CHAPTER 1

A World of Uprisings

The likelihood of democratic development in Eastern Europe is virtually nil. . . . With a few exceptions, the limits of democratic development in the world may well have been reached.

—Samuel Huntington, 1984

We, the old ones, may never see the decisive battles of the coming revolution.

—V.I. Lenin, January 1917

Uprisings are terrible, beautiful events. They break out so unexpectedly that they surprise their partisans as much as they bewilder their opponents. Far more than we realize, the world we live in has been created by revolutionary insurgencies. From the American Revolution to the Russian, from the Gwangju Uprising to the Arab Spring, uprisings occur with astonishing regularity.

Leading up to the 1980s, East Asian dictatorships had been in power for decades and seemed unshakable, yet a wave of revolts soon transformed the region. These insurgencies threw to the wind the common bias that Asians are happier with authoritarian governments than democracy. They ushered in greater liberties and new opportunities for citizen participation—as well as for international capital. One of the purposes of this book is to assess the contradictory character of these changes and the forces that produced them.

Asia’s Unknown Uprisings focuses on people’s forms of interaction with each other during moments of confrontations with the forces of order. I seek to let the actions of hundreds of thousands of people speak for themselves as a means to portray freedom’s concrete history. The oft-repeated phrase “the people make history” cannot be comprehended without a central focus on popular uprisings. In the first volume, I provided a view of Korean history through the prism
of social movements. In a country whose unique character meant three consecutive dynasties each lasted nearly half a millennium, Korea's long twentieth century produced an unmatched richness of uprisings and upheavals. From the 1894 Farmers' Movement against Japanese colonialism to the 2008 candlelight protests against U.S. "mad cow" beef, insurgencies continually built upon each other. Popular movements assimilated lessons from previous protest episodes, and people improvised tactics and targets from their own assessments of past accomplishments and failures.

This volume is international in scope and deals with uprisings in nine places, yet connections can be found in popular insurgencies' capacities to learn from each other, to expand upon preceding examples, and to borrow each other's vocabulary, actions, and aspirations. Almost overnight, "People Power" simultaneously became activists' common global identity—cutting across religious, national, and economic divides. Through empirical analysis of specific uprisings, this book's focus is the unfolding development of Asian uprisings in the Philippines (1986), Burma (1988), Tibet (1989), China (1989), Taiwan (1990), Nepal (1990), Bangladesh (1990), Thailand (1992), and Indonesia (1998).

The 1989 revolutions in Eastern Europe against Soviet regimes are well known, yet Eurocentric (and anticommunist) bias often diminishes the significance of their Asian counterparts, rendering them largely invisible. Although the accomplishments of Asian uprisings are noteworthy and their characters significantly more grassroots than contemporaneous turmoil in Eastern Europe (where Gorbachev's willingness to abandon the Russian empire triggered the movements), they remain unknown, even within the region where they transpired. East Asia's string of uprisings from 1980 to 1992 had a huge political impact, overthrowing eight entrenched regimes: Filipino dictator Ferdinand Marcos was forced into exile; South Korea's Chun Doo-hwan was disgraced and compelled to grant direct presidential elections before being imprisoned; Taiwan's forty-year martial law regime was overturned; Burma's militarized citizefrey overthrew two dictators only to see their successors massacre thousands; Nepal's monarchy was made constitutional; military ruler Muhammad Ershad in Bangladesh was forced to step down and eventually sent to prison; Army Chief Suchinda Krapayvier in Thailand was forced to vacate the office of prime minister, and Indonesia's longtime dictator Suharto was ousted after three decades in power.

Despite more than a century of research, modern social science is utterly incapable of predicting political upheavals. Democratization theorists have identified an array of major variables for lasting democracy. Half a correlation between economic societies reach a wealth significantly higher than the sequently operationalized Littlative predictions correlational of governance. Samuel Hun

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<td>Ferdinand Marcos</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>1986</td>
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<td>Chun Doo-hwan</td>
<td>South Korea</td>
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tation theorists have identified
an array of major variables posited to be significant indicators of the possibility
for lasting democracy. Half a century ago, Seymour Martin Lipset hypothesized a
relation between economic development and democracy, asserting that
societies reach a wealth threshold, their chances of being democratic are
significantly higher than those of poorer societies. Various theorists have sub-
sequently operationalized Lipset’s “modernization theory” with specific quanti-
itive predictions correlating wealth and survival rate of democratic systems
of governance.” Samuel Huntington’s observation that urbanization is a prereq-
itive for democratization led him to recommend “forced-draft urbanization,” a
notorious policy that resulted in free-fire zones and rural saturation bombing of
Vietnam as means of forcing peasants into cities. The United States dropped
more bombs on Vietnam to “create the preconditions for democracy” than had
been everywhere during World War II, yet Vietnamese nationalism prevailed.
Max Weber’s notion of a correlation between capitalism and the Protestant ethic
was adapted to Asia through analysis asserting an inverse relationship between
Confucian values and democratization. Although East Asia’s economic rise has
left such theorists pause, communal Confucian values remain seen as the
“kernel of traditional culture that is unfavorable to democracy.” For Huntington,
Confucian democracy was an oxymoron, a “contradiction in terms.” Following
his lead, Euro-American theorists have understood a dethroned American-style
“civil society” as a reason for an absence of democracy.

To the above list of explanatory variables for democratic governance should
be added the precise character of uprisings. Protesters’ mutual relationships
their capacity to bond and organize themselves in moments of extreme crisis,
their hierarchical or horizontal patterns of authority, and their behavior toward
those within their own ranks who violate group norms and values) are signif-
ificant predictors of future political relationships. Similarly, insurgents’ interaction
with opposing forces (their treatment of prisoners, tactics of mobilization and
confrontation, and forms of justice meted out to traitors and enemy combatants)
give insight into the quality of democratic norms that likely would become oper-
tive if the movement were successful. Comparing the intensity of peaks of protest
may also be a means of gauging democratization’s subsequent depth. Noting
the specific social strata that mobilize during crises may be a better means of
comprehending political opinions than one hundred telephone opinion polls con-
ducted in quieter moments. Individuals who seem to be agreeing with the course
of politics as-usual often have other streams of thought in the back of their minds.
The tremendous power of the mass media notwithstanding, uncontrolled intu-
tions and insights remain operative even when they are not overtly expressed.

Seeking to better understand social movements is one reason for my admit-
tedly labored reconstruction of civil insurrections in this book, but it is not
my only one: I hope to glean useful lessons and insights for future generations’
freedom struggles. In my view, without a fundamental break with a few hundred
billionaires’ control of humanity’s vast social wealth and the allocation of that
wealth through the profit motive, our planet will continue to be ravaged by reck-
less industrialization and mounting wars. Without systematic transformation of
corporate capitalism, hundreds of millions of people will remain condemned to live in hell on earth because of poverty, starvation, and disease. As I see it, it is entirely unlikely that the kind of social reorganization required for lasting peace, environmental salvation, and shared prosperity can be achieved through continuing evolution of inherited economic and political structures. Rather, global revolutionary change is a prescriptive remedy needed in large doses to cure the diseases of militarized nation-states, power-hungry politicians, and wealth-grabbing billionaires.

Like art, revolution is an important dimension of uniquely human activity, a form of species-constitutive behavior that contains its own grammar and logic. While it is true that humans are creatures of habit and routine, we are also capable of enormous changes. We grow accustomed to our daily lives, and fantasize—or fear—that our current conditions will last forever. Nation-states today are everywhere hegemonic, yet uprisings can transform overnight even the most apparently entrenched social relationships.

One of the problems with a nationalist construction of history is that it refrains in advance the idea that human beings in various places might actually be more closely tied to each other than they are to their own "countrymen," that ordinary people's aspirations and dreams, their conscious and unconscious desires and needs, might be more similar to each other's than to those of their nation's elites. Even addition of one country's history to another can lead to assertions that are both untrue and important, while obscuring transnational simultaneity, commonalities, and parallel grassroots developments. It matters little whether or not the first nationalist revolution in Asia took place in the Philippines with the uprising against the Spanish in 1896, "Korea's Great Farmers' War, or Tonghak movement, came two years earlier. What is important is they both fought for freedom from foreign conquest. The great international synthesis achieved by Tonghak, China's Taiping Rebellion, and Vietnam's Cao Dai have much more in common than many scholars realize precisely because of nationalist constraints on research.

Today, as planetary integration accelerates, human beings are rapidly becoming self-conscious as a species—one of the very best dimensions of globalization. World history opens new possibilities, and it is also a necessary means to assimilate properly the recent past. If citizens in country A were motivated to overthrow their ruler because what they witnessed people in country B do so, then a history of either country would not do justice to its freedom movement. Even more significant is the simultaneous emergence of freedom struggles in many places. When conceptualized across national boundaries, a more accurate representation of uprisings becomes possible, and a more promising future comes into focus. This endeavor lies at the center of all my books on urban insurgencies in the late twentieth century.

The inability of analysts to comprehend the global nature of social movements is due in part to a lack of empirical studies of uprisings, even in national contexts. With respect to Korea, the best English-language historians have often neglected (and sometimes misstated) basic facts related to insurgencies and paid scant attention to their "Great Women." In the case of the great revolution in Germany and England-language book, so I wrote them myself.

Moving from periphery to center, today it is are everywhere hegemonic, yet uprisings can transform overnight even the most apparently entrenched social relationships.

Koreans' spirit and enlivened them in the center of the subsequent cultural wave in the 21st century. In 1960, South Korea's dictator Syngman Rhee of Seoul, Rhee was forced to mobilize hundreds of thousands of his people against him. In 1980, citizens in Kwangju, South Korean army. After this, the citizens' guerrillas led by U.S. President Carter responded to their struggle to overthrow Chun Doo-Hwan and Roh Tae-Woo.

Asia's People Power Insu

Even in defeat, popular uprisings in unexpected forms. It was born in the actions of citizens who overthrew their government. A movement that began as a peaceful protest and then took to the streets, it was threatened with a military response provided critical support. Under the leadership of nonviolent resistance advocates, the movement was able to overcome setbacks and turn the tide of history. The grassroot rebellion of 1989, which called for citizens to rise against their government and demand changes, marked a turning point in the struggle for democracy.
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paid scant attention to their significance, emphasizing instead "Great Men" and

"Great Women." In the case of Thailand, as Somchai Phatharatohnanunt wrote in

2006, "There are still few major works on Thai civil society organizations in

the form of social movements." Much as I tried, I could find no comprehensive

German or English-language history of many of the uprisings discussed in this

book, so I wrote them myself.

Moving from periphery to center of the world system (a phenomenon commonly

understood in economic terms), East Asia is positioned today to take the

lead in the unfolding of world politics. The huge losses of indigenous people's lives in U.S.

wars—more than three million killed in the Korean War and at least

two million more in Indochina—served as crucibles of fire, precipitated refugees

by the tens of millions, and conditioned unprecedented social movements that

sought to transform their societies. In three devastating years, Korea's yangban

aristocracy was completely destroyed, compelling its citizens arduously to rebuild.

Koreans' spirit and energy through destruction and reconstruction positioned

them in the center of the groundswell of Asian popular uprisings, and their

subsequent cultural wave (hallyu) swept the continent at the end of the twentieth

century. In 1960, South Korean students led the country against U.S. imposed

dictator Syngman Rhee. After police slaughtered 186 young people in the streets of

Seoul, Rhee was forced into exile, and democracy won. In 1973, Thai students

mobilized hundreds of thousands of citizens against their military dictator, and

after seventy-three were gunned down, they also won a short-lived democracy.

In 1980, citizens in Gwangju courageously rose up against the brutality of the

South Korean army. After driving the military out of the city, they governed them-

selves through citizens' general assemblies. Although overwhelmed by the army

(abetted by U.S. President Carter) at the cost of hundreds of lives, they continued

their struggle to overthrow the junta in 1987 and to imprison former dictators

Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo a decade later.

Asia's People Power Insurgencies

Even in defeat, popular insurgencies transform people and subsequently reap-

pear in unexpected forms. The sudden emergence of eight People Power uprisings

within six short years from 1986 to 1992 is a case in point. The term "People Power"

was born in the actions of hundreds of thousands of Filipinos in February 1986,

when citizens overthrew the Marcos dictatorship in an eighteen-day uprising. Set

off by electoral fraud and a mutiny by key elements of the military, people stubbornly

took to the streets to block loyalist tanks and troops. Despite being continually

threatened with great harm, people's courageous flooding of public space provided

critical support to the mutineers. While mythologized today, people's nonviolent resistance should not obscure the critical roles played by armed soldiers, whose guns and helicopters were vital to the ouster of Marcos. Nor should the grassroots rebellion obscure the importance of the Catholic Church hierarchy, which called for citizens to go into the streets of Manila. After the uprising began, U.S. President Ronald Reagan continued to support his longtime friend Marcos,
but once the bulk of the military defected to the side of the opposition, the United States insisted the time had come for Marcos to go. Soon thereafter he went reluctantly into exile, but not before the phrase “People Power” became well known enough to frighten entrenched dictators no matter where in the world they ruled.

The overthrow of Marcos helped to animate the 1987 June Uprising in South Korea, a marathon endeavor of nineteen consecutive days of illegal protests in which more than one million people mobilized on three separate days. Hundreds of thousands of Koreans evidently were inspired and instructed by their Filipina fellow. Alongside Korea’s legendary student movement, Christian groups also played a leading role in winning direct presidential elections and other political reforms. Civil society played a crucial role in the popular uprising through formation of a “grand coalition with the opposition political party, ultimately pressuring the authoritarian regime to yield to the ‘popular upsurge’ from below.”

As South Koreans won democracy, people’s movements sprang up in many neighboring countries. An end to thirty-eight years of martial law was won in Taiwan in 1987, less than a month after the Korean military capitulated to opposition demands. Anecdotal evidence tells of people singing Korean democracy movement songs in the streets of Taipei. Three more years of struggles culminated in students taking over Chiang Kai-shek Square in March 1990 to insist upon—and gain—democratic elections for president and parliament (the Legislative Yuan).

In Burma, popular aspirations for loosening central controls bloodily collided with the forces of order beginning in March 1988. As in 1980 in Gwangju, students in Rangoon led the population into the streets, and the military went on a killing spree ordered by ruthless generals at the highest levels of power. Despite horrific repression, popular resistance continued, compelling President Ne Win to step down after twenty-six years of rule. When he named the police commander responsible for the butchery of so many innocent lives as his replacement, five days of new student-led protests forced yet another resignation. In the resulting vacuum of power, popular councils of workers, writers, monks, ethnic minorities, and students emerged as the leadership of a nationwide movement for multiparty democracy. Undeterred by people’s clear desire for more freedom, the military decided to preserve its rule by massacring even more protesters—killing at least three thousand people before order was restored. Arresting thousands in 1990, including over a hundred newly elected parliamentarians, the Burmese military government ignored the huge electoral mandate won by Aung San Suu Kyi’s National League for Democracy (NLD) and kept her under house arrest for most of the next twenty years.

In March 1989, three decades after their failed uprising against Chinese invasion, Tibetans rose again. When Chinese police attacked small protests against Han settler-colonialism, demonstrators counterattacked, turning their wrath on Chinese businesses. Party leaders sent in the army and declared martial law in Lhasa on March 8, a precursor of what would come to Beijing less than two months later. In May 1989—months before Eastern European communism faced its stiffest challenges—student activists in Tiananmen Square activated a broad public outcry for democracy. Hundreds of thousands of workers and citizens soon joined the movement’s one’s expectations. Follow: Marcos’s army in Manila, cit for days and prevented it fi martial law. Despite splits a order was ultimately impo Square. For years afterward.

The revolt in China was significant allies in th manifestation in neighboring Viet was at war, a member of a multiparty democracy in 1989 Europeans began to take re Itions. There, too, disaffected activists. A flood of countries were won in Hungary 1989, the Berlin Wall came countries exceeded from the weight and soon dissolved in 1990, people in Ban their rulers. Only after stu parties to unite against mil able to compel its resignat in April 1990 forced it a constitutional monarchy, day popular uprising aboli

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one's expectations. Following the tactics of Filipinos who had mobilized to stop

Marcos's army in Manila, citizens of Beijing held off the People's Liberation Army

for days and prevented it from implementing the government's declaration of

martial law. Despite splits in the armed forces and inside the Communist Party,

order was ultimately imposed after hundreds were killed around Tiananmen

Square. For years afterward, activists were hunted and imprisoned.

The revolt in China originated from outside the ranks of the party, but it had

significant allies even in the party's highest echelons. Within the halls of com-

unism in neighboring Vietnam, as the Zeitgeist of revolt against dictatorship

was at work, a member of the Politburo, General Tran Do, publicly called for

multiparty democracy in 1989, an unprecedented event. Inspired by Asian revolts,

Europeans began to take more decisive actions to overthrow Soviet-backed dic-

tatorships. There, too, dissenters within ruling communist parties significantly

affected activists. A flood of change inundated Eastern Europe, and new govern-

ments were won in Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Romania. In November

1989, the Berlin Wall came down, and Germany quickly reunited. The Baltic

countries seceded from the Soviet Union, which toppled under its own top-heavy

weight and soon dissolved into more than a dozen new republics.

In 1990, people in Bangladesh and Nepal massively mobilized to overthrow

their rulers. Only after students in Bangladesh compelled warring opposition

parties to unite against military dictator Muhammad Ershad was the movement

able to compel his resignation. In Nepal, fifty-three days of illegal protests begin-

ning in April 1990 forced the king to accept opposition leaders' generous offer of

a constitutional monarchy. (In 2006, after a new king seized control, a nineteen-

day popular uprising abolished the monarchy.)

As country after country was affected, Thailand underwent a bloody uprising

in 1992 that strengthened democratic forces. The mobilization there began

humbly enough when an opposition politician went on a hunger strike against

coup leader General Suchinda Kraprayoon's ascension to the office of prime

minister. As a movement for civilian control of government and democracy spread,

hundreds of thousands of people went into the streets. On May 18, 1992, more

than fifty people were killed when the military used bullets to suppress street

demonstrations. As a result of his army's brutality, Suchinda was forced to step

down.10 Years of grassroots involvement in writing a new constitution produced

one of the best in Asia, which went into effect in 1997.

In 1998 in Indonesia, students called for a "People Power Revolution." After

days of campus protests, tens of thousands of them surged into the parliament

building and ended three decades of Suharto's presidency. Protesters used new

Internet technology—chat rooms, web pages, and e-mail—to organize and mobi-

lize. Given the country's unreliable progovernment media, they adapted the web

to publicize their movement and used encrypted messages to send intelligence

reports to each other about the positions and size of military and police. Since

school organizations were heavily infiltrated, one of their main organizations,

Forum Kota, insisted on a rotation of leadership and office location every week.11
The variety of movements examined in this book is summarized in Table 1.2. Despite libraries of books about them, these uprisings' synchronous appearance and relationships to each other have yet to be explored. As the relationship of these revolts to history, is so their place in a beginning with the global 19

Belief that the 1960s by the end of the twentieth century, by the rapid spread of had significant long-term effects, was only a matter of time. But only a question of when—no more Forms of direct democracy as a 1960s continue to define the New Left's world. Civil Insurgencies from 19

In almost every country in it emerged in 1968. From France to Mexico—as in dozens of cases, and sometimes as a response to student rebellion, a generation demanded an end to living in a system dominated by trade union workers, all in the stage, around which the larger system has settled. Opposing capitalism's free, 1960s movements but their communist—or “Old Man the Prague Spring,” human face,” was brought people in Prague took over. It took the Soviet Union’s vision into the U.S. peace movement. It was from Poland and Yugoslav fault lines of protest.

The international revolts of the twentieth century, with January 31, 1968, nearly U.S. bases came under such a vast intelligence apparatus uprisings during which took in a single night, Vietnam

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Type of Movement</th>
<th>Short-Term Result</th>
<th>Long-Term Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Military mutiny supported by Catholic hierarchy and People</td>
<td>Elite-led democracy; neoliberal reforms</td>
<td><em>People Power</em> II in 2001 overthrew President Estrada; death of two President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>People's Uprising; 19 days of illegal protests</td>
<td>Direct presidential elections; increased liberties;</td>
<td>End to military dictatorship; increased liberties and prosperity; Korean wave</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>1987–1990</td>
<td>Extrastituary opposition (longitudinal); student protests</td>
<td>End of four decades of martial law; wave of protests; elections</td>
<td>Liberal democracy; increased prosperity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burma</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Student-led popular uprising; councils</td>
<td>Two dictators overthrown; movement perceived violently—thousands fled</td>
<td>Continuing military dictatorship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tibet</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Monk-led protests turn into riots</td>
<td>Martial law; heavy repression; continued military secret police</td>
<td>Continuing military dictatorship</td>
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<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Student protests leading to popular contestation of power</td>
<td>Repression; increased prosperity; continuing one-party rule</td>
<td>Continuing military dictatorship</td>
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<td>Nepal</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>53-day popular uprising and general strike</td>
<td>Constitutional monarchy; strikes; reforms</td>
<td>Second uprising in 2006 overthrowing monarchy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Student-led popular uprising</td>
<td>Overthrew Enshad; new elections; strikes</td>
<td>Continuing dictatorship/liberal democracy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Citizen coalition led protests; intense fighting after military attacks</td>
<td>Violent suppression leading to new constitution (1997) 2006 military coup d'état; continuing struggles; polarization of Red and Yellow Shirts</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Student-led uprising; occupation of parliament</td>
<td>Cluster of Suharto; neoliberal reforms</td>
<td>Liberal democracy</td>
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relationship of these revolts to each other is an understudied dimension of their history, so is their place in an even larger intercontinental wave of insurrections beginning with the global 1968 New Left.

Belief that the 1960s belong to the distant past ignores their continuation at the end of the twentieth century. While New Left insurrections were characterized by the rapid spread of revolutionary aspirations and actions in 1968, they had significant long-term effects. The shift in values they created meant that it was only a matter of time before the apartheid regime in South Africa collapsed, only a question of when—not if—dictatorships everywhere would be swept away. Forms of direct democracy and collective action developed by the New Left of the 1960s continue to define insurrections’ aspirations and structures, precisely why the New Left was a world-historical movement.22

Civil Insurrections from 1968 to 1998

In almost every country in the world, insurgent social movements synchronously emerged in 1968. From France to Senegal, China to the United States, and Poland to Mexico—as in dozens of other countries—militant students were at the cutting edge, and they sometimes detonated wider social explosions. In France, after a student rebellion, a general strike in May 1968 of at least nine million workers demanded an end to lives of drudgery in factories and offices. When the communist-dominated trade unions negotiated a settlement calling for higher wages, thousands of workers threw bottles and lunchboxes at their union leaders, and booted them off the stage. Around the country, workers reject the communists’ proposed settlement. They wanted new kinds of lives—not better pay for enduring stuffing assembly lines and boring offices for the better part of their lives. They rejected the entire system and called for self-management and an end to capital’s domination.

Opposing capitalism and communism because neither kind of society was free, 1960s movements became known as “New Left” to distinguish them from their communist—or “Old Left”—predecessors (or, as some insisted, enemies). When the Prague Spring, the Czechoslovakian experiment of “socialism with a human face,” was brought to an end by half a million invading Russian troops, people in Prague took down street signs and buildings’ identification markers. It took the Soviet Union’s army a week to find the post office. Borrowing a page from the U.S. peace movement, young protesters put flowers in the gun barrels of tanks. In Poland and Yugoslavia, student movements emerged along the global fault lines of protest.

The international revolt in 1968 was touched off by one of the greatest armed uprisings of the twentieth century—the Tet Offensive in Vietnam. On the night of January 31, 1968, nearly every city in the Southern part of the country and all U.S. bases came under surprise attack. More than half a million U.S. troops and a vast intelligence apparatus failed to anticipate the nationally synchronized uprising during which seventy thousand South Vietnamese guerrillas attacked in a single night. Vietnam’s second-largest city, Hue, was liberated and held out for three weeks, and the U.S. embassy grounds in Saigon were overrun.23 Planned
to coincide with presidential elections in the United States, the Tet Offensive resulted in President Lyndon Johnson’s decision not to run for reelection and led to upheavals in Germany, France, Spain, Senegal, and Mexico—even in the heartland of the United States. A few months later, on April 4, Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, and riots took place in over 150 cities. More damage was done to Washington, D.C., than when the British captured it during the war of 1812. All these movements converged in a process of mutual amplification.  

The spontaneous chain reaction of uprisings and the massive occupation of public space in 1968 signaled the sudden entry into history of millions of ordinary people who acted in solidarity with each other. People intuitively believed that they could change the direction of the world from war to peace, from racism to solidarity, and from patriotism to humanism. In my book on the global imagination of 1968, I developed the concept of the eros effect to explain the rapid spread of revolutionary aspirations and actions. During moments of the eros effect, universal interests become generalized at the same time as dominant values of society (national chauvinism, hierarchy, and domination) are negated. As Marcuse so clearly formulated it, humans have an instinctual need for freedom—something that we grasp intuitively, and it is this instinctual need that is sublimated into a collective phenomenon during moments of the eros effect. Dimensions of the eros effect include: the sudden and synchronous emergence of hundreds of thousands of people occupying public space; the simultaneous appearance of revolts in many places; the intuitive identification of hundreds of thousands of people with each other; their common belief in new values; and suspension of normal daily routines like competitive business practices, criminal behavior, and acquisitiveness. In the course of this book, I discuss many such moments. People’s intuition and self-organization—not the dictates of any party—are key to the emergence of such protests. Actualized in the actions of millions of people in 1968, the eros effect is a tool of enormous future potential. In relation to the 1980 Gwangju Uprising, this phenomenon was named the “absolute community.” With the Arab Spring in 2011, transnational eruptions of protests have become widely visible.

Although often thought to have climaxed in 1968, the global movement intensified afterward. In 1969, the Italian Hot Autumn saw hundreds of thousands of workers challenge factory authority and institute autonomous forms of shop floor governance. In 1970, the U.S. movement reached its high point at the Black Panthers Revolutionary People’s Constitutional Convention, the culmination of the “American 1968,” a remarkable five-month upsurge from May to September 1970, during which the movement simultaneously climaxed among a wide range of constituencies: a political strike of four million students and half a million faculty on the campuses after the killings at Kent State and Jackson State Universities; the National Organization for Women’s general strike of women (and the design of the modern symbol for feminism); the massive entry of Vietnam veterans into the peace movement; the first Gay Pride week; and the Chicano Moratorium on August 29 in Los Angeles. As the whole society was disrupted, Puerto Ricans, Native Americans, and a rainbow of constituencies flocked to Philadelphia in answer to the calls for the United States. A victory process involving more than the replacement of the nation’s stable redistribution of the world.

Also in 1970, the Polish workers for 1968”—when workers had won the streets of Gdansk. people were killed, hundreds in the ruling United Polish Workers’ Gdansk and Szczecin. Only aft insurgency be contained. The movement slowly rebuilt itself to overturn Poland’s government.

At the end of 1972, when the Vietnam and嘛 Huaphong of students. In October 1973, the United States a people were shot down in the s military dictatorship and era, history.

A month later, students in U.S.-imposed Papadopoulos a courage of their counterparts mammoth “OK!” (“NO!”) pax had characterized as the New using a tank, bazooka, and au and took the Polytechnic. I overthrow from within his o were numbered, and it fell will.

From 1974 to 1991, after this global revolt, some forty throw of the Portuguese dicator was quickly followed by the d and popular insurgencies top people fought the structural a Fund (IMF). From 1978 to 19 in Bolivia. Popular movement dicator. History’s Zeitgeist: of popular uprisings and m power. Everyone rushed to ca (1979), Bolivia and Honduras in Argentina mobilized people leage to it in years. In Uruguay in a mammoth protest of four
United States, the Tet Offensive not prompted for re-election and led to the movement on April 4, 1968. More damage was done during the war of 1812. All these factors contributed to the massive occupation entry into history of millions of people, especially in cities around the world from war to peace, to humanism. 

In my book on the evolution of the eros effect to explain and actions, during moments generalized at the same time as hierarchy and domination, people have an instinctual need for it and it is this instinctual need that drives moments of the eros effect. During emergent and synchronous emergence of public space, the simultaneous identification of hundreds of human belief in new values and productive business practices, criminal and this book, I discuss many such notions—not the dictates of any party—alized in the actions of millions of future potential. In relation to the rise of solidarities and the organizational eruptions of protests have

In 1968, the global movement of Autumn saw hundreds of thousands of autonomous movements reach its high point at institutional Convention, culminating in a simultaneous upsurge from May to July. Among four million students and half of a million students, the massive entry of Vietnamese at Kent State and Jackson State, with a general strike of women and men; the massive entry of Vietnam during the Chicano Movement, which was perceived as a way society was disrupted, with the body of constituencies flocking to Philadelphia in answer to the Black Panther Party's call to write a new constitution for the United States. A visionary draft was produced through a participatory process involving more than ten thousand people. The consensus included the replacement of the nation's standing army with popular self-defense and equitable redistribution of the world's wealth.

Also in 1970, the Polish workers' movement revived. Chanting "We apologize for 1968"—when workers had failed to rally to students' support—thousands went into the streets of Gdansk. Fighting with police escalated, and at least 45 people were killed, hundreds wounded, and 10 buildings set on fire—including the ruling United Polish Workers' Party headquarters. The movement spread to Gdynia and Szczecin. Only after Party Chief Edward Gierek resigned could the insurgency be contained. Fighting in the streets subsided, but the trade union movement slowly rebuilt itself into Solidarność—the organization that went on to overturn Poland's government in 1989.

At the end of 1972, when the U.S. government bombed the dikes of Northern Vietnam and mined Halphong harbor, campus protests again involved millions of students. In October 1973, Thai students mobilized, led by some who had studied in the United States and returned with New Left ideas. After dozens of protests were shot down in the streets of Bangkok, students overthrew the Tha military dictatorship and created one of the most open periods in the country's history.

A month later, students in Greece took over Athens Polytechnic to oppose the U.S.-imposed Papadopoulos dictatorship. They chanted slogans that praised the courage of their counterparts in Thailand. The 1973 Greek student movement's mammoth "NO!" poster drew inspiration from what Herbert Marcuse had characterized as the New Left's "Great Refusal." On November 17, soldiers using a tank, bazooka, and automatic weapons gunned down thirty-four people and retook the Polytechnic. Eight days after the slaughter, Papadopoulos was overthrown from within his own army's ranks, but the military's days in power were numbered, and it fell within a year.

From 1974 to 1991, after the foodgates of change had been knocked open by this global revolt, some forty countries democratized. Beginning with the overthrow of the Portuguese dictatorship in April 25, 1974, the "Carnation Revolution" was quickly followed by the demise of the junta in Spain (1977). In Peru, strikes and popular insurgencies toppled the government in 1977. In dozens of countries, people fought the structural adjustment demands of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). From 1978 to 1979, widespread strikes against the IMF broke out in Bolivia. Popular movements in Nicaragua and Iran overthrew U.S.-imposed dictators. History's Zeitgeist suddenly appeared everywhere, if not in the form of popular uprisings and movements in the streets, then in the backrooms of power. Everyone rushed to catch the wave: Senegal (1978), Ghana (1979), Nigeria (1979), Bolivia and Honduras (1982), and Turkey (1983). In 1982, a general strike in Argentina mobilized people against the military dictatorship for the first challenge to it in years. In Uruguay, monthly rallies beginning in May 1985 culminated in a mammoth protest of four hundred thousand people in a country of only three
Popular Intuition in the Philippines dictated Marcos's departure.

million) demanding release of political prisoners and an end to dictatorship. In 1984, millions of Brazilians mobilized for direct presidential elections.

As a popular uprising developed step by step, Haiti's dictator, Duvalier, in power for decades, was forced to flee early in February 1986. In the Philippines, people took hope from Duvalier's ouster and mobilized massively against Marcos later that same month. In the photo above, one group sat on their sandbagged barricade with a homemade sign reading: "Marcos—Duvalier Waits for You!!!" Such global relationships are often ignored or deemed anecdotal, yet people's intuitive connections are powerful resources in challenging existing powers.

Global People Power

As People Power swept through Asia after 1986, citizens rose up all over the world—from Eastern Europe to Latin America, back again to Asia and into Africa. Civilian governments replaced military rulers in Colombia, Brazil, and Chile; multiparty democracy appeared in the Ivory Coast, Zaire, Gabon, and Algeria. In December 1987, Palestinians under Israeli occupation launched their first Intifada. Even in Pakistan, democratic elections were held after Zia-ul-Haq was killed in an air crash on August 17, 1988. In January 1989, Benin's Marxist-Leninist government faced a paralyzing general strike and was subsequently forced to conduct free elections. At the end of February 1989, Venezuelans rose in a tremendous popular rebellion against an IMF-imposed austerity package. At least 276 people were killed (some counted the slaughter in the thousands) before the massive mobilization could be halted. Over the next decade, the country realigned its political priorities, and Hugo Chávez was swept into power. As South Africa's movement continued to build momentum, millions of people worldwide galvanized an antiapartheid boy on February 11, 1990, after thirty years.

This wave of insurrections led by centralized parties or idiosyncratic, these movements were armed, they were neither called Proletarian or Red. Nationalist defined sectors of the world by centralized parties, these societies, a diverse and autarchial, continually grown since 1968, often befuddled those in power; the military's loyalties were so minimal intervention would not suffice.

Within the veritable tidal wave of people's power, Romania, and East Germany. The 1986 "People Power" uprising broke the back of economic reform movement of George, and "People Power" became a reality in Taiwan, and China. The overt found effects in Nepal, since the Chinese took the name of the reform movement bequeathed by the Chinese, and the victory was one another: after Chinese pro-democracy movement on June 4, 1989, East German solution.

In 1968, connections are not unreflected, but in 1989, a result of surface communicability of world events and drawing apathetic and apathetic parts of the planet. From May 1968, I gleaned five defining principles:

1. Opposition to racial, as economic freedom
2. Concept of freedom as but also freedom to
3. Expansion of democratic constraint
4. Enlarged base of repressive power
5. Emphasis on direct a
galvanized an antiapartheid boycott, and Nelson Mandela walked out of prison on February 11, 1990, after thirty-seven years in captivity.

This wave of insurgencies was not characterized by armed insurrections led by centralized parties or ideologically united groups. Neither pacifist nor communist, these movements were generated from the grassroots. Generally not armed, they were neither called into being nor led by trained cadre (such as the Proletarian Hundreds or Red Guards); nor were they mainly productions of traditionally defined sectors of the working class. In contrast to political insurgencies led by centralized parties, these were social insurgencies produced by global civil society, a diverse and autonomous manifestation of popular wisdom that has continually grown since 1968. The movements' popularity and festive character often befuddled those in power. During the June Uprising in South Korea, even the military's loyalties were so thrown into confusion that top generals thought military intervention would not be helpful and might provoke another Gwangju Uprising.22

Within the veritable tidal waves of protests that swept the planet, people intuitively awakened to their power and took control of cities. In the Philippines, Romania, and East Germany, crowds of people overrun presidential palaces. The 1986 "People Power" uprising in the Philippines clearly encouraged South Koreans (whose 1980 Gwangju Uprising had also inspired Philippine resistance), and "People Power" became the name adopted for mobilizations in Burma, Taiwan, and China. The overthrow of Romanian dictator Ceausescu had profound effects in Nepal, since Ceausescu had visited Kathmandu in 1987. In 1968, Indonesians took the name "People Power" from the Philippines, and Jakarta's reform movement bequeathed its name ("reformasi") to the Malaysian movement soon thereafter.24 In victory as well as defeat, people intuitively identified with one another: after Chinese protesters were brutalized in the streets of Beijing on June 4, 1989, East German activists worried they would soon face a "Chinese solution."

In 1968, connections among protests were, for the most part, immediate and unreflective, but in 1989, citizens became self-consciously tied together. As a result of mass communications, people are increasingly capable of interpreting world events and drawing appropriate lessons within days of events in distant parts of the planet. From my earlier study of the actions of millions of people in 1968, I gleaned five defining principles of the global New Left:

1. Opposition to racial, political, and patriarchal domination as well as to economic exploitation
2. Concept of freedom as not only freedom from material deprivation but also freedom to become new kinds of human beings
3. Expansion of democracy and the rights of the individual, not their constraint
4. Enlarged base of revolution, including the "proletarianized" middle strata
5. Emphasis on direct action.23
These principles existed in the actions of millions of people and embodied their capacity for self-management and international solidarity.

Uprisings at the end of the twentieth century demonstrate patterns astonishingly similar to these defining features of New Left movements. Unlike hostility toward the church in classical Left movements from the French Revolution and 1871 Paris Commune to the Russian and Chinese Revolutions, New Left movements emerged from within the church and used it as a base of support, whether in African American civil rights struggles or East Germany's Protestant church refuges. Movements of the 1960s involved thousands of pastors like Martin Luther King Jr. and a changed Catholic Church after the promulgation of liberation theology in Medellín. During Gwangju's 1980 uprising, the YMCA and YWCA were key organizing centers, and in 1986, Cardinal Jaime Sin of Manila played a huge role in the 1986 Philippine People Power victory, as did Korean Protestants and Cardinal Stephen Kim in the following year's June Uprising.

A key New Left characteristic was an enlarged constituency of revolution—a factor discerned in the significant participation of the lumpenproletariat among Gwangju's armed resistance fighters; mobilization of the new working class (office and clerical employees) as Seoul's "mexcie brigade" in 1987; in committed protests of Nepalese medical professionals, lawyers, and journalists in 1990; and in what is erroneously referred to as the "mobile phone mob" in Thailand in 1992.24 While more recent movements assimilated completely new technologies like fax machines, cell phones, the Internet, and social media, they also reactivated New Left playfulness, humor, irony, and autonomous artistic expression as opposition tactics.

New Left forms of participatory democracy were central to the movement's identity in the 1955 struggle to desegregate buses in Montgomery, Alabama; student movements in dozens of countries; the international counterculture embracing Christiania's communards in Copenhagen, San Francisco's Diggers, Amsterdam's Provos, and Berkeley's People's Park as well as the Black Panther Party's Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention. Continuing in the 1960s tradition of participatory democracy, the autonomous movement (or Autonomen) in Germany used consensus in general assemblies to make key decisions and has sustained itself over several generations of activists. Allied with farmers and ecologists, the Autonomen successfully stopped the German nuclear power industry's attempt to produce bomb-grade uranium. As they developed through militant actions, the Autonomen transformed themselves from civil Luddism into a force resisting the corporate system as a whole.

Asian uprisings contained parallel forms of "deliberative democracy" during the 1980 Gwangju Uprising in South Korea, the Lily student movement in Taipei's Chiang Kai-shek Square in 1990, and Kathmandu's libered Patan in 1990. In this same tradition, Seattle protests against the WTO in 1999 were largely prepared by networks for direct action based on strict principles of participatory democracy. In the anti-corporate globalization movement that grew by leaps and bounds after Seattle, forms of consensual decision-making emerged among many groups, and decentralization of communication made possible by projects like Indymedia allowed for th
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Left movements. Unlike hostility s from the French Revolution and
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like Indymedia allowed for the participatory ethic to proliferate. Even the armed
Zapatista uprising in Mexico shares many New Left characteristics. Not a tradi-
tional working-class constituency, they bring questions of participatory democ-
and everyday life to the center of the movement. They did not try to seize
state power directly but sought to change their lives through counterinstitutions. They
en talked about the idea of creating a “new person.” All of these develop-
ments are extraordinarily important and help to highlight and intensify a globally
 interconnected movement.

Asian activists were greatly influenced by—and should be seen as part of—
the New Left. Thailand’s 1973 uprising was to a large extent organized by
students whose studies in the United States had exposed them to 1960s ideas
and actions. The 1973 generation not only led that uprising but also went on
to participate significantly in the 1992 democratic insurgency. The Philippines
movement was also a product of energy from the 1960s. During years of prepara-
tion for their historic task, members of the Reform the Armed Forces Movement
(RAM)—the central organization of the 1986 military mutiny—studied Egyptian
officers who overthrew King Farouk in 1952, reviewed the history of social move-
ments in many countries, “in particular Gandhi’s work and people’s experiences
in Czechoslovakia and Hungary,” and contacted civil activists to organize “flower
brigades” designed to block roads into Manila and thereby prevent troops loyal
to Marcos from coming to his rescue. They modeled these flower brigades on
those the American youth movement of 1968 had used to disarm troops breaking
up demonstrations against the Vietnam War.” In 2009, I interviewed Philipin
Senator Gregorio Honasan, a key leader of the mutiny in 1986. He described RAM
as “children of First Quarter Storm,” the Philippine movement of 1970.

In her 1986 presidential campaign against Marcos, Cory Aquino ran under
the banner of LABAN (Lakas ng Bayan) or “Power of the People”—an amaz-
ingly similar phrase to the chief slogan of the Black Panther Party, “All Power
to the People.” Today that exact phrase is used in many contexts, for example
in Venezuela where it has been painted on police cars. While the phrase’s exact
origin lies in the flux of popular creativity that congeals in social movements,
its common usage speaks volumes about these movements’ similarities to each
other. One analyst reported that East German participants in their democratic
revolution of 1989 were familiar with “People Power” but did not trace it to the
Philippines. Similarly, activists in Nepal used the term without reference to the
Philippines.

Tracing the empirical history of Eastern European insurgencies, it is appar-
ent that Asia’s predated and inspired them. Asian uprisings were understood
by participants in Europe’s 1969 revolutions as vital, even “central to the global
movement.” One participant in East Europe’s democratization noted that televi-
sion news reports of the Chinese movement played a significant role: “Everywhere
in East Europe people were talking about it. Everybody told me: ‘without the
Chinese, we could not have done anything.’” Televised reports of Chinese
repression of protesters in Tiananmen Square also apparently played an impor-
tant part in persuading Eastern Europe’s Soviet leaders to go peacefully into the
sunset (with the sole exception of Ceausescu in Romania). The Chinese movement followed forerunners in the Philippines and Korea—both of which were within the U.S. sphere of power and therefore heavily reported in China. When Czech President Havel visited Manila in 1995, he spoke out about the inspirational role played by Filipina People Power for the Czech movement.12

Beginning with the global insurgency of the 1960s, people collectively recognized that they neither needed nor desired a single vanguard party. The history of the Russian Revolution and the death of liberty in Eastern Europe became common sense proof of the strategy’s limitations—as did the similarity between mammoth states in the United States and the USSR, a common realization reflected even in Beatles songs. Disenchantment with the corporate/communist behemoth grew as people came to understand that liberty without racial and economic equality (as in the United States) was not genuine freedom any more than equality without liberty (as in the USSR). All over the world, more and more people knew that war should be made obsolete, nuclear weapons abolished, and police repression ended. The New Left emphasis on spontaneity grew precisely from the wisdom and intelligence of ordinary people.

The global movement of 1968 profoundly changed people’s expectations of their political leaders and economic structures. More than anything else, however, what changed were people’s conceptions of themselves and their own power. Unlike the Euro-American New Left, activists in Asia did not need to invent a new counterculture in order to sustain their struggle; rather, Asian movements rejuvenated traditional music, art, philosophy, and theater, and strengthened their communal ties as they mobilized against deceitful political relationships and postcolonial structures of capital accumulation.

From 1968 to 1989: The Fall of Soviet Communism

After 1968, grassroots movements continue to be structured according to a grammar of increasing democracy, autonomy, and solidarity. These now seemingly universal desires stand in stark opposition to the entrenched system of capitalist patriarchy. With these unifying aspirations, social movements remain globally connected, and internationally synchronized actions are increasingly common. From this perspective, late twentieth-century democratization movements were delayed results of 1968’s high points. They were the 1960s’ gift to the future. Without anyone predicting their downfall, Eastern Europe’s communist regimes in Hungary, Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Romania were all transformed in 1989. The Soviet Union could not remain aloof and it soon dissolved. Looking back at the string of uprisings that swept away East Asian dictatorships and East European Soviet regimes, Immanuel Wallerstein, Terence Hopkins, and Giovanni Arrighi called the movements of 1989 “the continuation of 1968.”13

Among many historical connections and robust similarities between insurgencies in 1968 and 1989, New Left insurgencies that opposed communist Old Left governments in Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Yugoslavia in 1968 were direct links. In Czechoslovakia, when the new government first convened on December 28, 1989, delegates chose Alan their first speaker of parliaments intellectuals, especially those Socialism, were given space. Gorbachev himself acknowledged ranks of the Communist Party impulse toward critical third country that was not right. Gorbachev’s college friend i a future Czech dissident and After the Prague Spring was tion sent to reconstruct the refused to meet with the Sov him. Nineteen years later, in 1968 in Czechoslovakia and the not only was Gorbachev’s Czech activists remained co carried it through as best they could keep alive the dream of other countries, including as illustrated in Figure 2.1.16

An additional dimension: European peace movement form frozen Cold War power the dead end to which poll European peace movement Soviet SS-20s, Gorbachev a never been been prepared to their insurance against a ne possibility of nuclear war e Curtain, neither buffer stat Soviet leaders with the ass the streets in Europe in the Gorbachev that Western m. These mobilizations are hi military confrontation pros.

Grassroots movements long history. By the 1960s, Soviet leaders, but after At history, movements in East For example, on August 2 Chun Doo-hwan was forc Freedom League brought o of the 1930 Molotov-Ribbe ever been mounted. The 1
The Chinese movement—both of which were within the People's Republic of China. When Czechs began to talk about the inspirational role of Maoist China. The Chinese movement was only one of many, with the Soviet Union, many prominent Party intellectuals, especially those around the journal Problems of Peace and Socialism, were greatly affected by the Czech movement. Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev himself acknowledged his debt to the Prague Spring as he rose to the ranks of the Communist Party: "The Czechoslovakia of 1968 was for me a major impetus toward critical thinking. I understood that there was something in our country that was not right. But this impetus came from the outside world." Gorbachev's olive branch to Slovakian President, Czech prime minister, and one of the architects of the 1968 reform program. After the Prague Spring was crushed, Gorbachev was part of the Soviet delegation sent to reconstruct the two countries' relationship. He noted how workers refused to meet with the Soviet representatives, an "eye opening" experience for him. Nineteen years later, when he was asked what the differences were between 1968 in Czechoslovakia and his own program, he quipped, "Nineteen years.

Not only was Gorbachev directly changed and inspired by the Prague Spring, but the Czech activists remained committed to the process of social transformation and carried it through as best they could. We can trace a direct line from key activists who kept alive the dream of the Prague Spring and helped spread the message to many other countries, including Hungary, the USSR, Bulgaria, Romania, and Poland, as illustrated in Figure 1.1.

An additional dimension of the impact of 1968 is located in Western Europe, where peace movements, which grew out of the New Left and helped transform the Cold War power relations, that is, to navigate their societies out of the dead end to which political elites had so ineptly steered them. Without the European peace movement in the streets protesting U.S. and Soviet nuclear weapons, and Soviet SS-20s, Gorbachev and other members of the Soviet establishment would never have been prepared to loosen their grip on Eastern European buffer states—their insurance against a new German invasion. After massive protests against the possibility of nuclear war erupted in the streets of Europe, the Iron Curtain, neither buffer states nor short-range missiles were required to produce Soviet leaders with the assurances they needed. Millions of people who took to the streets in Europe in the fall of 1981 against U.S. policies helped to convince Gorbachev that Western military intervention in Russia was out of the question. These mobilizations are historically responsible for breaking up the stalemated military confrontation produced by the world's political elites.

Grassroots movements against Russian domination, of course, have a long history. By the 1980s, they had grown into forces nagging Gorbachev and Soviet leaders, but after Asian uprisings brought People Power onto the stage of history, movements in Eastern Europe gained encouragement and inspiration. For example, on August 23, 1987, less than two months after Iranian dictator Ch感应 Doo-hwan was forced to agree to presidential elections, the Lithuanian Freedom League brought out several hundred people to protest the anniversary of the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact—the first time public opposition to it had ever been mounted. The pact had sealed the Baltic countries' fate as Moscow's
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![Figure 1.1 Orange Revolution, 1968–2006.](image)

satellites. On June 10, 1988, thousands of Lithuanians publicly sang forbidden nationalist songs, sparking a movement later dubbed the “Singing Revolution.” Within two weeks, on June 24, intellectuals organized saulius (“co-movements” in Lithuanian) to publicly lead an independence struggle against Soviet domination. Saulius were comprised of artists, scholars, journalists, musicians, philosophers, and writers, and these intellectuals were as surprised as anyone when within a few months, they found tens of thousands of supporters. On August 23, more than a hundred thousand people demonstrated for national independence. Merging with the Green Movement, the movement brought tens of thousands of citizens to join hands and form human chains along the Baltic shoreline, protesting the Ignalina nuclear plant and the possibility of catastrophic pollution. Activists revived folk songs and festivals, and by using their traditional culture, they activated massive resistance. On September 11, neighboring Estonians’ “Song of Estonia” attracted about three hundred thousand people, more than one-fourth of the country’s population.

Following these protests, on December 7, 1988, Mikhail Gorbachev told the UN General Assembly that “force and the threat of force can no longer be, and should not be instruments of foreign policy.” Once Gorbachev renounced Soviet use of force to maintain its defense line against another German invasion, a wave of change engulfed Eastern Europe. Soon thereafter, tens of thousands of Soviet troops began pulling out of Eastern Europe. One of the most visible protest venues was in Leipzig, where beginning in the spring of 1989, people chanted, “Wir wollen raus!” (“We want out”). Few people expected that before the end of the year, the Berlin Wall would be pulled down.

In June 1989, Imre Nagy—executed hero of the 1956 Hungarian Uprising in which as many as twenty thousand people died—was reburied in a symbolic act indicating the regime’s desire to move toward independence from the Soviet Union. In late August, on the fiftieth anniversary of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, some two million people from Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania joined hands in a six-hundred-kilometer human chain from Tallinn through to Vilnius and called for freedom from Russian domination. When Hungary opened its borders to the West on September 11, 1989, East Germans flooded through, and their leaders did not repress growing Monday marches in Leipzig. On October 16, one hundred thousand people marched, the next week three hundred thousand, until finally on Monday, November 4, half a million people gathered in Berlin with live television coverage. On November 9, the wall was breached.

History changed at breathtaking speed in this moment. One day after the Berlin Wall was broken through, Bulgarian dictator Todor Zhivkov was forced from power. One month and a day later, the Velvet Revolution won power in Czechoslovakia. The demise of East Germany had helped stiffen resistance since the East German secret police had long been one of the most powerful forces propping up the Czech regime. The Velvet Revolution involved six weeks of spontaneous protests. On November 17, after it was rumored Prague police killed a student, about fifteen thousand people rallied near the university at Strakova. As people came down the hill to the main part of the city, soldiers in red berets broke up their
peaceful candlelight vigil. In support of the ensuing student strike, actors turned over their theater for public meetings. With Havel as leader, Civic Forum—the name given to the political movement—called for liberal democracy and a market economy. Three days later, a crowd of more than a thousand jeered Wenceslas Square, jingling keys and calling for the return of Dubček, hero of the 1968 Prague Spring, they insisted it was time for the communists to vacate the house of government. The next day, even more people congregated, this time with a sound system. On November 27, the student strike turned into a two-hour national strike, convincing communist president Gustav Husak to step down, and the next month, the Federal Assembly unanimously acclaimed Havel as new president.

The same day that Czech President Husak resigned, December 10, the student-based Mongolian Democratic Union formed after sparking protests in Ulan Bator. In a large public square, the rock band Kholkh ("hell") played outdoors as people paraded with banners protesting "bureaucratic oppression." A week later, a second rally drew two thousand people, and students returned with banners calling for freedom of the press, a multiparty system, and human rights. On January 21, with temperatures sliding to about −30°C, they sang traditional folk songs praising long-banned national hero Genghis Khan and resolved to hold weekly demonstrations. Beginning a hunger strike on March 7, traditionally dressed activists in Ulan Bator (inspired by Chinese students in Tiananmen) drew tens of thousands of supporters and set off strikes in the capital. As protests mushroomed, the government quickly granted a multiparty system. In mid-April, a postcommunist surge among coal miners and truck drivers demanded greater economic rights.

Despite the tectonic shift in Eastern Europe elites, ruthless dictator Nicolae Ceausescu had no intention of stepping aside. A week after Czech President Husak resigned, Romania's city of Timisoara convulsed in violence when soldiers opened fire and killed nearly one hundred people. During a general strike in Timisoara in response to the killings, soldiers began conversations with citizens. Within a week, the army withdrew, and a revolutionary committee became the town's de facto government. On December 22, after the army suddenly changed sides, its tanks led a crowd in Bucharest that overran Ceausescu's headquarters and captured him. On Christmas Day, he and his wife were executed, and a new communist government quickly replaced them.

As the process of change continued, on March 11, 1990, Lithuania declared independence. That same day in Estonia, a democratically elected alternative parliament convened in the capital and also moved toward a declaration of independence. Despite Lithuania's resolution to depart from the Soviet Union, Russian troops retained control of much of the country's infrastructure. On January 13, 1991, they clamped down so hard that the day remains etched in people's minds as "Bloody Sunday." At least 14 people were killed (including a KGB officer) and 702 wounded when tanks and armor-piercing bullets were used to secure Soviet control of the main television tower in Vilnius. People massively revolted, taking down street signs to confuse Russian troops (as had been done in Prague in 1968), and offered voting and television tower.

Less than a week later in and half a million people conv to defend their parliament and trucks and tractors, strung barbed wires, and organized round-the-clock activities, and prepared for a S of grassroots activity, no invasion.

Within a few short months, the public and Poland and integrated their opposition to the compromise. In Czechoslovakia, the wave swept from Poland and Romania, after the top entrenched communist cadre.

With its empire collapsing, power, Gorbachev's ambitious that they mounted a coup against the Communist Party, the KGB, Gorbachev and his family were on the hardline communists, people poured into the streets, students called on soldiers to pray, pacifists passed out war newspapers and radio stations, alternative media. In Palace Sq people assembled. The mayor and the head of the Russian anyone who followed coup led dramatically called for resistance members of the KGB refused. Eventually the coup collapsed, Union. One by one, each of its leaders, Yeltsin and leaders described as an "unconstitutional coup, Gorbachev was powerless of Communist Party rule.

In this time of accelerated Harlan Cleveland, observed the driving force for political to keep up with them. It is the political leaders of powerful outcomes. Well-known names military powers and economi
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Less than a week later in neighboring Latvia, six protesters were killed, and half a million people converged in downtown Riga. They built barricades to defend their parliament and broadcast centers; reinforced them with heavy trucks and tractors, strung barbed wire and flammable materials into the blockades, and organized round-the-clock patrols. Citizens provided meals, firewood, medicines, and prepared for a Soviet siege. When the dust settled on the scurry of grassroots activity, no invasion by Russia materialized.

Within a few short months, Eastern Europe’s Soviet regimes had been overthrown. In Hungary and Poland, governments adopted reform-oriented measures and integrated their oppositions into power through a process of institutional compromise. In Czechoslovakia and East Germany, regimes that refused to bend in the wind were swept from power by popular insurrections. In Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania, after the top rung of communist leaders had been deposed, entrenched communist cadres retained control of capital and political power.

With its empire collapsing, hardline Soviet leaders sought to retake their power. Gorbachev’s ambitious reform program so angered Party conservatives that they mounted a coup against him beginning on August 19, 1991. Elements of the Communist Party, the KGB, and the army mobilized in synchronized actions. Gorbachev and his family were placed under house arrest, but popular resistance to the hardline communist counteroffensive was widespread. In Moscow, people poured into the streets to protest the Russian parliament. Women and students called on soldiers to join them. Religious people knelt in the streets in prayer, pacifists passed out writings on the methods of nonviolent struggle, and newspapers and radio stations that had been closed by the state quickly set up alternative media. In Palace Square in Leningrad, more than a hundred thousand people assembled. The mayor appealed to the military not to support the coup, and the head of the Russian Orthodox Church threatened excommunication to anyone who followed coup leaders’ directives. Russian President Boris Yeltsin dramatically called for resistance from the top of a friendly tank, and even some members of the KGB refused to follow orders, risking death for their defiance. Eventually the coup collapsed, opening the way for the dissolution of the Soviet Union. One by one, each of its fifteen republics declared independence. In early December, Yeltsin and leaders of other republics dissolved the USSR—a move later described as an “unconstitutional coup” by Gorbachev. Weakened by the August coup, Gorbachev was powerless to stop the USSR’s collapse after seven decades of Communist Party rule.

In this time of accelerated change, former U.S. ambassador to NATO, Harlan Cleveland, observed that, “Across the world, the general public is now the driving force for political and social change, with their ‘leaders’ struggling to keep up with them. It is hard to think of a time in world history when the political leaders of powerful nations have seemed so irrelevant to important outcomes. Well-known names—presidents and prime ministers of the world’s military powers and economic powerhouses—have been staking at the nightly
news with ill-concealed astonishment.** While acknowledging grassroots movements' power, top leaders in Eastern Europe also played significant roles. In many cities of Eastern Europe, including Leipzig, Berlin, Budapest, and Prague, crowds chanted “Gorby! Gorby!” They wanted a leader to liberate them, a new Peter the Great who would institute progress from the highest level of government. Despite elite attempts to manage the reform process, when the breakthrough came, its results were different than anyone expected. West Germany swallowed the East in one big gulp, producing enormous budgetary nightmares and cultural dislocations like the emergence of neo-Nazi pogroms. The demise of the USSR was beyond Soviet reformers' expectations or desires. No one could impede the rapid penetration of the former Soviet Union by corporate capitalism, and Russia was ravaged by a neoliberal offensive led by Harvard economists. Long-term movements, intense uprisings, grassroots insurgencies, and activist groups are key to producing robust, lasting democratic change. Yet, because key catalysts behind changes in the communist world emanated from above, democratization was neither lasting nor deep, and a new elite seized control and aligned itself with global capital.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, American triumphalists proclaimed victory in the Cold War and prepared for another century of US world hegemony. According to the misguided views of Francis Fukuyama, we had arrived at the "end of history." Although he subsequently recanted, many people believed that the entire world would welcome U.S.-style representative democracy as the best possible form of government. Paul Wolfowitz and Dick Cheney sent U.S. troops into Iraq, fully expecting them to be greeted with flowers in the streets of Baghdad. With mounting U.S. casualties, a continuing economic crisis that began in 2008, and the rising fortune of China, the illusion of U.S. global hegemony vanished as quickly as a desert mirage. In 2009, President Obama's bow to the emperor of Japan and his quiescence in Beijing were only surface indications of a much deeper American decline yet to come. Nonetheless, an ideological interpretation of the late twentieth century that maintains the United States is at the center remains operative in Samuel Huntington's concept of the third wave.

Rethinking Huntington's Third Wave
Few theorists besides Samuel Huntington have enjoyed the widespread application of their ideas through national policies. With the ears of Pentagon insiders and their worldwide academic network listening carefully to any word, the power of his ideas should not be underestimated. A lifelong "Cold Warrior," Huntington praised the military as a "motor of development" even in repressive, Third World dictatorships supported by the United States. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, "Mad Dog" (as his students called him) warned of a "clash of civilizations," thereby laying the groundwork for U.S. global military intervention to focus on the Islamic world. Under President Richard Nixon, the United States implemented "forced-draft urbanization" in Vietnam through massive bombings of "free-fire zones" in which U.S. troops were permitted to kill anything that moved. For every minute Nixon was president, the United States dispensed more than a ton of explosives during the Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson administrations. By the end of the 20th century, 25 million U.S. military personnel killed civilians. Towns and their inhabitants were left with 21.5 million tons of toxic waste as the greatest use of chemical weapons.

Despite the sacrifice of a slaughter of two million people in Vietnam, the United States was shattered by the 1973 war and a global peace movement. In a report to the Trilateral Commission titled "The Illusions of Power," as a cause of 1974, for the United States, health of liberty, of its capacity to maintain, such as a sense of purpose.

In 1989, Huntington's concept of a "Third Wave" of democratic development was not alone in its description of what had happened in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Since then, Linz, Seymour Martin Lipset (democratization theory, 1973), and Huntington himself have described a "third wave" of democratization, which began in the early 1990s. As authoritarian regimes collapsed, the new democracies faced a range of challenges, from political instability to economic hardship. Huntington's concept of the "Third Wave" helped to shape the expectations and strategies of those seeking to establish democratic institutions in countries that had previously been ruled by authoritarian regimes.

As dictatorships fell, the "third wave" of democratization was accompanied by a wave of nationalism and ethnic conflict. In some cases, the transition to democracy was peaceful, while in others, it was marked by violence and bloodshed. Despite the challenges, the "third wave" of democratization has been a remarkable and ongoing process that has changed the course of political development in many countries.
nile acknowledging grassroots movements also played significant roles. In many cities, Budapest, and Prague, crowds stormed and liberated the, a new Peter the Great. The people of the Soviet Union was not free. No one could predict the rapid spread of capitalism, and Russia was riven by political turmoil. Long-term movements, and activist groups are key to this. Yet, because key catalysts behind from above, democratization was not led by the same people who had been in power for centuries. American triumphalists proclaimed the century of American world hegemony. With Fukuyama, we had arrived at the center of the world. Many people believed that the Soviet Union was about to fall, and Dick Cheney sent U.S. troops to the streets of Baghdad. The economic crisis that began in 2008, the U.S. global hegemony vanished, but Obama's bow to the emperor only surface indications of a much deeper, an ideological interpretation of the United States is at the center of the third wave.

We enjoyed the widespread application of the Cold War. Military leaders, Pentagon insiders, and political leaders, a Cold Warrior, development, even in repressive states. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, where the collapse of the Cold War was, where a clash of systems for U.S. global military intervention, Richard Nixon, the United States. Through massive repression, the United States dispersed more than a ton of explosives on Vietnam—a total of 3.2 million tons, more than during the Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson regimes combined. As Carl Boggs recounted, "By the end of this warfare the United States had destroyed 9,000 out of 15,000 homes, 25 million acres of farmland, 12 million acres of forest, and 1.5 million farm animals. Towns and villages were bombed, torched, and bulldozed, their inhabitants often rounded up and slaughtered. Nearly one million orphans were left along with 182,000 disabled people and one million widows. More than 19 million gallons of toxic herbicides were dumped in the South alone, by far the greatest use of chemical weaponry ever." 14

Despite the sacrifice of more than fifty-eight thousand American lives and the blood of two million people, Huntington's attempt to "democratize" Southern Vietnam was shattered by the heroic resistance of Vietnamese freedom fighters and a global peace movement. Shaken by U.S. defeat in Vietnam, Huntington wrote a report to the Trilateral Commission in which he named the "democratic disinterment" as a cause of 1968 protests. He concluded that "democracy is called for in the United States." At that time, many people were worried about the health of liberty, of its capacity to survive assaults by jaundiced paragons of virtue from Harvard, such as Samuel Huntington and Henry Kissinger. 15

In 1984, Huntington incorrectly surmised that, "The likelihood of democratic development in Eastern Europe is virtually nil... With a few exceptions, the limits of democratic development in the world may well have been reached." He was not alone in his mistaken assessment, in a multivolume study of democratization published in 1989—just before the wave of collapse of Soviet regimes—Juan Linz, Seymour Martin Lipset, and Larry Diamond (leading lights of mainstream democratization theory) did not include a single communist country because "there is little prospect among them of a transition to democracy." 16 These predictive failures cannot be blamed on a lack of information. U.S. media continually gave wide coverage to communism's internal problems while scarcely covering events within the U.S. sphere of influence. By comparison to the U.S. media frenzy during Tiananmen Square protests in China, the tiny space afforded the 1989 Gwangju Uprising helps explain why it is today called "Korea's Tiananmen" even though it preceded the Chinese movement by nine years.

As dictatorships fell one after another in East Asia and Eastern Europe, Huntington quickly abandoned his pessimism and promulgated the idea of a "third wave" of democratization. Previously, his ideological presuppositions caused him to disregard the profound transvaluation of values ushered in by the movements of the 1960s. In the aftermath of the civil rights movement and New Left, South Africa's apartheid regime's days were numbered, as were the reigns of other dictatorships supported by the United States (and Huntington) in places like Greece, Portugal, Spain, the Philippines, and many other countries. Whether behind the communist "Iron Curtain" or in the capitalist "Free World," tyrannical governments could not last after the global wave of 1968 had changed the world. When unpopular regimes were subsequently swept aside, Huntington crafted the "third wave" as a tool to sever democratization movements from their origins in the New Left—and to aggrandize the U.S. role in the "democratic wave."
What Is Democracy?

Few political questions confronting humanity today are of greater importance than that of the meaning of democracy. Universally valued, democracy remains an elusive concept. Minimally defined as elections, democracy worthy of the name involves the existence of justice as well as citizens' input into significant decisions affecting their everyday lives. Despite such considerations, Huntington maintained that "elections, open, free, and fair, are the essence of democracy, the inescapable sine qua non." In doing so, he ascribes a universal truthfulness to Western-style representative governments, to "formal democracy," in which members of the economic elite vie for positions of political power in elections, and only a fraction of the population bothers to vote.

In U.S. national elections, candidates not loyal to the Pentagon and transnational corporate power routinely cannot even be included in televised debates—let alone be able to mount major fund-raising efforts. As a result, the vast majority of U.S. elections carry less choice than between Coke and Pepsi. Voting seldom, if ever, offers meaningful choices to citizens, such as the possibility to abstain from wars. Whether Democrats or Republicans are in office, corporate looting of the public treasury and massive Pentagon budgets feed the war machine's unending appetite. Voting every few years may help people feel like they have a say in government, but it does little to ensure real democracy.

Even if we accept Huntington's perspective for the moment, major problems arise. His notion of democracy simply as voting makes for ease of measurement. Whether or not there are elections becomes his method to determine whether or not "democracy" exists—which, for him, means simply that 50 percent of adult males are eligible to vote and a "responsible executive" is supported by an elected legislature or chosen in direct elections. Contemporary thinkers might wonder why 50 percent of men alone were sufficient for Huntington, why he excluded women. With rates of voter participation hovering around 60 percent, elections by men only would mean only about 30 percent of citizens would vote. A candidate could then be elected with a "majority" of 16 percent of citizens—hardly a number worthy of being considered democratic. Even if the franchise is extended to everyone, a majority of the 60 percent who vote is still only 30 percent of the electorate.

In contrast to Huntington's minimalist definition of democracy, a different understanding has repeatedly been formulated within popular movements since the 1960s: ordinary citizens should have real power through direct participation in decision-making. Popular input could help bring an end to wars and a phasing out of the military's weapons of mass destruction. Precious resources could be democratically allocated rather than controlled by a handful of billionaires. Instead of a Murdoch-controlled global media, for example, we could have citizen-reporters providing news from around the world. Self-managed institutions could determine society's goals and means of operation based upon human needs, not corporate greed. Democratization could be measured on the basis of the decentralization of power and wealth and creation of an independent 'public sphere' in which rational discussion among people can take place and decision-making (can be) pursued. A democracy worthy of the name would empower all individuals to participate in what policies to undertake within the practice of popularities offered to us by the previous existing forms of representative market economy. Candidates, and voting on persons of the same kind of choice that consents is a suitable vehicle for the construction of corporate and consumer economy, and for providing but it is not the alphabet and om "democratization" is accepted rather "democracy" good on or business interests. In Allen protest wars, he believed dearsy. Huntington's notion of and bring deeper penetration

Following Huntington, the essence of democracy work for liberal democracy Karzai in Afghanistan, petty of thousands of American lives, and hundreds of billions of ideological obscurantism and a "democracy." The type of "do impose on the world such unending wars in which the mental devastation, and irruption of the world system popular discussions or choice.

In order to provide ideological great lengths to rewrite history decades have been created in the second wave, 1943 to 1962 (q the time of the book's publication roots power, his periodo- American and French Revolutions representative democracy—just 1960s insurrections. While he did not exclude economic de wave of democratization: the growth of the previous two centuries' victories of capitalist elites armies than to genuine democracy.
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ional companies, no longer included in televised debates—
efforts. As a result, the vast majority of Americans, and even the
vested interests in consumer markets, for coordination of the global capitalist
economy, and for providing banks with a safe and reliable financial infrastructure,
but it is not the alpha and omega of democracy. The more Huntington’s notion of
democratization is accepted, the more real the risk becomes to freedom. He
considered “democracy” good only when it did not interfere with U.S. strategic
needs or business interests. In Allende’s Chile, Chávez’s Venezuela, or when Americans
protest wars, he believed democracy should be limited, even overturned if neces-
sary. Huntington’s notion of the “third wave” was a tool designed to open markets
and bring deeper penetration by U.S. transnational corporations.

Following Huntington, a veritable parade of political scientists proclaimed
that the essence of democracy is voting. In so doing, they prepared the ground-
work for liberal democracies like Pervez Musharraf in Pakistan and Hamid
Karzai in Afghanistan, petty dictators maintained in power only through wasting
thousands of American lives, hundreds of thousands of indigenous peoples’ lives,
and hundreds of billions of U.S. taxpayer dollars—all legitimized by elaborate
ideological obfuscation and media campaigns that portray them as necessary for
“democracy.” The type of “democratization” that Huntington’s theories sought to
 impose on the world includes Abu Ghraib and the CIA’s rendition program,
undertaken wars in which the vast majority of those killed are civilians, environ-
ment, and trade liberalization that spells death to millions at the
periphery of the world system—policies implemented without any substantive
popular discussions or choice between real alternatives.

In order to provide ideological justification for U.S. wars, Huntington went to
great lengths to rewrite history. In The Third Wave (1991), he argued that democ-
acies have been created in three great waves: the first wave, 1828 to 1876; the
second wave, 1945 to 1960 (post–World War II); and the third wave, 1974 to the
time of the book’s publication in 1991. Consistent with his bias against grass-
roots power, his periodization of the “first wave” severed democracy from the
American and French Revolutions—social movements that created modern rep-
resentative democracy—just as his “third wave” cut democracy from its roots in
1960s insurgencies. While he excluded 1960s social movement insurgencies, he
did not exclude economic developments prior to 1974: “In considerable measure,
the wave of democratizations that began in 1974 was the product of the economic
growth of the previous two decades.” Huntington’s three waves correspond to
victories of capitalist elites and as such relate more to expansion of market econ-
omies than to genuine democracy. He did not ignore political developments—only
those of which he did not approve—and when he did acknowledge the contribution of activism, it was elite action. He was convinced that “the third wave of the 1970s and 1980s was overwhelmingly a Catholic wave.” He located the origin of this Catholic wave in the change in the Catholic Church during the 1960s due to Pope John XXIII—but he did not link it to 1960s movements that were the point of origin of the “Christian Left” at the base of the church. His bias against 1960s movements prevented him from understanding that tens of thousands of people in the Christian Left, advocates of the Theology of Liberation, were not simply subjects of the Pope but active creators of changes in the church and themselves autonomous participants in the global grassroots movement.

Huntington bracketed his third wave as a tribute to U.S. imperial power and democratic prestige: “Movements for democracy throughout the world were inspired and borrowed from the American example. In Rangoon supporters of democracy carried the American flag in Johannesburg they reprinted the Federalist; in Prague they sang ‘We Shall Overcome’; in Warsaw they read Lincoln and quoted Jefferson; in Beijing they erected the Goddess of Democracy.” Here Huntington made a critical error that led him to misconstrue events. He claimed the “Goddess of Democracy” in Tiananmen Square was a copy of the U.S. Statue of Liberty. In fact, Chinese art students explicitly rejected the idea of copying the U.S. statue as too “pro-American” and instead modeled theirs on Russian communist Vera Mukhina’s monumental sculpture, “A Worker and a Collective Farm Woman,” which held aloft a torch with two hands on the top of the USSR’s pavilion at the 1957 Paris World Fair.

Similarly, the Athens Polytechnic students who sacrificed their lives in the movement to overthrow the Greek dictatorship were profoundly anti-American. As was well known to Greeks, the United States and Israel had overthrown their democracy in 1967 and imposed the Papadopoulos junta in its place. With an accurate understanding of the actual character of the global insurgency unleashed in this period, we can better comprehend Athens Polytechnic students, whose actions were a key event in the process of overturning dictatorships in the Southern Mediterranean. The global student movement of 1968, which mightily opposed the U.S. war in Vietnam, inspired Greek students. Athenian protesters in 1973 identified with Thai students, who also opposed the U.S. war and had overthrown their military rulers only a few months earlier. Huntington ignored Greek and Thai students and instead placed Portugal’s military coup against the Salazar dictatorship at the beginning of the third wave. Even in that case, he failed to link the Portuguese colonels to insurgent African guerrillas in Mozambique, Angola, and Guinea-Bissau, key grassroots movements that greatly influenced Portugal’s colonial officers before they successfully overthrew Salazar in 1974.

To be sure, the democratic taster of the United States remained bright in the 1980s. During the Ewango Uprising, the most militant fighters nicknamed themselves the “SWAT” team after a popular U.S. television show, and many citizens believed that the entry of U.S. aircraft carrier Coral Sea into Korean waters during the uprising meant it had come to save them—where in fact the opposite was true. After the United States abetted Korea’s military dictatorship in crushing the uprising, anti-Americanism took on a new character of the United States: it was simultaneously one of the few enthusiastic supporters of the Iranian people. A plume of strength and success ordinary citizens could live.

Huntington’s exogenous democracy as a system that, as in his post-World War II inauguration of democratic Korea, leaving aside the prior to the beginning of the democracy? When we ask for definition in Korea, he point. Admiring more welcomed U.S. invasions of It quite eluded him that at hardly qualifies as democrac, the people” is meant. In a Christmas 1972, and Barack received a Nobel Peace Prize research is also flawed—ye

Ideology and Science
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uprising, anti-Americanism emerged with a vengeance in South Korea. The
dialectical character of the United States, one of the freest societies in world history
and simultaneously one of its most warlike, evidently still allowed for a variety of
enthusiastic support in the 1980s. For Huntington, the United States “conveyed an
image of strength and success.”
other, the image was of a free society, where
ordinary citizens could live prosperously and enjoy liberties like nowhere else.
Huntington’s exogenous model of political development understood
democracy as a system that
could be imposed upon people from the outside,
as in his post-World War II “second wave,” when “Allied occupation
promoted
inguination of democratic institutions in Germany, Italy, Austria, Japan,
and Korea.” Leaving aside the slaughter of a hundred thousand
South Koreans prior to the beginning of the Korean
War, the question remains: was Korea then a democracy?
When we ask which “open, free, and fair” elections (according to his
own definition) in Korea he could have meant, there is none to which
anyone can point. Admiring more recent democracies imposed from the outside, Huntington
welcomed U.S. invasions of Grenada and Panama as bringing them democracy.
It quite eluded him that any system of government imposed from the outside
hardly qualifies as democracy—unless of course, something other than “rule
by the people” is meant. In a world where Henry Kissinger, who bombed Hanoi on
Christmas 1972, and Barack Obama, who expanded the war in Afghanistan, both
received a Nobel Peace Prize, it should be no wonder that mainstream scholarly
research is also flawed—yet I cannot help but make note of it.

Ideology and Science
In the late 1980s, the U.S. National Academy of Sciences twice refused to admit
Huntington on the grounds that his work was “ideology,” not “science.” In his
campaign against Huntington’s application for membership, Yale mathematics
professor Serge Lang pointed to the book Political Order in Changing Societies
(1968), in which Huntington called Africa under apartheid a “satisfied
society.” Huntington’s ideological posturing is far from unique. Much of main-
stream political science in the United States routinely accepts value-laden
research as “science.” Huntington’s Cambridge colleague, MIT professor Ishi-
ed Sola Pool, kept interrogation records of tortured Viet Cong suspects in file
his office as “data” to analyze enemy motivation, implicitly becoming part
of the entire torture apparatus. Despite his complicity in war crimes in Vietnam—or
should I say because of them?—Pool’s name today is attached to an annual
award of the American Political Science Association. Like Pool, Huntington
did not see himself merely as an academic but infused his books with advice for and
praise of the military as a “motor of development.”

For “dispassionate” and “value-free” political scientists like Huntington,
ette dynamics are primary variables. Since they assume an elite will always
govern, the only questions become: “Which elite?” and “Can democratic transitions
be managed for the maintenance of elements of an old elite?” Huntington’s
administrative social research categorized the character of transitional regimes,
classifying them as transplacemen in which key leaders maintain themselves
within a new arrangement of power, unlike a wholesale replacement of an old elite, or a transformation of an old elite into a new elite. Abolition of elite rule altogether and creation of substantive democracy remained out of his realm of possibilities. As a self-described “aspiring democratic Machiavellii,” Huntington offered “tips” to leaders on how to isolate radical opposition.  

Emphasizing elite actions, Huntington downplayed the role of civil society in the democratization groundswell at the end of the twentieth century. He claimed “demonstrations, protests and strikes played central roles in only six transitions completed or underway at the end of the 1980s [in the Philippines, South Korea, East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Romania].” Only reluctantly did he acknowledge that, “It seems probable, although little evidence is available, that events in the Philippines and Korea helped stimulate the demonstrations for democracy in Burma in 1988 and those in China in the fall of 1986 and the spring of 1989, as well as having some impact on the liberalization that occurred in Taiwan.” Like Huntington, Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe Schmitter believe that it is preferable for elites to transfer power to some fraction of their supporters or to negotiate a transition with reform-minded members of the opposition than to be outright overturned by opposition movements. That is one reason why elites embrace and propagate widely nonviolence: It permits negotiations between old and new rulers and facilitates the peaceful accommodation of the old within the new. It is also why reformist parties can be so useful. Stephen Haggard and Robert Kaufman realized that “as we have seen in several of our cases, reforms have sometimes been more effective when they are implemented by ‘Left’ parties that can provide some possibility of political influence and compensation to those negatively affected by the reform process.” According to their view, popular movements cannot lead to more democracy; they may prove to be “uncontrollable” and lead either to revolutionary overthrow of the existing system in its entirety or increased repression.

Whatever their different persuasions, mainstream sociologists, economists, and political scientists subscribe to the notion of the “rational” individual actor at the core of society. As with Adam Smith’s “invisible hand,” they believe that “rational choice,” or personal advancement of compartmentalized self-interests will lead to maximization of the social good. In the first place, individualized instrumental rationality is but one form of rational action—and often an unreasonable form at that. Collective instrumental rationality and value-rationality are other forms, which play central roles in animating social movements. With important exceptions like E.P. Thompson and George Rudé, social scientists have traditionally viewed crowds as less rational than individuals. In extreme interpretations, crowds were understood to embody a form of “contagion,” of authoritarian domination and unthinking action, such as lynch mobs. According to this conventional wisdom, crowds lead individuals to suspend their individual rationality and act according to “base” instinctual passions.

In contrast to this view, millions of ordinary people who unite in social movements can be regarded as proof of another dynamic: ordinary people, acting together in the best interests of society, embody a reasonability and intelligence far greater than that of elites w One does not need to be a radical Recent observers of technology 1 the Internet and the World Wi and “smart mobs.”

In the case of South Korea, situations compelled the Carnegie insurgent movement in the country. Roh Tae-woo (who was still people of Gwangju). Juan Lincl to the conclusion that “regime dence that popular mobilization fractions of previous dictatorcratic regimes (as in South Korea) reasonability, and even diminish their lack of influence. People’s to keep much of their ill-begot Subharto all did.

**Evaluating Uprisings**

Uprisings are the best of times occur, but great setbacks are to watch in horror as their loved. Are the sacrifices worth the be.

For Huntington, as for it are mainly understood in ten analytical approach, yet there broad indications of people’s alter group, and expands and dictatorships were brou enunciated more than two hu indications of the degree to which morality and culture. If we freedom in people’s lives, w erative subjects of their soc won by ordinary citizens result in citizens’ involvement in pol vated civic organizations? W have been produced.

Bound as they are to n and mainstream political s as said, victors write history it understanding, one not dict voary upheaval prepares ent failures since they did it
A world of uprisings

As a wholesale replacement of an old elite, Abolition of elite rule democracy remained out of his realm of democratic Machiavelli," Huntington declared. Opposition played a central role in only six transitions 80s in the Philippines, South Korea, and Romania. Only reluctantly did although little evidence is available, demonstrate the demonstrations for in the fall of 1986 and the spring of 1989 the liberalization that occurred in small and Philip Schmitter believes to some fraction of their support. Mind members of the opposition to movements. That is one reason point violence; it permits negotiations the peaceful accommodation of the parties can be so useful. Stephen "as we have seen in several of our effective when they are implementation of political influence and corruption process." According to their democracy; they may prove to be a carryover of the overthrow of the existing system.

Mainstream sociologists, economists, and of the "rational" individual actor. "Invisible hand," they believe that of compartmentalized self-interests. In the first place, individualized rational action—and often an unreal rationality and value rationality animating social movements. With George Staud, social scientists have than individuals. In extreme intensity, a form of "contagion," of author(s) such as lynch mobs. According to rituals to suspend their individual passions. Ordinary people who unite in social dynamics: ordinary people, acting by a reasonability and intelligence far greater than that of elites which rule nation-states and giant corporations. One does not need to be a radical to subscribe to the idea of group intelligence. Recent observers of technology have penned simple insights that speak volumes: the Internet and the World Wide Web have facilitated "the wisdom of crowds" and "smart mobs."

In the case of South Korea, political scientists' bias in favor of elite-led transitions compelled the Carnegie Commission to ignore the contribution of the insurgent movement in the country's democratic transition. Instead they credited Roh Tae-woo (who was subsequently imprisoned for his crimes against the people of Gwangju). Juan Linz and A. Stepan studied East Germany and came to the conclusion that "regime collapse" had occurred despite substantial evidence that popular mobilizations transformed the political landscape. When fractions of previous dictatorships are permitted to play some role in new democratic regimes (as in South Korea, East Germany, Romania, and Indonesia), the reasonability, and even gullibility, of insurgent movements is a key reason, not their lack of influence. People's generosity even allowed many deposed dictators to keep much of their ill-gotten fortunes—as Duvalier, Marcos, Chun, Ershad, and Suharto all did.

Evaluating Uprisings

Uprisings are the best of times; they are the worst of times. Tremendous changes occur, but great setbacks are possible. People make new lifelong friends, others watch in horror as their loved ones are murdered and blood flows in the streets. Are the sacrifices worth the benefits?

For Huntington, as for most political scientists, the impacts of uprisings are mainly understood in terms of changes in elite power. That is certainly one analytical approach, yet there are far more significant outcomes. One is to assess broad indications of people's well-being and happiness, new rights won by subaltern groups, and expanded liberties. To what extent have onerous burdens and dictatorships been brought to an end? A second evaluative dimension was articulated more than two hundred years ago, when Emmanuel Kant searched for indications of the degree to which reason becomes an important determinant of morality and culture. If we extrapolate his insight into a framework of gauging freedom in people's lives, we can ask: Have people been able to become deliberative subjects of their social and political affairs? To what extent have liberties won by ordinary citizens resulted in free public conversations, increased ordinary citizens involvement in policymaking, changed patterns of authority, and activated civic organizations? What kinds of resources for future freedom movements have been produced?

Bound as they are to maintaining the political control center, Huntington and mainstream political science fail to recognize such outcomes. As is often said, victors write history in large script. Yet at the margins, a more accurate understanding, one not tied to predominant ideology, is possible. Every revolutionary upheaval prepares the ground for future insurgencies. Although apparent failures since they did not seize power, previous waves of social movements...
in 1848, 1905, and 1968 profoundly changed values and ushered in new political epochs. After 1848, workers won greater employment rights, and citizens' voting rights expanded; after 1905, struggles for national liberation became increasingly legitimate; and since 1968, women's rights, justice for subaltern groups, and the environment have become central concerns. Similarly, subsequent Asian uprisings expanded freedom without seizing power. The transvaluation of values produced by robust insurgent movements may be longer-lasting and of greater significance than transitory fluctuations in elite composition or implementation of new voting systems. After successful insurgencies, Taiwan's forty-year martial law regime finally was brought to an end, and Thais, Nepalis, Filipinos, and South Koreans all won new, more progressive constitutions. In South Korea, workers won annual double-digit pay raises for years after 1987, and in Thailand, Nepal, South Korea, and China won greater union rights.

Yet uprisings can also lead to regression in people's standards of living, civil demobilization, and less political engagement in state matters. In the aftermath of successful overthrow of dictatorships in Thailand, South Korea, Indonesia, and the Philippines, elite corporations, aided by the World Bank, IMF, and WTO, used the openings provided by popular movements to batter down barriers to U.S. and Japanese goods and investors. The resultant situation led to increased poverty in the Philippines and to the 1997 IMF crisis in Thailand and South Korea. In Burma, dire poverty reigns supreme—along with a ruthless predatory state whose commanding generals enrich themselves while the vast majority suffers in marginalized states of existence. In the former Soviet Union, hunger rose and life expectancy fell. In 1989, only 2 percent of Russians lived below the poverty line. Within ten years of the coming of "democracy," half of all children lived in poverty, and more than 23 percent of Russians were impoverished—living on two dollars per day or less. Fully 40 percent of Russians survived on four dollars per day, as tuberculosis and infant mortality rates rose to an all-time high. Within twenty years, average life expectancy for men fell by five years to sixty.

One common result of the nine case studies in this book is that in country after country, an afterglow surge occurred after uprisings. Insurgencies energized civil societies, outcomes evident in workers' strikes and farmers' movements, motion among minorities and subaltern strata, and a mushrooming of independent newspapers, cooperatives, and political activism. Clearly uprisings gave rise to expanding circles of action. Insurgent confrontations transformed clients into citizens, compelled elites to reevaluate goals and adjust policies, and empowered grassroots organizations. Individual and groups engaged in illegal regime-altering actions, they found ways to engage in new forms of political participation to remake established procedures and create new space for others to become involved. The world's greatest natural resources are human imagination and will—the force animating, and empowered by, upheavals at the end of the twentieth century.

At the same time, some uprisings' afterglow outcomes, such as NGOs proliferation, lead to the emergence of a new stratum of professional activists who presented fertile grounds for recruitment by U.S. agencies seeking suppliants concerned with the promotion of elite's power and wealth. As fragment, insurgencies simultaneous ers were co-opted into vehicles restricted to the attempt to penetrate and co-opt those with regimes deemed unTens of millions of U.S. dollars the CIA, such as creating "trifles, activist clusters, and mists." In combination with the international committee's U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the aim of building friendly voices them into transnational alliances.

Often this effort required organically developed through the Philippines under Marcos of Marabuk. The goal in both arose from below, Americanization of the streets, left to develop and expand and become a threat to rate domination. U.S. infiltrated venture capital meant pre as James Petras observed do of sticking with the dictator, sweeps away both the regime into a social revolution. The United States cannot be Milosevic in Yugoslavia, and as an alternative tactic.

As the global economy to economic expansion or friendly regimes were sacrifice better equipped to face the logic of overthrowing "crony" to the logic of local account corporations, eager to pene.

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concerned with the promotion of democracy—but not with challenging the global
elite’s power and wealth. As specialized activism came to dominate the move-
ment, insurgencies simultaneously disintegrated, as even well-intentioned activ-
ists were co-opted into vehicles that served the very aims of their opponents.
In the 1980s, as People Power revolts transformed political dynamics, U.S. global
strategy changed from sole reliance on repressive military interventions and
covern CIA actions to include a public component called “democracy promotion,”
the attempt to penetrate and control emergent civil societies in targeted countries
(those with regimes deemed unfriendly or unstable by American policymakers).
Tens of millions of U.S. dollars were poured into programs formerly managed by
the CIA, such as creating “friendly” trade unions, political parties, feminist alli-
ces, activist clusters, and media that would support U.S. transnational interests.
In combination with the National Endowment for Democracy, the AFL-CIO,
the international committees of the Democratic and Republican parties, and the
U.S. Chamber of Commerce, NGOs chosen by U.S. officials were funded with the
aim of building friendly voices within emergent civil societies in order to channel
them into transnational alliances with global elites.

Often this effort required undermining indigenous radical formations that
organically developed through struggles against U.S.-backed dictatorships—as
in the Philippines under Marcos or more recently in Egypt before the overthrow
of Muammar. The goal in both these cases was to suppress popular demands that
arose from below. American policymakers are well aware that the radical impetus
in the streets, if left to develop according to its own logic, could well continue
to expand and become a threat to both U.S. strategic military interests and corpo-
rate domination. U.S. infiltration of indigenous civil society groups is often a pre-
ventative measure meant precisely to undermine movements’ radical potential.
As James Petras observed during the Arab Spring, “The risk of waiting too long,
of sticking with the dictator, is that the uprising radicalizes: the ensuing change
swaps away both the regime and the state apparatus, turning a political
uprising into a social revolution.” (In cases where entrenched regimes unfriendly to
the United States cannot be overthrown through military intervention, such as
Milošević in Yugoslavia, strategic nonviolent opposition led by NGOs was used as
an alternative tactic.)

As the global economy developed, authoritarian dictatorships became fetters
to economic expansion or were unable to defeat local insurgencies. Previously
friendly regimes were sacrificed one after another to make room for new sub-
elites better equipped to facilitate new phases of capitalist expansion. Under the
guise of overthrowing “communism,” indigenous capitalists who operated according
to the logic of local accumulation were replaced with transnational banks and
corporations, eager to penetrate previously closed labor markets and consumers.
One after another, insurgencies at the end of the twentieth century illustrate
that ordinary people’s collective wisdom is far greater than that of entrenched
elites, whether democratically elected or self-appointed. Without highly paid
trainers, insurgent activists adapted new technologies and brought them into
use faster than the corporate elite. The throngs of ordinary citizens who went into
the streets and faced violence and arrest, endangering their own lives and their families' futures, had visions of freedom writ large. It is these visions that I seek to portray in the following chapters, to uncover goals expressed during actions involving thousands of people. I aim to probe into people's deepest aspirations—ones that remain in their hearts even when the events in which they are involved are short-lived or produce unintended results. Empirical analysis of the actions of hundreds of thousands of ordinary people—millions if we sum the total number of participants—reveals that ordinary people want peace, greater democratic rights, equality, and simple forms of progress, while elites are more concerned with cutting taxes on the rich, extending national sovereignty, and protecting corporate profits. In the transformed reality constructed by People Power, mobilized throngs have newfound capacities to enact change. Inspired by previous movements of common people to overturn elites at the apex of power, popular movements continue to enlarge the scope of human liberty. By reconstructing the actions of hundreds of thousands of people in insurrections, I hope to construct a philosophical history not simply from my own mind but from the actions of masses of people. As Susan Buck-Morss put it, what is needed is to "reconstruct not a philosophy of history, but a philosophy out of history, or (this amounts to the same thing) to reconstruct historical material as philosophy."

The Continuing Wave
The late twentieth-century wave of uprisings is inseparable from the ongoing contestation of elite rule that continues today in global insurrections against the neoliberal economic system. The global movement that yesterday won formal democracy today demands an end to world poverty. By challenging the concentration of humanity's collective wealth in the hands of a few billionaires and a few hundred corporations, the global justice movement is a continuing democratic wave. Without anyone telling them to do so, millions of people all over the world have selected the world capitalist regime as the target of their protests. Most publicly visible in world media after the battle of Seattle in 1999, popular confrontations of elite power seek democratic deliberation of the global economic system's goals and rules. All over the world, thousands of protesters have challenged summit meetings of the IMF, G-8, WTO ministerials, and World Bank. A new pluralist and decentralized global economy is envisioned by thousands of participants in the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre and in regional alliances autonomous of the WTO/World Bank/IMF axis. How much longer will humanity tolerate the current abomination of waste and warfare that condemns millions of human beings to living hell on earth?

Despite apparent setbacks, social movements' energies resonate from the grassroots across national boundaries, stimulating each other with greater velocity and more force than ever before in history. Groups form and disband, crowds gather and scatter—but they leave behind a residue of collective capacity for thought and action that builds upon previous incarnations. As people are transformed through insurrections, they refuse to tolerate previously accepted forms of domination. Popular wisdom grows in each iteration of the movement's emergence; ever-new aspirant for freedom, we continually u at the end of history.

NOTES
3 Samuel Huntington, The T (Norman: University of Okl
5 Sushant Dr Patharathin in Northeast Thailand (Cop
6 See Monica Alcina Mera James B. Reuter, SJ, Found.
7 Sunil Amr Xin, "Civic Mel aand Democratic Consolid (Stanford: Hoover Institut Asa's Unknown Uprisings
8 As explained to me by Sue
9 The military government to Yangon, but the demo follow them in that regard
10 Human rights activists ma
11 Jorgens Hansen, "Waves unpublished paper, 371: P
12 For more on the world his b
13 The greenroom role of V during World War II. In a Japanese rule, a nationalw supplies. In 1968, massc Chinese armed urban ins estical component of the sy (London: New Left Books Ph Min, Osp Piatnik
14 See Imagination, chap. 2
15 See Imagination and 3 Movements and the Decl usion of what I call th
16 For MacDermot's formalistic Beacon Press, 1999).
turing their own lives and their future. It is these visions that I seek to capture in this book by focusing on people’s deepest aspirations—on the small scale of their lives, but also on the larger scale of their societies. This approach challenges the traditional focus on political movements and the state, emphasizing instead the role of everyday people in shaping the future. I hope to show how these aspirations animate action, and how the struggle for freedom is a continuous process that never ends.

NOTES
7 Sunghyuk Kim, “Civil Mobilization for Democratic Reform,” in Institutional Reform and Democratic Consolidation in Korea, eds. Larry Diamond and Doh Chull Shin (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1999), p. 281. For details on the June Uprising, see Asia’s Unknown Uprisings Volume 1, chap. 9.
8 As explained to me by Seung Hee Jean in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 2006.
9 The military government changed the country’s name to Myanmar and its largest city to Yangon, but the democracy movement insists on retaining the old names, and I follow them in that regard.
10 Human rights activists maintain that hundreds were killed or disappeared.
13 The prominent role of Vietnam was preordained by an earlier insurgency there during World War II. In 1945, after millions of Vietnamese had starved to death under Japanese rule, a nationwide uprising had captured the country’s rice stocks and food supplies. In 1968, master planning by Ho Chi Minh, who had studied European and Chinese armed urban insurrections of the 1920s and 1930s for the Comintern, was a critical component of the synchronized Tet offensive. See A. Neuberg, Armed Insurrection (London: New Left Books, 1990). The authors were actually Mikhail Tukhachevsky, Ho Chi Minh, Delp Platinsky, and Erich Wollenberg.
14 See imagination, chap. 2.
15 See imagination and The Subversion of Politics: European Autonomous Social Movements and the Decolonization of Everyday Life (Oakland: AK Press, 2006) for discussion of what I call the “eros effect.”
16 For Marcuse’s formulation of instinct and revolution, see Essay on Liberation (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969).
UPRISINGS

Identified about these events. See Susanne
in Anguish of Tibet, 248-51.

[RHA 172, no. 75-76 (June 29–July 6, 2009):
developments in March 1989.


at Review, September 1999, 4.

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The Tibet, A Generation in Peril: The Lives of
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The Tibetan Uprising of 2008 and China’s
21st, 2010), 2.


Tibet Riots in March,” International


New York Times, May 15, 2008, A29; Smith,

CHRONOLOGY

April 15, 1989
Party leader Hu Yaobang passes away; within an hour,
workers gather in Tiananmen Square

April 18
About two thousand students sit-in at Tiananmen Square;
workers begin to discuss forming organization

April 19
Autonomous student union forms at Beijing University; ten
thousand students in Tiananmen Square

April 19
125 students sit-in at elite housing at Zhongnanhai for two
days until dispersed by police

April 20
Beijing Normal University Autonomous Union organized,
calls for citywide student organization

April 21
Boycott of classes begins in response to police clubs break-
ing up Zhongnanhai sit-in previous night

April 21
Sixty thousand students gather in a soccer field, march to
Tiananmen that night for Hu’s funeral

China

Let China sleep, for when she wakes, the whole world will tremble.
—Napoleon

Satellites Have Already Reached Heaven, but Democracy Is Still
Stuck in Hell!
—Protest banner carried by researchers from Chinese Academy of

It’s anarchy, but it’s organized anarchy.
—Dan Rather, CBS News, May 1989
April 22
At Hu’s funeral, over a hundred thousand attend, chant “We Want Dialogue”; heavy protests in Xian April 22; after the funeral, students kneel, holding a petition; no one comes forward to accept it

April 24
Autonomous Student Federation found in Beijing

April 26
People’s Daily editorial condemns antistate turmoil and chaos

April 27
Despite police blockades, more than a hundred thousand students march to Tiananmen Square

April 27
Fourteen-hour march; over five hundred thousand citizens defy police in a carnival-like atmosphere

April 29
Officially recognized student group meets with government

May 4
Rally attracts over one million people for seventieth anniversary of 1919 student movement

May 8
Some students return to class, others favor a boycott

May 10
Over five thousand participate in bicycle-demonstration supporting journalists’ call for press freedom

May 11
Over the heads of the autonomous student unions, celebrity movement leaders plan action

May 13
Hunger strike begins and soon is joined by about two thousand people

May 14
Because televised talks were being prerecorded, not broadcast live, some hunger strikers disrupt them

May 15
Gorbachev visits, but ceremony in Tiananmen replaced by airport ceremony

May 16
Three hundred thousand people march in sympathy with hunger strikers, occupy Tiananmen Square

May 16
On behalf of central committee, Zhao Ziyang calls protests “patriotic”; hunger strike continues

May 17–18
More than three thousand hunger strikers, some dramatically fainting; more than a million people protest in support on both days; media reports sympathetically on hunger strikers; workers congregate in square; journalists demand, “No more lies”; people sing “We Shall Overcome” for the foreign press assembled for the Gorbachev visit; singer Cui Jian joins protests

May 18
Li Peng sternly lectures hunger strikers in meeting in Great Hall of the People; Outside Secondary Schools Student Autonomous Federation formed

May 19
Early morning visit by tearful Zhao to Tiananmen calls for compromise; martial law declared; army mobilized; Beijing Workers Autonomous Union calls for general strike against martial law

May 20
Hundreds of thousands of Beijing citizens peacefully block the army for food, drink, and six hundred to involve more citizens on motor Ziyang out as struggle; troops Television broadcast troops arrives; Organization of students, intellectuals, day; unanimous martial law

May 21
Millions of do not concert; Cert; democracy

May 23
Attempted ab “commanders”

May 27
“Only ten thousand New hunger: fills again

June 2
Army again to stopped by city; many section on Channonamun taken and st

June 3
Shooting con

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In 1989, STUDENT activists in C racy that was only brought to an around Beijing’s Tiananmen Sq minded political leaders, the new Chinese Communist Party (CCP) movement, workers were significan nation of Beijing, especially after a successfully demobilized what was in army units to “sanitize” the saw in 1980 in Gwangju, students they often took refuge in their hris surged to the forefront of the fury of the state.
hundred thousand attend, chant easy protests in Xian April 22; after metal, holding a petition; no one except it Federation condemned in Beijing in den a three-state turmoil and the army for forty-eight hours and provide the troops with food, drink, and flowers; in more than eighty cities and at six hundred colleges and technical universities, protests involve more than 2.8 million people; "flying tigers" (citizens on motorcycles) report on troop movements; Zhao Ziyang out as Party general secretary; Premier Li Peng wins struggle; troops pull back

May 21

Television broadcasts from Beijing are suspended; more troops arrive; people continue to block them

May 23

Organization of all autonomous groups is formed; workers, students, intellectuals, and citizens meet at noon every day; unanimous decision to leave on May 30 (tenth day of martial law)

May 27

Millions of dollars raised in Hong Kong racetrack benefit concert; Central Art Academy students erect "goddess of democracy"

May 28

Attempted abduction of Chai Ling and Feng Congde (the "commanders") by other activists at 4:00 a.m.

May 30

Only ten thousand students still occupy the square

June 2

New hunger strike by four people has huge impact; square falls again

June 3

Army again tries to empty Tiananmen Square; buses stopped by crowds

June 4

At 2:00 a.m., army units begin fighting their way into the city; many soldiers killed; people gather at every intersection on Changan Avenue; disbelief that troops are using live ammunition; 4:45 a.m.; with the square surrounded, vote is taken and students leave square

June 5-6

Shooting continues in Beijing; casualties mount

June 8

Government spokesperson claims three hundred dead, seven thousand injured

IN 1989, STUDENT activists in China sparked a national uprising for democracy that was only brought to an end after a massacre in working-class suburbs around Beijing's Tiananmen Square. Despite accounts linking it to reform-minded political leaders, the revolt in China originated outside the ranks of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Though it was widely portrayed as a student movement, workers were significantly involved—as was nearly the entire population of Beijing, especially after May 20, when hundreds of thousands of people successfully demobilized what seemed like an endless convoy of trucks bringing in army units to "sanitize" the protesters' base in Tiananmen Square. As we saw in 1980 in Guangxi, students initiated protests, but once danger multiplied, they often took refuge in their homes and campuses, while working-class activists surged to the forefront of the movement and bore the brunt of the unleashed fury of the state.
Within the hallowed halls of the communist elite, as the global chain reaction of revolts against military dictatorships continued, significant support for reform emerged within the party. For sympathizing with protesting students, Hu Yaobang had been forced to step down as party general secretary in 1987, and two years later, Zhao Ziyang was similarly nudged from power. What distinguished the 1989 movement from previous episodes of dissent was the popular power wielded by spontaneously formed autonomous groups. No “commander-in-chief” or central committee controlled the whole movement, although several leaders claimed to do so. Rather, across the country, on university campuses and in workplaces, independent groups formed at the grassroots and united in action. Multiple and diverse tendencies simultaneously coexisted within the movement. While student leader Wang Kaifeng famously intoned his desire for Western consumerism and Nike shoes, the Beijing Autonomous Workers’ Federation (BAWF), along with a dozen other such formations, advocated more democracy within a socialist framework.

A significant difference between the Chinese movement and simultaneously occurring ones in Czechoslovakia and much of Eastern Europe was the near absence of calls for a market-based capitalism among Chinese dissidents. Beginning in 1978, Deng Xiaoping had initiated a whole series of such reforms from the top and encouraged the emergence of a market-Leninist system within the state-controlled economy so carefully nurtured from the 1950s to the 1970s. In December 1978, when the Central Committee ordered the dismantling of collectivized farms and authorized family farms to sell some goods on the market, one of the great accomplishments of the Maoist revolution was undone—and locally based party officials quickly enriched themselves. By 1980, Chinese citizens, if of any one opinion, were worried about high inflation and erosion in their standard of living that the new market-based reforms brought with them. “To get rich is glorious,” Deng insisted, yet many workers found themselves less secure, while managers and the party elite became spectacularly wealthy. One of the world’s most egalitarian societies became so stratified that the party eventually stopped releasing data measuring inequality.

The 1989 revolt was not limited to Beijing. By the time the insurrection had been brought to a bloody end, more than eighty cities experienced mobilizations of one kind or another involving millions of people as an erosion effect swept the country. Years later, people spoke of a “Hundred Million Heroes” in reference to those who acted in 1989. Even though that is an astonishing number, it includes only about 10 percent of the country. When we consider four million out of Nepal’s population of thirty million mobilized on the final day of protests in 2006 (more than 13 percent), and compare both those numbers with 300,000 of Guangxi’s 750,000 citizens who mobilized on May 21 (or about 42 percent), we get a sense of the relative intensity of those mobilizations. While China’s potential for political change was thwarted by overwhelming force in 1989 and blunted over subsequent decades by economic reform, the trajectory for China’s future—as revealed in the actions and aspirations that emerged in the heat of events in 1989—provides a significant glimpse of the changing character of freedom in China.

While prolific, Western media coverage of the occupation of Tiananmen Square and subsequent reports on the Chinese democracy movement are suspect. Many Western observers have framed risings in Eastern Europe that overthrew the context of Confucian culture and Asiatic imposition of anticomunist Western interventions in Korea and Vietnam as Chinese history in 1989.

For decades, the United States was erstwhile ally during World War II. Truman ordered fifty thousand U.S. soldiers and light on Chiang’s side as looked askance at their officers for Christmas 1945. A U.S. lieutenant reported that you can’t tell a man that he’s the same railway with Japanese. M and sailors were stationed in China.

During the subsequent bloody Kai-shek and Kuo-mintang (KMT) war of the Communist Party. After Chiang & forces massively intervened in neighbor As the war against communism int States, and U.S. planes repeatedly hit. Finally the CCP authorized its army American ground forces that took in the killing of U.S. Air Force officers and men and killers from Sweden, Italy, Brazil. When the bloodletting ceased, Chair of thousands—including Mao’s elderly. It is no accident that both the Kore borders.

Throughout the 1960s, U.S. I islands of Quezon and Matsu. As home on the outskirts of Taipei, w dark near the remote bomb shelter was long-range U.S. artillery. As s one of my friends did not return to him. His father and support to Chiang Kai-shek’s arm during his monthly rotation to th This “ancient” history has been erasure in Belgrade was jealously during U.S.-led NATO attacks c killed and the building set on fl
Many Western observers have framed the events in China with synchronous risings in Eastern Europe that overthrew Soviet rule in 1989 rather than in the context of Confucian culture and Asian politico-economic developments. The imposition of anticommunist Western ideology—so destructive in shaping U.S. interventions in Korea and Vietnam as means to “contain” communism—distorts Chinese history in 1989.

For decades, the United States has waged war on Chinese communism, our erstwhile ally during World War II. After the defeat of Japan, President Harry Truman ordered fifty thousand U.S. Marines to China to work alongside Japanese soldiers and fight on Chiang’s side against communists. U.S. troops immediately found themselves at their officers for explanations about their mission. Around Christmas 1945, a U.S. lieutenant reported, “They ask me, too, why they’re here... but you can’t tell a man that he’s here to disarm the Japanese when he’s guarding the same railway with Japanese.” More than a hundred thousand U.S. soldiers and sailors were stationed in China by 1946.

During the subsequent bloody civil war, the United States aided Chiang Kai-shek and Kuomintang (KMT) while Western media vilified Mao Zedong and the Communist Party. After Chiang suffered ignominious defeat in 1949, the U.S. forces massively intervened in neighboring Korea’s civil war the following year. As the war against communism intensified, McCarthyism polarized the United States, and U.S. planes repeatedly attacked China’s side of their border with Korea. Finally the CCP authorized its army to drive back the United States. So badly did American ground forces fare that without air superiority and chemical/biological warfare, U.S. troops in all probability would have been overrun. From January to March 1952, a substantial body of evidence proves U.S. germ warfare against China “spilled over” from Korea—including testimony from thirty-eight captured U.S. Air Force officers and men and a six-hundred-page report authored by scientists from Sweden, Italy, Brazil, the Soviet Union, France, and Great Britain. When the bloodletting ceased, Chinese casualties were estimated in the hundreds of thousands—including Mao’s eldest son—while millions of Koreans were killed. It is no accident that both the Korean and Vietnam Wars were fought on China’s borders.

Throughout the 1960s, U.S. forces aided Taiwan’s shelling of the Chinese islands of Quemoy and Matsu. As a boy, I lived in Taiwan, and at night, from our home on the outskirts of Taipei, we could see the sky lit up by fire and blast shelter adjacent to our house. My father explained it was long-range U.S. artillery. As a fifth-grade student in 1959, I remember when one of my friends did not return to our school. I asked my father what had happened to him. His father and mine were both U.S. officers providing artillery support to Chiang Kai-shek’s army. He told me my friend’s father had been killed during his monthly rotation to the islands.

This “ancient” history has modern counterparts: In 1999, the Chinese embassy in Belgrade was intentionally targeted and hit by U.S. fighter bombers during U.S.-led NATO attacks on Serbia. At least three Chinese people were killed and the building set on fire. Today, it is no secret that U.S. world strategy
continues to encircle China with American bases. Few if any of these dynamics have been reported in the U.S. media. At the same time, in one of his final books, Samuel Huntington calmly discussed the possibility of a future U.S.-China war.

The Cultural Revolution's Contribution to the Movement of 1989

Very often, the origins of social movements are understood retrospectively in unlikely and auspicious events. This may well be the case of the seemingly insignificant appearance of people bringing white flowers to Tiananmen Square in April 1976, three months after the death of longtime leader Zhou Enlai. Within days of the first spontaneous commemoration of Zhou's life, thousands of people arrived to lay wreaths, leave poems, and otherwise mark the passing of a man whose significance the hard-line "Gang of Four" leaders sought to minimize. Mourning Zhou was perhaps the only permitted public means of expressing displeasure with the continuing marginalization of conservatives like Zhou's protégé, Deng Xiaoping.

On Sunday, April 4, an estimated two million people visited the square. The next day, police cleared away all the flowers and sanitized the memorial site, but people nonetheless returned. Ordered to disperse, the crowd fought back when police moved in with clubs, and in the ensuing scuffles, a police van was overturned. Soon a workers' militia arrived and broke up the assembly of mourners, but the damage had been done: the April 5 events were characterized as "counterrevolutionary." Deemed responsible for motivating the protests from behind the scenes, Deng Xiaoping was dismissed from all positions of responsibility, and Mao denounced Deng on a second time as an "unrepentant capitalist-roader." (The first time was in 1966 at the height of the Cultural Revolution, and Deng was banished for years to the countryside. Soon thereafter, radical Beijing University students incarcerated his eldest son. When Deng's son sought to escape by jumping from a fourth-floor dormitory window, he ended up paralyzed from the waist down—a tragedy for which Deng never forgave the student movement.)

Western analysts have long assumed that Eastern European and Chinese activists may only have had experience with democracy before communist rule, that China has no civil society—or that it is born in the 1989 turmoil. In doing so, they posit specific European and the U.S. models as defining civil society and ignore cross-cultural realities. Chinese peasants' centuries of uprisings constitute a "dyanastic cycle" (though which regimes came to power, increased their military budget to remain there, raised taxes to pay for the military, after which people revolted and overthrow the dynasty—leading to a reiteration of the cycle). Examples of more recent civil activities include the White Lotus rebellion from 1796 to 1801, the many public-minded literati networks in the late Ming dynasty, the Taiping rebellion of the 1860s, New Text Confucianism, the Reform Movement after the defeat by Japan, and the May Fourth uprising in 1919. Alongside this rich tradition, many examples of people's direct engagement with civil matters can be found since 1949. Through popular participation in movements of national political change—from the disastrous Great Leap Forward in 1957 to the Cultural Revolution a decade later—millions of Chinese people accumulated valuable experiences, as they drew upon previous history were enormous, yet through these h themselves to take an active role in

In the Manichean world of U. wing that proved such a fertile rec Bush regime), the Cultural Revolution historians in both China and the US yet it could also be viewed as "the I enlightened about the nature of C form of direct democracy—of people a culture of resistance and became from the grassroots." Mao's famed the Cultural Revolution, promised to replace officials, basing his idea the 1871 Paris Commune (where all popular recall). From this perspective of civil society against the state but became a resource to draw upon in

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Economic Reform

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In the Manichean world of U.S. anticommunism (including its Trotskyist wing that proved such a fertile recruiting grounds for neoconservatives in the Bush regime), the Cultural Revolution was purely an abomination. Mainstream historians in both China and the United States condemn it in no uncertain terms, yet it could also be viewed as "the history of Chinese youth gradually becoming enlightened about the nature of Chinese society." 9 Evidence persists that as a form of direct democracy —of people taking power into their own hands—it built a culture of resistance and became a source of encouragement for speaking out from the grassroots. 10 Mao's famous "Sixteen Points," the seminal document of the Cultural Revolution, promised more democracy. Mao advocated elections to replace officials, basing his ideas upon democratic currents in Marxism like the 1871 Paris Commune (where all elected delegates were subject to immediate popular recall). From this perspective, the Cultural Revolution was a mobilization of civil society against the state bureaucracy, and people's experiences during it became a resource to draw upon in the heated moments of 1989.

Since Mao's demobilization of the Red Guard in 1968 at the height of the Cultural Revolution, China's student movement slowly rebuilt itself. In both objective factors (number of students, their concentration on campuses, and the single-child policy of the government) as well as subjective factors (the quality of everyday experiences, legacy of past struggles, and desire for new forms of liberty), students were positioned for the leading role they would assume with great popular acclaim in 1989. In similar ways, the country's working class—officially acclaimed to be masters of the nation—was groomed to carry out a thorough and far-reaching transformation of the country.

In very specific ways, the Cultural Revolution schooled thousands of people in the ethics and etiquette of street protests. At one critical moment in 1989, only a day before the shooting began, soldiers and demonstrators who were locked in confrontation began a singing competition—a technique commonly used during the Cultural Revolution. 11 Another carryover came when workers issued a detailed expose of high officials' special privileges—from families' trips abroad to limousines and businesses—a direct descendant of antielitism and anticorruption campaigns during the Cultural Revolution. As one of their leaders put it, "The bureaucratic cats get fat while the people starve." 12 Cultural Revolution experiences enriched centuries-old notions that the Emperor ruled through a mandate of heaven (which could be retracted if power was wielded in unjust ways), that the people have the right to petition for redress of grievances, and officials bear a concomitant responsibility to respond intelligently, and that everyone has the right to rebel against unjust dictates.

**Economic Reform**

The month after Mao Zedong died on September 9, 1976, party conservatives moved quickly to remove from power the "Gang of Four" and hundreds of others.
aligned with them. By November 1978, Deng Xiaoping had been restored to a high position, and the April 5, 1976, incident was reclassified as "revolutionary."

After the party recognized the righteousness of the 1976 events, the change in climate was immediate: wall posters began to appear in Beijing. The "Democracy Wall Movement"—as this spurt in spontaneous grassroots initiative became known in the Western media—was initially encouraged by top party leaders, but as it spread to other cities, many became worried they might again be targeted, especially since economic reforms began in earnest in December.

With the purge of the Gang of Four, hundreds of thousands of banished Red Guards returned to the cities after a “lost decade” in rural areas, and thousands of prisoners incarcerated during the Cultural Revolution were freed. Among those released from prison were three longtime democracy activists from Guangzhou known collectively as Li Yizhe, who had long advocated legal protection for individuals. Radical factions from the Cultural Revolution that had been broken up in 1968 began to reconstitute themselves in the mid-1970s and organize against what they perceived as a restoration of capitalism by Deng and the new party elite. A legacy of the Cultural Revolution, this enduring culture of resistance appears to have been one of the key forces behind the 1978 movement, especially through groups like Hubel’s Big Dipper Study Group and Yangtze River Commentary, Beijing’s April 3rd Faction (which called for working people and not bureaucrats to be “masters of society”), and Hunan’s Provisional Revolutionary Great Alliance Committee.

In those heady days, a young electrician and former Red Guard, Wei Jingbiing, signed his name to a poster attacking Deng (then a party leader) and calling for democracy (“the fifth modernization”). Wei helped found one of China’s first independent magazines, Exploration. Soon others published dissident poetry and essays in Beijing Spring, Enlightenment, and Today. That winter, rural people streamed into the capital in a torrent of dissent. A ragtag assortment of peasants camped outside government offices to protest rapes, thefts, and even murder at the hands of powerful local communist authorities. One rape victim organized one of the largest marches. Unemployed young people militantly sought entry into Zhongnanhai—the exclusive compound where many of the party elite lived. On March 25, Wei called Deng a “fascist dictator.” Having twice been purged in the past, Deng moved resolutely to prevent any new recurrence of his banishment. Within days, thirty activists had been arrested, and Democracy Wall was shut down.

In early 1979, as the official celebration of the April 5 Incident approached, Wang Xizhe (one of the three original Li Yizhe members) ended a rousing speech by calling on more than a hundred intellectuals and cadre to “grasp their pens and use them to struggle to bring real democratic rights to the masses.” Not one to let words alone speak, Wang helped organize a campaign against Deng’s plan to abolish constitutional protections of the “Four Greats” (free speech, full articulation of viewpoints, public debates, and large character posters). Wang publicly encouraged opposition leaders to protest the detention of other dissidents, and he participated in an underground activist conclave in Beijing in June 1980 to discuss the need for a Chinese organized proletarian party.”

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Needless to say, the group soon the crackdown came in August, more than was subsequently sentenced to fourteen years of democracy received small. Officials worried that if protesters in they might substitute themselves for party leader Hu Yaobang attacked t illegal organizations...have behi. within the party who...think som over the country.

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1980 to discuss the need for a Chinese Communist League (to function as a "newly
organized proletarian party"). In mid-1980, a national association of twenty-one
autonomous magazines called for a mass democratic movement to counter the
enforced bureaucratic elite. Although Democracy Wall had been shut down, the
current of resistance continued to flow.

Needless to say, the group soon drew the ire of Deng and top leaders. When
the crackdown came in 1981, more than twenty activists were rounded up. Wang
was subsequently sentenced to fourteen years in prison, and other leading advoca-
tes of democracy received similar rewards for their services to the people.
Officials worried that if protesters in different parts of the country linked togeth
they might substitute themselves for the leading role of the party. In January 1981,
party leader Hu Yaobang attacked the dissidents: "These illegal magazines and
illegal organizations... have behind the scenes backers... There are people
within the party who... think some young people are so smart they can take
over the country."

No matter how much the government repressed small magazine pub-
lishe and isolated outspoken activists, democratic sentiments continued to
be espoused. Within three years, calls for free expression were heard within
the Party's Writers' Association, where some believed that "creation requires
freedom." The technical intelligentsia articulated the notion that "freedom of
discussion is a prerequisite of the pursuit of truth." In many places, the need for
academic freedom was discussed. In May 1985, the government granted Hefei's
University of Science and Technology (UST) a measure of autonomy in its expe-
iment with educational reform. Soon thereafter, a new wave of protests appeared
on campuses at the forefront of reforms, around issues such as permitting faculty
to select department heads and students to sit on presidential advisory boards.
In July 1985, Li Honglin, president of the Fujian Academy of Social Science, called
for concrete regulations to safeguard constitutionally protected rights. That fall, a
Shanghai-based magazine published an exposition on two concepts of freedom:
"If socialist society cannot offer the individual more and greater freedom, how
can it display its superiority?... democracy and freedom very easily become
derogatory words, associated with the bourgeoisie, as if our proletarians and com-
munists did not want democracy or freedom, only dictatorship and discipline."

On December 5, 1986, at Hefei's UST, students protested the closed process
of nominations for the People's Congress. Within two weeks, protests in Hefei
spread to more than a dozen other cities, bringing nearly a hundred thousand stu-
dents into the streets of Shanghai. After five days of public turmoil, student rep-
resentatives from fifteen universities negotiated their demands with city leaders.
Wall posters at Beijing University read, "We want democracy, we want freedom,
we support the university student movement in the University of Science and
Technology." Among the list of complaints that arose across China were:

1. A ban on discussion of sexual liberation at Zhongshan University
   in Guangzhou
2. Beijing University's policy of lights out at 11:00 p.m.
3. Incompetent librarians who retained their positions only because of their connections to powerful party officials.

4. Poor food service in campus cafeterias.

During six hours of negotiations with Shanghai Mayor Jiang Zemin, student representatives pressed four issues: democracy, recognition of their movement as benefiting China, no retribution against participants, and freedom to publish their own newspapers. Three years later, these would remain key issues for students who occupied Tiananmen Square.

Although the 1986 protests brought some reforms, especially electoral changes that opened the selection process for candidates to the People’s Congress, the government again cracked down. The president of the Writers’ Association lost his party membership. The president and vice president of UST were transferred to other posts and expelled from the party. Party General Secretary Hu Yaobang—who had opposed the 1980 upsurge—was linked to the new protests and forced to resign in early 1987—as were two other “leading lights of the party.” Hu’s dismissal made him a hero to students and democracy activists—despite the fact he had opposed them a decade earlier.

At the same time as grassroots demands for more rights were being articulated, the government moved away from central economic controls. From 1979 to 1988, state planning’s control of output declined from 77 percent to 47 percent. As steel, from 85 percent to 26 percent of timber, and from 59 percent to 43.5 percent of coal.25 As private industry was encouraged, many workers in state-owned enterprises faced hardship. In the spring and summer of 1988, factory layoffs affected four hundred thousand people in seven hundred Shenyang plants alone. White-collar workers were not directly benefiting from economic liberalization. The educated elite saw the country as increasingly mismanaged and corrupt. Work stoppages increased in the same period, as did the crime rate.26 In early June, some twenty thousand Beijing University students protested in Tiananmen Square after one of their fellow students had been murdered. They wanted the government to protect them from local criminals.

To be sure, between 1979 and 1984, people’s standard of living improved. From the onset of economic reforms in 1978 to 1987, more than 38 times as many citizens owned refrigerators as in 1949. In 1986, more than one in three urban families experienced a sharp decline in their earnings.27

In the first four months of 1990, coal prices rose 106 percent, while food prices also rose significantly: vegetables went up 68.7 percent, for example.28 A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rate of Real Growth</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
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<td>1985</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
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<td>1986</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
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<td>1987</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
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<td>1989</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
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<td>1990</td>
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<td>1991</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
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The contradiction between high inflation and a jump in labor productivity they saw. A new 1987 law gave managers more autonomy, but permitted layoffs that affected 60 percent of workers. Some fifteen to twenty million workers worried they too, might be laid off, dashed against the cold reality of industrial conditions. Simultaneously, the gap between the rich and poor grew. Times had never been better for the wealthy, but those in the middle and below found their lives becoming more and more difficult.

China’s economy was in the era of Maoist empowerment, actions to improve their lot, strikingly counted at more than seven times the 1987 rate.
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Zhai Mayor Jiang Zemin, student rep-
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ting, the cost of living rose, believed their cut out of every transaction. In

experienced a sharp decline in their $9, coal prices rose 100 percent, while went up 68.7 percent, for example. A


Table 5.1 Rates of Real Growth and Inflation, 1983–1991

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rate of Real Growth</th>
<th>Inflation of Consumer Prices</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
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<td>1986</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
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<td>1987</td>
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<td>1991</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
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populace used to decades of low and stable prices and nonexistent unemployment painfully experienced the insecurities of the “free” market.

To increase efficiency, the state implemented Taylorist production techniques and introduced piecework wages. When material incentives failed to provide the jump in labor productivity they sought, the party expanded management powers. A new 1987 law gave managers more power over workers without providing any simultaneous mechanism for workers to redress grievances. The new legislation also permitted layoffs that affected three hundred thousand workers by August 1988. Some fifteen to twenty million other workers classified as “underemployed” worried they, too, might be laid off. Suddenly, decades of rising expectations were dashed against the cold reality of insecurity and impotency—the very conditions sociologists identify as producing progressive social movements.

Simultaneously, the gap between elite and working people widened. For the elite, times had never been better. Party functionaries made huge profits on resale of commodities bought at low, state-mandated prices. They were able to buy luxury goods from abroad, send their families on foreign tours, and live in top housing. Party members received special consideration in courts if they were charged criminally. Both Deng and Zhao’s sons were thought to be engaged in corrupt practices. Last but not least, while all youth had to compete for scarce seats in higher education, top party members’ children were granted special admissions.

The contradiction between the official ideology of equality and workers’ sub-

ordination became unbearable. Nationalization of industry and property under-
made economic equality—especially after the onset of Deng’s reforms. Long nourished on a steady diet of government propaganda about the proletariat as the most advanced class, China’s workers found that the reality of their everyday lives stood in sharp contrast to that of wealthy leaders whose slick suits and limousines were all too conspicuous signs of their rule over people who wore Mao suits and rode bicycles. China’s economy was contained within social relations of a bygone era, the era of Maoist empowerment of peasants and proletarians. As workers took actions to improve their lot, strikes were increasingly their weapon of choice—officially counted at more than seven hundred in the first ten months of 1988—and
not necessarily peaceful ones. Between January and July of that year, more than 297 managers were injured during 276 incidents of beatings meted out by angry workers, in Shenyang (Liaoning) three city managers were killed by subordinates. 31

Like the proverbial genie that can’t be put back in the lamp, China’s culture of protest continued to grow. While in the United States and Europe, consumerism had tamed avant-garde art’s subversive appeal by transforming it into another commodity, Chinese artists continued the rebellious antestablishment upsurge. 32 Although many abandoned China when a campaign against “spiritual pollution” was waged, by the mid-1980s, a multifarious confluence of streams converged as the New Tide movement, “Dada” performances were held in Xiamen and Beijing University in 1986. The new cultural opening included a television series, River Elegy, which emphasized the producers’ desire to rid China of traditional civilization and become modern and westernized. A prominent magazine introduced a new series on “avant-garde art” in May 1988, and the opening of a “China/avant-garde” exhibition took place in early 1989. This “first modern art show” was brought to an early end after pistol shots were fired as part of a telephone booth installation piece. Officials punished the artists with a two-year ban on modern art, but the movement was about to emerge on a larger scale than anyone had dreamed possible.

The 1989 Crisis
On April 15, 1989, Hu Yaobang suddenly died from a heart attack. Within an hour, people began congregating near the revolutionary heroes’ monument in Tiananmen Square, just as they had during the movement of April 5, 1979. That evening, as groups huddled together in animated discussions, many people decried inflation eating into their meager incomes. About 4:00 a.m., the first organized contingent marched in: twenty employees of the Ministry of Textiles placed a wreath at the base of the monument. 33 Not until more than twelve hours later did the first group of students arrive (late on the evening of April 16), when some three hundred from Beijing University brought eight wreaths to the growing altar dedicated to Hu. Thus, it was workers who initiated the autonomous commemoration of Hu and unleashed an escalating spiral of events that reached its bloody denouement forty-eight days later on June 4.

More than anyone else, students took the lead in provoking a confrontation with the government that would spark urban uprisings all over the country, but to characterize the movement of 1989 as a student movement fails to appreciate the popular character of the uprising. Chinese speak of “one hundred million heroes” when they describe the events, yet in 1988, the government counted only two million students (alongside 105 million workers—70 percent of the nonagricultural labor force). 34 Students first took decisive action on April 17, when more than a thousand people brought a petition criticizing officials’ corruption to Zhongnanhai. During the next two days and two nights, no one would meet with students to accept their petition, so they remained sitting there.

At dusk on April 19, 1989, at Beijing University (Beijing DaXue or Beida, for short), hundreds of students shouted approval for formation of a planning committee to create an autonomous student union. Other campuses soon declared their own autonomous unions, and a committee of five to seven members rose into a citywide coordinating group passed a line of no return. By form government ones, they had unwittingly. During the same night that some 500 hundreds of other students were the city, groups were mobilizing. 

The next morning at Beijing jihuaoshidai, three activist friends rest campus. Without elections, thethro back the dormitory residence of (April 20), police clubs put a bullet in the first drawing of first blood that propels classes that would last for weeks at

The clusters of workers in Tien students had been beaten at Zhong with officers, and their workers to form their own autonomous end to the students’ peaceful sit-clustered in Tiananmen rose to his denouncing the violence. Two day forming their own organization, an The informal group published two I corruption, and the short sighted money had one of Deng Xiaoping’s: Ziyang pay for his golf excursions fancy Western suits? How many visit? Alongside such questions, the by Deng’s economic reforms—story these modest actions, the Beijing born. The autonomous form of hot small significance. The central aspirations for self-government—

In the weeks of upheaval that to center of the protests. On April of whom had activist experience, that day, new faces surged forward their most articulate spokesperson every day in the northwest corner insurgency, that is, after martial the Workers’ Federation continue
JUNY AND JULY OF THAT YEAR, MORE THAN EIGHT HUNDRED people were killed by government forces in China's southern provinces. In the months that followed, thousands more were arrested. The crisis dragged on for months, with sporadic outbreaks of violence in different parts of the country. The government responded with a brutal crackdown, eventually quelling the protests after a few months. The impact of the protests was felt throughout China, with many people on the streets demanding greater freedoms and democratic reforms. The government's response was seen as a setback for those who had been pushing for change. The crisis ended in September, with the government reaffirming its commitment to the status quo.
Students Take the Initiative

With Hu Yaobang’s funeral scheduled for April 22, government leaders wanted Tiananmen Square kept clear, and they thought it would be a simple matter to do so. They planned to close the square before the funeral, but autonomously organized students outmanned them. On the night of April 21, about sixty thousand students gathered on a Shida soccer field and marched to Tiananmen. While underway, the march from Shida was joined by contingents from Beida and the University of Politics and Law. The first group to arrive was from Qinghua University. Without a plan to do something once they got there, they set down and rested. Soon the soccer field assembly, tens of thousands strong, marched in singing the Internationale and chanting, “Long Live Freedom!” and “Down with Dictatorship!” At dawn, a meeting of representatives from each school was convened, and to everyone’s surprise, nineteen colleges were present. The group approved a petition that included:

- Reassessment of Hu Yaobang
- Punishment for those responsible for the beatings at Zhongnanhai
- Permission to publish autonomous newspapers
- Publication of government officials’ incomes
- Discussion of national education policy and fees
- Reconsideration of the “anti-spiritual pollution campaign”
- Accurate media portrayal of the new student movement.

As party leaders exited Hu’s funeral in the Great Hall of the People, only a few even bothered to glance at the assembled students. Trying to get officials to meet them, tens of thousands of students marched around the square, chanting “We want dialogue,” but they were ignored. A trio of Beida students knelt on the steps of the Great Hall and held the seven-point petition above their heads for about forty minutes. When there was still no response, many students began weeping in frustration.

By themselves, the seven points were not revolutionary demands—indeed they were supplications to the government and recognized the power of the system. Yet by autonomously challenging the sole discretion of the party to make policy, students crossed a dangerous line. Furthermore, by honoring the long-standing Chinese tradition of petitioning authorities for redress of grievances, students acted within the set of values central to Chinese civil society. By ignoring them, officials’ actions broke with people’s expectations of proper behavior. Already enraged by a student sit-in at their elite housing complex, government leaders wanted nothing to do with uppity youngsters who dared reproach them. That same day, protests in Xian turned violent and many people were hurt. Some reports claimed eleven people were killed and hundreds injured amid a cluster of attacks on police.

As early as 542 BCE, even before China became Confucian, student protests had occurred. Over ensuing centuries, Chinese students played central roles in stirring the nation to act, resisting corrupt authorities, and supporting rulers they considered kind and just. Central to China’s civil society and governing bureaucracy, scholars have long been reciprocated the public’s esteem by people. A famous Song dynasty scholar put it best: “A scholar worries over the way things are only after all of humanity is happy.”

Seen in the best light, students and high-minded fairness. They were opportunities for university graduates and most qualified to hold. One and the brightest are refused party membership. The party is being mai delected party members lack of fun this way, as many as 75% of education.”

Two days after Hu’s funeral, activists who had stepped forward the Autonomous Student Union of rotating delegates democratically (forty-one) universities, the ASU did not only did it have a much wider base of student union, it took to undertake—or ones they thought elected Zhou Yongjun chairperson on Wuer Kaixi’s issue. The ASU quickly worked out an agenda and strategy fusing demonstrations down to the was viewed by student activists at same night ASU was formally born in Xian and Changsha, where shortly.

For years, previous attempts discovered and broken up before erated political space opened by newly mobilized, and the ASU. During the next six weeks, much recognition of its right to exist. On April 25, Central People’s Radio as “illegal organizations” and pr right of legal organizations.” Tu to retal became a major sore point.

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bureaucracy, scholars have long been held in high repute, and they have often
reciprocated the public’s esteem with concern for the well-being of ordinary
people. A famous Song dynasty scholar, Fan Zhongyan, is still remembered for his
insight, "A scholar worries about the world before the world worries itself; a scholar
is happy only after all of humanity has achieved happiness."

seen in the best light, students acted in this tradition of generosity of spirit
and high-minded fairness. They wanted an end to officials’ corruption and greater
opportunities for university graduates. Students felt excluded from positions they
were most qualified to hold. One wall poster written in mid-April read, "The best
and the brightest are refused party membership, while the dregs are admitted
in droves. The party is being manipulated by a bunch of phonies." Another
declined party members lack of formal education: "Of the 47 million members
of this ‘vanguard,’ as many as 75 percent have no more than elementary school
education."

Two days after Hu’s funeral, about thirty-five students, including many of the
activists who had stepped forward to formulate the seven-point petition, created
the Autonomous Student Union of Beijing Universities and Colleges (ASU). With
rotating delegates democratically selected from fifteen (and soon thereafter from
forty-one) universities, the ASU reflected a bottom-up representative system.
Not only did it have a much wider base of popular support than the government-
sanctioned student unions, it took actions mainstream organizations were afraid
to undertake—or ones they thought were incorrect. At their first meeting, they
elected Zhou Yongjun chairperson of the standing committee by a vote of nine to
Wuer Kaixi's six. The ASU quickly became the “decision-making body that could
work out an agenda and strategy for the movement as a whole.” Besides organiz-
ing demonstrations down to the finest details like slogans, times and places, it
was viewed by student activists as their representative to the government. The
same night ASU was formally founded in Beijing, heavy protests turned into riots
in Xian and Changsha, where shop windows were smashed and looting occurred.

For years, previous attempts to construct independent organizations were
rediscovered and broken up before they could build a base. Within the newly lib-
erated political space opened by the eros effect of 1989, many groups simulta-
neously mobilized, and the ASU was able to emerge as a major political player.
During the next six weeks, much focus would be put upon obtaining government
recognition of its right to exist. By the right of the group’s second meeting on
April 25, Central People’s Radio read an editorial attacking autonomous unions
as "illegal organizations" and promising to "stop any attempt to infringe on the
right of legal organizations." Published the next day in People’s Daily, this edi-
torial became a major sore point for students—and an unvelled threat to them.

On April 25, Deng Xiaoping took to the airwaves and called for Chinese
people to "prepare ourselves for a nationwide struggle and resolve to crush the
turmoil." The following day, he warned Premier Li Peng that "this is not an ordi-
nary student movement... These persons have arisen to create turmoil after
having been influenced and encouraged by liberalization elements in Yugoslavia,
Poland, Hungary, and the Soviet Union... The more the Poles gave in, the
greater the turmoil became." Deng was not entirely wrong: students had discussed the idea of naming their new organization "Solidarity" in honor of the Polish workers' movement. Moreover, the ouster of Marcos from the Philippines and capitulation of Chun Doo-hwan in South Korea inspired people, while the transformation of Taiwan from a martial law garrison state to proto-democracy (see the next chapter) gave people reason to believe the time had come for China to open its political system. As one observer described the scene in Tiananmen Square, "Many emulated the white headbands worn by South Korean dissidents and flashed the V sign favored by anti-Marcos activists who fought for people’s power in the Philippines." Chinese people had assimilated a new tactic in the arsenal of insurrection: the massive occupation of public space as a means of rallying the population. While this tactic first appeared in the early 1989 effect of the global movement, Filipinos used it to overthrow Marcos in 1986, and in 1987, South Korea's June Uprising compelled the dictatorship to grant democratic reforms.

It would be wrong however, to attribute the Chinese movement simply to spillover or "snowballing" from other countries. The simultaneity of China's movement and a dozen more in 1989 speaks to an occurrence of the era effect, to the intuitive and spontaneous awakening of need for freedom. China's protests erupted months before the Berlin Wall came down, before Poland's Solidarity came to power, and before the Czech "Velvet Revolution"—all of which transpired in a process of mutual amplification.

Chinese wall posters and placards drew inspiration from Martin Luther King Jr., Gandhi, and Abraham Lincoln; they mentioned Kent State and Gorbachev. Inspired by King's speech, a Nanjing University student composed a poem, "I Have a Dream," which became a big character poster, Eyes on the Prize, an award-winning television series on the U.S. civil rights movement, had been available at her university. Someone photocopied the People Power book from the Philippines and plastered it on a prominent situated wall. In the context of a worldwide continuation of 1989, with protests spreading in Hungary, East Germany, and many other countries, an editorial in China's People's Daily on April 26 condemned "anti-state turmoil and chaos," branding both students and workers in unsevery terms—a "conspiracy by a handful of unlawful elements" who had even taken over the broadcasting facilities of colleges and universities.

As in so many other revolts in this period—the media coverage in Guangzhou and Thailand readily come to mind—protests were deeply troubled by hostile and somewhat inaccurate media assessments of their movements and demanded retractions. The difference is that in China, they ultimately did receive a high-ranking leader's public praise as well as promises of no retaliation—but they came too late (on May 16) to change the trajectory of the protests.

**Students Under Attack**

Densely concentrated on campuses and afforded time and space to study, students mobilized quickly. Under attack on radio, television, and newspapers, students knew the state's iron fist was clenched and ready to strike. At their next meeting, the ASU hotly debated who Committee unable to decide, they cast forty schools present agreed to class boycott already in place, staff rivaled the party for people's control, and Deng's hardline position clumsily brought heavy pressure to bear on A9; not withstand it. On the night of Apri 1989, but it was too late for one per; more than half a million citizens went on protests became meaningless, as marching to Tiananmen Square. In "a carnival-like atmosphere," Carter worked to mingle among the tens of thousands of Beijing residents.

After witnessing the joyous leaders finally realized they need ignore or pressure protesters. On April 23rd with members of the group, they thereby accomplishing two goals. I was willing to talk and listen—which, it is to suppose like those in the Philippines, King Gyanendra in Nepal, bullets rather than words to respond party's highest levels were listening with students in the reform process to reach a consensus on whether to autonomous discretion to decide.

After their successful mobilizations, Zhou Yongkang was forced. Wuer Kaixi became the new prie. Two days later, Wuer failed to attend. Riding the enormous energy gone decided to mount another protest to newly formed organization. Tenth anniversary of the 1979 an students' rally, which attracted 5 More young workers than student marchers broke through police line movement. The two dismissed for public statements as if they were boycotts, and Wuer read a long de
The Chinese movement simply to entries. The simultaneity of China's to an occurrence of the eros effect, of need for Freedom. China's protests he down, before Poland's Solidarity "Revolution"—all of which transpired inspiration from Martin Luther King mentioned Kent State and Gorbachev.70 university student composed a poem, "A charmer poster. Eyes on the Prize, an S.C. civil rights movement, had been copied the People Power book from prominent situated wall. In the context protests spreading in Hungary, East editorial in China's People's Daily on chaos," branding both students and by a handful of unlawful elements" facilities of colleges and universities,51 the media coverage in Guangju and were deeply troubled by hostile and of their movements and demanded a, they ultimately did receive a high promises of no retaliation—but they declined the protests.

offered time and space to study, studio, television, and newspapers, studied and ready to strike. At their next meeting, the ASU hotly debated what course of action to take. With the Standing Committee unable to decide, they called a general assembly to vote. Nearly all of the forty schools present agreed to organize a major protest on April 27. With a class boycott already in place, students overnight became a powerful force that rivaled the party for people's loyalty. With Zhao Ziyang on a trip to North Korea, Li and Deng's hardline position clumsily handled the burgeoning movement. They brought heavy pressure to bear on ASU leader Zhou Yongjun, who evidently could not withstand it. On the night of April 26, he unilaterally called off the demonstration, but it was too late for one person to change anything. The next day, more than 100,000 students converged on Tiananmen Square. As they circumvented police blockades and marched in contingents, they were cheered on by hundreds of thousands of Beijing residents. As the seemingly endless procession passed, more than half a million citizens watched from sidewalks. The government's ban on protests became meaningless, and more than 500,000 people defied police by marching to Tiananmen Square, where they remained for some fourteen hours in "a carnival-like atmosphere." Cardboard boxes were filled with donations, and many workers mingled among the throng. Later one student leader called it "one of the greatest events in history."

After witnessing the joyful civil disobedience of April 27, government leaders finally realized they needed to do something more creative than simply ignore or pressure protesters. On April 29, they held a widely publicized meeting primarily with members of the government-sanctioned student organization, thereby accomplishing two goals. The dialogue made it appear that the party was willing to talk and listen—which, it must be said, was remarkable when compared to dictators like Marcos in the Philippines, Ne Win in Burma, Chun Doo-hwan in Korea, King Gyamendra in Nepal, and Suchinda in Thailand—all of whom used bullhorns rather than words to respond to their youth.53 Significant forces within the party's highest levels were listening, especially Zhao Ziyang, who sought to work with students in the reform process. The "dialogue" also split the ASU. Unable to reach a consensus on whether or not to attend, the group granted individuals autonomous discretion to decide whether or not to participate in the meeting.

After their successful mobilization on April 27, students reorganized themselves. Zhou Yongjun was forced to resign for his unilateral "cancellation" and. Wu'er Kaixi became the new president—but with a more limited set of powers. Two days later, Wu'er failed to attend a meeting and was replaced by Feng Congde. Riding the enormous energy generated by the recent civil disobedience, the ASU decided to mount another protest on May 4, no easy task given the pressure on the newly formed organization. The government's official rally on May 4, the seventieth anniversary of the 1919 anti-Japanese protests, was dwarfed in size by the students' rally, which attracted 50,000 students and more than 250,000 others. More young workers than students were present. Once again, the autonomous marchers broke through police lines, this time while singing songs from the 1919 movement. The two dismissed former leaders of the ASU each made individual public statements as if they were still leaders: Zhou announced an end to class boycotts, and Wu'er read a long declaration that few outside the media even heard.
Significantly, these individuals felt empowered to speak on behalf of the movement as a whole, and their words were taken by the media as representing the ASU. Such individualism would not be the last time organizations of the student movement were undermined by self-proclaimed leaders.

In the heady atmosphere following two successful massive protests, campus activists were uncertain how to proceed. On May 5, thousands of students at nearly all universities except Beida and Shida returned to classes. On many campuses, the ASU began to be viewed negatively—whether because of its internal power struggles or its changing positions on class boycotts. When campus representatives assembled on May 5, desirous rather than optimistic characterized the meeting. At least one standing committee member resigned, and many others were simply no-shows. The movement seemed stuck at a low point, and no one knew what to do next. By now, students’ key demand was for dialogue with the government—a measure that carried within it implicit recognition of their autonomous organizations. To that end, they spun off a Dialogue Delegation and hoped to secure a positive response from the government.

While the ASU stagnated, students by the hundreds continued to hang wall posters, and other groups mobilized. On May 10, more than five thousand bicycle riders supported journalists’ call for press freedom. Unlike 1960s movements in the United States, activist students had a core of older activists around them who could offer advice and provide insight into the character of the society they were attempting to change. Even more importantly, younger activists often listened to their elders. With experiences accumulated from years of struggle and analysis gleaned from study, a hundred flowers of ideas bloomed, some fragrant, others short-lived. One young teacher at People’s University displayed a big character poster detailing continuity in the history of Chinese administrations by comparing the power structure in 1989 with that in China’s feudal past. See TABLE 5.2. The political critique evident in the poster is incisive, but it does not represent growing public dissatisfaction with the deterioration of economic conditions.

The Hunger Strikers’ Coup d’État

On May 11, a small group of celebrity activists including Wu'er Kaixi and Wang Dan met at a restaurant to discuss the movement’s impasse. Looking for a way to maintain momentum, they resolved to appeal to students to join a hunger strike without the approval of the autonomous student unions. None was a spokesperson for any organization, and they soon helped spawn a dynamic inside the movement through which the fruit of students’ efforts—the autonomous unions for which they had so mightily sacrificed—was thrown to the wayside and replaced by the media appeal of leaders willing to “fast to the death”—as they insisted they would do.

On May 13, just before beginning their hunger strike, dozens of students guzzled down a last lunch of beer and sausages. Gathering in Tiananmen Square before sympathetic media, they were quickly joined by hundreds more people. It was only two days before Russian leader Mikhail Gorbachev’s historic visit marking an end to three decades of Sino-Soviet animosity was to take place. The

### TABLE 5.2 Comparison of the Present Pawn

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Uprisings

To speak on behalf of the movement by the media as representing the widespread organization of the student leaders. Successful massive protests, campus life continued. On May 5, thousands of students at Tsinghua returned to classes. On many campuses—whether because of its internal or external—or because of the mass demonstrations of students abroad, there was a dialogue between the government and the students. The pattern is similar to optimism that characterized the member resigned, and many others went back to school and no one was arrested for dialogue with the implied recognition of students' rights to a dialogue delegation and hoped for peace.

The students continued to hang wall y 10, more than five thousand bicycle freedom. Unlike 1960s movements in many of the leadership around, the leadership of the society they were young. Younger activists often listened to music, from years of struggle and analysis, from some fragrant, others University displayed a big character Chinese administrations by company. China's feudal past. See Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 Comparison of present power structure and power structure.

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<td>Doctrine of inherent virtue</td>
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<td>Status of the individual</td>
<td>None</td>
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Source: Han Mingfu, Class for Democracy, TSS.

During the hunger strike, dozens of students died. Gathering in Tiananmen Square legally joined by hundreds more people. Mikhail Gorbachev's historic visit to China was to take place. The students realized they occupied a key strategic position from which they might win their demands—which included including additional measures: repeal of the April 26 edict banning protests and televised talks between students and the government. Around 500 p.m., a slender psychology graduate student named Chai Ling led the crowd in an oath: "I swear, that to promote democracy, for the prosperity of my country, I willingly go on a hunger strike. I will not give up until I realize our goals." Nearby, Wang Dan was using a bullhorn to hold a press conference. No organization existed to make decisions on behalf of the students. Hunger strikers milling around the Monument to the People's Heroes. Working now as celebrity activists, leaders wore shirts with their names written in large characters on them and moved around the square inside a phalanx of bodyguards, signing autographs as they passed through the crowd.

Communist leaders continued to seek ways to hear students' concerns—whether convinced by the sincerity of their hunger strike or troubled by the widespread sympathy and sympathetic media they enjoyed among citizens. Top leader Yan Mingfa, head of the CCP's unified front department, sat down to meet with students on May 14. He promised there would be no "settling the account after the autumn harvest"—that is, that the regime would not retaliate against the students once their movement had died down. In the midst of the talks, hunger strikers—wearing hospital clothing and some with intravenous feeds attached to their bodies—burst into the hall and disrupted the conversation. They were angered because the televised version was being prerecorded, not broadcast live. Putting an end to the dialogue, they demanded to read their "last words" to their parents. Amid cries and weeping heard in all corners of the room, they proceeded to do so. This charade took place one day after the beginning of the fast!
involved rejecting compromise, who movement colleagues, and thereby abject failure. The hunger strike wthly of people, in eliciting “an unprcitizens of Beijing, young and old literate,” but since it cut the mven huge strategic error.57

For three weeks, workers qufactories and offices. Only after in Tiananmen Square did the World announce their presence publicly, members. By May 13, when huge de clearly visible BAWF continued owned factories, which had also cations.58 Party leaders vainly soughtearly May, the top party office in Eers instructing them to take all fea coming together. On May 10, the P six thousands miners’ families in later, both Premier Li Peng and Z leaders, yet the outcome was not in Tiananmen with the words one during the meeting: “The party sh national debt!”59 On May 15, Beiji devoted to the problem of how to

Although considered an ile continued to grow, both in numbers martial law approached, they an the lies of the rulers. . . There another public statement, they are lovable yet pathetic and tragic pe years, and are still being deceiv people; we should restore ourse our generation is fated to carry on then it is better to die in battle if flooded into the city to join the hundred hunger-striking student managed and privately owned c Corporation and Yanshan Petroc of trucks, cars, and buses, singluous red flags and portraits of “The demonstration today was di nightmares—organized worker 7

Unlike students, BAWF war demands included price stabiliz
involved rejecting compromise, whether with Zhao and other moderates or with movement colleagues, and thereby doomed the movement in its arrogance to object failure. The hunger strike was a great tactic in terms of gaining sympathy of people, in eliciting "an unprecedented outpouring of sympathy from the citizens of Beijing, young and old, rich and poor, highly educated and semiliterate," but since it cut the movement from democratic organizations, it was a huge strategic error.  

For three weeks, workers quietly organized and spread the word to large factories and offices. Only after hundreds of thousands of students occupied Tiananmen Square did the Workers' Federation (BAWF) feel safe enough to announce their presence publicly. On May 2, they had two thousand registered members. By May 13, when huge demonstrations were mounted almost every day, the clearly visible BAWF contingent marched prominently among many state-owned factories, which had also created their own autonomous worker federations. Party leaders vainly sought to keep workers from joining the protests. In early May, the top party office in Beijing issued a directive to all factory managers instructing them to take all feasible steps to keep workers and students from coming together. On May 10, the Party Politburo received a report that a third of the two million miners' families had taken part in the movement. Three days later, both Premier Li Peng and Zhao Ziyang held special meetings with labor leaders, yet the outcome was not to their liking. On May 14, banners appeared in Tiananmen with the words one of the workers was rumored to have shouted during the meeting: "The party should sell off its Mercedes Benz to pay off the national debt." On May 15, Beijing officials huddled in an emergency session devoted to the problem of how to "stabilize workers."  

Although considered an illegal organization by the authorities, BAWF continued to grow, both in numbers and in its systematic critique. On May 17, as martial law approached, they announced, "The people will no longer believe the lies of the rulers. . . . There are only two classes: the rulers and the ruled." In another public statement, they sounded a battle cry: "Ah, the Chinese! Such a lovely yet pathetic and tragic people. We have been deceived for thousands of years, and are still being deceived today! Not instead we should become a great people; we should restore ourselves to our original greatness! Brother workers, if our generation is fated to carry out this humiliation into the twenty-first century, then it is better to die in battle in the twentieth!" On May 17 and 18, workers flooded into the city to join the protests, at whose symbolic center sat several hundred hunger-striking students. From state-owned enterprises to collectively managed and privately owned ones, from large factories like the Capital Steel Corporation and Yanzhan Petrochemical to small shops, they arrived in columns of trucks, cars, and buses, singing, drumming, beating gongs, and carrying enormous red flags and portraits of Mao. On May 18, the New York Times reported, "The demonstration today was the realization of one of the government's worst nightmares—organized worker participation in what began as student protests."  

Unlike students, BAWF wanted a more democratic form of socialism. Their demands included price stabilization, the right to change jobs freely, and an end
to hiring that discriminated against women. One BAWF activist subsequently declared: “In the factory, the director is a dictator. What one man says goes. If you view the state through the factory, it’s about the same: one-man rule... A factory should have a system. If a worker wants to change jobs, they ought to have a system of rules to decide how to do it. Also, these rules should be decided upon by everybody.” Here in a nutshell is a vision for a higher form of socialism, not a desire for consumerism. While many workers criticized their exclusion from elite circles and demanded entry to off-limit state stores where Western goods were sold, workers sought to abolish the elite entirely and developed a vision for improving everyone’s lives. “New hotels have gone up and changed the city’s face, but the people still lack decent housing space,” they wrote. “There’s a craze for banquet tables at the top,” they complained. As they organized, they articulated the belief that their autonomous organization represented workers better than the official All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) that they felt was controlled by the party, not the workers. Although many ACFTU members (including some officials) hung out at the BAWF convergence point in Tiananmen, the ACFTU refused to endorse the BAWF, whose stridency and independence threatened their complacency.

During the 1989 insurgency, students found a mentor and advocate in Zhao Ziyang, and like Zhao, many sought to play the role of loyal opposition. Many workers, however, tired of Zhao’s fancy Western suits and matching policies, often shouted “Down With Zhao Ziyang!” As the movement developed and workers increased their presence, they called for ordinary citizens to oversee officials and challenged the special privileges enjoyed by the communist elite. They sought to curtail arbitrary power of managers in factories and to stimulate autonomous unions that could help to formulate national policy and to craft specific agreements governing workplace relations. Far from rejecting the communist revolution, they sought to reenergize it on the basis of Marx and Mao. One of their wall posters was quite explicit: “We have calculated carefully, based on Marx’s Capital, the rate of exploitation of workers. We discovered that the servants of the people swallow all the surplus value produced by the people’s blood and sweat... But history’s final accounting has yet to be completed.”

As the movement spread across China, preliminary assessments of the movement’s scale indicated that of 434 big cities in China, 107 reported student protests, including thirty-two with participation of autonomous workers groups. Years later, a more complete compilation counted demonstrations in 341 cities. In Xian, one thousand hunger strikers sat down in New City Square. Delegations traveled to nearby factories to gain support. As many as two thousand students rode trains to Beijing on May 18 and 19. In Chongqing, eighty-two students began a fast in front of City Hall on May 18, copying both the Beijing tactic and the demand for a dialogue with officials. In Nanjing, tens of thousands of workers and students demonstrated, and some joined a hunger strike there. A “Goddess of Democracy” was erected in Shanghai before art students did so in Beijing.

It appeared that everyone was pulled in by the “magnetic attraction” of the protests—even police officers, Foreign Ministry workers, bankers, and People’s Daily reporters. One estimate said tens of thousands were in the streets every day during those early days. The streets were so jammed that Gorbachev never reached Forbidden City, or even to the opera, for everyone. and hundreds of thousands gathered outside it. The Beijing Military Command’s state-owned pharmaceutical company contracted to produce more than twenty-five hunger strikers. Some established artists sold pieces: a scene, hunger strikers gathered in a “carnival” of protest remained peaceable. Tiananmen at 2:00 a.m. on May 19, and there were piles of shields, dead or dying, on the streets everywhere, with the smell of incense. Parents who had come into the square around the place, and after: it, the rolls of smoke, smoke, smoke, smoke, smoke!

For some people, the hunger strikers were observed with sympathy to them, nonetheless wistfully admitted: “He was talking about his family, it’s not really food.” Furthermore, they relay hunger strike, fasting a day, at the point. For some unknown reason, others might die after seven days on a diet. It was one of many people who have had to act before he became president. Twenty-three days on a water-only diet is, for Gwangju citizens, a prerequisite.

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For some people, the hunger strike also emitted a strange aroma. Many hunger strikers were observed eating secretly by foreign journalists who, while sympathetic to them, nonetheless subsequently reported these facts. One student openly admitted he was eating sweetened yogurt—claiming, "Snacking is okay. It's not really food."\textsuperscript{53} Furthermore, it appears many of the students were on a relay hunger strike, fasting a day at a time after which someone else replaced them. For some unknown reason, Chinese people believed that the hunger strikers might die after seven days on a water-only diet, when in fact Dick Gregory is only one of many people who have fasted for many times as long.\textsuperscript{54} As a democracy activist before he became president of South Korea, Kim Young-sam fasted twenty-three days on a water-only diet beginning on May 18, 1983, to express his support for Gwangju citizens' continuing struggle against the Chun Doo-hwan dictatorship. Students' dignified role in the China—a society in which everyone worked incessantly for the nation to recover its greatness—meant they lived on a pedestal for most of the time—a position they demanded the government also accord them. The cream of the crop of a single child nation, Beida students who spearheaded the hunger strike considered themselves the future leaders of the nation—as did the public that supported them. On the first day of their fast, some forty-one of China's future elites collapsed. Such theatrics, when not amusing, disguised a great deception. Tibetan circles of protest were recreated around the water strikers' "altar." Without comprehending its Tibetan roots, Barmé described how, "As the space was a circle it immediately encouraged a type of circumambulation. Crowds of observers and delegations edged their way around it. People often burst into tears as they moved past the young water strikers huddled in the seats of the bus, sometimes raising their hands or flashing the V sign."\textsuperscript{55}
"Commander-in-Chief of the Headquarters of Tiananmen Square"

On May 14, Chai Ling left the meeting with government officials due to "exhaustion," but at 8:00 a.m. the next morning, she announced the formation of a Hunger Strike Command with herself as chairperson. Her new position also brought her control of a broadcasting center in Tiananmen Square acquired with Hong Kong donations. Her husband and fellow activist, Feng Congde, personally refused to let ASU representatives have access to the station. Thus in a single evening, Chai Ling and her husband managed, in effect, a coup d'état that put her in the position she later called "Commander-in-Chief of the Headquarters for Defending Tiananmen Square." In her mind, the occupation of Tiananmen Square necessitated a new organization—the "Headquarters for Defending the Square" (HDS)—and it quickly constituted committees for finance, liaison, information, secretariat, and resources as well as action teams for food and water distribution, medical care, picketing, and security.

Two of the original hunger strike conspirators, Wu'er Kaixi and Wang Dan, were among the most upset by Chai Ling's ascendance to sole possession of such exalted status, particularly since they had not been present at that meeting. The next day, they insisted that leadership should be reconstituted. After a new standing committee again selected Chai Ling as chair, the first task they undertook was to set up a security perimeter. Activists cordoned off their inner circles, this time with transparent fishing line held by trusted students who kept even the most ardent citizen supporters from reaching the increasingly isolated and arrogant leadership.

To counteract their marginalization, ASU representatives along with Qinghua University students set up a second broadcasting center (with its own security guards), "The Voice of the Student Movement." This new station's amplification was much more powerful and competed with HDS. Needless to say, the two had poor relations. More than $400,000 in donations had been raised to support the student movement, but Chai Ling controlled much of it, as did Beida's ASU, which had come to act independently of the citywide ASU.

On May 16, speaking on behalf of the party's Central Committee, Zhao Ziyang sought compromise and publicly called student protests "positive" and "patriotic." He promised no prosecutions if they would simply leave. Despite the government's generous offer, no one accepted it. On that fourth day of the hunger strike, about 200 of the 3,100 participants fainted. Demonstrations continued and more than 300,000 people marched in sympathy. On both May 17 and 18, more than a million people attended protests. Hunger strikers continually fainted despite being fed intravenously. Unconstrained by party directives, media reported sympathetically at the same time that journalists publicly insisted, "No more lies." A rising number of workers congregated in the square. People sang, "We Shall Overcome" for the assembled throng of foreign reporters—as many as a thousand strong—who were in Beijing for Gorbachev's visit but spent the bulk of their time covering the "story of their lives" in Tiananmen Square. Whether delirious from the hunger strike or inspired to speak his true motivations, it was at this juncture that leader Wu'er Kaixi uttered his most famous lines: "We want Nike shoes, lots of free time to take on an issue with someone, respect from..."

While no doubt most hunger strikers were doubts, reports later revealed that reporter John Pomfret claims to have seen strike. Andrew Higgins of England's Radio in the back seat of a car, and Wu'er hold his strength because he was lead, Sincere or not, reading the Beida decisions to call off their strike belied their intentions: "We do not want to promise age, We do not want to motherland is so impoverished; it death is not what we seek. But if the two live better, and can make our heart to cling to life. As we suffer from what we part from life, Aunts and Uncle written in blood, although other of..."

Already elite and expecting no students excluded from their ranks. Workers in particular were the inner circles of power. In Beijing, workers from the st student expropriations. To keep nonstudents out, students wore black bands or to pin white flowers. This Suffered themselves from any violence and legality. Some who were own choosing, but in fact, we continually rebuffed, at least until..."

From the workers' perspective, such as secrecy, exclusivity, privileges, could be found within, as a red flag to the masses to see. "The workers who took part in the protests were students, and they included all levels of students, from workers'..."
of Tiananmen Square" government officials due to "exhaustion announced the formation of a chairperson. Her new position also in Tiananmen Square acquired with allow activist, Feng Congde, personal-access to the station. Thus in a singleaked, in effect, a coup d'etat that put runner-in-Chief of the Headquarters mind, the occupation of Tiananmen be "headquarters for defending the committees for finance, liaison, information, action-teams for food and water security."

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While no doubt most hunger strikers were sincere, Wuer apparently was not. Television reports later revealed footage of him eating at a Beijing Hotel, and AP reporter John Pomfret claims to have shared a meal with him during the hunger strike. Andrew Higgins of England's Independent saw him gulping down noodles in the back seat of a car, and Wuer told a friend he "needed to eat to conserve his strength because he was a leader and because he had a heart condition."80 Sincere or not, reading the Beida manifesto in light of students' subsequent decisions to call off their strike leaves me skeptical of their commitment—if not their intentions: "We do not want to die; we want to live, for we are at life's most promising age. We do not want to die; we want to study, to study diligently. Our motherland is so impoverished; it feels as if we are abandoning her to die. Yet death is not what we seek. But if the death of one or a few people can enable more to live better, and can make our motherland prosperous, then we have no right to cling to life. As we suffer from hunger, Papa and Mama, do not grieve; when we part from life, Aunts and Uncles, please do not be sad."81 This plea was not written in blood, although other oaths were.

Already elite and expecting to become powerful as they grew older, Beijing students excluded from their ranks in Tiananmen anyone not part of their campuses. Workers in particular were chased off as soon as they sought entry to the inner circles of power. In Beijing, students marched with hands linked to prevent ordinary citizens from joining their "pure" protests. Once they occupied Tiananmen, concentric rings of security prevented their inner circles from being reached by workers and other nonstudents. The Construction Workers Union and BAWF both sought to send delegations for discussions but student marshals chased them off. According to one worker-activist, students looked down on "construction workers from the villages, saying they're convict laborers."82 To keep nonstudents out, students secretly told each other to wear sneakers or a black band or to pin a white flower and school emblem on their clothes.83 They distanced themselves from any militant resistance—instead emphasizing nonviolence and legality. Some observers took the separation of workers to be of their own choosing, but in fact, they tried to access students leaders and were continually rebuffed, at least until late May.84 Tuned into elite discourse, students struggled to ensure their status within it—and reproduced it within the movement.

From the workers' perspective, many of the same corrupt practices of the elite, such as secrecy, exclusivity, factionalism, struggles for power, and special privileges, could be found within the student movement, whose leaders reportedly had mattresses to sleep on and wads of cash from foreign donors in their tents. Student leaders took on absurd titles like "commander-in-chief" while workers remained opposed to hierarchy and let anyone join their meetings—including students. While workers considered themselves the "most advanced class," they had little of the cockiness students exhibited, and they worked with collective leadership rather than under "commanders" who seemed to multiply in student circles.
Most workers of China supported the seven initial student demands. Railway workers reportedly permitted thousands of students to ride the trains to Beijing without money so they could join the movement. During the hunger strike, as many as two hundred thousand students may have flooded into the capital to check on the scene. Crime rates for all types of offenses plummeted from mid-April to mid-May in an unprecedented drop. Vegetable vendors kept prices down, despite the opportunity to charge more, because, "At such a time, everybody must have a conscience." As one observer wrote, "The self-organization of the Beijing citizens, the establishment of committees that organized incoming supplies and saw to the housing of thousands of students and others from out of town, removed garbage, wrote, printed and distributed publications, not only exploded the fashionable Western myth that improvements in the Chinese standard of living had suddenly depoliticized the population, but also disproved, to the permanent discomfiture of our masters everywhere, that the population of one of the largest cities on the planet can organize its affairs without the interference of the government, the state, and any of its institutions."

The students gave protests their start, and their courage inspired others to stand up, yet they were ultimately reform-minded. While workers generally supported Deng's market liberalization and wished to see privatization proceed, workers opposed excessive marketization and worried they would lose their jobs and past gains from the planned economy. While people in the streets may have called for an overthrow of the bureaucracy, no major student organization did so. Rather, they wanted dialogue with and recognition from the government—which is why the designation student "rebellion" is inappropriate. A rebel feels excluded from power and wants inside, while revolutionaries want to destroy the power structures themselves. Students wanted to be part of the reform process that Deng was leading, while workers marched with giant photos of Mao and wanted to oust Deng a third time. At best, students wanted reform; workers wanted revolution.

Farmers were never part of the movement in significant numbers—a reason why it cannot be said that the urban-based movement captured the overwhelming majority of Chinese citizens' loyalty. During the Great Leap Forward, farmers had resisted attempts at collectivization, resulting in severe shortages and famines that killed millions of people. In 1989, a material basis for farmers' political apathy can be found in benefits the countryside received during years of Maoist policy. While Deng's reforms would ultimately lead back to severe city-countrywide economic disparities, in 1989 economic liberalization had yet to severely impact the countryside, and farmers did not rise up against Deng as workers did.

On May 17, believing Zhao's efforts at compromise had failed, Deng authorized martial law. Although Li Peng believed any further exhibition of regime weakness would have handed the country over to the students, he scheduled a meeting with students for May 18. Only on that morning did students receive word that government officials would meet them at 11:00 a.m., and they hastily assembled a delegation that included students meeting in the Great Hall of the People autonomous organizations since Li to face with student leaders. Nonetheless lectured the hunger strikers by. Although students finally got Liu Wuer Kaixi (who at that moment did the proceedings, castigated Li Peng contumely: "We don't have much time to spare. Let's get to the main points you invited us—and you wore a camera, a medical team rushed in grabbed his oxygen bag. Wuer apprised the public, a talent he availed himself.

At 5:00 a.m. on May 19, Party leaders held an early morning visit. He tearfully told the student leader who arrived last to reach. After his visit, autograph from public view. He did not comment or memoirs were published in 2009. Since the time, no one knew exactly why, and Li Peng's hard line was upheld. Shanghai had skillfully defused newspaper World Economic Herald, the Politburo and as general secretary Jiang was also chairperson of the People's Congress of the Central Committee of the 1989 movement in Tibet, Hu Jintao.

From Martial Law to the Bloods
On the afternoon of May 19, as Beiden Gorbatchev word spread that Chai Ling called an emergency meeting. While security prevented Wuer Kaixi's hunger strike, a message they bore of hunger strikers to discuss the appeared announcement, they when from eighty schools gathered, an emergency force to check their student commencement. Some 80 percent of representatives didn't really had already announced an end stages insisted the strike would student leaders were split into students from campuses outside 2
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ver to the students, he scheduled a
that morning did students receive
m 1000 a.m., and they hastily
assembled a delegation that included
many celebrity leaders. Televised live, the
meeting in the Great Hall of the People
ailed recognition of student
organizations since Li Peng, the top
official, met face-to-face with student
leaders. Nonetheless, the encounter
miserably. Li Peng sternly
ured the hunger strikers and insisted the
party "would not stand idly
Although students finally got the natio-
meeting they sought, Wu'er Kaixi (who
that moment did not represent anyone
himself) took over the proceedings, castigat-
Li Peng for being late, and treated him
with utmost contempt: "We don't have much
time to listen to you. Thousands of hunger
strikers are waiting. Let's get to the main
point. It was we who invited you to talk,
not you who invited us—and you were late." Sec-
seconds later and plainly visible on
amera, a medical team rushed in to
m a fainting Wu'er as he
abbed his oxygen bag. Wu'er
maintly had a knack for "strategic
faring" in
public, a talent he availed himself of
more than once.
At 5:00 a.m. on May 19, Party General Secretary Zhao Ziyang paid
students an early morning visit. He tearfully called for students to
courage Tiananmen, to no avail. That was the very last moment when
compromise could have been reached. After his visit, autograph
hunters mobbed Zhao before he disappeared from public
view. He did not comment on the events until his posthumous
memoirs were published in 2009. Clearly a split in the party had
occurred, but at the
time, no one knew exactly
In retrospect, Zhao Ziyang was forced to resign
and Li Peng's hard line was upheld. Within a
year, Jiang Zemin (who, as mayor of
Shanghai, had skillfully defused
protests in 1986 and subsequently
the newspaper World Economic
Herald) replaced Zhao on the
standing committee of the
Politburo and as general secretary of the central
communist. By March 1990,
Jiang was also chairperson of the
Military Commission of the
People's Congress of the
Central Committee. The
Who led the repression
the 1989 movement in Tibet, Hu
Jintao, became general secretary in
From Martial Law to the Bloodshed of June 4
On the afternoon of May 19, as Beijing emptied of the foreign media that
accompanied Gorbachev, word spread that a massive government
operation of hucksters in the command bus.
While security prevented Wu'er Kaixi from attending, the group voted to
end the hunger strike, a message they broadcast without bothering to wait for
hundreds of hunger strikers to discuss the matter. When hunger-striking
students finally heard the announcement, they demanded reconsideration
of the issue. Delegates
from eighty schools gathered, and it took
more than an hour for Chai Ling's
security
force to check their credentials. Finally, when the meeting was allowed
to commence, some 80 percent voted to continue the strike. By that time, the
vote of representatives didn't really make much difference. Chai Ling's
headquarters had already announced an end to the strike. The democratic
gathering of dele-
ates insisted the strike would continue. The BASS called for unity, while the
student leaders were split into bitterly divided factions. So frustrated were
students from campuses
outside Beijing by being
excluded from decision-making
in Tiananmen that they eventually called a meeting in front of the Museum of History and formed their own organization, the Outside-Beijing Autonomous Student Federation.

With martial law imminent, students began drifting away, but BAWF called for a one-day general strike to begin the next day. In a widely distributed handbill that first appeared at 9:30 on the morning of the May 19, BAWF exhorted workers to use "vehicles from every work unit to block main transportation arteries and subway exits, and to ensure the normal operations of the China Central Television and China Central Broadcasting stations." Amazingly, they were able to persuade the All China Federation of Trade Unions, which had donated 100,000 yuan—about $25,000—to the protests, to join in the call for a general strike for May 20.26

On the evening of May 19, in a televised solo encore, Li Peng decried "chaos" in the capital and promised "resolute and decisive measures." The very next morning, with Zhao Ziyang unable to stop him, Li signed the martial law order and sent tens of thousands of troops into the city. It was one thing to declare martial law and another to enforce it. Party leaders ordered troops into Beijing, but the army refused to fire on mobilized citizens who peacefully blocked them with every available means. The army took over major media outlets like Central Television and Radio, Xinhua News Agency, and People's Daily, thereby ending mass media extortions of people to resist martial law—and squeezing reports of soldiers who promised not to use force. No more photos of conversing soldiers and citizens would be published in major media outlets. When soldiers tried to approach Tiananmen Square, however, they discovered that thousands of citizens had erected barricades all around its outskirts using everything from city busses and construction cranes to dumpsters and construction equipment. Responding to the call of BAWF, the people of Beijing had come to rescue their young people. As Jan Wong described the scene: "Elders lay down in front of tanks. Schoolchildren swarmed around convoys, stopping them in their tracks. After the first tense night, the soldiers began to retreat as the crowds cheered and applauded. Some bystanders flashed V signs. Others wept, and so did some of the soldiers. One commander shouted, "We are the people's soldiers. We will never suppress the people." Subsequent reports told of the commanding general of the Thirty-Eighth Army refusing to obey orders to move on the capital, requiring Deng to summon the Twenty-Seventh Army from Hebei province.27 Troops arrived in Beijing from Chengdu, Shenyang, and Jinan.

On May 20, popular forms of dual power emerged to contest the government's authority. Autonomous groups of protesters formed in factories and government work units, police precincts, hotels, law courts, CCP organs, youth groups, government ministries (including at least eight national government agencies), official media agencies, and university departments.28 Contingents of "Flying Tigers" motorcyclists reported on troop movements. China's only two living Army Field Marshals praised publicly students' patriotism. Seven other generals—including a former minister of defense and a veteran of the Long March—circulated a statement that one hundred senior officers

signed calling on the army not to use violence against the Congress Standing Committee circ. to repeal martial law.29 BAWF released a statement that invoked the memory of the working class thank these students of them. History will remember the sacrifices we will use our bodies to protect others. We will build another Wall of Flesh.

For forty-eight hours, hundres of thousands of people blocked the army. People fed the soldiers, sang songs for them, and implored them to be on the side of Social Science called on the gove of the National People's Congress and ASU that invoked the memory of the working class thank these students of them. History will remember the sacrifices we will use our bodies to protect others. We will build another Wall of Flesh.

With victory inspiring them, thousands of Beijing's citizens blocked renewed army attempts to move the capital, requiring Deng to summon the Twenty-Seventh Army from Hebei province.27 Troops arrived in Beijing from Chengdu, Shenyang, and Jinan.

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signed calling on the army not to open fire on people. The National People’s
Congress Standing Committee circulated a petition for an emergency meeting
to repeal martial law. BAWF released a joint statement with hunger strikers
and ASU that invoked the memory of the Paris Commune: “We members of the
working class thank these students and think the Chinese nation should be proud
of them. History will remember them, Tiananmen Square will be our battlefield.
We will use our bodies to protect the students, hunger strikers, and sit-in protesters.
We will build another Wall of the Commumards with our life’s blood.”
For forty-eight hours, hundreds of thousands of Beijing citizens peacefully
blocked the army. People fed the soldiers, passed them cases of liquid refresh-
ments, sang songs for them, and bought them popsicles and flowers—as they
impressed them to be on the side of the people. A banner at the Chinese Academy
of Social Science called on the government to resign and for an emergency session
of the National People’s Congress to be convened. In more than eighty cities at
six hundred colleges and technical universities, protests involved more than 2.8
million students. In Shanghai, half a million people marched in support of the
students, and in Xian some three hundred thousand people mobilized.
With victory inspiring them and giving them new confidence, hundreds of
thousands of Beijing’s citizens remained at the barricades on May 21 and 22
and blocked renewed army attempts to reach Tiananmen Square. As Beijing held out,
all over China, people mobilized, including four hundred thousand who marched
in Hong Kong on May 21. Table 5.3 offers an indication of the national scope of
the protests.
As people continued to block troops from entering the center of the city,
BAWF distributed an open letter on May 21 calling for an indefinite general strike
and insisting workers, "the most advanced class," should form the "backbone" of resistance. So popular was their growing leadership that in the two weeks from May 20 to June 3, some twenty thousand Beijing workers signed their names to membership rolls. With so many new recruits, the group spawned a new structure, with separate units for organization, logistics, and information (with daily broadcasts of news and a wildly popular evening free speech forum). They also set up an office to interface with factories, campuses, and grassroots groups. By the end of May, they had a printing press, broadcast station in the square, picket corps, four "dare-to-die" security brigades ready to fight police incursions, and a constitution specifying a general assembly, standing committee, and executive committee.

Beginning on May 20, they organized autonomous daily demonstrations and worked in tandem with the array of groups protesting martial law. They called for every work site to maintain its own self-organization, lest authorities invent a pretext to intervene by force. In Beijing, workers at Capital Steel Corporation, construction workers, Beijing Citizens Dare-to-Die Corps, and the Flying Tigers Motorcycle Brigade (with about three hundred members) formed. In China's northeast, the Manchurian Tigers Dare-to-Die Corps and Mountain Dare-to-Die Corps were similarly organized along autonomous lines. Among writers, the Beijing Union of Intellectuals was established, attributed by one Western observer to be the "first such autonomous sign of a civil society since the 1940s." 102

On May 23, BAWF helped form a new confederation of all autonomous groups, including workers, intellectuals, citizens, and several student groups. As the student movement receded, workers took the initiative to form autonomous federations across China—in Shanghai, Wuhan, Canton, Xian, Nanjing, Hangzhou, Shenyang, Canning, Lanzhou, Guiyang, Changsha, and Xining. 103 In this period, many other organizations formed, but none more potentially important than one formed on May 23, which sought comprehensively to unify all opposition currents. They called themselves the Joint Conference of All Persons of All Circles in Beijing and included about forty representatives of workers, intellectuals, and students. A series of meetings beginning on May 20 included BASU activists, members of the Outside Beijing Autonomous Student Federation, individual activists like Wang Dan, BAWF members, older intellectual-activists from the 1976 and 1978 movements as well as representatives who grew rapidly in size. On May 22, even the Union attended, but Chai Ling refused to sign, the group resolved to meet daily at the same time, obey the decisions of the Joint Conference more as advisors than leaders. 104 With some 250,000 people in attendance, and Chai Ling and decision-making body in place, the "students parliament" helped set up a "student parliament and herself as chair.

As movement leaders huddled in Hunan, Mao's order that they throw bags of ink at the Chair immediately grabbed the tag (as a newspaper editor) and turned them ranging from sixteen years for the 105 By 2006, all were released after six years. Here is just one example of betrayal movement. It was "even the th..." but today, the student security team police, "Betrayal" and "sabotage" activists. Some students went to soldiers under the orders of self-determination and took place at the loudspeakers. The attempt was made on Chai Ling and his cronies tried more than b... In 1992, a singing leadership of the movement out of organizational representatives. Li to propel himself into the center, tendencies, these demagogical attention and made stubborn into... Still the citizens of Beijing...
movements as well as representatives of the Federation of Intellectuals. The group grew rapidly in size. On May 22, even representatives from the Hong Kong Student Union attended, but Chai Ling refused to come. By bringing together representatives of all autonomous groups, a potential Commune was created. The next day, the group resolved to meet daily at noon.103 They asserted that everyone should obey the decisions of the Joint Conference, but many students thought of them more as advisors than leaders.104 While they attempted to create a central clearinghouse and decision-making body, others talked of multiple centers transferring power and parallel “command” structures. Acting independently, Chai Ling helped set up a “student parliament” with representatives from each campus—and herself as chair.

As movement leaders huddled in seemingly endless meetings, three citizens arrived from Hunan, Mao’s home province. As soon as they had a chance, they threw bags of ink at the Chairman’s giant portrait. The Dare-to-Die Squad immediately grabbed the trio (a schoolteacher, a factory worker, and a town newspaper editor) and turned them over to police. (They later received sentences ranging from sixteen years for the worker to life in prison for the schoolteacher. By 2006, all were released after serving from ten to more than sixteen years.) Here is just one example of betrayal of the incredible sense of community in the movement. Yesterday “even the thieves were on strike for the common good,” but today, the student security team turned overly freely arrived activists to the police. “Betrayal” and “sabotage” emerged as words employed to describe fellow activists. Some students went to the train station and recruited new arrivals as soldiers under the orders of self-appointed commanders. Three or four “coup” per day took place at the loudspeaker broadcasting stations; at least one kidnapping attempt was made on Chai Ling and Peng Congjie by other activists; one student and his cronies tried more than half a dozen times to seize power. Referring to her rivals, Chai Ling declared: “I am the commander in chief; I must resist compromise, resist these traitors.” She called for overthrow of the government. As we will see in Thailand in 1992, a single individual, Chamlung, was also able to take leadership of the movement out of the hands of a more democratic committee of organizational representatives. Like Chai Ling, Chamlung used a hunger strike to protest himself into the center. Circumventing and marginalizing democratic tendencies, these demagogical politicians turned personal charisma into media attention and made stardom into power.

Still the citizens of Beijing blocked the streets. Unable to deploy its military to clear the streets, the government hesitated. For a moment, it seemed as if anything was possible. On May 25, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs maintained that Zhao Ziyang was technically still general secretary of the Party’s Central Committee. Some one hundred thousand workers and students in Tianamen Square took to chanting, “Step down Li Peng!” That same day, the ASU completed its long process of reorganizing itself. Its massive student base had considerably dwindled, and the revived group worked in the shadows of the hunger strikers and media stars who made major decisions. For his part, Li Peng publicly predicted, “troops will successfully impose martial law.”107
On May 26, BAWF wrote to all Chinese abroad: "Our nation was created from the struggle and labor of we workers and all other mental and manual laborers. We are the rightful masters of this nation. We should be, indeed must be, heard in national affairs. We absolutely must not allow this small handful of degenerate scum of the nation and working class to usurp our name and suppress the students, murder democracy, and trample human rights." Another of their public statements exhorted Chinese people to "storm this twentieth-century Bastille, this last stronghold of Stalinism!" Immediately, international networks mobilized. Organizers in Hong Kong threw a racetrack benefit concert and raised millions more dollars on May 27. Tents and supplies arrived that very night in Beijing, along with wads of cash. Almost immediately, a dispute broke out among student leaders about who should control the funds. Final agreement was reached to share them, with Chai Ling openly insisting she should control the largest share.

Chai Ling finally joined the daily meetings of the Joint Conference. On May 27, after an especially long discussion from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., a unanimous decision was reached to leave Tiananmen on May 30, the tenth day of martial law. Delegates called a unified press conference and announced their decision to leave. Little did they know that Chai Ling's assembly of two to three hundred university representatives later voted at their nightly meeting by over 80 percent to stay. However painstakingly the Joint Conference decision had been made, it was overruled by Chai Ling's "student parliament." Once again, movement leaders released self-contradictory statements. While Wu'er and Wang announced people's intentions to leave, Chai Ling insisted she had changed her mind, that the hunger strikes would stay. While many people may have thought about it, no one seriously proposed that their group abandon their comrades illegally occupying the square. Many individuals, however, simply voted with their feet and left. On May 29, some thirty thousand students departed by rail from Beijing while only 250 entered; by the end of the month, many campuses had returned to quiet.

As the number of people remaining in Tiananmen dwindled, students sent outreach teams to recruit new constituencies. One of them went to Daxing County, where they were attacked and jalled by local police. Unable to get the arrested released, students approached BAWF for help on May 28, and a contingent of workers consisting of at least six trucks and a motorcycle contingent was dispatched to Daxing. They confronted local officials, but were unable to get the students released, so they returned to Tiananmen. Two days later, police in Beijing responded to the incursion into Daxing by arresting three BAWF leaders, among them Shen Yinghan, and eleven Flying Tigers motorcyclists. Hearing the grim news, Han Dongfang and some thirty workers went to the Ministry of Public Security and demanded the prisoners be freed. Refusing to comply, the authorities insisted BAWF was an illegal organization and refused to negotiate with anyone other than students. Several thousand people gathered, yet officials would not relent. The next day, however, after BAWF organized a press conference for foreign media, a sit-in at the ministry, and a demonstration in Tiananmen, the police suddenly freed all the arrested. When we compare this treatment of workers with the fact that no student April 25 to June 4, we begin to get an idea of the movements... Nor only did the authorities within the movement, the line divvied indelible ink. The same day workers expressed their desire to call for a movement, and you have to obey s some workers felt, "By the end, all the students anymore... We demand government but the students would flourish, stupid, reckless, and unable to think, did, in fact, reach out to teams to Capital Steel to encourage ASU gave some funds to BAWF... tant enough to share the spotlight... After the Daxing action, as B declined, student leaders finally began to take over the main part of the square—a ban on movement "pure..." Comparing the organizations concluded that students were far more were by and large unable to build their own factories. The newly for and skeletal, involving a small number facilitated by free train rides also blessed with sympathetic movement. Beijing students were Shanghai, Nanjing, Wuhan, Xiaonan, like fax machines they could control... From 1978 to 1987 than doubled, and photocopy was strata of literati around universities. Flush with funds, ASU men Academy of Fine Arts and commissartment scheduled for May 30. At principle, but they insisted on the role of the Statue of Liberty in New... days earlier. Such a copy seems was raised that a mere copy of notions of creativity, so they then hand holding aloft a torch. One adapting such a model based on Mukhina, whose monumental sc... had adorned the top of the USF
adored: "Our nation was created from another mental and manual laborers. We should be, indeed must be, heard allow this small handful of degener- o our name and suppress the ose human rights." Another of their public forms this twentieth-century Bastille, diately, international networks mobile-strikers benefit concert and raised militiaries arrived at very night in Beijin, y, a dispute broke out among student s. Finally agreement was reached to she should control the largest share of the Joint Conference, On May in 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., a tiananmen on May 30, the tenth day of the conference and announced their Chai Ling's assembly of two to three led at their nightly meeting by over the Joint Conference decision had a "student parliament." Once again, statements. While Wu'er and Wang u Ling insisted she had changed her life many people may have thought her group abandon their comrades duals, however, simply voted with thousand students deported by rail end of the month, many campuses in Tiananmen dwindled, students uncles. One of them went to Daxing by local police. Unable to get the WFDHF help on May 28, and a cor- rucks and a motorcycle contingent local officials, but were unable to get anzamen. Two days later, police in- by arresting three BAWF leaders, who were arrested by Tigers motorcyclists. Hearing city workers went to the Ministry of the funeral, refusign to comply, the aristaion and refused to negotiate the people gathered, yet officials BAWF organized a press conference and a demonstration in Tiananmen, then we compare this treatment of workers with the fact that no students were arrested in Tiananmen Square from April 15 to June 2, we begin to get an understanding of the widening gulf between the two groups.126

Not only did the authorities see students and workers in different lights, within the movement, the line dividing them may as well have been written in indelible ink. The same day workers had been asked to help in Daxing, the BAWF expressed their desire to call for a strike, but students told them, "This is our movement, and you have to obey us." Without the consensus needed for action, some workers felt, "By the end, after 28 May, we didn't advocate sympathy for the students anymore... We demanded to participate in the dialogue with the government but the students wouldn't let us. They considered us workers to be crude, stupid, reckless, and unable to negotiate." Many individual campus activists did, in fact, reach out to factory workers. Shida sent as many as five teams to Capital Steel to encourage autonomous workers organizations, and ASU gave some funds to BAWF.11 Student leaders, on the other hand, were reluctant enough to share the spotlight with each other—let alone with common citizens. After the Daxing action, as BAWF grew distant and the number of students declined, student leaders finally eased their prohibition on workers entering the main part of the square—a ban initially enacted to keep students' democracy movement "pure."112

Comparing the organizations of students and workers, many observers concluded that students were far more developed: "In contrast to students, workers were by and large unable to build effective autonomous organizations within their own factories. The newly formed municipal federations were at best small and skeletal, involving a small minority of workers." Students enjoyed mobility facilitated by free train rides (courtesy of railroad workers) and they were also blessed with sympathetic media coverage that helped them spread their movement. Beijing students were sighted in universities and colleges in Harbin, Shanghai, Nanjing, Wuhan, Xian, and Changsha. Students also adapted new technologies like fax machines faster than the regime's repressive apparatus could control.114 From 1978 to 1987, the number of urban telephone lines had more than doubled, and photocopy machines became widely available—at least to the strata of literati around universities.

Flush with funds, ASU members contacted students at Beijing's Central Academy of Fine Arts and commissioned them to create a statue by the demonstration scheduled for May 30. About fifteen undergraduate art majors agreed in principle, but they insisted on reworking the ASU proposal for a larger version of the Statue of Liberty in New York—as had been unveiled in Shanghai a few days earlier. Such a copy seemed too "pro-American." An additional objection was raised that a mere copy of an existing work did not resonate with artists' notions of creativity, so they proposed a more difficult figure, a statue with two hands holding aloft a torch. One of the students had fortuitously been working on adapting such a model based upon one produced by Russian female artist Vera Mukhina, whose monumental sculpture "A Worker and a Collective Farm Woman" had adorned the top of the USSR's pavilion at the 1937 Paris World's Fair.116
While the ASU worked on the statue as a means to draw people back to Tiananmen, Chai Ling scheduled a secret interview with journalist Philip Cunningham, during which she admitted, “What we actually hoped for was bloodshed. Only when the square is awash with blood will people open their eyes.” Maintaining she “did not care if people say I’m selfish,” Chai Ling called for people to “overthrow the illegal government of Li Peng.”137 On May 28, the World Bank suspended negotiations with China for further loans.138 At dusk on May 29, fewer than ten thousand students remained in the square. No one could yet tell in which direction the country was headed. Some feared chaos, others authoritarianism.

On May 30, the arrival of the thirty-foot high Goddess of Democracy brought a fresh attraction to the square, enticing some three hundred thousand viewers to review the installation over the next forty-eight hours. Whether thought to be Guanyin, the Statue of Liberty, or a synthesis of the two, the sculpture enlivened the dismal scene and brought new hope to people. By Friday, June 2, the square seemed about to be abandoned, when a new hunger strike by four people, including rock star, Hou Dejian, had a huge impact, and Tiananmen again filled. The new hunger strikers released a statement that was highly critical of “internal chaos” of students’ organizations, “Their theories call for democracy,” they wrote, “but their handling of specific problems is not democratic.”139 The end was near, and even injecting new celebrity energy could not hold it off much longer.

During the night of June 2, troops began to infiltrate Beijing. Before dawn, people blocked troops and overturned trucks. Hundreds of soldiers were surrounded, some beaten and others arrested by people. A little after noon on June 3, troops used tear gas on protesters who had captured an ammunition truck near the southwest corner of Zhongnanhai, but the crowd refused to disperse. The army again tried to enter Tiananmen Square from the Great Hall of the People. Some came out of tunnels under the Great Hall, and engaged in a singing contest with demonstrators using versions of “Without the Communist Party, There Would Be No New China.” At day’s end, those troops went back into the Great Hall. While many people celebrated their victory, still believing that the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) would not fire on people, a full-scale military assault was underway.

Around 5:00 p.m., BAWF started to distribute weapons (steel chains, clubs, cleavers, and sharpened bamboo poles). They organized people to break down a wall at a construction site in Xidan to take beams and bricks to use for self-defense.140 That evening in the working-class area of Muxidi, west of Tiananmen, huge crowds blocked lightly armed troops who tried to advance. As stones flew, breaking some of their fiberglass helmets, heavily armed soldiers of the Thirty-Eighth Army behind them opened up with their AK-47s. In the ensuing confusion of battle, many people were killed, including soldiers of the Thirty-Eighth Army who were crushed to death by armored units of the Twenty-Seventh Army.

Resistance was massive and militant. Assaults were reported on seven separate troop formations during the night of June 3. As army units began fighting their way into the center of the city, people gathered at intersections on Chang’an Avenue. Amid disbelief that troops were using live ammunition, pitched battles involving barricades, stones, and Molotovs along Chang’an Avenue. Around troops fired volleys after volleys. Ambulances and pediatric drivers ferried injured to drive a bus into the assembly of gunfire. Citizens swarmed hospital corridors for donors.

As the soldiers reached Tiananmen, their first assault was on the Workers central meeting point. About five uncontrollably, other singing, remembrance of the People’s Heroes. Workers grew angry knives on the monument rather that nowhere in sight, having left aron took a vote and decided to leave. They, along the southern side.

At dawn on June 4, Tiananmen awoke, outraged citizens took to Beijing’s mayor, “Rioters swarmed at Liubukou and snatched machinist Dongdan and in the Tianqiao area and beaten. On the Liubukou a severely beaten.” The mayor went to Hufangqiao to surmise on the Department of the CCP Central (Ministry of Radio, Film, and Tele the “Federation of Autonomous W and overthrow the government.”

...soldiers and police in five different taken in Huosi. A police ambul...soldiers inside was beaten to death and damage to 1,280 police cars, 16 vans, and buses. At Shuan machine guns from armored cars.

Many reports of mutiny the east of Xidan intersection, w... in Fuchengmen, a soldier’s corps in Changwumen, a soldier was overpass, while people cheered a Near the Capital Cinema on West shot four people. The crowd be corps, and hung him on a barb.

In many cities, people fought out, reports filtered out of Beijing were posted in several cities. In
involved barricades, stones, and Molotovs versus the armed military were fought all along Changan Avenue. Around 1:30 in the morning, fighting intensified as troops fired volleys after volleys. Ambulances raced to hospitals as quickly as they could, and pedicab drivers ferried many wounded as well. Around 2:30, someone tried to drive a bus into the assembled soldiers, only to be stopped by a volley of gunfire. Citizens swarmed hospitals to donate blood as soon as the call went out for donors.

As the soldiers reached Tiananmen Square, at least one report tells that their first assault was on the Western reviewing stand where the BAWF had its central meeting point. About five thousand students, many of them crying uncontrollably, other singing, remained crowded around the Monument to the People’s Heroes. Workers grew angry with students who broke captured guns and knives on the monument rather than use them to fight the military. Chai Ling was nowhere in sight, having left around 3:00 a.m. At about 4:45 a.m., students took a vote and decided to leave. Twenty minutes later, they filed out peacefully along the southern side.

At dawn on June 4, Tiananmen was in the hands of the army. As the city awoke, outraged citizens took to the streets. Around 7:00 a.m., according to Beijing’s mayor, “Rioters swarmed over military vehicles which had been halted at Liubouton and snatched machine guns and ammunition. From Jianguomen to Dongdan and in the Tianzhu area, martial law troops were cut off, surrounded, and beaten. On the Jianguomen flyover, some troops were stripped and others were severely beaten.” The mayor went on to claim that soldiers were so badly beaten around Huafangqiao that some were blinded. “Mobs” attacked the Propaganda Department of the CCP Central Committee, the Great Hall of the People, the Ministry of Radio, Film, and Television, and two gates of Zhongnanhai, while the “Federation of Autonomous Workers’ Unions” urged people to “take up arms and overthrow the government.” The mayor’s report details “bestial” attacks on soldiers and police in five different locations. He claims submachine guns were taken in Hugroi. A police ambulance was stopped and one of the eight injured soldiers inside was beaten to death. The intensity of the fighting resulted in arson and damage to 1,280 police cars, military vehicles (including 60 armored personnel carriers), and buses. At Shuangqiao intersection, insurgents took twenty-three machine guns from armored cars the crowd had stopped.

Many reports of mutilations of soldiers’ corpses were made, including to the east of Xidan intersection, where a soldier was killed and his body burned; in Fuchengmen, a soldier’s corpse was hung in midair near where he was killed; in Chongwenmen, a soldier was burned alive and his corpse burned from an overspray, while people cheered and described it as “lighting a heavenly lantern.” Near the Capital Cinema on West Chang’an Avenue, platoon leader Liu Guogeng shot four people. The crowd beat him to death, burned and disemboweled his corpse, and hung him on a burning bus.

In many cities, people fought the military takeover. Despite the media blackout, reports filtered out of Beijing. Faxes from Hong Kong portraying the massacre were posted in several cities, including Shenyang and Shanghai. In Chengdu,
violent resistance was crushed. In Hangzhou at 2:00 p.m. on June 4, throngs attacked the railroad station and tied up traffic. Fighting there continued until June 7 as people put wood, rocks, and steel on the tracks to block traffic. Sit-ins at major intersections blocked traffic, and a contingent of art students lowered the national flag on the provincial government building. Acts of heroism abounded, most famously by Beijing’s anonymous “tank man”—a citizen who stared down a tank column and held them off on June 5. In Nanjing, ten thousand people marched to mourn the killings in Beijing. In Shanghai, after a train ran over protesters occupying the tracks, killing six people and wounding others, people set fire to train cars and tied up railway traffic for hours.

Overall, the army remained firmly under the control of the government, although in an unknown number of cases, soldiers refused to obey orders. General Xu Qinxiu, Commander of the Chinese Thirty-Eighth Army, was subsequently court-martialed for a failure to carry out martial law orders; on June 4, Beijing’s deputy military commander was relieved of authority. On June 6 and 7, army units reportedly fought each other, but the government’s forces overwhelmed and crushed all opposition. More than one hundred PLA officers were later charged with having “breached discipline in a serious manner,” and 1,400 enlisted men were found to have thrown their weapons and run away in the final hours.

The Aftermath of the Uprising

Initial government reports about the crackdown maintained that a total of 300 soldiers and civilians were killed and seven thousand injured, yet over the years, estimates of the number of people killed ranged to 1,000 or more. On behalf of the government, Beijing Mayor Chen Xitong counted several dozen soldiers and police killed and 6,000 wounded. Among citizens, he tabulated 200 killed—including 36 college students who lost their sons to the violence, closest relatives of deceased pec 130 names. At the end of June 200 people who had been sentenced the dead, Ding passed on.

Hundreds of known activists proceeded step-by-step. By June taken into custody. Two days late yet for all the difficulties endure repressive power came down on damaging tools in Shanghai race burned train cars were executed 2,500. Two “rioters” in Chengdu as ten thousand people being do.

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of soldiers refused to obey orders. One of the mothers who lost her son to the violence, Professor Ding Zilin, spent years locating the closest relatives of deceased people. By mid-1995, her list included more than 130 names. At the end of June 2006, Ding and a group of relatives of the deceased named 186 people who had been killed. Although the government has yet to compensate the dead, Ding passed on financial help from abroad to bereaved families.

Hundreds of known activists were arrested in major cities as the crackdown proceeded step-by-step. By June 11, more than one thousand people had been taken into custody. Two days later, a wanted list for student leaders was released, yet for all the difficulties endured by student activists, the brunt of the state’s repressive power came down on workers. On June 15, three workers convicted of damaging tools in Shanghai received death sentences, and on June 21, three who burned train cars were executed. By July 5, the number of arrested reached 2,500. Two “rioters” in Chengdu were sentenced to death. Estimates were as high as 50 thousand people being detained.

In video testimony from Hong Kong, Chai Ling told of tanks running over students sleeping in their tents in Tiananmen Square, after which troops doused them with gasoline and set them afire. The story was false. Contrary to continual Western media reports, careful examination of video and eyewitness
testimony reveals that no students were killed in Tiananmen Square.\textsuperscript{13a} Most of the killings took place in the working-class suburbs on the outskirts of Beijing. While many people blamed Li Peng, in a subsequent posthumous memoir, Zhao Ziyang maintained Deng Xiaoping ordered the crackdown on protesters without even taking a leadership vote.\textsuperscript{231}

In the fall of 1989, a new law mandated that all Beijing University students must undergo one year of military training before entering college, and the entering class was cut from two thousand to eight hundred. All together in the country, some thirty thousand enrollments in humanities and social sciences were axed before the end of 1990.

One of the few surviving vehicles for public expression of protest sentiment was modern art, whose surge continued after 1989. With the success of Deng’s market oriented reforms, commercialization tarned the art scene. Late in 1992, with market opportunities in Hong Kong, a third wave emerged.\textsuperscript{144} Ironically appropriating socialist realist images and slogans, artists were able to subvert serious state art.\textsuperscript{145} Mixing Cultural Revolution images with Western consumer script, Wang Guangyi created “political pop” art with Coca-Cola—fawning tribute to the accomplishments of the 1989 uprising.

China’s Prosperity amid Repression

With the retrospective space of more than two decades, we can today appreciate how close China was to a revolutionary situation in 1989. No one applauds the application of state violence on citizens, yet the government has yet to apologize for its overwhelming use of force. Repression was its line of first defense, but the main thrust of government’s two decade long response to the challenges posed by the uprising has been to provide unparalleled opportunities for prosperity and economic growth. Since 1986, evidence abounds of an increasing number of state-enterprise workers and university students becoming members of the CCP.\textsuperscript{138}

In the decade after the crackdown, ten times as many students joined the party as in the previous decade; in 2001, as many as one-third of all students applied for membership, only slightly less than the 28 percent of graduate students who were already members. More than 8 percent of all students were party members in 2007, compared with less than 1 percent in 1989.

Multiparty democracy and expansion of civil liberties are not yet on the horizon, yet the Chinese system has undergone significant reforms. Within academia, more room has opened for debate and airing of unpopular opinions.\textsuperscript{139} Repression has certainly continued. In 2008, Wang Dan—by then a Harvard alumnus—counted three hundred thousand political prisoners in reeducation camps.\textsuperscript{140} Compared with more than two million Americans who languish behind bars, China’s poor human rights performance in the eyes of U.S. citizens is strongly indicative of the power of the mass media.

Many reforms have been made to soften the system. By the Sixteenth Party Congress in 2002, more than half of the Central Committee retired, and an important transition occurred. Officials are now rotated in an attempt to reduce corruption, mandatory retirement by age has been implemented for government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rate of Real Growth</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: China Statistical Yearbook, 2007 at other authorities, permission was given in one-third of China’s richest city and intellectuals have been integral advice to top officials. Despite effector Consumer goods and travel option political intervention and arbitrariness in the 1980s, official clearance from travel privileges required approval centrally allocated.

Of all the changes since 1989, astonishingly constant economic growth and even amid the IMF crisis of 2000-2001, China’s economy is expected to reach the same level in 2008.

China is today regarded as a miracle. With WTO membership and 1.3 billion people, China is due to become the world’s second largest economy in 2020.\textsuperscript{141} From less than $17 trillion in 2000, it is due to become the world’s second largest economy in 2020.\textsuperscript{141} So much money has fallen in China, the IMF’s official estimate of the country’s 70 largest cities alone has increased by more than 10 percent every month since 2004.

In the process of this growth, more than three hundred thousand members of government officials has increased so rapidly that the Gini Coefficient (a measure
ed in Tiananmen Square. Most of the suburbs on the outskirts of Beijing, with a population of over a million, saw a crackdown on protesters without prior warning. In the country's cities and towns, social scientists were axed and their work silenced.

Authorities, permission was given for entrepreneurs to join the party (resulting in one-third of China's richest citizens being CCP members), and professionals and intellectuals have been integrated into positions of power to provide expert advice to top officials. Despite efforts to curb it, corruption increased after 1989.

Consumer goods and travel options are more widely available, and the scope of political intervention and arbitrary intrusions into everyday life has decreased. In the 1980s, official clearance from work unit leaders was required to get married; travel privileges required approval from authorities; and even theater tickets were centrally allocated.

China is today regarded as another "miracle" in a string of Asian economic miracles. With WTO membership since 2001, the spectacular rise in living standards is due in no small part to export-oriented production for the U.S. market. From 2002 to the first half of 2006, China's foreign reserves increased by $654.7 billion. From less than $17 billion in 1987, by June 2010 it approached $2.5 trillion. So much money has flown into the country that real estate investment in Shanghai rose from $100 million annually in 1990 to $7.5 billion in 1996—a rise of 750 percent in just six years—before climbing to $11 billion in 2002. In the country's 70 largest cities from December 2007 to April 2008, housing prices rose more than 10 percent every month before slowly decreasing to only a 5.3 percent rise in August 2008.

In the process of this phenomenal growth, seven billionaires and more than three hundred thousand millionaires have been created—most either party members or government officials, or with close ties to them. By 2005, inequality has increased so rapidly that the government stopped releasing its calculation of the Gini Coefficient (a measure of inequality), but it did note that it was higher...
than for all developed countries and nearly all developing countries.\(^{217}\) Before the
reform, it stood at 0.20 in cities and slightly higher in rural areas, at 0.22–0.24. By
2002, the national figure had reached 0.43—one of the world's highest.\(^{218}\) In 2002,
the top 20 percent of the population held 59.3 percent of the country's wealth,
while the bottom 20 percent possessed only 2.8 percent.\(^{219}\) No significant middle
class has yet to be built: the bottom 50 percent of economic strata held only 14.4
percent of wealth, and the bottom 70 percent less than 20 percent.

China's reputation as the "world's workshop" was built on the backs of a
reserve army of labor of tens of millions—a floating population of more than a
hundred million that brought tens of billions of dollars in investments by trans-
national firms bringing labor-intensive operations with workers paid the "China
price."\(^{220}\) With working conditions still rivaling those of any underdeveloped
country, Chinese laborers suffered 14,675 workers killed on the job in 2003.\(^{221}\) By
contrast, only 1,456 workers were counted as killed on the job in the first nine
months of 2008. Unskilled industrial laborers in China make a pittance. Even
India paid 50 percent more to its workers than Chinese employers did in 1995—and
the United States paid 47.8 times as much, South Korea 22.9 times as much.\(^{222}\)
While white-collar employees in large cities recorded significant gains in income,
the unskilled suffered as the economy grew. Of all the secrets behind the Chinese
miracle, the country's exploitation of its vast pool of semiskilled rural emigrants
is at the top of the list. Others include imperial exploitation of Xinjiang and Tibet's
vast mineral and oil deposits and their people's labor; state intervention in cur-
currency exchange, which limits international speculators' power; and an ideology
of manufacturing's primacy, which orients all to production. By guiding invest-
ments, China provides another example of East Asian "developmental states"—
precisely the kind of government dismantled by the United States in South Korea
after the Gwangju Uprising. Finally, a unique feature of China's demographic
transition from 1985 to 2007 was the decline in the number of young people, from
a ratio of forty-five children (fifteen years old and younger) per hundred workers
in 1985 to only fifteen youths per hundred workers in 2005.\(^{223}\) The consequent
freeing up of financial resources provides a boost to savings and capital outflows.
Despite the small number of entry job seekers, in 2009, only half of all graduating
college seniors were able to sign contracts for employment by May—meaning
at least three million people remained looking for work after finishing college.

Continuing Resistance and State Incorporation
Alongside economic growth came a mushrooming of NGOs—or what should be
called GONGOs (government-organized NGOs) because of funds received from
and links to the state.\(^{224}\) In 1994, the party granted legal status to private citizens'
groups, and environment groups are one key focal point of those initially formed.
While the national government formally calls on local groups to report environ-
mental problems, local authorities are encouraged to accomplish high growth
rates—a disincentive to maintain high standards for environmental protection.\(^{225}\)
From 1992 to 2007, more than three hundred thousand NGOs were registered.
Unofficially, as many as two million may exist.\(^{226}\)

Chinese people's culture of dissent remains a significant feature of the increasing
scope of unrest.

Other estimates of the number of protests temporarily usurped for development,
problems have been so glaring that the very word "grassroots" conflicts involving
people—crowds—outside the bloodiest confrontation since 1989 were taken, the first time for one
windpower plant.\(^{227}\)

Can China's central planning from the cycle of booms and busts
That may well be the critical quest.
As economic prosperity quieted in turn could spark another movement
that China is close to collapse: in 2002, for example, Gordon Chang that the "People's Republic has in
it was Western capitalism that ne
China's Tibetans and Uighurs, although in both cases, the overw
Han Chinese favors the government
in Tibet began China's march to

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Protests</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>8,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>10,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>11,500</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>12,500</td>
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<td>1997</td>
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<td>1998</td>
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<td>1999</td>
<td>32,500</td>
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<td>40,000</td>
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<td>2001</td>
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<td>2002</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>70,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>87,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>90,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>100,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: China's Ministry of Public Security as cited by "China's Protests Every Day:" http://news.foxdebate
Chinese people's culture of direct action and resistance to unjust authority remains a significant feature of the political landscape. Table 5.5 illustrates the increasing scope of unrest.

Other estimates of the number of protests are even higher. Land is routinely usurped for development, whether for golf courses or power plants, a problem so glaring that the government acknowledges that the vast majority of grassroots conflicts involve land enclosures. In 2006, police opened fire in Dongzhou (a coastal town outside Shanwei) and killed as many as thirty people—the bloodiest confrontation since 1989. This was the second time Dongzhou lands were taken, the first time for construction of a coal plant and the second for a wind power plant.

Can China's central planning and control of finance capital keep its economy from the cycle of booms and busts that Western capitalism compels us to endure? That may well be the critical question determining the character of modern China. As economic prosperity quieted many voices from 1989, a major economic downturn could spark another movement for change. Some in the West delude themselves that China is close to collapse, a fate they similarly project onto North Korea. In 2002, for example, Gordon Chang predicted in The Coming Collapse of China that the "People's Republic has five years, perhaps ten, before it falls." In 2008, it was Western capitalism that nearly collapsed.

China's Tibetan and Uighur minorities are also sources of instability, although in both cases, the overwhelming sentiment among the vast majority of Han Chinese favors the government's claim to these lands. The 1989 crackdown in Tibet began China's march toward repression and was many steps backward.

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<td>2005</td>
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<td>2006</td>
<td>90,000</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>100,000</td>
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1 thousand NGOs were registered.
on a path to democracy, but their hard lines also catapulted Tibet. Governor Hu Jintao and Shanghai Mayor Jiang Zemin into positions of central importance by the beginning of 1990. (Jiang became general secretary of the CCP in June 1989 and Hu succeeded him in 2002.)

A different dynamic in the political relationship between Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the mainland may prove to be a future stimulus to progressive change. Both Taiwanese and Hong Kong activists played minor roles in the mainland's 1989 movement. Former National Taiwan University Professor Chen Ku-ying and legislative candidates Huang Hsin-hsin and Chang Chun-mei all found homes in China but left after the debacle of Tiananmen Square. Along with the Hong Kong representative to the People's Congress in Beijing, Huang was the only other representative to oppose the use of troops on students.

In 1989, repression was the result of the uprising inside China, but in neighboring Taiwan, Bangladesh, and Nepal, the next acts in the unfolding drama of regional democratic movements were sparked by people's resistance.

NOTES
1. Although the government claims far fewer, as many as seven hundred people may have been killed.
2. Bloom, Killing Hope, 22.
3. Ibid., 36.
7. A good counterexample can be found in Jack Goody, "Civil Society in an Extra-European Perspective," in Civil Society: History and Possibilities, eds., Satyajit Kavarn and Sunil Khilnani (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), besides pointing out the importance of guilds in medieval China and other specific examples of civil society, Goody also argues that "the capacity and the desirability of Eastern rulers has often been exaggerated while that of the West has been underestimated" (153).
8. Frederic Wakeman insists these events left residues that persisted in the Cultural Revolution. "Boundaries of the Public Sphere in Ming and Qing China," Daedalus 127, no. 3 (1998).
10. Apparently even in China, the backlash against the Cultural Revolution was severe as well. Ten years after it ended, Shaoguang Wang interviewed eighty-five people in Wuhan and asked them if they would participate in another Cultural Revolution. All said no, but when he asked the same question about a movement against corrupt officials, all said yes. Shaoguang Wang, "From a Pillar of the Community to a Force for Change: Chinese Workers in the Movement," in Chinese Democracy and the Crisis of 1989, eds. Roger D. Forges, Liu Ying, and Wu Yen-ho (Albany: SUNY Press, 1993), 377.
13. In a society where family honor is it are particularly significant. Few Americans know Germany during World War II, a far honor mattered.
15. Wang, Red China Blues, 188-90.
17. Ibid., 36.
22. Kelly, "Chinese Student Movement."
29. Han, Cries for Democracy.
30. Wang, "Pillar of Community.
31. Ralph Cudler, "The Avent-Garde Communism in the USSR and Cil
ter and Xiaoqing, "Workers."
32. Quoted in des Forges et al., C Revolutions, 405.
34. Wright, Perils of Protest, 35-36.
36. Wright, Perils of Protest, 38.
37. For details on events in Xian, see J Protests, 33-39, and Han, Cries fo
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an Unger (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1993).


13 In a society where family honor is important, what is considered “just” and “unjust” are particularly significant. In the United States, such civil continuity is practically nonexistent. Few Americans know of the Bush’s family’s collaboration with Nazi Germany during World War II, a family legacy that would be politically disastrous if honor mattered.

14 Rosen, “Guangzhou’s Democracy,” 2.

15 Wong, Red China Blues, 188–89.


17 Ibid., 25.


20 Quoted in ibid., 139.


28 Wang, “Pillar of Community,” 134.

29 Bachman, “Planning and Politics,” 303; Baum, “Road to Tiananmen,” 420–21.

30 Han, Cities for Democracy.


33 Walder and Xiaoxia, “Workers,” 2.

34 Quoted in Lai Forge et al., Chinese Democracy, 180. Thompson, Democratic Revolutions, 146.


36 Wang, Perils of Protest, 35–36.


38 Wright, Perils of Protest, 38.

39 For details on events in Xian, see Joseph W. Esherick, “Xian Spring,” in Pro-Democracy Protests, 83–91, and Han, Cities for Democracy, 100–101.

Hou, *Cries for Democracy* 37.

Ibid., 42.


At the end of August 1989, a solidarity-led coalition government was formed in Poland; the Berlin Wall was broken down on November 9, 1989; and Czechoslovakia’s Velvet Revolution began three days later. Also see Rudolf Wagner, “Political Institutions, Discourse and Imagination in China at Tiananmen,” in James Manor, ed., *Rethinking Third World Politics* (New York: Longman, 1991).

Waller, “Political Sociology,” 52.


For a groundbreaking and visionary explanation of the tendency of Marxist regimes to open to reform, see Herbert Marcuse, *Soviet Marxism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1958). Given their own self-understanding as products of revolution, communist regimes proved themselves particularly astute in dealing with protest movements arrayed against them in comparison to their counterparts in the West or the South. In the USSR, the system was effectively overthrow in part because of the regime’s ideology embracing social transformation and change as part of the historical process.

Wong, *Red China Blues*, 231.


Wright, *Perils of Protest*, 60.


Wong, “Pillar of Community,” 178.

“Letter to Workers of the Entire Nation,” quoted in Walder and Xiaolma, “Workers,” B. Note here the call to “return to original greatness”—still a key part of Chinese Middle Kingdom identity, that is, that China is the center of the world.

Wang, “Pillar of Community,” 179.

Dated May 17, as quoted in Walder and Xiaolma, “Workers,” 8.

Pik Wan Wong, “The Pro-Chinese Democracy Movement in Hong Kong,” in *The Dynamics of Social Movement in Hong Kong*, eds., Stephen Wong, Kai Chiu and Tai Lok Lui (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2000), 58.


Estherick, “Xian Spring,” 52.