

Ideological Change in the People's Republic of China

—Analysis on the Criticism of Hu Shi, 1950's-1980's
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ABSTRACT

As the title suggests, the basic theme of this thesis is a theoretical analysis of ideological change in the People's Republic of China from the 1950's to the 1980's that is based on the criticism of Hu Shi's ideas. An introduction to Hu Shi's educational background is followed by an account of his contributions to Chinese intellectual history. The analysis of evaluations of Hu Shi in the 1950's and the 1980's forms the third part of the thesis and is highlighted.

This thesis attempts to indicate that political needs are central in the People's Republic of China. All changes, economic, cultural, and ideological, have to meet the requirements of political struggles. Changes in these areas also reflect the situation of political struggles. Marxism is always the theoretical base for evaluation in Communist China. The criticism of Hu Shi's ideas after 1949 followed this pattern. Although the evaluations of Hu Shi in the 1950's and the 1980's are different, the change is slight. The study of Hu Shi in the 1980's is still based on Marxist theory. Based on this argument, this thesis suggests that the evaluation of Hu Shi cannot make profound changes by holding Marxist theory in esteem only. The solution to this problem is to exchange culture and ideas freely with other countries, including the West.

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TRANSCRIPTION

In this thesis, the *pinyin* system is used for the names of people, cities, book titles and articles originally in Chinese. Wade-Giles transcriptions are also given in brackets where names familiar to Western readers appear.

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

China has changed. Her rulers have gradually focused their attention on politics. Before the 1890's, they usually emphasized moral ideology. Besides some necessary administrative means, they applied morality in order to dominate the country. With the opening of the national door in the 1860's to mid-1890's, some Western ideas were introduced into China, although this introduction was very slight. Politics gradually increased its importance in China. Hao Chang summarizes this development by saying, "one significant upshot of the intellectual encounter between China and the West in the latter half of the nineteenth century was the gradual shift in the late Ch'ing *ching-shih* tradition from *moral-administrative* reformism to a *political* transformation of the ground rules of traditional Chinese polity".¹ After 1949, all policies followed by the Chinese Communist Party have been centred around politics. The development of ideology also has political prerequisites. On this base appeared several ideological campaigns in Communist China, such as the anti-Rightist movement in the 1950's, the campaign to criticize Lin Biao and Confucianism in the 1970's, and those against spiritual pollution and bourgeois liberalism in the 1980's. After 1949, it becomes characteristic of China that ideological change and academic studies should be subject to

¹ Hao Chang, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and Intellectual Transition in China, 1890-1907* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: 1971), p.33. *Ching-shih* (*jingshi*) means practical statesmanship.

political needs.

The repudiation of Hu Shi [Hu Shih] in the 1950's and his re-evaluation in the 1980's are also reflections of this characteristic of contemporary China, that ideology serves political needs. The reason that I chose Hu Shi as the main topic of my thesis is that Hu Shi was a very influential figure in Chinese intellectual history. He was the product of a many-sided and complex society. The criticism directed against Hu Shi and his ideas also reflects the situation of social ideology in China.

Hu Shi was one of the Chinese scholars who completed their higher education in America. At the same time, he was a model scholar who admired Western culture. As a scholar, Hu Shi was diligent all his life and published innumerable works. He contributed to the launching of the Literary Revolution, the advocacy and practice of vernacular poetry, the investigation of Chinese classical novels, and to the study of ancient Chinese history, philosophical history, and intellectual history. His efforts to promote the use of the vernacular in writing sparked the literary and cultural movement of the 1920's. As a disciple of John Dewey, he utilized Western philosophical terminology and methodology in reinterpreting Chinese philosophy.

In the course of his life, Hu Shi was awarded thirty five honorary doctor's degrees by universities in the United States, Britain, Canada, and Hong Kong.² This is unusual not only for China, but also for the world in general. His position in Chinese literary history and his influence on academic circles should not and

² Yi Zhuxian, "What Kind of Person Is Hu Shi" in *Renwu*, No.2, 1986, p.156.

cannot be ignored. Although Hu Shi contributed to Chinese intellectual history, his opposition to Marxism could not be accepted by Communist China. Hu Shi thus became a controversial figure in modern China. Because many people did not approve of Hu Shi's political opinions, their appraisal of Hu Shi was influenced by this. For many years, people in China only criticized Hu Shi, without reference to his contributions.

In the 1950's, criticism of Hu Shi and bourgeois ideology was one of the main campaigns. It spread all over mainland China. Books and articles criticizing Hu Shi could be seen everywhere. In cultural and educational circles, in the world of literature and the arts, and in the area of theory, a widespread campaign to criticize Hu Shi's political and scholarly ideas was launched. Because his political ideas were judged reactionary, his academic contributions were completely denied. It is very hard to find a positive appraisal of Hu Shi in the articles and books published in the 1950's. At that time, one's political attitude was of crucial importance. Anyone believed to be a reactionary would be completely condemned. No one would say a good word for a reactionary, for to do so would lead to the speaker being considered to have incorrect political ideas.

An important characteristic of the campaign to criticize Hu Shi in the 1950's was that everyone had to criticize Hu Shi's ideas. Even those intellectuals who thought that the criticism of Hu Shi was not quite fair dared not express their opinions. This phenomenon was conditioned by the historical character of the Chinese intellectuals; although their ideas might be more advanced than those of their contemporaries, they usually played the role of appendages to the govern-

ment in power. Also, the lesson of history was that no one could succeed if he dared oppose his ruler publically. In the case of criticizing Hu Shi's ideas, this fatal weakness of Chinese intellectuals was revealed again. To be worldly and to play it safe, many intellectuals published articles and books to criticize Hu Shi's ideas, no matter whether the criticism was objective and correct, in order to give the impression that they were not falling behind the times under the proletarian dictatorship.

However, this does not mean that this situation will never change. With changing times, the minds of the Chinese people have also changed. Many scholars have recognized that the method of appraisal which they had used was not objective. After the end of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, especially after the late 1970's, the appraisal of Hu Shi took on new prospects. The study of historical events and figures has become more objective than it was previously. Because human beings are sophisticated creatures, they have various aspects. The complexity of human beings requires that the appraisal of a person cannot be simple and arbitrary. People in the 1980's tried to study Hu Shi, his ideology, and his scholarly methodology fairly. From the articles published in the 1980's, we can see that most scholars affirm Hu Shi's academic contributions and criticize his political views.

The development and change in the appraisal of Hu Shi from the 1950's to the 1980's reflects the evolution of Chinese views of the world. I will analyze these developments and changes by revealing the differing evaluations of Hu Shi and his thought in different periods of time. In the following chapters, I will introduce Hu

Shi's educational background; his contribution to Chinese academic circles and his various opinions; and different evaluations of Hu Shi in the 1950's and the 1980's. These chapters should contribute to an understanding of ideological changes in China since 1949.

Chapter II

BIOGRAPHY

Hu Shi was such an influential figure in the early twentieth century in China that, especially when people talk about the Vernacular Literature Movement of the May Fourth period, they cannot avoid mentioning Hu Shi's name. Besides advocating literary revolution, Hu Shi also stood for "science" and "democracy" and introduced John Dewey's experimentalism (or pragmatism),³ which the Chinese Marxists believed to be China's most dangerous enemy. Like many intellectuals of his generation, Hu Shi received both traditional Chinese and Western educations, and both left their marks on his mind. On the one hand, Hu Shi admired Western culture, advocated wholesale Westernization, and was even called the Chinese representative of the "Western bourgeois" in ideological and academic

³ Hu Shi explains the difference between the terms "pragmatism" and "experimentalism" in his "Shiyan zhuyi" (Pragmatism). The term "pragmatism" was coined by C.S. Peirce. Later, William James applied it to religious experience. John Dewey accepted Peirce's original idea and believed that "the laboratory attitude of mind" was the most important. One must practically test the truth of an idea by testing it in action. If it works, it is true; if it does not, it is false. In order to differentiate his pragmatism from James's, Dewey preferred using the terms "instrumentalism" and "experimentalism" rather than "pragmatism". The subtle differences between "pragmatism" and "experimentalism" are: pragmatism means that only pragmatic ideology is a valuable ideology; but experimentalism holds that an ideology that solves practical problems is valuable ideology. See *Collected Essays of Hu Shi* (Taipei: 1953), Vol.1, Juan 2, pp.282-298; and "Dewey's Philosophy" in *Collection of Hu Shi's Lectures* (Taipei: 1970), Vol.2, pp.271-314. Although Hu Shi understood the difference between the two terms, he sometimes used them interchangeably. See Tang Degang, *Oral Autobiography of Hu Shi*, p.119, n.20. In this paper, the terms "Dewey's pragmatism", "experimentalism" and "instrumentalism" are interchangeable.

areas by Chinese Communists; on the other hand, he observed traditional Chinese morals.⁴ In many aspects, Hu Shi's ideas, which came from John Dewey superficially, stemmed from his traditional education. For example, on the one hand, he introduced Deweyism in which "experience" was the core; on the other hand, he kept mentioning Zhu Xi's [Chu Hsi's] "learning originates in thought" (*xue yuanyu si*). The idea of "learning originates in thought" was noticed by him and was deeply rooted in his mind as early as his studies at Chengzhong Xuetang (Chengzhong School).⁵ Also, his belief in social reform through peaceful revolution instead of violent struggle was not merely borrowed from the West. It was based on the *feigong* (non-offensive) principle of Mo Zi [Mo Tzu] and the *buzheng* (non-resistance) of Lao Zi [Lao Tzu].⁶ In order to understand Hu Shi's ideology and how it was shaped by his education, we need to take his educational background into consideration. Only then can we place him in the context of his society and gauge people's response to his work, topics taken up in subsequent chapters.

⁴ The most popular story showing the deep-rooted influence of tradition on Hu Shi's life concerns his marriage. For detailed information, see Li Wancheng, "Chunfeng nianyu lijiao guan: Hu Shi de hunyin yu ai qing" (Even the New Thought is Hard to Get Through the Barrier of Lijiao: Hu Shi's Marriage and Love) in *Chinese Reader's Digest*, November, 1987.

⁵ Hu Shi, *Autobiography at Forty*, p.132.

⁶ Tang Degang [T'ang Te-kang] trans. and ed., *Oral Autobiography of Hu Shi*, p.70.

2.1 Education in His Hometown (1891-1904)

Hu Shi, originally named Hongxin, was born in Shanghai on December 17, 1891.⁷ His father, Hu Chuan (1841-1895), a native of Jixi County, Anhui Province, was a government official. Hu Chuan had been educated in the family school and had become a *xiucai* (a person who had passed the imperial examination at the first level in the Ming and Qing [Ch'ing] dynasties) at the age of twenty-four. Later, he studied in the Longmen Shuyuan (Academy of Classical Learning) in Shanghai for three years. In 1889 he married his third wife, Feng Shundi (1873-1918). Hu Shi was Hu Chuan's only child by Feng Shundi.

Under the guidance of his father, Hu Shi had learned more than seven hundred Chinese characters by the time he was four years old, while most children of his age had learned none. In 1895 Hu Chuan died from beriberi⁸ and the four-year old Hu Shi was taken care of by his mother, who was only twenty three years old, and by his uncles.

From 1895, when Hu Shi went back to Jixi with his mother from Taiwan where his father had been in office, until 1904, when he went to Shanghai with his third brother to receive an official education, Hu Shi received a traditional education in the family school in Jixi. Because Hu Shi had already learned approximately one thousand characters before entering school, he did not need to read the usual chil-

⁷ The general information about Hu Shi's early life in the following pages is from his *Autobiography at Forty*. Some English versions of the original information are taken from Howard Boorman's *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*.

⁸ Other sources say that Hu Chuan died in a battle with Japanese invaders in Taiwan. See Bai Jian "Hu Shi" in Zhen Zhuo ed. *Biography of Educators in Modern China*, p.343.

dren's primary books. The tutor of the family school, one of his paternal uncles, used the *Xue weiren shi* (*Poem of How to Behave*), written by Hu's father Hu Chuan, a Neo-Confucian of the Cheng-Zhu [Ch'eng-Chu] School, as his textbook. The text concerns Neo-Confucian rules of behavior in society. Zhu Xi was also read, and his influence on Hu Shi's intellectual development cannot be separated from Hu Shi's father's teaching. In later years, Hu Shi read many of Zhu Xi's works, such as the *Xiaoxue* (*Lesser Learning*). Hu Shi respected Zhu Xi very much, and Zhu Xi's ideas stayed with him all his life.⁹ From the *Poem of How to Behave*, Hu Shi learned that one's behavior should not be heretical: everyone should study hard, behave well, and keep to traditional morality.¹⁰

Hu Shi received a classical primary education because of Hu Chuan's testament to Feng Shundi, which said that Hu Shi was clever and talented, and should go to school to study.¹¹ Hu Shi read widely both in history and in popular novels, although reading popular novels was not considered part of a regular education. Besides the classics that every student was supposed to read in school, he started to read popular fiction when he was nine years old. Before he transferred to schools in Shanghai, he had read many popular novels, such as *Shuihu zhuan* (*Water Margin*), *Honglou meng* (*Dream of the Red Chamber*), and *Rulin waishi* (*The Scholars*), while most Chinese students at that age were only reading the classics. In his spare time, Hu Shi often told stories that he had learned from his novel reading to his cousins. In order to speak easily and be understood, he had to retell the sto-

⁹ Lin Yusheng [Lin Yu-sheng], *The Crisis of Chinese Consciousness*, p.100.

¹⁰ Hu Shi, *Autobiography at Forty*, pp.36-38.

¹¹ *Ibid*, p.34.

ries in the contemporary vernacular. This practice laid a good foundation for his advocacy and practice of vernacular literature later.

In his youth, Hu Shi had been exposed to the influence of Buddhism. He grew up in an environment in which his mother and the other women of the household were faithful believers in Buddhism. He too had believed in the prestige of joss. However, at the age of ten, Hu Shi started to read the *Zizhi tongjian* (*Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government*).¹² It not only became his first step in the study of history, but also exerted a tremendous influence on him, causing him to renounce his Buddhist beliefs.¹³ He found atheistic messages in Fan Zhen's [Fan Chen] "Shenmie lun" (Essay on the Extinction of the Soul) which were quoted in the *Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government* and in Sima Guang's [Ssu-ma Kuang] own comments on the non-existence of hell and supernatural beings. The idea that one's spirit dies with one's body impressed Hu Shi greatly, and he began to doubt the existence of a deity. This suspicion helped to lay the foundation for his acceptance of Darwin's evolutionism in later years. While studying in Shanghai, he had chanced to read Yan Fu's [Yen Fu's] translation of Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics*, and he soon became an enthusiastic follower of this work.¹⁴ All these books reinforced his anti-religious views and became the basis of his advocacy of scientific methodology.

¹² The *Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government* was compiled by Sima Guang (1019-1086) in the late eleventh century when China was in the Song Dynasty. It is a chronological account of China's history from 403 B.C. to A.D. 959.

¹³ Hu Shi, *Autobiography at Forty*, PP.75-78.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p.98.

2.2 Education in Shanghai (1904-1910)

The end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century was the period of the penetration of Western politics, economics, science and culture into China. Shanghai was a coastal and cosmopolitan city, so teaching Western science, reading Western books, and discussing current affairs were in fashion in schools there. This was the social milieu that Hu Shi, in company with his third elder brother (half-brother), found when he arrived there to attend "modern schools" in 1904. He stayed in Shanghai for six years and attended four schools: Meixi Xuetang, Chengzhong Xuetang, Zhongguo Gongxue (China National Institute), and Zhongguo Xingongxue (China New National Institute). They were all influenced by Western "civilization" and were called "new schools".

In those "new schools", the students learned Chinese, English, mathematics, physics, chemistry, and some other natural sciences. Hu Shi not only learned natural science in such schools, but also came in contact with Western ideas. In 1905, Hu Shi entered the Chengzhong Xuetang, where he encountered more Western ideas. His first knowledge of the Darwinian concept of change came from his teacher Yang Qianli (Tianyi), a Chinese teacher with new ideas. Yang used Yan Fu's translation of Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics*¹⁵ as his text book. The concept of "evolutionary ethics, the survival of the fittest" impressed Hu Shi very much, as it did many Chinese intellectuals at that time. That he chose "Shi" as his name reflected his allegiance to the climate of opinion in contemporary society. As Hu Shi mentions in his autobiography, talking about evolution became a general style among the intellectuals in the early twentieth century in China. The stylish Dar-

¹⁵ Its Chinese title is *Tianyan lun*.

winian catchwords, such as "struggle for existence", "survival of the fittest", and "natural selection" appeared in almost every article. Taking the names "Jingcun" (survival) and "Tianze" (natural selection) was a fashion. "Shi" means "the fittest". So his name was the souvenir of a fashion.¹⁶

In the course of his one and a half years at the Chengzhong Xuetao, Hu Shi did a great deal of extracurricular reading. Among these readings, Liang Qichao [Liang Ch'i-ch'ao] had the most influence on Hu Shi. In his *Autobiography at Forty*, Hu Shi wrote that during his study in Shanghai Liang Qichao had done him an infinite favour. Two of Liang Qichao's books found their places in the deepest recesses of his mind, the *Xinmin shuo* (*On the New Citizen*) and the *Zhongguo xueshu sixiang bianqian zhi dashi* (*General Circumstances of the Development of Chinese Scholarship*). In his *On the New Citizen*, Liang pointed out that

the weak and outmoded Chinese nationality needed to be changed into a fresh and vivid nationality. None could survive when his arms were broken, his five internal organs were rotten, his physique was wounded, and his blood vessels were empty; no country could exist if its people were foolish, poor, cowardly, weak, lax and chaotic.¹⁷

Hu Shi believed that the greatest contribution of *On the New Citizen* was that it pointed out that the Chinese lacked many of the virtues of Westerners. Liang's *On the New Citizen* opened a new world for him; it convinced Hu that there were better nationalities and higher cultures outside of China. Liang's *General Circumstances of the Development of Chinese Scholarship* showed Hu that there were other academic works besides the *Si shu* (*Four Books*) and *Wu jing* (*Five Classics*).¹⁸

¹⁶ Hu Shi, *Autobiography at Forty*, pp.99-100.

¹⁷ Quoted in *Ibid*, pp.101-104. All quotations originally in Chinese in this paper are my translation.

From 1906 to 1908, Hu Shi attended the Zhongguo Gongxue (China National Institute) which had been established in 1905 by Chinese students who had studied in Japan. It was a radical institute. Most of the teachers and students were revolutionists. Revolutionary books and journals were popular in the Institute. Many people cut their queues off to demonstrate their anti-Manchu sentiments. Hu Shi was too young at that time to be persuaded to be a revolutionist, but he joined the Jingye xuehui (Struggle Association), an organization with revolutionary tendencies, wrote many articles for its newspaper, *Jingye xunbao* (*The Struggle*), and soon became editor of the paper. He published vernacular essays, novels, and essays on current affairs in the newspaper. This not only gave him a good opportunity to organize and express his ideas, but also gave him a chance to practise vernacular writing for more than one year.

By 1908, along with many other students who were dissatisfied with the constitution of the China National Institute, Hu Shi left the school and established the China New National Institute. However, the China New National Institute did not have enough money to attract enough teachers away from the old school, so they had to look for teachers among their fellow students. Hu Shi was invited to teach English to the lower grades.

Although Hu Shi had attended three schools, he had never received a diploma. If he had continued to be a student, he would have graduated the following year, but because he could no longer afford to go to school, he accepted the invitation

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p.105. Four Books include *Daxue* (*The Great Learning*), *Zhongyong* (*The Doctrine of the Mean*), *Lunyu* (*The Analects of Confucius*), and *Mengzi* (*Mencius*). Five Classics include *Shijing* (*The Book of Songs*), *Shujing* (*The Book of History*), *Yijing* (*The Book of Changes*), *Liji* (*The Book of Rites*), and *Chunqiu* (*The Spring and Autumn Annals*).

and taught English thirty hours a week. Besides teaching English, he did editorial work for survival. However, the China New National Institute only existed for a little more than one year and then merged back into the China National Institute because of persistent financial difficulties. Because of their feeling of solidarity, many students, including Hu Shi, did not want to go back to the China National Institute. They believed that it was a disgrace to go back to the old school.¹⁹

With the closure of the school, Hu Shi's ideals were shattered; meanwhile he was frustrated by financial difficulties. He let himself degenerate into a playboy. In the spring of 1910 he was detained for one night because of coming to blows with a policeman while drunk. Afterwards, embarrassed on his own account and ashamed of embarrassing the school for which he worked, he decided to mend his ways. With the help and encouragement of his friends, Hu Shi decided to take the examinations for the Boxer Indemnity Scholarship. After two months of diligent preparation, he passed the examinations and became one of seventy successful candidates to go to study in the United States in 1910. From this time on he started to use Hu Shi as his formal name.²⁰

By 1910, Hu Shi had finished his six years of study and work in Shanghai. This period of time had been very important in his life. He had read some translations of Western books such as Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics*, Mill's *On Liberty*, and Montesquieu's *L'Esprit des lois*.²¹ These books made him familiar with the West-

¹⁹ See Hu Shi *Autobiography at Forty*, pp.160-161.

²⁰ Hu Shi used the names Simi or Mier before he attended school. After going to school, he used Hongxin as his official name until 1910 when he went to the United States.

²¹ Howard Boorman ed., *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, p.168.

ern ideas of science and democracy. These ideas of science and democracy became the spirit that Hu Shi advocated in the "May Fourth Era". Also, Liang Qichao's essays in the *Xinmin congbao* (*New Citizen*) had widened Hu Shi's field of vision and taught him how to see Chinese traditional ideology historically. It was Liang's *General Circumstances of the Development of Chinese Scholarship* that became the spark which lit Hu Shi's aspiration to write his *History of Chinese Philosophy*. Hu Shi not only received new ideas, but also used vernacular writing to express his opinions. This period laid the foundations for his later intellectual development.

2.3 Influence of Western Culture and Education (1910–1917)

In August 1910, Hu Shi left Shanghai for the United States and started to pursue his seven years of study in America. It was in this period of time that Hu Shi combined John Dewey's philosophy with his own on the basis of Chinese traditional ideology, and applied it to his scholarship.

When Hu Shi arrived in America in September 1910, he studied Agriculture at Cornell University in Ithaca. Before leaving for the United States, his brother had seen him off and had told him that he should study either railway engineering or mineral and metallurgical engineering. Popular opinion then held that China's greatest need was industry. If Hu Shi had studied engineering, he could have both rejuvenated family property and revitalized national industry after he went back to China. However, Hu Shi had no interest in railways or mining. In order not to let his brother down, he chose agriculture. He wanted to be an agricultural expert

to serve his motherland. Also, the College of Agriculture did not charge tuition fees, so he could save some money to subsidize his family.²² However, agriculture was not what he was really interested in, so in early 1912, he transferred to the School of Arts and Sciences, where he majored in philosophy and minored in politics, economics, and literature.

In the course of his study, Hu Shi became interested in American politics. As he had done before he went abroad, Hu Shi gained knowledge from outside reading as well as from his formal course of study in his undergraduate years in America. He was also active in society. He visited Congress and the House of Representatives and participated in both Chinese and American students' activities.

Both the Xinhai [Hsin-hai] Revolution²³ in China in 1911 and the presidential election in the United States in 1912 reinforced Hu Shi's interests in politics, which remained with him throughout his life, although he seldom participated in practical politics. While participating in political activities in America, Hu Shi was impressed by the spirit of democracy. He admired this democracy with all his heart and tried to advocate it after he went back to China.²⁴ In May 1913, Hu Shi was elected president of the International Federation of Students in Cornell University. He was also elected to Phi Beta Kappa, the most famous and respected American national honor society; meanwhile, he became involved in several of the

²² Geng Yunzhi, *Chronicle of Hu Shi's Life*, p.332.

²³ The Xinhai Revolution in 1911 overthrew the Qing Dynasty which had dominated China for more than two hundred and seventy years. This marked the end of imperial rule and the birth of Nationalist China.

²⁴ Tang Degang trans. and ed., *Oral Autobiography of Hu Shi*, pp.43-44, pp.45-47, p.49.

pacifist organizations that flourished before and during World War I.²⁵ That Hu Shi got involved in pacifist organizations and became a cosmopolitan actually stemmed from his traditional education.²⁶

After receiving a B.A. degree in 1914, he remained at Cornell for another year to begin graduate work in philosophy. During this period, Hu Shi and Zhao Yuanren [Y.R. Chao], Hu's classmate, formed a Science Association and published a monthly magazine based on the spirit of science, *Ke xue (Science)*, with the help of several other Chinese students. The purpose of the magazine was to "promote science, advocate industry, examine and approve terminology, and spread knowledge".²⁷ This magazine became the first among Chinese students in America; and the Science Association was the first Chinese science organization established in America. When those students went back to China, they took it with them. It existed in China for several years and contributed to the promotion of science in China. Hu Shi participated and assisted throughout its publication.

In the summer of 1915, Hu Shi discovered John Dewey's writing on experimentalism, and in September he left Ithaca for New York City. He entered Columbia University to do his Ph.D. in philosophy under John Dewey and became Dewey's enthusiastic follower. According to him, the reason that he chose Columbia University and Dewey was:

²⁵ Boorman, *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, p.169.

²⁶ The ideas of nonresistance and noncontention can be found in the works of Lao Zi and Mo Zi, which Hu Shi knew very well. He often cited Lao Zi and Mo Zi in his *Diary of Study Abroad*. For example, he quoted Lao Zi's words, "if you do not contend with anyone, no one will contend with you," (p.436.) and combined this idea with the pacifism which he got from Western philosophers.

²⁷ Geng Yunzhi, *Chronicle of Hu Shi's Life*, p.341.

The Department of Philosophy in Cornell was occupied by a new idealist school. So-called "new idealism" is also called "objective idealism". It is a school of neo-Hegelianism of the nineteenth century English philosopher, Thomas Hill Green. The school of philosophy in Cornell always tried to find a target to criticize. Dewey was one of their main targets. ... After auditing the seminar criticizing Dewey and reading Dewey's works in order to attend the seminar, I gradually became interested in Dewey and his philosophy. Since then, I tried to read as many experimentalist books as possible. By the summer of 1915, I decided to study philosophy under Dewey in Columbia University after I had read and studied experimentalist books systematically.²⁸

Hu Shi's doctoral dissertation, "The Development of the Logical Method in Ancient China" (*Zhongguo gudai zhexue fangfa zhi jinhua shi*) completed in April 1917, was intended to discover "pragmatic" tendencies in early Chinese philosophy.

That Hu Shi chose Dewey as his object of worship had its basis in Hu Shi's education in Chinese traditional philosophy. The concept that "learning originates in thought" influenced him very much. He believed that the power of ideas played a very important role in shaping life and history. This idea can be found in his earliest writing when he was in Shanghai. In his first vernacular short story, "Zhen ru dao" (The Island of Unchanging Reality), published in *The Struggle* in 1908, he criticized the Chinese for doing things without thinking, "It is a pity that we Chinese have never been willing to think, and only know how to drift with the tide and echo what others say. The reason that our countrymen have come to be fools like this, in my view, is simply because of their unwillingness to think".²⁹ After going abroad and encountering Deweyism, he found that Dewey's thought was not totally strange, but rather reinforced ideas he already held. He could accept Dewey's philosophy without abandoning completely that with which he was familiar. In this

²⁸ Tang Degang ed. *Oral Autobiography of Hu Shi*, p.104.

²⁹ Hu Shi, *Autobiography at Forty*, pp.130-132.

case, he used Dewey's theory to confirm and strengthen ideas which in many cases he already held.³⁰

Furthermore, Dewey's emphasis on the efficacy of thought was explained using terms such as "scientific method" which had all the more attraction for Hu Shi because the term "science" was a fashionable word for the Chinese in the early twentieth century. Above all, Dewey defined his "scientific method" as experimentalism or instrumentalism, which combined knowledge and deed. It also matched Hu Shi's original ideas derived from his traditional education. The term "experience", which is the core of Dewey's philosophy, filled a gap in Hu Shi's ideology; this was the most important thing he learned from Dewey.³¹ Hu Shi summed it up as "hypothesize boldly, identify carefully" (*dadān de jiashe, xiaoxin de qiuzheng*), a motto that remained the method of his own scholarship all his life as well as being his recommendation to others. Applying this method, Hu Shi reached new levels of achievement in his later study of classical literature.

In June 1917, Hu Shi finished his seven years of study abroad and left the United States.³² In July, he landed in Shanghai. His education in America led him

³⁰ Jerome B. Grieder, *Hu Shi and the Chinese Renaissance*, Massachusetts: 1970, p.45.

³¹ Hu Shi mentioned this in many places. See also *Oral Autobiography of Hu Shi*, pp.106-110.

³² Hu Shi did not get Ph.D. degree as soon as he finished his dissertation. Compiling the *Columbia University Master's Essays and Doctoral Dissertations on Asia, 1875-1956* (New York: Columbia University Libraries, 1957) as part of the Columbia bicentennial celebration project, the president of Oriental Library, Howard P. Linton, was surprised that he could not find any record of Hu Shi in 1917 volume. This bibliography was published in 1957. Hu Shi's doctoral dissertation was listed under the year 1927. In 1961 Chinese library scientist Yuan Tongli [Yuen T'ung-li], compiling *A Guide to Doctoral Dissertation by Chinese Students in America, 1905-1960* (Washington D.C.: Sino-American

to mix Chinese traditional ideas and Western ideas. Before he went abroad, Hu Shi was influenced by Liang Qichao's writing:

What is the way to rescue China from jeopardy and to seek a path of progress? The answer is: only after she gets rid of the flagrant and chaotic constitutions that have existed in China for thousands of years, will she be able to smash the arena of manoeuvre of those corrupt officials and to open up a progressive way. She must ban the rotten and ambiguous doctrines that have ruled China for thousands of years, and then those pedants could not pervert the law by playing with legal phraseology to cheat the people."³³

After he transferred to Columbia University, Hu put most of his energy into writing his dissertation and engaging in literary reform. Confirmed in his traditional ideas by Dewey's thought, Hu Shi was opposed to violent revolution. He believed the best way to deliver the country from its current plight was through education. In order to realize universal education, Hu Shi believed that Chinese literary

Cultural Society, 1961) was also puzzled. He put Hu's dissertation under 1917 and appended the note "(1927)". But these two bibliographies did not come to the Chinese intelligentsia's attention. In 1977 a younger scholar, Tang Degang, who had a friendship with Hu Shi, published a reminiscent essay about Hu Shi, "Qifen chuantong, sanfen yanghuo --- huiyi Hu Shizhi xiansheng he koushu lishi zhisan" ("Seventy Percent Traditional, Thirty Percent Western --- Recalling Mr. Hu Shizhi and Oral History (3)") in a popular magazine *Zhuanji wenxue* (*Biographical Literature*) distributed in Taipei. In the article, Tang said that Hu Shi got his doctoral degree in 1927. When Tang's articles were published in 1977, discussion and debate started. Writing *Hu Shi yanjiu lungao* (*Essays on Hu Shi*) Geng Yunzhi systematized a chronicle of Hu Shi's life, and inferred the time that Hu Shi got his doctoral degree according to Hu's diary and his letters to his mother and friends. Geng assumed that Hu Shi finished his doctoral dissertation, but he failed to pass oral defense. Hu published his dissertation after he went back to China in 1922, and got the degree in 1927 (pp.292-318). According to another assumption (represented by C.T. Hsia), Hu Shi did not get Ph.D. degree in 1917 because he could not afford to print one hundred copies of his dissertation for the university at that time. According to the policy of Columbia University, students could not get their degree until they met the requirements, including handing in one hundred copies of dissertations.

³³ Quoted in Hu Shi, *Autobiography at Forty*, pp.103-104 from Liang's *Xinmin suo: lun jinbu* (*On New Citizen: On Progress*)

reform or revolution was needed.³⁴

Seven years of study in the United States made Hu Shi ready to serve his motherland by introducing and applying John Dewey's experimentalist philosophy in China. Dewey's theory lent a scientific base to the ideas that he had gained from traditional education. Hu Shi became the most faithful disciple and preacher of Dewey's experimentalism in China. He used the experimentalist method in his political attitude and scholarship in later years.

³⁴ These ideas can be find in Hu Shi's *Diary of Study Abroad* and in his letters to his friends.

Chapter III

HU SHI'S INTELLECTUAL ROLE IN MODERN CHINA

After Hu Shi returned from the United States, he began to put into practice all he had learned from both traditional Chinese education and Western education. He advocated vernacular literature in order to lay a foundation for the popularizing of education and introduced Western ideas, especially Deweyism, in order to end the dominance of traditional Chinese ideology and to enable China to catch up with the contemporary world. His contributions to Chinese literary and intellectual history were concentrated in the first twenty years after he went back to China in 1917. From 1937 to 1962, when he died in Taiwan, he put more energy into education. This chapter will delineate Hu Shi's views on literature, ideology, politics, and education.

3.1 Contribution to Chinese Culture

On his return to China, Hu Shi began applying Dewey's philosophy and methodology to China. His major contribution to Chinese culture lay in his advocacy and practice of the vernacular literary movement, his introduction of pragmatism to China, and his study of Chinese philosophy and classical literature.

Influenced by ancient Chinese philosophers, as found in the Classics, and confirmed in his beliefs by exposure to the work of Dewey, Hu Shi believed that only

universal education could rescue China from the harassment of foreigners. In his *Diary of Study Abroad*, he wrote that if the country was strong, it would never be destroyed. This strength could be achieved by promoting education and fostering talented people.³⁵ However, the Chinese classical style of writing was a disadvantage to popular education because it was difficult to learn and was removed from everyday use. Vernacularization of the Chinese written language became the chief task of universal education.

The vernacular movement played an important role in the development of Chinese culture. Just as European literature had been emancipated from Latin and had come to use various languages, the vernacular movement in the May Fourth period emancipated the Chinese written language from monopolization by the intelligentsia to become a tool of popular expression and discussion.³⁶ Thus the vernacular movement had great repercussions and spread rapidly in Chinese educational circles and in society as a whole.

Actually, vernacular literature was not an entirely new development in China in the early twentieth century. Vernacular fiction had existed as early as the Tang [T'ang] Dynasty (618-907).³⁷ However, vernacular literature had not been

³⁵ Hu Shi, *Diary of Study Abroad* (3), pp.832-833.

³⁶ Li Zeho, "Hu Shi, Chen Duxiu and Lu Xun" in *Fujian pinglun (Fujian Review)*, No.2, 1988, p.2.

³⁷ See Hu Shi, "Baihua wenxue shi zixu" (Introduction to *History of Vernacular Literature*) in *Collected Essays of Hu Shi*, Vol.3, Juan 7, pp.625-26. Hu Shi also mentioned that there were many vernacular poems in Tang Dynasty (pp.33-36) in his "Lishi de wenxue guannian lun" (On Historical View of Literature) written in 1917. W.L. Idema writes in his Introduction to *Chinese Vernacular Fiction* that the vernacular novels and stories appeared no later than the late sixteenth century (p.XI).

recognized by the orthodox Confucian aesthetics for all those centuries. It was merely a form of entertainment, without any standing in scholarship. From the seventeenth century on, the vernacular language absorbed many aspects of the classical Chinese literary language and laid a foundation for the vernacular becoming a national language. By the late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), some intellectuals, aware of the Meiji Restoration of Japan and of Modern Western countries, realized that if China wanted to change her situation, she needed to have a standard literary language which could be used by the whole nation, instead of only by a small elite.³⁸ By the early twentieth century, the necessity for literary reform, more specifically, the necessity for vernacularization, became a country-wide issue among Chinese intellectuals. A great change in both the form and the substance of literature took place after the May Fourth Movement. Hu Shi, as one of the intellectuals among the May Fourth generation, contributed to vernacularizing the Chinese language.

His idea of vernacularizing the Chinese language can be traced back to the early years of his life when he studied in the United States. In 1915, Chinese students in the eastern U.S. formed the Research Institute of Literary Science. The reform of the Chinese writing system was discussed then. Zhong Wenao, a member of the supervisory committee for Chinese students in America, vigorously advocated abolishing characters and using alphabetic writing. Hu Shi and Zhao Yuanren disagreed. In the annual meeting of the Research Institute, Hu Shi read his essay "Ruhe keshi wuguo wenyan yiyu jiaoshou" (How to Make Classical Chinese Convenient for Teaching), which discussed the literary reform from the

³⁸ Milena Dolezelova-Velingerova, "Introduction" in *The Chinese Novel at the Turn of the Century* (Toronto: 1980), pp.4-6.

aspect of Chinese writing. Zhao's essay was "Wuguo wenzi nengfou shiyong zimu-zhi jiqi jinxing fangfa" (Whether Chinese Script Could Employ Alphabetic Writing and How Alphabetic Writing Could Be Used), which discussed the reform from the aspect of spoken Chinese. Their essays attracted the attention of many people.³⁹ Hu Shi demonstrated that the reason that Chinese characters were difficult to popularize was not because of the Chinese characters themselves, but because of the teaching method. Classical Chinese was a "half-dead language", while vernacular writing was a living language. People without an education in classical Chinese could not understand the meaning directly from the text; they had to translate it into the vernacular first. This suggestion became the starting point of his road to literary revolution.⁴⁰

With the aim of "Saving the Nation by Education", Hu Shi threw himself into the vernacular literary revolution. He belonged to a small group of intellectuals who gathered around *Xin qingnian* (*New Youth*) in Beijing.⁴¹ In order to promote the purpose of the literary revolution, he published a number of essays in *New Youth* on aspects of the general problem of cultural regeneration, as well as on intellectual reform and pragmatism. He wanted to rescue the nation with his

³⁹ Bai Jian, "Hu Shi" in *Biography of Educators in Modern China*, p.356.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p.356.

⁴¹ The members of this group were Chen Duxiu [Ch'en Tu-hsiu], Li Dazhao [Li Ta-chao], Qian Xuantong [Ch'ien Hsuan-t'ung], Gao Yihan [Kao Yi-han], Shen Yimou, Hu Shi. Later Zhou Zuoren [Chou Tso-jen], his brother, Zhou Shuren [Chou Shu-jen] (pen-name Lu Xun [Lu Hsun]), and others joined them. The efforts they made were against traditional values. *New Youth* was a magazine founded by Chen Duxiu in September 1915 in Shanghai. Its aim was to prompt the idea of democracy and science. The emergence of *New Youth* was believed to be the mark of the beginning of the May Fourth Movement. It was named *Qingnian* (*Youth*) before the second volume.

voice and his pen.⁴² In January 1917, He published "Wenxue gailiang chuyi" (Tentative Proposals for Literary Reform) in *New Youth*. The article systematically expounded eight prerequisites of literary reform:

Scholars should: 1. write about something that exists; 2. not imitate the ancients; 3. be particular about grammar; 4. not moan and groan without being ill; 5. get rid of trite themes and polite formulae; 6. not use allusion; 7. avoid parallelism; 8. and not avoid using common words and folk adages.⁴³

Hu Shi took a mild stance in this article. For example, he used the word "reform" instead of "revolution". After Hu's "Tentative Proposals for Literary Reform" appeared, Chen Duxiu published a more radical article, "Wenxue geming lun" (On a Revolution in Literature), which explicitly advocated three doctrines of literary revolution:

Repudiate ornate and flattering aristocratic literature, build unassuming and lyrical popular literature; repudiate extravagant classical literature, build fresh and honest realistic literature; repudiate pedantry and abstruse pedantic literature, build understandable and popular public literature.⁴⁴

Following the "Tentative Proposals for Literary Reform", Hu Shi wrote additional essays arguing the same case. In his "Jianshe de wenxue geming lun" (On a Constructive Revolution in Literature), published in 1918, Hu Shi pointed out that the basic aim of literary revolution was to construct a literature with the national language. "Only if there is a literature with the national language is the language a real national language."⁴⁵ This so-called literature with the national language is

⁴² Hu Shi, *Diary of Study Abroad* (3), pp.832-833.

⁴³ Hu Shi, "Wenxue gailiang chuyi" (Tentative Proposals for the Improvement of Literature) in *Collected Essays of Hu Shi*, Taipei: 1953., Vol.I, Juan 1, p.5.

⁴⁴ Chen Duxiu, "On a Revolution in Literature" in *Ibid*, p.18.

⁴⁵ Hu Shi, "On a Constructive Literary Revolution" *Ibid*, p.57.

vernacular literature. Again, Hu Shi described classical Chinese as a "dead language" in this article. He supported his contention by mentioning a number of literary works of the past according to their degree of popularity. He believed that all valuable literary works in China were vernacular literature or those close to vernacular literature. The rest were antiques and should be put in a museum. The reason that relatively recent literary works such as *Water Margin*, *Monkey King*, and *Dream of the Red Chamber* were called living fiction was that they were written in the vernacular. Classical Chinese, which is a dead language, could not produce a living literature because it could not express the author's meaning and feeling clearly and directly.⁴⁶ In this article, Hu Shi issued a public challenge to classical Chinese.

Besides advocating the vernacular in theory, Hu Shi employed vernacular writing in practice. He wrote many vernacular poems, although they were not outstanding. Those poems in the vernacular style were collected in *Changshi ji* (*Experiments*), published in 1919. This collection of poems was published when the new literature and old literature were in direct conflict. It was an experiment in writing a new style of poem. Here Hu Shi applied to his literary revolution his "laboratory attitude of mind" learned from John Dewey. In his Introduction to *Experiments*, Hu Shi wrote:

We believe that the vernacular does have the possibility of literature. It is the sharpest weapon of the new literature. But most of the people in China do not believe so ---- the thing that they badly disagree on is whether the vernacular can be the sharpest weapon of the literary composition in rhyme. The way to counter this disagreement is by the scientific experimental method. A scientist treats something that has not been proved as a hypothesis, he will not reach a conclusion until he examines it in action. What we advocate,

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, pp.57-59.

that poems can be written in the vernacular, has not been accepted; therefore, it is a hypothetical theory. In the last three years, what we did was to examine this hypothesis, ... to see if we can write good poems in the vernacular, and if the vernacular poems can be better than the poems written in classical Chinese. This is our experimental attitude.⁴⁷

In order to espouse the importance of the vernacular correctly, to present the concept that the Chinese literary history of the past thousand years represented the end of classical Chinese literature and the rise of vernacular literature, and to make people understand the position of vernacular literature in Chinese literary history, Hu Shi published the first volume of his *Baihua wenxue shi* (*History of Vernacular Literature*) in 1928. It covered the period through the Tang Dynasty. Although this book is called *History of Vernacular Literature*, Hu Shi frequently mentions the history of classical Chinese, thus showing that vernacular literature had its background in classical Chinese. In other words, it showed that vernacular literature was not irrelevant to classical Chinese, but was developed from classical Chinese. Furthermore, when he discussed a writer or a school of literature, he usually included some representative works. So his work is not just a history of literature, but also an anthology. Unfortunately, as with his history of philosophy, he never published the remaining volumes.

Besides his advocacy of the vernacular literary revolution, Hu Shi's contribution to Chinese culture is also found in his textual research and historical writing. *Zhongguo zhexueshi dagang* (*Outline History of Chinese Philosophy I*), based on his dissertation and combined with what he learned from his teaching and studying, was published in 1919. *Hongloumeng kaozheng* (*Textual Research on the Dream of*

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, pp.202-203.

the Red Chamber) was published in 1921. In his *Outline History of Chinese Philosophy* (1), Hu Shi made a systematic study of Chinese classical philosophers and their works. He believed that Western methods, which emphasized efforts to improve and perfect crude original formulations, were not totally alien to the Chinese.⁴⁸ He applied a method of hypothesis and identification to the study of the ancient ideology. This method took the place of the traditional methodology, which had used mythology as information in the study of philosophical history. This book was the first philosophical study done according to Western methods and was welcomed by many intellectuals. Liang Qichao praised the author's "sharp observation, good organization, and bold creative power".⁴⁹

Hu's *Outline History of Chinese Philosophy* altered the way the classics were perceived. It taught people to read the Classics critically. This sceptical approach to the Classics affected many younger scholars. For example, Gu Jie-gang [Ku Chieh-kang] started to work on the textual research of ancient history under the guidance of Hu Shi's ideas. His *Gushi bian* (*A Symposium on Ancient History*) raised many questions and laid a foundation for eliminating the old model and ideas from historical study in modern China. Gu's contribution owed a great deal to the inspiration of Hu Shi and others of Hu Shi's generation. He mentioned in *A Symposium on Ancient History* that "had I not met Meng Zhen (Fu Sinian) and Hu Shizhi (Hu Shi), and not encountered *New Youth's* advocacy of ideological revolution, ...if Shizhi and Xuanton (Qian Xuanton) had not helped to raise my interest in compiling materials of textual research, and encouraged my initial scepticism,

⁴⁸ Grieder, *Hu Shi and the Chinese Renaissance*, pp.162-163.

⁴⁹ Geng Yunzhi, *Chronicle of Hu Shi's Life*, p.365.

my study of ancient history would not have progressed so fast.⁵⁰

Hu Shi devoted a great deal of time to using the experimental method to study Chinese literary history and philosophy in such works as his textual criticism of *Water Margin*, *Dream of the Red Chamber*, and *Monkey King*, in his verification of Zen history and Buddhist Scriptures, and in his differentiation of verity from fabrication. Besides this, he put much of his energy into introducing his methodology in such works as "Qingdai xuezhe de zhixue fangfa" (The Intellectual Methodology of Qing Dynasty Scholars) published in 1921, "Guoxue jikan fakan xuanyan" (Inaugural Announcement of the *Chinese Studies Quarterly*) published in 1923, "Gushi taolun de duhou gan" (Impression of Reading the *Discussion on Ancient History*) published in 1924, "Zhixue de fangfa yu cailiao" (The Methods and Materials of Scholarship) published in 1928, and "Pinglun jinren kaoju Lao Zi niandai de fangfa" (Critique on Current Scholars' Methods of Dating the *Lao Zi*) published in 1933. What he was trying to do was to advocate and teach people the scientific method of research and study which he had learned from Western education.

In summary then, it is impossible to ignore Hu Shi's contributions to Chinese literature in the 1920's. Hu Shi's experimental methodology, especially his "hypothesize boldly, identify carefully", played an important role in Chinese philosophical, literary and historical studies. Traditionally, Chinese scholars had relied on the findings of older generations and supported those by additional research. This method had greatly retarded the development of research in China. Hu Shi assisted scholarship to make a giant step.

⁵⁰ Geng Yunzhi, "Ping Hu Shi de lishixue chengjiu jiqi lilun he fangfa" (Critique of Hu Shi's Contribution to Historical Study and His Theory and Method) in *Essays on Hu Shi*, p.70.

3.2 Hu Shi and Dewey's Philosophy

That Hu Shi was called Dewey's disciple is not strange. He was not only Dewey's enthusiastic follower, as mentioned in the previous chapter, but was also an active propagandist of Dewey's philosophy in China. When Dewey lectured in China from 1919 to 1921, Hu Shi was his interpreter most of the time. In order to acquaint Chinese students with pragmatism, Hu Shi wrote articles and gave lectures on the eve of Dewey's arrival in China. From 1919 to 1960, Hu Shi lectured and wrote prolifically on Dewey and his pragmatism. The lecture "Tantan shiyan zhuyi" (On Pragmatism) was given in Shanghai before Dewey arrived in China, "Shiyan zhuyi" (Pragmatism) and "Duwei lun sixiang" (Dewey on Thought) was written in 1919, "Duwei xiansheng yu Zhongguo" (Mr. Dewey and China) was written in 1921, "Yanhua lun yu cunyi zhuyi" (Theory of Evolution and Scepticism) was written in 1922, the lecture "Duwei zhexue" (Dewey's Philosophy) was given at Taiwan Normal Institute in 1952, and the lecture "Duwei zai Zhongguo" (Dewey in China) was given at the University of Hawaii in 1960. All these articles and lectures are collected in *Collected Essays of Hu Shi*, *Collection of Hu Shi's Lectures*, and *Selected Works of Hu Shi*.

Hu Shi maintained his respect for Dewey all his life. He was glad to be called Dewey's disciple and a faithful disciple of pragmatism. In his introduction to the *Selected Works of Hu Shi*, he wrote:

My thought was influenced mostly by two people: one was Huxley, another one was Mr. Dewey. Huxley taught me to be sceptical and not to believe anything that had not been properly proven. Mr. Dewey taught me how to think, to give consideration to the current problems, to treat all theories and ideals as hypotheses which are waiting to be tested, and to take the result of a thought into

account.⁵¹

He even called himself a "Chinese Dewey" in his lecture "Dewey in China".⁵² Is Hu Shi really a disciple of Dewey as he proclaimed himself to be? Did he understand Dewey thoroughly and inherit Dewey's ideas? To answer these questions, we need to analyze Hu Shi's ideas, the content of his works, and the application of his ideas to practice, and not merely his claim.

For the most part, two differing opinions have been held during the last ten years among Chinese scholars as to whether Hu Shi inherited the ideas of his teacher, John Dewey. Dr. Wu Sen has an article "Duwei sixiang yu Zhongguo wenhua" (Dewey's Thought and Chinese Culture), in which he believes that although Hu Shi was Dewey's student, he never inherited Dewey's ideas. What Hu Shi did during the time that Dewey was in China was to introduce his own ideas under the banner of Dewey. Wu censured Hu Shi in his article for not carrying on Dewey's ideas in China due to a misunderstanding and twisting of them.⁵³ Opposing this opinion was Geng Yunzhi, who thought that Dewey had had a great influence in China in the 1920's because of the help of his students, especially of Hu Shi. The contemporary British philosopher, Bertrand Russell, was not as fortunate in China as Dewey, although he was famous in philosophy. Besides, Hu Shi accepted Dewey's philosophy of his own accord. Hu Shi did not write much in philosophy. His representative essay on philosophy is his "Pragmatism". Hu Shi devoted more than half the length of this essay to introducing Dewey's ideas from three aspects:

⁵¹ Hu Shi, "Jieshao woziji de sixiang" (Introducing My Own Ideas) in *Selected Works of Hu Shi*, p.3.

⁵² Hu Shi, *Collection of Hu Shi's Lectures*, Vol.2, p.327.

⁵³ See Geng Yunzhi, *Essays on Hu Shi*, Chengdu: 1985, pp.93-4.

Dewey's philosophical concepts, Dewey on thought, and Dewey's philosophy of education. Hu Shi seized the core of Dewey's ideas --- experience. So Hu Shi can be called Dewey's disciple and can be said to have inherited Dewey's thought without distortion.⁵⁴ Who is right? Before deciding if Hu Shi really inherited Dewey's thought, let us compare Hu Shi's ideas and his application of those ideas with Dewey's theory in following examples.

Hu Shi's motto in his academic career --- hypothesize boldly, identify carefully --- stemmed chiefly from Dewey's *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* (New York: 1938). Richard J. Bernstein gives us a clear picture of Dewey's experimental spirit:

Insofar as the situation demands some resolution, we must attempt to articulate the problem or problems that are to be solved. Formulating the problems may be a process of successive refinement in the course of the inquiry. The next logical stage is that of suggestion or hypothesis, in which we imaginatively formulate various relevant hypotheses for solving the problem. In some complex inquiries we may have to engage in hypothetico-deductive reasoning in order to refine our hypotheses and to ascertain the logical consequences of the hypothesis or set of hypotheses. Finally, there is the stage of experimental testing in which we seek to confirm or disconfirm the suggested hypotheses. If our inquiry is successful, the original indeterminate situation is transformed into a unified whole.⁵⁵

Hu Shi not only propagated this approach in his articles and lectures about pragmatism,⁵⁶ but also applied it everywhere, especially in his scholarship. His "Textual Research on *Dream of the Red Chamber*" is one of his representative

⁵⁴ See *Ibid*, p.95.

⁵⁵ Richard J. Bernstein, "John Dewey" in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2), Paul Edwards ed., New York:1967, p.383.

⁵⁶ Hu Shi's "Dewey's Philosophy" in *Collection of Hu Shi's Lectures*, pp.298-302, and "Pragmatism" in *Collected Essays of Hu Shi* (1), pp.315-320 have a detailed explanation.

works showing traces of the experimentalist method. The core of the experimentalist method put the emphasis on evidence. This became Hu Shi's weapon in his literary studies. His criticism was that all the textual research done on *Dream of the Red Chamber* in the past was trying to connect some irrelevant things to *Dream of the Red Chamber*. These were "subjective, wanton, unreliable, and meaningless". The correct method of textual research was "to investigate who the author of the book is; what the author's experience and his family background were; when the book was written; how many editions there were; and where these editions were printed according to reliable editions and relevant materials. All these questions are asked within the context of textual research on *Dream of the Red Chamber*."⁵⁷ Actually the acceptance of the experimentalist method can be found in Hu Shi's articles on literary reform as early as 1917. He wrote, "I believe that vernacular literature should be orthodox in modern literature. However, the idea of orthodoxizing vernacular literature is still a hypothesis. Although there is much evidence to show the vitality of vernacular literature in literary history, it still needs to be proven by men of letters in the future."⁵⁸

The heart of the Dewey's instrumental logic is "the idea of a conflict within a coordination or situation that demands reconstitution or reconstruction".⁵⁹ Dewey believed that the world is an interacting organism. When he criticized "The Reflex Arc Concept", he thought that the stimulus-response was a matter of

⁵⁷ Hu Shi, "Textual Research on the *Dream of the Red Chamber*" in *Collected Essays of Hu Shi*, pp.585-586.

⁵⁸ Hu Shi, "On Historical View of Literature" in *Collected Essays of Hu Shi*, Vol.1, Juan 1, p.34.

⁵⁹ Bernstein, *John Dewey* (Atascadero: 1966), p.20.

organic coordination. "What counts as a stimulus and what as a response depends on the changing role that the activity plays within an organic coordination."⁶⁰ In other words, "stimulus" and "response" are not fixed and static. This idea used in actual social life and scholarship comes to mean that things are related organically and change all the time. The effect of one thing can be the cause of another. Things are not totally isolated. Naturally, Hu Shi applied this idea in his literary reform. When he talked about the history of Chinese literature, he believed that vernacular fiction was related to classical Chinese literature. It was not totally separate. One era had to be continued by the next era. The literature of one age must be carried on into the next age. Certainly this continuity did not take place entirely without change. This developmental relationship laid a foundation for the development of vernacular literature.⁶¹

From the examples above, we can see that Hu Shi understood the method of Dewey's pragmatism and applied it to his literary study. In this sense, Hu Shi was Dewey's disciple in the academic area. But was he in the ideological area? Hu Shi's "Introducing My Own Ideas" is the best indication of his ideas. In this article, Hu differentiated Hegelian dialectic from Dewey's pragmatism. He thought that dialectics was philosophy before the appearance of the theory of biological evolution. It was metaphysical. Pragmatism stemmed from the theory of biological evolution. It was a scientific method. Therefore, the two methods were extremely different. Here Hu Shi misunderstood his teacher's ideas. He only grasped one aspect of the sources from which Dewey's pragmatism came. He did not know any

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p.18.

⁶¹ Hu Shi, "On the Historical View of Literature" in *Collected Essays of Hu Shi*, Vol.1, Juan 1, p.33.

other sources of Dewey's pragmatism. This was the source that made Deweyism close to Marxist dialectic materialism to some extent. This source was Hegel. This issue will be explored in the next chapter.

As for the relation of the individual to society, Hu Shi held Ibsen in esteem. He quoted Ibsen's words in an article intended to teach his students:

Ibsen said, "What I expect from you is a real and pure egotism. Sometimes, you should think that only your things are the most important in the world. Anything other than that is nothing. ... The best way to benefit society is no more than to make yourself become a useful person. ... Sometimes, I feel that the whole world is like a sinking boat. The most important thing is to rescue myself." This is the most perfect individualism. The only way to rescue yourself is to make yourself become a useful person. Some people have told you "sacrifice your individual freedom and seek national freedom!" I would say "striving for your own freedom is striving for national freedom! Fighting for your own human dignity is fighting for national human dignity!"⁶²

Hu Shi placed the individual above society. Dewey had a different opinion. Dewey believed that the realization of human freedom could only be achieved "through the proper transaction with objective conditions as they are embodied in political and economic institutions".⁶³ In other words, human freedom is restricted or made possible by social conditions. What Hu Shi held in esteem is actually what Dewey wanted to avoid. Dewey wrote in his introduction to *Human Nature and Conduct*:

...there are two schools of social reform. One bases itself upon the notion of a morality which springs from an inner freedom, something mysteriously cooped up within personality. It asserts that the only way to change institutions is for men to purify their own hearts, and

⁶² Hu Shi, "Introducing My Own Ideas" in *Selected Essays of Hu Shi*, pp.8-10; and "Aiguo yundong yu qiuxue" (The Patriotic Movement and the Pursuit of Knowledge) in *Collected Essays of Hu Shi*, Vol.3, Juan 8, pp.723-724.

⁶³ Bernstein, *John Dewey*, p.141.

that when this has been accomplished, change of institutions will follow of itself. The other school denies the existence of any such inner power, and in so doing conceives that it has denied all moral freedom. ... There is an alternative to being penned in between these two theories. We can recognize that all conduct is *interaction* between elements of human nature and the environment, natural and social. ...freedom is found in that kind of interaction which maintains an environment in which human desire and choice count for something.⁶⁴

However, we have to say that Hu Shi was self contradictory. On the one hand, he encouraged students to cultivate themselves without taking social circumstance into account. On the other hand, he accepted Dewey's idea that the proper transformation of the society was the basis of achieving human freedom. That is why Hu Shi recommended establishing a good government in 1922. Dewey offered him a theoretical base.

From the analysis above, we can say that in general Hu Shi was Dewey's disciple. We should allow them to have some differences. Allowance for having differences is also in accord with the demands of pragmatism. Hu Shi not only adopted the experimentalist method in his scholarship, and applied the theory of experimentalism to the development of his ideas, but also exploited experimentalism in his solutions to social and political problems.

⁶⁴ Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct* (New York: 1922), pp.9-10.

3.3 Hu Shi's Political Views

In modern Chinese history, scholars were usually involved in politics and contemporary affairs, and Hu Shi was no exception. Applying experimentalism to the political arena, he examined the contemporary social and political problems in China and arrived at conclusions which were in conflict with those of many other reform-minded intellectuals.⁶⁵

Influenced by the pacifist ideas of Mo Zi and Lao Zi, the evolutionism of Darwin, and the experimentalism of Dewey, Hu Shi opposed the use of violent revolution to solve China's problems. For example, in 1915, the "Twenty-one Demands" of Japan caused strong opposition among the Chinese and especially among the Chinese students abroad. The demands for war with Japan were heard everywhere. To counter this tendency, Hu Shi argued that study was the most pressing matter for students.⁶⁶ At that time Hu Shi was under the influence of Lao Zi's idea of non-resistance. He used the example of water and rock which Lao Zi had made famous: "there is nothing weaker than water in the world. However, nothing can be better than water for assaulting the fortification of rocks".⁶⁷ The power of water, when extended to the human being, meant the development of intelligence.

⁶⁵ Boorman, *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, p.170.

⁶⁶ Hu Shi, *Diary of Study Abroad* (3), pp.591-596.

⁶⁷ Tang ed., *Oral Autobiography of Hu Shi*, p.75.

Between 1915 and 1916, Hu Shi's ideas began to evolve from non-resistance into pacifism after he read the works of Norman Angell⁶⁸ and John Dewey. Compared to the philosophy of Lao Zi, their theory was more constructive, although there was no great difference in essence. Hu Shi adopted the philosophy of Dewey and some passages from Angell, which employed new concepts of power and law, and believed that law was the direction which could make power be used more economically and effectively.⁶⁹ Bringing pacifist ideas into his political activities, Hu Shi insisted that the way of solving the problems of Chinese politics was to wait until new social and intellectual attitudes were implanted and cultivated over a period of years or decades.

For his biographers, and even for present day arbiters of Chinese culture, Hu Shi is a problematic figure. He was not only a scholar who decided to look for a career in the study of Chinese philosophy, but also a person who, despite his philosophy, involved himself in politics. While still at university, he spent one third of his time on political courses. However, when the Chinese Renaissance started, he tried to lay a non-political cultural foundation and declared that he would not engage in politics for twenty years.⁷⁰ He did not keep his word very long. After

⁶⁸ Angell, Sir Norman (1872-1967) was born at Holbeach, Lincolnshire. He was a British economist and worker for world peace. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 1933. His *The Great Illusion*, one of the most influential books of the first half of the twentieth century, was published in 1910 and was translated into many languages. The basic doctrine of this book was that successful armed aggression by one economically advanced state against another would not benefit the aggressor economically. See *The Dictionary of National Biography, 1961-1970* (Oxford University Press, 1981) ed. by E.T. Williams and C.S. Nicholls, pp.31-32; *Encyclopedia Americana* (Danbury: Grolier Incorporated, 1982) ed. by Alan H. Smith, Vol.1, p.839; *Encyclopedia Britannica* (William Benton, 1972) ed. by Warren E. Preece, Vol.1, p.925.

⁶⁹ Tang ed., *Oral Autobiography of Hu Shi*, pp.77-80.

the appearance of radical elements who talked anarchism and Marxism, he could not restrain himself from thinking about politics. In his "Wode qilu" (My Crossroad), he revealed:

I have been waiting for two years and eight months; and finally I am unable to stand it. The reason that I talk about politics might appear to be a concern about corruption, but it is actually because people discuss "isms" in the "new media" without studying the real problems. What I am going to say about politics is to put "study more problems, talk less isms" into practice.⁷¹

In the summer of 1919 Hu Shi published an article entitled "Wenti yu zhuyi" (Problems and Isms) to counter the tendency of people spending their energy on talking about "isms" instead of studying concrete problems. In this article, Hu Shi demonstrated his opinion about "isms" and further discussed the slogan "study more problems, talk less isms" according to the experimentalist way of thinking. Hu Shi believed that all the people who talked a lot of "isms" were those who would not study the problems. They were frightened by the difficulties and tried to find an easy way to go. They were lazy. All valuable thoughts needed to have specific problems as their content. Otherwise, those thoughts were only idle dreams.⁷²

Many radical intellectuals disagreed with Hu Shi's argument. A representative figure was Li Dazhao, who became a Marxist when Marxism had just been introduced to China. Li Dazhao wrote an article, "Zailun wenti yu zhuyi" (More On Problems and Isms), to rebut Hu Shi. Li disagreed with Hu Shi's view which contrasted "problems" with "isms". He pointed out that "problems" and "isms" could not be separated. It was necessary to have an ideal doctrine so that people would

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p.200.

⁷¹ Hu Shi, *Collected Essays of Hu Shi* (Shanghai: 1931), Vol 2, Juan 3, pp.98-100.

⁷² Hu Shi, "Isms and Problems" in *Selected Essays of Hu Shi*, pp.36-37.

be mobilized in struggle in order to solve social problems. Li also wrote about Bolshevism; the triumph of the Russian Revolution proved that the Marxist historical view was right.⁷³ Hu Shi then wrote a response which displayed his opinion on the relation of "isms" and "problems":

All problems which can be called problems, no matter how large or small the context is, must be specific, not abstract. All doctrines were specific propositions originally. They are not empty and meaningless. Problems themselves do not have the nature of abstraction. But when we study a problem, we must deliberate it carefully. This deliberation can not be considered as the abstract nature of the problem. Doctrines are usually the concrete methods of solving specific problems. But one kind of solution can be used as a reference in other similar countries and times. Therefore, we can say that although the original doctrine is specific, its application has universality. However, we should not come to the conclusion that a doctrine has universality just because it is an abstract ideal.⁷⁴

The Marxists in the People's Republic of China cited Hu Shi's articles on "isms and problems" when they attacked him for what they saw as his anti-Marxist stance. However, they ignored Hu Shi's initial attitude, which was not completely against Marxism. He, in his articles on the method for introducing a doctrine, analyzed Marxism and pointed out:

Marxism has two important parts: the materialist conception of history and the theory of class struggle. ... The materialist conception of history indicates the importance of material civilization and economic organization in the social evolution of human beings. It created a new epoch for history, opened innumerable doors for society, and tapped many ways for politics. ... Whether socialism can be realized is no longer a question and has been proven.⁷⁵

⁷³ Li Dazhao, "Zailun wenti yu zhuyi" (On problems and Isms Again) in *Collected Essays of Hu Shi* (Taibei: 1953), Vol.1, Juan 2, pp.361-362.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, p.45.

⁷⁵ *Ibid*, Vol 1, Juan 2, p.377.

However, starting from his position as both the pacifist and pragmatist, Hu Shi opposed class struggle and violent revolution:

The theory of class struggle, that the propertied class cannot co-exist with the proletariat, is very important in the history of the socialist movement and the development of a party. Yet, this theory stresses the aspect of "class consciousness". It cultivates a hostility of classes, which makes not only the working class believe that capitalists are foes, but also capitalists think that the working class is an enemy. The result of this hostility makes two big forces, which were supposed to help each other, become two hostile camps. Many constructive methods of rescuing society cannot be put into practice and the result is that many tragedies will happen.⁷⁶

In his fight against the Marxist theory of class struggle, Hu Shi tried to seek a way for China by pragmatism. He thought that although "pragmatism" was a kind of "ism", it was a method of studying problems. It stressed concrete facts and problems. It only recognized progress as being made progressively step by step; each step was guided by intelligence and experience.⁷⁷

To advocate his point of view that China could only be rescued by progressive means, Hu Shi drew up a manifesto entitled "Womende zhengzhi zhuzhang" (Our Political Proposals) published in the second issue of *Nuli zhoubao* (*Endeavor*). The manifesto was signed by sixteen leading intellectuals in May 1922.⁷⁸ The purpose

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, Vol 1, Juan 2, pp.377-378.

⁷⁷ Hu Shi, "My Crossroad" in *Ibid* (Shanghai: 1931), Vol 2, Juan 3, pp.100-102.

⁷⁸ The sixteen were Cai Yuanpei [Ts'ai Yuen-p'ei] President of National Beijing University; Wang Chonghui, instructor at National Beijing University; Luo Wengan, instructor at National Institute; Tang Erhe, Ph.D in Medical science; Tao Zhixing [T'ao Chih-hsing], Dean of Education Faculty at National Southeast University; Wang Boqiu, Dean of Politics, Law and Economics Department at National Southeast University; Liang Sumin instructor at National Beijing University; Li Dazhao, Dean of the library at National Beijing University; Tao Menghe [T'ao Meng-he], Dean of Philosophy Department at National Beijing University; Zhu Jingnong, Zhang Weici, Gao Yihan, Xu Bohuang, instructors at National Beijing University; Wang Zhen, secretary of American New Bank Group; Ding Wenjiang [Ting Wen-chiang], former president of Geo-

of this document was to define good government as opposed to the situation of the contemporary government. It was the concrete working out of Dewey's theory.

Hu Shi, like most of the intellectuals of the time, concerned himself with the future of the country. He designed a blueprint for China. He suggested that what China was going to establish was a united country with public security, widespread prosperity, civilization and modernization. In order to realize this blueprint, people needed to know what the problems they had were and how they could solve the problems. Hu Shi thought that the biggest problem in China was neither capitalism, because China did not have capitalism, nor feudalism, because it had already crumbled two thousand years ago, but five enemies which were "poverty, disease, ignorance, graft, and harassment".⁷⁹ In "Which Road Shall We Follow" published in 1930, Hu Shi explored two kinds of ways to solve the problems and reach the goal. One was evolution. The other was revolution. These two ways were not totally irrelevant one to the other. To follow the process of natural change was evolution. To speed up some stages of evolution by means of human activity was revolution. Revolution was better than evolution. It was an action with self-consciousness. Evolution needed a longer time to produce change and might leave some stale institutions and forces unchanged. As for revolution, there were two methods --- peaceful and violent. Hu Shi argued that the five enemies in China did not need to be overthrown by violent revolution, but by frequent evolution with conscious efforts. Self-conscious reform took the place of so-called revolu-

logical Survey Institute; Hu Shi, Dean of Studies at National Beijing University. (*Collected Essays of Hu Shi*, Shanghai: 1931. Vol 2, Juan 3, pp.33-34)

⁷⁹ Hu Shi, "Women zou natiao lu" (Which Road Shall We Follow) in *Collected Essays of Hu Shi* (Taipei: 1953), Vol.4, Juan 4, pp.431-432, p.435.

tion.⁸⁰ This idea is obviously counter to the revolutionary program of the Chinese Communist Party, so it is not strange that Hu Shi was repudiated by Communist China in the 1950's.

After 1931, Hu Shi was getting closer and closer to the Guomindang [Kuomintang] (National Party) although he had had an unpleasant time with the Guomindang before.⁸¹ In September 1942, Hu Shi accepted a position as the ambassador of the National Government to the United States. In 1945, as a member of the delegation of the National Government, he attended the United Nations Conference on International Organization held in San Francisco. During the conference, Hu Shi discussed post-war political problems with Dong Biwu [Tung Pi-wu], the representative of the Chinese Communist Party. Hu Shi suggested that the Communist Party get rid of its military force, engage in the activities of a purely political party, and become a second major party of peace in China, of all which proposals met with the opposition of Dong Biwu.⁸² In November 1946, Hu was elected a representative to the constitutional convention of the National Assembly. Although Hu Shi supported the National Government, he never became a party member of the Guomindang.⁸³ On the eve of the Chinese Communist Party completely winning the war, Hu Shi called for the opening of a new political consultative conference. He insisted that a "political foundation should be built on the

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, pp.436-442, p.443.

⁸¹ Geng, "Cong wusi dao sanshi niandai chuqi Hu Shi de zhengzhi taidu de bianhua" (The Change of Hu Shi's Political Attitude From the May Fourth Period to the Early 1930's) in *Essays on Hu Shi*, pp.216-239.

⁸² Geng, *Chronicle of Hu Shi's Life*, p.494.

⁸³ Howard L. Boorman, *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, p.173.

basis of culture and the climate of opinions".⁸⁴

All his articles and suggestions on politics were criticized by the Chinese Communist Party in the 1950's. Hu Shi was regarded as a counter-revolutionary intellectual who depended on Chiang Kai-shek and the Guomindang. He became an unacceptable person in Communist China in the 1950's.

3.4 Wholesale Westernization

Seven years in the United States gave Hu Shi an opportunity to see another country, one which was more developed than China in almost every aspect. He was enthralled by all the new things. Looking at the backwardness of China, Hu Shi tried to find out why China fell behind the West in becoming a powerful and advanced country and how she might catch up with the rest of the world. Before we can understand his suggestion of "Wholesale Westernization", we first need to know how this idea was formed.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, China's situation was such that the Qing Dynasty was feeble and dying. The whole country had entered a complete depression, culturally, socially and economically. Having grown up in this depressing country, Hu Shi went to the United States at the age of nineteen. He saw the powerful and prosperous panorama of the United States. He admired American liberal culture and democratic politics, and its advanced science and technology. Also, nineteen is the age at which a person's ideas take shape. Naturally, the sharp contrast between China and the United States made Hu Shi infatuated with

⁸⁴ Geng, *Chronicle of Hu Shi's Life*, p.512.

Western civilization. After his impressions were formed, he started to plan for China's future. To counter the haughty self-satisfaction of the Chinese people, Hu Shi exposed the backward and ugly aspects of China and elevated the advanced and scientific aspects of Western countries.

The term "science" had a most lofty position in China in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Neither reformers nor conservatives dared slander it. However, Liang Qichao's announcement that "science" had become bankrupt in Europe encouraged conservatives to fight back against the intellectuals with new ideas. In order to confirm confidence in science, Hu Shi published the "kexue yu rensheng guan xu" (*Introduction to Science and the Philosophy of Life*). He urged his fellow intellectuals not to deceive themselves by seeking grounds for the belief that China occupied a unique position in the world. Instead, he argued, they should become thoroughly "modernized" and sufficiently tough-minded to accept the unflattering position assigned to China when her accomplishments were measured on the scale of world history.⁸⁵

Arguing against the point of view that Western civilization was a material civilization and Chinese civilization was a spiritual civilization, Hu Shi pointed out that this point of view was used by Chinese to comfort themselves when they were oppressed by Westerners. He believed that material civilization and spiritual civilization could not be separated. "Spiritual civilization must be based on material civilization. Raising the standard of living and increasing the convenience of life

⁸⁵ Hu Shi, *Collected Essays of Hu Shi* (Taipei: 1953), Vol.2, Juan 1, pp.120-139. Geng Yunzhi has a detailed analysis and comments on the controversy of Hu Shi and Liang Qichao. See his article, "Hu Shi yu Liang Qichao" (Hu Shi and Liang Qichao) in *Essays on Hu Shi*, pp.258-266.

are leading people toward the direction of liberating human abilities, making life easier, and allowing people to have spare energy to satisfy their spiritual needs."⁸⁶ The tragedy was, Hu Shi continued, that innumerable people had little happiness and could not avoid cold and starvation. China was in a tragic state.⁸⁷

How could China get rid of this tragedy? The only way was to admit that China was backward and inferior to the Western countries. The handicaps of China were not caused by imperialism, but by China herself. Hu believed that what foreigners brought to China were not catastrophes, but glad tidings. The Chinese should put the blame on their ancestors. The smoking of opium, the binding of feet, the writing of "eight-legged essays",⁸⁸ and the five enemies (poverty, disease, ignorance, graft, and harassment) which Hu Shi mentioned in previous years did not appear suddenly. They had a long history.⁸⁹ In 1935, Hu Shi published "Shiping suowei 'Zhongguo benwei wenhua jianshe'" (A Critique of "Cultural Reconstruction on a Chinese Basis"). From analyzing the history of self-strengthening reforms, he found that all reforms in Chinese history had a common weakness. They could not give up their Chinese basis, so they failed at the end. If China wanted to shake off backwardness, she had to give up her basis and accept

⁸⁶ Hu Shi, "Women duiyu xiyang jindai wenming de taidu" (Our Attitude Toward the Modern Western Civilization) in *Collected Essays of Hu Shi*, Vol.3, Juan 1, p.3.

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, pp.1-4.

⁸⁸ Eight-legged essay was a highly structured essay form used in the civil service examinations during the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties. The subject matter of the examinations was derived from the Confucian classics.

⁸⁹ Hu Shi, "Cantong de huiyi yu fanxing" (A Painful Recollection and Introspection) in *Ibid*, Vol.4, Juan 4, pp.450-457.

world culture freely.⁹⁰ This is what Hu Shi called "Wholesale Westernization".⁹¹

Hu Shi's advocacy of wholesale westernization was unacceptable not only to conservatives in the 1930's, but also to many people who insisted on keeping the Chinese basis even as late as in the 1980's. His advocacy of "giving up the Chinese traditional culture for wholesale westernization" became one of the targets in Communist China in the 1950's. Even in the 1980's, literary works such as Su Xiaokang's "Heshang" (River Elegy), which reflects the same opinion as Hu Shi's, have been criticized and are regarded as propagating a sense of national inferiority.

3.5 Hu Shi's Influence on Education

From the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937 until his death in 1962, Hu Shi put more energy into education than into literature. Holding to the idea that education was the means to rescue the nation, Hu Shi continuously insisted, during both the Sino-Japanese War and the Chinese civil war, that scholars be engaged in academic study and that students concentrate on books. He himself spent most of his later years lecturing abroad, aside from his four-year tenure as Chinese ambassador to the United States.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, Vol.4, Juan 4, pp.535-540.

⁹¹ In his "Chongfen shijie hua yu quanpan xihua" (Full Cosmopolitanization and Wholesale Westernization), Hu Shi explained the meaning of the term "wholesale westernization". He said that what he meant was wholehearted modernization because it was impossible to adopt Western things a hundred percent. So "wholesale" should be understood as "full". See *Collected Essays of Hu Shi* (Taipei: 1953), pp.541-544.

Hu Shi's best-known opinion on education was "rescuing China by education". This was actually derived from Dewey's theory that education was the fundamental method of social progress and reform. As early as during his studies in the United States, he was of the opinion that China could be saved by studying hard. When Yuan Shikai [Yuan Shih-k'ai] accepted the Japanese "Twenty-one Demands" in 1915, many students who were studying in the United States joined their voices with their countrymen in China against Yuan. Faced with this situation, Hu Shi argued that "we are far away from our motherland. We can do nothing except study hard."⁹² Also, his diary reflects the stress he laid on education. He wrote on February 21, 1915:

If I can see one national university in China which is as good as Harvard in America, Cambridge and Oxford in England, Berlin in Germany, and Paris in France in the future, I can die content. How can the world put up with a big country which has two million square kilometers of land and four hundred million in population without a single university? How can the world tolerate the existence of a country without one university? In a country, it is not a shame to be without a navy. Nor is it shameful to be without an army. However, it is a shame to be without a university, a public library, a museum, or an art gallery.⁹³

Hu Shi brought this idea back to China after he finished his study in the United States. On May 30, 1925, an anti-imperialist movement to rescue the nation was launched. Many students left classrooms and participated in street demonstrations. At this time, Hu Shi published "Aiguo yundong yu qiuxue" (The Patriotic Movement and the Pursuit of Knowledge). He suggested that students remember Ibsen's words, which were "make yourself be a useful person". He said:

⁹² Geng Yunzhi, *Chronicle of Hu Shi's Life*, p.344.

⁹³ Hu Shi, *Diary of Study Abroad* (3), p.566.

Rescuing the country is a big thing: demonstration in the streets and shouting loudly "Down with British and Japanese imperialism" are not engaging in rescuing the country; even things such as writing a blood pledge and dying for the country are not engaging in rescuing the country, either. Rescuing the country needs all kinds of people. The real preparation for rescuing the country is to make yourself be a useful person. ... The chaos of the country should stimulate your enthusiasm and interests in study. ... do not forget that what you are pursuing is ten times more important than your shout in the streets.⁹⁴

However, this attitude could not fit the contemporary situation. Many intellectuals and students became dissatisfied with him and criticized his words and deeds.⁹⁵

As for educational theory, Hu Shi did not have a particular explanation except for introducing that of Dewey. In his "Pragmatism", he summed up Dewey's theory as: Education is life. Education is a continuously reorganized experience. Experience is life. Life is dealing with the environment around the human being; it is to change the things that humans come in touch with; to turn harmful things into harmless things and to turn harmless things into beneficial things. There is no class character in modern education.⁹⁶ Hu Shi always thought that academic organizations, especially schools, should be separated from politics. For example, in July 1937, Hu Shi made an informal speech about education and stated that education should be separated from politics and that political partisan forces should not interfere with education.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ Hu Shi, "Patriotic Movement and Pursuing Studies" in *Collected Essays of Hu Shi* (Taipei: 1953), Vol.3, Juan 8, p.724.

⁹⁵ Geng Yunzhi, *Chronicle of Hu Shi's Life*, pp.404-406.

⁹⁶ Hu Shi, *Collected Essays of Hu Shi* (Taipei: 1953), Vol.1, Juan 2, pp.332-334.

⁹⁷ Geng Yunzhi, *Chronicle of Hu Shi's Life*, p.473.

All Hu's opinions on education conflicted with those of Marxists. Marxists believe that education has a class nature in class society. It is subordinate to politics. Also, the complete change of the existing society should be realized through revolution rather than education, as was expected by Hu Shi and Dewey. Therefore, Hu Shi's advocacy of universal education for the sake of rescuing China was regarded, in Communist China of the 1950's, as a poison which was weakening the fighting will of the people and anaesthetising their ideology.⁹⁸

In general, Hu Shi expressed strong political views in his later years. Giving up his declaration that he would not talk about politics or participate in political affairs, he served the government of Chiang Kai-shek in word and deed. His opposition to the Communist Party led to a strong campaign against him in the People's Republic of China during and after the 1950's. However, his contributions to Chinese intellectual history and literature, which were mainly expressed in his early years, made him "the father of the Literary Revolution".⁹⁹ His historical works on vernacular literature and his "utilization of Western philosophical terminology and methodology in reinterpreting classical Chinese thought"¹⁰⁰ opened a new door for the study of Chinese intellectual history and literature. His obvious contributions to Chinese intellectual history, combined with his opposition to the Chinese Communist Party, have made him a controversial person in post-revolutionary China. This controversy has lasted more than three decades and,

⁹⁸ Wang Huanxun's *Hu Shi jiaoyu sixiang pipan (On Criticism of Hu Shi's Educational Ideology)* has a systematic criticism of Hu Shi's educational ideas.

⁹⁹ The critic C.T. Hsia gave this title to Hu Shi because of his contribution to the vernacular movement in the 1920's.

¹⁰⁰ Boorman, *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, p.174.

although the appraisal of Hu Shi has changed, Hu Shi and his ideas are still issues in China today.

Chapter IV
EVALUATION OF HU SHI'S IDEAS IN THE 1950'S AND THE
1980'S

From the 1950's to the 1980's, there were many campaigns in the Chinese ideological realm. All these campaigns were closely related to current politics. That ideology serves the needs of current politics has become characteristic of Communist China. This characteristic makes Chinese politicians, theorists, and even scholars analyze and evaluate a person or an idea in a lopsided and arbitrary way. Politics' taking command lumps theory, academic research and ideology together. This situation prevents people from evaluating things fairly. In this chapter, I will demonstrate this by an account of the campaign to repudiate Hu Shi's ideas in the 1950's and its change in the 1980's.

4.1 Chinese Society in the 1950's

The 1950's were a decade of changes in China. The politics, economics, culture and ideology of China faced a new situation. Political power had shifted to the hands of the Chinese Communist Party from the Nationalist Party. The Communist Party was faced with the problems of economic recovery from war, changing culture, and educating the masses. Briefly, the new China faced two major tasks: economic reconstruction and ideological reconstruction. Because economic issues are not the focus of this paper, I will only touch on them briefly.

From the beginning of the twentieth century to the end of the 1940's, China was in chaos. Since 1911 extensive areas of the country had been racked by revolution, despotic warlords, civil war, foreign invasion, flood and famine. The eight-year long Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) wore down manpower and material resources without any production to compensate. However, no sooner was the Sino-Japanese War over than a fierce rivalry broke out between two major forces, the Nationalist Party and the Chinese Communist Party, each seeking political control of the whole country. By the time the Communist Party seized power, the economy had nearly collapsed. Industry in Manchuria and commerce on the coast were shattered; dams, irrigation systems and canals had not yet been repaired; railway lines had been cut off by armies; and inflation had undermined confidence in the monetary system.

Besides economic reconstruction, the new Chinese Government believed that new China needed an ideological reconstruction. This was one of the most important tasks facing Communist China. After China stepped into the twentieth century, institutions changed. The corrupt and incompetent Qing Dynasty was overthrown by the Xinhai Revolution inspired by Sun Yat-sen in 1911. However, complex warfare among warlords soon erupted. Government power changed hands over and over again. In order to rescue China from this chaos, many people with lofty ideals, especially intellectuals, tried to find solutions for China. Some Chinese who had studied in the West expected China to apply Western methods, ridding itself of religious domination and authoritarian regimes and using scientific knowledge and democratic institutions to reform society. After 1917, another pattern for the universal society of the future began to emerge in Russia. Very

soon, the pattern which had appeared in Russia was introduced into China. From then on, there were two major climates of thought in China --- Western liberal democracy, represented by the United States, and Marxist Communism, represented by the Soviet Union. Both of them were trying to design a future for China. The conflict of these two ideologies was reflected through the conflict of the two major parties in China --- the Nationalist Party, which was close to the United States, and the Communist Party, which held Russia in esteem. During the twenty eight year (1921-1949) conflict with the Nationalist Party, the Chinese Communist Party, with the help of the Communist International, underwent a long and arduous evolution and showed an indomitable vitality.¹⁰¹ On the eve of the Liberation in 1949, the deliberate Communist policy appealed not only to those peasants and middle class people who would benefit directly from the policies of the Communists, but also to those intellectuals who usually preferred not to bother about politics. Here is an example from Bodde's *Peking Diary*. It is a record of an interview with a Chinese intellectual who spoke his mind in 1948:

Most Chinese intellectuals would prefer not to bother about politics. But while they have heard the government repeatedly proclaim its intention of bringing democracy and honest administration to China, they have seen these protestations repeatedly flouted in actual fact. Indeed, far from improving, the government becomes steadily worse,

¹⁰¹ Sino-American and Sino-Soviet relations were actually more complex than this brief description can suggest. The attitude of the Chinese Communist Party toward the United States was less-antagonistic when the Second World War ended. The relations between the Chinese Communist Party and the Soviet Union were not as warm as many thought. See O. Edmund Clubb, "Chinese Communist Strategy in Foreign Relations in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol.277, September 1951, pp.156-66. Before the People's Republic of China was established, the Soviet Union supported the Nationalist Government no less than the Chinese Communist Party. Actually, in the years following 1927, the relation between the Nationalist Government and the Soviet Union was closer than the relation between the Chinese Communist Party and the Soviet Union. See *United States Relations With China* (Washington: 1949), pp.93-100.

so that today few thinking people hold much hope for its reform. That is why we intellectuals have gone through three phases in our thinking. At first, most of us supported the government, recognizing its many faults, but hoping it would reform. Then we became increasingly discouraged with reform prospects, but saw no feasible alternative. Though the present government, we felt, was bad, what might take its place would be even worse. During this second phase, intellectuals were uncertain and bewildered. Then came the present, third phase. We have become so completely convinced of the hopelessness of the existing government that we feel the sooner it is removed the better. Since the Chinese Communists are obviously the only force capable of making this change, we are now willing to support them as the lesser of two evils. We ourselves would prefer a middle course, but this is no longer possible.¹⁰²

It was not easy for the Chinese Communist Party to gain state power. So, as soon as it obtained power, it tried to consolidate its regime. Ideological reform was one of the important steps. Marxists believe that politics is linked to ideology and that the two complement each other at all times. When political policy changes, ideology will change with it. Therefore, an ideology which adapts to contemporary politics plays an important role in stabilizing politics. Although many intellectuals accepted the Chinese Communist Party, they retained some ideas that could not meet the requirement of the new society. In order to suit the needs of the contemporary national politics, China launched several ideological campaigns in the 1950's, such as the "Thought Reform" of 1950 and the "Anti-Rightist" campaigns that followed the "Hundred Schools and Hundred Flowers" campaign of 1957. Repudiation of Hu Shi's ideas was one of the elements in these ideological reforms.

¹⁰² Derk Bodde, *Peking Diary* (London: 1951), September 27, 1948, pp.23-24.

4.2 The Repudiation of Hu Shi in the 1950's

Why did Communist China choose Hu Shi as a particular target in the 1950's? To answer this question, we should clarify the contemporary international and national situations.

The international situation saw the world divided between two major camps --- the "imperialist" and "military" blocs which were headed by the United States, and the socialist countries which were headed by the Soviet Union.¹⁰³ Both of them tried to expand their power and influence in the world. At the beginning of the 1950's, the United States supported South Korea and gave it military assistance in the Korean War. The United States's participation in the Korean conflict endangered the security of New China.¹⁰⁴ In response to this, China started the "Resist America and Aid Korea Movement" with the Chinese involvement in the Korean War from 1950 to 1953. The relations between China and the United States were in a state of complete hostility.

Within China, although the Communist Party had seized political power, it had not had a chance to rectify its ideological territory. Thousands of Chinese who had gone to the United States for schooling and millions who had benefited from

¹⁰³ Terms "imperialist" and "military" were defined by Lenin and were used to describe non-socialist Western countries such as the United States, Britain, France, and so on. Believing in Marxism, the Soviet Union was a socialist country. The words "imperialism" and "militarism" were not used to describe the Soviet Union although some people in China thought that the Soviet Union acted imperialistically.

¹⁰⁴ The Korean peninsular is the gate of China toward the Pacific Ocean. The Chinese government believed that the victory of South Korea, which was under the control of the United States, over the whole peninsula would have put China in danger from a U.S. satellite.

American charities remained in Communist China. They felt good will toward and respected the United States in their hearts. This situation obviously would prevent the Chinese Communist Party from pursuing its policies. With the rise of the "Resist America and Aid Korea Movement", a campaign to repudiate American influence in ideology was carried out. American educational, medical, and missionary activities in China were described as an expression of cultural aggression and imperialism. The people who respected America became targets of the campaign.

Being a disciple of the American philosopher and educator, John Dewey, Hu Shi had introduced Deweyism into China. He not only utilized pragmatist philosophy in his own scholarship, he also tried to introduce it to non-academic society. Also, he whole-heartedly advocated American democratic liberal politics. Although he had flown to the United States before the whole country was in the hands of the Communist Party, Hu Shi's influence in China was substantial. Meanwhile, he had become very close to the Nationalist Government after the eruption of the Sino-Japanese War. In the early years of World War II, he was appointed by Chiang Kai-shek as Chinese Ambassador to the United States. Therefore, Hu Shi was regarded as a particular enemy by Communist China --- the "running dog of Chiang Kai-shek" and the "cultural comprador of American Imperialism". He then became the chief and central representative of Chinese bourgeois ideology.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ See Zhang Hanqing, "Weishenmo yao zhankai dui Hu Shi fandong sixiang de pipan?" (Why Should We Criticize Hu Shi's Reactionary Thought?) in *What Kind of Person Is Hu Shi?* p.6. The term "bourgeois" is not defined clearly although it is used frequently in China. Originally, the word is used to describe the class which has property. More recently it has become more or less a synonym for "Western".

The criticism of the film "Wu Xun zhuan" (The Life of Wu Xun) in 1951 was the prelude to the campaign repudiating Hu Shi's ideas. The purpose of criticizing the film was to "provoke writers to draw tight the bowstring of class struggle", and fight against "feudal forces" in ideological circles.¹⁰⁶ In September, with a five-hour lecture by premier Zhou Enlai to a group of Beijing intellectuals, the Ideological Reform Movement was fully underway. The ideological reform program was a method of "thought struggle" to single out individual offenders and use them as specific targets or as examples for the others. In late 1951, articles criticizing Hu Shi appeared in newspapers. This quotation from the December 27, 1951 *Progressive Daily* in Tianjin expressed the current attitude toward Hu Shi:

Hu Shi is an intellectual who has sold out to the imperialists and the reactionary ruling class, and has helped the enemy as an accomplice. This man, who is guilty of the most heinous crimes against the people, still refuses to repent and is even now taking refuge in America as an imperialist instrument.¹⁰⁷

In tune with this attitude, many articles and books began pointing out that his influence on philosophy, politics, literature, history, education, language and so on impeded the improvement of society, the progress of science and culture, and the development of socialist construction. By the end of 1954, the campaign to criticize Hu Shi's ideas formally started. In 1955, the campaign reached its climax. The reason that criticizing Hu Shi's ideas became a serious, nation-wide campaign was explained explicitly in an article by Hu Sheng, a Communist scholar, in 1955:

¹⁰⁶ Mao Zedong, "Pay Serious Attention to the Discussion of the Film *The Life of Wu Xun*" (May 20, 1951) in *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, Vol.V, pp.57-58.

¹⁰⁷ Cited in Walker, *China Under Communism*, p.207 from "The Campaign Against Hu Shi", *Current Background*, #167.

The influence of Hu Shi's reactionary cultural and social view is manifested in our social and historical research work. His ideas lead people to discern only individual phenomena in history and society.... Hu Shi's influence has not been completely removed. We must continue and persist to struggle against the imperialistic and thoroughly reactionary ideology which the imperialists are using to enslave the people of the world... . Hu Shi's ideology is a type of bourgeois-imperialistic ideology which in the past has thought to obstruct the work of socialism. Therefore, to repudiate the ideology of the Hu Shi clique is still necessary.¹⁰⁸

The criticism of Hu Shi's ideas in the 1950's was aimed at all its aspects, from his political opinions to his scholarship. Hu Shi's works were believed valueless and poisonous by Communist China. Now let us see how Communist China in the 1950's criticized Hu Shi's ideas.

4.2.1 Criticism of Hu Shi's Political Ideas

As early as 1949, the repudiation of Hu Shi had been initiated. In the *Peking Diary*, Professor Derk Bodde observed that the *Progressive Daily* of May 17, 1949 carried a long "open letter" from Chen Yuan, a well known historian and the president of Fujian University, to Hu Shi, former president of Beijing University. In this letter, Chen Yuan asked Hu Shi:

Why did you choose to run away? You said that there would be no freedom here and cited Kravchenko's *I Chose Freedom* as illustration. But it is not as you say. Now, for the first time in my life, I have seen what freedom really is. ... You own forty editions of the *Water Classic Commentary* (an ancient geographical work on which Dr. Hu has long been doing research). Why is it you never owned a single work by Mao Tse-tung? In reading these works a new world has opened before me. I realize for the first time that our whole study of history has been subjective, unscientific. Man's mind is determined by his society. ... All culture follows politics and at the same time leads politics. The realization of this fact is the freedom

¹⁰⁸ Hu Sheng, "Why We Have to Criticize the Thought of Hu Shi, Yu Pingbo and Hu Feng" in *Study*, April 2, 1955, pp.9-10.

that the new government has brought to me.¹⁰⁹

The letter contained an interrogatory tone, and became the first article which pointed to Hu Shi directly after the Communists controlled almost all the country. However, the spearhead of the criticism did not concentrate on Hu Shi until 1954.

The over-all criticism of Hu Shi's political views was concentrated on his discouragement of revolution and advocacy of reform; his appeal to "study more problems and talk less isms" when Marxism had just been introduced into China in the early twentieth century; his standing for "good man's government";¹¹⁰ and his announcement that "Americans were not aggressive toward China". His "study more problems and talk less isms" was regarded as intended to impede the spread of Marxism in China. His attitude to foreign countries and his view of "the five enemies harassing China" were considered no different from Acheson's "White Paper", which believed that China's major difficulty was "large population". Both of them tried to divert attention away from anti-imperialism and against imperialist aggression to China's "poverty", "ignorance", "large population", and so on.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Derk Bodde, *Peking Diary: A Year of Revolution*, pp.183-84.

¹¹⁰ Hu Shi suggested a government which was concerned with masses and the nation but not its own power like all those warlords' regimes. He believed that solving the national problems depends on this kind of government not violent revolution or war. He called this government "good man's government".

¹¹¹ See Wang Zisong, etc. "Pipan Hu Shi de fandong zhengzhi sixiang" (Repudiation of Hu Shi's Reactionary Political Thought) in *Criticism of Hu Shi's Thoughts*, Vol.1, pp.23-24.

Among those views, Hu Shi's "study more problems and talk less isms" was one of the biggest issues. It was debated as early as in the 1920's. During the first decade of the twentieth century, the Russian Revolution sent Marxism-Leninism to China. Many articles about Marxism and Bolshevism were published. Talking "isms" was a fashion in China. To counter this tendency, Hu Shi published "Duo yanjiu xie wenti, shao tanxie zhuyi" (Study More Problems, Talk Less Isms) in 1919. Li Dazhao, an early Marxist in China, also published articles to discuss this issue with Hu Shi. Hu Shi disagreed with the Marxist theories of surplus value and proletarian revolution. He believed that the theory of surplus value made employer and employee feel humiliated by each other. Hu Shi's opinion of Marxist theory confirmed him as a reactionary in Communist China.

His (Hu Shi) political opinion and action is identical with American imperialistic policy to China. He objected to the Xinhai Revolution led by Sun Yat-sen and approved of Yuan Shikai who was the representative of feudalistic comprador force. In the May Fourth Movement, he publically objected to the mass patriotic movement and Marxism. After 1922, he became an agent of American imperialism. He followed the instruction of American imperialism and calumniated the bourgeois democratic representative Sun Yat-sen. In general, he took care of the interest of American imperialism and pro-American comprador bloc.¹¹²

4.2.2 Criticism of Hu Shi's Philosophy

Compared to his political influence, Hu Shi's influence on intellectuals was more substantial. For this reason, repudiation of Hu Shi's intellectual ideas became a major element in the movement to criticize his ideology. Among his intellectual ideas, his pragmatist philosophy held a major position. In Communist

¹¹² Zeng Wenjing, "Wusi yundong qianhou Hu Shi de zhengzhi mianmu" (The Political Face of Hu Shi Before and After the May Fourth Movement) in *Criticism of Hu Shi's Thoughts*, p.41.

China, all ideologies which were different from Marxist-Leninist thought were thought of as bourgeois ideologies; all schools of philosophy which were different from the Marxist philosophy of dialectical materialism were considered to be "idealist" philosophy. All non-Marxist theories were believed to be "reactionary" and "imperialistic" theories, which meant that, as a philosophy professor stated in early 1955:

What Hu Shi expounded was the reactionary bourgeois philosophy of imperialism, especially the reactionary pragmatism of John Dewey and William James, which is extremely harmful to the socialist revolution in China. Therefore, to remove the prevailing malignancy caused by Hu Shi's ideology from our academic world is of a major significance to the task of opposing the idealist ideology that serves modern imperialism.¹¹³

The criticism of pragmatism in the field of philosophy mainly focuses on the theory of truth, realism, agnosticism, the theory of empiricism, and an intellectual method limited to response to nature rather than the generation of a more inclusively explanatory theory. All of these are carried out on the basis of a comparison with Marxist theory. Pragmatism results in idealism, which is thoroughly opposite to Marxist materialism. The comparison may help us to clarify how the Chinese Marxists understand both Marxism and Pragmatism.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ He Lin, "Liangdian pipan, yidian fanxing" (Two Points of Criticism, One Point of Reflection) in *Criticism of Hu Shi's Thoughts*, Vol.2, p.89.

¹¹⁴ This is summed up from Hua Ming's essay "Hu Shi de shiyong zhuyi zhexue de fandong shizhi" (The Reactionary Character of Hu Shi's Pragmatistic Philosophy) in *What Kind of Person Is Hu Shi?* (Guangzhou: 1955), pp.15-22.

1. Realism and Sensationalism

Marxism --- The reality of the world lies in its material nature. The material world exists independent of human consciousness. It has its own law of development. Matter is the primary phenomenon. It is the fountainhead of sense, experience, concept, and consciousness. Human sense, experience, concept and consciousness are derivative phenomenon. They are the reflection of material existence.

Pragmatism --- James: Consciousness is matter; matter is the combined name of lots of consciousness.

Dewey: There is a continuity between nature and experience. This continuity makes nature and experience inseparable, so that matter is the human consciousness towards it.

Hu Shi: (1) The natural world is not objective matter. It is human subjective consciousness, experience, imagery, concept, and so on. (2) The natural world cannot exist apart from human consciousness and experience. (3) Consciousness is primary; matter is secondary. Matter comes from consciousness, not the other way around.

2. Epistemology and Agnosticism

Marxism --- Cognition comes from matter. Thought is the reflection of existence. People's cognition can reflect the objective world correctly. Objective matter and its law of development is cognizable. Cognition must come from prac-

tice. Whether the cognition is right or not, it must be examined in practice and conform to objective matter as truth.

Pragmatism --- Matter is not the source of consciousness and experience. Consciousness and experience are not the reflection of existence, so objective matter is not cognizable. Truth is originally made by and for the human beings. A hypothesis which explains satisfactorily and has effect is true.

3. Theory of Truth

Marxism --- The only criterion to discriminate truth is objective social practice. Truth is objective. It has both absolute and relative natures. The historical restriction of human cognition brings about the relative nature of truth, and the objective nature of truth brings about the absolute nature of truth. Relative truth contains elements of absolute truths. Innumerable relative truths form the river of absolute truth.

Pragmatism --- Denies the objective nature of truth and blots out the practical foundation and criterion of truth. Therefore, it ignores the existence of absolute truth thoroughly. Hu Shi believed that truth was effective only at a certain place, and to a certain person. There is no objective criterion to determinate truth. The only criterion is effectiveness. It is a subjective criterion. Everyone can declare that the thing which is effective to him is the truth.

Repudiation of pragmatistic empiricism also starts from the debate over "which is primary, matter or consciousness?" Chinese Marxists think that experience derives from the physical world. It is the result of the long-term develop-

ment of the natural world, and it will not have human experience without human beings.¹¹⁵ Experience is only the perceptual knowledge. It is the primary stage of knowledge and needs to be improved to the stage of rational knowledge. In the eyes of Chinese Marxists, although pragmatists agree that experience is the reflection of objective matter of the external world, they over-estimate the force of experience and believe that all problems can be cognized and solved depending on experience. In other words, they disclaim the process that perceptual knowledge needs to be developed to the stage of rational knowledge. All these confused the ideology in China.

Dewey and Hu Shi tried to control the objective environment and disarmed people's scientific thought in practice by using subjective experience. The result is that pragmatism makes the people, especially the working class, become poisoned by subjective empirical philosophy and lose their direction in the practical struggle.¹¹⁶

By analyzing the pragmatist concept of experience and the method of thinking, Yao Pengzi points out that pragmatism is an extremely selfish philosophy of individualism. It reflects the insatiable desire of the bourgeoisie. The method of thinking which Dewey and Hu Shi advocated is subjective idealism. It only teaches people how to deal with the environment in order to satisfy an "individual narrow requirement".

All through the essays on pragmatism, we will find that although almost all of them touch upon the issue of experience, they are all similar and do not contain penetrating analysis; neither are they persuasive.

¹¹⁵ Yao Pengzi, *Pipan Hu Shi shiyong zhuyi de fandong xing he fan kexue xing* (*Criticism of the Reactionary and Anti-scientific Nature of Hu Shi's Pragmatism*) (Shanghai: 1955), p.34.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid*, pp.37-8.

4.2.3 Criticism of Hu Shi in Other Academic Areas

Hu Shi not only held pragmatism as his philosophy, but also applied it to his scholarship in such areas as history, literature, and education (see above). He believed that his methodology --- hypothesize boldly, identify carefully --- was a scientific method. However, Guo Moruo, a Marxist scholar, argued that Hu Shi's method was not scientific, but idealistic, and that it distorted science:

... science allows hypothesis; however, science needs more identification. So-called hypotheses should be initial ideas framed on the basis of insufficient evidence. It is not final; but if there is more evidence and if the hypothesis stands the test of counterevidence, it may be final. So what the real scientists adopt is "hypothesize carefully, identify boldly".

Hu Shi did not understand science at all. ... Hu Shi usually assumed some absurd argument, then racked his brains trying to find evidence in order to prove his hypothesis. ... His hypothesis is the result. This result certainly is a subjective, lopsided, and arbitrary product. Applying this method and attitude, Hu Shi denied the existence of Qu Yuan, the criticism in *Dream of the Red Chamber* of feudal society, the value of Chinese culture, the existence of China's feudal institutions, and the aggression of imperialism toward China. He used to advocate "Westernize thoroughly, accept completely". What he wanted to do is to lead people to be the obedient subjects of America.¹¹⁷

In the field of history, Hu Shi was criticized for his denial of the existence of class struggle, which was regarded as the motive force of the development of history. Zhou Yiliang, a famous historian in China, pointed out in 1955 that what Hu Shi did was just sift a heap of musty old books and papers while he called himself a historian. The purpose of his sifting musty old books and papers was an attempt to "guide young people to dig into a heap of musty old books and papers so that they

¹¹⁷ Guo Moruo, "Sandian jianyi" (Three Suggestions) in *Criticism of Hu Shi's Thoughts*, Vol.1, pp.10-11.

could be divorced from reality and current class struggle."¹¹⁸ Hu Shi's conception of history was criticized in the following aspects:

1. The irregular nature of historical development

In accordance with the Marxist materialistic conception of history, the development of human society has its own law independent of human will. This law is that the development of human society must go through five stages: primitive society, slave society, feudal society, capitalist society, socialist and communist society. That the capitalist society will be replaced by the socialist and communist society becomes inevitable. However, Hu Shi thought that all theories, ideas, and knowledge were hypotheses. So was Marxist theory. Contrary to the Marxist theory that the force to push history forward is the people's revolution, Hu Shi believed that individuals played an important role in the development of history. In this case, Hu Shi was believed to be a person who served the moribund reactionary ruling class and ignored the people's force.¹¹⁹

2. Comprador¹²⁰ character of historical study

Historians in Communist China think that China was in a very important position in the world before the Opium War.¹²¹ However, the Opium War made China

¹¹⁸ Zhou Yiliang, "Pipan Hu Shi fandong de lishi guan" (Criticism of Hu Shi's Reactionary View of History) in *Criticism of Hu Shi's Thoughts*, Vol.1, pp.113-114.

¹¹⁹ See *Ibid*, pp.107-14.

¹²⁰ "Comprador" in general terms means purchasing agent. In political terms in China, "comprador" is the businessman or middleman who does business for foreign capitalists in his own country.

¹²¹ The Opium War happened from 1840-1842. Britain launched it with the excuse

become a semi-feudalistic and semi-colonial society. She was getting poorer and more backward because of feudalism and imperialism. But Hu Shi thought that the wealth of the Chinese culture was out of the question. The reason that China was poor and backward was the "five enemies" which were poverty, disease, ignorance, graft, and harassment. So what Hu Shi advocated, in the view of Marxist historians, was a typical comprador culture. Hu was lacking Chinese backbone and went to seek refuge with the imperialist compradors. Hu Shi's point of view was totally reactionary.

3. Reactionary pluralistic conception of history

The Marxist concept of history is monist. It believes that the economic basis determines the superstructure; and the superstructure will react to the economic basis. What Dewey suggests is that the economic element is equal to the political, moral, and cultural elements. Economy is only one of the elements which influence social history. "So his (Dewey) pluralistic conception of history which equalizes the economic element with the political, moral, and cultural elements is actually a monist idealism which equalizes the economy with superstructure."¹²²

that China prohibited Britain's selling of opium to China. Because of the corruption of the Qing Government, China was forced to sign a treaty. Since then, China's door was opened and foreign forces gradually penetrated into China.

¹²² Yang Zhengdian, "Suqing fandong de zichan jieji zhexue sixiang shiyong zhuyi de yingxiang" (Eliminating the Influence of Reactionary Bourgeois Philosophical Thought --- Pragmatism) in *Criticism of Hu Shi's Thoughts* (Beijing: 1955), pp.115; and *Collected Materials of Criticizing Hu Shi's Thoughts* (Shanghai: 1955), p.23.

In the study of Chinese classical literature, Hu Shi also adopted the experimental method and ignored class character. For example, Hu Shi thought that *Dream of the Red Chamber* was actually an autobiography of the author, Cao Xueqin. The book describes accurately man's natural tendency of "eating idle bread till a whole fortune is used up" and that "when an influential person falls from power, his hangers-on disperse". "It was a masterpiece of naturalism".¹²³ Opposite to this view, Chinese Marxist scholars who kept the proletarian stand believed that *Dream of the Red Chamber* was a realistic literary work. It reflected the contradictions in contemporary society through the description of various characters. The resistance to feudal ethics by Jia Baoyu revealed internal contradiction and crisis on the eve of the crumbling of feudal society.¹²⁴

In the field of education, the Chinese Communists believe that Dewey's education was introduced into China through Hu Shi. Dewey's theory indicates that education is life; life is dealing with the environment around the human being. School is the society; courses in schools should show no difference from the life outside schools. Children should be the centre of education; the purpose, plan and performance of activities should be carried on by children. Dewey's theory cannot be accepted by the Chinese Marxists. They think that education is determined by the policy of the ruling class, and will obey the interest of the ruling class. In the capitalist society, education must serve the bourgeoisie. To Marxists, the real intent of Dewey and Hu Shi is:

¹²³ See Hu Shi, "Textual Research on the *Dream of the Red Chamber*" in *Collected Essays of Hu Shi* (Taipei: 1953), Vol.1, Juan 3, pp.607-608.

¹²⁴ See Liang Xiyan, etc. "Women duiyu Honglougong yanjiu de chubu yijian" (A Tentative Suggestion for the Study of the *Dream of the Red Chamber*) in *Criticism of Hu Shi's Thoughts*, Vol.1, pp.182-183.

First of all, trying to go against the educational intent of the proletariat is clearly indicated; secondly, under the intent of covering class nature, they tried to deceive the masses so that they could reach their filthy narrow purpose for their class; thirdly, they tried to make people believe that education is supraclass and suprapolitical, to make the educational work lack a clear purpose and a direction of work. People will not know whom education should serve.¹²⁵

From the description above, we can easily see the connection of the criticism of Hu Shi's intellectual ideas with the existing political orthodoxy. This political viewpoint was based on the Marxist theory of class struggle and class nature in all aspects of ideology. Although Marxists did not have to reject all the schools which had different ideas, the Marxists in China had to try to keep their control of the regime both physically and ideologically while they were a new force without much experience of governing a society at peace. To ensure that everything served the proletarian dictatorship became the main characteristic of China's society in the 1950's.

4.3 Critique of the Criticism of Deweyism and Hu Shi's Ideas

The nation-wide campaign to repudiate Hu Shi and his thought from various aspects of social science took place in the middle of the 1950's. Critical articles based on Marxist theory appeared in newspapers and journals. Hu Shi was denounced as a "running dog of imperialists and Chinese feudalistic compradors", "the number one spokesman of the comprador bourgeoisie, who was fostered by American imperialism", and "a key representative of Chinese bourgeois thought". It is not surprising that Hu Shi was described as a "running dog of American impe-

¹²⁵ Yan Yonghuang, "Pipan Hu Shi de fandong de jiaoyuxue guandian" (Criticizing Hu Shi's Reactionary View of Education) in *What Kind of Person Is Hu Shi?* pp.49-50.

rialism". From the previous chapter, we know that Hu Shi was a disciple of John Dewey. He held Dewey's pragmatism in high esteem; meanwhile, he wholeheartedly introduced it into China. As a teacher and inspiration of Hu Shi, Dewey could not avoid being criticized by the Chinese Marxists. Dewey was the "poisonous" root of Hu Shi's ideas. Also, criticism of pragmatism was an intellectual trend in Communist countries in the 1950's. For this reason, we need to consider Deweyism and its relation to Marxism.

One of the most influential philosophers and educators in the world in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Dewey was born in Burlington, Vermont in 1859. He spent four years, from 1875 to 1879, at the University of Vermont. He then taught classics, science, and algebra at a high school in Oil City, Pennsylvania until 1881. He had been interested in philosophy since his days at the University of Vermont. The publication of two of his philosophical articles encouraged him to pursue his professional philosophical career. He attained his Ph.D. at Johns Hopkins University. Under the influence of G.S. Morris, whose philosophical outlook had been shaped by Hegel, Dewey became an enthusiastic Hegelian. Later, influenced by scientific study, Dewey abandoned Hegelianism and turned towards pragmatism.¹²⁶ Since then, Dewey has always been mentioned in the same breath as pragmatism. Of course, pragmatism took different forms from its formulator, Charles Peirce, through William James, to John Dewey. What we will discuss here will be Dewey's pragmatism.

¹²⁶ Paul Edwards ed. *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2), p.380.

Dewey's pragmatism became one of the most influential philosophies in America at the beginning of the twentieth century. It was introduced into China in the early 1920's by scholars who had studied in America, such as Hu Shi, and had significant influence on academic and ideological circles in China.¹²⁷ Since 1949, China has been in the control of the Communist Party. Given the antagonism between Marxism and Pragmatism throughout the world, China also spread criticism against Deweyism. Dewey's pragmatism was described by Chinese Marxists as follows:

Pragmatism is one of the most reactionary trends of thought of bourgeois philosophy in the imperialistic era. It is, like Machism, a modern fideism. It is a sordid merchant ideology and commercial philosophy which originally grew up in the soil of the American life-style. American imperialism applies it in defence of a violent fascist policy and uses it as a tool to enslave the people mentally. American pragmatists are pawns of imperialists, neo-realistic, critical positivists, British logical atomists and French existentialists against Marxism-Leninism, to advocate cosmopolitanism and obscurantism, to provoke a new war, to propagate imperialist aggressive policy, and to become a theoretical pillar of the moribund capitalist institution.¹²⁸

Now let us see if this description makes sense.

From this description, we are to understand that pragmatism was the philosophy of imperialism. It served the needs of the ruling class, more specifically, of capitalists. However, from an understanding of Dewey's pragmatism, we find that this conclusion is not accurate. This can be proved by Dewey's contact with Jane Addams' Hull House. Richard J. Bernstein tells us,

¹²⁷ Barry Keenan, *The Dewey Experiment in China*, Chapter 1.

¹²⁸ Yang Zhengdian, "Suqing fandong de zichan jieji zhexue sixiang shiyong zhuyi de yingxiang" (Eliminating the Influence of Reactionary Bourgeois Philosophy --- Pragmatism) in *Criticism of Hu Shi's Thoughts*, pp.115-6.

Jane Addams' Hull House was founded in 1889 as a settlement house for social work among immigrant workingmen. It was the hub of radical thought and activity in Chicago. It was an "academy" for the workingman, a place where contemporary social issues were hotly debated, for struggling unions to meet and organize, and most important a place for making deep and lasting friendships based on the common commitment to practice social reform.¹²⁹

Dewey introduced his social philosophy to this workers' organization. He was welcomed. Instead of being a spokesman for capitalists, Dewey, as Bernstein wrote, "became America's intellectual spokesman for practical social reform, for the elimination of specific injustices, and for the positive reconstruction of a democratic community that would become more humane and in which all would share the benefits."¹³⁰

Marxists characterized Dewey's pragmatism as idealism. If we analyze Dewey's philosophy carefully, we realise why Marxists believed so. Dewey, like William James, tried to find a position between materialism and idealism. He called this middle ground pragmatism. He used the term "experience" to replace "matter" and "spirit". Materialism believes that matter is primary, and that spirit, being derived from matter, is secondary. Contrary to materialism, idealism believes that spirit is primary and matter secondary. Dewey used "experience" to replace both matter and spirit. His "experience" has an ambiguous nature. Throughout the critical articles written in China, we find that the main target is "experience". The question is, is "experience" as Marxists understand it the same as the "experience" Dewey understood? We need to make clear Dewey's concept of experience and its relation to nature.

¹²⁹ Bernstein, *John Dewey*, p.36.

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, p.37.

Against Hegel's idealistic concept of experience, in which experience "embraced nothing less than the entire system of consciousness, the whole realm of the truth of the mind," Dewey maintained that experience encompassed everything, but that nature was more extensive than experience.

Experience is of as well as in nature. It is not experience which is experienced, but nature --- stones, plants, animals, diseases, health, temperature, electricity, and so on. Things interacting in certain ways are experience; they are what is experienced. Linked in certain other ways with another natural object --- the human organism --- they are how things are experienced as well. Experience thus reaches down into nature; it has depth. It also had breadth and to an indefinitely elastic extent. It stretches. That stretch constitutes influence.¹³¹

When Dewey talked about the relation of experience and nature, we can see that he assumed a dialectical materialist's mindset. He believed that experience occurred under highly specialized conditions. It was a latecomer in the history of the universe. However, until experience appeared, was there no knowledge of nature.¹³² On the other hand, Dewey's "experience" was an all-inclusive element. It was Dewey's philosophical term "experience" that replaced the terms "matter" and "spirit". Thus, experience, in Dewey's eyes, is different from what Marxists understand by experience, which is knowledge or technical ability deriving from practice and nothing else.

Should we simply characterize pragmatism as idealism? Dewey chose "experience" as the centre of his entire philosophy, but himself rejected the equation of pragmatism with idealism. Throughout his work, as Bernstein tells us, Dewey distinguished his concept of experience from the atomistic and particularistic con-

¹³¹ Cited in *Ibid*, pp.78-79.

¹³² *Ibid*, p.79.

cept of experience that had been central to traditional, especially British, empiricism. Also, "Dewey rejects a tendency in various forms of idealism, in which experience tends to become one all-encompassing whole". Dewey's experience "consists of a series of interpenetrating organic coordinations".¹³³ Nor did he think that pragmatism was materialism if materialism was metaphysical.¹³⁴ Pragmatism is more like dialectical materialism. But Dewey did not like his philosophy to be called materialism. Instead, he called it naturalistic pragmatism.

There are many similarities between Dewey and Marx.

1. When Dewey talked about stimulus and response, he believed that these two elements were correlated. Stimulus and response were not two totally isolated things. In the critique of the Reflex Arc Concept, Dewey pointed out that the response was not an independent event which merely followed a stimulus. The stimulus was constitutive of the response insofar as "the sound experience must persist as a value in the running, to keep it up, to control it".¹³⁵ The response was not a totally new experience. It was the original experience transformed and reconstituted. Here, the idea of "transformed" and "reconstituted" can be found in Marxist theory as applied in sociology. For example, Marx believed that the supersession of institutions was a process of transformation. It was not that one thing was replaced by another irrelevant thing. Both Dewey and Marx agreed that things in the world were initially related.

¹³³ *Ibid*, p.20.

¹³⁴ C.W. Tolman and B. Piekkola, "Anticipations of Activity Theory in the Critique of the Reflex Arc Concept" in *Activity Theory*, No. 3/4, 1989, pp.43-4.

¹³⁵ Cited in Bernstein, *John Dewey*, p.16 from Dewey "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology" in *Psychological Review* III, July, 1896, pp.357-370.

2. Both Dewey and Marx were Hegelians at first. Later, both of them accepted Hegel's dialectic idea and abandoned his idealistic aspect so that their theories could become more scientific. Dewey's idea of organic coordination made him more naturalistic. Bernstein points out that "the insights that Dewey had derived from his study of Hegel and neo-Hegelians are now divorced from the Hegelian context and reformulated in a terminology more congenial to an experimental, scientific temper."¹³⁶ Marx, like Dewey, accepted Hegel's dialectic idea and developed it towards dialectical materialism. Bernstein's words also fit Marx here.

3. In terms of the individual, freedom, and democracy, Dewey had a similar inference as Marx. Dewey pointed out in his *Individualism, Old and New*:

Individuality is at first spontaneous and unshaped, it is a potentiality, a capacity of development. Even so, it is a unique manner of acting in and with a world of objects and persons. It is not something complete in itself, like a closet in a house or a secret drawer in a desk, filled with treasures that are waiting to be bestowed on the world. Since individuality is a distinctive way of feeling the impacts of the world and of showing a preferential bias in response to these impacts, it develops into shape and form only through interaction with actual conditions.¹³⁷

Dewey's words are no different from the Marxist theory that social life shapes the quality and type of human individuality. It can also be seen through Dewey's criticism of classical liberalism. According to his critique, classical liberalism "lies in the notion that individuals have such native and original endowment of rights, powers, and wants that all that is required on the side of institutions and laws is to eliminate the obstructions they offer to the free play of the natural

¹³⁶ Bernstein, *John Dewey*, p.20.

¹³⁷ Cited in *Ibid*, pp.138-139.

equipment of individuals".¹³⁸ He believed that individuals should not be isolated from their surroundings. The soul or mind or consciousness was not self-contained and self-enclosed.¹³⁹ In this case, the realization of human freedom "can be achieved only through the proper transaction with objective conditions as they are embodied in political and economic institutions".¹⁴⁰

When Dewey talked about freedom, he applied his pragmatist ideas. Dewey distinguished two schools of social reform: one required an inner freedom or moral freedom --- "the only way to change institutions is for men to purify their own hearts"; the other one upheld that human nature was determined by the environment, so human beings were passive. Dewey looked for a place between these two theories.

There is an alternative to being penned in between these two theories. We can recognize that all conduct is interaction between elements of human nature and development, natural and social. ...freedom is found in that kind of interaction which maintains an environment in which human desire and choice count for something. There are in truth forces in man as well as without him. While they are infinitely frail in comparison with exterior forces, yet they may have the support of a foreseeing and contriving intelligence.¹⁴¹

From the comparison above, it is not hard to conclude that Dewey's pragmatism is closer to materialism than to idealism. However, although Dewey had a close relation to society at large and tried to apply his theory to its social practices, its effect was not notable. On the other hand, Marxism is not only dialectical

¹³⁸ Cited in *Ibid*, p.139 from Dewey, "Philosophies of Freedom" in Bernstein ed. *John Dewey on Experience, Nature and Freedom*, p.271.

¹³⁹ Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p.94.

¹⁴⁰ Bernstein, *John Dewey*, p.141.

¹⁴¹ Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p.10.

materialism, but also historical materialism. Marxism believed that the development of society has its objective laws. Within these laws, social existence determines social consciousness and social consciousness reacts to social existence; more specifically, human beings can pursue politics, science, religion, and art --- superstructure --- on the basis of having food, clothes, and shelter --- economic base. The development of society is the result of conflicts between economic base and superstructure, productive forces and the means of production. Marx divided social groups into different classes according to the economic condition within a certain society. Marxists believe that this division into classes gives people a clear target to fight, and all these aspects cause Marxism to have an explicit guide for social actions. It is also believed that Marxism was more influential than Deweyism in social practice because of this division. The lack of a historical sense in theory is the "weakness" of Dewey's philosophy. This "weakness" then became the major target of Communists who refrained from mentioning Deweyism's similarity to Marxism.

In the philosophical aspect, Dewey was similar to Marx. His pragmatism was closer to materialism than idealism, as we have seen. The rejection of Deweyism was actually based on ideological considerations.¹⁴² Charles W. Tolman and Brad Piekkola explain this in their article, "Anticipations of Activity Theory in the Critique of the Reflex Arc Concept". The paper informs us that the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* shows clearly the change of attitude towards Dewey. In the 1931 edition, Dewey was "an outstanding American philosopher, psychologist, sociologist, and pedagogue". But in the 1952 edition, he became a "reactionary bourgeois

¹⁴² See Jim Cork, "John Dewey and Karl Marx" in *John Dewey: Philosopher of Science and Freedom*, ed. by Sidney Hook, pp.331-50.

philosopher and sociologist".¹⁴³ The criticism of Dewey's pragmatism in the 1950's started from the early 1930's. Dewey's chairmanship of the Mexico Inquiry in 1938 which exonerated Trotsky of guilt led to the condemnation of Dewey by Communists all over the world.¹⁴⁴ It had a purely political purpose. The criticism of Dewey in China in the 1950's was an echo of world Marxism. Chinese Marxists used the same terminology to criticize Dewey as American Marxists did. For example, Harry K. Wells defines pragmatism as follow:

Pragmatism is a form of philosophical idealism. More specially, it is a form of subjective idealism which asserts that only our mind really exists, that the natural and social world exists only in our sensation and ideas, will and emotions. It is a subjective idealistic philosophy evolved within the concrete historical conditions of the United States.¹⁴⁵

The appearance of this phenomenon cannot be separated from the Russian influence on the world. After the Russian October Revolution of 1917, the Soviet Union became a world power. It established the first socialist country according to Marxist theory in the world. It was the example for Marxists in other countries. Soviet Marxism was believed to be orthodox Marxism. Lenin and Stalin were regarded as the representatives of contemporary Marxism. Since every action, policy and theory in the Soviet Union could be imitated by Marxists in other countries, so too could the treatment of Dewey. Even though Dewey was accepted in the years following the Russian Revolution, he was totally rejected after the Mexico Inquiry. This hostility of Russian Marxism to Pragmatism influ-

¹⁴³ C.W. Tolman and Brad Piekkola, "Anticipation of Activity Theory in the Critique of the Reflex Arc Concept" in *Activity Theory*, No. 3/4, 1989, p.43.

¹⁴⁴ William W. Brickman, "Dewey and Russia" in *John Dewey: Master Educator* (New York: 1959), p.102.

¹⁴⁵ Harry K. Wells, *Pragmatism: Philosophy of Imperialism*, p.13.

enced the trends of world Marxism. Therefore, it is not surprising that Marxists from different countries have the same attitude toward Dewey and his pragmatist philosophy.

Communist China, as a follower of the Soviet Union in the 1950's, would no doubt be influenced by Soviet policies. From the attitude toward Deweyism and Hu Shi's ideas, we can easily see that the Chinese Marxists mixed up philosophical and ideological perspectives. Concerning the philosophical perspective, the ambiguity of Deweyism cannot be accepted by Marxism. Marxists are always able to find weaknesses to attack in Pragmatism. Also, Engels, one of the founders of Marxism, had pointed out that there were only two schools in philosophy --- materialism and idealism. There was nothing in between. If Dewey would not admit that his philosophy was materialism, then according to Marxist logic, it must be idealism. However, the similarity between Deweyism and Marxism should not be denied because of their ideological disagreement. Dewey's pragmatism and Hu Shi's application of Deweyism to his scholarship belonged to the academic context. They should not be criticized in the same breath as political attitudes. Furthermore, Deweyism should not have been rejected completely when some aspects did not meet the interest of Marxism. After all, they had similarities.

The campaign to criticize Hu Shi's ideas in the 1950's had a pronounced political taint. All theories and ideas of Hu Shi and Dewey were explained according to the contemporary needs of political struggle. This was the characteristic of Chinese society in the 1950's. Although Marxist theory states that the economic base determines the superstructure and the superstructure responds to the economic

changes in any kind of society, politics as an aspect of the superstructure plays an important role in China. This was especially the case before the end of the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" in 1976. The repudiation of Hu Shi's ideology was an expression of political emphasis. Certainly there were several economic development plans during these years. However, every plan and policy in every territory served the dictatorship of the proletariat. Formulation of all policies and measures was made according to the need of the dictatorship of the proletariat, especially in the field of ideology.

4.4 Chinese Society in the 1980's

The campaign to criticize Hu Shi's ideas in the 1950's did not disappear suddenly in the 1960's and 1970's. In 1954 and 1955, most of the articles in all kinds of journals and newspapers were about the repudiation of Hu Shi's ideas. After 1956, this kind of article became less and less frequent although it still could be found occasionally. The attitude of these articles toward Hu Shi was mainly negative. In the 1980's, the appraisal of Hu Shi and his thought reappeared. With the change of social and political circumstances, the attitude toward Hu Shi changed in the 1980's. People started to reevaluate Hu Shi and to approve many aspects of his ideas which were believed reactionary in the 1950's. In order to understand this change better, we need to understand something of the situation in China in the late 1970's and the early 1980's.

The period of the late 1970's and the early 1980's was a transitional period in China. It was during this period that the country evolved gradually from a Maoist

regime to a Dengist regime, while the Communist Government shifted its emphasis from class struggle to the task of economic construction, and the period during which the people readjusted their ideology after the preceding thirty years. So the situation of Chinese society in this period appeared unstable and complicated. The political and ideological campaigns in the 1950's, the Great Leap Forward in 1958, and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976 created tremendous ideological confusion among the people, in addition to economic depression and production stagnation. In order to rescue China from this situation, the Chinese Communist Party posed a new goal for the country after it announced the end of the Cultural Revolution. Especially after the Third Plenum in late 1978, the Communist Government formulated a general policy of readjusting, restructuring, consolidating and improving China's economy. On January 16, 1980, Deng Xiaoping pointed out explicitly in his article, "The Present Situation and the Task Before Us", that modernization was at the core of all three major tasks¹⁴⁶ because "the role we play in international affairs is determined by the extent of our economic growth. If our country becomes more developed and prosperous, we will be in a position to play a greater role in international affairs."¹⁴⁷

Under the influence of such a policy, China has seen a change in her economy. Economic readjustment, which meant reducing investment to raise consumption and shifting the remaining investment resources toward the production of consum-

¹⁴⁶ Deng lists three major tasks in the 1980's in "The Present Situation and the Tasks Before Us". They are, briefly, (1) in international affairs, continuing to oppose hegemonism and striving to preserve world peace; (2) working for the return of Taiwan to the mainland, for China's reunification; (3) stepping up economic construction, which was stepping up the drive for China's four modernizations. See *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping*, pp.224-225.

¹⁴⁷ *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* (Beijing: 1984), p.225.

er goods, brought considerable results according to the statistics of Bruce L. Reynolds:

Whereas state investment increased by a massive 31.3 percent in 1978 on top of sizable increase in 1977, it grew only 4.4 percent in 1979 and not at all in 1980. As a result, total investment as a proportion of gross national product declined from 36.5 percent in 1978 to perhaps 30 percent in 1980. Although a modest increase in the absolute level of investment is planned for 1981, the investment-to-GNP ratio is to remain below 30 percent after that. Industry is to grow at 6 percent per year --- less than the 10 percent rate since 1952 but still quite respectable.¹⁴⁸

With the reduction of investment in heavy industry, the development of light industry appeared to be a growing tendency. Following the accomplishment of readjustment, China entered the stage of economic reform.

The Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee decided to cease using the slogan "take class struggle as the key link" and shifted the Party's work to socialist modernization.¹⁴⁹ So while economic construction became the central task in the 1980's in China, the direction of political struggle changed too.

Although class struggle still exists in China, the objects of struggle have changed. As Hu Lu states in "A Few Questions on Class Struggle Under Present Conditions": "the class struggle we have talked about since the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Party Central Committee is basically different from taking class struggle as the key link." It is:

mainly against counterrevolutionaries and enemy special agents; various kinds of criminal offenders and other bad elements; new exploiters engaged in graft, embezzlement, and speculation; some

¹⁴⁸ Bruce L. Reynolds, "The Chinese Economy in 1980: Death of Reform?" in *China Briefing*, 1981 ed. by Robert B. Oxnam and Richard C. Bush, pp.42-43.

¹⁴⁹ John P Burns and Stanley Rosen ed. *Policy Conflicts in Post-Mao China* (Armonk:1986), p.368.

remnants of the "Gang of Four"; a small number of unreformed landlords and rich peasants and some remnants of other old exploiting classes.¹⁵⁰

The spearhead of struggle points at those who tried to prevent and sabotage the socialist economic construction.

Ideology is a sophisticated field. After the Cultural Revolution ended, people started to take a sceptical attitude to things that they had been convinced of before. Many intellectuals, especially young people who had been suppressed in the preceding decade or two, tried to find a democratic path for China after the experience of the suffocating policy of the past. This was a spontaneous social phenomenon. Among the leading group, Deng Xiaoping gave a speech at the closing session of the Central Working Conference referring to the phenomenon that many leaders dared not speak their minds. He urged both party members and people outside the party "to dare to think, explore new paths and put forward new ideas".¹⁵¹ Meanwhile, Deng proposed to lay particular stress on democracy. The period from the Third Plenum in December 1978 to the Sixth Plenum in June 1981 can be called the period of "thaw" (*fang*), according to Lowell Dittmer's periodization.¹⁵² This "thaw" included introducing Western ideas into China. Following the period of the "thaw", the anti-spiritual pollution campaign emerged late in 1983. These situations made it appear that China's door had swung open to West-

¹⁵⁰ Hu Lu, "A Few Questions on Class Struggle under Present Condition" in *Policy Conflicts in Post-Mao China: A Documentary Surey, with Analysis* ed. by John P. Burns and Stanley Rosen, p.40. Original source is from *Wenhui bao*, June 9, 1982. Translation from FBIS Daily Report, June 18, 1982, pp.03-05 (excerpts).

¹⁵¹ Deng Xiaoping, *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* (Beijing: 1984), pp.154-155.

¹⁵² See "Introduction" in *Policy Conflicts in Post-Mao China* ed. by Burns and Rosen, p.5.

ern ideas.

The changes in the political, economic, and ideological areas were reflected in academic studies in the 1980's. The study of Hu Shi in the 1980's appeared more objective than that in the 1950's. However, the change of attitude toward Hu Shi is only superficial because the theoretical basis of these studies is still Marxism.

4.5 Re-evaluation of Hu Shi in the 1980's

Since the late 1970's, articles on Hu Shi have reappeared. Although they are not as numerous as in the 1950's, there are enough to show the attitude of the 1980's toward Hu Shi. In these articles, Hu Shi has changed from being seen as the completely unacceptable reactionary scholar of the 1950's to being seen as a person who was politically reactionary but had made a contribution academically. Yi Zhuxian's conclusion is representative of the general attitude toward Hu Shi in the 1980's:

The complicated thought and experience in Hu Shi's life was the outcome of complicated contradictions which appeared in the process of political, economic, and cultural developments in semi-feudal and semi-colonial Chinese society. He was a scholar who was diligent in his academic studies lifelong; after all, he had written as many essays as he was tall. Hu Shi's initial contribution was to the literary revolution. Also, he advocated and wrote vernacular poems, did textual research on Chinese classical novels, and studied ancient Chinese history, Chinese philosophical history, and Chinese intellectual history. ... His contributions to modern Chinese literary and cultural history and his influence in the international academic area should not be written off at one stroke. They are also unable to be blotted out. However, when he boycotted and opposed Marxism in his ideological theory and finally depended on the Guomindang Government in politics, he not only became a rightist who was antagonistic to the Communist Party and the people in politics, but also declined into mediocrity and produced no more outstanding works of

scholarship.¹⁵³

When scholars in the 1980's define the nature of Hu Shi, terms such as "the running dog of the Guomindang", "the comprador of American imperialism", and so on, which were very common in the 1950's, can hardly be found. Instead, Hu Shi is defined as a bourgeois scholar. After rectifying the extreme views popularized over the past three decades in which revolutionary nature was primary, scholars now try to avoid rejecting one's contribution because of his differing political stand. Scholars study Hu Shi's academic contributions and his political views separately.

People in the 1980's praise Hu Shi's contributions to literary and historical studies, especially his advocacy of the vernacular literature movement. Li Zehou thinks that Hu Shi's "Tentative Proposals for Literary Reform" initiated the vernacular literary movement in the May Fourth Period. The vernacular literary movement and the May Fourth student movement complemented each other and became a new stage in modern Chinese history.¹⁵⁴ Besides Hu Shi's contribution to literary history, his research methodology of study --- hypothesize boldly, identify carefully --- which was formerly called anti-scientific has now been basically accepted. For example, Zhong Ying points out in *Wenhui bao*, a major newspaper in Shanghai:

Scientific history proves: "hypothesize boldly, identify carefully" is a most common method for academic and scientific studies. When people are looking to the answer for a scientific question, they have

¹⁵³ Yi Zhuxian, "Hu Shi shi yige zenyang de ren?" (What Kind of Person Was Hu Shi?) in *Renwu (Figures)*, No.2, 1986, pp.156-157.

¹⁵⁴ See Li Zehou, "Hu Shi, Chen Duxiu, Lu Xun" in *Fujian pinglun (Fujian Review)*, No.2, 1988, pp.1-3.

to look for a large number of materials carefully. They can form a preliminary idea on the basis of the materials. Then they can bring out a bold hypothesis. This hypothesis needs to be tested carefully in order to tell whether it is a truth or not. This method can meet epistemological law in the process of recognizing things about human beings. It is a scientific method.¹⁵⁵

Current criticism of Hu Shi's political views is almost the same as it was in the 1950's. It concentrates on Hu Shi's viewpoints, such as his advocacy of "studying more problems and talking less isms" when Marxism was just introduced into China; his suggestion of "rescuing China by education" and encouraging students to stay away from the streets and study hard when China had an anti-imperialism movement in the 1920's; and his holding of pragmatism in esteem. Comparing the criticism of Hu Shi's politics in the two different periods, there is a little difference. In the 1950's, the criticism was comprehensive without recognizing any positive aspects. However, analysis of Hu Shi in the 1980's distinguished different periods of time. In general, Hu Shi's political stand after the 1930's is completely condemned. Hu Shi is described as a person who firmly opposed Marxism and the Chinese Communist Party and went to seek refuge with the Guomindang Government after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War. Hu Shi's political stand is believed not to be very clear before then.¹⁵⁶

Although most articles about Hu Shi in the 1980's try to avoid the extreme attitudes of the 1950's, and indeed, some positive aspects of Hu Shi's ideas are approved of in these articles, they are still based on Marxist theory. For example,

¹⁵⁵ Zhong Ying, "Dadan jiashe, xiaoxin qiuzhen xi" (Analysis of "Hypothesize Boldly, Identify Carefully") in *Wenhui bao* January 19, 1981, p.3.

¹⁵⁶ See Geng Yunzhi, "Cong Wusi dao sanshi niandai chuqi Hu Shi zhengzhi taidu de bianhua" (The Change of Hu Shi's Political Attitude from the May Fourth Period to the 1930's) in *Essays on Hu Shi* (Chengdu: 1985), pp.216-239.

when authors affirm Hu Shi's contribution to the vernacular literary movement, they cannot forget the Marxist model for the development of human society. The positive function of the vernacular literary movement, in the eyes of Chinese Marxists in the 1980's, is to oppose feudalistic old literature. Classical Chinese literature is believed to be feudal. At least it served feudalistic morality. Hu Shi, as a "bourgeois intellectual", advocated vernacular literature in opposition to classical Chinese. He naturally stood on the revolutionary side and played a positive role according to Marxist theory.

I have just mentioned that Hu Shi's methodology has been accepted to some degree in the 1980's. However, this acceptance exists under certain conditions. Now let us see how people accept Hu Shi's methodology by analysis of Yang Guorong's essay, "Lun Hu Shi fangfalun sixiang de neizai maodun jiqi genyuan" (On the Inner Contradictions of Hu Shi's Methodology and their Roots). The reason that I chose this essay is that it is superficially a purely academic study, but after we analyze the content, we find that it is tinged with politics.

After Yang Guorong confirms Hu Shi's respect for facts and evidence, he then disagrees with Hu Shi's methodology in which questioning is the first step of study. He directs his attack against points of view held by Hu Shi, such as, "problems are the forefather of knowledge; the production and accumulation of knowledge always occur because problems need to be solved --- [we] need to overcome difficulties in practice and to answer knotty problems in theory",¹⁵⁷ Yang believes that the problems Hu Shi referred to are idealistic and subjective. He comments:

¹⁵⁷ Cited in Yang Guorong, "On the Inner Contradictions of Hu Shi's Methodology and their Roots" in *Zhejiang xuekan (Zhejiang Journal)*, No.5, 1985, p.77.

Objectively, problems are a very important link in scientific studies. Raising questions and solving them correctly has significant meaning to scientific studies. However, the occurrence of problems does not happen without a base. This base is the practice of human beings. In terms of their substance, problems are the reflection of objective contradictions. What Hu Shi suggested is actually opposite to this point of view. In Hu Shi's eyes, difficulties are the motive of thought and the challenge of thought.¹⁵⁸

If we go back to Hu Shi's book, we can easily see that Yang's comment is not quite accurate. Hu Shi did not say that the occurrence of problems happened without a base. Instead, he said that the situation of human life always changed. When people were in a new situation, they would meet new things which might not fit their old customs. Then the problems would appear.¹⁵⁹ So Hu Shi's problems are the product of real life. Marxism believes that sensation comes from practice. It is the reflection of objective matter. Motive also has its objective conditions. In this case, sensation and motive are not purely subjective. Hu Shi's idea does not conflict with Marxist theory at this point. Yang's critique cannot stand firmly.

On the basis of his criticism of Hu Shi's first step, Yang Guorong develops a censure for Hu Shi's second step --- hypothesis. To counter Hu Shi's method of raising hypotheses, which is based on several possible solutions that occur to people, Yang thinks,

although problems function as triggers, the solution to problems cannot be separated from a certain base of facts. This is an important link --- the investigation and research of facts --- between the production of problems and their solution. Hu Shi treated problems lop-

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p.77.

¹⁵⁹ See Hu Shi, "Pragmatism" in *Selected Essays of Hu Shi* (Taipei: 1953), Vol.1, Juan 2, p.323. Also see his "Dewey's Philosophy" in *Collected Speech of Hu Shi* (Taipei: 1970), Vol.2, p.298-299.

sidedly as the direct prerequisite of hypothesis.¹⁶⁰

Here, Yang misunderstands Hu Shi's hypothesis. First of all, Hu Shi's hypothesis is not necessarily the same as the conclusion. It is just a theory that is waiting to be proven. It is not equal to the conclusion. What Yang recommends about the investigation and research of facts is Hu Shi's next step --- identify carefully. Secondly, Hu Shi's hypothesis is not built on empty thinking. It is based on the knowledge that people possess.¹⁶¹ The knowledge and experience which Hu Shi mentioned are actually Yang's "base of facts".

When Yang Guorong criticizes Hu Shi's idea of reason, he uses the Marxist concept of "experience" to understand the Pragmatist concept of "experience".

Yang writes:

Pragmatism separated theory from practice. ... they [pragmatists] overvalue experience and belittle reason. ... From this, pragmatism denies the function of rational thinking. ... Based on this opinion, Hu Shi mixed experience and reason up, and finally excluded reason infavour of experience.¹⁶²

In the first part of this chapter, I explained the Deweyist concept of "experience". It is a combination of matter and spirit. So when Hu Shi talks about experience, it actually includes both the "experience" of the Marxist concept and reason.

Through the whole article, we can see that Yang's critique of Hu Shi's methodology is made under the presupposition that pragmatism is an idealist philosophy. Yang believes that Hu Shi's methodology, on the one hand, holds the principle of

¹⁶⁰ Yang, "On Inner Contradictions of Hu Shi's Methodology and its Root", p.77.

¹⁶¹ See Hu Shi, "Pragmatism" in *Selected Essays of Hu Shi* (Taipei: 1953), Vol.1, Juan 2, pp.324-325.

¹⁶² Yang, "On Inner Contradictions of Hu Shi's Methodology and its Root", p.77.

respecting facts and evidence, advocates that theory is the reference material of research, and poses the requirement of clarifying the change and the reason of change; on the other hand, it uses subjective questions as the only prerequisite of hypothesis, belittles and excludes "abstract names", and rejects the original reason for research. All these cause inner contradictions in Hu Shi's methodology. When Yang analyzes the root of these contradictions, he believes that Hu Shi's methodology obtains its scientific aspect from the *puxue* (Han Learning)¹⁶³ of Qing Dynasty and modern Western science, and its non-scientific and idealistic aspects from Deweyism:

When Hu Shi absorbed the traditional methods of *puxue* and the scientific method of modern Western countries, he was influenced by pragmatism. The former became an ideological root of scientific elements in Hu Shi's methodology. The latter became the theoretical source of idealistic and non-scientific elements in his methodology.¹⁶⁴

We have shown that theoretically, pragmatism is very similar to Marxism. However, because pragmatism does not call itself materialism, it is philosophically assigned to idealism according to the Marxist standard. Politically, it is reactionary and unacceptable in Communist countries. From Yang Guorong's article, we can see that the influence of Deweyism on Hu Shi's methodology is rejected, although Deweyism stemmed from modern science and held the "laboratory attitude of mind" as its principle. Having the label "idealistic philosophy", Dewey's pragmatism can be accepted neither in the 1950's nor in the 1980's in China.

¹⁶³ *Puxue* was developed in the Qing Dynasty by certain Confucian scholars with more pragmatic and critical views of the classics and their doctrines. It was part of a general movement of critical scholarship manifest in historical, geographical and textual studies.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid*, pp.82-83.

In general, the attitude toward Hu Shi has changed since the late 1970's. In the 1980's, the evaluations of Hu Shi's contribution to China became more objective than those of the 1950's. Hu Shi has received the honour which should have belonged to him a long time ago in Chinese literary history. However, theoretically, he can not be accepted in many aspects, even though these aspects are reasonable, because he adopted Deweyism as his theoretical base. Hu Shi's ideas and methodology can never be accepted completely or even substantially in Communist China until the Chinese Marxists change their attitude toward Deweyism.

Chapter V

CONCLUSION

The controversy over Hu Shi has lasted for more than thirty years. From the outline provided in the previous chapter, it is possible to see the nature of attitudes toward Hu Shi during those years. Although there have been some changes in the critique on Hu Shi, they are superficial. This situation is inseparable from the complicated condition of Chinese society.

Criticism of Hu Shi and Dewey was closely related to the contemporary situation. In the 1950's, one of the main tasks of the Chinese Communists was to pay special attention to class struggle. Criticizing Hu Shi's ideas, therefore, was carried on under the guide of "taking class struggle as the key link". As an opponent of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, Hu Shi was completely rejected. He was believed to be a spokesman of the capitalist class. As a person who passed "reactionary ideas" on to Hu Shi, Dewey could have no better fortune than his student. Dewey and his ideas were mentioned in the same breath as Hu Shi's ideas. From previous chapters, we understand that Dewey and Hu Shi had their differences. Hu Shi was not as faithful to Dewey's ideas as he declared and as the critics in the 1950's believed.

We should not say that Chinese critics in the 1950's criticized Hu Shi's ideas without grounds. All the articles they condemned were written by Hu Shi. (Here

we are not talking about what points of view those critics held and what kinds of materials they particularly chose. Meanwhile, we need to keep in mind that misunderstanding Hu Shi's ideas could happen anytime under the contemporary political situation in China, although critics might have read Hu's works directly.) Therefore, we should say that those critics understood Hu Shi's ideas directly from his works. Nevertheless, their understanding of Dewey was indirect. From articles criticizing Hu Shi in the 1950's, we can see that although Dewey's ideas were criticized at the same time as Hu Shi's ideas were mentioned, almost none of the critics had read Dewey's work directly. What they knew about Dewey was through Hu Shi's introduction. The introduction Hu Shi wrote was mainly on the method of pragmatism, which is the "laboratory attitude of mind". Under this circumstance, Chinese critics in the 1950's simply equated Dewey's ideas and Hu Shi's ideas. For example, Chinese Marxists believe that pragmatism is an extremely selfish philosophy of individualism.¹⁶⁵ Pragmatism is defined generally as the philosophy of individualism. However, although Hu Shi may be called an individualist (it does not have to be extremely selfish), Dewey was a collectivist. Thus the criticism of Dewey in the 1950's proceeded on the base of misunderstanding Dewey's ideas.

The discussion about Hu Shi in the 1980's appears a little different. With the economic reforms of the late 1970's and the early 1980's, opening China to the rest of the world became a necessity. The open door of the twentieth century is different from that of the nineteenth century. When the Western Affairs Movement (*yangwu yundong*) happened in the nineteenth century, the force of Chinese traditional ideology was very strong. Many scholars believed that Chinese institu-

¹⁶⁵ See Yao Pengzi, *Criticism of the Reactionary and Anti-Scientific Nature of Hu Shi's Pragmatism* (Shangshi: 1955)

tions were more advanced than those of Western countries. China needed only to learn technology from the West. For example, Li Hongzhang wrote: "If China wants to strengthen herself, she needs to learn the advanced technology of the West."¹⁶⁶ Zhang Zhidong also promoted the idea of "reviving Confucianism as the moral basis of state and adapting Western devices for practical use".¹⁶⁷ This idea was the basis of the slogan: "Chinese learning for the foundation (*zhongxue weiti*), Western learning for application (*xixue weiyong*)". Thus the scope of the movement advocated by late Qing scholars during the 1860's and mid-1890's was limited to the acceptance of firearms, ships, machines, communications, mining, and light industries. The reformers did not attempt to learn about Western institutions, philosophy, arts and culture.¹⁶⁸

In the nineteenth century, the door opened under the circumstance that China had been sealed off for hundreds of years. People had no idea of how fast Western countries had developed. Also, national pride was deep-rooted. The background of the open door in the twentieth century is different. In the past one hundred years, many more people have been in contact with Western countries than was the case one hundred years ago. Knowledge and ideas about Western countries have accumulated as the Chinese people have been in contact with countries outside China. Traditional ideas have been attacked by Western ideas and find themselves on the defensive. In the late twentieth century, China, under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, has opened her door to the world again in order to develop her

¹⁶⁶ Cited in *Zhongguo jindai shi (Modern Chinese History)* (Beijing: 1983), p.148.

¹⁶⁷ Immanuel C.Y. Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China* (New York: 1975), p.439.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p.356.

economy. With the introduction of advanced technology and Western economics, Western ideas and culture were inevitably brought into China.

As a Chinese policy maker, Deng Xiaoping has made China open her door to the world in economy, but he still tried to keep one single idea as a guiding ideology rather than applying a plurality of ideas in ideology. This single idea is "Mao Zedong Thought" which is the combination of Marxist-Leninist theory and its application in the practice of the Chinese revolution. However, this single idea cannot be revived smoothly. Challenges to this single idea have appeared frequently since the late 1970's.

In these circumstances, the study of Hu Shi in the 1980's has become more objective than that in the 1950's, although it is still based on the application of Marxist theory as presuppositions. At least, critics of the 1980's do not criticize Dewey's ideas; they do not even mention his name or refer to his works, except in articles on pragmatism. We cannot find any trace of simply equating Hu Shi's ideas and Deweyism. Also, as we know, Hu Shi's political views and his academic contributions are discussed separately in the 1980's. This is progress in the development of Chinese ideological and academic circles. This progress also gives a hint that cultural exchange between countries is very important.

In order to realize the renewal of ideology, the exchange of various cultures and ideas becomes necessary. Each culture and idea should develop what is useful or healthy and discard what is not. Then the world can reach global harmony. The realization of this global harmony requires that people seek, make great efforts, and even sacrifice. In China, the different evaluations of Hu Shi in the 1950's and

1980's reflect that her people's understanding is getting more and more mature as a consequence of ideological exchange with other countries. Their knowledge of the world is getting deeper and deeper. This phenomenon indicates that China is stepping forward toward global harmony.

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