table 14.2

GROWTH OF MEDIA, 1950–1992

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Book Titles</th>
<th>New Book Titles</th>
<th>Magazines</th>
<th>Newspapers</th>
<th>Radio Stations</th>
<th>Television Stations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>12,153</td>
<td>7,049</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>49 (1949)</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>21,071</td>
<td>13,187</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>61 (1957)</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>30,797</td>
<td>19,670</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>94 (1962)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>20,143</td>
<td>12,352</td>
<td>790</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>3,694</td>
<td>2,677</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>4,889</td>
<td>3,870</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>13,716</td>
<td>10,633</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>21,621</td>
<td>17,660</td>
<td>1,911</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>43,603</td>
<td>33,743</td>
<td>4,705</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>219</td>
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<td>1990</td>
<td>80,224</td>
<td>55,254</td>
<td>5,751</td>
<td>773</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>92,148</td>
<td>58,169</td>
<td>6,486</td>
<td>875</td>
<td>812</td>
<td>586</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


 Criticism of negative phenomena and even of leadership failings is allowed, but there cannot be general criticism of the leadership or opposition to current policy.

A second characteristic that follows from the first is that the language of media in China is often sloganbound, ideological, and obscure. The ideological language of the party is used to express party messages. Moreover, since the fact of conflict between leaders and divergent views on policies is suppressed, the discussion of politically sensitive issues often uses cryptic or vague language. This approach produces dull, ambiguous articles that even party cadres dislike reading.

Finally, the style of communications is pedagogical. The media persuade people to plant trees, to oppose bourgeois liberalization, to respect intellectuals—whatever the current policy calls for. The messages are often accompanied by descriptions of "typical" cases that illustrate either the benefits of correct behavior or the problems that need correction.

Despite these distinctive features of the Chinese media that result from party control, in the 1980s they became an impressive information, news, and entertainment system. Almost everyone listens to the radio. The rural elite and the urban population are avid newspaper readers. The quality of international news available to the average citizen has improved, and many listen to Voice of America, the BBC, and Radio Moscow. What a U.S. reader would miss in a Chinese newspaper would be the political analysis and criticism, stories of crime and disasters, and con-
sumer-oriented advertising. A Chinese reader in the United States might miss the variety and low price of newspapers, the availability of international news, the careful presentation of the government’s position, and the time to read newspapers that many jobs in China allow.

It is difficult to generalize about the overall effectiveness of the communications system in political socialization and ideological reeducation. As with any communications system, those in control have considerable leeway in presenting and shaping information. But the effectiveness of the system depends on its credibility, and credibility cannot be controlled so easily. During the Cultural Revolution the leftists manipulated the news at will, but few in China believed the stories. The mass media were studied as a barometer of national politics rather than as a news source.

In the 1980s the media remained subordinate to the CCP, but the party encouraged the development of journalism oriented toward information rather than propaganda. Investigative journalism became popular and influential. (One of the most famous political exiles, Liu Binyan, was once a star investigative reporter for The People’s Daily.) New newspapers were founded with weaker links to the CCP and bolder editorial policies; one of these, reputed to be Zhao Ziyang’s favorite newspaper, was closed down in the early days of the Tiananmen crisis. Older, stodgier newspapers lost circulation and had to catch up by changing their editorial policies. Journalists gradually developed and expressed a feeling of professional identity and autonomy. On May 9, 1989, a petition with the signatures of more than a thousand journalists was given to the Journalists’ Association demanding a dialogue with the government on press reform, and freedom of the press was one of the main demands of the Tiananmen demonstrations. Throughout the month of May 1989, the Chinese press became more open in reporting on the demonstrations in Beijing and elsewhere and more obviously supportive of the demonstrators.12

There was much subtle resistance in the media to reporting the government’s version of the massacre and to propagandizing repressive measures. The press remains subordinate to the party, however, and its work is too visible to allow sustained resistance to the party’s policies. Yet the party is not able to remove the entire cohort of reform-minded journalists because there is not a great reservoir of loyal conservatives to take their place. Thus, since June 1989 the media have been an unwilling mouthpiece for the party, and the tone of the press has generally been dull and depressed, though it revived to rather shrill levels after Deng Xiaoping’s 1992 stand against conservative caution and in favor of further reform.

Socialization and Major Political Change

Although family, education, and communication are all vital agents of socialization, the political outlook of any individual is most strongly influenced by his or her own experience. Momentous variations in Chinese policies, such as the Cultural Revolution and the post-Mao shift to modernization, have brought major changes to the lives of most people and have been formative political experiences for several generations of young people. Major events such as the founding of the PRC in 1949, the death of Mao, or Tiananmen create historical watersheds that separate the political attitudes of the generations who experience the event from those who come afterward. As a result of so many major changes, different political experiences divide the Chinese population into many strata.

The founding of the People’s Republic of China was perhaps the major political change. Until 1949 life for many Chinese had been characterized by chaos, uncertainty, foreign incursions, and undisguised exploitation and oppression. After 1949 a powerful and effective national political system was rapidly put into place, and the old elite was rooted out from top to bottom. The mandate of the new order was both revolutionary and convincing, and even such later policy failures as the Great Leap Forward did not lead to widespread questioning of the party’s right to rule. Thus, pre-1949 generations have had a broader political experience but one haunted by disunity and chaos, while the children of the PRC have seen the party’s policy changes against a constant background of a strong party-state. In the minds of more than 80 percent of its population, China is assumed to be unified, strong, and socialist.

Despite this common feature of “post-49” generations, the wide variations in PRC policy have produced major differences in the life experiences and political behavior of everyone, as well as differences in the political socialization of youth.13 A “good” high school student in the 1950s and early 1960s was
one who studied hard, volunteered for a variety of service activities, and did well on examinations. Children whose parents were party members, workers, and poor peasants were favored, but the ultimate criterion was activism and academic performance. As a result, the student bodies of colleges contained large percentages of middle-class youths who had done very well on examinations under the influence of a more academically oriented home environment. Students were cautious and orderly; the school environment was strict; and the memory of the Anti-Rightist Campaign discouraged political boldness. Although standards were different for different social classes, everyone except those from the worst family backgrounds could imagine a place for themselves in the new order. There was remarkable idealism and enthusiasm, even among middle-class students, and thousands volunteered to transfer to the countryside.

The Cultural Revolution challenged every aspect of the educational environment, dismissing the previous 17 years as “bourgeois culture.” Students were urged to criticize their teachers and administrators and to form Red Guard units to promote Mao Zedong Thought and oppose bourgeois influence. High school classes did not meet for two years, and universities were closed for four years. Academic values based on expertise were replaced by political values based on “redness.” But the definition of “redness” was not clear. Students from good class backgrounds considered themselves “naturally red,” while middle-class students worked hard to show that they were especially dedicated to Chairman Mao and the revolution. These differences were related to conflicts and eventually battles that broke out between different Red Guard factions. The initial idealism and excitement turned to chaos and terror, and eventually to disillusionment, as the army restored party control and millions of youths were forcibly transferred to rural areas. The Red Guard generation lived through a violent and exciting time that generated close friends and strong enemies. They became cynical concerning party leadership and resentful of their own vain sacrifices. Despite their own participation in the Cultural Revolution, they were happy to see the leftist leadership fall in 1976.

The post-Mao generation of Chinese youth reflects a complex but, until Tiananmen, basically positive and optimistic situation. They are certainly not as ideological as the previous generation, but neither are they as docile as students before the Cultural Revolution. Somewhat like the post-Vietnam U.S. youth, they have been more concerned with personal success than they are with politics. But their individual futures are premised on the continuation of the party’s commitment to modernization, and so by and large they support continued liberalization and openness to the West. The widespread demonstrations by college students in December 1986 were in part a response to a new climate of liberalization introduced by Hu Yaobang and in part an attempt to push the reforms further. Suppression of the 1986 demonstrations alienated students and intellectuals from the CCP, many for the first time, and contributed to the more critical and confrontational tone of the 1989 demonstrations.

Since their generation was the target of the Tiananmen repression, the youth of the 1990s are naturally alienated from the old political leadership. But they are also faced with the exciting prospects offered by a mushrooming economy, as well as by the plentiful distractions of consumerism. It is not surprising that their alienation is deflected away from radical politics toward individual profit and enjoyment.

**POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND RECRUITMENT**

The political process of the Chinese party-state is fundamentally different from the processes of the Western liberal democracies. As a result, the process functions—political participation, interest articulation, aggregation, and so forth—which are clearly present in industrial democracies, are much more ambiguous and mixed in the case of China. We will therefore preface our attempt to describe Chinese politics in the general terms of process functions by stressing four characteristic features of the party-state.

The fundamental political reality in the PRC is the unitary nature of political, state, and even societal power. To a great extent Chinese society was recreated by the CCP after 1949, and all of its organizations, from the village and factory to the National People’s Congress, were structured with the
Students from various universities in Beijing gather beneath Mao's portrait in Tiananmen during their demonstration on January 1, 1987. Such demonstrations led to the removal of Hu Yaobang and foreshadowed the larger demonstrations of 1989.

Source: Reuters/UP/ Bettmann

CCP at the core and the higher levels of the CCP in unquestioned command. Not only was opposition not allowed, but even organization independent of the CCP's internal control was not allowed. The students at Tiananmen demanded recognition of autonomous student associations, and Deng Xiaoping considered this to be in itself a threat to the party-state. The party-state allows nothing outside itself, and it is this total concentration of power which justifies the adjectives "totalitarian" or "totalistic." On the other hand, by including all of society the party-state necessarily contains many interests and conflicting tendencies within itself.

Second, participation is very important for the party-state, but it is mobilized participation sponsored by the CCP rather than participation generated independently by citizens. The CCP seeks broad, nearly universal participation in both occasional campaigns and in routine tasks and institutions in order to educate the masses, get grass-roots feedback, and help implement party policies. The assumption of such mobilization is that the party-state is close to the masses and has their interests at heart, and so the masses are supposed to respond enthusiastically to the party's call. From the party's perspec-

tive, mobilization is neither spontaneous nor commanded, but rather a natural interaction between the leaders and the masses. Those who respond consistently are considered activists and may be recruited into the party. Of course, participation does not always go as planned. Many times mobilization goes too far and is then corrected by a period of consolidation, producing a "campaign cycle" of mobilization and consolidation.

The third feature is that the current leadership expects unanimous support. There is no such thing as a loyal opposition even within the party, and the leadership controls the diversity of public opinion on any subject. Sometimes the arena for public discussion is set rather broadly, as in the Hundred Flowers movement in 1957, but caution is advised because one might be declared a "poisonous weed" afterward. On the other hand, standards may be turned upside down when the current leadership changes. People who were punished as class enemies at one time may be declared heroes in the future. Within the leadership, disagreements are expressed privately and symbolically. It is only when the leadership changes that disagreements within the previous leadership are acknowledged. Since leadership does
change, most people wait for a favorable political wind.

A fourth feature is that the Chinese party-state has had definite stages of development which can be compared to a life cycle, and the metaphor is strengthened by the fact that it corresponds to the life cycle of its top leadership. In its first stage, in its "youth" as a revolutionary movement before 1949, the CCP developed its approach to politics because of the necessity of mobilizing popular support against the government and the Japanese. The party and the people were indeed close because they depended on one another for survival. In its second stage, from 1949 to 1976, the party-state went through various successes and crises of maturity. It established an unusually strong state and attempted ambitious goals, but its power made it less dependent on the people and less guided by their concrete interests and capacities. Its solidarity and ideological self-confidence were destroyed by the excesses of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution.

After the death of Mao Zedong the party-state entered a third stage, that of semiretirement. Great changes were wrought not through its collected energies but through its relaxation. It permitted the economy and society to diversify. It maintained its central position as patron of reforms, often in a passive role of privileged power rather than leadership. During the 1980s the control of the party-state began to deteriorate, and more common forms of citizen political participation began to emerge. Central control over the economy and the workplace was weakened by market forces, the party-state's ideological monopoly was threatened by the attractiveness of foreign ideas and its own intellectual narrowness, and the reform leadership of Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang implicitly threatened its singleness of purpose and commitment to power. The conservative coup of 1989 reasserted the power of the party-state, but it cannot be rejuvenated. Nevertheless, the party-state will remain the major political heritage of whatever regime succeeds it.

Participation

The mobilized political participation characteristic of the party-state can be described in terms of three modes of participation. The first mode is participation in the formal institution of the state structure, essentially the election of deputies to rural commune and urban district congresses, and since 1979 to all county-level congresses as well. The people's congresses have 3.64 million elected members at all levels (more than the population of Singapore), and 20,000 delegates at the provincial level. Institutional participation involves widespread participation, with turnouts regularly exceeding 90 percent of eligible voters, but has been mainly symbolic because the congresses are weak and voters have usually just approved an official list of candidates. The reforms of 1979–82 have increased congressional powers, added the county elections, and explicitly encouraged multiple candidates for positions. Despite these reforms, the party is ambivalent about encouraging electoral competition and certainly does not want to legitimate questioning of or opposition to its policies.

Participation in mass campaigns has been a more important mode in the past. It involves citizens in implementation of government programs, requires actions that have both socializing and symbolic functions for participants, and allows some popular influence on local decisions or decision makers through criticism of cadres and policy experimentation that are part of most campaigns. Deng Xiaoping's group has criticized the large-scale mass struggle campaign as an inappropriate "ultra-left" technique, but they have not renounced its use in organizing orderly support for their policies.

A third mode is participation in the internal affairs of primary units beneath the basic level of government, such as villages and teams, urban neighborhood organizations, schools, factories, and other units. This mode produces the most regular and significant forms of participation: The masses have greater say in the elections of unit leaders, they have more regular and influential contact with these leaders, and they are able to discuss issues that bear directly on their daily lives. Local units also recruit people into activist roles or lead them to serve the community by accepting assignments that contribute to collective welfare.

Mobilized mass political participation in China has little to do with decision making, except in primary units that have little leverage against the sys-
tem, but it plays an important role in policy implementation, political socialization, and symbolic expression. As mentioned in the discussion of socialization, Chinese modes of participation have produced tension, hardship, and alienation for some citizens. The participant may be compelled to implement unpopular policies, to criticize self and others in cynical or destructive ways, or to spend dreary hours in the study of materials that have little personal meaning. The general pattern weakens or routinizes some conventional forms of participation (voting, for example), while at times encouraging unconventional forms that may bring psychological and physical violence (seen most clearly in the Cultural Revolution). With the semiretirement of the party-state in the 1980s, the level of mobilized participation dropped off considerably, and citizens gradually began to use some of their participatory opportunities for their own purposes. Occasionally, elections and assembly votes produced results the party had not intended. Although these occurrences were rare enough to be newsworthy, they highlight the possibility of an evolution of some party-state institutions toward citizen-based political functions.

Of course, the demonstrations at Tiananmen were examples of massive political participation that was not mobilized by the party-state. The broad support for these demonstrations showed the extent to which Chinese society in the 1980s had outgrown the control of the party-state. At bottom, the demonstrators were demanding to be treated as citizens who could express their own interests and form their own associations rather than as the masses under party tutelage. The form of participation, however, was quite similar to mobilized participation in that a few student leaders assumed that they were spokesmen for everyone, and they tended to see their struggle with Li Peng as a revolutionary struggle for total victory rather than a search for an acceptable compromise.

Recruitment

Three important political roles—activist, cadre, and party member—dominate the staffing of the Chinese political system. Activists are ordinary citizens, not holding full-time official positions, who acquire special interest, initiative, or responsibility in public af-

fairs. Cadres are those who hold a leadership position in an organization, normally as a full-time post. New members of the party are carefully selected by party branches, but they need not be cadres.

Becoming an activist is generally the first step in political recruitment, and it is from the ranks of activists that most new cadres and CCP members are drawn. Local party organizations keep track of activists within their jurisdiction, turning to them when political campaigns and recruitment are underway. In practice, activists are designated on the basis of self-selection, personal ability, and group support, with local officials watching closely to veto undesirables and to select the most promising candidates for more important roles.

Recruitment to cadre status is different. State cadres (full-time employees who staff state, party, and mass organization hierarchies above the primary level and who receive their salaries from the government) are appointed from within the bureaucracies, through the personnel sections of the state and the departments of the CCP. The most serious problem in cadre recruitment is tension between the dissimilar criteria of professional skills and political activism. In the leftist period, political activism received the primary emphasis. Since 1978 intellectual work has been considered respectable, and the status of specialists has been greatly improved. Nevertheless, a tension persists between the party’s commitment to ideological leadership and the technocrats’ preference for autonomy.

Admission to the CCP is the decisive act of political recruitment. Higher-level units and some types of work (journalism, for instance) have a preponderance of party members, but in most of society the party is a dedicated and self-selecting minority.

Party membership provides entrance into a political career with significant opportunities for advancement and power. The party member is always in a position of relative political prominence. If an ordinary worker, the member is expected to have an activist role; among activists, members are the most likely to be selected as cadres; and among cadres, members have superior political status and opportunities.

Party recruitment in the post-Mao era has been very complex. First, the top leadership is hardly "new blood." Deng Xiaoping and his colleagues are
now in their 90s, and although they claim to be turning power over to younger successors, the sacking of Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang by Deng shows that ultimate power still remains in elderly hands.

Second, party discipline became quite lax in the 1970s and even more so in the 1980s. Party secretaries became excessively powerful in the early 1970s, and then modernization opened up many opportunities to profit from power. Maintaining party discipline is therefore a major and continuing problem. A system of "commissions for discipline inspection" was reestablished in 1979, and there have been a succession of campaigns to fight corruption, economic crime, to promote socialist spiritual civilization, to oppose bourgeois liberalism, and so forth. Some Chinese analysts say that the problem is not due to leftist or capitalist influence but to the feudal, patriarchal power structure that does not provide adequate democratic controls over those who hold power.

Third, although the party adopted modernization as its chief task in 1978, its personnel and its leadership style are more suited to political revolution and basic economic construction. The party has made an effort to recruit more intellectuals, as it did in the 1950s, but many perceive a latent tension between the pluralistic tendencies of a modern society and unquestioned political domination by the party. The problem is more complex than it appears, because the party has led the modernization reforms. But the massacre and the removal of the top reformers damaged, perhaps irretrievably, the CCP's credibility as a reform leader. No other political institutions exist which could challenge the CCP or replace it in its central political function, but one lesson of reform in Eastern Europe is that an alternative does not have to be fully formed in order to remove a party-state that has lost legitimacy.

INTEREST ARTICULATION

The central process in every political system is the conversion of demands, representing the interests, goals, and desires of individuals or groups within the society, into political decisions that are then applied and enforced by the government. The CCP's idea of how this process ought to work is contained in the mass line, stated in a directive written for the Central Committee in June 1943 by Mao Zedong:

In all the practical work of our Party, all correct leadership is necessarily "from the masses, to the masses." This means: Take the ideas of the masses (scattered and unsystematic ideas) and concentrate them (through study turn them into concentrated systematic ideas), then go to the masses and propagate and explain these ideas until the masses embrace them as their own, hold fast to them and translate them into action, and test the correctness of these ideas in such action. Then once again concentrate ideas from the masses and once again go to the masses so that the ideas are persevered in and carried through. And so on, over and over again in an endless spiral, with the ideas becoming more correct, more vital and richer each time.14

Masses articulate interests (express their "scattered and unsystematic ideas"), while the party—and only the party—aggregates them (turns them into "concentrated and systematic ideas" that can become policy alternatives). There are, of course, organizations other than the CCP that have the capacity, in membership and scale, to pull together and synthesize the demands of particular groups in Chinese society. But these organizations are not autonomous. Their leadership is dominated by party members whose job is to protect the CCP's favored position in the formulation of policy proposals and to discourage demands that conflict with the CCP's general line.

The CCP's willingness to encourage political claims from the populace conflicts with its fear of organized competition or opposition. The result is that many such claims are put forward in an unorganized, fragmented way.

Since the articulation of one's own political interests and demands is restricted to informal pleading and pressure on party leadership, the two most important political assets for an individual are access and connections. Access is regular interaction with leadership. A person with access can make sure that the leadership is constantly aware of his interests and point of view. The party actively solicits the views of the masses, and those with regular access are in a good position to take advantage of such openness.
Therefore, a position in the People's Congress or the Women's Union, though it may not be powerful in itself, is quite desirable because of the access it affords.

*Connections* (guanxi) are, simply, the people whom one knows. Connections can open the "back door" of the leadership when the "front door" is forbidding or is clogged with red tape. When faced with a problem, an individual sits through his friends and family, and the friends of friends and family, to locate someone whose position or access might be useful. Of course, reciprocity is expected, and thus "connection networks" evolve. Some people build their careers on such exchanges of favors, a practice called "climbing the connection network." Although access and connections are important in every culture and have always been particularly important in China, it should be noted that the party's monopoly of interest articulation and the weakness of the legal system put the individual in a weak, supplicant position and thus encourage such behavior.

Popular demands are most frequently and easily expressed within basic-level government, especially within primary production and residential units. The smallest groups—villages in the countryside, work teams in factories, and residents' groups in cities—have frequent meetings and choose their own group leader. The masses also have a direct voice in more inclusive groups—production brigades, factory-wide organizations, and neighborhood committees—through selection of representatives to managing committees or meetings of the entire constituency. Selection of leaders and representatives may stem from discussion and consensus rather than from contested elections, and individuals unacceptable to higher cadres are not likely to be chosen. The leaders chosen are themselves ordinary workers, however, and are in close association with their colleagues. In such a context, the leaders have the power of the state behind them, but they may also elicit the cooperation of the members. However, in the small group just as in society at large, no one is allowed to challenge the party openly.

Other means of expressing individual or deviant demands include writing letters to mass media and making personal visits to cadres' offices. Rectification campaigns give citizens special opportunities to review and criticize the performance of local elites. Finally, popular demands make themselves known through acts of noncompliance or resistance, such as slowdowns or absenteeism at work, violation of regulations, and taking advantage of loopholes or ambiguities in policy.

A totally different sort of interest articulation occurred during the first three years of the Cultural Revolution. Established mass organizations were banned, but students and workers were encouraged to form revolutionary mass organizations. Although these organizations did not view themselves as promoting the interests of their members, it is clear that students and workers who were disadvantaged by "the system" tended to form more radical groups, while the children of party cadres and workers with good jobs tended to form groups that defended the authorities. Beginning in 1967, Mao tried to incorporate the new mass organizations into normal politics, but the hostility among the groups prevented it. Finally, the power of the revolutionary mass organizations was suppressed by the army, and some of their leadership were given token political positions.

Organized articulation occurs when the group making the demand has members drawn from many units or localities and some means of communicating with its members and the larger public. Such organized articulation is the special function of mass organizations, the Women's Union, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions, the Writers' Union, and so on. All these groups in turn have members in the people's congresses and in the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. But the primary function of such groups is to inform and implement party policy in their respective social spheres, not to provide independent representation of an interest group. The level of activism in mass organizations is determined more by the party's willingness to listen than by the urgency of mass demands. The party is in firm control of the leadership of mass organizations, and they have no means of action that do not require party acquiescence.

Despite party leadership, mass organizations provide a variety of services for their members and serve as advocates of their interests within the limits of party policy. Most mass organizations were disbanded during the Cultural Revolution, but in the 1980s their advocacy functions were stronger than ever. The most interesting case is the Writers' Union.
which in early 1985 was allowed to freely elect its national executive committee. One of those elected, Liu Binyan of The People's Daily, was expelled from the party in early 1987 for advocating bourgeois liberalization. Thus, the tension between group representation and party control continues.

In summary, popular articulation of interests tends to limit itself in normal times to unorganized expression of demands within the primary unit. Organized articulation is risky and likely to occur only when in conformity with official policy or when the group has high-level bureaucratic support; in such cases, it is difficult to tell whether the demand starts below and receives elite support or whether it appears only after elites solicit it as a weapon in higher-level debate. In either case, elite allies are normally essential for wider dissemination of the demand and for any hopes of favorable response. The episodes in which popular demands have exceeded elite guidelines are significant exceptions to these generalizations, but, as we have seen, each episode brought suppression of dissidents and reaffirmation of the party's right to define the limits of popular political activity.

INTEREST AGGREGATION AND ELITE CONFLICT

In contrast to multiparty politics in the West, which sometimes gives an artificial sense of conflict and disunity, the monopoly of interest aggregation by the CCP in China often gives an artificial appearance of unity and harmony in the leadership. Since there is no legitimate opposition and the media are controlled by the party, leadership conflict in China only becomes obvious when the current leadership is displaced by a new leadership with a different direction. Even at such times the process of debate and displacement is not usually open to the public. Instead, the media are filled with criticisms and condemnations of the previous policy line. It is strange to see policies and leaders with apparently unanimous support suddenly be replaced by opposing policies and leaders, also with apparently unanimous support. This pattern, which was most clear in the Cultural Revolution and the transition to the post-Mao era, became more complex in the 1980s, and then reasserted itself in 1989.

The key to the paradox of unanimity and bitter conflict in Chinese politics lies in the tendency to view political conflict as an all-or-nothing struggle. There can be no open pluralism of viewpoints. Public political struggles are in reality not struggles between two sides, but rather attacks by the winners on the losers, in which the losers are not allowed to respond or to defend themselves. Therefore, those who differ with current policy avoid challenging it openly in normal times, but may suddenly appear as enthusiastic supporters of a new policy and critics of the old if a new leadership permits a change.

Although the prohibition of opposition and open challenge is the basic rule of the game, differing views on policy do exist, bureaucracies attempt to increase their budgets, and new policies are adopted. Since overt interest aggregation and constituency building are impossible, informal networks based on a number of factors, including mutual support, shared opinions, and patron-client ties form a strong but publicly invisible fabric of elite politics. In times of crisis and high vulnerability, the mutual protection provided by informal groups becomes crucial and the factional fabric of politics becomes more obvious. But even when factional politics has been at its most extreme—for instance, pitched battles between various Red Guard groups during the Cultural Revolution—factionalism itself has always been publicly condemned.

Informal associations are not the only trellis of political activity and interest aggregation. The major bureaucratic structures compete privately and indirectly for budget shares and for the attention of the top leadership. The Ministry of Agriculture, for example, might emphasize the importance of investment in chemical fertilizer plants, while the Railways Ministry might push for electrification of trunk lines. Besides the interbureaucratic differences at each level, there is also tension between central ministries and local governments concerning control over projects, revenue, and investment. Moreover, the encouragement of foreign investment and trade in the 1980s has created a clear difference of interests between coastal provinces, whose natural advantages in foreign trade have been enhanced by special privileges, border
provinces, which rely on a special relationship with a neighboring foreign country for their trade opportunities, and inland provinces, which are poorer and therefore demand more redistributive developmental policies. Since Guangdong Province (located next to Hong Kong) has been the fastest-growing and most externally oriented province, it has been at the center of the most prominent regional tensions. But the problem of regional diversity is a general one. The expression of differences between provincial and national interests are hampered by the lack of a federal structure, and as the real power of regional and local interests continues to grow with decentralized economic development, inevitable tensions will give rise to new patterns of center-local and interprovincial politics.

POLICYMAKING AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The primary decision maker in the Chinese system is the CCP. The decision-making structure is narrow, based on party committees acting in closed session. There is little open legislative activity or issuance of public laws, although both have increased in the past 15 years. Decisions take the form of general statements on policy or doctrine, or they emerge as administrative directives and regulations.

Although the government issues legal-sounding rules, implying implementation at a specific time and procedures to enforce compliance, its decisions on many important issues have a tentative and experimental quality. They are cast in the form of general statements, indicating models to be followed or goals to be attained but not specifying exact procedures, forms, and relationships. The meaning of such a decision emerges only in practice, as lower levels begin to develop concrete responses to the tasks demanded of them. In the midst of this practice, higher levels review and investigate the early results. They may decide to accelerate or decelerate the process, publicize new models, or even issue new directives that alter the initial thrust of the policy. Members of the party elite seem to regard the attendant shifts and variations as necessary for the development of viable policies. It is their way of practicing the mass line, of refining their views through practical experience.

Decision Making

Mao Zedong was long the central figure in Chinese decision making, initiating, approving, and legitimating many of the most important CCP policies. His knowledge of personalities and issues, his self-confidence and determination, his ability to persuade, and his sensitivity to tactics and strategy made him a formidable politician. As party chairman, he had ample power to shape the procedural and institutional context of elite politics. Above all, he held unique authority and prestige. His politics were occasionally criticized, resisted, or altered, but direct challenges to his leadership were doomed to failure.

For several reasons, however, it is a mistake to look on decision making under Mao as a dictatorial process. Although Mao’s influence was greater than that of any other leader, his changing perceptions of priorities and his own personal style led him to exercise it unevenly. His authority over senior colleagues weakened at times, the years just before the Cultural Revolution being the best example. After the Cultural Revolution, declining vigor removed him from an active role in administration. He continued to have a decisive role in some key decisions—for example, the rapprochement with the United States, the purge of Lin Biao, and the 1976 demotion of Deng Xiaoping—but his domination of central politics was coming to a close well before his death.

Since the death of Mao in 1976, Chinese decision making has necessarily been more collegial than it was before. Deng Xiaoping does not have as much personal authority as Mao had, and it is difficult to know whether a particular policy decision expresses his personal preferences or is the result of a collective decision. Nevertheless, top Chinese leadership as a whole retains the unrestricted, personalistic ambience characteristic of Mao and of imperial times. Deng Xiaoping has twice removed a chosen successor, as Mao did twice. Although Deng has been active in imposing restrictions on the rest of the party and administrative hierarchy, the top of the hierarchy appears to feel that its own unrestricted power is a necessary condition for proper political guidance.
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No central leadership, however, can simply do what it wants. The major restraint on their power is the limitation of human and natural resources. With the economy still depending heavily on the harvest and with popular compliance essential for the success of mass campaigns of social change, central plans may come up against unexpected and insuperable obstacles. The Great Leap Forward is probably the best example of what may happen when elites defy the objective limits of nature and humankind. Moreover, because of China's great size, a large amount of discretion and leeway must be delegated in applying policy, thereby putting central preferences at the mercy of local interpretations. This tendency is strengthened by administrative commitments to experimentalism and decentralization.

Another set of questions about Chinese decision making concerns its capacity to assess rationally a significant range of policy alternatives and their possible consequences. Concentration of power in a small group of party elites, combined with insistence on ideological orthodoxy, closes the problem to needed unorthodox or nonparty views. Even Mao complained about this shortcoming. The real problem seems to be the hazards associated with sponsoring a rejected alternative; these hazards lead to caution in taking a stand on an issue not yet decided. The veiled and frustrating language of Chinese political debate is best understood as a function of this desire to argue a position without appearing to deviate from orthodoxy.

The utilization of "models" illustrates both the capabilities and the limits of Chinese policymaking. Because of the discretion allowed to local levels, a unit occasionally is quite successful when it follows a variant of normal policy. The unit is studied closely, and if its initiative is successful, its experience may be propagandized for general study. National policy is often legitimated, validated, or amended on the basis of successful models. The classic case was the Dazhai Brigade, a very poor rural unit that in the early 1960s made itself into a success through good leadership and collective labor. Mao Zedong was so impressed with their success that he penned the slogan, "In agriculture, learn from Dazhai," and the Dazhai model became a policy lodestone for more than a decade. The problem with using models in this way is that the conditions of the successful model might not exist elsewhere, and the political attention directed at models distorts their performance. When the official attitude toward Dazhai turned from praise to exposure in 1978, its success was attributed to state subsidies and dishonest leadership—and even to the large amounts of extra night-soil left by thousands of visitors!

The utilization of models allows policymaking to be empirically oriented without being dependent on experts, but it runs the risk of basing policy on unrepresentative and inappropriate evidence. Because of such problems, specialists and statistics are becoming more important in policymaking.

Finally, one might ask if the weakness of popular representation above the basic level and of independent political communication restricts policymakers' understanding of how decisions will be received. The answer must be yes, since the central elite relies on cadre reports filtered up through the bureaucracy for its impressions of popular mood. As in all bureaucracies, such reports reflect what bureaucrats think their superiors want to see as well as what is actually happening. Elites have some ways of guarding against serious miscalculations of popular response, however. One is the combination of mass line and decentralization that leaves implementation to units better informed of local conditions. Another is the experimental approach that permits altering initial policies on the basis of early results.

Administration

The Chinese political system entrusts the application of its rules to a variety of structures, including state, party, and army bureaucracies and the communications systems they control; the management organs of primary units; and a multitude of popular committees, organizations, and meetings that mobilize the population for direct action on government programs. It is the world's largest bureaucracy, governing a society with the world's longest experience with bureaucratic rule. Precisely because they know these things, and recognize the traditional and modern abuses of bureaucracies, the Chinese Communists have made many efforts to restrain the exercise of bureaucratic power. Although they accept the necessity for centrally directed organizational hierarchies, they have tried to ensure bureaucracy's responsiveness to political controls and to keep its structure simple and efficient. As a result, the history of bu-
reacuity in China since 1949 has been one of recurring tendencies to expand its role matched by counterpressures to limit it.

The basic problem of political control over the bureaucracy has expressed itself most forcefully in the relationship between the party and the state hierarchies. When the PRC was established, the party was in no position to take over the specialized responsibilities of running national-level and urban bureaucracies, but by the early 1960s party committees were in control of the decision making of every public organ. Despite the initial attacks on the party, the Cultural Revolution strengthened party displacement of the state by establishing "unified leadership" under revolutionary committees. The post-Mao leadership has taken as a major task the reestablishment of some degree of state autonomy. The "feudalism" encouraged by party domination is criticized, and professionalism and the rule of law are encouraged. Nevertheless, the dilemma of party control and state autonomy is likely to remain as a basic policy tension.

A second major issue is ensuring that administrative personnel effectively fulfill their functions and serve the people. Campaigns against bureaucratism and cadre corruption have been launched periodically since the birth of the PRC. Harry Harding describes two different approaches to bureaucratic reform in Maoist China. The first, rationalistic reform, accepts bureaucracy as necessary but attempts to discipline it internally. This approach was more characteristic of Liu Shaoqi. The second, radical reform, is more fundamentally antagonistic to bureaucracy and seeks to control it externally through mobilizing the masses, as in the Cultural Revolution. In the post-Mao era radical reform through mass mobilization has dropped out of the picture. New trends in bureaucratic reform in the 1980s included professionalization, mandatory retirement ages, legal and procedural improvement, and the strengthening of popular control through election mechanisms.

Decentralization is an important issue of Chinese administrative politics that can be used to illustrate the difference between the Maoist and post-Mao regimes. Some degree of decentralization is inevitable in China because of its size and diversity. Moreover, the party's guerrilla heritage inclines it to be flexible and to trust local leadership. But decentralization also entails a loss of central information and control, a loss that inevitably inconveniences and embarrasses top leadership. Because of China's unitary ethnic and political heritage, decentralization involves a delegation of decision making, but not a real segmentation of power as in a federal system. For these reasons both Mao and the current modernizers favored decentralization, but the kinds of decentralization they promoted were quite different.

Mao's decentralization stressed self-sufficiency of egalitarian communities. Each locality was supposed to raise its own food. Sideline occupations were often discouraged, and regional trade in agricultural products declined. Individuals were supposed to prosper through collective efforts. This version of decentralization is akin to a traditional peasant's idea of prosperity and security: to be independent of outsiders, to be united as a community, and to produce a sufficiency of basic goods.

The decentralization favored in the 1980s was quite different; indeed, it was almost the opposite of the Maoist ideal. Instead of self-sufficiency, decentralization now stressed production of marketable commodities. Villages and families were allowed to produce what was profitable and to buy their own grain if necessary. Sideline enterprises were encouraged, and more and more peasants were employed in nonfarm tasks. Families were allowed to work for themselves and become rich before their neighbors. The current version of market decentralization is thus very modern. It stresses choices made for self-interest within a differentiated and interdependent economy. Its ideal is "more, better, faster" for both individual and society.

The product of successful market decentralization has been a thriving decentralized economy, but also it produces local interests that are more assertive in their relationships with higher levels and more likely to quarrel among themselves. Under Maoist decentralization, local interests tended to be furtive and defensive, hiding resources from higher levels in order to make sure that sufficient resources were at hand. Under market decentralization, the material ambitions of localities have become virtually unlimited, and localities have become enmeshed in interdependent as well as competitive relations with other localities. As the amount of economic pushing and shoving increases at every level of society and government, local leaders are judged by how well they
play the new game of market localism. The conservative post-Tiananmen regime is suspicious of market decentralization because it erodes central control, but it acknowledges that the general pattern of market decentralization established in the 1980s cannot be reversed.

Rule Enforcement and Adjudication

Examination of the way in which the political system enforces and adjudicates its rules begins with the formal legal system. In China, the institutions that do the work are the courts, whose function is to try cases, render verdicts, and assign sentences; the procuracy, which investigates and prosecutes possible violations of law; public security or police organs; local mediation committees; and the CCP, which is deeply involved in the entire legal process. The structure and activity of these institutions, and their relationships, set the tone of law enforcement in China. But the formal legal system plays a relatively modest role in social control. The CCP approach to law enforcement and adjudication is not highly legalistic, in the sense of reliance on statutes and institutionalized procedures for their application and interpretation. Rather, the party views social control from the perspectives of its ideology and the Chinese legal tradition, which weaken legal formalities and shift legal functions away from the structures designed to perform them.

The role of law in China differs from the role of law in the West in a number of important respects. First, a democratically elected legislature is the basis of legitimacy in the West, and the rule of law is superior to governmental and nongovernmental organizations. In China, the party's legitimacy derives from its successful leadership of the revolution and its commitment to Marxism-Leninism. The rule of law is secondary to the rule of the party, and the legislature, the National People's Congress, is definitely secondary to the party. A citizen must obey party decrees and officials as well as laws and state officials. This basic fact has not been changed by recent increases in legal codification, though it is important to note that the party is also bound by legislation.

Second, whereas citizens have equal legal and political rights in the West, the PRC is a "people's democratic dictatorship" that expects to treat class enemies differently from class allies. The distinction between friends and enemies is based not only on the revolutionary experience but also on the Marxist critique of Western law. So the legal and political systems actively discriminate against class enemies and favor workers, peasants, and party members. The
behavior will be commented on and criticized. In most cases a returning criminal is expected to be taken back by his original work unit, contributing to an extremely low recidivism rate. Very few people are either let loose or cast off by society.

Despite these differences from Western legal systems, there have been important developments in Chinese law in the post-Mao period. Major legal codes have been introduced, including the first criminal code in 1979. The 1982 constitution is more carefully written than its predecessors, although it contains clauses that permit the avoidance of inconvenient provisions. The importance attached to law and the prestige of the legal profession have increased enormously. The rapid growth of economic contracts has prompted growth in civil law, an area that had been neglected. Major campaigns for public legal education have been launched. But law has never been a very vital or autonomous force in China, and social habits change slowly. In any case, the goal of the legal system is not to be like that of the West, but to handle the conflicts occurring in a socialist party-state in a regular, fair, and efficient manner.

PUBLIC POLICY: PERFORMANCE AND EVALUATION

In this concluding section we concentrate on the general policy strategies that China has pursued and the effects they have had on political and economic development. As we have seen, the Chinese themselves consider the course of public policy to have been a zigzag path, with the major phases being the Soviet-style policies of the 1950s, the leftist policies initiated in 1957 by Mao Zedong, and finally the modernization policies of the post-Mao era. We will examine how each of these phases affected the power and performance of the state, and we will end with a brief look at foreign policy.

Performance Capabilities

As indicated in Chapter 8, the capabilities of a political system can be described in terms of its capacity to extract resources, distribute goods and services, regulate behavior, and symbolize goals. In general,
the PRC has performed strongly in all categories, but not in all categories at once. A closer look at its policy history reveals that extraction and regulation dominated the 1950s, distributional and symbolic concerns dominated the leftist period, and the enhancement of the resource base of the state has preoccupied the post-Mao leadership. The shifts of policy focus have been due in part to perceptions of earlier mistakes and failings, but also in part to changes of policy context brought on by the success of earlier policies.

The PRC began with the historic distributional policies of land reform and the promotion of mass interests in the urban economy, but the major task of the 1950s was to establish political and economic control in order to build a modern state structure on the Soviet model. In the urban sector, the state established control of the marketing system and increasingly pressured remaining capitalists to become part of the state-controlled system. As a result, there was a rapid increase in state income led by a great increase in the profits of state-owned enterprises. Meanwhile, the rural economy, somewhat dispersed by land reform, was consolidated through cooperatsation and the establishment of compulsory grain quotas in 1953. Agricultural taxes were reduced (they provided 29.3 percent of revenue in 1950 and only 9.6 percent by 1957), but resources were extracted from agriculture through low prices and compulsory deliveries.

Politically, the CCP’s consolidation of power was much milder than that of the Bolsheviks, probably because of its tradition of United Front policies and its confidence in broad popular support. However, in line with Marxism-Leninism, the CCP felt no need to allow a pluralistic political system or seriously to guarantee political rights to the masses. Although there were many campaigns against bureaucratism and corruption among cadres, it was assumed that party leadership was correct. The criticism of the party voiced in the Hundred Flowers Campaign of 1957 was a shock to the leadership, and the critics were quickly condemned as rightists and treated as outcasts.

By 1957 the accomplishments of the PRC were the source of both pride and concern. China had completed the transition to a socialist political economy more rapidly and with better results than had its mentor, the Soviet Union. But the urban and central orientation of the Soviet model had produced imbalances. Educational and health resources were now developed in the cities but still primitive in the countryside. Agricultural production had improved, but it had trouble keeping ahead of population growth. Some sort of breakthrough was necessary, but agricultural mechanization, the solution suggested by the Soviet model, was too costly. In politics and ideology the PRC had moved beyond the need for a united front, and its erstwhile allies among the former bourgeoisie and intellectuals now appeared to be insidious class enemies of socialism. In the terms introduced earlier, extractive and behavioral capabilities were no longer the major focus, and attention shifted to distributional and symbolic development.

Both the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, as well as the general trend of the leftist period, concentrated on ideological motivation and distributional policies. Despite such spectacular failures, distributive policies had positive effects on national health care and education. As a result of leftist policies, basic health care and education reached almost every rural area. Urban incomes and rural incomes within villages became very equal, but there was an increase in the differences among villages and between rural and urban areas.

The extractive and regulatory capabilities of the earlier period were not abandoned by Mao. State revenue increased its dependence on enterprise profits, and expenditures included record levels of capital investment. Quotas and sanctions against sideline enterprises were applied in order to force rural areas to concentrate on raising grain. As Figure 14.5 makes clear, inflation was held to nearly zero, but at the cost of extensive rationing and a bleak consumer lifestyle. In the leftist period the party-state had become too strong for its own good and had held the reins of society too tightly.

When Mao Zedong died in 1976, the PRC was burdened with extractive policies and obsessed with behavioral conformity, and it had grown cynical toward symbols. Central control of investment, which had been effective during the construction of an industrial base, became more wasteful as the economy became more sophisticated. Leftist egalitarianism had distributed primary and secondary education and basic health care more widely, but the disdain