

Chapter One

Introduction: Toward a Political Sociology of China's Intellectuals

If the way the world works can be explained, it is not an eternal way;
if the concept one uses can be explained, it is not an eternal concept.

(Dao ke dao, fei heng dao; ming ke ming, fei heng ming.)

—Lao Zi, *Dao De Jing*¹

Tackling a “political sociology of China’s intellectuals” seems to be an impossible task. First of all, from “literati” to “intellectuals,” China’s educated elite has a history of over 2,500 years, whereas sociology, developed in the West, has a history of only about 150 years. The sociology of intellectuals is an even younger field. As a social group, the European “intelligentsia” (the closest resemblance to China’s intellectuals) did not emerge until the 1860s in Poland and Russia (Gella 1976), and the educated elite in France and in the United States did not identify themselves as “intellectuals” until the end of the nineteenth century. Thus, the sociological study of the group as a stratum is relatively new.

Second, the most accomplished scholars in the sociology of intellectuals, such as Weber, Gramsci, Mannheim, Shils, Parsons, Lipset, and Gouldner are Western. To be sure, they have all incorporated Chinese intellectuals into their historical-comparative research and have provided us with numerous insights, which will greatly inform our discussions in the book. Their focus, however, is largely on the Western and cross-cultural development of intellectuals.

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Third, the most recent scholarship on Chinese intellectuals, both Western and Chinese, treats intellectuals mainly from a historical or a literary point of view, although many studies do use a sociological perspective. As a matter of fact, the best-known scholars in the field, including Merle Goldman (Harvard University), Timothy Cheek (Colorado College), Yu Ying-shih (Princeton University), Yan Buke (Beijing University), and Xu Jilin (Shanghai Normal University), are all historians. Among other scholars who have done substantive work are Perry Link in language and literature (Princeton University), Tu Wei-ming in Chinese philosophy (Harvard University), Jin Yaoji (or Ambrose Y. C. King) in sociology (The Chinese University of Hong Kong), and Andrew Nathan in political science (Columbia University).

Thus, a politico-sociological study of Chinese intellectuals poses a major challenge. Not only do we need to bridge the gaps between the ancient and the contemporary, China and the West, but we also need to integrate history, the humanities, sociology, and political science. It is not an easy task, but since scholars such as these have already laid the foundations, we can at least help construct the building.

In this chapter, we will lay out some of the major issues concerning a political sociology of China's intellectuals. We will focus on a historical-comparative study of intellectuals' political roles: revolutionary, organic, critical, unattached, and professional. We will examine their ideological dispositions and ethical dilemmas underlying their political roles. We analyze the dilemmas they face between an ethic of responsibility and an ethic of ultimate ends, between *Dao* (morality and values) and *shi* (power), and between vocation and profession. These dilemmas lead to intellectuals' dual or split personalities. We will finally evolve a typology of China's intellectuals and their politics. Using various historical and theoretical perspectives to achieve a synthesized politico-sociological approach, this chapter serves as a foundation for our later exploration of various groups of contemporary intellectuals. (For an examination of the historical development of the intellectual in China as well as in the West, and the various definitions of intellectuals, see the appendix.)

Four Types of Intellectuals and Four Political Roles

Politics deals with power distribution, and sociology deals with individuals in group interaction. A political sociology of Chinese intellectuals

may be said to deal with how intellectuals in China handle their power relations with the state: in other words, the political roles of intellectuals in relation to the state.

One way of thinking about the political roles of today's intellectuals is outlined in Lipset and Basu's aptly titled essay, "The Roles of the Intellectual and Political Roles" (1976). They compare and contrast intellectuals across nations and discern four orders of understood political roles. These include the *gatekeeper*, or the innovative spokesperson for contending tendencies; the *moralist*, or the conscience of society; the *preserver*, helping to frame the legitimization of old or new authority; and the *functionary* who maintains the social order as bureaucrats, judges, educators, and various other experts and professionals. The *gatekeeper* and the *moralist* seem to follow the critical tradition of intellectuals, while the *preserver* and the *functionary* seem to be what we may call 'organic intellectuals.'

But what does "organic" mean, if we know what it means to be critical? In his analysis of intellectuals, Gramsci (1971:13) emphasizes their *political attitudes or affiliation*. On the one hand, he does agree that intellectual activity must be "distinguished in terms of its intrinsic characteristics," with, at the highest level, the "creators of various sciences, philosophy, art, etc.," and at the lowest level "administrators," and "divulgers" of accumulated intellectual wealth. This reminds us of Lipset's creators, disseminators, and appliers (cited in Nettl 1969:97; see also the appendix). Gouldner's humanistic and technical distinction, that is, between intellectuals and intelligentsia, may also be seen as based on the intrinsic characteristics of intellectual activity: intellectuals being mainly critical and emancipatory, intelligentsia being technical and practical (1979:48). Gouldner's *intellectuals* would probably include Lipset and Basu's first and second layers, creators and distributors, but would exclude most scientists and engineers, whereas *intelligentsia* would include most scientists, engineers, physicians, and some lawyers, or in a word, those we tend to call "professionals." Gramsci would probably agree with both Lipset and Gouldner on the differences among roles, albeit with some reservations.

Gramsci (1971:12), however, also believes that this intrinsic aspect is not the most important factor in reaching "a concrete approximation of reality."² A more fruitful way to approximate the reality of intellectuals should view them in the "ensemble of the system of relations in which these activities (and therefore the intellectual groups who personify

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them) have their place within the general complex of social relations” (Gramsci 1971:8). This is where we see the difference between organic intellectuals and traditional intellectuals.

The closest definition Gramsci (1971:6) gives for *organic* intellectuals is that they “are for the most part ‘specializations’ of partial aspects of the primitive activity of the new social type which the new class has brought into prominence.” In other words, it is these intellectuals who elaborate the various causes of the new class, the bourgeoisie. These include most of the functionaries that Lipset and Basu discuss. To be more specific, they accomplish this task on two superstructural levels. First, in civil society, they perform the function of ideological hegemony; and second, in political society, they perform the function of direct domination, or judicial government.

Therefore, “[t]he intellectuals are the dominant group’s ‘deputies’ exercising the subaltern functions of social hegemony and political government” (Gramsci 1971:12). They are the advocates, organizers, and administrators of a mostly dominant group. However, they can also be organic to the working class. When Karl Mannheim (1936:158) speaks of intellectuals furnishing the theorists for the bourgeoisie, the conservatives, and the proletariat, he is, in fact, also talking about organic intellectuals. So is A. Joseph Schumpeter (1976:154), who says that intellectuals “staff political bureaus, write party pamphlets and speeches, act as secretaries and advisers, make the individual politician’s newspaper reputation, which, though it is not everything, few men can afford to neglect.”

In contrast, *traditional* intellectuals are the intellectuals of the rural type, “linked to the social mass of country people and the town (particularly small-town) petite bourgeoisie, not as yet elaborated and set in motion by the capitalist system” (Gramsci 1971:14–5). These resemble the unattached intellectuals Mannheim discusses (1936:155).

What is the value of Gramsci’s characterization of intellectuals? The answer is that it highlights *the political relations between intellectuals and other social groups*, rather than their technical or cultural functions in society. Several issues, however, still need to be addressed. What other political roles do intellectuals perform? Do these social and political relations change? For example, how organic are organic intellectuals to, say, the industrialized bourgeoisie, or in the case of China, to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)? Does the organicity change over time? What about the critical intellectuals who do not

seem to be organic to either the capitalists or the working class, nor even linked to the rural masses? What about Mannheim's unattached intellectuals?

Mannheim (1936:155–6) believes that education levels the status and wealth differences among intellectuals. This does not mean, however, that individual intellectuals will not maintain their class and status ties or social interests. But it does mean that a “homogeneous medium” of multiple components has been created against which conflicting parties can “measure their strength.” “With the increase in the number and variety of the classes and strata from which the individual groups of intellectuals are recruited, there comes greater multiformity and contrast in the tendencies operating on the intellectual level which ties them to one another” (p. 157).

It is only in this sense that intellectuals are “to a large degree unattached to any social class” (p.156). In this sense, they transcend their own social classes.

The contemporary meaning of this unattachedness may be embodied in professionalism. Both Brint (1994) and Flacks (1991:12) note that since the 1960s, there has been a tendency for the knowledge class in the United States to move from their concern with ordinary people's everyday experience, public welfare, and social movements to a concern with expert knowledge, instrumental effectiveness, and expert recognition. There is a parallel development in China in the 1990s. Although there are different meanings of unattachedness at different times, as we will see in our historical exploration of unattached intellectuals, it suffices to say now that these intellectuals strive to be objective, independent of politics, and unattached to any class.

However, intellectuals are not always happy with the unattached status. They take one of two courses of action to get out of the predicament, the dilemma of this middle-of-the-road position. One is to become affiliated “with one or the other of the various antagonistic classes” (Mannheim 1936:158). In Flacks's (1991:3) words, they “might try to link to social forces seeking to replace or overthrow established power centers.” They thus become the organizers and participants of social movements, such as the Communists, working-class advocates, nationalists, feminists, and environmentalists (pp. 4–5, 13). Along with those who find a connection with the established power elites in the form of think tanks or managers (Dupuy 1991:80–1; Flacks 1991:3), they become what Gramsci would call “organic intellectuals.”

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It must be noted, though, that the rulers and their organic intellectuals need each other. For example, at the time of the founding of the People's Republic of China (1949), the CCP needed to enlist talented intellectuals in the minor parties to help reconstruct the country both politically and economically. Hence the name United Front. On the other hand, the minor parties needed the CCP to give them a chance to participate in that reconstruction, which they had sought desperately but hopelessly in the Republican era (Mazur 1997:52, 62–5, 70). The same can be said of the relationship between Deng Xiaoping and the intellectual reformers in the late 1970s (Kraus 1986:199). The intellectuals' identification with a social class or group, subordinate or dominant, does not, however, "free them from the disgust of the original members of that class" (Mannheim 1936:158). This is one of the emotional trials that triggered the dual and/or split personality, which we will discuss later in this chapter.

The other way out, according to Mannheim (1936:160–1), is to develop their own consciousness (not class consciousness, at least not in Mannheim's time) of their own social positions, and to strive to fulfill their mission as "watchmen in what otherwise would be a pitch-black night." They may be critical of the power elites and sympathetic to the "antagonistic class," but as in the case of some members of the New Left in Britain and in the United States, their space of discourse is in the universities and in the mass media. They can, however, easily switch to social movements as their discourse space (see Flacks 1991:8–12). These intellectuals, along with those engaged in social movements, are following the critical tradition.

Our analysis of Mannheim, Gramsci, and certain contemporary theorists yields at least three kinds of intellectuals according to their political roles: unattached, organic, and critical. In fact, some intellectuals have become so critical that they turn revolutionary. Indeed, Coser (1965:136) identifies at least four kinds of intellectuals. *Revolutionary* intellectuals like the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks hold power. Others advise those in power or serve them in bureaucratic functions, like the *Ideologues* under Napoleon, the Polish revisionists under Gomulka, the Fabians, and the members of Roosevelt's "brain trust." They connect with the established power elites, and we call them *organic* intellectuals. Still others criticize the powers that be, such as the "Old Testament prophets," who "may castigate political men for the errors of their ways." As also with the Dreyfusards and the Abolitionists, the critics may attempt "to shame men committed to an ethos of compromise by

holding up absolute standards of moral righteousness.” We call these people *critical* intellectuals. A fourth kind of intellectual may uphold “art for art’s sake” and “have no relationship whatever with things political, for whom the world of politics is like a nightmare.”³ We call them *unattached* intellectuals.

Parallel developments of the four kinds of intellectuals have also occurred in China. Goldman and Cheek (1987) identify three kinds of Chinese intellectuals or three (political) roles intellectuals play. They include the ideological speakers for the state, academic and professional elites, and critical intellectuals (see also Cheek 1992:135). They correspond to Coser’s last three kinds of intellectuals and three political roles. In the following discussion, we will expand these roles to include those of the revolutionary intellectuals in power, and we will also examine the various kinds of intellectuals in each category. Let us now trace the history of those developments in the context of this larger sociological scholarship, again comparing and contrasting China and the West.

Revolutionary Intellectuals in Power

In China, the 1911 Revolution seemed to have put many intellectuals in power, as we can see from the composition of the first Republican cabinet (see table 1 in the appendix). However, history did not really give this group a chance to rule. Chiang Kai-shek established a government that was populated with intellectuals,⁴ but it was bogged down in constant civil wars as well as in the war against the Japanese invasion. History did give China’s Communist intellectuals a chance, though. How did they do, then? To allow us to see the picture more clearly, we will compare the Jacobins in the French Revolution, the Bolsheviks in the Russian Revolution, and the Communists in the Chinese Revolution.

The Jacobins were members of one of the political clubs that were responsible for spreading the idea of *Liberty*, *Equality*, and *Fraternity*, the watchwords of the day. Coser (1965:146–7) observes that Jacobin intellectuals (lawyers, scientists, journalists, ex-priests, and former playwrights) were prominent as deputies to the National Convention. They were major agitators and leaders of mass organizations, including the Paris Commune. The very top leadership group of the government, the twelve men of the Committee of Public Safety, were all intellectuals: seven lawyers, one with a law degree; two army officers and engineers; one actor and playwright; and one Protestant minister. One can certainly say the same about the fathers of the Russian Revolution: Plechanov,

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Lenin, and Trotsky, and about the top leadership group of the CCP. The Politburo members of the CCP, who made the revolution, such as Mao Zedong (1893–1976), Liu Shaoqi (1889–1969), Zhu De (1886–1976), Zhou Enlai (1898–1976), and Lin Biao (1907–71), were all intellectuals. Invariably, these revolutionary intellectuals were alienated, marginalized, and concerned about social inequalities at the time of the revolutions (see Coser 1965; Skocpol 1994; Yu Ying-shih 1993).

What did the Jacobins do, then? They wanted to “transform radically the very fabric of French society and to transform it in the image of reason and virtue, as interpreted by the philosophers, especially Rousseau” (Coser 1965:150). This was exactly the orientation of the Chinese Communist intellectuals after “liberation” as well as that of the Bolsheviks. They wanted to destroy the old world and create a new one. The Jacobins, the Bolsheviks, and China’s Communists took many other similar steps. They all had created rituals and ceremonies to replace past memories. In France, festivals were created to honor “the Supreme Being, nature, the human race, the French People, liberty and equality, hatred of tyrants and traitors, friendship, temperance, mother-love, filial piety, and so forth” (p. 150). In China, festivals were created to honor the revolutionary past, such as the birthday of the Party, the May 4 Movement, Labor Day, Women’s Day, and Army Day. And the same happened after the Russian Revolution (Kenez 1985:138). Street names and personal names changed in France as well as in China. Infants in France were given names such as Constitution, Marat, Montagne, or the names of other revolutionary intellectuals, rather than Christian names. In China there were suddenly a lot of personal names such as Liberation (*jiefang*), National Construction (*jianguo*), and National Day Celebration (*guoqing*). In France, people were supposed to wear simple long trousers rather than the knee breeches of the aristocracy. In China, people were supposed to wear Sun Yat-sen jackets, rather than the traditional style jackets and long gowns the gentry had worn.⁵

However, changing names, creating new festivals, and wearing different styles of dress were not enough. The Jacobins, the Bolsheviks, and the Chinese Communists all believed in a dictatorship for the same reason: for a harmonious society to exist, the government had to eliminate conspirators, factionalists, and all enemies of reason. The Jacobins sincerely believed that for the Republic of Virtue to prevail, the guillotine had to continue functioning (Coser 1965:151), thus the Reign of Terror. The same was true with the Bolsheviks, who “saw the surrounding

world as an amorphous mass of enemies and the party as shock troops of historical necessity” (p. 162). In many waves of terror (to use Solzhenitsyn’s image), the ranks of the “enemies of the people” expanded from the kulaks (the rich peasants), the priests, the Nepmen (private businesspeople), and other “bourgeois specialists” at the end of the 1920s and the start of the 1930s to members of the Communist elite in the Great Purges of 1937–38 (Fitzpatrick 1999:190–217). Hundreds of professors were murdered (Krause 1991:20). And of the members of the Politburo between 1917 and 1923, “three died natural deaths, one committed suicide, five were executed by Stalin, and one, Trotsky, was murdered upon Stalin’s orders” (Coser 1965:167).

That is what the CCP believed and did as well. It launched one movement after another after “liberation” simply because, as Mao said, “the class enemies still exist and they don’t want to give up.” The strategy then was to keep looking for enemies, or in Mao’s words, to keep up “the continual revolution.” The Party found enemies in the landlords and in the rich peasants in the Land Reform movement in the early 1950s. It found enemies in capitalists and bourgeois intellectuals in the Three-Anti and Five-Anti movements as well as in the Anti-Rightist movement of the 1950s. And finally in the 1960s, it found enemies in its own ranks, the heads of the Party committees at various levels. All during the Cultural Revolution, they found contemporary sinners, while still continuing their search among the previous social groups. The Chinese guillotines kept working alongside thought reform.

It is fair to say, though, that the Communists sincerely meant to construct a more equal and harmonious society, and they found that the guillotine and thought reform were the only way to do it. Still, we find it hard to understand the terror introduced by the Jacobins, the Bolsheviks, and the Chinese Communists. In France the Committee of Public Safety, which reigned by terror, was headed by Robespierre. Neither he nor Mao was a bloodthirsty man. The contemporaries of the former testified that he was a great man, a truly sweet person (Coser 1965:152). Mao, too, captured the affection of many Chinese.⁶ Both intellectuals hoped for an equal and virtuous society. Why then did they create such terror among their people? We will discuss some of the reasons in the section on the ideological foundations of intellectuals.

Since the economic reform started in the 1980s, the Chinese revolutionary intellectuals’ monopoly of economic power has been weakened, but they still hold political power, albeit through a new generation. Six of

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the seven Politburo standing committee members are engineers. They are Jiang Zemin, Li Peng, Zhu Rongji, Li Ruihuan, Hu Jintao, and Wei Jianxing. The seventh, Li Lanqing, has an M.B.A. The educated class has provided 93% of the provincial level cadres, 90% of the cadres of the Ting and Ju (the next lower-level departments), and 80% of the county level cadres (Wang Xiaohui 1997; see also Li Cheng 2000). They control the means of production, monopolize the use of violence and the production of ideology, and discipline other intellectuals, much as Lenin intended his Vanguard party to do (Aronowitz 1990:21; Gouldner 1979:79). The Chinese still maintain the revolutionary intellectuals' ideological dispositions, bureaucratic thinking, and monopoly of power, although to a much lesser degree than their predecessors because of economic reforms.

In the remainder of the book, we will refer to the revolutionary intellectuals in China as the *bureaucratic ruling class* (BRC) to differentiate them from the previous generation of revolutionary cadres. In the study of political elites in China, a distinction is made between technocrats and career bureaucrats (Goldstein 1994). While the former may be more concerned about analyzing and solving problems by using scientific methods, the latter are more interested in maintaining power and privilege. The current bureaucrats, however, are leaning toward the latter. They do have a more flexible and less dogmatic ideological disposition, as we have just mentioned, and are more likely to function as modern rational and impersonal bureaucrats, as defined by Weber (1946). But while they may be more flexible on economic issues, they appear to be very stubborn on political ones.⁷ There will not be a separate chapter for them as there will be for the other major groups of intellectuals. But when we talk about “organic to,” “unattached to,” or “critical of,” the BRC is almost always the object of the preposition.

Scholars in China studies have done many wonderful in-depth studies of various revolutionary intellectuals in power, such as Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, Tao Zhu (1908–69), Deng Tuo (1912–66), Wu Han (1909–69), Zhang Chunqiao (1917–91), and Yao Wenyuan (1931–),⁸ and many of their findings will help us illuminate our discussions in this chapter. They provide further answers to the questions we have raised in this section about the behavior of intellectuals in power.

Organic Intellectuals

Rarely in power themselves, intellectuals have tried to exert their influence as advisers to those in power. This is what Shils (1969:31) means

by “the intellectuals’ authoritative exercise of power over concrete actions.” Examples abound in China, India, and Europe. However, there is a difference between the Chinese literati and their Western contemporaries. Marx ([1888] 1978:145) wrote when he criticized Western intellectuals, “The [Western] philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it.” In contrast, trying to change the world is what many Chinese intellectuals have been trying to do ever since Confucius, politically and/or culturally.

Nonetheless, Western intellectuals do have a tradition of political engagement, though to a lesser degree than China’s intellectuals. Organic intellectuals have functioned as personal agents, counselors, tutors, or friends of the sovereign, as illustrated by Plato, Aristotle, Alcuin, Hobbes, Milton, Lord Keynes, and so forth. In fact, Geoffrey Chaucer (ca.1340–1400) held a number of official positions, including comptroller of the customs at the port of London and diplomat to the Continent. John Milton (1608–74) served as foreign secretary of the government of the Commonwealth, and Dante Alighieri (1265–1321), the Italian poet, served as one of the six magistrates of Florence, though only for two months.

The Western intellectuals’ organic roles were strengthened in the past century since the emergence of the intellectual stratum after Marx’s time; so were the organic intellectuals’ roles in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. In the 1930s in the United States, “[l]arge segments of the intellectual and educated communities flocked to support . . . the Communist and Socialist parties” (Lipset and Basu 1976:132). Roosevelt incorporated experts into his administration, as have other presidents, governors, and mayors. Coser (1965) describes four cases of such intellectuals. They are the Fabians in England, the “brain trust” in the United States, the *Ideologues* in France under Napoleon, and the revisionists in Poland under Gomulka. I will now summarize these cases as well as the case of the Soviet organic intellectuals, and we will then see to what extent they resemble those in China.

The Fabians were a group of intellectuals who were concerned with social problems such as poverty amid the industrial prosperity of England in the 1880s. But rather than starting a mass social movement or violent revolution, they wanted to influence change by inoculating the people in power with socialist ideas. At a time when the ruling circles were aware of the need for reform, and were receptive to reform ideas, the Fabians were able to get the attention of the rulers and to underwrite

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reform measures in government and education. To help with the government reform, they befriended those in power and advised them in private, including such leading politicians as Lord Asquith, Balfour, Churchill, and Lloyd George. They sat on innumerable committees, drafted programs and proposals, gave thousands of lectures, published books and reports, and wrote pamphlets and leaflets. They “transformed the intellectual climate of British political life. They founded [the journal] *The New Statesmen* and the London School of Economics; they were the intellectual godfathers of the modern Labor Party” (Coser 1965:179). The Fabians were enormously successful.

Roosevelt’s “brain trust” refers to the large group of economists, agricultural experts, monetary experts, social workers, sociologists, and political scientists who came to the New Deal administration after the Great Depression. Although they “never created a coherent program or a common platform similar to that of the Fabians,” they nonetheless influenced various agencies by shaping programs and influencing legislation and executive action (Coser 1965:184). To the brain trusters of the thirties, we may also add the Rand Corporation of the sixties, the American Enterprise Institute of the eighties, and numerous other professionals who have served or are serving the establishment (see Israel 1986:ix).

The term *Ideologues* was used derisively by Napoleon to refer to the Ideologists who, as heirs of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, advocated, among other things, education as a means to teach rational and scientific principles so that a just and reasonable social order could be erected. In his ascendance to power, Napoleon courted these intellectuals for their influence on public opinion. He even joined one of their organizations, the Institut National, and “behaved like an *ideologue* on horseback. . . . [H]e appeared to the intellectuals as an incarnation of all the virtues they sought in enlightened men of power . . . their future philosopher-king” (Coser 1965:193–4). He wooed and won the most important men of letters, scientists, poets, philosophers, and so forth. After Napoleon’s coup on November 9, 1799, the latter believed that their moment had come. But they soon found that Napoleon, his power consolidated, no longer needed them. He dissolved the section of the Institute devoted to moral and political sciences, and replaced the Enlightenment educational system with an authoritarian one. It was suddenly clear that “he profoundly disliked these ‘men with a system’” who were not flexible to his needs. The honeymoon between intellect and power was now over (pp. 194–6). The intellectuals had hoped that Napoleon

would provide them with more opportunities to implement their Enlightenment ideals than they had had from the Jacobins. They were quickly disillusioned.

The revisionists were a group of Polish intellectuals who, in 1955, began to question the Party's dogmatic interpretation of Marxism-Leninism and its monopoly in various intellectual fields. The sociologist Jozef Chalasincki was the first to urge that the Communists should not uncritically accept every assertion of Marxism. But Chalasincki and his fellow intellectuals remained within the Communist Party. They sincerely hoped that under their respectful pressure the Party would change. Outside, however, the criticism of the political tyranny over science, art, and literature, of the economic plans, and of the condition of the working class intensified. Attacks appeared in all of the leading cultural periodicals and student papers. Further disturbances, chiefly riots in a factory in June 1956, and an alliance between intellectuals and workers helped bring Gomulka into power. Gomulka proceeded to denounce the errors and crimes of the previous Stalinist regime and moved to democratize political institutions and to extend workers' control over their industrial life. Many intellectuals served in the councils of government, and helped him uncover the crimes and errors of the past.

However, history repeated itself. Like Napoleon, Gomulka found that he no longer needed the intellectuals once he had rooted out the die-hard Stalinists and consolidated his power. He had far more need of the old Party functionaries and the support of the Soviet Union. The intellectuals' attack on the system became an obstacle to his rule. So Gomulka banned their journals, expelled their editors from the Party, and arrested and sentenced to prison students who protested (Coser 1965:197–203).

So there they are, the Fabians, the "brain trust," the *Ideologues*, and the revisionists. They either helped the leaders into power, as did the *Ideologues* and revisionists, or helped them in their reform movements, as did the Fabians and the American "brain trust." While the latter two succeeded to a great extent in implementing their ideas, the former two succeeded only in helping the men in their ascendance to, and consolidation of, power. Both Napoleon and Gomulka found that the intellectuals' ideas hindered their authoritarian rule. And the intellectuals found themselves betrayed by those they had hoped would be their "philosopher-kings." All of these intellectuals opted to advise the rulers

rather than to start a mass movement or a violent revolution, as the revolutionary intellectuals would have.

The development of the modern Russian organic intellectuals seems even more like that of China's. The first generation of Russia's men of letters tended to be employed "in chancelleries as secretaries and copyists, or were attached to newly established state institutions of learning (the Academy of Sciences and the University of Moscow) as official scribes and translators, or if more successful, to the [Czarist] court [in the eighteenth century] as its official bards and entertainers" (Nahirny 1983:36). During the Russian Revolution, the intelligentsia also served the Soviet regime as bureaucrats, propagandists, theorists, political educators, revolutionary writers, film and poster artists, and so forth. (Fitzpatrick 1970; Kenez 1985).⁹ In this way, intelligentsia were brought under state control, and law, medicine, journalism, and engineering were made to serve the Party's cause and became what the Ehrenreichs (1979) would call the 'professional-managerial class' (PMC), in effect a part of the bureaucracy (Ehrenreich 1990:181; Jones and Krause 1991; Krause 1991; Ross 1988:110–1). By the 1970s and 1980s psychiatrists and other doctors were actually being used to persecute dissidents (Jones and Krause 1991:243). As Lenin claimed, and as Mao in 1942 agreed, the intelligentsia were indispensable for the working-class movement, although they were stupid, democratic, backward, and pitifully unreliable (see Nahirny 1983:14) And said Stalin in 1931, "no ruling class has managed without its own intelligentsia" (cited in Bell 1973:103).¹⁰

But the organic intellectuals also conflicted with the radical revolutionaries. For example, prominent Bolsheviks spoke up in defense of free expression at the same time the Leninists were suppressing the non-Bolshevik press. Some of the people's commissars even resigned in protest. Gorky had to use his position to protect and support intellectuals who were in trouble with the regime (Kenez 1985:39–40, 102). Lunacharsky (1875–1933), who was head of the commissariat from 1917 to 1929, was in charge of education and the arts. In his view, the Soviet Union had to implement a European and American cultural style: progressive and liberal education with equal access to educational opportunities, and freedom and creativity in both science and the arts. His policies were defeated, and he found himself plagued by other differences. Lunacharsky finally left the department. But while he still retained some official titles, he suffered a great many political humiliations in

his last years (Fitzpatrick 1970:xv–xvi, 157, 309–10). He was luckier than some, however. Many intellectuals were unable to escape the firing squads and concentration camps of Stalin and his successors (see Fitzpatrick 1999:190–227; Gella 1976:16). Ilya Ehrenberg was another example of both “advise and dissent” (de Mauny 1984; Goldberg 1984).

What happened to the *Ideologues*, revisionists, and the Soviet intelligentsia also happened to the literati under the emperors and empresses and to the Chinese intellectuals under Mao and Deng, although there were some similar success stories of intellectuals influencing the powers, resembling those of the Fabians and “the brain trust.” Rather than starting their own dynasties or mass movements, these intellectuals opted to advise the kings and emperors and the Party boss, and served them in various capacities. Intellectuals were supposed to follow the calling to *li de*, *li gong*, and *li yan*, that is, to “achieve great virtues, perform meritorious services,” and “create great literary works.” This underscores the fact that intellectuals were part of every ruling class in China’s history, from feudal kings and emperors down to Communist and Guomindang regimes. That is what they were taught to do. The calling thus produced the *organic intellectuals*. We call them ‘organic intellectuals’ because they served an authority, whether the court or the Party, but in many ways they resembled the Jacobins in the sense that they did have some power, though not the ultimate power of the emperor. Their bureaucratic positions entrusted them with the power to administer local and departmental affairs, although it was the emperor or the Party Central Committee who had the final say.

In a book entitled *Rusheng yu Guo Yun* (Confucians and the fate of the nation), Liu Xiuming (1997) describes how literati strove to serve the various dynastic courts. Some examples are very illuminating. First and foremost, there is Confucius (551–479 B.C.E.). He was the founder and teacher of an entire system of ethical precepts for the proper management of society. It was Confucius who taught the emperors how to govern and the literati how to help him. Furthermore, he served as a senior official in the Kingdom of Lu (1100?–256 B.C.E.). To protect the kingdom’s interests, he led the efforts to defeat a rebellious army, helped the king to deflect insults, and even executed a lower official, Shao Zheng Mao, who was critical of the nobles.¹¹ After he resigned from office, he wandered around the kingdoms offering his services whenever they were wanted or hoping to be hired again as an official

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(Liu Xiuming 1997:25–30). He was the original organic intellectual. Other well-known scholar-officials described by Liu Xiuming include

Han Yu (768–824), poet and essayist

Du Fu (712–770), poet

Fan Zhongyan (989–1052), writer

Wang Anshi (1021–1086), writer and theorist

Zhu Xi (1130–1200), philosopher

Wen Tianxiang (1236–1283), poet and essayist

Wang Shouren (Yangming) (1472–1528), philosopher

Li Zhi (1527–1602), philosopher

Dong Qichang (1555–1637), painter, calligrapher, and connoisseur

Xu Guangqi (1562–1633), scientist

Many of the literati experienced frustrations and betrayals while serving the court, if they did not end up losing their lives in the process. Li Si (?–208 B.C.E.), the prime minister of Qin (221–206 B.C.E.), taught Qin Shi Huang, the first emperor, how to eliminate his enemies and at the same time how to gather talented people to his court. Though he was himself a Confucian, Li also advised the emperor to burn all of the Confucian books and to put to death those Confucians who did not obey the court, which the emperor obediently did. Li himself, however, was executed by the emperor's successor after failing in the court's power struggle (Liu Xiuming 1997:68–77). The emperor of the next dynasty, Han (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.), benefited greatly from another great Confucian, Dong Zhongshu (179–104 B.C.E.). Dong later advised one of the most successful emperors of the dynasty, Wu Di, to follow only Confucius and no one else. He also served in the court, although he was never given very important positions. And he almost lost his life for his belief that an accident, like a fire, may indicate a need to behead the corrupt officials in court (p. 106). He spent most of his time writing scholarly works that elaborated on the Confucian teachings (pp. 98–108). Wang Anshi (or Wang An-shih) became prime minister of the court. But like many scholar-officials, he met resistance to his reform efforts and finally resigned from office (pp. 440–1).¹² The philosopher Li Zhi was an official for twenty years, but he did not like his job. He was more interested in critiquing a contemporary strand of Confucianism that emphasized Heaven's Way at the expense of human

desires. He committed suicide in prison as a protest against persecution by the court because of his philosophy (Li Chunqing 1995:209–12; Liu Xiuming 1997:516–34).

There were successful scholar-officials. The Tang (618–907) dynasty's Yao Chong (642–721) and Song Jing (661–737) are prime examples. They not only helped Emperor Tang Xuanzong (685–762) in his power struggles and proposed reform measures, but also remonstrated with him when necessary (pp. 306–33). Literati like them were few, though.

Intellectuals were thus the “executive officers” of kings and emperors in various dynasties, their “deputies” as Gramsci would call them. They were supposed to, as Zhuge Liang (181–234) says, bend one's back to the task until one's dying day (*jugong jincui, si er hou yi*). And they were supposed to, as Fan Zhongyan (989–1052) says, be the first to worry about the troubles of the world and the last to enjoy its pleasures (*xian tianxia zhi you er you, hou tianxia zhi le er le*). Both refer to devotion to the emperor, or to a mission, usually given by one's masters or required by the literati tradition (see also Bol 1992). To become a scholar-official was the best way to save the world, because one would then, as Weber (1946:114–5) commented on politics as a vocation, hold the wheel of history. They were, however, constantly caught in power struggles and very few were able to influence politics the way Yao Chong and Song Jing did.

These were the earliest literati bureaucrats, or the bureaucratized intellectuals. Whenever a new dynasty was established, the new emperor would always surround himself with scholar-officials as advisers and administrators. For, as the saying goes, one can win a new dynasty on horseback but cannot govern from it (see also Tu Wei-ming 1993b:17–8; Jin Yaoji 1980:71).¹³ Jin Guantao and Liu Qingfeng (1989:173–5) rightly pointed out that one reason why Chinese civilization survived is that every time an old dynasty was destroyed and a new one established, Confucian scholars helped reconstruct the society socially, politically, and economically. The same process has been repeated hundreds of times over the last several thousand years. Indeed, the traditional Chinese polity (*zheng tong*) could not have survived without the support of the Confucian ideology embodied and developed by the literati (Tang Bo 1988:67–9, 72–4).

What about modern organic intellectuals? Since they have followed the same tradition as the literati, we are bound to see many of them in

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government. For example, almost all the twelve members of the first Republican cabinet were from the educated elite (see table 8.1 in the appendix). Some intellectuals have certainly been in leadership positions, like the revolutionary intellectuals in power. But others, like the *Ideologues* and revisionists, have been in supporting roles and have kept meeting frustrations.

Table 1.1 gives us an idea of the occupational distribution of students returning from America in 1917, 1925, and 1937, indicating especially the percentage of those intellectuals engaged in government service. Of all the students back from America, the tendency was for about a third to be hired by the government. One would assume that returned students from Europe and Japan would also join the government in large numbers. We mentioned earlier in a footnote that in the Guomindang (GMD) government, about 90 percent were intellectuals, according to Jiang Tingfu (or T. F. Tsiang 1980). It is probably fair to say that most would have to be bureaucratic functionaries. Statistics also indicate that in 1945, out of the CCP Politburo's 42 members, 27 were known to have enjoyed a higher education (2 did not, and the educational status of the remaining 13 was unknown) (North 1965:380–1).

As a Party largely of intellectuals, the CCP managed to attract to its services many intellectuals, whom they then transformed for the Party's purposes. "In the manner of past Chinese governments, the Communist

Table 1.1 Occupational Distribution of American-Trained Students

Year ¹	1917	1925	1937
Education	39.19%	38.36%	28.13%
Government service	35.59%	15.41%	29.34%
Business ²	11.66%	22.09%	13.45%
Foreign employ	1.90%	3.94%	4.60%
Professionals	8.27%	3.25%	2.60%
Social and Religious Work	3.39%	1.37%	1.30%
Others ³	—	15.58%	20.58%
Unknown	—	13.36%	14.33%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Total number of persons	472	584	1152

Source: Reconstructed from Y. C. Wang. 1966. *Chinese Intellectuals and the West 1872–1949*, p. 514.

Notes:

1. Years were chosen in an attempt to give equal intervals.
2. Business includes banking, commerce, and industry.
3. Others include homemakers and the deceased.

leadership has sought to utilize the skills of the intellectuals and to indoctrinate them with an all-embracing ideology—the ideology being Marxism-Leninism rather than the traditional Confucianism” (Goldman 1967:1). In 1939, Mao wrote that recruiting intellectuals into the revolutionary ranks was one of the important conditions for the success of the Communist cause (1966:583).¹⁴ Indeed, many intellectuals rushed to Yan’an, the mecca of the Chinese revolution. Or if they did not go to Yan’an, they supported the CCP from the GMD area.¹⁵ We will now focus only on the organic intellectuals of the Party before “liberation,” that is, the organic intellectuals dedicated to a social movement.¹⁶ This will lay a foundation for chapters 2 and 5, our study of the organic intellectuals after “liberation.”

The first sizable group of organic intellectuals in the Party was the League of Left-Wing Writers, established in March 1930. It was supported by Lu Xun (1881–1936), one of the most prominent writers and critics of the time, but it was first governed by Qu Qiubai (1899–1935) and later by Zhou Yang (1908–89), both of whom were Communist intellectuals (Goldman 1967:9–10). Its aim was to attack the Nationalist government and the rightist writers, and of course to spread Soviet literature and leftist programs (Holm 1991:30–3; Hsu 1983:569). It met dissent from some of Lu Xun’s close confidants, though, such as Feng Xuefeng and Hu Feng, who tended to adhere to a less doctrinaire attitude toward others and in literary matters (Goldman 1967:11–17). Nonetheless, a great number of literary works that depicted the life of the ordinary people appeared. Included in them are Mao Dun’s *Zi Ye* (The midnight), Lao She’s *Luotuo Xiangzi* (The story of Xiangzi), and Nie Er’s song *Yiyong Jun Jinxing Qu* (The song of the indignant and brave army) (Zheng Xian 1996:110), which is now the national anthem of the People’s Republic of China.

Soon after, intellectuals in Yan’an went through the first round of thought reform in the Rectification Campaign of 1942. The campaign began with Mao’s famous talk on art and literature. He urged writers to produce literature that would serve the Party and the working class. He called on the intellectuals to reform their bourgeois thinking and to become cogs and screws of the revolutionary machine (Holm 1991; Mao 1966; Vol. 3; see also Gao Xinmin and Zhang Shujun 2000). Most intellectuals willingly reformed themselves, like Ai Qing and He Qifang, both writers, and many began to write revolutionary literature. Holm’s (1991) study of the Lu Xun Academy of Art (or Luyi) in

Yan'an describes how the Communists used various folk dance and drama genres such as stilt-walking, *yangge* dance, and *yangge* plays in promoting their ideologies: themes of rebellion, satires of established authorities, class hatred, and so forth. Some of the most famous works produced during the wartimes include *Brother and Sister Clear Wasteland* (*xiong mei kai huang*) and *White-Haired Girl* (*bai mao nu*). Zhao Shuli's *Rhymes of Li Youcai* may be representative of the literature at the time. Here is a section of it:

Join the Peasants' Union; it will make us stronger.
 Anybody cheats us, we can fetch him a good crack.
 Old Yen can't now press us any longer.
 All the stolen land back, all the squeezed cash back;
 Reduce all the rents to the last squeezed penny;
 Out with officials who want to get us on the run.
 We're going to be tough with them, we aren't having any.
 Join the Peasants' Union if you want to see it done.
 (quoted in Chesneaux 1973:138)

These works were quite effective in generating enthusiasm among the peasants and soldiers in their struggle against internal and external enemies (Holm 1991:275–6, 321–3).

While many followed the Party's directives in reforming art and literature, writers like Ding Ling and Xiao Jun, however, were reluctant to acknowledge any "problems." Wang Shiwei, the severest critic of the Yan'an government, refused to budge. In the spirit of Lu Xun, he criticized the inequality in Yan'an and the hypocrisy of the Party (see Dai Qing 1994; Holm 1991; Gao Xinmin and Zhang Shujun 2000:344–65). He became "the symbol of resistance" to Mao's definition of intellectuals' roles (Apter and Cheek 1994:xx), and he is a good example of organic intellectuals who also perform critical roles. Rather than blindly subordinating themselves to the Party, Wang is actually saying that they should criticize it. (He paid a price with his life.) This is an aspect of the intellectual we will further explore in this chapter. Figure 1.1 may help us understand the complexity of intellectuals' roles.

The Rectification Campaign went on to sweep the GMD area as well. Here the Communist intellectuals Ai Siqi, Chen Boda, and Zhou Yang led the charge. Again, there was resistance from more liberal intellectuals of the Left like Feng Xuefeng. The Party, however, continued its