

A Tense Time: Explaining and Understanding Contemporary Chinese Nationalism

LIANG, Xuecun

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of the Requirements for the Degree of
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Abstract of thesis entitled:

A Tense Time: Explaining and Understanding Contemporary Chinese Nationalism

Submitted by LIANG, Xuecun

for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Government and Public Administration at
the Chinese University of Hong Kong in August 2011

ABSTRACT

China's phenomenal economic growth and rapid social transformation has attracted increasing attention from the outside on its identity change. The worldwide nationalist protests by the overseas Chinese during the 2008 Olympic Torch Relay alarmed the world about China's rise and aroused voluminous and vociferous academic debate. The purpose of this research is to provide a theoretical understanding of contemporary Chinese nationalism by addressing two main questions: (1) What is the substantive content of contemporary Chinese nationalism? (2) What are the sources of nationalism among the post-80s generation? I first examine the relationship between nationalism as a general ideological principle and two macro factors – modernization and the post-war international system – so as to develop a set of theoretical propositions to account for the particular case of the contemporary Chinese nationalism. Moving beyond the confines of state mobilization, I look to domestic socioeconomic changes and international pressures to explain the revival of nationalism in China. Instead of asking what is the real nature of Chinese nationalism, I aim to discover the substantive content of it – Statism, sovereignty, and status anxiety – and discuss to what extent it is trying to address common challenges faced by “new states.” To bridge the dichotomy between “top-down” and “bottom-up” approaches, I examine how state activities developed under the new domestic and international conditions of “reform and opening up” interact with the life history of the individual in the formation and evolution of nationalist aspirations among the young generation.

I argue that the surge of popular nationalism in the post-1989 period is a response to rapid social changes brought by the China Model of modernization and challenges

posed by globalization. Solution-seekings within the Chinese society take forms of both self-doubt and self-assertion, which produces ambivalent attitudes toward a host of antithetical beliefs and forces. Second, the popular nationalism in China represents an emerging new type of individual-state relationship. China's ongoing reform efforts result in a strengthened state with a weakened civil society. Administrative monopoly in economy as well as state-centered institutional arrangements create a huge gap between the state sector and the non-state sector, which put rigid constraints on individual autonomy. Due to the absence of a functioning civil society and tight restrictions on private enterprises, the citizens have to heavily rely on the state for personal well-being.

This project involves qualitative research complemented by quantitative data. I supplement theoretical inquiries with successive waves of survey data collected at numerous time points and present the data in a fashion that allows for cross-country and over-time comparison. Detailed qualitative accounts generated from case studies and in-depth interviews help to link theoretical elaboration with real-life context and to put concrete flesh on the bare bones of abstract theoretical ideas.

論文摘要

作為崛起中的大國，外部世界對中國不斷變化的身份定位給予了廣泛關注。

2008 年北京奧運火炬傳遞期間，全球華人的大規模抗議活動引發了學術界的激烈爭論。本研究旨在從理論視角理解當代中國民族主義的進程。通過深入探討改革開放所引起的內部和外部變化，為大眾民族主義的形成及演變提供一條新的研究路徑。作者認為中國的現代化模式製造了兩個截然不同的中國：國家的中國和市場的中國。這一深刻的內部變化導致民眾安全感的普遍降低，使得普通公民越來越依賴國家提供經濟保護和社會福利。社會達爾文主義作為一種潛在的價值觀念將制度瓶頸所導致的資源稀缺——轉化為個人競爭，掩蓋了更深層次的政治矛盾。

廣泛的國外經驗對年輕一代民眾的國際觀產生了深刻影響。作者認為，跨文化交流在短期內未必能夠起到促進民族間友好的作用，相反可能會帶來比封閉社會更大規模的衝突和對抗。在很大程度上，中國民眾對國家狀況的樂觀態度源於對外部世界批評意見的知之甚少。然而，與生活在本土的中國人不同，海外華人對中國相對落後的國際地位以及融入主流國際社會的重重障礙有逐步清醒的認識，這種身份落差所產生的巨大焦慮使得海外華人更傾向以民族主義的方式維護國家利益和形象。

本文的主體由四個部份構成，第二和第三章討論民族主義作為一種普遍的政治意識形態和社會力量與現代化和戰後國際體系之間的關係，並由此建立一系列宏觀視角作為分析中國民族主義的理論依據和倫理框架。第四章討論中國民族主義的三項具體內容：國家主義、絕對主權以及民族尊嚴。第五章分析 80 後

作為大眾民族主義新興力量的政治態度和政治表達，通過追溯 80 後的成長經歷和當下社會處境剖析中國三十年改革開放所帶來的社會經濟變化如何塑造了年輕一代對個人與國家關係的獨特認知。本文採用定性與定量結合的研究方法，在大量深度訪談的基礎上，以民調數據輔助理論探討，通過個案研究闡釋諸多民族主義現象背後的生成機理。

To my grandparents

7

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	ix
FIGURES.....	xi
I Introduction.....	1
1.1 Literature Review	2
1.1.1 Primordialism <i>versus</i> Instrumentalism.....	3
1.1.2 Nationalism as an Empty Signifier	10
1.2 Research Questions and Research Methods	16
1.2.1 Research Questions	16
1.2.2 Research Methods.....	17
1.3 Conclusion	19
II Nationalism and Modernity	21
2.1 Roads to Modernity.....	23
2.1.1 The Birth of New Nation-states	24
2.1.2 Categorization, Assimilation and Discrimination	34
2.1.3 Nationalisms: Visible and Invisible.....	47
2.2 Ethics of Nationalism.....	51
2.2.1 Particularism <i>versus</i> Universalism	52
2.2.2 Progressive or Regressive?.....	64
III Nationalism and International System in Change	73
3.1 Post-war International System Revisited.....	74
3.2 An Anachronistic Westphalian System?	88
3.3 What Makes a Nation-State?	97
3.4 Nationalism is Cause or Effect?.....	103
IV Chinese Nationalism: Three Concerns	107
4.1 Statism: Nation-state or State-Nation.....	108
4.1.1 Cannot Do without the State.....	110
4.1.2 State Capitalism: Logic and Social Consequences.....	117
4.1.3 Two Chinas: The State Sector and the Non-state Sector	131
4.2 Sovereignty	141
4.2.1 "Chinese Exceptionalism".....	142
4.2.2 From Empire to Nation-state.....	146
4.3 Seeking for Dignity.....	150

4.3.1 National Humiliation and Status Anxiety	152
4.3.2 History Kept Alive.....	156
V The Post-80s: The Individual and the State	163
5.1 A Worried Generation	164
5.2 The <i>Self</i> and The <i>Other</i>	185
VI Conclusion.....	194
Bibliography	199

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FIGURES

Figure 3.1 State legitimacy and state viability.....	84
Figure 4.1 Main indicators of the Top 500 Companies of China in 2010 classified by ownership.....	127
Figure 4.2 Distribution of the Top 500 Companies of China in 2010 classified by ownership and main indicators (percent)	127
Figure 4.3 Stock Price of Google.....	130
Figure 4.4 Annual average wage of staff and workers, 1978-2008	132
Figure 4.5 Wages of staff and workers by economic activities, 1986-2008	134
Figure 4.6 Number of Fiscal Dependents in China (not including armed forces), 1998-2006	136
Figure 4.7 Wage Share of China, 1978-2003.....	138
Figure 4.8 Household Final Consumption Expenditure (% of GDP), 1981-2009	139
Figure 4.9 China Gross Savings (% of GDP), 1982-2009	140
Figure 4.10 Do you agree the statement that our country should defend our way of life?	155
Figure 5.1 Statistics of the National Higher Education Entrance Examination (1977-2010).....	165
Figure 5.2 Growing concern over job security	167
Figure 5.3 Out of pocket payments of health care (% of total).....	168
Figure 5.4 Over-time change of life satisfaction of the Chinese people aged from 15 to 29	171
Figure 5.5 Competition is good or harmful, cross-country comparison	172
Figure 5.6 Life satisfaction rate and future prediction.....	174
Figure 5.7 Chinese enthusiasm toward the 2008 Summer Olympics	176
Figure 5.8 Do you agree the statement that for the sake of the national community, the individual should be prepared to sacrifice his personal interest?	177
Figure 5.9 Do you agree the statement that for the sake of the national community/society, the individual should be prepared to sacrifice his/her	

personal interest?	178
Figure 5.10 Impact of government policies on Chinese people's daily life, 2002, 2008.....	180
Figure 5.11 Government ownership <i>versus</i> private ownership.....	181
Figure 5.12 Interest in Politics, 2008	183

I Introduction

In 1945 the journalist Theodore H. White wrote that the world is “fluid and about to remade.”¹ Over more than a half century, it is believed that the ever fluid world has been consolidated bit by bit: the US-led international political and economic order has been long entrenched; ex-colonies have successfully gained independence from their European colonizers and, with considerable pain and struggle, finally entered the international anarchy club; the dismemberment of the Soviet Union marked the end of the Cold war and thereby ended the long-existing danger of total war among nuclear-armed powers. The world we are living in seemingly took a good shape – orderly, stable and progressive.

However, with the end of the Cold War, the glue that used to hold the international system together, the bipolar structure, irretrievably disintegrated. It released an ever-chained ghost, haunting the new establishment of the post-Cold War order. This ghost is nationalism. Whether world politics should be governed by the principle of nationalism or liberalism is not a new enquiry. An ambiguous relationship has always existed between liberalism and nationalism.² However, the current flow of nationalism is explicitly encroaching the domain traditionally accorded by liberal internationalism. Nation-states have returned to the center stage of international society, replacing the Cold War-era structure featured by less powerful states sticking to two antagonistic ideological camps. As every inch of land finally is occupied by inward-looking nation-states, the international order is no longer as docile to fundamental reforms as that of White’s time. Politically, the schism between democracy and authoritarianism is deepened as economic prosperity enhances the resilience of authoritarianism worldwide. Economically, negotiations among WTO members for further lowering trade barriers have come to multiple standstills since the launch of the Doha round in 2001. The tragic failure of the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference 2009 signaled another defeat of the so-called international

¹ Theodore H. White, *In Search of History: A Personal Adventure* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), p. 22.

² James Mayall, *Nationalism and International Society* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 92.

interests in confrontation with national ones. Tuvalu³ resident Mitiana Trevor, in his interview in Fiji, stated to Chinese journalists that: “all the 6 billion population on the earth owe us an apology.”⁴ But it may not be imprudent to predict that no remedy would be made soon, though people everywhere might feel deeply sorry. When the world is parceled and brought under national jurisdictions, where you belong seriously matters.

1.1 Literature Review

One of the well-accepted clichés of our time claims that we are living in a world of major transformations and identity change. China is a rising power under rapid transformation and attracts close attention from the outside on its identity formation. The world has never seen a power rising as fast, or on such a scale, as China is doing in the late twentieth century and early twentieth-first centuries. The Group of Eight leading economies has expanded to be the Group of Twenty, but some say it's really the G2 – China and the US – that counts. Barely a global issue can be negotiated, let alone resolved, without China's participation. China is a rising power under rapid transformation and attracts close attention from the outside on its identity change. The 2008 Olympic Torch Relay took place in the immediate aftermath of the anti-Chinese unrest that erupted in Tibet. The worldwide nationalist protests by overseas Chinese communities aroused intensive academic debate. A large body of literature suggests that China has become increasingly nationalistic ever since the early 1990s.⁵ Despite the enormous academic efforts to address the new surge of Chinese nationalism, two flaws have prevented progress.

³ Tuvalu is an island nation located in the Pacific Ocean. The continuously rising sea levels are going to submerge the country in a few decades. At the Copenhagen Summit in December 2009, Tuvalu's spokesman Ian Fry was one of the strongest critics of the final document stating, “It looks like we are being offered 30 pieces of silver to betray our people and our future.” See Richard Ingham, “Anger over New Climate Deal,” *AFP*, December 19, 2009, <http://www.news.com.au/world/widespread-anger-over-climate-deal/story-e6frfkyi-1225811997799>, accessed January 28, 2010.

⁴ Wang Fei, “Tuvalu mianlian mieding shengcun jiannan yao quanqiu 60 yi ren daoqian” (Tuvalu is facing catastrophe people there ask for apologies from around the world), *Guangzhou Daily*, December 2, 2009, <http://news.qq.com/a/20091202/000111.htm>, accessed December 4, 2009.

⁵ Geremie R. Barne, “To Screw Foreigners is Patriotic: China's Avant-garde Nationalists,” in Jonathan Unger, ed., *Chinese Nationalism* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1996), pp. 183-208; Zhao Suisheng, “Chinese Intellectuals' Quest for National Greatness and Nationalistic Writing in the 1990s,” *The China Quarterly*, No. 152 (December 1997), pp. 725-745.

1.1.1 Primordialism versus Instrumentalism

First, ontological dichotomy splits the research field. Scholars on ethnicity and nationalism have long been divided into two camps: primordialism versus instrumentalism. The former claims a reified national absolutism based on unchanging national identity having existed for a long time.⁶ Nationalism springs from the roots of human society, namely, primordial attachments. Conor Cruise O'Brien points out that nationalism is so deeply rooted in human nature and will not simply go away. He thinks nationalism will remain with us in its undesirable manifestations as well as in the 'sober' forms.⁷ In its austere version, the doctrine of nationalist absolutism goes like this: "The nation exists before all; it is the origin of everything. Its will is always legal, it is the law itself." Besides these "hardliners", there is a very popular moderate version of this view championed by Anthony Smith under the name of "ethnosymbolism", stressing the antiquity of nations and national feelings, as well as the importance of the past for the present.⁸

Instrumentalists place the origin of nations in modern times. They can be further divided into two subcategories according to their differing answers to the question: to what extent the ethno-cultural nation is real? The modernist realists view nations as real but distinctly modern creations.⁹ In the opening of his 1993 book, William Pfaff sweeps aside the idea that nationalism is "a primordial historical phenomenon" and offers his own account:

Nationalism is a phenomenon of the European nineteenth century. It is a political consequence of the literary-intellectual movement called Romanticism, a Central European reaction to the universalizing, and therefore disorienting, ideas of the eighteenth century French

⁶ See Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge: New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

⁷ Conor Cruise O'Brien, "The Wrath of Ages. Nationalism's Primordial Roots". *Foreign Affairs* 72, No. 5 (November/December 1993), p. 148.

⁸ For details see the debate between Anthony Smith and Umut Özkirimli. Smith, "The Poverty of Anti-Nationalist Modernism," *Nations & Nationalism*, No. 3 (July 2003), pp.357-370, and Özkirimli, "The Nation as an Artichoke? A Critique of Ethnosymbolist Interpretations of Nationalism," *Nations & Nationalism* 9, No. 3 (July 2003), pp. 339-355.

⁹ See Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism: New Perspectives on the Past* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983); and John Breuilly, *Nineteenth-Century Germany: Politics, Culture and Society 1780-1918* (London: Arnold, 2001)

Ernest Gellner in his path breaking work, *Nation and Nationalism: New Perspectives on the Past*, argues that contrary to popular and even scholarly belief, nationalism does not have any deep roots in the human psyche. Nations as a natural, God-given way of classifying men, as an inherent though long-delayed political destiny, are a myth.¹¹ Eric J. Hobsbawm parallels Gellner that nationalism exists in the context of a particular stage of technological and economic development. He uses the formation of national languages as an example. Standard national languages spoken or written, cannot emerge as such before printing, mass literacy and hence, mass schooling. It has even been argued that popular spoken Italian as an idiom capable of expressing the full range of what a twentieth-century language needs outside the domestic and face-to-face sphere of communication, is only being constructed today as a function of the needs of national television programming.¹² Barry Posen investigates the spread of nationalism in the nineteenth century as a means to enhance states' extractive and mobilizing power. He observes that nationalism is a cause of intense widespread public concern for national security, and a public predisposition to accept the judgments of civilian or military "threat inflators" of military dangers from abroad.¹³

Pushing the modernist perspective to a more extreme position, one finds anti-realist views of nation and nation-state. According to them, nations are purely "imagined" but somehow still powerful entities.¹⁴ The extreme anti-realist view claims that national past and nationality are pure "constructions." Karl W. Deutsch first brought scholarly attention to this theme in a seminal book, *Nationalism and Social Communication*, which attributed the success of nationalist ideas to the power of modern communications. "Membership in a people essentially consists in wide complementarity of social communication," he argued in his explanation of nationalism's cultural diffusion. "It consists in the ability to communicate more

¹⁰ William Pfaff, *The Wrath of Nations. Civilization and the Fury of Nationalism* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993).

¹¹ Gellner, 1983, pp. 34, 48.

¹² Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Program, Myth, Reality*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge England: New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992). p. 10.

¹³ Barry Posen, "Nationalism, the Mass Army, and Military Power," *International Security* 18 (1993), pp. 80-124.

¹⁴ See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, Revised* (London; New York: Verso, 2006); Karl W. Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication: An Inquiry into the Foundations of Nationality* (New York: The Technology Press of the MIT, 1953).

effectively, and over a wider range of subjects, with members of one large group than with outsiders.”¹⁵ For Deutsch and his supporters, therefore, modern national identities were shaped by modern communication systems that conveyed the ideas and interests of elites throughout large territories and populations.¹⁶ As a full exposition of Deutsch’s approach, Benedict Anderson, in a more recently work, accentuates the role of newspapers and novels in the creation of those “imagined communities” that become modern nations. He assumes that communicative processes create the cultural contexts in which nationalisms can develop. “Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness,” Anderson explains, “but by the style in which they are imagined.”¹⁷ The imagining of nations takes many forms, including the narratives of national novelists, the stories in national newspapers, the maps that students study at schools, and the interactions between colonial governments and their subject populations. Anderson finds that the emergence of an intellectual class precedes the emergence of nationalist ideologies in every society that develops nationalist identities. No matter how much differently the imagining work is conducted, the various nationalist narratives carry the influence of intellectuals.

Situated in China’s case, a robust debate between the bottom-up national appeals underpinned by a reified Chinese identity and the top-down nationalist mobilization led by the political elites of Chinese Communist Party (CCP) corresponds to the general primordialism-*versus*-instrumentalism schism. According to primordialist, nationalism is not a new phenomenon particular to the modern history of China. Prasenjit Duara argues that nationalism originated in ancient China and metamorphosed through dynasties.¹⁸ Not agreeing that the Chinese nation could be reified and then taken for granted though China had survived numerous external invasions and repetitively reunified itself under Confucianism, Peter H. Gries concedes that China’s “neo-nationalism” is not a political fever void of real content. He views the anti-Western sentiment taken up by the new generation is deeply rooted in narratives about past “humiliations” at the hands of the West in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries and impassioned notions of Chinese

¹⁵Deutsch, 1953, p. 71

¹⁶ Deutsch notes the role of elites in *ibid* , pp 75-78

¹⁷ Anderson, 1983, p 15.

¹⁸ Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China* (Chicago University of Chicago Press, 1995).

identity.¹⁹ Gries' argument represents a widely accepted account of Chinese nationalism. According to this thesis, Western domination was both the catalyst for the culturalism-to-nationalism transition and the object that fervent Chinese nationalists were resisting. A leading Chinese International Relations professor, Wang Jisi, observes that Chinese nationalism stemmed from "a long-standing pride that was frustrated by Western and Japanese conquering of China in modern history."²⁰ Orville Schell provides a more sophisticated understanding of "the Century of Humiliation." He agrees with Wang that the legacy of the country's "humiliation" at the hands of foreigners, beginning with its defeat in the Opium Wars in the mid-19th century, is the most critical element in the formation of China's modern nationalism. Furthermore, he highlights the special role Japan had played in China's nationalist turn. In his opinion, Japan's successful industrialization and Tokyo's invasion and occupation of the mainland during World War II was in many ways psychologically more devastating than Western interventions because Japan was an Asian power that had succeeded in modernizing, where China had failed. This explains why Japan has become the most regular target of Chinese nationalism.²¹

However, voices of primordialists are marginal in comparison with those of instrumentalists. For scholars of instrumentalism, the most important characteristic of contemporary Chinese nationalism has been its instrumentality to the CCP in compensating for or even replacing the declined Communist ideology. The dominant Western interpretation of Chinese nationalism falls into instrumentalist accounts that the CCP has top-down mobilized Chinese nationalism as a tool to legitimize its one-party rule and stabilize the precarious socioeconomic situation through rapid transition. As Thomas Christensen astutely points out, since the Chinese Communist Party is no longer communist it must be even more Chinese.²² Along the same lines, Zheng Yongnian²³ argues that the surge of nationalism results from the new political needs of the CCP. He notes, in the post-Mao era, the search for political legitimacy has replaced the foreign threat and has become the primary factor underpinning the

¹⁹See Peter Hays Gries, *China's New Nationalism: Pride, Politics, and Diplomacy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

²⁰See Wang Jisi, "Pragmatic Nationalism: China Seeks a New Role in World Affairs," *Oxford International Review* 6, No. 1 (Winter 1994), p. 30.

²¹ Orville Schell, "China's Agony of Defeat," *Newsweek*, July 26, 2008.

²² Thomas Christensen, "Chinese Realpolitik," *Foreign Affairs* 75, No. 5 (1996), p. 46, and more similar arguments could be found in his "A Belgrade Bombing Explodes in Beijing", "China's True Colors" and "Defusing the Crisis with China"

²³ In this project, all Chinese names follow the Chinese Convention by beginning with surnames.

revival of Chinese nationalism. In other words, the main sources of nationalism in the post-Mao era are domestic rather than external.²⁴ Zhao Suisheng states that when Communist's appeal is gone, the Chinese people need a unifying force to hold the country together during the turbulent transformation period.²⁵ He identifies China's nationalism as a state-led and pragmatic one, which is an instrument the CCP uses to bolster the population's faith in a troubled political system and to hold the country together during its period of rapid and turbulent transformation into a post-Communist society.²⁶ Looking into the dynamics of party politics, Allen Whiting contends, "The question as to whether the nationalism that is projected is confident or assertive and even aggressive depends very much on the degree of perceived vulnerability and on the character of the factional in-fighting in Beijing."²⁷ These top-down analyses of Chinese nationalism, which primarily look to the party-state system for independent variables of their accounts, make up a large portion of the existing literature in the field. In the dominant instrumentalist view, Chinese nationalism not only begins but also ends with the Communist Party.²⁸ As William C. Callahan succinctly states,

Recent studies of Chinese foreign policy, in both Chinese and English, often link [the] "new nationalism" with the rise of China. Unfortunately, much of the discussion of Chinese nationalism has a very narrow, top-down view of identity and politics, typically redefining nationalism first as official nationalism, then as Statism.²⁹

The trend of overemphasizing the role of the party-state has been, though to a limited extent, countered by scholars who give more weight to the multi-dimensional interactions between the state and the society. Carefully synthesized the primordial and instrumental approaches, He Yanan, in her recent works exclusively discussing

²⁴ Zheng Yongnian, *Globalization and State Transformation in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.51.

²⁵ Zhao Suisheng, *In Search of A Right Place? Chinese Nationalism in the Post-Cold War World* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, 1997), p. 16.

²⁶ Zhao Suisheng, "China's Pragmatic Nationalism: Is It Manageable?" *The Washington Quarterly* 29, No. 1 (1995-96), p. 132.

²⁷ Allen S. Whiting, "Chinese Nationalism and Foreign Affair Policy after Deng", *The China Quarterly*, No. 142 (June 1995), pp. 295-316. See also Allen S. Whiting, "Assertive Nationalism in Chinese Foreign Nationalism", *Asian Survey*, (June 1984), pp. 913-33; and Michel Oksenberg, "China's Confident Nationalism", *Foreign Affairs* 55, No. 3 (1986-87), p. 12.

²⁸ Gries, 2005, p. 118

²⁹ William C. Callahan, "National Insecurities: Humiliation, Salvation, and Chinese Nationalism," *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 29, No. 2 (March 2004), pp. 201-202.

the anti-Japanese segment of China's popular nationalism, stresses the increasing importance of the role of the general public since the 1990s. She contends that little evidence to date proves that the anti-Japanese sentiment is officially orchestrated. Nonetheless, Chinese popular nationalism still has deep roots in the state's patriotic indoctrination that has implanted pernicious myths in the national collective memory. Historians, journalists and intellectual elites writing extensively on Chinese history collectively contribute to remolding China's national past taken over by grassroots nationalistic leaders. As a result, China's anti-Japanese popular nationalism continues to swell, fueling widespread mutual mistrust and antipathy in both China and Japan.³⁰ His combined approach has particular synergistic strength in demonstrating how factors interact within and between the macro and micro levels to enable or hinder the ideological change of a society. However, the efforts to overcome the dichotomy of the top-down and bottom-up narratives of Chinese nationalism are still relatively new and insufficient in both depth and range of their enquiries.

The brief literature review of the extensive scholarship on Chinese nationalism reveals a robust debate between the decisive role of political mobilization and historical agonies arousing nationalist sentiments. In fact, scholars of the two opposing approaches see respectively the two sides of one coin. Both top-down mobilization and bottom-up movement are real, which inevitably interlink with one another and share nationalist concerns in common. There does not exist sheer "popular" Chinese nationalism completely impervious to the culture reproduction and identity construction activities of the state. Overemphasizing the difference between official and popular nationalisms, the top-down/bottom-up dichotomy severely undermines the strength of analyses provided by both camps. Instrumentalists restrict the discussion of structural factors to the one-party system and overstate the strength of state manipulation; primordialists take a rather crude retrospective view of the popular base of Chinese nationalism while paying scant attention to contemporary social forces, such as the ever-increased global mobility, and their effects on the public psychology. I take the frequently investigated explanatory variable of patriotic education as an example.

³⁰ Yanan He, "History, Chinese Nationalism and the Emerging Sino-Japanese Conflict," *Journal of Contemporary China* 16, No. 5 (February 2007), pp. 1-24.

As noted above, a number of China scholars and commentators in mass media hold state-led patriotic propaganda responsible for the surge of nationalism in the past two decades.³¹ In the shock of the political upheavals in 1989, the CCP reemphasized the importance of patriotic education to cultivate political loyalty among young generations. A wave of patriotic education campaigns swept discourse about schools, media, cultural sites and historic monuments, seeking to display the “century of humiliation” (1840-1949) in the hands of foreign imperialists and to glorify the heroic deeds of the CCP in national salvation. Seven government ministries and CCP departments, including the Ministry of Education and the Propaganda Department, jointly recommended 100 selected films, 100 selected songs, and 100 selected books to the whole society.³² Across the country a great many tourist destinations commemorating the atrocity of foreign aggressors were redeveloped, e.g. the Memorial Hall of the Nanjing Massacre, the Yuanming Garden, and the Opium War heritage trail around Guangzhou. Even private history museums won official support by providing public education on “patriotic” themes. These museums often worked closely with local officials to receive students for regular visits or thematic field studies, hold public events for key anniversaries, produce propaganda materials and donate books to local education institutions.³³ However, patriotic education is, by no means, particular to the post-1989 China. Ever since the establishment of the People’s Republic of China (PRC), patriotic education, as a constitutive part of nation building, has been built into China’s civil education scheme. The climax of patriotic education came with the Cultural Revolution in 1960s and 1970s when Maoist revolutionary frenzy stirred up virulent populism and anti-Western sentiment among the masses. And the 1990s political endeavor to instill nationalism in Chinese citizens was incomparable with those of Mao’s period in both intensity and scope. If patriotic propaganda has never ceased to influence people’s political ideology, it cannot help us to understand Chinese nationalism in a specific period of time.³⁴ More

³¹ See, among others, Teresa Poole, “Me-Generation on the Rise in China,” *The Independent*, June 2, 1999; Chang Pao-min, “Nationalities, Nationalism, and Globalization: The Case of China,” in Leo Suryadinata, ed., *Nationalism and Globalization: East and West* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2000), pp. 258-293; and Zhao Suisheng, *A Nation-State by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2004).

³² For an excellent review of China’s patriotic education, see Wang Zheng, “National Humiliation, History Education, and the Politics of Historical Memory: Patriotic Education Campaign in China,” *International Studies Quarterly* 52 (2008), pp. 783-806.

³³ “Jiaoyubu yaoqiu zhongxiao xuexiao jiehe kangri zhanzheng peiyu minzujingshen” (Education Ministry requires middle and elementary schools to nurture national spirits in combination of anti-Japanese war), March 4, 2005, <http://news.hsw.cn/system/2005/03/04/001680538.shtml>, accessed October 21, 2010.

³⁴ Liu Jianguo, “‘Aiguo jiaoyu dao zhi fan ri ma?’” (Patriotic education has led to anti-Japanese

to the point, the social effects of patriotic education cannot be evaluated without referring to structural factors (such as economic reform) and broader historical circumstances (such as the Cold War). Neither can it predict the political attitude or practical policy choice of a generation. During the Cultural Revolution, though deeply mired in xenophobic nationalism, China reached a major historical reconciliation with Japan after decades of hostility. The two countries normalized the bilateral relations in 1972 and further resolved to conclude a Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1978. The very brief cross-time comparison reveals that top-down mobilization should be treated as a constant variable which serves as the political context of Chinese nationalism. This is not to discount the explanatory strength of Instrumentalist approach as a whole but to suggest it is necessary to expand the range of variables examined. The same suggestion is also applicable to Primordialist approach.

1.1.2 Nationalism as an Empty Signifier

Second, it has been a recurring theme of the scholarship to articulate the type or the “real nature” of Chinese nationalism. A dozen of descriptive adjectives have been used to modify Chinese nationalism - confident, assertive, reactive, *realpolitik*, belligerent, defensive, superficial, arrogant, reactive, anti-Western, pragmatic, and so on.³⁵ China specialists have directed a great deal of attention to, in Allen Carlson’s words, define what makes Chinese nationalism “Chinese.”³⁶ In contrast, little scholarly effort has been spent discovering its multi-layered content and complicated sources. As Carlson maintains, the naming project to categorize Chinese nationalism with a single label – has its indispensable merits in accumulating a great deal of rich empirical material relating to various aspects of China’s political identity

sentiments?), *Global Times*, August 27, 2004, p. 26.

³⁵ About debates over the nature of China’s nationalism, see Oksenberg, 1986-87, pp. 501-523; Lei Guang, “Realpolitik Nationalism International Sources of Chinese Nationalism,” *Modern China* 21, No. 4 (October 2005), p. 498; Xiao Gongqin, “Superficial, Arrogant Nationalism,” *China Security* 3, No. 3 (2009), pp. 57-58. Zhao Suisheng, “China’s Pragmatic Nationalism: Is It Manageable?” *The Washington Quarterly* 29, No. 1 (1995-96), pp. 131-144; Zhao Suisheng, “Chinese Nationalism and its International Orientations,” *Political Science Quarterly* 115, No. 1 (Spring 2000), pp. 1-33; James Townsend, “Chinese Nationalism,” *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, No. 27 (January 1992), pp. 97-130. For an excellent review of this problem, see Allen Carlson, “A flawed perspective: The Limitations Inherent within the Study of Chinese nationalism,” *Nations and Nationalism* 15, No. 1, pp. 20-35.

³⁶ Carlson, 2009, p. 24

construction.³⁷ But such categorical framings have often portrayed Chinese nationalism as a relatively static and timeless being and thereby impede efforts to address its phenomenological complexity and interactionist characteristics.

It is understandable that both academics and political practitioners incline to quickly grasp the essence of Chinese nationalism because an overwhelming majority of research projects on this subject are policy driven. It is a conventional wisdom that nationalism permits or even compels political leaders to pursue provocative foreign policies that lead to major interstate wars. When a rising power embraces vehement nationalism, it inevitably alerts the international community about its strategic ambitions. Thus, to identify the nature of Chinese nationalism becomes more a political imperative than a mere scholarly curiosity. However, the question what makes Chinese nationalism “Chinese” is, to a considerable extent, less meaningful to ask because nationalism is in essence an “empty signifier.” “Empty signifier” is a concept propounded by Ernesto Laclau. According to him, empty signifiers “have no fixed content and can embrace an open series of demands.”³⁸ The purpose of such terms “is to give a particular demand a function of universal representation - that is to give it the value of a horizon giving coherence to the chain of equivalence and, at the same time, keeping it indefinitely open”³⁹ Thereby, an empty signifier has no articulate unchangeable reference. For an empty signifier, being definite is somewhat self-destroying. It must be abstract and dynamic enough to mean different things to different people. On the other hand, an empty signifier must have specific content under a given context and acquire new meanings in accordance with the changing situation. The failure to substantiate it or adjust it may result in the breakdown of social consensus. “Pure” empty signifiers, in this sense, are unsustainable.⁴⁰ Nationalism, among others, is a typical empty signifier, representing a wide range of social ideologies and political propositions in different times and under different circumstances. Thus, it is less meaningful to question whether Chinese nationalism is intrinsically defensive or offensive, confident or arrogant, because the least thing an empty signifier has is a static theme. In the following part, I give a few examples to

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26.

³⁸ Dirk Nabers, “Filling the Void of Meaning: Identity Construction in U.S. Foreign Policy After September 11, 2001.” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 5, No. 2 (2009), p. 196.

³⁹ Ernesto Laclau, *Emancipation(s)* (London: Verso, 1996), pp. 57-58

⁴⁰ Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (London: Verso, 1985), p. 114.

illustrate both the explanatory power and the principal limitations of the categorical approach and suggest remedies for its insufficiency.

In the early 1980s when China's national project of "reform and opening up" was still in its nascence, Allen S. Whiting had already observed that a major change of attitude in the framing of foreign policy has occurred to China's statesmen since the end of the Cultural Revolution. This attitude may best be characterized as "assertive" nationalism.⁴¹ He quotes two top leaders' statements to the Twelfth Congress of the CCP — one is Hu Yaobang, the other is Deng Xiaoping — as proof of this change. Both Hu and Deng stressed the importance of national independence and the intolerance of any encroachment on China's national dignity and interests.⁴² Whiting's observation two decades ago stands the test of time and is still pertinent to today's discussion. The hardline stance on "independent foreign policy" is ritualistically reiterated by Chinese spokesmen and official media whenever China is engaged in disputes with foreign countries such as Japan or the United States. To get rid of foreign interference in China's domestic affairs has been a long struggle throughout China's modern history, which is also the main theme of nationalism in many Third World states. However, China scholars have generally failed, first, to draw on the strength of the main discussion of nationalism in general and, second, to take a comparative perspective by referring to the common features of anti-colonial or state-building nationalism in particular. As noted by Carlson, researchers in this field "have tended to pursue their research in isolation from the main discussions that have animated the broader literature on nationalism." Despite forwarding a great deal of compelling insights, they have not made serious effort to acknowledge or use the plethora of existing work on the subject.⁴³ As a result, we still know very little about the relative position of China's case in the coordinate system of nationalism as a general matter. Moreover, the development of nationalism theory in multiple disciplines assigns great importance to structural factors on the international level, which attempts to understand the emergence of nationalism in the context of modern state system.⁴⁴ But how international circumstances, such as the transition from

⁴¹Whiting, 1983, p. 914.

⁴² Statements of Hu Yaobang and Deng Xiaoping to the Twelfth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, September 1, 1982.

⁴³Carlson, 2009, pp. 23-24.

⁴⁴ See, for example, John Breuilly, *Nationalism and the state*, 2nd ed. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993)

Westphalian sovereignty to legal sovereignty, come into play with China's domestic processes to engender nationalism is seldom acknowledged in the existing literature. To put it briefly, the existing literature on the subject outweighs China-based empirical analysis over theoretical understanding with comparative perspectives.

Lei Guang regards China's nationalism as essentially entangled with strategic thoughts of *realpolitik*, which is formed as "hard-edged realist ideals and ideas about state power and geopolitics clothed in the garb of nationalism."⁴⁵ He argues that China's *realpolitik* nationalism relies for its content on but is not reducible to the power politics of *realpolitik*, because the "nationalism" half of the compound comes into play in two ways. First, it may prevent the logic of *realpolitik* from always playing out completely since relentless pursuit of material power and national interests could be encumbered by ideational factors. He cites cases of territorial negotiations in which the symbolic status of national boundaries may appear more important to the Chinese nationalists than their actual on-the-ground demarcations (e.g. the demarcation between China and Burma over the British-defined boundary in the 1960s). On the other hand, conventional *realpolitik* encompasses elements of strategic power play that do not arouse nationalistic passions. For example, even though the Indian nuclear tests of 1998 dramatically altered regional power balance in Asia, they elicited a relatively mild reaction from China: they were perceived as a security challenge but not a major threat to the core Chinese identity as a sovereign state.⁴⁶ Lei Guang contends that Chinese nationalism focuses on preserving the nation-state and the nation-state system, rather than on engaging in aggrandizement aimed at recapturing past glories.⁴⁷ It is insightful to place great emphasis on the *realpolitik* characteristic of Chinese nationalism. However, as Carlson points out, the need to assure the accuracy of the categories scholars are seeking to impose upon the Chinese case has led them to tailor their research in particular constraining directions at the expense of the validity of their arguments.⁴⁸ Lei's account along the *realpolitik* line underestimates the non-material dimension of the nationalist appeals in China. The vehement nationalistic emotions during the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games have cogently manifested the popular aspirations to demonstrate national greatness and

⁴⁵ Lei, 2005, p. 498.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 499.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 509.

⁴⁸ Carlson, 2009, p. 25.

obtain national dignity. I agree that the goals of national rejuvenation sought by contemporary Chinese nationalists vastly differ from restoring the Central Kingdom status China enjoyed in pre-modern history. But to ensure the survival of China as a sovereign state and maintain the nation-state system does not exclude the quest for symbolic values and external recognition. For instance, the material and non-material pursuits of nationalism mutually strengthen each other. As Xiao Gongqin correctly points out, the people of large countries are often surrounded by illusions of grandeur, regarding the nation's vast territory and population as signs of its superiority to others.⁴⁹ There is no credible evidence that China has been or would be immune to the lure of grandeur. The role that national dignity and status anxiety play in the surge of Chinese nationalism will be addressed in this project. I ask for patience until Chapter 4.

Michel Oksenberg identifies Chinese nationalism as a “confident” one. He states that today's leaders are no less nationalistic than Mao and his supporters, but the nature of their nationalism is different. The ideological fervor, acerbic rhetoric and gratuitous insults of Maoist nationalism have subsided. The neo-nationalism among the leaders is bolstered by confidence in the economic future, which promotes confidence in China's foreign policy.⁵⁰ For Oksenberg, it is a patient and moderate nationalism rooted in confidence that over time China can regain its former greatness through economic growth, based on the import of foreign technology and ideas. It is a calculated nationalism, linked to a strategy for economic and political development. It is also a determined and resolute nationalism, flexible in tactics subtle in strategy but deeply committed to the preservation of national independence, the reunification of China (including Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan and disputed islands in the south and East China Seas) and the attainment of national wealth and power.⁵¹ Oksenberg's point of view – economic prosperity giving rise to national confidence – is typical among China observers in the West, though many are more vigilant about the antagonistic elements of Chinese nationalism over the long run. Lei summarizes the standard Western narrative on Chinese nationalism in his 2005 article:

China prides itself as a historically powerful country with a distinguished

⁴⁹Xiao, 2009, p. 57.

⁵⁰ Oksenberg, 1986-87, pp. 503, 519.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, p. 505.

civilization. Its decline in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the face of Western and Japanese incursions indelibly etched shame in the Chinese people and triggered their widespread attempts to reform their political system. Key to this endeavor is the quest for a strong state. ... Chinese nationalism is thus state-led, anti-Western, and steeped in an acute sense of national humiliation; in a quest for world eminence, it seeks to restore China's historical grandeur.⁵²

This standard formula offers valuable insights into contemporary Chinese nationalism. However it provides neither a workable analytical framework nor well-defined variables the students in the field can draw upon to deepen the collective understanding of the subject. This interpretation of Chinese nationalism weights the past over the present and the manipulation of the elites over the interaction between the state and the society. It overlooks that nationalism, especially at the grassroots level, reflects the citizens' either explicit or intuitive understanding of national belonging and the relationship between the state and the individual. How the ordinary people perceive the role of the cultural nation as well as the political state in their daily life, to a considerable extent, decide their stance toward nationalism.

To sum up, there does not necessarily exist a *real* nature of Chinese nationalism to be discovered through academic inquiry. Instead, there do exist a set of structural factors inside and outside China, which produce and reproduce nationalism through stable and predictable mechanisms. The trend of Chinese nationalism is, to a great degree, determined by how these factors play out under specific domestic and international contexts. In this view, to explore these factors and investigate how they function is a more fruitful approach to understand and explain Chinese nationalism as a particular manifestation of nationalism in the general sense.

⁵²Lei, 2005, p. 495

1.2 Research Questions and Research Methods

1.2.1 Research Questions

In order to rectify some of the deficiencies presented above, this project aims to address two main questions: (1) What is the substantive content of contemporary Chinese nationalism? (2) What are the sources of nationalism among the post-80s generation? Moving beyond the confines of state mobilization, I look to both domestic socioeconomic factors and international pressures to understand the emergence of contemporary Chinese nationalism. To bridge the dichotomy between “top-down” and “bottom-up”, I examine how state activities developed under the new internal and external conditions of “reform and opening up” interact with the life history of the individual to determine political preferences. My purpose is not to dismiss what we already know about the phenomenon of Chinese nationalism but to add to the existing analysis a missing motivational dimension – why the nation-state is important for the ordinary Chinese people.

Both classical modernism and hard realism, as discussed above, emphasize the importance of institution and technological innovation, the progress of social productivity and the revolution in social nexus. Gellner argues nationalism is the product of industrial social organization. Industrialism means population explosion, rapid urbanization, labor migration, and also the economic and political penetration of previously more or less inward-turned communities, by a global economy and a centralizing polity.⁵³ Liah Greenfeld pushes it even further. She argues, first, that the emergence of nationalism predated the development of every significant component of modernization; second, nationalism was not just a fortuitous antecedent of modernization but “the constitutive element of modernity”, the essential prerequisite for the generation of modernization.⁵⁴ This project directs effort to uncover the mechanism by which “reform” and “opening up” – the most enduring and efficient efforts to modernize and globalize China ever since the late Qing Dynasty – gives rise to popular nationalism.

⁵³Gellner, 1983, pp. 42-43.

⁵⁴ Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 18-21.

I argue that Chinese nationalism in the post-1989 period is closely related with two macro factors—modernization and the post-War international system. It manifests itself in concerns about Statism, sovereignty, and national dignity and shares a number of common features with nationalist appeals in other new states. It is a response to rapid social change brought by the China Model of modernization (state capitalism, marketization, regional disparity, etc.) and challenges posed by globalization (increased integration with the world economy, intensified global competition, cultural communication with other cultures, etc.). Solution-seeking within the Chinese society take the forms of both self-doubt and self-assertion. This produces increasing ambivalence in China's attitude toward a host of antithetical beliefs and forces, e.g., the liberal international order and the norms of Westphalian sovereignty, commitments to globalization and anxieties about the negative influence of interdependence, the quest for Chineseness and the imperative of Westernization.

Second, Chinese nationalism is bound with state capitalism. China's ongoing reform efforts result in a strengthened state and a relatively weakened civil society. Administrative monopoly in economy and state-centered institutional arrangements create a huge gap between the state sector and the non-state sector, which put rigid constraints on individual autonomy. Due to the absence of a functioning civil society and tight restrictions on private enterprises, the citizens have no other options than heavily relying on the state for personal well-being. In a subtle and latent manner, supporting the state becomes equivalent to obtaining a good life. This is particularly true for socially vulnerable groups, such as peasants, migrant labor, laid-off SOE workers, and young generations. Though the social vulnerability of people, in the first place, is state-induced, the state and the popular interest eventually converge with each other in an ironic way.

1.2.2 Research Methods

Public opinion toward the nation-state and nationalism is exceedingly difficult to discover. This project involves qualitative research complemented by quantitative data. First, I combine the structural approach common in the literature of modernization theory with the interactionist approach common in the literature of

identity formation. Combining different research approaches has synergistic effects and offset biases inherent in each of them. The former leads me to examine how domestic socioeconomic changes and China's international exposure transform the life patterns of ordinary Chinese people. The latter directs me to study how individual life experience interacts with the national past of the country gives rise to new nationalist consciousness. This mixed approach allows me to analyze how modernization in China causes the rise of nationalism.

Second, scholarship on Chinese nationalism has suffered from the lack of empirical data, which compromises serious efforts to explore the origins of any nationalism. I supplement theoretical inquiries with successive waves of survey data collected at numerous time points and present the data in a fashion that allows for cross-country and over-time comparison. Data analyzed in this research are mainly drawn from the four waves of the World Values Survey (WVS), conducted in 1990, 1995, 2001 and 2007, as well as two rounds of the East Asian Barometer survey conducted in 2002 and 2008, but by no means restricted to them.

Third, I employ case studies to complement formal theoretical analysis. A number of cases are examined to illustrate theoretical formulations or test casual mechanism suggested by the formal model. Case studies of Chinese nationalism track how different participants interact with one another to produce tensions and solutions in specific nationalist events. The detailed qualitative accounts provided by case analysis help to link theoretical elaboration with real-life context and to put concrete flesh on the bare bones of abstract theoretical ideas.

Fourth, I conduct unstructured in-depth interviews with organizers and participants of nationalist activities. As noted above, nationalism is an "empty signifier," which construes different meanings for different social actors in different political space. What national identification is believed to imply for the individual can change over time, even in the course of quite short periods. To discover the specific concerns and appeals of nationalism of the post-80s generation, I analyze the first-hand data collected from in-depth interviews with 55 informants from mainland China, Hong Kong, the United States, Britain, Belgium, Switzerland, and India. All interviews were carried out according to a formal set of key questions, which were designed to

identify the interviewees' basic attitudes toward the nation-state, for example, they were all asked: "Do you think sovereignty is important for China? Why?" And then I discussed ongoing nationalist events with some of these interviewees, whenever there was a chance, to deepen the understanding of their political beliefs and propositions. Stylized probes were employed in these interviews to clarify the inconsistencies in the interviewees' answers and to discover and prevent dissimulation. If an interview were asked: "Do you agree China should implement hardline policies in territorial disputes with neighboring countries?" and he or she answered: "Yes, of course," then a further question would be asked: "Do you think we should also consider the national interest of the neighboring countries?" All interviews were carried out in complete privacy. Based on their preference, some interviewees are identified using a pseudonym to maintain confidentiality of interview data.

1.3 Conclusion

In sum, this project is primarily qualitative with a quantitative component. It aims to provide a theoretical understanding of Chinese nationalism and to generate a few hypotheses for further empirical testing. It does not pretend to produce generalizable arguments for which rigorous quantitative analysis would have been necessary. By in-depth inquiries into the sociopolitical sources of China's contemporary nationalism, this project presents a fresh approach to study the formation and transformation of China's contemporary national identity. I argue that Chinese nationalism in the post-1989 period has three fundamental concerns – Statism, sovereignty, and national dignity, which combine to address common problems faced by new states. In terms of the state-individual relationship, domestic socioeconomic changes under the China Model of development undermine the social security of citizens, rendering the ordinary people unprecedentedly dependent on protection and welfare provided by the nation-state. Moreover, China's deeper engagement with the outside world extends the demand for national dignity from the elites to the whole society. Both processes lead to a pro-state stance of the general public, especially the young generation. In comparison with ideology control and political manipulation,

socioeconomic variables are a more reliable source of predictions since they stand as a stable framework less sensitive to political contingencies. Though nationalism provides no surefire prediction about the future, a better understanding of the origins of Chinese nationalism will reduce the uncertainty in strategic interactions between China and the U.S. as well as other regional powers in the long term.

II Nationalism and Modernity

The “prophets” of the nineteenth century, as claimed by Isaiah Berlin, foresaw many of the central trends of the twentieth century: Burckhardt foresaw the importance of the military-industrial complex, Weber the growth of bureaucracy, Bakunin the revolutions in Third World countries, Durkheim the anomie of industrialized society, Tocqueville the conformism of egalitarian societies, and Marx the accelerated rate of technological change and the concentration of the means of production in the hands of the few. Yet no one foresaw the centrality of nationalism in twentieth-century life.¹ They believed the force of nationalism was doomed in competition with liberalism and international trade. However, nationalism survived these trials and spread with whirlwind force and smashing success across the globe.

Nationalism in a broad sense is an old issue of human history. Recognizable forms of national sentiment can be located in the pre-modern era. But nation and nationalism becoming the foci of intellectual efforts is more recent. Since Ernest Renan’s lecture “What Is a Nation?” delivered in 1882, it has exhausted political thinkers’ intelligence seeking to define these terms. Though numerous scholars of a variety of disciplines have contributed to this industry², simply no definition of nationalism has ever gained general acceptance. Nationalism becomes a fuzzy concept because we have tended to lump together under its label all manner of group identities and primordial sentiments. Students in this field may unavoidably take agnosticism as the initial posture. But nationalism should not be confused with tribalism, ethnicity, or shared cultural, religious and linguistic identities. Nationalism involves only those sentiment and attitudes basic to orientations toward the nation-state.

One view sees nationalism as a doctrine or set of ideas. For Hans Kohn, it is a “political creed” that “centers the supreme loyalty of the overwhelming majority of the people upon the nation-state, either existing or desired.”³ Others view nationalism

¹ Avishai Margalit, “The Moral Psychology of Nationalism,” in Robert McKim and Jeff McMahan, eds., *The Morality of Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp.74-87

² For example, Louis Snyder’s attempt to clarify nationalism yielded a definition of no less than 208 pages, see Louis Leo Snyder, *The Meaning of Nationalism* New York: Greenwood Press, 1968.

³ Hans Kohn, “Nationalism,” *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* 11 (1968), p. 63

as sociopolitical movement that gathered momentum and authority in Europe over the nineteenth century and then spilled over into the rest of the world in the twentieth century. It strives to make culture and polity congruent, to endow a culture with its own political roof, and not more than one roof at that.⁴ Jack Snyder makes a significant refinement of this usual conception by differentiating nationalism from ethnicity and racism. Race is used to refer to biological characteristics, for instance, skin color. Ethnic or ethnic group is linked to a real or imagined common ancestry while a nation is, therefore, a group of people who see themselves as distinct in these terms and who aspire to self-rule”⁵ Ethnicity excludes the concept of self-rule. The author’s purpose in this project is not to enrich the conceptualization of these terms. It is less meaningful to abstractly conclude such a complex phenomenon as nationalism than to look into its content, process and consequence in specific context.

However the term is understood across the theoretical spectrum within in the academia, rather like religion, nationalism has a bad name in the real world.⁶ It is portrayed as evil by the media and criticized as irrational by politicians. It implies violent aggression, self-assertive ethnocentrism, ethnic cleansing, and even genocide. Throughout the twentieth century nationalism has indeed manifested itself as a destructive force from time to time. But it cannot be reduced to these phenomena. A dark view of nationalism is historically simplistic and morally misleading.⁷ The roles nationalism has played in different historical eras are also far from identical. The nationalism of the nineteenth century aimed at unifying religiously and politically heterogeneous social groups was totally different from the separatist nationalisms of the present. In the west, nationalism is often considered to be a curse, whereas in the south it is thought of as a blessing. In the one case, nationalism is associated with war, destruction and irrational intolerance; in the other case with progress, the transcendence of parochial loyalties and development.⁸ Ernst Haas differentiates “old nationalism” from “new nationalism.” The former refers to “societies whose

⁴ Gellner, 1983, p. 43, see also Hobshawn, 1992. Anthony Smith adopts a similar view with Gellner that nationalism is an ideological movement for the attainment and maintenance of autonomy, unity and identity of a human population. For a full exposition of Smith’s definition of nationalism, see Anthony D. Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*. 2nd ed (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1983).

⁵ Jack L. Snyder, *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict*, 1st ed. (New York: Norton, 2000), p. 23.

⁶ Clifford Geertz, “The Integrative Resolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States,” in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), p. 253.

⁷ Ernst B. Haas, *Nationalism, Liberalism, and Progress: The Dismal Fate of New Nations* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2000), p. vii.

⁸ Mayall, 1990, p. 78.

intellectuals had articulated nationalist sentiments by 1750 and which achieved the status of nation-state by 1880. Several became exemplars on which later nationalists and nation-builders relied.”⁹ The latter deals mostly with “societies whose national identities are largely due to the modernizing thrust of the imperialism the ‘old’ nation-states imposed on them, directly or by intellectual tutelage.”¹⁰ Nationalisms in the two phrases gathered momentum under distinct internal and external circumstances, carried different characteristics with varied intensity and made dissimilar sociopolitical outcomes. This chapter is dedicated to demonstrate the mixed image of nationalism as both a constructive and a destructive force in the new states. It provides an overview of the arguments that are developed in greater detail in the remainder of the dissertation. My aim is neither to celebrate nationalism nor to gloss over crimes committed under its name, but rather to analyze its dynamics that will shed light on the understanding of Chinese nationalism in the following chapters.

2.1 Roads to Modernity

Nationalism is a response to social changes associated with modernity. Though the emotion of patriotism and the sense of national consciousness and identity can be traced back to ancient times, nationalism in the modern sense did not emerge until the national revolutions in Europe.¹¹ In the pre-modern era ethnic differentiation was of minor political significance in many civilizations. Muslim historians were not accustomed to think in ethnic/national terms, and the passing of the leadership of Islam from the Arabs to Persians, Turks, and others did not strike Muslim historians as significant or worthy of special note.¹² Liah Greenfeld argues that nationalism is caused by capitalism and industrialization.¹³ It is “a peculiar modern form of politics which can only be understood in relation to the way in which the modern state has

⁹Haas, 2000, p. viii.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. ix.

¹¹ Ronald Findlay, “Notes on the Political Economy of Nationalism,” in Albert Breton, ed., *Nationalism and Rationality* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 146. It is worth noting that scholars have different views about which country is the first nation-state in the modern time. Liah Greenfeld put the birth of nationalism in the sixteenth-century Britain while a conventional view holds the first nation-state is France after 1789.

¹² Bernard Lewis, *History: Remembered, Recovered, Invented* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 80.

¹³ Liah Greenfeld, *The Spirit of Capitalism: Nationalism and Economic Growth* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), p. 4.

developed.”¹⁴ Gellner observes that nationalism is rooted in a modern kind of division of labor, which is complex and persistently, cumulatively changing.¹⁵ The capitalist way of production requires a high culture to accommodate unprecedented social mobility across regions, dialects, local customs and ethics. Liah Greenfeld argues that nationalism is a necessary condition for modernity.¹⁶ The emergence of modern economy could not have occurred without a new set of motivations and a new system of ethics.¹⁷ What they address is the prototype of nationalism, in the emergence of which domestic incentives played a much greater role than external factors. As nationalism travels beyond the European continent, it assumes new missions and, at the same time, new traits. In this sense, there is actually more than one type of nationalism. However, they are all related with modernity or modernization in certain ways and thereby produce common problems. This is the course that I would like to consider in this section.

2.1.1 The Birth of New Nation-states

“New nationalism” deals with belatedness.¹⁸ The twentieth century witnessed a proliferation of nation-states, which was not accidental. What brought the new states into being was the wave of modernity. By modernity I shall mean the emergence of a rational spirit, of a market-industrial economy, of a bureaucratically organized state, and of a political creed of popular rule. “Modernity,” suggests Charles Taylor, “is like a wave, flowing over and engulfing one traditional culture after another.”¹⁹ As modernity marches onward, the changes occurring are in a sense irresistible. As the European countries began to enfranchise their peoples, industrialize their economies, and modernize their navies, those on the other continents failed to take the same on. Consequently, the latter fell so far behind in the power stakes that they were either militarily defeated or entirely taken over by the former. The European success of modernization universalized, or tried to universalize, the value of progress. Progressivism advocates science and reason, endorses unlimited material improvement, glorifies changes. For the first time in human history, “new” became

¹⁴Breuilly, 1993, pp. 398-9, 401.

¹⁵Gellner, 1983, p. 24.

¹⁶ Liah Greenfeld, “In the National Interest,” interviewed by Vision, Spring 2006.

¹⁷ Greenfeld, 2001, p. 16.

¹⁸ On nationalism as a response to belatedness, see Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973); Gregory Jusdanis, *The Necessary Nation* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001).

¹⁹ Charles Taylor, “Nationalism and Modernity,” in Robert McKim and Jeff McMahan, eds., *The Morality of Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 43.

morally superior to “old.” It divided the world into successful societies on the one hand, and followers and failed communities on the other.²⁰ The inescapability of Western progress had made itself felt in the past two centuries by the “backward” societies where people realized that they were entering into a competitive, heartless world in which they started the journey as losers. The awareness by intellectual and political elites of the tardiness of their societies serves as a significant impulse for the emergence of nationalism.²¹ On this account, nationalism was born out of a theory of progressivism exemplified by Social Darwinism.

European modernization produced its first successes industrially in England and the Netherlands and politically in France. The advances made by these countries in modernizing themselves put all other societies, not least their neighbors, in a situation of “backwardness.” This was so because the theory of progress, another specifically European value now universalized, accentuated forward movement and unlimited material improvement. It divided the world into pioneering and successful societies, on the one hand, and follower and failed communities, on the other. Those left behind had no choice but to catch up with the winners of the race. Ever since they were co-opted or had inserted themselves into the narrative of Western progress, they have been striving to catch up.²² In China, the 1919 May 4th Movement initiated a new phase of history, in which all beings have been subject to a contrast between the “new” and the “old.” The former represents progress to be pursued whereas the later represents backwardness to be discarded. The idea of “new-progress” has predominated Chinese understandings of the multifaceted world for one century. It entails ruthless pursuit of modernity at the expense of cultural continuity and political stability.

The colonized and weakened experience in recent history gives new state nationalism its peculiar air of being bent toward modernity. Haas contends that nationalism “was a human invention designed ... to make life better for collectivities suffering the pangs of modernization.”²³ The basic purpose of nationalism in new states is to enable the backward societies to struggle for both freedom and prosperity.

²⁰Jusdanis, 2001, p. 7.

²¹*Ibid.*

²²*Ibid.*

²³Haas, 2000, p. viii.

The lure is not nation-state itself as the best form of polity but rather what the nation-state could promise, that is, industrialization, prosperity and dignity. Greenfeld quotes the case of Japan to illustrate the relationship between nationalism and modernization:

The explanation for the remarkably speedy and successful modernization of Japan – that is, for the reconstruction of Japanese society, including the economy, along the lines of the novel, modern, type of society – lies in the equally remarkable, speedy, and successful articulation and spread of Japanese nationalism. The history of its formation follows very closely the European pattern of the development of national consciousness and identity. As in all the other cases, with the exception of the English, nationalism in Japan is imported, but it is imported and later takes root, as in every society where it develops, for indigenous reasons.²⁴

However, the status of juridical independence offers no guarantee of economic success. When the twenty-six counties of southern Ireland seceded from the United Kingdom, Ireland was the least developed of all British territories. Irish nationalists claimed that sovereignty would usher in a new era of prosperity. In fact, however, the Irish economy stagnated under protectionist policies that held sway until the 1990s.²⁵

Gellner's definition of nationalism – to endow a culture with its own political roof – implies that the nation predates the state built on the basis of it. It is the typical case in its place of origin, namely, Western Europe, but not applicable to the latecomers of the modern state system. The pre-modern history of the Third World countries featured as atomic tribes, unskillfully administered kingdoms or sprawling empires. Nation was an alien form of political community unknown for many peoples before the arrival of European conquerors. In these societies, a new national identity hadn't been developed until the mass rallying behind a common political aim, under the leadership of local elite nationalists, to fight for access to self-government and, eventually, full independence. People mobilized to attack colonialism, from one case to another, do not qualify as a nation even by the minimum criteria. They, varying

²⁴ Greenfeld, 2001, p. 228.

²⁵ Michael Hechter, *Containing Nationalism* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 113.

from one case to another, do not share an historic territory, common myths and memories, a public culture, and a religious belief. Soldiers shedding blood in the same trench do not necessarily speak a common language. The mere force solidifying the heterogeneous mass was nothing but the mission to combat the same oppression. Nationalism, in this light, came to mean, purely and simply, the desire – and the demand – for freedom.²⁶ Only equipped by the apparatus of the state, a people could effectively fend off external influence, which is underpinned by the international legal principle of sovereignty. However, “to make Italy is not to make Italians.”²⁷ In the struggles for freedom the nationalists make the state other than the nation. Whether the state would successfully make the nation out of vastly diverse sub-national groups depends on specific circumstances, which will be addressed later in this chapter.

The task of nationalists radically changes once independence comes true and international recognition is secured. As foreign colonizers or invaders withdraw, the force once holding the “nation” together weakens accordingly. Moreover, formidable tasks are brought to the fore – defining who “we” are and producing prosperity by and for “us”. A new way of life must be carved out from the preexisting cultures and traditions, which often share few values in common. The socioeconomic infrastructure has to be thoroughly reformed to satisfy the demands of industrialization. The two goals are intimately related but often actually opposed with one another. Modernity is reasonably felt as a threat to a traditional culture. It travels not merely with new knowledge and technologies but also with Western values and new ideologies. They are not equally welcome by the multiethnic population of a new state. The attempt to define a collective subject of the state, in the words of Geertz, tend to revolve around the question of the content, relative weight, and proper relationship of two rather towering abstractions: “The Indigenous Way of Life” and “The Spirit of the Age.”²⁸ A more recent exposition of this view is provided by Gregory Jusdanis. He points out that “the great challenge to nationalists has always been to take part in modernization while at the same time preserving traditional identities. From the beginning nationalism has incorporated the tensions

²⁶Geertz, 1973, p. 239.

²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 240.

²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 260.

between tradition and progress and between a full past and the sketchy future."²⁹ Unlike conservatives deeply committed against change, reformers want to survive the harsh trials through systematic self-reformation. They realize that self-enclosure inevitably leads to the fate of being engulfed by those who successfully adapts to the changes. They aspire to accomplish modernization but they are neither willing nor able to become the copies of the West. Instead, they look for a creative adaptation, drawing on the cultural resources of their tradition that would enable them to take on the new practices successfully. Just taking over Western modernity couldn't be the answer. Or otherwise put, this answer comes too close to engulfment. They have to invent their own.³⁰ The justification of the new states, as to both their genesis and continuing life, was the preservation of a certain uniqueness.³¹ In brief, the aim of this brand of nationalism is to create a new, modern, national culture, but one *not* Western.³² The creative adaptation to modernity has to be different from culture to culture,³³ and thereby induces particularism.

The sense of preserving the *Self* in confrontation with the superior *Other* is not particular to "new nationalism." The earliest European nationalism fought against the attempt of the French to create a new world order, to extend the principle of French Revolution across the rest of Europe.³⁴ Romanticism had played an essential role in the national awakening of many Central European peoples lacking their own national states. It empowered the weak peoples to distinguish their indigenous cultures from those of the dominant nations.³⁵ By reviving and reinterpreted ancient myths, memories, folklores, customs and traditions, German poets, artists and scholars develop an imagined nation in response to the sweeping force of Enlightenment universality embraced by the French revolution and Napoleon's military conquest. It looks back into history to build the future and advances the idea that "the traditional community harbors the salvation of civilization."³⁶ In Isaiah Berlin's view, Romanticism, with the essence of counter-Enlightenment, had a deeper insight into

²⁹Jusdanis, 2001, p. 5.

³⁰Taylor, 1997, p. 44.

³¹Jusdanis, 2001, pp. 6-7.

³²*Ibid.*, p. 8.

³³Taylor, 1997, p. 44.

³⁴Jusdanis, 2001, p. 9.

³⁵Margalit, 1997, p. 77.

³⁶Michael C. Davis, "Constitutionalism and Political Culture: The debate over Human Rights and Asian Values," *Harvard Human Rights Journal* 11 (1998), pp. 125-26.

human psychology than the Enlightenment itself.³⁷ Subsequent experiences of new states created after the World War II vindicates Berlin's insights.

Though modernization, as a homogenizing force, had showed mighty power especially in modern total wars, it did not win over the reformist nationalists hands down. "New nationalisms" have always given priority to cultural survival and the pursuit of progress at the same time.³⁸ Far from playing a coherent role, the stimulus of modernization has divided as much as unified a society in transition. Modernity necessitates collectivity. Virtually all economic activities in the contemporary world are carried out not by individuals, but by organizations that require a high degree of social cooperation.³⁹ *Nation-states* have proved the largest as well as the most effective organization for coordinating capitalist production and fighting global war.⁴⁰ Moreover, social cooperation is densely conditioned by cultural infrastructure and historical legacies.

As Francis Fukuyama puts it,

Property rights, contracts, and commercial law are all indispensable institutions for creating a modern market-oriented economic system, but it is possible to economize substantially on transaction costs if such institutions are supplemented by social capital and trust. Trust, in turn, is the product of pre-existing communities of shared moral codes or values. These communities ... are not the product of rational choice.⁴¹

In modernizing societies where the traditional way of life holds strong and technical conditions for civil governance are absent, reformers are generally left with two options. They could either thoroughly remold the traditional society, infusing secular spirit and civic morale into the mass via education, propaganda, and even coercion as in Mao's China, or lift primordial ties to the level of political supremacy, serving as

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

³⁸ Jusdanis, 2001, p. 8.

³⁹ Greenfeld, 1992, p. 491.

⁴⁰ On the general theme of why nation-states have defeated other competing organization, see George Modelski, *Long Cycles in World Politics* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1987).

⁴¹ Francis Fukuyama, *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity* (London, Hamish Hamilton, 1995), pp. 335-336.

the bases of public administration and economic modernization as in India⁴². The first option is, in many occasions, accompanied with or proposed after radical revolutions. On the one hand it begets political upheavals and drastic social changes, inflicting new traumas onto a deeply scarred society; on the other hand it brings about rapid modernization by dismantling, temporarily or permanently, any conservative forces impeding progress. On the contrary, societies going for the second option stress continuity and stability, reconciling aspirations for modernity with pre-modern cultural heritage, homogeneity with social cleavages. It avoids radicalism but significantly prolongs the process of nation-building and modernization.

The endeavor to modernize the country, no matter which option it chooses, risks triggering ethnic nationalism within a new state. By "ethnic nationalism" I shall mean the claim of the ethnic group to statehood or self-rule through a break-up of existing units. It is often equated with separatism or secessionism. However, in this project "ethnic nationalism" is mainly used to distinguish from "state nationalism."⁴³ Few new states are real nation-states in the strict sense. As discussed in the ensuing pages, they are multinational, multicultural, or even multilingual. In large multiethnic states, ethnic nationalism is often observed as against the unitarist state nationalism. It is especially the case in the decolonized countries where boundaries of the new political communities were established by colonizers with little reference to ethnic division. The impacts of the incongruence of nation and state on modern nationalist mobilization are profound. But I ask for patience until Chapter 3. Here I shall focus on the interaction between multiethnicity and modernization and its effect.

For Michael Hechter, the progress of modernization inevitably created economic differentials within state territories.⁴⁴ He proposes a two-model theory - "diffusion model" and "internal colonialism."⁴⁵ "Diffusion model" suggests that over the long haul industrialization would equilibrate regional wealth and the social significance of

⁴² Geertz, 1973, p. 260.

⁴³ Statists, by Anthony Smith, define the nation as a territorial-political unit. Hence "state nationalism" implies the aspiration of a territorially defined, rather than culturally homogeneous, population for self-rule. On the differences between the "ethnacist view" and the "statist view" of nationalism, see Anthony D. Smith, *Theories of Nationalism* (London: Duckworth, 1971), pp. 174-176.

⁴⁴ Michael Hechter, *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development, 1536-1966* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975).

⁴⁵ "Internal colonialism" is a concept first propounded by Lenin and later discussed by Gramsci.

cultural differences should be on decline.⁴⁶ On the contrary, “internal colonialism” argues that it is always the case that whereas core areas are “characterized by a diversified industrial structure,” development in the periphery is “dependent, and complementary to that in the core.”⁴⁷ In other words, uneven modernization leads to the subordinate status of ethnic minorities. The cultural/ethnic differences between economically dominant majority and other groups in outlying regions are accentuated by discriminatory social schemes, such as “cultural division of labor.” Whenever individuals having different cultural markers are distributed through an occupational structure, a cultural division of labor is formed.⁴⁸ The most lucrative jobs are usually reserved for those from the center officially or unofficially, consciously or unconsciously. In the economically backward periphery, occupational stratification is often reinforced by residential segregation.⁴⁹ This, in turn, directs individual attention to collective identities and endows them with a materiality they may not have before.⁵⁰ Provided adequate channels of communication supplemented by modern technologies, a greater sense of group solidarity comes into being. Hechter contends, “Changes in a group’s cultural practices have no necessary bearing on changes in the extent of its ethnic solidarity.”⁵¹ It was social, economic, technological, and political developments in modernity, especially those uneven, that invest cultural differentiation with significance.

If the process of modernization, as discussed above, differentiates more than equalizes, the shortened length of time which countries are allowed to consolidate modernization exacerbates the tension. For the first modernizer, England, took 183 years from 1649 to 1832 to achieve modernization. In the United States it lasted 89 years, from 1776 to 1865. For 13 countries who entered it during the Napoleonic period (1789-1815), the average period was 73 years. But for 21 of the 26 countries who began it during the first quarter of the twentieth century and had emerged by the 1960s, the average was only 29 years.⁵² Karl Deutsch provides a similar calculation.

⁴⁶ Hechter, 1975, p. 8.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁴⁸ Michael Hechter, “Group Formation and the Cultural Division of Labor,” *American Journal of Sociology* 84, No. 2 (September 1978), p. 312.

⁴⁹ Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism* (London; New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 60.

⁵⁰ Jusdanis, 2001, p. 6.

⁵¹ Michael Hechter, “The Political Economy of Ethnic Change,” *American Journal of Sociology* 79, No. 5 (March 1974), p. 1152.

⁵² Cyril E. Black, *The Dynamics of Modernization* (New York, Harper and Row, 1966), pp. 90-94.

He estimates that during the nineteenth century the principal indicators of social mobilization in modernizing countries changed at about the rate of 0.1 per cent per year, while in twentieth-century modernizing countries they change at about the rate of 1 per cent per year.⁵³ The rapid tempo of modernization produced multiple crises at the same time while the feeble governments of the later modernizers were incapable of tackling even one at a time. Moreover, in a new state, after long and brutal struggles for independence and sovereignty, the population's enthusiasm for a stronger country and a better life became unbridled. All these aspirations were intensified by the "demonstration effect" of the developing world.⁵⁴ With higher pressure, greater competition, less time, and worse social conditions, the possibility for new states to privilege social equality over short-term rapid development was small. Economic prosperity is no panacea curing all social problems whereas conflicts do tend to be more numerous and intense in regions and countries where systematic poverty is greatest.⁵⁵ Forced into a corner, the policy makers had to ruthlessly pursue economic development at the expense of inner solidarity or constantly provide economic solutions to political disputes so as to stay in office.

Another factor deepening the uneven nature of modernization is heterogeneity. Pre-modern societies share some features in common. But they are not equally pre-modern. The distance between traditional beliefs and modern spirits varies heavily from one ethnic group to another. Capitalist production requires a certain way of viewing the world as well as a set of work ethic⁵⁶, which are totally absent from some cultures while partially exist in others. Evidently it is more difficult to introduce the market economy into some nomadic population whose members were not particularly enthusiastic about capital accumulation than into the Japanese society in 1868 where nascent banking system had been in place. The cultural disparity leads to new difficulties in spreading modernity to all people within a state. It risks either marginalizing ethnic minorities by the uneven advance of capitalism or assimilating them via the modern educational framework. Both destabilize the

⁵³ Karl W. Deutsch, "Social Mobilization and Political Development," *The American Political Science Review* 55, No. 3 (September 1961), pp. 493-514; Deutsch is quoted in Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), pp. 46-47.

⁵⁴ Huntington, 1968, p. 46.

⁵⁵ Ted Robert Gurr, "Peoples Against States: Ethnopolitical Conflict and the Changing World System," *International Studies Quarterly* 38(1994), p. 359.

⁵⁶ On the Protestant work ethic and the rise of modern capitalism, see Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989; 1930).

peripheral regions and agitate ethnic nationalism expressed in secessionist movements. If the ethnic group faring better in the courses of modernization is not politically dominant group, like overseas Chinese in Indonesia who monopolized the major business in the country, the situation turns to be even more volatile.

Hence, it will suffice to say that nationalism is “a forced by-product of the grotesquely uneven nature of capitalist development.”⁵⁷ No matter what causes the unevenness, modernization does not benefit all simultaneously and equally. The desire to join in modernity and to be thought well of by others inspires disadvantaged peoples to fight for independence. It unites people from different clans, races, languages, and religions with enormous capacities. However, once the political revolution is accomplished, the same desire fires back to detach, divide and dismember the poorly consolidated political community of heterogeneous ethnic groups. That accounts for one of the post-Cold War trends that the importance of interstate war is declining while that of intrastate war is increasing.⁵⁸

Progressivism, with the sweeping success of modernity, stands as a new moral precept, justifying the abandonment of anything nonmodern. Cognitively it sets up a series of dichotomies between good and bad, new and old, superior and inferior, desired and undesired. In practice it confronts two distinct worlds left behind by the historical uneven development of capitalism. Progressivism and the destructive forces it embraces serve as a significant impulse for the later modernizers to either derogate or aggrandize the *Self*, or, more often, do both at the same time. Put briefly, nationalism starts with differences and gains momentum in incessant comparison. In the section that follows, I will concern myself with differences – how differences are cognized and interpreted, how nationalism highlights and politicalizes differences on the one hand while antagonizes and eliminates them on the other, and how all of this contributes to the global reproduction of conflicts.

⁵⁷ Tom Nairn, *The Break-Up of Britain: Crisis and Neo-Nationalism* (London: Nlb, 1977), p. 128.

⁵⁸ Peter Wallensteen and Margareta Sollenberg, “Armed Conflict, 1989-1998,” *Journal of Peace Research* 36, pp. 593-606.

2.1.2 Categorization, Assimilation and Discrimination

Categories and Categorization

Edward Hall says, "One of the main crises in the world today is humankind's relationship to its extensions, institutions, ideas, as well as the relationships among the many individuals and groups that inhabit the globe."⁵⁹ He implies that the world we are living in is marked by differences, which are conflict-laden. Differences imply categorization and classification, which is the cognitive basis of modern science. Categorical thinking started with Plato. He introduced concepts as "species," "genus," and "essence" into philosophical thinking. Social Identity Theory (SIT)⁶⁰ suggests that people divide the world up into manageable categories to simplify matters. However, categories are made through experience, and not found in nature.⁶¹ We use categories as if they represent things in the real world. But they don't. Categories hold boundaries whereas natural beings exist on a continuum. As the "Bald Man Paradox,"⁶² discovered by Eubulides, illustrates, the boundary between two categories as "bald" and "non-bald," exists only cognitively rather than naturally. With categories we construct ideal models of things. The items put in categories do not always meet necessary and sufficient conditions of these ideal models. Instead, constructed categories are radial structures, radiating outward from a prototype at the center.⁶³ The prototype of "baldness" implies no hair. But a man with a receding hairline can be categorized as "bald" since his case falls within the range of the radial structure of "boldness" though far away from the center.

Anyhow, we do in practice make distinctions among peoples. Classification and categorization is fundamental to the being of ethnicity. But scholars diverge in the weights they assign to the role of categorization in explaining the phenomenon of ethnicity. The understanding of ethnicity has been split into two camps: one is

⁵⁹ Edward Hall, *Beyond Culture* (New York: Anchor Books, 1989), p. 1.

⁶⁰ On an introduction of Social Identity Theory, see Henri Tajfel and John Turner, "An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict," in William G. Austin and Stephen Worchel, *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations* (Monterey: Brooks/Cole Publication Co., 1979), pp. 33-47.

⁶¹ Anthony Amsterdam and Jerome Bruner, *Minding the Law* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000), pp. 8-9, 27-28.

⁶² The "Bald Man Paradox" goes in a string of questions: Would you say that a man with only one hair is bald? Yes. Would you say that a man with two hairs is bald? Yes. Would you say that ...? etc. Then where do you put the border between a bald man and a non-bald man?

⁶³ Steven L. Winter, *A Clearing in the Forest: Law, Life, and Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), pp. 69-103.

objectivism which emphasizes the real and substantial shared traits of a people; the other is constructivism which cognizes ethnicity through the subjects' self-identification and participation. Classification and categorization matters little for objectivists because the criteria they use to label ethnic groups is given. However, constructivism has gained ground in the last quarter century, accompanying with a general retreat from objectivist stances.⁶⁴ Anthropologist Fredrik Barth, as a key figure of constructivism, accentuates the constitutive significance of classification and categorization for the articulation of ethnicity. He argues that ethnicity is not a matter of "objective" commonalities and differences, but rather of practices of classification and categorization, to which both in-group and out-group members contribute collectively.⁶⁵ An exposition of the constructivist stances is provided by Richard Jenkins in his 1997 piece. He highlights the interplay between self-identification and external categorization and specifies the multiple levels of contexts – individual, interactional, and institutional – in which categorization occurs.⁶⁶ On the one hand, peoples could conceivably be other than they are; on the other, how people see themselves feed on how they are seen by others. In this regard, Craig J. Calhoun's understanding fully captures the constitutive nature of ethnicity:

Ethnic identities ... do not just come from within; they are produced in worlds of plural ethnic identities ... [T]he boundary of the group requires internal similarity as much as external difference. In this, ethnic identities are like national identities, which also never stand alone.⁶⁷

A people cannot be aware of their distinctions without reference to another people. By the same token, the objective distinctions of a people make no social significance if not regarded by others. A blue man who walks into a crowd of white people does not necessarily feel his uniqueness if no one notices his color or think it significant. He would be simply another person walking into the crowd. To the contrary, even if a person internalizes a great deal of characteristics of a foreign culture from language to social graces, it does not ensure that he or she would be considered as an in-group member. As Dudley Seers sadly states:

⁶⁴ Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004), p. 64.

⁶⁵ Fredrik Barth, "Introduction," in Fredrik Barth, ed., *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Difference* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1969), pp. 9-38

⁶⁶ Richard Jenkins, *Rethinking Ethnicity: Arguments and Explorations* (London: Sage, 1997).

⁶⁷ Craig J. Calhoun, *Nationalism* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1997), p. 42.

It is a matter of common observation that a parvenu alienated from his own culture may nevertheless not be permanently assimilated into a foreign one: however correct his vocabulary, accent and clothes, he remains in some degree an "outsider."⁶⁸

In addition to accentuate the interplay of internal and external cognition, the constructivist view gives special weight to subjective senses like belief and will. It divorces definitions of nationhood in terms of common language, territory, history, economic life, political arrangements, and so forth.⁶⁹ Hugh Seton-Watson interestingly suggests, "A nation exists when a significant number of people in a community consider themselves to form a nation, or behave as if they formed one."⁷⁰ The empirical evidence from Psychological evidence vindicates the subjectivity of social identity. Henri Tajfel suggests that people tend to favor ingroup members against outgroup members. When the subjects faced a choice between maximizing the profit for all and maximizing the profit for their in-group members, they typically chose the latter, though the criteria used in categorization is meaningless.⁷¹ In later experiments, Tajfel, together with Michael Billig, made the randomness of the categorization explicit for participants but got the same result. In these experiments, social categories were created on an explicitly random basis (by tossing a coin or drawing lots) without any reference to any real similarity. Tajfel and Billig found, even if group members clearly knew that membership had been randomly decided, they still favored the in-group members while discriminated against those in another category.⁷² In a series of arresting experiments, John Turner confirms the proposition that classification alone – let alone group competition – could produce fierce in-group loyalty.⁷³ Drawing on these empirical findings, Turner develops his "self-categorization theory" as an extension and redefinition of social identity theory founded by Tajfel.⁷⁴ The implications of the psychological studies are twofold. First,

⁶⁸ Dudley Seers, *The Political Economy of Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 11

⁶⁹ Brubaker, 2004, p. 66.

⁷⁰ Hugh Seton-Watson, *Nations and States: An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1977), p. 5.

⁷¹ Henri Tajfel, "Experiments in Intergroup Discrimination," *Scientific American* 223 (1970), pp. 96-102.

⁷² Michael Billig and Henri Tajfel, "Social Categorization and Similarity in Intergroup Behavior," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 3, no. 1 (March 1973), pp. 27-52.

⁷³ John C. Turner, "The Experimental Social Psychology of Intergroup Behavior," in John C. Turner and H. Giles, eds., *Intergroup Behavior* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), pp. 66-101.

⁷⁴ For social identity theory, see Henry Tajfel, "Social Categorization, Social Identity and Social Comparison," in

group identity can exist without a solid material base. It occurs as categorization is enforced and recognized. Second, discrimination is not necessarily traced to social conflict or history of hostility. The mere fact of division into groups is enough to trigger discriminatory behavior. I shall discuss them in turn.

Assimilation and Nation-building

The state plays a pivotal role in nation formation. It acts as the primary agent of classification and categorization.⁷⁵ State activities in this light cluster in two broad areas: regulative and formative. First, in the regulative sense, the state monopolizes the symbolic power of naming and indentifying. The state, traditionally understood, is distinguished from other social organizations in terms of the monopoly of legitimate use of violence.⁷⁶ But Pierre Bourdieu and Michel Foucault suggest that the state monopolizes, or seeks to monopolize, more than physical force but also legitimate symbolic force. This includes the power to name, to identify, to categorize, to state what is what and who is who.⁷⁷ Through a centralized, computer-aid dossier system, people are identified and managed by passport, identity card, fingerprint, photograph, signature, and DNA.⁷⁸ James Scott emphasizes the modern state's indispensable functions to create, practice, and reinforce social categories in light of gender, age, occupation, ethnicity, religion, or education level. The daily practice of identification and categorization present the modern state's efforts to "treat people according to state-created schemata."⁷⁹ In this sense, neither antiquity nor distinction ensures the juridical existence of an ethnic group; it has to obtain an official recognition by the state. In a similar vein, an ethnic group can notionally exist after it has lost its cultural distinction. For example, Manchu is one of the 56 officially recognized ethnic groups of the People's Republic of China (PRC). But the Manchu

Henry Tajfel, ed., *Differentiation Between Social Groups: Studies in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations* (London: Academic Press, 1978), pp. 61-76; Henry Tajfel, "Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations," *Annual Review of Psychology* 33 (1982), pp. 1-39. For self-categorization theory, see John C. Turner and Howard Giles, eds., *Intergroup Behavior* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

⁷⁵ Brubaker, 2004, p. 42.

⁷⁶ Max Weber, "Legitimacy, Politics and the State," In William Connolly, ed., *Legitimacy and the State* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984).

⁷⁷ Pierre Bourdieu, "Rethinking the State: Genesis and Structure of the Bureaucratic Field," *Sociological Theory* 12, No.1 (1994), pp. 1-18; Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in Graham Burchell, et al., eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 87-104. See also Brubaker, 2004.

⁷⁸ See, for example, John Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport: Surveillance, Citizenship and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Jane Capien and John Torpey, eds., *Documenting Individual Identity: The Development of State Practices in the Modern World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

⁷⁹ James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 76-83.

people have acculturated with the Han majority even since the Manchu conquered Ming's territory and established their own dynasty. Nowadays most Manchu people intermingle with other ethnicities, unidentifiable in terms of looks, dress, cuisine, and customs. Few still speak their language or keep their old surnames. Thus, Manchu as an ethnicity exists more notionally than substantively. The Manchu identity mainly derives from its official status as one of the 56 ethnic groups of China. As unequivocally argued by Edward W. Said, "Some distinctive objects are made by the mind, and that these objects, while appearing to exist objectively, have only a fictional reality."⁸⁰

Second, in the formative sense, modern state activities reinforce, or even create, the cultural and political distinction of a people via centralized administration and large-scale assimilation. The state is first and foremost a geographical entity. It claims a people or many peoples within a well-defined territory and seeks to administrate its subjects with great inner coherence. As the state apparatus grows sophisticated, its penetration capability is incomparable with any other form of political entities. It determines what language people speak, what children learn in public schools, and even what people eat and drink⁸¹. In other words, how people live their life, on the collective level, is the outcomes of particular political arrangements, though those arrangements may include more or less freedom of choice for the individual members and their choices may also be influenced by tradition and context. The state reengineers the characteristics of the people it governs especially in countries where modernization transforms the pre-modern societies at an unprecedented high speed. Anthropological and Sociological studies on colonialism reveal that colonial rule had significantly transformed the self-identification and stratification of local societies through systematic identification, labeling, and differential treatment of ethnic groups.⁸² The making-up effect of state activities is striking when tangible benefits are associated with official categories.⁸³ The power of modern political system in terms of shaping social identity is vividly illustrated by the contrast between two neighboring cities: Hong Kong and Shenzhen. Before Hong Kong (consisting of

⁸⁰ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003), p. 54.

⁸¹ For example, whether genetically modified food is allowed is a national decision.

⁸² See in particular Crawford Young, *The Politics of Cultural Pluralism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1976); Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985).

⁸³ Ian Hacking, "Making Up People," in Thomas C. Heller, Morton Sosna, and David E. Wellbery, eds., *Reconstructing Individualism: Autonomy, Individuality, and the Self in Western Thought* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), pp. 222-236.

Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and New Territories) was ceded to the United Kingdom in the late Qing Dynasty, the inhabitants of Hong Kong and Shenzhen were largely identical with one another in all aspects. In the following years, the British rule had vastly influenced the bilingual culture and ethnic make-up of Hong Kong. It gradually built and modernized an international port as well as a financial center. Influenced by British customs, Cantonese-speaking Hong Kong people now celebrate a few Western holidays unfamiliar in mainland China and may partake of a cosmopolitan identity largely foreign to ordinary Chinese. In apparent contrast, Shenzhen has been filled with Mandarin-speaking migrants from inland provinces after it became a special economic zone in 1979, though this was also associated by choice with the colonial transformation of nearby Hong Kong for which its special status was created. Before its establishment as a special economic zone Shenzhen underwent the same political upheavals and economic hardship as other parts of China and remained a fishing village for decades. Shenzhen was originally as hilly as today's Hong Kong. But a flat downtown area has been crafted out of the hilly landscape through massive urban construction. Two different political systems provide two distinctive ways of modernization, which in the end differentiate two groups of people of the same origin. In the dual processes the impacts of political power on social transformation are salient.

However, as Rogers Brubaker argues, abundant historical and comparative evidence proves that forced assimilation policies rarely work, and they are indeed more likely to strengthen than to erode differences, by provoking a reactive mobilization against such assimilatory pressures.⁸⁴ "Cultural practices are like addictions," puts Michael Hechter, "people become heavily invested in them and the substitutes are unappealing."⁸⁵ Where nation-building is relatively successful and peaceful, cultural homogenization is usually a concomitant of other social progresses such as universal military service, better access to public schooling and the popularity of mass media. To the contrary, coercion and punishment are liable to be counterproductive.⁸⁶ Examples on this front abound, one of which is the independence of Eritrea. Eritrea confederated with Ethiopia after the UN mandate ended in 1951. The Ethiopian authority, in 1959, decided to introduce compulsory teaching of Amharic, the official

⁸⁴ Brubaker, 2004, p. 119.

⁸⁵ Hechter, 2000, p. 64.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

language of Ethiopia, into all Eritrean schools. This directly triggered the massive mobilization of an independence movement in the early 1960s, which developed into a 30-year war until 1991.

In a broader sense, both state-building and nation-building increases homogeneity within a state territory. It occurs as either the contingent byproduct of modernization or the direct outcome of purposeful social engineering, commonly known as “assimilation.” In history assimilation has acquired a bad name because of the disastrous consequences of many harsh homogenizing projects, e.g., forcible Germanization of the Polish coal miners in the Ruhr area in the late 19th century. However, not all assimilationist policies are morally repulsive and practically inhumane. John Stuart Mill argues that it is not unusual for one nationality to merge and be absorbed in another. Especially when the former is culturally inferior to the latter, the absorption should be considered as to its advantage.⁸⁷ He explains,

Nobody can suppose that it is not more beneficial to a Breton, or a Basque of French Navarre, to be brought into the current of the ideas and feelings of a highly civilized and cultivated people – to be a member of the French nationality, admitted on equal terms to all the privileges of French citizenship, sharing the advantages of French protection, and the dignity and prestige of French power – than to sulk on his own rocks, the half-savage relic of past times, revolving in his own little mental orbit, without participation or interest in the general movement of the world. The same remark applies to the Welshman or the Scottish Highlander as members of the British nation.⁸⁸

In saying so, firstly, Mill subsumes different meanings of assimilation under one label. Secondly he postulates that there is always a qualitative difference between the inferior and the superior, which needs to be examined in some detail later. In this section I concern myself only with clarifying what we may talk about in terms of assimilation. Brubaker points out that we must distinguish between two basic meanings of assimilation:

⁸⁷ See John Stuart Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government* (London: The Electric Book, 2001).

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 289-290.

One is general and abstract; the other is specific and organic... In the general and abstract sense, the core meaning is increasing similarity or likeness. Assimilation is thus the process of becoming similar, or of making similar or treating as similar. In the specific and organic sense, ... assimilation ... implies complete absorption. In the general, abstract sense, the accent is on the process, not on some final state, and assimilation is a matter of degree... In the specific, organic sense, by contrast, the accent is on the end state, and assimilation is an either-or matter, not a matter of degree. It is the connotations of this organic meaning ... that have discredited the term, making it seem normatively retrograde, analytically disreputable, and empirically wrong.⁸⁹

To facilitate the discussion I code the general and abstract assimilation as Type 1 while the specific and organic one as Type 2. Differentiation between the two assimilations is theoretically sound but practically unworkable. Situated in Mill's examples of Breton or Basque people brought into the French nationality, it is hard to judge whether a Breton or a Basque is becoming similar to a French in the general and abstract sense or being absorbed into the French culture in the specific and organic sense. It seems all about the intentions of the initiators of the assimilating projects as well as the Breton or Basque's individual willingness.

However, the typology Brubaker offers here is useful in understanding the homogenizing functions of the modern state. If only Type 2 assimilations that lay stress on the absorption outcomes are what we criticize, then we may have good reason to discuss assimilationist policies without assimilationist outcomes.⁹⁰ From the perspective of history few nation-states, except failed ones, survive without attempts to homogenize peoples under its rule. Industrialization gives a heterogeneous society a strong impetus to form a common high-culture. Therefore, "exo-socialization, the production and reproduction of men outside the local intimate unit, is now the norm, and must be so. The imperative of exo-socialization is the main clue to why state and culture must now be linked, whereas in the past their connection was thin, fortuitous, varied, loose and often minimal. Now it is

⁸⁹ Brubaker, 2004, p. 119.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 119-120.

unavoidable.”⁹¹ The state now must take on duties of national education and centralized planning. Multiple barriers have to be overcome in the process of homogenizing people. Gellner summarizes it as “barriers to communication,” which are based on fragmented regional cultures.⁹² In so doing, it has to sacrifice diversity to a considerable extent. For example, there are an estimated total of 242 languages spoken in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Out of these, only four have the status of national languages. French is the official language of the country. It is meant to be an ethnically neutral language, to ease communication among the many different ethnic groups of the Congo. Sweden, in order to consolidate its frontiers, converted the Danish-speaking population of the southern provinces into Swedish speakers between 1660 and 1700.⁹³ Spain had been composed of a multitude of language groups until the year of 1716 when Castilian became the official language and started to be taught in school.⁹⁴ France, the prototype of nation-state, has a long history of transforming peasants, immigrants, and inhabitants of the border area into Frenchmen. The slow pace of French nation-building was indicated by demographic data. As late as 1863, at least 20 percent of the population of France did not speak French.⁹⁵ It might be understandable that linguistic homogeneity has to be politically created through nation-building in multinational states because they were not nation-states of the ideal type. However, even Japan, a real nation-state in the strict sense, had no common language in the pre-modern period. It was not until the Restoration years (1868-1912) that the notion of a standard Japanese language emerged. Today’s standard Japanese was based on a dialect originally spoken by Tokyo’s middle-class, unfamiliar for most Japanese before 1868.⁹⁶ It is not in my remit to go into the entirety of studies on nation-building policies, failed or successful. A brief discussion about states’ homogenizing efforts here suffices to argue that modern states exert a significant formative influence on the emergence and development of nations.

To conclude, not all social categories are real; instead, many exist only notionally or arbitrarily. The state imposes principles of division of the people it governs by

⁹¹ Gellner, 1983, p. 38.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 62.

⁹³ Uffe Ostergard, “Peasants and Danes: The National Identity and Political Culture,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34 (1992), pp. 3-27.

⁹⁴ David D. Laitin, *Language Repertoires and State Construction in Africa* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 13.

⁹⁵ Eugen Weber, *The Making of Modern France* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1976), p. 310.

⁹⁶ Laitin, 1992, p. 14.

monopolizing the symbolic power. Moreover, state activities brought into being new kinds of individuals and social groups by creating new categories or dividing old ones. As the preceding section has shown, social identity is subject to external recognition. The ultimate power of recognizing a social group rests with the state, though not free from challenges on both the sub-state and super-state levels. State boundaries serve as the most effective division of the people by directing them into different tracks of fast-paced modernization. The formative dimension of the modern state is further elaborated in the following discussion of discrimination.

Comparison, Stereotypes and Discrimination

The second implication of psychological studies by Billig, Tajfel and their associates deals with discrimination caused by classification and categorization. Categorization is central to personal identity. The intuition underpins much of the scholarly work on intergroup relations. Laclau contends that identity can only be established by difference, by drawing a line between something and something else. Therefore all principles and values receive their meaning from relationships of difference and opposition.⁹⁷ Every identity, in a similar vein, is constituted differentially and through recourse to an antagonistic *Other*, which sets the limits of the pure self.⁹⁸ Drawing upon Psychoanalytical findings, Sudhir Kakar summarizes a great deal of evidence that otherizing the out-group is universal in human societies through empirical studies of ethnic violence.⁹⁹

Human beings have universal propensity to differentiate the *Self* from the *Other* in multiple ways, but such differentiation is rarely value-free or impartial. As categorizing the people, we tend to compare the *Self* with the *Other* in the sense of civilized or backward, strong or weak, smart or stupid, diligent or lazy, etc.¹⁰⁰ Prevailing approach to the study of ethnocentrism, in-group bias, and prejudice, presumes that, first, the *Self* is always aggrandized and the *Other* always disparaged;

⁹⁷ Ernesto Laclau, *New Reflections of the Revolution of Our Time* (London: Verso, 1990), pp. 21, 58.

⁹⁸ Laclau, 1996, p. 38.

⁹⁹ Sudhir Kakar, "Some Unconscious Aspects of Ethnic Violence in India," in Veena Das, ed., *Mirrors of Violence: Communities, Riots and Survivors in South Asia* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990) pp. 135-145.

¹⁰⁰ On theory of social comparison, see Leonard Festinger, "A Theory of Social Comparison Processes," *Human Relations* 7 (1954), pp. 114-40; Robert K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (New York: Free Press, 1968); Rui J. P. de Figueiredo, Jr. and Zachary Elkins, "Are Patriots Bigots? An Inquiry into the Vices of in-Group Pride," *American Journal of Political Science* 47, No. 1 (January 2003), pp. 171-188.

and, second, “ingroup love and out-group hate are reciprocally related.”¹⁰¹ However, according to extended studies, the empirical evidence from minority peoples, such as the American Blacks, the French Canadians, the New Zealand Maoris, or the South African Bantus, casts doubts on this proposition.¹⁰² Low-status people tend to positively view the dominant out-group while belittle the in-group. Whether or not the in-group favor *versus* out-group aversion theory takes hold depends crucially on the relative status of the two groups in question. If the high-status people is held up as a model to be emulated by the low-status group, and especially the status relations between them is historically or religiously justified, it is very likely that the former will have a popular image among the latter. More to the point, status systems restrict the range of meaningful comparisons available to a given group.¹⁰³ The reference out-groups are deliberately selected and commonly used by all in-group members as a social convention. Only relatively similar groups are considered as comparable. For example, the object of reference chosen by Chinese peasants is usually Chinese urbanites, never French farmers or the Wall Street bankers. In her illuminating Ethnographic study of women workers in a Chinese factory based in Guangdong, Pun Ngai examines the wage scheme and pay differentials among various employees.¹⁰⁴ The Hong Kong managers’ incomes topped the scheme, which were too high to be imagined by the low-level assemble-line workers. But indeed few mainland Chinese assemble line workers had interest in comparing their wages with their Hong Kong bosses because “they were, in effect, from another world.”¹⁰⁵

This also applies to international comparisons. The status of a nation is more or less economically determined. As Gellner and others has shown, capitalism spreads across the world in an uneven pattern. He observes, “The differential timing of the arrival of modernization divided humanity into rival groups very effectively.”¹⁰⁶ However once the globally uneven development translates into a (informally) hierarchical international system, as the literature cited above illustrates, its impacts on potentially competing nations become subtle and complicated. Though

¹⁰¹ For a thorough examination of the presumption, see Marilyn B. Brewer, “The Psychology of Prejudice: Ingroup Love Or Outgroup Hate?” *Journal of Social Issues* 55, No. 3 (Fall 1999), p. 429.

¹⁰² David Milner, *Children and Race* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975); Howard Giles and Peter F. Powesland, *Speech Style and Social Evaluation* (London; New York: Academic Press, 1975).

¹⁰³ Tajfel and Turner, 1979, p. 36.

¹⁰⁴ Pun Ngai, *Made in China: Women Factory Workers in a Global Workplace* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005).

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

¹⁰⁶ Gellner, 1983, p. 52.

modernization did not arrive simultaneously in all parts of the world, it did eventually put all nations under the spell of progressivism. Progressive ethics provides the normative basis of defining superiority and inferiority. In many developing countries social elites generally accept the ethical legitimacy of progressivism and, accordingly, the inferior status of their nations. As a result, the sense of inferiority is gradually internalized in their cultural reproduction, which has profound implications for nationalisms in new states.

Does difference itself necessitate social cleavage? Said regards social division as dangerous and ominous.¹⁰⁷ In his thought-provoking book *Orientalism*, Said asks a probing question:

Can one divide human reality, as indeed human reality seems to be genuinely divided, into clearly different cultures, histories, traditions, societies, even races, and survive the consequences humanly?¹⁰⁸

When one uses categories like “us” and “they,” puts Said, “the result is usually to polarize the distinction ... and limit the human encounter between different cultures, traditions, and societies.”¹⁰⁹

Categorical thinking may lead to discrimination against the out-group because all dichotomies are more or less value-laden.¹¹⁰ By producing and reproducing racial, ethnic, and national distinctions, real or imagined, in everyday life, the stereotype of the *Other* is formed and consolidated. Stereotypical thinking plays a powerful role in our dealings with out-groups. We treat members of the out-group as undifferentiated items in a unified social category rather than in terms of their individual characteristics. Furthermore, people make sense out of new experiences by matching them with existing categories in mind.¹¹¹ Stereotypical thinking creates close belief-systems preventing information from challenging deeply held beliefs. Stereotypes not only feed on misperception and non-proved ideas but also serve as a new source

¹⁰⁷ William S. Sax, “The Hall of Mirrors: Orientalism, Anthropology, and the Other,” *American Anthropologist* 100, No. 2 (June 1998), p. 293.

¹⁰⁸ Said, 2003, p. 45.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 53-55.

¹¹¹ Anthony Amsterdam and Jerome Bruner, *Minding the Law* (Harvard University Press, 2000), pp. 19-53.

of misperception. In vivid cases such as the 9/11 attacks, the incident reinforces stereotypes about who are terrorists. The masses quickly generalize the Muslim image of the 9/11 terrorists whereas most terrorists in the world are non-Muslims.¹¹² In many cases, stereotypical thinking affects people's attitudes about the out-group unconsciously. Scholars suggest that positive interaction with individuals of another racial or ethnic group will minimize the effect of exposure to unfavorable racial and ethnic stereotypes in the media, ideally creating a less ignorant society.¹¹³ This belief underpins national as well as international efforts to promote cross-cultural communication such as tourism, joint sporting events, people-to-people diplomacy, exchanges of students, artists, scholars, and so forth. However, person-to-person interaction exhibits social outcomes of a complex pattern. On the one hand, it breaks long-standing stereotypes of the out-groups, dispels unfounded apprehension by visualizing the alien; On the other hand, it engenders new disagreements by exposing more value differences. As one interacts with a foreign culture through its people, institutions, and ideas, it is natural to focus on the differences between two cultures, as they are a given.¹¹⁴ Thus, to accept those differences and build similarities on them presents a real challenge. It is not easy for cross-culture interactions to touch on the soul of differences and find ways to overcome it. In this sense, intensive communication on the individual level may reduce cultural ignorance but not necessarily foster positive views of one another. I will return to this point in Chapter 5 and illustrate the paradoxical effects of cross-culture interaction with cases in contemporary Chinese nationalism.

Conclusion

To sum up, classification and categorization is a constitutive element of national identity. States, through official categorization practices, name, classify and identify their subjects, which is then reproduced in the daily life by the classified and reinforced by mutual recognition. Social categories are made relevant to the subjects in the course of interactions especially with the out-group. The sense of identity consists of various group memberships, among which state membership comes first.

¹¹² FBI's data reveals that from 1980 to 2005 only 6% of terrorist Attacks on U.S. Soil were plotted by Islamic extremists. See U.S. Department of Justice, "Terrorism 2002-2005," full-text available at http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/terrorism-2002-2005/terror02_05.

¹¹³ For example, Jennings Bryant, *Media Effects: Advances in Theory and Research*, 3rd ed. (Florence, KY, USA: Routledge, 2008), p. 332.

¹¹⁴ Judith N. Martin and Thomas K. Nakayama, *Experiencing Intercultural Communication: An Introduction* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2001), p. 84.

Belonging to one or another state has enormous implications for people's political, economic and cultural life because to a considerable extent the realization of basic human rights rest with the state. In this sense, other kinds of group memberships (family, clan, kinship, ethnicity, etc.) are significant but secondary. Modern states do not passively rely on the pre-existing structures of nations. Rather they create nations fiercely. In a deeply divided world underpinned by nationalist principles, efforts to change (or deepen) national boundaries in order to suit state boundaries parallel efforts to redraw state boundaries in order to suit national ones.

2.1.3 Nationalisms: Visible and Invisible

In China all full-time public schools hold a flag-hoisting ceremony once a week. National ritual of this kind has its analogues in a number of states, for example, the daily recital of the pledge of allegiance by American schoolchildren. However, these are not typically regarded as nationalism in the popular sense. Nationalism reminds people of Fascism, bloodshed, genocide, and probably the violent confrontations in the Former Yugoslavia. It seems to take place only on the periphery – the ethnic minorities within a state or a small number of troubled states in the international system. Nationalism is morbid and inapplicable to the orderly part of the world. Michael Billig trenchantly points out,

In both popular and academic writing, nationalism is associated with those who struggle to create new states or with extreme right-wing politics. According to customary usage, George Bush is not a nationalist; but separatists in Quebec or Brittany are; so are the leaders of extreme right wing parties such as the Front National in France; and so, too, are the Serbian guerrillas, killing in the cause of extending the homeland's borders.¹¹⁵

In her recently published article, Elke Winter cites Canadian scholars André Lecours and Geneviève Nootens' findings in surveying the current literature on nationalism.¹¹⁶ They see that the nationalism of minorities attracts most scholarly

¹¹⁵ Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage Publications, 1995), p. 5.

¹¹⁶ Elke Winter, "The Dialects of Multicultural Identity," *World Political Science Review* 5, Iss. 1 (2009), Article

attention in the field whereas the dominant groups' practices of nationalism are either overlooked or deemed as unproblematic once it is accepted by the majority of people within a single state. It seems that a well-established state, national or multinational, stands on the sidelines of the nationalist arena, exposing to nationalistic frenzy only contingently. Under the background of decolonization Geertz offers a cogent periodization of nationalism consisting of four major phases: "that in which the nationalist movements formed and crystallized; that in which they triumphed; that in which they organized themselves into states; and that (the present one) in which, organized into states, they find themselves obliged to define and stabilize their relationships both to other states and to the irregular societies out of which they arose."¹¹⁷ According to Geertz, the second and third of these phases catch the most solicitous attention of the entire world. Rather the first and fourth ones are much less spectacular though social changes occurring within these two phrases are more profound.¹¹⁸ In this sense, content and goals of nationalism varies in different phases of it. While the causes of nationalism have long been studied, the content of it is seldom addressed, much less accorded serious consideration. In his pathbreaking work Gellner avoids discussing the content of nationalism. Questions like compatibility and incompatibility of cultures, the obstacles of communication as well as how to overcome them receives only cursory examination.¹¹⁹

Confined to the impetus it gives to the political and military struggles for national independence, the historical significance of nationalism in the development trajectory of human society is greatly underestimated. Nationalism initiates a new phase in world history. In Greenfeld's words, "Nationalism is a form of social consciousness, a way of cognitive and moral organization of reality. As such it represents the foundation of the moral order of modern society, the source of its values, the framework of its characteristic – national – identity and the basis of social integration in it."¹²⁰ For example, Alan S. Milward observes that the "national" definition of culture had not been developed in European countries until the post-war period. It was precisely in those years that European states officially developed the

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¹¹⁷ Geertz, 1973, p. 238.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Arthur N. Waldron, "Review: Theories of Nationalism and Historical Explanation; Nations before Nationalism, Nations and Nationalism; the Quest for Self-Determination," *World Politics* 37, No. 3 (April 1985), p. 424

¹²⁰ Greenfeld, 2001, p. 24.

concept of a distinctive national cultural and for the first time spent public money on promoting and exporting this fabrication.¹²¹ Nationalism implies that the basis unit of world order should be nothing but nation. It involves a complex of assumptions, beliefs, bias, and habits. In a nationally organized world, it is necessary for every nation to have its own national language, national flag, national anthem, national flower, and so forth, all of which were unknown to the pre-national history. In this sense, nationalism is everywhere. Both the weekly flag-hoisting ceremony by Chinese students and daily recital of the pledge of allegiance by American schoolchildren are the institutionalized practices of fourth-phase nationalism in the two states, or, “banal nationalism.”¹²² It is non-drastring, less visible, but more deeply embedded in both the masses’ mentality and social institutions. Established nations do not cease to be nations; neither does the intensity of their nationalism abate. They turn nationalism to be cliché. “Daily, they are reproduced as nations and their citizenry as nationals. And these nations are reproduced within a wider world of nations.”¹²³ States are powerful machineries of instilling nationalism into its subjects. They invent and constantly reinforce “national flags, symbols, anthems, holidays, rituals, and traditions”.¹²⁴ They employ modern high-tech means of communication “to spread the image and heritage of the ‘nation’ and to inculcate attachment to it and to attach all to country and flag.”¹²⁵ States tax the nationals to subsidize public schools in which their children receive uniform compulsory education. A good grip on national histories is made a civil responsibility other than a personal interest.¹²⁶ They commemorate national heroes for defending the people (which implies killing people of another nation), name or rename streets, schools, stadium, and parks with them, and print their portraits on postage stamp and bill.¹²⁷ They promote and diffuse national literature, folklore, music, theater, cinema, and other kinds of cultural expressions.¹²⁸ It is hard to calculate how many resources and efforts have been invested into fostering national loyalty and cultivating “a sense of distinctness and of

¹²¹ Alan S. Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State*, 2nd ed. (London; New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 13-14.

¹²² I borrow this term from Michael Billig, see Billig, 1995.

¹²³ Billig, 1995, p. 6.

¹²⁴ Charles Tilly, “States and Nationalism in Europe 1492-1992.” *Theory and Society* 23, No. 1 (1994), p.140.

¹²⁵ Hobsbawin, 1990, p. 91.

¹²⁶ For example, Boyd C. Shaffer, *Faces of Nationalism: New Realities and Old Myths* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972); Lewis, 1975.

¹²⁷ Miguel Angel Centeno, *Blood and Debt: War and the Nation-State in Latin America* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), pp. 178-183.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

special destiny.”¹²⁹ Instead of fading out, nationalism persists as the endemic condition of the established state.

Here I would like to suggest that Greenfeld and Billig’s views of nationalism be adopted. Nationalism should not be equated with nationalist problems. Rather it is one of the constitutive principles of the contemporary world by which the modern political life, both domestic and international, is organized and reproduced. “Nationalism in the contemporary world makes universal claims.”¹³⁰ It underwrites a number of modern international institutions. In the Olympic games athletes must participate on behalf of their *nations* rather than themselves or any other social bodies. It is their *national* anthems that will be played if they win the games, other than their personal favorite songs or hometown folksongs. In this broad sense, nationalism subsumes patriotism. Maurizio Viroli defines patriotism as an empowering, tolerant brand of nationalisms.¹³¹ It begins with a sense of national pride, referring to the feelings of affection and attachment of a people toward the nation.¹³² Patriotism shares similar beliefs and habits of thinking with other varieties of nationalisms: nation as the ultimate object of political loyalty, supremacy of national interest, pride of motherland, and individual responsibilities for national common goods. However, Rui J. P. de Figueiredo, Jr. and Zachary Elkins suggest the difference between patriotism and other nationalisms can be discerned according to the different forms of pride involved. Pride reveals itself in either positive or negative form.¹³³ Patriotism evokes the sense of pride only in the positive form. It lays emphasis on the in-group love but has no implications for out-group hate or derogation. They examine the survey data of more than 50 countries, showing that the average patriots are not more antagonistic to immigrants than the average citizens.

In brief, nationalism claims that morality of nationhood is a universal morality. “The nation,” states Anthony Smith, “is the sole source of political power and everyone must belong to a nation, and that nations must be free and secure.”¹³⁴ At a Nashville Tea Party on February 27, 2009, a Tea Party protester holds a sign saying

¹²⁹*Ibid.*, p. 103.

¹³⁰Billig, 1995, p. 9.

¹³¹ See Maurizio Viroli, *For Love of Country* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

¹³²Jusdanis, 2001, p. 18.

¹³³ de Figueiredo, Jr. and Elkins, 2003, p. 186.

¹³⁴Smith, 1994, p. 379.

“Remember: Dissent is Patriotic”¹³⁵ It reveals that patriotism provides a moral justification for being a dissident and patriotism is moral in its own right. Both nations with established states and nations still looking for states are engaged in practicing nationalism. The state, instead of other social agents, serves as the major sponsor and operator of modern nationalism, which are banal but persistent, invisible but fundamental. The visible ethnic conflicts may arouse more international concerns about the schism among certain human groups. But it is indeed the invisible nationalism that underpins the international society founded on the moral existence of divided sovereign territories, which provides both the incentive and the arena of chronic nationalistic rivals along disputed state borders.

2.2 Ethics of Nationalism

As noted above, nationalism represents a major shift of societal attitudes in terms of collective consciousness and ethical standards, which underpin the modern political order. Nationalism gives birth to more and more sovereigns though the international society has put curbs on the multiplication of nation-states. In established states, it enacts nation-building policies designed to assimilate culturally distinctive individuals to the dominant culture. In large part due to the state-making or state-breaking movements marshaled by nationalism, political instability has been rife in Asia, Africa, and Latin America since the late years of the nineteenth century. Economic nationalism is threatening the further integration of a global market. Countries blame each other for failing the collective efforts of the Doha Round Talks.¹³⁶ Whether agricultural subsidies should be accommodated is not merely a trade problem. It touches underlying moral claims of nationalism, national interest, and sovereignty. In order to deal with any of these phenomena, we need a dialectic moral analysis of nationalism as both a political ideology and a global force. This section proceeds as follows: we shall first discuss the clash between moral/cultural relativism and liberal internationalism, more fundamentally, particularism and

¹³⁵ The picture, photographed by Kevin Smith, was originally uploaded at en.wikipedia, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Nashville_Tea_Party.jpg, accessed April 10, 2011.

¹³⁶ See Rhys Blakely, “India Blamed for Doha Collapse by Trying to Protect Poor Farmers,” *Times Online*, July 30, 2008, accessed January 8, 2010; Heather Stewart, “Doha: India Accuses U.S. of Sacrificing World’s Poor at Trade Talks,” *Guardian*, July 31, 2008, accessed January 8, 2010; “India, China not to Blame for WTO Talks Collapse,” *Indo Asian News Service*, July 30, 2008, accessed January 8, 2010.

universalism; and then we shall move to consider the *pros* and *cons* of nationalism with reference to its historical record.

2.2.1 Particularism versus Universalism

Two opposite forces strain international politics of our time: the political manifestation of the diversity of humankind and the attempt to promote liberal political order drawing upon common humanity. The former contends that “good” is a relative term. There is no universally accepted concept of “good” or “good life,” and there should not be. The vastly varied traditions, religions, political beliefs, languages, conventions and social customs of different peoples are best contained within independent societies and pursued separately. One of the leading defenders of this position is Canadian scholar Robert H. Jackson.¹³⁷ The latter stance holds that there is a shared humanity underlying social and cultural differences of human groups. Cross-cultural understanding and equitable treatment would be impossible if “good” was absolutely relative.¹³⁸ Humanitarian intervention in the internal affairs of the state is a necessary means of protecting and promoting human rights.¹³⁹

The schism of particularism and universalism is deeply rooted in the force of modernity. Value relativism is a necessary consequence of progressive rationalization.¹⁴⁰ In his 1993 book, R. B. J. Walker discusses Weber’s account of modernity. Weber argues, “Modernity is characterized by an intensifying clash between instrumental rationality and the realm of substantive values.”¹⁴¹ As all aspects of human existence become more and more rationalized because of the universalization of instrumental rationality, the moral and spiritual sphere of life is left out. The availability of means provides no clue to decide the value of the end; neither can it in itself reflect on the social meaning of the end. In the sense, instrumental rationality concerns how to do things but never why to do them.

¹³⁷ See, in particular, Robert Jackson, *The Global Covenant: Human Conduct in a World of States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

¹³⁸ Sax, 1998, p. 293.

¹³⁹ See, for example, Nicholas J. Wheeler, *Saving Strangers: Humanitarian Intervention in International Society* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Michael C. Davis, *International Intervention in the Post-Cold War World: Moral Responsibility and Power Politics* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2004).

¹⁴⁰ On this score I’m indebted to the work of R. B. J. Walker, see Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

¹⁴¹ Walker, 1993, p. 56.

Modernity awakens people from the old world of divinity, mystery and suppressive hierarchy while offering no rational way of judging competing value commitments in a secular era. Consequently the quest for ultimate values has been undertaken by ambitious statesmen, revolutionary ideologists, religious zealots, and romantic poets. The moral sterility of modernity corresponds with the presence of value relativism and the recourse to violence in modern politics despite the advance of reason and civilization.¹⁴²

Philosophers attempted to find a solution to the dilemma the difficulty of moral reasoning poses. Kantian philosophy claims the universality of morality and the existence of universal law. For Kant, the good will is intrinsically good under any condition. The morality of actions is determined by virtue of their motives. Moral actions should accord with duty and overcome self-interest. The universalizability of morality is tenable because in each rational being there is an innate knowledge of fundamental principles of common moral duties dubbed as the “categorical imperative”.¹⁴³ Weber offers a counter-position to Kant’s cosmopolitanism. His answer to the dilemma is to preserve the autonomy of deciding on ultimate values in the face of the value-free instrumental rationality. The autonomy can rest with the individual; or it may also, if not better, be carried on by the collective, specifically, the state. In this way, morality loses its universality and becomes a discrete matter, subject to the autonomous will of moral agent, either an individual or a political community, who do not necessarily employ the same reason or reasoning methods. In his excellent review Walker concludes,

The ethnical irrationality of the world is turned into the struggle between value spheres, of which the state, that claimed monopoly on the legitimate exercise of power in a given territory, is the most powerful expression. In either case, autonomy can imply relativism.¹⁴⁴

While value relativism suffers a major pitfall of nihilism, Kant’s claim of universal cosmopolitan culture conceals a premise that there is only one concept of “good”

¹⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 57.

¹⁴³ See also Chris Brown, *Sovereignty, Rights and Justice. International Political Theory Today* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2002), p. 43.

¹⁴⁴Walker, 1993, p. 57.

shared and valued by every society. Thus, cosmopolitanism could mean the dominance of one privileged culture over all others as well as forceful assimilations destroying the societies who hold different views of “good.” The most robust criticism of the Kantian cosmopolitan ideal is from Communitarianism. Though actively embracing some liberal values to prevent from slipping into authoritarianism, Communitarians stress the importance of belonging to a political community and participation in its culture has in the lives of individuals. They contend humans are not atomistic individuals but independent upon other community members. Values and beliefs can only emerge from public debates and are shared collectively. People assess their options and choices and make sense of others’ behaviors against the backdrop of social standards of value, in other words, the “horizons of significance.”¹⁴⁵ These Communitarianist notions have been acknowledged by many liberals to highlight the need to ground any constitutionalist project in the local community, which Michael C. Davis refers to as constitutional indigenization.¹⁴⁶ The various particularistic elements contained in value relativism, anti-Enlightenment romanticism, or Communitarianism, are absorbed by nationalism which, among other purposes, addresses human diversity.¹⁴⁷ The relativist stances underpin a whole complex of political principles: Westphalian sovereignty, national interest, self-determination, non-intervention, etc. It is easy to observe that any quest for national independence or self-autonomy uniformly involves a claim of the distinction of the people to other units. It logically follows from the notion that peoples of different characteristics cannot or had better not live under the same political arrangement because their ethical standards and cultural habits are hardly compatible. The norms of non-intervention and self-determination have to be held so as to protect the diversity of the human society, which, as the proof of the vast range of human

¹⁴⁵ See, for example, Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 2nd ed. (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984); Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989); Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), Cha. 4; Will Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community, and Culture* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), Cha. 8.

¹⁴⁶ Davis, 1998, p. 125.

¹⁴⁷ In a 1986 review article, Ernst Haas summarizes that understandings of nationalism in relation to other ideologies is split into two main wings. For one group of scholars, nationalism is an ideology that competes with liberalism, socialism, and fascism. For another group, however, nationalism sidesteps or subsumes other ideologies by focusing on what a given unit believes of itself in distinction to other units. See Ernst B. Haas, “Review: What is Nationalism and Why should We Study It?” *International Organization* 40, No. 3 (Summer 1986), p. 712. In practice nationalism not only work with a variety of ideas and beliefs under some conditions but also compete with them if occasion requires. Though significantly varied its primary concern remains similar from one case to another, that is, the distinction of the people it represents.

potential, is valuable in its own right.¹⁴⁸ Though it is debatable whether or not states are the best carrier of the common good of a people, nationalism is the most prominent manifestation of particularism in the modern time. French political thinker Gustave Le Bon in the nineteenth century once observed how different social foundations gave rise to varied political manifestations:

A Latin crowd, however revolutionary or however conservative it be supposed, will invariably appeal to the intervention of the State to realize its demands. It is always distinguished by a marked tendency towards centralization and by a leaning, more or less pronounced, in favor of a dictatorship. An English or an American crowd, on the contrary, sets no store on the State, and only appeals to private initiative. A French crowd lays particular weight on equality and an English crowd on liberty. These differences of race explain how it is that there are almost as many different forms of socialism and democracy as there are nations.¹⁴⁹

What a government can do depends very much on the nation's particular characteristics, not only its class structure and its history and culture, but also the size and composition of its population, its resources, its location, etc.¹⁵⁰ From the view of nationalism, the efficacy of political solutions to social and economic problems of a nation can only be evaluated under the local context. If the particularity of each nation were essential, analysts of international relations would be caught in a special problem. Any discussion of the "international" becomes difficult without reference to common measures and shared goals of the entire human society. All kinds of cross-cultural discourses "require terminology which is not merely relative but also comparative; that is, it involves reference to standards and particularly standards of conduct."¹⁵¹ In order to maintain a minimal international society in which difference peoples can communicate and cooperate, one must assume some common values and rules of conduct deriving from the common humanity universally possessed.

¹⁴⁸ See Terry Nardin, *Law, Morality, and the Relations of States* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1983).

¹⁴⁹ Gustave Le Bon, *The Crowd* (Mineola, N. Y.: Dover Publications, 2001), p. 102.

¹⁵⁰ Seers, 1983, p. 12.

¹⁵¹ Robert H. Jackson, *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 141-142.

One way of meeting the demands of moral consensus on a global scale is to promote human rights. As Brown has shown,

The issue of human rights has been at the center of discussion of cultural diversity and international political theory, for obvious reasons – the very notion that there are “human” rights, that is to say rights that individuals possess simply by virtue of their humanity, constitutes a challenge to the notion of diversity.¹⁵²

A preliminary international human rights regime has been established through a series of international agreements, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), and numerous regional treaties. Besides, An UN agency, the United Nations Human Rights Council¹⁵³, was created to investigate violations of human rights worldwide. Though accepted by a majority of countries, not all signatories show the same commitments to the value of human rights. Actually, from the beginning, there has been controversy over the importance and urgency of different types of rights. Developing countries assign more weight to economic, social and cultural rights while developed countries give priority to civil and political rights. Political freedom and civil rights in many non-Western countries are regarded as only means rather than ends.

The disagreement on human rights treaties reflects not only the differentiated values held by a deeply divided international community but also the political difficulties they impose on many non-Western countries. Being compliant with the international human rights regime requires significant domestic reforms impacting all aspects of the domestic life of its participants. As Brown notes, it is difficult for any non-democracies to meet all the requirements of the regime.¹⁵⁴ For this reason, “all political systems that are not liberal-democratic are delegitimized by the international

¹⁵² Brown, 2002, p. 190.

¹⁵³ It used to be the United Nations Commission on Human Rights before 2005.

¹⁵⁴ Brown, 2002, p. 190.

human rights regime.”¹⁵⁵ In response to the moral universalism in the idea of human rights itself and the delegitimizing function it practically plays, the so-called “third-generation” of human rights is advocated by the disadvantaged members in face of human rights pressure, for example, China. Under this label clusters a broad spectrum of political claims unconnected with one another. Among them the claim of collective rights present a major challenge to the current human rights regime, which holds the individual is an independent social unit with inalienable rights and privileges the rights of the individual over the community. The defenders of the legitimacy of collective rights usually stress the role of national sovereignty in improving the well-being of all people within a territorial state.

The universalist bearing of the international human rights regime has been eroded both in legislation and in operation. In fact, the UDHR of 1948 acknowledges collective rights to national self-determination and the individualist nature of human rights simultaneously. As different regions proceeds to draft their own human rights treaties, collective rights of nation-states are further emphasized.¹⁵⁶ Similarly, the double-think is also involved in the Vienna Declaration of 1993, combines a restatement of universalism with the recognition of “the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds.”¹⁵⁷ The double recognition of both individual and collective rights causes considerable ambivalence which sparks disputes among states from time to time. The second factor detracting the universal nature of human rights lies in the difficulty of punishing violators at a reasonable cost. In comparison with other national interests, it is unlikely that the human rights issue in *another* country would center the political agenda of a democratic country over the long term. The external support, mostly moral and diplomatic, for Dali Lama’s cause lasts for half a century but makes only limited improvement to the human rights condition in Tibet directly controlled by Beijing. The Tibetan issue makes headline news in a while, when statesmen or party leaders of big powers hold official meetings with Dali Lama, and in between it sinks into insignificance in the ordinary people’s life. In terms of enforcing human rights principle, North Korea’s case reveals that international mediation through diplomatic

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ For example, the African Charter of Human and Peoples’ Rights 1981, the subject of which shifts from “human rights” to “peoples’ rights.” It is also reflected in the Asian values debate throughout the 1990s.

¹⁵⁷ Brown, 2002, p. 190.

efforts or international pressure by economic and financial leverage has only limited effect on the domestic process of the country, although it did produce a major response to famine. However, any use of violence is considered with extreme caution. The war-scarred landscape of southern Kosovo reminds everyone of this point. Moreover, as noted above, the value of human rights is at odd with other institutional props of the international system. NATO's intervention in Kosovo in 1999 highlights the tension between the principle of state sovereignty and the supremacy of human rights as an evolving international norm.¹⁵⁸ As a result, humanitarian intervention, repeatedly present with unilateralism to date, falls into disfavor in states where sovereignty is held supreme and used to fend off foreign interference. State sovereignty is the subject of the next section of the chapter.

In addition to the international human rights regime, another challenge to cultural relativism is the advance of globalization. The discourse on globalization has become a flood. Globalization is not altering the philosophical and ethical base of the world but rather the social and economic landscape of people's life from every detail. The trend of globalization has gathered irresistible momentum as the international market expands at stunning rate. It was widely thought that the differences among geographical and cultural units would be sooner or later eliminated by the inexorable spread of globalization. No economies anywhere in the world can resist modernization forced on it by the existence of global markets. However, globalization is far from an equalizer of the world. John Gray contends homogeneity is just what globalization is *not*. Rather, global markets thrive on differences between economies. If wages, skills, infrastructure and political risks had been similar in all economies, overseas investment and international trade would make no profits and the mobility of capital and goods would not have occurred.¹⁵⁹ More to the point, though the way of life everywhere has been influenced by modernization, it does not mean that all cultures would reach modernity of the same form and content. Modern elements, like sciences, technologies, productions, ideas, and institutions, introduced to a modernizing society are used to address local problems. In this sense, the efficacy of either a new technique or a set of institutions largely depends on how well they can interact with the pre-existing social and cultural structure, especially the

¹⁵⁸ Shashi Tharoor and Sam Daws, "Humanitarian Intervention: Getting Past the Reels," *World Policy Journal* 18, No. 2 (Summer 2001), pp. 21-31.

¹⁵⁹ John Gray, *False Dawn: The Delusions of Global Capitalism* (London: Granta Publications, 2009), p. 57.

nonmaterial part of it. For this reason, in reality we observe more than one type of capitalism in different industrialized economies. As Gray illustrates,

The American belief that corporations are above all else vehicles of shareholder profits is not shared in most other types of capitalism. In Germany, the interests of many other “stakeholders” in addition to the shareholders are represented on boards of companies. It is inconceivable that any large enterprise would withdraw from its indigenous labor market as suddenly and comprehensively as American companies did when relocating from California to Mexico.¹⁶⁰

Furthermore, globalization pressures have the effect of strengthening certain parts of the state at the expense of others. The uneven development of capitalism among economies gives rise to the idea of global justice worldwide.¹⁶¹ More significantly, global economic difficulties - the intractability of global poverty, the yawning gap between the North and the South, the deterioration of terms of trade of raw material exporters, concentrated geographic unemployment, and the recurrence of global or regional financial crises - continuously shakes the liberal international trade order. In fact, the rationality of free trade has never been as apparent to those who came late to the industrial race as to the leading international traders, first Britain and now the United States.¹⁶² Being aware of the unequal outcome of international trade, developing countries has asked for more decision making power in the negotiations of the WTO. In the view of many of them, economic liberalism was little more than a new form of imperialism which keeps them at the low end of international division of labor. Indeed, due to the relative decline of the North American and European economies, later industrializers have increasingly used their leverage to insist that talks on agriculture receive priority attention, deny the inclusion of investment and competition policy on the negotiating agenda, and block agreement on negotiating modalities for agriculture and non-agricultural market access (NAMA). Specifically, the “BRICKs” (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and Korea) are likely to be pivotal in

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ Charles Beitz, Brian Barry, Thomas Pogge and Henry Shue, among others, has been the most important and influential figures in debates concerning global justice.

¹⁶² Mayall, 1990, pp. 78-79.

directing the course and contributing to the success or failure of the WTO.¹⁶³ It is hard to predict that more contribution to the multilateral management of trade from developing countries, who view liberalism with suspicion, will save or fail the liberal scheme.

More importantly, the credibility of the liberal trade order is undermined by the low mobility of labor in contrast with the nearly free pass of capital and goods from place to place. Logically, an open market order requires the free movement of labor across international frontiers.¹⁶⁴ Before the First World War official restrictions put on the migration of people by political units were sparse. E. H. Carr observes that freedom of migration was an even more vital factor in the 19th-century economic and political system, and more necessary to its survival, than freedom of trade.¹⁶⁵ No doubt it owed much to the vast demand of labor in the rapidly industrializing production system. At this phase, migrant workers were generally welcome by local capitalists with no or little discrimination. To the contrary, the late years of twentieth century has been featured by excess capacity in the global economy. In our time job opportunities instead of labor become more and more scarce. This trend has been worsened by overpopulation in some regions. In the danger of being overwhelmed by cheap labor from less developed countries, cosmopolitan liberal scheme was soon abandoned in favor of a national order of economic defense.¹⁶⁶ By the turn of the twentieth century, immigration control had become the norm. European governments had abandoned active labor recruitment policies in the mid-1970s, leaving restricted legal routes to enter Europe other than as a family member or as an asylum seeker hoping to gain refuge status.¹⁶⁷ A host of measures have been employed to professionalize border control and migration management, such as the use of new technology, visa documentation, and ever growing information collection system.¹⁶⁸ Empirical data shows that the visa requirement itself plays an important role in curbing the global mobility of population even if the immigration policies of a state

¹⁶³ Jeffery J. Scott, "America, Europe, and the New Trade Order," *Business and Politics* 11, Iss. 3 (2009), Art 1

¹⁶⁴ Mayall, 1990, p. 87.

¹⁶⁵ E. H. Carr, *Nationalism and After* (London: Macmillan, 1945), p. 12.

¹⁶⁶ Mayall, 1990, p. 87.

¹⁶⁷ Christina Oelgemöller, "Informal Plurilateralism: The Impossibility of Multilateralism in the Steering of Migration," *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations* 13, No. 1 (2011), p. 116.

¹⁶⁸ On the subject of immigration control, see, for example, Frédérique Channac, "The Evolution of International Decision-making processes concerning migrations: A Comparison between Formal and Informal Multilateral Fora," in Giovanna Zincone, ed., *Immigration Politics: Between Center and Periphery. National States and the EU* (Turin: Joint Session ECPR, 2002); Frédérique Channac, "Shaping International Migration Policy: The Role of Regional Consultative Processes," *Western European Politics* 29, No. 2 (2006), pp. 370-387.

are relatively open. In 2009, UK waived the visa requirement for Taiwanese citizens coming to the UK for less than six months and not seeking for work, effective from March 3. That led to a 36% increase in the number of Taiwanese visitors to the UK in 2009.¹⁶⁹ Even in the most liberal societies, immigration is regarded as a privilege not a right, suggests that there are compelling practical arguments in favor of the national state.¹⁷⁰ As the political pressure of ensuring sufficient employment emerged, the freedom of migration gave way to more pressing national concerns. In Britain the government has sought to take a more hardline approach since the 2005 election.¹⁷¹ Then-Prime Minister Gordon Brown pledged to create “British jobs for British workers” in September 2007. Two years later Britain formally introduced a new points-based system to bar all but the best and most needed workers from outside the European Union.¹⁷² However, there is a sure way to get over the immigration restriction and get into affluent societies, that is, richness. Canada is attracting about 3,000 wealthy individuals each year.¹⁷³ Britain is planning to relax its rules governing the immigration of wealthy individuals in an attempt to lure more rich families from China, India and the Middle East.¹⁷⁴ Nevertheless, poor people are also taking actions to cross borders in pursuit of economic opportunities or political asylum but in a completely different way. According to the estimates from the Pew Hispanic Center, 11.2 million unauthorized immigrants were living in the United States as of March 2010.¹⁷⁵ They are forced to live in informal economy without any citizen benefit. The *de facto* unequal status of human beings and ubiquitous lawful discrimination based on nationality stoke the debates between human rights and sovereign rights, which is figuratively presented as UD (The Universal Declaration of Human Rights) *versus* UN (The UN Charter). As a well-known Chinese scholar Liu Dong acidulously describes,

If you had ever encountered disdain in a U.S. embassy as applying for

¹⁶⁹ European Economic and Trade Office, “EU-Taiwan Trade and Investment Factfile 2010,” p. 16, http://ec.europa.eu/delegations/taiwan/documents/more_info/2010_eutw_tandi_factfile.pdf.pdf, accessed Oct 13, 2010.

¹⁷⁰ Mayall, 1990, p. 87.

¹⁷¹ James Boxell, “Perils of UK’s Points-based Visa System,” *Financial Times*, August 17, 2009, <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/8b03074a-8b6e-11dc-9f50-00144fcaabdc0.html>, accessed June 12, 2011

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ James Boxell, “UK to Relax Immigration Rules for the Rich,” *Financial Times*, November 24, 2010, <http://www.ftchinese.com/story/001035705/en>, accessed February 22, 2011

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ The data come from the U.S. Census Bureau’s March Current Population Surveys, by Jeffrey S. Passel, Senior Demographer, Pew Hispanic Center and D’Vera Cohn, Senior Writer, Pew Research Center, February 1, 2011

American visa, it would quite manifest to you that men are born to be *unequal*, at least for now. ... Hence, a part of human rights is incorporated with sovereign rights, or, in other words, sovereignty carries an element of human rights.¹⁷⁶

At least within a sovereign, the progressive development of citizenship has gradually rendered human differences in class, wealth, gender, race, religion, etc., less irrelevant in the operation of public life.

A quick look to the history of immigration control reveals that the contemporary international system is undergirded by both universalism and nationalism, which has recurrently caused tensions between states. James Mayall suggests that this incompatibility could only be reconciled internationally under two conditions. The first would be all states accepted the same internal constitutional discipline; the second required one leading state in a position to underwrite a liberal international economic order.¹⁷⁷ The post-War international order no doubt goes the second way, organized on the basis of the American superpower and a range of liberal-oriented international institutions under its leadership. Put slightly differently, the prerequisite of this solution is that the interest of maintaining an open international order must be consistent with the national interest of the U. S. and its alliance. That means the operation of the former cannot be against the latter. Otherwise, the leading powers will soon lose their domestic support. However, if other members of international society do not agree on the “monopoly rents”¹⁷⁸ collected by the global power and obtain an equitable share of the world’s rising wealth, it may prove difficult for the United States to maintain the order in the long run. Consequently, the world order “has always been vulnerable to a nationalist counterattack which represents the liberal order as a hypocritical veneer over what in reality is a system of imperial hegemony.”¹⁷⁹ Cosmopolitanism, in this sense, has been constantly challenged by the inner flaw of the initial design of the liberal order and attacked by the increasing

¹⁷⁶Liu Dong, “Gongli yu qiangquan” (Justice and power), in Li Shitao, ed., *Zhishifenzi lichang: minzuzhuyi yu zhuanxingqi zhongguo de mingyun* (*Intellectual positions: nationalism and China's destiny in the transitional period*) (Changchun: The Time Literature & Art Press, 1999), p. 497

¹⁷⁷Mayall, 1990, p. 76.

¹⁷⁸ On monopoly rents, see Modelski, 1987, pp. 153-154. Modelski notes that monopoly rents inevitably attract rivalry and competition, especially as the elements legitimizing monopoly in world arrangements have steadily declined.

¹⁷⁹Mayall, 1990, p. 76.

power of counter forces, in particular, nationalism. Nonetheless, very few states pursuing nationalism are completely self-reliant and live in isolation. The North Korea's *autarchy* policies subsist at the expense of the overall economic prosperity of the country. To a considerable extent, nationalisms thrive because they can "opportunistically exploit an open system of markets. But if everyone does, it is no longer an open system but a fragmented, mercantilist, and protectionist complex and everyone suffers."¹⁸⁰ In this sense, the primary enemy of nationalism is not cosmopolitanism but another state's nationalism.

Conclusion

The debates of what to make of cross-cultural normative assessment have generally taken place between two theoretical perspectives – "moral objectivism" and "cultural relativism"¹⁸¹, though there have always been tremendous efforts to make a synthesis of the two, producing discursively derived universal values while respecting a degree of indigenization or difference. The contemporary international ethics recognizes both universal human rights and particular national interests. It seems to lay equal emphasis on universal humanity and qualitative differences among groups. The double-think leads to confusion and disagreement about the standards of a responsible member of the international society. Some states troubled by human rights problems could be quite good international citizens who mind their own business and obey international law.¹⁸² However, we need to keep open-minded not to commit world affairs to thorough relativism. That nations with different ideologies can still communicate and negotiate is a sign that local rules are not wholly local.¹⁸³ In consideration of the imperative of international cooperation to address global challenges, a concern for human rights universals looks more and more like a moral necessity. However, any attempt to generalize rules or lessons that asserts to be broadly applicable should proceed with extreme caution. As James Scott points out, successful programs are often idiosyncratic and depend on the ability to use local

¹⁸⁰See G. John Ikenberry, "The Future of the Liberal World Order: Internationalism After America," *Foreign Affairs*, (May/June 2011).

¹⁸¹George DeMartino, *Global Economy, Global Justice: Theoretical Objections and Policy Alternatives to Neoliberalism* (London; New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 130.

¹⁸²Brown, 2002, p. 87.

¹⁸³Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations* (Oxford England: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 193.

knowledge to create local solutions.¹⁸⁴ The institutional development of a state will be heavily impacted by social structure, culture, and other variables not under the direct control of public policy.¹⁸⁵ In this vein relativism finds its value of existence. Moreover, though at odds with each other as moral precepts, nationalism and liberalism could be complementary ideologies in practice. As Henry Kissinger states, "Nationalism unleavened by liberalism turned chauvinistic, and liberalism without responsibility grew sterile."¹⁸⁶

2.2.2 Progressive or Regressive?

Anarchist tradition views that the state is an unnatural social formation that is normally instituted by violence. The attempt of Western countries to replace pre-colonial systems with a state system in their conquered territories are seen as the principal source of violent bloodshed and regional disability in our time, especially in the Middle East, Southern Europe, Central Asia and East Asia.¹⁸⁷ The disastrous consequences of state formation movements seems to be self-evident if we look to the media reports of ethnic hatred, genocide, suicide bombing, and massive militarization in these areas. The characteristic government in the new states is not social democratic but authoritarian or even totalitarian. National self-determinations have given birth to legally independent states but not necessarily the political freedom of their people. All of these are antithetical to the goal of self-determination in the original sense. The idea of self-determination, as J. S. Mill set out one and a half centuries ago, originated from the liberalist belief that "the question of government ought to be decided by the governed."¹⁸⁸ For Woodrow Wilson, the earliest global advocator of the very idea, a government representative of a defined national population is the underlying principle of self-determination.¹⁸⁹ Simply put, the government of a legitimate nation-state should be accountable to its people.¹⁹⁰ It

¹⁸⁴ See Scott, 1998.

¹⁸⁵ Francis Fukuyama, *State-Building: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2004), p. 82.

¹⁸⁶ Henry Kissinger, "The White Revolutionary Reflections on Bismarck," *Daedalus* 97, No. 3 (Summer, 1968), p. 922.

¹⁸⁷ Scott Burchill, *The National Interest in International Relations Theory* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 20.

¹⁸⁸ John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism, Liberty and Representative Government* (London: Dent, 1972), p. 361.

¹⁸⁹ Jure Vidmar, "The Right of Self-determination and Multiparty Democracy: Two Sides of the Same Coin?" *Human Rights Law Review* 10, No. 2 (2010), p. 239.

¹⁹⁰ J. Samuel Barkin and Bruce Cronin, "The State and the Nation: Changing Norms and the Rules of Sovereignty

would be ridiculous, in Wilson's view, that the people eagerly sought political autonomy for the nation but not democracy for themselves. However, as the idea of self-determination was applied to Central and Eastern Europe and vast colonial territories, only one scope of the notion survived, that is, the political independence of young nations. It is the state-creating self-determination that then became such a powerful and ubiquitous movement in the modern world. The proliferation of new states in the wave of nationalism and anti-colonialism in the post-War era has complicated implications for world affairs.

On the one hand, new nation-states, thanks to the assistance of modern bureaucratic systems and military technologies, amass unprecedentedly strong power in terms of extraction, regulation, and social control. On the other hand, the pre-modern social structure, which was capable of resisting or compromising the penetration of the state, is either devastated in drastic political revolutions or gradually dissolved by the new capitalist mode of production. As a result, people of many new states are rendered powerless and helpless in a relative sense because of the lack of operative democratic institutions and robust civil societies. The modern world is marked by systematic oppression, holocaust, and genocide, for example, the brutal killings between Armenians and Azeris, Georgians and Abkhazi.¹⁹¹ Genocide is widely seen as an extreme manifestation of racism and ethnocentrism. But ethnic hatred is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for mass killing. Genocide is "a more complicated result of both ethnic diversity and generally state-centered politics projects."¹⁹² Zygmunt Bauman's 1989 piece *Modernity and the Holocaust*, among others, is an excellent enquiry in this respect.¹⁹³

Nationalism to many liberals and cosmopolitans in the West appears to be mere crimes and covert expansionism. In the light of its close association with exclusivity, chauvinism, and destructive warfare, it is reasonable to fear and disfavor nationalism. However, it would be as unwise to demonize nationalism as to euphonize it. As mentioned above, Geertz periodizes the development of nationalism into four

in International Relations," *International Organization* 48, No. 1 (Winter 1994), p. 120.

¹⁹¹ On genocide as an exclusive strategy to achieve cultural homogeneity, see, for example, Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), pp. 428-33.

¹⁹² Calhoun, 1997, p. 35.

¹⁹³ See Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Polity, 1989).

phrases: nationalist mobilization, political/military triumph, nation/state building, and connecting to the outside world. I combine the first and second phrases, labeled as “state creation,” due to the common goal they share.

First, nationalism gives impetus to a host of national liberation movements though it cannot be reduced to these developments. Nationalism gains momentum where oppression is present. “If there were no perception of oppression, real or imagined, there would be no ethnic self-determination.”¹⁹⁴ Suppressed peoples regard nationalism as salvation, as Berlin put it, “to whom nationalism represents the straightening of bent backs, the recovery of a freedom that they may never have had..., revenge for their insulted humanity.”¹⁹⁵ China’s final victory in the anti-Japanese war owed much to the successful nationalist mobilization of the masses by Leninist parties, especially the peasants. Since the anti-oppression dimension of nationalism has been intensively discussed in other parts of this chapter, no more ink will be used here.

The second phrase nationalism deals with nation/state building. The literature is replete with claims about the importance of national affiliations and participation in a cultural life. Arthur Ripstein summarizes three advantages to cultural membership argued by defenders of nationalism. First, membership in a secure culture provides a moral space within which people can develop a rich and varied range of conceptions of the good. Second, it offers support for or confirmation of certain views of the good by placing them in a larger history.¹⁹⁶ These two have been examined in the preceding sections when discussing cultural relativism. The third advantage has to do with the relationship between individual and society. Supporters of nationalism hold national identification and solidarity as necessary conditions in modern society in order to motivate the forms of cooperation and self-sacrifice.¹⁹⁷ They suggest that cultural membership possibly changes the notion of what is justice. It makes citizens see the sacrifices demanded by a state as moral imperatives rather than arbitrary

¹⁹⁴ Dov Ronen, *The Quest for Self-Determination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 95

¹⁹⁵ Isaiah Berlin, “The Bent Twig: A Note on Nationalism,” *Foreign Affairs* 51 (Oct 1972), p. 29.

¹⁹⁶ Arthur Ripstein, “Context, Continuity, and Fairness,” in Robert McKim and Jeff McMahan, eds., *The Morality of Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 209.

¹⁹⁷ Miller, “In Defense of Nationality,” in Derek Matravers and Jonathan E. Pike, *Debates in contemporary political philosophy: An anthology* (London; New York: Routledge, 2003), p. 9.

burdens.¹⁹⁸ Georg Friedrich List contends nationalism is an independent economic order. He believes that “the consumer’s choices within the market are generally determined by parameters of the national culture. Only such a culture can give meaning to the individual’s choices.”¹⁹⁹ The nation/state building of new states involves massive political transformation and social reconstruction, all packed into an incredibly short time. The speed and magnitude of these changes is usually unseen in the history of the nation. More importantly, the social cost of these policies is not equally shared by all nationals. In the Newly Industrialized Countries (NICs), wages have to be kept down so as to compete in international markets;²⁰⁰ the social welfare system is either absent or highly fragmented during a long period of the economic takeoff; in order to constantly expand domestic investment, consumption is suppressed to keep a high saving rate. All these stringent policies require a high level of social consensus on the priority of national economic goals. Besides, nationalism offers a sense of continuity beyond the limit of life span. The slogan “For the Benefit of Posterity” (*zaofu zisunhoudai*) is widely used in China’s official propaganda and becomes popular in daily language. Parents are willing to endure terrible living conditions in the hope of building a strong nation for the children. It is more salient in the revolution period, in which nationalist soldiers feel glorious and immortal as sacrificing their life for the national cause. For example, Yan Xuetong, a leading Chinese IR scholar, once said, “China’s rise is to be realized within one generation. We should work really hard to make it come true. Don’t pass it on to the next generation.”²⁰¹

Historical custom plays a critical role in stabilizing a society and pacifying social distresses. Men can tolerate terrible inequalities, if they are stable and hallowed by custom. But in a hectically mobile society, custom has no time to hallow anything.²⁰² In the modern time, this task is, to some extent, undertaken by nationalism. By sanctifying the national interest, nationalism justifies the exercise of state power with a new set of moral standards. In nationalist arguments, the interests

¹⁹⁸Ripstein, 1997, p. 209.

¹⁹⁹Margalit, 1997, p. 75.

²⁰⁰Seers, 1983, p. 7.

²⁰¹Professor Yan Xuetong taught the author methodology class in the Spring 2006 semester. This was what he said in one lecture of the class.

²⁰²Gellner, 1983, p. 25.

and values of this nation take priority over all other interests and values.²⁰³ “National interest” becomes one of the most frequently occurring terms in modern world politics; also it is one of the most frequently abused ones. Government officials, congressman, and political activists cannot give a decent speech without directly or indirectly referring to national interests of the country. Under the context of nationalism, nation is regarded as the only source of state power. As a nation-state formed, nationals give up some individual autonomy to the overarching political body. It therefore is the role of the state to act in the interest of its population.²⁰⁴ Nevertheless, in practice a state is often manipulated to pursue the group interest of a narrow strip of the population at the expense of others. “National interest” is invoked to justify varied state policies – wise or unwise, moral or immoral – as if it is an objective category beyond dispute. In realpolitik it disguises selfish motives, backdoor deals, conspiracy, and sheer aggression. When the former Soviet Union sent troops to crackdown the Prague Spring, it stated that military intervention was the only way to protect the “national interest” of other members of the socialist family from harm. In pursuit of the so-called “national goals,” an enormous amount of national resources can be mobilized and squandered, plunging the country into aimless confrontation or self-destructive frenzy. “There are now many examples showing that whole populations ... can be induced to endure for years the deaths, disablement, and hardship of war by appeals to the national interest.”²⁰⁵

Once political rationalization is accomplished and a distinct national identity takes roots within a territory, the principal concern of nationalism moves to “difference.” National independence largely ensures the political survival of the state with the exception of extreme cases, as I shall discuss further in the next chapter, but not the cultural survival of the nation. Many nations decry the creeping imperialism of American culture introduced by coke, jeans, Hollywood films, and McDonald’s; others worry that their national languages risks being marginalized in the face of the advance of English as the *lingua franca*. As noted in the examination of particularism and universalism, neither modernization nor globalization is an end-state towards which all cultures are converging. In each society modernity must be tailored to the particular genius of the people. Few nations are willing to copy someone else’s life,

²⁰³Breuilly, 1993, p. 2.

²⁰⁴Barkin and Cronin, 1994, p. 124.

²⁰⁵Seers, 1983, p. 11.

no matter how good, without cultural and institutional innovations. In this phase, nationalism makes the call to difference.

It has been nearly universal occurrence in the new states that the attempts of national unity beget or intensify social tensions.²⁰⁶ Taylor observes that the impulse to form Pakistan had a lot to do with the preservation of a modernized Muslim identity against the danger of being overwhelmed in a Hindu state. In the 1941 elections the Muslim League swept the Muslim areas of India with its popular slogan “Islam in danger!”²⁰⁷ It was very possible that the Hindu response to the challenges of the hostile modern world was wise and vigorous. But it did not matter much actually. The key concern of the Pakistani was not the best solution to their difficulties whereas they deemed the Muslims deserved a chance to choose on their own. They feared their own “call to difference” would be drowned out by India’s answer to its own call.²⁰⁸ Situated in Chinese context, if Han people could reflect upon how much they fear to be overwhelmed by Western culture and how steadily they disagree with some Western values, they would be able to empathize with their Tibetan counterparts who have been pushed to verge of cultural distinction due to the ruthless assimilation policies of the central government. Thus, it is all about choice. If a culture disappears because its members find some other, surrounding culture more appealing, they are not left without a context of choice.²⁰⁹ To the contrary, if failing to promote the conception of multiculturalism and national autonomy, the “call to difference” will trigger new civil wars in multinational and multiethnic states such as Ukraine, Albania or Romania.

In analyzing this situation, it is not uncommon to conclude that cultural colonialism, especially the internal variety, constitutes a new threat to human societies instead of economic and military colonialism. Yael Tamir in his 1993 piece *Liberal Nationalism* redefines the nation as a voluntary society for individual cultural expression from an apolitical perspective.²¹⁰ By highlighting the apolitical nature of the nation, he suggests particular ethnic loyalties be abandoned in favor of a wider, more encompassing, civic version of nationalism. It assumes that the political tolerance

²⁰⁶ Geertz, 1973, p. 245.

²⁰⁷ Taylor, 1997, p. 49.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*,

²⁰⁹ Ripstein, 1997, p. 211.

²¹⁰ See Yael Tamir, *Liberal nationalism*(N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993).

achieved in the West is due to the success of state neutrality.²¹¹ However, a rigid distinction between civic and ethnic nationalism requires an ahistorical account of liberalism and democracy.²¹² The introduction of democracy into Western societies indeed benefited from the ethnocultural traits they possessed, for example, the popularization of Enlightenment political thought, which did not occur to many other regions until very recently. As Prasenjit Duara further points out, "Nationalism can't simply be a civic nationalism based on rights."²¹³ It also has to appeal to "ideas of deep histories and ethnic, racial, cultural identities for mobilization."²¹⁴ Otherwise, it would be impossible to distinguish nationalism from cosmopolitanism. The term of nationalism, therefore, would lose its value of existence. Moreover, in the preceding part of this chapter I have discussed the inevitability of categorical partiality in the intergroup relationship drawing on Social Identity Theory. Along this line, participation in public life necessarily involves partiality based on an array of categorical identities. If people cannot avoid being raised in a particular culture and becoming a part of it, then national partiality needs to be accepted as an essential aspect of human life.²¹⁵ On this account, political proposals targeted to eradicate particularist identities will prove unfeasible.²¹⁶ Thus appropriate antidotes to intolerant ethnocentrism are neither to renounce nationalism as a whole nor to endow any distinct group of people with its own "political roof". The former leads to breakdown of political communities which have made global cooperation and integration workable while the latter to unrestricted proliferation of sovereign states which will significantly upset the world order. In fact, it is not an either-or matter in which nationalism and cosmopolitanism cannot coexist.²¹⁷ To solve the paradox between the homogenizing attempts of nationalism and social resistance it stirs up is to respect people's right of choice.²¹⁸ If domestic political arrangements allow sub-national cultures to deliberately choose between pursuing the traditional conception

²¹¹ Neus Torbisco Casals, *Group Rights as Human Rights: A Liberal Approach to Multiculturalism* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006), p. 100.

²¹² Hence, the categorization is highly misleading as an analytic tool to explain the problems that beset multicultural societies in Eastern Europe. On the relevance of both types of nationalism to modern forms of patriotism, see Hobsbawm, 1991, pp. 80-100.

²¹³ Prasenjit Duara, "The Legacy of Empires and Nations in East Asia," In Pál Nyíri and Joana Breidenbach, eds., *China Inside Out: Contemporary Chinese Nationalism and Transnationalism* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2005), p.48.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

²¹⁵ Jeff McMahan, "The Limits of National Partiality," in Robert McKim and Jeff McMahan, eds., *The Morality of Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 120.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

of the good and gradually finding themselves with a new one, the paradox can be laid to rest. In any case, peoples' quest for giving their own answer to the "call to difference" cannot be attained without struggle. It, on the one hand, depends on active promotion of national autonomy and democratic institutions within the state. On the other hand, it calls for wide reforms in the international order referring to the idea of global justice.

In conclusion, nationalism is a modern product. It thrives in response to precarious modernity and periodic state failure to tackle continuing change. As Jusdanis justly points out:

The undertaking to build nations is an autonomous process that seeks to unify a particular people in a hostile world, to give them a realm of emotional attachments in the face of continuing change, and, above all, to propel them on a path of progress. Rather than sliding back into darkness, nationalism actually is an attempt to interpret and participate in modernity.²¹⁹

²¹⁹Jusdanis, 2001, p. 5.

III Nationalism and International System in Change

The world affairs in the aftermath of the Cold War have been marked by two opposite trends: the neoliberal thrust of globalization and the fortification of national blocks. As a recent global survey conducted by the Pew Global Attitude Project indicates, nationalistic sentiments are on the rise in Eastern Europe countries, particularly in Russia. Just over half of Russians (54%) say they completely or mostly agree with the statement "Russia should be for Russians," a substantial increase in comparison with the data of 1991 in which year only 26% thought so. The majority of the public in Bulgaria, Hungary, Russia and Poland completely or mostly agree with the view that "there are parts of neighboring countries that really belong to us." In Russia, the proportion is 58%, rising from 22% in 1991; In Bulgaria, roughly two-thirds of the masses (66%) express this opinion, up from 52% in 1991.¹ In regard to economic issues, many developing countries refuse to consider new liberalization in the Doha Round because they already face problems adjusting to competition in both home and export markets from China and other major developing countries. Their noncooperation attitudes are encouraged by the reluctance of the BRICKs to offer substantial cuts of their own trade barriers.² The breakdown of Geneva talks should not only be considered in relation to the difficulties in agricultural issues but also the failure of global multilateral scheme. Multilateral negotiation could promote the prompt globalization. However, ever since the 1990s there have been vibrant anti-globalization campaigns dotted around the world, many holding WTO as one of their main targets. The 2003 mini-ministerial meetings in Montreal and the 2005 trade talks in Hong Kong all witnessed large-scale protests in the host cities. In contrast to the bleak prospect of multilateral negotiation schemes, bilateral talks remain robust and fruitful among countries.

Scholars have written extensively to criticize the conservative turn of international

¹Pew Global Attitude Project, "Two Decades After the Wall's Fall: End of Communism Cheered but Now With More Reservation," November 2, 2009, http://pewglobal.org/docs/?DocID_25, pp. 55-57.

² See Scott, 2009.

affairs or stress the domestic drives of nationalism, but have said little about its structural and institutional roots at the international level. John Breuilly differentiates himself from prior theorists with his contention that nationalism is best understood as an especially appropriate form of political behavior in the context of the modern state system.³ It is this point that I am trying to cast light on in this chapter. My analysis of this chapter is divided into three sections. First, I discuss the conservative elements as well as the status quo orientation built into the post-war international arrangements. Second, I analyze the evolution of Westphalian sovereignty, which attempts to move the international system on to a liberal footing. Third, drawing on conclusions of the last chapter I provide theoretical and empirical answers to the basic question about establishing a nation-state?

3.1 Post-war International System Revisited

In contrast with its predecessor appearing in the League of Nations Charter which emphasized international justice, the post-war international order values systematic stability and legitimates national interest. The basic unit making up the international system is the sovereign nation-state. This has two implications. First, sovereignty, in a broad sense, describes both objective phenomena and subjective aspirations in the political world. Sovereigns are accorded a set of rights and assume a set of responsibilities, the most important of which is the mutual recognition of autonomy and juridical equality.⁴ The UN Charter⁵ confirms the principle of noninterference in the internal affairs, which is widely understood as an inheritance of the Westphalian tradition. Furthermore, sovereigns, though differing in size, population and power, are all juridical equals. As the first international legalist who defines “state sovereignty,” Emerich de Vattel, in his famous quote, contends: “A dwarf is as much a man as a giant; a small republic is no less a sovereign state than the most powerful kingdom.”⁶ Second, holding the nation-state as the basic unit of the international

³Breuilly, 1993, p. 1.

⁴ Michael Ross Fowler and Julie Marie Bunck, *Law, Power, and the Sovereign State: The Evolution and Application of the Concept of Sovereignty* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 1995).

⁵ Especially Article 2 of the UN Charter, full text available on <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter1.shtml>, accessed February 21, 2010.

⁶ Emerich de Vattel is quoted in J. L. Brierly, *The Law of Nations, 5th ed.* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1955), p. 37.

system delegitimizes other types of polities, e.g., colony and empire. By principle, state power derives from the population identified as a distinct nation and the state acts in the interest of the nation. Therefore, it is hard, if not impossible, for the state to give priority to long-term international interests and universalist values at the expense of immediate national gains.⁷

According to nationalist ideals, state is first and foremost a homogenous cultural unit. John Stuart Mill in *Considerations on Representative Government* claims: "It is in general a necessary condition of free institutions, that the boundaries of governments should coincide in the main with those of nationalities."⁸ If state boundaries are not congruent with national boundaries, then states might be changed to better reflect the ideal of state as nation. Given sovereignty essentially attaches itself to territory, any attempt along nationalist lines to make state fit nation involves territorial change by either secessionist or irredentist strategies. However, sovereign governments are usually ready to repatriate disaffected or disruptive populations but not to accept any loss of territory. Even minor boundary disputes often prove difficult to resolve.⁹ More importantly, there lacks a practically indisputable way of deciding boundaries between nations. The long human history witnesses constant rise and fall of principalities, monarchies and empires, and concomitant loss and regain of territories. Nationality does not depend exclusively upon any single variable ranging from language to tradition to common national past. None of these is the *sine qua non* of identifying a nation. Besides, nation is not a geographically static entity. It undergoes a continuous transformation that is dependent upon the activities of the people who inhabit it.¹⁰ In this sense, the national territory has open boundaries, affected by human engineering and historical contingencies.

Given the non-national outlook of the pre-war political map, to rebuild the international order around the principles of sovereignty and nationalism, though not immune to *realpolitik* and ideological rivalries, had required a host of territorial changes climaxed by decolonization movements from 1950s through 1970s. In this period, the international society under the leadership of the United States endeavored

⁷ Barkin and Cronin, 1994, p. 124.

⁸ Mill, 2001, p. 288.

⁹ Jackson, 1990, p. 190.

¹⁰ Wang Jisi, "America in Asia: How Much does China Care?" *Global Asia* 2, No. 2 (2010), pp. 25-27

to apply the concept of self-determination to colonial territories in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. American efforts to decolonize the world were augmented enormously by the rising tide of nationalism on these continents. As a result, a large number of new countries eventually took their seats in the concert of nation-states. In 1945 the United Nation was founded by a total of 51 members. By the end of 1970s, this number had soared to 150 or so. Within three decades about one hundred new sovereigns gained independence and entered into the global state system. According to Article 4 of the UN Charter, "The admission of any ... state to membership in the United Nations will be effected by a decision of the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council."¹¹ The requirement of international recognition as the external source of state legitimacy aims to protect established members of the state system and, consequently, prevent unilateral territorial change. However, the cautious stance was largely sidelined by the American optimism about the value of self-determination and the political future of new sovereigns. But, other countries, including the victims of the colonial system themselves, were less committed to self-determination as a universal value – at least as it might be applied to internal nationalities. Their participation in the decolonizing endeavor was concerned more about self-interested *realpolitik* than moral ideals.

Once the mission of anti-colonialism was accomplished, the prescriptive principle of sovereignty and the popular principle of self-determination, which once worked closely together to give birth to a great many new states, became antithetical to each other. Most newly established states were defined along the administrative boundaries enforced by their European colonizers. Therefore, many culturally heterogeneous peoples, who happened to live within a geographical unit but were only remotely related with one another in history, were now enclosed in one state. It was true for virtually all the new states that they were "bundles of competing traditions gathered accidentally into concocted political frameworks rather than organically evolving civilizations."¹² On this account, few new states qualified as nation-states in the real sense. According to the idea of self-determination, if rigidly applied, most decolonized political entities were subject to further dismemberment or substantial territorial adjustment. This rendered them extremely vulnerable to

¹¹<http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter2.shtml>, accessed January 11, 2010

¹²Geertz, 1973, p. 244.

domestic challenges appealing to further self-determination of internal nationalities. Paradoxically, the very ideal of lifting colonial territories from subordinate status became their enemy after they succeeded in obtaining the international recognition of their independency. They realized if any claim to self-determination was allowed in a state with dissident regions, it would encourage demands for the same within their own territories. Consequently, the beneficiaries of self-determination became stalwart supporters of Westphalian sovereignty and non-intervention. Given the political influence enhanced by the increasing number of post-colonial states, the international society took a decidedly conservative turn in respect of territorial change. The new *status quo* oriented political consensus put an end to the open and progressive period of the post-war state system. In the following decades, the international society tended to “retain the existing political map and to reject virtually out of hand any belated demands for self-determination, however worthy or just the cause may be.”¹³ On the question of territorial change the contemporary international order tends to be more deeply conservative than it was before 1914.¹⁴ The international implications of the conservative turn on this question are profound. Thereafter, nationalism in the new states bifurcates into two forces. The first variety is state nationalism, aiming to defend state sovereignty in terms of territory integrity, national security, political and economic independence. The second represents the subnational attempts, often in the form of separatism, to challenge the state justification of its political rule based on a particular culture or tradition. This development has further complicated the relationship between sovereignty, self-determination and non-intervention.

In order to elucidate the conflicts between different constitutive rules underpinning the international society, more ink needs be spilt on the theoretical origins of self-determination. National self-determination as a global force did not become prominent until Woodrow Wilson’s ideals of national freedom was brought to the fore in the reconstruction of the war-torn Europe after World War I. Wilson diagnosed as a major cause of the war the lack of congruence between states and nations.¹⁵ He asserted the best way to ensure international peace was to implement the principle of self-determination worldwide. As one of the most significant political

¹³ Jackson, 1990, p. 190.

¹⁴ Mayall, 1990, p. 123.

¹⁵ Barkin and Cronin, 1994, p. 120.

doctrines of the twentieth century, the principle of “self-determination of peoples” continues to be an underlying normative foundation of the post-war international society.¹⁶ It is legally affirmed in multiple international treaties and declarations, e.g., Article 1 and 55 of the UN Charter, the 1960 Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and the 1966 Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Tilly expounds the six assertions upon which the principle of national self-determination is built:

1. Each distinct, homogenous people has a right to political autonomy, even to a state of its own.
2. If such a people controls a state of its own, it has the collective right to exclude or subordinate members of other populations with respect to the territory and benefits under control of that state.
3. In that case, furthermore, even small or weak states have the right to formulate domestic and international policies without interference from other states.
4. If, however, such a people lacks a state, or at least substantial political autonomy, it has the right to struggle for independence or autonomy by extraordinary means.
5. Outside peoples and their states have the right and obligation to forward such struggles.
6. If the representatives of such a people establish a state of their own or seize control of a state previously controlled by alien powers, outside peoples and their states have the right and obligation to recognize the new regime.¹⁷

Tilly’s explication fully captures the essence of the principle of self-determination. All these political claims seem theoretically sound and morally progressive in comparison with imperialism and colonialism. However, the two assumptions they reveals –that what makes up a people or a nation is politically clear and that the self-determinations of different nations are essentially compatible with one another –are empirically dubious. Brown pointedly questions the basic idea behind self-determination, in particular, its two assumptions: “First, can it really be possible that

¹⁶ The quoted term is used throughout the UN Charter.

¹⁷ Charles Tilly, “National Self-Determination as a Problem for all of Us,” *Daedalus* 122, No. 3 (Summer 1993), pp. 29-30.

any division of the human race could have the right to self-determination? Second, what of the, surely very real, possibility that one division may wish to associate with another which, however, does not wish to associate with it? Third, it seems that, implicitly, self-determination involves the right to a particular territory, but what if two different divisions of the human race claim the same territory?"¹⁸ In his well-known Fourteen Points address to the US Congress, Wilson articulated the general tenet that all territorial questions had to be settled "in the interests of the population concerned."¹⁹ But by which principles or rules the disputed territory ought to be allocated among parties remained unmentioned. Academics have paid scant attention to what their theorization of the nation and nationalism offers to justify a state's entry into international society. Given the predominance of positivism in social science, it is less common to conduct research with a view to addressing these legal and normative questions. If stable boundaries among nations are not in place or cannot be easily negotiated before the actions of self-determination, the principle itself does not provide any specific basis for delineating national boundaries.²⁰ As noted above, the notion of nation presents a state of flux, especially on its periphery. Political boundaries between nations are contingent matters, which cannot be settled by rational argument or by a democratic vote.²¹ Democracy presumes the existence of a defined electorate. To choose who ought to decide a matter is what democracy cannot do. For example, who have rights to decide the boundaries between China and India – the original inhabitants of the disputed territory, the people currently living in the area, the population of the P. R. China, of India, or of both? Democracy cannot come into play before this question is properly answered. In a very real sense, self-determination of peoples has been consequently proved to be enormously complicated in practice while it is a simple ideal in principle. Its operation necessitates an effective way to decide the agreeable boundaries among nations, which we are not able to generate from within the principle. The indeterminacy of national boundaries, to a great extent, accounts for the violent outlook of modern nationalism. Since rational answers are unavailable while territorial loss is

¹⁸Brown, 2002, p. 78.

¹⁹ Ray Stannard Baker, *Woodrow Wilson and World Settlement*, vol. 1 (New York: Doubleday, Page and Co., 1922), p. 12.

²⁰ Of this dilemma Sir Ivor Jennings said, "On the surface it seems reasonable: let the people decide. It was in fact ridiculous because the people cannot decide until someone decides who are the people." Jennings is quoted in Lee Buchheit, *Secession: The Legitimacy of Self-Determination* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1978), p. 9.

²¹ James Mayall, *World Politics: Process and Its Limits*, (Malden, Mass. Blackwell, 2000), pp. 49-51

intolerable, military confrontation is often considered as the last resort to provide a quick solution.

Though many attempts have been mounted to address the ambiguities inherent in self-determination, political contests over different moral principles and legal precepts still lurk. The UN Charter is actually silent on what counts as “peoples”. Neither does it articulate whether it is a human right or a sovereign right. In the absence of universally agreed standards on how to define the legitimate territory of a nation, the international society unavoidably takes a pragmatist stance toward territorial disputes. For example, many borders in Eastern Europe, such as those between the Soviet Union and Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Romania, were altered in ways that were politically convenient but ethnically nonrepresentative.²²

Self-determination infers that a people or a nation exist prior to its political manifestation as a sovereign state.²³ But in practice it has been most frequently applied to places where there has never been a single civil society. In a great many situations, new states gained sovereignty as successors of the pre-existing colonies regardless of the ethnic composition within their territories. In the Third World, self-determination had been reduced to denying the rule of aliens and redressing the historical wrongs inflicted by European colonists. It has lost the original claim about the nation as the source of state power. The typical birthday gift to the new state was the creation of a fictitious nation with arbitrary state borders. In this light, it is the prevailing view now to use the territorial state to define national identity. For example, all people who are enclosed within the ex-colonial frontiers of Indonesia are Indonesians, though its cultural diversity has been for centuries especially great. Moreover, self-determination was a one-off process “dealt to populations under colonial rule only once at the time of independence.”²⁴ Because the involuntary dissociation between nation and state in the first place, new sovereigns are vulnerable to even minor internal challenges based on the principle of self-determination in the full-blown sense. The political elites have been keenly aware of the danger posed by separatism and irredentism, especially taking account of the Domino Effect. If self-determination were a continuing process rather than a once

²² See, for example, Gordon Craig, *Europe Since 1815* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1974), pp. 506-10

²³ Taylor, 1997, p. 38.

²⁴ Jackson, 1990, p. 152.

and for all event, the interest of numerous new states, and even some old states, would be adversely affected. Consequently, an international determination is quietly achieved to “retain the existing political map and to reject virtually out of hand any belated demands for self-determination, however worthy or just the cause may be.”²⁵ As J. Samuel Barkin and Bruce Cronin astutely points out in a 1994 article,

By retaining colonial rather than traditional borders as the basis for the creation of new states, the colonial powers and the UN sought to maximize the viability of the new states, rather than ethnic or tribal ties. In so doing it reflected the accepted norm that the legitimacy of states was based on good government, not national self-determination.²⁶

However, the principle of self-determination has been enshrined in the UN Charter and popularized as a moral standard ever since its publicity by Wilson. Any appeal to national autonomy or independence against an internationally recognized sovereign state is inevitably caught in a dilemma – it is morally legitimate but practically unpromising. This accounts for the standoffs of many ongoing self-determination causes. The underlying conservatism on territorial change attempts to stabilize the state system while the undeniable moral legitimacy of continuing self-determination significantly destabilizes the current political arrangements. Because of the contradiction between the two forces, political proposals for self-rule are usually greeted with moral enthusiasm but underplayed with sober realpolitik calculation. In this sense, the principle of national self-determination turns out to be much less permissive than attention to its philosophical origins and meaning might lead one to expect.²⁷

Another liberal element the principle of self-determination has relinquished in its migration beyond Europe is democracy. This is even a more significant change than the last one, though the international community sees compelling political reasons to do so. Two principles derived from the same Enlightenment seedbed – individualism and democracy – have been grafted onto the idea of nationalism by its modern founders. E. H. Carr rightly points out that in the nineteenth century nationalism

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

²⁶ Barkin and Cronin, 1994, p. 125.

²⁷ Mayall, 1990, p. 35.

seemed a natural corollary of both. In both French and American revolutions, the rights of nation were consciously derived from the rights of people. On this account, a nation that did not respect the rights of its own subjects denied its own rights to any national claim.²⁸ In a similar vein, Hans Morgenthau has maintained, "Nationalism as a political phenomenon must be understood as the aspiration for two freedoms, one collective, the other individual: the freedom of a nation from domination by another nation and the freedom of the individual to join the nation of his choice."²⁹ Self-determination had been marked off from other extreme variations of nationalism by its association with the desire of individual freedom. Fascism cannot be viewed as the legitimate basis for German policies because it sought to dominate or dislocate people.³⁰ However, the nineteenth century prototype of nationalism did not pass through its global spread unscathed. In the Third World national self-determination acquired prominent paternalist and authoritarian features, in which individual freedom was often subordinate to sovereign rights. If the international society insisted on a democratic regime as the precondition of state legitimacy, then many new states would be ineligible for the sovereign status. Therefore, it turned to have no choice but to weaken the democracy requirement so as to accommodate all ex-colonies in the global state system. Moreover, few existing members of the state system are actually enthusiastic to press the democratic qualification before extending international recognition to new states where the imperative lies in providing minimum social order rather than promoting political liberty (though over the long term the latter is more fundamental).³¹

The survival of a state today as in the past is determined by two factors: state legitimacy and state viability. If the evolution of the principle of self-determination transforms the understanding of state legitimacy in a paradoxical way, the changed concept of state viability further aggravates the trend. According to Robert Jackson, the nineteenth-century rule of basing international recognition on the ability to militarily self-defend and to maintain internal control was abandoned after World War II.³² Hobsbawm conducts a brilliant extrapolation of this discontinuity marked

²⁸ Carr, 1945, pp. 9-10.

²⁹ Hans J. Morgenthau, "The Paradox of Nationalism," *Yale Review* 46, No. 4 (June 1957), p. 481.

³⁰ Barkin and Cronin, 1994, p. 122

³¹ Mayall, 2000, pp. 53-54.

³² Robert Jackson, "Negative Sovereignty in Sub-Saharan Africa," *Review of International Studies* 12 (October, 1986), pp. 247-264, and "Quasi-states, Dual regimes and Neo-classical Theory: International Jurisprudence and

by "the Balkanization of the world of states."³³ Historically, ethnic minorities had not acquired strong motives to secede from large political entities mainly because they were easy to fall prey to the territorial expansion of strong neighbors. Back in the nineteenth century, mini-states, like today's Singapore, were considered as misfortune if not outright dishonor. They were tolerated at best as harmless freaks by the club of big brothers.³⁴ However, thanks to the development of global capitalism and the expansion of international trade market, the concept of state viability has undergone dramatic transformation.

The process of decolonization in the Third World left the international society full of small territories (or relatively large territories with small populations). But the thrust of self-determination was not sufficient to eventually introduce the late-twentieth century European equivalents of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha into the United Nations if the emerged small states could not survive international competitions. However, the post-war international order led by the United States has shown great commitments to protect even the very feeble mini-states from conquest by larger ones.³⁵ As a result, many apparently unviable members of the international community, popularly known as "failed states," are secure in their juridical sovereignty. Those deeply mired in civil crises for decades can still externally represent their people, receive and send diplomats, and steadily occupy the seats at major international bodies. Instead of its inherent ability to attain national goals and resist competitors, the legitimate existence of a state is now primarily underwritten by international recognition. In practice, puts Prasenjit Duara, "many nation-states gain sovereign authority not because they were created as such by long-term, home-grown historical processes, but because they have overhauled their legal and social systems so that other nations and powerful multi-national entities ... may recognize them as such."³⁶ This change profoundly alters the foci of international politics. On the one hand, it prevents states based on fictitious nations from disintegration. Once the independence status of a state has been internationally ratified, it has to be upheld regardless of its political

the Third World," *International Organization* 41, No. 4 (Autumn 1987), pp. 519-550

³³ See Eric Hobsbawm, "Some Reflections on 'The Break-up of Britain'", *New Left Review* 105 (1977), pp. 3-23

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 5

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

³⁶ Prasenjit Duara, "The Global and Regional Constitution of Nations. The View from East Asia," *Nations and Nationalism* 14, No. 2 (2008), p. 330.

and economic performance.³⁷ On the other hand, there has developed a global public scene on which the international status of any human group is vulnerable to nonrecognition from others.³⁸ As Lei Guang unequivocally argues:

[T]he first order of business for a non-Western state like China is usually less to amass power than to secure and affirm an identity as a nation-state within the framework of the Westphalian state system. Before the international community, such a nascent state must defend and legitimate its sovereign claim over a fixed territory.³⁹

The advance of recognition politics aggrandizes the leverage of dominant states in world affairs. Minority groups aspiring to political independence are compelled to comply with the preferences of great powers in exchange for their support in the UN and other international occasions. As Mayall observes, in the rebellion of East Bengal it was the Indian army that played a decisive role in expelling Pakistan, not the Bangladeshis themselves. Another example is Biafra, whose short-lived secession caused the death of more than one million people. Though Israel, France, Portugal, Rhodesia, South Africa and the Vatican City provided some support, but it failed to secure a powerful external patron who was prepared to defy the international consensus in favor of the territorial status quo. France once came close, but in the end President de Gaulle indicated that he would be guided by African opinion.⁴⁰ A necessary corollary of this situation is the normalization of intervention in the domestic politics, which I shall consider further in the next section.

To conclude, in comparison with traditional systems of power politics, the post-war international order has undergone significant changes in terms of state legitimacy and state viability (see Figure 1).

Figure 3.1 State legitimacy and state viability

³⁷ Mayall, 1990, pp. 122-123.

³⁸ Margalit, 1997, p. 46.

³⁹ Lei, 2005, p. 494.

⁴⁰ Mayall, 2000, p. 55.

STATE LEGITIMACY	
In Principle	In Practice
national self-determination	juridical sovereign
democracy	good governance

STATE VIABILITY	
Past	Now
state ability to compete	international recognition
	frozen political map

In principle it recognizes the nation as the basic unit of international society. But in practice it reifies territorial state which may or may not preside over a society in which one and only one well-defined nation pre-exists.⁴¹ In order to measure up to the principle of national self-determination, where the nation is absent or multiple contentious nations have been lumped together, it has to be created within in a, to a certain degree, arbitrarily demarcated geographical territory. Though some culturally heterogeneous states are socially and politically stable, it proves difficult for many others to secure a common base on which all social groups can coexist and prosper. Counterproductively, the imperative of nation-building, which attempts to integrate a divided society with a common high culture, intensifies social tensions and radicalize tolerant populations who used to enjoy a high degree of conviviality difficult to imagine in a nationalist mind. Historic empires often provided alternatives to complete incorporation or complete independence of the peripheral territories through diverse political arrangements and multiple administration systems. For example, throughout several hundreds years of imperial history China pursued a distinctive and flexible policy in its dealing with Tibet, whose status was the outcome of complex protocols and dialogues with the central government.⁴² But such middle ground relationships have been generally discarded in the modern state system which

⁴¹ Mayall, 1990, p. 123.

⁴² Michael Davis, "Establishing a Workable Autonomy in Tibet," *Human Rights Quarterly* 30 (2008), pp. 241-42.

makes a strict division between sovereigns and non-sovereigns. The principle of self-determination of peoples is essentially about legitimating nations. But in order to stabilize a large number of states built on fictitious nations, it tends to make the exercise of self-determination principle a one-off process to end the colonial system but is reluctant to articulate it for patent reasons. Consequently, as a universally promulgated ideal it continues to give impetus to nationalist movements. But the international community can neither provide substantial support nor find *nonrealpolitik* solutions for these appeals. The underlying tendency to reify the state has led to a transformation in the theme of self-determination. It has become more and more a political slogan used to pursue sovereign rights for the *group* rather than political freedom for the *individual*. The weakening demand for democracy reflects the steadily accelerating importance of system stability in the wake of decolonization. The regime change of a nondemocratic state which might upset the regional order is apparently less welcome by neighboring countries who had suffered decades of political chaos. If an authoritarian but stable state can be a good citizen of the international society, it becomes a rational choice to tolerate it. In the agenda making of the international community security and stability concerns outweigh the ideal of international justice.

In the view of the horrors of modern warfare, the post-war order is featured by "an unprecedented attempt to freeze the political map."⁴³ The UN collective security scheme forbids the use of force by states unless in self-defense or with the authority of the Security Council. It significantly reduces, if not completely eliminates, the possibility for the member states to unilaterally change their boundaries by force. The systemic attempt to suppress violence consequently removes war from its place as an institution of international society. Instead it is regarded as the primary evidence of the breakdown of order.⁴⁴ Accordingly, the contemporary international community is peculiarly tolerant of countries which are judicially sovereign but fail to meet the most fundamental empirical criteria of statehood as traditionally conceived. If the legal standing of the state is underpinned by the moral claim that they deserve sovereignty, then all members officially accepted by the state system have to be upheld without reference to their domestic situation. Though frequently

⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, p. 146.

labeled "failed state," very few states really "fail" in the traditional sense to be militarily conquered or annexed. All these changes in international order give prominence to recognition politics, which centers the agenda of contemporary nationalism.

Henry Kissinger notes that the stability of any international system depends on two factors: the degree to which its components feel secure and the extent to which they agree on the "justice" or "fairness" of existing arrangements.⁴⁵ In this regard, the design of the post-war international order fares no better than its predecessors. First, the conventional interpretation of self-determination as decolonization has done great injustice to the belated demand for self-determination in favor of system stability. If self-determination was a universal right, it should apply to all peoples without discrimination.⁴⁶ Otherwise, the principle will not stand up. The best it can do is no more than *ex-post facto* ratification of successful secessionist struggles as the outcome of sheer *realpolitik*. Wilson and his followers saw the principle of self-determination as an appropriate antidote to tired power politics. But owing to the flaws analyzed above, power politics is inevitably ushered in by the back door and small territories remain, in Wilson's own words, "chattels and pawns in a game."⁴⁷ Second, the essentially progressive ideal of self-determination and the essentially conservative pursuit of system stability evolve into a paradox. The more international and domestic efforts are mounted to freeze the political map, the more fears will be created for secessionist subnational groups who take seriously the principle of self-determination. On the other hand, given the established moral legitimacy and undeniable historical record of the exercise of self-determination, it is difficult for the international society to publicly deactivate political actions appealing to this principle. In other words, these appeals, no matter they are attainable or not, have to be morally bolstered with or without sincerity. It explains the increasing degree to what some old established countries such as Belgium, Canada, and Spain feel that they must make concessions to domestic ethnic minorities.⁴⁸ The moral legitimacy of secessionist mobilization spells great uncertainty for those whose state integrity has long been challenged. As their decision makers feel pressed to grasp the nettle

⁴⁵ Kissinger, 1968, p. 899.

⁴⁶ Mayall, 2000, p. 55.

⁴⁷ Baker, 1922, p. 12.

⁴⁸ Barkin and Cronin, 1994, p. 126.

through continuous assimilation or overt coercion, a security dilemma arises. To put it succinctly, it is prominent in the design of international system that some norms emphasize the state while others emphasize the nation. The duplicity of the principle of self-determination in combination with the conservative consensus to uphold existing states produce double insecurity on both parties – the stakeholders of the *status quo* and the real or potential revisionists. A significant phenomenon along this line is that over the last half century intrastate war has displaced the interstate war as the primary site of large-scale killing.

3.2 An Anachronistic Westphalian System?

Sovereignty, one of the most fundamental concepts in modern International Relations, appears to be a beleaguered notion these days. The legal status of sovereignty is confirmed by the UN Charter. Article 2(4) confines the legitimate use of force to self-defense or with the authority of the Security Council, and Article 2(7) confirms that the domestic jurisdiction of states is to be respected. The norm of sovereignty implies that the units making up the international system are independent states who recognize each other's rights to manage domestic affairs without outside interference. This norm is conventionally understood as the legacy of the Westphalian system, originated from continental Europe. Colonialism, together with the spread of global capitalism, initiated a new phase in human history. Since then the international society has steadfastly incorporated traditionally alien territories, like Japan, China, and many African countries. Decolonization created over 100 new states, which eventually led to the first truly global international society that the world had ever known. IR theories, especially the Realist school, are prone to discuss the "international system" as if it was a unitary and homogeneous entity consisting of undifferentiated sovereigns. Nevertheless, international society is an historical not a theoretical construct, whose constitution needs to be examined in finer detail.

Along this line, K. J. Holsti's investigation of the contemporary international system offers a better account. He divides the system into two connected parts, distinct in etiologies and profiles of their conflicts. The first is a "mature" system that is the

progeny of the European state system from seventeenth through twentieth centuries. The players are old states, whose identity is well established and for whom the state consolidation and national integration was achieved by 1919 or shortly thereafter. In these societies, external threats are generally more significant than internal ones. The other system is more troubled. It contains a new type of sovereign state which is independent in law but insubstantial in reality and materially dependent on other states for its welfare. These players generally have no long history of statehood, no well-defined borders, no strong sense of national belonging, and no effective state authorities in the modern sense. Though trying hard to be something akin to a modern state, most of them have not and can not in the true sense meet the traditional legal criteria of sovereignty and nationhood. The criteria are articulated in the Montevideo Convention on Rights and Duties of States as possessing a defined territory, a permanent population, a government and the capacity to conduct international relations.⁴⁹ While they satisfy the first two, as dependent states, they surely come up weak on the third and the fourth. Their international status as states was the price the international community paid to eradicate imperialism and colonialism.⁵⁰ In the first system, absolute sovereignty of the Westphalian variety is regarded as old-fashion in a rapidly globalized world. This attitude has given rise to transnationalism, exemplified by the development of the European Union. But in apparent contrast, the players of the second system are much more insistent on traditional principles of sovereign non-intervention, though they may be, in Jackson's term, "quasi-states."⁵¹

In his seminal book *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*, Stephen Krasner identifies four types of state sovereignty. Domestic sovereignty refers to the authority of the state within the country itself. The state may be more or less capable and authoritative in its relations with society. Interdependence sovereignty refers to the ability of state authorities to control trans-border flows of goods, capital, people, and so forth. International legal sovereignty refers to the status of a state under international law. It concerns whether a state is recognized as a sovereign that can legitimately represent its people to participate in the international system and

⁴⁹ See Article 1 of the Montevideo Convention, full-text available on <http://www.taiwandocuments.org/montevideo01.htm>, accessed August 15, 2011.

⁵⁰ K. J. Holsti, *Peace and War: Armed Conflicts and International Order, 1648-1989* (Cambridge: New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 283-284.

⁵¹ See Jackson, 1990.

otherwise make international agreements and treaties. Finally, Westphalian sovereignty refers to exclusion of external actors in the *de facto* operation of the domestic political system. States that are subject to manipulation by outsiders, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or a regional great power, may be legally sovereign but lack Westphalian state capacity.⁵² As Holsti has noted, almost every type of sovereignty is problematic in new states with the exception of the international legal status. In this sense, what the new states have obtained is no more than putative, or negative, sovereignty. Establishing negative sovereignty across the board created an artificial institutional leveling of a world which in actual fact was and is anything but level.⁵³

Jackson points out there are two divergent views about how best to accommodate the diversity of the world by institutional means. The first perspective insists that societal and cultural differences among nations and peoples should be recognized and reflected in specially adapted rules and institution. Thereby, only one institution or rule for all cases is *prima facie* not only irrational but also inequitable. The second view holds that sovereign statehood is the best way of guaranteeing the national freedom that is necessary to secure and protect the diverse cultures and societies of the world.⁵⁴ The designers of the post-war international order, fully aware of the historic fragmentation of the world system, adopted a more synthetic view in this respect. Given the huge gap between the two distinct systems – one post-Westphalian and one pre-Westphalian, any international effort to bridge them must involve a host of reconciliations between nationalism, particularism, and liberalism. Yet inevitably there are contradictions. It is reasonable to wonder whether a workable international system can be created to both reflect liberal values and effectively address uneven development among states while retaining consistency throughout.

Nationalism resembles the idea of the ownership of asset.⁵⁵ More than that, it is primarily about collective rather than individual ownership. The United States is owned by Americans, Japan by Japanese, Vietnam by Vietnamese, and so forth. This is exemplified by the notion of Permanent Sovereignty over Natural Resources

⁵² Stephen D. Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999).

⁵³ Jackson, 1990, p. 200.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Breton, 1995, p. 112.

(PSNR) pressed by the developing countries. To a large extent, the rapid growth of the industrial economy depended on a steady supply of cheap energy and raw materials.⁵⁶ Given chances are slim for most underdeveloped countries to secure scarce resources through free economic competition, a geographical deal based on sovereignty turns to be the most available solution. Especially on the side of the weak, bickers over geographical ownership of natural resources represent one of their fundamental concerns about *collective* rights to development. The concept of PSNR entered the international legal lexicon in 1950s. After more than ten years of consideration, General Assembly Resolution 1803 (XVII) of 1962 declared that both people and nations have a right to exercise sovereignty over natural resources, representing a breakthrough in legally acknowledging PSNR – though leading developed nations did not support the resolution.⁵⁷ A number of battles were waged over PSNR in the 1960s and 1970s, but the controversy seemed to have subsided.⁵⁸ It is safe today to assert that the notion of PSNR has evolved from a political claim to an accepted principle of international law.⁵⁹ A UN General Assembly resolution formally refers to the proposition that “the right of peoples freely to use and exploit their natural wealth and resources is inherent in their sovereignty.”⁶⁰ At the other end of the spectrum, the liberal principles endorsed on the international level are all concerned with the idea of human rights, which suggests the fundamental concern of world affairs be with the individual, giving the individual a status he or she lacked in traditional international law.⁶¹ The divergent views on the basic units of the international society – nation-state or individual – have profound implications on the political choices of states. If the individual well-being substantially depended on the collective bargaining of the national entity as a whole, then there would be no clear-cut boundary between sovereign rights and individual rights. Accordingly, the pursuit of the social ideal that “people matter and matter equally” should be confined within the framework of sovereign state while not extending beyond it. To the contrary, if

⁵⁶Mayall, 1990, pp.75, 103.

⁵⁷ See G. A. Res. 1803 (XVII), U.N. Doc. A/5217 (December 14, 1962). On the subject of PSNR, see Karol N. Gess, “Permanent Sovereignty Over Natural Resources: An Analytical Review of the United Nations Declaration and Its Genesis,” *International & Comparative Law Quarterly* 13, No. 2 (April 1964), pp. 398-449; Lorne S. Clark, “International Law and Natural Resources,” *Syracuse Journal of International Law & Commerce* 4, Iss. 2 (Winter 1977), pp. 377, 380.

⁵⁸ Ruth Gordon, “Racing U.S. Foreign Policy,” *National Black Law Journal* 17, Iss. 1 (2003), p.3.

⁵⁹ Emecka Duruigbo, “Permanent Sovereignty and Peoples’ Ownership of Natural Resources in International Law,” *George Washington International Law Review* 38, Iss. 1 (2006), p. 39.

⁶⁰ Karol N. Gess, “Permanent Sovereignty Over Natural Resources: An Analytical Review of the United Nations Declaration and Its Genesis,” *International & Comparative Law Quarterly* 13, No. 2 (April 1964), p. 411.

⁶¹Mayall, 1990, p. 148.

the fundamental unit of the international community were deemed to be individual person, then it would necessitate a fiscal system of the world to address global inequality at the individual level. The two antithetical perspectives could only be pragmatically reconciled under one condition - to accord the interest of state with the interest of people, which is the very logic behind the idea of self-determination. However, political practices, especially in non-democratic countries, fall far short of this ideal state. The norm of sovereignty, and the international preoccupation with stable political map, creates a favorable environment for governments. Due to the principle of non-intervention, suppressive regimes are generally tolerated and seldom held accountable for their criminal actions, though the emerging human rights regime increasingly challenges such claims of sovereign exclusivity.⁶² It is ubiquitous in the decolonized world that states amass power at the expense of social welfare or exploit the people for the narrow advantage of the ruling class.

As the last section has discussed in great detail, the principle of self-determination lost important liberal elements - the concern for individual freedom - in the spread to the Third World. Endowing sovereignty to weak countries irrespective of the capacity for self-government and the regime type has continuously produced quasi-states, which do even more evil than their colonizers. They either fall prey to factionalism, tribalism, and racism, or monopolize too much power and intentionally suffocate the civil society. The example of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda is a chilling reminder of what can happen. Congo, immediately after winning its independence, fell into anarchy in 1960. Militias disintegrated into armed gangs of looters. Military commanders set up in business on their own account using army units for their own enrichment. The experience of Bosnia-Herzegovina is symptomatic of the collapse of independent and effective state authority: where the police force was under Serb control, the Serbs were safe; where it was under Croatian control, the Croats were safe; and where it was under the control of both, neither group was safe. One significant consequence of this state of affairs is that a concern for human universals looks more and more like a moral necessity. Since 1990s the legitimation of state sovereignty is increasingly challenged by the idea of humanitarian intervention. The 2005 World Summit Outcome adopted the notion of the "responsibility to protect,"

⁶² Michael C. Davis, "International Intervention in an Age of Crisis and Terror: U.N. Reform and Regional Practice," *Tulane Journal of International and Comparative Law* 15, No. 1 (Winter 2006), pp. 1-3.

which promoted the development of appropriate principle for humanitarian intervention.⁶³ This has led to a subtle but profound change in the discourse concerning legitimacy of state conduct and the application of the sovereign non-intervention principle.

In fact, the norms of the Westphalia system have always made some provision for intervention.⁶⁴ In this sense, sovereignty is at best an “organized hypocrisy,” the concept of which is made known to IR scholars through Krasner’s 1999 book. Though intervention is a recurrent theme of world affairs, the political justifications of it vary considerably in different phases of modern history. The Cold War was a rivalry over ideology in the manner of *realpolitik*. Both the U.S and the Soviet Union unabashedly used their military power to dictate domestic political practices in Cuba, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Poland, Romania, East Germany, Bulgaria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and so on. However, neither side had ever even insinuated that these interventions were conducted on humanitarian grounds. The end of the cold war has seen a reaction against this old-fashioned *realpolitik* and against noninterference in the domestic affairs of other states, and for the promotion of liberal political and economic ideals internationally.⁶⁵ The primary institutions of international society are evolving, changing from the Westphalian ones of sovereignty, non-interference, balance of power, etc. to the post-Westphalian ones of human rights, democracy, and green peace.⁶⁶ The recent action of the UN force in expelling Gaddafi for what he did to Libyan people, not anyone outside the country, exemplifies this change.

However, the argument of humanitarian intervention contains two basic pitfalls. First, the underlying objectives of humanitarian intervention are supposed to be impeccably liberal – to promote individual well-being globally. Liberalism is prone to reduce political problems to moral ones. Consequently, seeking for legitimacy has come to embody a significant force in world politics.⁶⁷ As William Connolly astutely

⁶³ 2005 World summit Outcome, G.A. Res. 60/1, U.N. Doc. A/RES/60/1 (Oct. 24, 2005). For an excellent discussion of the development of the normative commitment to “responsibility to protect”, see Davis, 2006, pp. 1-39.

⁶⁴ Brown, 2002, p. 161.

⁶⁵ Barkin and Cronin, 1994, p. 124.

⁶⁶ Barry Buzan, “China in International Society: Is ‘Peaceful Rise’ Possible?” *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 3, No. 1 (2010), pp. 17-18.

⁶⁷ Brown, 2002, p. 184.

illuminates, there are two principles of liberalism. The first is liberty and the second is practicality. The problem of liberal political thinking is that it has always attempted to prioritize both, but it proves unattainable.⁶⁸ If humanitarian intervention is a universal commitment, then it ought to be applied equally to every state “where a government or effective authority actively exterminates its populace, or where it denies to it that which is necessary for its survival, or where it forcibly displaces it.”⁶⁹ However, we see in its operationalization the reference to specific historical contexts or interests is actually unavoidable. The totalitarian regime of North Korea has not only evidently oppressed its people for decades but also created pressing security threats to neighboring countries by producing WMD. There might be no other countries in the world needing a humanitarian intervention as urgently as North Korea. However, there is to date no signs indicating any move in this direction. Because there are no objective standards to determine where to intervene and how soon the intervention should be enforced after the occurrence of human rights violation, it is unavoidable to involve self-interest in the collective decision-making. Both the United States and the former Soviet Union had not hesitated to equate their national interests with some universal imperative when it suited them to do so.⁷⁰ As Davis notes, the U.N.-based efforts to address humanitarian crises and related developmental concerns have been continuously hindered by the predominance of superpowers. “While the U.N. Charter provides a formal security regime requiring Security Council approval for armed peacekeeping and peace-enforcement missions, the allowance of veto power to the five permanent members of the Security Council often renders the U.N Charter paradigm unresponsive to humanitarian crises.”⁷¹ The second pitfall concerns the outcome of intervention. To what extent intervention for either humanitarian or nation-building aim can substitute effective sovereignty in failed states? In this regard, both neoconservatives and liberal interventionists consistently over-estimate how easy it would be to fix problems of troubled states. The mission of intervention usually cost a lot more than initially expected.⁷² The war-scarred landscape of Kosovo may question whether military intervention for

⁶⁸ See William Connolly, *Politics and Ambiguity* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1987).

⁶⁹ Marc Weller, “Armed Samaritans,” *Counsel* (August 1999), pp. 20-22.

⁷⁰ Mayall, 1990, p. 146.

⁷¹ Davis, 2006, pp. 12-13.

⁷² Stephen M. Walt, “What Intervention in Libya Tells us about the Neocon-Liberal Alliance,” *Foreign Policy*, March 21, 2011.

http://walt.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/03/21/what_intervention_in_libya_tells_us_about_the_neocon_liberal_alliance, accessed March 21, 2011.

humanitarian purposes is a destructive or constructive force on a long view. The protracted wars in both Afghanistan and Iraq actually prolong the normalization of the two countries. Where Afghans had not been able to build a modern state, outsiders stand no chance. Friedrich List, German nationalist economist, argues that building a “universal republic” can only be realized if a large number of nationalities attain as nearly as possible the same degree of civilization, industry, political cultivation, and power.⁷³ On his account, the function of sovereignty, especially that of the domestic type, is fundamental and irreplaceable. Early industrialization means population explosion, rapid urbanization, high social mobility, etc. All problems caused by drastic social transformation demands local solutions which cannot be properly and effectively provided without a strong state. For the same reasons, Fukuyama argues that state-building is now more than ever crucial for reconstructing the world order.⁷⁴

However, the new states face a very difficult position because their sovereign status was not gained on conditions favorable to development and independence in the real sense. I hold cultural diversity as an example. For most new states, it is a big liability rather than an asset as some multiculturalists would like to believe. William Easterly and Ross Levine, based on large-N cases from Sub-Saharan Africa, confirm African states’ ethnic fragmentation explains a significant part of their underdevelopment. High ethnic diversity is closely associated with low schooling, underdeveloped financial systems, distorted foreign exchange markets, and insufficient infrastructure not to mention a weakened ethnic-based democracy.⁷⁵ Weak governance of the new states substantially changed the sense of “independence” into a synonym for “dependence.” In Seers’ view, dependence itself hinders development. Independence is not merely one of the aims of development but also one of the means.⁷⁶ Dependent status “vastly increases the likelihood that someone else in the international system will seek to intervene in their affairs against their wishes to forcibly fix the

⁷³ Friedrich List, “Nationality and Economy,” in Hans Kohn, *Nationalism: Its Meaning and History* (Princeton, N.J.: Van Nostrand, 1965), pp. 131-32.

⁷⁴ See Fukuyama, 2004

⁷⁵ William Easterly and Ross Levine, “Africa’s Growth Tragedy: Policies and Ethnic Divisions,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 112, No. 4 (November 1997), pp. 1203-50. On the negative relationship between ethnic diversity and social development, see also Alberto Alesina, Arnaud Devleeschauwer, William Easterly, Sergio Kurlat, and Romain Wacziarg, “Fractionalization,” *Journal of Economic Growth*, 8 (2003), pp. 155-94.

⁷⁶ Dudley Seers, “The Meaning of Development,” in Norman Thomas Uphoff and Warren Frederick Hchman, *The Political Economy of Development: Theoretical and Empirical Contributions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), p. 128.

problem.”⁷⁷ Among the great powers, the United States is perhaps the most active and persistent nation-builder. Of the more than 200 cases of the use of force by the United States since 1900, 17 cases may be considered attempts at nation-building.⁷⁸ The rulers of weaker states would have preferred some alternative arrangement but they could not secure their desired preferences with regard to their own domestic political structures without being threatened with nonexistence or bearing the costs of sanctions.⁷⁹

It seems reasonable to question whether weakened sovereignty, especially the Westphalian type, is necessarily bad for the state. As Carr cogently argues, although the nineteenth-century world witnessed the birth of major European nation-states as well as their rise to power, it is illusory to think that they had consequently gained full economic sovereignty. The authority of the dynamic international market was actually silently wielded by a singly highly centralized autocracy – Britain. More to the point, there was generally no resentment of what would nowadays be regarded as infringements of national sovereignty. Plausibly it suggests that sovereignty has never been a *sine qua non* for, at least, economic prosperity. In a similar vein, Richard Falk distinguishes the well-being of governments from that for peoples or countries. According to Falk’s reasoning, a decline of sovereignty need not entail a corresponding loss for peoples.⁸⁰ Krasner contends that international supervision and tutelage is beneficial for the populations of the states who are incapable of independently making viable economic policies. All these arguments are true but only theoretically. Sovereignty cannot be simply equated with a promise of good material life. It is closely associated with the need of recognition – the desire to be thought well of by others. Jackson asks a pointed question: “Having experienced the bitter harvest of independence would some now choose a reduced status if it promised improved living conditions through greater international involvement and supervision?”⁸¹ Economic prosperity is crucial for any society, but does not always take precedence over dignity, which is valuable not merely for the social elite but also for the ordinary people. Intense international competition has shaped the

⁷⁷Fukuyama, 2004, p. 96.

⁷⁸ Data cited from Pei Minxin and Sara Kasper, “Lessons from the Past: The American Record on Nation-Building,” Carnegie Policy Brief no. 24, 2003.

⁷⁹ Stephen D. Krasner, “Compromising Westphalia,” *International Security* 20, No. 3 (Winter, 1995-1996), pp. 115-151; Krasner, 1999, p. 224.

⁸⁰Jackson, 1990, p. 176.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, p. 200.

dynamic and uneven course of global capitalism. In such a predatory system, "the value of sovereignty to Third World governments ... is extremely high because it is virtually the only source of their status and privileges."⁸² To a considerable extent it accounts for the interesting phenomenon observed by Brown – though the Westphalian model has indeed been inappropriate for many of the new states, they have adopted the norms of sovereignty with great enthusiasm.⁸³

3.3 What Makes a Nation-State?

The preceding parts provide three arguments, on which the analysis of this section is based. First, assimilation, in the sense of making similar and treating similar, is both a condition and an outcome of modernization. Second, national boundaries are, to a large extent, arbitrary. Third, in many nationalism cases, state predates nation rather than the reverse. In this section, I return to the basic question raised in the introduction chapter: what makes a nation? To explore this question sheds light on understanding so "tantalizingly ambiguous" a concept as nationalism.⁸⁴ Can any random division of the human race be regarded as a nation? The answer is definitely no. If so, can we discern authentic nationhood by reference to objective criteria or through rational argument? To answer the second question presents more difficulty. The growing literature on both the objectivist and subjectivist views of nationalism has offered refined analysis of what makes a nation. Objectivism claims an "objective" basis for national identity while subjectivism suggests national identity should be defined in terms of a sense of belonging to a political community. The idea of "natural" frontiers has always been attractive to nationalist now and in the past. To reclaim the natural or historical (since it has lasted for a considerably long time, it can be regarded as natural) boundaries of a nation is a recurrent theme of irredentist nationalism in particular. However, it is quite obvious that while some frontiers – for example, mountain ranges, deserts, lakes, the sea surrounding islands and so on – may seem more plausible than others, particularly if they have persisted for a long time, none is natural: they are political and cultural, usually established by conquest

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 176.

⁸³ Brown, 2002, p. 188.

⁸⁴ Snyder, 1968, p. 54.

and maintained by occupation.⁸⁵ As discussed at length in the preceding sections, national boundaries on today's political map are, to a very large extent, the outcome of political contingencies and subject to continual reshaping. Their stability mainly derives from conventionality rather than naturalness. As Snyder provides, language, religion, and territory are all important factors in the nation, but none of them is the exclusive determinant of the nation's existence.⁸⁶ The role of language in national identity formation has long attracted more attention of scholars than other factors have. Language is indeed the most important component in the existence of a nationality. But the lack of fit between language and state is also manifest. Belgium has three official language districts, in which Dutch, French, and German are spoken respectively together with a number of minority languages and dialects. Multiple official languages have not abated the authenticity of Belgium as a nation with distinct culture and history. Today approximately 3000-6000 languages are spoken by human societies. In contrast there are only less than two hundred members of the UN. According to Frederick Hertz, "The identification of a nation with a language group is untenable. It conflicts with both the legal and sociological concept of a nation. The groups constituted by sentiment, citizenship and language very often do not coincide but overlap. In many cases, people of different tongue are citizens of the same state, and sometimes also regard one another as members of the same nation. On the other hand, many different nations in both senses speak the same language."⁸⁷ Along the subjective line, Craig J. Calhoun, in the treatment of Eritrean independence, argues that, "it is ... not the antiquity of Eritrean nationalism that mattered in mobilizing people against Ethiopian rule, for example, but the felt reality of Eritreanness."⁸⁸ Haas, echoing Renan's famous remark about "daily plebiscite", contends that people who chose to identify with a given unit are moved by incentives and disincentives.⁸⁹ No natural virtues necessarily command people's loyalty. All in all, it is a synthetic stance that has gained ground these days.

In an anthropological spirit, Anderson argues that, "In fact, all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact... are imagined... The nation is

⁸⁵ Mayall, 2000, p. 80.

⁸⁶ Snyder, 1968, p. 54.

⁸⁷ Frederick Hertz, *Nationality in History and Politics*, 3rd ed. (London, : Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951), pp. 95-96.

⁸⁸ Calhoun, 1997, p. 34.

⁸⁹ Haas, 1986, p. 713.

imagined as limited because even the largest of them... has finite, if elastic boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. No nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind."⁹⁰ In the same vein, Functionalists, like Eisenstadt and Geertz, maintains that all traditions are "created"; none are truly primordial.⁹¹ However, it is also true that not all attempts to imagine a nation have succeeded. The history of modern nationalism vividly shows how nations are built, sometimes with great difficulty, on an earlier ethnic and cultural substratum. In a large-N analysis that identifies all instances of voluntary political unification between 1816 and 2001, Ryan D. Griffiths finds that all unifying dyads have shared a common language.⁹² It implies that language heterogeneity is a major obstacle for political unification. Ethnic segregation is another ominous phenomenon, which spells doom for the disintegration of many multiethnic nations. In a country like Hungary, the population of which is composed of Magyars, Slovacks, Croats, Serbs, Roumans, and Germans, so mixed up as to be incapable of geographically differentiated, it is hard for any ethnic group to mobilize a secessionist movement with a territorial claim. The Southern Sudan, which gained its independence on July 1, 2011 through decades of bitter struggles and finally a referendum, tell the same story from the opposite side.

It is commonly observed that nations do not merely uncover evidences of their antiquity as an independent people but actively invent a tradition to legitimate demands for the present-day goal of independence, or the achievement of economic equality.⁹³ In order to establish the state of Israel, Jews revive Hebrew. The painstaking process was initiated in the late 19th century by the efforts of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda. Nowadays Hebrew is the most widely spoken language in Israel. To prevent a nation from disintegration relies on constant human efforts to both do and undo things. The latter is of more significance than the former. As Renan wittedly points out, in order to share a common future people "must also have forgotten many things. Every French citizen must have forgotten the night of St. Bartholomew and the massacres in the 13th century in the South."⁹⁴ Anyone who reads the history of the Culture Revolution in China would be impressed, if not mystified, by the

⁹⁰ Anderson, 1983, pp.15-16.

⁹¹ See Eisenstadt, 1966, 1973; and Geertz, 1963.

⁹² See Ryan D. Griffiths, "Security Threats, Linguistic Homogeneity, and the Necessary Conditions for Political Unification," *Nations & Nationalism* 16, No. 1 (January 2010), pp. 169-188.

⁹³ Hechter, 1975, pp. 38-39.

⁹⁴ Renan is quoted in Kohn, 1965.

capability of people to forget and forgive – the perpetrators and the victims live in the same village or neighborhood for decades while avoiding even the modest revenge, and their children go to the same elementary school and frequently sleep over at each other's place.

Considering the political reality that a great number of states are essentially multiethnic, it is meaningless to distinguish authentic nations from false ones. However, there are indeed “some national identities ... proved more persuasive than others and more capable of becoming a part of citizens' immediate basis for action and their unquestioned (or hard to question) transmission of culture.”⁹⁵ Gellner once sought to differentiate between two generic agents or catalysts of group formation and maintenance: will, voluntary adherence and identification, loyalty, solidarity, on the one hand; and fear, coercion, compulsion, on the other. He maintained that most persisting groups base their solidarity on a mixture of incentives from both categories.⁹⁶ Neither voluntary incentives nor coercive means on their own are adequate for explaining the formation of nations. Scott describes successful programs of development as often idiosyncratic, depending on the ability to use local knowledge to create local solutions.⁹⁷ The same is applicable to nation-building. However, the post-war history has indeed witnessed the emergence of a myriad of new nations along artificial state boundaries. By scrutinizing “provincial nationalisms” of the Habsburg Empire, Michael Mann observes that few nations successfully emerged on the basis merely of ethnicity. Otherwise, whether there was systematic and effective administration over a political unit offers a much better predictor.⁹⁸ This piece of historical evidence casts lights on the common experience of most decolonized countries. The prowess of state activities in terms of shaping a nation out of fragmented social groups is manifestly demonstrated in both old and new nationalisms. As succinctly expressed by Geertz, “The nationalists would make the state, and the state would make the nation.”⁹⁹ Back to the central question – “what makes a nation?” it would be safe to conclude that it is successful nation-building, sometimes without such goal in mind, that establishes a nation where it is

⁹⁵ Calhoun, 1997, p. 34.

⁹⁶ Gellner, 1983, p. 53.

⁹⁷ See Scott, 1998.

⁹⁸ Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, Vol. II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 238-247.

⁹⁹ Geertz, 1973, p. 240.

not in place yet.

The role of human manipulation in the national formation should not be underestimated. The logic of nation-building inexorably favors the use of inclusive strategies.¹⁰⁰ Brubaker warns that it is inappropriate to “overhastily consign assimilation to the dustbin of history.”¹⁰¹ As mentioned in preceding sections, the contemporary discourse on nationalism is often oblivious of the chronic assimilation process that the established nations had been through centuries ago. France, the prototype of a nation, has indeed a long history of assimilation, transforming peasants – and immigrants – into Frenchmen, in what Gérard Noiriel has called *le creuset français*, the French melting pot.¹⁰² In this respect, there is no essential difference between Holsti’s two systems. By comparison, political attitudes towards the legitimacy of various types of inclusive strategies have undergone fundamental change over the last centuries. David Laitin provides an insightful account of how views regarding inclusive policies have changed substantially in the last two centuries:

It is said that in Spain, during the Inquisition, gypsies who were found guilty of speaking their own language had their tongues cut out. With policies of this sort, it is not difficult to understand why it was possible, a few centuries later, to legislate Castil-Haile Selassie of Ethiopia pressed for policies promoting Amharic, infinitely more benign than those of the Inquisition. Speakers of Tigrey, Oromo, and Somali claimed that their groups were being oppressed, and the international community was outraged.¹⁰³

As discussed in the section concerning categorization, forced assimilation policies rarely work in the history of modern nationalism. Such policies and programs nowadays have come to be seen as morally and politically repugnant. The moral opposition to forced assimilation is based on a simple fact – national belonging is non-voluntary in both essential and technical sense. People’s membership in a cultural community is primarily determined by birth and early nurture, though there

¹⁰⁰ Hechter, 2000, p. 63.

¹⁰¹ Brubaker, 2004, p. 118.

¹⁰² Gérard Noiriel, *Le creuset français: Histoire de l’immigration* (Paris: Seuil, 1988); and Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press).

¹⁰³ Laitin, 1992, p. xi.

is always exit to another culture. Avishai Margalit and Joseph Raz express the common view when they write about belonging to a nation: "Qualification for membership is usually determined by non-voluntary criteria. One cannot choose to belong. One belongs because of who one is."¹⁰⁴ It is often pointed out that one's mother tongue is the most important depository of concepts, knowledge, social and cultural significance. But which language to speak is a given other than a choice. Brubaker suggests that an alternative to forced assimilation be accommodation in the light of multiculturalism.¹⁰⁵

However, it is misleading, if not harmful, to think the spread of civil spirits and multiculturalism has done away with assimilation in nationalist politics. Brubaker observes that, although the shift from assimilation to multiculturalism is evident, there is also an incipient shift in the opposite direction. More to the point, the operationalization of multiculturalism in a deeply divided society is heavily conditioned. It requires a host of prerequisites, including "shared commitments to non-violent principle on each party, liberalist elites, manageable competition among ethnic groups over scarce resources, effective international mediation, etc."¹⁰⁶ These are exactly what new states do not have in their political inheritance. Worse still, there are many other competing loyalties based on primordial attachments which continuously tend to divide the population in question. Haas contends that social co-optation is proved easier when the target population is not divided by obvious cleavages, especially ethnic cleavages. To the contrary, the attempt to rationalize a society is doomed when "social mobilization is compressed in to a single generation and when there is neither a strong state nor a pervasive nationalist sentiment, as in most of Africa."¹⁰⁷ For the double-weak countries, the most important power source of states lies in the world system in which they are positioned and shaped. They are allowed to legitimately administrate and homogenize peoples contingently enclosed within the state borders, which are seldom congruent with cultural boundaries, merely because they are internationally recognized as sovereigns. Since modernization requires a centrally sustained high culture pervading the entire population, modern demarcation activities between states are of much greater

¹⁰⁴ Avishai Margalit and Joseph Raz, "National Self-Determination." *The Journal of Philosophy* 87, No. 9 (September 1990), p. 447.

¹⁰⁵ Brubaker, 2004, p. 119.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

¹⁰⁷ Haas, 1986, p. 739.

significance than that in the past. Central to socialization theory is the thesis that educational institutions transmit norms, values, and models of behavior deemed to be appropriate in a given society. On this account, state boundaries are no longer solely a legal confirmation of the outcome of power rivalries. Where these lines are eventually drawn decide the fate of the populations in question whose life would be affected in a comprehensive manner. Once state boundaries are stabilized and underwritten by international or regional big powers, the homogenization of an originally divided society becomes a matter of time.

To conclude, “true” nations are nations with legitimate states. Legitimate states, conversely, create “true” nations over time. That is the very logic of modern nation-state politics and also the reason why de-sinicization movements in Taiwan more deeply concern the irredentists in the mainland than its military buildup.

3.4 Nationalism is Cause or Effect?

These two chapters have examined the relationship between nationalism and two macro factors: modernization and the international system. In relation with modernity, nationalism is Janus-faced: it is used to advocate as well as to obstruct modernity.¹⁰⁸ Nationalism so effectively performs the functions of social mobilization, political coordination and ideological legitimation that the quest for modernity cannot be achieved without it. Under the pressure of politically, economically, and culturally modernizing the backward social community, nationalism strives to actively assimilate the in-group. In face of the uneven advance of modernization, nevertheless, it seeks to resist the assimilation by the out-group and gains momentum in constant intergroup comparison. According to nationalist beliefs, all peoples have to freely decide their own way of participating in modernity or not to participate at all. In this sense, nationalism guides human societies to build diverse political and economic institutions in order to address a wide range of difficulties and challenges brought about by modernization. Nationalism is not an irrational force erupting in history, though not all roles it plays are necessarily

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 717

positive. National borders are better understood as an international institution embracing both progressive and conservative elements. They function to protect latecomers of modernity from being dominated by strong powers or belligerent neighbors. By the same token, they restrict poor population from migrating to rich lands. In political practice the forms of nationalism vary vastly, not all of which are liberal. In some occasions, it fosters or reinforces conservatism, authoritarianism, xenophobia, and primordial hatred. In Tom Nairn's words, "all nationalism is both healthy and morbid."¹⁰⁹

Ronald Findlay divides the problem of nationalism in the world today into three categories: (1) the fission of advanced capitalist states like Northern Ireland in Great Britain; (2) the break-up of multiethnic countries like the former Yugoslavia; (3) ethnic tensions and clashes in developing countries such as Sri Lanka.¹¹⁰ What Findlay describes is one side of the coin. On the other side stands nation-building nationalism aiming at homogenizing the divided population of a state. Ethnic heterogeneity provides a powerful incentive to design and develop state institutions. For political elites there seems to be no alternative to continuously homogenizing a society and co-opting the ethnic minorities. In the end, nation will fit state. By virtue of the institutional traits of the international system, failing to do so will put at risk the state. Even established industrialized states are not immune to the danger of disintegration. It is this nation-building/state-building nationalism that both consolidates the overall arrangements of the sovereign state system and destabilizes some parts of it. Haas once said: "[t]he very international system today guarantees and legitimates nations. External and internal factors reinforce each other, ensuring that nationalism remains alive and well."¹¹¹ More correctly, the very international system today simultaneously guarantees states (by freezing the political map and ensuring the survival of conditionally viable states) and legitimates nations (by morally upholding the principle of self-determination of peoples). Only under such institutional condition, Tilly's verdict of the nationalism politics finds validity. He diagnoses that the lack of temporal and spatial fit between state and nation is one of the main causes of many of today's national conflicts.¹¹² Only when nations are

¹⁰⁹ Nairn, 1977, p. 347

¹¹⁰ Findlay, 1995, p. 150.

¹¹¹ Haas, 1986, p. 717.

¹¹² Introduction of Gabriel Ardant and Charles Tilly, *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*

widely acclaimed as legitimate bases for the demarcation of autonomous political units, the incongruence between nation and state comes to be a problem. More importantly, given the inherent ambiguity of the concept of nation, the international society can offer no better than *ad hoc* solutions to secessionist and irredentist conflicts. The UN Charter recognizes the concept of self-determination as a “principle” and not as a “right,” which partially reflects the effort to attenuate the dilemma. However, adopting self-determination merely as a matter of principle is enough to give impetus as well as political justification to nationalist forces with increasing strength. By throwing multiethnic countries into a state of potential enmity, it could “ignite domestic and regional confrontations in cases where conflicts of ... interests do not necessarily exist.”¹¹³ In addition to the principle of self-determination, improved viability of the state further motivates ethnic groups to favor secession as the only acceptable solution to national contests. The classic value of the state lies in its ability to provide protection against external threats and allow a prosperous life for its people. However, the functional justification of the existence of the state has been replaced by the moral justification in terms of state legitimacy. A state deserves to be upheld because it belongs to a people who deserve to have such a state. As Hobsbawm trenchantly points out, separatist nationalisms have only been enabled by a “complete transformation of the concept of state viability.”¹¹⁴

Nationalism is, as many have observed, the major cause of domestic and regional confrontations. But nationalism does not take place in a vacuum. Its emergence and prominence is the product of modernization as well as the international system. These external and internal factors reinforce each other, ensuring that nationalism remains “alive and well.”¹¹⁵ As long as the fundamental structure of opportunities and motivations persists, the vigor of nationalism could be expected.

(Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975).

¹¹³ Barkin and Cronin, 1994, p. 128.

¹¹⁴ Hobsbawm, 1977, p. 5

¹¹⁵ Haas, 1986, p. 717.

IV Chinese Nationalism: Three Concerns

Patriotism is easy to understand. ... It means looking out for yourself by looking out for your country.

----- Calvin Coolidge

In the last two chapters I argue nationalism is an integral element within modernization and the post-war international order. The recent upsurge of Chinese nationalism is alarming for the international society. I suppose it is obvious why. But the rise of Chinese nationalism is neither unique nor surprising in historical perspective. As the literature review in the introduction chapter has indicated, there are disproportionately more scholarly attempts to *explain* what cause Chinese nationalism than those to *understand* what Chinese nationalism is. In my opinion, it is impossible to probe deeply the causal connections between Chinese nationalism and related variables without a good grasp of the substantive content of nationalism. Beneath the bewildering and sometimes ambivalent expressions of nationalist sentiments lie stable and persisting appeals, concerns and commitments, which are solidly grounded in underlying social structures. More importantly, the substance of nationalism in any political and cultural context must be established, always subject to contestation, and not simply assumed or inferred from “normal” cases. While there may be law-like generalizations of what nationalism means, such generalization do not fully explain what is at play in any national political context. It is to the political and economic conditions of a society that we must look to explore the functions of the particular nationalism in question.

To perform the task of filling the void, in this chapter, I deconstruct nationalism into three elements and discuss comparatively to what extent it is trying to address common problems faced by new states. My purpose is not to dismiss what we already know about the phenomenon of Chinese nationalism. On the contrary, the present effort is built on the efforts of former contributors to the topic. To situate the discussion of Chinese nationalism into a broad international and domestic background will avoid one of the major pitfalls, as noted by Carlson, that

“nationalism in China has largely been considered in isolation from the emergence of nationalism in other states.”¹

4.1 Statism: Nation-state or State-Nation

In 1936, Lin Yutang, the most influential social commentator of his time, provided a thoughtful account of Chinese society in *My Country and My People*. He wrote:

The family system stands midway between extreme individualism and the new sense of social consciousness which, in the West, includes the whole society. Chinese society is cut up into little family units, inside which exists the greatest communistic co-operation, but between the units no real bond of unity exists, except the state. ... Some form of nationalism is developing, but no one need be alarmed. The “yellow peril” can come from Japan but not from China. Deep down in our instincts we want to die for our family, but we do not want to die for our state. None of us ever want to die for the world.²

In the following seven decades, China has undergone great changes in almost all respects: wars and revolutions, famines and economic miracles. No traditional family system stands between the individual and the state any more. Individual, or the small-sized nuclear family, has replaced the old family system, becoming the basic unit of the society. What remains is the situation that no real bond of unity exists between the units, except the state. However, today’s Chinese state is far more capable, and sometimes even aggressive, than the old one. It is no longer something remote, or a mysterious emperor sitting in the Forbidden City. The state is ubiquitous in the life of every individual. As a consequence, in comparison with 1930s, Chinese nationalism has been well developed. It glues the society with the state. To some extent, in China nationalism is not merely an abstract political ideology or some tumultuous movements. It is how the ordinary people live their life, though this may be totally unconscious for many of them. The most prominent yet most ignored belief of Chinese nationalism is that a strong state is the prerequisite of national

¹ Carlson, 2009, p. 24.

² Lin Yutang. *My Country and My People* (London: William Heinemann, 1936), p. 176.

prosperity as well as individual well-being. The lack of a powerful state has been considered as the major cause of China's decline from the late Qin Dynasty onward. For the same reason, to build a strong state has been the dream of Chinese elites of several generations since Liang Qichao and Sun Yat-sen.

Judging by the degree of centralization and bureaucratization, China's Statism has historically been strong in comparison with its European counterparts where centralized absolutism had not emerged until the early 17th century. China's nationalism could not be thoroughly comprehended without referring to its Statist tradition. The pre-modern history of China witnessed the evolution of political entities very close to the modern pattern of the state in terms of organizational vehicles for political order and monopoly on coercive forces. Since Emperor Qin Shihuang founded the first unified empire, Qin and the following dynasties, much earlier than their European counterparts, developed credible state penetration capabilities through establishing a sophisticated bureaucracy and persistently disarming local forces. These old-time dynasties were highly centralized in terms of wealth and resource extraction and social control, e.g., military recruitment, taxation and migration management, leaving modern China with enormous legacy of Statism. However, the links between the ordinary Chinese people and the state had not been tightened until the nationalist mobilization in the early twentieth century, particularly, in the anti-Japanese war. Zheng Yongnian attributes the formation of a "strong state complex" to the particular international environment and domestic political structure when the country initiated its modernization.³

As I discuss at length in the previous two chapters, in many Third World countries, nationalism creates the state while the state builds the nation. The earliest nation-states in Europe were achieved without any total preoccupation with the idea of nationalism. Until the historic unifications of Germany and Italy, the emergence of nation-states had not been centrally planned and was the fruit of home-grown processes. Mainly due to the spread of the capitalist way of production and the imperative to modernize the traditional society, the importance of the state, especially in decolonized territories, rises to an unprecedented height. Zheng views

³ Yongnian, *Discovering Chinese Nationalism in China: Modernization, Identity, and International Relations* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 22-23.

Chinese nationalism as a response as well as a substitute to weakened state power. It fitted the experience of most newly created states where nationalism provided the base of political coalitions. However, in the post-1989 China, we see the unusual concomitance of an upswing in nationalist sentiments and steady growth of state power. I should like now to consider a number of external and internal factors that accounts for the new version of “strong state complex” in the “reform and opening up” era.

4.1.1 Cannot Do without the State

As a general matter, the state is an arrangement of political structures that allows the consistent exercise of coercion over a given space and population at a particular time.⁴ It is not merely the sole legitimate authority within a geographical unit but also the principal agent for dealing with the outside world and participating in international competition. In terms of amassing state power to realize national and international goals, the contemporary Chinese state is by no means unique. In this section, I examine the challenges posed by the continuous expansion of the global market and the emergence of the purposive state. In order to address these difficulties, policy adjustments by the national government have led to greater Statism in many regions, of which China is an exemplary case.

Historically, the state had played an indispensable role in the rise of great powers. Through surveying the record of relevant cases, Peter Nolan and Wang Xiaoqiang argue:

The state has been central to the rise of most of the world’s giant corporations. Far from simply emerging from the free market, the normal path through which the world’s leading corporations developed was through extensive government support. ... The United States in the 19th century unashamedly industrialized behind high protectionist barriers.⁵

⁴ I take the definition from Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European states, AD 990-1990* (Cambridge, Mass.: B. Blackwell, 1990), pp. 1-3.

⁵ Peter Nolan and Wang Xiaoqiang, “Beyond Privatization: Institutional Innovation and Growth in China’s Large

In the post-war world, the functions and obligations of the state have been strengthened rather than undermined. As Dudley Seers lucidly puts it, “we are entering a period in which resource limits can no longer be ignored, nor can the interests of different sections of the world be assumed compatible: to solve one country’s problems may well be to aggravate those of another. So the income of anyone, even in the industrial countries, now depends in large measure on the bargaining power of his or her government.”⁶ The orthodox liberal position that development of global capitalism and international civil society has somehow implied the increasing irrelevance of states is misplaced.⁷ As the traditional boundaries are dissolving day by day, scholars spend considerable effort debating to what extent the state still matters. By the year of 2008, the national dependency ratio has reached 36.72%.⁸ As transnational economic system grows mature, it is argued that “state territories and state frontiers are not the basic framework but merely complicating factors.”⁹ Concerning the new world of transnationalized production networks, Robert Reich asks a pointed question - “Who is ‘us’?”¹⁰ In response to him, Ethan B. Kapstein claims in an assertive tone, “only the state can defend corporate interests in international negotiations over trade, investment, and market access... If the existence of the state is in doubt, just ask the depositors of BCCI (Bank of Credit and Commerce International) in some fifty countries who woke up one morning in July to find their accounts frozen...”¹¹ The answer is thus banal but thought-provoking, that is, “We are US.”

States are not withering away. More precisely, they must not wither away. The painful loss of Asian countries in the 1997 financial crises warned the developing states that no outsiders would be responsible for the consequences of their national

State-owned Enterprises,” *World Development* 27, Iss. 1 (January 1999), pp. 177-178.

⁶ Seers, 1983, p. 1.

⁷ For major arguments about the decline or retreat of the state, see Kenichi Ohmae, *The Borderless World: Power and Strategy in the Global Marketplace* (New York: Harper Collins, 1990); Martin Van Creveld, *The Rise and Decline of the State* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Susan Strange, *The Retreat of the State: The Difference of Power in the World Economy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996). For critiques, see Linda Weiss, *The Myth of the Powerless State* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998);

⁸ UNDP, *China and a Sustainable Future (China Human Development Report 2009/2010)*, April 2010, p. 134.

⁹ Eric J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914- 1991* (London: Abacus, 1995), p. 145.

¹⁰ The full exposition of Reich’s argument is in *The Work of Nations*, the final chapter of which is entitled “Who is ‘US’?”

¹¹ Ethan B. Kapstein, “We are US: The Myth of the Multinational,” *The National Interest* 26 (Winter 1991-92), pp. 55, 61

policy. If interdependence is to promote common prosperity, then self-help is to prevent common collapse. In many parts of the world, the pressing problems of everyday life are generating pressures for “more state,” not “less state.”¹² In a national poll taken by the Pew Centre in March 2011, a 57%-majority of Americans says the government should play a significant role in reducing obesity among American children.¹³ Human societies are facing a knotty problem - as our life is more and more assisted, or, put another way, intervened, by complicated new technologies and sophisticated political and economic institutions, personal life is growing out of individual control. We need strong and effective authorities, more than ever before, to protect our security and regulate the society. In some essence, the expansion of state functions is due to the growing incompetence of the individual relative to the increasing complexity of modern life. The global advance of democracy has significantly contributed to the emergence of purposive state. A purposive state is one which regards it as its duty to secure for the population not merely their rights to physical security and property but also to their welfare.¹⁴ This trend has been foreseen by German economist Adolph Wagner.¹⁵ He suggested that the development of an industrial economy will be accompanied by an increased share of public expenditure in GNP, which is widely known as Wagner’s Law. Since in a democratic regime the electorate shall vote for ever-increasing social services, a welfare state will sooner or later evolves from free market capitalism. Sweden’s emergence to a welfare state is an exemplar case of Wagner’s Law. The prevalence of purposive state has far-fetched implications on the international order by altering the domestic political costs of interdependence. As Mayall discusses, historically very wide disparities in income had been tolerated by human societies over very long periods of time.¹⁶ The classic liberal state did not have to worry about the costs of interdependence “because economic relations fell within the private domain and the burden of adjustment fell, like an act of God, on the unfortunate population which had to adjust by its own efforts.” In other words, economic failure was a personal failure of little political significance. However, thanks in large part to the success of

¹² T. V. Paul, G. John Ikenberry, and John A. Hall, *The Nation-State in Question* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 2003), pp. 351-352.

¹³ Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, “Most Favor Government Role in Reducing Childhood Obesity,” March 8, 2011, <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1916/obesity-children-government-role-poll>, accessed March 14, 2011.

¹⁴ Mayall, 1990, p. 87.

¹⁵ For an interpretation of Wagner’s Law, see Richard Abel Musgrave. His most cited work is *The Theory of Public Finance: A Study in Public Economy* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959).

¹⁶ Mayall, 1990, p. 102.

democracy and egalitarianism, the economic and social well-being of the individual, e.g. the problem of income inequality, became a public issue concerning everyone. Under this circumstance, states have to institute old age pension, minimum income schemes, and public funds for medical care, and are always ready to provide financial remedies for unpredictable social risks. In the aftermath of North Korea shelling Yeonpyeong Island in which two South Korean marines and two South Korean civilians were killed, Seoul announced 1 billion won (\$875,583) to repair damages to the island community from the shelling.¹⁷

Moreover, a global free market works to pit countries against one another in keen international competition. As a result, the gap between the rich and the poor on the individual level has been expanding over the last several decades. A liberal international order produces winners and losers.¹⁸ No matter how Economists blame the manipulation and distortion of international trade, a significant number of developing countries are indeed experiencing severe income inequality in the age of the so-called “neoliberal globalization.” Close to fifty developing countries are technically bankrupt and considered failed states. The GNP per capita of about 100 developing countries is lower than it was either in the 1960s, 1970s, or 1980s.¹⁹ By the World Bank’s estimate, some 1.1 billion people lived on less than \$1 a day in 2001.²⁰ Between 1981 and 2001 the percent of total people in Sub-Saharan Africa living on less than \$1 a day increased 93%, from 164 million to 316 million.²¹ Time series data indicates that the share of the poorest fifth of the world’s population in global income had dropped, from 2.3 percent to 1.4 percent between 1989 and 1998. The proportion taken by the richest fifth, on the other hand, had risen. In sub-Saharan Africa, 20 countries have lower incomes *per capita* in real terms than they had in the late 1970s.²²

¹⁷ Verona Roddick, “North Korea Blames South Korea for the Yeonpyeong Island Shelling,” *USA News Week*, November 24, 2010, <http://www.usanewsweek.com/news/North-Korea-blames-South-Korea-for-the-Yeonpyeong-Island-shelling-1290600432/>, accessed November 24, 2010.

¹⁸ Bruce Edward Moon, *Dilemmas of International Trade* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1996), p. 91

¹⁹ UNDP, *Human Development Report 2003*, 2003, <http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2003/?CFID>, accessed March 20, 2010; UNICEF, *Annual Report, 2005*, <http://www.unicefusa.org/site/C.duLR180011/h>, accessed March 20, 2010; World Bank, *World Development Indicators, 2005*, <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/DATASTATISTICS/O>, accessed March 20, 2010.

²⁰ UNDP, United Nations Environment Program, The World Bank, and World Resources Institute, *World Resources 2005: The Wealth of the Poor* (WRI: Washington, D.C., 2005), p. 7.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Anthony Giddens, *Runaway World: How Globalization is Reshaping our Lives*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2003), p. 15.

However, taking a close look at what has contributed to the widening gap between the rich and the poor, we find the liberal trade system is not the main culprit of inequality. In a seminal paper for the World Bank, Francois Bourguignon and Christian Morrison attempt to survey the income data from 1820 to 1992.²³ They examine two levels of global distribution: distribution *between* countries and distribution *within* countries. Their findings go against the intuition of many critics of economic globalization. First, Bourguignon and Morrison confirm that global inequality among individual rose progressively, from 1820 to a peak in 1980, and started falling after this year. Second, inequality *within* countries reached a peak in 1910, subsequently fell to a trough in 1960 and then started to rise, modestly. On the basis of these two findings, it is not difficult to conclude that between 1980 and 1992 the international trade had been an equalizer of global economy²⁴ whereas the domestic distribution, in some countries, had come to polarize the society. In this vein, the distribution function of the state is brought into prominence. If the international trade allows the chance to improve the distribution of income within a country, it turns out to be a *national* problem to make sure the poorest population can share equally in growth. Economists suggest the most efficient solution to the problem, in theory, is to earn the benefits of free trade and use the proceeds to compensate the losers. However, operationalizing the optimum option is more difficult than it sounds.²⁵ The bitter challenge all practitioners now face is framed as distributional dilemma, which “refers to the inevitable choice implicit in trade policy between the pattern of income produced by trade and the pattern of income that would exist without trade.”²⁶ In any pattern there is no possibility to benefit everyone, and, therefore, this dilemma can never be fully resolved. States must choose not between lose and win but between who loses and who wins. In the 2009 London Summit, almost all G20 members promised not to implement protectionist policies on the international trade before 2010. However, 17 countries eventually adopted varied protection measures as of September 2009.²⁷ As the perfect solution is politically and administratively infeasible or comes with unaffordable social costs,

²³ Francois Bourguignon and Christian Morrison, “Inequality among World Citizens,” *American Economic Review* 92, No. 4 (September 2002), pp. 727-44. See also Martin Wolf, *Why Globalization Works* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), pp. 138-172.

²⁴ On the global shift in wealth and economic power, see also National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World* (November 2008).

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

²⁷ Xiong Min, “Who Are against Trade Protectionism?” *21st Century Business Herald*, September 21, 2009, p.3.

the decision makers always have to opt for sacrificing the benefits of trade for the sake of short-term domestic interests. In this sense, the state stands as the ultimate protector of individual business, and its role is decisive. Except the state, there are no other parties that a corn trader can rely on during the height of a crisis. Such are the challenges we now face. The role of the practitioner, the politician or the civil servant is the extremely difficult one of finding a politically and administratively feasible path of development in a grossly unequal world.²⁸

Another conventional wisdom, which had been a cliché in the traditional international system, is that size matters. As Chapter 3 has shown, the concept of state viability has changed dramatically. The survival of even the weakest states is guaranteed. However, military security does not necessarily translate into economic development. Though Singapore's experience proves that even small states have potentials to compete on a global scale, it would be too soon to say the size of an economy has become irrelevant. By comparing the development of Motorcycle Industry in three countries, Belgium, Italy and Japan, Filippo C. Wezel and Allesandro Lomi suggest that, on average, the development of small populations, like Belgium, is significantly affected by variations in the economic climate.²⁹ This interpretation also echoes the argument provided by M. T. Hannan *et al.* who noticed that the carrying capacity of a small population is significantly influenced by the size of its economy.³⁰ To overcome the constraints of smallness and fragmentation, regional integration has been the new trend in our time. The EU is widely recognized the most successful attempt on this front. The EU leaders repetitively speak of a Europe that "protects". It presumes that a Union that spanned 27 nations was large enough to protect a unique European social model from the uncertainties of globalization.³¹ However, it is mistaken to think the integration of European countries is the onset of the global demise of the nation-state. Even though the EU represented the supersession of the 27 European nation-states, it would not alter the

²⁸ Mayall, 2000, p. 55.

²⁹ Filippo C. Wezel and Alessandro Lomi, "The Organizational Advantage of Nations: An Ecological Perspective on the Evolution of the Motorcycle Industry in Belgium, Italy and Japan," *Advances in Strategic Management* 20 (2003), pp. 377-409.

³⁰ M. T. Hannan, Carroll, G. R., Dundon, E., & Torres, J. C., "Organizational Evolution in Multinational Context: Entries of Automobile Manufacturers in Belgium, France, Germany and Italy," *American Sociological Review* 60 (1995), p. 522.

³¹ Gideon Rachman, "Europe is unprepared for austerity," *Financial Times*, May 10, 2011, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/8b24504e-5c65-11df-93f6-00144feab49a.html#axzz1RjGyVqVc>, accessed May 20, 2011.

pressing needs for an overarching political structure and effective administration. It is not the “state” as a general political form of organizing human society that Europeans wish to abandon; it is rather the fragmentation of the existing state system. If in the future the EU remains a loosely bound union with a limited role, it would manifest the victory of the current arrangements of nation-states. If the EU assumed more and more functions and eventually evolved into a European state, it would imply the victory of the idea of multinational state. In either case, the “state” would stay in place. “The United States of Europe” would surely efface the traditional national boundaries. But, concomitantly, it must erect new ones on extended peripheries. Alan Milward argues that it was the heyday of state powers when the idea of creating a common community was introduced to the European countries. He writes: “(national) laws, officials, policemen, spies, statisticians, revenue collectors, and social workers have penetrated into a far wider range of human activities than they were earlier able or encouraged to do.”³² All these functions are still exercised by the national governments, with even greater vigor and in finer detail than before. Essentially, the EU is a “rescue of nation-state”, as Milward’s book title suggests, and an integrationist solution to national problems.³³ What it might annihilate is small European states but not the “state” in the abstract sense.

To conclude, globalization creates a great many opportunities. But to what extent a nation can take advantage of these opportunities depend on the strength of the state and the quality of supplementary institutions, such as the rule of law and protection of copyright. Foreign investment decisions depend on many factors, including the condition of transportation, environment, education, recreation facilities, all of which need to be provided by state funds. In fact, globalization and state activity have moved in tandem. The level of government spending for the major countries has, on average increased substantially since 1950 along with increased trade and capital flows.³⁴ As Martin Wolf unequivocally contends, “for people to be successful in exploiting the opportunities offered by international integration, they need states.”³⁵ The contradiction between the increasing mobility of capital and the

³² Milward, 2000, p. 18.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 445. A similar view was expressed by Greenfeld. She said, “The EU is an instrumental union... [E]ach nation sees it as a tool in the promotion of its own national interest.” See Liah Greenfeld, “In the National Interest,” interviewed by *Vision*, Spring 2006.

³⁴ Krasner, 1999, p. 223.

³⁵ Wolf, 2004, p. 276.

decreasing mobility of labor produces new insecurity for the working class in almost every country, who face the danger of massive lay-offs every day. For these geographically immobile workers, it is national governments that stand between the force of globalization and their individual interests. The only protection as well as compensation they could possibly receive is from their national governments. In this sense, both winners and losers need states.

4.1.2 State Capitalism: Logic and Social Consequences

In the last section, I argue the role of the state has been accentuated in the new international circumstances. While globalization pressures inevitably have the effect of strengthening certain parts of the state at the expense of others, how to share the risk and divide the cost among domestic groups is a national choice. Recent studies along the lines of Modernization Theory provide plenty of theoretical and empirical support for this argument. Modernization Theory deals with social changes and political responses linked with socioeconomic development. Its classic accounts predict that modernization will propel differentiated societies moving toward a condition of similarity.³⁶ However, the empirical evidence drawing from comparative studies casts doubt on this proposition. In a 2005 book, Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel contend that modernization projects in different societies share no common route or destination. They actually “follow different trajectories even when subject to the same forces of modernization, because specific factors, such as the cultural heritage of a given society, also shape how this society develops.”³⁷ In the book *Small States in World Markets*, Peter J. Katzenstein conducts a brilliant exploration of neocorporatism in small open economies. He notes there are striking cross-national variations in the responses of social groups under comparable pressures from the international economy, depending on political structures and

³⁶ For full exposition of Modernization Theory, see in particular Karl Deutsch, *The Nerves of Government Models of Political Communication and Control* (New York: Free Press, 1963); Lucian W. Pye and Sidney Verba, *Political Culture and Political Development* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1965); Arthur L. Stinchcomb, “Social Structure and Organization.” In James G. March, ed., *Handbook of Organizations* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965), pp. 142–93; and Huntington, 1968.

³⁷ Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel, *Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). p. 21

policies.³⁸ In a sense, modernization enables various systems of organizing capitalist production and results in diverse manifestations of modernity.³⁹ As a result, observes Gary G. Hamilton, “what we witness with the development of a global economy is not increasing uniformity, in the form of a universalization of Western culture, but rather the continuation of civilizational diversity through the active reinvention and reincorporation of non-Western civilizational patterns.”⁴⁰

There are basically two opposing economic views about the relationship between the state and the market - State Capitalism and Neoliberalism, which diverge in the belief they hold in the efficiency of state intervention. The growth in importance of the state as an economic actor has been slowly but surely developing for decades, which is fully manifested by the emergence of the developmental state and state capitalism. State capitalism is not a single coherent political or economic ideology. Rather it is a loose term to describe a variety of economic systems that give a prominent role to the state, China, of course, being one of the most prominent examples.⁴¹ Actually no country’s economy is either purely state-planned or purely free-market driven.⁴² State capitalism typically favors: (1) an open export climate; (2) states invest the accumulated national assets through Sovereign Wealth Funds (SWFs) and other state-dominated vehicles; (3) governmental efforts toward industry policy; (4) rollback of privatization and the resurgence of State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs).⁴³ Economic history witnessed a great number of successful cases adopting the model of state capitalism. The emergence of “capitalist development state”⁴⁴ in East Asian societies exemplified the trend. I adopt the concept of “capitalist development state” from Manuel Castells. He presents:

³⁸ See Peter J. Katzenstein, *Small states in world markets: industrial policy in Europe* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 1985).

³⁹ On cross-cultural variations of modernization, see, for example, Paul DiMaggio, “Culture and Economy,” in Neil J. Smelser and Richard Swedberg, eds., *The Handbook of Economic Sociology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 27–57; Mauro F. Guillén, *Models of Management: Work, Authority, and Organization in a Comparative Perspective* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

⁴⁰ Gary G. Hamilton, “Civilizations and Organization of Economics,” in Neil J. Smelser and Richard Swedberg, eds., *The Handbook of Economic Sociology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 184.

⁴¹ James O’Connor, “State Capitalism on the Rise?” *Atlantic Council*, December 1, 2008. http://www.acus.org/new_atlanticist/state-capitalism, accessed March 19, 2009; National Intelligence Council, 2008, p. 9.

⁴² Ian Bremmer, *The End of the Free Market: Who Wins the War between States and Corporations?* (New York: Portfolio, 2010), p. 43.

⁴³ National Intelligence Council, 2008, pp. 9-10.

⁴⁴ I adopt the concept from Chalmers A. Johnson, see Johnson, *Japan, Who Governs?: The Rise of the Developmental State*, 1st ed. (New York: Norton, 1995), pp. 67-68.

A state is developmental when it establishes as its principle of legitimacy its ability to promote and sustain development, understanding by development the combination of steady high rates of economic growth and structural change in the productive system, both domestically and in relationship to the international economy.⁴⁵

Chalmers A. Johnson views that a developmental state is like a revolutionary state, which never pretends to legitimate itself in terms of the acquiescence of its subjects, but in terms of the historical project they embody.⁴⁶ Johnson uses the Japanese state as an example. It differs itself from the assumption of *laissez faire* state theory by grounding its legitimacy on its performance and achievements rather than processes.⁴⁷ The prototype of developmental state capitalism in Japan, had soon been copied and adjusted to satisfy the varied demands in South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and, now, China, whose economic takeoff largely derived from extensive state intervention into the markets.⁴⁸ The Asian models are generally characterized by active state interventionism, predominance of state-sponsored large enterprises, industrial police, and producer economics.

A nascent economy is generally short of institutions, competitiveness, and time. State capitalism is a response to these disadvantages. As discussed in the last section, under the liberal paradigm economic life was considered as private domain in which the national government could, and should, do little. It was not until the mid-nineteenth century that the state assumed interventionist roles and exercised more influence over the process of economic development. One of the earliest incentives for doing so came from the impact of public health on military actions. In 1880s as the British government recruited soldiers to fight the Boer Wars, they found the physical deterioration of the population was critical and “less than 10 percent of the volunteers were considered fit enough to send abroad to fight.”⁴⁹ Globalization now and in the past has been characterized by keen competition, which infers permanent

⁴⁵ Manuel Castells, “Four Asian Tigers with a Dragon Head: A Comparative Analysis of the State, Economy, and Society in the Asian Pacific Rim,” in Richard P. Appelbaum and Jeffrey Henderson, eds., *State and Development in the Asian Pacific Rim* (Newbury Park, Calif: Sage Publications, 1992), p. 56.

⁴⁶ See Johnson, 1995, p. 67, and Castells, 1992, p. 57

⁴⁷ Johnson, 1995, p. 67

⁴⁸ Duara, 2008, p. 339

⁴⁹ Anthony S. Wohl, *Endangered Lives: Public Health in Victorian Britain* (London: Methuen, 1984), pp. 332-333

uncertainty and insecurity. Moreover, the liberal bearing of the post-war economic order, in spite of enormous efforts made to accommodate mercantilist national policies, intensifies free competition among companies, inexorably resulting in mergers, takeovers, massive lay-offs and pay cuts. The brutal economic warfare absorbs all aspects of human life: education, the rule of law, work ethics, social welfare, labor protection, and women's rights to work. All these factors are directly or indirectly contribute to the competitive power of a nation. The commercialization of the modern society blurs distinctions between economic and non-economic while the prevalence of welfare policies removes the boundaries between public and private. In order to take a favorable position in the global free market, the state has no alternative but to discharge its new obligations and intervene. Through cross-national statistical studies, Dani Rodrik finds out there exists a positive correlation between an economy's exposure to international trade and the size of its government. He suggests that government spending plays a risk-reducing role in economies exposed to a significant amount of external risk.⁵⁰

Market economies are built on large numbers of complex and intricately connected institutions.⁵¹ The institutional prerequisites of free market, together with supporting social values, are generally absent in pre-modern societies. More importantly, building these institutions take considerable time, which is also a "scarce resource" in developing countries especially for politicians. Poverty is easy to be tolerated when people in a society are equally poor. However, once more social members get rich, poverty starts becoming intolerable for people remaining as poor as before. This trajectory presents the dialect between poverty and equality, which has profound socioeconomic implications on states who initially develops the economy. Once a country embarks on economic development, it implies that everyone should benefit from the process in a relatively equal manner. If John's neighbor bought a refrigerator this year, he had better to be able to afford one in the near future. The aspirations to a refrigerator would propel John to work harder. An expanding economy must provide enough economic opportunities for people's ever-increasing economic ambitions. If the lower-class people's twenty-year toil led to nothing while

⁵⁰ Dani Rodrik, "Why do More Open Economies have Bigger Governments?" *The Journal of Political Economy* 106, No. 5 (October 1998), pp. 997-1032

⁵¹ Thomas G. Rawski, "Reforming China's Economy: What Have We Learned?" *The China Journal*, No. 41 (January 1999), p. 156

the upper class successively acquired cars, houses, and luxuries, grudge and hatred would be accumulated and the society would be significantly destabilized. On offer are two options. One is to sustain high growth rates to include more people; the other is to combat social inequality. In practice, for a rapidly expanding and poorly institutionalized economy the second tends to be far more difficult and less feasible than the former. As a result, a modernizing country has to hasten its economic growth so as to eliminate poverty before the unprivileged people seek any political solution to their economic disadvantages, such as regime change.

Gray argues that a *laissez-faire* market was feasible in nineteenth-century England only because functioning democratic institutions were lacking.⁵² He says:

[F]ree markets are creatures of state power, and persist only so long as the state is able to prevent human needs for security and the control of economic risk from finding political expression. In the absence of a strong state dedicated to a liberal economic program, markets will inevitably be encumbered by a myriad of constraints and regulations.⁵³

Almost all political parties undertaking social reconstruction according to the tenets of Neoliberalism have paid stiff political costs, losing the dominance status or suffering major setbacks in local and national elections. In Mexico, market reform began from early 1980s. In the elections of July 1997 the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) that had ruled Mexico for over six decades not only lost control of the country's capital city to the leftwing opposing party PRD – Party of the Democratic Revolution – but also its majority in the lower house of Congress.⁵⁴ No political party could have successfully weathered a general election with such a social polarization as that in Mexico.

If the free market is short-lived in the normal course of democratic process, the situation in authoritarian developmental countries is subtly different. As discussed above, the legitimacy of such kind of regimes is based on performance. In other words, it depends on the subjects' perception of to what extent the government is

⁵² Gray, 2009, p. 17

⁵³ *Ibid.*,

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 48

doing the right thing to satisfy their practical needs. For an authoritarian regime, the lack of democratic procedures and external authority to legitimate the governments' policy-making means that the ruling party would have to bear all possible political risks alone and be held responsible for any adverse social consequence in the long run. In this sense, psychologically authoritarian regimes are even more sensitive to the public opinion than democracies especially in the matter of economic policies. Therefore, authoritarian regimes have to draw other institutional resources more reliable than a crippled free market system to withstand the risk of economic ups-and-downs. Putin's Russia is an extreme case of building state control into economic sectors. Russian oligarchs amassed enormous wealth and power in the privatization of the Soviet asset. During the first month of Putin's presidency, he decreed the new rule of operating business in the country - the government would leverage the state power to back the oligarchs' business activities home and abroad while the oligarchs were to subordinate their interests to those of the state at any time of need. A case cited in Ian Bremmer's study show that, as the industries of metals, mining, and manufacturing was hit by the economic crisis in 2008 and 2009, Russian companies cut work schedules, slashed salaries, and pushes order workers into early retirement or younger ones into make-work jobs as a part of "social responsibility" projects which effectively prevented social unrest before it started.⁵⁵ This case presents how effectively state capitalism can respond to economic imperatives and how decisive it could be to sacrifice short-term gains for long-term stability.

On the other hand, since immediate democratic pressure is either absent or minimum, authoritarian systems could be able to exclude certain social groups from the access to equal economic opportunities for quite a long time. This gives the country a special advantage in operating a purely free market in some domains by preventing the unprivileged people from seeking political solutions to unequal treatments, to which I shall shortly return in the next section. Simply put it, Chinese politicians are particularly lucid about their weakness in political legitimacy. They realized once economic development was initiated, the problem of poverty and backwardness would become more pressing. Therefore, China has to develop fast. That is the only way to ensure that rising expectations for prosperity can be met and that citizens moving from poverty into the workforce can spur further growth and will not

⁵⁵ Bremmer, 2010, p. 110

become a threat to social order.⁵⁶ The year of 2010 saw China outstrip Japan as the economy second in total GDP to the United States. China's transformation since its opening in 1978 has been nothing but historic. For one who travelled in China three decades ago, it was hard to envision a myriad of metropolitans would rise directly from the wretched villages and wild cornfields they saw from the plane. If picking one word to sum up the traits of the time, it is "fast." "China Speed" is an often-used term to describe the incredible rapidity of China's economic changes, which connotes a combination of feelings like admiration, uneasiness, and confusion. For hosting the 2010 Expo, Shanghai built brand-new metro system. From 1995 through 2009, the metro system of China's largest city has doubled in reach to 420 km. "Shanghai did in 15 years what London did in 150," says Wu Zhiqiang, professor of urban planning at Tongji University.⁵⁷ A Wall Street Journal interview vividly illustrates how "China Speed" is worked in this country. Zhu Gongshan is a solar-energy magnate in China. He explained how a new industry had been swiftly created by the exercise of state power and how a world-class company could grow out from nothing within a few years. Zhu's business in solar-energy was initiated by a government decision to combat the dominance of foreign producers in the supply of polysilicon. Once the decision was promulgated, state-controlled banking system started pouring money into manufacturers and local governments expedited approvals for new plants. Mr. Zhu easily raised \$1 billion and built his first plant within in 15 months, which usually took years in the Western countries. Thanks to the heroic adventures of thousands of entrepreneurs like Mr. Zhu, China today makes about a quarter of the world's polysilicon and controls roughly half the global market for finished solar-power equipment.⁵⁸

In the global market big businesses are predators while small players are preys. In 2010, top 500 U.S. manufacturing firms had sales of \$4.5 trillion, greater than Germany's GDP. The top ten largest U.S. manufacturing companies (Exxon, Chevron, GE, Conoco, Ford, H-P, IBM, Proctor and Gamble, ADM and Boeing) had

⁵⁶ Stefan A. Halper, *The Beijing Consensus: How China's Authoritarian Model will Dominate the Twenty-first Century* (New York: Basic Books, 2010), pp. 133-134.

⁵⁷ Patti Waldmeir, "Futuristic yet Fruitful," *Financial Times Chinese*, May 4, 2010, http://www.ftchinese.com/story/001032441_en, accessed May 5, 2010.

⁵⁸ Jason Dean, Andrew Browne and Shai Oster, "China's 'State Capitalism' Sparks a Global Backlash," *The Wall Street Journal*, November 16, 2010, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703514904575602731006315198.html>, accessed March 19, 2011.

combined revenues of \$1.3 trillion, almost as much as Spain's GDP in 2010 of \$1.374 trillion.⁵⁹ As noted by Paul Krugman, economies of scale provide an alternative to differences in technology or factor endowments as an explanation of international specialization and trade.⁶⁰ Economic historians agree that during the period of rapid industrialization in Europe and the United States in the 18th and 19th centuries it was large-scale firms rather than small-scale manufacturing that was driving growth.⁶¹ Studies have provided massive empirical evidence to support the argument that large-scale economies continues to play a crucial role in the growth of trade among the industrial countries.⁶² Large multi-plants firms lower unit costs and are better placed than small firms to invest in research and development, take advantage of brand name capital, provide enhanced after-sales services and spread risk.⁶³ In global wine industry, two traditional strongholds of wine production France and Germany – have been losing their market share in face of keen competitions from the New World. The group with the strong competitive position includes the US, Australia, and Chile. Through comparative studies of a number of wine exporters, Richard Castaldi and Susan Cholette find, though the three countries vary widely in comparative advantage, capital structure, and capacity of domestic market, they all share one thing in common: large-scale production. In contrast, the concentration of production into small wineries, scarce land and labor impeded the Old World producers to compete effectively in a global market place.⁶⁴

Moreover, industrializing countries, in the early phase, heavily rely on either exporting natural resources (e.g. Russia and Gulf states) or producing labor-intensive commodities (e. g. China), or a combination of both. As the GDP *per capita* increases and the marketization deepens, industrializing economies have to create new growth points by upgrading their industries and changing the subordinate status

⁵⁹ "The IndustryWeek U.S. 500 List By Revenues," *Industry Week*,

<http://www.industryweek.com/research/us500/2010/iwps500revenues.asp>, accessed March 11, 2011

⁶⁰ Paul R. Krugman, *Rethinking International Trade* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: MIT Press, 1994), p. 11

⁶¹ See Alfred D. Chandler, *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1977); William Lazonick, *Business Organization and the Myth of the Market Economy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

⁶² See, for example, Béla Balassa, *Trade Liberalization among Industrial Countries: Objectives and Alternatives* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967); Irving Kravis, "The Current Case for Import Limitations," in Commission on International Trade and Investment Policy, *United States Economic Policy in an Interdependent World* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1971).

⁶³ See Alfred D. Chandler and Takashi Hikino, *Scale and Scope: The Dynamics of Industrial Capitalism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1990); Lazonick, 1991.

⁶⁴ Richard Castaldi, Susan Cholette and Mahmood Hussain, "A Country-Level Analysis of Competitive Advantage in the Wine Industry," DEIAgra Working Papers, No. 6002.

in the international division of labor. Otherwise, due to the climbing labor costs the comparative advantage of low wage will dwindle or vanish completely and the economy will fall into stagnation. In order to overcome the lack of core competencies in late industrialization, compensate for the inadequacy of low wage advantage, and discipline the market in the absence of rapid technological change, argues Alice H. Amsden and Takashi Hikino, national governments have to nurture and promote big business groups and pay for wrong investment and other learning costs.⁶⁵ Russell Smyth, by reviewing the role of China's SOEs in the national economy, suggests that there is sound economic logic in China's approach of promoting large-scale enterprises and enterprises groups. In the last two decades China have made impressive achievement in creating giant corporations. In 2010 PetroChina overtook Exxon Mobil as the world's most valuable company in the 14th ranking of the *FT* Global 500. A total of 21 Chinese mainland companies were listed amongst the Top 500, all of which are state-owned or state-invested companies.⁶⁶ In the same year, *Fortune's* ranking of the world's largest companies has only two American firms in the top 10 - Walmart at No. 1 and ExxonMobil at No. 3. There are already three Chinese firms in the top 10: Sinopec, State Grid, and China Petroleum. In total 54 centrally-administrated SOEs made the *Fortune* 500 list, up from 43 a year ago.⁶⁷

In the wake of the global financial crisis, the state-led development models are attracting more attentions throughout the world. State capitalism has the obvious edge in accelerating growth by concentrating capital and focus on particular industries, typically in industrial products for export.⁶⁸ As resources become scarcer globally and competition for them more fierce, state capitalism is very effective in leveraging the power of the state to obtain resources and commodities for key industries.⁶⁹ It has been proved particularly efficient in the transformation from a largely agrarian country to an industrial economy, for example, South Korea.

⁶⁵ Alice H. Amsden and Takashi Hikino, "Project Execution Capability, Organizational Know-how and Conglomerate Corporate Growth in Late Industrialization," *Industrial and Corporate Change* 3, no. 1 (January 1994), pp. 111-147

⁶⁶ *FT* Global 500 2010, <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/66ce3362-68b9-11d1-96f1-00144feab49a.pdf>, ranked by market values and prices at March 31, 2010.

⁶⁷ Xinhua News Agency, July 9, 2010; *People's Daily*, July 10, 2010.

⁶⁸ O'Connor, 2008.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*

For an authoritarian regime, unemployment is a major threat to regime stability. In a free market, nothing except profit can make capitalists invest and business owners employ. In an economic downturn, the government can only rely on the welfare system or fiscal measures to prevent the outburst of social unrest. It is very insufficient especially in a country as populous as China. The CCP realized that they had to build an economic system in which market forces can serve the state's development goals and not simply the financial interests of capitalists. For this the state needs to monopolize the most profitable industries. In the year of 2006, the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council (SASAC) officially recognized the monopolistic status of 129 centrally-administrated SOEs (also known as *yangqi*) in seven areas: national defense, power generation, oil and gas, telecommunications, coal mining, civil aviation, and shipping, which are the most lucrative industries in China.⁷⁰ Besides, the state also plays an active but largely undefined role in finance and banking sectors. In return, SOEs are expected to create new jobs in the light of the economic situation or the direct command from the central. Backed with every advantage the state can provide such as guaranteed land allotments, pump-priming government investment, subsidizing labor and infrastructural costs, SOEs must venture out into the world to secure the supply lines of crude oil, natural gas, minerals, grains, and other commodities in short supply in China.

The aggressive overseas investment of Chinese SOEs alarms many Westerners as well as recipient countries. China is criticized for practicing "neo-colonialism" in Africa, where Chinese investors are busy with grabbing the resources but contribute little to the local development. The expansionist orientation of China's overseas activities ranges beyond the parameters of this project. I shall focus on the impacts of state capitalism on Chinese people as well as Chinese nationalism. The China Model basically has three domestic consequences.

First, it continuously worsens the investment environment of local private capital. China's state capitalism has been successful in promoting globally competitive giants in some industries. However, it comes at the expense of the rest of the economy,

⁷⁰ SASAC, "Guanyu tuijin guoyou ziben tiaozheng he guoyou qiye chongzhi de zhidao yijian" (Guidelines on adjusting the state-owned capital and reforming the SOEs), December 18, 2006.

especially the private sector. According to the ninth ranking of "Top 500 Companies of China in 2010" by the China Enterprise Confederation (CEC) and the China Entrepreneur Association (CEA), SOEs are apparently preponderant in number, accounting for 65.8 percent of the total. The 329 state-owned and state holding companies listed earned 84.69 percent of the total revenue. In contrast, the 171 private companies generated only 15.31 percent of it, which implies that private firms making the list are vastly smaller in scale than the SOEs. (See Figure 4.1 & 4.2)

Figure 4.1 Main indicators of the Top 500 Companies of China in 2010 classified by ownership

Ownership	Number of Companies	Revenue (billion yuan)	Profits(billion yuan)
National Total	500	27,629.1	1,502.9
State-owned and State Holding	329	23,399.4	1,258.1
Private	171	42,296.7	244.7

Source: China Enterprise Confederation and China Entrepreneur Association, "Report on Top 500 Companies of China in 2010"

Figure 4.2 Distribution of the Top 500 Companies of China in 2010 classified by ownership and main indicators (percent)

Ownership	Number of Companies	Revenue	Profits
State-owned and State Holding	65.80	84.69	83.72
Private	34.20	15.31	16.3

Source: China Enterprise Confederation and China Entrepreneur Association, "Report on Top 500 Companies of China in 2010"

However, the economic benefits and efficiency of state-owned and state holding companies are apparently not as good as private companies. Private companies had an average profit margin of 5.79 percent, slightly higher than that of 5.38 percent by state-owned and state holding companies. But the per capita profits of the former were 78,600 yuan, far more than 52,700 yuan by the latter. Private companies' return on assets was 3.14 percent, significantly higher than 1.5 percent of the SOEs. Measuring by all other indicators like labor productivity and asset operation efficiency, the performance of private companies steadily exceeded the SOEs.⁷¹

⁷¹ China Enterprise Confederation and China Entrepreneur Association, "Report on Top 500 Companies of China

Zhang Wenkui, the Vice President of Development Research Center of the State Council, argues that the performance of the centrally-administrated SOEs is largely propped by monopoly companies that generate excess profits. In 2009, the combined earnings of just two *yangqi*, China Mobile and China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) – 218.55 billion yuan (\$32.96 billion) exceeded by 600 million yuan (\$90.5 million) the total profits of China's Top 500 private companies.⁷² If taking out Sinopec, CNPC, and China Mobil, the largest three monopolies, who contributed 44% to *yangqi*'s all-over profits of 2009, the average profit margin and return on assets of the rest 126 companies would drop significantly.⁷³ Though demonstrating great viability and potentials, the market environment of private firms has become more difficult in and after the recent global financial crisis. While the state-sponsored commercial banks lavished loans to SOEs who poured them into the real estate market to reap colossal profits, the private enterprises were forced to withdraw from the unprofitable manufacturing or look to the underground financial institutions for short-term finance. In an in-depth interview with a 43-year-old Shandong businessman Zhang Zhen, who owns several factories producing a variety of goods from seafood to paper boxes, he confirmed the hardship he and his friend are now encountering:

It is hard to be a businessman in China, harder than I thought when I was your age. In the last five or six years, my factories have been losing money other than earning money. Think about it, my wife and me worked like a dog, barely had a weekend, while the profit margin was even lower than the interest rates! If the situation continues, I can't carry it on any more. Fortunately I have real estate [business]. Otherwise, you would see me begging down the street now. [smile] My best friend curses himself everyday for not investing in real estate. He did, but too late. I guess he's planning migrating to Canada now. He said he'd better move quickly before money became paper. Well, Canada is good for him. (Interview 16, June 2009)

in 2010," full-text available on http://www.china.org.cn/top10/Top_500_Enterprises_of_China/2011-05/12/content_22685292.htm, access June 12, 2011.

⁷² *Guangzhou Daily*, August 22, 2010.

⁷³ Zhang Wenkui, "Efficiency of the SOEs Lags Behind Private Companies and Predicament Might Return" (Guoqi xiaoyi yuanyuan buru siqi, henkeneng chongxian kunjing), *Economic Reference News*, November 25, 2011.

Second, it creates a huge amount of wealth but distributes it very unequally. China records average annual growth of 8.5 percent from 1979 to 2006, with double-digit growth between 2004 and 2007.⁷⁴ In the meantime, China's Gini coefficient increased from about 0.29 at the beginning of the reform period to 0.45 in 2004.⁷⁵ The ratio of per capita GDP between coastal and inland provinces is 2.4. The ratio of per capita GDP between the wealthiest and the poorest province is now 8.65 while in India for 2004 the figure was only 4.5.⁷⁶ In 1993, the Chinese government established regulations covering SOE dividend payments, dividing firms into three groups according to industrial sectors. Enterprises in the tobacco, petroleum, telecommunications, coal development and electricity sectors were required to submit 10 percent of their dividends to the Ministry of Finance; SOEs in all other sectors than the military were required to submit dividends of 5 percent. SOEs have long been under fire from the public and the media for exploiting their monopoly positions and enjoying high incomes, while exuding privilege and self-esteem. The only group of the public benefiting significantly from the SOEs' success are those who work for them. Roughly estimated, the average salary of SOEs' employees is at least five times that of staff in non-state sectors. Earnings for top officials are even higher.⁷⁷ The yawning income gap between state sector and non-state sector has profound psychological implications on the ordinary Chinese people especially the young generation. I ask patience until the next section, which provides longitudinal data and cross-sector comparison.

Third, the ascendancy of state power in socioeconomic life determines that in any possible confrontation between the Chinese state and another party, no matter it is individual, foreign government, or MNC, the former is very likely to win. On this point, the 2010 confrontation between Google and the Chinese government was instructive. Since March 2010 Google began bickering with Chinese government over local regulations of Internet censorship and threatened to withdraw from China. In the following weeks, Google redirected searches by Google.cn to its Hong Kong servers. On July 8 Google declared that it had renewed its license with the Chinese

⁷⁴ Mary Gallagher and Jonathan K. Hanson, "Coalitions, Carrots, and Sticks: Economic Inequality and Authoritarian States," *Political Science & Politics* 42, No. 04 (2009), p. 670.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

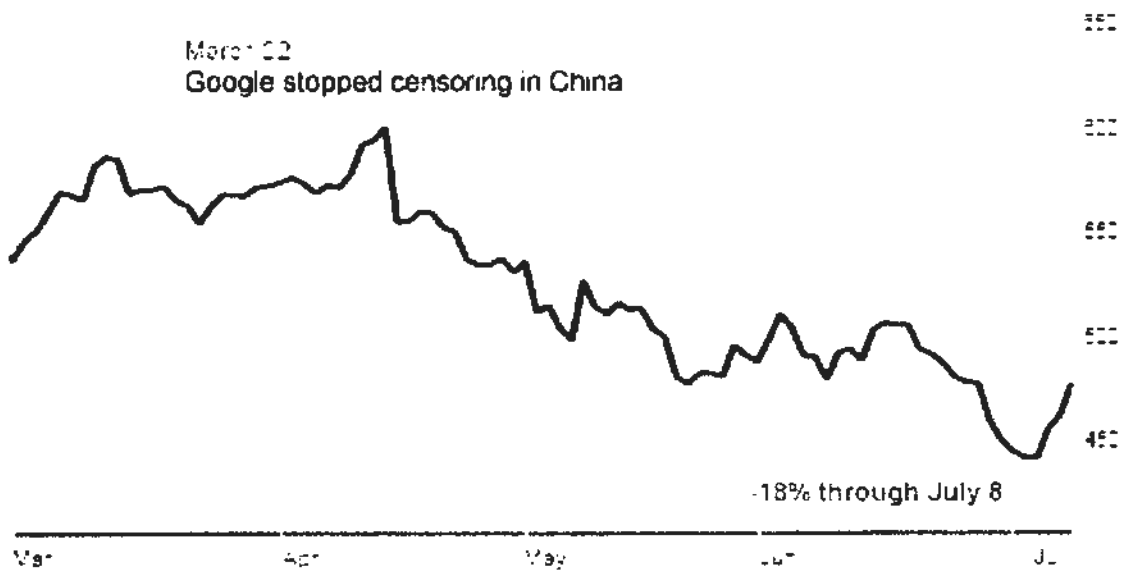
⁷⁶ Belton Fleisher, Li Haizheng, and Zhao Min-Qiang, "Human Capital, Economic Growth, and Regional Inequality in China," Working Papers 09-01, Ohio State University, Department of Economic, 2009.

⁷⁷ Huang Shuo, "Sharing Matters for China's SOEs," *China.org.cn*, March 14, 2011.
http://www.china.org.cn/opinion/2011-03/14/content_22126501_2.htm, accessed May 10, 2011.

government, putting a dramatic end to the highly publicized standoff “We are very pleased that the government has renewed our [Internet content provider] license and we look forward to continuing to provide Web search and local products to our users in China,” said Google on its blog. For understandable reasons, Google was reluctant to admit that its return to China was a concession. “I don’t think we gave anything up,” said Google spokeswoman Jessica Powell.⁷⁸ However, anyone in China knew if there was any loser in this standoff it must be Google, and Google did give many things up including its credibility. When Google declared it would cease censoring its search results by Google.cn four months ago, it was put on the altar of freedom and worshiped by millions of Chinese netizens. But was Google to be blamed for being Quixotic? The answer is “no.” From March 22 through July 8, Google’s stock price has dropped about 18% (see Figure 4.3), a major loss that no private companies, even strong MNCs, could stand. Google’s backing down was therefore no disgrace. In any contestation between a powerful state and a private enterprise, the odds of winning for the latter is extremely low especially when the former is nondemocratic.

Figure 4.3 Stock Price of Google

Google falls from grace



Google’s stock price has dropped about 18% since March 22, when it stopped censoring search services on google.cn, its Chinese search site.

Source: CNNMoney.com

⁷⁸ Aaron Smith, “China Renews Google License, Ending Standoff,” *CNNMoney.com*, July 9, 2010. http://money.cnn.com/2010/07/09/technology/google_china/index.htm, accessed August 10, 2010; see also Richard Waters and Kathrin Hillc, “Advertising Lead Put in Jeopardy,” *Financial Times Chinese*, June 30, 2010.

In conclusion, during the last one and a half centuries Chinese nationalists have been longing for a strong state. The national dream is realized in our time. China nowadays has strong state machinery with massive capacity to carry out its goals. State capitalism is building a strange China: a rising state with unprecedented wealth and an impoverished population with unprecedented anxiety. It has been widely noticed by academics, politicians, and practitioners that the CCP is using the economic leverage of SOEs, resources monopoly, and Sovereign Wealth Funds to undergird its political control over the society.⁷⁹ Though repetitively predicted to collapse soon ever since the crackdown of 1989, China's authoritarianism has demonstrated great resilience and weathered serious crises. However, contrary to most people's intuition, within a certain period social *inequality* benefits the regime stability rather than harm it. In the next section I demonstrate the widening gap between the state sector and the non-state sector through cross-time comparison. And then I move to discuss another two concerns of Chinese nationalism. The question of how social inequality translates into political stability under specific conditions is to be answered in Chapter 5.

4.1.3 Two Chinas: The State Sector and the Non-state Sector

State capitalism, as I have discussed above, is a mixture of capitalism with significant state ownership and controls. Therefore, it is better understood as the coexistence of one domain of state control and planning *and* the other domain of the capitalist market economy. The sector under state monopoly and controls continues many pre-reform Socialist/Communist policies and routines: lifetime employment, good benefits, generous medical care packages, and guaranteed old age pension. The sector capitalism takes over from the planned economy is dominated by a poorly regulated free market featured by keen competition, high mobility, and self-reliance. According to the report of local government, in Sichuan province the average annual wage of all workers and staff in 2010 was 26,952 *yuan*. The *yangqi* located in Sichuan offered the highest annual wage of 51,543 *yuan*, beating all other types of enterprises. In the same year, the per-capita net income of rural residents was 5,140

⁷⁹ On this subject, see Halper, 2010; and O'Connor, 2008

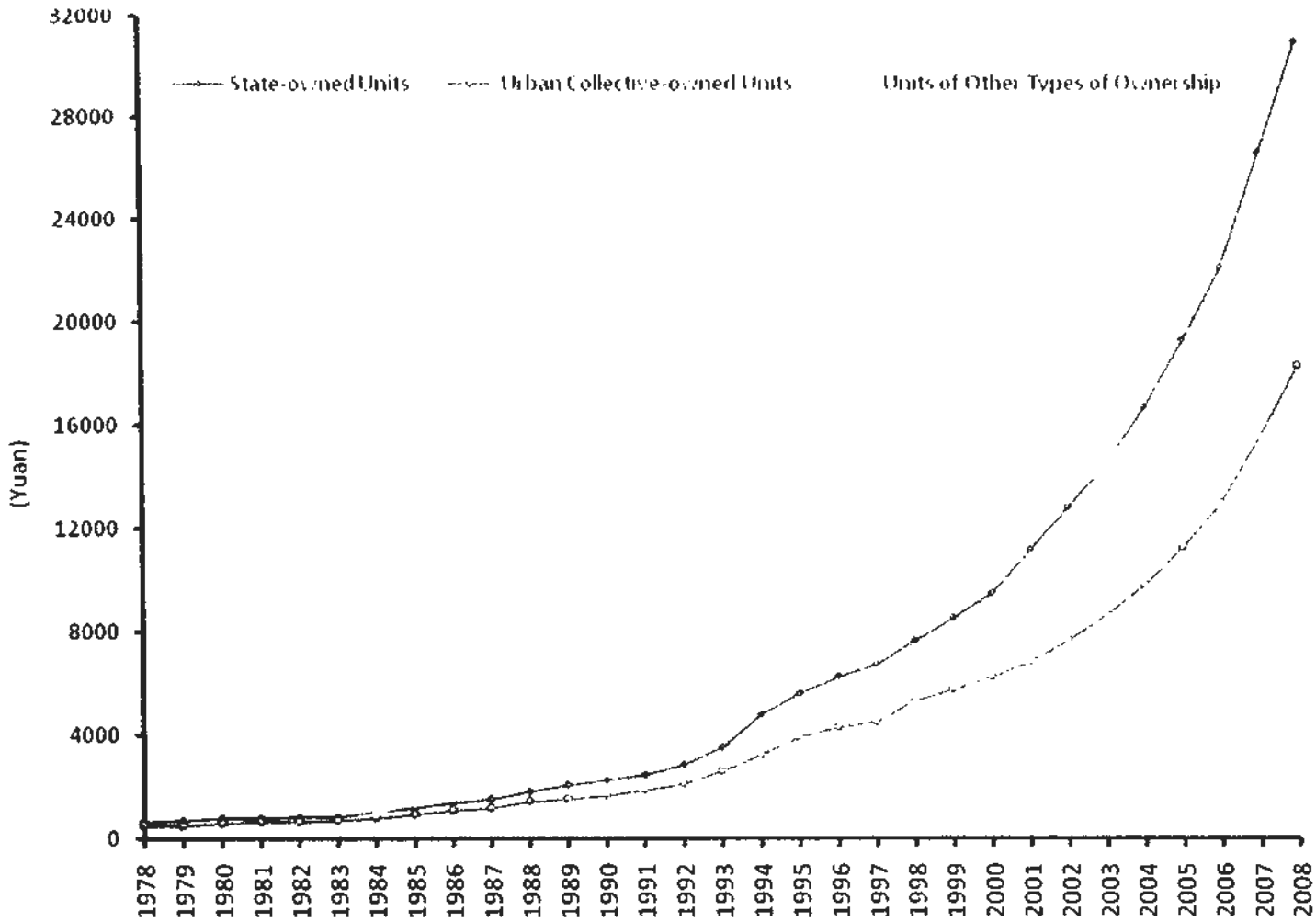
yuan, merely about one tenth of the wage income of *yangqi* employees.⁸⁰ People may wonder whether the high profit of *yangqi* comes from improved productivity, technological/organizational advantages, and wise investments. By deconstructing the income of monopoly companies, Yue Ximing and Terry Sicular show that over fifty percent of the income gap between monopoly industries and competitive industries can be attributed to the former's monopolistic status. The authors indicate that the percentage would be even higher if it included the high welfare benefits the employees of monopoly companies received.⁸¹

The time series data on Chinese workers' annual wages help us track the income changes among sectors since the beginning of "reform and opening up." As Figure 4.4 shows, the non-state sector, consisting mainly of private enterprises, Township Village Enterprises (TVEs), foreign-invested enterprises (FIEs), and joint adventures, enjoyed a golden decade from the late 1980s to 2000 or so. The relative income advantage of the private sector peaked in 1993 – the wage of its employees reached 1.40 times that of the state sector and 1.47 times the total average. It began to shrink after this year but remained the highest among the three. In 2003, the average wage of employees in the state-owned units overtook that in the private-owned ones, and has sustained rapid annual increases ever since. In apparent contrast, the urban collective-owned units lagged far behind the other two categories in every period.

Figure 4.4 Annual average wage of staff and workers, 1978-2008

⁸⁰ "2010 Average Wage of Workers and Staff in Sichuan Was 26,952 yuan, Topped by *Yangqi*." *Sichuan News Net*, June 02, 2011, http://sc.sina.com.cn/news/sc-all/2011-06-02_259-42480.html, accessed June 21, 2011.

⁸¹ Yue Ximing, Li Shi and Terry Sicular, "High Incomes in Monopoly Industries: A Discussion," *Social Sciences in China* 32, Iss. 2 (2011), pp. 178-196



Source: National Bureau of Statistics, China Statistical Yearbook

In an interview with Ms. Yu an Electronic engineer working for a large SOE based in Xi'an, she said: "As we graduated [from college], around 1993 and 1994, many of my classmates went to Shenzhen. The monthly pay that foreign companies offered was as high as my annual income in the SOE, a big lure."⁸² The situation is changing, however, slowly but significantly. Manpower's 2010 Foreign and Chinese Private-Owned Companies Talent Competitiveness Survey indicates that the foreign-owned companies are losing ground in Chinese job markets. Compared to the survey results of 2006, the proportion of job seekers considering foreign-owned companies as their first choice is down by 10 percent.⁸³ The report points out two factors accounting for the declining attraction of foreign firms. First, nowadays it is common that foreign companies pay much lower salaries to local employees, especially those in senior

⁸² Ms. Yu, interview by author, Hong Kong, February 22-27, 2011. The interviewee asked to remain anonymous.

⁸³ Manpower China. "Winning in China: Building Talent Competitiveness." 2010, p. 3.

management positions, than their foreign staff. Local executives are paid half or even a third of the salaries that foreign executives receive.⁸⁴ When they first started operations in China two or three decades ago, foreign investors offered global pay for Chinese employees. Foreign companies' cutting back on salaries is contrasted by the rapid pay rise across the board. From 2002 to 2006 workers' wages rose by more than nine percent per year (in U.S. Dollars) nationwide, while wages jumped by over 11 percent for those working in cities.⁸⁵ The second reason is the so-called "glass ceiling effect." Though some foreign companies have started promoting more Chinese staff to senior-level positions, many still appoint expatriate managers or hire from overseas talent markets like Singapore or Japan. Once reaching the "glass ceiling," Chinese employees would face a difficult choice between job hopping and early retirement. By comparison, the SOEs and big local private enterprises set no limits on personal career development – in some cases promotion is as frequent as once a year or even once a quarter, not to mention that they often offers generous compensations and benefits to senior executives. The 2010 survey reveals that 55 percent of management job seekers made the decision to switch employers in order to pursue long-term career plan.⁸⁶ Looking back in to the past, Ms. Yu felt gratified at her current life: "I don't regret that I chose an SOE. My life now is as good as, or even better than, my old friends. I lead my own team. We've been involved in a dozen major projects sponsored by the state."⁸⁷

The breakdown data on the changing monthly wages of different industries provide a clearer view about the gap between the state sector and the market sector. The data reveals that the income differences among industries and occupations were relatively minor in the 1990s and before. (See Figure 4.5)

Figure 4.5 Wages of staff and workers by economic activities, 1986-2008

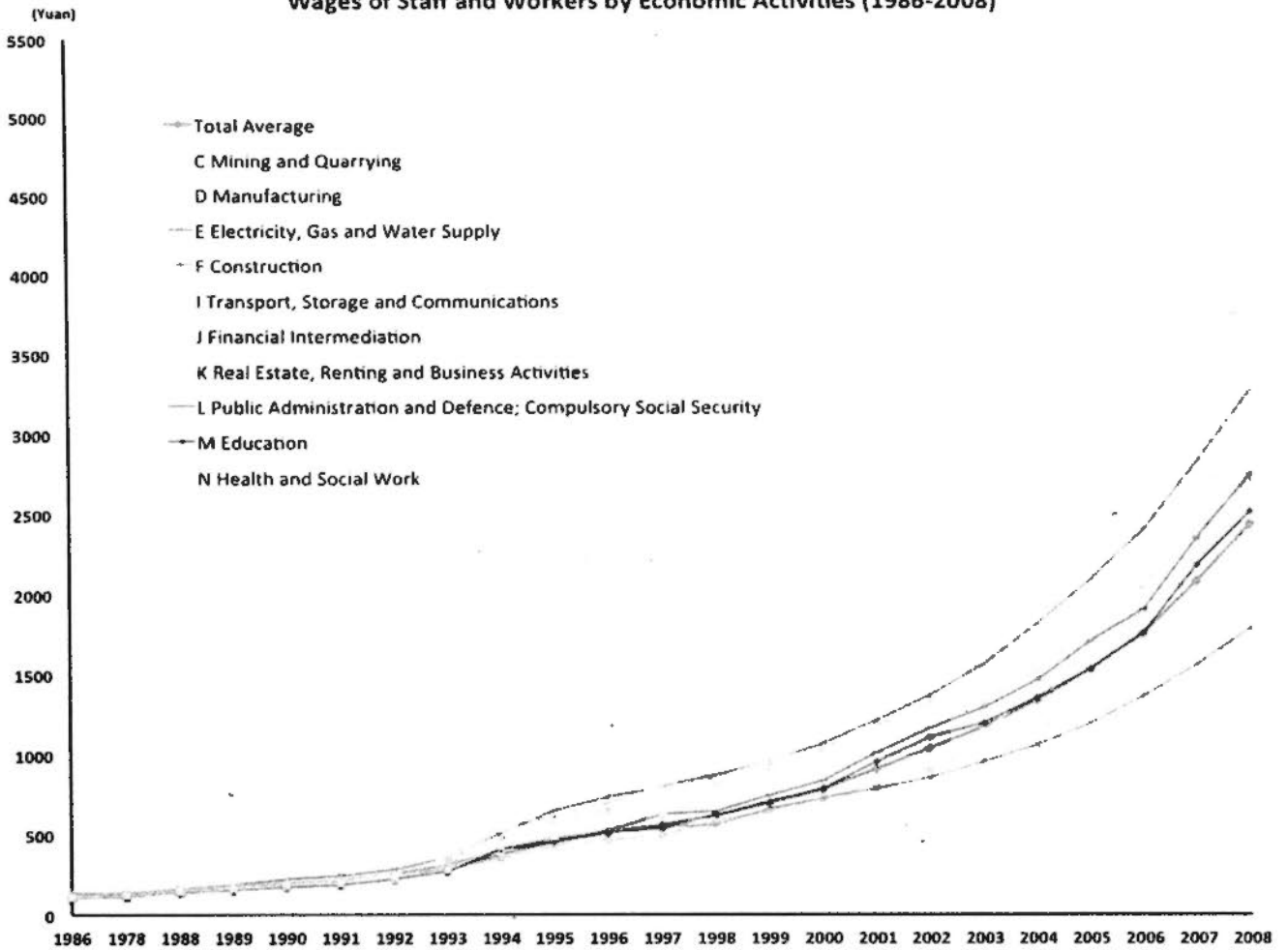
⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁸⁵ "The Next China," *The Economist*, 29 July 2010.

⁸⁶ *Manpower China*, 2010, p. 5.

⁸⁷ Interview 38, February 2011. The interviewee asked to remain anonymous.

Wages of Staff and Workers by Economic Activities (1986-2008)



Source: LABORSTA Labor Statistics Database, International Labor Organization

At the turn of the new century, the concentration of resources and profits in a few monopolistic industries – finance, energy, power generation, water supply, transportation, communication – began to manifest its effects as unprecedentedly rapid rise in the employees' paycheck. As a result, the income gap between the top 10 percent and the bottom 10 percent grew from 7.3 times in 1988 to 23 times in 2007.⁸⁸

The red line in the middle represents the total average wage in all sectors. Below it are labor-intensive industries – manufacture and construction, which are subject to perfect market competition, if not over-competition, and whose employees receive only minimum social welfare from social security scheme and government subsidies. In an apparent contrast, all the seven sectors beyond the average wage line are either state-owned monopolistic industries or institutions fully/partially supported by public finance, including government agencies, armed forces, and public service units (PSUs, e.g., schools, hospitals and research institutes) in the broad sense. Figure 4.6

⁸⁸Guo Qiang, "Yawning Income Gap Begg Solution," *Global Times*, March 5, 2010.

shows the number of China's fiscal dependents (*caizheng gongyang renkou*) consisting of those employed and retired on pensions from state agencies (*guojia jiguan*) and those employed and retired from PSUs.

Figure 4.6 Number of Fiscal Dependents in China (not including armed forces), 1998-2006

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Fiscal Dependents (million)	38.43	39.86	41.7	42.62	43.55	44.18	44.89	45.51	46.26

Note: In 1999, there were about 3.5 million people enlisted in the armed forces. The number remains stable in the following years.

Source: Ministry of Finance, *Statistical Materials for Prefectures, Cities, and Counties Nationwide* (Quanguo dishixian caizheng tongji ziliao); Wenhao Cheng and Dapeng Lu, "The Scale of Government Employment and Influential Variables," *Social Sciences in China*, No. 2 (2010), pp. 84-102.

Up to the year of 2006, 46.26 million employees were fully or partially paid by government budget. Though there may be some underreporting, it does not affect our understanding of the state domain. According to the report of the World Bank, personal emoluments for public sector employees constitute a major component of Chinese government expenditure especially at the local level. In OECD countries compensation costs for the public sector as a percentage of general government consumption expenditure ranged from 37 to 79 percent in 1996. In China, personnel costs make up from 50 to 73 percent of budgeted public expenditure at the local level. In poorer jurisdictions, the relative burden of public personnel emoluments is generally even greater.⁸⁹ The 46 million fiscal dependents, plus SOE employees and about 3 million people enlisted in the PLA, belongs to the "state" part of China's state capitalism. They have dossiers in the Ministry of Personnel or its local agencies, distinguished from those in free market who are generally monitored by the Ministry of Labor and Social security. A large number of state-sector workers enjoy lifetime employment and receive perfect social insurance, thereby the least affected

⁸⁹ World Bank, *China National Development and Sub-National Finance: A Review of Provincial Expenditures* (Washington: World Bank, 2002), p. 141.

by the ups and downs of market economy. They are not necessarily wealthy but stable and secure. That is exactly what hundreds of thousands of parents hope their children to have. In China, “state” is the real scarce resource.

Shibing Tuji (Soldiers Sortie) is a fiction authored by Chinese novelist Lan Xiaolong. In 2006 it was adapted into a popular TV series widely broadcasted in mainland China. The story is about a young man, Xu Sanduo, who was born in a backward inland village in 1977. Living up to the hope of his father, Xu Baishun, Sanduo joins the PLA when he grows up. Lan writes an interesting conversation between Xu Baishun and the village head. They are talking about one of the border conflicts between China and Vietnam in 1979.

Xu: “Head, tell me the truth. How long will the war take? Is it possible to be years?”

The village head: “Why years?!”

Xu: “Yile⁹⁰ is thirteen. In a couple of years he’ll be of age. I hope he could be enlisted.”

The village head looked aside: “It was over already, only less than half a month.”⁹¹

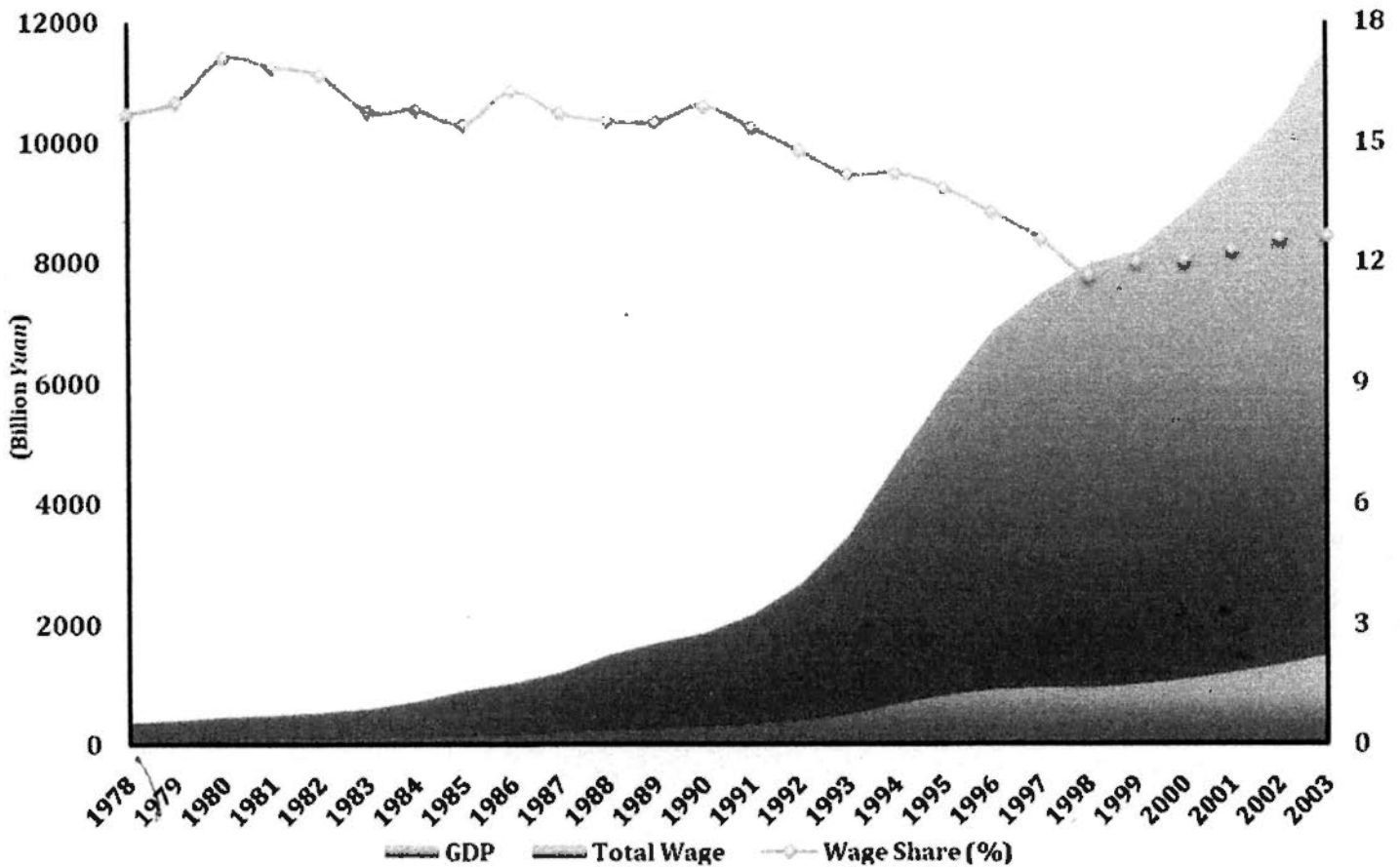
The father has three sons. All the time he has been thinking about how to get them enlisted. It is not easy. In his county, recruitment quotas are always tight. “Stay in the army for a couple of years. Once retired, a job would be assigned in the town. The kids then can permanently leave the poor village and ride with the state.” That is the father’s rationality as well as the calculation of thousands of Chinese fathers, who send their kids to the PLA. For Xu Baishun, war is not necessarily a bad thing. Engaged in a war, the state will need more young people in the army. For his kids, it means opportunities. In China the maintenance of a standing army provides not only stable “jobs” but also a hope of upward social mobility. For young people from rural families, the most common alternative is to be migrant workers working in low-wage labor-intensive industries and becoming unemployable soon (for either injury or old age). In comparison, to “ride with the state” is no doubt a better choice.

⁹⁰ The oldest son of Xu Baishun.

⁹¹ Lan Xiaolong, *Shibing tuji (Soldiers' sortie)*, (Hebei: Huashan Art and Literature Press, 2007), p. 10.

Economic development worsens the status of the wage labor in the free market. The benefits of economic growth are increasingly flowing to corporate profits and government revenues. Consequently, as one of the World Bank researches indicates, “the flipside of the increase in enterprise income and buoyant tax revenues is that wage income, and household income in general, has declined as a share of GDP.”⁹² This trend is reflected in a shrinking wage share in the growing economic pie. The wage share – the ratio between total wages bill in all sectors and nominal GDP – measures how economic growth is distributed between labor and capital. In China, labor’s Share of GDP has remained at very low levels through the “reform and opening up” period. Compared to 17 percent in 1980, it had actually dropped by about 4 percentage points to 12.6 percent in 2003. (See Figure 4.7)

Figure 4.7 Wage Share of China, 1978-2003



Source: National Bureau of Statistics, China Statistical Yearbook

⁹² He Jianwu and Louis Kuijs, “Rebalancing China’s Economy: Modeling a Policy Package,” World Bank China Research Paper No. 7, September 2007, p. 11.

At its lowest point -- the year of 1998, only 11.7 percent of the nominal GDP went to the pocket of wage-labor.⁹³ The deteriorating bargaining power of the labor sets the stage for the intensification of income inequality in China. According to the survey data collected by the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU), 23.4 percent of Chinese workers failed to get a raise in the past five years, with some 75.2 percent of employees complaining about the income inequality.⁹⁴

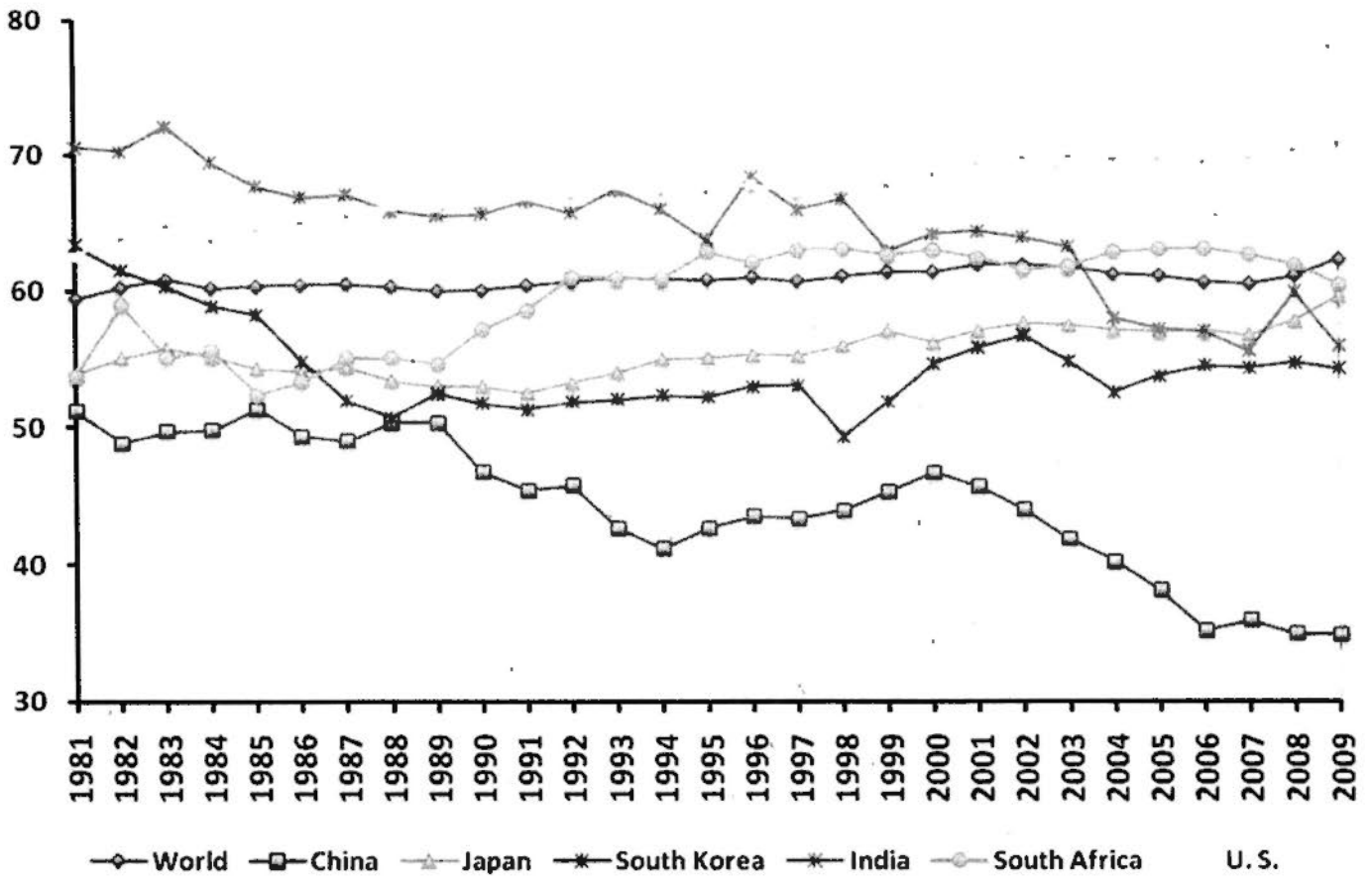
Because a relatively large share of total income goes to capital in the form of interest and profits and government in the form of taxes, in the face of economic and policy uncertainty the salaried class has to refrain from consuming and spending. China's consumption rate stood at 35.3 percent in 2008, which is not only far lower than the 70.1 percent in the U.S., but is also below South Africa's rate of 61.9 percent and India's of 54.7 percent.⁹⁵ (See Figure 4.8) In 2009, citizens of Japan and South Korea, who historically share a similar saving culture with China, spent 15 percent more of their household income than the Chinese. In correspondence with the ever-declining consumption rates are the ever-climbing saving rates. (See Figure 4.9) The Chinese populace are now saving more than 50 percent of their income. The ominously high saving rates cause chronic insufficiency of domestic demand, plaguing China's economy for years.

Figure 4.8 Household Final Consumption Expenditure (% of GDP), 1981-2009

⁹³ See also Deng Yuwen, "Gongzi shouru zhan GDP bizhong guodi shuoming shenme" (What the low wage share means?), *China Youth Daily*, June 21, 2005.

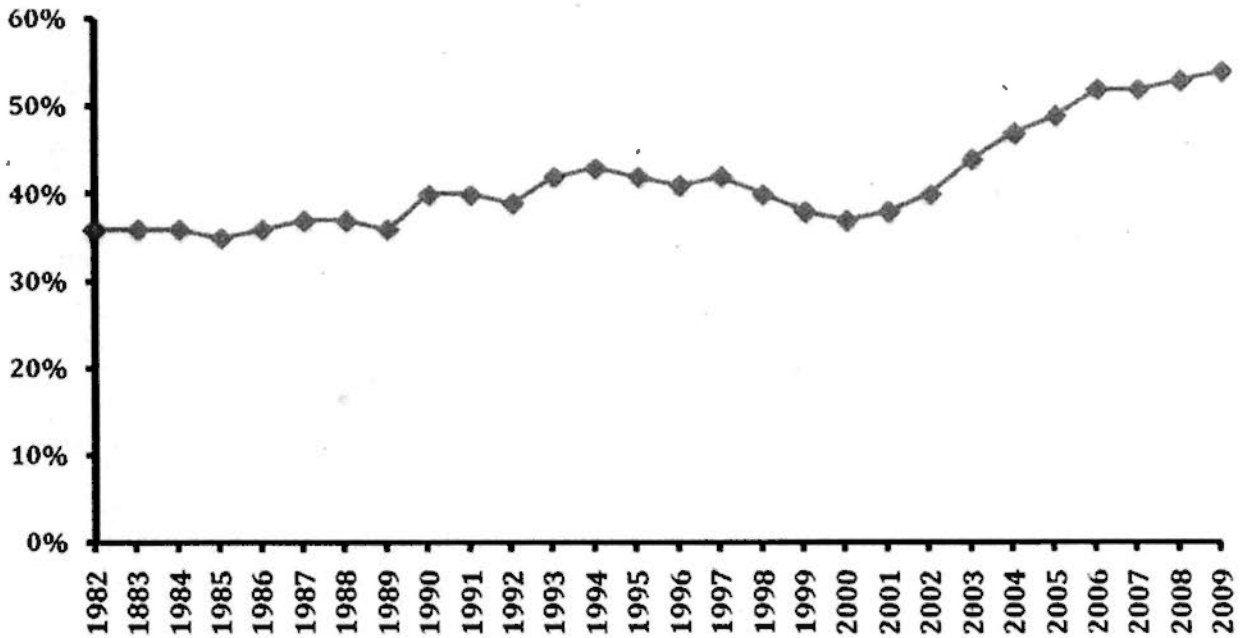
⁹⁴ "China's Labor Share of GDP Declined for 22 Consecutive Years," *Caijing*, May 12, 2010.

⁹⁵ See also "Consumption and Urbanization to Drive China's Economy," *People's Daily*, December 14, 2009, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90778/90862/6841622.html>, accessed December 16, 2009.



Source: World Development Indicators, The World Bank

Figure 4.9 China Gross Savings (% of GDP), 1982-2009



Source: World Development Indicators, The World Bank

To conclude, state capitalism puts China on a fast track to economic prosperity,

achieving a remarkable improvement in the general standard of living. Shaohua Chen and Martin Ravallion broadly estimate that between 1981 and 2001, the number of people living below \$1 per day in China declined by over 400 million. In the meantime the number in the rest of the world rose from 850 to 880 million.⁹⁶ Though China had for a long time been ruled by a disinterested government who remained impartial in interest conflicts among different social and political groups,⁹⁷ the situation began to change in recent years. The China Model of development favors a small group of people at the expense of the rest as well as the long-term interests of the nation as a whole. Through excessive monopoly over political and economic resources, state capitalism in China runs on a two-rail track – the exertion of state power and the operation of a *laissez faire* market. From an individual's perspective, the former provides economic well-being and social security while the latter entails personal freedom and high risk. The ruthless marketization confronts individuals living outside the protection of the state with a series of challenges never before encountered, and renders them extremely vulnerable to social and economic hazards. Paradoxically, due to the lack of effective democratic institutions and a viable civil society, the predatory state often turns out to be the only party people can appeal to. In a covert manner, the Chinese variant of modernization engenders enormous demand for the “state,” fuelling the old “strong state complex” with new incentives.

4.2 Sovereignty

In the preceding chapters, I have discussed at length the following four notions:

1. What a government can do, to a large extent, is restricted by the nation's particular characteristics. Successful national development depends on the ability to use local knowledge to address local problems. (see 2.2.1)
2. Nationalism contends that all peoples need to freely decide their own way of participating in modernity (see 2.1.1 & 3.4) and the efficacy of political

⁹⁶ Chen Shaohua and Martin Ravallion, “How Have the World's Poorest Fared Since the Early 1980s?” Policy Research Working Paper 3341 of World Bank, (2004), online at http://econ.worldbank.org/files/36297_wps3341.pdf, pp. 17, 20.

⁹⁷ Yao Yang, “The End of the Beijing Consensus: Can China's Model of Authoritarian Growth Survive?” *Foreign Affairs*, February 2, 2010, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/65947/the-end-of-the-beijing-consensus>, access February 25, 2010.

solutions to socioeconomic problems can only be evaluated under the local context (see 2.2.1).

3. The international human rights regime actually delegitimizes all political systems that are not liberal-democratic. (see 2.2.1)
4. The moral legitimacy of secessionist self-determination and the improving viability of small states create great uncertainty for multinational states whose territorial integrity has long been challenged. (see 3.1)

These four factors animate China's unyielding stance on the doctrine of national sovereignty, especially the Westphalian type. The first two propositions are suggestive of particularism to develop China in a uniquely Chinese way. The last two make defending China's one-party system and prohibiting ethnic secessionism top priorities of Chinese politics. State Councilor Dai Bingguo, in an important Party document, identifies three core interests of China: First, China's form of government and political system and stability, namely the leadership of the Communist Party of China, the socialist system and socialism with Chinese characteristics; Second, China's sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity; Third, the basic guarantee for sustainable economic and social development of China. "These interests brook no violation," claims Dai Bingguo.⁹⁸ "Chinese Exceptionalism" and absolute sovereignty tend to be two complementary weapons to fend off external criticism to these goals as well as the approaches to realize them.

4.2.1 "Chinese Exceptionalism"

People around the globe have been well aware of "American Exceptionalism," and a great deal of criticism has been poured upon the U.S. for the prerogatives it enjoys. By comparison, very scant notice is served to the Exceptionalism roaring in China. American Exceptionalism holds that the U.S is qualitatively different from other countries. It has successfully developed a uniquely American ideology and thrived on a socioeconomic system distinct from all predecessors. Chinese Exceptionalism is

⁹⁸ DaiBingguo, "Jianchi zou heping fazhan daolu (Sticking to the Peaceful Development Road)," in the CCP Central Committee, *Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu zhiding guomin jingji dishierge bunian guinea de jianyi (The CCP Central Committee's Proposal for Formulating the 12th Five-Year Plan for China's Economic and Social Development)*, October 2010, English full-text available on <http://www.chinaembassy.nl/eng/hldt/t815433.htm>, accessed November 11, 2010.

erected on an altogether different basis. It looks to both historical glories and present predicaments. China is the world's oldest living civilization. Its successful survival over thousands of years is due to the greatness of its culture and adaptive capabilities of its people. However, declining both in power and status, modern China became the largest, the most populous, and before the "reform and opening up", the poorest country in the world. Russia is of its size, but has a much smaller population; Japan is as populous as it, but enjoys much higher domestic homogeneity; India is comparable in terms of size and population and has a very heterogeneous society, but it is much richer in natural endowment especially arable lands. In a word, China is and ought to be unique in the past and now. It operates on a distinct cultural and value system and it will overcome national difficulties in its own way. In this vein, China's political discourse is replete with "Chinese characteristics" narratives. China has "socialism with Chinese characteristics," "market economy with Chinese characteristics," "socialist democracy with Chinese characteristics," "legal framework with Chinese characteristics," to name a few. Barry Buzan argues that China takes a very self-centered view of its own development and the often-heard phrase "Chinese characteristics" is suggestive of an inward-looking type of Chinese Exceptionalism. It presumes how the culturally unique Chinese people are doing things is not necessarily relevant to those outside China.⁹⁹ Among these particularistic claims, many are legitimate. China has to creatively adapt to modernity, drawing its own cultural and social resources to address various challenges in a realistic manner and viewing China's future from a historical perspective. As noted in Chapter 2, every human society needs to offer its own response to the imperatives of modernization, or, in other words, to indigenize modernity in a specific cultural space. Few peoples are actually willing to copy someone else's life, no matter how good it is, without reflections and innovations. And, more importantly, no one should be. Simply adopting successful institutional forms elsewhere is not the sure way of promoting development.¹⁰⁰ On this point, the opinion of a post-80s blogger Miss T (age 24, Master student of Tsinghua University, majored in Journalism, famous online for her tough patriotic stance) is illustrative:

Q: "What makes you think sovereignty is so important?"

⁹⁹ Buzan, 2010, p. 22

¹⁰⁰ See Michael Woolcock and Lant Pritchett, "Solutions When the Solution is the Problem: Arraying the Disarray in Development," *World Development* 32, No. 2 (2004), pp. 191-212

A: "It's all about autonomy. Adults have to make decisions on their own. We see it as a virtue or a qualification for adulthood. My mother likes fussing over my life. She's so restless about my friends, my school, my dress, my everything. Many Chinese parents do this, you know. It's culture. [sigh] She thinks she knows better about life than me, she has better judgments. That's probably true. She's mother. She's more experienced. But I would like to have full control of my own life, though my choice might turn to be stupid from time to time. The same is applicable to a state or a nation. We don't need someone else to tell us what is wrong and what is right. ... We're talking about a country of a 1.3 billion population. There are enough smart minds to think about what is the best for the people. I'm not saying we have never made mistakes. Again, it's not simply a matter of right or wrong." (Interview 9, June 2009)

However, the particularistic account is easy to be abused by both the government and the public. After a 6.3-magnitude earthquake hit Christchurch February 2011, Beijing asked New Zealand to pay extra compensation to the parents of Chinese victims because China's single-child policy had exacerbated their loss. Under New Zealand law, the families of disaster victims, regardless of nationality, receive payments from a government fund called the Accident Compensation Commission (ACC). Cheng Lei, a Chinese diplomat in Wellington, told the media the single-child policy meant these Chinese parents lost not only a loved one, but also their only prop in old age.¹⁰¹ The single-child policy is a typical Chinese characteristic. The *pros* and *cons* of the policy itself are beyond the range of this discussion. The point here is that the Chinese think "Chinese characteristics" should be well observed, and sometimes even command special treatment, in international affairs.

Worse still, Chinese Exceptionalism provides a strong justification for the authority to implement repressive national policies or dampen social discontent. Scholars have predicted that the coming of information age will facilitate democratic transformation by holding political regimes more accountable for their policies.

¹⁰¹ Agence France-Presse, "China Asks N Zealand for Extra Earth Quake Cash," *Yahoo*, http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20110314/afp/nzealandchinaquake_diplomacy, accessed March 16, 2011

Because of the penetration of global media and the accelerating popularity of the internet, it becomes increasingly easy for the general public to compare the situation of their own country with that of others and judge their national government's policy choice unwise or unjust, not to mention citizens can vote with their feet through permanent emigration.¹⁰² Pierre Salmon, borrowing from the economic theory of a tournament or rank-order competition, theorizes the mechanism of intergovernmental competition. His analysis shows that members of one group or collectivity can evaluate the performance of their own elites by reference to the conduct and undertakings of elites in other groups or collectivities, which weakens the local authority on a regular basis.¹⁰³ Shirley Hsiao-Li Sun observes Singaporeans have actively questioned the effectiveness of state policies by comparing them with policies perceived to be in operation in other national contexts, e.g., France, Canada, China, Denmark, Germany and the United Kingdom, in respect of government subsidies for larger families, length of maternity leave, and employee's rights to paternal leave. Sun suggests that globalization weakens the state authority by subjecting any national move to the review of its citizens from a comparative perspective.¹⁰⁴ International comparison accruing at the individual level generates not only more criticism toward national policies but higher expectations of a strong and efficient government. Theoretically, it could make governmental decision-making process more interactive with public opinions than ever before. In this sense, international comparison undermines state authority and increases the difficulty of governance by the local elites because they always needs to address one serious question from the subjects, "If those people can do it, why can't us?" However, particularism provides a universal solution to any popular challenge referring to foreign experience "because we are different." By setting a separate frame of reference, Chinese Exceptionalism can easily dismiss any legitimate popular appeal as unfeasible or inappropriate under *local* context.

¹⁰² On the subject of how knowledge structure forms public opinion, see, for example, Linda Berger, "How Embedded Knowledge Structures Affect Judicial Decision-making: A rhetorical Analysis of Metaphor, Narrative, and Imagination in Child Custody Disputes," *South California Interdisciplinary Law Journal* 18 (2009), pp. 259-308

¹⁰³ Pierre Salmon, "Decentralization As an Incentive Scheme," *Oxford Review of Economic Policy* 3, No. 2 (Summer 1987), pp. 24-43

¹⁰⁴ Shirley Hsiao-Li Sun, "From Citizen-Duty to State-Responsibility: Globalization and Nationhood in Singapore," *New Global Studies* 4, Iss. 3 (2010), Article 1

4.2.2 From Empire to Nation-state

China is still in the process of constructing self-identity as a regular nation-state in the modern sense. Given China's enduring legacy of dynasty politics, reshaping a disintegrated empire into a well-defined nation-state – an ordinary member of the state system coexisting with many other equals – proves an arduous task for China's political elites. It has been pushed to observe the finiteness of the Chinese nation in terms of territory, demography, cultural parameter, and political space but has not fulfilled it yet. Where the boundaries of the “Chinese people,” “Chinese nation,” and “Chinese state” should be drawn and whether or not the three dimensions should be commensurate has remained ambiguous and contested ever since the earliest nationalists, such as Liang Qichao and Sun Yat-sen.¹⁰⁵ As Chang Pao-min astutely points out:

When China declares that Tibet or Xinjiang is an ‘inseparable part of China’...the “China” referred to is political and territorial, meaning the ‘Chinese state.’ But when Beijing proclaims Hong Kong, Macao, or Taiwan to be ‘an inseparable part of China,’ the ‘China’ is cultural.¹⁰⁶

The unsettlement about where is China and who are Chinese has led to recurrent misunderstandings and confrontations inside and outside China.¹⁰⁷ Historically, the PRC's territorial disputes with its neighbors have provided powerful occasions for the expression of nationalism, which was interpreted as expansionism from time to time (e.g. the Korean War in 1950; the Sino-Indian War in 1962; the Sino-Soviet conflict in 1969; the Sino-Vietnamese War in 1979; the Sino-Vietnamese conflict in the South China Sea in 1988; the ongoing Diaoyu Island/Senkaku Island disputes with Japan, and the South China Sea confrontations with Southeastern neighbors). Chinese nationalism has rarely manifested itself as an exclusive force. Confucianism in history had acculturated the nomadic conquerors from the North with remarkable success before the defeat by the British in 1840s. The dominant Han ethnic is by and

¹⁰⁵ For a discussion of who are Chinese, see William A. Callahan, *China: The Pessimist Nation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

¹⁰⁶ Chang, 2000, p. 287.

¹⁰⁷ A thorough discussion of the geographical area the term “China” (*zhongguo*) referred to in history found in Victoria Yin-bor Hu, “How China Was Ruled?” *The American Interest* (March/April, 2008)

large non-religious and non-exclusive. It is prone to pre-identify all people of Chinese ascent as natural members of *zhonghuaminzu* (the Chinese nation), no matter which country they are currently residing in and what nationality they actually hold. Allen Whiting quotes an unidentified Chinese official, interviewed by a *Far Eastern Economic Review* reporter, that the PRC is now acknowledged to be “the sole legal government of the entire Chinese people,” which includes Hong Kong, Taiwan, and, more far-reaching, the overseas Chinese.¹⁰⁸ When Lee Kuan Yew, the Prime Minister of Singapore, met President Barack Obama in October 2009, he urged the U.S. to retain its presence in Asia. In his keynote address delivered at a gala dinner in Washington, Lee said,

The size of China makes it impossible for the rest of Asia, including Japan and India, to match it in weight and capacity in about 20 to 30 years. So we need America to strike a balance.¹⁰⁹

Reported widely by local and foreign media, Lee’s speech stirred up excessive nationalist sentiments among the Chinese populace. Lee was called “unabashed traitor” for his “anti-Chinese” attitudes.¹¹⁰ Chinese people’s overreaction derives from a deep-seated misperception about the relationship between cultural affinity and state interest. Singapore has never been seriously considered as an independent sovereign state with its own national interests to pursue. Deep in Chinese public’s psyche, though probably not consciously expressed, Singapore is supposed to be a steadfast ally to cooperate with, and a reliable friend standing on China’s side in world affairs. Thus, when Lee turned to the U. S. for counterbalance against China, the Chinese public was surprised.

Alastair Iain Johnston suggests a distinction should be drawn between the concepts of “learning” and “adaptation.” A learning state internalizes exogenous definitions, norms and rules and obeys voluntarily. An adaptive state moves pragmatically and adjusts to changing circumstances without a fundamental change of assumptions and

¹⁰⁸Whiting, 1983, p. 915

¹⁰⁹ Chua Chin Hon, “PM Calls on US to Retain Key Role in East Asia,” *The Straits Times*, October 29, 2009, http://www.pmo.gov.sg/content/pmosite/mediacentre/inthenews/ministermentor_2009/October_nim_calls_on_us_to_retain_key_role_in_east_asia.html, accessed April 10, 2010

¹¹⁰“Lee Kuan Yew ‘yongmeizhizhong’ weihe liny guoren jingcha” (Why has Lee Kuan Yew’s Asian strategy stunned the Chinese?), *Huanqiu Luowang (Worldwide watch)*, November 6, 2009

approaches.¹¹¹ China's responses to the demand of the modern state system are, to a great degree, "adaptation" with relatively low level of internalization. It cannot help looking back upon ancient glories in contemplating its contemporary situation. In this sense, Chinese nationalism is historically nostalgic. On the other hand, it has to face the reality that the old Chinese empire has been irreversibly shattered. The pressing task of Chinese nationalism is to prevent the current territory from further disintegration. China's compliance with the international norms regarding nation-state and the nation-state system has little to do with the justice these norms can serve to China. Rather it concerns primarily with to what extent they can contribute to China's international survival.

Victor Zaslavsky once described the former Soviet Union was "a state which unites a Norway and a Pakistan"¹¹² Considering the vast regional disparity between the central plains and the periphery, the same statement is also applicable to China. Due to the heterogeneous composition of the modern China state, Chinese nationalism primarily focuses on preserving the sovereign state system, which claims to represent all Han and non-Han people, or, *zhonghuaminzu*. In order to fit the Han-centered historical records into the unitary multinational statehood, the Ministry of Education had to cautiously define the concept of "national heroes" (*minzu yingxiong*), who fought other ethnicities in different dynasties, such as Yue Fei (1103-1142) and Wen Tianxiang (1236-1283). It advised high school teachers to carefully interpret the meanings of "national heroes," which should be understood under specific historical and political contexts.¹¹³ The principle of the self-determination of the people is the sword of Damocles hanging over the multinational state. It reminds the authority that their legitimate rule over peripheral ethnic minorities might be subject to fatal challenges, even though the real danger of *de facto* succession remains moderate. As David Campbell contends:

[The] mere existence of an alternative mode of being, the presence of which exemplifies that different identities are possible and thus denaturalizes the

¹¹¹ See Alastair Iain Johnston, "Learning Versus Adaptation: Explaining Change in China's Arms Control Policy in 1980s and 1990s", *The China Journal*, No. 35 (January 1996), pp. 27-61

¹¹² Victor Zaslavsky, *From Union to Commonwealth: Nationalism and Separatism in the Soviet Republics Co-author* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 114.

¹¹³ Anthony Kurn, "Age-old Nationalist Hero Gets a Demotion in China," *Los Angeles Times*, January 28, 2003, A3

claim of a particular identity to be the true identity, is sometimes enough to produce the understanding of a threat.¹¹⁴

In this sense, the fear of separatist nationalism, more than anything else, pushes the regime to stress the importance of Westphalian sovereignty that bases authority on territorial state, not cultural identity.¹¹⁵ As a result, China is regarded one of the most orthodox defender of the Westphalian sovereignty in the present world.¹¹⁶ It is tenacious in defending its full political autonomy and absolute jurisdiction over domestic affairs. Chinese spokespersons and official media have ritualistically reiterated the unshakable Chinese stance on “independent foreign policy” and “nonintervention in domestic affairs” in response to foreign criticism. As Samuel Kim notes, “some wayward stranger from another planet, doing a content analysis of the annual UN debate on the state of the world, could easily take sovereignty as quintessentially a Chinese idea.”¹¹⁷

To conclude, the multinationality of modern China is a major source of state insecurity. The looming danger of national disintegration thereby serves as a strong incentive for Chinese nationalism to uphold Westphalian sovereignty. In the period of “reform and opening up,” China has been oscillating between defending the principle of non-intervention and participating in liberalist international institutions. In some sense it wants to achieve both, but the two goals prove to be incompatible with one another from time to time. In order to address the dilemma, China has been inclined to welcome or even solicit some types of external influence, e.g., foreign direct investment (FDI), while negatively avoid or actively oppose others, e.g. human rights criticism. Chinese Exceptionalism plays an important role in resisting undesirable foreign influences and justifying domestic policies. It aims to build a fence between internal and external affairs and takes an inward-looking attitude on a wide range of national development issues.

¹¹⁴ David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*, Rev. ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), p. 3.

¹¹⁵ Zheng, 1999, p. 93; Lei, 2005, p. 509; Krasner, 1995-1996, pp. 115-151.

¹¹⁶ Davis, 2006, pp. 22-27.

¹¹⁷ Samuel Kim, “Sovereignty in the Chinese Image of World Order,” in Ronald St. J. Macdonald, ed., *Essays in Honor of Wang Tiew* (London: Martinus Nijhoff, 1993), p. 428.

4.3 Seeking for Dignity

The discussion of this section is based on three arguments I have presented in the preceding chapters:

1. Nations are not created equal and the advance of modernity is uneven in nature. Nationalism is fueled by the desires to join in modernity and to be thought well of by others. (See 2.1.1 & 3.2)
2. Nationalism starts with differences and gains momentum in incessant comparison. (See 2.1.1)
3. Due to the development of recognition politics, the international status of any human society is vulnerable to nonrecognition from others. (See 3.1)

Social epidemiologists and psychologists have piled up evidence to prove that human health and happiness is significantly affected by people's social status.¹¹⁸ However, the role of desire for status in processes of social transformation has been generally underestimated in classic theories of Social Science. Departing from what Modernists, like Gellner, have observed, the theme of modern nationalisms is no longer confined to the struggle for the congruence between nation and state or to "endow a culture with its own political roof."¹¹⁹ As Greenfeld trenchantly points out, "it is the sense of dignity that lies at the basis of national patriotism and commitment to national causes, which often strike outside observers as irrational."¹²⁰ In her now seminal book *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*, Greenfeld challenges the materialist and structuralist approaches of other theorists in the field by arguing that the emergence of nationalism was closely related to preoccupation with status. She concludes:

The English aristocracy sought to justify it; the French and the Russian nobility to protect it; the German intellectuals to achieve it. Even for the

¹¹⁸ See, for example, M. G. Marmot, *Status Syndrome: How Your Social Standing Directly Affects Your Health* (London: Bloomsbury, 2005); Richard G. Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, *The Spirit Level: Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better* (London, New York: Allen Lane, 2009).

¹¹⁹ Gellner, 1983, p. 43.

¹²⁰ Greenfeld, 2001, p. 3

materialistic Americans, taxation without representation was an insult to their pride, more than an injury to their economic interests. They fought and became a nation over respect due to them, rather than anything else.¹²¹

This psychological dimension of nationalism concerns not only the material well-being of a society but external recognition, compliment, and admiration accorded to it. As stated by Geertz, the peoples of the new states are simultaneously animated by two powerful motives – the desire to be recognized as responsible agents whose wishes, acts, hopes, and opinions “matter,” and the desire to build an efficient dynamic modern state.¹²² Berlin explains how the history of oppression and the lack of recognition give enormous impetus to nationalism in the backward societies. He states:

It is to be found among those hitherto suppressed peoples or minorities – those ethnic groups which feel humiliated or oppressed, to whom nationalism represents the straightening of bent backs, the recovery of a freedom that they may never have had. . . . [and] revenge for their insulted humanity. This is less acutely felt in societies which have enjoyed political independence for long periods. The West has, by and large, satisfied that hunger for recognition; it is lack of this that, more than any other cause, seems to lead to nationalist excesses.¹²³

In this light, nationalism, or at least one facet of it, should be understood as an ideological expression of the fundamental human quest for dignity and social recognition, which is not a particular cultural trait but a universal characteristic of humanity.

According to Taylor, social elites risk losing dignity and hurting self-esteem in the face of modernity. The threat does not necessarily take the form of immediate military conquest. It could even “exist in university textbooks, in the extraordinary industrial design of iPhone, in the shining painting of Benz.”¹²⁴ In this sense, for a

¹²¹ Greenfeld, 1992, p. 488

¹²² Geertz, 1973, p. 258.

¹²³ Berlin, 1972, p. 29.

¹²⁴ Taylor, 1997, p. 45.

late industrializer challenges wrought by modernization are ubiquitous and, often, formidable. Furthermore, in the era of mass politics the importance of dignity is increasingly sensed and accentuated by the general public who used to stand on the sideline of politics in pre-modern hierarchies. Martin Wight argues that the growth of democracy and socialism has spread among the middle classes and the masses the sentiments of national pride that used to be confined to kings and courts. “In too many countries,” puts Wight, “there is a powerful section of journalism that thrives by promoting distrust of foreigners and the illusion of self-sufficiency.”¹²⁵

As Avishai Margalit notes, identities in the modern world are more and more formed in this direct relation to others, in a space of recognition.¹²⁶ The concept of “good” gives way to the concept of “better” or “relative advance.” The innovations of terms like “developed” and “developing” are more about denoting a country’s place in the pecking order of the international society than depicting the quality of the socioeconomic life inside it. For every human group, there is something to be caught up with. Joining in modernity is equivalent to joining in a race with an ever-receding finishing line. Participants of the race see themselves rated on a variety of criteria and which rating matters a lot to them. In the charge of recognition politics, the value of beings is more and more subject to constant comparison and external recognition. In this section I first explore the role national humiliation plays in China’s deep-seated status anxiety. Then I use a diplomatic dispute between China and Britain to illustrate how historical memories function in contemporary foreign policy.

4.3.1 National Humiliation and Status Anxiety

The literature on the relationship between the reminiscence of past imperialist humiliations and Chinese nationalism is vast and rich.¹²⁷ It has been suggested by a number of scholars that the vehement feelings of grievance is rooted in the history of humiliation at the hands of imperialism. “In contrast to the self-confident American nationalism of manifest destiny,” observes Andrew Nathan and Robert Ross,

¹²⁵ Martin Wight, *Power Politics* (London: Royal Institute for International Affairs, 1946), pp. 34-35

¹²⁶ Margalit, 1997, p. 46.

¹²⁷ See, in particular, W. W. Rostow, *Politics and the Stages of Growth* (Cambridge Eng.: University Press, 1971); Berlin, 1972, pp. 11-30; and Geertz, 1973.

“Chinese nationalism is powered by feelings of national humiliation and pride.”¹²⁸ Lucian Pye notes that the Chinese “continue to dwell on the idea that they were years ago grossly and cruelly mistreated by others, and consequently they have a huge burden of humiliation that they feel they can live down by being aggressively self-righteous.”¹²⁹ In a similar vein, James Townsend argues that western domination was both the catalyst for Chinese nationalism and the object that fervent Chinese nationalists were resisting.¹³⁰

Feelings of humiliation occur when the inferior encounters the superior.¹³¹ The interactions between the two parties are not necessarily conflictual in nature. Cooperative and reciprocal communications can create the same psychological effects. The attitudes of the advanced, humble or arrogant, modest or assertive, plays merely a secondary role in the occurrence of the sense of humiliation. The inferior feelings of the unadvanced are primarily caused by the real or perceived gap between the two parties in terms of power, wealth, or capacity. Put differently, the feeling of humiliation can take place without any external stimulus, e.g. coercive behaviors, derogative remarks, or discriminative treatment. The inferior status itself can give rise to feelings of humiliation. However, the sense of humiliation is not necessarily harmful or reactionary for human society. The anxiety of being inferior can constitute an incentive to improve one’s lot through self-reformation and hard work. In different scenario, it may induce self-deception and narrow-minded xenophobia to shut out potential competitors. In a sense, nationalism serves as a defense mechanism in the face of the intensifying international competition. Defense mechanisms are psychological strategies brought into play by various entities to cope with reality and to maintain self-image. Healthy persons normally use different defenses throughout life. An Ego Defense Mechanism becomes pathological only when its persistent use leads to maladaptive behavior such that the physical and/or mental health of the individual is adversely affected. The purpose of the Ego Defense Mechanisms is to protect the mind/self/ego from anxiety, social sanctions or to provide a refuge from a

¹²⁸ Nathan and Ross, 1997, p. 34

¹²⁹ Pye, 1996, p. 12.

¹³⁰ Townsend, 1992, pp. 97-130.

¹³¹ For a general theory on humiliation, among other human emotions, and its political implications, see Dominique Moisi, *The Geopolitics of Emotion: How Cultures of Fear, Humiliation and Hope are Reshaping the World* (London: the Bodley Head, 2009)

situation with which one cannot currently cope.¹³²

Ever since China opened its door in 1978, it has been frantically engaged in catching up with the wealthy societies. It is arguable that China's economic miracle was at least in part a triumphant response to the superiority of the West. Over the past decades, this country has made great efforts to prove to the industrialized powers that China on its own could perform well in the global competition. After three decades of rapid growth, China hoped to display its prosperity and greatness through a two-week sports Gala with luxurious opening ceremony, spectacular stadium, and impressive lineup of youth volunteers. In a sense, the 2008 Beijing Olympics imbued with too much political significance was built to be a pride generator. One of the most important honors it brought to China was the then U.S. President George W. Bush's presence in the opening ceremony. Bush was the first U.S. president to attend Olympic Games outside of the United States. His acceptance of the Olympic invitation came as a key symbolic victory of China's global efforts to invite a big collection of heads of state or heads of government for the first day's festivities. Chinese official media particularly stressed that "Bush said he was 'honored' to be invited to attend the Beijing Olympics"¹³³ while no other major international media inside and outside the U.S. ever mentioned it¹³⁴.

Basil Davidson elaborates in his 1992 book *The Blackman's Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation-state* the difficult choice Africans face in building modern states of their own. Social elites of African countries constantly agonize about: "Why adopts models from those very countries or systems that have oppressed and despised you? Why not modernize from the models of your own history or invent new models?"¹³⁵ The same questions have constituted much political debate in China ever since the late Qin. Michael Okenberg observes that Chinese nationalism is hypersensitive to perceived insults and quick to claim that the outside world owes

¹³² Britannica Online Encyclopedia – *Defense Mechanism*, www.britannica.com, accessed March 21, 2009.

¹³³ "Bush: U.S.-China Relations 'Good' and 'Important'," *Xinhua Net*, August 1, 2008, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-08/01/content_8885617.htm, accessed August 2, 2008.

¹³⁴ For example, "Bush Will Be in Beijing for Olympics Opening Ceremony," *CBC News*, July 3, 2008, http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/story/2008/07/03/bush-olympics.html?ref_rss, accessed July 11, 2008; "Bush to Attend Olympic Ceremony," *BBC*, July 4, 2008, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7488858.stm>, accessed July 11, 2008; and "Bush Could Attend Olympics Opening Ceremony," *Reuters*, July 3, 2008, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2008/07/03/us-olympics-china-idUSWAT00972820080703>, accessed July 11, 2008.

¹³⁵ Basil Davidson, *The Blackman's Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation state* (New York: Times Books, 1992), p. 18.

China a debt. He maintains:

Self-pitying, self-righteous and aggrieved nationalism blames China's ills on the transgressions of the outside world. Many intellectuals and midlevel officials, more emotional than reasoned, give voice to such sentiments. They display deep ambivalence toward the outside world, exhibiting both intense scorn and admiration, resentment and appreciation.¹³⁶

A post-80s Chinese graduate student studying at École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) in Switzerland, who was an active leader of the Chinese Student Union of his university, echoed Oksenberg's observation. He spoke to me:

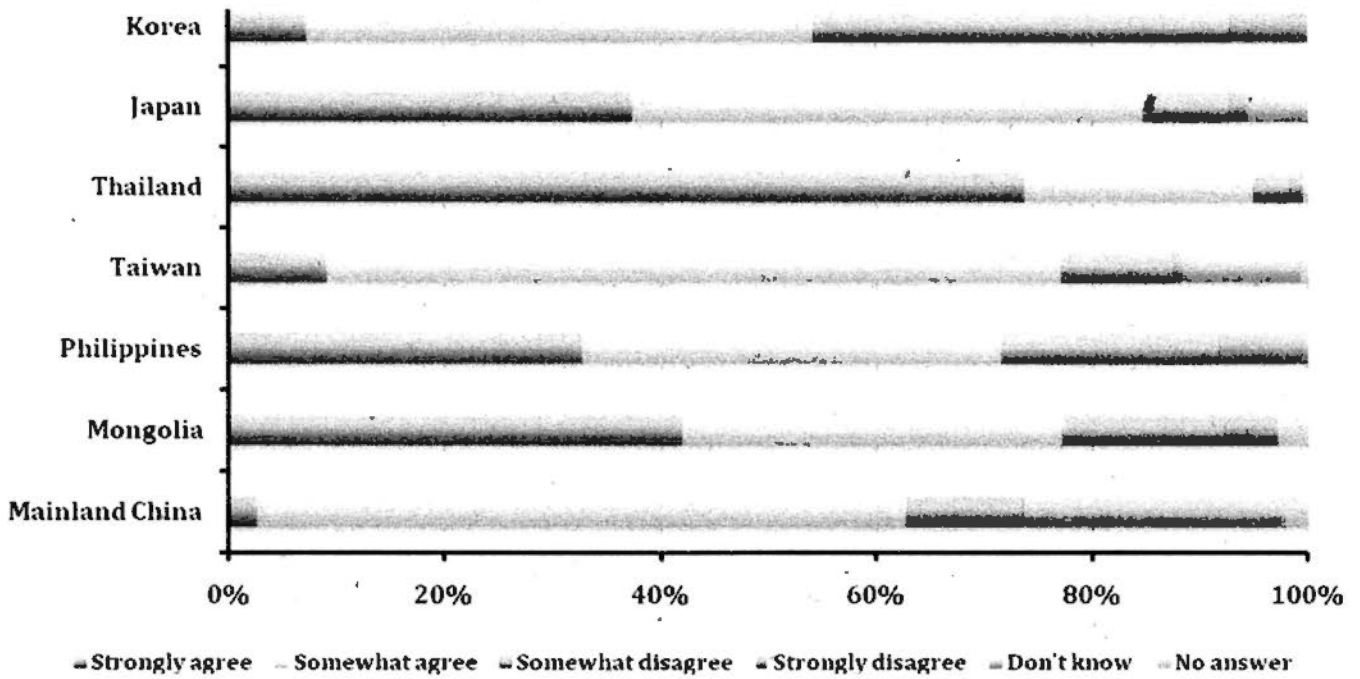
We are living in a time of rapid changes. People can do nothing but adapt. For China, one of the oldest civilizations, giving up its values, beliefs, and traditions has been a painful process. It hurts our self-esteem especially when the developmental imperative to stop being Chinese strikes in our life. The new socioeconomic system emerging in the Western society is both admired and resented by the Chinese. On the one hand, it spelled the doom for Chinese agrarian economy and subjugated us as a semi-colony. On the other, it gives the hope to restore the rightful status of China by emulating their, the Western, institutions. We may or may not overcome the grief caused by losing our Chinese traits. But there seems to be no choice. (Interview 34, December 2010)

Survey data indicates that in comparison with another five Asian countries, the Chinese show the least preference over their national way of life. (See Figure 4.10) Merely 2.6 percent of the respondents strongly agree that the government should defend the Chinese way of life and another 60 percent somewhat agree. In Thailand as high as 95 percent of people either strongly or somewhat agree with the statement. The only country on a par with China is South Korea with 7.3 percent of respondents taking a "strongly agree" stance.

Figure 4.10 Do you agree the statement that our country should defend our way

¹³⁶ Oksenberg, 1986-87, p. 504.

of life?



Note: The data was respectively collected from the six countries from 2001 to 2003.

Source: Values Surveys Databank

In this sense, Chinese nationalism cares less about a traditional way of being Chinese than about the nation's rightful place in the international system. If forsaking some part of the "Chineseness" could invigorate the old civilization and elevate the status of the Chinese people as a whole, it is not necessarily against the nationalist principle from the Chinese perspective.

4.3.2 History Kept Alive

Who controls the past controls the future;

Who controls the present controls the past.

---- George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-four*

Historical narratives play a constitutive role in organizing a society in the form of a nation-state. According to Lloyd Kramers, the history of nationalism is a history of

conflicts over competing narratives that seek to define a social community.¹³⁷ As noted in the previous chapters, political boundaries cannot be settled by either rational argument or a democratic vote. Therefore, there seems little alternative but to define the nation-state with reference to historical communities and their antiquity.¹³⁸ On this account, history matters a lot especially in appeals to external audiences or in sovereignty disputes. The recurrent tension between China and Japan over history textbooks is an exemplary embodiment of such “history centrism.” China accused the Japanese government of tampering with historical facts while Japan condemned CCP’s patriotic education was reactionary anti-Japanese mobilization.

The national past is a historical construct subject to continual reshaping, whether explicit or hidden. Randomly picking a history book of any country, the national past it depicts must be ancient, virtuous, and glorious. It seems that a universal model of writing national history has been propounded, and then all historical materials are tailored and crammed into the schematic construct to serve one common political ends - to justify the existing nation-state. Renan once pointedly noted: “Getting its history wrong is part of being a nation.”¹³⁹ In this vein, Walker Connor argues that, as trying to understand national sentiment, the key is not chronological or factual history, but sentient or felt history.¹⁴⁰

China has long perceived itself as a victim of historical wrongs – in modern history it ceded territory, paid indemnities and gave many political and economic privileges to imperialists. The Chinese people cannot be prohibited from imagining what if the Western powers had not interrupted China’s development from the late Qin to the middle of twentieth century. A post-80s Architecture student based in Hong Kong said:

If the imperialists had not plundered so many valuable works of art, I would

¹³⁷ Lloyd Kramer, “Historical Narratives and the Meaning of Nationalism,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 58, No. 3 (July 1997), p. 537.

¹³⁸ Mayall, 1990, p. 150.

¹³⁹ Ernest Renan, *Qu’est que c’est une nation?* pp. 7-8. “L’oubli et je dirai même l’erreur historique, sont un facteur essentiel de la formation d’une nation et c’est ainsi que le progrès des études historiques est souvent pour la nationalité un danger.” See also Brown, 2002, pp. 42-43.

¹⁴⁰ Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 202-203.

not have to go to the British Museum to see Chinese history... If the Japanese had not invaded us in the 1930s, the Communist party would have no chance to beat KMT and there would be no political disasters like the Cultural Revolution which took so many people's life and destroyed the Confucius moral system at the grassroots. (Interview 5, August 2008)

Though professional Chinese historians may not view the historical contingencies from the same angle, his remarks do represent the general feeling of the Chinese masses.¹⁴¹ The inflexibility of Chinese stance on territorial problems is underpinned by a consensus shared by both the mass public and the political elite that China cannot lose any more. The ongoing disputes over Diaoyu Island (Senkaku Island) and the South China Sea are taken as an opportunity to right the historical wrongs committed upon China in "the century of national humiliation" (*bainian guochi*). It is believed that China has these problems in the first place because it had been weak and bullied by great powers in modern history. Otherwise, the neighboring countries would have no chance to challenge China's hegemony in East Asia. It is neither merely a legal matter over which the International Court of Justice can deliver an impartial verdict nor sheer *realpolitik* calculations driven by acquisitive impulses. Whether China is capable of defending its "national interests" is widely regarded as a matter of dignity. The popularity of such mentality owes much to the collective memory of national humiliation. In the following part, I shall illustrate how historical elements come to influence contemporary issues with a recent diplomatic dispute between China and Britain.

In 2009 China executed Akmal Shaikh, a British national, on drug smuggling charges. It ignited a wave of diplomatic disquiet between China and Britain, which soon escalated to be a standoff due to the excessive public involvement from both sides. 53-year-old Shaikh was the first European Union citizen executed in China in the past five decades. He was caught carrying up to 4 kg of heroin at the Urumqi Airport after arriving from Dushanbe, capital of Tajikistan, on September 12, 2007. His supporters claimed he suffered from bipolar disorder and was deceived to carry a

¹⁴¹ Bernard Lewis quotes a similar example of a high Syrian government official interviewed by a Swiss journalist. The official commented, "If the Mongols had not burnt the libraries of Baghdad in the thirteenth century, we Arabs would have had so much science, that we would long since have invented the atomic bomb. The plundering of Baghdad put us back by centuries." See Lewis, 1975

suitcase without knowledge of the drugs concealed inside. British government ministers and Shaikh's family repeatedly called on China to show clemency. But People's Supreme Court of China did not take these appeals into account. According to the Chinese authorities, Shaikh's mental state was perfectly sound when he was arrested in Urumqi and the British government could not provide any solid evidence to prove that Shaikh had a long history of mental illness.¹⁴² Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu said it was a single criminal case, and Chinese judicial authorities had properly handled the case in accordance with China's law and legal procedures. She stressed the defendant's litigation rights had been carefully minded through the trial.¹⁴³ Shaikh was finally executed by lethal injection on December 29, 2009. His death provoked a strong response from Prime Minister Brown. In a later statement, Mr. Brown said: "I condemn the execution of Akmal Shaikh in the strongest terms, and am appalled and disappointed that our persistent requests for clemency have not been granted."¹⁴⁴ After Downing Street condemned the execution, Chinese spokeswoman Jiang Yu spoke in a press conference. "We express our strong dissatisfaction and opposition to the British government's unwarranted accusations toward the case." She urged London to correct the mistakes to avoid harming bilateral relations¹⁴⁵

On December 29, the same day Shaikh was executed, George Pitcher, the Religion Editor of *Telegraph Media* as well as an Anglican priest, posted on his *Telegraph* blog a letter from a prostitute he knew. The letter indicated that the prostitute was angry about China executing Shaikh, and declared that she would boycott any client holding the Chinese passport for a year.¹⁴⁶ Judging from the following media coverage and the comments posted on Pitcher's blog, local response to this letter was relatively moderate. British participants who voiced opinions were in the main Father Pitcher's followers. They complimented the prostitute's courage, mocked her move, or criticized someone's discriminative remarks towards prostitutes and prostitution.

¹⁴² "Justice Served Right", *China Daily*, December 31, 2009, p. 8, full-text available at

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2009-12/31/content_9249969.htm, accessed January 13, 2010

¹⁴³ Xinhua News Agency, "China Opposes UK Accusation of Drug Smuggler Handling," *China Daily*, December 29, 2009, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2009-12/29/content_9243702.htm, accessed January 13, 2010.

¹⁴⁴ "China Executes Briton Over Drugs," BBC, December 29, 2009, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/2/hi/uk_news/8433285.stm, accessed January 12, 2010

¹⁴⁵ Lei Xiaoxun, "Execution Won't Hurt Long-term Sino-UK Ties," *China Daily*, December 31, 2009, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2009-12/31/content_9249469.htm, accessed January 13, 2010

¹⁴⁶ George Pitcher, Prostitute Boycotts Chinese on Ethical Grounds, *Telegraph Blogs*, December 29, 2009, <http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/georgepitcher/100020870/prostitute-boycotts-chinese-on-ethical-grounds/>, accessed January 12, 2010

Through the entire event, the problem of drug abuse, nostalgic sentiments about Britain losing greatness, and human rights discord centered the agenda of British debate. In contrast, the reactions on China's side were more complicated and more tumultuous. Starting from the prostitute's letter, the two camps engaged in a serious debate involving a wide range of topics, from the Opium War to the history of Tibet. Though the number of Chinese participants was relatively small, they were more motivated to speak out. The debate produced 174 comments in total, 76 of which were evidently posted by Chinese with another 5 unable to be identified. These posters, distinguished from ordinary Chinese Netizens, are well-educated, working and living in western countries, speaking fluent English and reading news from multiple resources. Unlike the manipulated bloggers of the Fifty Cent Party, their opinions are spontaneous, thoughtful, and logically sound. Members from the Chinese camp demonstrated their persistence and resolution by elaborating their arguments at length and meticulously responding to every single question from critics. After several rounds of debate, the non-Chinese camp gradually withdrew from the tug, seeing no need to continue the discussion. But Chinese posters still hung on there typing impressively lengthy replies. A British Netizen named *crowndarmourer* said,

Just remind your [Chinese] countrymen that most British people do not care that much about an idiot smuggling drugs and we have no intentions of invading either. Let our leaders on both sides huff and puff about this issue. Do we as people in both countries really care? "No" is the answer. The idiot got caught and suffered Chinese law end of story, now let gets back to making money.¹⁴⁷

The distinct attitudes of the two sides indicated that the Chinese considered Shaikh's case a serious matter of national sovereignty and historical justice while the British regarded it primarily as a legal issue or a diplomatic dispute. In China both the official and the public interpretation of the British demands and responses was more or less misguided by preoccupation with overpoliticalization. A *China Daily* commentary condemned the virulent rhetoric of British media and Shaikh's sympathizers. "Some foreign organizations and media outlets are using the 'first

¹⁴⁷ Comment to Pitcher's blog article, posted on December 31, 2009 at 7:53 am

execution of a European in China in more than 50 years' to fan passions. Ironically, they have succeeded only in exposing European chauvinism, for they have conveniently forgotten the principle purportedly very close to the heart: All men are created equal and everyone should be equal before the law."¹⁴⁸ There had actually been a number of European citizens sentenced to death by other countries than China. But it was also true that Shaikh was indeed the only Briton executed in China over the past 50 years. The rhetoric of the British media might have gone too far on this point. But it could hardly be equated with "chauvinism." To scrutinize the news reports in Chinese media, it was not difficult to find that the discourse lacked in-depth debates over legal details and general human rights concerns beyond Shaikh's single case. The specific disputed point of the case is that Shaikh might be incapable of facing the charge because mentally ill offenders are not criminally responsible. However, the public sentiments among the Chinese masses exclusively focused on the inviolable judicial sovereignty of China, which put the event on to a *political* footing. Some Netizens quickly related the case to the history of national humiliation – the two Opium Wars with the British as well as the extraterritorial rights the Westerners unjustly enjoyed. Drug dealing, the British, and judicial sovereignty, the combination of the three elements recalled many people of the old days when British gunboats escorted commercial ships loaded with opium navigating in the Yangzi River. In a subtle way, the loss of dignity in the past translated into an "adequate" justification for the tough stance the Chinese government should take today. Another British poster "Sally" commented on a *China Daily* essay "The Age of Extraterritorial Rights in China is over"¹⁴⁹ not without confusion:

I am sorry this writer slinks to the level of harking back to the old days. Sorry, the opium war is over now, and everyone from that time is dead. This is 2010 and we are talking about the mental capacity of an accused, who just happens to be British but could just as easily be Chinese. By talking about the old days, I have to conclude that this writer is out for revenge for some past wrongs. Please don't use this man for that task.

For the Chinese people the past has not really passed even though the perpetrators

¹⁴⁸ "Justice Served Right", *China Daily*, December 31, 2009, p. 8.

¹⁴⁹ "The Age of Extraterritorial Rights in China is Over," *China Daily*, January 4, 2010, accessed January 12, 2010, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/thinktank/2010-01/04/content_9262161.htm

and victims of those historical events are all dead. "Past wrongs", in Sally's words, are kept alive through a large body of historical narratives enriched and expanded by every generation. The Opium War might be over but it continues to play out in Chinese politics through collective memories, real or imagined.

In conclusion, economic success makes many people feel that now China can win worldwide admiration and other countries should show their respect due to it. However, as China grows, so does criticism, just or unjust. The other countries' response to the rise of China has a profound impact on Chinese psychology. The people feel their best efforts thwarted when the outside world cannot correctly evaluate the worth of its historical or current achievements. However, what China demands from the international community are contradictory: to be left alone (sovereignty) and to be noticed (dignity). The double-think leads to tumultuous relationship between China and the rest of the world. In the next chapter I focus on the nationalist mobilization of the post-80s generation particularly in the year of 2008 and provide a tentative explanation of the formation of their nationalist ideology.

VThe Post-80s: The Individual and the State

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times; it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness; it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity; it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness; it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair; we had everything before us, we had nothing before us; we were all going directly to Heaven, we were all going the other way.

----*A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens

For decades, Chinese voices could only be heard from either the Chinese government's mouthpieces, or the dissenters. The only two exceptions are the Tiananmen Square protests against the CCP government by college students in 1989 and the Torch Relay protests by the overseas Chinese against Tibetans and pro-Tibet Western countries in 2008. With seven years of intensive preparation, the two-week 2008 Beijing Olympics was started with a spectacular opening ceremony on August 8. However, the run-up to historic national coming-out party was dotted by a series of nationalist events. In March 2008, the Lhasa Tibetans' massive protests against the CCP authority as well as Han residents resulted in extensive bloodshed. According to the Chinese official statistics, eighteen civilians and one police officer were killed, 382 civilians and 241 police officers were injured.¹ The following Olympics torch relay, run from March 24 until August 8, became a central stage for all different political groups to voice their opinions. In many cities along the North American and European route, the torch relay was besieged by advocates of Tibetan independence and critics of China's human rights record, which led to physical confrontations between Chinese and Tibetans at a few of the relay locations. To avoid the escalation of antagonism, the Chinese government had to change or shorten the path of the torch relay in many cities, such as, Paris and San Francisco. The global campaigns of

¹ "Eighteen Civilians and One Police Officer Killed by Lhasa Rioters," *China Daily*, March 22, 2008, http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90776_6378824.html, accessed April 11, 2008

boycotting the Beijing Olympics triggered a wave of nationalist mobilization, primarily, among the post-80s overseas Chinese students² echoed by other Chinese diaspora communities and homeland compatriots. Compared to the anti-government stance of the Tiananmen generation, the political ideology of the post-80s is widely labeled by China observers as “conservatism” with the characteristics of uncritical support for the party-state, blind patriotism, or anti-Westernism.³ As noted in the introduction chapter, the diagnoses of contemporary Chinese nationalism suffer from typological thinking and oversimplification, which paid scant attention to the links between social/political structures and the motivation of human agency. In this chapter I attempt to address my second research question as to the multiple sources of mass nationalism among the young generation. I provide (1) a preliminary explanation of how socioeconomic endeavors in globalizing China analyzed in the preceding chapter have transformed the relationship between the individual and the state, and (2) how these changes have led to mass nationalism among the post-80s youngsters.

5.1 A Worried Generation

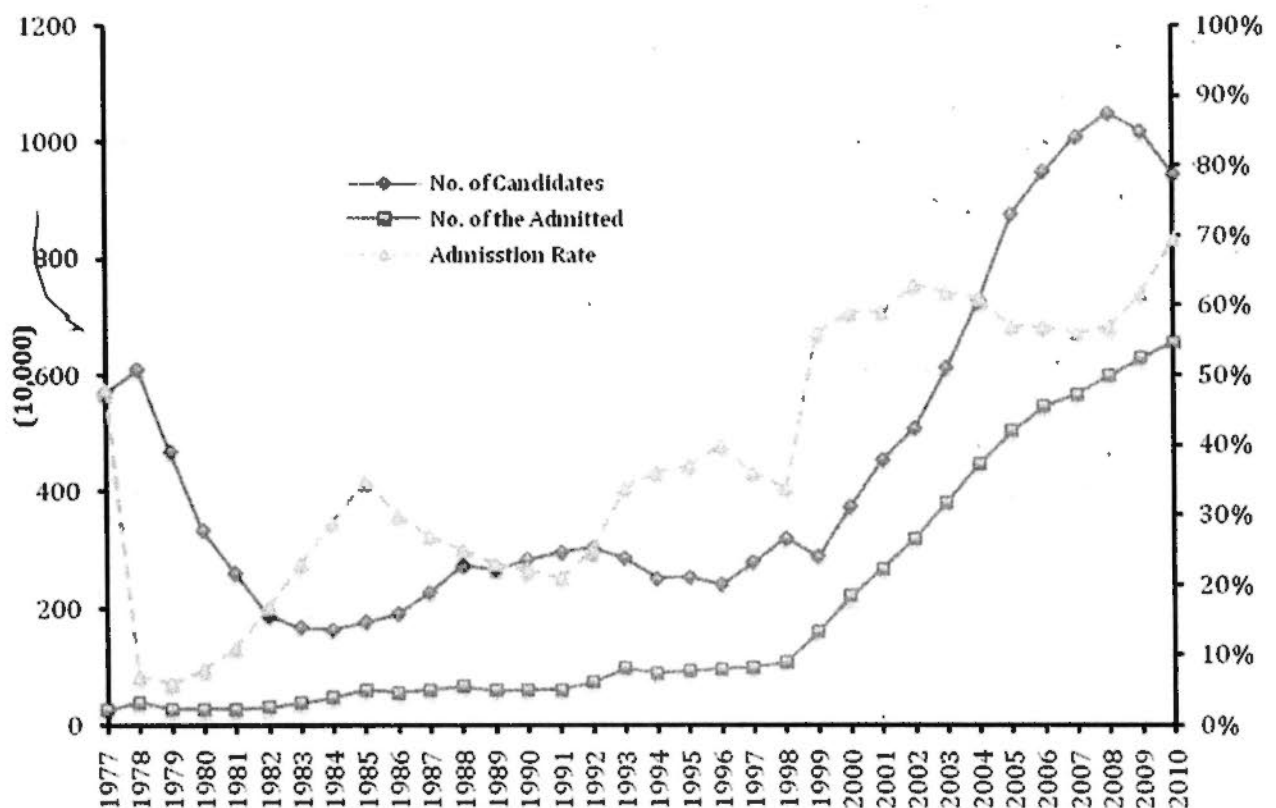
The post-80s generation in China is a worried generation. Ironically, the worries of the young people are bound with the country’s progress. During their growing years, the post-80s have been branded spoilt, materialistic and self-centered, and accused of lacking a sense of social responsibility. Nevertheless, as a generation mainly consisting of families with a single child, the post-80s grew up with excessive expectations of their parents. The personal success of the post-80s means a lot for their families, especially those losing status in or traumatized by earlier political ups-and-downs. In this sense, education is the first round of the race the post-80s children had to attend. However, the expansion of the group of college students is concomitant with the loss of the “elite consciousness” (*jingying yishi*).

² “The post-80s” is not a rigorous demographic concept. In this project, the author uses “the Post-80s” to refer to people born after the end of the Cultural Revolution, namely, the year of 1978.

³ See, for example, Simon Elegant, “China’s Me Generation,” *Time*, July 26, 2007; Jim Rardley, “From China’s Olympic March, Lessons in a Party’s Resilience,” *The New York Times*, August 7, 2008; Didi Krsten-Taylor, “Education as a Path to Conformity,” *The New York Times*, January 26, 2010; “China Politics: Nationalist Backlash,” *Economist Intelligence Unit*, April 21, 2008; Evan Osnos, “Angry Youth,” *New Yorker* 84, Iss. 22 (July 28, 2008); and “A Righteous Fist,” *The Economist*, December 18, 2010.

Over the past three decades, the concept of tertiary education and college students has undergone dramatic change. In 1980, there were only 280 thousand of people admitted to colleges through the National Higher Education Entrance Examination (*gaokao*). In the following years the enrolled students increased slightly to about 600 thousand with a low admission rate of 30 percent or so, which largely remained stable through the 1980s. Since 1999, China began adopting the practice of large higher education enrollment expansion, which had covered approximately 10 million students from 2000 to 2005. In the year of 2010, the number of enrolled students soared to 6.57 million with an unprecedentedly high admission rate of 70 percent. (See Figure 5.1)

Figure 5.1 Statistics of the National Higher Education Entrance Examination (1977-2010)



Source: Ministry of Education

The grand enrollment expansion has extended the opportunity of higher education to more and more Chinese students. In the meantime, it fundamentally changed the self-

perception of college students. College students used to confidently identify themselves as “elites.” For the majority of candidates, the extremely competitive *gaokao* was a watershed that divides two dramatically different lives. Until the late years of 1990s, college graduates’ employment was fully guaranteed by the program of unified job assignment. This policy had been implemented since the founding of new China, which ensured that every graduate had the opportunity to work. Unemployment was simply out of the question for the pre-1989 graduates. In addition, due to the absolute scarcity, college graduates were also eagerly solicited by out-program employers such as FIEs. Therefore, most college graduates could find a decent job in urban cities as long as they wish to.

In 1990s the policy of unified job assignment was gradually abolished while the advance of entrance enrollment expansion produced more graduates than ever before. For the post-80s generation, the first gift they receive in their adulthood is a tough job market. The competition for education resources is still fierce while the safeguard mechanism the pre-1989 generations used to enjoy is no longer available for them. After paying expensive tuition fee, more and more college students end up unemployed after graduation. In an interview with a middle-aged Computer Engineer who graduated from Nanjing University in 1988, he said:

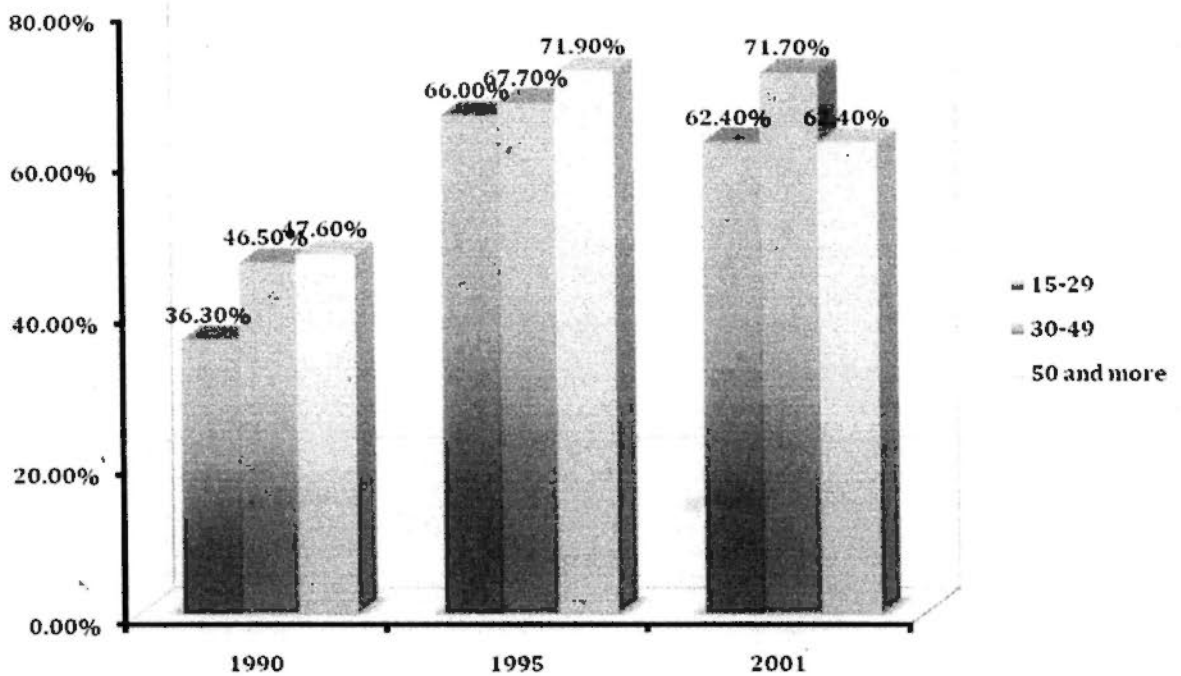
We seemed never worried about job, not as much as the post-80s kids. My college life was quite simple – classroom, library and dorm were my whole world. We worked hard but still had plenty of time for daydreaming, which someone called “idealism.” You’re too much occupied with taking all kinds of tests, participating extra-curriculum activities, looking for part-time jobs, and doing internship. Everyone hopes to be more prepared for the job market but there are always losers, always. This country simply does not need so many college graduates. We need migrant workers. (Interview 48, June 2009)

Psychological researches confirm that unemployment has a negative impact especially on the psychological well-being of highly educated and professional groups.⁴ The longitudinal survey data shows that the need of job security has

⁴ For example, S. Fineman, *White Collar Unemployment: Impact and Stress* (Chichester: Wiley, 1983); H. G. Kaufman, *Professionals in Search of Work: Coping with the Stress of Job Loss and Underemployment* (New York:

significantly increased in the post-1989 China. In 1990, only 36.3 percent of respondents aged from 15 to 29 indicated that good job security was important in a job. However, job security deteriorated quickly in the next five years. As of 1995, the young people who concerned about job security soared to 66 percent and the situation for the old-age group turned to be even more challenging. Although worries of job security eased slightly in the year of 2001, a majority of respondents still acknowledged the good job security was very important in a job. (See Figure 5.2)

Figure 5.2 Growing concern over job security



Source: Values Surveys Databank

Generally, the modern state has assumed an increasing amount of responsibility for the life of individuals in society. To providing social security system, the state became the major provider of security against the vagaries of everyday life and the individual's basic physical and social needs.⁵ The state even took part reconstructing work ethics and promoting social morale in order to boost the national economic

Wiley, 1982); P. G. Leventhman, *Professionals out of Work* (New York: Free Press, 1981); Norman T. Feather, *The Psychological Impact of Unemployment* (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1990).

⁵ Aage Böttger Sørensen, eds., *Human Development and the Life Course: Multidisciplinary Perspectives* (Hillsdale, N.J.: L. Erlbaum Associates, 1986), p. 225.

performance.⁶ As argued in Chapter three, the China Model of modernization favors a small group of people at the expense of the rest as well as the long-term interest of the nation as a whole. Through policy monopoly over political and economic resources, state capitalism in China runs on a two-rail track – the exertion of the state power and the operation of a *laissez faire* market. The government prioritizes the provision of social security to the state-sector employees over the labor in the free market. And government subsidies are usually more focused on urban areas. In this vein, the modernizing China is characterized by a wide range of double-track or multiple-track systems, including the Household Registration System (*hukou*), the National Higher Education Entrance Examination,⁷ medical care and old age pension schemes, etc. Through these schemes social resources are unevenly allocated, which results in severe inequality in economic and political opportunities among regions, occupations, classes, generations, genders, ethnicities, etc. I take the medical care system as an example.

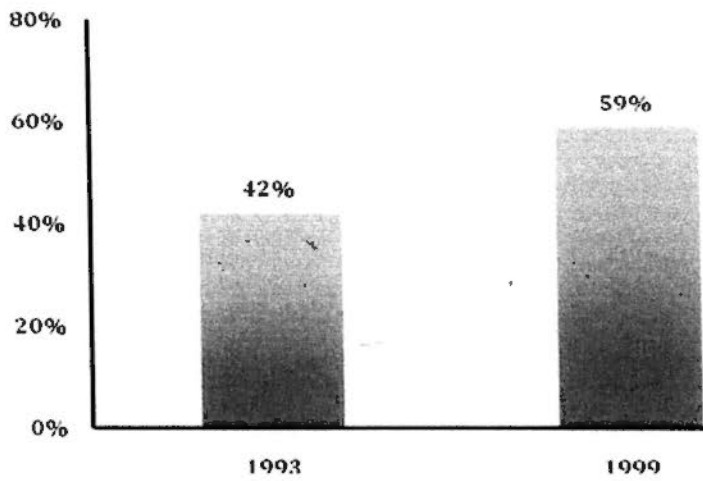
The 2002 World Bank report reveals that nationwide the government finances a small proportion of total health expenditure. In 1999, the government health expenditure, not including the government health insurance scheme, accounted for only 11% of total expenditure, which was very low compared to other countries. From 1993 to 1999, the share of out-of-pocket payment of health care increased from 42 percent to 59 percent. (See Figure 5.3) The government insurance scheme for civil servant absorbed about 25% of budgetary spending on health in 1990. This share has risen to 30% in 1999. Moreover, about sixty percent of total government health expenditure goes to the urban sector with thirty percent of the population, and only forty percent goes to the rural sector.⁸

Figure 5.3 Out of pocket payments of health care (% of total)

⁶ Haruhiro Fukui, "The Japanese State and Economic Development: A Profile of a Nationalist-Paternalist Capitalist State," in Appelbaum and Henderson, 1992, p. 212.

⁷ Since the admission quota of each university is disproportionately distributed among provinces, applicants are inevitably being discriminated based on their geographical region.

⁸ World Bank, 2002, p. 116.



Source: *National Health Financial Statistics Report*

Through dividing the society into one sector under the charge and protection of the state and the other sector dominated by a poorly regulated free market, a hierarchical China is created, though in a covert manner. The implicitly hierarchical social structure generates a general atmosphere of uncertainty and anxiety for the citizens, especially the young generation. In an interview with a mainland student studying in Hong Kong, she spoke to me:

“I never feel my future is secure. There are too many uncertainties out of individual control. My parents think I’m quite successful – they expect a lot from me. That’s partially true. I’m always a good student, seemingly a winner of the education competition. But good education is merely the first step. The post-80s are so addicted to success, willing to do almost anything that would possibly make them succeed. At the end of the day, we find ourselves living in competition and dying in competition.” (Interview 43, April 2011)

Iris, a 23-year-old accountant, works in the Beijing office of an American pharmaceutical company, who graduated from an elite university at a very young age of 20. She said:

The post-80s are a vulnerable social group, believe it or not. Many of my friends got married very soon after graduation (from the college). In this city,

the last thing you lack is loneliness and anxiety. Marriage might be a good solution though it begets new problems, for example, housing. How many people can afford an apartment without the help of parents? God bless you have good parents. My boyfriend is in an SOE. He feels much more stabilized than me though he leads a very hectic life too, always on business travel with his bosses here and there. I changed three jobs within the past two years. The first two were too stressful. I could barely take a day off inconsecutive six months. All my colleagues worked like robots – no mechanical failures, no complaints. One of my former colleagues, a super girl, suddenly died in her office last summer. Before that she'd been very sick for a week but she couldn't take sick leave. It's very tragic. (Interview 40, April 2011)

Qin Yin (pseudonym), a Mathematics student studying overseas, talked about her observation during her home visit trips followed by my questions, her responses:

Each time I went back home, I found something interesting. I come from a second-tier city (STC) of Hunan Province. There the happiest group of people is those working inside the System. Their income is just average or a bit above average. They are not the richest, but they enjoy peace and stability. Others, like small business owners, freelancers, blue-collar workers, may earn more money than those inside the System, but their struggles are enormous.

Q: If giving you two jobs, an average inside-System job and an average foreign enterprises job (excluding investment banks), which one would you opt for?

A: I think it's the inside-System one.

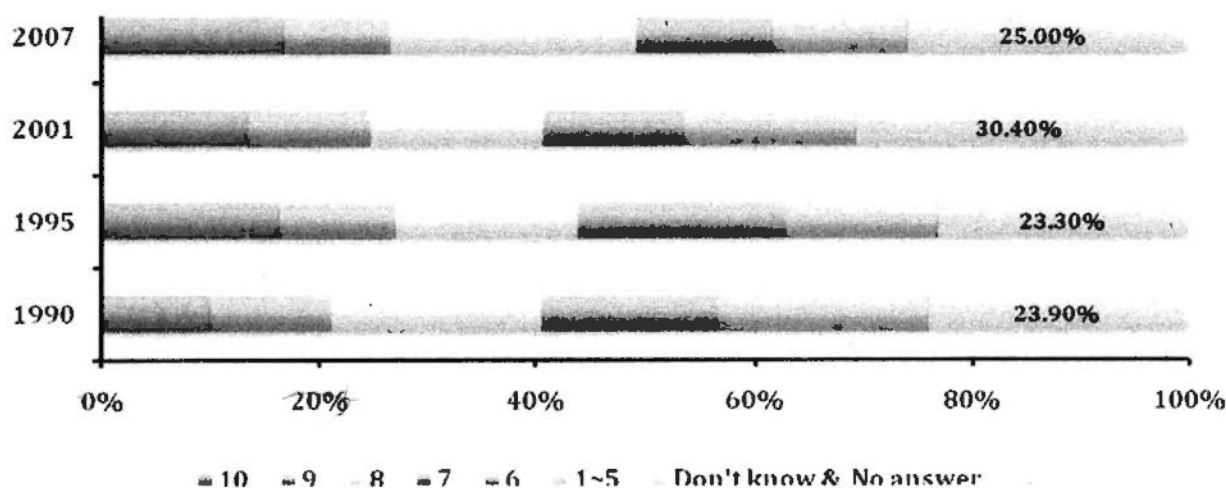
Q: Why?

A: Secure, and...warm. (Interview 28, July 2010)

Zhiqiang Zhou, a professor at Nankai University, correctly points out that the anxiety of the post-80s generation is the cost of China's social transition. He argues that "strong state, weak society" is the major source of the feelings of powerlessness

among the young people. This situation is deteriorated by the collapse of the traditional value system. A large proportion of social resources are control by the System. In many occasions, the private interest is sacrificed for the capital interest or the state interest.⁹ The rising housing prices lock many young people out of the property market. Quantitative analysis of large-N samples reveals that housing pressure is the major factor that negatively affects the subjective well-being of the post-80s couples.¹⁰ Li Daokui, a professor at Tsinghua University and a member of the Chinese central bank's monetary policy committee, told the media, "When prices go up, many people, especially young people, become very anxious," he said. "It is a social problem."¹¹ According to the World Values Survey time series data, from 1990 through 2007, life satisfaction on the individual level had not improved significantly. Among some age groups, it even deteriorated. The respondents were asked to indicate their life satisfaction rate on a ten-point scale with 1 representing "dissatisfied" and 10 "satisfied." In 1990, the mean value of the 15-29 age group was 6.8 out of a possible 10. As of 2007 this number rose slightly to 7. The proportion of respondents who rated their life satisfaction at 1-5 increased from 23.9 percent of 1990 to 30.4 percent of 2001. (See Figure 5.4)

Figure 5.4 Over-time change of life satisfaction of the Chinese people aged from 15 to 29



Source: Values Surveys Databank

⁹ Zhou Zhiqiang, "80hou jiti jiaolv shi shehui zhuanxing de daijia" (The collective anxiety of the post-80s is the cost of social transition), *Dongfang zaobao* (Oriental morning post), March 19, 2010.

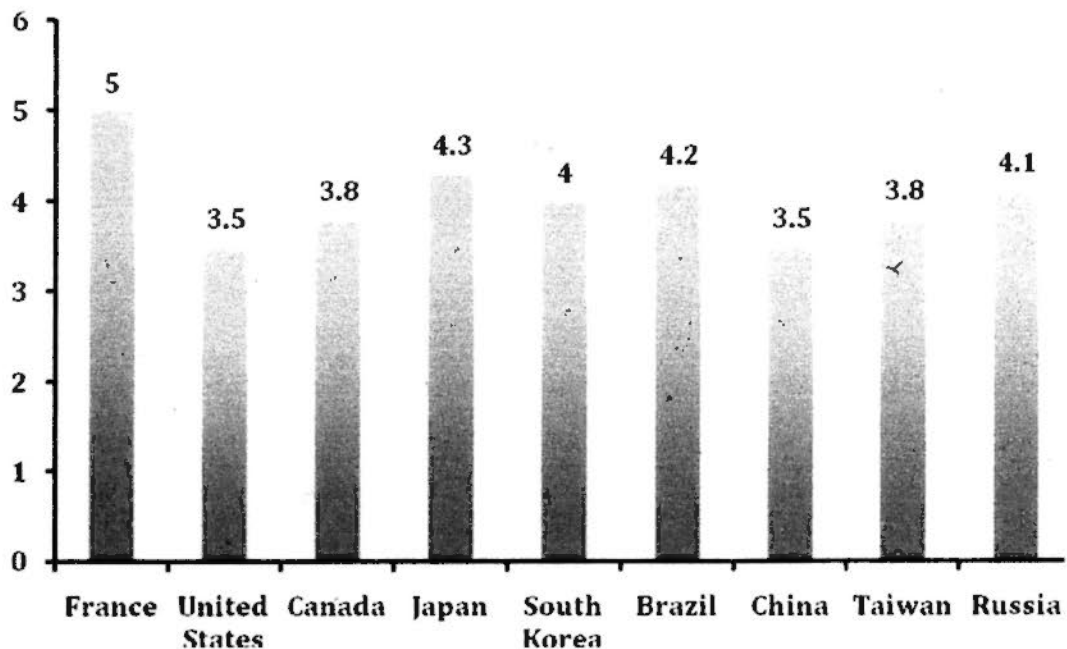
¹⁰ Huang Fen and Tu Tao, "'80hou' yihun qingnian de zhuguan xingfugan yanjiu" (An analysis on the subjective happy feelings of married 'post-80s'), *Dazhong Keji* (Public technology), No. 10 (2010), p. 244.

¹¹ Geoff Dyer, "China Told Property Risk Worse Than US's," *Financial Times Chinese*, June 1, 2010, <http://www.ftchinese.com/story/001032879/en>, accessed June 07, 2010.

People in the older age groups of 30-49 and 50+ generally felt less satisfied with their life in 2007 than in 1990. The mean value of the 30-49 age group dropped from 7.4 to 6.6 and that of the 50+ group from 7.7 to 6.9. This suggests that the overall economic achievements do not seem have direct effects on the citizen's life satisfaction. The worsening feeling of well-being partially owes to the lateral comparison between individuals and the drastic change of relative social status. While the overall life standards have been enhanced significantly, the yawning gap between the rich and the poor breeds excessive collective anxiety especially among those who are perversely affected in social development, for example, the less-educated factory workers.

A question arises immediately here: if the Chinese people, especially the young generation, is living in excessive anxiety and insecurity, what has kept them docile and made them conform to the demands of the social situations by every means? I argue that China's social stability is undergirded by a hidden but deep-seated social belief that competition is good and necessary. Among nine major economies, competition is most valued in China, on the par with the *laissez faire* United States. (See Figure 5.5)

Figure 5.5 Competition is good or harmful, cross-country comparison



Note: Respondents indicate on a ten-point scale with 1 representing "competition is

good” and 10 “competition is harmful.”

Source: Values Surveys Databank, Brazil [2006], Canada [2006], China [2007], France [2006], Indonesia [2006], Japan [2005], Russian Federation [2006], South Korea [2005], Taiwan [2006], United States [2006]

The collective social narratives as well as political propaganda continuously reinforce an impression that China as a whole has been making tremendous progress. It underpins a popular belief among the masses that if an individual fails in economic or social competition, it is only himself/herself to be blamed because it is so good a time ripe with opportunities. Born in the most populous country, the post-80s are intensively drilled with Social Darwinism. A 29-year-old Canadian journalist for an international news organization told *China Daily*: “More than any generation before them, the post-80s have had to fight their way through the market forces that are now so dominant in the Chinese economy.” Although the competitive pressure has been good for the country, he said he still felt for those who have had to experience it:

In compelling so many young Chinese to study extremely hard and strive to be better, it has made for very educated, ambitious people who succeed on their own merits. But I certainly count my blessings I wasn't born into such a competitive environment. ... Compared to the pressures and expectations faced by Chinese friends my age, I feel I had a pretty easy ride in Canada.¹²

In 2010 *Nanfang renwu zhouban* (*Southern people weekly*) published an issue on the post-80s generation. On the first page of an essay titled “The Post-80s: Love and Fear of a Generation,” the editor puts, “Romanticism needs its soil, which has disappeared in the era of the post-80s generation.”¹³ A post-80s described the world he saw: “It is best of times because every door of opportunity is open for you; it is the worst of times, because few of them allow you in.”¹⁴

In face of formidable competition pressure and economic insecurity, the post-80s become increasingly identified with the state sector or the System (*tizhi*, which I

¹² Wang Linyan, “Post-80s: The Vexed Generation?” *China Daily*, May 27, 2009, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2009-05/27/content_7947342_2.htm, accessed September 12, 2009.

¹³ Chen Yanwei, “80hou, yidairan de pa he ai” (The post-80s: fear and love of a generation), *Nanfang renwu zhouban* (*Southern people weekly*), No. 6 (2010), p. 24

¹⁴*Ibid*

designate with a capital *S* to distinguish it from social and political institutions in the general sense).¹⁵ In China, securing public sector (including SOEs) jobs have become the first preference of the job seekers nowadays, especially as the job market goes increasingly dire for college graduates. Offered on December 5, 2010 in major cities across China, the highly competitive annual National Public Servant Exam, dubbed as the “No. 1 exam in China,” attracted 1.4 million applicants for 16,000 vacancies around the country. This means roughly only one out of 87.5 exam takers could be accepted for a governmental job.¹⁶ In an extreme case, 4,961 people contended for a single post offered by the National Energy Administration.¹⁷ Statistics from the authority showed 11.77 million people had take the exams in the past five years (2006-2010), among whom 620,000 were recruited as civil servants.¹⁸ In 2010, the number of applicants for civil service posts was 16 times of that of 2004.¹⁹ The first and foremost thing that comes into the mind of a young people opting for government jobs is the financial security that it provides. Civil servants retain high social status in Chinese society. More practically, compared with other highly competitive professions, civil servants enjoy favorable treatment in terms of social security and health care, let alone the guaranteed long-term job security and stable income.

However, pains and costs of economic reform on the individual level are easy to be shadowed by the remarkable macroeconomic achievements. The Chinese people are proud of what China has accomplished and positive about the future. (See Figure 5.6)

Figure 5.6 Life satisfaction rate and future prediction

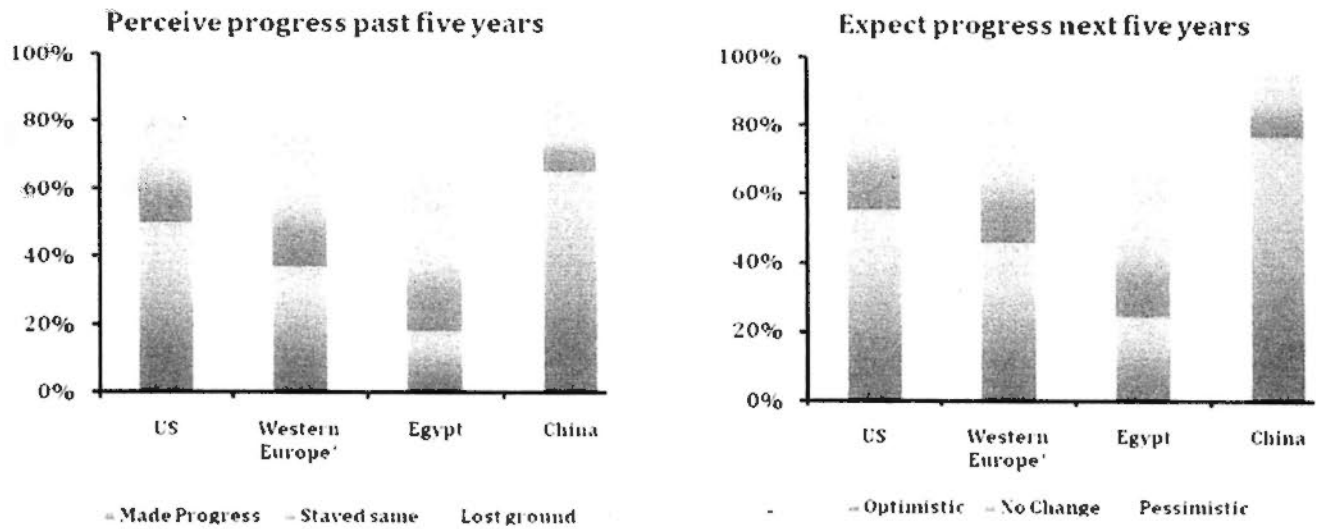
¹⁵ *Ibid*

¹⁶ “National Civil Service Exam Today: 1.41 Million Examinees Registered” (*Guokao jinri kaikao, 141 wan tongguo shenhe*), *China Youth Net*, December 5, 2010, http://news.youth.cn/wzt/201012/t20101205_1419255.htm, accessed December 5, 2010.

¹⁷ “China’s Civil Servant Exam to Place more Value on Grassroots Working Experience,” *People’s Daily Online*, February 17, 2011, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90776/90882/7290239.html>, accessed February 21, 2011.

¹⁸ *Ibid*.

¹⁹ “National Civil Service Exam Today: 1.41 Million Examinees Registered,” 2010.



Note: *Western Europe is based on the median percentage from Britain, France, Germany, and Spain.

Source: James Bell and Pew Global Attitudes Project, "Upbeat Chinese May Not Be Primed for a Jasmine Revolution," March 31, 2011.

According to a spring 2010 survey by the Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project, in 20 of 22 countries surveyed, less than half the population is satisfied with the direction of the country, including only 30 percent of Americans. Only in China does an overwhelming portion of the population (87 percent) say they were satisfied with the way things were going in their country.²⁰ In another Pew center survey, 66 percent of Chinese judged their lives to be better than five years ago. This number out-stripped even the personal progress reported in the U.S. and Western Europe. Only 18 percent of Egyptians registered an improvement in life satisfaction, with nearly half actually reporting a decline in life quality. 74 percent of Chinese believed their lives would be better in five years – an impressive level of optimism compared with opinions in the U.S. and Western Europe. In Egypt, only 23% anticipated a higher quality of life, while 40 percent predicted a lower quality. In China, just 6 percent believed their lives would worsen over the next five years.²¹ As people showing optimism about the national conditions, they are referring to the overall achievements of the Chinese state; as people expressing dissatisfaction with their life, they are referring to their individual situation from a comparative perspective. In the

²⁰ Pew Global Attitude Project, "Obama More Popular Abroad than at Home. Global Image of U.S. Continues to Benefit," June 17, 2010, p. 6.

²¹ James Bell and Pew Global Attitudes Project, "Upbeat Chinese May Not Be Primed for a Jasmine Revolution," March 31, 2011.

book *Geopolitics of Emotion: How Cultures of Fear, Humiliation and Hope are Reshaping the World*, Dominique Moisi tells a story about his first trip to China in 1985. He was required to see an immense dam across the Yangtze River. His guide from the diplomatic service spoke to him not without pride that the Chinese were the first people in history to have mastered the art of the dam. However, very surprisingly for Moisi, the guide conveyed to him his deep frustration with his life: “I made the crucial mistake of joining the diplomatic service rather than becoming a businessperson.”²² In varied forms pride and frustration has coexisted, though not always genially and stably, in the mentality of many Chinese people, sending contradictory messages to the outside world from one occasion to another.

The individual share of national dignity is therefore indispensable for the ordinary Chinese. The more the self-esteem and self-autonomy as an independent social agent is weakened, the more a strong state is needed. Nikolai Berdyaev, a Russian political philosopher, once said:

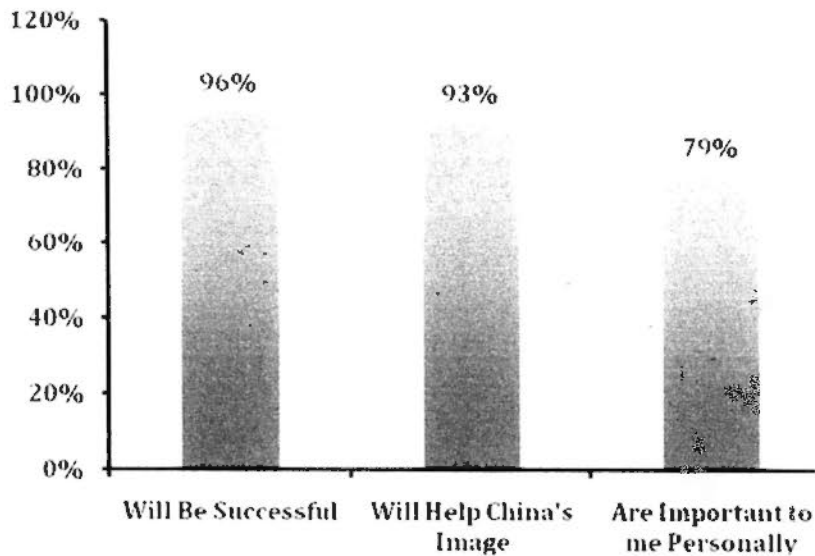
The Russian people do not want to be a masculine builder, its nature may be defined as feminine, passive and submissive in governmental matters, it always awaits its bridegroom, its husband, its master. Russia is a submissive, feminine land. A passive, receptive femininity with respect to governmental power is so characteristic of the Russian people and of Russian history. This is no limit to the humble endurance of the long-suffering Russian people.²³

In this light Chinese nationalism shares many common features with Russia's. In the eve of the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the Pew Center conducted a survey in China. About fourth-fifths of the Chinese people said the Olympics were personally important to them. (See Figure 5.7)

Figure 5.7 Chinese enthusiasm toward the 2008 Summer Olympics

²² Moisi, 2009, p. 37.

²³ Nikolai Berdyaev, *Sud'ba Rossii* (Moscow: Kniga, 1990, 1918), p. 12, quoted from Daniel Rancour-Laferriere, *The Slave Soul of Russia: Moral Masochism and the Cult of Suffering* (New York: New York University Press, 1995), p. 57.

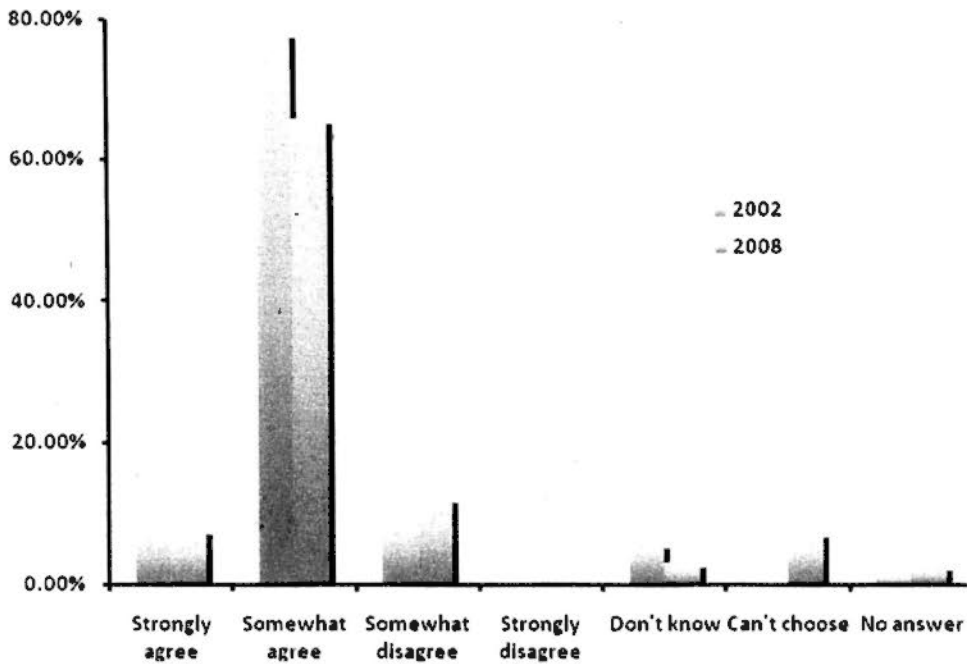


Source: Pew Global Attitudes Project, "An Enthusiastic China Welcomes the Olympics," August 5, 2008.

Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel suggest that the people of traditional societies have high levels of national pride, favor more respect for authority, take protectionist attitudes toward foreign trade.²⁴ Although in China the traditional collectivist values have been continuously eroded by the spread of self-expression values, the Chinese people are still prone to submit to a collective logic rather than a personal one. As asked whether the individual should be prepared to sacrifice his/her personal interest for the sake of the national community/society, in 2002 nearly 85 percent of the survey's respondents reported strongly agreeing or somewhat agreeing with the statement accounted. (See Figure 5.8)

Figure 5.8 Do you agree the statement that for the sake of the national community, the individual should be prepared to sacrifice his personal interest?

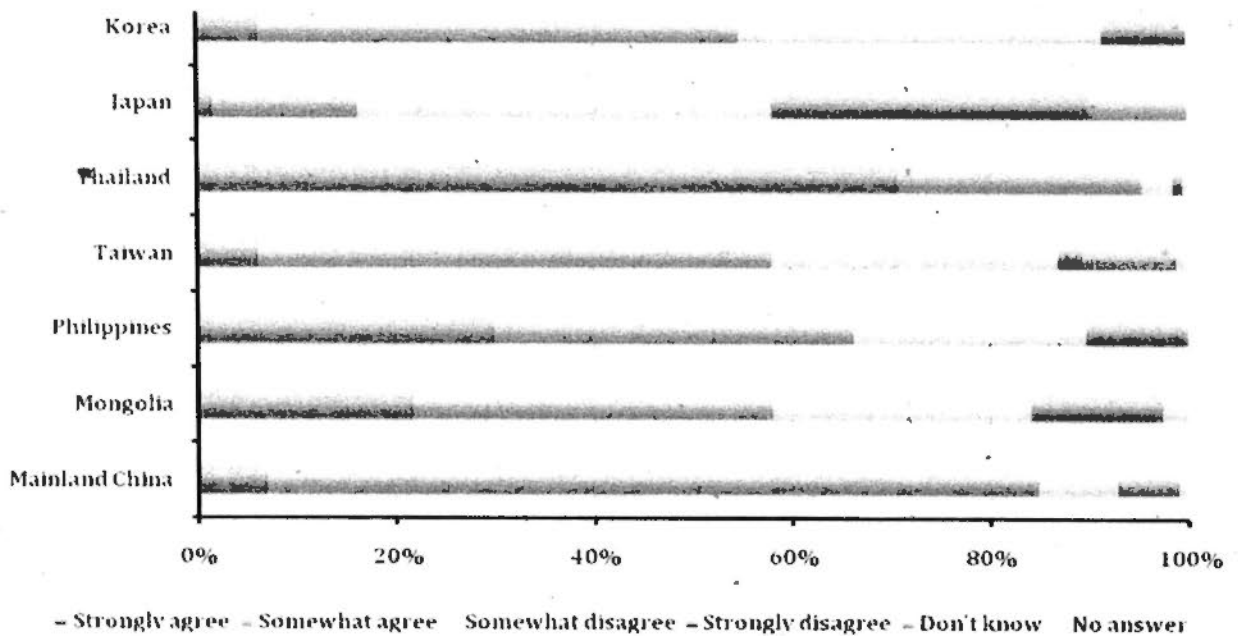
²⁴ Inglehart and Welzel, 2005, p. 52.



Source: Values Survey Databank, mainland China 2002, 2008

Up to the year of 2008, this proportion dropped slightly but there was still an overwhelming majority of Chinese nationals prioritizing the national interest over individual interest. Compared to other Asian countries, the predominance of the national interest was most acknowledged in Thailand (about 95 percent endorsed the individual sacrifice) and then the mainland China. In Japan, only 1.5 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that the individual should sacrifice for the nation with another 14.7 percent somewhat agreed the notion. (See Figure 5.9)

Figure 5.9 Do you agree the statement that for the sake of the national community/society, the individual should be prepared to sacrifice his/her personal interest?



Source: Values Survey Databank, China [2001], Japan [2003], Korea [2003], Mainland China [2002], Mongolia [2003], Philippines [2002], Taiwan [2001], Thailand [2002]

Disagreeing with most China specialists at the time who saw the reforms of the Deng era as efforts essentially to roll back the power and the penetration of the state in social life, Vivienne Shue boldly predicted that the thrust of the national reforms may ultimately serve state-strengthening, even Statist, ends. She noted that when a relatively strong state power is already in existence -- as in China -- the further development of capitalism has historically tended to lead not to lesser but to *greater* bureaucratic expansion and control. "Modern states typically claim to know less; but they can do much more," she continues, "this is but one of the melancholy ironies of what we sometimes call 'political development'." ²⁵

Shue predicted that "the rationalizing thrust of the reforms, when coupled with the deliberate effort to erase or transcend the old cellularity of 'backward' peasant economy and society, many ultimately serve state-strengthening, even statist, ends." ²⁶ Political modernization together with state capitalism step-by-step dismantles all non-political power sources and organs of social self-management at

²⁵ Vivienne Shue, *The Reach of the State: Sketches of the Chinese Body Politic* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1988), pp. 6, 119 and 120.

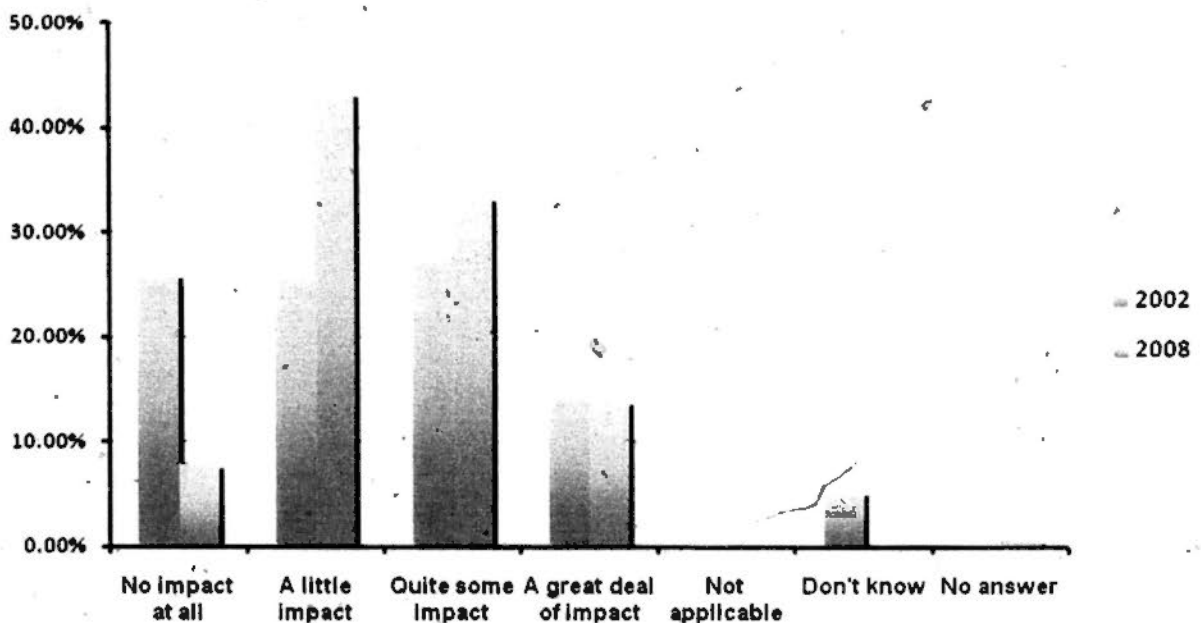
²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

the local level. As Bauman maintains:

[A]fter communal mechanisms of social regulation have all but disappeared and local communities ceased to be self-sufficient and self-reliant. Instead of an instinctive reflex of falling back upon one's own resources, the void tends to be filled by new, but again supra-communal, forces, which seek to deploy the state monopoly of coercion to impose a new order on the societal scale. Instead of collapsing, political power becomes therefore virtually the only force behind the emerging order.²⁷

The great insights of Shue and Bauman are widely supported by empirical data. In the East Asian Barometer's 2002 survey, 26.2 percent of the respondents said the government policies had no impact on their daily life and 25.8 percent said there was a little impact. In 2008, only 8 percent of people thought the government policies were irrelevant to their individual life, a significant decrease from the 2002 record. On the other hand, about 50 percent of respondents indicated that the government had either a great deal of impact or quite some impact on their life. (See Figure 5.10)

Figure 5.10 Impact of government policies on Chinese people's daily life, 2002, 2008

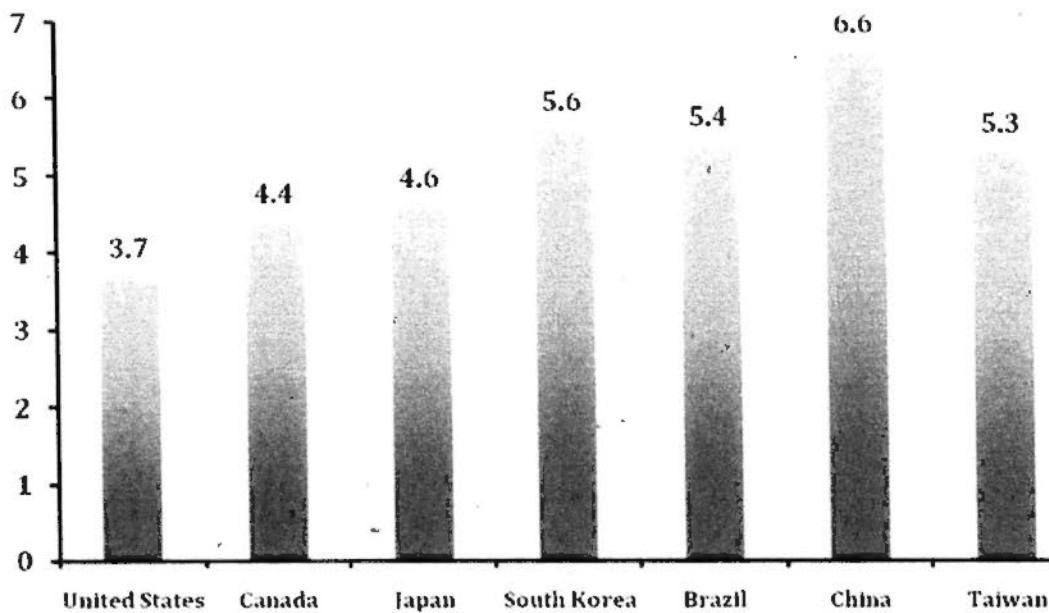


Source: Values Surveys Databank

²⁷ Bauman, 1989, p. 112.

Although China's state capitalism comes with a great deal of social cost, the Chinese people still prefer state centralization. According to the WVS data, among seven countries, which are either of China's economic volume or shares common cultural traits with China, the Chinese people showed the strongest support for more government ownership. Measured by a ten-point scale (1 means "private ownership of business should be increased" and 10 means "government ownership of business should be increased"), the mean value of China is 6.6, much higher to the *laissez faire* America (3.7) and also higher than other traditional developmental states like South Korea (5.6) and Japan (4.6). (See Figure 5.11)

Figure 5.11 Government ownership versus private ownership



Note: Respondents indicate on a ten-point scale with 1 representing "private ownership of business should be increased" and 10 "government ownership of business should be increased."

Source: Values Surveys Databank, Brazil [2006], Canada [2006], China [2007], France [2006], Indonesia [2006], Japan [2005], Russian Federation [2006], South Korea [2005], Taiwan [2006], United States [2006].

Wang Ting, a post-80s market representative of Honeywell's Beijing office, explained his rationale of supporting the state ownership:

SOEs serve the national interest very well. They invest according to the government's order and are more able to withstand global risks. In 2009, PetroChina and a British firm obtained exploration rights to Iraq's biggest oil field. No private enterprises in China can do that. (Interview 22, January 2010)

The young generation yearns for a strong China state, which can deliver prosperity and dignity to its nationals. In an interview with a 28-year-old Chinese student studying in Belgium who went to Paris to protest and support the Torch Relay in 2008, he explained why the motherland is important for Chinese diaspora:

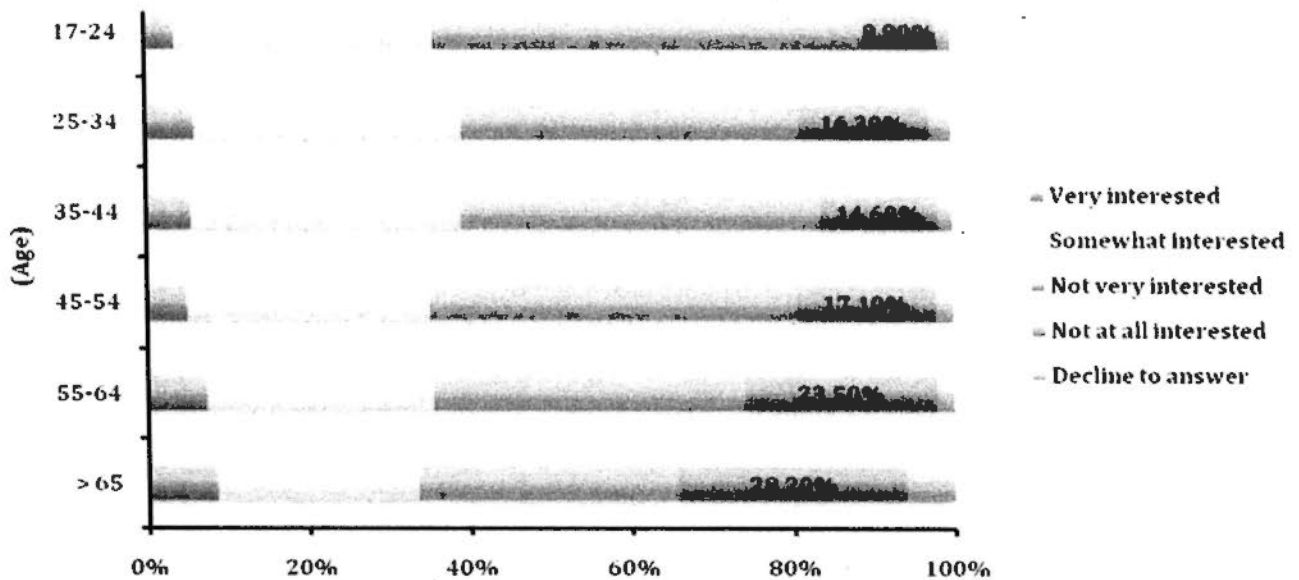
The international affairs are too complicated to be understood, let alone participated, by the ordinary persons. I am a PhD student in Computer Science but I don't dare to say I have sufficient capability to give comments on international relations. The ordinary people have no way to understand how the intricate international affairs would affect their own interest so that they look forward a strong and infallible authority, who can make better decision for the nation and provide the citizens protection against socioeconomic risks. For the group of overseas Chinese, the role of motherland becomes even more prominent. To a greater or lesser extent Chinese students here (in Europe) encounter some kinds of discrimination. We do hope China could grow strong and we could feel more proud to be a Chinese. I observe that most European local students don't trust their politicians, either. But as it comes to the international affairs, they all stand on the side of their governments. (Interview 13, October 2009)

Cheng Lin (pseudonym), a 30-year-old PhD student of University of California, Irvine, was enthusiastic about China's military buildup. He said,

If China decides to build aircraft carriers, I'd like to donate one month's salary, seriously. I hope to live a decent life, not to be bullied or pushed by others. Certainly I don't want to bully anyone else, either. However, in a highly militarized world, it is nothing but luxury. China has to gain the ability to defend the people. (Interview 3, August 2008)

The post-80s grow up in an ideological vacuum. They do not subscribe to any political belief except for personal struggle and are always ready to adapt to new situations. Many young people happily stay out of politics. Voting is not on their wishing list. Though a series of survey data seem to reveal that the young generation is more politically active (see Figure 5.12), the first hand observation suggests the opposite.

Figure 5.12 Interest in Politics, 2008



Source: Values Surveys Databank, Mainland China, 2008

In an interview with a post-80s journalist based in Guangzhou, he said,

Those (democracy, Jasmine Revolutions) are nonsense. I care only about my own life. How many revolutions had occurred to China under various slogans ever since the late Qin? Which one had really liberated the underdogs?
 (Interview 8, May 2011)

In his 2009 article, Stanley Rosen refers to a local survey conducted by the Beijing Municipal Communist Youth League, which reveals what “participation in politics” really means for the young people. According to the survey data, in 2005-2006, around 75 percent of youth expressed a willingness to participate in politics. But

asked what form their participation had taken, 72.5 percent noted that they had not actually participated at all, 11.1 percent said that participation meant expressing their opinions to family members or friends, 5.8 percent who participated by expressing their opinions in Internet discussions. Only 0.6 percent said that they would contact either a party or youth league organization to express an opinion.²⁸

The post-80s generation shows little interest in the history of political chaos and national disasters after 1949. Many young people are indifferent to any talk – including their parents’ – about the Culture Revolution or the Great Leap Forward. “The past has nothing to do with me and it will never happen again” is the very reason in the post-80s’ mind. The collective ignorance is a result of social construction and memory manipulation. This chapter of New China has been, for the most part, wiped out in history textbooks. Students are instructed by the teachers that there is no necessity to learn the history of the Cultural Revolution because it is beyond the range of the *gaokao*.²⁹ Moreover, if anyone is motivated to find out what happened in the past, he/she is more likely to be put off politics due to the excessive horror of those stories.³⁰

However, like anyone else, members of the post-80s generation are shaped by their experiences and those of their families. In the whole process of China’s SOE reform, 70 million workers had been laid off with very modest compensation. In the following years they were disposed to engage in fierce social competition. Due to the lack of education and skills, many had been chronically unemployed or underemployed. These laid-off workers are the parents of the post-80s generation. A large body of literature in Social Psychology suggests that the socio-economic settings of people’s childhood have delayed-action effects on the personality.³¹ The economic failure of parents, relatives, or other important childhood figures tends to increase the sense of uncertainty and insecurity of the post-80s generation.

To conclude, the pro-government stance of the young generation has complex

²⁸ *Beijing qingnian fazhan baogao (Report on the Development of Beijing Youth)*, 2005–2006 ed. (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2007), pp. 331–38; see also Stanley Rosen, “Contemporary Chinese Youth and the State,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 68, No. 2 (May 2009), pp. 365–366.

²⁹ Tao Dongfeng, “Yuqiuyu de buchanhui yu 80hou de budding ‘wenge’” (Yu Qiuyu’s no regret and the post-80s’ no “Cultural Revolution”), *Dangdai wendon (Modern literary magazine)*, No. 4 (2010), p. 6.

³⁰ See Elegant, 2007.

³¹ S. Stansfield Sargent and Marian W. Smith, eds., *Culture and personality* (New York: Viking Fund, 1950).

socioeconomic reasons. The ethics of Social Darwinist competition translates institutional constraints into endless personal struggle and keeps political tensions at bay. "Two decades ago the nation's elite wanted to be scientists and build their country. Today they want to be bankers, or stick with safe state jobs."³² Simply by raising the housing prices, the Hu administration has successfully defused the potential opposition from the so-called middle class in urban China. Chinese nationalism is stoked by growing national ambitions and individual powerlessness, which is leading to a stronger state and a weaker people.

5.2 The *Self* and The *Other*

It has been widely held that miscommunication is a major source of ethnic hatred and enmity. To cure it, positive interaction with individuals of another racial or ethnic group will minimize the effect of exposure to unfavorable racial and ethnic stereotypes in the media. In the preceding chapter, I contend that person-to-person interaction exhibits social outcomes of a complex pattern. On the one hand, it breaks long-standing stereotypes of the out-groups, dispels unfounded apprehension by visualizing the alien; On the other hand, it engenders new disagreements by exposing more differences in social patterns and value systems. In this sense cross-cultural communication, such as tourism, joint sporting events, people-to-people diplomacy, exchanges of students, artists, and scholars, does not necessarily foster hospitality among peoples in the short run. (See 2.1.2) As public opinion surveys have certainly revealed that the Chinese are excessively satisfied with their country's situation and highly proud of their nationality. I argue (1) the Chinese people's strongly positive self-image, to a considerable extent, stems from the general unawareness of foreign criticism; and (2) the disruption of self-approval inevitably generates opposition and reaction. It is debatable whether or not "to be thought of well by others" is a universal human need. But not knowing the *Other's* negative views of a country can certainly bolster the self-esteem of the people living in it. In the following part I use Joe Wong's case to illustrate how ignorance and awareness create diverging public opinions in cross-cultural communication.

³² Tatlow, 2010.

In 2009, a born-in-PRC Biochemistry PhD, Joe Wong (Chinese name Huang Xi, 黄西), got fame as a stand-up comedian in the United States. Later, he was invited to the White House to tell jokes for President Obama, which evoked a strong repercussion among Chinese at home and abroad. Domestic Chinese audience generally like Joe Wong's talk show and take his success as a great achievement. The online video of Wong's show at the 66th Radio and Television Correspondents (RTCA) Dinner March 17, 2010 drew 2 million hits and thousands of favorable comments in its first ten days. Despite his laugh riots are primarily written against the background of American history, politics and culture, many native Chinese are still able to appreciate his humor with the help of translation and elaboration.

Although Joe Wong continuously gained in popularity since his debut on the David Letterman show, making his performance one of the most coveted spots on American late night TV, the overseas Chinese community took far more divergent views on Wong's success. One camp hailed him for his perfect sense of humor and awesome performance skills; the other disfavored him for reinforcing the nerdy stereotype of Asian Americans. The two camp engaged in a heated debate over whether the American audience, who said Joe "killed'em", laughed at his bizarre racial characteristics or his jokes, whether he exaggerated his Chinese accent on purpose, and the like. Wong's detractors argued that the audience felt much more hilarious of Wong's nerdy and outlandish Asian stereotype than his sense of humor. Many Asian Americans found Wong's self-deprecating way actually embarrassing or even humiliating as he tried to amuse the white audience by exaggerating the absurdity he had encountered as an immigrant. Netizen *Rogerey@Ungulata* commented on Youtube:

All I'm saying is that there's a clear difference between telling jokes about your own race, which are usually aimed at breaking down stupid stereotypes, and BEING the joke about your own race and reinforcing negative stereotypes. Every Asian-American in that studio on the night was embarrassed.

Conversely, Wong's fans highly appreciated his talent in humor and were proud of having a Chinese fellow winning himself a place in the cut-throat world of the stand-up comedy. They contended in Wong's defense that self-depreciating humor was commonly employed by stand-up comedians, which had little to do with diffidence or psychological inferiority. Netizen *spsppw*, self-identified as a Sociology major ever studying and living in the U. S. for ten years, viewed Joe Wong's popularity as a positive influence over Asian Americans' social standing.

The author conducted a brief experiment by showing the video of Wong's performance in the RTCA dinner to two groups of in total twenty native Chinese, ten in each, aging from 20 to 30 with college degree. The ten members of Group One were living-in-PRC Chinese with little overseas experience. The ten in Group Two were either studying or working in the United States at the time. After watching the online video (with proper translation and background information provided), the responses from Group One revealed that the audience paid very scant attention to Joe Wong's "nerd" look and strong Chinese accent. In contrast these features were widely observed by the members of Group Two, though three of them showed no special disfavor of Wong's ethnic image on stage.

The differing senses and opinions of the living-in-PRC and overseas Chinese indicate that *unawareness* plays an important role in the formation of a positive self-image. Few people in Group One noticed the problem of stereotype projecting because they barely knew anything about the stereotypes of Asians in Western societies, which was simply not a part of their knowledge structure. Constituting the predominant majority of the Chinese population, most Han people neither have experience of living as an ethnic minority in an alien culture nor learn enough about how Chinese diaspora are viewed by foreigners. Most mainland Chinese have never heard about the names like Charlie Chan³³, Fu Manchu³⁴, Dragon Lady³⁵ and Wong Lung³⁶, let alone understand their social and cultural implications. Since social knowledge is deeply embedded in context and cannot be transmitted as abstract data, the sense of

³³ Charlie Chan is a fictional Chinese-American detective created by Earl Derr Biggers in 1920s, a good Chinaman trying to be a second-rate Westerner. He is clever but ridiculous, pompous, comical.

³⁴ Fu Manchu is a fictional character first featured in a series of novels by English author Sam Rohmer during the first half of the 20th century, who was also featured in cinema, television, radio, comic books for over 90 years.

³⁵ Dragon Lady is the villain in an action-adventure comic strip *Terry and the Pirates* created by cartoonist Milton Caniff.

³⁶ Wang Lung is a fictional Chinese peasant in Pearl Buck's novel *The Good Earth*.

racial stereotype is very unlikely to be integrated in the cognitive framework of the living-in-PRC Chinese. Moreover, it is somewhat common sense that the Chinese has little talent in alphabetic language speaking. The first generation of Chinese immigrants in the West barely takes occupations requiring excessive vocal skills. Joe Wong's coming ^{to} fame makes an explicit exception. Thus, he is widely regarded as a new national pride by his homeland compatriots, a made-in-China genius able to amuse American audience by American jokes.

Distinguished from the prevailing sanguineness in the homeland, the overseas Chinese see a far more complicated picture of Joe Wong's popularity in the United States. An analogy could be made between Joe Wong's case and foreigners performing *Xiangsheng*, or "crosstalk," in China. In the early 1990s it was popular to invite foreigners to perform *Xiangsheng* and nationally broadcast on Chinese television. Back then foreigners living or working in China were much fewer than today. Some Chinese folks even travelled a long distance to Beijing for seeing foreigners, who turned out to be a tourist attraction in the street. But this fad did not last long because it became harder and harder to find foreigners willing to perform *Xiangsheng* in public – many of them increasingly felt losing face to do so. When asked about what really makes you laugh in the foreigner-performed *Xiangsheng*, thirteen interviewees out of twenty admitted that they felt more hilarious about the foreigners' exotic looks and funny accents than their acting skills and sense of humors. The debate about Joe Wong's success among the overseas Chinese reflected the same concerns among the overseas Chinese. They have good knowledge of how the Westerners had stereotyped or otherized the Asian nations in history and may suffer from the harmful impacts of the stereotypical thinking in their daily life. Growing up with endless struggles to get rid of the influence of Asian stereotypes, the second generations of Asian immigrants dislike Joe Wong to a higher degree than their parents.

In the mind of the post-80s, the West is Janus-faced: one face is prosperous, progressive, and virtuous while the other is coercive, self-centered, and overbearing. Though heavily criticizing the "reverse racism" of the Tiananmen generation, which adopted an uncritical pro-Western stance, the post-80s still take a very positive view of the West. They generally believe that the Westerners are well-educated and of high

moral caliber; people in the Western societies enjoy more freedom, equality, and dignity; and the Western media are more impartial and trustworthy. The young generation treats the Western countries with heartfelt admirations and hopes to emulate their success. As noted previously, low-status people tend to positively view the dominant out-group while belittle the in-group, especially the high-status people is held up as a model to be emulated by the low-status group. To some extent, the West as a social ideal continues to be worshiped by the post-80s. In this respect, the differentiation between the post-80s and the Tiananmen generation is only quantitative rather than qualitative. However, idealizing the out-group has a negative outcome. If the positively viewed out-group fell short in the real world, it would generate excessive frustrations among its low-status followers, especially when the two groups engaged in disputes or conflicts. I use the anti-CNN movement led by overseas Chinese students as an example to elaborate why the misreport of CNN, among other international media, on the Tibetan issue provoked global boycott by the post-80s Chinese. Through this case, I attempt to offer a more nuanced account of the so-called “anti-West” Chinese nationalism.

March 2008, Lhasa Tibetans’ protest against the CCP authority, which escalated to be violent soon, attracted massive media attention. The Chinese Netizens found the CNN cropped one photo, with a man raising his arm to fend off the blow from a Tibetan youth wielding a stick, while the part with the 12 Tibetans holding weapons was deliberately cut off to diminish the menacing tone of Tibetan mob violence. Similarly, in another photo, CNN also cropped out the rioters throwing stones at an army truck, leaving a man running for life in front of the truck, deliberately creating a violent environment and a perception of the heavy presence of the Chinese army, intentionally neglecting the “cruelties of the mobsters.”³⁷ In one of CNN’s manipulated video footages entitled *Turmoil in Tibet*, the Chinese police allegedly repressing the Tibet demonstrators in Gansu Province in China were found to be Indian police in their khaki uniforms with berets in Himachal Pradesh, India.³⁸ In a later announcement posted on its Website, CNN said “the image in question had to be cropped to fit the standard story-size image.” Not only CNN was caught in the

³⁷ Permanent Mission of the People’s Republic of China to the UN, “CNN’s Distortion of Tibet Riot Picture Slammed by Netizens,” March 23, 2008, <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/ce/ccun/eng/xw/t417811.htm>, accessed June 21, 2008.

³⁸ Michel Chossudovsky, *Western Media Fabrications Regarding the Tibet Riots: Fake Videotape Used by CNN*, April 16, 2008, <http://globalresearch.ca/PrintArticle.php?articleId=8697>, accessed June 11, 2010

fraud. The American Fox News website published a photo captioned "Chinese troops parade handcuffed Tibetan prisoners in trucks," which was actually taken in India, with Indian police dragging a man away. Besides, the websites of Washington Post, BBC, Times, Germany's Bild national newspaper, Der Spiegel, N-TV, N24, RTL, TV all used photos with policemen wielding sticks to chase demonstrators, claiming that these officers were Chinese police. These alleged Chinese policemen turned out to be Nepalese in Kathmandu in clashes with Tibetan demonstrators.³⁹

Bristled with rage, Chinese Netizens led a wave of counteractions. As a collection of the evidence of media misreport, a video clip named "Riot in Tibet: True Face of Western Media" was post on Youtube on March 19, 2008, which receive more than one million clicks within one week. Another video titled "2008 China Stand Up" posted on Sina.com was another smash hit. The producer of the video was Tang Jie, a 28-year-old graduate student of Fudan University in Shanghai. Rao Jin, 23, a student studying in the United States created a non-governmental website Anti-CNN.com on March 20. Anti-CNN declared its goals on the home page as follows:

This website is established to expose the lies and distortions in the Western media. The site is maintained by volunteers, who are not associated with any government agencies. We are not against the western media, but against the lies and fabricated stories in the media. We are not against the western people, but against the prejudice from the western society.⁴⁰

Later this month, an anonymous open letter, addressed to all overseas Chinese, was widely disseminated on the Internet. It said,

All overseas Chinese compatriots, for the image of the motherland, for the dignity of the country, for every Chinese living in the West not despised and laughed. ... We are a new generation of Chinese youth, who come to the West with the best hope to learn science and technologies as well as democracy and the rule of law. We wish to promote the friendship between China and Western countries. We wish to advance the process of China's modernization.

³⁹ Li Mingsheng, "Chinese Cyber Nationalism in the Year of Olympics," *Communication, Creativity and Global Citizenship* (July 2009), p. 11.

⁴⁰<http://www.anti-cnn.com/>, accessed April 19, 2008.

We love the beliefs of democracy, freedom, and human rights. Thus, we are new citizens who represent the emerging civil society of China. ...

We cannot tolerate that an ambulance clearly displaying its emblem was labeled as military vehicle for transporting soldiers and policemen in Nepali uniforms blocking the protest of monks was described as Chinese soldiers cracking down peaceful uprising. ...

The ever humble, self-restrained, and peace-loving Chinese nation finally stops being a silent lamb!⁴¹

The Anti-CNN movement was a vast political mobilization of the post-80s generation. The collective fraud of the Western media made many post-80s realize that the West did have an ugly side. The Western media's professional ethics "objectivity, fairness, and truthfulness" was not free from the political interests of their national governments. In its essence, the Anti-CNN movement was not anti-West, as Rao Jin put on his website. The widespread anger among the Chinese youth stemmed from the deep frustration by the fall from grace of the role model. In this sense, the Anti-CNN mobilization has more far-reaching implications than an outburst of popular nationalism. As a Georgetown University student, who was an active poster on the Anti-CNN forum, recounted to me:

Before that (the CNN fraud) I lived with an ideal, a Western one. That's why I chose to do a PhD program in the United States. Unlike the old generations who seldom criticize the Chinese government, we see many ills of the country. We've begun admiring, if not envying, the West since we were little kids. When I was seven, a family friend came back from the US and brought me a comic book. I took it to the classroom and showed off to my classmates. Those kids bribed me with ice cream and peanuts for borrowing the book for one night. I think many post-80s have similar childhood memory. I'm angry because I'm shocked. They let me down. It feels like being fooled by

⁴¹ "Zhongguo haiwai liuxuesheng qunti kangyi xifang meiti dui xizang pianmian baodao," (The overseas Chinese students protest against the Western media's fake reports on Tibet), *Lianhe Zuobao*, March 21, 2008, author translation.

someone you've always adored and trusted. Now I'm left without a choice. I have to defend my country against slanders. (Interview 54, June 2008)

His narration represents the common psychology of the Anti-CNN Netizens after knowing the CNN's misreport. A London-based Chinese student spoke to me:

At the first sight of how those pictures were deliberately misrepresented in CNN's news reports, I thought it must be the Netizens' spoofing (*egao*). I told my boyfriend that CNN would never do that. (Interview 55, May 2008)

Another post-80s Fudan student, who was exchanged to the National Singapore University at the time, said with a serious look on her face:

The Chinese government might be very guilty for its media censorship. But the Chinese official media never tells a stag a horse, especially about those happening in foreign countries. They might hide a lot of things from the public for the CCP's political interests. But they never fake photographs of ongoing international affairs on purpose. (Interview 44, July 2011)

China observers identified the Anti-CNN movement as a manifestation of anti-West hypernationalism. From a bystander's perspective, although the CNN and other mainstream international media's misconducts should be criticized, a global boycott by the Chinese youth looked like an overreaction. For the Western citizens who had always viewed the media tycoons with caution, their misreport on Tibet was merely a single evidence of media dishonesty among many others. However, in the post-80s' eyes it meant the Western media stepped down from the altar, for the first time, under their watch. Reducing the overseas Chinese students' outrage to "anti-West" nationalism was an oversimplification. In a sense, the Anti-CNN mobilization signaled how the West was first idealized and then desanctified in the life course of the post-80s. The disenchantment about the West will help reshape a more accurate and realistic perception of the relationship between China as the Self and the West as the Other.

Intensive international exposure has already had significant impacts on the young

generation's global view. Like it or not, nations are not created equal and we are living in a hierarchical world consisting of great powers and city states. As argued in the previous chapters, the advance of global capitalism ushered in international comparison between geographically and culturally remote human societies. As Elke Winter observes, "While many Americans are profoundly ignorant about their northern neighbor, comparisons with the United States are a fact of life for Canada."⁴² Indians like comparing Bombay with Shanghai while Shanghai may happily compare itself with London, New York City, and Paris, but never Bombay or New Delhi.⁴³ Due to the daily interactions with the foreign societies, the overseas Chinese are more lucid about China's place in the international pecking order. In a telephone interview with Tony Sun (pseudonym), a post-80s college graduate working for Sinopec's Geneva office, Mr. Sun said,

Sinopec merged a great number of small firms in different countries. But the European employees here seem to dislike us. My boss said, "Let's take it easy. They had never worked for the Chinese, not even thought of it before we came. If you were in their shoes – think about if Sinopec was some day taken over by an India firm and you had a bunch of Indian bosses around – you wouldn't feel any better than them." (Interview 36, December 2010)

Mr. Sun's narrative reveals that China's relative status in a hierarchical international community is acutely sensed by the overseas Chinese, whose personal circumstances are, to a varying extent, affected by the overall performance of the Chinese nation on the international stage. The omnipresent international comparison, which is less keenly felt by the homeland Chinese, generates excessive status anxiety among the overseas post-80s. In contrast with the prevailing optimism of living-in-PRC Chinese, which is more or less bolstered by the ignorance about foreign criticism, the overseas Chinese are anguished about the negative national image of China and feel compelled to fight for the legitimate interest of the country. This mechanism explains why the overseas students, who enthusiastically embrace Western cultures, turn to be more nationalistic than their homeland compatriots.

⁴²Winter, 2009, p. 10.

⁴³Zhou Wenhan, "Yindu meiti shang de zhongguo" (China in Indian media), *Financial Times Chinese*, November 8, 2010, <http://www.ftchinese.com/story/001035360>, accessed November 10, 2010.

VI Conclusion

In this research, I examine the relationship between nationalism and two macro factors – modernization and the post-war international system – and develop a set of theoretical propositions to account for the particular case of contemporary Chinese nationalism. In comparison with the long history of other forms of political entities such as feudal manors or sprawling empires, nation-state is a very recent innovation of modern human society. It represents the central attribute of modernity in international politics, namely, a peculiar and historically unique configuration of territorial space.⁴⁴ Differing from the views of many critics, nationalism is more complicated a phenomenon than mere Chauvinism or imperialism. In new states, nationalism deals with belatedness and the uneven advance of global capitalism. It so effectively performs the functions of social mobilization, political coordination and ideological legitimation that the quest for modernity cannot be achieved without it.

The classic definition of nationalism – to endow a culture with its own political roof – implies there is a pre-existing nation on the basis of which the state will be built. But in many cases of new nationalism, the state predates the nation rather than the reverse. Due to the intensive nation-building efforts in every newly established sovereign, state boundaries serves as the most effective division of the people by directing them into different tracks of fast-paced modernization. Nationalism, on the one hand, seeks to resist the assimilation by the superior out-group and, on the other, gains momentum in constant intergroup comparison. Nationalist beliefs advocate that all peoples have to freely decide their own way of participating in modernity or not to participate at all. In this sense, nationalism forms an alliance with cultural relativism or moral particularism, which contends that there is no universally accepted concept of “good” and the efficacy of political solutions to socioeconomic problems can only be evaluated under the local context. However, the uneven development of different countries underpins a hierarchical international system in

⁴⁴ John Gerard Ruggie, “Territoriality and Beyond: Problematizing Modernity in International Relations,” *International Organization* 47, No. 1 (Winter, 1993), p. 144.

the real world. The differences in power and wealth generate enormous status anxiety in the backward human groups who aspire to be thought well of by others. This psychological dimension of nationalism concerns not only the material well-being of a society but also external recognition, compliment, and admiration accorded to it. The “seeking for dignity” endeavor is not a particular cultural trait but a universal characteristic of humanity.

The contemporary international ethics recognizes both universal humanity and qualitative differences among groups. The double-think is manifested in the dual processes of forming and enforcing the international human rights regime and bestowing sovereignty to decolonized territories. In comparison with traditional power politics, the post-war international order has undergone significant changes in terms of state legitimacy and state viability. In principle it recognizes the nation as the basic unit of the international society. But in practice it reifies the territorial state which may or may not preside over a society in which one and only one well-defined nation pre-exists.⁴⁵ In order to measure up to the principle of national self-determination, where the nation is absent, it has to be created within in a, to certain degree, arbitrarily demarcated geographical territory. Though some culturally heterogeneous states are socially and politically stable, it proves difficult for many others to secure a common base on which all social groups can coexist and prosper. Counterproductively, the imperative of nation-building, which attempts to integrate a divided society with a common high culturè, intensifies social tensions and radicalize tolerant populations who used to enjoy a high degree of conviviality difficult to imagine in a nationalist mind. The principle of self-determination of peoples is essentially about legitimating the nation. But in order to stabilize a large number of states built on fictitious nations, it tends to make the exercise of the self-determination principle a one-off progress to end the colonial system but is reluctant to articulate it for patent reasons. Consequently, as a universally promulgated ideal it continues to give impetus to nationalist movements. But the international community can neither provide substantial support nor find *nonrealpolitik* solutions for these appeals. The underlying tendency to reify the state has led to a transformation in the theme of self-determination. It became more and more a political slogan used to pursue sovereign rights for *group* rather than political freedom for the *individual*.

⁴⁵Mayall, 1990, p. 123.

Besides, the post-war international order is featured by an unprecedented attempt to freeze the political map. It is peculiarly tolerant of countries which are judicially sovereign but fail to meet the most fundamental empirical criteria of statehood as traditionally conceived. Though frequently labeled "failed states," very few states really "fail" in the traditional sense – to be militarily conquered or annexed. Once a political entity is accepted as a member of the state system through international recognition, its sovereign status will be held up with little reference to its domestic situation and its territory will be safeguarded by the collective security scheme devised in the UN Charter. Any attempt – both internal and external – to unilaterally alter the *status quo* is subject to intense international scrutiny. All these changes in international order give prominence to recognition politics, which centers the agenda of contemporary nationalism.

The rise of popular nationalism in contemporary China is a response to internal and external challenges posed by modernization and globalization. It shares many common features as well as sources with nationalisms in other "new states." In order to grasp the substantive content of Chinese nationalism, I deconstruct it into three elements: Statism, sovereignty, and status anxiety. The post-war international trade system replaces a military confrontation with an economic contest.⁴⁶ The ever-intensifying global economic competition accentuates the role of national government rather than weakens it. Globalization inevitably strengthens certain sectors of the state at the expense of others. How to share the risk and divide the cost among domestic groups is a difficult national choice. As a development model, state capitalism has a special advantage in economy of scale. Besides, it can prevent the unprivileged social groups from seeking political solutions to institutional constraints and unequal treatment, and sacrifice short-term gains for long-term stability with low political cost. China's state capitalism has created a huge amount of wealth but distributes it very unequally. The ruthless marketization renders individuals living outside the protection of the state extremely vulnerable to social and economic hazards. In a covert manner, the Chinese variant of modernization engenders enormous demand for "state," which fuels the old "strong state complex" with new incentives.

⁴⁶ Lester Thurow, *Head to Head: The Coming Economic Battle among Japan, Europe, and America* (New York: Warner, 1993), p. 23.

The second fundamental concern of Chinese nationalism is sovereignty. Throughout the period of “reform and opening up,” China has been oscillating between defending the principle of non-intervention and participating in liberalist international institutions. The multinationality of modern China serves as a major source of state insecurity. In the fear of separatist nationalism, the regime has always stressed the importance of Westphalian sovereignty that based legitimacy on territorial state rather than cultural identity, and resisted any possible application of the principle of self-determination to ethnic minorities within China. In order to fend off undesirable international influences, Chinese Exceptionalism is often upheld to justify domestic policies, which aims to build a fence between internal and external affairs. However, what China demands from the international community are contradictory: to be left alone (sovereignty) and to be noticed (national dignity). The double-think leads to tumultuous relationship between China and the rest of the world.

In the end, I address the recent surge of popular nationalism led by the post-80s overseas Chinese students and provide a preliminary explanation of how socioeconomic endeavors in globalizing China have transformed the relationship between the individual and the state. I argue that the pro-government stance of the young generation has complex socioeconomic roots. First, the post-80s are living in excessive social insecurity – one of the necessary consequences of the China Model of modernization which reinforces the prominence of the state in both national and individual survival. Social Darwinism translates institutional constraints into endless personal struggle and keeps political tensions at bay. Second, in contrast with the living-in-PRC Chinese, whose prevailing optimism toward the nation is more or less bolstered by their ignorance about foreign criticism, the overseas Chinese are anguished about the negative national image of China and feel propelling to fight for the legitimate interest of the country. This mechanism explains why the overseas students, who enthusiastically embrace Western cultures, turn to be more nationalistic than their homeland compatriots.

The new wave of Chinese nationalism is “state-sponsored” in the sense that it is the, though to a large extent indirect, outcome of China’s socioeconomic policies pursued

to modernize and globalize the country. Nevertheless, the updated version of “state-sponsored” nationalism goes far beyond the traditional state-centric framework, which provides that the revival of mass nationalism since 1989 is the direct product of state propaganda and political control. The new features of Chinese nationalism have far-reaching implications on the CCP’s legitimacy building and China’s political stability over the long term. If the individual view joining the state-sector and taking a pro-state stance as a rational choice under the current socioeconomic conditions, the ongoing scholarly debates over China’s political future, which exclusively focus on regime legitimacy and political trust, may have been barking up the wrong tree. It is arguable that with the current development model unaltered, the party system could withstand a high level of political skepticism among people at the grassroots and would be capable of continuously co-opting the elite group of the young generation without major political liberalization. No one can predict for sure how China will behave after it reaches a par with the United States. But to obtain a better understanding of the multiple sources of contemporary Chinese nationalism will significantly reduce the uncertainty in policy making for both “panda huggers” and “dragon slayers.”

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