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TUESDAY, AUGUST 10, 2021

Lao Tian: Teacher Mao Zedong's history graduate student Qi Benyu: I miss Comrade Qi Benyu

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We have seen too many people and things that are famous but not real. Today's article attempts to discuss a counter-example: a real, but nameless student of Mao's and what happened to him. With this article, Lao Tian intends to send his condolences to Mr Qi Benyu, who passed away on 20 April.



Qi Benyu came to work with Chairman Mao in 1950, initially managing the books for him. In his later years, he wrote an article looking back on his own development and considered himself a "private disciple" of Mao's, so that he had the advantage of being

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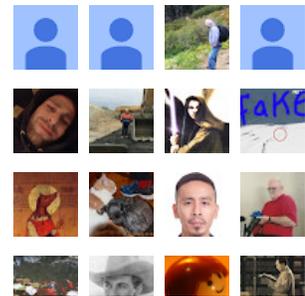
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close to him, and he tried hard to follow Mao's reading process and, in particular, to learn his ideas and methods.

From the perspective of Qi Lao's[1] life, he truly achieved the unity of knowledge and action, and practiced Mao Zedong's "Five Not Afraids Spirit"[2]. During the Cultural Revolution, Qi Lao, withstood the tremendous pressure from the officialdom, firmly supported the masses to organize to criticize the various perverse practices of the authorities. This became the thorn in the eyes of the majority of the officialdom. He went to Qincheng Prison in early 1968 and stayed there for 18 years.

In contrast to the end of Yao Wenyan and Zhang Chunqiao, who were in a similar position, Qi seems to have had the advantage of being sent to Qincheng prison in early 1968, which was perhaps not so much persecution as a real protection for him. Looking back on history today, we will find that it is common for those who really stand on Chairman Mao's side to be beheaded and go to jail. Jiang Qing had been mentally prepared for this. The only difference was when they entered the cell and how long they sat in jail. Qi Benyu went to prison in 1968 and was released from prison in 1986. Zhang and Yao both entered in 1976 and failed to get out for the rest of their lives.

First, Several positive interactions between a good teacher and a good student

Mao Zedong was so diligent in his study of Chinese history and politics that few professors who made a living from history could compare with him, but it is true that Mao Zedong was not given the title of professor by any institution, nor was he ever publicly enrolled in postgraduate studies. Qi Lao, looking back on his own learning process in his later years, said that he was only equivalent to a "private disciple" of Teacher Mao[3]. However, Qi's enduring enthusiasm for history and the profoundly guiding role of Teacher Mao in Qi's study of history was a healthy interaction that no pair of good tutors and students could match.

In 1950 Qi Benyu went to work beside Mao Zedong. His enthusiasm for learning history was extremely keen. In the beginning, he managed the books for Mao Zedong, and was able to access Mao's reading choices through the convenience of his work. He found whatever books the Chairman wanted to read, and whatever annotations the Chairman had in the book, he bought the book and copied it down. In this way, he followed the Chairman's reading and study of history, and often read at night after his busy work, so he had a deep understanding of the sense of history and politics of Teacher Mao. Therefore, starting in 1963, when Qi Benyu started writing historical essays, he was highly praised by Teacher Mao. The reason was nothing else but that Qi Benyu had deeply internalized Mao Zedong's thoughts, views, and methods of viewing historical events and characters into his own way of looking at history during the process of reading. Therefore, Qi Benyu's views and methods in his articles received high recognition by Teacher Mao. From his essay criticizing Li Xiucheng's self-report in 1963 to

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his essay commenting on Jian Bozan's[4] historicism in 1965, Teacher Mao gave unreserved admiration. Nominally, Teacher Mao never formally enrolled Qi Benyu as a graduate student, but Qi's enthusiasm for history and his fervent devotion to Teacher Mao's sense of history would have dwarfed any pair of professors or graduate students.

In a series of interviews by Lao Tian with Mr Qi Benyu in November 2012, he spoke of how he had been profoundly influenced by Chairman Mao in his own thought formation process. When he first joined Zhongnanhai, he was instructed to work with Tian Jiaying on the revision of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong. He and Tian were so dedicated to this that, in addition to scrutinising it, they adopted an innovative approach: one person read it to another, often reading and listening to an article more than ten times, and at the final stage, they had a sense of whether a punctuation mark was appropriate. Qi said that after reading this way for some time, his own thoughts were all those of Chairman Mao, and what the Chairman thought of the workers and peasants, and what he thought of the intellectuals, naturally became his own views. Qi joked that when members of the Cultural Revolution Group supported the rebels in organising themselves to criticise the powers-that-be, they were hated by the princelings and some people deliberately despised him, saying that "Qi Benyu only had an administrative rank of seventeen", but he actually served as Acting Director of the Central Office and Director of the Bureau of Secretaries. What really made Qi proud was that on 20 July 1966 the Central Committee decided to set up an editorial committee for the writings of Mao Zedong, and he was one of the members of the editorial committee for the anthology of Mao Zedong. This editorial committee was headed by Liu Shaoqi himself, and the list included at least senior officials from the Region and the Grand Military Region, in addition to Qi, who was the only one not selected because of his high rank.

Qi mentioned one incident in particular to illustrate why he was so fervently convinced by the Chairman's ideas. In the middle of the revision of Mao's Selected Works, he read for the first time an article written by Chairman Mao in a poor mountain valley in northern Shaanxi - "The Chiang Kai-shek government is now besieged by the whole people" (30 May 1947)[5]. This article said, "The Chiang Kai-shek government, hostile to the whole people, now finds itself besieged by the whole people. On both the military and political fronts, it has met defeats, is now besieged by the forces it has declared to be its enemies and can find no way of escape." "There are now two battle fronts in China. The war between Chiang Kai-shek's invading troops and the People's Liberation Army constitutes the first front. Now a second front has emerged, that is, the sharp struggle between the great and righteous student movement and the reactionary Chiang Kai-shek government." "The march of events in China is faster than people expected. On the one hand, there are the victories of the People's Liberation Army; on the other, there is the advance of the people's struggle in the areas under Chiang Kai-shek's control; both are moving at high speed." An incident is mentioned in this article, which happened to be seen

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and heard by Qi Lao himself, but his own views and feelings are worlds apart from the Chairman's.

On 4 May 1947, when Qi Lao was passing by the Huangpu District Police Station, he witnessed the siege of the police station by small businessmen organised by the youth gangs, and as a result, he was affected by the incident and felt aggrieved. His mood at the time was only very angry and resentful. He felt that the Guomindang regime was unprincipled. It didn't make sense, this was purely from a personal point of view and looking at the problem on a matter-of-fact basis. On the same matter, Chairman Mao saw a bright future for the whole world and a general antagonism between Jiang's regime (the pinyin spelling of Chiang Kai-shek is Jiang Jieshi - Trans.) and the people, and concluded on this - the failure of Jiang's regime on the political front - and predicted that political failure would hasten its military defeat. Qi Lao said that the siege of the police station this time was not organized by the underground party, but by the Youth Gang. At that time, the Jiang regime raised taxes in order to fight the civil war. The hawkers rose up to express their protests, and the police suppressed the protests, which naturally developed into a siege of the police station, with the combined effect that the common people felt closer to the youth gangs than to the Jiang regime. From this, we can see that the people's hearts are turned against the regime, and we can appreciate the Chairman's high and strategic vision of the problem, why the masses have power and can also determine the rise and fall of the regime. Qi Lao also commented that Deng Xiaoping and other people never valued the masses, did not know what the political front was and always suppressed the masses in the same way as Jiang Jieshi. In addition to ideological reasons, their vision was too low and narrow, so they could not see the power of the masses, which is also an important reason. After the comparison of this incident, Qi said he only had a partial vision and a momentary feeling, and could not help but be extremely impressed by the strategic vision of the Chairman and his breadth of outlook. The ancient people said not to go outside and still know the world affairs, but that is self-exaltation and just talk. People who really have a strategic vision are rare, but there are indeed some, and Chairman Mao is that kind of person who really can see from knowledge of the smallest things, an insight into the future. It was later revealed that when Chairman Mao wrote this article, he was in Yangjiagou in northern Shaanxi, having been driven out of Yan'an by Hu Zongnan's army just four months earlier, and the entire civil war situation in China was also one in which the Guomindang army was in full attack.

For a long time afterwards, Qi Lao managed the letters from the people for the Chairman. After Qi Lao had reported the important socio-economic phenomena in his letters, the Chairman himself approved many of them and handed them over to him. Qi Lao said that this was not a coincidence, as his thinking and way of looking at issues were influenced by the Chairman, and therefore the choice of many issues often fitted in with the Chairman's thinking and received the Chairman's attention and therefore priority approval.

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In terms of general management of state affairs, Qi Benyu's vision was already very close to that of Chairman Mao, so the documents he submitted received more attention. At the same time, in the midst of national political affairs in the 1950s and 1960s, the prevalence of opportunistic behaviour in the officialdom was a major stubborn problem, most notably the "five winds" that emerged in 1958 - the wind of pomp and circumstance, the communist wind, the wind of specialisation of cadres, forced orders and blind command - and in order to stem the tide of opportunism in the officialdom, Qi Benyu once again stood closely alongside Teacher Mao.

In 1958 Deng Xiaoping, leading a few provincial party secretaries who were at the forefront of the current boastfulness, concocted a "Forty Articles of the Fifteen-Year Programme for Building Socialism", which negated the yield increase target proposed in the "Forty Articles of the Programme for Agriculture" formulated by Mao Zedong in 1956, and proposed to raise per mu^[6] yield to four thousand, five thousand and eight thousand jin^[7] in twelve years, and also said that by 1967 it would reach 400 million tons of steel production. Mao Zedong forcefully shelved this so-called socialist construction programme and made counter-proposals telling these people to read, first of all, Stalin's "Economic Problems of Socialism in the Soviet Union", which did not work out very well. To stem the tide of opportunism in official circles, Mao twice sent Qi Benyu to the grassroots to find out what was really going on. In 1959, he was sent to Dafeng Commune in Xinfan County, Sichuan, and he planted experimental fields to see how much was the yield of an acre of field. The final figure was arrived at according to the most scientific farming methods and the best fertilizer input that local officials boasted about in newspapers, by which the experimental fields were planted. The output was more than 300 catties^[8] of wheat and more than 700 catties of rice. At the Lushan Conference in 1959, Tian Jiaying also took this figure (including the figure of output per acre that Qi Lao went to the labor model Luo Shifa to find out), and argued with Li Jingquan, the boastful provincial party secretary admired by Deng Xiaoping.

In response to Deng Xiaoping and others sitting in their offices in the city and ruling by "taking things for granted", Mao Zedong once again advocated the "style of investigation and research" in the bureaucracy in 1961. At this time, Qi Benyu was sent to the Changxindian Locomotive Factory. He saw that the officials were all superficial, so on 12 May 1961, he wrote a document entitled "Investigation on 'Investigation and Research'" and sent it to the Chairman, which said that "investigation and research are for solving problems, not for plating things in a beautiful gold colour". Mao Zedong first praised "Qi Benyu as a good comrade" in the comments, and then forcefully instructed that "if the same bureaucratic, lordly and disgusting method of investigation is still practised by the same people who went to the Changxindian railway rolling stock manufacturing plant, the Party Committee has the right to educate them. If dead bureaucrats are disobedient, the party committee has the right to blast them away. At the same time, please use this file as one of the teaching materials for the training investigation team."^[9]

Teacher Mao's statement that "Qi Benyu is a good comrade" was "corrupted" by the Central Literature Research Office, which was determined not to issue it. This corruption can probably be justified. If Qi Benyu was proclaimed to be a good person, most of the officialdom would refuse to see it that way. There is always a "dichotomy" of one kind or another, enough to reveal a universal dark side, so a wise editor needs to be vigilant in erasing some key elements. In Deng Xiaoping's time, the purpose and task of setting up several official ideological institutions at the ministerial level was to rewrite the Party's history, and in rewriting the Party's history, what they were trying to cover up was the dark side of the officialdom, in contrast to Mao Zedong's approach of launching the Cultural Revolution and asking the masses to rise up and expose the dark side of the officialdom, which were two very different positions and approaches from the one designed by Deng Xiaoping.

At almost every juncture in history, Qi Benyu stood in opposition to the dark side of the officialdom, and this was also the case during the period of academic criticism between 1963 and 1965. In the interview, Qi also pointed out that many of Yao Wenyuan's articles were written "in deference to the orders of his superiors", typical of "literature in compliance with orders", and that Yao Wenyuan had no responsibility to be held politically accountable later on, but was merely the executor; Qi said that he had done the opposite. The initial articles were written because he felt he had something to say, so he should be held responsible for them.

After more than a decade of reading under Mao's tutelage, Qi Benyu began the process of independent thinking and expressing his thoughts through writing in 1963, initially challenging the poor academic style of the historical community that fabricated conclusions out of historical facts and materials, most typically Luo Ergang[10] and others who ignored the historical facts in "A Review of Li Xiucheng's Autobiography"[11] and fabricated the so-called "pseudo-surrender theory" to inappropriately exalt his performance after his capture. As a result, after the publication of this article, Zhou Yang, the deputy minister of the Central Propaganda Department, organized a large number of authorities to besiege Qi Benyu, and used political power to protect the bad style of study in the academic research field. Due to the timely intervention of Teacher Mao, this siege was lifted and in the end, nothing happened. Teacher Mao later concluded that "the Central Propaganda Department is the Palace of the King of Hades," and Zhou Yang's poor performance should be one of the bases for making judgments.

After Qi Lao criticized the poor style of study in history, due to the intervention of the Chairman, all the authorities refused to discuss it on equal terms after their loss of absolute superiority. Therefore, the criticism of style of study had to come to an end and could not go on. He also inadvertently shifted the battlefield, beginning in 1964-1965 with a strong dissatisfaction with the historical and methodological views of the historical community, typified by his criticism of Jian Bozan. When Qi said why he had written his criticism of Jian Bozan, he said that he had taken a break during the

Four Clean-ups period[12] in the countryside, when he had a severe bronchial problem and coughed up blood. After he left work, he had ample time to read, first of all, historical papers according to his own interests. Qi said that for a long time he had only been reading books on historical theory and was unaware of the current state of historical research. When he concentrated on reading papers from the historical community, Qi said he was extremely shocked that many people in the academic community had become quite rampant and blatantly opposed to Marxism and Mao Zedong Thought, talking openly and in a light tone about class struggle and historical materialism. In this way, he dragged himself through his illness while reviewing materials and writing critical papers. As he had previously written a paper criticising Luo Erzang, he was subjected to a collective siege by the authorities of Zhou Yang's organisation (this organised siege died in an "attempted" state due to Mao's personal intervention in the discussion), so this time he was a little more cautious. The people who criticised the bureaucrats were under siege by the official organisation, so they had to be as cautious as possible and erase the critical edge of the article beforehand.

When Zhou Yang organised the siege by the authorities, he had sent the request report to the Premier for approval beforehand. Qi Lao talked about how the attempted siege had little impact on him personally: he was completely unaware of the initial stage of the siege planning, and soon after he knew about it, Teacher Mao intervened and he became the superior party instead; as a result his follow-up article came out and Luo Ergang and others completely ignored it. Qi even lamented that he was really interested in historical issues and tried to clarify some of them through debates. But those authorities are different, either they speak with absolute superiority and suppress you - as long as there is a slight disadvantage they don't say a word, so that you can't find an opponent even if you want to debate. Qi Lao also said that he admired the Premier's character, and that while Zhou Yang, the party in question, did not say a word of self-criticism, the Premier was completely different. In late April 1966 at the Jinjiang Hotel in Shanghai, the Premier made a point of taking responsibility for the incident and apologized to him in person. Many years later, Qi Lao still recalled with great emotion how he felt at that time. A big person like the Premier still remembered such a small matter a few years later and apologised to a young man; in contrast, many big people in the officialdom, who had done a lot of illegal and even criminal deeds, not only engaged in pushing up and pushing down in order not to take personal responsibility, but also went to the extent of systematically falsifying the history of the Party for this purpose.

Second, Mao Zedong's original design of the Cultural Revolution - to support young people to rise up and seize ideological leadership

It is often easy to acknowledge and see the immeasurable importance of good teachers to the development of their students. But the counter-effect of good students on their teachers is equally powerful, something that is often easy to overlook. In retrospect,

fifty years after the Cultural Revolution, I am afraid that Mao Zedong over-optimistically devised a 'low-cost revolutionary programme' to support small capital in criticising big capital during the first phase of the Cultural Revolution. His over-optimism of the "good students" and the resulting unreasonably high expectations may have played a significant role. (See note 23 for the sense in which "capital" is being used here and elsewhere -Trans.)

Today, fifty years after the Cultural Revolution, one cannot look back on Mao's original design for the Cultural Revolution without admitting that it was partly out of the regard for, and expectations of, his own students that he came up with his original design for the Cultural Revolution. It was because Mao saw that "over the years, the youth had made progress, it was some of the old professors who could not do anything about it." Therefore, the original design of the Cultural Revolution by Teacher Mao was to support the youth to rise up and criticise the old professors who had no way out, and to try to use this to build socialist ideological leadership. If Teacher Mao's design had been implemented, it is clear that the Cultural Revolution would have been an extremely low-cost revolution - one that would have ensured the formation of a new leadership in the ideological sphere without causing major social upheaval. However, such a low-cost revolution model was of little interest, especially to the officialdom, and academic authorities usually chose to reject academic debate on an equal footing, so the design ran up against academic authorities in the first place.

From 1949 onwards, the academic world, especially the historical world, has been lively with debate and has produced the so-called 'five golden flowers' - the five most popular fields of study. But such a lot of academic buzz was filtered out, and in the middle of a talk, Mao only affirmed a mere three young people and their critical writings. Reading these three essays over and over again (see the extracts in the Appendix for the main content of the three essays), while comparing them with the political practice of the Cultural Revolution, one can see that the three young people's critical essays all point directly at the unprincipled over-affirmation of the ruling class and its ability and willingness to mediate social contradictions, and on the contrary deny the historical and political subjectivity of the people. The policy of concessions criticised by Sun Daren[13], Qi Benyu's criticism of Jian Bozan's historicism, and Yao Wenyan's attack on Wu Han's play on Hai Rui all came together on the question of how to view the historical (political) subjectivity of the people. Breaking the monopoly of power by the powers-that-be and establishing the political subjectivity of the people - especially the right to organise and criticise - was the joint point issue in the political practice of the Cultural Revolution. Historical experience and realpolitik were thus concretely twisted together.

On December 21, 1965. talking with Chen Boda, Hu Jie, Tian Jiaying, Ai Siqi and Guan Feng on the issue of writing prefaces to classic Marxist works, Mao Zedong said: "After the Peasant War, the landowning class had only counter-attacked and there was no policy of concessions! The Secret History of the Qing Palace was described by some as patriotic, but I see it as a sell-out, a complete sell-out. Qi Benyu's article was very good, I read it three times, the drawback was that it did not name names. Yao Wenyan's article was also very good, naming names, and it shook the theatre, history and philosophy communities to their core, but it did not hit the nail on the head. The main point is the 'removal of officials'. The Emperor Jiajing was only Hai Rui's official, and in 59 years we were only Peng Dehuai's official, and Peng Dehuai was also 'Hai Rui'." (The Chronicle of Mao Zedong, Volume 5) According to Qi, Guan Feng once conveyed the Chairman's talk to him, and he was incredulous at the time. Even if the Chairman was praising and encouraging young people to speak, he would not have to read an article three times.

This excerpt is from official documents, so it is incomplete and omits many key elements that prevent the reader from grasping how an opinion is derived from the material. According to documents revealed during the Cultural Revolution, there were other important aspects of this conversation: "Some intellectuals, such as Wu Han and Jian Bozan, were becoming increasingly unhelpful. Now there was Sun Daren, who wrote against Jian Bozan's so-called 'concessionary policy' of the feudal landowning class towards the peasants. After the Peasant War, the landowning class only counter-attacked, how could they make any concessions? The landowning class just did not make any concessions to the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom." "Nowadays, philosophers can't engage in philosophy, literary scholars can't write novels, and historians can't engage in history; if they want to, they are emperors and generals. Qi Benyu's article (referring to "The Study of History for the Revolution") is well written, but the drawback is that it does not name names. Yao Wenyan's article (referring to "Review of the New Historical Drama <Hai Rui Dismissed from Office>") has the advantage of naming names, but it does not hit the nail on the head." "Young people are prone to metaphysics and cannot speak of shortcomings. It's good to have some experience. Over the years, the youth have made progress, it is some old professors who have not been able to do anything about it. It is better for Wu Han to go down and become a prefect than to be the mayor. It is also good for Yang Xianzhen and Zhang Wentian to go down. This is how to really help them." (1968 Chinese edition of Long Live Mao Zedong Thought, vol. 61-68, pp. 246-248) There is something in the middle of this paragraph of Mao's that is contrary to common sense; the statement that old professors have little hope for academic and political

progress and that the only hope was for young people, a statement against common sense, which needs to be developed and carefully dissected.

The average person, as a reader, is more likely to trust the authority of authoritative professors and their research, and less likely to pay attention to young scholars of lesser repute. Almost every student who enters a university classroom is taught to pay more attention to the top authorities in their field of expertise in the course of their studies and research, and that the first solid step in writing a good paper is to grasp the research and conclusions of the top authorities in the field before adding new empirical facts that they have discovered and then to propose corrections to the authorities' claims. This is in fact the most popular "academic increment" in academic circles - any scholar's research has and can only be recognized and cited in the circle if it is based on the "existing academic stock" and then revised and advanced to produce a "new increment" based on new facts. It is only when a scholar's research has been revised and advanced to produce a 'new increment' based on new facts that it can be acknowledged and cited within the circle. Generally speaking, the so-called "academic stock" in Chinese academia mostly refers to the theoretical and academic accumulation from Western academia. This method of academic incremental research, as far as the current implementation is concerned, requires that Chinese academic research be linked to the West. On the basis of academic accumulation, it is very close to the various situations revealed by "Orientalism", which is a colonial orientation in the field of ideological research.

Teacher Mao's view is fundamentally different from people's common sense and rules, and he is certainly dealing with very different issues. Ordinary people who are concerned with history and learning are trying to learn about the academic stock in the field of historical knowledge production, and even if they are engaged in professional research, they need to follow the groundwork on which to move forward. With the goal of generating a new ideological leadership through a process of historical and academic debate, Teacher Mao found two important things to be true: firstly, the old professors with authoritative positions were largely unhelpful in achieving this goal, and secondly, only young people could be counted on.

Let us see in detail how Mao criticised old professors and rewarded young people (Mao's relevant ideas have been censored so much in the official literature that it is impossible to get a full picture; the following texts are quoted from the 1968 Wuhan edition of Long Live Mao Zedong Thought, vols. 61-68; the Arabic numbers at the end of the paragraphs are the page numbers in the book[14].):

Someone called Sun Daren has written an article refuting Jian Bozan's idea of the feudal landlord class adopting a policy of concessions towards the peasants. After peasant wars the landlord class would only counterattack and seek revenge; there was never any question of concessions. The landlord class made no concessions to the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. The Boxers first

said: "Oppose the Qing and eliminate the foreigners," and later, "Support the Qing and eliminate the foreigners," thus gaining support of the Empress Dowager Cixi. After the Qing dynasty had suffered defeat at the hands of imperialism the Dowager Empress and the Emperor ran away, and Cixi started to "support the foreigners and eliminate the Boxers". Some people say that the *Inside Story of the Qing Court* is patriotic, but I think it is treasonable – out-and-out treason. Why is it that some say it is patriotic? Merely because they think that the Guanxu Emperor was a pitiable man who, together with Kang Youwei, opened a few schools, formed the New Armies and put into effect a few enlightened measures. 246

If you study a little modern history you will see that there was no such thing as a "policy of concession". The only concessions were made by the revolutionary forces to the reactionaries. The reactionaries always counter-attacked and sought revenge. Whenever a new dynasty emerged in history, they adopted a policy of "decreased labor service and taxation". This was because the people were very poor and there was nothing to take from them. This policy was of advantage to the landlord class[15]. 247

Not to reform arts faculties would be terrible. If they are not reformed, can they produce philosophers? Can they produce writers? Can they produce historians? Today's philosophers can't turn out philosophy, writers can't write novels, and historians can't produce history. All they want to write about is emperor, kings, generals and ministers. Qi Benyu's article (referring to "Study History for the Sake of the Revolution") is excellent, I read it three times. Its defect is that it does not name names. Yao Wenyuan's essay (referring to his review of the new historical drama "Hai Rui Dismissed from Office") is also very good:...its defect is that it did not hit the crux of the matter. 247

Our comrades likewise have dual nature, correct and incorrect. Don't you have a dual nature? I know I have. Young people easily make the mistake of being metaphysical: they cannot bear to talk about their shortcomings. People improve with experience. In recent years, however, it is the young who have made progress; the hopeless cases are some of the old professors. Wu Han is mayor of a city. It would be better if he were demoted to being head of a county. It would be better if Yang Xianzhen and Zhang Wentian were demoted too. That is the only way we can really help them. 248

Mao Zedong: *Speech at the Hangzhou Conference* (December 21, 1965)

Now there is to be a revolution. A few people should be protected, such as Guo Lao and Fan Lao, and the others should not be protected. Launch young people to challenge them by name. They stir up the struggle first. We struggle in the newspapers.

From now on, we should do a bit of criticising of the work done in each 5 or 10-year periods, discuss the pros and cons, and train successors. Otherwise, everything will fall into their hands... Old Fan is very fond of emperors, kings, generals and prime ministers.

People like him, including persons of the emperor-king school are very fond of emperors, kings, generals and prime ministers and they opposed the 1958 method of studying history. When criticising, one must not shoot off blank cannons, one must study historical data. This is a serious class struggle. Otherwise, revisionism shall emerge. It is this group of people who will be the ones to come up with revisionism in the future. For example, Wu Han and Jian Bozan were all opposed to Marxism-Leninism. They were members of the Communist Party; Communist Party members who nevertheless opposed the Communist Party and opposed materialism. 255

The young people's articles must not be suppressed, regardless of whether they contain good things or bad things. For Wu Han and Jian Bozan, don't deprive them of the right to eat, what does it matter. Don't be afraid of provoking people like Luo Erzang and Jian Bozan.255

Don't suppress the young, let them come on out. Qi Benyu criticized Luo Gang, Qi is a staff member of the Office of Letters and Visits of the Central Office, Luo is a professor. Whether it is good or bad, don't suppress it... Who is the authority now? It's Yao Wenyuan, Qi Benyu, Yan Da. Who melts who, is not yet resolved. We don't want these people to take over. The young, those who are less learned, have a firm stand, who are politically experience and determined people should take over. 256

If Qi Benyu and others want independence, want to be independent of wrong things, you, the Minister for Propaganda, should not suppress them! The students want to rebel, and they should be allowed to do so. The cultural revolution should be a mass movement and students should be allowed to speak out...Wu Han and Jian Bozan relied on history for their bread and butter. The students have read the history of the Ming, but Wu Han has not read it! 257

Mao Zedong: *Speech at the Enlarged Meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee***[16]** (March 20, 1966)

Our policy of enlisting intellectuals after liberation has had its advantages and disadvantages. Now it is the bourgeois intellectuals who hold real power in the academic and educational circles. The deeper the socialist revolution went, the more they resisted and the more their anti-Party and anti-socialist face was revealed. People like Wu Han and Jian Bozan were Communist Party members, but anti-communist, in fact they were Guomindang people. There is still very little awareness of this problem in many places, and academic criticism has not yet been carried out. Everywhere we must pay attention to the people in whose hands the schools, newspapers, journals and publishing houses are held, and we must carry out a practical critique of the bourgeois academic authorities. We need to train our own young academic authorities. Don't be afraid of young people breaking the "law of the land" and don't suppress their manuscripts. The Central Propaganda Department should not become a rural work department. 257-258

Speech (excerpt) at the enlarged meeting of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee (March 17-20, 1966)[17]

People who confiscate and suppress the manuscripts of the leftists and protect the rightists are of the university clique. The Central Ministry of Propaganda is the palace of the prince of Hell. It is necessary to overthrow the palace of the prince of Hell and liberate the Little Devil. I have always advocated that whenever the central organs do something wrong, it is necessary to call upon the local authorities to rebel and attack the central government. The local areas must produce several more Sun Wukongs[18] to vigorously create a disturbance at the palace of the king of heaven... To protect the left, we should cultivate the left in the Cultural Revolution. 258

Mao Zedong: Summary of Conversations with Comrade Kang Sheng and others (March 28-30, 1966)[19]

As a matter of fact, those party people in authority taking the capitalist road who support the bourgeois scholar-tyrants, and those bourgeois representatives who have sneaked into the party and protect the bourgeois scholar-tyrants, are indeed big party tyrants who have usurped the name of the party, have no contact with the masses, have no learning at all, and rely solely on "acting arbitrarily and trying to overwhelm people with their power." 260

Hold high the great banner of the proletarian Cultural Revolution, thoroughly expose the bourgeois reactionary stand of those so-called "academic authorities" who oppose the party and socialism, thoroughly criticize and repudiate the reactionary bourgeois ideas in the sphere of academic work, education, journalism, literature and art, and publishing, and seize the leadership in these cultural spheres. To achieve this, it is necessary at the same time to criticize and repudiate those representatives of the bourgeoisie who have sneaked into the party, the government, the army and all spheres of culture, to clear them out or transfer some of them to other positions. Above all, we must not entrust these people with the work of leading the Cultural Revolution. In fact many of them have done and are still doing such work, and this is extremely dangerous. 260-261

Mao Zedong: May 16th Notice for the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) A few words added to the 16" notice (16 May 1966)[20]

It should be said that it was the historical scholarly critical writings of Qi Benyu and Yao Wenyan, among others, that gave Mao great confidence that they could be used to establish a new ideological leadership that would contribute to the needed political understanding through the advancement of historical research and thus contribute to political improvement under socialist conditions.

Third, "History as a political research method" in the light of the changes in the field of historical research after the Cultural Revolution

After 1949, Marxist historiography, which had been established during the Nationalist era, had now entered the pantheon and become the overarching interpretive framework. Those who had contributed to the formation of this interpretive framework were now absolute authorities, and difficult to challenge. According to popular belief, these top authorities are collectively known as the 'Five Old Men of Marxism-Leninism' - Guo Moruo, Fan Wenlan, Lu Zhenyu, Jian Bozan and Hou Weilu. In this way, Mao-era historiography presents two contrasting phenomena: the imperial history in terms of data collection and research methods, and the 'five-stage view of history'[21] in terms of interpretation methods. To borrow from Braudel[22], the former is a short-term history of events, the latter is disguised as a long period of structural history. The more serious problem is: an uncontrolled inflation of event history to swallow up long time periods. The devouring of the long period by the short period is concretely expressed in Jian Bozan and Wu Han as the search for the 'positive results of the class struggle' in specific members of the ruling class, for which Wu Han describes the Qing officials as the decisive subject, and Jian Bozan more generally proposes a 'policy of concessions ".

The formation of overwhelming authority and its hegemony in the academic arena has a significant negative effect, even from a purely academic point of view. The French scholar Bourdieu[23] saw the academic field as a field of competition, where the entrance of each individual and the competitive strategy he adopted depended on his own stock of capital, and where, in general, it was usually the large capital that had the monopoly and tended to break the rules and conventions, which in academic terms manifested itself in a reckless and arbitrary approach to the relationship between material and conclusion, without respecting the rules of logical reasoning. When small capital entered, it had to rely on improving the quality of its products to compete with large capital for scarce discourse. Wu Han's arbitrary exaltation of Hai Rui and Jian Bozan's arbitrary denial of the peasant wars were both manifestations of an inherent causal relationship with big capital and monopoly status. In Mao-era China, this monopoly of big capital came partly from the fruits of its own efforts - the academic status it had established in the past - and partly from the unprincipled support of powerful figures, as Teacher Mao later loudly put it, "Down with the King of Hell, liberate the Little Devil! ", referring to the power behind big capital and its unprincipled support for academic monopoly status. Qi Benyu criticized Luo Ergang for ignoring the facts and insisting on Li Xiucheng's "pseudo-submission theory". Luo Ergang's method of managing history reflects the arbitrariness of ignoring key historical data in the evaluation of historical figures. This criticism is well-documented, but it has been roundly attacked by the authorities of the Ministry of

Propaganda which organized a group of authorities to besiege Qi Benyu, which very specifically revealed the power factor behind the monopoly status of big capital.

Qi Lao said, Zhou Yang had organised a large number of people to besiege me, and I did not even know about it at first, so I did not feel any psychological pressure at all. As a result, when the Chairman found out about it, he deliberately accessed the photocopy of "Li Xiucheng's autobiography" published overseas, and finally wrote a sixteen-word endorsement: " It is written in black and white, there is irrefutable evidence, loyalty to the king is unfinished, it's not fit to be a model." After these people saw the criticism, they even blocked it from me, and I had never seen the original copy of the Chairman's criticism. Later, it was Deng Liqun, who also worked for the Red Flag magazine, who told me that it was not the question of loyalty, but of its still continuing, and only then did I know exactly what the sixteen-word comment on the report was.[24]

To borrow Bourdieu's terminology, Teacher Mao apparently concludes that academic progress is achieved through the challenge and subversion of big capital by small capital over and over again, a conclusion that seems very close to American history of science professor Kuhn's 'paradigm shift theory'[25]. In this way, it is more effective to support the growth of small capital than to preserve the monopoly of big capital in terms of academic progress, and let us see what Teacher Mao had to say about this.

"Don't suppress the young, let them come on out., " Mao Zedong said in the middle of an interjection at the Hangzhou conference on March 20, 1965. "The young, those who are less learned, have a firm stand, who are politically experience and determined people should take over. " At an enlarged meeting of the Standing Committee of the Politburo in Hangzhou on 16 April 1966, Mao said, "I don't believe it's just Wu Han's problem. This is a struggle that touches the soul, is ideological, and touches a wide range of people in the government." (P1407). On June 10, 1966, Mao Zedong called the heads of the region to Hangzhou, saying, "We must build up the core of leftist leaders in the movement so that these people will hold the leadership. Don't discuss any qualifications, rank or prestige, otherwise we still won't be able to occupy this cultural position. A group of activists have emerged from the past struggles, and a group of activists have emerged in this movement; rely on these people to carry the cultural revolution to the end." (Wang Renzhong's diary, 11 June 1966) [P1417 in Mao Zedong's biography]. For more than a year, Teacher Mao had been thinking about how to support young people so that these people could

complete the Cultural Revolution's aim of "promoting proletarian thought and destroying bourgeois thought", and he personally devised the method of cultural revolution to support small capital and criticise big capital, and therefore, repeatedly notified authorities at all levels and all localities of this.

Deng Xiaoping seems to have had a fundamentally different view, believing that small capital was a disproportionate threat to big capital, and according to Deng, Bourdieu's summary of the competitive strategy of the academic world was also utterly wrong. At that time, the small capital could bully the big capital at will and as a result, the big capital was at a loss as to what to do. According to the recollections of those who were there, Deng Xiaoping's speech at this meeting of the Central Secretariat on March 3, 1965, under the chairmanship of Deng Xiaoping,, not only talked about the deviations of the social and educational movement at Peking University, but also about the tension caused by the overwhelming struggle in the academic and cultural circles at that time. He said: Now people are afraid to write articles, afraid to write plays, and afraid to publish books. Only soldiers are being played on the stage, only battles are being performed. How can a film be so perfect? This is not allowed to be played, that is not allowed to be played. Those 'revolutionaries' grabbed people by the scruff of the neck, trying to make a name for themselves by criticising others and stepping on their shoulders to get on stage. He proposed to put the brakes on it quickly. It was also stipulated in the minutes of the Registry meeting that 'the Four Clean-ups should stay with teaching'[26], 'academic criticism should stay with the flourishing academic research and literary creation circles', 'one cannot demand that plays and works be perfect ' and 'future criticism of well-known figures must first be reported to the central government for approval.'" [Gong Yuzhi, 'The February Outline' and a trip to the East Lake, in Centennial Tide, No. 4, 1998]. Whether or not there is any basis for Deng Xiaoping's claims, it is this calibre of material and its conclusions that are woven into the history of the Party and State today. If Deng Xiaoping's claim is credible, it is clear that it essentially relies on the fact that the Central Propaganda Department and others only supported small capital, not the monopoly position of big capital, an aspect for which the minimum evidence is currently lacking.

The debate in historiography on the eve of the Cultural Revolution and the problems it involved were not only a problem for Chinese academics, but also for the West. In 1958 the French scholar Braudel formally introduced the concept of the long period,

underestimating the traditional short period and event history approach beyond measure: "An event may have many concomitant meanings, it sometimes serves as a witness to some profound movement, and by all sorts of far-fetched causal reasoning - - Historians of the past have been happy to subsume long periods of time outside themselves. It can be prolonged indefinitely, freely or reluctantly linked to a series of other events or hidden realities that can never be separated again. In fact, the historiography of the last hundred years, with the exception of artificially disconnected histories and isolated long-duration interpretations, has been almost exclusively a political history centred on 'major events'. The content and object of historical research has been short periods of time, which is perhaps the ransom paid by scientists in the last hundred years for further mastery of the necessary research tools and rigorous research methods." [(French) Fernand Braudel, "History and Social Science: The Long Time", edited by Cai Shaoqing, "Recreating the Past: A Theoretical Vision of Social History", Zhejiang People's Publishing House 1988, pp. 51-52] Braudel is very subtle, he does not say outright that the historical research of the last hundred years is all nonsense, but that nonsense still serves some purpose, equivalent to "ransom" or "tuition fees".

In Mao's time, China had limited academic exchanges with overseas, and was unable to keep abreast of the rise of the French Annales school and its criticism and disparagement of "event history" and "political history". In the context of the debates in the historical community on the eve of the Cultural Revolution, it is clear that the three young people praised by Mao were downward-looking in their approach to history, focusing on the subjectivity of the people at the bottom, opposing the overemphasis on the emperor and the ruling class, and rejecting frivolous and arbitrary interpretations of structures by the event and political history method, which is precisely the approach and direction that some of the older professors were happy to uphold. In the history of events and political history, historiography is often permeated with the subjective preferences of individual scholars and therefore full of arbitrariness when making interpretations, due to the distancing between the framework and the materials and the failure to reveal deep social structures. Jian Bozan's arbitrary interpretation of the consequences of the Peasants' War and Wu Han's arbitrary exaltation of Hai Rui in isolation from the material and historical reality are, in addition to personal subjective reasons, objectively flawed in their methodology. Mao's criticism of Jian Bozan and Wu Han for working only with emperors and generals refers to material concerns, but these men 'crudely' linked the material of emperors

and generals to the interpretive framework of the 'five-stage view of history', drawing on the ideas of Bordieur, the giant of the French Annales school. The problem with the historiographical approach of these two men was that they used short periods of event history material to force an analogy and interpretation to the structural framework of the Five Stages theory, which is typical of far-fetched cause and effect reasoning. In addition to academic hegemony and its corrupting monopolistic character, the unprincipled official support for the authorities worsens the bad academic culture, which is often prone to interpretational arbitrariness by swallowing up long-time structures with short-time events, and it is precisely because of the flaws in the method of governance that these critics often find it difficult to defend themselves convincingly and, as a result, promote an opportunistic choice: academic authorities refuse to speak after losing their absolute superiority. As a result of this, it was interpreted as a stubborn political stance that refused to listen to criticism.

Having despised short time periods and event histories, Braudel himself recommends the long time period approach to explaining the power of deep structure, "The long time period is the most useful channel for social science to engage in observation and reflection together throughout the long river of time. (75)" To do this, the deep structure of society needs to be revealed and "'structure' is at the forefront of the long time problem. In examining social issues, 'structure' refers to an organic, tight and fairly fixed relationship that develops between reality and the masses in society. For us historians, structures are undoubtedly architectural elements, but even more so, they are very durable realities. There are structures that, by virtue of their longevity, become constant factors that are passed on from generation to generation, unbroken: they hinder or shape the progress of history." "Admitting long periods of time to the study of history is not playing around. It is not simply a matter of expanding the scope of research and interest, nor is it an option that is merely beneficial to the study of history. For historians, embracing long periods of time means changing styles, positions and ways of thinking to understand society with a new perspective. The time they have to become familiar with is a time that passes slowly, sometimes close to stillness. At this level - and no other - it becomes legitimate to move away from strict historical time and to enter and exit through the gates of historical time with new eyes and with new questions. In short, with the historical level, the historian can accordingly rethink the historical totality. Starting from this half-static deep layer, the thousands of layers created by the fracturing of historical time can easily be understood: everything

is transferred from the semi-static deep layer." [(French) Fernand Braudel: "History and Social Science: The Long Time", Cai Shaoqing, "Recreating the Past: A Theoretical Vision of Social History", Zhejiang People's Publishing House, 1988, pages 54 and 57].

To reveal the deep structure of history involves the question of the subjectivity of the people, and there is great difficulty in presenting such a history, says Bordieur: "Each of us is aware that there is a history of the masses outside his own life, and is apt to admit that the masses have a powerful driving force on history, but is not easy to see the direction or the laws of that force. " (ibid., 63)

The dominance of event and political history in Mao-era history, and its simple submersion in structural revelation, was indeed a major flaw. At the same time, the monopoly of big capital in academic field has largely worsened the style of scholarship, with some of the most powerful voices in the field often breaking free from the rule that "the material should explain the conclusion" and interpreting historical events and figures at will, even to the extent of "playing with historiography". In this respect, the performance of some authorities is not much different from that of today's entertainment directors, who must add the element of beauty to their films in order to attract audiences, with Jian Bozan touting Wang Zhaojun[27] and Guo Moruo pushing for Cai Wenji[28] in an unrestrained manner, out of touch with historical reality. This extreme lack of academic rigour was, to a large extent, inseparable from the monopoly position of big capital has that 'no-one dares harm me'. The poem 'The Tomb of Zhaojun' by Jian Bozan reads: 'The great map of the Han Dynasty is written in the pages of history, and the Great Wall is covered with smoke and wind for ten thousand miles.' How can you make a good pipa, when the sound of arrows has been silent for fifty years? According to Lao Tian, Hu Hanxie went south to the Han Dynasty because of the Huns' civil strife, and for this reason there was an urgent necessity to form a prosperous Han Dynasty. It was not because the peace policy was very successful. The historical understanding promoted in this poem has indeed reached the point of "frivolity".

How to view political subjectivity, which is closely linked to the historical subjectivity of the people, is a theme that runs through the decade of the Cultural Revolution. At the Lushan Conference in 1970, Lin Biao's group and his followers used "Mao's genius" as evidence to deny it, and in refuting this delusion, Mao distinctly put forward the stark contrast between "whether heroes make history or slaves make history". After Deng Xiaoping took power, in 1979

some officials in the historical field began to explicitly "stand up" for the Lin Biao clique, and the famous Mr. Li Wei wrote several articles on "On the Creation of History and Others" (Li Wei's anthology of essays contains four more on the same topic), rejecting Mao's views and partially reviving those of the Lin Biao group.[29] According to Wang Ruoshui[30], the effect of Li Wei's essays was so good that "after these essays by Li Wei, although there may still be differences of opinion on the subject, that old proposition that 'the people are the creators of history' or 'the people are the masters of history' can no longer have a market. This is a credit to Li Wei." [Wang Rushui: Materialist View of History and the Creation of History, Li Wei Memorial Collection Editorial Group, "Li Wei Ten-Year Festival" China Social Science Press, 1998, p. 193].

In France, the concept of the long period and the idea of combining historical research with the social sciences, promoted by Bordieur and others, gradually became mainstream by the late 1970s. ['The concept of the "long period", which in the 1950s was only a predictive formulation, has today (1978) achieved a full victory, but at the same time has become mundane and is often opposed.' Michel Vovelle[31]: *Historiography and the Long Time*, above, p. 132] In China, on the contrary, with the complete repudiation of the Cultural Revolution, the structural tendency to repudiate historiography, supported by Li Wei and others in power, nevertheless prevailed, and Chinese historiography moved against the historical tide, backwards towards the history of events and political history, and incidentally, even the relatively empty framework of structural historiography that existed before the Cultural Revolution gradually disintegrated, and historiography research became completely fragmented.

Because in order to deny that the people make history, it is necessary to establish the narrative of the creation of history by heroes or elites, for quite some time, many people in history circles have focused on the study of "civil society", which is equivalent to establishing the conclusion that "capitalists create history". In contrast to the reality of modern Chinese history, this academic effort encountered insurmountable obstacles. Starting from the Westernization Movement in the second half of the 19th century, the achievements of capitalism in China were extremely limited. By 1949, the total accumulation of industrial capital was only 12 billion yuan. After the Communist Party rejected the landlords, rich peasants and capitalists, the number of newly formed fixed assets during the First Five-Year Plan alone was more than four times this number.

Thus, in order to establish the idea that capitalists make history, it is necessary to thoroughly "blacken the Communist Party", and even if

the figures of capital accumulation under the Communist regime are large, there will certainly be an excessive moral price to pay - for example, by saying that the Communist Party deprives the peasants and engages in a scissors policy, that the Communist Party is a fascist, etc. In short, the theme of elite history-making is difficult to establish without taking the blackening of the Communist Party through to the end. While this effort has encountered major academic difficulties, it has had no small success in political propaganda, with CCTV, the high-profile media outlet under the Communist Party's Central Propaganda Department, strongly supporting "Towards the Republic"[32], and denying the role of all revolutions, including the Communist revolution, in advancing history.

In the debate in this field of historical research, there is another unspoken methodological issue: history as politics and political science as history. In China today, many people advocate so-called "top-level design" and "governance mechanism" studies, methodologies that had no place in Mao's time, not so much because of the insistence on the mass line in Mao's time, but because of the methodological rejection of the possibility of "norms divorced from process" (Mannheim's phrase)[33], and the rejection of any system designed out of thin air. It is in this sense that history, as a method, has never been more instructive for political improvement, as it seeks to observe the relations of interest between the various classes and groups interacting in society and the ways in which they interact with each other. It looks for new possibilities in the process of interaction between groups. In this sense, as a method of history, its guiding role for political improvement has never been higher. The American scholar Wallerstein[34] recognises only one social science - the historical social science - and Marx and Engels have spoken on various occasions about the uniqueness of the historical science, which is in fact a methodological vision: politics must be discussed on the empirical basis of social and historical processes, the process of social evolution, to borrow Bordieue's terminology. The role and relevance of the various structural elements in the middle of the process of social evolution need to be presented in a factual way. The attempt to establish the idea of the capitalists creating history at the expense of the "black communists" in the study of modern Chinese history today is precisely an attempt to omit the most important structural elements in the historical evolution process for the study of the history of events, with the aim of trying to arrive at the "middle period" - the historical and political legitimacy of the emergence of new social classes - and even the long period.

The Cultural Revolution originated from criticism in the historical field. It was not accidental. It was a methodological reiteration. It is in this field of critical examination that the old authority and its shortcomings and limitations were particularly serious. The position of academic authority strengthened by the ruling position of the Communist Party had worsened the political sense and direction of historical research. In order to protect Wu Han, Peng Zhen went so far as to drag the Ministry of Propaganda into issuing a separate policy for this purpose, which went beyond an error of public power like using the legitimacy of the regime to reinforce the status of academic authority, and was a typical manifestation of "public power legislating for private needs". Peng Zhen, in order to 'protect Wu Han to the death' (Mao's words), even devised the 'February Outline', which was a 'melee' and a 'leftist rectification', which is evidence of the fact that academic and political degeneration are mutually reinforcing, and a most pernicious manifestation of it.

Peng Zhen himself and his poor performance were not the problem. As Mao Zedong said "Peng Zhen is a tiny figure who has wormed his way into the Party, nothing more, and just one finger will push him down." The problem was that Peng Zhen's performance represented a constant orientation of power combined with academia and academia serving the needs of power, based on the performance in the field of historical research - the main tendency both before and after the Cultural Revolution was to deny the historical and political subjectivity of the people and to elevate the historical subjectivity of the ruling class in an unprincipled manner, in isolation from historical sources, according to Mao Zedong's statement "This is the law of class struggle, which does not depend on the will of the people." (Long Live Mao Zedong Thought, vol. 61-68, p259) This needs to be taken seriously.

Why revolution and history are timeless

The real evolution of society constitutes true history, and the recording and interpretation of this evolution becomes historiography, which, in addition to being oriented towards the past, also needs to assume responsibility for the future, where one needs to develop a theoretical understanding based on historical experience to guide interventions in future evolution.

After the introduction of Western scholarship into China in the early twentieth century, the study of Chinese history was largely integrated into an academic framework of interpretation based on Western historical materials, a limitation or general trend that has remained unchanged to this day. Professor Zhang Kaiyuan, who later turned to the study of civil society, described the differences in understanding and debates in the field of Chinese historical studies as nothing more than "Westerners fighting Westerners ". Bordieaur sees the study of the history of events since Ranke[35] as 'the ransom paid by scientists over the last hundred years for further mastery of the necessary research tools and rigorous research

methods', and for the field of Chinese historiography, in addition to this problem, there is an urgent need for a theoretical self-awareness that goes beyond Orientalism.

In terms of grasping historical materials, Teacher Mao's diligence far exceeded that of most history professors. As recalled by Pang Xianzhi, who managed the books for Teacher Mao, the two main official historical materials, "Zizhi Tongjian" and the "Twenty-four Histories", Teacher Mao read the "Zizhi Tongjian" seventeen times and the Twenty-four Histories more than once. So far, I have not heard of any university history professor who is more diligent in reading history books than Teacher Mao. Moreover, since the mainstream of historical studies in Mao's time was a kind of event history under the guise of structural history, with military and political weighting particularly heavy in short periods of history, the vast majority of history professors were in essence not very knowledgeable about politics and the military, which happened to be Teacher Mao's area of expertise as well. It was because of his familiarity with historical sources, and his insight into misinterpretations of them, that Mao was able to easily determine that Wu Han himself had not read the History of Ming, but that one of his students had. In terms of material grasp and military-political knowledge, the study of history in the Mao era was particularly unsatisfactory to Teacher Mao himself, who had long been concerned with the so-called revolution in history, to put it bluntly, because the reality of the situation was desperate. Teacher Mao's comments about some old professors were, to be precise, not so much disappointment as despair. It is precisely because of his despair for the authoritative professors in the field of history that it is possible to understand why Mao was so enthusiastic about the progress shown by young people, and he praised Qi Benyu to such a degree that Qi himself found it difficult to understand.

History and progress and real improvement in politics require overcoming the resistance in existing social structures in order to open up the way forward. The same is true of the cognitive process, which is the view of a revolutionary and the proper meaning of the so-called revolutionary line. What has happened to the post-1979 historical studies, which have left behind the guiding ideology of the class struggle for the argument that historical progress is driven by big figures and their actions, and the process of historical rewriting that highlights capital and capital accumulation as the driving force of historical progress in the study of modern history?

The slogan "Farewell to Revolution" is a real revolution in the way of thinking, which means that history does not need to exclude structural resistance in order to move forward, and that the study of history no longer needs to present the interplay of opposing and contradictory social forces, so that the so-called progress or regression of history will originate in the preferences and needs of the people, especially the big shots. Such historical research and interpretation would be extremely 'free' - historical research concentrates on the big personalities and their psychological activities, thus explaining historical processes and major events, and historians are given a huge amount of paper power -the

freedom to define and evaluate the psychological states of historical figures, and the considerable freedom to causally link them to the historical process to arrive at any interpretation they like.

On the other hand, it happens to be absolutely true that any attempt to envisage a low-cost revolution will not succeed. Before the Cultural Revolution began, Teacher Mao devised a cultural revolution in support of small capital to criticise big capital, with no effect. He supported Qi Benyu, broke up the siege by the organising authorities of the Ministry of Propaganda, and helped him to gain an equal opportunity to dialogue with the old professors. He did not forget to warn Qi to take care to convince people with reason - don't expect to change someone's lifelong views all at once, for what would be the result? The old professors, having lost their dominant position, refused to dialogue on an equal footing and were determined not to speak, as was the case with both Luo Erzang and Jian Bozan, and Wu Han was no exception. The dialogue on an equal footing between young people and old authorities that Mao expected to advance the progress of understanding through academic debate ended before the debate had even begun. Qi Lao said that he was very naive at the time, and that he had searched carefully for historical materials in preparation for a good debate with Luo Erzang and others, only to have Luo and others either refuse to debate or assume a low profile and admit their mistakes, and then not bother to speak. Qi described his feelings at the time as "being at a loss for words" (Lu Xun's verse). It seems that competition in the academic arena has strong similarities with competition in the market economy, where large enterprises with monopoly status are most concerned with their own monopoly status and monopoly profits, and have little interest in technological progress. The same is true of competition in the academic arena, where small-capital scholarship is more prescriptive than larger capital, as Qi Benyu discovered back then, and as Meng Xiangcai, a graduate student in the Department of History, recalls, Ning Ke (a teacher in the History Department of the Beijing Normal University), who also advocated historicism but lacked the status of large capital, was very different from Jian Bozan: "Ning Ke's views were not all wrong, but he overemphasised historicism. Jian Bozan speaks of historicism with insufficient theoretical arguments; Ning's arguments for historicism are much more in-depth." (Meng Xiangcai[36]: The Qi Benyu I know, in *The Historian's Journal*, tenth series, Shandong People's Publishing House 2007).

Later, Teacher Mao personally led the drafting of the "February Outline" to criticize Peng Zhen, dismissed the five-member leading group of the Central Cultural Revolution, and issued the "May 16 Circular". The secretaries of the provincial and municipal party committees in various places became the implementers of this policy. The result of the implementation was that Wang Guangmei's "moving stones"[37] and Liu Shaoqi's appreciation of the "anti-rightist" experience became mainstream: various lower-level officials hated by their superiors were selected as targets for

“moving stones”, or students who criticised the working group on the basis of facts were branded as rightists, and these two models became the mainstream of the movement. And at the central level, senior officials such as Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, Chen Yi, Bo Yibo and Li Xuefeng all swarmed to actively embrace these two modes of movement that embodied serious political alienation. As a result, the Cultural Revolution had to undergo a second transformation, with Teacher Mao and Premier Zhou supporting the Cultural Revolution Group to come out in support of the masses, allowing them to organise themselves to criticise the political alienation created by the combination of bad cadres in the officialdom and horseshit-style activists in the civil society.

Up to this point, each of the groups involved in the Cultural Revolution had their own petty agenda, the common denominator being that they had "zero revolutionary potential" and had proved themselves and the forces they chose to rely on incapable of making any positive contribution to genuine political improvement. It was absolutely necessary to find the critical power of the people and support it to grow. For this reason, the “Sixteen Articles”, the guiding document of the Cultural Revolution, was re-drafted, and the members of the Cultural Revolution team became active executors who supervised the implementation of policies—supporting the growth of the rebels, a critical force that originated from the people

The forced transformation of the Cultural Revolution meant that Mao's design for a low-cost revolution, in reality, suffered its first setback. According to Mao, it is always the facts that come first, and then the concepts. It is a general rule of understanding that the maturation of theory lags far behind the process of accumulation of experience, as often quoted by Hegel: Minerva's owl takes off in the dusk[38]. The low-cost revolution devised by Teacher Mao attempted to facilitate the advancement of awareness and the establishment of a new type of ideological leadership, which in effect required the owl of Minerva to take off in the early morning, and was difficult to achieve in practice. Moreover, in the case of the political game process of the Cultural Revolution, the analysis of the phenomenon by awareness also needed to conform to the constraints and needs of the *realpolitik* game and could not be summarised and expressed in terms of the depth achieved by awareness.

The Cultural Revolution group fully supported the rise of the rebels and their criticism of the bourgeois reactionary line, while the bourgeois reactionary line had an inherent association with the ruling and conservative groups, which in turn strongly opposed the

rebels and the Cultural Revolution group. In this way, those two separate groups that carried out the capitalist-reactionary line now turned into hardcore anti-Cultural Revolution forces, whose resistance and joint suppression of the rebel faction largely characterised the basic face of the Cultural Revolution. By the summer of 1967, all sections and groups in the country had become involved in "this serious exercise" and had chosen to take sides and perform according to their instinctive needs and interests. The Cultural Revolution, with its powerful opposition, was at an impasse and there was no chance of a "leftward break", or rather, the social cost of a hard leftward break would have been too high to bear. Thus, the option of breaking to the right, dominated by the powerful forces of the anti-Cultural Revolutionaries, moved forward step by step. Teacher Mao and Premier Zhou, for that matter, should have had a clear understanding and more consciously dismissed the option of breaking to the left. After Mao's return to Beijing at the end of September 1967, he was asked in person why Wang Li and Guan Feng[39] had been isolated and censored, to which Mao replied: "The time has come when heaven and earth are all working together, but the heroes are not free." In the course of the subsequent Cultural Revolution, the rebel factions were subjected to harsh and prolonged repression, a self-confirmation of the fact that the powers-that-be, together with the conservatives, had been given the opportunity to break the game to the right.



(Above: At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, the Central Cultural Revolution Group "four talents", from left: Qi Benyu, Wang Li, Guan Feng, Mu Xin)

From a factual and legal point of view, supporting the growth and expansion of the rebel faction was not only not wrong, but also in line with the basic duties of the Cultural Revolution groups since the transformation of the Cultural Revolution. The problem lay in the political aspect, as all classes and groups had been involved in the Cultural Revolution manoeuvres, the overwhelming strength of the anti-Cultural Revolutionaries and the extremely inadequate integration within the Cultural Revolutionaries had determined that the possibility of breaking to the left was extremely small and the cost of breaking to the left was too high. There was nothing inherently wrong with "seizing a handful of people in the army", on a factual and legal level, but this option did not have the corresponding conditions for implementation. In the absence of other organised forces sufficient to maintain a minimum of order, the military as the central guardian of order cannot be shaken. To "seize a handful of people in the army" carried through to the end means, in effect, to consolidate an extremely inadequate rebellious core and to dismantle or even suppress the majority in power to achieve order, an option with an unbearably high moral cost. Shanghai was exceptional in that Wang Hongwen, under the leadership of the General Department of Labour, first smoothly absorbed the conservative majority among the people, then quickly achieved internal integration within the General Department of Labour, and also used forceful means to break up the external opposition - the Shang Chai Union Department and the Branch Union Station, creating a relatively unified situation of mass power.[40] Under the political situation, most cadres could only rationally choose the three-step policy of "review, emergence and union" and chose to cooperate with the rebels, eventually having the prerequisites to break the deadlock to the left - to restore order without having to suppress the regime and the conservatives. Shanghai was the exception to the rule of the 'rebel faction' during the decade of the Cultural Revolution.

The members of the Cultural Revolution Group were caught up in a partial view of the issue of arresting a handful of people in the army[41], and did not see the structural contrasts in the overall situation, so the choices they made were extremely blind. From an administrative perspective, the Cultural Revolution Group did not make a single mistake in continuing to support the rebels, but from a political perspective, the mistakes of the members of the Cultural Revolution Group were clear - they did not understand the various implications of breaking left and right after the Cultural Revolution had reached a stalemate, and in particular, they did not understand what preconditions were needed to break left.

In turn, the prolonged and harsh repression of the members of the Cultural Revolution groups and the rebel groups they supported was largely a counter-evidence that low-cost revolutions were not established, that quasi-classes existed in a communal society that defended vested interests and power, and that anyone or any group that questioned their dominance would be suppressed by them without mercy. In this way, the Cultural Revolution was like a self-fulfilling prophecy: through an exercise, especially by the anti-Cultural Revolutionaries, it was made abundantly clear that in the

midst of a socialist state, political improvements that truly benefit the majority must also come at great cost to overcome resistance from the privileged classes, and the Cultural Revolution showed how great this resistance was. Because the resistance to progress was too great to overcome, as with all revolutions in history, many martyrs had to pay a huge price after the revolution suffered a setback. Qi Lao's 18 years of unjust imprisonment and Zhang Chunqiao's and Yao Wenyuan's lifelong failure to gain freedom were all part of the huge price of this attempted revolution.

The criterion for success in life today is to be promoted and made rich, and in that sense Mr. Qi Benyu's life was a tragedy. To be more precise, Mr. Qi Benyu is a victim of history, and it should be added that he did not suffer primarily for his own personal reasons, but for the power of the people - first and foremost, the power of the people to criticise those in power. As a victim, he first spent eighteen years in prison, and when he worked in the Shanghai Library after his release, he still remembered the teachings of Teacher Mao - to re-evaluate historical figures using the materialistic view of history as a guide. He retired on the lowest retirement salary in Shanghai (he was officially approved as a retiree with just over one year's service). For a scholar, he was also subjected to a long blockade by both government and academia: more than thirty years after his release from prison, not a single word signed by Qi Benyu has been published in the official mainland media.

Mr. Lu Xun said in "Miscellaneous Writings at the Pavilion – 'Have the Chinese lost their self-confidence?'" "Since ancient times, we have had men who worked doggedly in silence, men who have worked stubbornly at the risk of their lives, who strove to save others, who braved death to seek the truth ... Even the standard dynastic histories, which are really family records of emperors, princes, ministers and generals, cannot conceal their glory: these men are the backbone of China." Qi Lao is clearly the kind of person whose glory cannot be concealed by the endless slander of official and authentic history, and the kind of person who, according to Teacher Mao, has broken away from the people of low tastes. "We must all learn the spirit of absolute selflessness from him. With this spirit everyone can be very useful to the people. A man's ability may be great or small, but if he has this spirit, he is already noble-minded and pure, a man of moral integrity and above vulgar interests, a man who is of value to the people." [In Memory of Norman Bethune]

Did the Cultural Revolution succeed or fail? How much was gained at such a great cost? These crucial questions have often provoked heated debates and even emotional confrontations within left-wing circles.

On September 24, 1962, while presiding over the opening session of the Tenth Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee at

Huairan Hall in Zhongnanhai, he said, "In Europe, after the overthrow of feudalism, there were several restorations and reversals of fortune. This kind of reversal is also possible in socialist countries." [The Chronicle of Mao Zedong, vol. 5, p. 151][42]

According to Teacher Mao, it is difficult for a socialist revolution to succeed at one go. The key reason is that people's understanding of progress requires both positive and negative experience and lessons in order to reach a stable consensus. Therefore, it is meaningless to argue about the success or failure of the Cultural Revolution at any one time and place in the face of the historical trend of tortuous progress. This is the result of the "quick victory theory" thinking. The establishment of the socialist system and the process of restoration are directly proportional to the difficulty of people's ideological progress. Therefore, the right attitude is: not to let the sacrifices of our predecessors be wasted, but to stand on the shoulders of our predecessors and carefully draw lessons and experiences, so that our comrades and the price they paid will be as beneficial as possible to the growth of awareness and, as a result, to end the pre-civilisation era more quickly towards a true human civilisation. In the sense of growth in awareness, the Cultural Revolution, as an exercise in reviewing the strengths and weaknesses of the fighting forces and the parties involved, had great potential for advancing the progress of awareness, and we need to carry this forward today, following in the footsteps of our predecessors.

In the tortuous path of progress in understanding, no matter how great the failure, any effort that helps to raise awareness and helps to shape the pursuit of human civilization more quickly is a historic success, and in this respect, Qi and his comrades have established a monument that will last forever. On the day of the real triumph of socialism, perhaps a "pantheon of sages" will be established, following the example of the people of the French Revolution, to record the pioneers who made a unique contribution to the emergence of mankind from barbarism, and both Teacher Mao and his graduate student, Qi Benyu, should be eligible for inclusion.

Wherever there is oppression, there will be resistance. This is like the interaction of action and reaction forces in physics, and Teacher Mao said: "Do we want a revolution in a hundred years? Will there be a revolution in a thousand years? There will always be a revolution. It is always a part of the people who feel oppressed, the small officials, students, workers, peasants and soldiers, who don't like the big people oppressing them, so they want a revolution." [CPC Central Committee document, Zhongfa [1976] No. 4, Mao Zedong's instructions from October 1975 to January 1976, compiled by Mao Yuanxin]

The road of revolution cannot be straight. In 1935 Teacher Mao criticised one way of thinking: "The forces of the revolution must be pure, absolutely pure, and the road of the revolution must be straight, absolutely straight. Nothing is correct except what is literally recorded in Holy Writ. The national bourgeoisie is entirely and eternally counter-revolutionary. Not an inch must be conceded to the rich peasants. The yellow trade unions must be fought tooth and nail. If we shake hands with Tsai Ting-kai, we must call him a counter-revolutionary at the same moment. Was there ever a cat that did not love fish or a warlord who was not a counter-revolutionary? Intellectuals are three-day revolutionaries whom it is dangerous to recruit. It follows therefore that closed-doorism is the sole wonder-working magic, while the united front is an opportunist tactic." (On the strategy against Japanese imperialism, December 27, 1935)[43] During the Cultural Revolution, "I am the only Leftist" was the number one obstacle preventing the rebels from completing political unity, and there are many netizens in today's left-wing circles who have this kind of shut-door style or political cleanliness. During the Cultural Revolution, the change in the members of the Cultural Revolution group was also evident after the criticism by Teacher Mao.

Mao's opposition to "seizing a handful of people within the army" and to directing the criticism of the Cultural Revolution at the majority of those in power and the conservatives, was not due to a lack of factual and legal grounds, nor was it a mere tactic, but because: the manifestations of these phenomena of political alienation and their personalised agents were all inherently in line with the law of social differentiation. To solve the problems caused by the law of social differentiation, it is necessary to genuinely achieve this by raising people's awareness, and that uniting the 95 per cent of cadres and the masses is not just a matter of words, but an absolutely necessary requirement. The lack of consensus between the majority in power and the conservatives has, to a large extent, determined the direction of the political game and movement of the Cultural Revolution, as well as the impossibility of the problem being solved without the majority being aware of it. For this reason, not only did the Cultural Revolution need to be redirected or forcibly ended, but it was also inappropriate for judgements based on facts and law to be publicly communicated. When Lao Tian repeatedly read the article "Marching along the path opened up by the October Socialist Revolution" published on 6 November 1967, he used to be very puzzled as to why the article did not cite the emergence of the Cultural Revolution in China to develop its argument, but instead told a lot about how the Soviet Union had

turned into a revisionist country, when it was known that the old military leaders' suppression of the masses and the manipulation of the conservatives in power to distort the general direction of the movement were much stronger evidence to argue for the resistance of the social structure. It was only much later that it became clear that, although the article was intended to summarise the practical experience of the Cultural Revolution and to provide a preliminary theoretical distillation, it was not possible to stand in opposition to the majority of those in power and the conservatives, even though they were opposed to the Cultural Revolution, and to make accusations. However, what was absolutely necessary at the time to bend the truth is no longer needed today, and we are in a position to stand on the shoulders of our predecessors and take our understanding a great deal further.

The facts of the Cultural Revolution and the post-Cultural Revolution are both verifying those things that Teacher Mao told us in advance: "We must acknowledge that classes will continue to exist for a long time. We must also acknowledge the existence of a struggle of class against class, and admit the possibility of the restoration of reactionary classes. We must raise our vigilance and properly educate our youth as well as the cadres, the masses and the middle- and basic-level cadres. Old cadres must also study these problems and be educated. Otherwise, a country like ours can still move towards its opposite. Even to move towards its opposite would not matter too much because there would still be the negation of the negation, and afterwards we might move towards our opposite yet again. If our children's generation go in for revisionism and move towards their opposite, so that although they still nominally have socialism, it is in fact capitalism, then our grandsons will certainly rise up in revolt and overthrow their fathers, because the masses will not be satisfied." [Mao Zedong: Speech at the Tenth Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee (Huai Ren Tang, 24 September 1962, morning), in Long Live Mao Zedong Thought, vols. 61-68][44]

Even Confucius recognized that "the four seas are poor and the sky is in permanent ruin" - a ruling class that leaves the people without a way out will certainly be doomed, so the potential for revolution is always determined by the compatibility of the interests of the ruling class with those of the ruled class. Teacher Mao believed in revolution, just as he believed in the inevitability of restoration. The ruling class of the restoration, characterised mainly by its monopoly of political power and class interests and its exclusion of the majority's demands for political emancipation and economic advancement, inevitably stood in opposition to the majority, which created its own antagonists - revolutionaries - and it was historically inevitable that Sun Tzu would rise up in revolt and overthrow Lao Tzu[45]. It is history that completes this cycle, so that the Cultural Revolution is immortal, and so are those of its victims, who will light the way forward for all those who come after them. May 9, 2016

Appendix:

Excerpts from the arguments of Yao Wenyuan, Qi Benxuan and Sun Daren

Yao Wenyuan: Review of the new historical drama "Hairi Strikes"

It shows that the Dismissal of Hai Jui does not present "the internal struggle of the feudal ruling classes" as the author claims but molds in every possible way for our audience today a hero who determines the destiny of the peasants.

The conflict of the play unfolds itself around the theme of "return of land." Although Comrade Wu Han says in the preface that the play "has been revised to take the suppression of despots as the main theme," yet in actuality, the seizure of land is the cause of all grievances, and the action "to suppress the despots" and "redress grievances" also centers on the "return of land." "Return of land" is portrayed as "a means to help the poor peasants" and is also responsible for the dismissal of Hai Jui—the climax of the conflict in this play.

The play makes this special statement through "Villager A": "We are all tenants of the House of Hsu." It wants the audience to remember that it portrays the struggle between the poor peasants and the House of Hsu and other retired officials and corrupt officials, and that Hai Jui stands on the side of the tenants of the House of Hsu.

The Honorable Hai does not belie the hope of the public, and as soon as he assumes office, he "decides in favor of the people." He not only curses "the genuine sharp dealers who practice usury and take over land by force," and encourages the peasants "to make complaints" against them, but also displays a democratic spirit in court by finding out the opinions of "the elders" of the petitioners.

The peasants ask Lord Hai Jui to order the House of Hsu and the "families of retired officials" to return the seized land. So Hai Jui issues an order "requiring all families of retired officials to return within ten days all the land which they have seized from the law-abiding people."

After "the return of land," the sharp class contradictions abruptly cease to function. The "villagers" kowtow to Hai Jui and say: "Because the decisions of Your Honor are in favor of the people, the poor people south of the lower reaches of the Yangtze River will see better days in the future."

The author makes the poor peasants express their "gratitude" and joy by "singing together" a song in glorification of the honest, incorrupt official. They sing: "We see the blue sky today and must work diligently to rebuild our homes and gardens. With land we shall be properly fed and clothed and a good life will unfold before us."

The play tells people that although the feudal system is still intact and the ruthless oppression and exploitation of the landlords still exists, so long as we handle things in the same way as Hai Jui, the

peasants' problems of "land" and "food and clothing" can also be solved, and "a good life" lies "before us."

The play also lays emphasis on portraying how Hai Jui "avenges the people" and executes the "corrupt officials" en masse. It gives repeated publicity to "the need of reopening misjudged cases," and Hai Jui's determination "to pacify the anger of the people." He wants to "sweep away all wicked officials" and "exercises no leniency in the enforcement of law to pacify the anger of the people." The actions he takes in the play include beheading Wang Mingyou, magistrate of Huat'ing hsien; sentencing Sung-chiang Prefect Li P'ing-tu to "dismissal and imprisonment pending the receipt of the Imperial verdict"; and hanging Hsu Ying, son of Hsu Chieh.

In Comrade Wu Han's own words, so that "Hai Jui's departure will not present a dismal gloomy aspect, I decided to have Hsu Ying sentenced to death." In this way, Hai Jui terminates his official career and becomes a hero who has triumphantly resisted the feudal Imperial Court.

At the end of the play, Hsu Ying is executed, Hsu Chieh faints away, and the new governor is thrown into consternation. But Hai Jui holds high the official seal, stands erect, and declaims: "A virtuous man stands with his head reaching the sky and his feet on the earth." Inwardly, he tells himself: "I have triumphed."

The author has also "triumphantly" completed his task of molding his own hero.

In this play, only Hai Jui is the hero. The peasants can only air their grievances to their lord, beg "their lord to make decisions in their favor," and entrust their own destinies to the "Honorable Hai." In order to make the image of Hai Jui stand out against all other feudal officials, all the principal officials in the play are portrayed as bad characters. Hai Jui's wife and family dependents are wise people who want to protect themselves, and only his mother backs him up. Hai Jui goes it alone in making a great economic and political revolution.

Some bureaucrat-landlords in rural areas also seized a lot of land. The land owned by Xu Jie alone was put at 240,000 mou in some cases, and 400,000 mou in other cases— equivalent to about one-third or one-half of the acreage of arable land in Songjiang county under the jurisdiction of Shanghai municipality today.

Hai Rui's statement that "the common people cursed and resented the large numbers of estates and slaves owned by the retired officials in Huading" was a portrayal of the sharp class struggle which he saw with his own eyes. The concentration of land accelerated the sharpening of the class contradiction between the peasants and the landlord class. Large numbers of peasants went bankrupt and fled, many fields were left uncultivated, and "the

landless people could only work as hired farmhands for other people" (Records of Huading County).

Surrender of land was mainly implemented in two ways. One way was for the powerful landlords to instigate the lackeys—who were related to the original landowners in some ways—to "surrender" such land to themselves. Such land was taken away from the "rich families" which originally owned it, and the lackeys who "surrendered the land" became the caretaker or sublandlord of such land.

The other way was for the middle or small landowners, rich peasants, individuals, or the few small holders to surrender their land to the bureaucrat-landlords with the object of evading heavy official corvees and taxation. The reason was that the "Ming Code" provided that officials enjoyed the privilege of exemption from official corvees and taxation to varying extent according to their ranks, and the landowners could evade such official corvees and taxation by placing their land under the names of bureaucrat-landlords. The bureaucrat-landlords took advantage of this, and seized the land owned by the middle or small landowners, rich peasants, or small holders who sought to evade official corvees and taxation...

Because most land was owned by the landlords and rich peasants, the land seized by the bureaucrat-landlords was in most cases property of the middle or small landowners or rich peasants.⁹ This was the essence of the matter.

The Biography of Hai Rui says:

Therefore, the rich often surrendered their land to the officials, and would rather work as rent-paying tenants to evade their major duties. This was called surrender of land. Because of this, once a scholar passed the examination of the second degree, he often acquired the land surrendered and became a rich man. Once the downfallen officials regained their offices and power, they often behaved like the upstart officials, and looked upon the annexation of land as a matter of course. When those with power and influence took over the estates they wanted, nobody would dare to refuse.

This seriously jeopardized the interests of the middle and small landowners and rich peasants, and also seriously affected the financial receipts of the Imperial Court.

Did Hai Rui require the landlords to return land to the peasants when he called on the retired officials to return their land? No.

Both the Ming History and a number of biographies of Hai Rui clearly state that Hai Rui called on the retired officials to return the land "surrendered" to them...

Hai Rui told us in his Governor's Proclamation that all the measures issued by him as governor sought "to pacify the public by getting rid of old abuses and to restore the established laws of our ancestors."

Now, in the Ming Code formulated by the "founder of the dynasty," there was such a provision: "Those who surrender the land under dispute or the land of other people as their own properties to the officials in power, and those who receive such land shall each be punished with one hundred strokes of the cane and three years of imprisonment." Was this not precisely the contradiction which Hai Rui had to handle?

The Ming Dynasty had long ago laid down this law against the surrender of land for the purposes of alleviating contradictions within this class, guarding against the acute development of annexation, and facilitating the consolidation of the dictatorship of the whole landlord class. This law later existed only in name. Hai Rui had done nothing more than oppose the surrender of land within this sphere. How can it be said that he "decided in favor" of the peasants south of the lower reaches of the Yangtze River?

Did Hai Rui oppose "usury" with the "poor peasants" in mind?

It is best to quote the statement made by Hai Rui to refute Dai Fengxiang's attack against him. He said:

In past years, when collecting grain, the grain officials often deducted first their private debts before they turned over grain to the government. The wealthy aristocrats also forced settlements at harvesting time. Since private and public interests were dealt with side by side, the payment of grain tax could hardly be fulfilled. It is my opinion that the grain tax must be paid before private settlements can be made, and it is not my intention to prohibit the settlement of debts.

The "public side" meant the feudal Imperial Court, while the "private side" meant the landlords and the local bullies. Hai Rui made it known that he was not against exploitation by rural landlords and the granting of loans. He only opposed the monopoly of the fruit of exploitation by the big landlords in the countryside so as to solve the problem of financial income for the Imperial Court.

Hai Rui never thought of basically solving the contradiction between the peasants and the landlords. He only wanted to ease this contradiction...

The portrayal of Hai Rui is representing the interests of the peasants seeks to confuse the enemy and ourselves, to obliterate the essence of the dictatorship of the landlord class, and to prettify the landlord class...

A historical play needs to be processed artistically and recreated. We do not expect a new historical play to agree with history in every detail, but we do expect that the class stand and class relationship of the characters portrayed therein should agree with historical facts...

The laws and courts of the feudal state and the officials who rule over the people—including "honest, incorrupt officials" and "good officials"—can only be the tools of the dictatorship of the landlord class and can never transcend class, nor can they serve the ruling class as well as the ruled class....

the Dismissal of Hai Rui tells us: No! The "honest, incorrupt officials," are not the tools of the landlord class but are in the service of the peasant class. You see, Hai Rui in the play is an ambassador of the feudal dynasty, but he wages a fierce struggle against Xu Jie and represents the interests of the poor peasants.

In this struggle, "honest official" Hai Rui is on the one hand portrayed as a great hero who safeguards the interests of "the tenants of the House of Xu" and all poor peasants. He is opposed to other officials who implement the dictatorship of the landlord class, and the contradiction between the "honest, incorrupt officials" and the "corrupt officials" is portrayed as the contradiction between the protection and the suppression of the peasants as well as the contradiction between the return of land to the peasants and the seizure of land from the peasants. We can see nothing of the role played by the "honest, incorrupt officials" in consolidating the dictatorship of the landlord class.

On the other hand, all peasants are portrayed as a passive lot devoid of any spirit for revolutionary struggle. Their sole role is to kneel before the "Honorable Hai," beseech him to redress their grievances, and look upon the "honest, incorrupt official" as their savior.

Obviously, as the author of the Dismissal of Hai Rui sees it, the motive force for propelling history forward is not the class struggle

but "honest, incorrupt officials." There is no need for the masses to rise and liberate themselves, for with the blessings of an "honest, incorrupt official," they can promptly lead " a good life."

In this play, the "honest, incorrupt officials," law, and courts—which are the tools of the dictatorship of the landlord class—are all prettified as things which transcend class and their existence is divorced from and independent of the dictatorship of the landlord class. The play publicizes that there is no need for the oppressed people to make revolution, to go through any serious struggle, and to smash the state machinery. Provided they bow and kowtow to the "honest, incorrupt officials" and abide by the "law" of the feudal dynasty, they can wipe out the corrupt officials in one stroke and "lead a good life."...

Hai Rui was an influential historical character. As we see it, he was a more far-sighted personality among the landlord class during the decline of the feudal society. He was loyal to the feudal system, and was a "loyal official" of the feudal dynasty. He perceived some phenomena of the sharp contradiction between the peasant class and the landlord class at his times. In order to consolidate the feudal rule, weaken the resistance of the peasants, alleviate the sharp class contradictions, and uphold the fundamental interests of the feudal dynasty, he dared to wage a sharp struggle against some groups or measures which endangered the interests of the feudal dynasty.

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Sun Daren: How should the "concession policy" be evaluated?

Sun Daren, then an assistant professor in the Department of History at Shaanxi Normal University, published an article in a special issue of the Guangming Daily on 22 September 1965 entitled "How should the "concession policy" be evaluated", which was a representative example of a disagreement with Jian Bozan's views, and thus this was a representative article that disagreed with Jian Bozan's views, and thus attracted a great deal of attention and discussion in the academic community.

The Great Peasant War broke through the feudal net and fundamentally changed the relationship between the landowners and the peasants, which allowed the peasants to gain their freedom. On the contrary, after the failure of the Peasant War, the feudal regime's "policy of concessions" was in essence to deprive the peasants of this freedom they had gained and to put them back into bondage.

The interests of the hostile classes are that you die and I'll live, and they fight against each other. The feudal landlord class would never

have any "concession policy" towards the peasants. What kind of policy the feudal regime adopted depended not on revolutionary pressure, but on the class interests of the landlord class at that time, that is, on the nature of the landlord class.

From Sun Daren's "How Should the 'Concession Policy' Be Evaluated?"

Jian Bozan put this forward in his 1951 book *On Peasant Wars in Ancient China*. He said: "After each great uprising, the new feudal ruler, in order to restore the feudal order, had to make some concessions to the peasants, which meant that the exploitation and oppression of the peasants had to be reduced to a greater or lesser extent, thus reducing the restraint of the feudal relations of production on the productive forces and making it possible for the productive forces of feudal society to continue to develop again, thus pushing Chinese history forward, and thus every peasant insurrection or peasant war in Chinese history is, so to speak, a milestone in the forward development of Chinese feudal society."

In 1961, he added and amended this issue in his article "Preliminary Views on the Handling of Certain Historical Issues". The feudal ruling class, he said, "doesn't give in to every peasant war, they don't give in to those small local peasant wars." Whether to let or not, and how much to let, depends on the situation of class confrontation, on the change in the contrast of class forces brought about by the peasant war." The influential *Outline of Chinese History*, which he edited, contains similar arguments. A number of people in the historical community agree with his views. Some even summarise it as follows: "Revolutionary struggle - forced concessions, further struggles - further concessions" is a rule that drives the peasant wars.

Qi Benxuan: Study history for the sake of the revolution

We acknowledge the historical role of a few outstanding figures among the emperors and generals, but we know that they were outstanding because some of their activities were objectively in line with the requirements of social development or objectively in line with certain aspirations of the people. We have always believed that the people are the masters of history, and that the few outstanding figures among the emperors and generals are, in the final analysis, merely representatives of the ruling class, and that their historical role is but a drop in the ocean compared to that of the people, or to that of the great revolutionary leaders who stand at the front of the locomotive of history. Only the masses of the people, and those who are the true leaders of the revolution, are the great heroes most worthy of our passionate praise. We recognise the historical role of a few outstanding figures among the emperors and generals, but we know that they, like all figures in the ruling class, were also oppressors and exploiters of the masses, and that in offering something new to history they were often accompanied by brutal oppression, exploitation and acted in the current interests of the rulers. Therefore, when commenting on their historical role, we should also expose and criticise their atrocities of oppression and

exploitation as necessary. Of course, sometimes, in order to focus on a particular aspect, it is possible to focus on their progressive aspects; for those historical figures among them whose merits outweigh their faults, a realistic historical assessment should be made on the basis of their entire historical activities, rather than being arbitrarily harsh on just one point. However, in any case, we should not exaggerate their historical role in an unprincipled manner, or praise their civil and military achievements in a far-fetched manner, or even whitewash and justify their historical sins.

The history of class society is the history of class struggle, and to understand the history of class struggle, one has to study both sides of the class conflict. Emperors, kings and generals or other antagonists are representatives of one side of the conflict, and without studying them well, one cannot understand the other side of the conflict well either. The debate in history on the question of emperors and generals reflects the fact that there are still problems in the direction of research on this issue; to solve this problem is not to retreat in the face of research, but to do such research well with a proletarian position, perspective and methodology.

Just as the ruling class and the emperors and generals of feudal society cannot be correctly understood without the class perspective of the proletariat, the peasant class and peasant wars of feudal society cannot be correctly understood without the class perspective of the proletariat.

You see, the peasants rebelled in order to rise to power and become the new nobles and emperors, and their programme of struggle was again feudalistic. If this is really the case, then what irreconcilable class antagonism and irreconcilable class struggle exists? How can we imagine that the millions of serfs, starving, tossing and turning, struggling to the death, when they are forced to rise up and fight for their lives against the feudal landlords who are exploiting and oppressing them, are thinking of how they can become the lords who are being opposed by the masses? Existence determines consciousness. The economic position in which each class finds itself determines its own ideology. The exploited position of the peasantry, as a class, fundamentally determines the ideology of rebellion against the landlords, while the landlord class, in an exploitative position, can only produce the ideology of oppression of the peasantry. Of course, the peasants in feudal society were in some ways influenced by the ideology of the ruling class, so in their struggle programmes there were often things that reflected the ideology of the feudal ruling class; and in the course of the development of the peasant revolutionary movement, there were often cases where members of the revolutionary leadership were transformed into feudalists, or where the revolutionary leadership was usurped by elements of the landlord class, so that the peasant revolution became a tool for the feudal ruling class to change the dynasty. This historical fact, as Comrade Mao Zedong has analysed, is due to the constraints of historical conditions. As for some things in the peasants' revolutionary struggle programme which reflect feudal thinking, they are not as important as their revolutionary slogans of "equal division of wealth

", "equality of the rich and the poor", "having fields to plough together" and "having food to eat together". The claim that the peasants rebelled for the sake of promotion and wealth is a complete distortion of the peasant revolutionary movement.

The criticism of so-called ahistoricism in historical research is, at first glance, confusing. But we only have to look into the facts to understand that the ahistoricism in historical studies in recent years has been none other than the phenomenon of glorifying the emperor and denying the peasant movement. The emergence of this ahistoricism is not, as some have accused, due to the proletariat's increased class perspective, but, on the contrary, to the lack of a proletarian class perspective.

Note: Qi Benxuan's Study of History for the Revolution was published in the 13th issue of Red Flag magazine in December 1965

[1] The word “lao” (old) is often used before a person’s surname to show respect; used after the surname, as it is here, it indicates a higher level of reverence.

[2] In June 1957, Mao told [Wu Lenxi](#), who was about to take over as editor-in-chief of the People's Daily, "You have to be fully prepared for the People's Daily, to be prepared for the worst, and to be prepared for the 'five not afrails'." These 'five not afrails' are: one, to not be not afraid of dismissal; two, to not be not afraid of expulsion from the party membership; three, to not be afraid of divorce by one’s wife; four, not to be afraid of going to jail; five, is not to be afraid of being killed. With these ‘five not afrails’ as preparation, dare to seek truth from facts, dare to adhere to the truth.”

[3] During the Cultural Revolution, Mao was consistently referred to as “Great Leader, Great Teacher, Great Commander-in-Chief, and Great Helmsman”. He said he did not like this and only wanted to be known as a great teacher.

[4] Jian Bozan (14 April 1898 - 18 December 1968) was an ethnic Uighur, native of Taoyuan County, Changde, Hunan Province [1] . He was a famous Chinese historian and social activist, a renowned Marxist historian, one of the important founders of Chinese Marxist historical science, and an outstanding educator. Jian Bozan was persecuted during the Cultural Revolution. On December 18, 1968, the Central Task Force forced Jian Bozan to confess under the pretext of giving an account of "problems concerning Liu Shaoqi". He and his wife, Dai Shuwan, committed suicide by taking sleeping pills.

[5] See THE CHIANG KAI-SHEK GOVERNMENT IS BESIEGED BY THE WHOLE PEOPLE (marxists.org)

[6] One *mu* equals 0.165 (just less than a fifth) of an acre

[7] One *jin* is equal to 0.5 of a kilogram

[8] “Cattie” is the English word for *jin*, so half a kilogram.

[9] This is confirmed by the official <http://dangshi.people.com.cn/> website in an article titled “Party-wide investigation and research in 1961”. It says that more than two dozen investigation teams had been sent to the Changxindian Locomotive Factory. Qi Benyu went and revealed the shortcomings in their approach to problems there. Mao Zedong prepared a title for Qi Benyu's material, "An Example of Investigation of Disasters". Approval: "This document is issued to all comrades in the working meeting." He said that investigation teams should first have training, clear policies, attitudes and methods, so as not to make the investigation fail to achieve its goal, or cause grass-roots comrades disgust, so that the investigation as a good thing, becomes a disaster. On May 30th, he again approved Qi's material, recommending it to party and state organs at all levels, saying that “If it is still like those who went down to Changxindian railway locomotive and vehicle manufacturing plant to investigate, with their implementation of bureaucratic old-fashioned and repugnant kinds of investigation law, the party committee has the right to educate them. If dead bureaucrats don't listen, the party committee has the right to bombard them. In the meantime, please use this document as one of the teaching materials for the training survey team.”

[10] Luo Ergang (January 29, 1901-May 25, 1997), from Guixian County, Guangxi, famous historian, expert on the history of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, and military historian in the late Qing Dynasty.

[11] Li Xiucheng (1823-1864), a native of Fujian County, Guangxi, was a God-worshiper who joined the Taiping Army in September 1851 and was crowned King Chung in December 1859. He was an important general in the late Taiping revolution. Written in his own handwriting during his capture from 30 July to 7 August 1864, the Autobiography is an account of the leader of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, Hong Xiuquan and the whole process of Li's own participation in the revolution. It is a valuable source for the study of the Taiping Revolution and Li Xiucheng. Qi Benyu wrote a review of Li's Autobiography, and the struggle around this is described in Qi's Memoirs (Chapter 17) which can be accessed from here (戚本禹回

忆录 (2016) (marxists.org)) by running it through an online translator.

[12] Also known as the socialist education movement, from 1963 to May 1966, a campaign to clean up politics, the economy, organizations, and ideas was carried out in some rural areas and a few urban industrial and mining enterprises, schools and other units. This movement played a definite role in solving problems in cadre style and economic management.

[13] Sun Daren, from Fuyang, Zhejiang. Graduated from the History Department of Shandong University in 1957. On 20 November 1965, Sun Daren published an article in *Guangming Daily* entitled 'How to value the policy of concessions', in which he gave a fuller assessment of the role of the peasant war, saying that the progress of society was the direct result of the peasant war and not 'the result of forcing the rulers to make concessions'. There were few respondents at the time, but Mao Zedong agreed with him. He had just turned 30 that year.

[14] This speech at the Hangzhou Conference can be found on pages 243-250 of the *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung Vol IX*, Foreign Languages Press, Paris, 2021

[15] Chairman Mao used a Chinese idiom, “Light and thin”, (the pinyin is qing yáo bo fù), meaning to reduce bondage and taxation. It comes from the Han Dynasty book *Zhaodi Ji*.

[16] See: *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung Vol IX*, Foreign Languages Press, Paris, 2021, pages 260-67

[17] See *ibid* p 259

[18] Sun Wukong is the troublesome Monkey King from the novel *Journey to the West*.

[19] See under the title *Down with the Prince of Hell, Liberate the Little Devil – A Talk with Kang Sheng* in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung Vol IX*, Foreign Languages Press, Paris, 2021

[20] See *ibid*, Appendix 2, *Circular of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, May 16, 1966*, 432-3, 434-5

[21] The “five-stage view of history” is a simplified view of Marxist history of class societies; namely, that they progress from primitive

pre-class “communism” to slavery, then to feudalism and capitalism, and finally to socialism/communism.

[22] Fernand Braudel (24 August 1902 – 27 November 1985) was a French historian and a leader of the Annales School, emphasising the role of large-scale socioeconomic factors in the making and writing of history. A critic of capitalism, he denied the Marxist theory of qualitative ruptures or revolutions, and stressed the continuity of deeply embedded structural phenomena.

[23] Pierre Bourdieu (1 August 1930 – 23 January 2002) was a French sociologist, anthropologist, and philosopher. His work was primarily concerned with the dynamics of power in society, especially the diverse and subtle ways in which power is transferred and social order is maintained within and across generations. Bourdieu introduced the notion of capital, defined as sums of particular assets put to productive use. For Bourdieu, such assets could take various forms, habitually referring to several principal forms of capital: economic, symbolic, cultural and social.

[24] Mao used several idiomatic expressions here in four lots of four-characters, and the one referred to by Deng Liqun reads “zhong wang bu zhong” where the first “zhong” means loyalty, and the second (with “bu” - “no” or “not” - in front of it) means “the end”. If, as Qi Benyu says, he had never seen the 16-character expression, but only heard of it, then because of the homophones with their different meanings, he could have taken it to mean “loyalty to the king is not loyalty”, instead of Mao’s intended “loyalty to the king is not finished”, which would clearly refer to the survival of feudal attitudes.

[25] Thomas Samuel Kuhn (July 18, 1922 – June 17, 1996) was an American philosopher of science whose 1962 book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* was influential in both academic and popular circles, introducing the term “paradigm shift”, which has since become an English-language idiom.

[26] See footnote 12. Deng was saying that the four clean-ups should be conducted by education and persuasion and should not make people targets of struggle.

[27] Wang Zhaojun (circa 54 BC - 19 BC), famous as one of the four beautiful women of ancient China. She was sent by Emperor Yuan of the Western Han Dynasty to marry Chanyu Huhanye of the Xiongnu (Hun) Empire in order to establish friendly relations with the Han dynasty through marriage. She had four children by that marriage, but after her husband’s death, was ordered by the Han to

follow Xiongnu custom and marry the eldest brother of her late husband.

[28] After the founding of New China, Guo Moruo held important leadership positions in the country, but he continued to create literature and art, including the historical dramas "Cai Wenji" and "Wu Zetian". Cai Wenji was the daughter of the East Han Dynasty Confucian Cai Wei. In the midst of the war with the Southern Xiongnu (Huns), the family broke down and left their home. She married a sage king of the Southern Huns and they had two children. She was a brilliant and talented woman, good at literature, music and calligraphy and famous throughout China, so that when Cao Cao re-established control over the Eastern Han, he sent messages to her to return. Although she missed her homeland, she could not bear to leave her husband of 12 years and her children, but eventually did so out of patriotism to the Eastern Han and to serve its cause through cultural contributions. Guo Moruo portrayed Cai Wenji as an extraordinary and heroic woman, but said that his motivation in writing the play was to also praise Cao Cao, a controversial figure often depicted as a cruel and merciless tyrant.

[29] In 1972, the Beijing Weekly published an article in English entitled "The masses are the creators of history", which discussed Chairman Mao's teachings that "Historical materialism holds that the masses are the creators of history." In 1984, Li Wei of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences published an article on the creation of history and others in *The Study of History*, and on July 30, 1986, in the *Guangming Daily*, published the chapter "Re-on the Creation of History and Others", which prompted the Chinese academic community to discuss the view that "the people are the creators of history" and basically re-argued the view of history.

[30] Wang Ruoshui (1926-January 9, 2002), served as editor, head of the commentary group and deputy editor-in-chief of the theory group of the *People's Daily*. From 1978 to 1982, he was a delegate to the 5th National People's Congress and a member of the Disciplinary Inspection Committee of the CPC Central Committee. In August 1987, he was ordered to quit the party on charges of "bourgeois liberalization" and was removed from the party.

[31] Michel Vovelle (6 February 1933 – 6 October 2018) was a French historian who specialised in the French Revolution. He was closely associated with the revisionist Communist Party of France.

[32] "Towards the Republic" is a Chinese modern history drama co-produced by China Central Television, Beijing Tongdao Film and Television Production Co., Ltd., China International Television

Corporation, Changsha TV, etc. It was filmed in Beijing on October 8, 2001 and premiered in 2003. The film depicts the events that led to the overthrow of the Qing Dynasty and the establishment of the Republic of China by Sun Yat-sen and the Guomindang. Similar to the film "The Inside Story of the Qing Court" which Mao and Qi Benyu said was "out-and-out betrayal", the TV series was praised by bourgeois cultural circles for "playing a role in opening the way for China's political reform. In the play, Li Hongzhang, who has always been criticized as "betraying the country and seeking glory", is described as a patriot who is concerned about the country and the people; the "cruel-hearted" Empress Dowager Cixi is a far-sighted politician; and Yuan Shikai became a reformer of the princes and courtesans. And Sun Yat-sen, who has always been portrayed as a great man, has also become a flesh-and-blood and easily impulsive revolutionary idealist." Others praised it as "criticizing autocracy and advocating democracy" and said that it "gave Chinese people a lively democracy education lesson ... and objectively set the stage for the reform of China's political system."

[33] Karl Mannheim (27 March 1893 – 9 January 1947) was an influential German sociologist during the first half of the 20th century.

[34] Immanuel Wallerstein (September 28, 1930 – August 31, 2019) was an American sociologist and economic historian. He is best known for his development of the general approach in sociology which led to the emergence of his world-systems theory.

[35] Leopold von Ranke (21 December 1795 – 23 May 1886) was a German historian and a founder of modern primary source-based history.

[36] Meng Xiangcai was born on February 5, 1940 in Linyi, Shandong. He graduated from the History Department of Shandong Normal University in 1964 and then went to the Chinese Academy of Sciences as a graduate student. He is currently a professor and doctoral supervisor of the Department of History of Shandong University. He is also the secretary-general of the Chinese Peasant War History Research Association, the vice chairman of the Chinese Qin and Han History Research Association, the vice chairman of the Shandong History Society, and the vice chairman of the Shandong Peasant History Research Association. He has long been engaged in the teaching and research of the history of Chinese thought and the history of pre-Qin, Qin and Han.

[37] Wang Guangmei was the wife of Liu Shaoqi. During the land reform, Liu Shaoqi engaged in "moving stones", or "kicking away the old cadres", most of whom were of poor and lower middle peasant class status; and when he sent Wang Guangmei in November 1963 to the Taoyuan Brigade of Luwangzhuang Commune in Hebei Province, to check up on the "Four Clean-ups" movement, she again adopted the policy of "moving stones". Wang Guangmei's new creation of "moving stones" in the "Taoyuan Four Cleansing Experience" was passed on and recommended to the officialdom. Liu's and Deng's direction of the early Cultural Revolution movement in Beijing colleges and universities basically practiced "moving stones."

[38] "Minerva" is the Roman name of the Greek Athena, goddess of wisdom and philosophy, and associated with the owl. The meaning of Hegel's saying is that philosophy/wisdom takes flight only at the end of the day, after the day's main events have taken place.

[39] Wang Li and Guan Feng, together with Qi Benyu and others, were part of the original Cultural Revolution Group formed at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. Associated with ultra-leftism, they were dismissed from the Group and placed under house arrest.

[40] The Shangchai Union Division "action" was the largest armed combat incident during the Shanghai Cultural Revolution. Conducted at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, during the Storm of January 1967, it led to the formation of the Shanghai Revolutionary Committee.

[41] On January 10, 1967, Wang Li, Guan Feng and others drafted the Six Opinions of the PLA Newspaper on the Promotion of the Proletarian Cultural Revolution, proposing to "completely expose a small group of powerful people in the army who have followed the capitalist path". Jiang Qing gave it her complete approval and on January 14, 1967, the slogan was publicly proclaimed in an editorial in the People's Liberation Army Daily. On January 15th the People's Daily reprinted the editorial, and the slogan spread quickly across China. After the July 20 Incident in Wuhan, an armed clash between two opposing factions, the local PLA commander ordered his troops to support the faction condemned by the Cultural Revolution Group. This gave impetus to the demand to remove a small group of people in the PLA following the capitalist road, and initiatives to support this were overseen by Wang Li. However, the attack on the

PLA threatened to turn to chaos. Finally, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council of the People's Republic of China, the Central Military Commission and the Central Cultural Revolution Group jointly issued the Order on the Prohibition of the Seizure of People's Liberation Army Weapons, Equipment and Various Military Materials to contain the situation. Wang Li and Guan Feng lost their positions.

[42] See "Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung Vol VIII", Foreign Languages Press, Paris, 2020, p. 438

[43] See ON TACTICS AGAINST JAPANESE IMPERIALISM (marxists.org)

[44] See "Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung Vol VIII", Foreign Languages Press, Paris, 2020, p. 438

[45] Two Chinese ancients with competing philosophies. Sun Zi (Tzu) was a Chinese general, military strategist, writer, and philosopher who lived in the Eastern Zhou period of ancient China. Sun Tzu is traditionally credited as the author of The Art of War, an influential work of military strategy that has affected both Western and East Asian philosophy and military thinking. Lao Zi (Tzu) was an ancient Chinese philosopher and writer. He is the reputed author of the Dao De Jing, the founder of philosophical Taoism, and a deity in religious Taoism and traditional Chinese religions. Laozi takes adversity in stride, recognizing that all force eventually defeats itself. This is the logic behind wú wéi or "non-doing," often misinterpreted as inaction rather than its true meaning of non-interference.

[46] See Yao Wenyan (1965): On the New Historical Play "Dismissal of Hai Jui". (marxists.org)

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