

# “New Socialist Culture” and New Cultures in China

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## Introduction

China’s recent history has registered recurring waves of concern for “culture”. It has also experienced a flourishing of new cultures. The results manifest a complex reality. To avoid any misunderstanding regarding this topic. I will, first of all, focus on the different aspects of the term “culture”.



The Chinese word for culture, *wenhua*, made its way into China from Japan at the end of the 19th century. *Wenhua* together with *wenming*, the word for civilization, is a combination of *wen*, meaning patterns, decoration, language and literature, education and literacy, the non-military aspects of government and social life. *Hua* signifies a change for the better. Its primary meaning, therefore, is change effected through patterns of natural behavior, language and learning, education and socially approved behavior.<sup>1</sup>

The English term “culture” can have a variety of meanings:

- Culture comprises the value system, traditions, customs, beliefs and convictions, patterns of behavior which identify a group of people. These are its static aspects or “cultural heritage”.
- It also consists of the context and process of assimilating and reshaping this set of external and internal values. This is, the dynamic aspect of change carried out by the people themselves by combining elements of both the past and the present. This is always a new and living phenomenon.
- It also incorporates the results and means to propagate this set of cultural values through individual and social manifestations in art,

literature, philosophy, ideology, communications and mass media. These are the social and commercial aspects or “cultural production”..

There are two basic, possible approaches to analyse these different meanings of “culture”:

- the static approach which sees “culture” as a well defined and fixed treasure to hand over or to receive with some adaptations;
- the dynamic approach which considers culture as something living and constantly in process of change through people’s interaction and exchanges.

To catch a glimpse of China’s present multi-faceted culture, I will discuss the subject using these two approaches. First, I will examine the static approach adopted by the Chinese authorities, who wish to transmit the “socialist culture” by making it new “with Chinese characteristics”. Then, I will explore the dynamic approach by focusing on different groups of ordinary people who are creating their own new cultures.

## ***Official understanding and approach to culture***

### **Party officials and official media**

China is daily stepping up its efforts among the masses to promote the “new socialist culture”. The official media regularly call for strengthening the thinking of the masses in “patriotism, collectivism and socialism.”

Following up on the five year plan to construct a “spiritual civilization (1991-95),<sup>2</sup> Jiang Zemin, at the 5th Plenum of the 14th Party Congress (Sept. 25-29, 1995) strongly rebuked the cadres and even the Polituro members “for burying their heads in the sands of economic reform and ignoring ideological work”. He launched the priority slogan, “Politics first”. Last winter, farmers were required to start a political campaign. At the end of spring, 870,000 rural party secretaries, cadres and village committee chiefs were given special training in ideology and administration; 50,000 village party cells were targeted for rectification. In the cities, the ideological campaign was carried out by the mass media through a series of programs in April and May elaborating on the “talk politics” dictum. Besides con-

veying the message of “purity in ideology and socialist culture”, the campaign aims at enhancing public support for the party and at enlisting people’s cooperation to fight against economic corruption, the spread of pornographic materials and the influence of “rotten ideas from overseas”. Tertiary institutions, as well as publishing associations are required to hold ideological programs in order to tighten control. In mid June the mass media launched an adamant defense of the party’s Marxist foundations in order to prepare for the celebration of its 75th birthday.

These are but the most recent official efforts to spread “socialist culture”. In 1990, Li Ruihuan addressed a national forum on literary and art work. He said::

Specific culture, as an ideology, reflects specific politics and economics and, in turn, imposes a certain impact on social politics and the economy. The economy is the basis and politics is its concentrated reflection. When discussing the problem of Chinese culture, we should not forget the fundamental Marxist point of view. Construction of a new socialist culture with distinctive Chinese features should combine national form with socialist contents. In essence, it conforms to the reality in China, reflects our socialist life, reveals the essence of practical social relations, takes into account historical development and depicts the spirit of our socialist era. This new culture has roots in and serves socialist politics and economics. Without this new culture, we will not be able to accomplish, in the true sense of the word, the historical task of building socialism with distinctive Chinese characteristics.<sup>3</sup>

Chinese authorities seem to approach “culture” simply from the concept of “ideology”<sup>4</sup>. They are confident that Socialism, fixed in its principles, is quite adaptable to Chinese conditions (“with Chinese characteristics”) and the only suitable way for all people living in the People’s Republic. The emphasis, therefore, is on the unique and official ideology, on “national culture” and “national essence”. This ideology can meet the aspirations and improve the life of the masses. (Culture should “serve the masses and socialism”. The emphasis is on *hwa* that is, influencing and changing them).

The basic role of the Chinese authorities in building up the “new culture” is to spread socialist values, that is, socialist ethics,

good manners, proletarian democracy, the sense of law, social order, discipline, honesty, and advanced learning in science and technology, fostering national unity and solidarity, etc. All means, including strong measures, especially against corruption, crimes, social evils, factionalism and splittism, should be used to attain these objectives.

Chinese leaders recognized early on the importance of developing the means to communicate ideas and values to the masses that they believe to be crucial to their revolutionary objectives. To this end they have developed an extensive and sophisticated communications system. Moreover, they have adapted all traditional forms of media, including art and entertainment, to this end. Their aim is ambitious: to create a new culture, the socialist culture and thereby transform the basic patterns of thought and behavior of the entire Chinese population. Some of the values being stressed are rooted in tradition; others are radically new, but everything is meant to be derived from the “official ideology”.

In 1983 Deng Xiaoping underlined the urgent tasks of the organizational and ideological front:

But the official concern goes deeper and aims at helping people even to gain the “correct recognition of the objective reality”.

In other words, objective reality has very much a social-perceptual component, and it is the Party’s role to provide the ideal context in which the ideological sound elements of reality will be correctly recognized. Only in this way will the right kind of consciousness be developed among the masses of the people. The popular media are thus employed by the party as an instrument to aid the process of correct recognition, so that the Chinese will know what is desirable for them to know and see what is desirable for them to see. Correctness, in the thinking of the party leaders, is more important than spontaneity.<sup>5</sup>

This official stand determines the relationship between the “new socialist culture” and the traditional Chinese culture, as well as with the foreign (mainly Western) culture.

“Critical inheritance” is the official term used to designate past culture. In this light, traditional culture is to be critically evaluated by using Marxist theory. “Therefore, we should by no means promote the inheritance and legacies of historical culture without dis-

tinguishing the good from the bad. Instead, we must view it critically, and absorb its essence and discard its dross. The absolute purpose for advancing national culture is to make the past serve the present and to weed out the old and bring forth the new.”<sup>6</sup>

Today, Chinese authorities seem to have adopted the traditional line of those Confucian officials who, during the time of the Empire, strove to impose Confucianism as the “official ideology” over against other ideological currents.

As regards Western culture, the official position is against “complete Westernization” and the infiltration of decadent Western culture” with its “bourgeois liberalism”, in favor of cultural exchanges undertaken only with a critical attitude:

Absorbing foreign cultures is not aimed at replacing national culture, but instead at enriching and developing it. Making use of foreign cultures must be based on practical situation facing our nation. Both the ideological content and artistic form of foreign cultural works have to be scrutinized and adapted to the requirements of our socialist modernization program and the development need of our national culture. They should also be analyzed, sorted and transformed according to Marxist theory and methodology as to ‘make foreign things serve China.’<sup>7</sup>

### **The official theorists**

Under the official formula of ‘Socialism with Chinese characteristics’, cadres and intellectuals, who act as Party representatives can only base their understanding of culture on Marxist ideology. Their aim is to legitimize the Party’s official policies which are constantly adapted to the changing situation.

At present the party’s efforts are focused on legitimizing the on-going shift from the central-planned economic system to the market economy, to emphasize the relationship between economy and culture, as well as to promote culture as a tool for national stability, order and unity. Culture, therefore, has also become a weapon in the battle against “splittism”. For instance, recently, the Chinese minister of culture, Liu Zhongde, stated: “The Tibet Autonomous Region is a special place of strategic significance and it is in the forefront to fight splittist activities mounted by the Dalai Lama clique. The central government will also adopt a method to promote Tibet’s cultural un-

dertakings and tighten the cultural ties between Tibet and other parts of China.”<sup>8</sup>

### **The dynamic approach to culture from common people**

Intellectuals and artists, free from the responsibility of representing the official position, show more creative approaches and understandings of culture.

Common people in the city streets and in the countryside do not spend time on any specific concept of culture. In their daily life, however, especially since Deng Xiaopeng’s appeal that “some people in rural areas and in the cities should be allowed to get rich before others”, they have been striving to improve their living standard and setting up their own set of values, patterns of behavior, traditions and institutions, beliefs and convictions. These provide them with a sense of group identity, security and continuity.

According to their different past histories, present concerns, occupations and living conditions, these people are creating their own particular “culture”. The culture of rural people differs from that of urban residents. The culture of farmers differs from that of the fishermen or workers. Intellectuals and students are also creating something different from that intended by official bureaucrats. The cultural concerns of the younger generations are far removed from those of the old revolutionaries, etc. These “new cultures” are often considered as “sub cultures” within a “predominant culture”, but often, especially when dealing with same-language groups, like Cantonese or Shanghaiese, or minority ethnic groups, or groups sharing the same religion, they should be considered different “cultures” in the full sense of the word.

### ***New cultural manifestations***

For purposes of this article, I would now like to outline the main new cultural manifestations found among intellectuals, urban and rural dwellers and young people.

## **Intellectuals and artists**

Within the slogan, "Let a Hundred Flowers bloom and a Hundred Schools of thought contend" and the limitations placed on the exercise of freedom, intellectuals and artists in China have enriched the cultural field with such a creative spirit that critics describe the period from the Liberation, 1949 to 1989 as a New Era. Many have cautiously tried to become the "critical conscience" of society, exposing the bad effects of the official system and policies, the slowdown in the pace of reform, the major political blunders of the recent past, the negative effects of some Chinese traditions, and even the traditional role of the intellectuals as "servile tools of the government, neither willing nor able to play the role of an independent force in Chinese society". Some of them even dared to formulate concrete solutions for a new socio-political order. Philosophers, political scientists, historians, sociologists, scientists, futurologists, artists, human rights activists and dissidents joined together in discussions and debates thereby stimulating the rise of a "new culture". The main concerns and involvement have revolved around attitudes and the reinterpretation of the Chinese traditional culture, the relationship between Chinese and foreign cultures, the characteristics of the present Chinese culture and its future prospects.

These intellectuals display the anti-tradition mentality which has swept China since the beginning of the century. They blame traditional culture for underdevelopment, lack of individual consciousness, blind worship of and obedience to authority, dogmatism and passivity, etc. Some even express fear that the backbone of their great civilization, atrophied by the 19th century and criticized by the May 4 (1919) movement, might disintegrate beyond repair. Yet they do not completely reject it. They try to redefine and revitalize it, under the impact of and through a synthesis of the inputs from foreign cultures.

Although certain artists follow traditional ways, they also open up new paths: from realism (even using the technique of "photo realism") to impressions, from intuitionism to a combination of action painting with pop art.

Writers, who obviously play a leading role in the creation of this "new culture" have expressed it through literary works, reportage, lyrics, plays, film scripts, television production, operas and songs often raising controversies. Dramatists and film directors also have

shown creativity not only in a variety of styles but also in depth of contents and quality, often recognized at the international level.<sup>9</sup>

Efforts at innovation and creativity are often unpalatable to officialdom, who launched various campaigns against artists and intellectuals, e.g., the campaign against “spiritual pollution” in 1983-84, bourgeois liberalization and complete Westernization in 1986-87, etc.

In the debate about attitude and reinterpretation of the traditional Chinese culture, the most significant episode in recent years has been centered on the Central Television six-part documentary “He Shang” (River Elegy), broadcast in June 1988. This documentary launched a heated controversy on re-examining the foundations of Chinese cultural identity. The documentary presents the Yellow River as a symbol of Chinese culture and history, that gave splendor to China but kept her paddling along its silted yellow waters. The river is tyrannical and unpredictable, both life-giving and life-destroying: it never changes and yet is always changing. To many Chinese the message of the documentary was clear: only by rejecting the past in order to rebuild a “new culture”, not necessarily socialist, could China hope to enter the modern world. The official authorities labeled this message “national and historical nihilism”. They banned the documentary, fanning the flame of controversy which continued unabated until subdued by the strong measures taken in the aftermath of the Tiananmen June 4, 1989 incident. In August 1990, the propaganda ministry tried to counterbalance the “River Elegy” with the 4-part television documentary, “On the Road: a Century of Marxism”. This program sought to extol the official Four Basic Principles and the four decades of the Communist Party’s constant triumphs.

The Tiananmen Incident put the intellectuals in a quandary and their new developing culture in jeopardy. The conservative bureaucrats and the official theorists quickly took up a hard line against all liberal thinkers. They denounced their efforts as “excesses of intellectual pollution” due to bad Western influence. Prominent intellectuals were purged and many of them forced to go into exile, thus forcing this “new culture” to emigrate. All publications and publishing houses were brought into line, instructed to place the emphasis on “politics first” and “ideological purity”.

Since the Tiananmen incident, liberal intellectuals have experienced a certain hopelessness and alienation. The predominant stress



on the official “new socialist culture” has all but managed to curb their creative spirit.

According to a recent survey, conducted by the Contemporary University Students and Traditional Chinese Culture Task Group, “87.1% of university students support the development of traditional Chinese culture. Although the great majority of respondents did not approve of such traditional concepts as blind obedience, male chauvinism, and conformism, there are still some who remain convinced these concepts are ‘relevant’...”<sup>10</sup>

As regards the relationship between Chinese and foreign cultures, the same survey found that “Of those students who completed the questionnaire, only 10% believe traditional Chinese culture is superior to Western culture and only 1% said Western culture is superior. The majority believe that such a comparison cannot be made. Hence, when it comes to cultural construction, a majority of university students advocate that China should stand on traditional learning or synthesize Chinese and Western...”<sup>11</sup>

There are undeniable facts: “Since 1978, when China opened its doors to the outside world, foreign literature and art have become an integral part of Chinese cultural life - something unthinkable a decade ago” (Zhao Wei).<sup>12</sup> Progress has brought in a large amount of technological and scientific knowledge, new values and concerns, as well as a greater openness of mind. No one can deny the paradoxical features of today’s Chinese cultural sector, such as the refusal/identification (hate/love) relationship with the traditional culture, the conflictual relationship between individuals in their autonomy and family/clan, collective and society/state (new understanding of human rights, of society and nation, the way of government...), the paradox between modern and scientific ways, the past paternalistic and passive tradition, the conflict between the strait-jacket of the official ideological approach and the freedom of academic research and artistic creativity. There are also the fixed boundaries of socialism and the richness of cultural contents. The latter are felt especially when dealing with religious values. All these are undeniable elements and expressions that something new is in the process of creation.

## **Urban people**

People who are living in urban areas--the official number is 300 million and increasing daily--are also engaged in building up their own new set of cultural values. These people are generally educated and emancipated. They have personal contacts and have been exposed to the mass media, modern trends and to the outside world. These experiences have raised their ambitions and increased their interests.

The on-going economic reforms and open door policy have made people more oriented towards capitalism and consumerism. In January 1995, the China Broadcast News, in an official report, stated that urban people's attitudes have changed dramatically. They are more concerned with economic efficiency; recognize as positive the idea of becoming wealthy, accept the consequent competition and pressures, such as price increases, contracted labor, etc. They are more critical of the traditional idea that "officialdom is above everything", more self-reliant, no longer feel lost due to the so-called 'crisis of faith' which appeared in the late 70's when the economic reforms were considered at odds with the orthodox Marxist ideology. They are more concerned with science and technology as resources for making money and are no longer afraid of changes and crises, etc.<sup>13</sup>

At the beginning of 1996, the results of public surveys<sup>14</sup> show that:

sixteen years of 'socialism with Chinese characteristics' have transformed the interests and preferences of city dwellers: the greater availability of consumer goods for those who constitute the emerging middle classes who have spending power of potentially global economic importance, make urban people sophisticated and to look for the most fashionable and technology-advanced products, such as videos, compact disc players, audio-visual tuner-amplifiers, laser disc machines, etc. More than 80% of China's urban residents agree that a market economy is vital to China's modernization drive but, according to the results of another national poll, they note that culture must develop along with the economy. The 15,000 people interviewed showed that most have grown accustomed to changes during the transition from a planned economy to a market-oriented one over the past three years. 'Although people still regard job loss and pressure from competition both at work and daily life as a most unbearable thing, their response to sudden social changes, such as the grow-

ing income gap, rising prices, and the necessity of making sacrifices, is less fragile than before'. When asked what was vital to China's future, most of those polled listed the following: a complete legal system; well-educated citizens; equal rights; a family-planning policy; political democracy; better use of time, and increased efficiency - although 75% said they would still hesitate to appeal to the law if their rights and interests were infringed. Xinhua quoted the poll as saying that some traditional views still obstruct development of a market economy. It will be a gradual process for the Chinese people to really accept some new ideas.

Cities are witnessing the rise of a "middle class" (or "new elite"), fast created by the economic reforms. This new "middle class" consists of individual entrepreneurs, managers of the state, collective and private enterprises, professionals and experts, who are gradually more willing to be in full control of their life and even to play a role in the social and political arena. They are beginning to build up a tradition of middle class values, an "urban culture" but, obviously, not without conflicts.

The urban population's emphasis on intellectual and technoscientific training as a means to make money, and necessary for their children's education, shows the on-going psychological conflict between the pre-and post-industrial mentality and culture. Signs of the survival of the pre industrial mentality and culture are still quite evident in, for example, the frequent lack of maintenance and upkeep of equipment, facilities, housing, etc., in the struggle for survival, which makes courtesy seem anachronistic with pushing to get on public buses, driving motorcycles and vehicles on the sidewalks, honking horns, narrowly missing pedestrians, etc.

A recent cultural phenomenon evident in big cities, and also fast spreading in towns and rural areas is the rise of a "mass culture". This phenomenon is created by "mass literature", made up of tabloids, small magazine, leaflets, cartoons, which tantalize readers with a mix of wild romances, martial art sagas, spy stories, science fiction, sensational biographies of movie stars or other famous personalities, attractive tales about emperors and their concubines, handbooks for games, martial arts, gymnastics, dances and health manuals. Recently cassettes and compact discs have been added to the market to attract the younger generation.

This “urban culture” is already being expressed in several social behavioral patterns and habits, e.g., wearing bizarre fashions, trendy hairstyles, having famous-brand name goods, eating in expensive restaurants, flocking to discos, karaokes and bars, showing off the most advanced camera or hi-fi equipment, attending public dancing class, etc.

The authorities, intent on preserving some standard of morality, have tried, at times successfully, at times unsuccessfully, to clamp down on all this “spiritual pollution” and “bourgeois liberalization”. They consider the decline of “high culture” as a sign that “spiritual construction is lagging behind material construction”. One of the reasons for the limited results of their efforts is that many lower level cadres and leaders do not think this mass or popular culture is any cause for alarm nor is it necessarily inferior.<sup>15</sup>

### **Rural people**

The cultural systems of rural and urban dwellers have always been different in China. Following the rural liberalization policy in the 1980s, this disparity has become even more evident. People in the countryside (the official number is 800 million), are now enjoying more freedom and taking advantage of it, improving their standard of living, increasing their purchasing power, building new houses for themselves and buying the “four big items” - bicycles, sewing machines, radios and wristwatches - along with some more expensive clothes and goods. As a consequence, these improved conditions impel them not only to revive old traditional customs but to adopt new, modern ways brought in by recent changes from elsewhere or by mass media, and thus creating their new acceptable culture. They do not speculate on culture as such, but being open both to the past and to the new, they deal with it as something dynamic, something to be negotiated, transacted, achieved and created by themselves.

In the countryside, the general tendency is towards conservatism, but, as far as economics are concerned, the people are remarkably open to change. Their interests and attitudes are generally pragmatic. They honor those traditional customs which are mainly related to village feasts and celebrations, to clan and family rituals (marriages, funerals, visits to the tombs, to restoring temples and making pilgrimages, etc.).<sup>16</sup> With the increase of income, they also

adopt modern dress. They want to own television sets, refrigerators, telephones, and even cars or other means of transportation. Some less scrupulous people are quick to learn the “tricks of the trade”. They do not hesitate to make use of illegal means and to cheat in order to make money. But in the rural areas, the number of “swindlers” is not very high. For the majority of people, barring a few money spending extravagances, efforts at improving their lifestyle and setting up a new system of values and behavior are based upon the traditional wisdom of ordinary Chinese people, who have a practical and holistic approach to life. Their cultural values and ambitions are, therefore, limited generally to improving their lifestyle, at keeping harmony (good connections) with everybody they have to deal with, as well as with nature and the spirit world. They also show concern for the welfare of the community, working to improve public services. They put great hope in the next generation and try their best to provide their children with a better education than they had. Consequently, young rural people express more cultural demands than their parents. They read novels and magazines in their spare time, sing popular songs, attend sport centers, go to ballrooms, etc. In their search for a new and better life, they visit cities more frequently and participate in urban activities, thus helping to narrow the gap between the urban and rural mentality..

### **The younger generations**

All over China, there is a kind of “universal or common culture” found especially among the younger generation.<sup>17</sup> This phenomenon has never before occurred in history. This particular “culture takes values and expressions from all over the world.” It includes rock music, pop art, techno-scientific knowledge and computer jargon, karaoke, television propaganda slogans, familiarity with the most famous world movie stars, singers, athletes, artists and public personalities, etc. It is expressed in common types of behavior, like wearing T shirts and other brand name clothes, singing popular songs, playing the same games, seeing the same television serial (like Star Trek...), using the same greetings (Hi, Gi’me five, and even God Bless), etc.

This culture, based on shared interests, tastes and ways to express them, facilitates communications among young people worldwide and constitutes a set of common cultural values.

These external cultural manifestations which, though universal, are strictly related to the context in which they are lived. On a deeper level they reveal shared feelings of insecurity, boredom and despair. These in turn are manifested in acerbity, a degree of fatalism about human existence, a certain lawlessness, rebellion and marginalization. Specialists have called this situation the “gray culture”.

## **CONCLUSION**

Chinese authorities are, of course, directly involved in the creative process of fashioning a new culture. They feel deeply responsible for spreading, what they consider the only correct ideology for China; that is the new socialist culture. However, as far as “culture” is concerned, what matters most, in the end, is the common people’s acceptance and assimilation of cultural forms. In China there are different groups of people who, in order to express their position and interests within society, are creating their own “cultures”. No large society, however, can have only one culture or ideology. Lenin himself admitted this. Large societies are compelled to accept pluralism and any effort at uniformity or unitarianism is bound to failure. This is especially true for a country so vast and diversified as China.

Although a country can be rooted in a “predominant culture”, there are always simultaneously several “sub-cultures” as well as a “mass or popular cultures”. History and experience are quick to point out that the imposition of a culture or ideology on a people always gives rise to a “counter-culture”. Furthermore the spread of an “universal culture”, anywhere in the world, including China, would seem unavoidable today. “It is impossible to keep out the value system, mode of thinking and sense of competition, while importing advanced managerial techniques, science and technology from the West” (Yuan Zhiyuan).<sup>18</sup>

Finally, we must carefully consider that what really influences the life and behavior of the masses is not so much government directives, cultural measures dictated by authorities or even great literary works of the intellectual elite. It is rather popular culture, group cultures and “alternative cultures”.

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 Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> For more details cf. Wang Gungwu, *The Chineseness of China*, (Hong Kong, Oxford University Press, 1991).

<sup>2</sup> On this topic see my article, "Building a Spiritual civilization in China", *Tripod*, Vol XVI. No. 91, Jan-Feb.1996.

<sup>3</sup> Li Ruihuan, "Questions on Developing a Rich National Culture, (January 10, 1990), published in *Enriching Literature and Art*. Compiled by Beijing Review (Beijing Star Publishers, 1990), p. 17.

<sup>4</sup> According to the oldest meaning given by French thinker, Destutt de Tracy, "ideology is the unbiased way to study the development of man's idea. K. Marx gave the word a strong negative connotation: ideology for him means giving to idea priority over matter without realizing that human concepts are projections of material conditions and social relations, etc. Such ideology derived, in Engels' term, from this "false consciousness". Lenin used the term in a different way: each society has its "ideologies", the political, philosophic, religious ideas held by a certain class, in order to express its position and interests within a society. For him, therefore, ideology means "a set of convictions", but with the understanding that every "conviction" is the expression of the materials conditions of a class. Of course, in Lenin's view, there is only one correct ideology, one right conviction, that is the "socialist ideology of the proletariat", which is the weapon for the working class to create a communist society. In general, "ideology" can be defined as a system of thought used to interpret society and man's place in society, the function of which is either to stabilize the existing structures of society or to change them.

<sup>5</sup> Godwin C. Chu, "Popular Media: a glimpse of the New Chinese Culture", in *Popular Media in China*, (Honolulu, East-West Center Book, 1978, p. 6).

<sup>6</sup> Li Ruihuan, op. cit. P. 21.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>8</sup> Xinhua News Agency dispatch, 6/12/1996, quoted in *Hong Kong Standard* 6/13.

<sup>9</sup> For literature, it is enough to mention the "wound/scar of lost generation literature" started in 1978-79, whose main exponent is Lu Xinhua; "introspection literature", dominated mainly by Wang Meng, with descriptions of personal experiences, feelings, psychology, stream of consciousness, symbolism's, etc. The "rural" writers of Hunan led by Gu Hua, stress the importance of "reflecting real life" in their works, and emphasize the beauty of nature and rural life, The Shaanxi writers display their grasp of the problems related to the transition period between rural life and mod-

ernization; they describe the new situation, new life, and new people. There is also the realistic reportage, promoted mainly by Lin Binyan. There are also various school of poetry and drama. (See Zhang Zhizhong, "On Literary Schools in China Today," *Social Sciences in China*, Spring 1987, pp. 141-167).

<sup>10</sup> *China Daily*, quoted in *Eastern Express*, November 18-19, 1995.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Zhao Wei, *China Daily*, 14 January 1988.

<sup>13</sup> quoted in *Hong Kong Standard*, 19 January 1995.



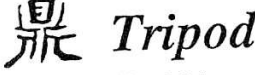


<sup>14</sup> The results of the following surveys are reported by Xinhua News Agency, quoted in *Eastern Express*, 8 January, 1996.

<sup>15</sup> An invasion of Pop Culture, in *Asiaweek*, November 1, 1995, p.53.

<sup>16</sup> On the revival of popular religion, see my article, "Popular Religion in China Today," *Tripod*, Vol. XV, No. 85, January-February 1995.

<sup>17</sup> N. Standaert, "Towards the Chinese Culture of the XXI Century", in *China News Analysis*, No.1462, 15 June 1992.

<sup>18</sup> quoted in *China Daily*, 8 April 1986.

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