enquanto que os monárquicos refugiados em Espanha entram por Trás-os-Montes.

Na cena internacional Portugal vê reconhecido o seu novo regime pela Inglaterra mas cria o ministério das colónias para as defender da cobiça que há muito se desenhava no eixo Berlim-Londres-Bruxelas.

O ano de 1912 começa igualmente com forte agitação social em Lisboa, o que conduzirá à instauração do estado de sítio, continuando a fragmentação do Partido Republicano em várias facções que enfraquecem os sucessivos governos que hão-de vir². Curiosamente, sem o saberem e certamente sem o desejarem, duas chinesas de passagem por Lisboa vão ver-se envolvidas nos acontecimentos que trarão para a praça pública as diversas contradições de uma revo-

1 Dois dos equívocos que a mais recente historiografia sobre a República não conseguiu ainda esclarecer foram o controverso suicídio do almirante Cândido dos Reis, e a actuação do funcionário diplomático alemão que ergueu uma bandeira branca entre as tropas fiéis à Monarquia e os revoltosos republicanos e assim motivou o precoce desânimo dos primeiros e a extemporânea euforia dos segundos, evitando um maior derramamento de sangue entre portugueses.

2 Cf. Ramos 1994: 335 e seguintes.

lução em marcha³, na mesma época em que o seu próprio país igualmente abraçava o regime republicano⁴.

2. A China em Lisboa em 1911

A China e os chineses não eram novidade em Lisboa em 1911. Mas também não eram assim tão vulgares, ou sequer muito notados, sobretudo numa época em que os acontecimentos nacionais e locais se sucediam, concitando as atenções e as colunas da imprensa escrita e dos comentários de rua. Mas mesmo nestes tempos conturbados o pequeno território chinês sob administração portuguesa também não era esquecido pelo governo provisório da República. Assim, logo a 5 de Abril de 1911, é nomeada uma comissão «para estudar a questão da delimitação de Macau e outros problemas pendentes que interessam àquela colónia» e, dois dias depois, para aí segue um contingente de tropas a bordo do vapor holandês Koning Willelm 2.º, para render a guarnição que tinha terminado o tempo de serviço e «atenuar o mau efeito produzido pela guarnição da colónia em Novembro último» supomos no que se refere aos problemas então frequentes entre portugueses e chineses acerca da soberania sobre as ilhas e as águas territoriais em volta de Macau⁵ e à reticente adesão de alguns oficiais à mudança de regime na metrópole, como aliás sucedeu noutras colónias. Porém, logo a 18 de Outubro de 1910, a maior parte da guarnição militar ali tinha arvorado a bandeira verde-rubra do novo regime.

A 6 de Junho de 1911 regressa a Lisboa o ex-iate real *Amélia*⁶, após ano e meio de ausência, trazendo a bordo um chinês fotografado à chegada com as suas vestes tradicionais, mas cuja identidade não é revelada pela fonte que consultamos.

Para além daquelas questões que regularmente ensombrevam as seculares relações entre Portugal e a China, esta estava presente em muitos palácios e casas

3 Cf. Ramos, 1994: 462-463, onde pela primeira vez encontramos referido este assunto que aqui desenvolvemos.

4 Sobre a implantação do regime republicano na China ver Amaro, 1998 I: 302 e seguintes.

5 *O Século*, várias notícias em Março e Abril de 1911. Sobre a questão das relações entre Portugal e a China nesta época ver Oliveira 1998: 161 e seguintes. No Arquivo Histórico Diplomático, Lisboa, existem vários documentos coevos referentes ao contencioso sobre a dragagem do porto de Macau e outras questões então pendentes entre ambos os países; cf. *Exposição...* 2010: 34.

6 Cf. *República*, 7 de Junho de 1911, que informa que o navio tinha sido rebaptizado «República» o que, podendo ser verdade, não foi oficializado, pois o vapor *Amélia*, o quinto navio real com esse nome, por decreto de 12 de Setembro desse ano, passou a denominar-se «Cinco de Outubro»; cf. Reis 2001: 16, 55 e 116; SANTOS, 2008: 88-90 e 202-204.

de Lisboa pelo menos através das porcelanas⁷, das sedas, dos biombos e do mobiliário, que continuavam aliás a ser procurados conforme se infere dos anúncios de «O Mandarim Chinês» na Rua Augusta n.ºs 141-145, o qual recebia grandes encomendas de porcelanas de várias procedências, incluindo chinesas⁸.

Igualmente em Junho desse ano chegam a Lisboa, vindos também de Macau, «onde estavam presos há dois anos, a bordo do paquete alemão Vandel, ... 17 chins e 4 timorenses» condenados a degredo em Moçambique, os primeiros por serem «gatunos e piratas», tendo sido objecto da curiosidade por parte da população durante a sua transferência para a prisão do Limoeiro. Segundo o jornal *O Século*, estariam «satisfeitos por não terem caído em poder da justiça chinesa...» que os teria mandado executar⁹.

A 30 de Novembro, o jornal *República* publica um artigo intitulado «No Extremo Oriente. A situação da nossa província de Macau. Expõe-na brilhantemente o macaista sr. Montalto de Jesus». A China e os chineses, ainda que através de Macau, estavam pois relativamente presentes no quotidiano lisboeta em 1911. A China imperial tinha uma legação em Lisboa cujo consulado estava instalado num palácio no largo de S. Sebastião da Pedreira.

3. Notícias sobre a China nos jornais lisboetas

No início de 1911 os jornais de Lisboa apresentam notícias detalhadas sobre a peste na China, algumas ilustradas com diversas imagens na primeira página sob os títulos «A hecatombe de Karbine» ou «A Manchúria devastada» e o subtítulo «a peste é o flagelo dos chineses». Aparecem igualmente alguns telegramas sobre questões fronteiriças entre a Rússia e a China e a possibilidade de se transformarem em conflito armado¹⁰.

Mas rapidamente são as notícias sobre a queda do regime imperial que vão ocupar os jornais portugueses. Assim, logo a 4 de Maio *O Século* apresenta em título «A insurreição na China». Porém, é sobretudo a partir de Outubro que se

7 No Palácio de Santos em Lisboa, que foi dos Marquês de Abrantes e hoje é a embaixada de França, existe o Salão das Porcelanas assim denominado por ter o tecto completamente revestido com 261 pratos de origem chinesa aí colocados desde o século XVI; cf. Stoop & Abrantes, 1983: 24-25.

8 *O Século*, 9 de Março de 1911, depois repetidos noutros números. Existia também na Rua de Belém n.ºs 125-131, um armazém de chá, café e sementes denominado «A Flor da China»; cf. *República* de 14 de Abril de 1911. Pensamos que em quase todas as cidades e vilas portuguesas havia então um estabelecimento comercial que se denominava «chinês» ou «da China», quer fosse de mercearia, por causa do chá, de tecidos ou roupas finas, por causa da seda, ou de louças, por causa das porcelanas.

9 Cf. *O Século*, 17 de Junho de 1911.

10 Cf. *República*, 9, 14, 22 e 24 de Fevereiro de 1911; *O Século*, Março de 1911, vários números.

destacam uma série de artigos quase diários, quase sempre na primeira página e ilustrados, sob o título «A Revolução na China», afirmando-se, logo a 15 de Outubro, que se trata de um movimento republicano e a 19 aparecem transcritas as primeiras declarações de Sun Yat Sen. A 26 de Outubro, em subtítulo, opina-se que «todo o progresso que se observa no Império Chinês é produto da inteligência e de patriotismo da raça mongólica, a que pertencem os revolucionários» e, logo depois, se dá conta que «o trono cede perante a Revolução, às exigências do partido liberal»¹¹.

Por sua vez o jornal *República*, a 17 de Novembro, publica uma caricatura chinesa sobre o ministro das vias e obras, Cheng Kong Pao, a oferecer vantagens aos cônsules de França, Inglaterra, Alemanha e América. A 28 de Novembro outro artigo é intitulado «A China em plena República. Constituintes em Sheng-Hae – um trono em liquidação», onde se dá conta que os delegados das onze províncias tinham «chegado no dia 21 àquela cidade para debaterem a futura constituição, a escolha da nova capital e o direito de voto».

A 10 de Dezembro outro artigo: «A Revolução Chinesa. Suas causas e caracteres. O nacionalismo chinês. Projecto de República Federativa». O chefe do movimento: o dr. Sun-Yat-Sen esteve durante algum tempo em Macau, segundo um jornal inglês, esclarecendo no texto que «é um cristão, um protestante da igreja evangélica... doutor em Medicina, diplomado pelo colégio médico de Hong Kong; exerceu durante algum tempo a sua profissão em Macau».

A 17 de Dezembro, publica um cartaz republicano chinês e um artigo sobre um dos últimos éditos da imperatriz. Com o ano prestes a findar, a 30 de Dezembro, este jornal transcreve na 1.^a página uma pequena notícia datada de Nankin, 29: «O dr. Sun-Yat-Sen foi eleito presidente da República da China». No dia seguinte *O Século* publica, também na primeira página, uma sua fotografia sob o título «A República na China»¹².

A República Portuguesa tinha agora mais um potencial aliado na cena internacional, com o mesmo regime político, embora lá longe, separados ambos os países por muitas monarquias, impérios e teocracias, e também de há muito ambos os países explorados por potências estrangeiras, no caso da China pelos impérios inglês, alemão e japonês e pelas repúblicas francesa e estadunidense, das quais se procurava agora libertar¹³.

11 Cf. *O Século*, de 4 de Maio de 1911; *idem*, 13, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21, 26, 31 de Outubro; 2 e 7 de Novembro de 1911.

12 Cf. *República*, 17 de Novembro de 1911, p. 3; 28 de Novembro, p. 5; *República*, 10 de Dezembro, p. 2; 17 de Dezembro, p. 5; 30 de Dezembro, p. 1, com o nome Yan em vez de Sun; *O Século* de 31 de Dezembro, p. 1; sobre Xangai na imprensa ocidental ver Guimarães 2010a.

13 Na realidade a República foi proclamada na China a 14 de Fevereiro de 1912 quando o general Yuan

Para além das dimensões e da distância, algumas outras semelhanças entre Portugal e a China seria então possível encontrar: mas vai ser um problema de saúde pública, comum a ambos os países – a cegueira – que vai trazer para o quotidiano lisboeta no primeiro ano da implantação da República Portuguesa o involuntário protagonismo de duas chinesas.

4. A cegueira em Portugal e na China

A cegueira era um flagelo em muitos países no início do século XX; não obstante os avanços científicos do século anterior, nesta área do saber médico eles eram ainda poucos e limitados nos seus efeitos sobre o sofrimento da população. Mesmo o ensino especial e as ajudas terapêuticas aos amblíopes apenas tinham começado em Londres em 1908 e em Estrasburgo em 1911¹⁴. Se em Portugal em 1890 havia uma quota de 12,5 cegos por cada 10 000 habitantes que, em 1900 desceu para 10,4, em 1903 subiu para 13,4 e em 1911 para 13,26, na Europa era apenas ultrapassada por Chipre (73,03) e pela Rússia europeia (20,16)¹⁵.

Em Portugal a cegueira era tida como uma desgraça, uma fatalidade do destino, e aqueles a quem tal acontecia restava-lhes, na maior parte dos casos, a mendicidade e o apego devocional a Santa Luzia¹⁶.

A assistência aos invisíveis pobres era quase unicamente prestada pelo Instituto de Cegos Branco Rodrigues com sede na Calçada do Combo, em Lisboa¹⁷, que em 1911 planeava construir na servidão do forte de Santo

Shikai leva o último imperador, então com seis anos de idade, a abdicar, substitui Sun Yat Sen na presidência e transfere o governo republicano para Pequim; cf. Amaro, 1998 I: 313. Ainda em 1911 a Mongólia proclama a sua autonomia e no ano seguinte o Tibete. A China reconheceu a República Portuguesa por nota formal da sua legação em Lisboa de 13 de Setembro de 1911; cf. *Exposição...* 2010: 33.

14 Cf. Viana 1939: 336.

15 Cf. Moutinho 1936: 288.

16 Santa Luzia ou Lúcia é uma obscura mártir cristã dos séculos III-IV, natural de Siracusa, degolada em 304, a qual se tornou protectora das doenças dos olhos em virtude do seu nome lembrar as palavras latinas *lux, lucis*; cf. *Grande Enciclopédia Portuguesa e Brasileira* XV: 670. Em Portugal existem pelo menos 21 lugares sob esta invocação, muitos deles associados a nascentes de águas sulfúreas com algum poder curativo nas doenças dos olhos; cf. Frazão, 1981: 490 e 709, para a toponímia de Monte de Santa Luzia e Santa Luzia.

17 Em 1895 o professor José Cândido Branco Rodrigues funda o *Jornal dos Cegos*, cuja venda reverte a favor do Asilo de Cegos de Castelo de Vide. Em 1900 funda em Lisboa a Escola Profissional para Cegos e em 1903 a Escola de Cegos no Porto; cf. *Grande Enciclopédia Portuguesa e Brasileira*, V: 26-27.

António da Barra, ao Estoril, um sanatório para cegos com projecto do architecto Ventura Terra, pois até então apenas conseguia apoiar em Lisboa 30 alunos e alunas e 24 no Porto¹⁸.

Por sua vez o único estabelecimento clínico público existente para tratar a cegueira, o Instituto de Oftalmologia de Lisboa, só em Abril desse ano fora pedagogicamente anexo à Faculdade de Medicina de Lisboa¹⁹. Segundo o seu director, o médico Gama Pinto, não possuía então «as condições indispensáveis para o fim a que se destina», pois tinha apenas trinta camas para um número de doentes sempre crescente. Além do mais havia muito poucos médicos e alunos de Medicina que se queriam especializar nesta área²⁰.

Na China, bem como assim como em todo o Extremo Oriente, o problema da cegueira era igualmente muito grave. Não possuímos dados para 1911, mas ainda em 1930 a *xerosis* provocada por avitaminose e que conduzia à cegueira era frequente em Tientsin entre os operários²¹.

Num país então carente de médicos, segundo os padrões ocidentais, a assistência era exercida por curandeiros e curandeiras que aplicavam os conhecimentos da sua medicina tradicional, pouco eficazes em casos epidémicos ou agudos²².

Também em Portugal, ainda nos anos trinta, se regista a existência, um pouco por todo o lado, de «uma *mulherzinha* que aplica uma pomada de efeitos milagrosos, ou de um *homenzinho* que possui uns pingos de efeitos maravilhosos, etc.», as «famosas *mézinhas* dos curandeiros, que, pelo menos na província, tomam por vezes proporções apreciáveis», conforme refere o médico oftalmologista Artur May Viana num artigo que publica em 1939²³. Era esta a

18 *Idem, idem e O Século*, 25 de Janeiro de 1911.

19 *República*, 8 de Abril de 1911, p. 2.

20 *Idem*, 29 de Janeiro de 1911. Caetano António Cláudio Júlio Raimundo da Gama Pinto nasceu em Goa em 1853, tendo vindo em novo estudar para Coimbra e Porto, onde concluiu o curso de Medicina em 1878. Foi depois estudar para Paris e outras universidades alemãs e austríacas, onde se especializou em Oftalmologia. Em 1880 foi nomeado professor da Escola Médica de Nova Goa e membro da Sociedade Internacional de Oftalmologia. Em 1889 o Rei D. Luís convida-o para vir para Lisboa, disponibilizando-lhe o Palácio dos Condes de Penamacor onde, em 1892, funda o Instituto Oftalmológico de Lisboa, que virá mais tarde a ter o seu nome. Foi desde 1911 professor da Faculdade de Medicina de Lisboa. Proferiu e publicou numerosas conferências em revistas estrangeiras e portuguesas. A sua biografia está publicada no *Anuário Académico* de 1943, p. 181; cf. *Grande Enciclopédia...* XII: 118-119.

21 Artigo de Lossouarn, director do Colégio Médico de Tientsin publicado na *Revista da Liga das Sociedades da Cruz Vermelha*, Paris, Maio de 1931, citado por Moutinho 1936: 298.

22 Em 1644 foi publicado o livro *Um Manual Valioso de Oftalmologia*, de Fu Renyu; cf. Sampaio 2002: 113.

23 Cf. Viana 1939: 335.

realidade da assistência à cegueira em Portugal e na China nas primeiras décadas do século XX, o que poderá explicar muito do que a seguir se apresenta.

5. As chinesas que curavam a cegueira

Em 18 de Novembro de 1911 estavam hospedadas em Lisboa no Hotel Algarve, Rua da Padaria n.º 32, 2.º andar, as chinesas Ajus ou Achus, de 31 anos, e Joé ou Goé, de 29, a primeira acompanhada de seu marido e dois filhos. Eram ambas naturais de Xangai, onde sua mãe, então com 85 anos, exercia o mesmo mister que tinha ensinado às filhas, o de curar as doenças dos olhos²⁴; figura 1.

Tendo saído daquela cidade quatro meses antes, da China tinham passado à Rússia, que atravessaram via Moscovo e Odessa, depois à Roménia, Áustria, Itália, França e Espanha, tendo entrado em Portugal pelo Algarve, onde realizaram intervenções em várias localidades antes de se dirigirem à capital. Aí, segundo o jornal *O Século*, tinham «procedido a vários e extraordinários curativos em pessoas atacadas das doenças dos olhos», tendo começado em Lisboa por «um pobre homem, quasi cego de um olho, que encontraram no Terreiro do Paço».

Rapidamente a fama das suas intervenções se espalha pela cidade e arredores e depois por todo o país. Ao hotel acorriam «muitas pessoas, estando por vezes a calçada pejada de gente...»²⁵.

Porém, o governador civil, o médico Eusébio Leão²⁶, através da polícia administrativa, acusa-as de exercerem ilegalmente medicina, proibindo-as de

24 Cf. *República*, de 19 de Novembro de 1911, p. 1, onde se publica o artigo «As chinesas miraculosas. Que teem uns aparelhos para curar a boca e arrancar bichos dos olhos». Segundo este artigo o hotel era «de quinquagésima ordem» e vieram para lá recomendadas por um sujeito do Algarve, por onde tinham entrado em Portugal, que era conterrâneo do dono do hotel; segundo o mesmo jornal de 20 de Novembro, p. 3, só haveria na China nove mulheres «que estão naquele segredo dos deuses».

25 *O Século*, 23 de Novembro de 1911, p. 1, com o sobretítulo «O caso da rua da Padaria» e título «As chinesas dos Bichos nos Olhos continuam na ordem do dia»; *República*, 19 de Novembro de 1911, p. 3, informação dada ao jornalista pelo dono do hotel, Manuel Francisco Marcelino.

26 Francisco Eusébio Lourenço Leão formou-se em Medicina na Escola Médico-Cirúrgica de Lisboa em 1890 tendo-se especializado nas escolas de Paris e Berlim. Tendo aderido ainda novo ao movimento anti-monárquico, em 1909 foi eleito secretário do Directório do Partido Republicano, tendo lido a proclamação da queda da Monarquia na varanda da Câmara de Lisboa a 5 de Outubro de 1910, sendo depois nomeado governador civil. Foi um dos muitos médicos eleitos deputados à Constituinte, depois nomeado ministro de Portugal junto do Quirinal; cf. *Grande Enciclopédia Portuguesa e Brasileira* XIV: 789/790. Numa entrevista que concedeu ao jornal *A Capital*, considerou que as chinesas «são prestimanas e fazem o que fazem todos os prestimanos – iludem» e que os bichos eram «larvas de moscas»; cf. *República*, 27 de Novembro de 1911, p. 1.

continuarem o seu mister e, logo depois, entrega-lhes uma ordem de expulsão do país. De imediato um grupo de pessoas junta os que se consideravam por elas curados, ou tinham esperança de o vir a ser, levando-os a protestar contra aquela medida junto do governo civil, que emitira a contra-fé, do ministério do interior e do parlamento, conseguindo assim suspender a ordem de expulsão por três dias. O grupo percorre depois os jornais a relatar o caso tentando conseguir apoio para as chinesas.

A 23 ocorre uma manifestação na baixa lisboeta a favor da sua permanência. Para acalmar a multidão que se manifestava à porta do hotel, o proprietário teve de as vir mostrar à varanda para provar que não se encontravam detidas: «em toda a cidade, eram as duas chinesas o assunto dominante do dia», escrevia-se n' *O Século*; figura 2.

Entretanto uma comissão de apoio à sua permanência tenta outra vez falar com o ministro do interior, depois com o presidente da República Manuel de Arriaga, sendo recebida por seu filho Roque, e daí segue de novo para o parlamento, onde já se encontrava uma outra comissão a pedir o mesmo. Regressadas as comissões ao hotel, daí sai uma nova manifestação, encabeçada pelos médicos Ferreira Mendes, Álvaro da Fonseca, Pedro Guimarães e Sá Teixeira, que ali tinham assistido à cura de uma conjuntivite granulosa com quinze anos de existência²⁷.

A manifestação vai de novo para o palácio da presidência da República, onde de novo a comissão é recebida pelo filho do presidente, depois segue para a avenida da Liberdade, passando pela sede da Associação dos Médicos sobre quem recaía a suspeita de estarem a pressionar as autoridades para a expulsão das chinesas.

O certo é que, a classe médica estava dividida sobre a questão: segundo o jornal *O Século*, que temos vindo a seguir, as chinesas «operaram limitado número de pessoas, quando se faziam acompanhar por médicos» portugueses, tendo os seus trabalhos sido assistidos por quatro clínicos, e mesmo um deles sido tratado com sucesso. Tendo ido depois examinar ao microscópio o que lhe tinham extraído dos olhos, verificou que se tratava de larvas de um insecto,

27 *República*, 22 de Novembro de 1911, pp. 2-3: estiveram no hotel os médicos Gama Pinto, director do Instituto de Oftalmologia de Lisboa, e Costa Guimarães, tendo-se este último sujeitado a uma intervenção das chinesas, pela qual pagou 3\$500 reis. Segundo as notícias que temos vindo a seguir, as chinesas não estipulavam preço pelas intervenções, recebendo o que os pacientes lhes davam. Alguns testemunhos dizem que não intervinham nos casos que consideravam que não poderiam curar. Por sua vez o *República* de 24 de Novembro, p. 2, diz que o assunto era discutido pela «parte mais importante de toda a população de Lisboa» e já não apenas pela «pequena minoria de aleijados dos olhos»; ver também *O Século*, 24 de Novembro de 1911, p. 1.

após o que o médico Ferreira Mendes as convida para fazerem curativos a outros doentes no seu próprio consultório na Avenida Cândido dos Reis, n.º 2 – 2.º D.^{to}. Este clínico, acompanhado pelo médico Pedro Costa Guimarães e por alguns repórteres de jornais de Lisboa, assistiu a intervenções das chinesas nos olhos de três doentes, declarando que as operações «... eram admiravelmente bem-feitas e que não havia nem sombra de mistificação, sendo muito bem-feita a escarificação e massagem, absolutamente científica», findas as quais guardou as larvas extraídas em frascos com álcool para análise.

Por sua vez, um médico oftalmologista, que o jornal não identifica, mas que supomos ser Gama Pinto, diz que as curas de que se falava eram sugestões, ou, quando muito, a extracção de larvas de parasitas humanos como o piolho, declarando que a proibição do exercício das chinesas tinha sido feita no cumprimento da lei, mas logo se contradizendo, ao aceitar que se elas realmente curavam, ainda que por sugestão, e se o processo curativo que empregavam não deixava marcas, pois então que as deixassem exercer, mas que, em todo o caso, os seus processos terapêuticos fossem previamente submetidos a uma comissão médica²⁸.

Entretanto, o advogado Mário Monteiro²⁹, um causídico lisboeta em busca de protagonismo social e político, interpõe recurso em tribunal contra a ordem de expulsão, enquanto que as chinesas e seus familiares recebem ofertas de acolhimento e de apoio vindas de várias pessoas, algumas das quais se diziam por elas curadas. Os jornais começam a receber correspondência dos mais diversos pontos do país a seu favor, comentando muitas das cartas que a sua expulsão era contra as liberdades que a nova constituição da República, apro-

28 Segundo o jornal *República* de 20 de Novembro de 1911, p. 3, as chinesas faziam o diagnóstico massajando as sobrancelhas, as pálpebras e o nariz e só depois, com uma agulha semelhante às de *crochet*, friccionavam a pálpebra superior, fazendo cair, sobre uma lâmina de madeira de secção quadrada que colocavam sob a pálpebra inferior, uns bichinhos brancos parecidos com os «das cerejas ou dos figos, mas mais pequenos». Segundo o mesmo jornal de 24 de Novembro, p. 2, o Dr. Ferreira Mendes, depois de ter assistido a uma intervenção ficou de tal modo impressionado que declarou tratar-se de um «caso novo na medicina». Ainda segundo este jornal, da comissão de médicos que se propunha enquadrar a actuação das chinesas, faziam parte Álvaro França, Pedro Guimarães, Sá Teixeira, Sá Viana e Álvaro da Fonseca. Aquele primeiro clínico chegou também a disponibilizar o seu consultório para elas exercerem se para tal tivesse o consentimento das autoridades médicas. O médico governador civil não aceitou o testemunho e as diligências desta comissão de médicos.

29 Formado em Direito pela Universidade de Coimbra, em Lisboa fundou o semanário *A Alvorada* «folha independente» que atacava a ortodoxia republicana, o que o levou ao exílio no Brasil. Depois do seu regresso dedicou-se de novo à advocacia, mas voltou a exilar-se naquele país durante o Estado Novo. Publicou poesia, ensaio, novelas, crónicas e peças de teatro, tendo adaptado ao palco a novela de Eça de Queirós *O Mandarim*; cf. *Grande Enciclopédia Portuguesa e Brasileira* XVII: 732.

vada a 19 de Junho desse ano, consignava. Outros protestavam mesmo contra a denominação de curandeiras que os jornais utilizavam para as designar, devendo antes, chamar-se-lhes massagistas, o que era profissão legal no país e que poderiam exercer sem qualquer impedimento, ainda que sob controle das autoridades sanitárias.

A despeito deste movimento favorável, na madrugada de 25 de Novembro a «polícia preventiva» cerca a Rua da Padaria e, surpreendendo os que aí velavam pela sua permanência, invade o hotel e obriga-as a abandoná-lo perante a indignação da esposa do proprietário, entretanto acometido por forte ataque de nervos ou pior, a qual se despede emocionada das crianças chinesas e de seus pais e tia. Obrigadas a entrar num automóvel estacionado à porta, este parte para Vila Franca de Xira, onde são metidas no comboio que partia para Espanha.

A 29 de Novembro *O Século* relatava em título na primeira página que «por causa das chinezas. Houve tumultos na baixa. 44 pessoas feridas», tendo-se realizado nos dias anteriores dois comícios, num dos quais o advogado Mário Monteiro, o tal que se oferecera para as defender judicialmente, declarara que a sua expulsão se devera «a um descarado favoritismo à classe médica»³⁰, e que: «Se elas curam por prestidigitação ou sugestão, abençoadas sejam. Os médicos que façam o mesmo, e assim provem que a China não é uma nação que caminha na vanguarda da ciência»³¹. Quando os dois mil manifestantes se dirigiam ao governo civil, aos gritos de «abaixo o governo» e «viva a China», alguém os conduz até à Rotunda do Marquês, onde já se encontrava outro comício com mais de três mil pessoas. Dali seguem todos para o Rossio, onde os manifestantes obrigam Machado dos Santos, o herói da revolução republicana, a refugiar-se num estabelecimento defendido pelos marinheiros da sua escota. O famoso café *A Brasileira*, é praticamente destruído, bem assim como parte da fachada de *O Século*: «o povo não desarma e está disposto a vingar a expulsão das chinezas», tinha dito um dos manifestantes. A ideia era seguir até ao Terreiro do Paço e pedir a demissão do governo. Porém, a recém-criada Guarda Nacional Republicana carrega sobre os manifestantes, tendo sido detidas 120 pessoas e feridas 44, cinco das quais em estado grave, vindo duas delas a morrer na sequência dos ferimentos recebidos. Face à dimensão dos acontecimentos o conselho de ministros reúne até tarde, emitindo depois um comunicado em que conclua que as desor-

30 Lembremos aqui que na Assembleia Constituinte eleita a 28 de Maio de 1911, 22% dos parlamentares eram médicos, o grupo profissional então mais bem representado no parlamento e nas câmaras municipais; cf. Serra 1996: 29; Guimarães 2010b: 63 e seguintes.

31 *República*, 27 de Novembro, p. 1.

dens verificadas tinham sido provocadas por agitadores, tendo o governo igualmente emitido uma nota oficiosa para os jornais estrangeiros.

Entretanto Mário Monteiro, em representação de vários cidadãos, apresenta queixa em tribunal contra a ordem de expulsão das chinesas, enquanto o parlamento discutia vivamente a questão do ponto de vista das liberdades e garantias e, por extensão, a questão da existência em Portugal de curandeiros e de falsos médicos sem diploma.

À medida que as notícias dos acontecimentos de Lisboa se vão espalhando, uma onda de indignação percorre o país, na qual se misturam a revolta pela destruição da esperança de cura dos inúmeros casos de cegueira existentes, a justa preocupação humana pelo sucedido e o oportunismo político. Na cidade universitária do Mondego os estudantes parodiam os acontecimentos em frente à casa comercial «A Chinezinha de Coimbra», tendo igualmente sido espancados pela guarda³².

Alguns portugueses ainda acorrem a Badajoz, ao Hotel Favorita, para serem tratados pelas chinesas enquanto estas aí permanecem, mas entretanto estas acabam também por ser expulsas desta cidade espanhola e, dias depois, serão igualmente expulsas de Cádiz, ignorando-se o seu destino posterior.

Com elas já longe, só a 21 de Dezembro, quase um mês após os acontecimentos, o jornal *O Século* noticiava que iam ser emitidos mandatos de captura contra «as chinesas» para comparecerem a julgamento no Tribunal da Boa Hora por exercício ilegal de medicina³³. Mas não conseguimos apurar se seriam as mesmas que teriam voltado, se seriam outras, ou se era apenas o habitual comportamento burocrático da justiça, desfasada do ritmo da realidade entretanto acontecida. As fontes consultadas não nos permitem tirar qualquer conclusão: em 25 de Fevereiro de 1912 no jornal *A Alvorada*, dita «folha independente» e de que era director, proprietário e editor Mário Monteiro, o advogado que defendera o direito de permanência de Ajus e Joé, este escrevia: «Fala-se outra vez nas chinesas. É bom porém distinguir que há tempos deram elas origem a um justo movimento de protesto por parte do Povo e agora vão ser naturalmente aproveitadas para uma pavorosa governamental. E não são as mesmas...». As mesmas ou outras, o que é certo é que este advogado virá a ser agredido no Tribunal das Trinas por ter conseguido uma absolvição por unanimidade³⁴. Entretanto, não temos mais notícias sobre estas mulheres que queriam ajudar os portugueses a ver no primeiro ano do regime republicano em

32 *O Século*, 28, 29 e 30 de Novembro de 1911.

33 *Idem*, 21 de Dezembro de 1911.

34 *A Alvorada*, n.º 3, 25 de Fevereiro de 1912, p. 4; n.º 4, 6 de Março de 1912, 1.ª página.

Portugal que coincidia com os primeiros tempos do mesmo regime na sua terra natal, a China. Mas temos a certeza de que não foram as únicas chinesas que em Portugal exerceram a arte empírica de curar³⁵.

6. Da realidade à metáfora

A 24 de Novembro o articulista do *República* faz *mea culpa* nas suas opiniões sobre o caso das chinesas; tendo começado por escrever num primeiro artigo que se tratava de um «episódio jocoso», a sua observação directa das curas realizadas, a opinião dos médicos que estiveram presentes e a esperança evidente em muitos cegos, levam-no a mudar de parecer.

O próprio director do jornal, o médico António José de Almeida³⁶, face à intransigência do médico governador civil, escreve um artigo de fundo em que defende que «o respeito à lei é coisa boa, mas também não é coisa má o respeito aos princípios», propondo que a actividade das chinesas passasse a ser enquadrada pela Associação dos Médicos, em nome dos cegos, os cidadãos que «são famintos de luz».

Curiosamente, ou talvez não, o mesmo número do jornal publica uma «carta de um chinês» chamado Ti-Chim-Fu que se diz acabado de chegar da China e em que, a propósito do caso, opina que «Há nas grandes civilizações europeias uma muralha muito mais espessa e vasta que a que rodeia Pekin. Chama-se, segundo me disseram, a Fórmula», aludindo obviamente à exclusividade incontornável do acto médico no que diz respeito às questões da saúde, lembrando que também Pasteur foi acusado de charlatão.

Perante a repercussão pública da questão o assunto passa a ser discutido no Parlamento, onde, recordemos, a maior representação profissional era de médicos e, por isso, não nos admiremos que, também aí, a questão não fosse analisada apenas do ponto de vista político: o médico deputado Júlio Martins³⁷,

35 Cf. Silva 2003: 39, que já citamos em Guimarães 2007: 21: em Vila Nova de Gaia, no início dos anos trinta do século passado, uma chinesa idosa apregoava que «tirava o bichinho do dente».

36 Formado em Medicina, em 1890, ainda estudante, foi preso por ter publicado um escrito anti-monárquico. Partiu depois para S. Tomé onde exerceu clínica. Regressado, em 1906 foi eleito deputado pelo Partido Republicano, tendo sido novamente preso em 1908. Proclamada a República fundou o jornal assim denominado, sendo depois nomeado ministro do Interior e, mais tarde, presidente do governo em 1916. Em 1919 foi eleito presidente da República, tendo como tal visitado o Brasil em 1922, no centenário da independência desta antiga colónia portuguesa. Faleceu a 31 de Outubro de 1929; cf. *Grande Enciclopédia Portuguesa e Brasileira* II: 35/36.

37 Formado em Medicina pela Escola Médico-Cirúrgica de Lisboa, foi eleito por Évora para as

chega a lamentar que «o povo adorava os homens da República, e hoje insulta-os gritando abaixo a República e vivam os bichos das chinesas»; já Carlos Amaro³⁸, advogado deputado, dizia que «...as chinesas teem não só habilidade para extrair bichos lá fora, mas também para sacar luzidos discursos aos senhores deputados da nação». Este caso acabou por originar não só a mobilização dos regimentos militares e da Guarda Nacional Republicana, criada a 3 de Maio de 1911, mas também colocar de prevenção os marinheiros dos navios surtos no Tejo³⁹.

Os tumultos gerados pela sua expulsão, que obviamente indignaram os «famintos de luz!», que assim viram desaparecer uma hipótese de melhoria das suas condições de vida, mas também aqueles que ficaram decepcionados com a Constituição da República Portuguesa de 19 de Junho de 1911⁴⁰, que remetia o exercício de algumas liberdades para «os princípios do direito público português» (Título II, Art.º 3-5.º) e para «a utilidade pública» (*idem, idem* – 26.º), os quais eram vagos, corporativos e a definir posteriormente, como se verificou. E também por todos aqueles que estavam já a ficar decepcionados com as promessas republicanas de melhorias económicas e sociais, além dos «revolucionários profissionais» arrematados pelas forças políticas em presença.

A 18 de Fevereiro de 1912 o advogado Mário Monteiro, o defensor officioso das chinesas, no seu semanário *A Alvorada* publica um artigo intitulado «China e Portugal ou uma pergunta e uma resposta: Que diferença existe entre o trono da China e o governo português? O trono da China publica éditos e avisa os seus vice-reis e governadores de que verá com bons olhos a implantação da República, enquanto o governo português não é capaz de largar o poder nem à mão de Deus Padre Todo Poderoso! Se é que não é pecado falar em Deus e em Padres numa terra em que só nos é dado ver uma simples meia dúzia de Todos Poderosos!...»⁴¹.

Constituintes em 1911, tendo depois sido ministro em diversos governos; Cf. *Grande Enciclopédia Portuguesa e Brasileira* XVI: 459.

38 Tendo frequentado a Escola de Agronomia de Lisboa, aos 17 anos foi preso por actividades republicanas, matriculando-se depois em Direito na Universidade de Coimbra. Depois de formado mudou-se para Lisboa tendo sido eleito deputado às Constituintes. Colaborou em diversos jornais e publicou poesia, ensaios e teatro, tendo exercido como conservador do registo civil; cf. *Grande Enciclopédia Portuguesa e Brasileira*, II: 290.291.

39 Cf. *República* de 24 de Novembro de 1911, p. 2; 25 *idem* p. 1; 28 *idem*, p.1.

40 Constituição Portuguesa de 1911, in <http://www.laicidade.org/wpcontent/uploads/2006/10/constituicao-1911.pdf>. (2.03.2011).

41 *A Alvorada*, n.º 3, 25 de Fevereiro de 1912, p. 4.

7. Conclusão

Em 1911 existiam em Portugal doenças dos olhos cujas causas e tratamento não eram conhecidas dos médicos portugueses⁴². Duas curandeiras chinesas, entretanto chegadas a Lisboa, conseguiam, através de práticas terapêuticas tradicionais do seu país, minimizar os seus efeitos, tendo criado expectativas de cura a muitos cegos e amblíopes e curado, ou pelo menos melhorado a visão, a alguns deles, incluindo médicos. Acusadas de exercerem ilegalmente medicina foram proibidas de actuar e expulsas do país, o que deu origem a manifestações de protesto que juntaram os cegos e outros descontentes com o regime republicano iniciado a 5 de Outubro de 1910, as quais foram reprimidas pelas forças militares.

Enquanto tal se passava, o novo regime político português saudava a implantação da República na China, curiosamente chefiada por um médico formado segundo os padrões ocidentais. Porém, o seu reconhecimento oficial por parte de Portugal terá de esperar por Outubro de 1913⁴³.

Em Portugal, em 1911 havia 7916 cegos⁴⁴; não sabemos quantos viram melhorada a sua visão após a meteórica e problemática passagem das curandeiras chinesas pelo Algarve e por Lisboa. Muitos deles acreditaram que tal era possível, mas a República rapidamente destruiu essa esperança aos «famintos de luz», como lhes chamou o médico e político António José de Almeida.

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42 Num episódio da série televisiva *Dr. House*, que retrata situações clínicas dos E.U.A actuais, uma criança apresentava perturbações clínicas devido a larvas alojadas em vários órgãos do corpo, incluindo os olhos; cf. House – série III – Linhas na Areia. Universal Network Television LLC, 2006.

43 Cf. *Exposição...* 2010: 35.

44 Cf. Moutinho 1936: 288.

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Anexos

Anexos

Figure 1

As chinasas Achus e Goé



Fonte: *República*, 19 de Novembro de 1911.

Figure 2
Os «famintos de luz» mobilizaram-se pela autorização de permanência das chinesas

a. 23 de novembro de 1911

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O caso da rua da Padaria

DA REPUBLICA

MINISTERIO DE INSTRUÇÃO

avel e urgente—diz o professor Aníbal Férnãez

«...placado, se atendermos á complexidade crescente das questões pedagógicas. Na verdade, a ciência da educação continua hoje uma verdadeira incógnita. A pedagogia geral, a pedagogia e a metodologia especiaes, que de cada erro de ensino, que de cada objeto de estudo, absorvem cada vez mais os especialistas. Por isso, se a administração económica do ensino se pode deixar a entidades laicas, a sua direção, propriamente pedagógica deve estar na mão de homens especialmente preparados para tal fim.

E' perfeitamente justificada a criação do ministerio de instrução

«...Deslavamos saber mais desenvolvidamente que as razões que entendo justifiarem a criação d'um ministerio de instrução publica.

«...Primeramente, a *causa material*, que consiste na impossibilidade de um ministro poder dirigir, com a atenção necessária, todos os negocios do ministerio do interior. Veni depois a *causa pedagogica*, que está na necessidade de coordenar o ensino científico com o ensino tecnico e profissional, que, neste momento, estão tão completamente separados, que até se acionam em ministerios diferentes. O patz ten bachareis a mais e technicos a menos. Necessita

NO PARLAMENTO HOLANDEZ

A QUESTÃO DE TIMOR

O presidente do conselho pôde esclarecimentos para a Haya sobre a interpegação Veymen

Publicou hontem o Senado um telegrama de Haya, comunicando que, em consequência da reunião das delegações, o presidente da comissão do orçamento das Indias, o deputado holandês Van Veymen declarou que o governo português é que devia ter exposto para para sua situação na questão de Timor.

«...Acreditava-se ainda, a nome telegráfico, que o sr. Sabomim Holandês, da Fracção, fez notar, a propósito dos membros de Timor, que nenhuma comissão de instrução, nem o governador geral, nem o governo, que não é responsável pelo facto, e referiu pelo ministro português á comissão portuguesa.

«...Sobre este assunto, falamos com o sr. dr. Augusto de Vasconcelos, presidente do conselho e ministro dos estrangeiros, que nos disse haver telefonado hontem mesmo para Haya, pedindo o informamento dos termos exatos em que se fez a interpegação. Logo que obtiver uma resposta é que se poderá dizer mais alguma coisa em relação a esta matéria.

O sr. Bernardino Machado diz que são os clericos que atacam os interesses portugueses

«...Ainda sobre o texto do referido telegrama, fomos ouvir o sr. dr. Bernardino Machado, que, pronunciando, fez d'o seguinte:

«...São clericos que lá fora atacam o ministro dos estrangeiros do governo português e os interesses portugueses, e, finalmente, ha entre nos quem logo pertença os seus ataques injurios e anti-patrioticos.»

No parlamento holandez volta a falar-se da questão de Timor

HAYA, 22.—A camera holandesa discutiu o orçamento das Indias.

O ministro das colónias confirma que, no caso de Timor, o governador não se refere a doutrina do go

AS CHINEZAS DOS BICHOS NOS OLHOS continuam na ordem do dia

Uma numerosa comissão dirige-se ao ministro do interior e ao parlamento, solicitando a revogação da ordem policial que as inibe de exercerem clinica



Fonte: O Século, 23 de Novembro de 1911.

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Vol. XXXI-1 (2012)

Parution en septembre 2012

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