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INTERPRETING NATIONALIST TEXTS: A POST-STRUCTURALIST APPROACH

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(9206 words)

The proliferation in the 1990s of Chinese texts discussing the relevance of nationalism to social, economic and political problems has generated a number of secondary analyses in English that are outstanding in terms of scholarship and breadth.¹ These present a common narrative according to which Chinese ‘intellectuals’, or members of the political ‘sub-elite’, underwent a radical change of consciousness from ‘anti-traditionalism’ in the 1980s to a new nationalism in the 1990s. This ideological shift is said to be mainly due to the influence of various actions taken by the United States, such as the imposition of sanctions after the Tiananmen Massacre, the Yin He incident, the failure of Beijing’s bid to host the 2000 Olympic Games, publication of Samuel Huntington’s article on the ‘Clash of Civilisations’, and finally the Taiwan Strait crisis of 1995-6. It is also understood as taking place in the historical context of the broader global resurgence of nationalism in the early 1990s that was triggered by the end of the Cold War, the collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and the questioning of boundaries that followed.

The interpretation of texts in terms of such a narrative presents a number of methodological questions, however. These include issues such as the mode of classification, the definition of key terms, the relationship between structure and agency, whether or not it is important to recover the intentions of the author and periodicity. Above all, however, the secondary literature on Chinese nationalism tends to pay very little attention to just how ‘nationalism’ acts as a structure to bring unity to the field of research by binding the texts together in some way, whether it be in terms of an idea, tradition of influence.

¹ Yongnian Zheng, *Discovering Chinese Nationalism in China: Modernization, Identity and International Relations*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Suisheng Zhao, ‘Chinese Intellectuals’ Quest for National Greatness and Nationalistic Writing in the 1990s’, *China Quarterly*, 152 (December 1997), 725-45; Joseph Fewsmith, *China Since Tiananmen: The Politics of Transition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, esp. pp 132-220.

This article suggests that an alternative interpretation can be developed by using a post-structuralist method to address such issues, the main principles of which are developed by Michel Foucault in the course of his researches into 'sexuality' and 'madness'. These can equally well be applied to 'nationalism' by treating the texts as discursive, rather than as the expression of a common structure called 'nationalism'. Such a perspective requires focusing analysis on the points of difference and tensions that exist between the texts, rather than the construction of common characteristics that bind them together into a narrative. It then becomes possible to explain how it is possible to say certain things at a given point in time and space, why some things have to remain unsaid, who is doing the talking, and where they are located in the network of social power. Above all, texts that discuss nationalism need no longer be understood as necessarily representing the emergence of a common consensus, emergent ideology or political movement.

PROBLEMS OF CATEGORISATION

As a result of his researches into the discourse on madness, Foucault came to the conclusion that:

The unity of discourses on madness would not be based upon the existence of the object 'madness', or the constitution of a single horizon of objectivity; it would be the interplay of the rules that make possible the appearance of objects during a given period of time [...].²

The implications of such an observation for the interpretation of the Chinese texts on nationalism can be illustrated by looking at the problems that arise when the attempt is made to unify the field of research by providing a clear definition of the object 'nationalism'.

The clearest case of such an approach is the definition of nationalism provided by Yongnian Zheng in the preface to his survey on the rise of the 'new nationalism'. In itself, Zheng's definition seems reasonable enough, insofar as it merely points out that 'nationalism' contains the two elements of 'nation' and 'state' and is political insofar as it advocates a special kind of relationship between these two concepts. To characterise this relationship Zheng refers to Kellas's statement that nationalism makes national identity 'the supreme loyalty for the people who are

² Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 36.

prepared to die for their nation',³ and Hinsley's description of it as a 'state of mind in which the political loyalty is felt to be owed to the nation'.⁴

However, even this very broad definition soon becomes redundant when it is not applied to a number of texts that are included in the survey. A clear example of this is the texts of the political economists Wang Shaoguang and Hu Angang, who are treated as part of the 'new nationalism' because they propose that the decline of the central government's ability to extract revenue has to be reversed if China is to avoid the kind of disintegration witnessed by the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia.⁵ Nowhere, however, does Zheng show that the texts of these writers advocate a state of mind in which political loyalty is felt to be owed to the nation or that the nation is the object of supreme loyalty for which people should be prepared to die.

When Zheng's original definition of 'nationalism' is rendered redundant in this way, he resorts to the introduction of new criteria, arguing that the nationalist tradition in China has long been characterised by a 'strong state complex'. This is similar to the way in which Suisheng Zhao delimits nationalism by associating certain texts with a historical tradition, in which the 'strong state dream' plays an important role.⁶ Yet there are good grounds for being sceptical about interpreting texts in terms of 'influences'. The influence on Hu Angang and Wang Shaoguang of American literature on 'state capacity', for example, could be claimed to be far more important than the influence of a 'strong state complex' from Chinese tradition. Moreover, it could be argued that Hu and Wang are not arguing for a particularly strong kind of state because they only propose raising the central government's share of national revenue from a very low level of 10.7 percent of GDP towards the average for developing countries of 31.7 percent, which is still well below the 47.6 percent average for developed countries.⁷ Yet if Hu and Wang are described as arguing for an 'efficient' state rather than a 'strong' state, then their status as nationalists becomes hard to sustain.

³ Zheng, *x*, citing James Kellas, *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, London: Macmillan, 1991.

⁴ Zheng, *xi*, citing F.H. Hinsley, *Nationalism and the International System*, London 1973.

⁵ Yongnian Zheng, 40-41.

⁶ Yongnian Zheng, 39; see also Suisheng Zhao, pp 725-6.

⁷ Hu Angang, 'Fenshuizhi pingjia yu jianyi' ('Evaluation and Suggestion of the Tax-Division System'), *Zhanlüe yu Guanli (Strategy and Management)*, 1996:5, pp. 1-9.

Joseph Fewsmith adopts a slightly different method by invoking certain sub-themes to explain how various texts are ‘bound together’ with nationalism. He thus explains how ‘neo-statism’ (as in Hu Angang and Wang Shaogang) ‘binds together’ with ‘popular nationalism’ (as in Wang Xiaodong), for the following three reasons:⁸

First, there is a common nationalism directed primarily against the United States, both in terms of its presumed desire to control China internationally and in terms of the American model of liberal democracy and neoclassical economics. Second, the approaches share a concern with social justice, though they differ somewhat in their preferred solutions. Finally, all three approaches share a populist orientation, although the neostatist is characterized by a concern for state building that popular nationalists like Wang Xiaodong do not display.⁹

Just as with Zheng’s definition, however, nowhere does Fewsmith effectively use his three criteria to demonstrate that the work of Hu Angang and Wang Shaogang is ‘directed primarily against the United States’. If his intention is to imply that it is nationalistic to challenge neoclassical economics, then consistency requires that this argument should also be extended to the sources from which the central concepts deployed in the texts of Hu and Wang are drawn, namely ‘the tradition in American political science that argues that “strong states” are important in establishing stable societies and bringing about rapid economic development’.¹⁰ If his criterion of a ‘common concern with social justice’ is used to ‘bind together’ popular nationalism with neostatism, the scope of analysis becomes broader still. Nowhere, moreover, does Fewsmith apply his third criterion by showing that the work of Hu Angang and Wang Shaogang has a ‘populist orientation’.

A more complex problem that is generated by such methods of interpretation arises from the way in which an ever-expanding number of sub-themes is generated by the ad-hoc addition of themes that are supposed to bind together into something called ‘nationalism’. A brief survey of the most influential secondary works thus reveals the following sub-themes:

⁸ Fewsmith, 132.

⁹ Fewsmith, 133.

¹⁰ Fewsmith, 136. The figures that Fewsmith directly names are Joe Migdal, John Zysman, Frederic C. Deyo, Gary Gererri, Donald L. Wyman, Peter Evans, Chalmers Johnson and Peter Katzenstein.

anti-traditionalism
anti-Westernisation
new-authoritarianism
Confucianism
culturalism
statism
(neo)-conservatism
neo-leftism
developmentalism
anti-Americanism
academic nativism
post-modernism
civilizationism
populism
elitism
concerns over social justice.¹¹

While such themes are heterogeneous at best, and actually stand as direct antinomies in a number of cases, more important problems that arises from such an approach is that no explanation is provided of how these sub-themes are bound into some kind of unity called ‘nationalism’.¹² Such problems become pressing when a major text like Wang Shan’s *Viewing China Through the Third Eye*¹³ can be seen by Fewsmith as the first truly populist nationalist text of the 1990s,¹⁴ but does not even feature in Zheng’s survey of the new nationalism. That methodology is at the root of this problem is indicated by the fact that convincing arguments could be constructed to support both views. From Fewsmith’s perspective, Wang’s text shows a degree of anti-Americanism insofar as it argues that the student demonstrations of 1989 were encouraged and supported (if not instigated) by the United States, were aimed at overthrowing the CCP because America feared China’s nuclear power, and also in Wang’s assertions that the United States is in moral and social decline and the cure to the ills generated by an ‘economic mechanism flooded with liberalism’ must lie in the East.¹⁵

However, when we look at the structure of the text itself, it is unclear just how this anti-Americanism makes *The Third Eye* a ‘nationalist’ text. First

¹¹ This list is compiled from the works of Zheng, Zhao and Fewsmith.

¹² Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, London and New York: Routledge, 1989, p. 38.

¹³ Wang Shan, *Di san zhi yanjing kan Zhongguo*, Taipei: Zhouzhi wenhua, 1994.

¹⁴ Fewsmith, pp. 146-7.

¹⁵ Fewsmith, p. 151.

of all, the fact that discussion of the United States is mainly confined to the first and final chapters of *The Third Eye*, indicates that it is introduced by Wang as a supplementary theme to support his main argument, which is concerned with the problems of China's reform programme. While the spectre of American intervention is there, it is used to warn readers *against* looking to extreme ideologies to solve China's social problems, because this will only strengthen the analogy between China and Hitler's Germany that is in the minds of American policy-makers, thus encouraging them to intervene.¹⁶ That Wang Shan is not being anti-American here, but painting a highly ambiguous picture of the United States is demonstrated when he even argues that the sanctions imposed by the United States after Tiananmen were motivated by good intentions to help the people of China, albeit that they were hopelessly misguided.¹⁷

Wang's discussion of the possibility of United States intervention in China therefore, focuses the reader's mind on domestic problems. These include issues such as the lack of political constraints to stop over-enthusiastic politicians instigating a pattern of development that has taken place through a series of leaps forward and sudden retrenchment,¹⁸ and the inability of leaders to come up with policies suitably diverse for the different conditions that exist across China.¹⁹ Wang even stresses that the inability to find solutions to such problems cannot be blamed on external forces when he points out that the political line adopted by the Eighth Party Congress in 1956 was more democratic than the policies initiated by the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee in 1978, even though it was agreed in the context of the Hungarian and Polish crises and while the Korean War was still very much in people's minds.²⁰

It is hard to see what is particularly nationalistic about the solutions to China's problems proposed by Wang, either. To solve the problems of the State Owned Enterprises (SOEs), for example, he looks to the independent power of a rising class of entrepreneurs and bourgeoisie and hopes for a strong leader who can deal with the class antagonisms that are bound to result from such a development. It is this context within which Wang praises Mao Zedong for the ruthless way in which he dealt with the relationships between different strata of Chinese society, although this positive evaluation is compromised by acknowledgement of the fact that Mao left Deng Xiaoping facing the problem of a China deeply divided

¹⁶ Wang Shan, p. 292-3.

¹⁷ Wang Shan, pp. 4-6.

¹⁸ Wang Shan, p 2.

¹⁹ Wang Shan, pp. 23-4.

²⁰ Wang Shan, pp. 92-3.

between city and countryside. As for Deng, Wang's main complaint is that his policies have made a class war more likely by encouraging the peasants to leave the countryside and enter the cities.²¹

While it is true that such arguments are sometimes authoritarian in nature, it is another step to argue that 'Wang's diagnosis of China's social ills and his hope that the CCP could provide stability in a period of transition is related to an unabashed nationalism'.²² Rather than emphasising anti-Americanism or Wang's praise for Mao, it is just as possible to draw attention to Wang's insistence that a reversal of the reform programme would be a disaster for China and the world in an era when the main threats to international stability have become ideological extremism, irrational economic policies, un-democratic political structures and procedures, and human rights failings. Wang does not advocate such politics, but warns that such tendencies pose a danger to China because they can lead to international and civil wars that might involve the use of weapons of mass destruction and trigger international intervention.²³

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Given the above characteristics of *The Third Eye*, it is not surprising that Wang Shan is entirely absent from Zheng's survey of the new nationalists. However, Fewsmith can still be said to be right to include Wang Shan in his overview, because it is not necessary for a text to *advocate* nationalism for it to be important to the discourse on nationalism. As Foucault points out with reference to understanding the discourse on sexuality:

The central issue, then (at least in the first instance), is not whether one says yes or no to sex, whether one formulates prohibitions or permissions, whether one asserts its importance or denies its effects, or whether one refines the words one uses to designate it; but to account for the fact that it is spoken about, to discover who does the speaking, the position and viewpoints from which they speak, the institutions which prompt people to speak about it and which store and distribute the things that are said. What is at issue, briefly, is the over-all 'discursive fact', the way in which sex is 'put into discourse'.²⁴

²¹ Wang Shan p. 71.

²² Fewsmith p. 151.

²³ Wang Shan, p. 295.

²⁴ Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, Harmondsworth Middlesex: Peregrine, 1984, p. 11.

From this perspective, then, we need to understand how *The Third Eye* might ‘put nationalism’ into discourse. The significant parts of the text, therefore, become where nationalism is directly discussed, even though it might not be advocated. One such place is where Wang explains that looking through the ‘Third Eye’ means adopting a perspective that combines the three competing post-war ideologies of social Darwinism, Marxism and nationalism.²⁵ The result is indeed a disturbing world view in which a growing population has to struggle for resources and adapt to survive, while the flow of information across borders means that ‘backward nations’ are transformed, acculturated, destroyed or rejected as a necessary sacrifice for the improvement of the whole human race.²⁶

It is a shame, therefore, that Fewsmith does not actually discuss this part of *The Third Eye*, because a good argument can be made for including Wang Shan as an important element of the nationalist revival on the grounds that his text discusses the possibilities for nationalism in China in the 1990s. Yet, if such an argument is to be made, it requires emphasising that Wang is actually highly cautious when he talks about nationalism, which is quite the opposite of the impression of *The Third Eye* that we find in Fewsmith. When Wang discusses using nationalism as a resource for surviving the global struggle for survival, for example, he emphasises the difficulties that arise from defining and building nations.²⁷ Similarly, he uses the threat of foreign competition to support the argument that China must be able to attract foreign capital and technology if it is to avoid becoming ‘a piece of plump meat surrounded by wolves’. With regard to foreign policy, he approves of moderation in international organisations that reflects China’s limitations, and maintains that PRC diplomacy is distinct from that of the United States because it upholds its own conception of international justice that refrains from the growing tendency for intervention.²⁸

Altogether, then, while the United States is presented as a potential threat to China in *The Third Eye*, this is quite peripheral to the central argument of the text, which Fewsmith more correctly describes as the ‘linking of urban anxieties to a systematic critique of the Dengist reforms’.²⁹ It could even be argued that Wang’s text is highly critical of the possibilities for nationalist mobilisation in China. If this is the case, then *The Third Eye*

²⁵ Wang Shan, p. 279

²⁶ Wang Shan, p. 275.

²⁷ Wang Shan, p. 277.

²⁸ Wang Shan, 291-2.

²⁹ Fewsmith, p. 148.

certainly does deserve to be included in the analysis of the nationalist revival, although not for the reasons that Fewsmith gives.

WHERE'S THE DISCOURSE?

Another advantage of post-structuralist method arises from the way that discourse analysis is concerned with revealing the rules that govern discourse by looking at the tensions that arise when texts are juxtaposed in various ways. Sometimes this can be done in such a way as to reveal discursive groups that are not immediately apparent in the texts themselves. As Foucault explains:

Providing one defines the conditions clearly, it might be legitimate to constitute, on the basis of correctly described relations, discursive groups that are not arbitrary, and yet remain invisible.³⁰

In other words, a discourse might be 'invisible' if it is constructed around themes that cannot be spoken of directly. This does not mean that such discourses are secret because they can be revealed by certain procedures which Foucault explains as follows:

[I]n no way would they [invisible discursive groups] constitute a sort of secret discourse, animating the manifest discourse from within; it is not therefore an interpretation of the facts of the statement that might reveal them, but the analysis of their coexistence, their succession, their mutual functioning, their reciprocal determination, and their independent or correlative transformation'.³¹

The method that is being described here can be demonstrated by deliberately looking at the coexistence of a text like *The Third Eye* with a discourse on nationalism that remains hidden both from the primary Chinese texts and the secondary surveys. This is the discourse articulated by the political elite, found especially in texts that appear under the name of the national leader, Jiang Zemin.

The fact that Jiang Zemin is absent from both primary and secondary texts constitutes a highly significant erasure, when we consider that it is he who launched the 'patriotic education campaign' on coming to power

³⁰ Foucault, *Archaeology*, p. 32.

³¹ Foucault, *Archaeology*, p. 32.

after the Tiananmen Massacre: Jiang declared that ‘socialism’ and ‘patriotism’ are ‘by nature the same’ (benzhi shang shi tongyi de),³² and told news workers that their responsibility is to stimulate a spirit of nationalist pride, self-confidence, and activism by educating society in patriotism, socialism, collectivism, self-reliance, hard struggle, and nation-building.³³ It is under Jiang’s rule that schools are commanded to raise the quality of the nation (*minzu*) and fight a protracted and heated war against bourgeois liberalisation and ‘peaceful evolution’.³⁴ And it is Jiang who personally dictates the nationalistic content of the school curriculum, recommending that events such as the Nanjing Massacre should be used to stir up popular anger and that national heroes should be contrasted with the negative examples of people who collaborated with foreign powers or worshipped foreign things and lacked all trace of ‘nationalist fibre’ should be studied.³⁵

If there is an unabashed discourse on nationalism, then, it is the official one. Yet this remains invisible in the discussion that takes place in the journals and monographs. Its icons are the virtuous and loyal people who defended China, took part in the birth of the CCP after the May Fourth Movement and led the nationalities of China through the land reform revolution, the anti-Japanese war, and Liberation to finally establish the ‘New China’. Its demons are the corrupt feudal rulers who allowed the Chinese people to be cheated by the Great Powers after the Opium War. Its story tells of how the Chinese people ‘stood up’ and emerged victorious after a number of wars against invaders. In international affairs, meanwhile, the Chinese people always oppose invasion, uphold justice and peace, choose the socialist system for themselves, and deal with international relations according to the Five Principles of Peaceful

³² Jiang Zemin, ‘Aiguo zhuyi he wo guo zhishifenzi de shiming’ (‘Patriotism and the Mission of Our Country’s Intellectuals’), (speech to the capital’s youth to commemorate the May Fourth Movement, 3 May, 1990), in *Mao Zedong Deng Xiaoping Jiang Zemin lun shijie guan rensheng guan jiazhi guan*, (*Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin on World View, View of Humanity and View of Values*), Hong Kong: Mingliu chubanshe, 1998, p. 360.

³³ Jiang Zemin, ‘Xinwen gongzuozhe de jiben fangzhen wenti’ (‘Basic Problems of Policy for News Workers’) (speech on news work to Central Propaganda Dept., 28 November 1989), in *Mao Zedong Deng Xiaoping Jiang Zemin*, pp 354-5.

³⁴ ‘Guojia jiaoyu weiyuanhui guanyu jin yi bu jiaqiang zhong xiao xue deyu gongzuo de yijian’ (13 April 1990) (‘Views of the National Education Commission on Advancing the Strengthening of Moral Education Work in Junior and Middle Schools’ (13 April 1990)), *Guojia jiaoyu weiyuanhui zhengbao* (Bulletin of the National Education Commission), No 6, 1990.

³⁵ Jiang Zemin ‘Ren yao you zhengqi he guqi’ (‘People Need Righteousness and Spine’), in *Mao Zedong Deng Xiaoping Jiang Zemin*, pp. 371-3.

Coexistence, stressing those that insist on mutual non-interference in domestic affairs and opposition to any kind of hegemonism and power politics. It is the teaching of all of these themes, claims Jiang, that will raise the national self-respect and self-confidence of the Chinese people, especially the young, and prevent the worship of foreign things.³⁶

Given the erasure of this official nationalist discourse from the texts that are usually presented as constituting the nationalist revival, it is interesting to note that *The Third Eye* is one of the few places where the almost universal silence is broken. This occurs when Wang Shan points out that Jiang Zemin will have to be more constrained in his use of patriotism than either Mao or Deng because he will be called on to make a more positive appraisal of historical episodes like the Cultural Revolution.³⁷ This breaking of the silence is even more interesting when we consider that Jiang Zemin is said to have initially recommended the *Third Eye* for cadre reading, only to later make a quick u-turn and have the book proscribed.³⁸ While it may be impossible to reveal Jiang's psychological intentions, the challenge for discourse analysis is to discover whether there is any system to such a selective breaking of the silence. If there is, then a fragmented field of research might be formed by placing the objects of discourse within an alternative narrative.³⁹

TEXTS IN CONTEXT

One such alternative narrative might be the leadership succession in Beijing, the decline and death of Deng Xiaoping, the consolidation of Jiang Zemin's power at the Fifteenth Party Congress, and the articulation of a new technological nationalism that is central to his new ideology of the 'Three Represents'. In this respect, it is to Fewsmith's great credit that his work does more than any other to locate the nationalist texts within the power struggle among political elites, something that comes out particularly strongly in his analysis of the impact of nationalism on the foreign policy making process.⁴⁰ Moreover, he acknowledges how the

³⁶ Jiang Zemin, 'Jianchi bu xiede jinxing zhongguo jindaishi, xiandaishi ji guojing jiaoyu', ('Ceaselessly Maintain Education in Chinese Modern History, Contemporary History and National Condition') (letter to Li Tieying and He Dongchang, 9 March 1991), *Mao Zedong Deng Xiaoping Jiang Zemin*, p. 375.

³⁷ Wang Shan, p. 196.

³⁸ One explanation for Jiang's supposed u-turn is that Deng Xiaoping was unhappy with the text. See the preface to the Taiwanese edition of *Di san zhi yanjing*.

³⁹ Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 43.

⁴⁰ Joseph Fewsmith and Stanley Rosen, 'The Domestic Context of Chinese Foreign Policy: Does 'Public Opinion' Matter?', in David M. Lampton (ed.), *The Making of*

main organs in which the discussion takes place are connected to various political actors. The management team of *Strategy and Management* is thus composed of an impressive array of senior PLA and CCP figures,⁴¹ and *China Can Say No* was supported by Yu Quanyu, the deputy head of China's Human Rights Commission.⁴²

However, the drawback of treating nationalist texts as an external influence on decision-makers is that the ambiguities and oppositions that appear in the texts themselves tend to get overlooked. Fewsmith thus does little to explain how the meaning of the texts might be constructed with reference to their links with the political elite, because he presents them as constituting a monolithic nationalism that exerts a certain kind of pressure on policy-makers. Again, 'nationalism' is treated as an object that stands over and above the texts, defined with reference to the grand historical tradition and also the newer narrative presented in the primary texts themselves,⁴³ rather than as something that is itself mediated by active discussion, political struggle and even dissent.

It may, though, be possible to develop such insights into the relationship between the texts and the dispensation of power further if we follow some of the steps that can be used to reveal the rules that govern discourse. For example, much more emphasis needs to be put on the way in which the objects of discourse emerge from social contexts, or what Foucault calls 'surfaces of emergence', such as the family, the immediate social group, the work situation, the religious community, or art, sexuality and penalty. It might also be useful to bear in mind the need to describe the 'authorities of delimitation', by which Foucault means disciplines like medicine and the law as well as religious authority, literary and art criticism and so on. Finally, analysis should try to look at the systems according to which different kinds of the same object are divided, contrasted, regrouped, classified, and derived from one another, or what Foucault calls 'grids of specification'.⁴⁴

Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2001, pp. 151-190.

⁴¹ Fewsmith explains that the 'honorary director' was former PLA Chief of Staff Xiao Ke, the director was former Secretariat member Gu Mu, and the senior advisors included retired general Zhang Aiping, former *People's Daily* editor-in-chief Qin Chuan, former State Economic Commission head Yuan Baohua, and former Secretariat member Yan Mingfu. Its editor was Qin Chaoying, son of the former editor-in-chief of *People's Daily*. (Fewsmith, *China Since Tiananmen*, p. 151)

⁴² Fewsmith, *China Since Tiananmen*, p. 155.

⁴³ Fewsmith and Rosen, *The Making of Chinese Foreign Policy*, pp. 158-60.

⁴⁴ Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, pp. 45-6.

When we look at the Chinese texts from these perspectives, we have a rich research programme indeed. Can, for example, the articles that appear in *Strategy and Management* between the launching of the journal in 1993 and the high-point of popular nationalism in 1996 be understood as delimited by the authority of writers who are mainly drawn from a relatively narrow group of prestigious think tanks and are privileged to be allowed to speak about politics by using the language of the social sciences? Moreover, if the texts themselves are treated as constituting a grid of specification, then the subject of analysis becomes the way in which they divide, contrast, regroup, classify and derive nationalism from various concepts.

Take, for example, the relationship between statism and nationalism that can be found in two of the articles in *Strategy and Management* by Fudan University's Xiao Gongqin. While the first of these is thematically very close to the texts of Hu Angang and Wang Shaoguang in the way that it describes the decline of the state,⁴⁵ the second involves a conscious exploration of the author's understanding of the possibilities for nationalism in China.⁴⁶ In the process, nationalism is divided into the categories of 'broad' and 'narrow'. This is clearly derived from the official discourse of nationalism, in which 'broad' nationalism is good because it is a 'natural resource' for the state to consolidate the community and oppose foreign aggression, while 'narrow' nationalism is dangerous because it stands for separatism and secession.

Yet if Xiao's text emerges from a journal populated by 'intellectuals' and sponsored by members of the political elite, where then are the 'authorities of delimitation' that constrain what can be said about the official discourse? These can be found first of all in the political elite of the time. Yet these figures are themselves divided between supporters of the principles established by Deng Xiaoping's 'Southern Tour' text, and those who cling to the principles of the command economy. 'Spaces of dissension' are thus opened up for a text like Xiao's to take part in the formation of the discourse on nationalism, always bearing in mind the hidden discursive group of themes that surrounds the figure of Jiang Zemin himself. Thus, while Xiao deploys the strategy of reproducing the official view that a certain type of 'broad' nationalism is acceptable, he

⁴⁵ Xiao Gongqin, "'Ran zhengquan" yu fenli jituanhua: Zhongguo xiandaihua de liang zhong xianjin' ("Soft Power" and Divided Interest Groups: Two Traps for China's Modernisation'), *Zhanlüe yu Guanli*, 1994:1, pp. 1-4.

⁴⁶ Xiao Gongqin, 'Minzu zhuyi yu Zhongguo zhuanxing shiqi de yishi xingtai' ('The Ideological Condition of Nationalism and China's Period of Transformation'), *Zhanlüe yu guanli*, 1994:5, pp. 21-5.

ingeniously combines this with another strategy, namely the argument that nationalism should be located as part of a ‘mainstream culture’ (zhuliu wenhua) of Confucian tradition rather than within the iconoclastic tradition that begins with the May Fourth movement.⁴⁷

To see Xiao’s text as just being part of a neo-Confucian nationalism that is symptomatic of a reaction against external forces, such as the publication of Huntington’s ‘Clash of Civilisations’ article, is thus to overlook some of its most important elements. Why, for example, are the figures of Deng Xiaoping and Li Ruihuan deployed as icons of ‘mainstream culture’, then juxtaposed with a vision of school education that mobilises a combination of Confucian ethics, socialist egalitarianism and themes of national unity from Chinese tradition? Again the significance of such a combination can be derived from juxtaposing the rival versions of nationalism found in Jiang Zemin and Deng Xiaoping. On the one hand, Jiang is the most vocal advocate of a ‘Chinese renaissance’, and sees tradition as the magic ingredient of an ideological education that can alleviate ‘national nihilism’ (minzu xuwu zhuyi) and thus prevent the ‘dregs and spiritual trash of capitalist culture’ from entering China along with western science and technology.⁴⁸ On the other hand, Deng’s view is enshrined in the third volume of his *Selected Works*, published in October 1993, where he condemns everything that has been received from the old China as a rotten mess.⁴⁹ Similarly, Li Ruihuan is notable in this context for being the main figure in the Politburo to try to appropriate and neutralise the promotion of ‘national culture’ (*minzu wenhua*) and ‘cultural flowering’ (*fanrong wenyi*) by combining them with a call to oppose the ‘ossification’ (*jianghua*) of neo-Maoist dogmatism in order to tame the purges being undertaken by the Ministry of Culture and the Department of Propaganda after Tiananmen.⁵⁰ Finally,

⁴⁷ Xiao Gongqin, ‘Minzu zhuyi yu Zhongguo zhuanxing shiqi de yishi xingtai’.

[page ??]

⁴⁸ Jiang Zemin, ‘Guanyu shehui zhuyi jingshen wenming jianshe wenti’ (‘On Problems in Building Socialist Spiritual Civilization’), *Mao Zedong Deng Xiaoping Jiang Zemin*, p. 349.

⁴⁹ Deng Xiaoping, ‘Jianshe you Zhongguo tese de shehui zhuyi’ (‘Build Socialism with Chinese Characteristics’), *Deng Xiaoping wenxuan di san juan (Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping Volume Three)*, Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1993, p. 63. Deng actually uses the metaphor ‘lan tanzi’, meaning a cart that has been overturned so that its goods are irretrievably damaged.

⁵⁰ Geremie R. Barme, *In the Red: On Contemporary Chinese Culture*, New York and Chichester: Columbia University Press, 1999, p. 29. For Li Ruihuan on minzu wenhua see Renmin Ribao 12 January 1990, ‘Fanrong wenyi bixu dali hongyang minzu youxiu wenhua’ and ‘Guanyu hongyang minzu youxiu wenhuade ruogan wenti – zai quanguo wenhua yishu gongzuo qingkuang jiaoliu zuotanhuishangde jianghua’,

if Xiao is loosening the hidden discourse in this way, what happens when we juxtapose his neo-Confucian text with his statist text is that the latter's position within nationalism becomes even more questionable.

The argument for 'ideological regeneration' found in the writing of someone like Kang Xiaoguang of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, can be treated in the same way.⁵¹ While its main concerns revolve around problems of corruption, loss of social direction and the possibilities for democracy, the most significant icon to be deployed is that of Sun Yatsen's plan for democratisation through political tutelage. This, argues Kang, is the model that the CCP should follow in order to adjust itself quietly and gradually to the changes taking place in the world. Nationalism is thus juxtaposed with 'tradition' and 'democratisation'. This strategy becomes even clearer in Li Fan's proposition that the two cultural tendencies of westernisation and the revival of tradition need to be combined through a Weberian 'protestant ethic', in which nationalism and religious beliefs play the role of an irrational 'tradition' while economic management is carried out according to western ideas.⁵² Yet nationalism, he is careful to stress, will not suffice on its own. It has to be accompanied by systematic reforms that include the CCP changing from being a revolutionary party to become a governing party that allows freedom of thought and expression, the expansion of the democratic system and the establishment of a new policy-making process.

The texts in *Strategy and Management* then, are constructed according to a number of complex political strategies. Rather than reduce these to a nationalist movement, it is more interesting to read them as a loosening of the official discourse on nationalism in ways that can often lead it away from the chauvinistic direction in which it has been taken by elements of the political elite since Tiananmen. It is thus essential not to try to hide contradictions in the texts between themes like Confucianism, democracy and nationalism by reducing them to a monolithic object called 'nationalism', but to bring them into full play as creating the 'spaces of

Renmin Ribao 15 May 1990. See also Renmin Ribao, 20 September 1989, 14 September 1989. And 'Li Ruihuan tan wending dangqian daju', *Yangcheng wanbao* 30 April 1990.

⁵¹ Kang Xiaoguang, 'Zhongguo xiandaihua de yongyanluo yu chu lu' ('Evolution and Way Out for China's Modernization'), *Zhanlüe yu guanli* 1994:1, pp 10-12.

⁵² Li Fan, 'Shichang jingji fazhan de zhengzhi huanjing ji qi dui Zhongguo xiandaihua de yingxiang' ('The Political Environment of the Development of the Market Economy and its Influence on China's Modernization'), *Zhanlüe yu guanli* 1994:3, pp. 2-6.

dissension' within which the objects and rules of discourse are transformed.⁵³

Moreover, this process of discourse formation has to be understood as expressive of the authorities of delimitation that are at work, and which constitute '[...] a complex strategical situation in a particular society'.⁵⁴ As Foucault points out, such authorities go well beyond the state and are dispersed throughout society in phenomena such as the family, the church and the medical profession (to name a few of his authorities). Within Chinese society, the complex dispensation of authority is something that Fewsmith acknowledges when he locates politics within the activities of elite, sub-elite and popular circles. The way in which the primary texts themselves refer to such divisions is quite clear when a writer like Sun Liping of Peking University describes how 'intellectuals' since the events of 1989 and Deng Xiaoping's Southern Tour are being forced to consider turning to populist ideologies if they are to bridge the distance that has opened up between themselves and the public.⁵⁵ In general, they talk very cautiously about the political elite, very frequently about their own role as 'intellectuals', and pour scorn on the dangers of popular nationalism.

PERIODICITY AND POPULAR NATIONALISM

It is essential to bear such political strategies in mind when we look at how the rise of 'popular nationalism' is represented within the narrative of nationalist revival. The most immediate problem with this narrative is that its main source is in fact *China Can Say No*, which presents the feelings of its authors as the product of a sequence of humiliations at the hands of foreign powers that culminates in the Taiwan Strait crisis. The story is thus one of infatuation with the West turning to despair in a process that sees the birth of popular nationalism when Taiwan's president, Lee Teng-hui, visits the United States in the summer of 1995.

There is, of course, some truth to this story. Taiwan is clearly not an issue in the texts that are published before the summer of 1995, for example, when cross-Strait relations were at a high point following the Koo-Wang talks in 1993. It is not even mentioned in a survey of security flashpoints in East Asia authored by Tian Xinjian of the Dept of Strategic Studies at the Academy of Military Science that appears in the first issue of *Strategy*

⁵³ Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 170.

⁵⁴ Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 93.

⁵⁵ Sun Liping, 'Xiandaihua jincheng zhong Zhongguo ge zhong shehui guanxi de xin bianhua' ('New Transformations of All Kinds of Social Relationships During China's Modernization') *Zhanlüe yu guanli* 1994:1 pp. 17-19.

and Management.⁵⁶ However, just as discourse theory searches for meanings in the contradictions and oppositions between themes, it also explores how discourses continue through periods of apparently radical change by playing several roles simultaneously, sometimes contradictory and sometimes mutually supporting.

If such a method is adopted, it requires not privileging the one issue of the Taiwan crisis, but understanding how this interacts with a range of other strategies that are generated by the continuation and intensification of the elite political struggle. That is to say, while a rupture in the narrative of nationalist revival appears when the texts begin to talk very explicitly about Taiwan and the United States after 1996, the fact that Deng Xiaoping is departing from the political stage and Jiang Zemin is still trying to consolidate his leadership in the run-up to the Fifteenth Party Congress, provides continuity to the same discourse. Moreover, this is the context within which discourses can be seen quite clearly to depend on each other as texts like *China Can Say No* begin to be categorised in terms of positive and negative forms of nationalism.

One of the most important collections of texts in this respect is the series of books produced after 1996 under the auspices of Liu Ji, vice-president of CASS from 1993 to 1998 and a close confidant of Jiang Zemin. Among these are the books *The Crucial Moment*, *Crossed Swords*, *Heart-to-Heart Talks with the General Secretary* and *Outcry*,⁵⁷ which, taken together, provide a comprehensive narrative of the period of ‘reform and opening’. *The Crucial Moment* is a broad survey of the social, economic and political problems faced by the Chinese leadership; *Crossed Swords* presents a historical narrative of the years since Deng Xiaoping came to power, in which the victors are Jiang Zemin and Zhu Rongji; and *Outcry* provides a grid of specification according to which ideological tendencies can be put into the five categories of ‘mainstream’ (‘reform and opening’, Deng Xiaoping, Zhu Rongji, elements of Jiang Zemin), ‘dogmatism’ (the ‘Old Left’, command economy, public ownership),

⁵⁶ Tian Xinjian, ‘Dongya anquan de fenxi yu zhangwang’ (‘Analysis and Outlook for East Asian Security’) *Zhanlüe yu guanli* 1993:1, pp. 21-2.

⁵⁷ Li Fugen (ed.), *Guanjian shike: dangdai zhongguo jidai jiejué de 27 ge wenti*, (*the Crucial Moment: 27 Problems Urgently Awaiting a Solution in Contemporary China*) Beijing: Jinri Zhongguo chubanshe, 1997; Ma Licheng and Lin Zhijun, *Jiaofeng: dangdai Zhongguo san ci sixiang jiefang shilu* (*Crossed Swords: Record of China’s Three Thought Liberations*). Beijing: Jinri Zhongguo chubanshe, 1998; Lin Zhijun and Ma Licheng, *Huhan: dangjin zhongguo de wu zhong shengyin* (*Outcry: Five Voices in Present Day China*), Taipei: Tianxia yuanjian chuban gufen youxian gongsi, 1999.

‘feudalism’ (‘Asian Values’, Confucianism/neo-Confucianism), and ‘democracy’ (democracy movement) and ‘nationalism’.

While all of these texts discuss a wide variety of themes, they play a significant role in articulating the discourse on nationalism by continuing to develop the distinction between a desirable ‘broad’ patriotism (aiguo zhuyi) and an undesirable ‘narrow’ nationalism. This appears somewhat incidentally in *The Critical Moment* and *Crossed Swords*, but receives a full exposition in *Outcry*,⁵⁸ where it is juxtaposed with ‘dogmatism’, ‘feudalism’ and ‘democracy’, all of which are presented as opposed to the ‘mainstream’. In this process, *Outcry* actually continues to mobilise many of the strategies seen in the pre-Taiwan crisis texts. Nationalism is thus not discarded altogether, but acknowledged as necessary insofar as it is a ‘psychological feeling and self-pride felt towards the special characteristics of one’s own nation’s culture’.⁵⁹ But at the same time, tight conditions are placed on the legitimate scope for using such a force by warning against adding an ‘ism’ (zhuyi) to the ‘nation’ (minzu) in a way that will create a xenophobic ideology in which everything must rely on the interests of the nation, and the nation comes above all else.

This negative kind of nationalism is condemned as ‘extreme nationalism’ (jiduan minzu zhuyi) or ‘narrow nationalism’ (xiayai minzu zhuyi), or what Deng Xiaoping called ‘great nationalism’ (jida minzu zhuyi) and ‘local nationalism’ (difang minzu zhuyi).⁶⁰ Its nature is demonstrated by referring to the examples of Indian nationalism (the BJP, nuclear tests), Japanese militarism (historical revisionism, films, textbooks), and Indonesian nationalism (atrocities against ethnic Chinese women and the property of ethnic Chinese during the downfall of Suharto). Within the Chinese context, it is represented by the Boxers, who rejected the 100 Days Reform movement due to their superstitious and reactionary nature and are comparable to the Red Guards who burned down the British Embassy during the Cultural Revolution and plunged the country into isolation until it was rescued by Deng Xiaoping.⁶¹ It is also to be found in the contemporary xenophobia found in popular anti-Americanism that does not understand the benefits that China accrues from foreign investment.

In fact, the pro-American sentiments in *Outcry* are one of the text’s most striking characteristics when compared to other texts in the discourse on

⁵⁸ Lin and Ma, *Outcry*, pp. 179-254.

⁵⁹ Lin and Ma, *Outcry*, p 194.

⁶⁰ Lin and Ma, *Outcry*, pp. 194-5.

⁶¹ Lin and Ma, *Outcry*, pp 202-3.

nationalism. Moreover, this is often developed by juxtaposing an upbeat view of the United States with themes that are raised in *China Can Say No*, as can be seen in the contrast painted between Chinese xenophobia and the ability of Americans to welcome Chinese restaurants in their country, or acknowledgement of the contribution that foreign investment makes to the Chinese economy. More direct criticisms of *China Can Say No* are made when it is singled out and castigated (along with *Behind the Demonizing of China*) for reducing American culture and politics to its most xenophobic and anti-Chinese elements. Meanwhile, the improvement in Sino-US relations that was being engineered by Jiang Zemin and Bill Clinton in the shape of the ‘strategic partnership’ is highly praised. Jiang in particular is applauded for following the example set by Deng Xiaoping, when he said after Tiananmen that relations with the US had to be restored, and also for ignoring the calls made by the authors of *China Can Say No* to use military force and heroic sacrifice to defy the United States. Such arguments, they claim, show how nationalism and leftism have merged together to create the biggest obstacle to China’s opening up to the world.⁶²

From this perspective, then, the challenge to extreme nationalism represented by *Outcry* could be said to be a variation on the discourse that is found in the texts of the early 1990s. Yet, like *The Third Eye*, this text also appears to tell us something about the rules governing discourse because it appears to have overstepped the mark of acceptability, with Liu Ji being removed from the centre of power to take up the deanship of a business school in Shanghai. Not only was the book deemed by members of the political elite to have gone too far in hanging out ideological disagreements in public, but even some of the more moderate among them, such as Wan Li, are reported to have taken exception to its coverage of nationalism.⁶³ Liu’s biggest error, however, was probably to break the silence surrounding the official discourse on nationalism just when Nato missiles struck the Chinese embassy in Belgrade.

A different strategy for appropriating popular nationalism for the elite can be found in Wang Xiaodong, who is particularly interesting because he is one of the few authors mentioned in the secondary literature who actually calls himself a nationalist. His literary career, moreover, spans the whole decade of the nationalist revival and reflects its movement between the elite, the sub-elite and the popular levels of discourse as he himself

⁶² Lin and Ma, *Outcry*, p. 229.

⁶³ Luo Bing, ‘Jinzhi kanwu de shoufeng’, (‘Tightening up Publications’), *Zhengming*, February 1999, pp. 11-13.

moves from being an editor and author for *Strategy and Management*, to being removed from this post early in 1999, after which he survives by becoming the co-author of the popular *China's Road Under the Shadow of Globalization*⁶⁴ that same year. He is thus active in developing the discourse of nationalism in the early 1990s, as a victim of the elite's fear of popular nationalism in 1999, and as a survivor who goes on to take part in the formation of the popular narrative of nationalist revival after Belgrade.

From a structuralist point of view, certain themes run through Wang's early works in *Strategy and Management* and his fully-fledged nationalism in *China's Road* that can be claimed to be central to the rise of the new nationalism. In all his texts, for example, he argues that international conflict is caused by the struggle for scarce resources and that globalisation leaves China's security and identity vulnerable because its principles and rules are shaped by the United States. His low opinion of the United States and the West in general is also reflected in his prescription that China has to acknowledge the bad intentions of its adversaries and stop believing that the obstacles to its development are domestic. Following on from this, he condemns 'liberal' Chinese 'intellectuals' who look unquestioningly to the West for solutions to China's problems.

Again, however, to treat Wang's texts as a unified whole is to overlook how he deploys similar themes behind different strategies as the political context changes. The subjects of Wang's early articles in *Strategy and Management* are thus Huntington's 'Clash of Civilizations' and the relationship between China's modernisation and the process of globalization.⁶⁵ Like his fellow authors, moreover, these strategies have to make sense against the backdrop of the leadership succession from Deng Xiaoping to Jiang Zemin. *China's Road*, on the other hand, is produced as an immediate response to the bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, in the situation of a commercially viable nationalist literature stimulated by *China Can Say No*, and while nationalism is being mobilized in the intra-party struggle over WTO membership.

When we read Wang with these different contexts in mind, it is notable how themes that originally constituted a relatively constrained

⁶⁴ Fang Ning, Wang Xiaodong, Song Qiang et al., *Quanqiuhua yinying xia de Zhongguo zhi lu (China's Road Under the Shadow of Globalization)*, Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1999.

⁶⁵ Shi Zhong (Wang Xiaodong), 'Zhongguo xiandaihua mianjian de tiaozhan' ('Challenges Faced by China's Modernization') *Zhanlüe yu guanli*, 1994:1, pp. 7-9.

nationalism in the early texts come to take on a much more active form in the later text. The sceptical attitude towards the United States and the emphasis on economic conflict in the early texts, for example, can be understood as largely determined by Huntington's attitude towards China and prophecies about future conflict being between civilisations rather than by any particularly strong advocacy of nationalism. Disagreement with Huntington also allows Wang to distance himself from advocates of Confucianism by pointing out that this has been rejected both by the social elite and the masses in China and that neo-Confucianism is an extremely weak movement.

Similarly, Wang's critical view of globalisation as bringing about the decline of the state can be understood as an attack on a remarkably upbeat appraisal of globalisation penned by Li Shenzhi of CASS.⁶⁶ This appears immediately before Wang's own article on 'The Problems Faced By China's Modernization', in a special section of *Strategy and Management*, that is the outcome of a conference on 'Reassessing China's Modernisation'. In this article, Li makes his own attempt to appropriate Deng Xiaoping by reproducing his warnings that China should not try to take on the role of leader of the Third World, by approving of the policy of peaceful non-alignment, and by praising Deng for being 'one of the few people of our time to have a correct view of globalisation'. In the unwritten context of Jiang Zemin's budding interest in the WTO at this time, Li also warns that trying to oppose the dynamics of globalisation will jeopardise China's access to foreign investment and points out that true 'patriotism' means wanting China to be a key player in developing the rules of world development, the first step of which is to understand the rules that already exist. Like many of the other writers in *Strategy and Management* Li thus neatly turns nationalism on its head, by arguing that only by taking a leading role in the process of globalisation 'can China's nationalist feelings be satisfied in the next century'. To leave no doubt about his negative view of extremist nationalism, he adds that 'If China's future takes the road of chauvinistic nationalism, I think it is definitely not the road to China's prosperity'.⁶⁷

Wang's response to Li is typical of the way that he uses literary strategies to locate himself within the dominant discourse of the political elite. Thus, while Li's article is an oblique challenge to the chauvinistic

⁶⁶ Li Shenzhi, 'Cong quanqiuhua guandian kan Zhongguo de xiandaihua wenti' ('Looking at China's Problems of Modernization from the Perspective of Globalization') *Zhanlüe yu guanli* 1994:1, pp. 5-6.

⁶⁷ Shi Zhong (Wang Xiaodong), 'Zhongguo xiandaihua mianjian de tiaozhan' ('Challenges Faced by China's Modernization') *Zhanlüe yu guanli*, 1994:1, p. 6.

elements of Jiang's nationalism, Wang explains his own position with reference to the victory of nationalists in the December 1993 parliamentary elections in Russia. This leads him to warn that the masses will turn to extreme nationalism unless an 'enlightened nationalist' can emerge to preserve the national interest. Wang thus uses his challenge to Li to effectively align himself with the leader who is emerging to lead China on an enlightened path in a world that has not yet achieved true globalisation and in which the awareness of national interests in the Western nations is still very strong. In other words, like so many of the texts of the early 1990s, Wang uses the debates of the time to associate himself with the ideology that is being promoted under Jiang. He thus accepts the need for nationalism, but conditions this by accepting that it will lead to disaster if it is preceded by the term 'extreme' (jiduan).

At first sight, Wang's contribution to *China's Road* appears to be markedly different from these early texts in that it is clearly an attempt to capitalise on the Belgrade bombing incident in the same way that *China Can Say No* rode the wave of anger caused by the Taiwan Strait crisis. A clear link is even made between these two texts through the rather crude mechanism of including in *China's Road* an edited and conflated version of two texts by Song Qiang, one of the authors of *China Can Say No*, thus entitling Song to be listed as a co-author.⁶⁸ Yet continuity between Wang's early texts and *China's Road* can also be seen, especially in the way that most of the themes are not new but merely developed to a more extreme degree. What used to be a measured criticism of 'liberals' who look to the West for answers to China's problems thus becomes a torrent of abuse. The producers of *River Elegy* are even condemned as preachers of a kind of 'reverse racism' that puts them on the same level as anxious Italians before the rise of fascism. The criticism of the United States is unrelenting, and the vision of a world in which conflict between nations is determined by a combination of racism and the struggle for economic resources is more developed.

Yet despite this continuity of themes in Wang, there is also something quite new in *China's Road*. This is the way in which he himself is trying to rewrite the whole narrative of the nationalist revival. While *China Can Say No* presents the original version by presenting the personal accounts of the transformation of its authors from lovers of all things Western into nationalists, Wang's version is constructed by appropriating the widest possible range of texts for the nationalist camp. The proliferation of sub-

⁶⁸ Song Qiang, 'Jianli 21 shiji de xin guoge' (Build a New National Character for the 21st Century), in Wang and Fang pp 134-150.

themes is thus a deliberate strategy deployed by Wang to consciously bind neo-conservatism, democracy and statism together with nationalism. And it is in *China's Road* that we see Wang Xiaodong claiming Wang Shaoguang and Hu Angang for his camp.

It is important to bring this strategy into full play when we consider the tendency of the secondary literature to accept the kind of categorization of texts and sub-themes deployed by Wang Xiaodong. Rather than accept such a categorization at face value, it might be more instructive to see it as calling into question the view that popular nationalism is a force that poses a possible threat to the political leadership. Instead, a popular nationalist like Wang Xiaodong can actually be seen as working to mediate between the various loci of power, indicated by the way in which he actually reproduces some of the well-established strategies of nationalist discourse coined by Deng Xiaoping and appropriated by Jiang Zemin. 'Nationalists', for example, are proclaimed as China's true democrats because, unlike 'liberals', they properly understand the relationship between 'national sovereignty' and 'human rights'. Such a view is clearly derived from the argument that there can be no human rights without state rights that appears in the *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping*, Vol. III. Similarly, Wang's definition of 'nationalism' is ultimately dependent on the way in which he distinguishes it from the arguments of 'liberals' who have little in common other than the fact that they are accused of denigrating Chinese culture, a categorisation that can be found at least as early as Deng's 1979 speech on the 'Four Cardinal Principles', which signalled the end of the Beijing Spring Democracy Wall movement.⁶⁹

The alignment with the political elite becomes increasingly clear when Wang carefully distances himself from any implied attack on the leadership. This can be seen most starkly right at the beginning of his section of *China's Road*, where he warns that the intention of Nato in bombing the embassy in Belgrade is to weaken the Chinese government by making it lose face in the eyes of an angry population when they see it does not have the power to react.⁷⁰ The implication of this is that those who demonstrate against the leadership have become the stooges of foreign powers.

⁶⁹ Deng Xiaoping, 'Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles', *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping (1975-1982)*, Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1984, pp 166-191.

⁷⁰ Fang Ning, Wang Xiaodong, Song Qiang et al., *Quanqiuhua yinying xia de Zhongguo zhi lu (China's Road Under the Shadow of Globalization)*, p. 6.

Wang's alignment with the state can also be seen in the way that he sketches out four possible scenarios for China's future as follows:

- i) China carries on as at present, but fails to deal with the problems of corruption and social order, meaning that it is unable to marshal its forces behind technological development and social cohesiveness in a way that will allow it to join the ranks of 'strong states' (qiangguo).
- ii) Political power becomes increasingly centralised in order to deal with corruption, achieve social stability and prevent ethnic separatism, but economic power remains dispersed in ways that will cause problems if a domestic or foreign crisis breaks out.
- iii) China breaks up like the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia.
- iv) China maintains stability and smoothly realises its political reforms so that the state (guojia) will have more power to deal with corruption, social disorder and inequality at home, and to modernise in a way that will allow China to enter the stage of advanced technology. In foreign affairs it will have sufficient power to preserve the national interest and will use its power to effectively promote world peace and development.⁷¹

Wang's preference is obviously for the fourth scenario, and he again uses this vision to bind together what he sees as the desirable political forces in China under the category of nationalism. As in the secondary literature, then, the diverse themes of statism, neo-conservatism and democracy can all be brought together as 'nationalist' on the grounds that they are distinguishable from a 'liberalism' that has no defining characteristics other than a desire to denigrate all things Chinese and emulate all things Western. The broad definition of nationalism that this allows him to generate is thus captured by the following quote:

In the end, China's 'nationalists' clearly know that they cannot realise the ideal of building a strong China that is able to stand up in the world without having a fair and democratic society, and a regime that has a high level of popular legitimacy. Similarly, their ideal of 'building a great China' is what motivates them to promote democracy more strongly than other people. The problem lies in how to truly and effectively promote democracy, allowing China to pass from the first

⁷¹ Wang Xiaodong, 'Zhongguo de minzu zhuyi he Zhongguo de weilai' ('Chinese Nationalism and China's Future'), in Fang Ning, Wang Xiaodong, Song Qiang et al., *Quanqiu hua yinying xia de Zhongguo zhi lu (China's Road Under the Shadow of Globalization)*, Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1999, pp. 100-101.

or the second scenarios above to the fourth, while avoiding the third. In this respect, the work of the ‘nationalists’ among China’s intellectuals is constructive and thus most likely to be China’s future direction.⁷²

The appropriation of democracy as a theme for nationalist discourse is thus complete, along with technology and authoritarianism. In this respect, Wang’s description of nationalism as China’s ‘sword and shield’ is truly ingenious in the way it plays on the Chinese pictogram for ‘contradiction’ in which these two concepts are combined.⁷³ Just as the contradictory themes of the 1990s are brought together under nationalism, Wang makes himself a nationalist object as he is located within the discourse that calls for all to ‘build socialism with Chinese characteristics’ that runs from Deng Xiaoping in the late 1970s through to the speeches of Hu Jintao and Jiang Zemin after Belgrade.⁷⁴ In the process, the wind is stolen from the attempt to appropriate ‘Deng Xiaoping Thought’ on the side of ‘liberalism’ as found in Li Shenzhi, who is expelled from the Party. In its stead, Wang’s presentation of nationalism as the true form of democracy (insofar as it embraces the entire nation in the global struggle for technological supremacy) is tailored to fit increasingly comfortably with the official discourse as the new ideological dispensation of the ‘Three Represents’ emerges and is finally consolidated within the Party line at the CCP’s Sixteenth National Congress in November 2002.

TOWARDS A POST-STRUCTURALIST INTERPRETATION

There has been a tendency amongst scholars of Chinese nationalism to interpret the key texts of the 1990s according to a specific definition of ‘nationalism’ and claiming that authors are working under ‘influences’ like the ‘strong state complex’ or according to intentions such as anti-Americanism. The above argument has suggested that an alternative

⁷² Wang Xiaodong, ‘Zhongguo de minzu zhuyi he Zhongguo de weilai’, 104-5.

⁷³ Wang Xiaodong, ‘Zhongguo de minzu zhuyi he Zhongguo de weilai’, p. 101.

⁷⁴ Hu Jintao, ‘Zhonggong zhongyang zhengzhiju changwei, guojia fu zhuxi Hu Jintao fabiao dianshi jianghua’ (‘Television Talk by Member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo and Vice State President Hu Jintao’). Renmin Ribao (People’s Daily), 10 May 1999, p. 1. Online. HTTP available at:

www.peopledaily.com.cn/item/ldhd/hujint/1999/jianghua. Consulted 15 October

2002; Jiang Zemin, ‘Zai huanying wo guo zhu nansilafu lianmeng gongheguo gongzuo renyuan dahui shang de jiang hua’, (‘Speech At the Large Meeting to Welcome Workers from Our Country’s Embassy in the Yugoslav Republic’), 13 May 1999. Online, HTTP available at: www.peopledaily.com.cn/item/ldhd/hjt.html.

interpretation can be arrived at by treating ‘nationalism’ as a discursive theme that is constructed from a set of contradictory political strategies.

A major advantage of such an approach is that it lays aside the knotty problems of definition and categorisation that the secondary literature on Chinese nationalism will never be able to resolve. Its main strength lies in the way that it focuses research on the disjunctions that exist in the texts so as to reveal the rules and conventions that render the discussion of nationalism meaningful. The fact that a book like Wang Shan’s *The Third Eye* can be classed as both nationalist, non-nationalist, or even anti-nationalist, is thus not overlooked but explained in terms of the overall structure of the text itself and the context within which it appears. Moreover, dissenting themes, such as those that frequently appear in the articles in *Strategy and Management*, become central to the discussion when they are understood as political acts within a specific situation.

A number of tools are suggested by discourse analysis for gaining insights into the strategies that makes sense of such acts. First of all, it is possible to suggest alternative contexts from those that are presented by the primary texts themselves. The dominant narrative contained in prominent works like *China Can Say No* needs to be treated with skepticism when unmentioned sequences of events are also taking place, such as the process of leadership succession. In the same way, it is important to juxtapose the texts with other texts that are not directly referred to when the official propaganda that so overtly propagates the main themes of the nationalist tradition is not directly referred to. When such methods are used, then statements that appear to be advocating nationalism, such as the advocacy of neo-Confucianism, may actually be part of a critique of a particular type of nationalism that is being mobilized for the purposes of establishing leadership legitimacy.

Further insights into the political strategies being deployed can also be gained by acknowledging the ‘surfaces’ from which the texts emerge. Whether these are within the Party-state-controlled media, think tanks with links to the Party-state, or from the commercial press will shed light on what it is possible to say. Equally, it is important to understand the ‘authorities of delimitation’ that circumscribe the realm of legitimate expression, whether these be the views and policies of the political elite, the conventions according to which ‘intellectuals’ work, or the demands set by the growing body of consumers. This is particularly important when it comes to understanding the hegemony of the texts, when they try to please myriad audiences by claiming all political tendencies for

nationalism, from anti-Americanism to democratisation, as seen so effectively in the works of Wang Xiaodong.

Ultimately, then, a poststructuralist interpretation of the Chinese texts treats 'nationalism' not as an object that has to be dug out, or 'crystallized', but as a contested concept around which various associated themes are divided, contrasted, regrouped, classified, and derived from one another. In this way, the narrative of nationalist revival can be deconstructed to reveal political strategies that are concerned not so much with standing up to American power, challenging the visions of Samuel Huntington or a psychological attachment to a strong state complex or Confucian tradition, but as the deployment of a large number of themes according to certain rules and conventions that are the stuff of Chinese political life.

Finally, it should also be pointed out that the discovery of rules, conventions and strategies is not the imposition of just another kind of structure on the speaking subject. Such a view would be a fundamental misunderstanding of poststructuralist method, which is mainly concerned with explaining how the diversity of opinions within a discourse is possible. It should in fact be clear from the above analysis that it is entirely inappropriate to view such an approach as in some way belittling the power for individual human beings to be the agents of political change. As Foucault himself explains:

On the contrary, my aim was to show what the differences consisted of, how it was possible for men, with the same discursive practice, to speak of different objects, to have contrasting opinions, and to make contradictory choices; my aim was also to show in what way discursive practices were distinguished from one another; in short, I wanted not to exclude the problem of the subject, but to define the positions and functions that the subject could occupy in the diversity of discourse.⁷⁵

In trying to sketch out how discourse analysis can be applied to the primary Chinese texts and the secondary English texts that discuss the nationalist revival in China in the 1990s, then, it is to be hoped that the way has been pointed towards the kind of interpretation within which the human element is given central place.

⁷⁵ Foucault *Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 221.