

**THE LEGITIMATING LOGIC OF STABILITY:
ANALYSING THE CCP'S STABILITY DISCOURSE**

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Abstract

This thesis addresses the question of why the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has remained in power since the Tiananmen Incident in 1989 by deploying the concept of political legitimacy. In this, the focus is not on whether the CCP is legitimate *per se* but rather on how the Party has legitimated its authority in this period. To that end, the Weberian conceptualisation of legitimation is situated within the Strategic-Relational Approach and, in so doing, allows, through the concept of “discursive selectivity”, for legitimation to be reconceptualised as a dialectical relationship consisting of both material and ideational factors. The effect of this move is to provide a suitable framework in which to consider additional legitimating strategies that are employed by the CCP. Consequently, this paper moves beyond the conventional explanation of “economic performance + nationalism” to argue that the CCP’s use of the stability discourse in the post-Tiananmen period has contributed to the regime’s legitimation. In order to understand how this discourse has been used, a critical discourse analysis is performed on selected articles from the *People’s Daily* published during the Beijing Spring, the “anti-Falun Gong” campaign and the “anti-Japan” demonstrations on the basis that these exceptional instances inform its usage in conventionalised slogans. This analysis found that the term “stability” took the form of an “empty signifier”, making most use of positive argument schemes to project a negative Chinese future without CCP authority. Finally, this thesis concludes that, in terms of legitimation, the events in 1989 constituted a *strategic* moment in the formation of the stability discourse, in that the Party’s hegemonic interpretation of these events allowed for this discourse to “resonate” with people in the period that has followed.

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Note on Transliteration

This thesis generally uses the *pinyin* system of transliteration for all names, including those that are commonly known in their *Wade-Giles* (or other) transliteration in English. For example, Beijing is used instead of Peking. The sole exception to this is the use of “Chiang Kai-shek” instead of “Jiang Jieshi”. In addition, when quoting an author or citing book and article titles, the author's original transliteration is used. An example of this is the reference on p. 244 to the Nationalist Party using the name “Kuomintang” instead of “Guomindang”, which is used throughout the rest of the thesis.

Abbreviations

CA	Content Analysis
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CCPPD	Central Propaganda Department of the Chinese Communist Party
CCTV	Central China Television
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CL	Critical Linguistics
CPR	Central People's Radio
CQSRS	China <i>Qigong</i> Scientific Research Society
DA	Discourse Analysis
GMD	Guomindang (Nationalist Party)
JSHTR	Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PAP	People's Armed Police
PMUNSC	Permanent Membership of the United Nations Security Council
PRC	People's Republic of China
PSB	Public Security Bureau
SDF	Self-Defence Forces
SOE	State-Owned Enterprise
UN	United Nations

Introduction

“With regard to the political disturbances of 1989, had the Chinese government not taken the resolute measures then, we could not have enjoyed the stability that we are enjoying today.”¹

Research Question

Reports in recent years in the Western media have highlighted the increasing prevalence of protests taking place across China. This has been evidenced not only in the attention paid to specific outbreaks of unrest, such as those that have taken place in Youyang county in the Chongqing municipality, Zhushan town in Hunan province and Dongzhou village in Guangdong province, but also in the conclusions that have been drawn from the recent publication of figures detailing protest activities in China. The first set of figures was published by Chinese government officials in the summer of 2005 and stated that number of “mass incidents” (*quntixing shijian*) increased from 8,700 in 1993 up to 74,000 in 2004, with the number of incidents increasing every single year by a minimum of 9%. A further set of figures was published by the Ministry of Public Security in January 2006 which showed that the number of “public order disturbances” (*raoluan gonggong zhixu fanzui*) in 2005 had increased by 6.6% from 2004 to 87,000.² Commenting on these statistics, Sisci notes, “one might be tempted to think that Chinese society is falling apart, and indeed, various books and

¹ Jiang Zemin, as quoted in a live televised debate with the-then US President, Bill Clinton, in the Great Hall of the People on 27 June, 1998. See “Clinton, Jiang debate human rights on TV” (27 June 1998).

² These two terms are not directly comparable as they purport to measure different variables, albeit what it is that these variables measure is not clear. It seems that “mass incidents” refers only to demonstrations involving a large number of people (being more than 100 people is the commonly cited definition) but is not concerned with the cause of such demonstrations. Furthermore, this category appears to constitute a subset of the broader category of “public order disturbances”, which refers to the disturbing of “public order” i.e. violations of the law, and, as such, is not directly concerned with the number of people involved. However, most media and, indeed, academic reports on these figures have merged these two data sets under the generic term “protest/demonstration” (which appears to carry the implication that their purpose is to oppose government authority) and, in so doing, claim that they rose from 74,000 in 2004 to 87,000 in 2005. This is not to say that the number of demonstrations has not increased markedly throughout China over the past fifteen years or so but rather that it may not be as dramatic as has been widely reported. For a more detailed explanation, see “Statistics of Mass Incidents” (15 November 2006).

articles have appeared suggesting exactly that.”³ Indeed, Wasserstrom contends that the effect of such reports has been to “portray the P.R.C as a country in danger of coming apart at the seams, ruled by a leadership group whose members are growing increasingly anxious about both the extent of unrest and the domestic media’s coverage of acts of contention.”⁴ Typifying such commentary is that offered by He Qinglian who, in comparing the outbreaks of demonstrations to those of forest fires, suggests that, “the fire hazards are not simply random areas covered by dry wood...[but] underground fires, smoldering dangerously just below the surface, that could erupt and rage out of control in any place and at any time.”⁵ Indeed, He predicts that, “[t]he day will come when the CCP will not be able to tamp down these fires.”⁶

Although He’s view is somewhat apocalyptic in its prediction concerning the future of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP),⁷ it is part of a more widely held view that the end of CCP rule is simply inevitable.⁸ This view first gained widespread consensus following the nationwide demonstrations against CCP rule that took place in 1989.

³ Sisci (20 October 2005).

⁴ Wasserstrom (December 2004).

⁵ He (2003: 71).

⁶ Ibid., p.72.

⁷ In light of the fact that the People’s Republic of China is a one party-state in which the government is under the rule of the Chinese Communist Party, a number of terms referring to this power arrangement including “the CCP”, the Party”, “the top leadership of the CCP”, “the regime” and “the Chinese government” will all be used interchangeably, unless otherwise specified.

⁸ Within this view, the main difference of opinion centres on how long the CCP will remain in power. Some have made specific predictions about when “regime change” will take place while others insist only that such change will eventually happen. Examples of the former include Goldstone, who, in 1995, predicted “a terminal crisis [for the CCP] within the next 10 to 15 years.” Chang made a similar prediction in 2001 when declaring that CCP rule will end by 2010 while Gilley has also stated that China will become a democracy by, at the latest, 2020. More recently, Rowen has predicted that, though the rule of the CCP might not necessarily end in the near future, the Chinese people will be “free” (defined by the Freedom of House Index) by 2025. As for those who believe that “regime change” is inevitable but do not specify when this might take place, Pei contends that China’s “illiberal adaptation” means that “[t]he Party is over”. For Gallagher, it is only the sequencing of China’s economic reforms, specifically the influx of foreign direct investment before privatisation and state-owned enterprise reform, that has “delayed democracy”. For others, including Lam, Zhao, Zheng and Wang, the difficulties of a democratic transition are acknowledged but the long-term political survival of the regime is largely discounted. See Goldstone (1995), Chang (2001) & (2006), Gilley (2004), Rowen (2007), Pei (2006) & (2002), Gallagher (2002), Lam (2006), Zhao (2000b), Zheng (2006), Wang (2007).

Prior to these demonstrations, China was largely thought to be stable, despite the disagreements amongst the Party's top leadership concerning the direction of the "reform and opening up" programme.⁹ However, the demonstrations in 1989, not only the size and scale of popular support involving different groups from society but also the division and indecision that they produced amongst the top leaders of the CCP, convinced many that the grievances of the protestors would lead to fundamental change. Indeed, Wasserstrom remembers that "[e]ighteen years ago, with protestors marching through scores of Chinese cities and giant crowds gathering in Beijing's Tiananmen Square, many outside observers, myself included, assumed that the era of Communist Party rule in China was nearing its end."¹⁰ Moreover, though the leadership's use of military force to suppress the demonstrations indicated the Party was not prepared to easily give up its power, this simply strengthened such views on the grounds that the CCP had effectively lost any possibility of recovering its legitimacy. Summarising this change, Goldstein stated back in 1994 that, "[a]lthough scholars continue to disagree about the probable life-span of the current regime, now is usually about when, not whether, fundamental political change will occur and what it will look like."¹¹ Moreover, though the CCP has remained in power since 1989, this view is still dominant in debates concerning the Party's future. Indeed, commenting on this recently, Schubert claims that "[i]t seems to be the established wisdom in the Western *academe* that Communist one-party rule in present-day China is historically anachronistic and...[r]egime change will therefore happen...and is only a matter of time."¹²

⁹ Teiwes makes the point that China was much less open to outsiders during this period and, as a result, it was more difficult for scholars to gain accurate information. Moreover, the view of China's apparent stability was part of the broader consensus on communist regimes. See Teiwes (2000: 71–72).

¹⁰ Wasserstrom (4 June 2007).

¹¹ Goldstein (1994: 727)

¹² Schubert (2008: 191–192).

This established wisdom concerning the end of the CCP's rule points to a number of problems that exist both within and without the Party. In the case of the Party, it is claimed that the communist ideology has been undermined by the market-oriented reforms put in place since 1978 which, despite recent ideological innovations, such as the "Three Represents" (*san ge daibiao*), no longer has any legitimating effect with its own cadres or, indeed, the public. In addition, the organisational strength of the Party is said to have declined in the period of "reform and opening up" (*gaige kaifang*), in large part due to the decentralising effect of the economic reforms, with the result that the central level of government now exercises less control over the lower levels. As a consequence of this, cadres at the lower levels have been engaged in rent-seeking behaviour, such as land requisition and the levying of supplementary fees and taxes that has both alienated the population while frustrating the leadership of the Party. That said, the steep rise in corruption that has occurred at all levels of government in the reform period is also said to have severely damaged the moral authority of the CCP regime.

However, even on the economic front and in spite of the consistently high growth rates, analysts who foresee the end of the regime point to the numerous structural problems that must be addressed by the CCP while noting the lack of political will that has been demonstrated, thus far, in dealing with them. These problems include the weakened state of the banking system, with its high ratio of non-performing loans, the continued propping up of unsuccessful State-Owned Enterprises (SOE), despite the reform of this sector at the end of the 1990s, the predatory role that the government continues to play in the economy as well as the inefficient use of

resources and energy shortages. Moreover, the reform programme is said to have produced a number of social problems that have not been adequately addressed by the government, including the widening levels of economic inequality between the rich and the poor as well as the wealthy regions on the eastern seaboard and the poorer regions in the hinterland, the increased levels of social dislocation, in large part due to rural-urban migration, the lack of funding for public goods, such as health care and education, as well as increasingly serious environmental concerns. Consequently, for analysts who see “regime change” as a matter of time, the increasing numbers of protests that have taken place in the post-Tiananmen period are a reflection of these problems and demonstrate the CCP’s failure to properly address them.¹³

However, though the number, as well as the scale, of the problems confronting the Chinese government is not disputed, the interpretation of China as a country rife with instability can be challenged. As Zheng points out, “[l]aundry-listing many dangers that the Chinese regime is facing without spelling out how these dangers might be turned into opportunities gives the mistaken impression that the current regime in China is nearing collapse. Given so many serious crises, however, one needs to wonder why it hasn’t collapsed already.”¹⁴ Indeed, a recently published study on governance by the World Bank for the period from 1996 to 2006 ranks China seventh out of the world’s twenty most-populous countries in terms of political stability and ahead of democratic countries such as Turkey (ninth) and India (eleventh).¹⁵

Furthermore, research carried out on the nature of the recent protests indicates that,

¹³ For more on the problems of the CCP’s governance capabilities, see Chung, Lai and Xia (2006).

¹⁴ Zheng (2003: 51). For other recent accounts that put forward a similar view, see Wang (2006), Perry (2007) and Schubert (2008).

¹⁵ This survey was compiled using subjective perception-based data. Moreover, though China dropped one place in the rankings since 2004, over the course of the survey from 1996 to 2006, its measure of political stability declined less than 2 percentage points (from 34.6% to 33.2%) despite the increase in the frequency of protests during this time. See Kaufmann, Kraay and Mastruzzi (2007).

though the grievances are real and serious, they do not yet pose a fundamental challenge to the rule of the CCP, unlike those that took place in 1980s and which culminated in the Beijing Spring of 1989. Whereas those demonstrations were nationally focused and took issue with the central government, those that have occurred more recently seem to be the result of more localised and specific concerns.¹⁶ According to Solinger, these concerns relate to “unpaid wages and pensions; sudden and massive job terminations; and management corruption held responsible for the bankruptcy of industrial enterprises – where discharged workers were secure enjoying privileges and benefits since the 1950s.”¹⁷ Concurring with this depiction, Shue notes that the protestors are typically “[s]uffering state-sector workers and peasants [who] have been prone to frame their protests in localized and limited ways, taking as their protest targets not the architects of central reform policy but local “bad” officials, “incompetent” firm managers, and “heartless” employers.”¹⁸

The significance of the localised nature of the protests in suggesting that the increase in the number of protests does not yet threaten the survival of the Party comes from the distinction that Chinese citizens appear to make between local and central government.¹⁹ In his research on political trust in China, Wang found that, “Chinese citizens hold high trust in the abstract government, but are much less satisfied with the

¹⁶ Wasserstrom (December 2004).

¹⁷ Solinger (February 2005).

¹⁸ Shue (2004: 29). Of course, framing grievances in this way does not preclude the possibility that protestors do so only because they are permitted by the state while grievances directed against higher levels of authority are not. Indeed, Oi contends that the state’s handling of local protests has resulted in them becoming “an accepted part of local politics”, such that “workers and peasants now take to the streets feeling that it is now within bounds.” See Oi (2003: 453).

¹⁹ Moreover, this distinction has been actively promoted by the Party through different media channels, with the central level being portrayed as responsible for the drafting of policies and the lower levels as responsible for the implementation of these policies. In Chan’s research on the content of *Jiaodian Fangtan*, a CCTV investigative news programme, he found that, “[c]riticism was limited to policy implementation by local cadres, not policy formulation by central government, or problems with existing institutions.” See Chan (2002: 44).

agencies that carry out the real functions of the state.”²⁰ For Wang, this distinction can be explained in terms of national leaders constituting an “imagined state”, in that citizens’ perceptions are, in the absence of direct interaction, formed through education and the media discourse, whereas the local government agencies represent the “real state”, with citizens’ perceptions being based on actual experience.²¹ Moreover, following his surveys on popular support in China, Chen similarly concluded that “people in China seem to separate more or less their interest and assessment of local affairs from their diffuse feelings about the political system as a whole.”²² In addition to these two studies, Nathan notes that, “[t]here is much other evidence from both quantitative and qualitative studies to suggest that expressions, including widely reported worker and peasant demonstrations are usually directed at lower-level authorities, while the regime as a whole continues to enjoy high levels of acceptance.”²³

The high levels of acceptance that Nathan refers to are those that have been repeatedly recorded in surveys of political support going back to 1990. Indeed, a nationwide opinion survey conducted by Nathan and Tianjian Shi in co-operation with the Social Survey Research Centre of the People’s University of China back in 1990 suggested that the government enjoyed a level of support which indicated that its authority was

²⁰ Wang (2005: 122).

²¹ Wang (2005: 121-123).

²² Chen (2004: 113). This finding was also reached by Li in his research into political trust in rural China. In this, Li found that “Chinese villagers tend to ‘bifurcate’ the state: one part is the more trustworthy higher levels; the other, the less trustworthy lower levels.” Moreover, a recent survey from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences’ “Blue Book” on Chinese society reached a similar conclusion. In its findings, the Blue Book found that, overall, people had a high level of trust in the central government (on a scale of 1 to 5, this was measured as 3.56) but a low level of trust in local government (2.88). That said, Fewsmith points out that, although the composite figure was high for central government, on particular issues, such as improving social affairs and cadre honesty, it received a lower score. See Li (2004: 233), Fewsmith (2007: 12–13).

²³ Nathan (2003: 13).

secure, in the short term at least.²⁴ This finding was supported by a further nationwide survey conducted by Tianjian Shi in 1993, in which 94.1 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that “we should trust and obey the government, for in the last analysis, it serves our interests.”²⁵ A longitudinal survey across the period from 1995 to 1999 also produced similar findings and left Chen to conclude that “the respondents in these three samples offered strong support for the political regime as a whole or considered the current regime legitimate.”²⁶ A similar conclusion was reached by Tang following his survey of six Chinese cities in 1999. For Tang, the results indicated that “Chinese urban residents showed not only relatively strong support for the current political system and a rising sense of nationalism, but also an unwillingness to challenge the authorities, at least not through institutional channels such as the workplace.”²⁷ More recently, responses given to the World Values Survey indicate that the central government still continues to enjoy widespread support.²⁸ In response to the question, “How much confidence do you have in the national government?” 95.2 percent of respondents claimed that they had either “quite a lot of confidence” or “a great deal of confidence”. Indeed, of the eighty countries surveyed, such levels of support for the national government were only higher in Vietnam (1) and Hungary (2).

²⁴ Cited in Nathan (2003: 13).

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.13.

²⁶ Chen (2004: 29).

²⁷ Tang (2001: 907).

²⁸ Wang, commenting on whether the responses of the Chinese population could have been the result of political fear or intimidation, cites the finding in Shi’s 1993 survey that there was little correlation between political fear and the level of expressed trust in the government (Wang’s calculates that between 4% and 14% of the support for the government could be derived from fear). That said, Schubert acknowledges that there remains “the suspicion that in an authoritarian environment, people do not say what they think, even if this danger has diminished considerably in the course of China’s reform process, given the degree of social pluralisation that it has produced.” See Wang (2005: 123), Schubert (2008: 200).

As a consequence, this thesis holds that the increasing frequency of protests taking place in China do not yet pose a challenge to the authority of the CCP, as was the case in 1989. This is both because of the localised and disconnected nature of the protests, the distinction that many people make between the local and central levels of government and also because the available empirical data indicates that people's support for the central government remains high.²⁹ As such, this thesis agrees with Shambaugh's assessment that China is in a period of "stable unrest" that may continue for some time."³⁰

However, accepting this view leaves unexplained why it is that China "enjoys" relative stability under the one-party rule of the CCP. After all, not only has the Party seemingly recovered from the dissatisfaction expressed by segments of the population in the 1989 demonstrations but it has undertaken a series of reforms that appear to be inimical to Communism while managing to avoid the "third wave" of democratisation that collapsed many of remaining communist regimes in the world.³¹ As Nathan points out, "[u]nder conditions that elsewhere have led to democratic transition, China has made a transition instead from totalitarianism to a classic authoritarian regime, and one that appears increasingly stable."³² Although the CCP's use of force in

²⁹ In addition, a new set of figures measuring "mass incidents" was released by the Ministry of Public Security for the period from January 2006 to September 2006, which claimed that there had been 17,900 "mass incidents" during this period. Moreover, this was said to constitute a drop of 22.1% on the same period from the previous year. However, the definition for "mass incidents" appeared to refer only to riots, protests, large petitions and so was different from that used in the earlier figures published in the summer of 2005. See "Statistics of Mass Incidents" (15 November 2006).

³⁰ Shambaugh (2000: x). This assessment of stability is political, in that it does not deny that China is changing but holds that these changes do not necessarily threaten the CCP's hold on power.

³¹ In this context, communism is primarily understood as an economic system and is contrasted with that of capitalism. However, the emphasis in this question is on the widespread *perception* that the economic reforms are capitalist, or rather non-communist, in nature rather than trying to demonstrate this from a strictly theoretical perspective.

³² Nathan (2003: 16). However, Perry disputes the notion that the CCP now fits the description of a classic authoritarian regime on the grounds that, rather than suppressing collective action, the Party has actively encouraged citizens to participate in mass mobilisations at specific times so as to carry out a

stopping popular demonstrations expressing discontent at its practices and suppressing political organisations threatening its authority has contributed to this transition,³³ this thesis follows Wasserstrom in asserting that “force alone cannot explain the party's hold on power”.³⁴ Consequently, this thesis begins by posing the question of how has the CCP remained in power throughout the post-Tiananmen period?

Of the many possible ways to answer this question, this thesis will deploy the concept of political legitimacy in an analysis of state-society relations.³⁵ However, the focus of this thesis will not be on whether the CCP is legitimate *per se* but rather on how the Party has attempted to legitimate its rule in the post-Tiananmen period. More

form of confrontational politics. Indeed, for Perry, the CCP can be better understood as “revolutionary authoritarian” regime. See Perry (2007: 9–10).

³³ For more on the CCP's suppression of political opposition, particularly the example of the China Democratic Party in 1998, see Wright (2004).

³⁴ Wasserstrom (31 August 2006).

³⁵ There are many other explanations within the academic literature that seek to explain the CCP's “hold on power”. For example, both Dickson and Tsai highlight the cooptation of the new entrepreneur class (seen as strategic in terms of bourgeois-led political transformations in other states) into the CCP ranks. Others, such as Unger, Li and Wang, point to the lack of political activism amongst the formative middle-classes, who are viewed as important in terms of the link between rising per capita income and democratic change. Even for workers from sectors that have “lost out” in the economic reforms, such as laid-off state-owned enterprise workers, Wright contends that the CCP's combination of state-led development and socialist ideals means that these workers still support the rule of the CCP in the hope that new economic policies will be of benefit. The increased access to resources and higher financial rewards in exchange for political acquiescence amongst the intellectual stratum in the post-Tiananmen period has, it is claimed, deprived possible opposition movements of the ideas needed to challenge the Party's authority. However, Perry suggests that it is the Party's continued use of “controlled polarisation” that has maintained a fragmented Chinese society and, in so doing, ensured that the CCP retains its primary role in leading society. Meanwhile, for Brady, it is the Party's use of the propaganda system that has worked to persuade members of Chinese society to support its leadership. In contrast, Nathan points to the increased role of “input institutions”, such as local elections, the *xinfang* system, the supervision role of the media, increased number of lawsuits, that have provided a number of channels for citizens to express grievances without directly challenging the state. Finally, for Naughton and Yang, the continued primacy of the CCP can be explained through the Party's retention of the *nomenklatura* system, which has allowed it to use political patronage to ensure cadre loyalty. Indeed, for Walder, the regime can withstand any external challenges from society as long as the Party cadres remain united. In drawing attention to all these different explanations (as well as acknowledging that there are many other credible explanations for which there was insufficient space to include), my focus on the legitimating effect of the stability discourse is intended to supplement rather than replace these explanations. Indeed, accepting the notion that no single explanation is complete, all these explanations, including that presented in this thesis, work to deepen the understanding of the CCP's “hold on power” in contemporary China. See Dickson (2007), Tsai (2005), Unger (2006), Li (2003), Wang (2008), Lipset (1981), Wright (2007), Perry (2007), Brady (2002), Nathan (2003), Naughton and Yang (2004), Walder (2006).

specifically, this thesis will seek to understand how the discourse of stability (*wending*) has been employed as a legitimisation strategy by the CCP. In this, the analysis will focus on the production of this discourse at the “elite” level rather than on its reception at the lower levels of society.

In light of this aim, the next section of this chapter will present a brief survey of the contemporary literature on the legitimisation of the CCP and, in so doing, demonstrate that the analysis of the Party’s stability discourse constitutes a legitimate area of enquiry. The chapter will then detail the approach that will be used to conduct this analysis before stating its contributions to scientific knowledge. Finally, the chapter will conclude by providing an overview of the remaining chapters in the thesis.

The Legitimation of the CCP

The dominant view in the academic literature on the legitimation of the CCP throughout the post-Tiananmen period is neatly expressed by Lee, who states that “[e]conomic growth and nationalism have come to form the *raison d’être* of the regime’s legitimation, replacing the bankrupt communist ideology that finds very few true believers in China today.”³⁶ With regard to communist ideology, there is widespread consensus amongst analysts that the legitimating effect of the Party’s communist ideology has declined. As Zhao makes clear, “[t]ill now, the state has been dominated by a Party that clutches onto a communist ideology that fewer and fewer Chinese take seriously.”³⁷ Agreeing with this assessment, Gries and Rosen state that, “traditional ideological appeals to implement Marxian-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought and build a socialist China find little resonance among the public.”³⁸ This lack of “resonance” with the Chinese public, or at least some of its members, is most commonly explained in terms of the Party’s economic reform programme, in that the implementation of a series of market-oriented economic policies worked to undermine the communist ideological formulations intended to justify them.

The period in which the economic reform programme began can be linked to Deng Xiaoping’s emergence as the “paramount leader” in 1978. Moreover, these economic reforms were enacted in response to the preceding failures of the Cultural Revolution. These failures occurred both in the political sphere, where disputes between factions within the Party and movements among the people caused political and social dislocation, and the economic sphere, where the putative aim to alter the economic

³⁶ Lee (2003: 1).

³⁷ Zhao (2001: 440).

³⁸ Gries and Rosen (2004: 16).

base through a transformation of the superstructure produced minimal economic growth.³⁹ As a result, the “ten years of chaos” served to damage the leading role of the Party and so, negatively impacted upon its legitimacy. In order to strengthen the Party’s legitimacy, the reformist leadership under Deng decided that economic growth would be the most effective strategy but, in so doing, implemented a series of economic policies more associated with capitalism than communism. Consequently, the CCP leadership was put in a position of needing to justify its role in carrying out reforms that appeared to be at odds with its previous interpretations of communism while, at the same time, maintaining its appeal with those who still believed in communism, both inside and outside the Party. The result was that the leadership began to adapt the communist ideology in an attempt to legitimate both the reforms and the Party. However, in order to do so, it was necessary for aspects of the communist doctrine as well as parts of the Party’s history to be subjected to criticism. Where previously there had been “politics in command”, in the “reform and opening up” period, people were encouraged to “seek truth from facts” on account of “practice being sole criterion of truth.”

However, though the CCP insisted on pursuing “socialism with Chinese characteristics”, problems arising from the economic reforms resulted in a tension between their material effects and the ideological claims put forward by the CCP. As Kluver points out, “[e]ither the Party was legitimate or the reforms were legitimate, but it seemed inconsistent to argue that both could be so.”⁴⁰ Indeed, this tension became evident with the pan-class nationwide demonstrations that took place in 1989.

³⁹ Even in 1976, the rate of production grew at just 1.7%, which was less than the rate of population growth for that year. However, more recently, Weatherley contends that the economic growth rate during the ten-year period was not so low and, indeed, averaged around 4%. See Saich (2004: 56), Weatherley (2006: 12).

⁴⁰ Kluver (1996: 94).

For Zhao, these protests “showed the fatal consequence of loosening “spiritual pillars (*jingshen zhizhu*) which had been incarnated as Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought and guided the Chinese people to support and even sacrifice for the regime under Mao.”⁴¹ Despite this, however, the Party continues to justify its policies through communist ideological formulations in the post-Tiananmen period; yet, there is little evidence that they have any real legitimating effect. The most recent addition to the CCP’s development of Marxism-Leninism has been Jiang Zemin’s “Important Thought of the Three Represents”, which was officially included at the 16th Party Congress in 2002. However, for Misra, “[t]he real importance of this formulation lies...in...bring[ing] its stated ideological goals closer to the practical policies that the leadership has been implementing.”⁴² Indeed, Zheng and Lye summarise this transformation in the reform and opening up period by noting that “[w]here before ideology dictated how things ought to be, now circumstances dictate what ideology should be.”⁴³

For many analysts, this decline in the legitimating force of the communist ideology has left the Party solely reliant on the material performance of the economy to legitimate its authority. Indeed, Zheng and Lye again point out that, “[i]t is not far-fetched to argue that the CCP has so far been able to remain at the helm of power due to its success in delivering economic goods, i.e. provide employment and material benefits, to the people.”⁴⁴ With the exception of the immediate post-Tiananmen retraction, the Chinese economy has continued to grow at a high rate, with GDP averaging 10% over the period from 1990 to 2004 while never falling below 7% in

⁴¹ Zhao (1998: 289).

⁴² Misra (2003: 740).

⁴³ Zheng and Lye (2005: 187).

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 193.

any one year.⁴⁵ Moreover, when viewed from a comparative perspective, China's economic growth has been the highest of any country in the world over this period.⁴⁶ Indeed, the effect of such sustained growth has been to bring about one of the fastest and largest reductions in the number of people living in absolute poverty in history, from 250 million in 1979 to 29 million in 2003.⁴⁷ In addition, Sisci notes that the benefits of such a reduction can be seen in the "highly visible improvements in daily life" which extend from a higher standard of living to the greater availability of social opportunities, such as attending university or starting up a business.⁴⁸

Nevertheless, despite the continued success of the Chinese economy, Zhao points out that, "[a] regime that bases its legitimacy on performance...is intrinsically unstable."⁴⁹ Indeed, Hong and Sun contend that, "due to the inevitable fluctuations of the market economy, this legitimacy is tenuous."⁵⁰ That said, in paying attention to the overall performance of the Chinese economy in the "reform and opening up" period, both perspectives presuppose that economic growth enhances the legitimacy of an incumbent regime. Yet, as Zhong notes, "economic growth in and by itself does not directly contribute to political stability...[i]n fact, it has been argued that economic development and modernization lead to political instability."⁵¹ Indeed, such instability can occur when economic growth is not evenly spread, either geographically or

⁴⁵ This figure is based on "world development indicators" published by the World Bank for the periods from 1990–2000 (10.6%) and 2000–2004 (9.4%). See World Bank (2006).

⁴⁶ From the period from 1990–2000, China is ranked first in terms of average GDP growth; in the period from 2000–2004, China is ranked sixth. However, given that only one of the five more highly ranked countries in this latter period experienced positive growth in the 1990–2000 period (Chad, with 1.9% GDP growth), China clearly has the highest economic growth when both periods are taken into account. See World Bank (2006).

⁴⁷ Zheng and Lye (2005: 193).

⁴⁸ Sisci (21 October 2005). Comparing the development of India and China since the 1980s, Perry concludes that, in addition to higher economic growth, "in terms of quality-of-life measures such as literacy and life expectancy, China also notably outperforms India." See Perry (2007: 3).

⁴⁹ Zhao (2001: 440–441).

⁵⁰ Hong and Sun (1999: 33). Indeed, Saich points to the collapse of the Suharto regime in 1998, following the Asian Financial crisis, as evidence of this point. Saich (2004: 84).

⁵¹ Zhong (1996: 202).

amongst different groups in society, as it will produce differences in the levels of wealth between members of society. In the case of China, Saich notes that, “[m]uch of the initial success and popular support [for the CCP] stemmed from the fact that there were relatively few losers and those who did lose out were politically marginalized.”⁵² That said, Saich warns that, “[i]t is now apparent that as reform moves to the next stage and China integrates further into the world economy, there will be significant losers, including those workers and institutions that have formed the core of the CCP socialist system.”⁵³ Yet, Wang estimates that this scenario had already taken hold by 1994, with the government’s economic reforms becoming a “zero-sum game.”⁵⁴ According to Wang, this represented the first time in the reform process that “some segments of society became real losers, losers not only in a relative sense, but also in an absolute sense.”⁵⁵ Indeed, Wang’s claims are evidenced by, amongst other things, the negative change in the Gini coefficient over this period.⁵⁶ Designed to measure income inequality, the Gini coefficient for the first year of the reforms in 1980 was calculated at 0.33. This marginally increased to 0.37 in 1992 before breaking through the “warning” level of 0.4 in the past decade and is now measured at 0.496.⁵⁷

⁵² Saich (2004: xvi).

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. xvi.

⁵⁴ Prior to this, from 1978 to 1993, Wang claims that the reforms constituted a “win-win” game on account of the fact that all social groups benefited, even if some groups benefited relatively more than others. See Wang (1999: 379-380)

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 380. An example of such reforms is the closure of “many non-performing” State-Owned Enterprises, which has contributed to an urban unemployment figure estimated to be in excess of 100 million. Moreover, such reforms have taken place during a period when the government has sought to end the “cradle-to-grave” benefits that linked the Party with the urban proletariat. Indeed, due to the effect of these reforms upon the urban working classes, Weatherley contends that “what was once the original constituency of the party now poses one of the biggest challenges to its very incumbency.” See Weatherley (2006: 146–149).

⁵⁶ The Gini coefficient ranges from between 0 and 1, with “0” representing a society where everyone has exactly the same income and “1” representing a society where one person has all the income and everyone else has none.

⁵⁷ An additional Gini co-efficient calculation by the Chinese People’s University estimates the figure to be 0.561, which, Fewsmith notes, puts China at “Brazilian levels of inequality”, with the top twenty percent of the Chinese population having 72.4 times the wealth of the bottom twenty percent. See Fewsmith (2007: 9).

Given the increasing economic problems upon certain sectors and regions in China during the post-Tiananmen period, many analysts suggest that the CCP has also drawn on nationalism as an ideological replacement for communism in order to augment its support amongst disaffected members of the population. Typifying this view is Zhao, who contends that “the rapid decay of Communist ideology has led the Chinese Communist Party to emphasize its role as the paramount patriotic force and the guardian of national pride in order to find a new basis of legitimacy to sustain its role.”⁵⁸ Moreover, for Saich, “since 1989, the CCP has been fairly successful in manipulating public opinion to instil nationalism as a legitimizing core value.”⁵⁹ Indeed, though nationalism has always been played a role in Party’s legitimization efforts, particularly at certain points during the People’s Republic of China, both the emphasis placed on nationalism as well as its content has changed following the events in 1989. In particular, Weatherley identifies an “anti-foreign” nationalism that emerged in response to the international community’s condemnations of the military suppression of the pro-democracy demonstrations.⁶⁰ These condemnations contributed to rise of “anti-China theories” that suggested that the international community, particularly the United States of America, was attempting to “contain” China in the same way that it did the Soviet Union during the cold war.⁶¹ Indeed, the “humiliations” that China suffered from “foreign imperialists” during the 19th and 20th centuries were used as examples to demonstrate the historical origins of their present-day intentions. Even calls for democratic change were held to be part of a

⁵⁸ Zhao (1997: 725).

⁵⁹ Saich (2004: 308).

⁶⁰ Weatherley (2006: 153–154).

⁶¹ Zheng (1999: 95).

strategy of “peaceful evolution” (*heping yanbian*) that was intended to “contain” China.⁶²

The propagation of anti-foreign nationalism opened up the space for the Party leadership to argue that patriotism constituted the only course for China in resisting the intentions of the “international bourgeois hostile forces”.⁶³ In order to persuade people of this argument, extensive “patriotic education” campaigns were promulgated across a range of channels including the media, leadership speeches and educational institutions. In this, the campaigns worked to promote political loyalty and obligation to the regime by linking the concept of the nation (*guo*) to that of the state (*zhengfu*) while, at same time, promoting the Party’s norms and values by emphasising the “Chinese characteristics” of the reform programme.⁶⁴ For Chen, these campaigns have been effective, in that the expression of strong nationalist support in response to survey questions could be attributed, in part, to “the government’s continuous promotion of it for the purpose of strengthening its legitimacy.”⁶⁵ That said, Chen also contends that the “public’s yearning for a strong national identity under a perceived foreign threat” is an additional factor explaining the high levels of nationalism in China.⁶⁶ Indeed, it is this aspect of Chinese nationalism which highlights the limits of legitimisation claims that rely on nationalism.

According to Seo, “successful nationalism redirects the target of political loyalty of the subjects from the political institutions or charismatic political leaders to a “nation...[so] political subjects with genuine loyalty perceive themselves as the

⁶² For more on the policy of “peaceful evolution”, see Ong (2007).

⁶³ Zheng (1999: 104–105).

⁶⁴ Zhao (1998: 288–290).

⁶⁵ Chen (2004: 107).

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p.107.

owners of the political community which the ruling regime tries to keep under control.”⁶⁷ In this, the promotion of nationalism not only promotes loyalty amongst the Chinese people towards the CCP but also obligates the CCP to “protect” the Chinese nation in the name of the people. As a consequence, nationalism can serve to both legitimate and, crucially, delegitimize the regime. This delegitimation can occur when people perceive that the actions of the government do not correspond with its ideational claims. Furthermore, by shifting the locus of allegiance from the Party to the nation, such instances can give rise to a *popular* nationalism that attempts to contest the government’s *official* nationalism.⁶⁸ Indeed, Gries explains that “[t]he 1990s witnessed the emergence of a genuinely popular nationalism in China that should not be conflated with state or official nationalism.”⁶⁹ The emergence of popular nationalism was signified with the publication of “China Can Say No” (“*Zhongguo keyi shuo bu*”) in 1996.⁷⁰ Although this book reproduced the “anti-China theories” line that the West, particularly the US, along with Japan and some “disgusting Chinese” (mostly referring to Taiwan), was plotting to “contain” a rising China, it deviated from the Party’s formulation of “patriotism” by declaring that China needed to formulate a counter-containment strategy in order to stand up and “say no” to the West. As Weatherley points out, while “not overtly critical of Chinese foreign policy, there was a clear implication...that the government was too soft in its dealings with the West.”⁷¹ Moreover, despite the government’s attempt to later ban

⁶⁷ Seo (2005: 143).

⁶⁸ In this thesis, such contestation will be considered only from the perspective of popular nationalism; however, it is important to note that nationalism can be further disaggregated to consider additional dimensions, such as ethnic nationalism and external nationalism. For more on this topic, see Zheng (1999).

⁶⁹ Gries (2004: 19). Xu dates the emergence of popular nationalism to 1996 and claims it was the “joint result of the evolving nationalist thinking of the early 1990s and the ongoing debates on modernity, postmodernism, postcolonialism, and their political implications”. See Xu (2001: 120).

⁷⁰ Qiang et al. (1996). According to Wang, this book became an “instant bestseller” after its first print and, by the autumn of 1996, had become a “small cultural phenomenon”. See Wang (1997: 161).

⁷¹ Weatherley (2006: 158).

this book, as well as the number of imitators that were quickly released, the publication of “China Can Say No” and its subsequent success indicated that nationalism could be used to challenge the authority of the CCP, particularly on issues of foreign policy.⁷²

This challenge was more explicitly demonstrated in the spontaneous anti-Japan protests that broke out following the seizure of the Fisherman Islands (Senkaku/Diaoyutai) by Japanese activists in 1996.⁷³ Although the government was able to quickly suppress the demonstrations, Weatherley notes that, “a number of internet sites and print publications subsequently appeared which expressed strong anti-Japanese sentiments and suggested that the CCP was too submissive on the Diaoyu/Senkaku issue.”⁷⁴ A further example was the demonstrations that took place in response to the bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade in 1999. The bombings, which had been carried out by the US, under the command of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), during the invasion of the Republic of Yugoslavia in 1999, killed three Chinese nationals and provoked spontaneous demonstrations in more than 100 Chinese cities involving people of all ages and from different social backgrounds. Although the protests were largely directed against the actions of NATO—the US and British embassies in Beijing were a particular focus for the protests—Gries notes that criticism was also directed at the Chinese

⁷² Other books in this genre included “*China Can Still Say No*”, “*Behind a Demonised China*”, “*The Third Eye*”, and “*Be Vigilant Against Japanese Militarism*”. As for the government’s banning of these books, this only came about after initial support for these books. Indeed, according to Wang, “CCP...organizations in Beijing reportedly bought a copy of the book for every party member.” See Wang (1997: 162).

⁷³ The Fisherman Islands refers to an uninhabited set of five islets and three rocks in the East China Sea that lie 125 miles off Taiwan and 185 miles off Okinawa. The sovereignty of these islands is disputed by China, Japan and Taiwan and has become more serious since geological surveys at the end of the 1960s estimated that a nearby continental shelf contained up to one hundred million barrels of oil. For more detail on this dispute, see Strecker Downs and Saunders (1998/99).

⁷⁴ Weatherley (2006: 157–158).

government's response of only lodging a "formal protest"⁷⁵ Indeed, despite a televised address by the then Vice-President, Hu Jintao warning against behaviour that damaged social stability while supporting the "patriotic" actions of the demonstrators, the government was not fully able to control the demonstrations but, instead, was forced to accommodate them.⁷⁶ This was most evident in the buses that were laid on for students to take them to the US and British embassies in Beijing, at which they threw various objects. As Fewsmith points out, "[i]t was certainly better, from the Party's point of view, to have such public anger directed at the United States than to have students throw stones at Zhongnanhai [the resident compound for Chinese leaders]".⁷⁷ More recently, the spectre of popular nationalism was again displayed with the "anti-Japan" demonstrations that took place across a number of Chinese cities in April 2005. Although ostensibly in reaction to the approval by the Japanese Ministry of Education of history textbooks that downplayed the actions of the Japanese military during its occupation of China, the demonstrations visibly highlighted how the government's use of "anti-foreign nationalism", in this case the atrocities of the Japanese, could be used by others to challenge its legitimacy. Indeed, for Gries and Rosen, these examples demonstrate that, "Party legitimacy now depends on meeting the expectations of nationalists."⁷⁸ While not fully accepting the overdeterminative nature of such a proposition, these examples of popular nationalism do indicate that government's use of nationalism can, on occasion, be the subject of resistance and, as such, is more limited in its legitimating force than commonly suggested.

⁷⁵ Gries (2004: 129–131).

⁷⁶ Zhao (2005–2006: 140).

⁷⁷ Fewsmith (2001: 213).

⁷⁸ Gries and Rosen (2005: 14).

In acknowledging this, the possibility is opened up to interrogate other sources of legitimization that have supplemented the Party's authority in the post-Tiananmen period. In this thesis, I will focus on only one of these additional sources: the CCP's ideational use of "stability" (*wending*). Indeed, stability has been identified by other analysts as a source of legitimacy. Shue appears to be the first analyst to specifically discuss stability in terms of legitimization.⁷⁹ For Shue, this is because the CCP, as a result of the economic reform programme, no longer derives its legitimacy from its "technical capacity" to deliver economic growth but from its "political capacity" to create a stable environment in which economic development can take place. In this, Shue asserts that the CCP's legitimacy now rests on the transcendental truths of Truth, Benevolence and Glory. While agreeing with Shue on the importance of stability, my research examines the content of the CCP's discourse of stability rather than focusing on its link to these truths. More recently, Weatherley, in his study of CCP legitimacy, also identifies stability as a source of legitimacy.⁸⁰ However, while providing interesting insights, his brief treatment of the concept opens up the space for my research to develop a fuller understanding of this source.

The importance of stability in the post-Tiananmen period has also been noted by other analysts. Indeed, Schoenhals comments that this term has been "the CCP catchword of the 1990s",⁸¹ while Wong points out that, in the post-Tiananmen period, "'Stability overrides everything' became the mantra of the state as it went about managing society."⁸² Shirk even claims that this mantra has been so important that the CCP now

⁷⁹ Shue (2004).

⁸⁰ Weatherly (2006: 149–151).

⁸¹ Schoenhals (1999: 597).

⁸² Wong (2004: 156).

determines its economic policies using an “algorithm” to ensure stability.⁸³ Moreover, in terms of legitimation, Chen contends that, “the Chinese regime has been able to bolster its legitimacy by controlling the media and using them to cultivate a general sense of progress while perpetuating official paradigms that emphasize stability and economic development over political change.”⁸⁴ However, while this has the case in the post-Tiananmen period, Zheng points out that the call for stability by Party leaders was not necessarily accepted in the 1980s.⁸⁵ Indeed, while CCP leaders highlighted the central role of stability in the economic development of other East Asian countries, those in favour of greater political reform viewed such explanations as excuses intended to prevent increased participation in the political process and so allow the CCP to maintain its monopoly on political rule. Ultimately, Zheng concludes that these groups pushing for political reform “gradually grew into something close to a social movement by the late 1980s, as shown in the 1989 pro-democracy movement.”⁸⁶ Moreover, in considering why the stability discourse has legitimated the authority of the CCP in the post-Tiananmen period but did not do so in the pre-Tiananmen period, this thesis contends that the events of 1989 constituted a *strategic* moment in the formation of the stability discourse, with the post-Tiananmen political context “favouring” this discourse.⁸⁷ Furthermore, the CCP’s hegemonic interpretation of these events, disseminated through various media channels, has

⁸³ According to Shirk, the government has calculated the economic growth rate needed to create a sufficient number of jobs to maintain the unemployment rate at a level that will prevent social discontent. See Shirk (2007: 55).

⁸⁴ Chen (2005: 4).

⁸⁵ Zheng (2003: 55).

⁸⁶ Ibid., p.55.

⁸⁷ This interpretation draws on the concept of discursive selectivity that will be discussed in greater detail in chapter one.

legitimated its authority by virtue of successfully “resonating” with the Chinese population.⁸⁸

The CCP’s emphasis on stability has also been reflected in surveys measuring the public’s attitudes. Data from the World Values Survey shows that Chinese people regard “stability” as being of the highest importance.⁸⁹ Moreover, Xie, Wang and Xu found in their surveys on risk perception that Chinese people were most concerned with risks that threatened national stability and economic development.⁹⁰ Tang’s six-city survey also found that a majority of respondents preferred maintaining political stability over democratisation, with 58% agreeing that political stability was more important than democratization while only 26 percent disagreed with such a notion.⁹¹ In addition, Chen’s longitudinal survey from 1995 to 1999 supported Tang’s findings, with over 80% of respondents preferring “a stable and orderly society to a freer society that could be prone to social disruption.”⁹² As a consequence, Chen concludes that the public’s preference for stability has been due to “the government’s relentless propaganda to portray the current political regime as the only guarantor for sociopolitical stability and defender of national interests.”⁹³ In light of this, the main aim of this thesis is to analyse the government’s propaganda in order to understand more fully how the discourse of stability has been used in the post-Tiananmen period

⁸⁸ This interpretation has been further strengthened by the government’s selective use of the subsequent collapses of the other authoritarian regimes, such as the former Yugoslavia and USSR as examples of instability that brought about economic chaos and national disintegration.

⁸⁹ The survey gave the respondents five options: “order in the nation”; “give people more money”; “fight rising prices”; “protect free speech”; and “don’t know”. In 1990, 66.2% chose “order in the nation” while, in 1995, the figure rose to 69.2%. Though the figure dropped in 2001 to 49.7%, it still received the highest number of responses, with the biggest increase in those who responded “don’t know”, which jumped from 2.9% in 1995 to 12.6%.

⁹⁰ Xie, Wang and Xu (2003).

⁹¹ Wang (2000: 899–900).

⁹² Chen (2002: 14).

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p.15.

to legitimate its authority. The approach that will be taken in this thesis will be briefly detailed in the next section.

Thesis Approach

This thesis addresses the question of how the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has remained in power since the events of 1989 by deploying the concept of political legitimacy. In this, the focus is not on whether the CCP is legitimate *per se* but rather on how the Party has legitimated its authority in this period. The conventional explanation relating to the legitimation of the CCP is that the declining legitimating power of the communist ideology has left it reliant on a combination of economic performance and nationalism. However, while agreeing with the important role that these two sources play in legitimating the CCP, this thesis argues that both sources have limitations and, as a result, it is possible to consider additional sources of legitimation during this period. In this thesis, the CCP's use of the stability discourse will be analysed in terms of legitimation.

However, the concept of legitimation is limited in its explanatory value, in that it presents the relationship between structure and agency in functionalist terms, with agents being conceptualised in terms of directly “reading off” the structural effects of rules and norms. In light of this, Weber's conceptualisation of legitimation will be situated in the strategic-relational approach, as developed by Jessop and Hay, in chapter one.⁹⁴ This conceptual move works to extend the understanding of legitimation beyond the identification of specific modes by interrogating the interaction of *strategic actors* and a *strategically selective context* from a spatio-temporal perspective. Moreover, within this framework, space is opened up in which to consider the role played by discourse, through the concept of “discursive selectivity”, in mediating between the structural effects of rules and norms and the

⁹⁴ This conceptual framework will be elaborated in the following chapter.

Lebenswelt notion of belief that informs action. As such, situating legitimization within the strategic-relational approach allows for a more dynamic understanding of this concept. In addition, the concept of discursive selectivity allows for the possibility of interrogating the “cognitive filters” that are used by powerful actors to influence the formation of strategies by other less powerful actors.⁹⁵ Of these, this thesis will focus on how the CCP has used the particular “cognitive filter” of the stability discourse to enhance its legitimization in the post-Tiananmen period.

The method by which this discourse will be analysed is the discourse-historical approach, as developed by Wodak, which is detailed in chapter two. The discourse-historical approach will be used to analyse a selection of articles from the People’s Daily newspaper covering the period from 1989 to 2007. This approach was selected on account of its emphasis on the historical dimension of discourse as well as its incorporation of argumentation theory. The selection of the People’s Daily as the source for this analysis is due to its status as the CCP’s “official mouthpiece”. As such, it occupies an influential position in shaping China’s national discourse. Within the identified time period, three instances will be selected for analysis: the “Beijing Spring” in 1989, the “anti-Falun Gong” campaign in 1999 and the “anti-Japan” demonstrations in 2005. These events have been selected on the basis that they constituted exceptional instances in which the stability discourse was used to legitimate the CCP’s authority. Moreover, in each of these three instances, the challenge to the Party’s power was different and, as such, carrying out an analysis of how the stability discourse was used in each of these instances will lead to a more complete understanding of the discourse.

⁹⁵ As pointed out in the next chapter, such filters are not held to be determinative and not all actors will be influenced in the same way and to the same extent.

The empirical analysis in each of these instances begins with a contextual analysis, adapted from Wodak's "Theory of the Context", before an intensive textual analysis of a selected commentary is conducted. This analysis will take place at the paragraphical level, which allows for movement between the sentential and discursive levels while making the analysis sufficiently explicit to allow readers to engage with the analysis. The categories for this intensive analysis were also adapted Wodak's "four-step" approach using an abductive process. As indicated above, particular attention will be paid to the use of argumentation strategies, including fallacies and topoi, as well as various rhetorical figurae. The empirical analysis will be concluded with an extensive textual analysis of texts that were also published during each instance in order to avoid producing an overly narrow understanding of the discourse.

Having detailed the approach that will be taken in this thesis, the following section will explain the contributions to scientific knowledge that this thesis hopes to make.

Contributions to Scientific Knowledge

This thesis seeks to make a number of contributions to scientific knowledge. In the field of Chinese politics, the analysis of the CCP's discourse of stability will highlight how this discourse has been used in certain instances during the post-Tiananmen period and, in so doing, explain both the continuities and differences in this usage. Furthermore, the analysis of the stability discourse intends to build on the work of other analysts who have identified stability as a source of legitimacy in order to make an important contribution to existing explanations concerning the continued rule of the CCP in this period. Indeed, if one accepts Brady's contention that the CCP's legitimacy in the post-Tiananmen period now rests largely on persuasion rather than coercion, analyses of particular discourses propagated by the CCP as well as the arguments used to support them constitute an increasingly important area of research in Chinese politics.⁹⁶ As a consequence, the approach that has been developed in this thesis to analyse the stability discourse will be useful to other analysts who focus on this research area.

Beyond the field of Chinese politics, this thesis also hopes to contribute to the concept of legitimization. By situating this concept within the strategic-relational approach, this thesis has provided a framework in which the previously functionalist relationship between structure and agency has been reconceptualised to take account of the mediating influence of discourse and, in so doing, allows legitimization to come closer

⁹⁶ See Brady (2002), (2006). A further point is that much of the literature on the legitimization of the CCP has focused on areas where its claims have been contested or resisted. While this work, which often draws on Scott's "weapons of the weak", provides valuable insight into the limits of the CCP's claims as well as demonstrating the criticality of Chinese citizens, the continued success of the CCP's claims seems to be an overlooked area of research. Indeed, given increasing plurality of information in China, this success seems all the more remarkable and, as such, in need of more extensive research. For an example of recent scholarship that focuses heavily on the resistance of the CCP's legitimization claims, see the edited volume by Gries and Rosen (2004).

to capturing the lived complexity of the real world. Moreover, this reconceptualisation of legitimisation provides a framework in which analysis can move beyond the identification of specific legitimisation sources to consider the multiple temporally and geographically variable legitimating strategies that are employed by ruling regimes in different political systems.

In terms of the strategic-relational approach, this thesis hopes to contribute to the development of the discursive selectivity concept by elaborating an explicit method of discursive analysis, namely Wodak's discourse-historical approach, that will allow other analysts to engage more fully with the findings of such research.⁹⁷ Moreover, by integrating the discourse-historical approach with the strategic-relational approach, this thesis hopes to contribute to the development of the discourse-historical approach by providing a relevant sociological framework that is called for but absent in Wodak's own work. Indeed, in achieving this integration, this thesis hopes to put forward a coherent conceptual and methodological framework that can be applied by analysts across the social sciences. Finally, in developing the discourse-historical approach to allow for the analysis of Chinese language texts, this thesis hopes to extend the applicability of this approach beyond the European language texts to which it has hitherto been applied.

The final section of this introductory chapter will conclude by providing an overview of the remaining chapters of this thesis.

⁹⁷ Although the strategic-relational approach was initially developed by Jessop, Hay developed the concept of discursive selectivity and has used this concept in his empirical research. However, as suggested in the text, Hay's empirical work does not use an explicit method and, as such, is more difficult to understand and so engage with his findings. For an example, see Hay (1996).

Thesis Overview

The remainder of this thesis will consist of five chapters. The first chapter will interrogate the concept of legitimacy in order to make clear the definition that will be applied in this thesis. Following this, the chapter will explicate the concept of legitimation i.e. the process by which legitimacy is attained. As pointed out above, due to the limitations of Weber's conceptualisation of legitimation, this concept will be situated within the strategic-relational approach and in so doing, the functionalist relationship between structure and agency will be reconceptualised in terms of strategic actors, strategically selective contexts and discursive selectivity. The effect of this conceptual move will open up the space in which discourse, in the form of "cognitive filters", can be analysed while, at the same time, placing the effects of such discourse within the broader context of political action.

The second chapter will follow on by elaborating the methodological approach that will be taken in analysing the stability discourse. As pointed out above, the discourse-historical approach, which is associated with the broader school of critical discourse analysis (CDA), will be used to analyse selected articles on stability from the *People's Daily* across the period from 1989 to 2007. In particular, articles from three exceptional instances in which the context "favoured" the stability discourse were selected for analysis. These instances were: the "Beijing Spring" in 1989; the "anti-Falun Gong" campaign in 1999; and "anti-Japan" demonstrations in 2005. Each of these instances are analysed in turn in chapters three, four and five of the thesis.

The third chapter focuses on the use of the stability discourse both during the "Beijing Spring" in 1989 and after the military suppression of these demonstrations. This

period has been selected for analysis on the basis that the demonstrations in 1989 represented a direct challenge to the CCP's authority that resulted in a legitimization crisis, if not an outright loss of legitimacy. Moreover, its significance in shaping the political context of the post-Tiananmen period is still evidenced by the leadership's ongoing refusal to officially revise its verdict of the protests as a counter-revolutionary rebellion.⁹⁸ A further aim in analysing articles from the period before and after the military suppression is to better understand why the stability discourse has been more effective in the post- rather than the pre-Tiananmen period.

The fourth chapter focuses on the use of the stability discourse during the “anti-*Falun Gong*” campaign in 1999. This period has been selected for analysis on account of the fact that the campaign was launched in response to what the government claimed to be “the most serious political incident since 1989”. Indeed, this “incident”, which refers to a demonstration that was held by *Falun Gong* adherents outside Zhongnanhai on 25 April 1999, represented the most significant instance of instability since the events in 1989. That said, though this instance provided another example in which the authority of the CCP was being challenged, this challenge was different in nature to that in 1989. Then, the government faced calls from protestors, at least in the initial stages, for reforms to be taken within the political system. In contrast, *Falun Gong*, a quasi-spiritual *qigong* group, was perceived to be a threat to the legitimacy of the CCP because it presented an alternative without the political system. In terms of the stability discourse, the “anti-*Falun Gong*” campaign was significant, in that the “25 April incident” provided a material referent that highlighted the limitations of this discourse.

⁹⁸ Despite the lack of official revision, references in leadership speeches and other various media do not tend to use this verdict but rather refer to the events as a “political disturbance” or a “political incident”.

The fifth chapter focuses on the use of the stability discourse during the “anti-Japan” demonstrations that took place in 2005. This period has been selected for analysis on the grounds that these demonstrations have presented the most recent challenge to the government’s authority. Moreover, as with the previous two instances, this challenge was different in nature, in that the demonstrations, on account of being directed against the actions of the Japanese government, did not directly challenge the government’s authority. However, the demonstrations did present an indirect challenge to the government over when to bring the demonstrations under control without turning the grievances of the protestors away from Japan towards the CCP. Indeed, historical precedents indicated that ending the protests too quickly and permitting them to last too long could both result in this taking place. Consequently, this chapter looks at how the stability discourse was employed in bringing the demonstrations successfully under control. Moreover, it also analyses how the CCP’s recent ideological formulation of “building a socialist harmonious society” has been incorporated into this discourse.

The thesis concludes by suggesting that, though the specific content of the stability discourse has varied in each of the periods under analysis, its usage has been similar, in that the positive value of stability has been linked to the leadership of the CCP and the negative value of instability has been linked to the “other”, be that the demonstrators in 1989, *Falun Gong* in 1999 or the “anti-Japan” demonstrators in 2005. Moreover, these values have been achieved through the central claim that China’s future can only be realised through continued economic development and political reform, for which stability is the necessary condition. In the positive version, the CCP

leadership will deliver this future while, in the negative version, the “other” will “destroy” this future. Moreover, these claims are strengthened by the use of historical evidence, the post-Third Plenum period in the case of the positive value of stability, and the periods of upheaval in Chinese history in the case of the negative value of instability.

In terms of legitimating the rule of the CCP, the stability discourse appears to be effective because it puts forward a “consequentialist” argument that shapes an as-yet-undetermined future in line with the Party’s interpretation of the present. That said, given that this discourse has remained largely the same in the pre- and post-Tiananmen periods, it seems possible to suggest that the effectiveness of the stability discourse is in large part due to the hegemonic interpretation of the events in 1989 that has shaped a political context which favours this discourse. Accepting this view, however, also suggests that, at some future point, the political context may no longer favour this discourse and, as such, it will lose its effectiveness in legitimating the CCP’s authority. Indeed, the evidence from the protests taking place at the local level as well as, more recently, in Tibet suggests that there are already limitations to the legitimating logic of the stability discourse.

Chapter 1: A Strategic-Relational Approach to Legitimation

Introduction

This chapter will develop the conceptual framework to be used in this thesis for analysing the legitimating effects of the stability discourse employed by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). As such, this framework both opens up the space in which the stability discourse can be analysed in relation to the CCP's legitimacy and places the effects of this discourse upon its legitimacy within the broader context of political action in China. In order to develop this conceptual framework, it is first necessary to interrogate the concept of legitimacy. In so doing, the definition of legitimacy that will be applied in this thesis will be made explicit. Indeed, a criticism that can be levelled at the contemporary literature on the legitimacy of the CCP is that this concept is rarely interrogated, with the result that it is left unclear who or what is being legitimated.⁹⁹ Following on from this, the concept of legitimation i.e. the process by which legitimacy is attained will be explicated. As pointed out in the introduction, Weber's conceptualisation of legitimation, which is the *de facto* standard framework used in such analyses, is limited by its functionalist view of the structure-agency relationship. In order to overcome this, Weber's conceptualisation will be situated within the strategic-relational approach. Through its concepts of strategic actors, strategically selective contexts and discursive selectivity, this approach allows for a more dynamic understanding of legitimation to be put forward in which multiple legitimating strategies can be considered. Of these, this thesis will focus on the CCP's use of the stability discourse.

⁹⁹ Although unclear, by virtue of the exclusive focus upon the CCP leadership and the population-at-large, many of these studies seem to conflate legitimacy with the notion of popular support. And though the CCP has become increasingly populist in the "reform and opening up" period, such a narrow view of legitimacy seems to overlook other important power relations that play a role in determining the regime's legitimacy.

The Concept of Legitimacy

This chapter will begin by detailing the concept of legitimacy to be applied in this thesis so as to better clarify what legitimation achieves. Firstly, it is necessary to establish that the legitimacy does play a role within a political system. For Gries and Rosen, “[l]egitimacy is central to politics everywhere”¹⁰⁰ while White acknowledges that legitimacy constitutes “a crucial basis of politics.”¹⁰¹ Even Huntington, who refers to legitimacy as a “mushy concept”, deployed it as one of the five independent variables when explaining the “third wave of democracy” that swept away authoritarian regimes in the early 1990s.¹⁰² For Weber, the centrality of legitimacy to the political system can be explained by “the generally observable need of any power, or even of any advantage of life, to justify itself.”¹⁰³ Drawing on Weber’s observation, Beetham goes further in stating that wherever power is exercised “societies will seek to subject it to justifiable rule, and the powerful themselves will seek to secure consent to their power from at least the most important among their subordinates.”¹⁰⁴ As a consequence, it is possible to state that in all political systems where power is exercised, legitimacy can, in theory at least, be said to operate. Such a statement, therefore, allows for the possibility that legitimacy exists not only in democracies, as some academics would hold,¹⁰⁵ but also in communist states, authoritarian regimes as well as dictatorships.¹⁰⁶ Indeed, for Beetham, legitimacy in a communist state is comprised of the same two components that make up legitimacy in capitalist

¹⁰⁰ Gries and Rosen (2004: 6).

¹⁰¹ White (2005: 2).

¹⁰² Huntington (1993: 46).

¹⁰³ Weber (1978: 953).

¹⁰⁴ Beetham (1991: 3).

¹⁰⁵ For an example of this in relation to China, see Bruce Gilley (2003).

¹⁰⁶ Commenting on the reluctance of social scientists to apply the concept of legitimacy to Asian countries, Ogden suggests that it may be due to the fact that they are unwilling to “confront the possibility that more authoritarian governments may actually attain and retain as much, if not more, legitimacy than democratic ones.” See Ogden (2007: 149).

democracies: namely, the interrelated but analytically distinct notions of the economy and the polity (or political ideology).¹⁰⁷

Moving onto define the concept of legitimacy, it is important, at the outset, to acknowledge that legitimacy, as White admits, “is not easy to define.”¹⁰⁸ For Weatherford, this is because the concept “plays such a protean role in accounting for political phenomena, taking on different aspects as it links global attributes of the political system with orientations of individual citizens.”¹⁰⁹ However, such difficulty also means that many competing definitions of legitimacy have been put forward to explain the concept. Holmes traces the origins of legitimacy back to Greek political thought on the grounds that “Plato and Aristotle were concerned *inter alia* with obligation, obedience and authority and thus with many of the issues that relate to a modern analysis of legitimacy.”¹¹⁰ However, it is the German social scientist, Max Weber, who is widely credited with developing the actual concept of legitimacy to deploy in analyses of the modern political system. As Zheng and Lye note, “Max Weber’s formulation of legitimacy has been a dominant thread in the literature on this topic.”¹¹¹ Weber’s conception of legitimacy was derived from his conception of power as being relational i.e. actors did not possess power *per se* but rather their power stemmed from others’ belief in that actor’s rightfulness to exercise power. Consequently, for Weber, legitimacy rested upon this notion of belief, so that “the basis of every system of authority, and correspondingly of every kind of willingness

¹⁰⁷ Beetham (1991: 181).

¹⁰⁸ White (2005: 1).

¹⁰⁹ Weatherford (1992: 150).

¹¹⁰ The term “legitimacy” is actually derived from the Latin term *legitimus*, meaning “lawful” or “legal”. However, as Holmes points out, “most contemporary conceptions of legality and legitimacy treat them as discrete concepts.” See Holmes (1993: 10–11).

¹¹¹ Zheng and Lye (2005: 187). For examples of those employing a Weberian approach to legitimacy, see Apter (1965), Barker (1991), Bendix (1978), Fish (2001) and Lipset (1981).

to obey, is a belief, a belief by virtue of which persons exercising authority are lent prestige.”¹¹² Moreover, the effect of this belief in the legitimacy of the ruler(s) is to convert the exercise of power into that of authority. For Blau, these two concepts can be distinguished by virtue of the fact that “people, *a priori*, suspend their own judgement and accept that of an acknowledged superior without having to be convinced that his is correct.”¹¹³ For Habermas, such authority is demonstrated when a political decision can be made “independently of the concrete use of force and of the manifest threat of sanctions and can be regularly implemented even against the interests of those affected.”¹¹⁴ In effect, authority means that obedience is derived from the legitimacy of those who issue orders rather than from the actual orders themselves.¹¹⁵

However, though influential, Weber’s formulation has been subject to numerous criticisms. These criticisms can be grouped into three categories: the notion of belief; incompleteness; and non-universality.¹¹⁶ In terms of belief, Schaar contends that Weber’s definition conflates “legitimacy into belief or opinion...[i]f people hold the belief that existing institutions are “appropriate” or “morally proper”, then those institutions are legitimate. That’s all there is to it.”¹¹⁷ However, Schaar’s charge that Weber conflates legitimacy with belief appears to overlook the fact that, within Weber’s formulation, legitimacy is acquired through the process of legitimation from particular sources.¹¹⁸ The relationship between these sources and the concept of

¹¹² Weber (1964: 382).

¹¹³ Cited in Teiwes, (1984: 43).

¹¹⁴ Habermas (1988: 201).

¹¹⁵ Weber (1964: 324–325).

¹¹⁶ Alagappa (1995: 12–14).

¹¹⁷ Schaar (1981: 19–25).

¹¹⁸ Weber cites the “ideal” types of legal-rational, traditional, and charismatic. These will be examined in greater detail in the following section in this chapter.

legitimacy is the *Lebenswelt* notion of belief. Moreover, given that belief in legitimacy is the product of the dialectically-related sources, Weber's formulation avoids the charge of conflation directed at it by Schaar. With regard to incompleteness, Beetham criticises Weber on the grounds that his formulation does not allow space for the concept of legality or consent of the governed to be considered alongside to notion of belief.¹¹⁹ However, I would argue that Beetham's criticism is misguided, in that neither the concept of legality nor the consent of the governed is independent of belief. Laws may possess formal recognition and a level of enforceability beyond that of belief, but, as Alagappa points out, its "authority derives from the beliefs that underscore the political order."¹²⁰ As for consent of the governed, though not explicitly stated, Weber's formulation includes this concept within his recognition that power is relational and in need of justification. The final criticism of Weber concerns the non-universal applicability of his definition, in that Weber's focus on the notion of belief deprives the concept of legitimacy of any moral and evaluative force.¹²¹ However, such criticism is emblematic of those who prefer to apply a more philosophical and normative definition of legitimacy rather than deploying a social scientific conceptualisation of legitimacy and, as such, constitutes an ontological difference rather than highlighting a theoretical inconsistency within Weber's formulation.

Rejection of these criticisms does not equate to full acceptance of Weber's formulation. Rather, as Alagappa points out, "Weber's work on legitimacy, while useful, should be considered as a starting point that demands explication and

¹¹⁹ Beetham (1991: 11–13).

¹²⁰ Examples of the belief underpinning legal status include belief in the fairness of the legal system as well as a belief that failure to comply with a particular law will result in a specific punishment. See Alagappa (1995: 14).

¹²¹ Ibid., p.15.

considerable development to make the concept analytically relevant.”¹²² While accepting that legitimacy, in short, concerns the right to rule¹²³ and that the notion of belief constitutes the basis of legitimacy, Weber’s definition fails to clearly specify who or what is being legitimated, by whom this legitimacy is conferred, and how much legitimacy is operating within the political system. A fuller definition is provided by Rigby, who states that legitimacy refers to “[t]he expectation of political authorities that people will comply with their demands...not only [because of] such considerations as the latter’s fear of punishment, hope of reward, habit or apathy, but also on the notion that they have the right to make such demands. This notion both inheres explicitly and implicitly, in the claims of authorities, and is reciprocated, to a greater or lesser extent, in the minds of those [from] whom compliance is demanded.”¹²⁴ Thus, in Rigby’s definition, the focus of legitimation is identified in the form of the “political authorities” and this power is legitimated, and so made distinct from that of coercive power, by the “people”. Furthermore, Rigby’s definition allows for the possibility that not all members of the people will accept the exercise of legitimate power as equally legitimate. However, while Rigby’s definition represents an advance on that offered by Weber’s, it is still necessary to further interrogate the terms deployed in his definition so as to more fully understand the concept of legitimacy.

System and Regime Legitimacy

In Rigby’s definition, legitimacy is seen as existing between the “political authorities” and the “people”. However, for Holmes, “[t]he notion that citizens either believe or do not believe that rulers have a right to rule begins to look too simple: we have to

¹²² Alagappa (1995: 340 n. 6).

¹²³ Holmes (1993: 39).

¹²⁴ Rigby (1982: 1).

distinguish between 'system legitimacy' and 'regime legitimacy'."¹²⁵ In this, "system legitimacy" refers to the legitimacy of the political system while "regime legitimacy" refers to that of the government/position. The distinction between these two forms can be made on the grounds that legitimate authority is derived from the belief in the legitimacy of the system whereas legitimacy of the government/position is dependent on the exercise of that authority within the system.¹²⁶ Furthermore, applying this analytical distinction, it is possible for a government to suffer from a lack of legitimacy while the legitimacy of the system remains intact. Yet, if the system is delegitimated, then the legitimacy of the government/position will suffer a corresponding withdrawal of legitimacy.

However, the extent to which this distinction can be made depends on the extent to which power has been institutionalised.¹²⁷ While such a distinction can be clearly made within democratic political systems, communist political systems, as a result of constructing a "party-state", have tended to blur the distinction between these two types of legitimacy, so that the legitimacy of the system becomes entwined with that of the government. With regard to the exercise of power in the People's Republic of China (PRC), there has been a move towards the partial institutionalisation of power in recent years. This was most clearly evidenced in the transfer of power from the "third generation" of leaders, headed by Jiang Zemin as party secretary, to that of Hu Jintao and the "fourth generation" of leaders that took place at 16th Party Congress in

¹²⁵ Holmes (1993: 25).

¹²⁶ As Teiwes notes, "[l]egitimacy of position...is a prerequisite to authority but does not guarantee it." See Teiwes (1984: 44).

¹²⁷ Huntington defines institutionalisation as the point at which a particular aspect of a political system assumes the qualities of "adaptability, complexity, autonomy, and coherence." Furthermore, the effect of such institutionalisation on a particular government is to make it "effective, authoritative [and] legitimate." Power that has not been institutionalised can be referred to as irregular, arbitrary and personalised. See Huntington (1982: 2-12).

2002. In addition, following the recent 17th Party Congress in October 2007, a further orderly transfer of power appears to have been put in place for 2012. Commenting on this, Nathan notes that, “few authoritarian regimes – be they communist, fascist, corporatist, personalist – have managed to conduct orderly, peaceful, timely, and stable successions.”¹²⁸ Moreover, alongside the transfer of power, Hu’s authority, in contrast to of his predecessors, is derived, in large part, from his status as party leader i.e. from his position rather than his person.¹²⁹ As a consequence, the exercise of power within the Party as whole is now less personalised and more regularised, with rules and procedures increasingly governing its exercise.¹³⁰ In addition to rules of succession and political decision-making, other examples of institutionalisation within the CCP can be seen in the introduction of elements of the rule of law, the increasing differentiation and specialisation of government agencies as well as the “professionalisation” of the political elites.¹³¹ However, though there are signs of institutionalisation, Nathan cautions that, “to be sure, the Chinese regime is still a party-state, in which the Party penetrates all other institutions and makes policy for all realms of action. And it is still a centralized, unitary system in which power at lower levels derives from grants by the center.”¹³² Consequently, it is still possible to state

¹²⁸ Nathan (2003: 7).

¹²⁹ Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping and, to a lesser extent, Jiang Zemin, were able to exercise power based on their revolutionary status. Indeed, given that Deng Xiaoping held no formal political positions in the 1980s, his power can be classed as entirely personal.

¹³⁰ Miller cites the increased consensus over decision made in the Politburo in recent years as evidence of this. That said, it is important to stress that this is relative to earlier periods when the reliance on personal authority was much greater. Moreover, though there is a greater emphasis on rules and procedures, this does not preclude the exercise of personal power within such limits. See Miller (Summer 2004).

¹³¹ In his analysis of Party appointments, Walder found that the increasing trend in the period of reform and opening up has been to select candidates on the basis of education level and marks a change from the emphasis on people’s “political” integrity in the earlier periods of the PRC. For more detail, see Walder (2006).

¹³² Nathan (2003: 13).

that, in the People's Republic of China, the legitimacy of the political system and that of the Chinese government can not be clearly distinguished.¹³³

Tripartite Legitimacy

Having established that legitimacy can be analytically bifurcated into system legitimacy and regime legitimacy, it is now necessary to examine the society in which legitimacy is conferred. Up to this point, "the right to rule" has been presented as an exchange between rulers and the ruled. However, Weber's view of society conceived of three main strategic groups: "chiefs", "staffs" and "masses".¹³⁴ The "chiefs" referred to the political leaders or "rulers", the "staffs" referred to the bureaucracy responsible for implementing and enforcing the laws and policies of the "chiefs" while the "masses" referred to the public at large. In this thesis, the term, "elites" is preferred to that of "chiefs" and, applying Walder's definition of this group, refers to all cadres "at the rank of country magistrate or division chief and above."¹³⁵ The term "cadres" is preferred to that of "staffs" and refers to those in the national bureaucracy below the level of county magistrate and division chief.¹³⁶ As for the term, "masses", it will be retained on account of the fact that is still the term most frequently employed in public discourse when referring to the general public. However, it should be pointed out that these groups constitute analytical distinctions and, though each group has a material basis, the boundaries between them are not, as such, fixed. For

¹³³ The separation of the Party and the State (*dang zheng fankai*) was proposed in Zhao Ziyang's Work Report at the 13th Party Congress in 1987 as part of a wider package of political reforms; however the demonstrations and resultant suppression in 1989 occurred before such reforms were realised and they have been remained un-implemented ever since.

¹³⁴ In his earlier study on legitimacy in the People's Republic of China, Teiwes conceptualised society in terms of "leader", CCP elite" and "the public". Teiwes (1984: 44-5).

¹³⁵ Using data from 1998, Walder calculates that this group number around 500,000 in size, with 900 making up the central apparatus, 2,500 being at the rank of minister or provincial governor, 39,000 being comprised of prefecture and bureau leaders and the remaining 466,000 holding positions at the county level. See Walder (2006: 19).

¹³⁶ Walder estimates that this group to consist of 40 million cadres. See Walder (2006: 19).

example, party members can belong to any of these three groups while non-party members can usually only belong to those of the “cadres” and the “masses”.¹³⁷

Moreover, within each of these broad categories, further sub-groups can be distinguished.¹³⁸ However, for the purpose of this thesis, the identification of these three strategic groups is sufficient to allow for heuristic analysis.

For Weber, the relationships between each of these groups could be ordered hierarchically in terms of legitimacy. Consequently, Weber identifies three separate but interdependent relationships: elites-cadres; elites-masses; and cadres-masses. Of these, the relationship between the elites and cadres was viewed as the most important on the grounds that, even if there was a withdrawal of legitimacy from the masses, elites would still continue to exercise legitimate authority if they retained the support of the cadres. Supporting this view, Alagappa states that, in the context of non-democratic political systems, “[c]onsent of the administrative staff and strategic groups is critical for the legitimization of authoritarian and totalitarian regimes.”¹³⁹ In relation to China, Walder states that “[t]he political elite of 500,000 cannot rule the country unless it can retain the obedience of 40 million state cadres...and if the elite maintains the discipline of state bureaucrats and the allegiance of party members, it can withstand challenges from other groups in society, even in periods of economic

¹³⁷ Walder states that approximately 8% of the population are CCP members (approximately 70 million). Of these, 25% are cadres, either “elites” or “cadres”, while the remaining 75% are part of the “masses”. However, of the “elites” group, 95% are Party members while, in the “cadres” group, approximately 38% are Party members, leaving Walder to conclude that, “appointments into the elite are made almost exclusively from among those ordinary cadres who have already joined the party.” See Walder (2006: 20).

¹³⁸ One sub-group that has received much attention is the military. However, while this sub-group plays an influential role in Chinese politics, I follow Ji’s point that “[t]he military can sustain the CCP leadership but not the legitimacy upon which the Party’s ultimate fate is decided.” Indeed, the events in 1989 provided a clear example of this, in that it was the military that maintained the CCP’s hold on power in the short-term; however, it has been the Party’s recovery of its legitimacy since then that has enabled it to hold onto power in the medium term. See Ji (2006: 59–60).

¹³⁹ Alagappa (1995: 24).

hardship and social upheaval.”¹⁴⁰ Following on from this, Holmes defines the withdrawal of legitimacy by the masses as constituting only a “severe legitimacy deficit” as long as “[o]fficial ideologists...*do* have new ideas for legitimation and a belief in what they are doing”.¹⁴¹ Consequently, for Holmes, a legitimation crisis only occurs when “those who would normally be expected to attempt to legitimate the order are no longer able and/or willing to do so.”¹⁴²

The final relationship in Weber’s hierarchy is that between cadres and the masses. Indeed, for White, it is important to distinguish this relationship, as “[m]any writers conflate trust in national leaderships with trust in local officials.”¹⁴³ This is not to say that a lack of trust in local officials cannot also affect peoples’ perceptions of national leaders but that, generally, the cadres-public relationship should be treated as analytically distinct from that of elites-public. Moreover, as Wang’s survey results as well as others have highlighted, it is possible for the masses to negatively view cadres while, at the same time, positively viewing the elites. Indeed, it seems plausible to suggest that the distinction which has been made between the central and local levels in China has acted as an effective replacement, in the short-term at least, for the lack of separation between system and regime legitimacy.

¹⁴⁰ Walder (2006: 21). Indeed, on his “southern tour” in 1992, Deng Xiaoping stated that, “[i]f China is to have real problems, they will have to come from within the CCP. ... The key is to do a good job maintaining the internal cohesion of our communist party. As long as no problems emerge from within, we can all lie down asleep reassured”. Cited in Gore (2000).

¹⁴¹ Holmes (1993: 23).

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p.23. Applying these definitions to China, the demonstrations that took place in 1989, with over one million protestors and lasting roughly two months, would only constitute a severe legitimacy deficit on the grounds that, while the public (or certain groups within the public) withdrew their legitimacy, those who legitimate the regime held firm enough to bring the protests under control and so avoid a possible legitimation crisis. Indeed, despite the disquiet over the course of action taken to end the protests both at the elite as well as the cadre level, in the end, the belief in the legitimacy claims of the elites was sufficient to mobilise approximately 150,000 to 200,000 army troops to suppress the demonstrations and restore the rule of the Party.

¹⁴³ White (2005: 14).

However, within Weber's schema, an additional strategic relationship was left unidentified: the "intra-elites". Alagappa points out that, "[f]rom the ruler's viewpoint, legitimacy is not just a stratagem to secure more effective control or perpetuate themselves in office. Self-justification in moral terms is crucial for most rulers. They need to believe they are serving the national interest or a moral cause even if it necessitates a "noble lie".¹⁴⁴ Moreover, in his analysis of the collapse of the Soviet Union, Holmes identifies the leadership's loss of belief in itself as one of the main factors, specifically the moment when the United States' announced its Strategic Defence Initiative. According to Holmes, the USSR was not capable, either technologically or financially, to match such a programme and "[a]s this fact became obvious to Gorbachev and other leaders, so they came to accept that they had now lost the decades-long competition with capitalism."¹⁴⁵ In relation to China, the importance of "intra-elites" legitimacy was most clearly demonstrated during the protests in 1989, as the top leaders disagreed over how to respond. Moreover, the post-Tiananmen appearance of unity and consensus, if not its actuality, indicates that the Party leadership has recognised the importance of this relationship.¹⁴⁶ Indeed, Teiwes contends that the leaders have learned "the Tiananmen lesson of how leadership instability could contribute to a regime crisis."¹⁴⁷ This is because the appearance of perceived disunity at the elite leadership level can work to create uncertainty amongst the other groups in society over the political and economic direction of the country and, in so doing, allow for competing political viewpoints to be put forward, around

¹⁴⁴ Alagappa (1995: 4).

¹⁴⁵ Holmes (1993: 30).

¹⁴⁶ Though there has been outward appearance of consensus amongst the leadership, it is widely acknowledged that different factions still remain within the leadership. Indeed, Li characterises China's political system as "one party, two factions", in which the power of the "Communist Youth League" faction (*tuangpai*), headed by Hu Jintao, is offset by that of the "Princelings" faction, headed by Zeng Qinghong. For Li, these factions can be distinguished along socio-political and geographical lines as well as policy initiatives, with the former being more "populist" and the latter being more "elitist". See Li (6 December 2006).

¹⁴⁷ Teiwes (2000: 75).

which people can mobilise.¹⁴⁸ Conversely, the appearance of leadership unity creates a degree of certainty over the political direction of the state and so, can work enhance the legitimacy of the regime. Indeed, Zhao claims that the post-Tiananmen leadership consensus has had this effect: “after the 1989 repression, the government actually gained ‘trust’ among the Chinese people...during the 1980s, a major worry among the Chinese was whether the state policy was going to turn back to what it was during Mao’s era. The fact that even after the military repression the state still maintained the reform policy convinced many Chinese that the reform was the only way out for the state.”¹⁴⁹

Returning to Weber’s adapted hierarchical schema of societal relationships, this thesis holds that access to power constitutes the most important criterion in determining the order of this hierarchy. On that basis, the intra-elites relationship is considered to be most important in terms of maintaining legitimacy. Following this, the elites-cadres relationship is considered next in importance, followed by the elites-public relationship and, finally, the cadres-public relationship. That said, this hierarchical order is not necessarily fixed but rather is contingent upon the particular context in which action takes place. Indeed, an example of when the order of this hierarchy was not determinative occurred with Deng Xiaoping’s “southern tour” (*nanxun*) in 1992. In this, Deng used this “tour” of southern provinces to gain support from lower level cadres and members of the masses for his economic reforms in order to overcome opposition from members within the leadership elite. More recently, Hu Jintao’s approach to governance, from the sacking of Beijing’s mayor and the Health Minister in response to the initial cover-up of the SARS outbreak through to the promotion of

¹⁴⁸ Shirk points out that, “[l]eadership splits telegraphed to the public...in other authoritarian regimes have triggered revolutionary upheavals.” (Shirk 2007: 48).

¹⁴⁹ Zhao (2001: 434).

the “three people’s principles” and the “building of a socialist harmonious society”, has been characterised as “populist”,¹⁵⁰ which, even allowing for the relativity of the term and the perpetuation of factional politics, suggests that the order within the hierarchy can shift over time.

Measuring Legitimacy

Having outlined the different aspects of legitimacy, it is now necessary to address the question of how to measure legitimacy.¹⁵¹ As Chen has noted, “[s]tipulating a definition of regime legitimacy is easy; operationalizing and testing a definition is much more difficult.”¹⁵² The most straightforward test that can be applied in determining the legitimacy of a regime is what Holmes refers to as “Meyer’s ultimate test of legitimacy”.¹⁵³ This test simply holds that it is only possible to discern if an authoritarian regime is illegitimate (or close to it) when it has collapsed (or appears in overt danger of collapse). Conversely, this proof also holds that if a regime or state does not appear to be in imminent danger of collapse, then it must be legitimate.

Although this test may be problematic from a moral perspective, it is directly informed by Weber’s definition of legitimacy, which, in claiming that the legitimacy of a regime is the result of people’s *belief* in its legitimacy, views people’s actions as a direct reflection of these beliefs. However, this also gives rise to a contradiction at the heart of Weber’s definition, in that legitimacy is regarded as people’s positive

¹⁵⁰ Li (6 December 2006). However, it should be noted that some analysts interpreted the sacking of the Mayor and the health minister as being as much about politics as populism in that, in terms of factions, one was considered to be from the *Tuanpai* faction and the other from the “Princelings” faction.

¹⁵¹ Indeed, this issue has recently been addressed by Schubert in an attempt to overcome what he sees as the lack of research being carried out the legitimacy of the CCP. While I welcome this attempt to initiate a dialogue on this under-developed but extremely important subject, and though I share many of the perspectives that Schubert puts forward in relation to the regime’s legitimacy, I feel that his emphasis in adopting a “micro-political” approach neglects important theoretical considerations which, in effect, work to undermine the validity of any such claims that such an might achieve. For more, see Schubert (2008).

¹⁵² Chen (2005: 4).

¹⁵³ Holmes (1993: 29).

acceptance of power yet can only be empirically demonstrated in instances where such power is rejected as illegitimate. As Grafstein points out, “[i]n the end, Weber virtually identifies legitimacy with stable and effective political power, reducing it to a routine submission to authority.”¹⁵⁴ Although problematic, this does not make the Weber’s definition of legitimacy redundant but rather constitutes the starting point from which to measure legitimacy.¹⁵⁵

For a number of social scientists, the measurement of legitimacy can be successfully achieved through the use of surveys that record citizens’ responses to questions about a particular regime. The most comprehensive approach to this quantitative measurement of legitimacy has come from Easton, who devised a theoretical framework with which to measure “supportive attitudes”. According to Easton, supportive attitudes can be defined when “[w]e can say that *A* supports *B* either when *A* acts on behalf of *B* or when he orients himself favorably toward *B*. *B* may be a person or a group; it may be a goal, idea, or institution.”¹⁵⁶ For Easton, supportive attitudes equate to political support on behalf of the public and are directed towards three groups – the regime, the authorities and the political community, with the regime being the most important.¹⁵⁷ Furthermore, political support can be broken down into two components, namely “diffuse support” and “specific support”. Easton regarded diffuse support as equivalent to belief in legitimacy, as it constitutes a person’s belief that the existence and actions of the government were in accordance

¹⁵⁴ Grafstein (1981: 456). Indeed, this is somewhat ironic, as Weber’s intention in conceptualising legitimacy in this way was partly to overcome the problem of *Verstehen*—interpreting other cultures using the values of one’s own culture—and, in so doing, allow for legitimacy to be empirically tested.

¹⁵⁵ Weber’s conflation of stability with legitimacy is problematic only in so much as, while a legitimate regime is also stable, a stable regime is not necessarily legitimate.

¹⁵⁶ Easton (1965: 159).

¹⁵⁷ Chen (2004: 3).

with their ethical and moral principles regarding the political.¹⁵⁸ As such, diffuse support is built over a long time period through exposure to continuous socialisations as well as repeated judgements on a government's performance. For Easton, once diffuse support has formed, it tends to hold firm and remain stable, and is subject only to gradual change. In contrast, specific support refers to a person's satisfaction with the policies and performance of the government and, as such, is both short-term and prone to volatility, usually in response to the perceived benefits and costs of specific policies. Hence, Easton's composite concept of political support consisted of both belief and opinion, albeit with diffuse support being held as the more dominant variable. Commenting on the relationship between these two types of support, Chen states that, "although the two dimensions are not totally independent of one another, the relationship between them is weak or moderate. And change in one dimension should not translate into a one-to-one change in the other."¹⁵⁹

However, though Easton's approach represents a sophisticated attempt to operationalise and measure the legitimacy of a regime, it appears to be problematic on both a theoretical and a practical level. With regards to its theoretical framework, the relationship between diffuse support and specific support is problematic, in that the temporal aspect of the relationship is not clearly conceptualised nor explicitly acknowledged. Indeed, while Easton holds that diffuse support builds over a longer period of time than specific support, he does not make clear when or, indeed, how specific support could be transformed into diffuse support. As a consequence, this theoretical weakness causes difficulties in empirically measuring and distinguishing

¹⁵⁸ Easton (1965: 278).

¹⁵⁹ Chen (2004: 5). Moreover, Chen used Easton's approach when conducting a longitudinal survey of political support in Beijing from 1995 to 1999.

between these two types of support.¹⁶⁰ Moreover, it raises the question of whether the analytical distinction between the two variables can actually be tested at the empirical level. Further problems with Easton's approach have occurred when it has been used to measure political support in China, in that political support has only been measured in terms of the relationship between the political authorities and the people. As a consequence, no consideration has been given to the intra-elites or elites-cadres relationship that also make up the legitimacy of a political regime.

An additional problem, albeit one not solely confined to Easton's approach, concerns the generalisability of survey data.¹⁶¹ Spatio-temporality considerations notwithstanding, this is an issue that is more important in the context of China, both because of its size and its political environment. For surveys being conducted in China, complete enumeration is effectively unobtainable, thus the use of samples is necessary. Moreover, from the evidence of previous surveys that have been conducted in China, these samples have tended to concentrate on a particular group (urban/rural) and/or a particular area (East/South/West/North).¹⁶² For example, in Chen's longitudinal survey from 1995 to 1999 on popular political support in urban areas, the survey was restricted to Beijing,¹⁶³ for which only 700 respondents were sampled in the first survey while 720 respondents were selected for the following surveys in 1997 and 1999.¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, due to the high mobility of residents in Beijing, Chen did not survey the same respondents on each occasion but rather asked the same questions

¹⁶⁰ Chen (2002: p. 2 note 4). Other attempts to measure political support or political trust or some variant of all seem to run up against a similar difficulty of empirically distinguishing between belief and opinion.

¹⁶¹ For more on this issue in relation to China, see Manion (1994).

¹⁶² This point is also made by Friedman, who states that "public opinion polls that try to characterize Chinese opinion...tend to ignore regional diversity and privilege Beijing but omit its recent immigrants." See Friedman (2002: 19).

¹⁶³ I have focused specifically on Chen's research as it constitutes the most substantive quantitative research solely concerned with measuring the legitimacy of the CCP.

¹⁶⁴ The response rates for the three surveys ranged from 93 percent to 96 percent. See (Chen 2004: 16).

to different residents. Consequently, this makes it difficult to support Chen's conclusion that the legitimacy of the regime is high but gradually declining. Moreover, though the use of multi-stage sampling seemed to ensure the representativeness of different categories within the sample group, the small sample size means that it is only possible to regard the data for Chen's survey as partial, at best, and not, as he claims, revealing of the state of popular political support in the urban areas throughout China. That said, such criticisms are not intended to dismiss entirely the validity of Chen's work or, indeed, other such approaches to the measurement of legitimacy but rather attempt to make clear the limitations of relying only on quantitative data in assessing the legitimacy of a regime.

The difficulties in empirically measuring legitimacy, therefore, suggest that it is necessary to use both quantitative and qualitative methods to assess the legitimacy of a regime.¹⁶⁵ However, given that the focus of this thesis is not on whether the CCP is legitimate but on how it has attempted to legitimate its authority in the post-Tiananmen period, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to assess the current state of the CCP legitimacy. Rather, the arguments put forward in the preceding pages hold open the possibility that, in spite of the protests and problems that confront the Chinese government, members of Chinese society may still view the authority of the CCP as legitimate. More importantly, however, these arguments are intended to make clear the definition of legitimacy that will be applied in this thesis and, in so doing, allow for the claims of legitimation to be more fully understood. Consequently, a number of conditions that make up the concept of legitimacy will now be specified:

¹⁶⁵ Although this introduces a subjective component into the definition of legitimacy, it does not render it a moral concept.

(1) In this thesis, legitimacy is understood as “the belief in the rightfulness of a state, in its authority to issue commands, so that the commands are obeyed not simply out of fear or self-interest, but because they are believed to have moral authority, because subjects believe that they ought to obey.”¹⁶⁶ In short, political legitimacy can be regarded as converting power into authority.

(2) Legitimacy is not natural but must be created by the incumbent regime.

Furthermore, it is considered a desirable goal for all regimes, not only as an end in itself but also because the existence of legitimacy lowers the social, economic and political costs of governance.¹⁶⁷

(3) Legitimacy is considered to be a dynamic concept and, as such, can fluctuate both positively and negatively over time.

(4) The concept of legitimacy is held to be partial, rather than total, so that at no time, are all legitimacy claims accepted by all people. Rather, different groups believe different claims at different times and to differing degrees.¹⁶⁸

(5) It is possible for coercion and legitimacy to operate in the same political system. A higher level of legitimacy corresponds to a lower level of coercion while a lower level of legitimacy corresponds to a higher level of coercion.

¹⁶⁶ Barker (1990: 11).

¹⁶⁷ Zheng and Lye (2005: 186).

¹⁶⁸ Gries and Rosen (2004: 9).

(6) Legitimacy can be distinguished between that of system legitimacy and regime legitimacy. However, the degree to which the distinction can be made depends on the extent to which power has been institutionalised.

(7) Society is divided into three main groups and the relationships between these groups are ranked in importance of legitimating a particular regime. The intra-elites relationship is held to be the most important, followed by the elites-cadres relationship, the elites-public relationship and, finally, the cadres-public relationship.

(8) Legitimacy crises can be ranked in order of seriousness. A severe legitimacy deficit is the least serious type of crisis and takes place when the public (or significant groups within the public) withdraw their support for the regime, expressed through acts of non-compliance and/or protesting, while the elites and cadres still believe in their right to rule. In this, it is still possible for a regime to recover from a severe legitimacy deficit to (re) gain a high level of legitimacy. A legitimisation crisis occurs when the elite leadership no longer believes in its right to rule. In this situation, a system collapse represents only one of the possible outcomes. However, at the very minimum, a change in the leadership of the regime is required in order for legitimacy to be restored. The most severe type of crisis is that of illegitimacy, which indicates that the political system has collapsed and, as such, is a final and irreversible state.

The Concept of Legitimation

Having established the definition of legitimacy to applied in this thesis, it is now necessary to focus on the question of how the CCP has obtained its legitimacy during this time. Indeed, as Nathan points out, “[o]ne of the puzzles of the post-Tiananmen period has been the regime’s apparent ability to rehabilitate its legitimacy...from the low point of 1989, when vast, nationwide prodemocracy demonstrations revealed the disaffection of a large segment of the urban population.”¹⁶⁹ In order to do this, this thesis will make use of the concept of legitimation. For Holmes, legitimation can be simply understood as “the process whereby legitimacy is acquired”,¹⁷⁰ while Alagappa provides a more expansive definition, stating that it is “an interactive and...dynamic process among the government, the elite groups, and the politically significant public: those in power seek to legitimate their control and exercise their power; the subjects seek to define their subordination in acceptable terms.”¹⁷¹

The main approach towards legitimation, and the one that has been used most frequently in explaining how the CCP has legitimated its authority, is Weber’s “modes” of legitimation.¹⁷² In this, Weber identifies three modes of legitimation from which regimes derive their authority: legal-rational; charismatic; and traditional. Moreover, Weber views these modes as “ideal types”, in that “their one-sided accentuation of certain varied aspects of social reality is necessary to describe a complex phenomenon, even if reality never quite corresponds to the resulting

¹⁶⁹ Nathan (2003: 7).

¹⁷⁰ Holmes (1993: 39).

¹⁷¹ Alagappa (1995: 13-14).

¹⁷² For examples of this approach being explicitly employed in analyses of the CCP, see Teiwes (1984), Zheng (2003), Weatherley (2006). However, it should be pointed out that many more use Weber’s approach implicitly on account of the fact that it has become the “standard” framework in which to analyse political legitimacy. For examples of work that attempts to develop a distinctively Chinese approach to Weber’s notion of legitimacy, see Guo (2003), Tian (2003).

construct.”¹⁷³ The first mode of legitimation, legal-rational, is, according to Weber, derived from a “belief in the “legality” of patterns of normative rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands.”¹⁷⁴ Moreover, this “belief” rests on the establishment by a regime of clear rules and procedures whose implementation is transparent and accountable. From this, Weatherley notes that a regime which bases its authority of legal-rational norms “must adhere closely to these procedures.”¹⁷⁵ The charismatic mode of legitimation could be contrasted with that of the legal-rational mode, in that while the latter was concerned with institutional power, the former focused on the legitimating effect of personal power. For Weber, the notion of charisma “applied to a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities.”¹⁷⁶ Moreover, it is on the basis of this charisma that people would obey the orders of a particular leader. That said, Weber also viewed this mode of legitimation as the most unstable form of power, which was only likely to emerge during periods of crisis before being “routinised” in its aftermath.¹⁷⁷ The final mode of legitimation identified by Weber was that of tradition and this was viewed as mixing elements of the first two modes. According to Weber, this mode of legitimation could be understood as “an established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions and the legitimacy of those exercising authority under them.”¹⁷⁸ Although this mode was derived from pre-democratic forms of governance, such as the “divine right of monarchs”, Weatherley notes that it also refers to the “contemporary application of methods of governing or political ideas that

¹⁷³ Grafstein (1981: 458).

¹⁷⁴ Weber (1964: 328).

¹⁷⁵ Weatherley (2006: 6).

¹⁷⁶ Weber (1964: 358).

¹⁷⁷ Weatherley (2006: 7).

¹⁷⁸ Weber (1964: 328).

stretch back through the ages and which are familiar to the populace.”¹⁷⁹ In this, a leader will be considered legitimate and their orders will be obeyed if he/she acts within the limits of traditional conventions.

However, though Weber analytically distinguishes these three ideal types, he was, as Holmes notes, “fully aware that all three ‘pure’ types overlap both conceptually and in the practice of ‘the real world’.”¹⁸⁰ Consequently, it is possible for a leader to simultaneously make use of charisma and tradition in legitimating his/her authority. Similarly, norms and procedures that are based on legal-rational authority can, over time, also derive their force from tradition. Moreover, in contemporary applications of Weber’s approach, analysts have sought to employ additional modes of legitimation. In relation to the People’s Republic of China, Weatherley notes that an ideological mode of legitimation has been viewed as “crucial to any understanding of CCP legitimacy.”¹⁸¹ Indeed, the initial rule, at least, of the CCP was based on its exclusive role in interpreting the “scientific” Marxist-Leninist doctrine, which identified the conditions necessary to progress towards a communist future. Moreover, to challenge the Party’s interpretation of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine was effectively to question the legitimacy of the CCP itself. More recently, the decline of the communist ideology in the reform and opening up period has led analysts to identify a “eudaemonic” mode of legitimation on the grounds that the authority of the CCP is now being legitimated on its performance, particularly in relation to delivering economic growth.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁹ Weatherley (2006: 8).

¹⁸⁰ Holmes (1993: 14).

¹⁸¹ Weatherley (2006: 10).

¹⁸² For an example of this, see Chen (1997).

Although Weber's concept of legitimation is useful in describing how a regime maintains authority, it is necessarily limited in explaining why a regime maintains its authority on account of the fact that no space is given to addressing the question of why people believe in the identified modes of legitimation. Rather, Weber's conceptualisation seems to suggest that regimes which act in accordance with norms and rules that it has established, either directly, through tradition or by a charismatic leader, will continue to be legitimate. As such, this conceptualisation is overly structuralist and, though the inclusion of the *Lebenswelt* concepts of belief, meaning and intention suggest a role for agency, Weber effectively reduces it to that of material circumstances.¹⁸³ Moreover, while this approach can describe a politically stable situation, it is unable to conceptualise political change. As a consequence, those works that adopt a Weberian approach in explaining the legitimation of a regime tend to produce, what Shue regards as, "[f]unctionalist analyses...[which] grossly misread the complexity of the lived world of belief most beings encounter".¹⁸⁴ However, this does not mean that Weber's approach to legitimation is not useful; rather, it is necessary to reconceptualise this concept so as to allow for a fuller explanation of why people believe what they believe and, in so doing, explain why a regime, specifically in this instance the CCP, maintains its authority. As a consequence, this thesis intends to situate the Weber's conceptualisation of legitimation within the strategic-relational approach

¹⁸³ Grafstein (1981: 457).

¹⁸⁴ Shue (2004: 42).

The Strategic-Relational Approach¹⁸⁵

The strategic-relational approach is concerned with explaining social and political change and draws on Bhaskar's critical realism to develop an understanding of causal mechanisms within the social and political world.¹⁸⁶ The effect of the critical realist ontology is evidenced in the strategic-relational framework's distinctive understanding of structure and agency, in that it attempts to transcend the dualism present in Weber's approach by focusing on the relationship between the two concepts.¹⁸⁷ Implicit within this is the notion that structure and agency are recursively related and so, influence each other. Furthermore, this approach holds that these concepts are merely analytical on the grounds that "neither agents nor structures are real, since neither has an existence in isolation from each other."¹⁸⁸ In addition to being relational, structure and agency are also held to be dialectical, in that the product resulting from the interaction of structural and agential factors is distinct and so irreducible to the sum of these factors.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁵ Although the strategic-relational approach is principally associated with Jessop, it has also been developed by Hay. Moreover, it was Hay who introduced the concept of "discursive selectivity" into this approach and, as this concept is central to my reconceptualisation of legitimation, I will principally draw on Hay's version of the strategic-relational approach.

¹⁸⁶ As such, this ontological position holds that the world exists independently of our knowledge of it and that social phenomena be accorded causal powers. However, the realist ontology also attributes causal powers to generative mechanisms that are not directly observable and which researchers may not be able to empirically prove are causally efficacious. Furthermore, realists contend that there can be a difference between appearance and reality, so that though a real world exists, outcomes within it can also be affected by the way in which this world is socially constructed. For further detail, see Bhaskar (1989), Hay (2002), Marsh and Furlong (2002: 30-31) and Jessop (2005).

¹⁸⁷ These relational concepts concern the interplay of actors (agency) and the conditions in which their actions take place (structure). Agency refers to the "capacity to act upon situations" and is exercised by actors who are conceptualised as both reflexive and rational and whose actions reflect conscious attempts to realise their intentions. In light of this, not only individual people but also governments can be regarded as actors, albeit they exercise differing levels of power. Contrastingly, structure is held to be constituted through the regulation of social relations, in the form of institutions, practices, routines and conventions. Moreover, the strategic-relational approach is not the only framework that attempts to move beyond the structure-agency dualism. Examples of other prominent attempts include Giddens' structuration theory, Archer's morphogenetic approach as well as Bourdieu's concept of the *habitus*. For further explanation, see Hay (2002), Lewis (2002) and McAnnalla (1998, 2002).

¹⁸⁸ Hay (2002: 127).

¹⁸⁹ Analogously, this is represented in an extension of the coin example used in Giddens' structuration theory, with structure and agency regarded, not as two sides of a coin, but as "the metals in the alloy

The strategic-relational approach further distinguishes itself by dispensing with the conventional pairing of structure and agency. As Hay points out, “the very terms structure and agency themselves seem to imply an analytical *and* ontological separability at odds with the ontological assumptions of the strategic-relational approach.”¹⁹⁰ Rather, in contending that “all action contains at least a residual strategic moment,”¹⁹¹ it makes the conceptual move from the dualism of structure and agency to the duality of *strategically selective context* and *strategic actor*.¹⁹² Strategic actors are conceptualised as both conscious and reflexive, in that they are able to monitor both the immediate and longer-term consequences of their actions. They are also held to be intentional, even if these intentions are not always explicitly articulated, and have a partial knowledge of the context within which their strategies are formulated. Strategies represent “intentional conduct oriented towards the environment in which it is to occur,”¹⁹³ and constitute the means by which actors attempt to realise their intentions. As a consequence, an actor will necessarily make a strategic assessment of the potential courses of actions that will best allow intentions to be achieved.¹⁹⁴ Included within this assessment is also a consideration of the

from which the coin is forged.” As with looking at a coin, when the metals used cannot be distinguished in the fused result, so it is that we cannot see structure or agency but rather only the product of their relational interaction. Furthermore, as this analogy indicates, the strategic-relational approach focuses on the interplay of structure and agency in order to transcend their dualism. For further explanation, see Hay (2002: 121-129).

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., p.129 (Italics used in the original quotation).

¹⁹¹ This definition obviates the possibility that, within the strategic-relational theoretical framework, strategy is conflated with action.

¹⁹² Beginning with structure and agency, agency is initially situated within structure to create a structured context and structure is brought into agency to produce a contextualised actor. This new conceptual pairing is what Jessop terms a “doubled dualism” and represents the halfway point in moving towards the conceptual duality. To complete the process, the contextualised actor is then reinserted into the structured context and the structured context is brought back into the contextualised actor to leave a strategic actor within a strategically selective context. See Hay (2002: 127-128).

¹⁹³ Ibid., p.128.

¹⁹⁴ However, not all strategies are the result of explicit calculation but, instead, are the product of habitual practices. Drawing on Giddens’ concept of “practical consciousness”, these practices are held

context in which action will take place for, as Hay notes, “to act strategically...is to project the likely consequences of different courses of action and, in turn, to judge the contours of the terrain.”¹⁹⁵ In judging the terrain, Hay is suggesting that the context is strategically selective, in that it will select for certain strategies over others in order to allow “a given set of intentions or preferences” to be realised.¹⁹⁶ However, though the strategic-relational approach conceptualises contexts as favouring certain strategies over others and, indeed, certain outcomes over others, to the extent that instances of systematically structured outcomes may occur over time, it holds that the context does not determine the outcome. Different actors confronted by the same strategically selective context will not necessarily opt for the same course of action. Furthermore, the same actors facing similar circumstances to those faced before will not necessarily employ the same strategy. This is because the strategic-relational approach allows conceptual space for actors to strategically learn from past actions so that strategies can be reformulated to overcome structural constraints. Added to this, the effects of action, both intended and unintended, also impact upon the structured context, thus enabling a “partial” transformation of the strategically selective context to take place.

The Ideational and the Material

The strategic-relational approach, as outlined above, puts forward the concept of strategy as the means by which to transcend the structure-agency dualism at the heart of the Weberian approach to legitimation. However, in order to fully explain why the (majority of) Chinese people could believe in the legitimacy of the CCP and so do not attempt to challenge its authority, it is necessary to explicate the process by which

to be strategic on account of the fact that they orient the actor towards an environment. Furthermore, if such practices are rendered explicit, they reveal a strategic component. See Hay (2002: 132).

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., p.132.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., p.129.

their (non-CCP challenging) strategies are formulated. At issue is the extent to which strategy is informed by ideas and that to which it is formed by material effects.

Moreover, for Hay, this issue “tends to resolve itself into the question of whether ideas should be accorded a causal role independent of material factors or not.”¹⁹⁷

In the strategic-relational approach, the capacity of actors to formulate strategy demonstrates that they must have knowledge of the context in which they are situated. However, on the basis that actors cannot possess perfect or complete knowledge of their context but rather have only partial and not necessarily correct knowledge at best, Hay makes the point that, “if actors lack complete information, they have to interpret the world in which they find themselves in order to orient themselves strategically towards it.”¹⁹⁸ And it is through this need to interpret the world that the strategic-relational approach makes space for the inclusion of the ideational, as it mediates between the actor and the context.¹⁹⁹ Furthermore, Hay makes the point that “however accurate or inaccurate, such understandings inform strategy and that strategy in turn yields both intended and, inevitably, unintended consequences.”²⁰⁰ Consequently, in acknowledging that ideas can produce material effects and transform the context, the strategic-relational approach accords the ideational a role independent of material factors in political outcomes.²⁰¹

However, in much the same way that strategy is circumscribed by a strategically selective context, the strategic-relational approach also holds that the ideational is

¹⁹⁷ Hay (2002: 205).

¹⁹⁸ Hay (2002: 211)

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., p.209 (Italics removed).

²⁰⁰ Hay (2002: 212-213).

²⁰¹ McAnulla puts forward Giddens’ concept of the “double hermeneutic” as additional evidence that ideas are real on the grounds that it holds that “people have ideas about the world and that those ideas are also part of that world.” See McAnulla (1998: 11).

constrained by a context which is *discursively selective*. In essence, the context will select for particular ideas over others. However, as with strategy, the context does not determine which particular ideas an actor chooses to hold. Rather, a reflexive and strategic actor can assess the efficacy of particular ideas that enable him to best realise his intentions. Moreover, in order for particular ideas to be repeatedly held by an actor, it is necessary that they retain, what Hay terms as, “a certain resonance” with the experiences, both direct and mediated, of an actor.²⁰² That said, Hay also acknowledges “the power of those able to provide cognitive filters, such as policy paradigms, through which actors interpret the strategic environment.”²⁰³

Bringing Legitimation Back In

Bringing Weber’s conceptualisation of legitimation into the strategic-relational approach allows for the concepts of strategically selective contexts, strategic actors and discursive selectivity to be incorporated into its schema and, in so doing, extends understanding of legitimation beyond the identification of specific modes in Weber’s approach by interrogating the interaction of strategic actors and a strategically selective context from a spatio-temporal perspective. Indeed, as Gries asserts, [r]ather than seek a single lodestone of PRC legitimacy, analysts should focus on context: certain events make certain claims salient at certain times.”²⁰⁴ Consequently, reconceptualising legitimation in terms of the strategic-relational approach provides a framework in which this type of analysis can take place.

²⁰² Hay (2002: 211-212).

²⁰³ Ibid., p.214.

²⁰⁴ Gries (2004: 181). A good example of this is Beijing’s hosting of the summer Olympics games. Although it does not easily fit into a single mode of legitimation, it clearly has had a legitimating effect upon the Chinese government. That said, this effect has not been constant since the announcement of Beijing’s successful bid but rather varies over time. In addition, the legitimacy claims made by the government in hosting the games have not been accepted by all groups in society or by all members in every societal group at all times. Rather, at certain times, for example, the official opening of a new venue, the legitimating effect may increase for a short period of time.

Of the three central concepts within the strategic-relational approach, discursive selectivity will be the focus of enquiry in this thesis on the grounds that this concept mediates between the structural effects of rules and norms and the notion of belief that, Weber claims, informs action. Whereas the relationship between structure and agency was previously functionalist, in that actors were conceptualised as being able to “read off” such effects and act accordingly, the concept of discursive selectivity is more dynamic and, as a result, captures more closely the lived complexity of the real world. Moreover, as pointed out above, the concept of discursive selectivity opens up the possibility of interrogating the “cognitive filters” that are used by powerful actors to influence the formation of strategies by other less powerful actors. Of these, this thesis will focus on how the CCP has used the particular “cognitive filter” of the stability discourse to enhance its legitimation in the post-Tiananmen period. Of course, as pointed out above, it is important to emphasise that a “cognitive filter” is not determinative, in that not all people will necessarily be influenced by, in this instance, the stability discourse. Rather, by virtue of the fact that the CCP has heavily propagated this discourse in the post-Tiananmen period and that surveys have recorded the issue of stability as being of primary concern to members of Chinese society, it is possible to infer that the stability discourse has had an effect. Moreover, in terms of legitimating the CCP, the stability discourse works by arguing that the continuation of CCP rule is the only way in which stability can be safeguarded.²⁰⁵

²⁰⁵ This point does not deny that the structural constraints put in place by the CCP, including the use of coercive techniques, such as suppressing dissent that criticises its rule and dismantling organisations that could challenge its authority, have brought about a strategically selective context which favours the maintenance of Party rule. However, within the strategic-relational approach, this context, as with “cognitive filters”, is not held to be determinative and, indeed, the increasing numbers of protests taking place in China demonstrate that some actors are still prepared to challenge the government over certain issues. Consequently, the stability discourse can be understood as complementing and, indeed, may even justify in certain instances, the structural constraints put in place to maintain the Party’s rule.

Conclusion

This chapter has developed the conceptual framework in which analysis of the legitimacy effects of the CCP's stability discourse will take place. In this, the chapter first disaggregated the concept of legitimacy in order to make clear the definition that would be applied in this thesis. Adopting a social scientific conceptualisation of this concept, this thesis holds that it is possible for all regimes, including the CCP, to obtain legitimacy and, in so doing, allow for the conversion of political power into authority. As such, legitimacy is seen as desirable for a regime on account of the fact that it lowers the cost of governance. That said, this thesis does not hold that legitimacy is fixed and evenly spread amongst all groups in society but rather that it is a dynamic concept which can fluctuate both positively and negatively over time and amongst different groups in society. Consequently, it is possible for a regime to be considered legitimate, even if all groups do not view it as legitimate at all times. Indeed, drawing on Weber's hierarchy of legitimating relationships, the "intra-elites" relationship is held to be the most important in maintaining the legitimacy of a regime.

Having made clear the definition of legitimacy, this chapter moved onto consider the process by which a regime obtains its authority. In this, Weber's conceptualisation of legitimisation is the "standard" framework that has been used in analyses of the CCP's legitimisation. However, due to its overly structuralist tendencies, this concept was considered to be of limited explanatory value and, as a result, was situated within the strategic-relational approach. Through the concepts of *strategic actors*, a *strategically selective context* and *discursive selectivity*, this conceptual move worked to extend legitimisation beyond the identification of specific modes and, in so doing, opened up

the possibility of interrogating multiple temporally and geographically variable legitimating strategies. Moreover, through the concept of discursive selectivity, space was made in which to consider the role played by discourse in mediating between the structural effects of rules and norms and the *Lebenswelt* notion of belief that informs action, in particular, the “cognitive filters” that can be used by powerful actors to influence the formation of strategies by other less powerful actors. Of these cognitive filters, this thesis will focus on how the CCP has used the stability discourse to enhance its legitimation in the post-Tiananmen period.

Looking ahead to the next chapter, it will detail the methodological approach that will be taken in analysing the CCP’s use of this discourse. Moreover, in so doing, it intends to further develop the discursive selectivity concept by elaborating an explicit empirical method that has been absent in earlier analyses.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁶ See, for example, Hay’s work on the “winter of discontent”. Although Hay’s thesis is convincing, the lack of an explicit empirical method is problematic, in that it is difficult to follow his arguments and, as a result, to engage with his work. See Hay (1996).

Chapter 2: A Discourse-Historical Approach to Stability

Introduction

This chapter will detail the methodological approach to be taken in the analysis of the stability discourse. In this, the discourse of stability will be analysed as it is instantiated in language. Indeed, with regard to Chinese politics, Fang contends that language plays a greater role than in Western countries, to the extent that “Chinese political reality is essentially established and constructed through rhetoric”.²⁰⁷ This point is supported by Kluver, who asserts that the legitimacy of the CCP has been based on its ability to successfully promulgate national myths and maintain ideological orthodoxy.²⁰⁸ While not fully agreeing with the overdetermining value that these viewpoints place on language, this thesis does propose that discursive practices, and the ideas that they carry, have contributed to the legitimation of the Party. Moreover, amongst these discursive practices, this aim of this thesis is to understand how the discourse of stability has contributed to this legitimation.

In order to elaborate the methodological approach by which I will try to analyse this discourse, it is necessary to begin by specifying the discursive site of enquiry.

Following this, the chapter will outline the methodological approach that has been taken as well as specify the methodical tools that will be used in conducting the analysis. Finally, the chapter will detail the process by which texts were selected for analysis.

²⁰⁷ Fang (2001: 585). From a historical perspective, Gries also notes that “China’s emperors saw language as a tool of rule. Diction mattered.” This was not only because language served an ideological purpose but, Pye contends, because it also functioned as a loyalty device, in that using the language of the emperor was considered to demonstrate loyalty. In more recent times, the use of formulations (*tifa*) by CCP leaders has also functioned as a loyalty-testing device. Indeed, Fewsmith states that those who disagree with current policy or power arrangements, or who want to launch new policy initiatives, must challenge previous *tifa*.” See Gries (2004: 9), (Fewsmith (2005: 4).

²⁰⁸ Kluver (1996).

Selection of Source

In analysing the CCP's use of the stability discourse to legitimate its authority, this thesis will focus on the media as the site of enquiry. Although there are other discursive sites which may more directly reflect the views of the leadership, such as leaders' speeches, the media was selected because of the legitimating role that it performs within the Chinese political system in both reflecting the views of the leadership and disseminating these views to other groups within society.²⁰⁹ Indeed, Chen contends that, "the Chinese regime has been able to bolster its legitimacy by controlling the media and using them to cultivate a general sense of progress while perpetuating official paradigms that emphasize stability and economic development over political change."²¹⁰

The Party's control of the media is part of a broader propaganda system (*xuanchuan xitong*) that can be traced back to the Yan'an period prior to the establishment of the People's Republic of China. Moreover, the nature of this control was famously summed up by the former Secretary-General, Hu Yaobang, when he stated that "[t]he Party's journalism is the Party's mouthpiece, and naturally it is the mouthpiece of the people's government, which is led by the Party."²¹¹ For Kuo, "the underlying message of Hu's words is that news must be about the things that the Party decides the people

²⁰⁹ On the content of the media, Brendebach comments that, "[e]xcept for brief flowerings of public expression (as in the Spring of 1989) media content in the PRC has consisted of little other than the leadership's opinion made public." See Brendebach (2005: 30).

²¹⁰ Chen (2005: 4).

²¹¹ Cited in Lee (1990: 8). In the aftermath of the military suppression, Jiang Zemin, speaking at a seminar on journalism, echoed this sentiment when declaring that "[o]ur country's newspapers, broadcast and television are all the mouthpieces of the Party, the government and the people. This should be sufficient to explain the character of [Chinese] journalism and its important place in the work of the Party and the nation." More recently, Liu Yunshan, the current Director of the Central Propaganda Department, stated that "one of the primary tasks of journalists is to make the people loyal to the party." Cited in Brady (2006: 66).

should know rather than what they want to know.”²¹² Moreover, though the media industry has become increasingly commercialised in the reform and opening up period and, as such, is more dependent on advertising revenues than government subsidies, the CCP still exerts considerable political control over the content of the media. Commenting on this control in relation to the newspaper industry, Brady points out that “[i]f these papers step too far beyond the boundaries of official propaganda, central officials have no difficulty in reeling them back in to a more conservative line, whether through censure, sacking, or even arresting key staff.”²¹³

The central officials who are tasked with taking such actions are located within the Central Propaganda Department of the Chinese Communist Party (*Zhonggong zhongyang xuanchuan bu*).²¹⁴ In addition to the powers specified above, these officials have a range of other powers that are intended to ensure the “correct” dissemination of the Party’s message across the different media channels. In this, the Central Propaganda Department of the Chinese Communist Party (CCPPD) employs, amongst other devices, “news reviewer groups” (*xinwen yueping xiaozu*) which are made up of retired CCP “ideologues” and tasked with surveying media content and compiling regular reports on its political nature.²¹⁵ Commenting on these devices, Zhao states that “[f]or editors and journalists, the danger of postpublication retribution is omnipresent.”²¹⁶ Indeed, Chan contends that it leads editors and journalists to

²¹² Kuo (2002: 12).

²¹³ Brady (2002: 577).

²¹⁴ It is also important to note that the CCPPD executes this power through an extended apparatus of control which includes the Ministries of Culture, Education, Information Industry, Public Security and State Security as well as the State Council Information Office, General Administration of Press and Publications and the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television amongst others. For a comprehensive overview of the CCPPD, see Shambaugh (2007).

²¹⁵ The closure of the weekly supplement of *China Youth Daily*, “Freezing Point” (*bingdian*), in January 2006 was reportedly due to a report by a “news reviewer group” on an article by Yuan Weishi calling for a more objective view of China’s history to be presented in middle-school history textbooks.

²¹⁶ Zhao (1998: 21).

practice self-censorship when publishing media content.²¹⁷ That said, Tang also makes the point that the CCPPD “does far more than censor material...[i]ts primary function is to mobilize public opinion behind party policy and to promote the party’s legitimacy and its official ideologies”.²¹⁸ The CCPPD performs this function by laying down guidelines on what should be published in the media, as well as in other cultural industries, such as the arts and education.²¹⁹ Moreover, in publishing these guidelines, the CCPPD has the authority to set political formulations (*tifa*). Indeed, for Fewsmith, “[t]he ability to determine formal language and impose it on at least the major media outlets is an important part of power...[and] one that the CCP guards jealously.”²²⁰ This is because these formulations work to frame particular issues in accordance with the Party line and, in so doing, “set the tone” (*ding diaozi*) for the coverage by other non-government media organisations. Consequently, in analysing the Party’s use of the stability discourse, it is necessary to focus on those media outlets that most consistently use the “correct” formulations and, in so doing, reproduce the Party line.

The major media outlets in the PRC are, according to Zhao, Xinhua news agency, the *People’s Daily* newspaper, Central People’s Radio (CPR) and China Central Television (CCTV).²²¹ Of these, I intend to concentrate on the production of the stability discourse in the *People’s Daily* newspaper. While CPR and, especially, CCTV reach a substantially higher number of people and the stories produced by

²¹⁷ Chan (2007: 558).

²¹⁸ Tang (2005: 80).

²¹⁹ Brady (2002: 565). According to Zhao, these guidelines can be communicated through a number of different documents including “Party resolutions, directives, announcements, internal bulletins such as “Propaganda Trend”...speeches and informal verbal messages of leading Party figures.” See Zhao (1998: 20).

²²⁰ Fewsmith (2005: 3).

²²¹ Zhao (1998: 18).

Xinhua are picked up by newspapers across China,²²² as well as the fact that the circulation figures for “hard copies” of the *People’s Daily* has declined steeply in recent years,²²³ it is still regarded “China’s official mouthpiece” on account of the fact that it is the “organ” of the CCP’s Central Committee and under the direct control of the CCPPD.²²⁴ Indeed, Zhao makes the point that “[i]mportant editorials in *People’s Daily* are frequently transmitted by Xinhua News Agency, summarized on the national radio and television broadcasts, and sometimes reprinted by provincial Party organs.”²²⁵ Consequently, the *People’s Daily* still plays an influential role in “setting the tone” of the official discourse.²²⁶ Indeed, in his analysis on the usage of nationalism, Christiansen states that, “[t]he usage in the *People’s Daily* is carefully regulated; internal consistency, style conventions and restrictions on content are closely monitored, so that the *People’s Daily* stands out as the most authoritative general medium in China.”²²⁷

An additional reason for selecting the *People’s Daily* as the source of empirical analysis is its accessibility and availability. Indeed, commenting on the selection of media, Hansen et al. note that this is “often one of the most decisive

²²² This is due to the fact that Chinese news media are allowed only to source stories from Xinhua. See Tang (2005: 81).

²²³ Shambaugh notes that, from a figure of 5 million per edition in the 1980s, the number of copies sold per edition in 2004 was reported to be 1.8 million, with unofficial estimates putting the figure as low as 200,000. Moreover, as it is the paper of the Party leadership, its readership is mostly party cadres rather than the wider public. See Shambaugh (2007: 56).

²²⁴ Wu (1994: 195).

²²⁵ Zhao (1998: 18).

²²⁶ This was demonstrated in March 2007 when the Property Law was being enacted at a session of the National People’s Congress (NPC). This Law had engendered opposition from within the Party on account of the fact that it appeared to protect private property rights and, indeed, according to reports, it had been first slated for passage at a session of the NPC in 2005 before being withdrawn at the last moment due to a lack of consensus. According to a report in the South China Morning Post, in order to avoid any opposition to the Property Law during the NPC session in 2007, the CCPPD instructed media outlets to only publish stories on this Law from Xinhua and the *People’s Daily*, as they represented the “official” line. See “Media Told to Toe Official Party Line” (9 March 2007).

²²⁷ Christiansen (2000: 1).

factors...particularly where retrospective analysis is needed.”²²⁸ Consequently, in analysing the use of the stability discourse across the time period from 1989 until 2007, the ability to access materials both when in China and in the UK is an important practical consideration.²²⁹ In this regard, Chan notes that the *People's Daily* has been impressive in both compiling and making available its historical collection of articles. Moreover, this collection is available on a number of different formats, including CD-ROMs as well as a searchable database. In this research project, I have made use of a searchable database that has all the editions of the *People's Daily* from the years 1946 through to May 2007.²³⁰

²²⁸ Hansen et al. (1998: 101).

²²⁹ This consideration is less important when the time period under analysis is after 2000, as materials from most media outlets are available online. That said, the search engines on these sites do not generally allow the level of specificity that is possible with the searchable database.

²³⁰ The *People's Daily* databases that I used in the course of this research project were at three different sites: the University Zone Library of Ningbo and the Ningbo Municipal Library in the People's Republic of China and the School of African and Oriental Studies (SOAS) library in London, UK.

Selection of Methodology

The two most commonly used methods for interrogating the production of mass media are those of content analysis (CA) and discourse analysis (DA). In the case of the former, Berelson, in a frequently cited definition, states that CA is “a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication.”²³¹ In describing CA as “objective”, Berelson is referring to the ontological view put forward in this method that language constitutes a value-free medium which directly reflects users’ understandings of the world. Moreover, this ontological view informs content analysis’ epistemological premise that the CA practitioner, by carrying out “systematic” and “quantitative” analysis of language use, can “reveal” such understandings. That such analyses are held to be systematic is due to the fact that they are conducted in accordance with a prescribed number of steps. Although the exact number of steps does vary from one research project to another, there is widespread adherence within the CA field to a broad set of sequential principles. Consequently, most research projects begin by defining the problem that is to be researched before moving on to select both the media as well as the sample to be analysed. However, before the selected sample can be analysed, it is necessary for the CA practitioner to both predetermine the categories that will be highlighted within the texts as well as put together a coding schedule that will allow for comparative results.²³² Commenting on this set of principles, Hansen et al. contend that it “lays open to scrutiny the means by which textual meaning is dissected and examined.”²³³ Moreover, CA practitioners hold that these meanings are strengthened by the method’s emphasis on quantitative analysis, which is evident not only in the number

²³¹ Berelson (1952: 18).

²³² Hansen et al. (1998: 98–122).

²³³ Ibid., p.98.

of texts analysed in a CA research project but also in the use of sampling strategies to select these texts.

In contrast to the more quantitative approach of CA, discourse analysis adopts a more qualitative approach to the analysis of texts. Indeed, though van Dijk admits that DA is “an ambiguous concept”, on account of the fact that there are many different versions,²³⁴ Gill states that “what these perspectives share is a rejection of the realist notion that language is simply a neutral means of reflecting or describing the world, and a conviction in the central importance of discourse in constructing social life.”²³⁵ Indeed, unlike content analysis, DA views language as ideologically constructed. As Fowler makes clear, “[a]nything that is said or written about the world is articulated from a particular ideological position: language is not a clear window but a refracting, structuring medium.”²³⁶ Moreover, this view of language also opens up the space for the claim that the ideological effects of discourse play a role in shaping the social world. Consequently, discourse analysis views discourse as a form of social practice.²³⁷ Indeed, while this position is not, as Gill points out, consistent with a realist ontology, it is compatible with those of actualism and critical realism.²³⁸ Furthermore, it has clear methodological implications for practitioners seeking to carry out discourse analysis, in that it becomes necessary to analyse not only the text but also the context in which it is disseminated. Indeed, citing Bourdieu, Hyatt states that “it would be meaningless to try to analyse political discourse by concentrating on

²³⁴ van Dijk (1988: 24).

²³⁵ Gill (2000: 172–173).

²³⁶ Fowler (1991: 10).

²³⁷ The extent to which discourse shapes the social is one point of variation among competing versions of DA.

²³⁸ It should also be pointed out that Gill’s reference to realism appears to be to that more formally known as “classical realism” and, as such, does not apply to the discussion on realism in chapter 2, as this was concerned with “modern realism” (also referred to as “critical realism”). See Marsh and Furlong (2002: 30–32).

the utterances alone without considering the sociopolitical conditions under which the discourse is produced and received.”²³⁹

This dual focus on analysing both the text and the context in discourse analysis is what works to distinguish it from earlier approaches towards mass media.²⁴⁰

Moreover, in directly comparing discourse analysis with that of content analysis, van Dijk contends that this dual focus has the effect of making DA “less mechanical, less concerned with manifest content and more aware of the power of language and the varieties and contexts of language use.”²⁴¹ For Sloam, this difference between the two approaches can be condensed into the observation that CA “describes” language usage while DA “understands” such usage.²⁴² Indeed, because of this, Wang goes so far as to suggest that “[d]iscourse analysis is superior to content analysis.”²⁴³ However, though rejecting the notion that one method is necessarily “superior” to another, in this thesis, I have opted to use a form of discourse analysis on the grounds that it is more appropriate in realising the aim of understanding the ideational content of the stability discourse promulgated by the CCP. Furthermore, discourse analysis is consistent with the critical realist ontology, in which the strategic-relational framework is located, in a way that content analysis is not. That said, elements of content analysis will be incorporated into the methodology at instances, particularly in the selection of articles, where it is felt that they will strengthen the overall effectiveness of my approach.

²³⁹ Hyatt (2005: 515).

²⁴⁰ Fang (2001: 587).

²⁴¹ van Dijk (1985b: 46).

²⁴² Sloam (2007: 4).

²⁴³ Wang (1993: 561).

However, having selected DA, it is necessary to specify the particular form that it will take in analysing the selected media texts. Gill identifies three “broad theoretical traditions” within DA. The first tradition includes critical linguistics, social semiotics and critical discourse analysis while ethnomethodology, speech-act theory and conversation analysis are grouped in the second tradition. Those that take a post-structuralist approach, such as Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory approach and Derrida’s post-structuralism, are said to constitute the third tradition.²⁴⁴ In deciding the most appropriate tradition within which to situate this research project, it was possible to discount the second tradition on the grounds that its approaches are more generally used in the analysis of spoken communicative events. The third tradition of post-structuralist approaches was also discounted on the grounds that, though its approaches have been applied to the analysis of media texts, its actualist ontological position does not attribute any causal value to material objects and, as such, is inconsistent with the critical realist ontology of the strategic-relational approach.²⁴⁵ As explained in the chapter one, critical realist ontology holds that the world exists independently of our knowledge of it and that social phenomena be accorded causal powers. Moreover, these causal powers are attributed to generative mechanisms that are not directly observable and which researchers may not be able to empirically prove are causally efficacious. Consequently, realists contend that there can be a difference between appearance and reality, so that though a real world exists, outcomes within it can also be affected by the way in which this world is socially constructed.²⁴⁶ In terms of the strategic-relational approach, this ontological position

²⁴⁴ Gill (2000: 173–174).

²⁴⁵ Although the different approaches do vary on the role accorded to extra-discursive practices, they ultimately view discursive practices as determinative. For more on the ontological differences between the *empirical*, the *actual* and the *real*, see McAnnulla (2005).

²⁴⁶ For further detail, see Bhaskar (1989), Hay (2002), Marsh and Furlong (2002: 30–31) and Jessop (2005).

informs its understanding of the structure-agency relationship and, through the concepts of strategic actors, a strategically selective context and discursive selectivity, opens up the space for the role of discourse to be analysed within context of political action. Moreover, as indicated above, though discourse has effects independent of the context, it is not held to be determinative but rather, through the concept of discursive selectivity, the ideational and the material are held to be relational. As will be explained in greater detail below, this position is consistent with the view put forward in critical discourse analysis.

Consequently, in turning to the first tradition identified by Gill, I have selected critical discourse analysis as the most appropriate method with which to analyse the discourse of stability. Although critical linguistics (CL) and critical discourse analysis (CDA) are very similar and, indeed, CDA developed out of CL, the focus within a CDA project is on meaning-making at the discursive level, rather than just the lexical and sentential level, as is more often the case with the CL, and, as such, is more appropriate to the aims of my research project.²⁴⁷ Moreover, with regard to the analysis of media texts, Bell and Garrett note that, "CDA has produced the majority of the research into media discourse during the 1980s and 1990s, and has arguably become the standard framework for studying media texts within European linguistics and discourse studies."²⁴⁸ As for Chinese media texts, Kuo notes that "there have been very few studies in Chinese media discourse, which many have dismissed as "purely

²⁴⁷ This does not mean that I will not take account of meanings at the lexical and sentential level, rather that I will not be confined only to these levels. As for social semiotics, I have discounted the use of this method in this particular project, as I am not paying attention to visual dimension of meaning-making in this research.

²⁴⁸ Bell and Garrett (1998: 6). Indeed, Bell and Garrett contend that the dominance of CDA in the study of media discourse is such that it now occupies a "hegemonic" position in the field to the extent that other approaches have to outline their position in relation to it.

propaganda” and therefore not worthy of analysis.”²⁴⁹ Indeed, because of this, Fang argues that, “[a]s the mass media is a site for...discursive practices, it is therefore vitally important for us to gain a greater understanding of Chinese media discourse and how it is used in the process of political socialization, as well as how such discourse has changed across a period of time.”²⁵⁰ Consequently, in conducting a critical discourse analysis of Chinese media texts, an additional aim of this research project is to contribute both to the ongoing work in understanding Chinese media discourse and to the development of CDA by applying it to non-European language texts.

Critical Discourse Analysis

As pointed out above, the emergence of CDA has been traced back to the 1970s,²⁵¹ when a form of textual analysis, which later took on the name ‘critical linguistics’,²⁵² began to focus on the relationship between language and society and, in particular, the role played by language in the exercise of power.²⁵³ The significance of this conceptual move was that, prior to this point, most linguistic research had conceptualised language as an autonomous structure which could be analysed separately from the environment in which it was used. However, on the grounds that the use of language involves choices and that these choices are value-laden, practitioners of CL and, latterly CDA, argued that such a conceptualisation was not

²⁴⁹ Kuo (2002: 287). For further examples of CDA being applied to Chinese media discourse, see Wang (1993), Fang (2001).

²⁵⁰ Fang (2001: 585).

²⁵¹ While elements of CDA can be seen in Wittgenstein’s understanding of “language games” and can indeed, be traced all the way back to Aristotle’s notions of dialectics and rhetoric, Wodak confines her discussion to the emergence of CDA from the field of linguistics.

²⁵² Kress states that the term critical linguistics was “quite self-consciously adapted” from the critical theory associated with the Frankfurt School which avoided the materialist reductionism of classical Marxism by highlighting the role played by culture in shaping outcomes. See Kress (1988: 88), as cited in Wodak (2001: 5), Fairclough (2001: 33).

²⁵³ Wodak (2001a: 5).

possible. Rather, these practitioners argued that language plays an active role in shaping the world. That said, this role was not to be regarded as one of simple determination.²⁵⁴ Rather, the relationship between language and society was to be understood as dialectical, in that “discourses as linguistic social practices can be seen as constituting non-discursive and discursive social practices and, at the same time, as being constituted by them.”²⁵⁵ The effect of this view is that, in order to perform a critical discourse analysis of a text, it is necessary to situate the text within its context.²⁵⁶ Furthermore, in order for this to be properly carried out, CDA is necessarily interdisciplinary in that it requires “a theorization and description of both the social processes and structures which give rise to the production of a text, and of the social structures and processes within which individuals or groups as social historical subjects create meanings in their interaction with texts.”²⁵⁷ Consequently, a critical discourse analysis attempts to move beyond the linguistic so as to understand both how a text is produced and consumed. In light of this, the empirical chapters in the thesis begin a contextual analysis of the event so as to situate the selected text relating to this event in its historical and cultural context. Following on from this, an intensive analysis of this selected text will be produced and will be supplemented by a co-textual analysis that considers others articles that were published during this event relating to the stability discourse.

The central aim of CDA is, according to Phillips and Jørgensen, “to shed light on the linguistic-discursive dimension of social and cultural phenomena, and processes of

²⁵⁴ Wodak (2001a: 3).

²⁵⁵ Wodak (2001b: 66).

²⁵⁶ The main distinction between CL and CDA is that the latter views the text, as opposed to words or sentences, as the basic unit of communication. See Wodak (2001a: 2).

²⁵⁷ Ibid., pp.2–3.

change in late modernity.”²⁵⁸ More specifically, CDA pays attention to the concept of power and the role played by language in its construction and reproduction, with particular emphasis given to abuses of power, such as instances of domination and discrimination.²⁵⁹ Drawing on the notion of critique developed by the Frankfurt School, the aim of CDA in such instances is, according to Meyer, to “make explicit power relationships which are frequently hidden”²⁶⁰ with the avowed intention to engage in the “transformative politics” of social change by contributing to a redistribution of power within the communication processes.

However, as seems appropriate for an approach which is intentionally ‘critical’, critical discourse analysis has also been subjected to numerous criticisms, most of which have emanated from within the field of linguistics.²⁶¹ These criticisms can be grouped into four broad categories. The first criticism concerns the lack of a clear definition of the term ‘discourse’. For Widdowson, “discourse is something everybody is talking about but without knowing with any certainty just what it is: in vogue and vague.”²⁶² Indeed, Phillips and Jørgensen also note that “[t]he concept has become vague, either meaning almost nothing, or being used with more precise, but rather different, meanings in different contexts.”²⁶³ Certainly, there does appear to be a lack of consensus on an agreed definition, with each CDA practitioner seemingly defining the concept in relation to their own particular research enquiries. However, this stems in part from the very nature of CDA, which as Bell and Garrett point out, is

²⁵⁸ Phillips and Jørgensen (2002: 61).

²⁵⁹ However, Wodak points that “[f]or CDA, language is not powerful on its own—it gains power by the use powerful people make of it.” Wodak (2001a: 10).

²⁶⁰ Meyer (2001: 15).

²⁶¹ The most well-known of these criticisms were published in an exchange of articles between H. G. Widdowson and Norman Fairclough in the journal *Language and Literature* in 1995 and 1996.

²⁶² Widdowson (1995: 158).

²⁶³ Phillips and Jørgensen (2002: 1).

“best viewed as a shared perspective accompanying a range of approaches rather than as just one school.”²⁶⁴ Furthermore, this is not a problem that is solely confined to CDA but exists within the wider domain of the social sciences. Consequently, until such time as an agreed definition emerges, it would seem necessary to understand the term within the theoretical and methodological frameworks in which it is being deployed.

In addition to the ‘fuzzy’ concept of discourse, Widdowson raises a further criticism against CDA’s claim that “language realises social context” by arguing that linguistic analysis of the text does not, in itself, provide sufficient explanatory analysis.²⁶⁵

Stubbs also criticises this aspect of CDA by claiming that the link between the text and context is neither properly explained nor fully developed.²⁶⁶ However, while neither of these criticisms seems to be fully developed, Hyatt does raise a more legitimate concern over the concept of context. For Hyatt, “[t]he strongest of potential critiques lies with the fact that any attempt to look at the sociohistoric context of a text involves a process of social construction.”²⁶⁷ Indeed, it would seem that this problem is an inescapable corollary of the ontological view that knowledge is socially constructed. Recognising this, Wodak stresses the need for the adoption of a triangulatory approach, which can, if not overcome this problem, then at least serve to minimise it. For Wodak, a triangulatory approach can be achieved through the use of “different approaches, multimethodically and on the basis of a variety of empirical data as well as background information.”²⁶⁸

²⁶⁴ Bell and Garrett (1998: 6).

²⁶⁵ Widdowson (1995).

²⁶⁶ Stubbs (1997: 102).

²⁶⁷ Hyatt (2005: 523).

²⁶⁸ Wodak (2001b: 65)

A third criticism raised by Widdowson centres on CDA's notion of criticality. For Widdowson, this explicitly ideological position has the effect of producing biased analysis, both in the selection of the texts and in the readings of them by CDA practitioners.²⁶⁹ Luke also criticises CDA for producing ideologically biased analysis, contending that CDA is "more akin to political, epistemic stances: principled reading positions and practices for the critical analysis of the place and force of language, discourse, text and image."²⁷⁰ Fairclough has responded to these criticisms by pointing out that CDA practitioners make clear their ideological commitments, unlike analysts in other fields, and by emphasising that the results produced by a critical discourse analysis are inherently open-ended.²⁷¹ For Meyer, these criticisms directed at CDA's explicit ideological positions tie into the wider debates on whether any research can be carried out without "*a priori* value judgements" and whether it is possible to analyse empirical data without using "preframed categories of experience."²⁷² Meyer regards the positions in these debates as "irreconcilable" and, as such, reconciles himself to applying a critical approach towards research. While also taking a critical approach towards the analysis of text, Hyatt accepts the possibility that textual analysis can lapse into a more ideological reading and that, in order to reduce such a potentiality, "it is necessary for the analyst to be open about his/her positionality, to attempt to offer a reflexive account of the interpretation, to be aware that textual encodings are polysemic, and to emphasis the centrality of the context of the production and reception of texts."²⁷³

²⁶⁹ Widdowson (1995: 169).

²⁷⁰ Luke (2002: 97).

²⁷¹ Fairclough (1996).

²⁷² Meyer (2001: 17).

²⁷³ Hyatt (2005: 520).

The final criticism of CDA raised by Widdowson concerns the relatively selective linguistic corpus that is analysed by CDA practitioners. Indeed, for Widdowson, such a limited number of texts goes against the commonly understood idea of “analysis” as involving the examination of several different interpretations and, in so doing, further strengthens his position that CDA produces biased and unrepresentative textual analyses.²⁷⁴ In response, Meyer admits that “[a]lthough there are no explicit statements about this issue, one might assume that many CDA studies...mostly deal with only small corpora which are usually regarded as being typical of certain discourses.”²⁷⁵ Indeed, though Widdowson is correct to draw attention to the need for representativeness, he runs the risk of committing an epistemological fallacy in equating it with the number of collected texts. Though there is a weak link between the two variables, the number of collected texts is less important in terms of representativeness than the particular texts which have been collected. Moreover, given that it is rarely possible, or, indeed, practical, to analyse all texts on a particular subject, the decisions as to which text(s) should be analysed must be made by individual analysts. Consequently, in order to negate Widdowson’s charge, it is necessary for CDA practitioners to make transparent the methods by which texts were collected as well as making explicit the reasons by which analysed texts were selected. As will be explained in detail in the final section of this chapter, I have sought to address these issues in the empirical chapters of this thesis by including a “selection of data” section that explicitly details the process and reasoning by which each text was selected.

²⁷⁴ Widdowson (1998: 132). This criticism has also been raised by Stubbs (1997).

²⁷⁵ Meyer (2001: 25).

As stated above, CDA, like discourse analysis, should not be thought of in terms of a single unified approach. Indeed, Fairclough and Wodak have identified a number of major trends that have emerged within this approach: French discourse analysis; critical linguistics; social semiotics; socio-cultural change and change in discourse; socio-cognitive studies; discourse-historical method; reading analysis; and the Duisburg School.²⁷⁶ As a consequence of these trends, it is necessary to further specify the particular version of CDA that will be applied in this research project. In order to achieve this, Meyer suggests that CDA be thought of as “an approach...which constitutes itself at different levels – and at each level a number of selections have to be made.”²⁷⁷ The selections which confront a CDA practitioner range from those on the theoretical understanding of ‘discourse’ to be applied to whether a historical dimension of analysis needs to be included through to the selection of a methodical tools for the empirical study of the data.²⁷⁸ Moreover, as with the decisions that were taken at earlier junctures in the methodological process, the basis on which such selections are made is not in terms of one being more “correct” than another but rather being more appropriate to realising the aims of the research project. In light of this, I have opted to employ the discourse-historical approach, as laid out by Wodak, in carrying out the analysis on the discourse of stability.²⁷⁹ However, in keeping with Wodak’s insistence that the CDA practitioner should exercise “conceptual pragmatism,” I will necessarily adapt this approach to better fit, where appropriate, my research aims.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁶ For a fuller description, see Fairclough and Wodak (1997: 262–268). For an alternative overview, see Meyer (2001: 20–23) or Wodak (2004: 200–210).

²⁷⁷ Meyer (2001: 14).

²⁷⁸ Phillips and Jørgensen (2002: 64).

²⁷⁹ Wodak states that the discourse-historical approach was developed with the intention of analysing “historical, organizational and political topics and text.” Wodak (2006: 134).

²⁸⁰ For Wodak, “conceptual pragmatism” demands an approach which relates “questions of theory formation and conceptualization closely to the specific problems that are to be investigated.” Wodak (2001: 64).

The Discourse-Historical Approach

The discourse-historical approach, according to Weiss and Wodak, “attempts to transcend the pure linguistic dimension and to include more or less systematically the historical, political, sociological and/or psychological dimensions in the analysis and interpretation of a specific discursive occasion.”²⁸¹ In particular, this approach, by situating specific discourses within their socio-historical context, pays greater attention to the effect of the historical dimension on discursive practices than appears to be the case with other approaches within CDA and, in so doing, allows those deploying the discourse-historical approach to better explore the ways in which specific discourses have been subject to diachronic change.²⁸² As such, the discourse-historical approach appears to represent the most appropriate method with which to carry out my research objective of interrogating how the discourse of stability has been used by the CCP across the post-Tiananmen period.

Within the discourse-historical approach, the term ‘discourse’ is understood as “a complex bundle of simultaneous and sequential interrelated linguistic acts, which manifest themselves within and across social fields of action as thematically interrelated semiotic, oral or written tokens, very often as ‘texts’, that belong to specific semiotic types, that is genres.”²⁸³ Moreover, discourses are differentiated from texts on account of the latter being conceptualised as “materially durable products of linguistic actions”.²⁸⁴ In addition, discourses should not be viewed as closed systems but rather as ones which are open and mixed and, as such, can operate both in and between different “fields of action”. Discourses are also held to consist of

²⁸¹ Weiss and Wodak (2003: 23).

²⁸² Wodak (2001b: 65).

²⁸³ Wodak (2001b: 66).

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

both macro-topics and sub-topics, with new sub-topics being created through rearticulation in different fields of action. And, as with other approaches in CDA, the discourse-historical approach conceptualises discourse as a form of social practice that both constitutes and is constituted by other social practices. That said, the distinction between the discursive and the non-discursive is held to be analytical and, as such, cannot be demonstrated through empirical analysis of texts. Indeed, this view of the ideational-material relationship makes the ontological position of the discourse-historical approach consistent with that of the strategic-relational approach.

A distinctive feature of this approach is that it proposes a “theoretical” concept of context.²⁸⁵ Indeed, Gill makes the point that, “[w]hen a discourse analyst discusses context, he or she is also producing a version, constructing the context as an object.”²⁸⁶ In light of this, Wodak’s concept of context can be understood as offering a set of explicit principles upon which such construction can take place. Moreover, for Hyatt, this concept “persuasively argues that interdisciplinarity is a necessary and logical corollary if context is to be considered as more than merely situation in a spatial or temporal sense but a concept that requires much deeper theoretical description and justification.”²⁸⁷ Consequently, context is held to consist of four interrelated levels, in which the first level is considered to be descriptive while the second, third and fourth levels constitute “theories of the context”.²⁸⁸ For Wodak, this means that the first level should be concerned with “the immediate, language or text-internal co-text” while the second level concentrates on “the intertextual and

²⁸⁵ Meyer (2001: 29).

²⁸⁶ Gill (2000: 180).

²⁸⁷ Hyatt (2005: 519).

²⁸⁸ Wodak (2004: 205).

interdiscursive relationships between utterances, texts, genres and discourses”.²⁸⁹

Level three moves beyond the linguistic dimension in order to take account of social factors, which Wodak collectively refers to as “middle-range theories, that work to frame the “context of the situation” while the fourth level is concerned with so-called ‘grand theories’, that is the wider socio-political and historical contexts, in which the discursive practices are embedded.”²⁹⁰ That said, it is also important to point out that, though these levels guide the construction of the context, they constitute analytical distinctions and, as such, the context will be presented in the form of a coherent narrative relating to the relevant period.

Applying Wodak’s theory of the context to my research project, it is possible to state that the first level will involve the texts which have been selected for analysis, in this case those from the post-Tiananmen period. Moreover, the intertextual and interdiscursive relationships that form the second level of the context in which the selected texts have been published will be highlighted in order to understand both how different discourses have been used in the promulgation of the stability discourse. At the third level, the selected texts, situated within the fields of politics and media, are viewed from the perspective of the CCP’s legitimation while the strategic-relational approach will constitute the fourth level of context and, as such, the social will be conceptualised in terms of strategic actors, a strategic selective context and discursive selectivity. A final point on the construction of context is that, according to Meyer, in Wodak’s empirical work, “general social theory plays a negligible part compared with the discourse model...and historical analysis.”²⁹¹ Consequently, in situating the discourse-historical approach within the broader strategic-relational

²⁸⁹ Wodak (2004: 205).

²⁹⁰ Wodak (2001: 67).

²⁹¹ Meyer (2001: 22).

framework at the fourth level, this thesis intends to introduce a social theory that works to strengthen the results of its analysis and, in so doing, contribute to the development of Wodak's approach.

The final aspect of the discourse-historical approach to consider is the analysis of the texts. Drawing on Glaser and Strauss's Grounded Theory, Wodak emphasises that this part of the research process is necessarily abductive, in that there should be continual movement between theory and empirical data in establishing the categories of analysis.²⁹² That said, Wodak, in her own empirical research on racist and discriminatory discourses, has employed a "three-dimensional" discourse-analytical approach which is comprised of four distinct steps. Adapting these steps in order to fit in with the aim of analysing the CCP's use of the stability discourse, the first step is to analyse the main themes (or topics) of the selected texts. According to van der Valke, a theme can be defined as "a semantic macrostructure regulating the overall coherence and global meaning of a text including ideological dimensions."²⁹³ Indeed, Vaara et al. state that a thematic analysis is the "recommended way to start any critically oriented media analysis."²⁹⁴ This is because themes structure and stress what is most important in a news text.²⁹⁵ In order to carry out a thematic analysis of media texts, it is necessary to begin with the headline of the text. For Fang, "[h]eadlines signal a particular perspective or framework for interpreting what to follow...the overall gist or topic of a news article is presented or even summarized in the headline."²⁹⁶ Following on from this, "lower-level" themes within each paragraph of the selected text will be highlighted.

²⁹² Meyer (2001: 27).

²⁹³ van der Valk (2003: 318).

²⁹⁴ Vaara et al. (2006: 797).

²⁹⁵ van Dijk (1985a).

²⁹⁶ Fang (2001: 587).

The second step in the discourse-analytical approach is to analyse the discursive strategies employed in the selected texts. For Wodak, a strategy can be understood as “a more or less accurate and more or less intentional plan of practices (including discursive practices) adopted to achieve a particular social, political, psychological or linguistic aim.”²⁹⁷ More specifically, discursive strategies are defined as “systematic ways of using languages.”²⁹⁸ With regard to my research, I will pay particular attention to the use of argumentation strategies on the grounds that they are intended to persuade the reader of a particular viewpoint so as to generate consensus.²⁹⁹ Indeed, Werlich’s typology of discourse classifies political discourse as largely argumentative.³⁰⁰ In terms of specific argumentation strategies, I will follow Wodak in drawing on the pragma-dialectical approach to argumentation.³⁰¹ This approach proposes ten central rules by which argumentative discussions can analysed.³⁰² Moreover, these rules are not concerned with the content of the arguments but with the way in which such arguments are constructed.³⁰³ In this, an argumentative strategy can be identified by its “violation” of one (or more) of the ten central rules.³⁰⁴ However, I should also point out at this juncture that while such violations are useful in identifying specific argumentative strategies, this thesis does not share the pragma-dialectical approach’s view of such strategies as committing logical fallacies. Indeed,

²⁹⁷ Wodak (2004: 207).

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p 207.

²⁹⁹ Fowler (1991: 214).

³⁰⁰ Werlich’s typology identifies five different types of discourse: descriptive; narrative; explanatory; argumentative; instructive. See Werlich (1982).

³⁰¹ Wodak was the first CDA practitioner to incorporate aspects of argumentation theory into her research and is a further reason for my use of the discourse-historical approach in analysing the discourse of stability.

³⁰² For this list of rules, see van Eemeren et al, (2002: 182–186).

³⁰³ Commenting on these rules, van der Valk refers to the first five rules in the pragma-dialectical approach as “process-argumentation rules” and the second set of five rules as “product-argumentation rules”. See van der Valk (2003: 318).

³⁰⁴ It is possible for an argumentative strategy to simultaneously violate more than one of these rules.

this thesis is concerned with analysing the CCP's use of the stability discourse rather than determining its normative value.

In terms of argumentative strategies, though it is not practical to provide a complete list here, I will highlight those that feature prominently in the selected texts following preliminary analyses. The strategy of *argumentum at consequentiam* occurs when, according to van Eemeren et al., “unfavourable light is cast on a thesis by pointing out its possible consequences, without the rightness of the thesis itself being disputed.”³⁰⁵ In relation to the stability discourse, this strategy can be used both to justify action (e.g. suppression) by appealing to the consequences of inaction (instability) and justifying inaction (the demands of demonstrators) by appealing to the consequences of action (chaos). Indeed, this was the most frequently deployed argumentative strategy in the events selected for analysis and was central to the stability discourse's hegemonic presentation of a future in which CCP leadership maintained stability and the absence of its leadership resulted in chaos. An additional strategy is that of *argumentum ad hominem* which is, according to Wodak, an “attack on the antagonist's personality and character (of her or his credibility, integrity, honesty, expertise, competence and so on) instead of argumentatively trying to refute the antagonist's arguments.”³⁰⁶ In the relation to the stability discourse, a clear example of this strategy was evidenced in the treatment of Li Hongzhi, the founder of *Falun Gong*. In the selected text, which is analysed in chapter four, the actions of *Falun Gong* were attributed to Li's intention to “destroy” stability and, as such, worked to justify the government's suppression of the group in order to “maintain” stability. The final example is the “straw man” strategy which, according to Wodak, “amounts

³⁰⁵ Van Eemeren et al. (1987: 30), as cited in Reisigl and Wodak (2001: 74).

³⁰⁶ Reisigl and Wodak (2001: 72)

to...presenting a distorted picture of the antagonist's standpoint in order to be able to refute the standpoint or argument more easily and to make it less tenable."³⁰⁷ In relation to the stability discourse, this strategy works to deny proposed changes by distorting their overall content, or, indeed, by overemphasising a negative aspect of such changes in order to delegitimize such changes in favour of maintaining stability.³⁰⁸ Indeed, this strategy was deployed during the initial stages of the Beijing Spring in 1989, which is analysed in the chapter three, when the demands of the demonstrators were conflated with democracy and, in so doing, refuted on the grounds of causing instability.

In terms of analysing the content of the argumentative strategies, this thesis will make use of the linguistic device of *topoi*. This linguistic device can be traced back to Aristotle's theory of argumentation in which its literal meaning was that of "place".³⁰⁹ However, in more recent versions of argumentation theory, Wodak states that *topoi* have become understood as "recurrent argument schemes which are intended to make the audience draw a particular inference...often by using a fallacy".³¹⁰ In this, Wodak views *topoi* as "conclusion rules" that constitute the condition upon which the move from argument to conclusion is justified.³¹¹ Indeed, van der Valk shares this view when describing *topoi* as "general principles that support an argument without themselves constituting the argument itself."³¹² As with argumentation strategies, it is not practical to provide a comprehensive list here; however, I will highlight those that

³⁰⁷ Reisigl and Wodak (2001: 73).

³⁰⁸ An additional point to make is that it is possible for two argumentative strategies to be employed simultaneously. For example, the straw man strategy may be used in combination with that of *argumentum ad consequentiam*, so that a particular viewpoint may be distorted and then refuted by appealing to its negative consequences.

³⁰⁹ van der Valk (2003: 318).

³¹⁰ Wodak (2006: 136).

³¹¹ Reisigl and Wodak (2001: 75).

³¹² van der Valk (2003: 319).

feature prominently in the selected texts following preliminary analyses. The *topos* of stability presents “stability” as the condition upon which a particular course of action is justified, be that, for example, in bringing demonstrations to an end or suppressing movements that the government views as “dangerous”. The negative version of this *topos* is that of chaos and this works by justifying the same course of action but by presenting the demonstrations or anti-government movements as causing chaos. A further variation of these *topoi* is that of threat, which serves to justify the same course of action but, in this instance, by presenting the demonstrations or anti-government movements as threatening the stability of the country. Moreover, a more specific variant of this *topos* is that of external threat, which was particularly seen in the aftermath of the military crackdown in 1989 in attempting to justify this action by claiming that the protests were part of external threat from foreign powers to undermine China’s stability.³¹³

A further set of discursive strategies that will be analysed is that of the legitimization strategies used to justify particular viewpoints put forward in the selected texts. In this, I will use van Leeuwen’s typology of these strategies, in which four general types of “semantic-functional” categories are identified: Authorization; Moral Evaluation; Rationalization; and Mythopoesis.³¹⁴ The category of authorization refers to those strategies which make use of the authority of tradition, custom, law and/or those in whom the institutional authority is vested in order to achieve legitimization. The second category of moral evaluation refers to those strategies which reference particular value systems while the third category of rationalization achieves legitimization by

³¹³ Indeed, this *topos* gained credence from the sanctions that were subsequently imposed on China by foreign countries.

³¹⁴ See Van Leeuwen (2007) for an outline of this typology and Van Leeuwen and Wodak (1999) for an application of this typology.

appealing to the utility of “institutionalised social action”. The final category of mythopoesis uses narratives in which “outcomes reward legitimate actions and punish non-legitimate actions.”³¹⁵ With regard to application of this typology, Vaara, Tienari and Laurila caution that “Van Leeuwen’s model is a general one and has not been developed for legitimation in contexts such as the media.”³¹⁶ Indeed, van Leeuwen, in his application of this model, focuses on the legitimation of the institutional practice of compulsory education rather than on a specific form of discourse.³¹⁷ Consequently, an additional aim of this research project is to contribute to the development of van Leeuwen’s typology by employing it in an analysis of political discourse.

The third step in the discourse-analytical approach is to analyse the linguistic means employed in the empirical data. In particular, I will pay attention to the rhetorical means on account of the fact that such *figurae* are intended to persuade the reader. Indeed, as van Dijk points out, “both classical and modern rhetoric deals with the persuasive dimension of language and, more specifically, with the account of those properties of discourse that can make communication more persuasive.”³¹⁸ As with argumentation strategies and *topoi*, it is not practical to give a prescriptive list of these means; however, specific rhetorical means that will be highlighted include the modality of semantic propositions. For Fowler, “modal expressions signify as to truth (‘correct’), likelihood (‘certainly’, ‘might’), desirability (‘regrettable’); other modal usages stipulate obligations (‘should’, ‘ought to’) and grant permission (‘may’).”³¹⁹ In particular, I will pay attention to epistemic modality, which works to strengthen the

³¹⁵ Van Leeuwen (2007: 92).

³¹⁶ Vaara et al. (2006: 795).

³¹⁷ Though van Leeuwen did include media texts in his corpus, it did not feature prominently in his empirical analysis. Rather, more use was made of children’s textbooks and school brochures. Moreover,

³¹⁸ van Dijk (1988: 28).

³¹⁹ Fowler (1991: 64).

truth value of claims, and deontic modality, which works to impose obligation upon the reader. A further rhetorical means to be highlighted is that of metaphors. Van der Valk explains that, “in a metaphor, one domain of reality is compared with another, more familiar domain of reality, whereby the understanding of the less familiar domain is enhanced by means of common sense reasoning.”³²⁰ Moreover, in terms of persuasion, this use of analogous language can be effective in persuading the reader to accept the claims being forward. Additional rhetorical means that will be analysed include rhetorical questions and imperatives that direct the reader to a particular line of thinking, formulaic phrases such as CCP slogans that encode prefixed meanings, intensifying phrases like hyperboles that work to heighten the persuasiveness of claims as well as mitigating terms, what Kuo refers to as “downtoners”, that work to minimise negative effects. Other rhetorical means that are highlighted throughout the course of the empirical analyses will be defined at the appropriate points.

The final step in the discourse-analytical approach is what Wodak terms “specific context-dependent linguistic realizations”.³²¹ In terms of CDA, this step is important, as it explicitly acknowledges the relationship between the text and its context.

In terms of analysis, I will make particular use of the concept of political implicatures. In van Dijk’s analysis of a speech by the former Spanish Prime Minister, José María Aznar, to legitimate the decision to go to war in Iraq, he defines political implicatures as “inferences based on general and particular political knowledge as well as on the context models”.³²² Moreover, van Dijk distinguishes implicatures from implications on the grounds that the latter refers to semantic strategies taking place within the text while the former is concerned with pragmatic strategies taking place beyond the text

³²⁰ van der Valk (2003: 330).

³²¹ Wodak (2004: 206).

³²² van Dijk (2005: 65).

i.e. the context.³²³ Consequently, in order for implicatures to be understood, it is necessary for the reader to have contextual knowledge of the communicative event. Indeed, van Dijk contends that this knowledge rests upon three sources: readers' "representations of the structures of the discourse and its meanings; readers' "context model of the current communicative situation"; and readers' "more general knowledge about the political situation in the world and in the country".³²⁴ In addition, a particular function of political implicatures is that they are often used to indirectly delegitimize oppositional viewpoints while avoiding direct negative presentation of the other. Indeed, implicatures were found in all of the texts analysed in the empirical chapters, particularly in the texts relating to the "anti-Japan" demonstrations in 2005. This can be explained through the government's "softly-softly" approach in dealing with demonstrations for fear of turning the demonstrators' grievances away from Japan towards itself. As such, these texts avoided direct negative presentation of the demonstrations. As for further context-dependent linguistic realizations, these will be highlighted at the relevant points throughout the analyses.

³²³ van Dijk (2005: 69).

³²⁴ Ibid., p. 70.

Selection of Data³²⁵

Commenting on conducting media analysis, Hansen et al. make the point that “[i]t is rarely either possible or desirable to analyse all media coverage of a subject, area or issue.”³²⁶ Accepting the validity of this point, it is then necessary to make a number of decisions concerning the selection of the material to be analysed. Moreover, it is important to point out that the decisions taken should not be judged in terms of being correct or incorrect but rather in terms of being appropriate to fulfilling the aims of the particular research project. An additional point is that, in making decisions over the selection of materials, I acknowledge that there exist alternative ways in which to fulfil these aims; however, I hope that the justifications supporting the decisions taken in this research project serve to make them valid.

In the opening section of this chapter, I stated that I will principally focus my analysis of the stability discourse on articles published in the Party newspaper, the *People's Daily* on account of its authoritative position in representing the views of the leadership. Consequently, my initial search of the *People's Daily* database was to assemble those articles most relevant in the production of the stability discourse. The categories available on the database with which to search for these articles were: date (*riqi*); headline (*biaoti*); page number (*banci*); edition (*banming*); author (*zuozhe*); special column (*zhuanlan*); text (*zhengwen*). For this initial search, I performed a “keyword” search (*zhengwen*) for the term “stability” (*wending*) between the dates of

³²⁵ The process by which I selected the data does, for the purposes of presentation in this chapter, assume a linear, sequential narrative. However, the actual process was much “messier”, in that the selection of the data was necessarily abductive and involved constant movement between the data, the literature relating to the discourse-historical approach and methodical tools of textual analysis as well as relevant literature on China over a time period of approximately 18 months.

³²⁶ Hansen et al. (1998: 100).

26 April 1989 until 16 May 2007 (the last available date on the database).³²⁷ However, given that the number of articles mentioning this term totalled 63,431 articles, it was then necessary to introduce additional criteria in order to reduce the linguistic corpus to a more manageable size.

The first of such criteria was to establish the type of article that would be most relevant to my analysis. In this, I decided to restrict the search to editorials (*shelun*) and commentaries (*pinglun*).³²⁸ The reasoning for this decision was twofold. Firstly, as Wu points out, “[e]ditorials and commentaries in the *People’s Daily* represent the viewpoints of the Chinese leadership.”³²⁹ Indeed, Wu elaborates on this point by stating that “[c]ommentaries in the *People’s Daily* do not obtain their authority from their viewpoints, analyses of event, or good writing style, but from their position as a vehicle of command...[t]he more information they convey directly from the party-state Centre, the more they are seen as valuable, unquestionable representations of the will of the leadership.”³³⁰ Furthermore, in addition to important editorials and commentaries being carried by other media outlets, as noted above, Wu states that they can also form the basis of cadres’ weekly “political studies” sessions.³³¹ In light of this, the editorials and commentaries of the *People’s Daily* can be considered to

³²⁷ Although the term “stability” is used in a number of different contexts, such as financial stability, the physical sense of stability, which are not directly related to my concern with the political use of the term, my approach was to intended to initially include as many articles as possible before going on to reduce the linguistic corpus. Indeed, a search for the term “social stability” (*shehui wending*) in this period resulted in only 9,776 articles while, for the term “political stability” (*zhengzhi wending*), the number of articles totalled 2,650 in this period.

³²⁸ Wu classifies editorials and commentaries as belonging to the “typology” of commentaries. Furthermore, Wu also differentiates between two different types of commentaries: commentator’s articles (*pinglunyuan wenzhang*) and signed commentaries (*shuming pinglun*). Moreover, the first type of commentaries can be further distinguished between staff commentaries (*benbao pinglunyuan wenzhang*) and special commentator’s articles (*teyue pinglunyuan wenzhang*). See Wu (1994: 196–198).

³²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 195). Indeed, it was because of this understanding that students demonstrating in 1989 reacted so strongly to a *People’s Daily* editorial published on 26 April denouncing the demonstrations as causing “turmoil”.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, p.195.

³³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

occupy a privileged position in shaping the officially sanctioned discourse. Moreover, the second reason for specifically focusing on this type of article is because of its style, in that, unlike news reports, it is generally constructed around a particular theme and, in so doing, is more explicitly argumentative in justifying a viewpoint in relation to this theme. Consequently, given that part of my discourse-analytical approach is analysing the use of argumentation strategies, this type of article is more useful in understanding how the CCP uses the stability discourse in legitimating its authority.

However, the available categories with which to search the *People's Daily* database does not allow for commentaries and editorials to be searched independently of the other newspaper articles. Consequently, drawing again on Wu, I introduced the additional criterion of selecting editorials and commentaries that had been published on the front page. Indeed, though Wu states the distinction between the different types of commentaries is not clear-cut in terms of importance, he points out that “[c]ommentaries, including editorials, are published on different pages according to editors’ perceptions of their importance...[and] the most important appear on the front page of the *People's Daily*.”³³²

Following on from this, I then sought to collect the most relevant articles by focusing on specific time periods within the eighteen-year period. In total, fifteen time periods consisting of single eight-week blocks were initially selected. Moreover, their selection was based on two interrelated factors. Firstly, a preliminary survey of the articles from the *People's Daily* indicated that the usage of stability could be separated into four broad categories: social stability; political stability; economic

³³² Wu (1994: 196).

stability; and national stability. Secondly, a close reading of the literature pertaining to Chinese politics in the post-Tiananmen period led me to identify a number of significant instances in which the issue of stability was prominent. However, in order to make the collection of articles manageable, I opted to search three time periods in each of the categories of social stability, economic stability and national stability and, on account of a high number of instances, six time periods within the category of political stability. In addition to these nine time periods, further searches were conducted for editorials and commentaries that were published on the politically significant dates of New Year's Day (1st January), the date on which the CCP was founded (1st July) and National Day (1st October).

The main criteria for selection of articles within this time period, in addition to the two that were outlined above, were that stability featured in the headline of the article and that it was mentioned a minimum of five times in the body of the text. The significance attached to the presence of stability in the headline was drawn from van Dijk's observation that the headline "usually expresses the most important topic of the news item."³³³ In addition, stipulating the minimum number of times that stability was mentioned in a single text was intended to complement this criterion so as to ensure that the collected articles would be relevant in understanding the use of the stability discourse. These additional criteria were necessary because the term "stability" is used so frequently in articles in the *People's Daily*; however, in the vast majority of these articles, stability is not the central theme but rather is briefly included as part of a standard political formulation.³³⁴ This is not to overlook the role played by such uses of stability in constructing the stability discourse; indeed, I believe that these

³³³ van Dijk (1985: 69).

³³⁴ The most common of these formulations is: "stability is the foundation of economic development".

formulaic phrases have a diffuse effect in persuading people over the need to maintain “stability”. However, I also contend that, by analysing instances in which the use of stability is explicit, one is able to understand how stability is used in such formulations. In effect, I am suggesting that the use of stability in exceptional instances informs its usage in conventionalised slogans.

As for the searches conducted with the specified time periods, they produced inconsistent results, with relevant articles being found only in some of the time periods. Indeed, the surprising lack of articles on stability during some of these politically significant instances, such as the occasion of China’s formal membership of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 1999 and the changeover in the Party’s leadership in 2002, suggested that the stability discourse was not always employed in instances where the threat of instability was not explicit. In response, I decided to conduct a further, more comprehensive search of the database by going through all the published articles from the end of April 1989 through to the middle of May 2007 using the four criteria outlined above in order to collect the most relevant articles relating to stability.³³⁵ The completion of this search resulted in the collection of sixty-four articles in total. The next step was to sort through these articles in order to determine which would be most suitable for empirical analysis. This determination was based on a number of factors including the political significance of the article, the context in which the article was published as well as the way in which the concept of stability was used. Following this, I selected articles on stability that were published in relation to three events: the Beijing Spring in 1989; the “anti-*Falun Gong*” campaign in 1999; and the “Anti-Japan” demonstrations in 2005. These three events

³³⁵ To restate these criteria: editorials and commentaries; published on the page 1; feature stability in the headline; mention stability at least five times in the text.

were connected by the fact that they constituted exceptional instances in which stability was, or, at least, was perceived to be, explicitly threatened. Indeed, drawing on the concept of discursive selectivity, it could be stated that these events took place in a context which “discursively selected” the stability discourse to be emphasised. In addition, in each of these instances, the threat of instability was different and so, by analysing articles published during these periods, it was hoped that different aspects of the stability discourse would be emphasised which would allow for a fuller understanding in how the Party makes use of this discourse to legitimate its authority. In the case of the Beijing Spring, the authority of the CCP was being directly challenged by a group of protestors, initially made up of students, but later including other groups from society, who were demonstrating over aspects of the Party’s rule. In the case of *Falun Gong*, the authority of the CCP was perceived to be challenged by a quasi-spiritual group which propagated a belief system at odds with that “communism”.³³⁶ As for the “anti-Japan” demonstrations in 2005, these were ostensibly directed against the actions of the Japanese government and, as such did not present a direct challenge to the Party’s authority.³³⁷ However, the concern for the Party’s leadership was over how to bring the demonstrations to an end without having the protests being redirecting against the government.

Proceeding onto the question of how articles from these events will be analysed, for the chapter relating to the Beijing Spring, I opted to take the approach of intensively analysing two texts while in the chapters relating to the “anti-*Falun Gong*” campaign and the “anti-Japan” demonstrations, I intensively analysed a single text along with an,

³³⁶ In actual fact, the campaign against *Falun Gong* appeared to be at the insistence of Jiang Zemin and it is not clear that it was fully supported by other members of the leadership elite. My appreciation to Professor Zheng for pointing this out.

³³⁷ Indeed, there is much evidence to suggest that the Party leadership encouraged, if only tacitly, these demonstrations.

extensive analysis of the “co-texts” that made use of the stability discourse during the period surrounding these events.³³⁸ In order to do this, I specified a time period relating to each particular event in which I conducted a search of the *People’s Daily* using the same four criteria outlined above. From this, I selected the texts for intensive analysis according to the consideration of the article’s political significance as well as its use of stability. In this, the selection of these texts rested on the judgement of the analyst. As for adopting the approach of intensively analysing an entire text, I chose this method on the basis that it allowed for a fuller understanding of how the stability discourse was practically employed in legitimating the authority of the CCP as well as delegitimising those who challenged this authority. The other prominent approach to take when carrying out this type of analysis is to extensively analyse a wider number of texts according to a set of prescribed categories. In this, the discourse is broken down into a series of structural features. However, as with the decision to use discourse analysis over content analysis, neither of these approaches is necessarily better than the other. Rather, it is for the analyst to decide which approach is more appropriate in realising the aims of the research. Consequently, for this research, I felt that the intensive analysis approach yielded a greater explanatory value in understanding how the CCP employed the stability discourse in particular instances during the post-Tiananmen period. Indeed, when experimenting with the extensive analysis approach, I felt that it produced an empirical analysis which was disparate and fragmented and, as such, was distanced from how the stability discourse was used in the texts. That said, I also recognise that to rely only on intensive analysis can

³³⁸ The decision to omit the co-textual analysis in chapter three on the 1989 Beijing Spring was due, both to the limited coverage of the military suppression in its immediate aftermath and the political significance of the 4 June 1990 editorial. This editorial was published on the first year anniversary of the military suppression and provided a clear statement of the government’s justification for taking military action in 1989. In so doing, it hegemonically defined the usage of stability in the post-Tiananmen period and, as a consequence, I felt that this editorial should be intensively analysed.

produce an overly narrow understanding of a discourse. Therefore, the inclusion of the co-textual analysis is intended to supplement the intensive analysis and, in so doing, avoid such a result.

In terms of the empirical analysis, I opted to conduct it at the paragraphical level.

Although this is not necessarily the most conventional approach, I believe that it is the approach that best allows for the analysis to be both detailed and coherent.³³⁹

Moreover, this approach is also intended to make explicit my reading of the texts.

This is because I am aware that my analysis will produce a single reading that is derived from my particular position vis-à-vis the texts. Consequently, by making them explicit, I hope to allow other readers to engage with my findings and, in so doing, produce a fuller understanding of the stability discourse.

³³⁹ Many discursive analyses take place at the text or super-text level; however, while I feel that such analyses produce coherent accounts of a particular discourse, the lack of direct and specific reference to the texts make it difficult to engage with such accounts.

Conclusion

This chapter has explained how I will analyse the CCP's use of the stability discourse in legitimating its authority. It set out by identifying the mass media as the site of enquiry for the analysis of this discourse. This site was selected on the grounds that it both reflected the views of the leadership and most widely disseminated these views to the members of Chinese society. Within the mass media, the *People's Daily* was chosen as the source from which texts would be selected in the carrying out of this analysis. Although the information broadcast via the media of radio and, particularly, television reach a wider audience, the *People's Daily* was selected on the grounds that, as the "official mouthpiece" of the CCP leadership, it occupied an influential role in shaping the national discourse in China. An additional factor in the selection of this source was the greater likelihood of being able to access the articles most relevant to my research due its availability on different formats, such as CD-ROMs and databases.

The selection of the method by which the articles from the *People's Daily* would be analysed was between the approaches of content analysis (CA) and discourse analysis (DA). Although content analysis allowed for a higher number of articles to be analysed, it was felt that the richer qualitative analysis produced by discourse analysis was more appropriate to the aims of this research. Moreover, given that discourse analysis refers to a broad collection of qualitative approaches to textual analysis, it was also necessary to select a particular approach. In this, the approach of critical discourse analysis (CDA) was selected on the grounds that its understanding of the relationship between language and society was consistent with the ontological viewpoint of the strategic-relational approach. In addition, it has been frequently used in analyses of discourses in the media. However, as with discourse analysis, CDA is

also a broad collection of approaches that view language as a social practice.

Consequently, it was necessary to select a particular CDA approach. In this, Wodak's discourse-historical approach was selected due to its emphasis on the historical dimension of discourse which was appropriate to my aim of examining the stability discourse across the post-Tiananmen period. Moreover, this approach incorporated argumentation theory into its analysis which was also appropriate to my aim of focusing on the legitimacy effect of the stability discourse.

The selection of articles from the *People's Daily* to be analysed was determined by a number of searches carried out on the newspaper's database. These searches were conducted in accordance with a set of criteria that were developed abductively and resulted in the selection of texts related to three events: Beijing Spring in 1989; the "anti-Falun Gong" campaign in 1999; and the "anti-Japan" demonstrations in 2005. These events were selected on the grounds that they constituted exceptional instances in which the stability discourse was used to legitimate the CCP's authority. Moreover, in each of these three instances, the challenge to the Party's power was different and, as such, carrying an analysis of how the stability discourse was used in each of these instances would hopefully lead to a more complete understanding of the discourse.

Looking ahead to the empirical section of the dissertation, the following three chapters will diachronically analyse the use of the stability discourse in chronological order, beginning with the Beijing Spring in 1989 in chapter three before moving onto analyse its usage in the 1999 "anti-Falun Gong" campaign in chapter four and then finally examining the "anti-Japan" demonstrations in 2005 in chapter five.

Chapter 3: The 1989 “Beijing Spring”

Introduction

This chapter will analyse two editorials from the *People's Daily* that were published in relation to the events of 1989. The term “Beijing Spring” (*Beijing zhi chuan*) is collectively used to refer to both the demonstrations that began soon after the death of Hu Yaobang on 15 April and the military suppression that brought these demonstrations to an end on 4 June.³⁴⁰ As made clear in the previous chapter, the decision to focus on this particular period is because the demonstrations that took place in 1989 constituted a fundamental challenge to the authority of the CCP. Indeed, by the time martial law had been imposed on 4 June, what had begun as small demonstrations made up of mostly students and teachers calling for political reforms had expanded to include people from various strata throughout Chinese society, including even Party cadres,³⁴¹ demanding democratic change. As such, the demonstrations represented a pan-class, region-wide challenge to the leading role of the CCP in Chinese society. In light of this challenge to the CCP's authority, the intention of analysing the two editorials is to examine how the discourse of stability was employed to maintain the Party's legitimacy.

³⁴⁰ The term “Beijing Spring” was originally given to the pro-democracy and human rights, also known as the Democracy Wall Movement, that broke out in Beijing in September 1978. However, in light of the fact that it has also been used by academics, amongst others, to refer to the demonstrations that took place in 1989, I have opted to use this term, as it more adequately refers to both the demonstrations and the military suppression than would be the case with the alternative terms the “Democracy Movement” or the “Tiananmen Massacre/Tiananmen Incident”. Moreover, these alternative terms have also been used in a more political explicit manner than has been the case with “Beijing Spring”. However, the drawback in using this term is that it geographically restricts the demonstrations to Beijing and, as a result, neglects the demonstrations that took place throughout the country.

³⁴¹ According to an internal party audit conducted after the Tiananmen Incident, more than 10,000 cadres took part in the Beijing demonstrations. See Baum (1994: 276).

The first article to be analysed in this chapter is entitled “Safeguard the Overall Situation, Safeguard Stability” and was published on 29 April. This editorial was selected because it was published during the initial demonstrations and, as a result, demonstrated how the CCP leadership attempted to use stability to both maintain its legitimacy against the challenge posed by the demonstrations and undermine the legitimacy of the demonstrators. In contrast, the 4 June editorial, entitled “Stability Prevails Over Everything”, was published on the first year anniversary of the military suppression. Consequently, this editorial was chosen because it demonstrated how the CCP leadership attempted to use stability to justify the politically significant decision to use military force in order to bring the demonstrations to an end.

As explained in chapter two, the analyses of the editorials will begin by presenting a contextual analysis of the events that situates the publication of the editorial in the political context of this period. Following on from this, an intensive analysis of the editorial will be carried out at the paragraphical level so as to make explicit my reading of the text. In this, the aim of this reading is to answer three principal questions:

1. What meaning was given to stability in the editorial?
2. How did the editorial attempt to persuade the reader of the validity of this meaning?
3. How did this use of stability relate to the legitimacy of the CCP?

29 April Editorial: Contextual Analysis³⁴²

The first article to be analysed is an editorial from the *People's Daily* entitled "Safeguard the Overall Interests, Safeguard Stability" that was published on 29 April 1989.³⁴³ The timing of the editorial was significant, in that it came three days after another *People's Daily* editorial, "It is Necessary to Take a Clear-Cut Stand Against Turmoil".³⁴⁴ This earlier editorial represented the first official response from the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leadership to the ongoing student demonstrations. These protests had begun as mourning for the passing of the former Secretary-General of the CCP, Hu Yaobang, who had died from a heart attack on 15 April. However, as Blecher points out, these demonstrations "quickly went well beyond merely honouring a deceased hero."³⁴⁵ Indeed, for Baum, the death of Hu Yaobang provided the "catalytic spark"³⁴⁶ to a set of tensions that had been in evidence throughout parts of Chinese society since the middle of the 1980s and which culminated in protests that "presented the regime with one of the greatest threats to its power and policies encountered in the forty years since the Communists came to power."³⁴⁷

Pre-Tiananmen Tensions

Such tensions had emerged in response to the deepening changes being brought about in the "reform and opening up" period that began in 1978. The most visible evidence of these tensions was seen towards the end of 1986 and into the beginning of 1987 when students from different universities carried out a series of demonstrations. The

³⁴² The complexity and varied nature of the events surrounding the Beijing Spring of 1989 is such that I do not intend to fully examine them here. Rather, my purpose in briefly detailing them is both to demonstrate that the Beijing Spring of 1989, in terms of challenging the legitimacy of the CCP, was not an isolated, even if unprecedented, event as well as to provide adequate contextual understanding for the textual analysis.

³⁴³ Shelun (29 April 1989).

³⁴⁴ Shelun (26 April 1989).

³⁴⁵ Blecher (2003: 100).

³⁴⁶ Baum (1994: 247).

³⁴⁷ Manion (1990: xxxvi).

initial protests took place in Hefei in Anhui Province and were a reaction to perceived CCP interference over individual students' attempts to take part in local elections.³⁴⁸ However, the demonstrations quickly spread and, in addition to specific grievances over the quality of their living and studying conditions, became more concerned with the lack of political reform being undertaken by the government.³⁴⁹ Demonstrations were held in cities across China including Shanghai, Kunming, Chongqing and Shenzhen,³⁵⁰ at which, according to Blecher, banners bearing slogans such "long live freedom" and "give us democracy" could be seen.³⁵¹ The leadership of the CCP did not respond to this series of protests until a mass rally, organised by Beijing students, defied a recently enacted regulation requiring prior approval of demonstrations and took place in Tiananmen Square in early January 1987.³⁵² According to Spence, "the party hard-liners...moved swiftly to quash the burgeoning student movement, striking not at the students themselves, but at those the students found most inspirational."³⁵³ These inspirational figures included academics, such as Fang Lizhi,³⁵⁴ and writers, such as Liu Binyan and Wang Ruowang, who, in the view of the CCP leadership, promulgated ideas that both attacked the Party and encouraged "bourgeois

³⁴⁸ Saich (2004: 66).

³⁴⁹ According to He, it was specifically the lack of any political reforms to emerge from the conclusion of the Sixth Plenum of the Twelfth Party Congress in September 1986 that caused disaffection amongst university students. See He (2001: 119–120).

³⁵⁰ Spence (1999: 683). Spence estimates that the demonstration in Shanghai consisted of approximately 30,000 students as well as 30,000–40,000 Shanghai residents. However, despite the apparent show of support in this instance, Saich makes the point that the student demonstrations in 1986, in general, found little resonance with the wider populace because their grievances, although against the policies of the CCP, were perceived as being narrowly concerned with student life. See Saich (2004: 66)

³⁵¹ Blecher (2003: 96–97).

³⁵² Kwong (1988: 972).

³⁵³ Spence (1999: 684).

³⁵⁴ Fang was the Vice-President of the University of Science and Technology in Hefei, the site of the initial demonstrations, and for Kwong, Fang probably gave support to these protests. Indeed, his name appeared on the ballot for the rescheduled election on 29 December. In addition, Blecher claims that a lecture tour of several university campuses undertaken by Fang in November 1986 in which he had advocated the complete "westernization" of China with regard to democracy, human rights and popular sovereignty, was also instrumental in sparking the student demonstrations. See Kwong (1988: 973), Blecher (2003: 97).

liberalisation". A further casualty of the leadership's response to the student protests was CCP Secretary-General, Hu Yaobang. Although Hu resigned following a "self-criticism of his mistakes on major issues of political principles",³⁵⁵ his resignation was widely seen as being forced by the conservative faction within the leadership for his perceived softness on "bourgeois liberalisation", as well as his tacit support for the student demonstrations.³⁵⁶ However, the manner of his resignation, in that the putative leader of the CCP had been forced to issue a "self-criticism" did, according to Spence, leave "a bad taste in Chinese mouths".³⁵⁷

Although the student demonstrations had been successfully put down by the CCP, the tensions that had given rise to them continued to increase and, indeed, were no longer solely concerned with the lack of political reforms but also focused on the direction of the economic reforms. As a consequence, by 1989, there was, according to Blecher, a "palpable air of crisis".³⁵⁸ With regard to the economy, the early successes of the reforms had given way to an increasing number of problems. More specifically, these problems began to emerge in what Shi has identified as the second stage of economic reforms.³⁵⁹ The beginning of this stage was signalled by the "Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Reform of the Economic System" that was taken at the Third Plenum of the Twelfth Congress in October 1984. In contrast to the initial reforms, which were characterised by an emphasis on decentralisation and, according to Shi, resulted in a "non-zero sum game", the second

³⁵⁵ Spence (1999: 685).

³⁵⁶ Baum (1994: 247–251). However, Shi contends that it was not solely the conservative faction that forced Hu's resignation but rather a "joint venture" between the reformers and the conservatives. Furthermore, this alliance was formed in response to proposals by Hu that intended to punish party officials engaged in corruption and "official profiteering" (*guandao*). See Shi (1990: 1191).

³⁵⁷ Spence (1999: 697). Saich makes the point that the manner of Hu's resignation left intellectuals, in particular, disillusioned with the Party leadership, so that "many of the harsh judgements that had been reserved for private discussion were thrown into the public domain." See Saich (1994: 258).

³⁵⁸ Blecher (2003: 99).

³⁵⁹ See Shi (1990: 1188–1190).

stage was intended to transform China from a planned to a market economy. However, for Shi, this was done “without fully acknowledging the complex internal dynamics of such a transformation or the political and social impact of the proposed changes.”³⁶⁰ Ironically, Shi contends that it was the success of the first stage which contributed to the problems encountered in the second one, both in the (over)confidence of the leaders to push ahead with the reforms that they believed would generate sufficient economic growth to overcome any potential problems and the raised expectations of the public which was unprepared for the possibility that the reforms could create losers as well as winners.³⁶¹

The centrepiece of this second stage was the introduction of price reform, in which the state’s control over pricing was to be replaced by that of the market. The Decision announced at the Third Plenum made clear the importance of price reform to continued economic reform by stating that, “[t]he various aspects of the reform in economic structure, including the planning and wage systems, depend to a large extent on reform of the price system. Pricing is a most effective means of regulation, and national prices constitute an important condition for ensuring a dynamic yet not chaotic economy. Therefore reform of the price system is the key to reform of the entire economic structure.”³⁶² However, before moving towards a system in which all prices would be set through market interactions, the leadership opted for a “dual-track” pricing system, in which the price of certain goods would still be administratively determined. In line with the gradual expansion of commodities that were subject to market pricing, in May 1988, the leadership choose to expand price reforms to the foodstuffs of meat, vegetables, fruit and sugar. According to Stavits,

³⁶⁰ Shi (1990: 1189).

³⁶¹ Shi (1990: 1189).

³⁶² Beijing Review, vol.27, no.44 (29 October 1984), p.viii, as cited in Chan (1987: 98).

“[c]hinese leaders were very much aware that sharp increases in food prices [had] sparked politically destabilizing strikes and demonstrations in Poland and other countries.”³⁶³ Despite this, by the middle of May, prices in non-staple foods had risen by 24.2% while the price of vegetables increased by 49.7%.³⁶⁴ Although food subsidies were issued to certain groups by the government in an attempt to mitigate the rise in food prices,³⁶⁵ the effect of the price reform, along with the panic buying that accompanied it,³⁶⁶ was to strengthen the inflationary pressures that were already in the economy.³⁶⁷

Despite a period of economic retrenchment towards the end of 1988 that was intended to cool the economy, by 1989, the People’s Republic of China (PRC) was experiencing the highest level of inflation in its history, with the rate above 20% in some urban areas.³⁶⁸ For many workers, the rate of inflation was outpacing the increase in wages and merely strengthened the impression that the economic reforms were leaving them worse off.³⁶⁹ This impression was created as the reform process brought an end to the welfare system of the “iron rice bowl”. Principally, this came through the implementation of a contract-based system of employment for workers, which was intended to remove the guarantee of lifetime employment and so improve the productivity of enterprises. However, enterprises also functioned as the provider

³⁶³ Stavis (1990: 41).

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

³⁶⁵ These groups were college students, technical students, government workers, workers in state-run enterprises, retirees, and minority nationalities. See Stavis (1990: 41).

³⁶⁶ Spence notes that the high level of inflation caused outbreaks of panic buying and hoarding of goods, adding to the sense of crisis in China at the time. See Spence (1999: 692–694).

³⁶⁷ According to Stavis, the official price index rose by 8.8 percent in 1985, 6 percent in 1986, and between 7.3 to 9.7 percent in 1987. He attributes the high inflation to the increases in wages for state workers, increase in availability of credit, increase in the money supply as well as an increase in investments. See Stavis (1990: 40).

³⁶⁸ Shi also cites the urban cost-of-living index which rose by nearly 40% in 1988 as evidence of high inflation at the time. See Shi (1991: 1190).

³⁶⁹ Stavis cites the 1988 Economic and Social Development Communiqué issued by the State Statistics Bureau as showing that approximately 35% of families in 13 urban cities experienced a decline in their living standards. See Stavis (1990: 41).

of welfare services, such as medical care and housing, to their employees and a further effect of this change was to make workers' access to these services less secure. As Saich sums up, "[e]ssentially, urban workers were offered a deal that involved giving up their secure, subsidy-supported low-wage lifestyle for a risky contract-based system that might result in higher wages at the possible price of rising costs and unemployment."³⁷⁰ And although Saich contends that, prior to the Beijing Spring, workers decided to "reserve judgement",³⁷¹ a number of strikes and slowdowns by workers did take place from 1985 onwards.³⁷²

This negative impression of the economic reforms was further compounded by the perception that party officials were abusing their political position to engage in widespread corruption, in particular, a form of corruption dubbed "official profiteering" (*guandao*). This type of corruption was made possible through the exploitation of the "dual-track" system set up for the policy of price reform that created both a free market price and a lower, administratively determined, price and involved both lower-level officials as well as, indirectly at the very least, leaders at the highest level. According to Stavis, lower-level officials' participation extended to accepting bribes from companies to sell them allocations of the lower-priced goods, from which profits could be made by reselling the goods at the higher market price.³⁷³ Shi also points out that the link to higher level officials came from the fact that many of the companies to whom these lower priced goods were being sold were family members and relatives.³⁷⁴ Indeed, so severe was the perception amongst large parts of the populace that this type of corruption was taking place that Saich contends it had

³⁷⁰ Saich (2004: 70–71).

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

³⁷² Blecher (2003: 95–97).

³⁷³ Stavis (1990: 41).

³⁷⁴ Shi (1990: 1190).

the effect of eroding “any vestigial notions that the party was a moral force in Chinese society.”³⁷⁵

In addition to the economic problems that were escalating across China during this period, tensions were also becoming more apparent within the leadership of the CCP. By 1989, Blecher notes that the leadership “was widely known to be weak and divided.”³⁷⁶ Indeed, Baum has characterised the political dynamic of the reform process throughout the 1980s as being marked by cycles of “letting go” (*fang*) and “tightening up” (*shou*).³⁷⁷ These cycles were considered to indicate whether the “reform” or “conservative” faction held sway within the leadership at a particular time. Periods of liberalisation were understood as periods in which the “reform” faction was decisive while periods of conservatism implied that the “conservative” faction was more powerful. As well as giving rise to political infighting, the effect of these cycles of “letting go” and “tightening up” was to create uncertainty over the future direction of China amongst the public and this was further heightened by the relatively open debate on the subject that took place within the media during this period.³⁷⁸

Alongside these tensions, Spence also points out that 1989 was a symbolic year for revolution, marking not only the 200th anniversary of the French Revolution but also the 70th anniversary of the May Fourth Movement as well as the 40th year of the

³⁷⁵ Saich (2004: 71). Figures for 1987 showed that approximately 150,000 CCP members had been punished for corruption, with 25,000 also being expelled from the party altogether. What is not known is how many members were investigated in total. See Spence (1999: 694).

³⁷⁶ Blecher (2003: 99).

³⁷⁷ See Baum (1994).

³⁷⁸ Petracca and Xiong highlight the debate between proponents of neo-authoritarianism and democracy in the *People's Daily* and *Guangming Daily* from the middle of 1988 until the government crackdown in June 1989 as making “China's urban intellectuals, students, and workers ... believe that “all is possible”.” See Petracca and Xiong (1990: 1100).

founding of the PRC.³⁷⁹ Indeed, according to Manion, “[e]ven before Hu’s death...student activists at Beijing University had begun organizing a big prodemocracy demonstration for the anniversary of the 1919 May Fourth Movement.”³⁸⁰ As a consequence, when Hu’s death was announced, it was not surprising that students mobilised so quickly to express their grievances, especially given the fact that Hu’s official obituary ignored their calls for a reassessment of his career by omitting any reference to his resignation as CCP Secretary-General in 1987.³⁸¹

The Outbreak of Protests

The first indication that the mourning by students for Hu’s passing was becoming more political came two days after the announcement of 15 April when hundreds of students, as well as teachers, from the University of Political Science and Law went to Tiananmen Square to lay wreaths in commemoration at the foot of the Monument to the People’s Heroes. However, in actions that had echoes in those that took place in the same space during the commemoration for Zhou Enlai on *Qingming* festival in 1976, the students and teachers also used the opportunity to shout slogans such as “long live democracy”, “long love freedom”, “long live the rule of law” and “down with corruption”.³⁸² The following day, thousands of students from Beijing University and People’s University gathered in Tiananmen Square and listened to a series of impromptu speeches on political reform. After the speeches had ended, hundreds of students also remained behind and staged a sit-in in front of the Great Hall of the

³⁷⁹ Spence (1999: 696).

³⁸⁰ Manion (1990: xv).

³⁸¹ Ash (1989: 667).

³⁸² *Ibid.*, p. xv. This is not to suggest that, either in size or political significance, these actions were directly comparable to those that occurred in the “April Fifth” Movement (*siwu yundong*) but rather that, on both occasions, the performance of grievance became a political moment.

People.³⁸³ However, it was not until 20 April, when approximately ten thousand students massed in front of Xinhuaamen and attempted to gain entrance to the leadership's residential compound at Zhongnanhai, that clashes between students and armed military guards took place.³⁸⁴ The students had a list of five issues that they wished to present to the Party leaders for discussion concerning a re-evaluation of the 1986 demonstrations and Hu's role in these demonstrations, the financial dealings of the leaders and their relatives, political freedoms as well as funding for tertiary education.³⁸⁵ Needless to say, their list was not presented to the leaders.

The occasion of Hu Yaobang's memorial service on 22 April presented another opportunity for these demands to be communicated to the Party leadership. Indeed, according to Esherick and Wasserstrom, "[i]n the People's Republic, memorial services for important political leaders are... critical political moment[s]" on account of the fact that the memorial service requires space to be given to public mourning and so opens up the potential for destabilising volatility.³⁸⁶ With thousands of mourners congregated in Tiananmen Square, the students again attempted to petition the government to meet with them and discuss their concerns. This petition took the form of three students kneeling on the steps of the Great Hall of the People, where the memorial service for Hu was taking place, requesting to be received by the Premier, Li Peng. For Oksenberg and Sullivan, this performance was "consciously emulating the way virtuous but loyal censors remonstrated in imperial times to petition the

³⁸³ Manion (1990: xv).

³⁸⁴ Blecher (2003: 100).

³⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 100.

³⁸⁶ Esherick and Wasserstrom (1992: 33). Oksenberg and Sullivan point out that, as Hu was not a prominent leader in the Party at the time of his death, it was not necessary to hold a memorial service. Consequently, they speculate that it may have been held in order to mollify the public. See Oksenberg and Sullivan (1990: 190).

government.”³⁸⁷ However, the petition was not received by Li Peng but, instead, by two members of the funeral committee and Manion notes that the students “considered that response inadequate and even humiliating.”³⁸⁸

The following day, the students released a seven point petition (*qitiaoh*). In addition to the five demands issued on 20 April, the students also called for legislation to ensure press freedoms that would, amongst other things, allow the accurate reporting of their demonstrations as well as a full enquiry, along with public disclosure of the results, into the violence towards the students outside Xinhuaamen by the armed military guards on 20 April.³⁸⁹ The further significance of this petition came from the fact that it was released on behalf of the students by the Preparatory Committee for Beijing Autonomous Union of Students. This committee was made up of representatives from nineteen Beijing colleges and universities and, in addition to defying a government ban on autonomous organisations, it signalled that these demonstrations were both bigger in size and better organised than those that had taken place in 1986.

The 26 April Editorial

As previously stated, the first official response from the government came on 26 April with the publication of the *People's Daily* editorial entitled “It is Necessary to Take a Clear-Cut Stand Against Turmoil” and Blecher contends that it marked a “turning point” in the direction of the Beijing Spring.³⁹⁰ The importance of this editorial derived from the fact that it was based on an ‘unpublished’ speech given by Deng

³⁸⁷ Oksenberg with Sullivan (1990: x). Spence also considered the students’ act to be “ritualistic but sincere”; however, for Blecher, although appearing to follow the protocol from imperial times, the students were doing so “mockingly”. See Spence (1990: 698), Blecher (2003: 100).

³⁸⁸ Manion (1990: xv).

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. xvi–xvii.

³⁹⁰ Blecher (2003: 100).

Xiaoping on April 25,³⁹¹ and, as such, represented the verdict of China's paramount leader on the student movement.³⁹² In light of this, Manion asserts that the editorial "had to be taken seriously."³⁹³ The verdict given in the editorial was that the student movement constituted "turmoil" and was the work of "an extremely small number of people with ulterior motives" who were attempting "to sow dissension among the people, plunge the whole country into chaos and sabotage the political situation of stability and unity."³⁹⁴ The editorial also stated that the "turmoil" was a "planned conspiracy" whose "essence is to once and for all negate the leadership of the CCP and the socialist system."³⁹⁵

Oksenberg, Sullivan and Lambert describe the 26 April editorial as "[u]nequivocally tough and...signaled the intent of conservative leaders to crack down."³⁹⁶ This intent was signalled through the reference in the editorial to "an extremely small number of people with ulterior motives". Although the identification of these people was unclear,³⁹⁷ Wang Ruowang notes that this usage was similar in construction to "a handful of people", which was "consistently used by Mao before he went all-out to attack people."³⁹⁸ It was also redolent of Deng Xiaoping's labelling of the Democracy Wall activists as "bad elements", which served as a pretext for suppressing the

³⁹¹ Despite this speech being 'unpublished', Manion contends that it was "common knowledge" in Beijing that the editorial came from a speech by Deng. See Manion (1990: xx)

³⁹² Zhang and Krauss contend that this verdict "directed the news angle—set the agenda—for China's press concerning the movement." See Zhang and Krauss (1995: 416).

³⁹³ Manion (1990: xx). Indeed, Manion notes that a further indication of its importance was the fact that it was also televised nationally on the national evening news on 25th April.

³⁹⁴ Shelun (26 April 1989).

³⁹⁵ Ibid.

³⁹⁶ Oksenberg and Sullivan (1990: 191).

³⁹⁷ Suggestions include the student leaders responsible for organising the protests, intellectuals "inspiring" the protests and whom the CCP had targeted after the student demonstrations in 1986 or even leaders within the CCP, who were manipulating the protests for their own political gain.

³⁹⁸ Wang (16 May 1989).

Movement.³⁹⁹ Alongside the use of this label, the editorial also classified the student demonstrations as constituting “turmoil” (*dongluan*).⁴⁰⁰ Brook comments that the term “signifies a chaotic condition that works against the good order of society. Nothing good can come out of turmoil; life can proceed only when turmoil subsides.”⁴⁰¹ In addition, the use of “turmoil” in the editorial was politically significant. Whereas the student protests in 1986 had been officially classified as “trouble-making” (*naoshi*)⁴⁰², the term “turmoil” had been previously used to describe the “counter-revolutionary” activities of the “Gang of Four” (*siren bang*) during the Cultural Revolution. As a consequence, by using the same description for the student demonstrations, the leadership was stating that they viewed them as comparable.⁴⁰³ Not only did this comparison attempt to discredit the aims of the student movement but, for Wang Ruowang, it was intended “to arouse the people’s strong aversion.”⁴⁰⁴

The comparison with the Cultural Revolution by CCP leaders was based not so much on the content of the student demonstrations but rather its size and organisation. As Manion points out, “[t]he big character posters, unofficial students organizations, and link-ups with other units and cities recalled for many older officials the tactics of student Red Guards in the Cultural Revolution.”⁴⁰⁵ However, for the students, such a comparison caused disbelief as well as anger. They believed that their actions, far

³⁹⁹ Zhang and Krauss make the point that this tactic has been used since imperial times: “[i]n traditional China, the Emperor always labelled the opponent force as “bandits”, “robbers”, or “betrayers” and the like, and then eliminated them.” See Zhang and Krauss (1995: 417).

⁴⁰⁰ The term *dongluan* is also translated as “disturbance” in some publications, such as Shi (1990) and Baum (1994). Regardless of the preferred English translation, however, all publications agree on the significance of its political usage.

⁴⁰¹ Brook (1992: 4).

⁴⁰² Baum (1994: 249).

⁴⁰³ Wasserstrom notes that the negative connotations of this term pre-dated the Cultural Revolution decade: “Long before the cataclysmic events that those alive today lived through, the terms for chaos were already enshrined as pejorative descriptions for anything that threatened the stability and security of the community.” See Wasserstrom (1994: 289).

⁴⁰⁴ Wang (16 May 1989).

⁴⁰⁵ Manion (1990: xvii).

from presenting a counter-revolutionary challenge to the Party's leadership,⁴⁰⁶ were patriotic and, by drawing the government's attention to issues which needed reform, would contribute to the CCP-led revolution. Indeed, this belief on the part of the students had been, in part, encouraged by the CCP leaders. In response to what had taken place during the Cultural Revolution, Manion points out that, the leaders "had acknowledged...that the country could benefit from more consultative politics—encouraging people to voice suggestions and criticism about problems including mistakes and abuses in leadership."⁴⁰⁷ Furthermore, the students had grown up in a period of ideological flux, in which the emphasis on the correct theoretical formulations (*tifa*) of communism that had marked the first thirty years of the PRC was being challenged by a new orthodoxy that emphasised the importance of practical results. This new emphasis was expressed in political slogans, such as "seek truth from facts", "emancipate the mind" and "practice is the sole criterion of truth", which accompanied the launching of economic reforms and suggested that socialism was now more flexible than had been the case during the period under Mao.⁴⁰⁸ However, as would be clearly demonstrated on 3–4 June, this view was not shared by the CCP leadership. As Manion makes clear, "[a]lthough the authorities had granted the masses the right and provided the means to raise opinions, they had more or less reserved a monopoly on defining and imposing solutions"⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁶ Shi contends the student movement should not be characterised as "demonstration" but "remonstrance", as this term implies "a claim to criticize and disagree with the policy of the government but without any intention or plan for replacing that government with one composed of its critics." See Shi (1990: 1195).

⁴⁰⁷ In order to facilitate this, the Party set up and reinstated various practices, such as Party discipline inspection commissions and local people's congresses as well as "mass organisations" for groups within society like students, workers and women. See Manion (1990: xxii).

⁴⁰⁸ Zhao contends that the campaign to "reassess" Maoism brought about the unintended effect of the "three crises of faith" (crisis of faith in socialism; crisis of faith in Marxism; and crisis of faith in the CCP). See Zhao (1998: 288).

⁴⁰⁹ Manion (1990: xxii).

The publication of the strongly-worded 26 April editorial, which was intended to quell the protests, had the opposite effect upon the students and they responded by organising the largest demonstration in the history of the PRC.⁴¹⁰ On 27 April, approximately 100,000 students from 40 universities marched to Tiananmen Square, where they were joined by citizens to make up 500,000 demonstrators.⁴¹¹ As Shi points out, “[t]he decision makers of the CCP had never thought the demonstrations would reach such a scale”⁴¹² and it is in this context that the 29 April editorial will be analysed.

⁴¹⁰ Shi (1990: 1197).

⁴¹¹ Manion (1990: xxv).

⁴¹² Ibid., p. 1197.

29 April Editorial: Selection of Data

The 29 April commentary was selected following a number of searches that were conducted within the available categories in the *People's Daily* database.⁴¹³ The time frame in which the search was carried out was a five and a half week period beginning on 26 April 1989 and ending on 4 June 1989. The selection of 26 April 1989 was made on account of the fact that this was the date on which the infamous editorial labelling the demonstrations as causing “turmoil” (*dongluan*) was published and, as pointed out in the contextual analysis, it marked a “turning point” in the nature of the demonstrations against the government. As for the end date of 4 June, this was chosen because it marked the date on which the military suppression of the demonstrations at Tiananmen Square began. As explained in the chapter two, the intention of these searches was to begin with the broadest possible search before adding more specific criteria that would allow for the number of hits to be reduced to the point where the most suitable articles could be selected. However, as made clear throughout the thesis, the selection of an article was not based solely on the ordered results of the *People's Daily* database search but was also dependent on other variables, such as the political significance of the article as well as the relevance of its content to the stability discourse. Moreover, the relative weighting of these variables was not subject to statistical calculation but rather, in keeping with the discourse-historical approach, was determined by the judgement of the analyst. A further consideration specific to this search period was that some journalists, particularly at the *People's Daily*, dissented from the government line and even went so far as to join protestors in demonstrating against the government. Indeed, Brendebach states that “[n]ews workers played a vital role to generate the atmosphere of political change by joining

⁴¹³ As detailed in chapter two, these categories are: date (*riqi*); headline (*biaoti*); page number (*banci*); edition (*banming*); author (*zuozhe*); special column (*zhuanlan*); text (*zhengwen*).

the protests.”⁴¹⁴ Consequently, given that the aim of this thesis is to analyse the government’s use of the stability discourse, the editorial or commentary selected for analysis will be one which closely follows its line.

The first search to be conducted was a keyword search for the term “stability” in the selected time period. From a total of 3,546 articles that were published during this period, 230 articles featured this keyword. The first result was an editorial that was published on 29 April entitled “Safeguard the Overall Situation, Safeguard Stability”, in which “stability” was mentioned a total of 19 times.⁴¹⁵ Moreover, according to the *People’s Daily* ratings system, this article had a relevancy rating of 100%. The second article on the list was a staff commentary entitled “Jointly Safeguard the Stability of the Overall Situation” that was published on 23 April.⁴¹⁶ This article, which had a relevancy score of 95%, mentioned “stability” 6 times. The remaining articles in the first ten hits consisted of minor news items and articles covering Li Peng’s meeting with student demonstrators.

The second search to be conducted added the additional criterion of searching for articles that contained the term “stability” in the headline. As pointed out in chapter two, making use of this criterion is based on the understanding that the headline generally indicates the most important topic to be addressed in the article.⁴¹⁷ However, though my research suggests that the inclusion of stability in the headline does not always ensure that the concept is the central focus of the article, its absence from the

⁴¹⁴ Indeed, because of this and, in a move that reflected the importance of the media’s role in China, it was journalists rather than students who were the first target of the post-Tiananmen purging campaign (*qingcha*), with 597 out of the 700 editorial staff at the *People’s Daily*’s “blacklisted” and a further four members imprisoned. See Brendebach (2005: 41).

⁴¹⁵ Shelun (29 April 1989).

⁴¹⁶ Benbao Pinglun (11 May 1989).

⁴¹⁷ van Dijk (1985: 69).

headline does indicate that the concept will not feature prominently enough to make intensive analysis worthwhile. Of the 26 articles that featured “stability” both as a keyword and in the headline, the first two results were the same as those produced by the first search while the remaining articles in the first ten results again consisted of minor news items and articles covering Li Peng’s meetings with student demonstrators.

The final search to be conducted was to restrict the headline and keyword search to include only those editorials and commentaries published on the first page of the *People’s Daily*. As acknowledged in chapter two, though these articles are not necessarily more influential than those published on other pages of the newspaper, their placement on the first page did signify that they were more likely to represent the authority of the top leadership of the CCP.⁴¹⁸ Of the ten articles to be returned in the search results for this time period, the first article, with a relevancy rating of 100%, was, once again, the 29 April editorial. The second result was also the same as in the previous searches. Of the remaining articles in the list, only the fourth result was an editorial or a commentary reprinted copy of an editorial from Liberation Army Daily (*Jiefang Junbao*) entitled “Important Measures to Safeguard the Capital’s and the Country’s Stability” that was published on 22 May.⁴¹⁹ This article, which was concerned with the measures put in place following the declaration of martial law on 20 May, had a relevancy rating of 76% and mentioned “stability” a total of 14 times.

Following the searches, the article selected for intensive analysis was the 29 April editorial. In addition to being the first result in all of the database searches, this

⁴¹⁸ Wu (1994).

⁴¹⁹ Shelun (22 May 1989).

editorial was selected for its political significance, in that it provided a clear example of how the CCP leadership attempted to use stability during the initial stages of the protests to both maintain its legitimacy against the challenge posed by the demonstrations and undermine the legitimacy of the demonstrators.

29 April Editorial: Textual Analysis⁴²⁰

“Safeguard the Overall Situation, Safeguard Stability”

As explained in chapter two, the headline indicates the most important topic of an article. In the case of the 29 April editorial, the headline suggested that safeguarding the overall situation and stability would be the central focus. Moreover, the headline was presented as an emphatic statement, which not only worked to establish the authority of the editorial but also instructed the reader to follow its order.⁴²¹ In this, the reference to the “overall situation” appeared intended to minimise the specific grievances of the demonstrators, in particular the list of criticisms (*qitiao*) made at the 27 April protest,⁴²² by directing the reader to place them in a wider context. The use of the term “safeguard” in the headline also worked to achieve several effects. Firstly, the term “safeguard” was employed as an anaphora that served to establish a corresponding relationship between the two clauses, in which the “safeguarding” of stability was presented as a necessary condition for the “safeguarding” of the overall situation. Secondly, the term “safeguard” functioned as a militaristic metaphor that conveyed the impression that stability and the overall situation were under attack and, as such, needed to be “defended”. Taken together, the headline for the 29 April editorial used stability to legitimate the authority of the CCP by making the claim that to threaten stability was to threaten the overall situation. Conversely, by drawing on van Dijk’s concept of political implicatures, this headline also worked to delegitimize the demonstrators, as the use of the “overall situation” obscured their criticisms and,

⁴²⁰ Shelun (29 April 1989). The intention of this translation has not been to necessarily produce the most fluent English translation but rather one that closely conveys the meaning and structure of the Chinese original. For the Chinese original, see the Appendix section.

⁴²¹ When considering the “reader” of the editorial, it is important to remember that the editorial is intended to persuade not just those demonstrating against the government but also Party cadres and members of the public, for whom information about the demonstrations are limited at best, of the validity of its claims.

⁴²² It should be noted that the list of demands/criticisms made by the demonstrators varied in number and scope as the movement progressed.

in so doing, enabled the act of demonstrating to be portrayed as responsible for threatening this stability. Furthermore, this delegitimation was strengthened by the use of a nominalised form of stability in the headline. According to Fowler, nominalisation takes place when predicates are “realized syntactically” as nouns.⁴²³ One possible effect of this transformation is, what Fowler terms, mystification.⁴²⁴ Consequently, in the headline of the 29 April editorial, the nominalised usage of “stability” functioned to mystify both what constituted stability as well as who was threatening this stability, with the effect that the space in which to challenge the claim made in the headline was closed off and so the negative implicature that the demonstrators were threatening stability was allowed to go uncontested.

(1) China needs stability. (2) At present, the great issue of overall interest above everything else is to maintain social stability. (3) Ignoring and departing from this issue of overall interests can only bring disasters to the nation and the state.

The first paragraph of the editorial was typographically distinct from the proceeding six paragraphs, on account of the fact that, while they were all of a similar length, this paragraph was substantially shorter. Furthermore, this difference in length can be attributed to the different functions that they performed within the editorial, in that the first paragraph provided a summary of the stability discourse that the following paragraphs elaborated upon. The first paragraph began by declaring that “China needs stability”, wherein the toponym “China” worked to complement the use of the “overall situation” in the headline by linking the threat to stability with the future of the nation. Moreover, the editorial deployed this populist toponym in order to create consensus amongst the readership and so, while claiming to speak on behalf of the

⁴²³ Such a distinction is less clear-cut in Chinese than in English, where it is more common for verbs and adjectives to function as nouns and vice versa. That said, the entry for *wending* in *hanying cidian* lists it only as an adjective and a verb.

⁴²⁴ See Fowler (1991: 78–81).

Chinese people, the editorial was also directing them to accept this proposition. The first sentence of the paragraph also worked to impress the significance of the threat to stability, as the use of “needs” semantically implied that China does not have stability. Indeed, this impression is reinforced by use of the temporal marker “at present” at the start of the second sentence, which also suggested that the threat to stability was a current concern. The collocation of “social stability” put forward in the second sentence then located this present threat to stability amongst the people and, so, as with the headline, implicated the demonstrators as the source of this threat. The second sentence also worked to emphasise the importance of the threat to stability with the declaration that maintaining social stability is the “great issue of overall interest above everything else”. Indeed, employing van Leeuwen’s typology of legitimating strategies that was detailed in chapter two, this declaration, in making an intertextual reference to Deng Xiaoping’s proclamation that “stability prevails over everything”,⁴²⁵ can be identified as “authorization”, as it makes use of Deng’s personal authority to persuade the reader of its importance.⁴²⁶ The final sentence of the paragraph attempted to justify the preceding claim of the second sentence by warning of the consequences if it was not followed. Employing the *topos of chaos*, this sentence imagined that “disasters” will be brought upon “the nation and the state” and so, as with the first sentence, attempts to link the threat to stability with the future of the nation. Indeed, the likelihood of this scenario is strengthened by the collocation of the modal verb “can” and the singular adjective “only”, which worked to privilege this particular vision of future reality over any alternative.⁴²⁷ However, the lack of specific details to substantiate it meant that, as Gill points out, “the force of the

⁴²⁵ According to He, Deng first made this statement on 26 February 1989 when meeting with President Bush during his visit of China. See He (2001: 471–472). For the original statement, see Deng (1993: 284).

⁴²⁶ van Leeuwen (2007: 94)..

⁴²⁷ Dunmire (2005).

argument rests on rhetoric alone.”⁴²⁸ In terms of legitimation, the first paragraph followed on from the headline in delegitimizing the demonstrators by implicating the act of demonstrating as the threat to stability, which, in the paragraph, is projected against whole nation, while the criticisms of the demonstrators are, in the words of Wodak and van Leeuwen, “rhetorically eliminated”.⁴²⁹ As a consequence, this use of stability again worked to strengthen the authority of the CCP by undermining the possibility of change.

(1) Since the beginning of this century, China has experienced far too much turmoil.

(2) During the first half of the century, the political rule of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism brought frequent chaos with war, hunger and famine here and there and resulted in a state in which our people had no means of livelihood.

(3) Since the founding of new China, the country has achieved unity, and the nation has gained independence. (4) We have the conditions for stability and construction. (5) Due to our mistakes in providing subjective guidance, we have wasted more than ten years.

(6) If we count the number of years, it has only been some 20 years that we have stable conditions under which to truly engage in construction. (7) The reason for China's economy being so backward now and the currently restrained development of China's politics and culture is due to many objective factors. (8) In addition to the historical conditions, which constitute the main cause, that the nation's construction period has been too short is also an important factor. (9) However, in the more than ten years since the Third Plenary Session of the 11th CCP Central Committee, the reason that it has been possible to implement the correct guidelines and policies, the reason that it has been possible to smoothly carry out the reform programme, and the reason that it has been possible for the achievements in construction to be obvious to all is due to the most important condition of maintaining social stability. (10) This kind of stable situation is the result of joint efforts made by people throughout the whole country.

(11) Stability is not easy to achieve. (12) What would happen without stability? (13) It is not difficult for all those responsible people with intellect, including the broad masses of young people, to draw conclusions from the recent turmoil in Xi'an and Changsha.

(14) If we let such regional turmoil spread unchecked then a promising China will become a hopeless China. (15) This is something that the people of the country would hate to see.

The second paragraph moved away from concern over the present threat of stability to expand upon the proposition, made in the second sentence of the first paragraph, that stability was “the great issue of overall interest”. In order to do this, the paragraph

⁴²⁸ Gill (2000: 184).

⁴²⁹ Wodak and van Leeuwen (2002: 365).

attempted to demonstrate the importance of stability by presenting it in a transitional narrative that moved between China's past, present and future. The first part of the paragraph was concerned with China's past and represented an example of "using the past to serve the present". Indeed, this treatment of history can be viewed in terms of, what Cao refers to as, the dual strategy of "active forgetting" and "selective memory". For Cao, the strategy of "active forgetting" involves the omission of "what is inconvenient" while that of "selective memory" works to include "what is convenient".⁴³⁰ The paragraph began by stating that "China has experienced far too much turmoil" in the past century. However, within this straightforward description, the intertextual use of the term "turmoil", which had been used in the 26 April editorial, worked to politically implicate the ongoing demonstrations within this history of "turmoil" and, in so doing, reminded the reader of the negative effects of this turmoil. In terms of legitimization, this use of historical comparison seemed intended to delegitimize the demonstrations by linking the label of "turmoil" to a discourse of morally negative values.⁴³¹ As for the intertextuality of "turmoil", it suggested that this editorial, rather than signalling a change in the verdict of "turmoil" that had been demanded by the demonstrators on 27 April, was published in order to explain more fully why the CCP leadership had reached such a verdict in the 26 April editorial.⁴³²

The second sentence followed on from the first by highlighting the negative effects that instability had caused in China's past. Moreover, the use of emotive vocabulary in this sentence seemed intended to rhetorically heighten the imagery of instability in

⁴³⁰ Cao (1999).

⁴³¹ van Leeuwen (2007: 99).

⁴³² The 26 April editorial was a relatively short article (comprising only 1,288 characters) and did little to explain how the CCP leadership had arrived at this verdict. Rather it relied on the leadership's authority to persuade the readership that its claims were valid. See Shelun (26 April 1989).

this period. However, the deployment of a temporal marker at the beginning of this sentence worked to confine these examples of instability to the period before the CCP took power. Furthermore, the identification of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism as the causes of this instability, presented as “morally abstract” concepts, seemed intended to delegitimize these politico-economic systems and so, indirectly, legitimate that of the CCP. This strategy of positive self-presentation and negative other presentation was continued in the third sentence by linking the founding of the People’s Republic of China to the positive values of unity and independence while the fourth sentence semantically implies that these values had created “the conditions for stability and construction” and so enabled the editorial to assert a positive association between stability and the party-state. The fourth sentence also attempted to strengthen the causal relationship between stability and construction that was put forward, albeit in the negative form, in the second sentence and, in so doing, implicitly suggested that “construction” is the main objective in people’s lives.

This point concerning “construction” was further developed in the fifth and sixth sentences; however, in contrast to the previous sentences in the paragraph, use is made of negative events that had taken place within the history of the PRC. The fifth sentence made the admission that “mistakes” have happened under the leadership of the CCP over a period of more than ten years and, taken together with the claim in the following sentence that construction had only been possible in stable conditions for approximately twenty years, the political implicature was that these mistakes took place with the Great Leap Forward experiment and the Cultural Revolution. The claim of approximately twenty years of stable conditions then appears to roughly refer to the periods from 1949 until 1957, 1962 to 1965 and 1978 to 1989. The underlying

nature of this comparison appears to be that the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution were periods of instability that caused China to experience negligible economic growth whereas the periods of stability enabled China to achieve high economic growth. Consequently, the propagation of this link between economic growth and stability worked to obscure alternative explanations that would challenge this simplified account of PRC history and, in so doing, attempted to strengthen the legitimacy of the CCP leadership and its “central task” of economic development. In addition, this link also served to delegitimize the demonstrations by suggesting that their outcome will be comparable to events, recent in the memory for many Chinese people, that had taken place under the previous leaderships of the CCP and which resulted in instability along with negligible economic growth.

This link between economic growth and stability was further emphasised in the next three sentences of the paragraph. In particular, it was made most forcefully in the ninth sentence, which claims that all the “successes” that had taken place since the Third Plenum could be attributed to the “most important condition of maintaining stability”. Furthermore, the persuasiveness of this claim was heightened through the rhetorical strategy of parallelism, in which three successive clauses within the sentence employed the same lexical formulation of “the reason that it has been possible...”. Alongside this strategy of parallelism, the ninth sentence also featured morally evaluative adjectives and adverbs that worked to strengthen the positive self-presentation of the leadership’s successes. Consequently, the “guidelines and policies” were presented as being “correct”, the “reform programme” had been carried out “smoothly”, while the task of construction had been marked by “achievements”.

The final part of the paragraph began by stating that stability comes from the “joint efforts” of “people throughout the country”. The effect of this statement was to place responsibility for maintaining stability onto “the people” while, at the same time, working to deny other possible explanations for why stability might be maintained.⁴³³ Again, this particular explanation of stability represented another example of the editorial’s rhetorical strategy to foreground actions while obscuring possible causes for these actions. Indeed, this explanation of stability was reinforced in the following sentence with the statement that “stability is not easy to achieve”. Using van Leeuwen’s typology of legitimating strategies, the declarative tone of this statement, as with the previous sentence, could be identified as constituting a “definition” and, as such, represented an appeal to a form of theoretical rationalisation. Having defined what stability consisted of, the twelfth sentence then poses the rhetorical question of “what would happen without stability”. As explained in chapter two, rhetorical questions constitute an example of a “linguistic mean” in Wodak’s discourse-analytical approach. More specifically, Fowler points out that, “formulating a question on behalf of the addressee is a standard strategy in pedagogic discourse.”⁴³⁴ Furthermore, for van der Valk, rhetorical questions are argumentative, in that “[t]hey strengthen a claim that is made by forcefully inviting an intended answer and thus preventing the opposite answer that is in line with the opponent’s arguments.”⁴³⁵

The space opened up by the rhetorical question is closed down in the following sentence and the use of the term “turmoil” to describe the recent outbreaks of violence in Xi’an and Changsha worked to equate them with those taking place in Beijing and,

⁴³³ Given the nature of the criticisms made by the demonstrators, one possible explanation might be that stability is the result of people’s overall satisfaction with the CCP leadership. Indeed, such a determination is a close approximation of Weber’s conceptualisation of legitimacy.

⁴³⁴ Fowler (1991: 189).

⁴³⁵ van der Valk (2003: 330).

in so doing, further delegitimize the Beijing demonstrations.⁴³⁶ Indeed, this sentence, in referring to “responsible people with intellect” and “the broad masses of young people”, attempted to persuade the reader towards this negative view of the Beijing demonstrations by employing what van Leeuwen identifies as the impersonal authority of conformity. However, the negative “conclusions” that the reader was impelled to “draw” about demonstrations in the thirteenth sentence were then made explicit in the fourteenth sentence. This sentence takes the form of an “if...then” construction and van der Valk identifies this as constituting a “counterfactual argument”. For van der Valk, it is deployed for “argumentative moves that are based on imaginary situations... [and] are used to persuade the audience of the necessity of specific policy measures.”⁴³⁷ In the case of the fourteenth sentence, the imaginary situation of regional turmoil leading to a “hopeless China” seemed intended to both further delegitimize the ongoing demonstrations as well as legitimate any possible future action that might be taken to suppress them. Indeed, the legitimization of future action was rhetorically heightened by the use of the metaphor “spread” in this phrase, which implicitly conveyed the negative impression that these demonstrations were comparable to that of a medical virus or a wildfire. Furthermore, the combination of the pronoun “we” alongside the terms “allow” and “unchecked” presented these metaphoricalised turmoil as requiring human action in order to prevent them from affecting the whole nation. The final sentence of the paragraph complemented the legitimization of possible action by claiming that it would have the imprimatur of “the people” while, at the same time, directing the reader to accept this proposition.

⁴³⁶ During the demonstration in Tiananmen Square on 27 April, protestors did denounce the outbreak of violence in these two cities, in part, to avoid those demonstrations being negatively compared to that in Beijing. See Manion (1990: xix).

⁴³⁷ van der Valk (2003: 320).

(1) What does China's stability depend on? (2) What does China's economic and social development depend on? (3) They depend firmly on the four cardinal principles and they depend firmly on reform and opening up. (4) The general guiding principles of the four cardinal principles and reform and opening up constitute the foundation for the stability and development of our country. (5) These two guiding principles are also the basic requirements of the party's theories and line during the primary stage of socialism. (6) In contemporary China, all opinions and acts that acknowledge and uphold these two basic points are beneficial to our social stability and development. (7) On the other hand, all opinions and acts that go against these two basic points are harmful to our social stability and development. (8) China's train of modernisation must rely on these two wheels to move forward. (9) Neither wheel can be separated. (10) To all opinions and acts that negate the four cardinal principles, facts have shown us that not only must we pay attention to theory and knowledge when carrying out serious and conscientious criticism and education, but also that we must adopt even firmer measures in our practical work to resolutely stop them from spreading. (11) We must not lower our guard and never give in to connivance or appeasement. (12) Party organisations and members must never relax their vigilance on this question of the overall situation that concerns the fate of the country.

The two macropropositions put forward in the second paragraph were that stability is necessary for economic growth and that stability is maintained by the people; however, the third paragraph linked these two macropropositions by asserting that they were both dependent on the leadership of the CCP. In terms of legitimation, this rhetorical move attempted to bolster the authority of the CCP by claiming that its leadership had been responsible for the period of stability and economic growth that occurred after the Third Plenum in 1978 while also working to delegitimize the demonstrations on the grounds that, by causing instability, they were rejecting the leadership of the CCP and, in so doing, threatening economic growth.

The link between the two macropropositions from the second paragraph was established at the start of the third paragraph through the posing of two consecutive rhetorical questions that used repetitious patterning to generate a relationship of equivalence between stability and economic and social development. Furthermore, the dialogic quality of these questions opened up the space for the editorial to put forward

a new formulation for stability and development which stated that they were dependent upon the Four Cardinal Principles (*sixiang jiben yuanze*) and Reform and Opening Up (*gaige kaifang*).⁴³⁸ The use of these ideological slogans were also examples of what Fowler terms “formulaic phrases”, in that “they can be strongly foregrounded offering conceptual simplicity and memorability...[and] their simplicity provides a packaging of ideas with a very solid and clear outline.”⁴³⁹ In the case of the Four Cardinal Principles and Reform and Opening Up, the package of ideas that they referred to formed part of the political line of “One Centre, Two Basic Points” that was set at the 13th Party Congress in 1987. The Four Cardinal Principles and Reform and Opening Up constituted the “Two Basic Points” upon which the “One Centre” of economic development was dependent.⁴⁴⁰

The programme of Reform and Opening Up was launched at the Third Plenum of the 11th Party Congress held in December, 1978.⁴⁴¹ In addition to the political ouster of Hua Guofeng and the “Whateverist” faction, this Plenum also marked the beginning of China’s economic reform programme. For Gore, the slogan of Reform and Opening Up refers to “the task of ‘liberating and developing the forces of production’” that constitutes the basis of the CCP-defined socialism.⁴⁴² In contrast to the economic focus of Reform and Opening Up, the slogan of the Four Cardinal

⁴³⁸ Fowler defines dialogism as “an argumentative engagement with the imagined points of view of those referred to by the text, and those who read it.” See Fowler (1991: 218).

⁴³⁹ Fowler (1991: 178).

⁴⁴⁰ Bo (2004: 34).

⁴⁴¹ The use of the term “reform” (*gaige*) in describing this programme was significant, in that it connoted a move away from the “revolutionary” policies pursued under Mao’s leadership. Indeed, according to Miller, the term “reform” was “previously a dirty word in the Maoist lexicon”. As for that of “opening up” (*kaifang*), Lu notes that it had previously been used, albeit in the long-hand form of *menhu kaifang*, to refer to the trade policy imposed on China by America in the late 19th Century. Moreover, Kim points out that, in period from 1971 until 1978, the comprehensive Chinese-English Dictionary, compiled by the Beijing Foreign Languages Institute, defined “*menhu kaifang zhengce*” as “‘Open Door’ policy (which U.S. imperialism once foisted on China to secure the same privileges as the other imperialist powers)”. See Miller (2007: 6), Lu (1999: 506), Kim (1981: 463).

⁴⁴² Gore (2000).

Principles is concerned with the political leadership of the economic reform programme. The use of this slogan first occurred in a speech given by Deng Xiaoping at the Forum on the Principles for Theoretical Work on 30 March 1979.⁴⁴³ In this speech, Deng stated that these principles consisted of: keeping to the socialist road; upholding the dictatorship of the proletariat; upholding the leadership of the CCP; and upholding Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought.⁴⁴⁴ The significance of the Four Cardinal Principles came from the fact that it signalled the intention to suppress the “Democracy Wall” Movement and so closed down the possibility of political reform by reasserting the leadership of the CCP.⁴⁴⁵ Consequently, its usage in this editorial also suggested that these new demonstrations calling for political reform would be suppressed by the CCP leadership.⁴⁴⁶ More generally, the promulgation of the Four Cardinal Principles and Reform and Opening Up was reflective of Lu’s observation that “political slogans are coined to meet the changing need of social conditions as well as the need of authorities to establish control.”⁴⁴⁷

The remainder of the third paragraph was concerned with intensifying the relationship between stability, development and the “Two Basic Points” and so legitimate the Party’s leadership while, at the same time, delegitimize the demonstrators by implicating them in the negation of this relationship. The fourth sentence made use of the metaphor “foundation” to semantically imply that negation of the “Two Basic

⁴⁴³ Hu (2001: 435).

⁴⁴⁴ The ordering of the principles can also be interpreted as politically significant, with the principle concerning ideology placed last and so reflecting a move away from ideological dogma towards practical results.

⁴⁴⁵ In order to legitimate the Four Cardinal Principles, Deng used the negative comparison between the criticisms made by members of this ‘movement’ to those made by the Gang of Four and Lin Biao during the Cultural Revolution. For Deng’s speech, see Deng (1983: 157). For further information on the “Democracy Wall” Movement, see Brodsgaard (1981).

⁴⁴⁶ The authority of the Four Cardinal Principles was also strengthened in 1982 when it was inserted into the CCP Constitution and the PRC Constitution. Consequently, violation of the Four Cardinal Principles could now be classified as a legal, as well as political, offence. See He (2001: 435).

⁴⁴⁷ Lu (1999: 487).

Points” would result in the “collapse” of stability and development. The sixth and seventh sentences, operating as a pair of contrastive sentences, reinforced this point by using the moralised abstractions “beneficial” and “harmful” to present support for the “Two Basic Points” and, by extension, the leadership of the CCP, in terms of objective reasoning. The tenth sentence also conveyed this impression of objective reasoning when stating that “facts” require greater attention to theory and knowledge to prevent the negation of the Four Cardinal Principles from “spreading”. The final sentence of the paragraph then completed the intensification of the relationship between stability, development and the “Two Basic Points” by linking the need to prevent the negation of the relationship to the “fate” of China and, in so doing, appealed to the reader’s sense of nationalism.⁴⁴⁸

(1) Under socialist conditions, stability and democracy are unitary. (2) Fundamentally speaking, there are no contradictions between the two nor should there be. (3) Marxism always considers democracy to be an important development in the civilisation of mankind and a great banner of the people’s liberation movement of the proletariat. (4) Socialism should realise a higher, more extensive and more earnest form of democracy than that practised by capitalism as its own lofty goal. (5) Communist Party members have always strived for people’s democracy and socialist democracy. (6) Since the third plenary session of the 11th CCP Central Committee, we have conscientiously drawn lessons from our historical experiences and expended tremendous efforts in the promotion of democracy. (7) Compared to 10 years ago, our country has made clear progress in pursuing democracy, in theory and in practice, in our country’s political life and in its social life, in relations within the Party and without the Party. (8) This is what people throughout the whole country have personally experienced. (9) This is also what fair-minded international public opinion firmly recognises. (10) Without the stable situation of the past 10 years, this development of democratic construction would not been possible.

The fourth paragraph continued on the theme of the CCP’s leadership but moved away from concern with the relationship between stability, development and the “Two Basic Points” to emphasise the democratic construction that has been made since the

⁴⁴⁸ The use of “fate” performs an additional function, in that it conveys the impression that China does, indeed, have a “fate” or endpoint that can be realised through the CCP-led reform programme. As such, this usage heightens the teleological claims within the slogan of “the primary stage of socialism” in the fifth sentence and metaphor “the train of modernisation” deployed in the eighth sentence.

Third Plenum in 1978. The political implicature of this rhetorical move suggested that the paragraph was intended to be read as a response to the demonstrators' demands. However, on account of the fact that these demands, as outlined in the seven-point list (*qitiao*) at the April 27 demonstration, made no direct mention of democracy,⁴⁴⁹ this rhetorical move can be classified as the argumentative strategy of *the straw man*. For Reisigl and Wodak, this particular strategy involves "presenting a distorted picture of the antagonist's standpoint in order to be able to refute the standpoint or argument more easily and to make it less tenable."⁴⁵⁰ In the case of this editorial, the conflation of the demonstrators' demands with that of democracy allowed these demands to be ignored while, at the same time, the need for non-Party led democracy was refuted.

The use of stability in relation to this democratic construction, although it only featured twice in the paragraph, is similar to the relationship between stability and economic growth that was advanced in the second paragraph, in that stability was presented as constituting the necessary condition. This relationship between stability and democracy was initially established in the first sentence of the paragraph, when it was claimed that "[u]nder socialist conditions, stability and democracy are unitary". Through the deployment of the conjunctive conjunction "and", which worked to connect stability and democracy, the effect of the sentence was to suggest that democracy cannot function without stability. Furthermore, the reference to "socialist conditions" specified that this relationship between stability and democracy, as well as the proceeding discussion of democracy, only pertained to socialism and, as a result, it worked to close off the space in which to challenge this claim. The second

⁴⁴⁹ This is not to say that some banners on display in Tiananmen Square did not proclaim slogans concerning democracy nor that some political speeches made reference to democracy; however, the purpose of the demonstrations, at this early stage, was still limited to receiving a response to a set number of demands.

⁴⁵⁰ Reisigl and Wodak (2001: 73).

use of stability, in the final sentence of the paragraph, attempted to strengthen the relationship between stability and democracy by claiming that the democratic progress that China had made in the past ten years was due to stability. In addition, this appeal to instrumental rationalisation was heightened by the use of the conditional conjunction “without...it would not have been possible...”, which, for Shi, “renders the causal link factual and absolute.”⁴⁵¹ In terms of legitimisation, the nominalised usage of stability in this paragraph opened up space for the political implicature that the demonstrations, by causing instability, must also be opposing democracy and, as a result, worked to delegitimize the demonstrators. Conversely, such use of stability also allowed the CCP leadership to obscure the grievances of the demonstrators while, at the same time, presenting itself as the party of democratic progress.

(1) Of course, there is a fairly big distance between the actual construction of our country's democratic politics and the proper meaning of socialism as well as the demands of the people. (2) Therefore, at the 13th Party Congress, we made the construction of socialist democratic politics the main task of our country's political reform. (3) But the smooth advance of political reform also depends on social stability. (4) In undertaking political reform, we must, under the premise of upholding our country's basic political system, promote what is beneficial and abolish what is harmful, and, in no way, undertake “complete westernisation” or imitate other countries' political model. (5) The democracy that we are promoting and pursuing is the kind of democracy which will earnestly engender the enthusiasm of the broad masses of workers, peasants and intellectuals. (6) We hope that the actual process of democratic construction is beneficial for the normal social order and the nation's lasting political stability. (7) It should, by no means, hinder the social order or undermine stability. (8) Since the Second World War, there is no lack of examples of developing countries throughout the world not properly handling the development of democracy, which has resulted in economic confusion. (9) The lessons of other countries as well as our own experience demonstrate that, on the question of democracy, we must, first, make gradual progress according to our country's actual conditions and not be hasty or be guided only by our emotions. (10) Second, we must promote democracy on the basis of the legal system. (11) We must not lose our yardstick. (12) Only by adhering to these two conditions will we have the possibility of avoiding setbacks while paying a relatively small cost for making essential progress. (13) If not, then it's possible that the opposite will happen and turmoil will be planted as the root of disaster meaning that our honest wish for democracy will eventually come to nothing.

⁴⁵¹ Shi (2004: 150).

The fifth paragraph continued on the theme of democracy put forward in the previous paragraph. But where the fourth paragraph emphasised the socialist democratic progress that China had made in the past ten years under the CCP's leadership, the fifth paragraph was concerned with the future form and pace of this democratic progress. In terms of form, however, the paragraph did not explicitly detail what democracy in China would be but rather specifies what it should not be, namely an imported version from other countries. As for the pace of this democratic progress, the paragraph was more explicit when it stated that progress must be "gradual". Indeed, this focus upon the form and pace of democratic progress had a further rhetorical effect, in that it rested on the presupposition that China would become democratic. Consequently, this paragraph continued the work of the fourth paragraph by shifting the argument away from how democracy would reform the CCP onto that of how the CCP would reform democracy and so, attempted to strengthen the CCP's leadership over the process of democratic reforms.

In order to assert the CCP's leadership over the democratic reforms, the editorial discursively represented these reforms, not as the result of a political process but as a set of objective measures that would be best suited to China's development and positioned the CCP as the actor most capable of formulating and implementing these measures. Furthermore, this discursive representation was accomplished through the use of moralised abstractions, which worked to shift the notion of democratic progress away from a discourse of politics towards one of scientism. Consequently, in the fourth sentence, the process of political reform was defined in terms of promoting "what is beneficial" and abolishing "what is harmful", which worked to create

consensus amongst readers by obscuring the political power exercised by the CCP in determining what is “beneficial” and “harmful”. In the ninth sentence, China’s past was rendered into the moralised abstraction of “experience” while its present was given the form of “actual conditions” that worked to objectify these periods of time and, in so doing, enabled the editorial’s conclusion of the need for gradual progress to be presented as the result of “objective” analysis, with the political role of the CCP again discursively minimised. This claim of objectivity was also supported by the use of negative comparative examples, both the “lessons” of other countries, which implied that this is from whom China should learn, as well as those who are “hasty” and “guided only by our emotions”, which implicated that this is the behaviour of those who favoured democracy and, by extension, the demonstrators while also offering the contrastive implication that the proponents of “gradual progress” i.e. the CCP leadership were rationally-minded. The use of moralised abstractions was also evident in the twelfth sentence, in which the concept of “gradual progress” and the use of the legal system were presented as the only “two conditions” that would result in the avoidance of “setbacks”. Moreover, the use of the economic metaphor “paying a relatively small cost” worked to strengthen the impression that the reforms had been objectively constructed by suggesting that the complex process of democratic reforms could be, and indeed, had been by the CCP leadership, fully costed in advance.

The use of stability in relation to the discussion on the future form and pace of democratic reforms was similar to that put forward in the fourth paragraph, in that stability was presented as constituting the necessary condition for the implementation of these reforms. Furthermore, the iteration of this link in the third sentence also served to restrict the role of the masses in this process to that of only aiding the

implementation of the reforms while denying them participation in shaping its content. Rather, the implicature of the link suggested that this power in deciding the nature of the reforms remained exclusively with the leadership of the CCP. This statement of stability as a necessary condition of political reforms performed an additional rhetorical function, in that it also worked to deny the converse relationship that political reforms were a necessary condition of maintaining social stability. In light of the fact that the lack of political reforms constituted one of the main motivations for the demonstrations, the denial of this link seemed intended to shift the blame for any lack of political reform onto the masses and, as a result, deepen the delegitimation of the demonstrators.

The use of stability in the fifth paragraph also goes beyond that in the previous paragraph, as it was presented as the criterion by which to determine the implementation of proposed political reforms. Consequently, in the sixth sentence, the effects of political reforms were presented in terms of being beneficial to stability while, in the seventh sentence, it was claimed that they should not “undermine” stability. This appeal to future effects in these sentences makes use of the argumentative strategy, *argumentum at consequentiam*, to put forward the impression that political reforms should not be taken if they cause instability. Indeed, this point was reinforced in the final sentence of the paragraph with the prediction that political reforms which cause “turmoil” would also result in the end of the “honest wish” for democracy. In terms of legitimation, this presentation of stability worked to strengthen the authority of the CCP leadership by placing it in the position of the “expert” that can rationalise political reforms by appealing to effects that have not yet happened.

(1)The “Cultural Revolution” was just over ten years ago. (2)People over the age of thirty can not forget the turmoil of this period. (3)No one, including the young students, can hope that this kind of tragedy is repeated. (4)If all kinds of large- and small-character posters that slander, vilify and attack party and state leaders are allowed to fill up the heavens, if all kinds of “power seizures” and “occupations of various localities by force” are allowed to spread and if there are series of students’ strikes everywhere, our country will very probably, once again, fall into total civil strife. (5)All good and honest pure-minded young students should understand that, in large-scale mass incidents, good and bad people are often mixed together, in which those with ulterior motives are like fish in troubled waters and are waiting to play on your emotions and inappropriate behaviour. (6)The incidents in Xi’an and Changsha that saw some people beating, smashing and looting deserve our vigilance.

The sixth paragraph did not directly mention stability but, instead, presented a future account of the demonstrations that imagined its outcome to be instability. Indeed, the paragraph claims that this instability would “very probably” take the form of “total civil strife”. In order to validate this claim, the paragraph used events that took place during the Cultural Revolution as a rhetorical device to project their consequences onto the demonstrations taking place in Beijing. Moreover, the deployment of political terminology from the Cultural Revolution period, such as “power seizures” and “occupying various localities by force” worked to more forcefully remind readers of this period, particularly the activities of the Red Guards, and, in so doing, attempted to implicate the behaviour of the student demonstrators with those of the Red Guards. However, as with previous references to demonstrations in the editorial, this implicature was possible by focusing only on the act of demonstrating while obscuring any discussion of the reasons for these demonstrations. In terms of legitimization, this comparison with the Cultural Revolution elaborated upon the negative label of “turmoil” and seemed intended to delegitimize the demonstrations.⁴⁵² Indeed, this delegitimation was heightened in the final sentence

⁴⁵² Note that there had been much media coverage given over to the negative effects of the Cultural Revolution since the arrest of the “Gang of Four” in 1976 and, more extensively, following the

with a repeated reference to the violent incidents that took place in Xi'an and Changsha. In addition to equating them with the demonstrations taking place in Beijing, the terms used to describe people's behaviour in these incidents strengthened the comparison between the demonstrators and the Red Guards as they had also been used to describe the behaviour of the Red Guards.

An additional theme in the sixth paragraph that seemed intended to delegitimize the demonstrators was that of age and, by extension, its implied correlative relationship with wisdom.⁴⁵³ This was evident in the two references that were made to students in the paragraph being collocated in both instances with the enaging adjective "young". The youthfulness of the students was also emphasised in the claim made in the second sentence that only people over the age of thirty were in a position not to forget the "turmoil" during Cultural Revolution. In terms of argumentation, this claim seemed intended to negate the students' rejection of the label "turmoil" on the grounds that they had not experienced the Cultural Revolution. Indeed, the implicit supposition put forward in this claim was that only those who had experienced the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution had the wisdom to determine the "real" nature of the student demonstrations. Consequently, this supposition also worked to enhance the legitimacy of the CCP's declaration that the demonstrations constitute "turmoil".

deposition of Hua Guofeng in 1978. Consequently, readers would most likely have been fully aware of the negative connotations of the association between the demonstrations with the Cultural Revolution.

⁴⁵³ Chinese culture, as with many cultures, tends to view the relationship between age and wisdom in terms of the older a person is, the wiser he/she is considered to be. Conversely, the younger a person is, the less wisdom they will have.

The theme of age and wisdom was also evident in the use of proverbs (*chengyu*) in the sixth paragraph.⁴⁵⁴ Indeed, this paragraph was the only one of the seven in the editorial to make use of proverbs. In terms of the discourse-analytical approach detailed in chapter two, proverbs can be categorised as an example of a “linguistic mean” and are similar to slogans, in that they encode prefixed meanings. Indeed, Fowler refers to proverbs as “generic statements” on the grounds that they work by propagating “what is taken to be common-sense wisdom”,⁴⁵⁵ while Gunthner refers to them as “collectively recognized life-maxim[s]”.⁴⁵⁶ Kuo also makes the point that, “[q]uoting proverbs...is a frequently-used rhetorical device for Chinese to strengthen their argument.”⁴⁵⁷ In the sixth paragraph, of the five proverbs that were employed, four of them appeared in the fifth sentence alone. This sentence began by addressing “[a]ll good and honest pure-minded young students” before making the claim that people with “ulterior motives” use “large-scale mass incidents” to play upon the “emotions and inappropriate behaviour” of students. In order to validate this claim, the sentence did not provide supporting evidence but rather continued with the theme of age and wisdom established in the preceding sentences by employing the inherited wisdom of proverbs to enhance its truthfulness and so persuade the students of the need to end their demonstrations. Furthermore, this sentence also had the effect of portraying the students as callow and naïve while, at the same time, placing the

⁴⁵⁴ The Chinese term *chengyu* generally refers to a concise four-character structure which communicates a particular idea or axiom that has often been drawn from ancient texts or historical stories. Furthermore, it can also be translated into English as an idiom. However, while all proverbs can be classified as idioms, all idioms cannot necessarily be classified as proverbs. In this chapter, I have opted to employ the English term “proverb”, as I feel it places greater emphasis on the wisdom that can be conveyed in these phrases.

⁴⁵⁵ Fowler defines generic statements as “descriptive propositions which are supposedly true of any instance of the entities to which they refer...[and] are inevitably authoritarian, claiming total and definitive knowledge of some topic.” See Fowler (1991: 211).

⁴⁵⁶ Gunthner (1991: 407).

⁴⁵⁷ Kuo (2002: 295).

editorial and, by extension, the CCP leadership in a position of experience and wisdom that worked to strengthen its legitimacy.

(1) Both democratic development and social stability very much depend on the guarantees of the legal system. (2) Citizens throughout the country must all respect our country's constitution and laws. (3) Local citizens must respect local legislation. (4) Students must respect school regulations. (5) Only then can we discuss the normal social order. (6) Only then can we promote the minimum conditions of democracy and implement democracy. (7) Failure to observe these conditions undermines democracy and inevitably leads to turmoil. (8) With regard to the law, those who have different opinions on the regulations and those who have different opinions on the affairs of the state should pursue them through legal channels. (9) A State Council spokesperson has now already published a statement welcoming the student request for dialogue. (10) As far as the participation of some students in strikes are concerned, of most importance is to resume classes as quickly as possible. (11) The earlier classes are resumed, the less will be lost. (12) This is in students' vital interest, and is also the hope of all the parents and friends and family of students. (13) All parts of society, the education administrative department, Party organisations in schools and faculty members should all respond by showing concern for the students and resume classes as quickly as possible. (14) The sooner, the better. (15) In the present circumstances, the concrete act of resuming classes will precisely safeguard the overall situation and safeguard stability.

The final paragraph of the editorial was, effectively, comprised of two parts. The first part of the paragraph added to the formulation put forward in the fourth and fifth paragraphs that stability was a necessary condition of democratic development by stating these two elements were both dependent on “the guarantees of the legal system”. This new formulation proposed adherence to laws and regulations as being necessary to the achievement of stability and that only once this had been achieved could democratic development be undertaken. Moreover, this new formulation also offered, for the time in the editorial, a criterion by which to define stability and instability, in that people who abided by the laws and regulations could be considered to uphold stability while those who violated such laws and regulations could be deemed guilty of causing instability. Furthermore, the sixth paragraph defined these laws and regulations as including not only China's constitution as well as national and

local laws but also school regulations. In effect, the editorial stated that school regulations had the same force of law as the country's constitution. Consequently, this rhetorical move worked to further delegitimize the demonstrations through the implicature that the actions of the student demonstrators were illegal and so made them guilty of causing instability.⁴⁵⁸ Indeed, the illegality of the demonstrations was reinforced in the eighth sentence with the claim that those who disagreed with regulations or the affairs of the state "should pursue them through legal channels".⁴⁵⁹

Having rhetorically linked the illegality of student demonstrations to instability, the second part of the final paragraph used stability in an attempt to persuade the students to resume classes and so end the demonstrations. Indeed, the final sentence of the paragraph explicitly linked the student demonstrations to the headline of the editorial by stating that the resumption of classes by students was the "concrete act" that would "safeguard" the overall situation and "safeguard" stability. In terms of legitimization, this statement used stability to delegitimize the demonstrations by presenting the students as responsible for causing instability. Indeed, this responsibility is intensified by the claim in the ninth sentence that the government had "welcomed" the students' request for "dialogue", which seemed intended to remove the justification for the students continuing the demonstrations while, at the same time, conveying a positive impression of the government's treatment of the students' demands. Finally, the deployment of the term "resuming classes" rather than that of "ending the

⁴⁵⁸ The protests were illegal under Beijing municipal regulations, which held that all demonstrations must receive authorisation from the municipal government. Indeed, these regulations had been put in place as a response to the 1986-1987 student demonstrations in Beijing. See Ash (1989: 670).

⁴⁵⁹ According to Manion, in the reform and opening up period, CCP leaders, recognising the need for a greater degree of consultative politics, had put in place a number of institutional changes, such as local people's congresses, the receiving of letters from the public by government offices as well as "mass" organisations for students, workers and women, which were intended to function as the "legitimate channels of socialist democracy, through which the masses could communicate their views to the authorities." See Manion (1990: xxii).

demonstrations” further added to this responsibility by reminding the reader that students go to university in order to attend classes rather participate in demonstrations.⁴⁶⁰

In considering the construction of the stability discourse in the 29 April editorial, it is necessary to begin by focusing on the term “stability” itself. As pointed out earlier in the chapter, the term “stability” was consistently deployed in a nominalised form throughout the editorial and this allowed the editorial to use stability in a way that did not require its meaning to be made explicit. Indeed, the definition of stability put forward in the editorial stated only that it is achieved through the “joint efforts” of the people under the leadership of the CCP. This definition was later augmented in the final paragraph with the stipulation that only people who abided by laws and regulations contributed to stability while those who did not were guilty of causing instability. In the absence of any additional quantitative measure, the editorial effectively made no distinction between violations of the law when determining instances of instability. As a result, the term “stability” was discursively flexible and this allowed it to be used both positively to strengthen the legitimacy of the CCP and negatively, in the form of instability, to delegitimize the demonstrations.

The positive use of stability in the 29 April editorial began with the headline linking the “safeguarding” of stability to that of the overall situation. This link worked to establish the importance of stability by presenting it in terms of national concern and, in so doing, shifted the focus of stability away from maintaining the power of the CCP

⁴⁶⁰ The editorial strengthens this point when it claims that resuming classes is also “the hope of all the parents and friends and family of students”. For Gill, “[t]his is a fairly standard rhetorical move, in which a speaker or write claims to know and articulate the desires of another person or group. It is particularly effective...in constructions of crisis or threat, since it also implies that the group...are in danger of not being able to speak for themselves.” See Gill (2000: 186).

and onto the fate of the Chinese nation. In this, it worked to generate consensus over the importance of stability amongst the readership. However, having established the importance of stability, the editorial then used this legitimacy value to bolster the authority of the CCP by linking the existence of China's stability to the founding of the People's Republic of China. The positive value of stability was further used to strengthen the legitimacy of the CCP leadership with the claims that the economic growth and democratic reforms which have taken place since the Third Plenum have only been possible because of the condition of stability. As such, these claims simplified causal relationships in order to put forward the notion that stability precedes economic growth and democratic reforms and, in so doing, denied alternative explanations.

The negative value of stability, or instability, was employed both to complement and support the impression of stability's positive value. As a consequence, instability worked to both delegitimize the demonstrations against the CCP while, at the same time, legitimizing the authority of the CCP. In contrast to the presentation of stability, however, the negative value of stability was rarely used explicitly but rather was conveyed through implicatures. As explained in chapter two, an implicature is a "context-dependent linguistic realization" which van Dijk defines as "inferences based on general and particular political knowledge as well as on the context models".⁴⁶¹ The implicatures in the 29 April editorial, which could be made on the understanding that it had been published in response to the demonstrations, were evident in the claims that the positive value of stability promoted economic growth and democratic reforms also implicitly suggested that without stability, economic

⁴⁶¹ van Dijk (2005: 65).

growth and democratic reforms was not be possible. However, the editorial's use of implicatures also meant that the demonstrations were not explicitly labelled as responsible for causing instability. Consequently, the 29 April editorial avoided the strategy of explicit negative other-presentation that was employed unsuccessfully in the 26 April editorial. A further effect of using implicatures was that it emphasised only the act of instability while obscuring possible reasons to explain it. The exception to the use of implicatures in the editorial was the open predictions that were made concerning the future for a China without stability. In order to strengthen the validity of these predictions, the editorial used examples of instability from both the Cultural Revolution and the pre-PRC period to suggest that this will be the future for China if the condition of stability was not maintained. However, as with the implicatures, these predictions only worked by focusing on the acts of instability that occurred during these historical periods while leaving the reasons why such instability broke out unstated.

The positive value of stability established in the editorial and its association with the leadership of the CCP attempted to strengthen the Party's legitimacy in the same way that the negative value attached to instability worked to delegitimize the demonstrations. However, this use of stability was only possible on account of the vague definition that was proposed in the editorial. So while this enabled the term "stability" to be discursively flexible, it also meant that the use of stability in the 29 April editorial was entirely reliant on rhetoric to enhance the legitimacy of the CCP.

As explained in chapter two, this chapter is exceptional, in that two articles are intensively analysed rather than the combination of intensive analysis and extensive

analysis that will follow in the next two empirical chapters. The decision to omit the co-textual analysis was due, both to the limited coverage of the military suppression in its immediate aftermath and the political significance of the 4 June 1990 editorial. This editorial was published on the first year anniversary of the military suppression and provided a clear statement of the government's justification for taking military action in 1989. In so doing, it hegemonically defined the usage of stability in the post-Tiananmen period and, as a consequence, I felt that this editorial should be intensively analysed.

4 June Editorial: Textual Analysis⁴⁶²

“Stability Prevails Over Everything”

The six Chinese characters of the headline (稳定压倒一切) for the 4 June editorial were positioned above the body of the text, both evenly spaced and in bold black font.⁴⁶³ In light of the date’s symbolism, the headline articulated the main justification for the actions of the CCP leadership the previous year. Furthermore, this headline was a phrase that had been first used by Deng Xiaoping two months prior to the beginning of the Democracy Movement (*bajiu minyun*) and, as such, made use of Deng’s authority to strengthen this justification.⁴⁶⁴ As for the actual phrase, it worked to persuade the reader of its validity by foregrounding the importance of maintaining stability. For Fairclough, this rhetorical strategy is effective because “[t]he initial (‘thematic’) position in a clause is an informationally prominent one.”⁴⁶⁵ Indeed, the importance of stability was heightened by the use of the term “everything”, which served to leave this importance unchallenged. Furthermore, the use of the verb “prevail over” carried connotations of force and so implicitly expressed the Hobbesian notion that it was legitimate for the state to use violence in order to maintain social stability.

(1) A year has already passed since the quelling of the turmoil and the counter-revolutionary rebellion that took place in Beijing in the spring and summer of last year. (2) The development of the situation in the past year has made us further understand the nature of the turmoil and the counter-revolutionary rebellion and the great significance in the quelling of the rebellion.

⁴⁶² As with the previous article, the aim of this translation is not to necessarily produce the most fluent English translation but rather one that closely conveys the meaning and structure of the Chinese original. For the Chinese original, see the Appendix section.

⁴⁶³ Shelun (4 June 1990).

⁴⁶⁴ This quotation was cited in the analysis of the previous article.

⁴⁶⁵ Fairclough (2001: 244).

The first paragraph opened by making clear that the headline of the editorial did, indeed, refer to the military action that had taken place in Beijing. However, the use of the temporal marker at the end of the first sentence also worked to link the military action to the demonstrations that were taking place in Beijing and, as such, suggested that the publication of the editorial on 4 June was to commemorate the ending of the demonstrations.⁴⁶⁶ Thus, the editorial was a less of an apology and more of a commemoration. Furthermore, the link between the military action and the ending of the demonstrations indicated that the editorial would employ the rhetorical strategy of justifying the military action by presenting it as caused by the demonstrations. Therefore, this rhetorical strategy would be the opposite of that which had been used to delegitimize the demonstrations in the 29 April editorial. In that editorial, only the act of demonstrating had been highlighted while the possible reasons to explain the students' actions were obscured.

The phrase used to refer to the military action that took place on 3–4 June in 1989 was “the quelling of the turmoil and the counter-revolutionary rebellion”. For Brook, the naming of the events in 1989 is important because “[t]he Chinese government does not dispute the central fact of the killing. What it does dispute is the quality of the act. It does so by disputing the name.”⁴⁶⁷ As to the use of the term “quelling” (*pingxi*), Brook also comments that, “[a]s in English, the Chinese term...has an archaic flavor, the sort of word that might be used to describe a military campaign in the 18th

⁴⁶⁶ Although this point is, to a degree, obvious, I have made it because I feel that there has been a tendency in “western” reports on the events of this period to separate off the military action—generally referred to as the “Tiananmen Massacre” or, alternatively, the “Tiananmen Incident”—from the demonstrations. Consequently, in terms of justification, it is less easy to justify military action when it is presented in isolation than when it is viewed as a reaction to a set of events.

⁴⁶⁷ Brook (1992: 4).

century.”⁴⁶⁸ Indeed, the effect of using a word with such an “archaic flavour” was to obscure the violence that was perpetrated by the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) that night. Furthermore, this effect was compounded by the rest of the phrase, which deleted the participation of the PLA in the act of quelling. Rather, the full phrase mentions only the object of the quelling—the demonstrations— while omitting any reference to the subject—the Army— who carried out the action. As to the term used to refer to the demonstrations in the 4 June editorial, it had been expanded from that of “turmoil” (*dongluan*), employed in the 29 April editorial, to include “counter-revolutionary rebellion” (*fan’geming baoluan*). For Nathan, this classification constituted “an even more severe label than that of “turmoil,” which the authorities had applied up to then, and one that implied (falsely) that the demonstrators were armed and had shed blood.”⁴⁶⁹ This implication was suggested through the use of the term “rebellion”, which had the effect of strengthening the Army’s justification for taking action against the demonstrators by presenting it as a necessary response to force.⁴⁷⁰ The use of the label “counter-revolutionary” also carried a negative connotation because, as Liu points out, “[i]n Communist China, there is no word more sacred or richer in righteous indignation and moral force than “revolution”.”⁴⁷¹ This derived from the fact that the term “revolution” has been discursively linked to the founding of the People’s Republic of China and so, by labelling the demonstrations as “counter-revolutionary”, the editorial was claiming that the intention of the

⁴⁶⁸ Brook (1992: 4).

⁴⁶⁹ Nathan (2001: 8).

⁴⁷⁰ In addition, there has been much debate over which side actually fired the first shots, with the CCP leadership claiming that it was the demonstrators, thus further justifying the military actions.

⁴⁷¹ Liu (1994: 309).

demonstrators was to overthrow the Chinese Communist Party and replace the

PRC.⁴⁷²

(1) Soon after the quelling of the rebellion, the Party Central Committee convened the fourth plenary session of the 13th CCP Central Committee, calling for adherence to the country's foundation, taking the road that will lead the country to strength and prosperity, and paying special attention to several important tasks. (2) At the sixth plenary session of the Party Central Committee, a decision was made to enhance the party's ties with the masses. (3) The third session of the seventh National People's Congress called on the whole nation to further strive for the steady political, economic and social development of the country. (4) In the past year, under the united and strong leadership of the Party Central Committee with Comrade Jiang Zemin as the core, the Chinese people of all nationalities have overcome mounting difficulties and worked vigorously. (5) As a result, the national economy has progressed steadily amid economic rectification and further reforms; industrial production has risen again; inflation has been curbed; prices have tended to be stable; social order has improved; progress has been made in building a clean government and in fighting corruption; and a turn for the better has occurred on the political and ideological front. (6) The people are pleased and satisfied to see all these things done. (7) After the quelling of the rebellion, some people worried that there might be changes in the good policies implemented since the third plenary session of the 11th CCP Central Committee, such as the reform and opening policy, the rural policy and the policy on intellectuals. (8) They worried whether there would be stability in the country. (9) People have now clearly seen that the policies of the party and government have not changed, but have been further developed and perfected. (10) The country now enjoys political, economic and social stability; it has tided over the most difficult times caused by the rampant spread of the ideological trend of bourgeois liberalisation and the turmoil and rebellion.

The second paragraph shifted the focus of the editorial away from what happened during the months of April, May and June in 1989 onto that which happened after the demonstrations had been ended. The first four sentences of the paragraph detailed important decisions that had been taken by the Party leadership at different meetings in this period. In addition to relaying these decisions to the reader, they also seemed intended to perform the rhetorical function of demonstrating that the CCP was once again “under the united and strong leadership of the Party Central Committee with

⁴⁷² The label of “counter-revolutionary” also carried legal consequences. Under the penal code formulated in 1951, people accused of “counter-revolutionary” crimes could receive the death penalty. Indeed, it was only in 1997 that these crimes were replaced by that of “jeopardising national security”. See He (2001: 121).

Comrade Jiang Zemin as the core” following the challenge to its authority from both within and without during the first half of 1989. The fifth sentence in the paragraph went on to list the achievements that had been made under the Party’s leadership since the quelling of the rebellion. Fowler notes “[t]he levelling effect of the list—a standard effect of listing syntax” and, as a result, the achievements presented in this list were not clearly differentiated in terms of importance. However, within this list, it was possible to note that the curbing of inflation and stabilisation of prices as well as the declaration that “progress has been made in building a clean government and in fighting corruption” indicated that, though the CCP leadership had taken the decision to end the demonstrations, it had still responded to some of the demonstrators’ grievances, albeit without, in any way, compromising its hold on political power. The sixth sentence in the second paragraph then worked to reinforce the positive self-presentation of this list by claiming that “[t]he people are pleased and satisfied to see all these things done”. This is an example of a rhetorical strategy, also employed in the 29 April editorial, in which the term “people” functions as a vague category that appears to refer to the whole population of China, including the reader, and, in so doing, works by claiming to speak on behalf of this group while directing the reader to agree with this proposition. For Gill, “part of the force of this categorization is its very inexplicitness.”⁴⁷³ Indeed, this rhetorical strategy was employed a further two times in the remainder of the paragraph.

Having established the CCP leadership’s version of the events from 1989 in the first paragraph, the function of the second paragraph in the 4 June editorial was to further justify the use of military action to end the demonstrations by persuading the reader

⁴⁷³ Gill (2000: 183).

that the quelling of the rebellion had restored social stability, which then enabled the CCP to regain political stability and so allowed the Party leadership to put in the place the measures to recover economic stability. Consequently, the second paragraph built on the Hobbesian notion expressed in the headline that it was legitimate for the state to use violence in order to maintain social stability by appealing to the performance of the state since social stability had been restored. As with the discursive construction of stability in the 29 April editorial, this presented stability as constituting the necessary condition for the governance of China.

(1) Looking at today's situation and thinking about last year's events, people will more profoundly understand that the strategic decision to resolutely quell the rebellion by the central authorities was entirely correct and necessary. (2) Last year's disturbance was caused by an international macro-climate and an internal micro-climate, the direct opposition of bourgeois liberalisation against the four cardinal principles, and the intense struggle between infiltration and anti-infiltration, subversion and anti-subversion and peaceful evolution and anti-peaceful evolution. (3) Hostile forces, at home and abroad, manufactured this disturbance in order to overthrow the CCP leadership, subvert the socialist system and so make China a dependency of capitalism's developed countries. (4) At this critical life or death moment, the party and government had no choice except to resolutely quell the rebellion. (5) If last year's rebellion had not been quelled, today's China would unknowingly have chaos. (6) If there was chaos in China, it would not just have affected the peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region, but also the peace and stability of the whole world.

The second paragraph ended by linking the events in 1989 to the “rampant spread of the ideological trend of bourgeois liberalisation”. According to Schnell, this term was used “by the Chinese government to describe unwanted ideas and values which have been readily identified as American or Western.”⁴⁷⁴ These ideas and values were unwanted because, according to remarks attributed to Deng at the Sixth Plenum of the Twelfth Party Congress in September 1986, “[l]iberalization is only of a bourgeois nature. There is no proletarian, socialist liberalization.”⁴⁷⁵ As a result, the “Resolution

⁴⁷⁴ Schnell (1999: 4). Alternatively, Fewsmith contends that “bourgeois liberalization can be understood as democracy.” See Fewsmith (2001: 228).

⁴⁷⁵ Cited in He (2001: 119).

of the Central Committee of the CPC on the Guiding Principles for Building a Socialist Society with an Advanced Culture and Ideology”, adopted at the Sixth Plenum, charged bourgeois liberalisation with “negating the socialist system in favour of capitalism” and being “in total contradiction of the people’s interests and the historical trend.”⁴⁷⁶ The charge of bourgeois liberalisation was used to criticise political ideas or actions that the CCP leadership viewed as a threat to the socialist system.⁴⁷⁷ Indeed, this was the case with the student demonstrations that took place at the end of 1986 and the beginning of 1987, which the CCP leadership viewed as advocating political reforms that threatened the socialist system and, as a result, brought them to an end on the grounds that they constituted bourgeois liberalisation.⁴⁷⁸ The charge of bourgeois liberalisation made against the demonstrations in 1989 seemed similarly intended to discursively present them as a threat to the socialist system and so justify the decision by the CCP leadership to end the demonstrations in 1989. Furthermore, this charge also performed the rhetorical function of negating all the demands of the demonstrators without explicit rebuttal by linking them to an anti-western and anti-socialist discourse. However, in order to perform this rhetorical function, it was necessary that the meaning of bourgeois liberalisation was vague. Indeed, for Schnell, “the term “bourgeois liberalisation” exemplifies language which is created to be purposely vague.”⁴⁷⁹ This vagueness then enabled the use of bourgeois liberalisation, as with that of stability, to be discursively flexible but, as was also the case with stability, it was entirely reliant on its rhetorical force to persuade the reader to accept the charge of bourgeois liberalisation.

⁴⁷⁶ Cited in Schnell (1999: 7).

⁴⁷⁷ Qiu makes the point that, “[t]he crucial difference between the [terms] ‘political reform’ and ‘bourgeois liberalization’ is that the former is within the party-state institution, while the latter is without. Political changes for the destruction of Communist ideology are offensive, whereas those for improvement inside the socialist framework are tolerable.” Qiu (2000: 257).

⁴⁷⁸ He (2001: 120).

⁴⁷⁹ Schnell (1999: 4).

The link between bourgeois liberalisation and the 1989 demonstrations at the end of the second paragraph was further developed in the third paragraph with the identification of “an international macro-climate and an internal micro-climate” as the cause of the demonstrations. This claim moved beyond that made during the demonstrations, most notably in the 26 April *People’s Daily* editorial, that they were being caused by “a small group of people with ulterior motives” to imply that the demonstrations were the result of collaborations between the demonstrators, or more specifically, those who organised the demonstrators, and foreign states. Furthermore, the paragraph claimed that the intention of this collaboration was “to overthrow the CCP leadership, subvert the socialist system and so make China a dependency of capitalism’s developed countries.” While these claims could not be verified, their rhetorical effect was both to delegitimize the demands of the demonstrators by conflating them with a foreign plot to collapse the PRC while also appealing to nationalist sentiment to justify the use of military force by presenting the demonstrations not as a struggle between the party-state and society but as a conflict between China and an external enemy. Whereas the former situation would have suggested that the armed party-state attacked the unarmed demonstrators, the latter situation worked to justify military force by implying that, in fact, it was China’s military that had been initially attacked by armed demonstrators. Indeed, this theme of foreign “hostile forces” attacking CCP-led defenders of China was also implied in the description of the demonstrations as “an intense struggle between infiltration and anti-infiltration, subversion and anti-subversion and peaceful evolution and anti-peaceful

evolution”.⁴⁸⁰ As a consequence, the fourth sentence built on the previous sentences by deploying the *topos of external threat* to claim that “the party and the government had no choice but to resolutely quell the rebellion.” Furthermore, the use of the label “rebellion” for the Democracy Movement presented it as an armed force and, in so doing, strengthened the claim by denying the existence of alternative means to bring the demonstrations to an end. Indeed, for Brook, “[t]he Beijing Massacre was not the only possible outcome of the growing tension between state and society, nor did it have to happen. It occurred for the specific reason that the Party as a state had available to it military means and chose to direct those means against the civilian population of Beijing.”⁴⁸¹

The fifth sentence of the third paragraph attempts to strengthen the argument that the CCP leadership had no choice in using military action by the employing the argumentative strategy, *argumentum at consequentiam*, to claim that the consequences of not taking military action would mean that China would now be in a state of “chaos”. Although not directly using the concept of stability, this argument did impose a relative understanding of stability by inviting readers to draw comparisons between the current situation and that of “chaos”. Furthermore, the term “chaos” was politically significant because it worked to remind the reader of the repeated upheavals that China had suffered from the middle of the nineteenth century

⁴⁸⁰ Commenting on the use of anti-Western rhetoric in the media at the time, Shambaugh notes that, “[i]n the wake of Tiananmen, however, it has reached a height unsurpassed since the Cultural Revolution.” See Shambaugh (1989: 860). Moreover, the sanctions imposed on China by the international community worked to both enhance the rhetorical appeal of the CCP’s criticism of the “West” as well as strengthen the plausibility of its claims that the Democracy Movement had been infiltrated by foreigners. Indeed, as pointed out in the introductory chapter, these claims formed the basis of the anti-foreign nationalism that was heavily propagated in the post-Tiananmen period.

⁴⁸¹ Brook (1991: 196).

up to the Cultural Revolution.⁴⁸² In fact, the use of history had already been employed in the paragraph with the claim that the intention of the “hostile forces” was to make China “a dependency of capitalism’s developed countries.” This claim made reference to China’s “century of national humiliation” (*bainian guochi*) that is dated to the defeat in the Opium Wars of 1839 and 1842 and was only ended, according to this discourse, when the CCP gained power in 1949. Indeed, according to Zhao, the use of this historical discourse has been a key rhetorical strategy on the part of the CCP “because eliminating “the century of shame and humiliation” is at the heart of a principal claim to CCP legitimacy.”⁴⁸³ Consequently, by linking it to the military action that was taken in 1989, it seems that the CCP leadership intended to use this to further justify its decision to use this military force.

(1) Stability is the precondition for carrying out the building of socialist modernisation.

(2) Without a stable environment and with chaos prevailing, people will not have the ideas or energy to focus on reform and construction, in the same way that, even with the doors of the country open, foreigners will not dare to come to China to set up factories, conduct business or do exchanges. (3) Also, socialist democracy can only be built under stable conditions and progress at a steady pace according to the Constitution and laws. (4) Turmoil can only create anarchism. (5) Stability represents the fundamental interests of the people. (6) This is the sentiment of the people. (7) Party committees and governments at all levels and all related departments must regard the safeguarding of stability as the most important task at present and pay adequate attention to all aspects of this task. (8) Party and government leadership organisations at all levels and all comrades of the party must clearly remember the fundamental objective of wholeheartedly serving the people, be honest and clean when performing official duties, work hard, put one’s heart and soul into handling the affairs of the masses, further improve the environment and rectify order and deepen reforms, as well as gradually push the economy forward. (9) At the same time, they must do ideological and political work well and fully promote socialist democracy, allow people to have peace and tranquillity and society to have stability and unity.

⁴⁸² This argumentation scheme has been employed in a number of different contexts. In his research on news production in Guangdong province, Latham found that, “[t]he fear of chaos was a consistent theme in explanations and justifications of media control...[and] was able to provide a legitimating rationalization of government control even for many of those who advocated media liberalization and found censorship annoying at least and detestable at most.” See Latham (2000: 650).

⁴⁸³ Zhao (2000: 30). The use of this discourse is discussed in greater detail in the intensive analysis of a commentary published during the “anti-Falun Gong” campaign.

The theme of “chaos” put forward at the end of the third paragraph is elaborated upon in the fourth paragraph, with the claim that its prevalence would have a negative impact upon “reform and construction”. This would be not only because chaos would deprive people of “ideas and energy” but also because it would deter “foreigners” from investing in China. As well as reaffirming the centrality of the Party’s key task of economic reform and construction, this claim also strengthened the impression that chaos would have taken hold if the demonstrations had not been ended and, in so doing, worked to privilege the Party’s version of future reality over any alternatives. Indeed, this version was reinforced with the claim in the fourth sentence that “[t]urmoil can only create anarchism”, which worked to deny the possibility of other outcomes, in particular, the political reform that had been the objective of the Democracy Movement.

The use of the chaos discourse in the fourth paragraph also worked contrastively to emphasise the importance of stability. The implication was that, in order to avoid chaos, it was necessary to have stability. Furthermore, the fourth paragraph followed the 29 April editorial by defining this stability as the necessary condition for both the building of “socialist modernisation” and “socialist democracy”. The importance of stability to the economic and democratic development of China was then reinforced in the sixth and seventh sentences with the claims that it represented both “fundamental interests of the people” as well as “the sentiment of the people”. As in the second paragraph, these claims employed the rhetorical strategy of appearing to speak on behalf of the “people” while working to persuade the reader to accept them. Moreover, absent from either of these claims was the point that the maintenance of stability was

also in the “fundamental interests” of the CCP in terms of maintaining its hold on political power.

(1)The people demand stability. (2)Stability prevails over everything. (3)This is people's common understanding after experiencing last year's political disturbance. (4)We must preserve the country's stability as we would safeguard our own lives. (5)We simply cannot do anything detrimental to the matter of stability. (6)This way, our country's great hope will be the great hope for the cause of socialism.

The last paragraph concluded the 4 June editorial by emphatically stating the importance of maintaining stability. Indeed, the paragraph begins by employing the rhetorical device of claiming to represent the views of “the people” while working to direct the reader to accept the importance of stability. Indeed, this direction is strengthened by the declarative tone of statement. The importance of maintaining stability is then made clear in the fourth sentence when readers are instructed to regard the preserving of stability as they would “safeguard their own lives”. The use of the inclusive pronoun “we” alongside the modal verb “must” in this sentence also worked to strengthen the impact of these instructions by shifting the responsibility for maintaining stability onto the reader. In addition, the content of the instructions, in comparing the preservation of stability with the protection of one’s own life, implicitly suggested that it was acceptable to use force in order to maintain stability. Indeed, this implication was strengthened by the iteration of the headline of the editorial in the second sentence on account of its expression of the Hobbesian notion that it was legitimate for the state to use force against its people. Moreover, this notion was also given greater legitimacy by the claim in the third sentence that it was “people’s common understanding after experiencing last year’s political disturbance”. As a consequence, the rhetorical effect of implicitly suggesting that the use of force to maintain stability was acceptable in the future seemed to retroactively justify the

decision by the CCP leadership to use military force to end the demonstrations from the previous year.

The 4 June editorial did not deny that military force had been used to end the demonstrations in 1989, even if, at the same time, it rhetorically eliminated the violence that was caused by these actions. Rather, it sought to justify the decision by the CCP leadership to use this military force. The editorial attempted to achieve this by using stability, both in negatively portraying the Democracy Movement as causing instability and in positively presenting the ending of this Movement as re-establishing stability

The use of stability to justify the decision to use military force began with the headline of the 4 June editorial, which implicitly suggested that it was legitimate for the state to use military force in order to maintain stability. Following on from this, the editorial's portrayal of the demonstrations as causing instability was achieved both by labelling the demonstrations as a "counter-revolutionary rebellion" that conveyed the impression of an armed force and by the linking of this rebellion to a plot by foreign states that was intended to bring about the collapse of the PRC. Consequently, the 4 June editorial defines instability by equating it to the ending of CCP rule. In order to further strengthen this definition, the editorial used the term "chaos" to describe a future for China that it claimed would have been realised had the demonstrations not been ended by military force. However, the use of this term also had the effect of linking China's future to the period of upheaval from the previous one hundred and fifty years and, in so doing, worked to obscure alternative future realities.

This negative use of chaos also worked contrastively to present stability in positive terms, in that the reader was persuaded to make a comparison between the situation in China as it currently existed and one in which there was “chaos”. This positive presentation of stability was further strengthened by the claim that the political, economic and social achievements that had been made under the leadership of the CCP since the ending of the demonstrations was the direct result of the social stability that had been achieved by use of military force. Consequently, in the same way that editorial negatively linked instability with the overthrow of the CCP, it also worked to positively link stability with the maintenance of CCP rule. In terms of legitimization, this rhetorical strategy was similar to that of the 29 April editorial, in that stability was used to strengthen the legitimacy of the CCP while instability was used to delegitimize the demonstrations. However, as with the 29 April editorial, this use of stability was only possible by deployment of its nominalised form, which enabled the definition of stability to be left unstated in the editorial. As a result, stability was discursively flexible but also entirely reliant on rhetoric to enhance the legitimacy of the CCP.

Conclusion

This chapter analysed the editorials of 29 April 1989 and 4 June 1990 with the intention of better understanding how the CCP leadership employed the concept of stability to respond to the fundamental challenge that was posed by the Democracy Movement. In the 29 April editorial, stability was presented as a positive value and instability as a negative one. This was achieved by linking stability to China's future development, in that it was presented as the necessary condition both for continued economic growth and political reform. The positive value of stability was then linked to the current leadership of the CCP. In contrast, the negative value of instability was achieved by linking it to the period of upheaval in China's modern history, in that instability was presented as the sole reason for China's lack of relative development in that period. The editorial then worked to implicate the negative value of instability with that of 1989 demonstrations.

As for the 4 June editorial, a similar rhetorical strategy was employed, in that stability was again presented as a positive value and instability as a negative one. Furthermore, this positive value of stability was also linked to the leadership of the CCP while the Democracy Movement was implicated as the negative value of instability. However, given that the 4 June editorial was intended to justify the decision to use military force in order to bring the demonstrations to an end, the use of stability and instability also differed from that in the 29 April editorial. As a consequence, the positive value of stability was achieved by linking the political, economic and social developments that had taken place since the military suppression to the condition of stability. In this, both these developments as well as the decision to use military force were linked to the leadership of the CCP and, as a result, the positive value of stability was once

again presented in terms of the Party. In contrast, the negative value of instability was established by presenting the implications of demonstrations as chaos. Furthermore, in the same way that the relative stability that existed in China following the military suppression was linked to the CCP's leadership, so it was that the chaos that was imagined as resulting from the demonstrations was linked to the overthrow of the CCP.

The key rhetorical feature of both editorials was the nominalised usage of stability. As pointed out earlier, the effect of such usage was to "mystify" the definition of stability. As a result, what constituted stability and who was threatening this stability was not made explicit. This enabled the editorial to use stability in a way that was discursively flexible, in that stability was linked only with the CCP while the demonstrations were presented only in terms of instability; however, this also meant that the persuasiveness of the stability discourse rested entirely on rhetoric. In terms of legitimation, it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of this rhetoric, if only because other events must also be taken into consideration. This is particularly the case with the 29 April editorial, in that the discourse of stability may well have had a positive impact on the legitimacy of the CCP but, ultimately, the demonstrations against the Party did not stop following its publication. Despite this, it is important to remember that the editorial was not solely aimed at persuading the demonstrators to end their protests but was also intended to persuade those not protesting, both party members and the vast majority of the wider populace, of the legitimacy of the CCP's rule. A further point to make is that when the protests were brought to an end, the discourse of stability constructed in the 29 April editorial may have gone some way to restoring the legitimacy of the CCP. Indeed, in considering the 4 June editorial, it is possible to

state that the stability discourse seemed to be more effective in restoring the Party's legitimacy after the demonstrations were brought to an end. Ironically, this seems to have been because of the events that took place in 1989. As Qiu points out, "[a]lthough he [Deng] had previously proclaimed that "stability takes precedence over everything"..., this warning had little effect until after June 4th. A decade from then, most public security officers and political instructors in Chinese universities are still repeating this ultra-conservative motto when there is anything potentially endangering "stability".⁴⁸⁴ Indeed, it seems that the threat to the Party's monopoly of political power posed by the events in 1989 actually worked to heighten the rhetorical effect of the stability discourse. In terms of discursive selectivity, the Party's hegemonic interpretation of these events as causing instability helped to shape a political context that favoured the discourse of stability.

Despite the predictions of collapse that followed the events in 1989, it was a further ten years before the authority of the CCP was seriously challenged. On this occasion, the challenge came not from politically agitated students but from followers of a quasi-spiritual *qigong* group called *Falun Gong*. Consequently, the next empirical chapter will focus on how the CCP used the stability discourse during the "anti-*Falun Gong*" campaign that was launched in response to this challenge.

⁴⁸⁴ Qiu (2000: 257).

Chapter 4: The 1999 “Anti-Falun Gong” Campaign

Introduction

This chapter will analyse a commentary that was published in the *People’s Daily* during the Chinese government’s campaign against the quasi-spiritual *qigong* group, *Falun Gong*.⁴⁸⁵ Following on from the analysis of the Beijing Spring in the previous chapter, the campaign against this group was undertaken in response to the next major incidence of instability in the People’s Republic of China. Indeed, this incidence, which took the form of a demonstration held by *Falun Gong* on 25 April 1999 outside Zhongnanhai, was described by the government as the “most serious political incident since 1989”.⁴⁸⁶ The result of this demonstration was that, after a three month time lag, the government decided to outlaw the group and, in so doing, launched what Wong describes as “a well-orchestrated nation-wide crackdown, one that China...[had] not seen since the Tiananmen Incident.”⁴⁸⁷ In light of this, the aim of this chapter is to analyse a commentary that was published in the initial stages of this crackdown in order to better understand how the discourse of stability was employed to legitimate the government’s suppression of *Falun Gong*.

In contrast to the previous chapter, this chapter will only analyse a single article. This is because there has been little variation in the usage of stability throughout the anti-*Falun Gong* campaign and, unlike the previous chapter, there is little explanatory

⁴⁸⁵ In this paper, I use the term *Falun Gong* to refer to the group rather than the alternative appellation of *Falun Dafa*. The distinction between these terms appears to be that *Falun Gong* refers to the practice of meditative exercises and *Falun Dafa* refers to the spiritual belief system based on Li Hongzhi’s teachings. While *Falun Dafa* is the name that adherents of the group prefer to use, I have decided to use *Falun Gong* to refer to the group on the basis that this term is predominantly used both in the popular media as well as in the academic literature.

⁴⁸⁶ This claim was made by Wang Zhaoguo, who was speaking on behalf of the CCP Central Committee on 23 July following the announcement of the ban. See “Official says Falun Gong Most Serious Incident since Tiananmen” (27 July 1999).

⁴⁸⁷ Wong (1999: 8).

value to be gained from analysing more than one article. As such, the article that will be analysed is representative of how stability has been used in the campaign. In addition, the selected article is a “staff commentator” article (*benbao pinglun yuan*) rather than the editorials (*shelun*) that were analysed in the previous chapter. Although editorials do represent the most authoritative type of commentary, commentator articles are also used to express the views of the leadership. Indeed, Wu notes that, “[s]ince the late 1970s, staff commentator articles...have flourished, partially as a replacement for editorials.”⁴⁸⁸ Furthermore, given that the usage of stability in the commentary was consistent with editorials which were published on *Falun Gong* at the time, I feel that this commentary is sufficiently authoritative to be the subject of my analysis.

As explained in chapter two, this chapter will begin by presenting a contextual analysis of the events that situates the publication of 16 August editorial in the political context of this period. Following on from this, an intensive analysis of the editorial will be carried out at the paragraphical level so as to make explicit my reading of the text. Moreover, as with the intensive analyses carried out in the previous chapter, the aim of this reading is to answer three principal questions:

1. What meaning was given to stability in the commentary?
2. How did the editorial attempt to persuade the reader of the validity of this meaning?
3. How did this use of stability relate to the legitimacy of the CCP?

Finally, the chapter will end with a co-textual analysis that examines how the stability discourse was used in other articles published during the anti-*Falun Gong* campaign

⁴⁸⁸ Wu (1994: 197). Indeed, in the recent debate over the property rights law, the leadership’s views were expressed through a signed commentary rather than an editorial. This commentary, which was signed using the pseudonym *Zhong Xuanli* (understood to be an abbreviation for *Zhonggong zhongyang xuanchuanbu lilun ju*, also known as the Central Propaganda Department’s Theory Bureau), was published in the *People’s Daily* on 5 June 2006. See *Zhong Xuanli* (5 June 2006).

so as to avoid producing an overly narrow understanding of the discourse in this period.

16 August Commentary: Contextual Analysis⁴⁸⁹

The article that will be analysed in this chapter is a commentary from the *People's Daily* entitled "Maintain the Overall Situation and Stability and Push Forward Reform and Development—Ninth Commentary on Tightening Efforts to Handle and Solve the 'Falun Gong' Problem" which was published on 16 August 1999 as part of a series of commentaries concerned with the *Falun Gong* "problem".⁴⁹⁰ Furthermore, this series was itself part of the wider campaign against *Falun Gong* that had been launched by the Chinese government on 22 July 1999 with the announcement of the resolution by the Ministry of Civil Affairs to outlaw "The Research Society of *Falun Dafa* and the *Falun Gong* organisation under its control",⁴⁹¹ the release of a Circular by the CCP Central Committee forbidding its members from practicing *Falun Gong*⁴⁹² and a set of regulations from the Ministry of Public Security prohibiting the promotion of *Falun Gong*.⁴⁹³ For Perry, such a campaign, both in size and scope, had not been conducted in the People's Republic of China since the 1950s, when successive campaigns were undertaken against the resistance of "counter-revolutionaries". However, this comparison notwithstanding, Perry also contends that the campaign against *Falun Gong* was still "unprecedented" in that "never before have we witnessed an attack of this kind on but a single target."⁴⁹⁴ Furthermore, this "target" had only been founded seven years earlier⁴⁹⁵ and yet, by the time the campaign was launched, the number of

⁴⁸⁹ As with the contextual analysis in the previous chapter, this analysis is not intended to provide a full historical account of *Falun Gong* and the government's campaign against the movement but rather, in keeping with the Discourse-Historical approach, to present my understanding of the issues relevant to this period in order to make more explicit the meanings within the 16 August Commentary.

⁴⁹⁰ Benbao Pinglunyu (16 August 1999)

⁴⁹¹ "On the Resolution Outlawing the Falun Dafa Research Society" (1999: 30–32)

⁴⁹² "Circular of the CCP Central Committee Forbidding Communist Party Members from Practicing Falun Dafa" (1999: 14–18).

⁴⁹³ "Public notice of the Public Security Ministry of the People's Republic of China" (1999: 33–36).

⁴⁹⁴ Perry (2001: 170).

⁴⁹⁵ According to Vermander, the group's first workshop was held in the city of Changchun (Jilin province) in May 1992. See Vermander (2001: 13).

Falun Gong adherents numbered in the millions.⁴⁹⁶ As Wong points out, “the sudden rise of FLG in the short span of only a few years (as compared to 2000 years of history for Chinese Buddhism and 1700 years for Taoism) is simply an astonishing phenomenon.”⁴⁹⁷ In order to explain how this “phenomenon” came to be and why it then became the object of a government campaign, it is first necessary to give a brief account of *Falun Gong*.

The Philosophy of *Falun Gong*⁴⁹⁸

Penny describes *Falun Gong* as “qigong with Buddhist characteristics” and this neatly, if simplistically, captures the syncretic blending of Daoist and Buddhist elements that are most prominent in the cultivation system promulgated by the group.⁴⁹⁹ Indeed, the incorporation of elements from these two religions is reflected both in the name of the group and the emblem that represents it. For the name, the term *falun* is the standard Chinese translation in religious writings for the Buddhist term *dharmacakra*, which

⁴⁹⁶ The exact number of *Falun Gong* adherents range from the Chinese government’s estimate of approximately two million to that of one hundred million (70 million in China) put forward by *Falun Gong* spokespersons. While the government’s figure is widely regarded to be on the low side, the membership figure given by *Falun Gong* seems extremely high, given as it would put its membership above that of the CCP. Furthermore, there is no way to verify the figures given by the group, for, as Tong points out, “[o]rganizationally, the *falun gong* has...no institutionalized means to delineate members from non-members, authorized from unauthorized agents and no rites of induction and expulsion.” See Tong (2002: 636, 659).

⁴⁹⁷ Wong (1999: 12).

⁴⁹⁸ In attempting to give a brief overview of *Falun Gong*, it is important to point out that the history of the group, and particularly that of its founder, Li Hongzhi, is highly contested, both by those who support the ban on the *Falun Gong* and by those who oppose it. The divergent figures for *Falun Gong* membership cited in Note 8 above is but one example of this contestation. Furthermore, there is also a degree of dissonance to be found in the academic literature on these issues, no doubt due in part to these contested views but possibly also due to the fact that little research had been conducted on the group prior to the government’s ban. As a consequence, it has been difficult to establish a consistent set of facts on this subject. See also Ownby (2002: 308–309).

⁴⁹⁹ Penny (2005: 44). Other authors have suggested that additional spiritual elements can be discerned in the *Falun Gong* belief system. For example, Xiao contends that it also draws on “ethic-teaching Confucianism”, most notably in the concept of *xinxing* (mind nature). For Chang, *Falun Gong* also contains elements of classical Chinese folk religion as well as magic while Shue describes it as “an eclectic blend of themes and metaphors drawn from Daoism, Buddhism, Chinese folk myths, Chinese medicine, *qigong* practice, pop science and even science fiction. See Xiao (2001: 131), Chang (2004: 61), Shue (2002: 220).

means “the Wheel of the Law”⁵⁰⁰, while the use of the term *gong* refers to the Daoist practice of *qigong*. Put together, the phrase *Falun Gong* literally means the “Practice of the Wheel of the Law”. As for the group’s emblem, it displays both the Buddhist *dharma* wheel and the Daoist *taiji* symbol.⁵⁰¹

The inclusion of Daoist beliefs in *Falun Gong* is most evident in the five sets of meditative exercises that constitute the practice of *Falun Gong*, as these exercises draw from that of *qigong*.⁵⁰² The concept of *qigong*, which has been traced back to Daoist practices as early as the fourth century BCE,⁵⁰³ can be broken down into those of *qi* and *gong*, in which the term *qi* refers to the notion of a “life energy” that is said to be present in all things and the term *gong* refers to practice, in the form of meditation and deep breathing, through which this “life energy” can be cultivated. According to Lu, those who practice *qigong* believe that, “through cultivating “*qi*” one can gain not only some kind of vital energy that is useful to stay healthy, but also obtain some supernormal abilities.”⁵⁰⁴ Within *Falun Gong*, this concept of *qigong*, as practiced through the five sets of meditative exercises, was more heavily emphasised than that of Buddhism in the early stage of its existence.⁵⁰⁵ According to Lu, *Falun Gong* was initially promoted by Li Hongzhi in his lectures and classes as a method for healing physical ailments and curing diseases. Indeed, Lu claims that Li would often offer to perform immediate treatments on people in order to demonstrate its healing

⁵⁰⁰ Penny (2005: 35). However, Ching contends that though this translation is “technically correct”, in Buddhism, the term “Law” refers to doctrine. See Ching (2005: 42).

⁵⁰¹ Ching, (2005: 43).

⁵⁰² However, there is disagreement over the extent to which these exercises can be considered as *qigong*. See, for example, Vermader (2001: 5), Leung (2002: 767).

⁵⁰³ Overmyer (2003: 314). Xu contends that the actual term is of recent origin; however, this is disputed by Leung, who claims that the word first appeared in medical texts during the time of the Jin dynasty (265–317 CE). See Xu (1999: 973), Leung (2002: 767).

⁵⁰⁴ Lu (2005: 174).

⁵⁰⁵ Indeed, *Falun Gong* received its accreditation, albeit under the name of “The Research Society of *Falun Dafa*” and, with it, the legal right to exist as an organisation from the China *Qigong* Science Research Society (CQSRS) in 1992. See Xia and Hua (1999: 8).

power.⁵⁰⁶ However, this emphasis on the healing power of *qigong* gave way to a spiritual salvation that borrowed from Buddhism with the publication of Li Hongzhi's first book, *Zhuan Falun*, in 1994. This book, which had been put together by *Falun Gong* adherents from transcriptions of Li's lectures, is, according to Chan, regarded as "a sacred text, a revelation of the Truth of the Universe".⁵⁰⁷

In *Zhuan Falun*, Li posits that humanity has been subject to eighty-one near annihilations in the phase of pre-recorded history and that, with the passing of each one of these events, a process of progressive degradation has been effected upon the quality of the remaining human beings, to the extent that the human beings now left on earth equate to the "dregs" of humanity. For Li, this means that all human beings are polluted by karma (*veli*), which he claims is materially represented by a "black substance". In addition, this karma will become greater if people commit immoral acts. The effect of this karma at a societal level has been to leave it morally degraded while, at an individual level, it has resulted in people suffering bad fortune and illnesses. According to Li, the only way to eradicate karma is through the cultivation of one's "mind nature" (*xinxing*) and this will only occur once people accept his teachings and follow the practice of *Falun Gong*. By doing this, people will be able to replace karma with virtue (*de*), materially represented by a "white substance". This substance is to be cultivated by the practice of *Zhen* (truthfulness), *Shan* (benevolence) and *Ren* (forbearance), which constitute "the supreme nature of the universe" (*yuzhou zuigao texing*) and take their form in acts such as enduring suffering and setbacks as well as doing "good deeds". The purpose of this cultivation is to increase practitioners' "mind

⁵⁰⁶ An example is at the second Oriental Health Expo in Beijing in 1993, at which Li offered treatments on expo visitors with such success that the Ministry of Public Security praised Li's power of healing diseases. See Lu (2005: 175).

⁵⁰⁷ Chan (2004: 670).

nature” to the level where it is possible for them to attain a state of enlightenment known as “consummation”.⁵⁰⁸ Li, in his capacity as master, aids practitioners in reaching this state by inserting the *falun*, literally a small wheel of law, into their lower abdomens. According to Li, the *falun* constitutes “a miniature of the universe that possesses all of the universe’s capabilities, and it can operate and rotate automatically”.⁵⁰⁹ It enables practitioners to cultivate their own virtue by giving them their own cultivation energy, also known as *gong*. When the *falun* rotates clockwise, it is said to absorb energy from the universe and when it rotates counter-clockwise, it is said to release energy and waste into the universe while at the same time benefiting those nearby.

The Popularity of *Falun Gong*

The publication of *Zhuan Falun* was also significant, in that it served to differentiate *Falun Gong* from other *qigong* groups. This had proved necessary, as the group’s emergence had occurred at the height of the “*qigong* fever” (*qigong re*) in China.⁵¹⁰ Consequently, it had been but one of a number of groups offering *qigong*. Moreover, these groups, such as *Zhong Gong* and the “New Guo Lin *Qigong*”, had been established much earlier than *Falun Gong* and, as a result, were bigger, more organised and had a stronger reputation for healing diseases. For *Falun Gong*, it proved difficult to attract new practitioners in the environment. However, the

⁵⁰⁸ Penny (2003: 644).

⁵⁰⁹ Li (2000: 42).

⁵¹⁰ Chan estimates that the number of registered and non-registered groups during this time reached approximately 2,000 while Friedman claims that the CQSRS had estimated there to be sixty million regular *qigong* practitioners. As to the larger question of why *qigong* became so popular in China during this period, Chen puts it down to “[t]he combination of the withdrawal of state funds, emergence of charismatic masters and a long tradition of self-cultivation”, in that the post-Mao period had involved a change in the way that health care was funded, with the result that a greater proportion of the health care cost was transferred onto the patient. Consequently, people began to look towards less expensive ways of treating illnesses and ailments and, given the long tradition of self-cultivation as well as the emergence of many *qigong* groups, for many people, *qigong* represented a viable alternative. See Chen (2003: 506–508), Chan (2004: 674), Friedman (2005: 223).

publication of *Zhuan Falun*, in linking the practice of *qigong* to that of spiritual salvation, enabled it to offer a form of *qigong* that went beyond the more traditional healing practices of most *qigong* schools and was responsible, in part at least, for the rapid growth of the group. From her interviews with *Falun Gong* adherents, Chan concluded that “it was its moral teachings that make it superior to other *qigong* groups”.⁵¹¹ Ching also found that the appeal of *Falun Gong* lay in the fact that it offered “a set of beliefs...about life and hereafter”.⁵¹² For many analysts, the appeal of this belief system to so many people in China during this time lay in the declining power of the communist ideology. Indeed, Ching traces the decline of this ideology all the way back to the deleterious effects of the Cultural Revolution⁵¹³ whereas others, most notably Xiao, contend that it was due to the mass lay-offs, widening income disparity and official corruption that arose from the economic reforms in the post-Mao period.⁵¹⁴ Despite these differences, most agree that the decline of communism had led to an “ideological vacuum”. Indeed, for Xiao, this vacuum was *Falun Gong*’s “most effective recruiting mechanism.”⁵¹⁵ Leung agrees, explaining that *Falun Gong* “attracted people, including CCP members, seeking traditional values and a more idealistic meaning in life, and it offered a philosophy to fill the spiritual vacuum that has resulted from growing disillusionment with the Communist ideology.”⁵¹⁶

⁵¹¹ Chan (2004: 676).

⁵¹² Ching (2005: 49).

⁵¹³ Ibid., p. 49.

⁵¹⁴ See Xiao (2001), Leung (2002) and Chan (2004). An additional factor may have been that *Falun Gong* was set up in the north-east of China which experienced high unemployment in the 1990s.

⁵¹⁵ Xiao (2001: 130).

⁵¹⁶ Leung (2002: 783). The limitation of such an argument is that it rests on the presupposition that people, or in this case Chinese people, require some form of ideological fulfilment and that communism previously provided this fulfilment. Such points are not uncontested and leave unexplained, for example, why some people became FLG adherents while others did not. That said, the link between “the ideological crisis” in communism and the apparent widespread appeal of *Falun Gong*’s belief system cannot be entirely rejected.

In addition to *Falun Gong*'s belief system, analysts also emphasise the methods employed by the group to publicise this belief system when explaining its popularity. Alongside the publication of books and the release of audio and video materials that were done by most groups, Chen highlights the fact that *Falun Gong* offered free classes for interested practitioners at a time when many other *qigong* schools charged regular attendance fees.⁵¹⁷ Chen makes a further point that regular practitioners were encouraged to actively discuss Li's teachings with friends and family members. Indeed, for Chen, "[t]his was perhaps the main reason for rapid dissemination."⁵¹⁸ Johnson makes a similar point, in that *Falun Gong*, on account of the fact that it was registered as an affiliate of the China *Qigong* Scientific Research Society, was not bound by the restrictions placed upon official religions and so was able to proselytise in public spaces.⁵¹⁹ Vermander also points to *Falun Gong*'s use of public spaces when conducting its exercise sessions as enabling it to gain prominence. In fact, according to Vermander, Li Hongzhi insisted that it was necessary for exercises to be carried out in public so as "to propagate and improve dharma...throughout the universe" and because "protestation was necessary for salvation".⁵²⁰ A final reason given by Johnson to explain *Falun Gong*'s popularity does not concern its promulgation strategies but rather the failure of the Chinese government to circumscribe such strategies. According to Johnson, no government department was prepared to take responsibility for dealing with *Falun Gong*. As it was not classified as a religion, the

⁵¹⁷ According to Ownby, this only occurred once *Falun Gong* had acquired a level of financial success—through the sale of other *Falun Gong* paraphernalia—that made it no longer dependent on raising money through lectures. See Ownby (2002: 305–306).

⁵¹⁸ Chen (2003: 511).

⁵¹⁹ Johnson (13 December 2000).

⁵²⁰ Vermander (2001: 5).

Religion Bureau did not believe that it fell under their jurisdiction while the Ministry of Public Security was not able to act unless the group caused a “disturbance”.⁵²¹

Political Pressure on *Falun Gong*

In the same way that *Falun Gong*’s popularity could be explained, in part, by the growth in popularity of *qigong* schools across China, so it was that the government’s suppression of *Falun Gong* can be partly explained by its attitude to this growth in the practice of *qigong*. For Lu, this attitude was both “subtle and contradictory”, in that the government actively sought to encourage the practice of *qigong*, not least because many leaders felt that the healing practice was both effective and reduced the burden on the health care system, while at the same time exercising control over *qigong* masters who were viewed as a threat to state rule.⁵²² The government was able to display such a contradictory attitude by putting in place regulations that sought to distinguish the legitimate form of “scientific” *qigong* (*kexue de qigong*) from the illegitimate form of “unscientific” *qigong* (*wu kexue de qigong/jia qigong*).⁵²³

Consequently, in 1986, the China *Qigong* Scientific Research Society (CQSRS) was established and required all *qigong* schools to obtain its accreditation. Although Lu states that this “played an important role in propelling *qigong* to high popularity”,⁵²⁴ it also meant that the activities of *qigong* schools would now be subject to state monitoring.⁵²⁵ Regulations introduced by the CQSRS stipulated that accreditation for *qigong* schools would be awarded on condition of the *qigong* master either having a medical degree plus further courses in traditional Chinese medicine, having trained with an officially accredited *qigong* master or demonstrating their healing powers

⁵²¹ Johnson (13 December 2000).

⁵²² Lu (2005: 183 note 3).

⁵²³ Chen (2003: 508–510).

⁵²⁴ Lu (2005: 174).

⁵²⁵ Leung (2002: 767).

before an official board.⁵²⁶ In addition to these regulations, raids were carried out on booksellers carrying “unscientific” *qigong* titles and checks were made in public parks to ensure that *qigong* practitioners belonged to an officially registered school.⁵²⁷ For Chen, the effect of these regulations meant that “[t]he state and its representatives thus became crucial gatekeepers to counter runaway popular imaginations of *qigong* masters.”⁵²⁸

The significance of the state’s classification of *qigong* for the later campaign against *Falun Gong* is that, in 1996, the CQSRS suspended the registration of *Falun Gong* on the grounds that it was “advocating superstition”.⁵²⁹ The withdrawal of this registration now meant that *Falun Gong* was classified as an illegal organisation in China.⁵³⁰ For Ching, the lack of official registration also meant that *Falun Gong* “was without adequate political protection, and thus exposed to attacks or criticisms from all quarters.”⁵³¹ Indeed, in the period prior to the 1999 suppression of the group, *Falun Gong* was subjected to criticism from the Chinese media. The first prominent

⁵²⁶ Chen (2003: 510).

⁵²⁷ Ibid., p.510.

⁵²⁸ Ibid., p.509.

⁵²⁹ Xia and Hua (1999: 8). However, there are conflicting accounts over both the timing and the cause of *Falun Gong*’s ejection from the CQSRS. According to Lu, the CQSRS suspended *Falun Gong* in 1994 but that *Falun Gong* made the decision to withdraw from the Society in 1996 after it was unable to register with a social organisation. Tong, however, cites *Falun Gong* sources which claim that it was Li Hongzhi who initiated *Falun Gong*’s withdrawal from the CQSRS. First, he informed the Society in 1994 that *Falun Gong* would no longer run training sessions and then, in September 1996, his deputies informed the CQSRS that *Falun Gong* would no longer run training seminars. In response to this, the CQSRS terminated *Falun Gong*’s registration in November 1996. For Leung, *Falun Gong* was de-registered by the government in 1997 while Shue dates *Falun Gong*’s removal from the CQSRS only to the “mid-1990s”; however, Shue claims that it was due to other *qigong* masters complaining to the CQSRS about Li Hongzhi un-*qigong* practices. See Lu (2005: 183 note 3), Tong (2002: 640–641), Leung (2002: 763), Shue (2002: 216).

⁵³⁰ In light of the fact that *Falun Gong*’s illegality became the main basis on which the government initially justified its suppression of the group in 1999, it is important to make clear that this illegality meant that *Falun Gong* was not able to exist in an organisational form nor exercise functions that were associated with being an organisation, such as holding training seminars and convening meetings of practitioners. However, this illegality did not extend, in theory at least, to stopping people from individually following the practices of *Falun Gong* or reading Li Hongzhi’s already published books. Yet, when the government announced its ban in 1999, it also forbade the practice of *Falun Gong*.

⁵³¹ Ching (2005: 45).

attack on *Falun Gong* occurred when the *Guangming Daily* published a review of a book by Li Hongzhi entitled “Ring the Bell of Warning Forever” (*jingzhong changming*) on 17 June 1996 in which *Falun Gong* was denounced for “advocating feudal superstitions”.⁵³² A further denunciation of *Falun Gong* took place when a programme on cults was broadcast by Beijing TV, in which a Chinese physicist, He Zuoxiu, accused the group of being a “cult” and of “spreading wrongful theories and practices” which had been responsible for committing one of the researchers at his institute to a mental asylum.⁵³³ In both instances, the response of *Falun Gong* practitioners was to protest in front of the media organisation’s headquarters in order to demand a retraction of the criticism. In fact, according to the *People’s Daily*, there were a total of seventy-eight protests made against media organisation from 1996 to 1999 by *Falun Gong* adherents that involved three hundred people or more.⁵³⁴ Furthermore, Johnson states that, [i]n almost every case, the media had backed down, printing or airing apologies to *Falun Dafa*.⁵³⁵ In the case of the critical book review in the *Guangming Daily*, the response of the Press and Publication Administration was to institute the “three nots” policy, which stipulated that, in reports concerning groups such as *Falun Gong*, the media should not be for it, against it or label it as either good or bad.⁵³⁶ In the case of the Beijing TV broadcast, following a two thousand-strong protest that lasted over three weeks and which showed no sign of abating before the politically sensitive date of 4 June, Johnson claims that political leaders “ordered the television station to end the *Falun Dafa* protest at any cost.”⁵³⁷

⁵³² Xia and Hua (1999: 8).

⁵³³ Vermander (2001: 12 note 3).

⁵³⁴ Party Paper says *Falun Gong* “True Cult” (29 October 1999). For Chen, this represented another difference between *Falun Gong* and other *qigong* schools, in that “[t]hough hundreds of *qigong* masters and forms were active in post-Mao China, few overtly criticized the state.” See Chen (2003: 512).

⁵³⁵ Johnson (13 December 2000).

⁵³⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵³⁷ Johnson (13 December 2000).

Therefore, Beijing TV brought the protests to an end by handing out lunchboxes to the protestors and offering to air a programme that presented a more sympathetic profile of *Falun Gong*.

The “25 April Incident”

In light of the success of these protests by *Falun Gong* adherents, it was not unsurprising when the publication of another critical article in the Youth Science and Technology Review (*qingshao nian keji baonan*) in April 1999 caused adherents to employ this tactic once again. The article, entitled “I Do Not Approve of Teenagers Practicing *Qigong*”, was written by the same physicist, He Zuoxiu, who had been critical of *Falun Gong* in the Beijing TV programme. Although the main point of the article was that athletic sports were better for the physical development of young people than *qigong*, it also accused *Falun Gong* of being responsible for the death of several young people.⁵³⁸ With the article having been published by Tianjin Normal University, protestors gathered outside the journal’s editorial building there. Initially, the protest consisted of just fifty or so demonstrators; however, as the days passed, the number of protestors steadily increased and, by April 24, approximately six thousand demonstrators had massed in Tianjin. According to Chang, the forcible removal of ten of the protestors by the police provoked the remaining protestors to march on Tianjin City Hall.⁵³⁹ However, though serious in its own right, the protest in Tianjin merely served as a precursor for the events that would unfold in Beijing the following day.

⁵³⁸ Ching (2005: 45). Johnson also claims that *Falun Gong* adherents were offended by the article’s use of the term “boss” (*toutou*) rather than “master” when referring to Li Hongzhi. See Johnson (13 December 2000).

⁵³⁹ Chang (2004: 106).

On 25 April 1999, approximately ten to fifteen thousand *Falun Gong* adherents assembled outside the Xinhuaamen entrance to the leaders' residential compound, Zhongnanhai.⁵⁴⁰ The protest lasted from 4 am until 11 pm and involved practitioners from six different provinces.⁵⁴¹ Although its aims were not entirely clear,⁵⁴² it seems that the main objective of the protest was to petition the national leaders to restore *Falun Gong*'s legal status and so allow it to resume its organisational functions.⁵⁴³ The protestors agreed to leave the site after the designated *Falun Gong* leaders had a meeting with the Chinese premier, Zhu Rongji.⁵⁴⁴ The initial reaction of CCP leaders to the protest, in public at least, was muted. Although it was declared illegal and a warning was issued to citizens and, in particular, to officials not to participate in further demonstrations,⁵⁴⁵ the only mention of the protests in Xinhua was an article published on April 27, which reported the protests as well as those that took place in Tianjin while emphasising the role of government officials in "persuading" the protestors to end their demonstration. Furthermore, the article chose to refer to *Falun Gong* only as a "health fitness activity".⁵⁴⁶

The Campaign Against *Falun Gong*

However, as stated at the start of this chapter, the government eventually responded to this protest some three months later when it published the decision to outlaw *Falun Gong*. For Wong, this decision was inevitable because "[t]o the government, such an

⁵⁴⁰ Penny (2003: 643).

⁵⁴¹ Tong (2002: 637). According to Xiao, the protestors came from the provinces of Hebei, Shandong, Liaoning and Inner Mongolia as well as the municipalities of Beijing and Tianjin. See Xiao (2001: 124).

⁵⁴² The objectives of the protest were difficult to discern because the demonstrators did not hold aloft banners or shout out slogans. Rather, the majority of protestors merely read Li Hongzhi's books and carried out the *Falun Gong* meditative exercises. As such, the demonstration was calm and peaceable.

⁵⁴³ Ching (2005: 41). Leung also contends that a further reason of the demonstration was to protest against Chinese Academy of Social Sciences' labelling of the group as an "evil religious sect" while Chang claims that it was due to the arrest of the ten adherents in Tianjin. See Leung (2002: 763), Chang (2004: 106).

⁵⁴⁴ Ching (2005: 41).

⁵⁴⁵ Chen (2003: 514).

⁵⁴⁶ Chen (2005: 22–23).

open demonstration would undermine public confidence in its ability to maintain stability in this politically sensitive year of 1999 and would hence make the government “lose face” internationally and domestically.”⁵⁴⁷ Though 1999 was a politically sensitive year on account of the number of anniversaries that would take place, such as the eightieth year of the May Fourth Movement, the fiftieth year of the founding of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) as well as the tenth year of the events at Tiananmen,⁵⁴⁸ others point to additional factors that influenced the government’s decision to ban the group. For Chen, it was due to the fact that “[t]he protest directly confronted socialist leaders...[and so] transformed this healing sect into a political organization that challenged state legitimacy.”⁵⁴⁹ Indeed, Chen makes the point that the holding of the protest outside Zhongnanhai indicated the political intentions of *Falun Gong*, both to contest the CCP’s authority and to publicise its own cause.⁵⁵⁰ Furthermore, Xia and Hua contend that, “[i]f the FLG was allowed to have its legitimacy and official recognition, it amounted to the opening up of a public sphere for the existence of autonomous organizations and associations...[and this] would be antithetical to the monopoly of political power over the China by the Communist Party.”⁵⁵¹ However, others, most notably Leung, suggest that the government’s decision to ban *Falun Gong* was due to the organisational capabilities that the group had demonstrated on 25 April.⁵⁵² As Leung points out, “the movement’s ability to gather 10,000 members from across the country to take part in an orderly and disciplined protest outside Zhongnanhai needs an organizational

⁵⁴⁷ Wong (1999: 13).

⁵⁴⁸ Perry (2001: 166–167).

⁵⁴⁹ Chen (2003: 513–514).

⁵⁵⁰ Chen (2003: 513).

⁵⁵¹ Xia and Hua (1999: 11–12).

⁵⁵² See Chen (2003), Ching (2005), Leung (2002) and Tong (2002).

network and a disciplined code of conduct.”⁵⁵³ Indeed, in the intervening period between the 25 April protest and the government’s decision to ban *Falun Gong*, Chen claims that there was 307 protests involving *Falun Gong* adherents across China.⁵⁵⁴ According to Xia and Hua, approximately 70,000 *Falun Gong* adherents went to Beijing from 3–6 June to petition the government against banning the group, following rumours that such a move was imminent.⁵⁵⁵ Powers and Lee claim that a further petition of 14,000 signatures was presented to the government on 14 June making the same request.⁵⁵⁶ Additional protests of between 3,000 to 5,000 people were also reported in Hubei and Shandong provinces as well as in several large Chinese cities.⁵⁵⁷ For Powers and Lee, “[s]uch displays of organizational ability...were certainly calculated to symbolize the widespread distribution of FLG practitioners internally and internationally and to embarrass the Chinese government into recognizing the group’s legitimacy.”⁵⁵⁸ However, for Wong, such behaviour may have actually influenced the government’s decision to ban the group.

The varied composition of *Falun Gong*’s membership is a further reason that has been put forward by analysts when considering the decision to ban the group. For Perry, this is because “movements that spill across jurisdictional and/or occupational boundaries are...viewed as cause for central concern.”⁵⁵⁹ In the case of the *Falun Gong*, it appears that its membership base consisted of a broad range of people from different groups throughout Chinese society. Although reliable information is difficult

⁵⁵³ Leung (2002: 765).

⁵⁵⁴ Chen (2005: 18). In addition to those within China, protests by *Falun Gong* adherents also took place in other countries. See Powers and Lee (2002: 263).

⁵⁵⁵ Xia and Hua (1999: 10)

⁵⁵⁶ Interestingly, Xinhua did publish an article on 14 June which reassured *Falun Gong* practitioners that the group would not be banned. See Chen (2005: 23).

⁵⁵⁷ Powers and Lee (2002: 264).

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid., p.264.

⁵⁵⁹ Perry (2001: 169).

to obtain, Leung cites an unpublished report from an investigation conducted into the group by the Chinese government, which states that the average age of *Falun Gong* followers was above forty and sixty percent were female. In addition, the majority, approximately seventy percent, could be classed as low income, both those from urban and rural areas, while those from the “margins” of society, such as retired and semi-retired cadres and teachers, who had fallen behind following the implementation of the economic reforms, constituted the next largest group of followers. The smallest group within *Falun Gong* was also considered to be the most influential and consisted of elites from the CCP, the military, the civil service as well as professionals.⁵⁶⁰ Moreover, within these three main groups of *Falun Gong* adherents, many were also said to be members of the CCP. Zong Hairen states that investigations by the national public security services in July 1999 suggested that 15.6 percent of the 2.3 million *Falun Gong* followers were members of the CCP,⁵⁶¹ while Leung cites a party official who claimed that as many as seven million members of the CCP were also followers of *Falun Gong*.⁵⁶² In addition, an internal estimate of China’s air force concluded that there were four to five thousand *Falun Gong* “sympathisers” amongst the two hundred thousand-strong force.⁵⁶³ Consequently, for Leung, “[t]he reaction of the state and the CCP to the FLG protests reveals the extent to which both were seriously threatened by the turning of so many state officials and CCP members to the

⁵⁶⁰ Leung (2002: 765–767).

⁵⁶¹ According to Zong, it was the revelation of these figures that caused the CCP leaders to ban *Falun Gong*. See Zong (2002: 67). It should be pointed out that Zong Hairen is a pseudonym for a person or group of people who claim to have had high-level access to the top leadership of the CCP. Despite this, and the apparent intention of the book to discredit the then Secretary-General, Jiang Zemin, I have cited this information both because it has been cited by other authors and, more specifically, in this instance, it is supported by other information.

⁵⁶² Leung (2002: 773).

⁵⁶³ Murphy (15 February 2001).

movement”.⁵⁶⁴ In terms of legitimacy, CCP leaders may have determined that cadres’ loyalty was compromised by their following of *Falun Gong* and that this had the potential to undermine the Party’s authority.⁵⁶⁵ For evidence of the effect that could cause, Perry points to the defection of Guomindang members to the CCP during the civil war: “When Guomindang members at all levels began to go over to the Communist side, the civil war tilted decisively in favor of the revolutionaries.”⁵⁶⁶

The appeal to history is the final reason most often cited by other analysts when considering the decision to ban *Falun Gong*. However, this appeal is more rooted in China’s history of sectarian-led uprisings that stretches back to the Yellow Turban rebellion, which contributed to the end of the Han Dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE), through to the White Lotus, Taiping and Boxer rebellions, which all damaged the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911). According to Schell, these uprisings were successful, in part because “[s]uch cult-animated uprisings against unjust authority...have always been viewed by Chinese as portents that the legitimacy—or the “mandate of heaven”—of a ruling dynasty has been withdrawn.”⁵⁶⁷ Although the legitimacy of the CCP is no longer derived from the “mandate of heaven” (*tianming*), Perry suggests that the actions of the CCP, in both banning *Falun Dafa* and cracking down on *Falun Gong* practitioners, has “invited just such historical allusions.”⁵⁶⁸

⁵⁶⁴ Leung (2002: 773). A Circular issued by the Central Committee of the CCP forbade Party members from practicing *Falun Gong* and Notices from the Ministry of Personnel and the State Council also forbade civil servants.

⁵⁶⁵ However, Ching contends that, as *Falun Gong* was not initially classed as a religion, cadres may not have felt that they were violating the terms of their membership. See Ching (2005: 47).

⁵⁶⁶ Perry (2001: 171).

⁵⁶⁷ Schell (1999).

⁵⁶⁸ Perry (2001: 174).

However, the main reason put forward by the Chinese government when the decision to ban *Falun Gong* was announced was that the group constituted an illegal organisation. In effect, this presented the decision taken by the government to be one that was based on PRC Law. According to the government, the *Falun Gong* had violated nine different articles within two Laws and two set of regulations,⁵⁶⁹ which ranged from failing to have the required registration to operate as a mass organisation to disrupting social order by holding unauthorised assemblies to utilising superstitions to delude people and cause their death. Consequently, the Chinese government used these laws as the basis on which to arrest *Falun Gong* practitioners. However, in carrying out these arrests, the government, in the initial stages at least, distinguished between those who practised *Falun Gong* for health reasons and those who had played a role in organising the protests. According to Chen, the arrests began with seventy of those considered to be “key figures”.⁵⁷⁰ The decision to ban *Falun Gong* also led to a purge of government and Party officials who were alleged to be *Falun Gong* adherents. According to Ching, in one instance, approximately 1,200 government officials were taken away to schools for a weekend in order to study Chinese Communist Party documents and renounce their belief in *Falun Gong*.⁵⁷¹ Furthermore, Chen notes that, in the months following the ban, all government and Party institutions both publicly declared their support for the campaign against *Falun Gong* and criticised those former colleagues who were alleged to have been *Falun Gong* members.⁵⁷²

⁵⁶⁹ For a detailed list of these laws, see “Laws Exist for the Banning of Falun Gong” (1999: 43–45).

⁵⁷⁰ Chen (2003: 517).

⁵⁷¹ Ching (2005: 47).

⁵⁷² Chen (2003: 515).

In addition to the arrests of practitioners both within and without the CCP, the campaign against the *Falun Gong* also included the launching of the largest propaganda campaign since the events at Tiananmen took place in 1989.⁵⁷³ For Powers and Lee, the aim of this campaign was “to try to discredit the FLG organization, practices, belief system, and social consequences.”⁵⁷⁴ Furthermore, the government attempted to achieve this by utilising all the available media platforms. Though not an issue with the protests in 1989,⁵⁷⁵ the Internet had been regarded as playing an important role in the continued existence of *Falun Gong* after 1996 and the government’s response was to block all *Falun Gong*-related websites and search terms while also publishing its own articles against the group online.⁵⁷⁶ In addition, it also took the step of temporarily shutting down several e-mail services on the grounds that they were being used by *Falun Gong* followers to communicate with each other in order to co-ordinate their activities.⁵⁷⁷ As for television, Chen states that it was “a key medium to illustrate why the state viewed the sect as an evil cult.”⁵⁷⁸ As well as *Falun Gong* being the main topic of news broadcasts,⁵⁷⁹ regular programming was also interrupted by the airing of shows condemning *Falun Gong*. Chen notes that an anti-*Falun Gong* documentary was shown repeatedly on state television from 21 July until 25 July while Ching recounts that the broadcasts on *Falun Gong* featured such items as the leaders of China’s official religions denouncing the group, former *Falun*

⁵⁷³ Xia and Hua (1999: 11).

⁵⁷⁴ Powers and Lee (2002: 268).

⁵⁷⁵ However, technology, both in the form of phones as well as fax machines, did play a role in allowing demonstrators to relay information about the demonstrations within and without China.

⁵⁷⁶ Chen (2003: 515–516).

⁵⁷⁷ An example of this was the closure of approximately one million free e-mail accounts from the provider 263.net. This took place on 22 July and lasted for several days. See Lin (2001: 224).

⁵⁷⁸ Chen (2003: 516).

⁵⁷⁹ For example, on 24 July 1999, the CCTV programme “National News Hook-up” featured *Falun Gong* in thirty-one of the thirty-three items broadcast that evening. “TV news Devoted to Massive Criticism of Falun Gong” (24 July 1999).

Gong practitioners criticising its belief system as well as experts detailing the litany of crimes that *Falun Gong* had committed.⁵⁸⁰

⁵⁸⁰ Ching (2005: 42).

16 August Commentary: Selection of Data

The 16 August commentary was selected following a number of searches that were conducted within the available categories in the *People's Daily* database.⁵⁸¹ The time frame within which the search was carried out was a five-week period that started with the official announcement of the group's ban on 23 July 1999 and ended on 31 August 1999. This period was chosen because it was the time when the campaign was at its most intense, with a large number of articles published on the subject of *Falun Gong*.⁵⁸² Indeed, of the 4,140 articles that had been published during the selected time frame, a total of 385 articles featured the term "*Falun*".⁵⁸³ In addition, a keyword search for the term "stability" (*wending*) produced a total of 480 articles for this period. Moreover, the first result on the list of articles was not concerned with *Falun Gong*; however, the second result, with a relevance score of 99% was the 16 August commentary. Furthermore, when restricting this search to include only articles that had been published on the first page of the *People's Daily*, the 16 August commentary was the top result, with a relevance score of 100%.

Expanding the search for articles that mentioned both "stability" and "*Falun*" produced a total of 116 articles, in which the 16 August commentary was placed tenth with a relevance score of 86%. Again, narrowing this search to include only those articles published on page one reduced the number of articles to 39, with the 16 August commentary placed as the seventh most relevant article. The search was further restricted to include only those articles on page one that featured "stability" in

⁵⁸¹ As detailed in chapter two, these categories are: date (*riqi*); headline (*biaoti*); page number (*banci*); edition (*banming*); author (*zuozhe*); special column (*zhuanlan*); text (*zhengwen*).

⁵⁸² Chen (2003: 516).

⁵⁸³ This term had been chosen so as to include articles that used the term *Falun Gong* or *Falun Dafa* or, indeed, both terms. In addition, a search for the keyword of *Falun Gong* yielded a total of 360 articles while a search for the keyword of *Falun Dafa* resulted in a total of 201 articles.

the headline and the keywords of “stability” and “*Falun*”. This search produced a total of five articles for the period between 23 July 1999 and 31 August 1999. The first result on the list, with a relevance score of 100%, was the 23 July editorial entitled “Improve Our Understanding, Recognize the Danger, Maintain a Hold on Policy, and Uphold Stability”. However, though the editorial was politically significant in terms of the campaign against *Falun Gong*, it presented this campaign as a struggle between the beliefs of the CCP and the beliefs of *Falun Gong* and, as a result, the concept of stability was not heavily emphasised. Indeed, “stability” was only used a total of nine times in the six paragraph editorial, of which two mentions were in the first paragraph while the remaining seven were in the fourth paragraph.⁵⁸⁴ The second result on this list was an article that had also been published on 23 July entitled “Cadres and Masses in All Parts of the Country Resolutely Support the Party and Government’s Handling of *Falun Gong*; Resolve to Uphold Science, Abolish Superstition and Safeguard Stability” and had a relevance score of 94%.⁵⁸⁵ Again, however, though stability was used in the headline, it was not the central theme of the article. Rather, this article extended the main theme of the editorial by presenting the campaign as a contest between “science” and “superstition”, in which science was associated with the beliefs of the CCP while *Falun Gong*’s beliefs were said to be based on “superstition”. In fact, despite the article consisting of sixteen paragraphs, the concept of stability was only used three times, once each in the second, thirteenth and fifteenth paragraphs.

The third result on the list was the 16 August commentary with a relevance score of 86%. However, by contrast with the two previous articles, the concept of stability was

⁵⁸⁴ Editorial (1999: 79–82).

⁵⁸⁵ Shelun (23 July 1999)

heavily emphasised throughout the article. Indeed, stability was used a total of 18 times and featured in every one of the commentary's seven paragraphs. The fourth result of the list was a Xinhua special commentary entitled "Ban Unlawful Organisation, Safeguard Social Stability" that was published on 31 July 1999 and which also had a relevance score of 86%.⁵⁸⁶ However, as with the first two articles on the list, the main focus of this article was not stability, which was used only four times in the five paragraph article, once each in the first, second, fourth and fifth paragraphs. The final result on the list was an article entitled "Take a Clear-cut Stand and Thoroughly Resolve the "Falun Gong" Problem, Beijing ensures stability and economic development" that was published on 8 July 1999. Again, despite having stability in the headline, the concept was not heavily emphasised and, indeed, was only mentioned three times in the four paragraph article, once in the first paragraph and twice in the third paragraph.

Following the searches carried out on the *People's Daily* database, I selected the 16 August commentary for my analysis of stability's usage in the government's campaign against *Falun Gong*.⁵⁸⁷ The article was not selected solely on the basis that it mentioned stability more times than any of the other articles but also because the concept was the central focus of the article. As such, the commentary elucidated more clearly than the other articles how stability was used in relation to justifying the

⁵⁸⁶ Xinhua Pinglunyuan (31 July 1999).

⁵⁸⁷ Indeed, a broader three year search from 23 July 1999 to 23 July 2002 for articles that featured on page 1 of the *People's Daily* with "stability" in the headline and the keywords of "stability" and "Falun" reinforced this decision on account of the fact that, of the 13 results, the 16 August commentary was fourth on the list behind the two articles published on 23 July 1999 and a commentary published on 20 January 2001. Although the 20 January commentary was concerned with "stability", mentioning the term a total of 13 times, it also dealt with issues beyond the campaign against *Falun Gong*, such as the 10th Five-Year Plan and the "Three Represents". As a result, I felt that the 16 August commentary better reflected how stability was used in the anti-*Falun Gong* campaign. In addition, there were no substantive differences in the concept's usage in either of the commentaries.

suppression of *Falun Gong*. That said, the 16 August commentary was also representative, in that the use of stability was consistent with the other articles.

16 August Commentary: Textual Analysis⁵⁸⁸

“Maintain the Overall Situation and Stability and Push Forward Reform and Development—Ninth Commentary on Tightening Efforts to Handle and Solve the ‘Falun Gong’ Problem”

As explained in chapter two, the headline indicates the most important topic of an article. In the case of the 16 August commentary, the headline was comparatively long and the use of the em-dash effectively worked to separate it into two interrelated parts.⁵⁸⁹ In turn, each of these two parts consisted of two clauses. In the first part of the headline, the first clause worked to establish a relationship of equivalence between “the overall situation” and stability, as had also been the case with the two editorials analysed in chapter three. However, in contrast to the militaristic metaphor, “safeguard”, that had been predominantly used in those two editorials, the 16 August commentary employed the term “maintain” and this constructed the impression that the overall situation was currently stable. In addition, “maintain” was used in its imperative form and this directed the reader to follow this order, while at the same time, presenting the stability of the overall situation as a positive value, in the sense it was worth “maintaining”. The second clause of the first part of headline also worked to present the policy of “reform and development” positively, with the imperative “push forward” linking the clause to a discourse of progress. Furthermore, the use of the conjunctive conjunction “and” also joined the two clauses, so the condition of maintaining the stability of the overall situation was related to that of pushing forward reform and development.

⁵⁸⁸ As with the articles analysed in the previous chapter, the intention of the translation has not been to necessarily produce the most fluent English translation but rather one that closely conveys the meaning and structure of the Chinese original. For the Chinese original, see the Appendix section.

⁵⁸⁹ While the headlines often used in commentaries and editorials of the *People’s Daily* are not necessarily short, they generally consist of one or two clauses. Consequently, this headline, which features four clauses, is somewhat longer.

In the second part of the headline, the second clause makes reference to *Falun Gong* by explicitly framing the group in terms of a “problem-solution” schema.⁵⁹⁰ Indeed, this schema, as expressed in the formulaic phrase “solving the...problem” (*jiejue...wenti*), is one that is commonly employed by the CCP and has the effect of attaching a negative value to the “problem”.⁵⁹¹ In addition, it also works to direct the readers’ attention away from the question of why the problem came into being and onto that of how the problem can be solved. In the case of *Falun Gong*, this schema closed off potentially awkward questions, such as why so many people across China, both inside and outside the CCP, practiced *Falun Gong* while, at the same time, suggested that people’s belief in the group’s teaching was something that was, indeed, solvable. As to how this problem could be solved, the first clause of the second part of the headline indicated that many solutions were put forward at the time;⁵⁹² however, the one expressed through the complete headline for the 16 August commentary was that the *Falun Gong* problem would be solved by maintaining the stability of the overall situation while pushing forward reform and development. In terms of legitimation, stability was being used to justify both the continued rule of the CCP and the decision to suppress the *Falun Gong*.

⁵⁹⁰ Fairclough (2001).

⁵⁹¹ A prominent example of this is that issues concerning the grievances of ethnic minority groups are frequently expressed through the “solving the ethnic problem” (*jiejue minzu wenti*) schema.

⁵⁹² Other commentaries in the series included: the fourth commentary, which attempted to explain more clearly the “nature of the struggle” against the group by emphasising their threat to society; the fifth commentary, which focused on exposing the “harm” caused by *Falun Gong*’s teachings; and the seventh commentary, which suggested that the way to solve the *Falun Gong* problem was to demonstrate the “theoretical superiority” of the CCP’s teachings. In addition, at the end of June, the *People’s Daily* began a series on articles on atheism, which, in hindsight, seemed to prepare the ground for the suppression of the group. See Staff Commentator (30 July 1999); Staff Commentator (4 August 1999); Shao Jingjun (29 June 1999).

The headline in the 16 August commentary, more so than was the case with the editorials in chapter three, also functioned as an “advance organiser” of the article. For Renkema, an advance organiser can be “a title or subtitle that...provides clues about the macrostructure or superstructure.”⁵⁹³ The clues provided by the headline of 16 August commentary were that the macrostructure (content) would be concerned with demonstrating both why the *Falun Gong* was a “problem” and why maintaining stability and pushing forward with reform and development constituted the solution. As for the commentary’s superstructure (construction), the first paragraph elaborated upon the headline before the second and third paragraphs highlighted the actions of *Falun Gong* that necessitated the government’s decision to ban the group. The fourth paragraph focused on the importance of maintaining stability and the fifth paragraph attempted to demonstrate the material benefits that would accrue from continuing with the policy of reform and opening up. The final two paragraphs concluded the commentary by emphasising the importance of suppressing *Falun Gong*’s activities and the continued leadership of the Chinese Communist Party.

(1) In tightening the effort to handle and solve the “Falun Gong” problem, the basic starting point is that to further maintain the stability and unity of our very good situation; it is beneficial to focus our energy on promoting reform, opening up, modernisation and construction. (2) Not to excise this poisonous tumour and not to punish these elements causing turmoil will leave the Party without peace, the country without peace and the people without peace, and will seriously interfere with reform, opening up, modernisation and construction.

The first paragraph expanded upon the themes put forward in the commentary’s headline. As a consequence, the use of the terms “very good” and “beneficial” when describing the link between maintaining stability and promoting reform and development emphasised the positive value of the relationship in the first sentence

⁵⁹³ Renkema (2004: 99).

and were contrasted against the repeated use of the terms “not” and “without” in the second sentence that stressed the negative consequences that would arise if no action was taken against *Falun Gong*. Furthermore, these positive and negative values were strengthened by the use of the modal verbs “is” and “will” that asserted the truthfulness of the sentences. For Fowler, the effectiveness of this type of modality is derived from the fact that “[t]here is no equivocation...No space is provided for any questioning of the truth of the claim, or the satisfactoriness of the situation described.”⁵⁹⁴

The reference to stability in the first sentence was also significant, in that it was expressed through the Chinese phrase “*anding tuanjie*” (安定团结), meaning “stability and unity”, rather than that of “*wending*” (稳定), meaning only “stability”, which had been used exclusively in the editorials in chapter three. According to He, the phrase “stability and unity” can be traced back to a 1974 directive issued by Mao that was intended to bring an end to the conflicts in Chinese society at that time. He notes that, since then, the phrase has also been frequently “invoked by the CCP leadership... and is considered to be the underlying premise for carrying out all Party tasks”.⁵⁹⁵ In contrast, the use of the singular term “stability” is dated by He to Deng Xiaoping’s pronouncement in 1989 that “stability prevails over everything”.⁵⁹⁶ Indeed, it is this later form of stability that has, subsequently, been used more frequently by the CCP leadership than that of “*anding tuanjie*”.⁵⁹⁷ In part, this may be due to its usage drawing upon Deng’s authority but also partly because the phrase “*anding*

⁵⁹⁴ Fowler (1991: 128).

⁵⁹⁵ He (2001: 3).

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁷ The main exception to this is for articles that concern minority nationalities, when “*anding tuanjie*” is more often employed.

tuanjie” carries a different connotation.⁵⁹⁸ This difference is largely due to the presence of “*tuanjie*”, which, in referring to “unity”,⁵⁹⁹ operates as a signifier for the maintenance of China’s territorial sovereignty. Indeed, in the same way that the use of “stability” implicates the notion of chaos (*luan*), so it is that “unity” implicates the charge of “splittism” (*fenlie zhuyi*). This charge draws on the discourse of “national humiliation” (*guochi*) promulgated by the CCP since the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949⁶⁰⁰ that links the decline of China as a “great power” to both its occupation by other nations as well as the secession of areas, such as Tibet, Taiwan and Mongolia, that had all been part of the Qing empire. Indeed, the restoration of China’s territorial integrity and, with it, the ending of the “century of national humiliation” (*bainian guochi*) is one of the claims upon which the CCP’s legitimacy rests. Furthermore, the notion of China once again becoming one of the world’s “great powers” also works, in part, to sustain the legitimacy of the current regime. In light of this, Callahan points out that “fragmentation constitutes one of the few political crimes left in China; the worst epithet is not *capitalist* or *counterrevolutionary*, but *splittist*.”⁶⁰¹ Although this direct charge was not made in the paragraph,⁶⁰² the use of the phrase “stability and unity” in the first sentence, and indeed throughout the commentary, implicitly accused *Falun Gong* of causing chaos and “splitting” China and, in so doing, both acknowledged the “cross-class” and “cross-territorial” appeal of

⁵⁹⁸ The usage of “*wending*” and “*anding*” can overlap; however, the meaning of “*anding*” is more narrow, in that it refers to the material situation of societal stability—it literally means “fixed peace”—whereas, “*wending*” has a broader meaning and is used in contexts beyond that of societal stability, such as political stability, economic stability and, even, mental stability.

⁵⁹⁹ “*Tuanjie*” can also mean “amity” as well as “to join forces” (and, indeed, is used in this latter sense in the final paragraph of the commentary; however, in the official translation of “*anding tuanjie*”, it is referred to as “unity”).

⁶⁰⁰ Callahan points out that the discourse of national humiliation can be traced back to 1915 protests against the government’s acceptance of Japan’s “21 demands”. However, he also notes that the content of this discourse has changed. See Callahan (2006).

⁶⁰¹ Callahan (2004: 209). This crime is also legally supported by Article 4 of the Constitution, which prohibits national minorities from seceding from China.

⁶⁰² It is, however, made in the fifth and seventh paragraphs.

the group's teachings⁶⁰³ as well as amplified the charges against the group by appealing to the reader's nationalist sentiments. By the same token, it also worked to strengthen the legitimacy of the CCP by placing it, through implicature, in the position of maintaining the nation's stability and territorial sovereignty.

(1) Li Hongzhi used the "Falun Gong" organization to maliciously confuse people's minds, manufacture turmoil and destroy the stability and unity of the very good situation. (2) He then intended to profit from the chaos, collude with hostile domestic and foreign forces, overthrow the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, change the socialist system, subvert the people's democratic dictatorship, and lead all the ethnic groups of China into a dark and evil abyss. (3) This is not sensationalism, but actual facts.

The second paragraph follows on from the first by detailing the charges against *Falun Gong*. In this regard, the 16 August commentary differs from the two editorials analysed in chapter three, in that *Falun Gong* and its leader, Li Hongzhi, are explicitly depicted in terms of negative other-presentation whereas the negative presentation of demonstrators in 1989 was largely achieved through the "context-dependent linguistic realization" of implicatures. Indeed, for Powers and Lee, this negative labelling of the group was the most important strategy in the government's propaganda campaign as, if successful, it "would lead the populace to condemn the FLG and pressure its members to discontinue their practices and beliefs."⁶⁰⁴ In the second paragraph, the negative presentation of *Falun Gong* was achieved by conflating the group with its founder, Li Hongzhi, and by employing the rhetorical strategy of *argumentum ad hominem* against Li, in which he was presented as a svengali-like figure who used his teachings to create turmoil in order to overthrow the CCP and the socialist system. The conflation of *Falun Gong* with Li was effected in the first sentence of the paragraph with the claim that Li "used" *Falun Gong* to "confuse" people's minds.

⁶⁰³ Perry (2001: 169).

⁶⁰⁴ Powers and Lee (2002: 268–269).

This claim put forward the impression that *Falun Gong* adherents were under the control of Li and, as such, their actions were the product of his intentions. In addition, this claim worked to delegitimize Li's teachings by suggesting that they did not represent a higher truth, as Li himself had claimed,⁶⁰⁵ but rather caused adherents to suffer from a form of "false consciousness"⁶⁰⁶ Indeed, this delegitimation was further strengthened through the appeal to the practical consequences of chaos and the destruction of stability and unity that Li's teachings had intentionally caused. As in the previous paragraph, stability and unity were linked to the positive value of the "very good situation" while Li was placed in the position of the agent carrying out the negative act of "destroying" this "very good situation".

The use of stability and unity was also significant, in that their "destruction" provided the basis for the list of charges made against Li in the second sentence of the paragraph. Although these charges claimed knowledge of Li's intentions, that they were never realised means that their effect was largely rhetorical. Indeed, this effect was heightened through the use of the propaganda technique of "name-calling". According to Cross, this technique "consists of labelling people or ideas with words of bad connotation."⁶⁰⁷ Consequently, the second paragraph associated Li with adjectives, such as "dark" and "evil", adverbs, such as "maliciously", and verbs, such as "confuse", "destroy" and "subvert". As to whether there was any truth in the charges is largely unknown. Vermander suggests that these charges derived from a number of factors, including "Li Hongzhi's exile in the United States, the role that the movement's adherents play outside China, the appeals from humanitarian

⁶⁰⁵ According to Xiao, Li had declared that "no government, including that of the CCP, could deal with the social problems existing in China, but that supernatural power, possessed by the Falun Gong alone, was the answer." See Xiao (2001: 128).

⁶⁰⁶ Friedman (2005: 226).

⁶⁰⁷ Cross (1989), as cited in Kuo (2002: 292).

organisations, press reports or interventions—even indirect—by foreign governments”⁶⁰⁸ In argumentative terms, the list of charges seemed intended to present Li as an “enemy of the state” and, in so doing, justify the government’s decision to suppress the group on the grounds of pre-emption, in that he had intended to commit these crimes against the CCP and the nation in the past and must be arrested before being allowed to actually commit them in the future.⁶⁰⁹

(1) In order to destroy the situation of stability and unity, they deceived the masses into following it and doing evil. (2) Looking at the facts already available, since last year they have used “wisdom gong” and “making known the Law” to plot, organise and direct many illegal mass protests, laid siege to party and government institutions and propaganda departments, until the “25 April” illegal protest of more than 10,000 people at Zhongnanhai. (3) For Li Hongzhi, the more people who took part in this intentional, premeditated, and organised major incident the better. (4) Furthermore, he wanted to create bloodshed and make the incident bigger, and then blame it on the party and government. (5) How poisonous are his motives! (6) They also spread fallacies to confuse people, exerted control over people’s minds and shook people’s beliefs, propagated theories about the destruction of the earth, the end of the world, the futility of science, the futility of labour and the futility of government, intentionally caused chaos, destroyed stability and seriously destroyed normal work, production, education and research, disrupted reform, opening up and socialist modernization construction, and interfered with the Party and government’s decision-making and planning in handling a series of major issues in international and domestic affairs.

The third paragraph continued with the argumentative strategy of attacking Li and, by extension, *Falun Gong*; however, the first part of the paragraph moved away from detailing Li’s “evil” intentions to documenting the protest activities of the group. In this, the concept of “stability and unity” was again used to delegitimize *Falun Gong* by linking the holding of demonstrations to the “destroying” of “stability and unity”. Furthermore, this link was strengthened through the scientistic appeal to “facts” in the second sentence, which also worked to obscure the commentary’s particular interpretation of those “facts”. Indeed, a similar appeal was employed at the end of the

⁶⁰⁸ Vermander (2001: 5).

⁶⁰⁹ This depiction of Li as a criminal was given further credence by the issuing of a warrant for his arrest to Interpol, even though Li resided in the United States, with whom China did not have an extradition treaty.

second paragraph when the intentions of Li were held to be “not sensationalism, but actual facts.” For Gill, such rhetorical moves are “designed to protect or ‘inculcate’ an argument from criticism and to offer a ‘preferred reading’, indicating the way the argument should be interpreted.”⁶¹⁰ A further effect of these appeals may have been to signal to the reader that the views expressed in the commentary were based on science and, as such, stood in contradistinction to the “pseudo-science” of *Falun Gong*.

As for the group’s protest activities, the second sentence emphasised that they were both organised and illegal. In terms of organisation, Tong makes the point that it was “in the interests of the regime to demonstrate that the *falun gong* was well organized...[t]he more organized the *falun gong* could be shown to be, then the more justified the regime’s repression in the name of social order was.”⁶¹¹ Indeed, if it could not be demonstrated that *Falun Gong* was an organisation, then it would not have been in breach of the “Regulations on the Registration and Management of Mass Organisations” that had been the primary legal basis upon which the government’s decision to ban the group had been taken. Consequently, presenting the protests as the result of organised events by *Falun Gong* leaders rather than spontaneous occurrences by *Falun Gong* practitioners was an important part of the attempt by the CCP leadership to demonstrate that *Falun Gong* constituted an organisation.⁶¹² As for the illegality of the protests, this classification was similar to the verdict against those in 1989, in that it focused on the act of demonstrating while obscuring the reasons for such demonstrations. Indeed, Perry makes the point that “the Falun Gong demonstrations had been prompted precisely by a desire for the official recognition

⁶¹⁰ Gill (2000: 182).

⁶¹¹ Tong (2002: 638).

⁶¹² Additional claims put forward in the media campaign against *Falun Gong* included detailing its nationwide network of teaching centres, its hierarchical leadership structure and its set of institutionalised rules and regulations. See Chen (2005), Powers and Lee (2002), and Tong (2002).

and registration that the state refused to grant.”⁶¹³ Ching concurs, stating that, in the absence of mass voting, “[t]he only means of mass protest is petition of the government...yet, mass petitions become the basis for mass suppression.”⁶¹⁴ Nevertheless, the classification of the protests as illegal also had the effect of presenting *Falun Gong* members as criminals and, in so doing, also worked to justify the action taken by the government towards adherents of the group. Indeed, the second sentence attempted to strengthen this justification by deploying the textual device of citing numbers when claiming that more than 10,000 protestors gathered outside Zhongnanhai. In addition to what Leach identifies as the intensifying phrase of “more than”, van Dijk also points out that numbers are often used in news reporting in order to convey a sense of “truthfulness”.⁶¹⁵ In this, the number of protestors could be understood as a “linguistic mean” that performed a similar function to epistemic modality.

The lack of explanation concerning the reasons for *Falun Gong*’s demonstrations opened up space for the commentary to again claim knowledge of Li’s intentions for holding them. In this, the commentary effectively built on the charges made in the second paragraph by claiming that Li had organised the demonstrations with the intention of “creating bloodshed” as a pretext for challenging the authority of the CCP. However, as with the claims made against Li in the second paragraph, the commentary does not put forward any evidence to support these claims and, as a result, their force is entirely dependent upon rhetoric. Indeed, the declarative statement that followed the fourth sentence can be understood as an attempt to direct the reader to accept these claims, with the use of the metaphorical adjective

⁶¹³ Perry (2001: 173).

⁶¹⁴ Ching (2005: 51).

⁶¹⁵ van Dijk (1988: 87–88).

“poisonous” further strengthening the impression conveyed throughout the commentary that Li’s motives were harmful and destructive towards China. Yet, in the final analysis, Li’s intentions were not realised at the 25 April demonstration. Rather, reports of the protestors’ behaviour indicated that they were calm and peaceable throughout the duration of the demonstration, with many spending the time outside Zhongnanhai reading Li’s books and performing *Falun Gong*. As a consequence, this suggests that either the “evil” intentions ascribed to Li were not correct or that he had not managed to “maliciously confuse” members of *Falun Gong* as was claimed by the CCP leadership. Indeed, both Perry and Ching contend that the 25 April demonstration was largely organised by *Falun Gong* adherents within China, who were using it to gain official recognition for the group,⁶¹⁶ while the extent of the role played by Li, who had by this time already emigrated to the United States of America, is not clear.⁶¹⁷

The calm and peaceable behaviour of the *Falun Gong* demonstrators on 25 April also provides a material referent for questioning the link put forward in the third paragraph between the protests and the destruction of “stability and unity”. Indeed, considering that protests were not an altogether unusual occurrence at that time in China, the commentary did not make explicit why only the demonstrations by *Falun Gong* members, as opposed to other contemporaneous protests, had destroyed “stability and unity”.⁶¹⁸ Furthermore, unlike the protests in 1989, which lasted for over a month and eventually required, at least in the view of the CCP leadership, the use of military

⁶¹⁶ See Perry (2001: 173), Ching (2005: 41).

⁶¹⁷ In the Chinese media, Li was alleged to have co-ordinated the protest via the telephone from Hong Kong. See Tong (2002: 648).

⁶¹⁸ Other protests that took place in China in 1999 included farmers demonstrating against increased levies in rural areas, collective resistance by laid-off workers as well students responding to the NATO bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade.” See Perry (2001: 167).

force to bring them to an end, the demonstration outside Zhongnanhai only lasted one day and was brought to an end, not by military force, but by the “persuasion work” of government officials.⁶¹⁹ In terms of appearance, this demonstration did not appear to destroy “stability and unity”. However, the lack of media coverage given to the demonstration, which, in the case of Xinhua, was a single article published two days later, as well as the intervening period of nearly three months between the demonstration and the launch of the government’s campaign against the group worked to obscure the actual events that took place on 25 April and, in so doing, enabled the charge of destroying of stability and unity to be made against *Falun Gong*. Yet, as with the editorials analysed in chapter three, this charge employed the concept of stability, and, in this case, unity, in a normalised form that had the effect of leaving the concept to be defined in a way that was not transparent. Consequently, as with the claims made over Li’s intentions, the delegitimizing effect of the link between the *Falun Gong* protests and the destruction of “stability and unity” was achieved largely through its rhetorical appeal.

(1) In today’s reform, opening up, modernization and construction, those who want to cause turmoil and destroy the situation of stability and unity also commit a crime against the nation and a crime against the nationalities. (2) We must safeguard the hard-won situation of stability and unity as we would safeguard our own eyes. (3) For Chinese people, who are concentrating their energy on reform, opening up and socialist modernization construction, stability is of overwhelming significance. (4) Stability is politics; stability is the overall situation; without stability, what can be done. (5) The consensus of the whole party and all ethnic groups of China is that stability prevails over everything. (6) After the truth about “Falun Gong” was published, the masses saw clearly their political character and serious harm and actively joined in the struggle against “Falun Gong.” (7) This is a serious ideological and political struggle, and also a political struggle to protect social stability.

⁶¹⁹ As pointed out in the contextual analysis, this was the explanation given in the sole Xinhua article on the demonstration that was published on 27 April 1999.

Having established, albeit through largely rhetorical means, the negative link between the *Falun Gong* protests and “stability and unity”, the focus of the commentary moved onto the positive value of the relationship between “stability and unity” and reform and development. In this, the fourth paragraph particularly emphasised the importance of “stability and unity”. As a consequence, the second sentence presented the safeguarding of “stability and unity” in terms of safeguarding one’s “own eyes”, with such an analogy directing the reader to imagine “stability and unity” in terms of a body part that Chinese culture holds to be most important. Furthermore, the rhetorical effect of this analogy was heightened through the deployment of the inclusive pronoun “we” alongside the modal verb “must” that implicitly suggested a sense of obligation on the part of the reader. The second sentence, in collocating “stability and unity” with the predicate “safeguard”, was also another example of the positive value that was being associated with “stability and unity” throughout the commentary. As pointed out in chapter three, the use of the militaristic metaphor “safeguard” conveyed the impression that “stability and unity” was under attack and, as such, was something that was worth defending. Indeed, this positive view of safeguarding “stability and unity” was reinforced by the contrasting negative view put forward in the first sentence, which paired “stability and unity” with the metaphor “destroy” and had the effect of presenting the concept as a material object. Moreover, the first sentence strengthened such negativity by equating the destruction of stability and unity to a crime against the nation and nationalities. Not only did this rhetorical move make use of a populist appeal to the readership but it also attempted to persuade them to view such people as criminals. As Powers and Lee point out, “once a

phenomenon is placed into a category of “equivalents”, people tend to treat the individual instance so labelled as they would any other member of the category.”⁶²⁰

The remainder of the paragraph strengthened the positive value of stability by repetitively stressing its importance. Consequently, the third sentence claimed that stability was of “overwhelming significance” while, in the fourth sentence, stability was equated with politics and the overall situation. The fourth sentence also highlighted the importance of stability by posing the rhetorical question of what could be achieved “without stability”, in which the positioning of stability in a conditional clause conveyed the impression, already established in the commentary, that it was the necessary condition upon which all other things depended. Furthermore, the space opened up by the rhetorical question was answered through Deng’s authoritative maxim that “stability prevails over everything”. Indeed, this statement also employed the rhetorical device of claiming “consensus” for this position while, at the same time, directing the reader to accept this proposition. Moreover, the acceptance of this proposition also opened up the space for stability to be used to delegitimize *Falun Gong* while, at the same time, strengthening the justification of the government’s suppression of the group, in that the final sentence of the paragraph conflated this suppression, in the form of the political codeword “struggle” (*douzheng*), with that of “protecting” stability. Indeed, the term “struggle” performed a similar function to that of “problem” in the headline. However, whereas “problem” suggested that *Falun Gong* was something that could be “solved”, the term “struggle” presented *Falun Gong* as the CCP’s opponent, with its suppression representing “victory”.

⁶²⁰ Powers and Lee (2002: 268).

(1) Reform and opening up is the path to a powerful country. (2) The more than twenty years of reform and opening up have caused a fundamental change in the destiny of our motherland and socialism, with the unprecedented liberation and development of our country's social productive forces, the continuous improvement in people's living standards, the increasing strength of our nation's comprehensive power and its rising international status. (3) All of this is due to reform and opening up. (4) To unswervingly push forward reform and opening up is to unswervingly implement the fundamental political line of the party and comprehensively push forward the cause of building socialism with Chinese characteristics. (5) Reform and opening up can only advance, not retreat; can only win, not fail. (6) Chinese people, with no small difficulty, have moved down the path of strengthening the country, not simply to allow it to be disrupted and destroyed. (7) But to further push forward reform and opening up, we must have a stable domestic environment and a favourable international environment. (8) Only by maintaining the situation of stability and unity can China quickly become rich and powerful. (9) If "Falun Gong" is allowed to spread, the situation of stability and unity will be disturbed and China will then either return to being a closed state or be "Westernized," "split up," "weakened," and become a dependency of imperialists. (10) These two outcomes would be disastrous for socialist China and for its 1.2 billion people.

The fifth paragraph followed on from the fourth by focusing on the second part of the relationship between stability and unity and reform and development. Indeed, where the fourth paragraph emphasised the importance of stability, the fifth paragraph used the programme of reform and opening up to explain why it was important. Moreover, the elaboration of this programme's success could also be understood as an attempt to persuade the reader of the CCP's leadership. In effect, it advocated the materialism of the CCP, which was presented as modernizing and progressive, over the idealism of *Falun Gong*, which was viewed as primordial and backward. Indeed, this dualism had also featured in the third paragraph; however, in that paragraph, the emphasis was on delegitimizing ideas attributed to *Falun Gong*, which, again, took place through the rhetorical technique of "name-calling". Consequently, *Falun Gong's* ideas were labelled as "fallacies" and associated with "confusing" people, "shaking" their beliefs and "controlling" their minds while the theories attributed to the group were derogated with the appellation "futility". In addition, the third paragraph attempted to delegitimize these ideas and theories by highlighting their negative consequences.

Moreover, the consequences that were highlighted also corresponded to the political objectives of the CCP and conveyed the impression that the idealism of *Falun Gong* was negatively impacting upon the CCP's materialism.

In promulgating the success of the reform and opening up programme in the fifth paragraph, the theme of national (re)glorification was used to present the programme's success in terms of China's development. Furthermore, the paragraph discursively constructed this development as being both progressive and modern. Consequently, reform and opening up was held to be responsible for the liberation and development of the country's social forces that was both "productive" and "unprecedented"; people's living standards had seen "continuous improvement"; China's comprehensive power had "increasing strength"; while its international status was "rising". Indeed, according to the commentary, reform and opening up could only "advance" and "win" but not "retreat" or "fail". In addition, the use of the metaphor "path" in the first sentence along with that of "destiny" in the second sentence combined to construct the impression that China's future realisation as a "powerful country" was entirely dependent on the programme of reform and opening up.

Having established the positive value of the reform and opening up programme, the paragraph then introduced stability and unity as the necessary condition to "push forward" with the programme and, in so doing, make China a "rich and powerful" country. Moreover, the use of stability and unity in relation to reform and development opened up the space for further delegitimation of *Falun Gong*, in that the "spread" of the group was linked to the negation of stability and unity. In addition, this delegitimation was heightened through the use of a counterfactual statement that

presented the imagined consequences of *Falun Gong*'s "spread" being either a "closed state", thus directing the reader to imagine the period before 1978, or "a dependency of imperialists", thus directing the reader to imagine the period prior to 1949. The final sentence then reinforced the negative projection of future effects by claiming that they would be "disastrous" while, at the same time, attempting to persuade the reader of this judgment.

In argumentative terms, the fifth paragraph effectively proposed that the reform and opening up programme, carried out under the CCP leadership, had been both successful and, indeed, was essential for China's future development but that, in order to "push forward" with the reform and opening up programme and make China into a rich and powerful nation, it was necessary to maintain stability and unity. The converse of this argument then read that those who disrupted stability and unity would prevent the programme of reform and opening up from pushing forward, which would in turn prevent China from becoming a powerful country. In fact, according to the paragraph, it would turn China into either a closed state or a "westernised" state. The corollary of these argument schemes was to justify the government's suppression of *Falun Gong* on the grounds that it was protecting stability and, in so doing, would make China rich and powerful.

(1) The current struggle has momentum and vigour, the "Falun Gong" organisation has suffered heavy losses, the face of the organisation is already paralysed, the majority of the practising "Falun Gong" masses have broken away from the "Falun Gong" organisation, and the overall situation in the capital and all parts of China is stable. (2) We have won an initial victory in the struggle, but the struggle is long-term, difficult, and complex. (3) To completely destroy the "Falun Gong" organisation and completely purge the pernicious influence of Li Hongzhi's evil doctrine, much remains to be done. (4) We must pay full attention to maintaining the overall situation of stability, bring to bear the policies of might, alleviate social shocks, allow the people of all ethnic groups of China and all levels of society to concentrate their

energy on building of the two forms of enlightenment. ⁽⁵⁾ All levels of party organization and government must give prominence to maintaining social stability.

The sixth paragraph concludes the argument scheme put forward in the fifth paragraph by using the claim of maintaining stability to specify the “destruction” of *Falun Gong*. Although the first sentence of the paragraph claimed that the “overall situation” in China was, at that time, “stable”, it also worked to construct *Falun Gong* as a militaristic opponent. Indeed, this construction built on the description of the anti-*Falun Gong* campaign as a “struggle” that was first used at the end of the fourth paragraph. Consequently, in the first sentence, *Falun Gong* was said to have “suffered heavy losses”, had the “face” of its organisation “paralysed” and lost the “majority” of the “practicing masses”. Moreover, these claims also put forward the implicature that *Falun Gong* was being “defeated” as a result of the measures put in place by the CCP. Not only did this work to position the Party as the agent “defending” the nation against the *Falun Gong* threat and, so, displaying “leadership” but also linked it to the positive discourse of “progress” that had been used throughout the commentary, particularly in the fifth paragraph. This impression of *Falun Gong*’s “defeat” was also reinforced with the claim that China was stable. However, this use of stability simultaneously worked to strengthen the *topos* of threat, as it suggested that, prior to this point, the “overall situation” in China was not stable. Furthermore, the reference to stability in Beijing and “all other parts of China” suggested that the threat posed by *Falun Gong* was geographically spread across the country.

The *topos* of threat was temporally extended in the second sentence as the claims of success in defeating *Falun Gong* were said to constitute only an “initial victory”.

Rather, the “struggle” against the group was vaguely described as “long-term,

difficult, and complex". Indeed, this was reinforced with the claim in the following sentence that "much remains to be done". Moreover, what it was that the commentary stated needed to be done to *Falun Gong* could be interpreted as constituting the final victory over the group: namely its complete "destruction". However, as with the inexplicitness over how long it would take to "destroy" *Falun Gong*, the commentary was also vague in detailing how *Falun Gong* would be "destroyed". Nevertheless, the imperative to "pay full attention" to maintaining stability as well as the sanctioning of "policies of might" appeared to legitimate the use of force in order to achieve this final victory against the group. Indeed, the usage of stability in this context, in the form of the singular "*wending*" rather than "*anding tuanjie*", was redolent of the 4 June editorial, in which the need to maintain stability also appeared to express the Hobbesian notion that it was legitimate for the state to use force.

In argumentative terms, the construction of *Falun Gong* as a military opponent was a further example of how the commentary worked to reclassify the quasi-spiritual *qigong* group. And, as in the other examples, this reclassification seemed intended to legitimate specific actions to be taken against the group based on its categorisation. In the case of the sixth paragraph, classifying *Falun Gong* as a military opponent worked to legitimate actions that were necessary to defeat such an opponent. Furthermore, the use of the temporally vague *topos* of threat allowed for such actions, which, though never specifically elaborated, were suggestive of the use of force, to be further justified in terms of maintaining stability.

(1) We must further educate, transform, and emancipate the majority of the masses who practice "Falun Gong", while, in accordance with the law, striking hard against the extremely small number of organisers, plotters, and behind-the-scenes manipulators who insist on making trouble. (2) We must resolutely handle those elements that cause turmoil and destroy the very good situation of stability and unity before allowing them

to create an atmosphere which will bring disaster and calamity to the country and the people. ⁽³⁾Whoever violates the law cannot escape the punishment of the law. ⁽⁴⁾We want stability, not turmoil; unity, not splittism; scientific truths, not evil doctrines. ⁽⁵⁾We must rally more tightly around the Party Central Committee with Comrade Jiang Zemin as its core and concentrate our energy on pushing forward reform, opening up, modernization and construction. ⁽⁶⁾This is the common wish of the whole party and of the people of all the ethnic groups of China!

The final paragraph of the commentary moved on from the sixth paragraph by drawing a distinction between those who would and those who would not be targeted in the government's "destruction" of *Falun Gong*. In this, the paragraph made clear that "the majority of the masses" who practiced *Falun Gong* would be treated differently from those who were held to have engaged in organisational activities against the state. Indeed, though the previous paragraph had made the claim that the majority of the masses had already "broken away" from *Falun Gong*, the claim to "further educate, transform and emancipate" these adherents continued the theme of false consciousness that had run through the commentary and worked to delegitimize Li Hongzhi's claims to represent "the truth" while, at the same time, making the implicature that the CCP, if not knowing "the truth", at least knew what was not "the truth". As for the label given to those who engaged organisational activities, the term "extremely small number of people" was similar to that used during the demonstrations in 1989 and, indeed, in many other political campaigns throughout the course of the People's Republic of China. For Kuo, this phrase can be categorised as a "downtoner" on account of the fact that it worked to minimise the number of people in the country who opposed the authority of the Party;⁶²¹ however, its usage in previous political campaigns also suggested that the government would employ similarly coercive techniques to treat those who were charged with this crime. Indeed, though the paragraph claimed that these people would be treated "in accordance with

⁶²¹ Kuo (2002: 299).

the law”, it also subsequently stated that “[w]e must resolutely handle these elements”. For Fowler, this latter expression is an example of a “pseudo-locative” phrase, in that it “mystifies a set of complex relationships...in a single locative phrase.”⁶²² In this particular example, no detail is given over, amongst other things, how particular suspects will be identified or what type of punishment they would expect to receive. As a consequence of obscuring such details, the pseudo-locative phrase allowed the impression of legality put forward by the paragraph to go unchallenged.⁶²³ In addition, within this pseudo-locative phrase, the reference to those engaged in organisational activities as “elements” was an example of, what Fowler also termed, a “nominal expression”, in that these people were replaced by a technical term. For Fowler, such expressions achieve “a remarkable and dehumanizing transformation of a human individual into a depersonalized object.”⁶²⁴ Indeed, commenting on the dehumanising effect of labels during the Cultural Revolution, Lu states that “[o]nce people were labeled as ghosts, snakes and devils, they were treated like animals.”⁶²⁵ In the case of the second sentence, the negative effect of the term “elements” was strengthened by the charge such people had “destroyed” stability and unity. Furthermore, the use of stability and unity, in combination with the term “elements”, seemed intended to further justify the government’s action towards *Falun Gong* on the grounds that it was necessary to take pre-emptive action in order to maintain stability and unity and so prevent an “atmosphere of disaster and calamity”. Indeed, though the following sentence reinforced the impression of legality, the use of the rhetorical strategy of *argumentum at consequentiam* in the third sentence suggested that the prosecution of

⁶²² Fowler (1991: 128).

⁶²³ As pointed out earlier, legal violations formed the main justification for the government’s decision to suppress *Falun Gong*.

⁶²⁴ Fowler (1991: 128).

⁶²⁵ Lu (1999: 497).

Falun Gong adherents was not solely based on what laws had been violated by their past actions but also on what laws might be violated by their future actions.

The final three sentences of the final paragraph, in many ways, encapsulated the central message of the commentary, with the positive values of stability, unity and scientism being associated, by implicature, with the leadership of the CCP and, in turn, being contrasted against the opposing negative values of turmoil, splittism and evil doctrines, which were used to delegitimize *Falun Gong*. Following on from this, the leadership of the CCP was emphasised in relation to pushing forward the Party's economic plan of reform and development. Finally, the persuasiveness of this message was strengthened by the rhetorical strategy of claiming "consensus" for this position while, at the same time, directing the reader to accept this proposition.

The use of "stability and unity" in the 16 August commentary was similar to that of "stability" in the two articles analysed in chapter three, in that it was discursively constructed as a positive value while its antonymical equivalents were presented negatively. Furthermore, the positive value of stability was used to legitimate, albeit through implicature, the authority of the CCP while its negative value was used to explicitly delegitimize *Falun Gong*. The positive value of stability and unity was initially constructed through the headline, which linked the maintenance of stability to that of the overall situation. As in the previous articles, this immediately presented stability in terms of national interest and, as such, shifted the focus of maintaining stability away from preserving the power of the CCP and onto the fate of the Chinese nation. Indeed, the link between maintaining stability and preserving the power of the CCP was never explicitly articulated throughout the commentary but rather was

implicated in the link between stability and the programme of reform and development, which could be read as constituting the Party's competing version of the "higher truth". This link had also been put forward in the commentary's headline and further strengthened the positive relationship between stability and the future of the Chinese nation. In argumentative terms, stability and unity was presented as the necessary condition upon which the success of the programme of reform and development was dependent. In turn, the commentary presented the success of this programme as being the necessary condition upon which China's future as a rich and powerful nation was dependent. Consequently, the maintenance of stability and unity was justified in terms of China's future development. Furthermore, despite simplifying causal relationships in order to put forward this notion, this argument scheme opened up the space for its converse to be put forward i.e. the failure to maintain stability and unity would affect the success of reform and opening up which, in turn, would prevent China from becoming a rich and powerful nation. This converse argument scheme constructed the negative value of instability. Moreover, it was into this argument scheme that the 16 August commentary attempted to position *Falun Gong* as the agent responsible for "destroying" stability and, in so doing, legitimate the government's suppression of the group.

However, this positioning of *Falun Gong* rested upon two claims. The first claim was that the group had destroyed "stability and unity" through the series of demonstrations that had been held between 1996 and 1999. Of these demonstrations, the 25 April demonstration outside Zhongnanhai was presented as the most egregious violation of social order. The second claim against *Falun Gong* built on the first claim by putting forward the proposition that, if left "unsuppressed", the group would continue to

destroy stability and unity and eventually lead to China becoming either a “closed” state or a “westernised” state. With regard to the first claim, it was significant that, in the absence of a formal definition of stability, quantitative or otherwise, put forward by the commentary, this claim offered a material referent by which the claim of destroying stability and unity could be assessed. In fact, reports of the behaviour of *Falun Gong* adherents at the 25 April demonstration as well as the Xinhua report published two days later did not appear to support the claim that stability and unity had been destroyed by *Falun Gong*. Indeed, this impression was further strengthened by the fact that the CCP waited nearly three months before issuing a formal response to the protest. In contrast, the use of stability in the second claim was more consistent with those analysed in chapter three, in that its emphasis on future consequences provided no material referent. Rather, the second claim privileged the Party-endorsed future reality over competing alternatives and, as such, was entirely reliant on rhetoric.

16 August Commentary: Co-textual Analysis

The response from *Falun Gong* adherents to the decision by the government to outlaw both the group and its practice as well as the subsequent propaganda campaign was similar to that when *Falun Gong* was de-registered by the CQSRS in 1996, in that members of the group contested the decision. As Ching points out, “[f]rom the beginning, Falun Gong members did not take the ban passively.”⁶²⁶ Indeed, even on the day that the ban was announced, tens of thousands of people took part in demonstrations against the ban in ten cities across China.⁶²⁷ For Vermander, this response from *Falun Gong* adherents could be explained by the fact that “[t]he repression, once it began, enhanced still further the redemptive effect of the affirmation of faith and, in this regard, public protests take on a ritual character”.⁶²⁸ Chen finds that this response to the ban was paralleled by those of earlier sectarian movements which had been outlawed in imperial times, in that “during periods of official repression or adversity, followers were mobilized into greater levels of commitments.”⁶²⁹ Moreover, by seeking to contest the government ban, *Falun Gong* effectively transformed itself from a quasi-spiritual *qigong* group into a fully political organisation.⁶³⁰ Indeed, the performative act of outlawing *Falun Gong* seemingly had the effect of turning the group into the very organisation that the government accused it of being and thus provided further justification for the government’s actions.

⁶²⁶ Ching (2005: 47).

⁶²⁷ For more, see Powers and Lee (2002: 264), Ching (2005: 41).

⁶²⁸ Vermander (2001: 5).

⁶²⁹ Chen (2003: 513).

⁶³⁰ Chen points out that not all members of *Falun Gong* have become political, in that members who follow Li Hongzhi’s teachings are generally more politically active than those who use *Falun Gong* for its healing effects. See Chen (2005: 513).

In addition to maintaining the propaganda campaign against the group,⁶³¹ the CCP responded to the actions of *Falun Gong* adherents by introducing new legislation that would allow it to ban “cult organisations”. This legislation, which was passed by the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress (NPC) on 30 October 1999 in the “Decision on Banning Cult Organisations and Preventing and Punishing Cult Activities”, built on the existing legislation governing “cult” organisations under Article 300 of the Criminal Law to expand the number of activities for which practitioners could be tried as well as clarified the severity of their punishments.⁶³² Furthermore, due to the interpretation of the Decision by the Supreme People’s Court (SPC) and the Supreme People’s Procuratorate (SPP) on 1 November 1999, these expanded powers were given greater legal force by sanctioning their retroactive application.⁶³³ As a result, even those who were not directly connected with the group, for example bookshop owners who had once stocked *Falun Gong* books, could now be, and indeed were, subject to arrest.⁶³⁴ In addition to the new legislation, new measures, such as the launching of an education movement to “reveal the truth” about *Falun Gong* as well as “the comprehensive management of public order” to protect against the *Falun Gong* threat, were also announced in order to further aid the attempt to “comprehensively eliminate” the group.⁶³⁵

⁶³¹ In his research on the anti-*Falun Gong* campaign in Xinhua, Chen found that, between 23 July and 31 July, there were one hundred news items published on *Falun Gong*, while, for the whole month of August, the number of articles totalled ninety-one. The number of articles remained significant throughout the remainder of the year, except for the half-month period prior to the fifty year anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic of China, See Chen (2005: 21).

⁶³² In fact, “cult organisations” were only included in the 1997 revision of Criminal Law. Previously, they were not listed as criminal. See Penny (2005: 44 note 4).

⁶³³ Keith and Lin (2003: 638–639).

⁶³⁴ Leung (2002: 779). Leung makes the point that such people “[t]he retroactive application of the law defies normal concepts of legality.” Peerenboom agrees to the extent it “raises questions in such cases about the legality of retroactive sanctions.” See Peerenboom (2002: 96).

⁶³⁵ Keith and Lin (2003: 638).

The Decision passed by the NPC Standing Committee resulted in *Falun Gong* being labelled as a “cult organisation” (*xiejiao zuzhi*).⁶³⁶ Although the term had been used in relation to the group prior to the Congress, such usage had been infrequent; however, following the passing of the new legislation, the use of “cult organisation” when referring to *Falun Gong* became the consistent rhetorical appellation.⁶³⁷ For Chen, the term “*xiejiao*” (邪教) carried “pathological notions of “twisted”, “perverse” or “malignant” associated with evil.”⁶³⁸ Mostly, this was due to the presence of the character “*xie*”, which literally means “evil” or “heretical”. However, though the character “*jiao*” generally refers to “teachings” and, indeed, is used in the Chinese term for “religion” (*zongjiao*), Vermander quotes a teaching booklet published as part of the education campaign against “cult organisations” which stated that “[t]he *jiao* in *xiejiao* does not refer to the same *jiao* as in *zongjiao* (religion). It refers to an alleged religion, a perverse or evil force. A cult organisation is not the equivalent of a normal religious organization.”⁶³⁹ Indeed, Ownby notes that this usage of “*xiejiao*” differed from earlier periods of Chinese history, in that where it had previously been used to distinguish “orthodox teachings” (*zhengjiao*) from “heterodox teachings” (*xiejiao*), it was now being used to differentiate the secular from the religious.⁶⁴⁰ Furthermore, even though China is officially an atheistic and communist country, *Falun Gong* was being suppressed on the grounds that it was not a religion. Moreover, this designation of the group as a “cult organisation” was not determined by a religious body but by

⁶³⁶ The official translation of *xiejiao* in government sources has increasingly become “evil cult”. However, I have chosen to use “cult organisation” as it does not contain the pejorative “evil”, which is present but not explicit in the Chinese original. Furthermore, I do not use the older translation of “heterodox teachings” because it does not convey the religious element that was given to the term in its usage during the anti-*Falun Gong* campaign.

⁶³⁷ Prior to the Decision, most articles used “*Falun Gong* organisation” (“*Falun Gong*” *zuzhi*); after the Decision, the standard reference was “*Falun Gong* cult organisation” (“*Falun Gong*” *xiejiao zuzhi*).

⁶³⁸ Chen (2003: 519).

⁶³⁹ Guo Zhengyi, “Jujue Xiejiao: Shaonian Jiaoyu Duben” (Denouncing Cult Organisations: Education Handbooks for Young People), (Beijing: Zhongguo Qingnian Chubanshe, 2001), p.39, as cited in Vermander (2001: 4).

⁶⁴⁰ Ownby (2003: 305).

the Chinese government. For Leung, the labelling of *Falun Gong* as a “cult organisation” was intended to legitimise “the use of stronger measures to control FLG compared to other religious groups.”⁶⁴¹

The passing of the new legislation and, with it, *Falun Gong*’s designation as a “cult organisation” also signified a shift in emphasis in the government’s propaganda campaign. Although the main justification for the suppression of the group remained its illegality, the introduction of the new legislation allowed for the focus of the campaign to move away from the group’s lack of registration and its disruption of public order and onto those negative characteristics that made the group a “cult organisation”, as defined by the government.⁶⁴² While articles attacking Li Hongzhi and *Falun Gong* had always been part of the overall propaganda campaign, they previously worked to discredit the group; now, however, such articles constituted the main basis on which the government’s suppression of the group was justified. As a consequence, many of the articles concerned with *Falun Gong* following the legislation on “cult organisations” repeatedly emphasised the harmful effects of Li Hongzhi’s teachings upon *Falun Gong* practitioners and their families, so that stories were published documenting those who were caused to take extreme measures, such as cutting open their stomachs in an attempt to find the *falun* wheel or refusing medical treatment in the belief that it would promote bad karma but dying as a result.⁶⁴³ In addition, the designation of *Falun Gong* as a “cult organisation” also

⁶⁴¹ Leung (2002: 774).

⁶⁴² The characteristics of a “cult organisation” were enumerated to be: the worship of a cult leader who often has political ambitions; the brainwashing of members; the spreading of heretical ideas, such as the end of the world theory; the illegal collection of funds; the secrecy of organisation; and the causing of harm to society. See “Party Paper List Qualities Which Mark Falun Gong as Cult” (30 October 1999).

⁶⁴³ For Chen, the credibility of such stories was questionable because there was often little or no attribution of sources and, even in those cases where sources were attributed, they followed the government line. See Chen (2005: 28).

allowed it to be presented alongside other notorious groups, such as the “Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God Movement”, the “Branch Davidians” and “Aum Shinrikyo”,⁶⁴⁴ and, in so doing, worked to further justify the actions of the CCP by relating them to those which were taken by the other governments when dealing with these groups.⁶⁴⁵

The harmful effects of *Falun Gong* were graphically demonstrated when an incident of self-immolation involving five people took place at Tiananmen Square on 23 January 2001. Although *Falun Gong* denied that any of its members were involved and, indeed, even suggested that it had been staged by the Chinese government in order to discredit them, that the people performed meditative gestures in a style akin to those practiced by the group appeared to support the claims made by the government. Indeed, as Friedman points out, the immolation “led to a more effective portrayal of FLG as an alien cult similar to the murderous Aum Shinrikyo in Japan...and Branch Davidians in the USA.”⁶⁴⁶ Furthermore, this incident brought about a second wave in the campaign to suppress the group, in which, according to Leung, “China mobilized the strongest accusation and heavy-handed propaganda blitz which recalls [sic] the Maoist campaign in the Cultural Revolution, when 12 million

⁶⁴⁴ The “Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God Movement” was a “post-Catholic” group in the southwest region of Uganda that preached about the imminent end of the world. However, when this end did not occur as predicted (in 2000), leaders of the group began to carry out executions on its members. The exact death toll is not known but it claimed that it is somewhere in the region of 790 followers. Aum Shinrikyo was a religious group in Japan that sought to teach the “supreme truth” about the “creation and destruction of the universe” and was responsible for the sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway system in March 1995 that resulted in the deaths of 12 people and the injuring of many. As for the Branch Davidians, it preached about a form of apocalyptic reckoning and gained infamy when it was involved in a 51-day siege with the FBI in Waco, Texas that ended in the deaths of 86 of its members.

⁶⁴⁵ Peerenboom points out that China is not the only country to ban groups considered to be “cults”. Indeed, all countries include some limits on the practice of religious freedom where violation of criminal law takes place. See Peerenboom (2002: 95).

⁶⁴⁶ Friedman (2005: 227). The incident of self-immolation also highlights the role played by the semiotic dimension of discourse.

Chinese youth were mobilized to sign a “civil convention in the anti-cult struggle.”⁶⁴⁷ In addition, the second wave led to more followers being sent to detention camps in order to undergo “re-education and training”.⁶⁴⁸ Consequently, despite the intermittent individual and small group protests that have taken place across China since the start of the government campaign, mostly at sites of symbolic value, such as Tiananmen Square,⁶⁴⁹ Chen concludes that, “[b]y 2002, most organizers and followers within China had either renounced their beliefs or were in reform camps.”⁶⁵⁰ Furthermore, Friedman notes that, “[w]ith FLG leader Li Hongzhi organizing from America and demonstrators in Tiananmen increasingly foreigners, FLG began to be experienced as a foreign plot to embarrass China... Educated Beijing people commented that to allow superstitious, pre-modern Chinese peasants to act as modern and sophisticated urbanites could elsewhere would destabilize China.”⁶⁵¹

⁶⁴⁷ Leung (2002: 775).

⁶⁴⁸ Vermader (2001: 7).

⁶⁴⁹ Chan (2004: 677). However, Chung, Lai and Xia cite Public Security statistics indicating that *Falun Gong* still maintains a national network in China and is actively recruiting new members. See Chung, Lai and Xia (2006: 26).

⁶⁵⁰ Chen (2003: 518–519). In addition to jail and “re-education camps”, those accused of being members were also detained through hospitalisation in psychiatric wards on the grounds that they were suffering from “*qigong* deviation” (*qigong piancha*). See Perry (2001: 172).

⁶⁵¹ Friedman (2005: 227).

Conclusion

The success of the government's campaign against *Falun Gong* has been due to a combination of coercive and persuasive techniques. Coercive techniques, such as the arrest and detention of people accused of being members of the group, have worked to effectively dismantle *Falun Gong*'s organisational network inside China while the persuasive techniques, in the form of the government's propaganda campaign, has served to justify the necessity of the government taking such coercive action while also attempting to convince the rest of the population not to associate with the group or its practices. Moreover, while the use of coercion has remained largely consistent, if unevenly applied throughout the campaign, there was a shift in emphasis in the content of the propaganda. In the initial stages, the government sought to justify the banning of the group on the grounds that it was not a registered organisation and that it had disturbed public order. Following the passing of the Decision banning "cult organisations", it was now sufficient to justify the banning the group by demonstrating that it was, indeed, a "cult organisation". Consequently, the harmful nature of the group's teaching as well as its effects upon practitioners and society became the main focus of the propaganda campaign. As for the use of stability in the propaganda campaign, its usage remained largely consistent despite this shift. In this, the group's capacity to "organise" demonstrations was put forward as evidence of it destroying "stability". In addition, this charge was used to justify the government's actions on the basis that, if *Falun Gong* was not "destroyed" then it would destroy stability in the future and this would, in turn, prevent China from becoming "rich and powerful". Despite these arguments being used repeatedly throughout the campaign, however, stability was never presented as the main justification for the outlawing of *Falun Gong* but rather worked to support other arguments. Indeed, its usage was less

prominent than in the government's response to the events in 1989. This may have been due to the fact that, unlike 1989, the demonstrations which had been held by *Falun Gong* did not appear to "destroy" stability, at least not when they were concluded without the use of military force and, in the case of the 25 April demonstrations, that the government waited three months before officially condemning them. Moreover, this suggests that there are limits to the government's use of the stability discourse on occasions when a material referent can be used to judge the rhetorical claims. Indeed, in terms of discursive selectivity, the government's use of the stability discourse did not appear to "resonate" with Chinese people, in that the context at this time did not "favour" this discourse.

The final empirical chapter focuses on the most recent large-scale demonstrations to have taken place in China. However, unlike 1989, the ire of the protestors was not directed against the Chinese government but rather the Japanese government. Despite this, these demonstrations still presented the Chinese government with a challenge over how best to handle the demonstrations in such a way as to prevent the ire of the protestors turning on the Chinese government. Consequently, this chapter analyses how the CCP employed the stability discourse during this period to successfully bring the demonstrations to an end.

Chapter 5: The 2005 “Anti-Japan” Demonstrations

Introduction

This chapter will analyse a commentary that was published in the *People’s Daily* following a series of “anti-Japan” demonstrations⁶⁵² which had taken place in a number of Chinese cities during the month of April in 2005. Although these protests did not explicitly challenge the authority of the CCP, as in 1989, nor were they organised by a quasi-spiritual *qigong* group that the CCP leadership perceived to be a threat to its authority, as in 1999, the demonstrations directed against Japan did indirectly challenge the leadership of the CCP. This was because they presented the Party’s leadership with a dilemma over how best to bring them under control. If the leadership allowed the demonstrations to continue for too long, historical precedents suggested that they could open up a space which would enable the expression and mobilisation of discontent against the rule of the CCP. However, other historical precedents indicated that bringing the protests to an end too soon could also open up a similar space as protestors reacted to the government’s suppression of their patriotic actions by challenging its authority. Consequently, as Shirk points out, “[w]henver anti-Japanese emotions boil over into large-scale protests that threaten to spin out of control, it takes a delicate touch to halt the protests without having them turn against

⁶⁵² The labelling of the protests as “anti-Japan” rather than “anti-Japanese” is based on the claims made by demonstrators—or, at least, those who claimed to speak on their behalf—that their actions were directed against the Japanese government as well as those who endorse the views of “right-wing militarists” rather than the majority of the Japanese population (this is also the line of the Chinese government). Whether such a distinction was actually maintained during the demonstrations when some Japanese businesses as well as Japanese products were vandalised, even if by a minority, is a moot point. However, it is also incidental to the focus of this chapter.

An additional point concerns the use of the terms “protest” and “demonstration”. More generally, I use the term “demonstration”, again on the grounds that it is more neutral—in my opinion, it describes the act taking place whereas the term “protest” also includes interpretation (often used pejoratively) of the event. That said, this distinction is slight and, in order to avoid over-repetition, the two terms are used interchangeably.

the CCP instead.”⁶⁵³ In light of the fact that the CCP leadership was able to do just that and successfully bring the “anti-Japan” demonstrations to an end without encountering either of the two outcomes listed above, the aim of this chapter is, by intensively analysing a commentary that was published in response to these demonstrations, to better understand how the discourse of stability was used to legitimate the authority of the CCP in bringing an end to the “anti-Japan” demonstrations.

As with the previous chapter, this chapter will only intensively analyse a single article on account of the fact that the usage of stability throughout government’s campaign to bring the demonstrations to an end was relatively consistent. As such, this article is considered to be largely representative of how stability was used in the campaign. That said, the usage of stability in other significant articles published in this period, where different, is also detailed in the “co-textual analysis” section of this chapter in order to give a more complete understanding.

As explained in chapter two, the analyses of the editorials will begin by presenting a contextual analysis of the events that situates the publication of 17 April editorial in the political context of this period. Following on from this, an intensive analysis of the editorial will be carried out at the paragraphical level so as to make explicit my reading of the text. Moreover, as with the intensive analyses carried out in the previous chapters, the aim of this reading is to answer three principal questions:

1. What meaning was given to stability in the commentary?
2. How did the editorial attempt to persuade the reader of the validity of this meaning?

⁶⁵³ Shirk (2007: 144–145).

3. How did this use of stability relate to the legitimacy of the CCP?

Finally, the chapter will end with a co-textual analysis that examines other significant themes in the campaign to bring the “anti-Japan” demonstrations to a successful end and, in so doing, avoid producing an overly narrow understanding of the discourse during this period.

17 April Commentary: Contextual Analysis⁶⁵⁴

The article that will be analysed in this chapter is a signed commentary from the *People's Daily* entitled "From Building a Harmonious Society See Stability" which was published on 17 April 2005.⁶⁵⁵ The publication of this article was significant, in that it constituted the opening salvo of a broader campaign by the CCP leadership to bring under control a series of "anti-Japan" demonstrations that had taken place in different parts of China on the three previous weekends.⁶⁵⁶ The first of these demonstrations took place on 2 April in the geographically disparate cities of Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan province in Western China, and Shenzhen, close to the border with Hong Kong in the southern province of Guangdong. The protestors, in both instances, numbered around ten thousand and sought to direct their grievances against local Japanese supermarkets and department stores.⁶⁵⁷ According to Shirk, "[i]n both cities, the police allowed the protestors to damage the stores, but barred them from entering."⁶⁵⁸ Demonstrations again took place in Shenzhen the next day, with approximately 3,000 protestors attacking two Japanese department stores.⁶⁵⁹

The following weekend, further demonstrations against Japan were held in the cities of Shenzhen and Guangzhou in Guangdong province as well as the municipalities of

⁶⁵⁴ As with the previous chapters, this analysis is not intended to provide a complete account of the events surrounding the "anti-Japan" demonstrations in 2005 but rather, in keeping with the Discourse-Historical approach, to present my understanding of the issues relevant to this period in order to make more explicit the meanings within the 17 April Commentary.

⁶⁵⁵ He Zhenhua (17 April 2005).

⁶⁵⁶ Shirk estimates that protests took place in twenty-five cities across China whereas Jin claims that they occurred in "nearly forty major cities". He contends that the demonstrations were even more widespread, having broken out in "dozens of Chinese cities spanning over 20 provinces". Consequently, as these varied figures indicate, the precise scale of the protests is hard to ascertain, particularly as media reports tended to pay most attention to those taking place in the major cities. Suffice it to say, protests did take place in numerous locales throughout China, with the most substantial demonstrations occurring in the major urban areas. See Shirk (2007: 142), Jin (2006: 25), He (2007: 1).

⁶⁵⁷ Mooney (4 April 2005).

⁶⁵⁸ Shirk (2007: 142).

⁶⁵⁹ Mooney (4 April 2005).

Chongqing and Beijing.⁶⁶⁰ In the case of the latter, being both the capital as well as the city in which the embassies of foreign countries were resident, such a demonstration carried a greater degree of political symbolism. The protest initially began in a shopping mall for hi-tech goods in the district of Zhongguancun and consisted of approximately 10,000 students, most of whom were students.⁶⁶¹ As with the demonstrations that had taken place in Chongqing and Shenzhen on the previous weekend, the target of the protest appeared to be businesses that sold Japanese products. According to Shirk, the demonstrations became violent, as protestors “smashed electronic billboards advertising Canon cameras and other Japanese electronic products..., kicked and hammered Toyota automobiles caught up in the melee, and broke the windows of Japanese banks and restaurants.”⁶⁶² Following this, the demonstration moved out of the Zhongguancun district towards Tiananmen Square. However, according to van Kemenade, they were prevented from entering the square by the People’s Armed Police (PAP),⁶⁶³ who, in conjunction with the Beijing police, redirected around 1,000 or so demonstrators into the foreign embassy district.⁶⁶⁴ Once there, Shirk claims that, “the demonstrators threw bottles, tiles, stones, and eggs over the heads of the five-man-deep cordon of People’s Armed Police” before being taken home in waiting buses, with the crowd of protestors effectively being dispersed by the early evening.⁶⁶⁵ However, when protestors attempted to gain entry to the embassy district the following day, Bezlova claims that they were prevented from doing so by “full gear riot police”.⁶⁶⁶ Nevertheless, on the same day in

⁶⁶⁰ See Bezlova (13 April 2005), “Anti-Japan Protests Flare Up in China” (16 April 2005).

⁶⁶¹ Shirk (2007: 140).

⁶⁶² *Ibid.*, p.141.

⁶⁶³ This is, effectively, a national paramilitary organisation which has responsibility for the “quelling of ‘sudden incidents’”. See Cheung (1996: 527).

⁶⁶⁴ van Kemenade (9 April 2005).

⁶⁶⁵ Shirk (2007: 141–142).

⁶⁶⁶ Bezlova (13 April 2005).

the city of Guangzhou, approximately 3,000 protestors were able to surround the Japanese Consulate while a further 10,000 people demonstrated in Shenzhen.⁶⁶⁷

By the following weekend, the final set of demonstrations took place, most prominently in the cities of Shanghai, Hangzhou, Tianjin and, once again, Shenzhen, while protests in the cities of Guangzhou, Chongqing and Beijing were all blocked by the authorities.⁶⁶⁸ Of these, the demonstration held in Shanghai on 16 April was the largest, with estimations for the number of people taking part ranging from 20,000 up to 100,000.⁶⁶⁹ Furthermore, Shirk also contends that the Shanghai protest was the “most violent” of those that took place in April, with reports of Japanese businesses being attacked and Japanese cars being overturned.⁶⁷⁰ As with the demonstration that took place in Beijing on 9 April, protestors converged on the Japanese Consulate, whereupon a variety of objects, including stones and paint, were thrown at the building; however, as with the Beijing protests, riot police prevented protestors from gaining entry to the compound.⁶⁷¹

Causes of the “Anti-Japan” Demonstrations

Two immediate issues were considered to have led to the three weeks of protests across China. The first issue concerned the possibility that Japan could obtain Permanent Membership of the United Nations Security Council (PMUNSC). Concerns over this were raised when Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General, issued a report on 21 March 2005 entitled “In Larger Freedom: towards Development,

⁶⁶⁷ “China’s Anti-Japan Rallies Spread” (10 April 2005).

⁶⁶⁸ “Anti-Japan Protests Flare Up in China” (16 April 2005).

⁶⁶⁹ According to Shirk, a government spokesman put the number of protestors at 20,000 while a variety of eyewitnesses put the figure at anywhere from 50,000 to 100,000. See Shirk (2007: 143).

⁶⁷⁰ “Japan Anger at Shanghai Violence” (16 April 2005).

⁶⁷¹ Farrer (29 April 2005).

Security and Human Rights for All".⁶⁷² This report proposed two models by which the membership of the Security Council would be expanded from its current membership of fifteen countries to twenty-four.⁶⁷³ In addition, it specified that the criteria for determining which countries should hold such seats as being "those who contribute most to the United Nations financially, militarily and diplomatically".⁶⁷⁴ In light of the fact that Japan was the United Nations (UN) second largest financial donor, contributing approximately US\$800 million or just under 20% of the UN's overall budget,⁶⁷⁵ had recently dispatched Self-Defence Forces (SDF) to take part in UN peacekeeping missions in Cambodia and Nepal, and was the only non-permanent member aside from Brazil to have served eight Security Council terms, it was regarded as having a strong bid to gain one of the newly created seats.⁶⁷⁶ Indeed, this bid was strengthened by having the declared support from the United States, European Union countries as well as many countries in the developing world.⁶⁷⁷

Although a vote on the proposals put forward in the UN report was not scheduled until September of that year and, even in the unlikely event of one model gaining sufficient support,⁶⁷⁸ China, as one of the five UN Security Council Permanent Members, would have the power to veto any Japanese bid. Despite this, a group of

⁶⁷² He (2007: 1).

⁶⁷³ Model A proposed an additional six Permanent Memberships (PM) with two drawn from the "Asia and Pacific" region alongside three more two-year non-renewable seats. Model B did not propose the creation of any additional PMs but suggested that a new category of eight four-year renewable seats be created, of which 2 would also be drawn from "Asia and Pacific". See U.N. General Assembly (2005: 43).

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid., p.42.

⁶⁷⁵ Roy (2005:192).

⁶⁷⁶ Breumner (2006: 1). Japan had begun its eighth two-year non-renewable term in January 2005. It only became a member of the United Nations in 1956.

⁶⁷⁷ Gordon (1 October 2005).

⁶⁷⁸ Acceptance of any structural reform of the Security Council requires support from at least two-thirds of the UN member nations as well as all five current PMs. Given that two models were being proposed on this occasion, as well as the contentious nature of Security Council reform, it seemed unlikely that either model would gain the necessary support from the member nations to become enacted. As it transpired, neither of the proposals gained enough support.

Chinese people living in the United States organised an online petition to oppose any possibility of Japan gaining Permanent Membership.⁶⁷⁹ The initial aim of the petitioners was to obtain one million signatories; however, following widespread coverage in the Chinese media, the total number of signatures on the petition ended up exceeding this figure by, at the very least, a multiple of ten.⁶⁸⁰ Indeed, the popularity of the petition was such that it even spread offline, with reports that there were signing stations being set up in various Chinese cities as well as workers in factories and offices bringing the petition round for colleagues to sign.⁶⁸¹ According to He, the most frequently cited reason for signing the petition was the refusal by the Japanese government to acknowledge the acts that were committed by the Japanese Imperial Army during its occupation of China from 1931 to 1945.⁶⁸²

The second issue that led to the “anti-Japan” protests was the release of the list of approved school history textbooks by the Japanese Ministry of Education in early April.⁶⁸³ Concerns over Japan’s portrayal of its wartime actions in its school history textbooks had been an ongoing issue since objections were first raised by the Chinese government in 1982;⁶⁸⁴ however, for He, the release of this list in 2005, coming so close to the setting up of the online petition, was, in effect, “the straw that broke the

⁶⁷⁹ Mooney (4 April 2005).

⁶⁸⁰ The figures range from 10 million, which is put forward by Reilly up to Shirk’s claim of 40 million. In between, Zhao estimates 20 million signatories (also reported by the Economist) while Joseph Kahn (of the New York Times) puts the figure at 30 million. None explain how such a figure was reached. See Reilly (2006: 211), Zhao (2005: 131), “Asia: The genie escapes; China and Japan” (16 April 2005), Joseph Kahn (15 April 2005), Shirk (2007: 173).

⁶⁸¹ Reilly (2006: 211), Shirk (2007: 173).

⁶⁸² He (2007: 1).

⁶⁸³ Every four years, the Ministry of Education releases a list of school textbooks (usually numbering seven or eight) that have been approved by the Textbook Authorisation Research Council. See Masalski (2001), Nakamura (30 October 2007).

⁶⁸⁴ The approval of the first edition of the JSHTR in 2001 also drew protests from the Chinese and South Korean governments and prompted the Japanese Ministry of Education to require 124 changes. See “Japan History Texts Anger E Asia” (5 April 2005).

camel's back".⁶⁸⁵ Of the eight books that had been approved that year, it was an updated edition of the textbook published by the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform (JSHTR) that caused the most offence. In addition to claiming that Japan's wartime actions had been borne out of the need for "self-preservation" and that the invasions of China and Korea were carried out in order to liberate the Asian region from "western domination",⁶⁸⁶ its reference to the events that took place in Nanjing at the end of 1937, in which the Japanese Army is widely accepted to have killed hundreds of thousands of people over a period of several weeks, as an "incident" aroused the greatest level of indignation.⁶⁸⁷ Moreover, the textbook did not provide an estimate for the number of Chinese people killed during this period, instead stating only that "many had been killed".⁶⁸⁸ Despite the fact that the JSHTR is used in less than 1% of schools in Japan,⁶⁸⁹ Barmé makes the point that the repeated approval of such textbooks feeds "into a perception that China's neighbour continues to avoid confronting its—albeit imperial—past...and that it is a nation that is incapable of redressing those wrongs through meaningful, substantive and sustained acts and expressions of official contrition."⁶⁹⁰ Moreover, Jin contends that, for many in China, this lack of contrition over past actions is also linked to the present-day issue of regional security, as it demonstrates that Japan has never abandoned its imperialist ambitions and, indeed, that the intention of right-wing groups within the political establishment is to once again remilitarise the country.⁶⁹¹

⁶⁸⁵ He (2007: 1).

⁶⁸⁶ "China 'Jails Democracy Activist'" (25 December 2005).

⁶⁸⁷ The episode is more commonly referred to as the "Nanjing massacre", although the term "the rape of Nanjing" has been popularised since the publication of Iris Chang's book of the same name.

⁶⁸⁸ Indeed, only one of the approved textbooks in 2005 actually gave figures for the number of Chinese people killed during the events in Nanjing. See "Japan History Texts Anger E Asia" (5 April 2005)

⁶⁸⁹ Miyazaki (16 April 2005).

⁶⁹⁰ Barmé (16 May 2005).

⁶⁹¹ Jin (2006: 38).

However, these immediate issues surrounding the “anti-Japan” demonstrations had also been preceded by a series of diplomatic incidents. Chief among these was the release of a joint statement by the US-Japan Security Consultative Committee on 19 February 2005. In this statement, the two countries stated that one of their “common strategic objectives” was to “[e]ncourage the peaceful resolution of issues concerning the Taiwan Strait through dialogue”.⁶⁹² As well as constituting the first direct expression made by Japan on the status of Taiwan since it normalised relations with the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in 1972, this statement was taken to mean that Japan would assist the United States in defending Taiwan from military attack by the PRC.⁶⁹³ Given that the issue of Taiwan’s sovereignty is central to the CCP’s nationalist credentials,⁶⁹⁴ any statement or action on this issue by an outside country that does not fully endorse the People’s Republic of China’s “One-China” principle can provoke diplomatic tension.⁶⁹⁵ However, in the case of Japan, such diplomatic tension can be even more severe on account of the fact that, as Shirk points out, “[t]oday’s Chinese can’t forgive Japan for dismembering China and ruling Taiwan as a colony until the end of World War II.”⁶⁹⁶ Furthermore, He makes the point that, because of such feelings, “[p]olicy flexibility is particularly limited when problems regarding Taiwan arise between China and Japan”.⁶⁹⁷

⁶⁹² Joint Statement of the U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee (19 February 2005).

⁶⁹³ “Sino-Japanese Relations under the “New US-Japan Security Alliance”” (1 March 2005).

⁶⁹⁴ However, this issue has only assumed such importance in the post-Mao period and, indeed, can be traced back to Deng Xiaoping’s call in 1980 for the “return of Taiwan to the motherland” as the second of the government’s three “major tasks” (“opposing international hegemonism” and “economic reform” were the first and third tasks respectively).

⁶⁹⁵ A recent example of this was said to be the Chinese government’s decision to deny the USS Kitty Hawk permission to dock in Hong Kong for Thanksgiving celebrations in retaliation for the US government’s earlier decision to sell Patriot II missile systems to Taiwan. See Lague (29 November 2007).

⁶⁹⁶ Japan gained control of Taiwan in the Treaty of Shimonoseki following China’s defeat in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895. See Shirk (2007: 152).

⁶⁹⁷ Indeed, He contends that “[t]he government would face a legitimacy crisis if it showed any signs of compromise in sovereignty disputes over Taiwan.” See He (2007: 13).

Although the Chinese government did not take overt retaliatory action against Japan over the statement, the following month saw the passing of an anti-secession law relating to Taiwan (*fan fenlie guojia fa*) at the Third Session of the Tenth National Party Congress. This law authorised China to employ “non-peaceful means” in the event of ““Taiwan independence” secessionist forces” attempting to declare independence for the island, “major incidents” that would lead to the island’s independence or when the possibilities for peaceful reunification had been “completely exhausted”.⁶⁹⁸ In effect, the Anti-Secession Law presented a response to the statement issued by the US-Japan Security Consultative Committee by reasserting China’s right to take military action in order to prevent Taiwan from becoming independent. Furthermore, although the Law was not drafted in reaction to the US-Japan statement,⁶⁹⁹ the extensive media coverage given to both the statement and the passing of the Anti-Secession Law had the effect of keeping the twin nationalist issues of Taiwan and Japan in the public consciousness in the period leading up to the demonstrations.

However, in order to better understand why the issue of Japan’s wartime actions was able to bring about three weeks of demonstrations in China more than fifty years later, it is necessary to examine how these actions have been viewed throughout the course of the People’s Republic of China.

⁶⁹⁸ “Anti-Secession Law adopted by NPC (full text)” (14 March 2005).

⁶⁹⁹ A draft version of the Law had been submitted to the NPC Standing Committee in December 2004. Moreover, for Shirk, the Law was drafted in response to the possibility of a law being passed that would authorise the holding of a referendum on the island’s independence. See Shirk (2007: 203–206), “China Prepares to Enact Law Against Secession” (18 December 2004).

Japan in the Maoist Era

For Gries, the Sino-Japanese War of 1937–1945, or the “War of Resistance Against Japan” (*KangRi Zhanzheng*) as it is more commonly referred to in China, can be considered “the birthplace of the People’s Republic of China”.⁷⁰⁰ Indeed, this view was expressed by Mao Zedong on the occasion of the normalisation of Sino-Japan relations in 1972 when he stated that, “[w]e must express our gratitude to Japan. If Japan didn’t invade China, we could [have] never achieved the co-operation between the KMT [Nationalist Party] and the Communist Party. We could have never developed and eventually taken political power for ourselves. It is due to Japan’s help that we are able to meet here in Beijing.”⁷⁰¹ As Denton points out, the reason as to why Mao was so grateful for the Japanese invasion was that it “allowed the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to emerge from the shadows and become a legitimate claimant to political hegemony in China.”⁷⁰² Prior to the outbreak of war, the CCP had been under sustained military attack from the Guomindang (GMD),⁷⁰³ which was pursuing the strategy of “first internal pacification, then external resistance” (*xian annei, hou rangwai*).⁷⁰⁴ However, the onset of war against a common external enemy provided both the political opportunity for a weakened CCP to establish its nationalist credentials vis-à-vis the Guomindang⁷⁰⁵ and the military opportunity to turn the attacks of the Guomindang towards the Japanese.⁷⁰⁶ In so doing, it enabled the CCP

⁷⁰⁰ Gries (2004: 69).

⁷⁰¹ Cited in Barmé (16 May 2005).

⁷⁰² Denton (17 October 2007).

⁷⁰³ As pointed out in the “note on transliteration” (p. iv), Kuomintang (KMT) and Guomindang (GMD) both refer to the Nationalist Party.

⁷⁰⁴ This meant “pacifying” the CCP before “resisting” the Japanese Army. See So (2002: 213).

⁷⁰⁵ There much concern at the time in China that it was necessary for the GMD to join forces with the CCP in order to resist the Japanese. Indeed, this was one of the central motivations of the December Ninth Movement in 1935.

⁷⁰⁶ The GMD eventually agreed to suspend its war against the CCP and formed a Second “United Front” in 1937 to fight the Japanese army.

the time and space in which to regain its military strength.⁷⁰⁷ Indeed, by basing itself in rural parts of China, the CCP was simultaneously able to recruit a large number of, mostly, peasants and avoid sustaining heavy losses at the hands of the Japanese army. As a consequence, when Japan surrendered on 15 August 1945 following the dropping of the two atomic bombs by the United States, the CCP possessed a significantly stronger military force with which to take on the Guomindang in the ensuing civil war.

In light of the crucial role that the War of Resistance against Japan played in facilitating the CCP to gain political control of China, it is not surprising that it occupied a central position in the Party's post-revolutionary legitimising narratives. However, within these narratives, the War was depicted only in so far as it related to the CCP's leadership. As Gries explains, "[t]he Communist storyline was simple: without the Party-led defeat of the Japanese, there would be no New China."⁷⁰⁸ Indeed, "New China" was imagined as an enlightened and sovereign nation that had been "liberated" from a "semi-feudal" and "semi-colonial" past, of which the "War of Resistance" constituted its "denouement".⁷⁰⁹ In effect, the main theme of such narratives was that of heroic victory.⁷¹⁰ Moreover, the role of villain was not played by the Japanese Army but by the Guomindang. As He points out, during this period, "communist propagandists premised national identity on the "defining fundamental fissure" between the Chinese Communists and the Capitalists, especially the

⁷⁰⁷ This is not to suggest that the CCP's actions were motivated only by self-interest but rather to make the point that it had the effect of enabling the CCP to emerge from a period in which its survival was uncertain.

⁷⁰⁸ Gries (2004: 73).

⁷⁰⁹ Denton (17 October 2007).

⁷¹⁰ Gries (2004: 69–75).

Kuomintang...government in Taiwan.”⁷¹¹ Consequently, in relation to the War, the GMD was portrayed as responsible for governing a weakened Chinese state that both created the conditions for a stronger Japan to invade and which was then unable and uninterested in resisting its occupation.

An additional feature of the post-revolutionary narratives was the lack of attention that was given to the atrocities which had been committed against the Chinese people during the Japanese occupation. As Denton explains, “War and revolutionary martyrs were worshipped for their noble sacrifice to the nation, but victims of atrocities—the “rape of Nanjing” or the medical experiments led by the infamous Unit 731 of the Japanese Imperial Army—did not fit well this prevailing heroic narrative.”⁷¹² Indeed, this was reflected on the occasion of the normalisation of relations between the two countries in 1972. In addition to accepting what Barmé describes as a “superficial apology” from the Japanese Prime Minister, Tanaka Kakuei concerning the atrocities committed by the Japanese Army in China, the Chinese leaders also waived any claims for war reparations.⁷¹³ According to Shirk, Zhou Enlai reasoned that “they did not want to use a wartime indemnity to construct their country; it would harm peace to force the losing country to be responsible for the huge indemnity; and it was unreasonable to require the generation that didn’t fight the war to pay for it.”⁷¹⁴ However, He contends that the Chinese government’s readiness to overlook these issues was more to do with the strategic importance of resuming relations with

⁷¹¹ He (2007: 5).

⁷¹² Denton (17 October 2007).

⁷¹³ According to He, the Japanese Prime Minister expressed “deep reflection” for the “much trouble” caused by Japan during an “unfortunate period” rather than making a formal apology. See He (2007: 5).

⁷¹⁴ Shirk (2007: 158). This also followed the example of the Republic of China, which foreswore reparations when signing the Treaty of Taipei.

Japan.⁷¹⁵ In terms of geopolitics, China was keen to form an alliance with Japan in order to offset its increasingly tense relations with the Soviet Union.⁷¹⁶ In economic terms, the normalisation of Sino-Japanese relations would open up the opportunity for bilateral trade to take place between the two countries at a time when China was economically weak. And in terms of Taiwan, a condition for the normalisation of relations was that the Japanese government both recognise the People's Republic of China as the sole legitimate representative government of China rather than the GMD, as previously acknowledged in the 1952 Treaty of Taipei, and endorse the PRC's position that Taiwan was an "inalienable part of China". Commenting on the normalisation of relations, He states that "Beijing's attempt to create an illusion of Sino-Japanese friendship without first settling the historical account was largely successful."⁷¹⁷ However, the changeover in the leadership of the Party and the new political direction pursued by Deng also brought about changes in the way in which the War of Resistance would be understood.

Japan in the Post-Mao Era

The first indication that the historical account between China and Japan had not been completely settled was in 1982, when the Chinese government, along with the Korean government, objected to changes that had been proposed by the Japanese Ministry of Education to a textbook written by Ienaga Saburo. These changes included replacing such phrases as the Japanese army's "aggression into" China with the army's "advance into" China.⁷¹⁸ Although the Ministry of Education responded to the protest by dropping the proposed changes and, indeed, even introduced the additional

⁷¹⁵ He (2007: 4).

⁷¹⁶ Indeed, Reilly claims that the normalisation agreement contained an "anti-hegemony" clause that was specifically devised to counter the threat from the USSR. See Reilly (2006: 192).

⁷¹⁷ He (2007: 6).

⁷¹⁸ Masalski (2001).

criterion of requiring textbooks to demonstrate understanding in their portrayal of historical events concerning other Asian countries, the protest was significant, in that it represented the first time in the post-war period that the Chinese government had opposed a Japanese account of the War. Moreover, it also signalled that the official narrative of the War which had been propagated throughout the Maoist period was now subject to revision. For He, “[d]omestic politics was the main cause of the change.”⁷¹⁹

Within domestic politics, this cause was the new policy of “reform and opening up” implemented under Deng Xiaoping’s leadership. Although largely welcomed by a population still recovering from the excesses of the “class struggle as the key link” version of communism that had been practiced throughout latter part of Mao’s rule, this new policy encountered resistance from within the CCP. And when the new economic reforms began to cause unanticipated problems, such as inflation and unemployment, it also began to lose support amongst the public as well. The CCP leadership, at least those within the leadership that were in favour of the reforms, responded by increasingly justifying the reform programme through appeals to “patriotism” (*aiguozhuyi*) rather than that of communism.⁷²⁰ This concept, which had also been used during the Maoist period,⁷²¹ was intended to cut across notions of class and appeal to all sections of society by promoting the inclusive idea of Chinese identity. He notes that this involved trying “to inspire the people’s love for the nation

⁷¹⁹ He (2007: 6).

⁷²⁰ The concept of “patriotism” is also commonly referred to as “official nationalism” or “state-sanctioned nationalism”. However, within a Marxist-Leninist framework, the concept of “nationalism” is associated with “capitalist-imperialist” countries, who used it as a pretext to invade (and to a lesser extent, interfere in the affairs of) other countries. In contradistinction, the concept of “patriotism” referred to the idea of defending and protecting your own country.

⁷²¹ Although the concept had been employed during this period, its usage carried class connotations. For more, see Schubert (2001: 138–141).

by praising China's national greatness as well as accentuating the differences between China and other nations."⁷²² The link to the economic reform programme came from the fact that much of the national greatness which was highlighted by the concept of patriotism was located in China's past and so the implicit (and sometimes explicit) argumentation was that this "greatness" could only be achieved again in the future by pursuing the policy of "reform and opening up" under the leadership of the CCP. This claim was further reinforced by emphasising China's so-called "century of humiliation" as a contrastive example to demonstrate how weak China had once been. The use of the "century of humiliation" in this way also brought about changes in the depiction of its most important episode, at least for the CCP, namely, the "War of Resistance". The result was that the "victor" narrative, which had emphasised the heroic struggle of the Chinese people during this episode, now gave way to a "victim" narrative that highlighted their suffering.⁷²³

Although elements within this new narrative were carried over, particularly the crucial role of the CCP in defeating the Japanese Army, the role of the GMD as the villain was now played by Japan, with "China" being presented as the victim of its atrocities.⁷²⁴ Indeed, the atrocities that had once been suppressed in the previous narrative were now heavily emphasised. This "gorification" of the atrocities had the dual effect of strengthening the sense of Chinese victimhood while, at the same time, intensifying antipathy towards the Japanese. The centrepiece in this new narrative was the events that took place in Nanjing at the end of 1937 and the start of 1938. Where

⁷²² He (2007: 6).

⁷²³ Gries (2004: 79).

⁷²⁴ The replacement of the GMD as the villain as well as the subsequent acknowledgment of its role in fighting alongside the CCP could also be interpreted as a political overture to Taiwan's rulers, particularly in light of Deng's "three major tasks". In addition, this replacement also reflected the de-emphasising of class struggle as the "fundamental fissure" of national identity. See Coble (2007: 402).

previously, there had largely been silence, in the post-Mao period it has come to represent, what He describes as, “the prime icon of Japanese brutality”.⁷²⁵ In addition to being the focus of intense academic research as well as popular culture,⁷²⁶ the events in December 1937 and January 1938 have been commemorated with the building of the “Memorial to Victims of the Nanjing Massacre by Japanese Invaders” (*QinHua Rijun Nanjing datusha yunan tongbao jinianguan*).⁷²⁷ For Ross, this Memorial has become “not only a key source of information about the events of 1937 but, more importantly, a source of Chinese government sanctioned interpretations of that history.”⁷²⁸ Most contentious within this interpretation has been the insistence that the number of deaths caused by the Japanese Army during the seven week period totalled 300,000 people. Indeed, though this figure is heavily disputed, it is repeatedly displayed throughout the Memorial in Nanjing.⁷²⁹ For Coble, this emphasis on the number of deaths is representative of how the wartime actions of the Japanese Army are now portrayed, in that it “often resembles a “numbers game”, in which the goal seems to be to maximize the number of victims.”⁷³⁰ Indeed, this point is echoed by Gries, who contends that “[t]he new victimization narrative obsesses about two

⁷²⁵ He (2007: 6).

⁷²⁶ An example of this was the publication of the “Great Nanjing Massacre” (*Nanjing datusha*) in 1987, which reportedly sold 150,000 copies in the first month of its release. More recently, the Irish Chang book, “The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II”, brought the events of 1937-1938 to an English speaking audience. See He (2007: 8).

⁷²⁷ The Memorial was built on the site of a mass grave and first opened in 1985. It has since been expanded twice, in 1995, which coincided with the 50th anniversary of the ending of World War II, and December 2007, which coincided with the 70th anniversary of the start of the Japanese incursion into Nanjing. For a detailed description of the Memorial, see Denton (17 October 2007).

⁷²⁸ Ross (2006: 4). This importance is heightened by the Memorial’s status as a tourist destination. Indeed, the number of visitors for 2005, the last full year it was open was put at 2.1 million. See “Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall Receives 2 mln Visitors Last Year” (24 January 2006).

⁷²⁹ The 1948 Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal estimated the number of deaths to be 200,000 while Ross cites a wide range of sources that put the figure between 40,000 and 150,000. Ultimately, as Shirk points out, the “true number may never be known.” See Ross (2006: 2–3), Shirk (2007: 155).

⁷³⁰ Coble (2007: 44). This “numbers game” has also been evident in the overall estimate for the number of Chinese people killed in the war. In its immediate aftermath, Chiang Kai-shek put the number of soldiers killed at 1.75 million while, in 1949, Mao stated that 9.32 million soldiers and civilians had died. In 1991, the State Council White Paper on Human Rights put the combined figure for those killed and injured at “more than” 21 million. However, in 1995, Jiang Zemin, in a commemoration speech to mark the War’s end, raised this last number to 35 million.

subjects: quantifying Chinese suffering and presenting the Chinese case to the world.”⁷³¹

Popular “Anti-Japan” Sentiment

The government’s use of the “victim” narrative in relation to Japan in the post-Mao period has resonated strongly with the Chinese public. For Denton, this is because “[d]epictions of Japanese atrocities are morally unambiguous and serve to direct divisive class resentments toward an external other.”⁷³² Moreover, He points out that, “[w]hen the Chinese people embraced the new victim narrative, their emotions of self-pity and grievances towards Japan outpoured.”⁷³³ This outpouring has been evident in a number of incidents in which Chinese people have displayed antipathy towards Japan. In all of these incidents, the issue of Japan’s past actions in China was implicitly or explicitly present. Indeed, this was the case with the first mass demonstrations that took place after the Cultural Revolution. These demonstrations, which had been organised by university students to take place on the historically symbolic date of 18 September 1985, were in response to the recent visit to the Yasukuni Shrine by the then Japanese Prime Minister, Yasuhiro Nakasone, as well as China’s increasing trade deficit with Japan.⁷³⁴ The visit to the Yasukuni Shrine was provocative to many Chinese people on account of the fact that the souls of many of those who executed the “Greater East Asian War”, including the wartime leader, Hideki Tojo, were enshrined at the temple.⁷³⁵ Moreover, as Nakasone attended in his

⁷³¹ Gries (2004: 80).

⁷³² Denton (17 October 2007).

⁷³³ He (2007: 8).

⁷³⁴ The date commemorated the “Mukden Incident” when the detonation of part of the Southern Manchurian railway line by the Japanese army served as a prelude to its invasion of Manchuria.

⁷³⁵ The Yasukuni Shrine, a Shinto temple that was built in 1869 at the start of the Meiji Restoration to honour all those who would give their life defending Japan, enshrined the souls of those who were judged to Class-BC war criminals at the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal in 1959 while in 1978, the 14 Class-A war criminals were secretly enshrined by the resident priests. In total, there are estimated to be

capacity as Prime Minister, many people interpreted the visit as indicating the Japanese government's official support for, or, at least, lack of remorse over, its wartime actions.⁷³⁶ As for the trade deficit, He notes that, despite the many possible reasons to explain this deficit, including the lack of quality control over Chinese-made goods as well as Japan's high trade barriers, "Chinese students instantly linked the economic issue with history."⁷³⁷ Indeed, the calling for an economic boycott of Japanese goods was itself a nationalistic tactic with historical resonance, having been periodically employed since Japan issued the Twenty-One Demands in 1915.⁷³⁸

The spectre of history, as represented through the victim narrative, has also been present in issues that do not, on the surface at least, appear to be connected with Japan's wartime actions. In 2000, there was an incident involving defective Toshiba notebook computers, in which rumours circulated that Toshiba was paying compensation out to European and US customers for the selling of a faulty product while failing to do so with Chinese customers. As with the trade deficit in the mid-1980s, though they were plausible explanations, such as the lack of existing laws within the Chinese legal system that required the paying of compensation to Chinese customers in such a scenario, the incident was interpreted as another example of Japanese discrimination towards China.⁷³⁹ This view was also taken when Japan Air Lines' (JAL) neglected to give Chinese passengers any food or lodging following an emergency landing in Osaka due to a snowstorm in January 2001. Despite the fact that the passengers' attempts to gain compensation of one million Renminbi (RMB)

approximately 2.5 million souls at the Shrine. See Shirk (2007: 294 note 1), "Koizumi Shrine Visit Stokes Anger" (15 August 2006).

⁷³⁶ Nakasone's visit was the first by a Japanese Prime Minister since the enshrining of the 14 Class-A war criminals. Previous prime ministers had visited but only in a private capacity.

⁷³⁷ He (2007: 11).

⁷³⁸ Spence (1999: 281).

⁷³⁹ Jin (2006: 30).

per passenger was repeatedly rejected by Chinese courts, Jin points out that, “in the court of public opinion, it was a typical example of “Japanese discrimination against the Chinese” and is still frequently cited in discussions of China-Japan relations taking place in China today.”⁷⁴⁰

The issue of Japan’s wartime actions has even extended into the realm of sport. In 2004, China hosted the Asia Cup football tournament and, in each of Japan’s group games against Oman, Thailand and Jordan, which took place in the wartime capital of Chongqing, Chinese fans openly displayed hostility towards the Japanese team by burning Japanese flags and shouting anti-Japanese taunts, such as “apologise to the people of Asia” and “return the Diaoyu Islands to China”.⁷⁴¹ However, this hostility worsened when China played Japan in the final of the Asia Cup. Although the Chinese authorities anticipated possible crowd disturbances by employing around 50,000 police officers to guard the Beijing Worker’s Stadium as well as directing the crowd’s behaviour over the tannoy system, the Japanese national anthem was still booed and anti-Japanese taunts were once again chanted. Furthermore, after the game, which had ended in a 3–1 defeat for China, riots involving upwards of 10,000 people outside the stadium prevented the Japanese team from leaving and resulted in a Japanese diplomat’s car being damaged. The hostility displayed towards the Japanese men’s football team in the 2004 Asia Cup was also in evidence when the Japanese women’s football team played in the 2007 World Cup being held in China. Describing their match against Germany, Zhou states that, “Japan...had to endure not only the onslaught by reigning champions Germany on the pitch, but also a chorus of abuse from the almost 40,000 spectators, who had come not so much to cheer the Europeans

⁷⁴⁰ Jin (2006: 29).

⁷⁴¹ Ibid., p. 26.

but to jeer their Asian neighbours.”⁷⁴² Furthermore, this hostility did not completely dissipate when, at the end of the match, the Japanese team returned to the pitch carrying a banner that said “Thank China”. Commenting on the attitude of Chinese spectators, Liu opines that, “following the increased fervency of nationalism in recent years, any encounter between China and Japan in international competition becomes a venue for the Chinese angry young patriots to release their hatred.”⁷⁴³

The “increasing fervency of nationalism” that Liu makes reference to has been partly the result of the government’s promotion of “patriotism”, which has grown more pronounced since the events in 1989, but has also been due to the frequent publication of anti-Japanese stories in the media in recent years. As Shirk notes, “[e]very perceived slight by Japanese leaders, every revision of Japanese textbooks—as well as every misstep by Japanese students studying in China or Japanese visitors to China—is an opportunity for tabloid newspapers and Internet Web sites to attract audiences and whip up popular passions.”⁷⁴⁴ While the government’s heavy use of the victim narrative has resulted in a Chinese public that is receptive to such stories, it has also been the government’s gradual commercialisation of the media as well as a loosening on reporting restrictions that has enabled newspapers to publish these stories.⁷⁴⁵

Indeed, this new media environment is epitomised by the emergence of the “Global Times” newspaper (*huanqiu shibao*), whose strongly nationalistic editorial focus has seen it become China’s most popular newspaper.⁷⁴⁶

⁷⁴² Zhou (30 September 2007).

⁷⁴³ Liu (19 September 2007).

⁷⁴⁴ Shirk (2007: 156).

⁷⁴⁵ This commercialisation of the media came about through the government’s decision to reduce funding for media groups, thus forcing newspapers to attract readers in order to gain advertising revenue. The split between newsstand sales and advertising revenue is reported to be roughly 10%-90%. See Shirk (18 October 2007).

⁷⁴⁶ The Global Times is published by the *People’s Daily* media group and was initially published as a weekly periodical. However, its popularity has led to an increase in the frequency of its publication and

This new media environment has also coincided with the advent of the Internet in China. In addition to becoming the primary source of news for many people, the regulation of which is more difficult for the government to control,⁷⁴⁷ the Internet has opened up an alternative space, in the form of online forums, bulletin boards and chat rooms, that allows people both to disseminate and discuss such news.⁷⁴⁸ Moreover, the increasing popularity of nationalist content offline has also been reflected online. Consequently, Shirk notes that “[e]very reported outrage sparks excited discussions on Internet chat rooms.”⁷⁴⁹ With regard to anti-Japanese stories, this was demonstrated when, in September 2003, the Chinese media reported that the police were investigating a three-day orgy involving four hundred Japanese businessmen and approximately five hundred Chinese prostitutes that had taken place at a hotel in Zhuhai in Guangdong province.⁷⁵⁰ The release of this information provoked more than 7,000 comments being posted on several popular forums in the two days after the reports first ran, with the vast majority being highly critical of the actions of the Japanese businessmen as well as Japan.⁷⁵¹ Indeed, the public’s reaction was so strong that China’s Foreign Ministry took the unusual step of summoning a Japanese representative to express its outrage over the incident,⁷⁵² which it did by framing the

it is now published five times a week. Its focus is on foreign affairs, with stories on Taiwan, Japan or the United States often featuring prominently on the front page, alongside pictures of military hardware or combat graphics. See Shirk (18 October 2007).

⁷⁴⁷ News articles tend to be posted first and removed when considered too politically sensitive. In the interim, which may be as short as a couple of hours, the article can be copied and reposted in a number of forums, so that, though the original article may no longer be unavailable, people may still be able to access a copy.

⁷⁴⁸ Liu (2006: 145).

⁷⁴⁹ Shirk (2007: 156).

⁷⁵⁰ “Japanese Orgy Hurts Chinese Feelings” (30 September 2003).

⁷⁵¹ That the orgy took place on 16–18 September and coincided with the 72nd anniversary of the “Mukden Incident”, which, no doubt, served to heighten people’s sense of indignation.

⁷⁵² It was unusual, in that the orgy was not technically a state-to-state matter.

actions of the Japanese businessmen in terms of the victim narrative when claiming that they had “hurt the feelings of the Chinese people.”⁷⁵³

The Japanese “sex tour” scandal demonstrated not only that the Internet allows for the wider dissemination of news, thus keeping the public better informed but also that it provides a platform for the public to communicate its opinions about this news and, in so doing, can affect the actions of the government.⁷⁵⁴ Moreover, though the critical views expressed online can potentially impact on all areas of government policy, it seems that it has the greatest impact on the government’s Japan policy.⁷⁵⁵ A possible explanation for this is that the government’s repeated use of the victim narrative, by highlighting the past suffering of Chinese people, has worked to both stimulate and legitimate present grievances towards Japan and, in so doing, opened up the space, as well as providing the language, for people to challenge the policy on Japan.

Consequently, when dealing with Japan, the government is put in the position of representing the public’s will rather than that of “leading” the public, as is the case on most other issues. For He, this has led to a situation in which, “[i]n order to placate public anger and deflect anti-establishment challenges, the government has to maintain a hard-line policy towards Japan.”⁷⁵⁶ Mooney concurs, arguing that the Party leadership “fears that appearing weak-kneed vis-à-vis Japan will damage Party legitimacy.”⁷⁵⁷

⁷⁵³ “Japanese Orgy Hurts Chinese Feelings” (30 September 2003).

⁷⁵⁴ However, the extent of the public’s influence is difficult to gauge, given the opacity of the Chinese political system. Indeed, the possibility exists that the government uses the cover of public opinion when it feels that such actions are in its best interests and suppresses such opinion on other occasions. That said, Shirk claims that leaders do read what is posted online and this corresponds to the trend of greater responsiveness on the part of the government in the post-Mao period.

⁷⁵⁵ Examples are: the train project, the online petition and the new thinking on Japan.

⁷⁵⁶ He (2007: 11).

⁷⁵⁷ Mooney (4 April 2007).

The fears of the Party leadership over public opinion on relations with Japan have been deepened by an additional feature of the Internet: the increased capacity, both in terms of time and scale, to organise collective action. Consequently, it is now not only possible for people to exchange their opinions online but also to organise demonstrations offline. Indeed, this capacity was vital in the organising of the “anti-Japan” protests in April 2005. According to Liu, “[d]espite some official restrictions and prohibitions, the Chinese protesters were still able to make their way to the internet and disseminated a range of protest information extensively across the whole nation.”⁷⁵⁸ Such information was spread using a wide range of web-based tools, such as websites, blogs, bulletin boards, instant messages, e-mail as well as Short Message Service (SMS) on mobile phones. Moreover, for Shirk, the organisation of the “anti-Japan” protests was unprecedented in the history of the People’s Republic of China, in that it involved “decentralised, bottom-up mobilization with no visible organization or leadership.”⁷⁵⁹ That said, it was also the case that the Party leadership had indicated, most notably with the prominence given in the official media to the petition opposing Japan’s bid for PMUNSC, that displays of “patriotic action” against Japan would be tolerated, even if, according to Yardley, “the scale of the protests did seem to surprise the government.”⁷⁶⁰

Ending the “Anti-Japan” Demonstrations

The eventual outbreak of the “anti-Japan” demonstrations presented the Party leadership with a dilemma over when best to bring the protests to an end. Allowing the demonstrations to continue for too long could run the risk of bringing domestic

⁷⁵⁸ Liu (2006: 144).

⁷⁵⁹ Shirk (2007: 142). Contrary to this, Lam cites a “Beijing source close to the security establishment” claiming that the protests had been organised by “anti-Japan” NGOs. See Lam (26 April 2005).

⁷⁶⁰ Yardley (25 April 2005).

grievances to the fore, of which they were many, and so turn the protests against the CCP. Then again, attempting to bring demonstrations to an end too soon might also cause the protestors to turn on the government for suppressing their “patriotic actions”. Moreover, there existed historical precedents which suggested that both scenarios were real possibilities. With regard to the first scenario, there had been a number of demonstrations that had taken place throughout the course of the twentieth century in China which had initially started out protesting the actions of Japan before subsequently developing into protests against the government of the day. As for the second scenario, He notes that, “[n]o Chinese government in modern history, the late Qing, Republican, or Nationalist, succeeded in putting down patriotism; each time they tried, it incurred massive anti-government revolts.”⁷⁶¹

The government finally decided to bring all demonstrations to an end following the third successive weekend of protests. According to Zhao, the Party leadership was “concerned both about the risk of confrontation with a foreign power and that the public’s passions could turn against the government.”⁷⁶² Indeed, Shirk notes that, by the time of the government’s decision, large-scale protests directed against the government had already taken place. These included a riot between approximately 30,000 “townspeople” and the police over pollution from a local factory in southeast China, a strike by 10,000 workers at a Japanese-owned factory in Shenzhen over union representation, as well as a sit-in held by 2,000 or so retired military officers outside the PLA’s Beijing headquarters over the level of pensions. Although these single-issue protests have become relatively common in China over the past few years and are not, as such, directed against the central government, the timing of these

⁷⁶¹ He (2007: 19).

⁷⁶² Zhao (2005: 141).

protests added to the threat of instability.⁷⁶³ In addition, the make-up of the demonstrations was of concern to the Party leadership. While the first series of protests was largely made up of students, by the third week of demonstrations, people from other sections of society, including workers and businessmen, were also taking part.⁷⁶⁴ Of further concern were the purported calls circulating on the Internet for larger demonstrations to be held on the upcoming anniversaries of International Labour Day on 1 May and the May Fourth Movement, also officially designated Youth Day, on 4 May. Indeed, given the political symbolism of these anniversaries, particularly the patriotic anti-government association of the May Fourth Movement as well as the fact that the first week of May was an official holiday in the PRC, the concern was that these demonstrations would be directed against the CCP. Furthermore, in the event of these demonstrations going ahead, the 4 June anniversary would only be the following month and could add further momentum to any anti-government movement.

Beyond domestic considerations, Party leaders were also concerned with maintaining good relations with Japan. According to Lam, "Chinese leaders remained worried that repeated violent protests against Japan or boycotts of Japanese products would eventually drive Japanese businesspeople away."⁷⁶⁵ Moreover, Lam contends that the protests had already served their purpose by reducing the likelihood of Japan obtaining Permanent Membership of the UN Security Council.⁷⁶⁶

⁷⁶³ Shirk (2007: 175).

⁷⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 142.

⁷⁶⁵ Lam (26 April 2005).

⁷⁶⁶ According to Lam, the Party leaders are "dead-set" against Japan gaining PMUNSC, as it would effectively transform it into a "normal" country with a "normal" military. See Lam (26 April 2005).

17 April Commentary: Selection of Data

The 17 April commentary was selected following a number of searches that were conducted within the available categories in the *People's Daily* database.⁷⁶⁷ The time frame within which the search was carried out was a five-week period that started on 1 April 2005 and ended on 4 May 2005. Although a media blackout on the reporting of the demonstrations was in place from 6 April until 17 April,⁷⁶⁸ I chose to begin the search period on 1 April 2005 so as to include any significant articles on stability that, though they may not have directly mentioned the protests, may have been intended to signify the need for them to be brought to an end. As it was, there were only six articles published in this period that contained stability in both the headline and as a keyword and these were generally short articles that were concerned with economic issues.⁷⁶⁹ As for the selection of the end date of 4 May, this was chosen because, as

⁷⁶⁷ As detailed in Chapter two, these categories are: date (*riqi*); headline (*biaoti*); page number (*banci*); edition (*banming*); author (*zuozhe*); special column (*zhuanlan*); text (*zhengwen*).

⁷⁶⁸ According to a report in the *South China Morning Post*, the news blackout was imposed on 6 April through an "Eight-Point Circular" from the Party's Central Propaganda Department that attempted to reduce the level of public antagonism towards Japan. See Staff Reporter (6 April 2005).

⁷⁶⁹ However, two articles concerned with stability were published in *People's Daily Online* (*Renmin Wang*) during this period (note: they were not available on the database as this lists articles only published in the *People's Daily* newspaper). The first article, entitled "Think About the Overall Situation, Safeguard Stability", was written under the name of Wei Minyan and published on 14 April. In addition to calling for greater focus on reform and opening up, the article followed the more usual government line that the textbook issue was being caused "right-wing militarists" line. The article also referred to the "anti-Japan" protests, albeit only once through the expression "spontaneous protests" (*zifa de kangyi*), while stability only featured significantly in the final paragraph, in which it was mentioned six times, with its usage merely emphasising its importance in terms of economic development and building a "well-off society". The second article, entitled "Stability is Most Precious", was attributed to Yi Zhi and was published on 15 April, albeit it was also reposted on 16 and 17 April. This article differed from the previous one in that it did not directly address the issue of the demonstrations but rather implicated them within the wider context of civil strife. In this, the article used the example of Yugoslavia, which it claimed was economically successful in 1980s before it descended into chaos in the 1990s following the outbreak of conflict in the 1990s, to call for stability, stating that it would allow for China's "miraculous" economic development to continue and so benefit "all parts of the country". The article also pointed out that, like the issue of Japan's textbooks, China would have to deal with challenges in the future but that it should rely on the "Party and government's diplomatic expertise" to solve them whilst people should carry out their patriotic duty by studying hard, being productive and maintaining stability. Interestingly, the rhetorical style of these articles was very different to those that later appeared in the print versions of the *People's Daily*, in that they were less formulaic in their use of language while also more populist in their argumentation. That said, they were consistent in adopting the "softly-softly" approach that was being employed at the time to deal with the demonstrations. See Wei Minyan (14 April 2005), Yi Zhi (15 April 2005).

pointed out above, there had been attempts to organise larger demonstrations on this politically significant date and so, with the passing of this date without incident, it seemed to mark the point at which government had (re)gained control of situation offline, if not necessarily online. As with the searches that were used to select the articles in the previous chapters, the intention of the searches was to begin with the broadest possible search before adding more specific criteria that would allow for the number of hits to be reduced to the point where the most suitable articles could be selected. However, as made clear throughout the thesis, the selection of an article was not based solely on the ordered results of the *People's Daily* database search but was also dependent on other variables, such as the political significance of the article as well as the relevance of its content to the stability discourse. Moreover, the relative weighting of these variables was not subject to statistical calculation but rather, in keeping with the discourse-historical approach, was determined by the judgement of the analyst.

The first search to be conducted was a keyword search for the term “stability”. From a total of 4,010 articles that were published during the selected period, 447 articles featured this keyword. The first result was a staff commentary that was published on 29 April entitled “Keep in Mind Everything We Cannot Accomplish without Stability”, in which “stability” was mentioned a total of 32 times.⁷⁷⁰ Moreover, according to the *People's Daily* ratings system, this article had a relevancy rating of 100%. The second article on the list was a signed commentary by Zhong Xuanli, entitled “Actively Produce Things in Favour of Social Stability”, that was published

⁷⁷⁰ Benbao Pinglunyuanyuan (29 April 2005).

on 23 April.⁷⁷¹ This article, which had a relevancy score of 95%, also mentioned “stability” 32 times. The third most highly ranked article, with a rating of 92%, was the 17 April commentary, entitled “From a Harmonious Society See Stability”, which was signed using the penname “He Zhenhua”.⁷⁷² Moreover, in comparison to the first two articles, stability was used a total of 25 times throughout the article. The fourth article on the list was an editorial from the *Global Times*, which was republished the following day in the *People’s Daily* on 21 April, entitled “Nothing Can Be Done without Stability”.⁷⁷³ This article, which had a relevancy rating of 85%, mentioned stability a total of 18 times. The fifth article on the list was an editorial that had originally been published in *Guangming Daily* (*guangming ribao*) on 27 April but, as with the previous article, was reprinted the following day in the *People’s Daily*. This article, entitled “Doubly Taking the Interests of the Whole into Account”, only mentioned stability 10 times and had a relevancy rating of 74%.⁷⁷⁴

The second search to be conducted added the additional criterion of searching for articles that contained the term “stability” in the headline. As pointed out in earlier chapters, making use of this criterion is based on the understanding that the headline generally indicates the most important topic to be addressed in the article.⁷⁷⁵ However, though my research suggests that the inclusion of stability in the headline does not always ensure that the concept is the central focus of the article, its absence from the headline does indicate that the concept will not feature prominently enough to make

⁷⁷¹ Zhong Xuanli (23 April 2005). As pointed out in the previous chapter, “Zhong Xuanli” is a pen name for the CCP Propaganda Theory Bureau.

⁷⁷² He Zhenhua (17 April 2005). He Zhenhua is also a pen name for a group of commentators. Indeed, the 17 April commentary was one of a series of four articles that were published between 17 April and 23 April on different aspects of the building a socialist harmonious society concept. Moreover, the name is a homonym that literally means “how China can be revitalized”. My gratitude to Professor Zheng for providing this information.

⁷⁷³ Huanqiu Shibao Pinglunyan (21 April 2005).

⁷⁷⁴ *Guangming Ribao* Pinglunyan (27 April 2005).

⁷⁷⁵ van Dijk (1985: 69).

intensive analysis worthwhile. Of the twenty-two articles that featured “stability” both as a keyword and in the headline, the first four results were the same as the first search while the fifth article on the list was a staff commentary, entitled “Promote the Healthy Stable Development of Sino-Japanese Relations as a Guiding Principle”, that was published on 30 April 2005.⁷⁷⁶ This commentary had a relevancy rating of 71% and mentioned stability a total of 13 times.

The final search to be conducted was to restrict the headline and keyword search to include only those editorials and commentaries published on the first page of the *People's Daily*. As acknowledged at earlier points in the thesis, though these articles were not necessarily more influential than those published on other pages of the newspaper, notwithstanding the difficulty in measuring such an effect, their placement on the first page did signify that they were more likely to represent the authority of the top leadership of the CCP.⁷⁷⁷ Of the six articles to be returned in the search results for this time period, the first article, with a relevancy rating of 100%, was the 17 April commentary. The second result was also a commentary, entitled “Consciously Handle Matters in Accordance with the Law, Uphold a Stable Overall Situation”, that was published on 22 April and only mentioned a total of eight times while the remaining four articles were short items that were related to Party announcements.⁷⁷⁸

However, the selection of the 17 April commentary for intensive analysis was also based on the political significance of its publication. As noted above, a media blackout on the reporting of the protests had been in place since 6 April; however, the publication of this commentary constituted the first attempt by the CCP leadership to

⁷⁷⁶ Benbao Pinglunyuanyuan (30 April 2005).

⁷⁷⁷ Wu (1994).

⁷⁷⁸ Xinhua Pinglunyuanyuan (22 April 2005).

bring to an end the “anti-Japan” demonstrations. As Shirk points out, “[a]fter three weeks of protests, the Communist Party finally sent a clear signal that it was time to stop...when the *People’s Daily* published a front-page official commentary that...urged young people to “cherish social stability”.”⁷⁷⁹ Moreover, the significance of the commentary was also reflected in the fact that it was posted on a number of forums and bulletin boards as well as the websites of local governments.⁷⁸⁰ Indeed, a simple and, by no means “scientific” search for this article—putting the title of the article in quotation marks—on the localised Google search engine in China (www.google.cn) brought up a total of 7,080 hits while the same search on the Baidu search engine (www.baidu.cn) produced a total of 8,920 hits. By comparison, a similar search for the 23 April commentary by Zhong Xuanli yielded only 47 results on Google and 748 results on Baidu while the 29 April commentary scored 252 hits on Google and 37 hits on Baidu.⁷⁸¹

A further consideration influencing the selection of the 17 April commentary was that it elaborated the relationship between building a socialist harmonious society and stability. As such, it was also hoped that analysing this article would provide insights into how stability was being conceptualised in relation to the latest ideological programme being promulgated by the CCP leadership. That said, the arguments being

⁷⁷⁹ Shirk (2007: 143).

⁷⁸⁰ Checking the popular Sino-Japanese board in the “Strong Country Forum” (*qiangguo luntan*) during this period (<http://bbs.people.com.cn/boardList.do?action=postList&boardId=13>), which Liu contends “has become one of the most dramatic and controversial virtual political forums in China”, the 17 April commentary was posted in full, with the title of the post highlighted in red. Even allowing for the fact that the forum is run by the *People’s Daily* group and, according to Brady, has “at least six online censors and a manager to monitor, censor and guide discussions online”, the 17 April commentary drew a high number of responses, with an even spread between those who expressed agreement with the need for stability and those who rejected such an argument. See Liu (2006: 145), Brady (2006: 68).

⁷⁸¹ An additional search on the articles concerned with stability that were published on 14 and 15 April showed that the former article produced a total of 330 hits on Google and 29 hits on Baidu while the latter article produced 11,600 results on Google but only 9 results on Baidu. However, the 11,600 results from Google is somewhat misleading, as only 57 items are listed in total.

put forward in other prominent editorials and commentaries published during the selected time period are also interrogated in the “co-textual analysis” section of this chapter.

17 April Commentary: Textual Analysis⁷⁸²

“From Building a Harmonious Society See Stability”

As explained in chapter two, it is important to begin a textual analysis with the headline, as it indicates the most important topic of the article. In the case of the 17 April commentary, the headline immediately established a relationship of equivalence between the concepts of “building a harmonious society” and “stability”. Moreover, this relationship differed from those established in the headlines of the articles analysed in the previous chapters, in that the concept of “building a harmonious society” replaced that of the “overall situation”.⁷⁸³ Although both terms implicated the effects of protesting upon China, the “overall situation” did so more by emphasising the threat to China’s present whereas “building a harmonious society” projected it onto the nation’s future. Furthermore, the teleological appeal of the latter term may have been intended to generate greater consensus over the need to stop protesting, in that it shifted the readers’ focus away from the comparative question of whether the protests actually threatened the “overall situation” onto the speculative one concerning China’s future development and, in so doing, worked to minimise the current grievances by placing them in a wider context.⁷⁸⁴ In addition, the use of the shortened “harmonious society” over the official formulation of “socialist harmonious society”, although not necessarily an intentional rhetorical move, reduced the political content of the headline by pairing the more neutral concepts of harmony and stability.

⁷⁸² As pointed out in the previous chapters, the intention has not been to necessarily produce the most fluent English translation but rather one that closely conveys the meaning and structure of the Chinese original.

⁷⁸³ The exception to this is, of course, the 4 June 1990 editorial. However, its headline, “stability prevails over everything”, did not construct a relationship of equivalence with stability.

⁷⁸⁴ Of course, the use of the “overall situation” in the previous headlines also attempted to achieve a similar rhetorical effect.

In its function as an “advance organiser”, the headline indicated that the macrostructure (content) of the 17 April commentary would be concerned with elaborating the relationship between building a (socialist) harmonious society and stability. Moreover, despite the fact that the publication of the commentary constituted the first move on the part of the government to bring the “anti-Japan” demonstrations to an end, the commentary did not acknowledge, either directly or by clear implicature, the “anti-Japan” demonstrations nor did it address the subject of Sino-Japanese relations. Rather, it was the commentary’s concern with stability, which could also be read as “instability”, as well as the timing of its publication and the prominence accorded to it on the front page of the *People’s Daily*, which indicated that it had been published in response to the ongoing protests. And while this lack of overt reference to the demonstrations can be partly explained by the fact that the government-imposed news blackout on the reporting of the protests still remained in place, for Shirk, it also reflected the government’s “soft touch” in dealing with these protests.⁷⁸⁵ Indeed, though this approach stood in contradistinction to those employed in response to the early protests in 1989 as well as the *Falun Gong* demonstrations in 1999, it was similar to that used during the 1985 “anti-Japan” demonstrations.

As for the superstructure (construction) of the 17 April commentary, the first paragraph began by setting out the concept of the socialist harmonious society in greater detail before the second paragraph emphasised the importance of stability in building such a society. The historical importance of stability in relation to the achievements of the reform and opening up period was recounted in the third paragraph while the fourth paragraph suggested that China was now entering a period

⁷⁸⁵ Shirk draws parallels with the government’s handling of the “anti-Japan” demonstrations held in September 1985. See Shirk (2007: 161).

in which such achievements would be challenged. In the fifth paragraph, law and order were proposed as the solutions needed to overcome such challenges and realise social harmony while the final paragraph focused on the role to be played by Chinese citizens in contributing to this goal.

(¹)The Party Central Committee proposed building a socialist harmonious society and it enjoys the support of the Party and the people. (²)In February of this year, Comrade Hu Jintao delivered an important speech on the major significance of building a socialist harmonious society that systematically and comprehensively elaborated its basic features and important principles as well as the primary tasks needed to be done. (³)If we want to build a socialist harmonious society, it should be a society featuring democracy and the rule of law, fairness and justice, sincerity and trustworthiness, amity and vitality, stability and orderliness, and harmony between mankind and nature. (⁴)Comprehensively and accurately understanding the fundamental characteristics and important principles of a harmonious society, an important point then is having a full understanding of the important significance of maintaining stability and order and safeguarding social stability. (⁵)In practice, people realise more and more deeply that to build a harmonious society, you must safeguard social stability.

The first paragraph introduced the concept of building a socialist harmonious society by employing the familiar *People's Daily* rhetorical device of claiming broad support for a Party slogan while, at the same time, directing the reader to support it.

Indeed, at this time, building a socialist harmonious society constituted a new ideological innovation and, as such, the rhetorical device, as well as the commentary in general, could be understood as part of a broader campaign by the CCP to popularise the concept. Although the origin of this concept could be traced back to the work report delivered by Jiang Zemin at the 16th Party Congress in 2002 which, in calling for the development of a “well-off society in an all-round way” (*qianmian jianshe xiaokang shehui*), set the realisation of a “more harmonious society” as one of its major goals, it emerged in its present form at the Fourth Plenum of the 16th Party Central Committee in September 2004 when the resolution on “Decisions of the CCP Central Committee on Enhancing the Party's Ability To Govern”, listed building a

socialist harmonious society as one of the main tasks to be undertaken in strengthening the Party's governing capacity.⁷⁸⁶ However, according to Po, it was only after a speech by Hu Jintao in February when opening a "special-topic" seminar on building a socialist harmonious society for "provincial and ministerial principal leading cadres", referenced in the second sentence, that the concept "began to gain momentum."⁷⁸⁷

In setting the teleological goal of building a socialist harmonious society, General Secretary Hu stated in this February speech that "to realize social harmony and build a happy society has always been a social ideal which mankind has assiduously sought and is also a social ideal which Marxist political parties, including the CCP, have made unremitting efforts to seek."⁷⁸⁸ However, though social harmony has always been the (very) long-term objective of Marxist political parties, it had previously been conceptualised in terms of being achieved through communism rather than as an end in itself. Indeed, Miller makes the point that, under Mao, it was not "social harmony" that was pursued but rather, "class struggle" that was waged in order to "continue the revolution under the proletarian dictatorship".⁷⁸⁹ Miller also notes that, despite its rejection of "class struggle" in favour of reform and opening up, "at no point in the Deng era did authoritative Party statements endorse a "harmonious society" as the

⁷⁸⁶ "A Basic Task of Building Socialism with Chinese Characteristics—Penetratingly Understanding the Momentous Significance of Building a Socialist Harmonious Society" (1 March 2005).

⁷⁸⁷ Po (2006: 24).

⁷⁸⁸ "Hu Jintao Emphasizes the Necessity of Gaining a Thorough Understanding of the Great Importance of Building a Socialist Harmonious Society and Earnestly Doing a Good Job in Vigorously Promoting Social Harmony and Unity, at the Opening Session of a Seminar for Provincial and Ministerial Principal Leading Cadres on the Special Topic of Increasing the Ability to Build a Socialist Harmonious Society; Wen Jiabao, Wu Guanzheng and Li Changchun Attend, and Zeng Qinghong Presides over the Opening Session" (19 February 2005).

⁷⁸⁹ Miller (2007: 5–6).

overarching goal of the Party.”⁷⁹⁰ Rather the goal of realising social harmony appeared to be one that, on a rhetorical level at least, drew more on the Confucian concept of harmony (*datong*).⁷⁹¹ That said, Miller makes the point that, “apart from the shared overarching goal, there seems little in common between the values and concepts of traditional Confucianism and those of “socialist harmonious society.”⁷⁹² While this is correct in a literal sense, in that building a socialist harmonious society does not give any space over to the practicing of traditional rituals such as filial piety, the formulation of this new concept did appear to “recontextualise” elements of Confucian thought.⁷⁹³ Indeed, Lam states that, “[a]ccording to party insiders, the new-found stress on harmony has grown out of a “neo-Confucianist” strain of thinking within the Hu-Wen leadership.”⁷⁹⁴ Moreover, the promulgation of building a socialist harmonious society was striking for the fact that the values and concepts that were put forward in the third sentence did not appear to have much in common with those of a communist society either. Indeed, for Holbig, these values and concepts, such as democracy, rule of law and justice, go “far beyond the “paternalist” mode of legitimisation in many former Soviet-type societies...[and] approach more “liberal” governance styles in modern industrial societies.”⁷⁹⁵ Consequently, the introduction of

⁷⁹⁰ Miller (2007: 6). Indeed, Barmé points out that, “[r]ather than ushering in a socialist ideal in some distant future, Deng’s formula aimed at creating a wealthy and strong nation—a long cherished hope dating from the 19th century—in the here and now.” See Barmé (21 November 2006).

⁷⁹¹ According to Chen, this concept has long been “one of the core aspirations of Chinese politics.” Barmé also notes that, in traditional thought, “*xiaokang* was an imagined preliminary to the great harmony.” See Chen (2006: 154), Barmé (21 November 2006).

⁷⁹² Miller (2007: 8).

⁷⁹³ For instance, Cabestan notes that the concepts of fairness (*gongping*) and justice (*zhengyi*), both listed in the third sentence, were “two notions that very much existed in imperial China.” Consequently, their reappearance under the banner of building a socialist harmonious society is consistent with Wodak’s concept of recontextualisation, which holds that “[a]rguments, topics, narratives, events, appraisals, *topoi*, etc. change when transmitted from generation to generation, from one genre to another, from one public space to a different sphere and so on.” See Cabestan (2005: 48), Wodak (2006: 132).

⁷⁹⁴ Lam (2004: 14 October 2004).

⁷⁹⁵ Holbig (2006: 28). However, Miller disputes such an interpretation, albeit indirectly, by comparing the changes in the CCP to those which were introduced during Khrushchev’s leadership of the CPSU. See Miller (2007)

building a socialist harmonious society could be understood as significant on account of the fact that it represented a further attempt by the CCP to make the transition from a “revolutionary” party (*gemingdang*) to that of a “ruling” party (*zhizhengdang*).

While the first three sentences of the paragraph introduced the concept of building a socialist harmonious society, the fourth sentence built on its relationship with stability that was initially established in the commentary’s headline. Employing the *topos of stability*, this sentence proposed that the aspirational goal of building a socialist harmonious society was conditional on the maintenance of stability, with the implied conclusion that instability would prevent its realisation. Moreover, the implicature of this *topos*, as a “context-dependent linguistic realization”, was that the “anti-Japan” protests could cause such instability. The persuasiveness of this conditional proposition was also heightened by the use of epistemic modality. Indeed, though this modality was commonly employed in the commentaries and editorials of the *People’s Daily*, it carried greater weight in the 17 April commentary on account of the fact that the concept of building a socialist harmonious society had not yet been widely disseminated and so placed the commentary in a position of authority both to educate and instruct the reader to accept its claims. The truthfulness of the link between building a socialist harmonious society and stability was re-emphasised in the fifth sentence through the claim that it had been “realized” by “people”. Indeed, the references to “understanding” and “practice” in the final two sentences worked to support this claim, as well as negate possible criticisms, by suggesting that such truthfulness could only be reached through knowledge and experience of building a socialist harmonious society. The first paragraph ended with the frequently employed

use of the deontic modal verb “must” to implicitly obligate people to “safeguard” stability.

(1) Stability is the prerequisite and foundation of harmony. (2) To push towards the construction of a harmonious society, we must maintain social peace, stability, and order. (3) Without stability, we cannot even begin to discuss the building of a socialist harmonious society. (4) Only if we have stability are we then able to develop the economy and achieve social harmony. (5) Building a harmonious society needs work and maintaining stability and order and safeguarding social stability are the most important tasks.

The short second paragraph continued the theme of the first paragraph by further emphasising the importance of the relationship between building a socialist harmonious society and stability. Indeed, the opening sentence was a declarative statement that extended the conditional proposition put forward at the end of the first paragraph by presenting stability as the necessary condition of building a socialist harmonious society. In this, the commentary employed the same rhetorical formulation that had been used in the articles from the previous chapters, except that, where those articles justified the maintenance of stability solely in terms of reform and development, the 17 April commentary appealed to the new ideological construction of a harmonious society. Despite this, the rhetorical formulation was consistent in its presentation of stability in a nominalised form that allowed for its definition to remain vague.

This nominalised form of stability also allowed for the second paragraph to discursively construct the concept’s positive value. Consequently, the middle three sentences in the paragraph, while making further use of the *topos of stability* in a conditional proposition structure, presented the relationship between stability and building a socialist harmonious society in terms of progressive movement from one

stage to another. In the second sentence, this was achieved through the use of the verb “push towards” (推进). The use of the metaphor “discuss” (谈起) in the third sentence had the effect of suggesting that stability constituted the pre-existing condition for such action to take place. The fourth sentence then used the verbs “develop” (发展) and “achieve” (达到) in extending the conditional relationship between stability and building a socialist harmonious society to include the economy and, in so doing, suggested a linear progression from stability to economic development and onto a socialist harmonious society. The final sentence book-ended the second paragraph with a further declarative statement that iterated its central theme.

(1) Maintaining social stability is the overall situation; this is an extremely important experience of our country's modernization and development. (2) In the past twenty years of reform and opening up, our country's economy has consistently maintained rapid and healthy development, our comprehensive national power has notably strengthened, people's lives have gradually improved, enterprises are thriving and full of vitality, and our international prestige is continuously rising. (3) This is all closely related to the situation of our maintaining unity and stability. (4) We should truly cherish this hard-earned, very good situation. (5) Comrade Deng Xiaoping once pointed out: "the problem that China has is that the need for stability prevails over everything. In an environment without stability, nothing can be accomplished, and even the results which have been achieved can be lost." (6) This has not only been fully demonstrated by the putting into practice of reform and opening up and modernization construction, but is also the shared conclusion that has been reached by the cadres and the masses from experience and training; it is the common aspiration of the people.

Having rhetorically established the importance of stability in relation to the building of a socialist harmonious society, the third paragraph moved on to justify its importance by highlighting the achievements of the reform and opening up period. In effect, the commentary was using these achievements to legitimate its claim of maintaining stability. Consequently, the selectively chosen achievements, which further developed the impression of progress that had been a discursive feature of the second paragraph with terms such as “continuously rising”, “gradually improving”

and “notably strengthened”, were solely attributed to the condition of stability. The connection between stability and reform and opening up was put forward in the first sentence and then iterated in the third and sixth sentences. Moreover, each of these sentences employed the same rhetorical strategy of appealing to objective circumstances while offering a subjective interpretation. In the first sentence, this was achieved with the claim that the link between stability and the “overall situation” was based on the “experience” of the reform and opening up period. According to van Leeuwen and Wodak’s typology of legitimation strategies detailed in chapter two, this claim constituted a form of instrumental rationalisation, in that the “means” of maintaining stability were justified by the “results” of the reform and opening up period, as expressed through the “moralized activity” of “experience”.⁷⁹⁶ In contrast, the third sentence followed earlier instances in the text by using the epistemic modal verb “is” to suggest the truthfulness of its claims. In terms of legitimation strategies, this type of modality relied on the authority of the commentary as well as that of the *People’s Daily* to persuade the reader of the link between stability and reform and opening up. The final sentence of the paragraph, in restating this link once more, combined the legitimation strategies employed in the first and third sentence by invoking the authority of “cadres” and “the masses” to endorse its appeal to the “moralized activity” of “practice”. Indeed, the use of terms, such as “demonstrated”, “practice”, “reached”, “experience” and “training”, all worked to discursively emphasise the domain of empirical observation while, at the same time, obscuring the political act of interpreting these observations. Moreover, the use of these terms also appeared to index the slogan “practice is the sole criterion of truth” (*shijian shi*

⁷⁹⁶ van Leeuwen and Wodak define “moralized activities” as those which are “represented by means of abstract terms that distil from them a quality that triggers reference to positive or negative values, to ‘moral concepts’.” In the case of “experience”, it linked into a discourse of moral values that presented the economic reform programme only in positive terms. See van Leeuwen and Wodak (1999: 105).

jianyan zhenli de weiyi biao zhun) that is most closely associated with Deng Xiaoping and had been one of key principles in guiding the economic reform programme.⁷⁹⁷

The authority of Deng was also explicitly invoked in the fifth sentence with a direct quotation that served to reinforce the importance of maintaining stability. Although the first part of this quotation had been employed, either directly or indirectly, in each of the articles analysed in the previous chapters, the 17 April commentary was alone in including the second part of this quotation. The significance of this inclusion was that, in contrast to the paragraph's emphasis on the positive value of stability, it sought to legitimate stability by appealing to the negative consequences of instability. Furthermore, this rhetorical move had the effect of opening up the space for the final sentence of the paragraph to reassert the positive value of stability and, in so doing, build consensus around the proposition that only a Party-led future reality could maintain stability.

(1) Safeguarding social stability is a necessary requirement for building a socialist harmonious society. (2) Presently, our international and domestic environment is very complicated, as we face great opportunities and encounter serious challenges. (3) By uniting as one to maintain stability, only then do we have the capacity to seize opportunities, overcome difficulties and respond to challenges. (4) Our country's modernization construction correctly lies in a period of important strategic opportunity; by ensuring stability, we have the ability to seize and use well this period of strategic opportunity to realise economic development and social harmony. (5) By ensuring stability, we have the ability to resolve contradictions and to better balance morale, unify all the forces which are capable of being unified and mobilize all positive elements. (6) By ensuring stability, we have the ability to properly solve the various kinds of problems we face and produce a good internal and external environment for the development of the economy and society. (7) Facing the overall situation of modernization and development, we must cherish and safeguard social stability like we cherish our own eyes.

⁷⁹⁷ Schoenhals (1991).

This emphasis on a Party-led future reality at the end of the third paragraph served as the pretext for the reintroduction of the building a socialist harmonious society concept at the start of the fourth paragraph. Moreover, the restatement of the link between this concept and stability signified that the focus of the commentary would now shift away from legitimating stability in terms of the past experience of reform and opening up and onto the future challenge of building a socialist harmonious society. In this, the commentary employed the rhetorical strategy of appealing to future effects in order to justify the present situation. Indeed, the slogan of building a socialist harmonious society, though rhetorically oriented towards the teleological goal of social harmony, can also be understood as an acknowledgement by the CCP that China did not currently have social harmony, nor was it likely to, until it had reached an as-yet undefined level of development at a non-specified point in the future. Indeed, for Holbig, the Party's new concept was "a strategic attempt of the new leadership to rationally resolve the root causes of growing social contradictions which are increasingly perceived as a risk to social stability and to the political legitimacy of CCP rule."⁷⁹⁸ Such "contradictions" included the widening income gap between the rich and poor as well as the rural and urban areas, unemployment, environmental concerns, such as pollution and over-use of natural resources, corruption and land requisition.⁷⁹⁹ However, though the goal of building a socialist harmonious society constituted an acknowledgement of these problems, it did not link them to the Party's leadership of the country but rather presented such problems as structural changes that were due to the current stage of the country's "modernisation construction". Indeed, by placing these problems within the context of building a socialist harmonious society, the Party was attempting to strengthen its leadership

⁷⁹⁸ Holbig (2006: 28).

⁷⁹⁹ Po (2006: 24).

authority by positioning itself as the “expert” that both understood these problems and understood how best to solve them. In terms of stability, this rhetorical move worked to strengthen the Party’s claim that it was the necessary condition upon which building a socialist harmonious society was dependent.

This link between stability and building a socialist harmonious society was then emphasised in the fourth paragraph through a series of conditional propositions. Moreover, this paragraph, in keeping with the government’s policy of “positive propaganda” (*zhengmian xuanchuan*),⁸⁰⁰ worked to enhance the legitimating effect of stability by emphasising its positive value. In this, the condition of stability was presented in terms of “resolving contradictions”, “solving problems”, “seizing opportunities”, “overcoming difficulties” and “responding to challenges”. However, in the same way that use of the terms such as “difficulties”, “challenges” and “opportunities” in relation to the building of a socialist harmonious society constituted an acknowledgement of the problems that were present in Chinese society, so it was that this emphasis on the positive value of stability also suggested, albeit by implication, the negative consequence of not having stability and, in so doing, worked to further strengthen the argument in favour of stability and the continued rule of the CCP.

The fourth paragraph, in focusing on the importance of stability in building a socialist harmonious society, appeared to be concerned with the future direction of Chinese society. However, its central theme could also be understood as addressing, albeit through implicature, the issue of the “anti-Japan” demonstrations. Indeed, the

⁸⁰⁰ Brady (2002: 569).

reference in the second sentence to the “presently” “complicated” “international and domestic environment” seemed to be an indirect reference to these protests.

Consequently, in relation to the demonstrations, the use of stability in the fourth paragraph seemed to suggest that the protests were causing instability, with the implication that, if continued, they could impact upon the country’s development.

Moreover, by appealing to the possible impact of the protests, the paragraph worked to set the grievances of the protestors within the larger context of development and, in so doing, minimise these grievances while, at the same time, attempting to assert the leadership of the CCP in dealing with the issue of Japan.

(1) In safeguarding social stability and realising social harmony, an important issue is handling the problems that we face in accordance with law and order. (2) Ruling the country in accordance with the law is a statement that everyone supports. (3) This then means that we must perfect the socialist legal system with the important intention of fully developing the rule of law by promoting, realising and guaranteeing all-round social harmony. (4) Social development is always likely to face contradictions and problems but also always advances through the continuous solving of these contradictions and problems. (5) In today’s very unstable world, we are likely to have all types of friction and problems; domestic reform and development is not likely to be plain sailing, and we are sure to have all kinds of difficulties. (6) In resolving these contradictions and problems, we can only be calm and rational and proceed according to law and order.

Having elaborated why stability needed to be maintained in the fourth paragraph, the fifth paragraph moved on to explain how it could be maintained. In this, the commentary proposed that China should be ruled “in accordance with the law” (*yifa zhiguo*). According to Zheng, this concept, which can also be referred to by the term “rule by law”,⁸⁰¹ holds that “a country...[is] governed not by leaders’ personal

⁸⁰¹ There is some disagreement over whether the phrase “ruling the country in accordance with the law” (依法治国) should be translated as “rule by law” or “rule of law”. Whereas Zheng and Cabestan, amongst others, both opt for the former translation, Peerenboom contends that the wording of the phrase implies that the government is constrained by the law and, as a result, is “more conducive to rule of law.” However, I have chosen to use the former translation on the grounds that the alternative phrase “*fazhi*” (法治) is more commonly interpreted as “rule of law”. Indeed, it is this term which is

authority, but by institutional authority.”⁸⁰² In effect, the “rule by law” concept connotes an instrumentalist view of the law, in which the state uses the law as an “instrument” with which to exercise its authority.⁸⁰³ Moreover, it can be distinguished from the concept of the “rule of law” on the grounds that, in a system governed by the “rule by law”, the authority of the state is not necessarily bound by the constraints of the law. Consequently, though the “rule by law” system is perceived to be an advance on that of “rule by men” (*renzhi*) and, indeed, since 1979, China has increasingly moved towards this system of governance,⁸⁰⁴ its promotion in relation to the building of a socialist harmonious society did not signify that the CCP was intending to reduce its authority but more that it was attempting to regularise it. Indeed, for Cabestan, the Party’s promotion of the “rule by law” concept is “aimed both at enhancing the regime’s political legitimacy and at stabilizing society and relations between state and society by opening new avenues for the presumably more reliable settlement of disputes.”⁸⁰⁵ Consequently, where the building a socialist harmonious society concept acknowledged the social problems that had resulted from the programme of reform and opening up, albeit in the guise of promulgating the aspirational goal of a harmonious future, and where the concept of stability was put forward as the sole condition needed to overcome these problems, albeit through using the implicit threat of instability, the concept of “rule by law” was being proposed as the means by which

used in both the first paragraph and the third sentence of this paragraph in relation to the building of a socialist harmonious society. See Zheng (2000), Cabestan (2005), Peerenboom (2002: 64–65).

⁸⁰² Zheng (2000: 142).

⁸⁰³ Peerenboom (2002: 8).

⁸⁰⁴ During the period under the leadership of Mao, China was generally classified as a “rule by men” system. Since then, the legal system has been increasingly developed, particularly following China’s entry into the World Trade Organisation (WTO). As to whether it should be classified as “rule by law” or “rule of law” system, the majority of academic literature on this subject tends towards classifying China’s system as “rule by law”. An additional point in relation to the reappearance (and recontextualisation) of Confucian ideals has been the recent introduction of “rule by virtue” (*dezhi*). According to Zheng and Lai, this concept holds that “a ruler has to be educated in Confucian virtues before he can be a legitimate ruler of the country and people” and is intended to complement the goal of the “rule of law”. See Zheng (2000: 141–144), Cabestan (2005: 44), Peerenboom (2002: 237), Zheng and Lai (16 March 2001).

⁸⁰⁵ Cabestan (2005: 48).

these problems would be solved, thus ensuring stability and so enabling China to achieve its goal of social harmony.

This emphasis on the “rule by law” concept was reflected in its usage throughout the fifth paragraph. Consequently, the first sentence stated that it was necessary to “handle” problems “in accordance with law and order” while the fourth sentence claimed that development could only move forward by “continuously” solving such “contradictions” and “problems”. The fifth sentence iterated the proposition that economic development produced social problems before the final sentence emphasised the role of law and order in “resolving” these problems.

However, though the discussion of “rule by law” in the fifth paragraph appeared to refer to the wider issue of social grievances, it could also be understood as referring to the “anti-Japan” protests. This was because these protests had not been legal, in that, though they may have received unofficial encouragement, they had not, at least in the major urban areas, gained the necessary official permits to allow the staging of demonstrations. Consequently, by making this implicature, the 17 April commentary provided a further indication that its publication was intended to bring an end to the “anti-Japan” protests before the demonstrations that had been planned for 1 May and 4 May anniversaries could take place. Moreover, the emphasis on legality suggested that those taking part in future demonstrations, unlike those up to this point, may be subject to legal prosecution.⁸⁰⁶

(1) Harmony and stability is in accordance with the fundamental interests of the nation and the people; to promote harmony and safeguard stability is every citizen's

⁸⁰⁶ As it turned out, arrests were later made in relation to the demonstration that took place in Shanghai. On 26 April, sixteen “youths” were “formally arrested” while a further twenty people were “temporarily jailed”. See Cody (26 April 2005).

responsibility. ⁽²⁾ *We all hope to live in a harmonious and stable society; we all hope the nation becomes rich and powerful as quickly as possible and that people become well-off.* ⁽³⁾ *We all hope to smoothly realise the grand goals of modernization and development.* ⁽⁴⁾ *So, everyone should do their duty to the utmost for harmony and stability and exert themselves to that end.* ⁽⁵⁾ *So long as we are all united, with everyone cooperating and acting in concert with each other and have unity and stability, then there are no problems that we cannot overcome.* ⁽⁶⁾ *We believe that an even richer, more powerful, more democratic and more civilized China will inevitably stand towering like a giant in the forest of the world's nations.*

The final paragraph of the 17 April commentary filled out the concept of building a socialist harmonious society by enlisting the participation of the Chinese people in achieving this goal. Consequently, the opening sentence of the paragraph stated that the safeguarding of stability and the promotion of harmony were the “responsibility” of “citizens”. Rhetorically, this relationship was achieved by the linking of the two declarative statements, which, for Fairclough, has the effect of constructing a “non-dialogical divide between those who are making all the assertions and those they are addressed at.”⁸⁰⁷ In this sentence, the commentary appeared to be telling the reader that the building of a socialist harmonious society involved a reconfiguration of the state-society relationship, with the Party-state allowing Chinese people a greater degree of personal freedom while, at the same time, reducing its responsibility for their welfare. In this, the use of the term “citizen” (*gongmin*) as opposed to the more frequently used alternatives such as “the people” (*renmin*) or “the masses” (*qunzhong*), seemed significant on account of the fact that it presented the Chinese people as having a set of, albeit unspecified, inalienable rights as well as being “stakeholders” in the building of the harmonious society.⁸⁰⁸ Indeed, the use of this term seemed intended to promote loyalty to nation, in that it connoted the obligation of the individual to ensure the welfare of the collective. That said, the introduction of the

⁸⁰⁷ Fairclough (2001: 260).

⁸⁰⁸ However, Holbig contends that the use of term “citizen” was not intended to refer “to the whole populace but only to the educated and affluent urban elites which, in fact, appear as the main protagonists in the vision of a “harmonious society”. See Holbig (2006: 29).

new concept was not intended to limit the government's control over society but rather to strengthen its governing capacity. Indeed, it was first presented in a resolution on "Decisions of the CCP Central Committee on Enhancing the Party's Ability to Govern" at the end of the Fourth Plenum of the 16th Party Central Committee. Moreover, in his February speech on the concept, Hu Jintao stated that building a socialist harmonious society was "essential for consolidating the party's social foundation to govern and achieve the party's historical governing mission."⁸⁰⁹

This intention to strengthen the government's governing capacity by granting citizens greater responsibility for their own and, by extension, the country's material development appeared to draw on modes of governance associated with Confucian thought. Indeed, as Chen points out, "[t]he Confucian idea of social harmony places a duty upon the individual to organize the different elements of society into the greatest possible end product."⁸¹⁰ Moreover, Zheng makes the point that, "[e]ven though Confucius put much emphasis on the role of *rites* in governance, his emphasis was on individual virtue and public morality."⁸¹¹ However, this emphasis historically produced authoritarian systems based on hierarchy rather than democratic systems based on equality. Even allowing for the recontextualisation of traditional Confucian ideals in China's modern political system, it seemed that the promulgation of the building a socialist harmonious society concept opened up the space in which "citizens" could play a more active role in society with the intention of maintaining stability and, in so doing, strengthen the rule of the CCP.

⁸⁰⁹ Cited in Holbig (2006: 27).

⁸¹⁰ Chen (2006: 164).

⁸¹¹ Zheng (2000: 155).

This link between the individual and the maintenance of stability and harmony was emphasised throughout the remainder of the fifth paragraph. Indeed, in contrast to the first sentence, the second, third and fourth sentences provided an example of more explicit argumentation, in that the use of the logical connective “so” in the fourth sentence indicated that people doing their “duty to the utmost” was necessary in order to realise the aspirational national goals of harmony, stability and economic development. This point was reinforced through the appeal to unity and stability in order to overcome problems, which, as in the previous paragraphs, also conveyed the implication of not having these conditions before the final sentence attempted to generate consensus for the Party’s plan by inviting the reader to “believe” in a future vision of China that contained properties which were implicitly linked to the building of a socialist harmonious society.

However, as with the earlier paragraphs, the focus on China’s future in this paragraph could be understood as a means by which to indirectly address the issue of the “anti-Japan” demonstrations. Indeed, as Dunmire points out, “cueing the public’s view of the future is a particularly powerful means of influencing contemporary behavior.”⁸¹² Consequently, this emphasis on China’s future as well as the difficulties involved in achieving that future again served to minimise the current grievances of the protestors by setting them within this larger context while the appeals to the notions of citizen responsibility and individual virtue attempted to persuade the protestors to bring the demonstrations to an end for the sake of the national good.

⁸¹² Dunmire (2005: 483).

The use of “stability” in the 17 April commentary was similar to the articles analysed in previous chapters, in that it was discursively constructed as a positive value.

Moreover, this construction of stability's positive value also opened up the space for the commentary to make the implicit suggestion that a lack of stability would lead to negative consequences. Consequently, the positive and negative use of stability was used to legitimate, albeit through implicature, the authority of the CCP.

This positive value of stability was, once again, initially constructed through the headline, which linked the maintenance of stability to the new concept of building a socialist harmonious society. This rhetorical move immediately worked to present the condition of stability in terms of China's national interest as well as its future development and, in so doing, shifted the focus of maintaining stability away from the preservation of the CCP's power and onto the future of the Chinese nation. Indeed, the link between maintaining stability and preserving the power of the CCP was never explicitly articulated throughout the commentary but rather was only implicated through the relationship between stability and the programme of building a socialist harmonious society.⁸¹³ Moreover, in this relationship, stability was presented as the necessary condition upon which the building of a socialist harmonious society was dependent. Although the promulgation of this new concept did put forward a more comprehensive vision of China's future development than had been the case with the articles analysed in the previous chapters, which only specified the goal of making China “a richer and more powerful nation”, substantively, the use of stability paralleled those in the earlier articles, in that the future development of China was

⁸¹³ That said, the Party's authorship of this new programme was only mentioned in the opening sentence of the commentary. Moreover, given that “building a socialist harmonious society” sounded more Confucian than communist, the 17 April commentary, in contrast to the articles analysed in the previous chapters, was notable for its lack of explicit reference to the leadership of the CCP.

held to be contingent on maintaining stability. The argumentation schemes to support this central claim were also substantively similar to those employed in the earlier articles, with the successes of the reform and opening up period being attributed the condition of stability, the importance of the legal system being emphasised in the maintenance of stability and the responsibility of the people in the safeguarding of stability.

The use of these argument schemes also opened up the space for the converse argument to be made through implication. In effect, the commentary argued that the failure of people to observe the law would lead to instability, which would, in turn, negatively affect the progress of modernisation construction and, in so doing, prevent the teleological goal of building a socialist harmonious society from being realised. Moreover, this argument scheme implicated the “anti-Japan” demonstrations. While not employing the tactic of explicitly labelling these demonstrations as responsible for “destroying” stability, as was the case with *Falun Gong* in the previous chapter, this use of implicature to suggest the demonstrations would cause instability marked the start of a campaign by the CCP leadership to bring them to an end in order to restore “stability”.

17 April Commentary: Co-textual Analysis

This campaign was stepped up with the release of an announcement by the Ministry of Public Security (PSB) on 21 April that directly addressed the issue of the “anti-Japan” demonstrations. This announcement, which was reported in the following day’s edition of the *People’s Daily*,⁸¹⁴ continued the government’s “softly-softly” approach by using the term “demonstration” (*youxing shiwei*) to describe the protests rather than more politically negative terms, such as “disturbance” (*naoshi*), which had been used to describe the demonstrations that took place at the end of 1986 and the start of 1987, or “turmoil” (*dongluan*), which had described the initial protests in 1989.⁸¹⁵ Moreover, the announcement did not blame “the masses and students” for the “spontaneous” protests nor did it attribute them to “people with ulterior motives”, as had been the case in 1989, but rather claimed that they had been caused by Japan’s “erroneous attitudes on history...as well as its incessant adoption of conduct which harms the Chinese people’s sentiment”. Indeed, the announcement voiced support for the demonstrations by stating that “[w]e fully understand this type of passionate patriotism of the vast masses and students” as well as arguing that it was necessary for the “Japanese side to conscientiously address the Chinese peoples’ concern and properly deal with the problem.”

In terms of bringing an end to the demonstrations, the Ministry of Public Security’s announcement followed on from the 17 April commentary by emphasising the importance of the law. Indeed, in keeping with the rhetorical strategy of the commentary, the announcement used the future as a way of dealing with the present

⁸¹⁴ “Gong’an bu jiu jinqi yixie difang fasheng sheRi youxing shiwei fabiao tanhua” (22 April 2005).

⁸¹⁵ Moreover, the description of the demonstrations as “involving Japan” (*sheRi*) rather than the conventional English description as “anti-Japan” (*fanRi*) maintains the government’s line that the demonstrations were not against Japan *per se* but rather were caused by Japan.

and, in so doing, avoided direct criticism of the previous actions of “the vast masses and students”.⁸¹⁶ Consequently, the announcement stated that all demonstrations must adhere to laws and regulations set out in “the People’s Republic of China Law on Assembly, Procession and Demonstration” (*Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Jihui Youxing Shiwei Fa*);⁸¹⁷ that permits must be obtained from the PSB; that the content of the demonstrations must be approved by the PSB; and that organisational material distributed via the Internet and mobile phones must be approved by the PSB. In effect, the announcement was stating that those who contravened PRC Law would be considered guilty of causing “illegal behaviour”, with the implicit threat of arrest and possible imprisonment. The announcement also emphasised the theme of building a socialist harmonious society while asserting the leadership of the CCP and the government in “handling Sino-Japan relations”. As for the use of stability, it was only mentioned briefly in relation to realising the goal of harmony and the need of citizens to protect the “hard-won stability and unity of the overall situation”.

The commentary that was published alongside the PSB announcement, entitled “Consciously Handle Matters in Accordance with the Law, Uphold a Stable Overall Situation”, did feature stability more prominently; however, its usage was consistent with that of the 17 April commentary, in that the promotion of harmony was linked to the condition of maintaining stability.⁸¹⁸ Moreover, the 22 April commentary iterated the justificatory claim that “China is currently in a crucial period in the comprehensive building of a well-off society and urgently requires a stable domestic

⁸¹⁶ The exception to this was the accusation that “a very small number of people” who “seized the opportunity to engage in the smashing of public and private property and various illegal activities that disturbed the peace, and have damaged our country’s image”.

⁸¹⁷ This Law was introduced on 31 October 1989 in response to the events earlier that year. See Wong (2006: 186).

⁸¹⁸ Xinhua Pinglunyuanyuan (22 April 2005).

situation and a good international environment.” That said, the main focus of the commentary was, as with the announcement by the PSB, emphasising the importance of the law and persuading people to “express their feelings calmly, rationally and lawfully.”

As the campaign to bring an end to the “anti-Japan” demonstrations continued, the link between economic development and stability was increasingly promoted in a number of articles. These articles expanded on the argument put forward in the 17 April commentary that China’s economic development was due to the condition of stability and, in so doing, made the implicature that the “anti-Japan” demonstrations, by causing instability, would adversely affect China’s future development. As explained in chapter two, implicatures can be understood as “inferences based on general and particular political knowledge as well as on the context models”.⁸¹⁹ Moreover, given the importance of the economic relationship between China and Japan, this implicature may have been suggesting that this would be caused by the negative impact of the demonstrations upon Sino-Japan relations.⁸²⁰ Consequently, a signed commentary entitled “Actively Produce Things in Favour of Social Stability” by Zhong Xuanli, which was published on 23 April, pointed out that China’s “average GDP per capita had already broken through the 1000 USD mark”; “[t]he people’s and the masses’ material lives as well as their spiritual and cultural lives have received great improvement”; “China’s reform and opening up and socialist modernization and development had attracted worldwide attention”.⁸²¹ The commentary then linked these successes to condition of stability when stating that “[i]f we were to have a social

⁸¹⁹ van Dijk (2005: 65).

⁸²⁰ During this period, there appeared to be many, at least those participating in online forums, that believed there had been a shift in the balance of the Sino-Japan economic trade relationship and that Japan was now more dependent on China than had been the case previously. See Liu (2006: 149–152).

⁸²¹ Zhong Xuanli (23 April 2005).

environment without stability, without a favourable social order, we would not be able to have today's immense development and profound change." This link between the successes of reform and development and stability allowed the commentary to state that, with China entering "a period of emerging contradictions" in which it would face "all kinds of problems which are difficult to predict", it was necessary to "maintain a clear head, consider stability as China's highest interest and consolidate the stable and unified overall situation." In addition to positioning the resolution of such problems within the teleological goal of building a socialist harmonious society, the 23 April commentary also attempted to further justify this argument by presenting this relationship in terms of global consequences. Consequently, the commentary claimed that "the world also needs China's stability... China's development is inseparable from the world and the world's peace and development also needs China... Protecting China's stability conforms to the force of world peace and the common desire of human progress." Indeed, this justification was also reproduced in other articles concerned with demonstrating the importance of the link between economic development and stability. A staff commentary that was published on 29 April, entitled "Keep in Mind Everything We Cannot Accomplish without Stability", stated that China's development was "inseparable from the world, and the world's prosperity needs China... A stable, open and prosperous China is essential in protecting world peace and making an even greater contribution to advance common development."⁸²²

Following the holding of a meeting between President Hu and Prime Minister Koizumi at the Asia-Africa Summit in Jakarta on 23 April, at which Hu put forward a "five-point proposal" (*wudian zhuzhang*) aimed at restoring Sino-Japanese relations, a

⁸²² Benbao Pinglunyuanyuan (29 April 2005).

number of articles were published emphasising the importance of these relations. Moreover, these articles did so by highlighting the economic aspect of the Sino-Japanese relationship over that of history while, at the same time, using stability only in terms of maintaining this bilateral relationship. Consequently, an article published on 27 April, entitled “Treating Sino-Japanese Economic Cooperation Rationally”, put forward a number of statistics to illustrate the growth of the trade relationship between China and Japan since normalisation in 1972 in order to demonstrate the importance of this relationship.⁸²³ According to the article, trade between the countries had grown 160-fold in the thirty-three years, with the total for 2004 reaching US\$167.8 billion in 2004. Moreover, Japan had invested a total of US\$66.6 billion in contracted value in China. In addition, the article stated that an economic boycott of Japanese goods would violate the terms of China’s WTO membership, as they required it to “fulfill its foreign commitments, persist in opening to the outside world as it has always done, develop normal economic and trade relations with various countries, treat foreign commodities on the Chinese market in a manner of fairness and equality, and protect the legitimate rights and interests of foreign investors.”⁸²⁴ The article also pointed out that, in light of the fact that China’s dependence on foreign trade stood at 70 percent, not to mention a number of additional economic benefits, such as employment, tax revenue and foreign exports sales, an economic boycott of Japanese goods would actually end up negatively impacting China’s economy. The need to restore Sino-Japanese relations was also stated in a commentary, entitled “Promote the Healthy Stable Development of Sino-Japanese Relations as a Guiding Principle”, that was published on 30 April 2005.⁸²⁵ Although, this commentary emphasised the importance of economic relations between the two

⁸²³ Gong Wen (27 April 2005).

⁸²⁴ Ibid.

⁸²⁵ Benbao Pinglunyuan (30 April 2005).

countries, it also made reference to Hu's "five-point proposal" in order to demonstrate the leadership of the CCP in taking a "tough line" with Japan.

In addition to the propaganda campaign,⁸²⁶ the government undertook practical measures to bring the "anti-Japan" demonstrations to an end. On 19 April, the CCP propaganda department, the People's Liberation Army (PLA), the Ministry of Education as well as some other government departments convened a meeting of some 3,500 senior officials at which the Foreign Minister argued that the continuation of the "anti-Japan" demonstrations would harm Sino-Japan relations and cause instability in China. Following on from this, a "speech tour" was launched in which former diplomats were sent to college and university campuses in a number of cities that witnessed demonstrations in an effort to explain to students the importance of maintaining friendly relations with Japan.⁸²⁷ Moreover, Shirk notes that security officials also visited these campuses in order to persuade students "to settle down".⁸²⁸

In light of the pivotal role that the Internet played in the organisation of the "anti-Japan" demonstrations, the government also sought to use this medium to bring the protests to an end. Consequently, according to Shirk, "[t]he authorities...got the anti-Japanese activists who operate under official protection to urge calm on their Web

⁸²⁶ An exception to the generally positive tone of the propaganda campaign was the publication of a staff editorial in the Shanghai-based *Liberation Daily* (*jiefang ribao*) on 25 April entitled "Understanding the Essence, Investigating the Violation of Law". This editorial stated that there was a "preponderance of facts to prove that the recent illegal marches were not a patriotic movement, but rather amounted to illegal behaviour." Moreover, it also claimed that the demonstrations had not been "a spontaneous movement of the masses, but rather a backstage plot." Although Shirk describes this editorial as "mysterious", a reader's letter had been published in the same paper on 23 April claiming that the actions of the protestors were not patriotic as they had "smashed the larger backdrop of Sino-Japanese friendship". Though the letter did not directly criticise the protestors of having "ulterior motives", the fact that it was published on the front page of the paper suggests that it may have been intended as a prelude to the criticisms being made in the later editorial. See Shirk (2007: 175), Li Zongxin (23 April 2005).

⁸²⁷ Yardley (22 April 2005).

⁸²⁸ Shirk (2007: 175).

sites.”⁸²⁹ In addition, Liu notes that “[m]any Chinese websites, which contained protest-related information, were closed down by the Chinese authorities.”⁸³⁰ Indeed, this was symbolised by the closing down of the well-known anti-Japanese website, www.japanpig.com, which had played a leading role in encouraging people to protest.⁸³¹ Other measures taken to restrict the online organisation of protests included increased censorship of internet chat rooms and the addition of the term “demonstration” (*youxing*) to the banned list of words on the most popular instant-messaging software client, “QQ”.⁸³²

The other communication technology that had played an important role in the organisation of the demonstrations was mobile phones, particularly text messaging, and this was also targeted by the government in its attempts to end the demonstrations. However, in contrast to the censorious approach that was employed in dealing with the Internet, the government used text messaging technology to individually warn citizens against taking part in demonstrations.⁸³³ Consequently, according to Zhao, in the run-up to the symbolic 4 May anniversary, mobile phone users received “a blizzard of text messages” which warned people against “spreading rumours, believing rumours, or joining illegal demonstrations”.⁸³⁴ Commenting on those sent to the nine million residents in Beijing, Barné notes that the mass text messages were issued by all the telecom operators “at the behest of the Public Security Bureau” while,

⁸²⁹ Shirk (2007: 176).

⁸³⁰ Liu (2006: 153 note 2).

⁸³¹ Indeed, according to Brooke, on the weekend prior to 16 April, the website had been encouraging demonstrations to take place in at least six cities. See Brooke (14 April 2005).

⁸³² Liu (2006: 153 note 3).

⁸³³ Approximately 350 million people are said to own mobile phones in China, which equates to roughly 27% of the 1.3 billion population. Moreover, of these, a disproportionate number are owned by younger people and urban dwellers. See Yardley (25 April 2005).

⁸³⁴ Zhao (2005: 141).

according to Dickie, the 30 million mobile phone subscribers in Jiangsu province were sent text messages on behalf of the “Office for Maintaining Stability”.⁸³⁵

However, the government did not rely solely on the circulation of text messages to prevent the possibility of further protests taking place but also made use of a more traditional approach to such situations by deploying the security services. According to Zhao, “[p]olice in major cities throughout China went on full alert to prevent a recurrence of demonstrations.” Moreover, Barmé notes that they were “reports of busloads of police and soldiers being deployed to protect Japanese interests in the Chinese capital and other cities.” With the anniversaries of Labour Day and Youth Day passing off without incident,⁸³⁶ these approaches appeared to be successful. Indeed, despite predictions that the “anti-Japan” demonstrations could presage a period of increased protest activity, there has, as yet, been nothing on this scale since.⁸³⁷ Moreover, despite the cancellation of a meeting arranged between China’s vice-premier, Wu Yi, and Prime Minister Koizumi in May 2005, political relations between China and Japan appear to have improved significantly in the intervening period. Indeed, in September 2006, following his election to replace Junichiro Koizumi, the then Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, chose China, as opposed to that of the United States, as the destination of his first foreign visit. Furthermore, in April 2007, Wen Jiabao gave the first address by a Chinese Premier to the Japanese parliament,

⁸³⁵ Barmé (16 May 2005), Dickie (29 April 2005).

⁸³⁶ Wasserstrom reports that, on 4 May, “there was a conspicuous police presence around Tiananmen Square.” See Wasserstrom (2005: 60).

⁸³⁷ Wasserstrom noted at the time that “the rest of 2005 is filled with interesting—and potentially provocative—anniversary dates.” Meanwhile, Shirk predicts that “[t]he 2005 protests were the first—but certainly not the last—Chinese experiment with a new-style, technology-enabled collective action that mimicked the Ukraine’s [sic] “Orange Revolution””. However, though a demonstration against the building of chemical plant in Xiamen in June 2007 was notable for its use of technology in organising collective action, it was more limited both in size and scope than those in 2005. As for Ukraine’s “orange revolution”, such a comparison places too much emphasis on the role of technology while ignoring the key role played by NGOs, particularly foreign ones, in organising opposition to the electoral result. See Wasserstrom (2005: 63), Shirk (2007: 142–143).

the *Diet*. And despite the surprise resignation of Abe in September 2007, his replacement, Yasuo Fukuda, recently went on record to state that Sino-Japanese relations were improving as if “spring had already arrived” before undertaking a diplomatically successful visit of China at the end of 2007.⁸³⁸ Moreover, alongside the warming up of political relations, economic relations between China and Japan have continued to grow.⁸³⁹ Indeed, the trade between the countries reached the record level of US\$207.36 billion in 2006 while the figures for the three quarters of 2007 showed a year-on-year growth of 14%. In addition, China has now become Japan’s largest trading partner while Japan is China’s second largest source of Foreign Direct Investment.

⁸³⁸ Kato (4 January 2008).

⁸³⁹ There are also, allegedly, plans being put in place for Hu Jintao to visit Japan in April 2008—the first visit by a Chinese president since Jiang’s largely unsuccessful trip ten years earlier.

Conclusion

The CCP has increasingly relied on “patriotism” to legitimate its authority in the reform and opening up period and particularly since the events of 1989. In this, the nationalistic goal of making China a “strong and powerful nation” and, more recently, “building a socialist harmonious society”, is presented in terms of the Party’s economic reform programme and this has the effect of fusing the concept of the state with that of the CCP. Moreover, in order to strengthen the appeal of these claims, the concept of patriotism makes use of China’s relative weakness prior to the economic reform programme and, in particular, during the so-called “century of humiliation”. Whereas the “dream of a strong nation” is accompanied by a narrative of pride in China’s future achievements, the “century of humiliation” has produced one of victimisation, at least in post-Mao period. In this, the main focus of this victimisation narrative is on the actions that were committed by the Japanese army during its occupation of China from 1931-1945. However, this has had the effect, particularly with the government’s repeated use of this victimisation narrative in the post-Tiananmen period, of arousing and legitimating present grievances towards Japan based on the past suffering of Chinese people and, in so doing, opening up the space, as well as providing the language, for people to participate on issues relating to Sino-Japanese relations. Indeed, it seems that on this particular issue, the Chinese government is especially sensitive to the views of the public.

It was in this context that the “anti-Japan” demonstrations took place. The immediate issues that provoked the demonstrations appeared to be Japan’s bid for a Permanent seat on the UN Security Council, its approval of particular school history textbooks, as well as its indirect expression of support for Taiwan independence. However,

following the outbreak of demonstrations in a number of Chinese cities over a series of weekends in April, the government was presented with a dilemma over when to bring them to an end. The need to do so was borne out of the concern that, as with previous demonstrations that had been initially targeted against Japan, these protests could eventually be redirected against the leadership of the CCP. However, there was also concern, for which historical precedents also existed, that attempting to bring protests to an end too quickly would leave the government vulnerable to the charge of suppressing “patriotic actions”. In contrast to the response when dealing with the 1989 protests and with *Falun Gong* in 1999, the government adopted a “softly-softly” approach, which was initiated with the publication of the 17 April commentary. In this, demonstrators were being urged to once again end their actions on account of the need for “stability”. In the particular instance of the 17 April commentary, the need for stability was explained, as with earlier articles, in terms of economic development. Indeed, the programme of reform and opening up was presented as being dependent upon the condition of stability. However, the 17 April commentary also introduced a new concept for which the condition of stability was necessary: building a socialist harmonious society. Although this concept did not fundamentally change the way in which stability was used, it did prescribe, at the rhetorical level at least, a Confucian-inspired vision of China’s future and, in so doing, may have worked to strengthen the appeal of stability in the present.⁸⁴⁰

⁸⁴⁰ Although the resolution of the Sixth Plenum of the 16th Party Central Committee put forward a more substantive programme to fill out the concept of building a socialist harmonious society, there has been speculation that this populist concept does not have unanimous support within the Party. That said, conducting a *People’s Daily* database for the articles containing the phrase “harmonious society” (*hexie shehui*) over the past three years (the database only carries articles up to May 2007) indicates that: in 2005, of the 40,387 articles published that year, 1,982 articles (4.9%) contained this phrase; in 2006, of the 39,487 articles published, 2,277 articles (5.8%) contained this phrase; and for the five months of 2007, of the 16,080 articles published, 1,409 articles (8.8%) contained this phrase. Consequently, whether building a socialist harmonious society will, indeed, become the overarching ideological goal of the CCP in the short- to medium-term or whether, like a number of other ideological slogans through the years, it will be quietly retired can only be assessed with the advent of time.

Conclusion

This thesis began by considering the increasing number of demonstrations that have been taking place across China. Indeed, these demonstrations, coupled with the mounting governance challenges that confront the Chinese government, have served to strengthen the view of many analysts that the end of Chinese Communist Party (CCP) rule is simply a matter of time. Moreover, this view can be traced back to the government's use of military force to suppress the demonstrations in 1989. Yet, since this time, the CCP has managed to remain in power. Furthermore, the recent protests in China do not appear to be directed at the central level of government but rather are concerned with localised and specific grievances. Although these grievances are serious and point to problems with governance that, if unsatisfactorily resolved, may yet bring about a direct challenge to the government's authority, the rule of the CCP appears to be relatively stable, in the short-term at least. Consequently, accepting that its power does not fully rest on coercion, this thesis has sought to explain how the CCP has remained in power in the post-Tiananmen period.

In explaining this situation, this thesis has deployed the concept of legitimacy in an analysis of state-society relations. Within the academic literature on this subject, the dominant view is that the CCP's legitimacy is mostly derived from the performance of the economy, with nationalism also being used to fill the "ideological vacuum" left by the declining legitimacy of communism. While agreeing that these two sources have played an important role in legitimating the Party's authority, closer analysis suggests that both sources have limitations. In the case of the economy, history indicates that economic growth tends to produce instability rather than stability in a country. Indeed, during the post-Tiananmen period in China, though the

overall GDP rate has been consistently high, economic growth has been unevenly spread amongst different regions in the country and different groups in society. As such, the economic reforms have produced an increasing number of “losers”. In order to explain how the regime has managed to remain in power, many analysts have identified the ideational effects of nationalism. However, though heavy use has been made of nationalism in the post-Tiananmen period, the government’s propagation of *official* nationalism has also opened up the space for the emergence of *popular* nationalism. Indeed, examples from the past fifteen or so years suggest that *popular* nationalism has worked to challenge the government’s authority. While this does not mean that official nationalism no longer effectively legitimates the CCP, it does suggest that it can be subject to resistance and, as such, is more limited in its legitimating force than commonly suggested. Moreover, accepting this point opens up the possibility that the CCP may have made use of additional sources of legitimacy throughout the post-Tiananmen period. Of these, this thesis has focused on one source: the government’s ideational use of “stability”.

However, in order to fully explain how the government’s use of stability legitimates its authority, a suitable conceptual framework in which this analysis could take place was developed in chapter one. In this, the first step was to interrogate the concept of legitimacy. Adopting a social scientific conceptualisation, this thesis held that it is possible for all regimes, including the CCP, to obtain legitimacy, which, once obtained, would allow for the conversion of political power into authority. That said, legitimacy should not be viewed as fixed or evenly spread amongst all groups in society but rather as a dynamic concept which can fluctuate both positively and negatively over time and amongst different groups in society. Moreover, it is possible

for a regime to be considered legitimate, even if all groups do not view it as legitimate at all times. Indeed, this point highlights the need to disaggregate society when considering legitimacy, in that different groups can have greater influence depending upon the spatio-temporal context. In this thesis, the “intra-elites” relationship is held to be the most important in maintaining the legitimacy of the CCP.

In turning to consider the process by which the CCP obtains its legitimacy, this thesis found Weber’s conceptualisation, which is the standard framework in such analyses, to be overly structuralist and, as a result, limited in its explanatory value. In order to overcome this, the thesis situated the concept of legitimation within the strategic-relational approach. The effect of this conceptual move was to extend the understanding of legitimation beyond the identification of specific modes by interrogating the interaction of *strategic actors* and a *strategically selective context* from a spatio-temporal perspective. In this, the possibility was opened up to consider multiple temporally and geographically variable legitimating strategies. Moreover, through the concept of discursive selectivity, space was made in which to consider the role played by discourse in mediating between the structural effects of rules and norms and the *Lebenswelt* notion of belief that informs action, in particular, the “cognitive filters” used by powerful actors to influence the formation of strategies by other less powerful actors. Consequently, this thesis conceptualised the stability discourse as a cognitive filter that has been used by the CCP to enhance its legitimation in the post-Tiananmen period.

The method by which this discourse would be analysed was elaborated in the second chapter. This method was the discourse-historical approach, which is associated with

the broader school of critical discourse analysis (CDA), and it was selected on account of its emphasis on the historical dimension of discourse as well as its incorporation of argumentation theory. Moreover, having chosen the media as the site of enquiry, the discourse-historical approach was used to analyse a selection of articles from the *People's Daily* newspaper covering the period from 1989 to 2007. The selection of the *People's Daily* as the source for this analysis was due to its status as the CCP's "official mouthpiece". Moreover, within the time period from 1989 to 2007, three instances were identified for analysis: the "Beijing Spring" in 1989, the "anti-Falun Gong" campaign in 1999 and the "anti-Japan" demonstrations in 2005. These events were selected on the basis that they constituted exceptional instances in which the stability discourse was used to legitimate the CCP's authority. Moreover, in each of these three instances, the challenge to the Party's power was different and, as such, carrying out an analysis of how the stability discourse was used in each of these instances would hopefully lead to a more complete understanding of the discourse.

The first of the three empirical chapters in the thesis focused on the use of the stability discourse both during the "Beijing Spring" in 1989 and after the military suppression of these demonstrations. This period was selected for analysis on the basis that the demonstrations in 1989 represented a direct challenge to the CCP's authority that resulted in a legitimisation crisis, if not an outright loss of legitimacy. Of the two articles that were analysed in this chapter, the first was the 29 April editorial entitled "Safeguard the Overall Situation, Safeguard Stability". This editorial was politically significant, in that it was published during the initial stages of the demonstrations. Moreover, it was intended as a response to the infamous 26 April editorial, which, in labelling the demonstrations as "turmoil", had only succeeded in provoking larger

protests. Consequently, analysing the 29 April editorial demonstrated how the CCP leadership used the stability discourse both to maintain its legitimacy against the challenge posed by the demonstrations as well as undermine the legitimacy of the demonstrations so as to bring them to an end. In the editorial, the term “stability” was only deployed in a nominalised form and this allowed the editorial to use stability in a way that did not require its meaning to be made explicit. Consequently, stability was used both positively to strengthen the legitimacy of the CCP and negatively, in the form of instability, to delegitimize the demonstrations.

This positive value was achieved by establishing the importance of stability. In this, the 29 April editorial presented stability in terms of national concern, which worked to “depoliticise” stability by shifting its focus of maintaining stability away from preserving the power of the CCP onto the future of the Chinese nation. However, by presenting the future of the Chinese nation in terms of economic development and political reform, the editorial worked to link this future with the period since the Third Plenum in 1978. Moreover, by presenting stability as the necessary condition for the economic growth and political reform in the post-Third Plenum period, the editorial linked the maintenance of stability to China’s future development and, in so doing, attempted to legitimate the authority of the CCP. In contrast, the negative value of instability was achieved by presenting a Chinese future without stability. Indeed, in the same way that the positive view of China’s future was linked to the post-Third Plenum period, so it was that this negative view of China’s future was linked to periods of upheaval in China’s modern history, including the Cultural Revolution as well as the pre-PRC period. In presenting instability as the sole reason for the lack of relative development in these periods, the editorial projected a historical view of

China's future in order to delegitimize, by implicature, the demonstrations as the cause of future instability.

The second article that was analysed was the 4 June editorial entitled "Stability Prevails Over Everything", which was published on the first year anniversary of the military suppression. This editorial was selected because it used the stability discourse to justify the use of military force in bringing the demonstrations to an end. Moreover, it provided the definitive statement on the paramount importance of stability in the post-Tiananmen period. Indeed, this meaning was directly expressed in the headline "Stability Prevails Over Everything", which implicitly conveyed the Hobbesian notion that it is legitimate for the state to use violence to maintain social stability. The remainder of the editorial sought to justify this position by demonstrating the negative value of instability and the positive value of stability. In this, the use of the stability discourse was similar to that in the 29 April editorial; the most striking difference was that the negative value of instability was emphasised more strongly than the positive value of stability. Indeed, whereas the link between the demonstrations and instability had been implicated in the 29 April editorial, it was explicitly stated in the 4 June editorial. In addition to labelling the demonstrations as a "counter-revolutionary rebellion", the editorial sought to further strengthen the negative impression of the demonstrations by linking it to a plot by foreign states that was intended to bring about the collapse of the People's Republic of China and, in so doing, defined instability in terms of the collapse of CCP rule. Indeed, this theme would form the basis of the anti-foreign nationalism that was heavily propagated by the CCP during the post-Tiananmen period.⁸⁴¹ Moreover, as with the 29 April editorial, the 4 June

⁸⁴¹ For more on this, see pp.17–19.

editorial viewed a CCP-less future as “chaos” and, in so doing, served to present this future in terms of the upheavals from the previous one hundred and fifty years of Chinese history.

As for the positive value of stability, it was similar to the 29 April editorial, in that it was presented as the necessary condition for economic development and political reform; however, whereas the first editorial used the example of the post-Third Plenum reforms, the 4 June editorial emphasised the political, economic and social achievements that had been made under the leadership of the CCP since the ending of the demonstrations. In this, the editorial was attempting to legitimate the use of military force as well as the post- rather than the pre-Tiananmen political leadership. Moreover, it followed the 29 April editorial in linking the positive value of stability with the maintenance of CCP rule.

In addition to the positive and negative use of stability, the two editorials were similar in their nominalised usage of stability. As pointed out earlier, the effect of such usage was to “mystify” the definition of stability. As a result, what constituted stability and who was threatening this stability was never made explicit. This enabled the editorials to use stability in a way that was discursively flexible, in that stability was linked only with the CCP while the demonstrations were presented only in terms of instability; however, this also meant that the persuasiveness of the stability discourse rested entirely on rhetoric. Moreover, in terms of legitimation, though this is difficult to properly assess, it seems that the 4 June editorial had greater legitimatory effect. Indeed, given that the analysis of the two editorials did not reveal substantive differences between the pre- and post-Tiananmen forms of the stability discourse, it

seem possible to suggest that the events in 1989 represented a *strategic moment* in the formation of this discourse, in that the government's hegemonic interpretation of these events helped to shape a political context which "favoured" the discourse of stability.

The second of the three empirical chapters in the thesis focused on the use of the stability discourse during the "anti-*Falun Gong*" campaign in 1999. This period was selected for analysis on the basis that it represented the next politically significant instance of instability in the post-Tiananmen period. In addition, the challenge to the authority of the CCP differed from that in 1989. Then, the protestors, at least in the initial stages, pushed for reforms within the political system, whereas, in 1999, *Falun Gong* presented an alternative without the political system. The article that was selected for analysis in this period was a 16 August commentary entitled "Maintain the Overall Situation and Stability and Push Forward Reform and Development—Ninth Commentary on Tightening Efforts to Handle and Solve the 'Falun Gong' Problem". In this commentary, the use of stability, or "stability and unity" to be precise, was similar to that during the "Beijing Spring", in that it was consistently deployed in a nominalised form which did not require its meaning to be made explicit. Furthermore, stability was discursively constructed in both a positive sense, which worked legitimate the CCP leadership, and in a negative sense, which worked to delegitimate *Falun Gong*.

The construction of stability as a positive value was similar to that deployed during the Beijing Spring, particularly the 29 April editorial, in that stability was presented in terms of national interest. Again, this rhetorical move seemed intended to shift the

focus of maintaining stability away from preserving the power of the CCP and onto the future of the Chinese nation. This future, which was articulated as becoming a “rich and strong nation”, was similarly imagined in terms of continued economic development and political reform. As with the 29 April editorial, China’s future was linked with the period since the Third Plenum in 1978 and, through implicature, the leadership of the CCP. By then presenting stability as the necessary condition for the economic growth and political reform in the post-Third Plenum period, the editorial was linking the maintenance of stability to China’s future development and, in so doing, attempting to legitimate the CCP leadership. In contrast, the negative value of instability was again achieved by presenting a Chinese future without stability. Indeed, in the same way that the positive view of China’s future was linked to the post-Third Plenum period, so it was that this negative view of China’s future was linked to periods of upheaval in China’s modern history, for which instability was identified as the sole cause. In establishing the negative value of instability, the commentary attempted to delegitimize *Falun Gong* by positioning it as the agent responsible for causing this instability and, in so doing, justify the government’s ban.

However, despite these arguments being used repeatedly throughout the campaign, stability was not presented as the main justification for the outlawing of *Falun Gong*. Rather, it was used in support of other arguments, particularly following the passing of legislation to ban “cult organisations”. Moreover, this use of stability was less prominent than in the government’s response to the events in 1989. This may have been due to the fact that, unlike 1989, the demonstrations which had been held by *Falun Gong* did not appear to “destroy” stability, particularly given that they were ended without the use of military force and, in the case of the 25 April demonstrations,

that the government waited three months before officially condemning them. Indeed, the use of the stability discourse in the “anti-*Falun Gong*” campaign suggested that there are limits to the use of this discourse on occasions when its rhetorical claims can be measured against a material referent. Consequently, unlike the government’s hegemonic interpretation of the demonstrations in 1989, the labelling of *Falun Gong* as “destroying” instability did not appear to “resonate” with Chinese people. This suggests that the context did not favour the stability discourse and, as such, its effectiveness in legitimating the rule of the CCP might be limited to particular contexts.

The final empirical chapter in the thesis focused on the use of the stability discourse during the “anti-Japan” demonstrations in 2005. This period was selected for analysis on the grounds that these demonstrations presented the most recent challenge to the government’s authority. Moreover, as with the previous two instances, this challenge was different in nature, in that the demonstrations were directed against the Japanese government and so did not directly challenge the government’s authority. That said, the demonstrations did indirectly challenge the Chinese government, in that it faced a dilemma over when to bring the protests to an end without turning the grievances away from Japan towards the government. Indeed, historical precedents suggested that ending them too quickly or allowing them to last too long could result in such a scenario being realised. The 17 April commentary marked the start of the government’s campaign to bring the demonstrations to an end. This use of stability in this commentary was similar to the earlier articles, in that it was discursively constructed as a positive value and a negative value. However, where it differed from those articles, particularly the 4 June editorial and the 16 August commentary, was in

the lack of an explicit negative other presentation. Indeed, the negative value of instability was only implicitly suggested in the space opened up by the positive value of stability. This lack of negative other presentation appeared to reflect the government's "softly-softly" approach in dealing with demonstrations.

The positive value of stability followed the articles from the earlier period in being initially constructed through a headline which linked the maintenance of stability to China's national interest as well as its future development and, in so doing, shifted the focus of maintaining stability away from preserving the CCP's power and onto the future of the Chinese nation. However, the headline in this commentary was also politically significant, in that it introduced the new concept of "building a socialist harmonious society". This Confucian-inspired vision of China's future development differed from the earlier articles by providing a more concrete teleological goal. That said, the use of stability paralleled those in the earlier articles, in that the future development of China was still held to be contingent on maintaining stability. Moreover, as with those articles, the importance of maintaining stability was justified by presenting it as the necessary condition for the economic development and political reform that had taken place in the reform and opening up period. Also, the link between maintaining stability and preserving the power of the CCP was never explicitly stated. Indeed, the 17 April commentary did differ from the previous articles in its lack of explicit references to the CCP leadership.

As pointed out above, the negative value of instability was only implied through the construction of stability's positive value. In this, the commentary suggested that the failure of people to observe the law would lead to instability, which would, in turn,

negatively affect the progress of modernisation construction and so prevent the teleological goal of building a socialist harmonious society from being realised. However, at no point in the commentary was the “anti-Japan” demonstrations referred to.

The diachronic analysis of the stability discourse in these three instances indicates that the usage of this discourse has been relatively consistent within the post-Tiananmen period. In this, stability was always presented in a nominalised form that served to “mystify” its definition and, in so doing, allowed it to be discursively flexible. As a result, stability was discursively constructed as a positive value to legitimate, often indirectly, the authority of the CCP and as a negative value to delegitimize the “other”, be that the demonstrators in 1989, *Falun Gong* demonstrators in 1999 and the “anti-Japan” demonstrators in 2005. Moreover, these constructions of stability made use of the same argumentation. In terms of the positive value of stability, the direct link between maintaining stability and preserving the power of the CCP was obscured in favour of presenting stability as an issue of national interest. Indeed, this link was always initially established through the headline. In addition, this link demonstrated how the stability discourse, though analytically distinct, drew on other discourses, in this case, nationalism. Presenting stability in terms of national interest also worked to view the current challenge to the government in terms of its future consequences. As Dunmire’s research suggests, with the future undetermined, this positioning of the current challenge opened up the space in which to put forward the CCP’s vision of the future and, in so doing, privileged this version over competing alternatives.⁸⁴² In the CCP’s version, China’s future development, in the form of a “rich and powerful

⁸⁴² For more, see Dunmire (2005).

nation” or, more recently, “building a socialist harmonious society”, was claimed to be dependent on continued economic development and political reform. In addition, by claiming that the “successes” of the reform and opening up period were due to the necessary condition of stability, this vision of the future was, in effect, claiming that only the CCP could lead China towards this future development state. In terms of effectiveness, it could be argued that this hegemonic interpretation of China’s future has performed a similar role to the government’s hegemonic interpretation of the events in 1989.

This vision of China’s future was also reinforced by the construction of stability’s negative value. As pointed out above, though the identification of the “other” changed in each instance, the argumentation differed only in explicitness. In the cases of the military suppression in 1989 and the “anti-*Falun Gong*” campaign in 1999, the government’s action necessitated the explicit negative presentation of the other while, in the cases of the pre-military suppression period and the “anti-Japan” demonstrations in 2005, this negative presentation was mostly done through implicature. Nevertheless, the arguments were effectively the reverse of those used in the positive construction of stability, in that the intention of the negative other, sometimes in collaboration with foreign states, was to destroy China’s stability which would, in turn, lead to the collapse of the CCP and so bring about a future state of “chaos” similar to experienced during periods of upheaval from China’s modern history. In each of these instances, the challenge confronting the Chinese government was presented in terms of a fundamental challenge to the political system. In addition to the intentions of the negative other, its actions were always presented in terms of

violating the law thus effectively making them criminals and, in so doing, further justifying the response of the government.

In terms of linguistic features, the selected texts in each of the three instances were also similar. The most frequently employed argumentative strategy was that of *argumentum at consequentiam*. As explained in chapter two, this strategy was used both to justify action (e.g. suppression) by appealing to the consequences of inaction (e.g. instability) and justifying inaction (e.g. the demands of demonstrators) by appealing to the consequences of action (e.g. chaos). Indeed, this argumentative strategy, by appealing to events which had not yet taken place, played an important role in putting forward the CCP's hegemonic interpretation of the future. Moreover, this interpretation was strengthened by the repeated use of the *topos* of threat in the selected texts. As explained in chapter two, this *topos* worked to justify the ending of collective action by presenting them in terms of "threatening" the stability of the country. Additional discursive strategies used in the selected texts included those identified by van Leeuwen's typology of legitimating strategies as "theoretical rationalisations". As explained in chapter two, this type of strategy referred to declarative statements that took the form of "definitions". Indeed, these statements, along with the "linguistic mean" of epistemic modality, contributed to the authoritative "voice" of the articles that attempted to persuade the reader to accept the authority of the CCP. As pointed out above, the use of implicatures, particularly in instances of negative other presentation, was frequently employed throughout the texts in order to heighten the persuasiveness of the CCP's claims.

In terms of legitimation, the CCP's use of the stability discourse throughout the post-Tiananmen period has relied on "consequentialist" arguments to persuade members of Chinese society to support its authority. In this, China's undetermined future has been imagined in terms of "good" and "bad" consequences and, in so doing, appeals to people's fear and self-interest. However, using Zhong's classification of "positive" and "negative" stability, it is possible to suggest that such arguments constitute a form of "negative" stability, in that they avoid finding "appropriate solutions to solve emerging economic, political and social problems".⁸⁴³ So while the stability discourse may well continue to sustain the regime in the short- to medium-term, it seems that it will not, in the long-term, serve to generate legitimacy for the CCP in the way that "positive" stability would. Indeed, given that the stability discourse has remained largely the same in the pre- and post-Tiananmen periods, it seems possible to suggest that its legitimacy effectiveness has been due, in large part, to the hegemonic interpretation of the events in 1989 and subsequent collapses of communist regimes that has shaped a political context which favours this discourse. Moreover, accepting this view also suggests that, at some future point, the political context may no longer favour this discourse and, as such, it will lose its effectiveness in legitimating the CCP's authority. Indeed, the use of the stability discourse in the "anti-Falun Gong" campaign has highlighted the limits of this discourse in instances where its rhetorical claims could be measured against a material referent. Moreover, the demonstrations that have been taking place at the local level across China, most recently in Tibet, further acknowledge that the stability discourse is not always effective in persuading people to stop demonstrating in instances where grievances are specific rather than

⁸⁴³ Zhong (1996: 217–218).

systemic.⁸⁴⁴ That said, it is also possible that another *strategic moment*, similar to that in 1989, could occur which will serve to strengthen the legitimating logic of stability.

Setting stability within the broader context of CCP legitimacy, the analysis of selected articles has demonstrated that this discourse is not independent of other forms of legitimation. Indeed, the persuasiveness of the stability discourse is due, in large part, to the economic success of the reform and opening up period and the Party's propagation of a nationalist identity, particularly in the post-Tiananmen period. As such, the Party's legitimacy makes use of a number of overlapping and mutually reinforcing legitimating strategies and should be considered more in terms of dialectical effect than direct causality. Moreover, as the disaggregation of legitimacy in chapter one demonstrated, Chinese society is composed of a number of strategic groups, which all play a role in legitimating the Party's authority. Consequently, assessing the effect of the stability discourse upon the overall legitimacy of the CCP is difficult to determine; however, for the duration of the period in which China's one party-state remains without an effective mechanism to distinguish between system and regime legitimacy, challenges to the CCP's power will likely will be interpreted in terms of political instability, thus ensuring the continued use of the stability discourse.

⁸⁴⁴ Indeed, this distinction was evident in the most recent edition of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences' Blue Book. As Fewsmith points out, "overall, the data look favorable in terms of social stability. But as soon as the questions become more concrete—health care, employment, welfare issues, local government—then the answers given are less upbeat and sometimes suggestive of considerable conflict." See Fewsmith (2007: 22–23).

Appendix: Analysed Newspaper Articles (Chinese Originals)

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作者：社论

维护大局 维护稳定

中国需要稳定，当前压倒一切的大局是保持社会的稳定。无视这个大局，背离这个大局，只能给民族和国家带来灾难。

进入本世纪以来，中国所经历的动乱实在太多了。前半个世纪，帝国主义、封建主义和官僚资本主义的统治，带给我们的是战乱频仍、饥馑遍地和民不聊生。新中国建立后，国家统一了，民族独立了，有了稳定和建设的条件。由于主观指导上的失误，我们浪费了十多年的时间。算起来，我们真正在稳定的条件下一心一意搞建设，也就是二十多年。中国经济现在之所以处在这样一种落后的水平，中国政治、文化的发展现在之所以受到这样多的客观因素制约，除了历史条件这个根本原因以外，建设时间太短也是重要原因之一。而十一届三中全会以来的十年，正确的方针政策之所以能够贯彻实施，改革之所以能够顺利进行，建设之所以能够取得有目共睹的成效，首要的条件，是保持了社会的稳定。这种稳定的局面，是全国人民共同努力维护的结果。稳定来之不易。如果丢掉稳定，会是什么样子？一切有理智的负责任的人们，包括广大青年朋友们，都不难从西安、长沙最近发生的动乱中得出结论。如果听任这种局部性的动乱蔓延开来，一个很有希望的中国就会变成没有希望的中国，这是全国人民最不愿意看到的。

中国的稳定靠什么？中国的经济和社会发展靠什么？靠坚持四项基本原则，靠坚持改革开放。四项基本原则和改革开放的总方针，构成了我们国家稳定和发展的基础。这两个方面，也是党在社会主义初级阶段的理论和路线的基本要求。在当代中国，一切承认和维护这两个基本点的言论和行动，都有利于我们社会的稳定和发展。反之，一切违背这两个基本点的言论和行动，都有损于社会的稳定和发展。中国现代化的列车，要靠这两个轮子驱动，缺一不可。事实教育我们，对于一切否定四项基本原则的言论和行动，不仅要注意在理论上认识上进行严肃认真的批评教育，而且要在实际工作中采取更果断的措施坚决加以制止，决不能掉以轻心，更不能纵容姑息。党的组织，共产党员，在这个事关国家命运大局的问题上，一刻也不能丧失警惕。

在社会主义条件下，稳定和民主是统一的，从根本上说，它们没有矛盾，也不应该有矛盾。马克思主义从来认为，民主是人类文明的重大发展，是无产阶级和人民解放运动的伟大旗帜。社会主义应当把实现比资本主义更高、更广泛、更切实的民主，作为自己的一个崇高目标。共产党人历来为人民民主和社会主义民主而奋斗。党的十一届三中全会以来，我们认真总结历史的经验教训，为推进民主付出了巨大的努力。同十年前相比，我国的民主进程，无论是

理论上还是实践上，无论在国家政治生活中还是在社会生活中，无论在我们党内生活还是在党与非党的关系上，都有明显的进步，这是全国人民亲身体验得到的，也是国际公正舆论所公认的。没有十年稳定的局面，也就不会有十年民主建设的发展。

当然，我国民主政治建设的实际，离社会主义本身所应有的内涵，离人民群众的要求，也都有着相当大的距离。所以在党的十三大上，我们把建设社会主义民主政治确定为我国政治体制改革的主题。但是，政治体制改革能否顺利进行，也有赖于社会的稳定。我们所要进行的政治体制改革，是在坚持我国基本政治制度前提下的兴利除弊，而决不是“全盘西化”或照搬别国的政治模式；我们提倡和追求的民主，是切实调动广大工人、农民和知识分子积极性的民主；我们希望民主建设的实际进程，有利于社会的正常秩序和国家的长治久安，而决不应妨碍秩序和破坏稳定。二次大战以来，世界上发展中国家在民主进程上处置不当，导致经济混乱、社会动荡的，不乏其例。别国的教训，我们的经验，都说明在民主问题上，一是要按照我国的实际情况循序渐进，不能单凭感情，操切从事；二是必须在法制的轨道上推进，不能失去准绳。坚持这两条，我们才有可能避免挫折，以较小的代价取得实质上的进步；否则，就有可能适得其反，为动乱种下祸根，民主的善良愿望最终也会落空。

“文化大革命”不过是十多年前的事情。现在30岁以上的人们，谁都不会忘记那段动乱的年月。全国人民包括青年学生在内，谁也不会希望那样的悲剧重演。如果听任各种诬蔑、谩骂、攻击党和国家领导人的大、小字报满天飞，如果听任各种“夺权”和“抢占”蔓延，如果到处罢课、串联，我们的国家很可能又将陷入一场全面性的内乱。一切单纯的善良的青年学生，都应当懂得，在大规模的群众性的事件中，往往鱼龙混杂，居心叵测者正等待着你们的感情冲动和行为失当而混水摸鱼。西安、长沙发生的有人趁机搞打、砸、抢、烧的事件，还是值得警惕的。

民主的发展和社会的稳定，都有赖于法制的保障。我国宪法和法律，全国公民都必须遵守。地方性法规，当地公民都必须遵守。学校的校规，学生都必须遵守。遵守才谈得上社会的正常秩序，才有实行民主、推进民主的起码条件；不遵守就是对民主的破坏，不遵守必然酿成动乱。至于对法律、法规有这样那样的意见，对国是有这样那样的意见，也应通过合法的途径反映。现在国务院发言人已经发表谈话，对北京学生要求对话表示欢迎。对参加罢课的这部分学生来说，当前最重要的就是尽快复课。复课越早，损失越少。这是学生的切身利益，也是所有学生家长和亲友的期望。社会各方面，教育行政部门，学校的党团组织、教职员工，都应当行动起来，关心学生，劝告学生，尽快复课，越快越好。在当前条件下，复课就是维护大局、维护稳定的实际行动。

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作者：社论

稳定压倒一切

平息去年春夏之交在北京发生的那场动乱和反革命暴乱，已经一年了。一年来形势的发展，使我们进一步认识了那次动乱和反革命暴乱的性质，认识到平暴的伟大意义。

平暴不久，党中央召开十三届四中全会，提出坚持立国之本，走好强国之路，切实抓好几件大事。到六中全会，中央又作出关于加强党同人民群众联系的决定。七届全国人大三次会议，号召为实现我国政治、经济和社会的进一步稳定发展而奋斗。一年来，我国各族人民在以江泽民同志为核心的团结和坚强的党中央领导下，克服重重困难，扎扎实实工作，使我国国民经济在治理整顿和深化改革中稳步前进，工业生产开始回升，通货膨胀受到抑制，物价趋于平稳，社会治安得到加强，在廉政建设和惩治腐败方面取得了进展，政治思想战线也出现了新的转机。这些都是人民高兴、满意的事情。平暴之后有人担心，改革开放政策、农村政策、知识分子政策以及其他一系列十一届三中全会以来的好政策，会不会改变？国家能不能稳定？现在人们已经清楚地看到，党和政府的政策不但没有改变，而且在进一步发展和完善之中。现在我们国家政治稳定、经济稳定、社会稳定，我们已经度过了由于资产阶级自由化思潮泛滥，以及动乱和暴乱所造成的最困难时期。

看看今天的形势，想想去年的情景，使人更深刻地认识到，中央坚决平暴的决策，是完全正确的和必要的。那场风波是国际大气候和国内小气候造成的，是资产阶级自由化和四项基本原则的尖锐对立，是渗透与反渗透、颠覆与反颠覆、和平演变与反和平演变的激烈斗争。国内外敌对势力制造这场风波的目的，就是要推翻中国共产党的领导，颠覆社会主义制度，使中国变成资本主义发达国家的附庸。在生死存亡的关键时刻，党和政府除了坚决平暴，别无选择。如果没有去年的平暴，今天的中国不知要乱成什么样子。中国一乱，不仅影响亚太地区的和平与稳定，而且影响全世界的和平与稳定。

稳定是进行社会主义现代化建设的前提条件。没有稳定的环境，成天乱糟糟的，大家没有心思和精力去搞改革、搞建设，就是打开国门，外国人也不敢来办工厂，做生意，搞交流。社会主义民主政治建设也只能在稳定的条件下，依照宪法和法律稳步地进行，动乱只能造成无政府主义。稳定代表了人民的根本利益，是人心所向。各级党委、政府和有关部门，要把维护稳定作为当前压倒一切的任务，围绕稳定，抓好各方面的工作。各级党政领导机关和全党同志，要牢记全心全意为人民服务的根本宗旨，廉洁奉公，艰苦奋斗，尽心竭力为人民群众办事，进一步搞好治理整顿和深化改革，逐步把经济搞上去。同时，要做好思想政治

工作，充分发扬社会主义民主，让人们心平气顺，社会安定团结。

人民是要求稳定的。稳定压倒一切，是经过去年那场政治风波之后，大家的共识。我们要像保护自己的生命那样，保持国家的稳定，决不能做任何不利于稳定的事情。这样，我们的国家就大有希望，社会主义事业就大有希望。

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作者：本报评论员

保持大局稳定推进改革发展——九论抓紧处理和解决“法轮功”问题

抓紧处理和解决“法轮功”问题，根本出发点是为了进一步保持安定团结的大好局面，以利于集中精力推进改革开放和现代化建设。不切除这个毒瘤，不处置这个动乱因素，党无宁日、国无宁日、民无宁日，改革开放和现代化建设必将受到严重干扰。

李洪志借“法轮功”组织，蓄意搞乱人心，制造动乱，破坏安定团结的大好局面，以便乱中坐大，乱中施变，进而勾结国内外敌对势力，推翻共产党的领导，改变社会主义制度，颠覆人民民主专政，把全国各族人民带进黑暗邪恶的深渊。这绝非危言耸听，而是活生生的事实。

为了破坏安定团结的局面，他们蒙蔽群众跟其作恶。从已经公布的事实看，从去年以来，他们以“会功”、“弘法”为名，策划、组织、指挥了一次又一次非法聚众示威，围攻党政机关和宣传舆论等部门，直至“4·25”万余人非法聚集中南海。在这次有目的、有预谋、有组织的重大事件中，李洪志要求去的人越多越好，甚至还要制造流血事件把事闹大，再嫁祸于党和政府。用心何其毒也！他们还妖言惑众，控制人们的思想，动摇人们的信念，宣扬地球毁灭论、末世论、科学无用论、劳动无用论、政府无用论，蓄意制造混乱，破坏稳定，严重破坏了正常的工作、生产、教学、科研秩序，干扰了改革开放和社会主义现代化建设，干扰了党和政府处理国际国内一系列大事的决策和部署。

在改革开放和现代化建设的今天，谁要制造动乱，破坏安定团结的局面，谁就是国家的罪人，民族的罪人。我们要像维护自己的眼睛一样，维护来之不易的安定团结局面。稳定，对于正在集中精力进行改革开放和社会主义现代化建设的中国人民具有极其重要的意义。稳定是政治，稳定是大局，没有稳定什么事情都干不成，稳定压倒一切，这是全党和全国各族人民的共识。在“法轮功”的真相公布之后，人民群众认清了他们的政治本质和严重危害，积极投入同“法轮功”的斗争。这是一场严肃的思想政治斗争，也是一场维护社会稳定的政治斗争。

改革开放是强国之路。20多年的改革开放使我们祖国和社会主义的命运发生了根本性的变化，我国社会生产力得到空前的解放和发展，人们生活水平得到不断改善，综合国力日益增强，国际地位日益提高，这一切皆源于改革开放。坚定不移地推进改革开放，就是坚定不移地贯彻党的基本路线，就是全面推进建设有中国特色社会主义事业。改革开放只能进，不能退；只能胜，不能败。中国人民好不容易走出来的这条强国之路，决不容许受到干扰和破坏。而要进一步推进改革开放，就必须有一个稳定的国内环境和良好的国际环境。只有保持安定团结的局面，中国才能尽快强盛起来。如果放任“法轮功”蔓延，搞乱了安定团结的局面，那么，中国要么还回到闭关锁国的封闭状态，要么被“西

化”、“分化”、“弱化”，沦为帝国主义的附庸。这两种结果，对社会主义中国，对 12 亿人民，都是灾难。

当前这场斗争，有声势，有力度，“法轮功”组织受到重创，面上的组织已经瘫痪，绝大多数练习“法轮功”的群众已经脱离“法轮功”组织，首都和全国各地大局稳定。这场斗争已经初战告捷，但斗争是长期的、艰巨的、复杂的。要彻底摧毁“法轮功”组织，彻底肃清李洪志歪理邪说的流毒，还有许多工作要做。我们一定要十分注意保持大局的稳定，发挥政策的威力，减轻社会的震动，以利于全国各族人民、各界人士集中精力抓两个文明建设。各级党组织和政府，都要把维护社会稳定的工作放在十分重要的位置。

要进一步做好绝大多数“法轮功”练习群众的教育、转化和解脱工作，依法严厉打击极少数存心作乱的组织者、策划者和幕后操纵者。对于一切破坏安定团结大好局面的动乱因素，要坚决处置在萌芽状态，决不能让他们形成气候，祸国殃民。谁违了法，就不能逃脱法律的制裁。要稳定，不要动乱；要团结，不要分裂；要科学真理，不要歪理邪说。更紧密地团结在以江泽民同志为核心的党中央周围，集中精力推进改革开放和现代化建设，这是全党和全国各族人民的共同愿望！

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从构建和谐社会看稳定

党中央提出构建社会主义和谐社会，深得党心民心。胡锦涛同志今年2月发表重要讲话，对构建社会主义和谐社会的重大意义、基本特征、重要原则和主要工作等作了全面、系统的阐述，具有重大意义。我们所要建设的社会主义和谐社会，应该是民主法治、公平正义、诚信友爱、充满活力、安定有序、人与自然和谐相处的社会。全面准确地理解和谐社会的基本特征和重要原则，重要的一条就是要充分认识保持安定有序、维护社会稳定的重要意义。在实践中，人们越来越深切地体会到，构建和谐社会，必须维护社会稳定。

稳定是和谐的前提和基础。推进和谐社会建设，就必须保持社会的平安、稳定、有序。没有稳定，构建社会主义和谐社会就无从谈起。惟有稳定才能发展经济，才能达到社会和谐。构建和谐社会，需要做很多方面的工作，而保持安定有序、维护社会稳定，是最重要的工作。

保持社会稳定是大局，这是我国现代化建设的一条极其重要的经验。改革开放20多年来，我国经济始终保持持续快速健康发展，综合国力显著增强，人民生活逐步改善，各项事业生机勃勃，国际威望不断提高。这一切都同我们的社会保持团结稳定的局面密切相关。我们应该倍加珍惜来之不易的大好局面。邓小平同志曾经指出：“中国的问题，压倒一切的是需要稳定。没有稳定的环境，什么都搞不成，已经取得的成果也会失掉。”这不仅为改革开放和现代化建设的实践所充分证明，也是广大干部群众从经验和教训中得出的共同结论，是人民的共同心声。

维护社会稳定，是构建社会主义和谐社会的必然要求。当前，我们所处的国际国内环境相当复杂，既面临大好机遇，也遭遇严峻挑战。团结一心，保持稳定，我们才能抓住机遇，克服困难，应对挑战。我国现代化建设正处于一个重要战略机遇期，确保稳定，才能抓住和用好这个战略机遇期，实现经济发展和社会和谐；确保稳定，才能化解矛盾、理顺情绪，团结一切可以团结的力量，调动一切积极因素；确保稳定，才能妥善解决我们面对的各种问题，为经济社会发展创造良好的内部和外部环境。在现代化建设的大局面前，我们必须像爱护自己的眼睛一样珍惜、维护社会稳定。

维护社会稳定，实现社会和谐，一个重要问题是依法有序地看待和处理我们面对的问题。依法治国这句话，大家都拥护，这就意味着必须健全社会主义法制，充分发挥法治在促进、实现、保障社会和谐方面的重要作用。社会的发展总会面临着矛盾和问题，也总是在不断解决矛盾和问题中前进的。当今世界很不平静，会有这样那样的磨擦和问题；国内改革建设不会一帆风顺，会有这样那样的困难。解决这些矛盾和问题，只能冷静理智、依法有序地进行。

和谐与稳定符合国家和人民的根本利益，促进和谐与维护稳定是每一个公民的责任。我们都希望生活在一个和谐、稳定的社会之中，都希望国家尽快地富强起来，人民富裕起来，都希望顺利实现现代化建设的宏伟目标，那么，人人应该为和谐稳定尽责，为和谐稳定出力。只要我们上下同心，各方协力，和衷共济，团结稳定，就没有克服不了的困难。我们相信，一个更加富强、更加民主、更加文明的中国必将屹立于世界民族之林。

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