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IRRESISTIBLE LAUGHTER: A Q-METHODOLOGICAL STUDY OF CHINESE HUMOUR AND COMMUNICATION

by

Min Zheng

A Thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
Through the Department of Communication Studies
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts at
the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

1993

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To My Grandmother

誰這英

who taught me how to laugh
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ABSTRACT

This thesis is an empirical investigation of humour and communication in Chinese culture, applying Q-Methodology supported by subjective scientific principles. Taking British cultural studies as its point of departure, it seeks to discover the cultural meanings of humour which is potentially opposite to the dominant ideology. Studies of five single cases were conducted to reach an understanding of the patterns and common tendencies in the underlying subjectivity of the reception of humour by the Chinese media audience.

As a methodological device, some 60 cartoons selected from the Chinese journals published during the years of 1990 and 1991 constituted a Q-sample. Five Chinese respondents were invited to sort the Q-sample under 8 conditions of instruction: Chinese tradition, the Chinese government's point of view, present Chinese culture, ideals, the students' point of view, a playful attitude, Western culture and self.

The factor structures which resulted from Q-sorting show striking distinctions between the government's point of view and the respondents' self perceptions. Most of them idealized the students, who openly confronted the government ideological control in the 1989 movement. Although one of the respondents idealized the government's points of view, he acknowledged the difference between words and deeds of the government. Respondents appear to be tolerant about Western culture as
well as traditional culture of China, both of which are strongly opposed by the Chinese government, through the mass media, in order to maintain its ideological conformity. Also according to the results of the study, play elements are active in the present culture, containing potential threats to ideological control. Interviews with these respondents assisted in making comprehensive interpretations of their factor structures.

In the context of the West, cultural studies approaches to the study of media reception have been focused on differing interpretations, attributable to an individual's social status and interests rather than imposed to ideologically preferred meanings. This thesis, however, attempts to bring the scope of study beyond interpretations of specific media texts to discover the potential of oppositional meanings in a culture, which can be made manifest through probing into people's underlying subjectivity in media reception of humour.
INTRODUCTION

The people, and the people alone, are the moving force in the making of world history (Mao, 1972: 118).

This thesis is a Q-methodological investigation into the underlying subjectivity of humour reception in Chinese culture and communication. It especially seeks to discover the potential for people's resistance towards the dominant ideology, which goes beyond the oppositional reading of media texts to include their possible alternative ways of perceiving their tradition, present society and other cultures.

In communication studies, humour has mostly been treated within a behavioral framework. Following the stimulus-response mechanism, special emphasis is put on the effects of humorous forms used as persuasion and education. This thesis, however, is undertaken in response to British cultural studies' approaches, which propose to bring the important issue of ideology into the study of media practice as well as human communication (Hall, 1982).

Some sixty cartoons, the popular humorous form circulated in the Chinese media, will be used as a site to engage people in everyday conversations regarding ideological discourse. Through this methodological device, an understanding of cultural meanings of humour reception, as well as media
reception in general, will hopefully be reached.

Cultural studies emerged in post war Britain as an intellectual endeavour in analyzing and criticizing capitalist societies, which, according to scholars within the approaches, have been maintained through ideological domination rather than economic exploitation and political coercion alone. To maintain social stability under the existent political and economic system, ideology works as a form of social control by shaping people's mental formation and winning people's consent. The significant and consistent concern of this school is "the role which media play in the circulation and securing of dominant ideological definitions and representations" (Hall, 1980c: 118).

Cultural studies' efforts in media studies are double-edged towards both production of media texts and reception of the texts. For the former, it reveals that through prearranging series of commonly accepted codes¹, the different areas of social life were mapped out in a "dominant cultural order," and hierarchically organized into "preferred meanings" in the media texts. Audiences therefore are mostly positioned to take the ideological representations as a mirror reflection of the real world.

The analysis of the ideologically orientated media texts

¹. Code is defined by John Fiske as "a rule-governed system of signs, whose rules and conventions are shared amongst members of a culture, and which is used to generate and circulate meanings in and for that culture (1987: 4).
has brought up the other focus, the exploration of the relation between how media products were encoded and how they were decoded. Stuart Hall (1980), the prominent leader of British cultural studies, suggests that "the former can attempt to 'pre-fer' but cannot exactly prescribe or guarantee the latter, which has its own conditions of existence" (Hall, 1980c: 135). This assumption provides a basis for consideration of a more active "audience," who might sometimes create their own interpretations if they find that their social experience does not correspond with the ideologically constructed reality.

Both of these orientations towards media production and reception are aimed at creating awareness on the part of the "repressed," so that they can participate in the actual political struggle for social change and cultural transformation. For the same primary intellectual goal, this thesis is devoted to the latter part of the venture, namely to look for potential oppositional cultural meanings in people's reception of media products. Located within a specific cultural context such as China, this effort will hopefully encourage the creation of oppositional cultural meanings in any society under ideological control.

For this purpose, we will review some key propositions. First of all, Hall's encoding/decoding model offers three hypothetical propositions for some possible decoding positions: the dominant-hegemonic position, the negotiated
position and the oppositional position (Hall, 1980c: 136 - 138).

The first position suggests an ideal-typical case of "perfectly transparent communication," where the audience takes meanings of a media text "full and straight." They would decode the message in terms of the reference code in which it has been encoded in a hegemonic manner. The negotiated position of decoding contains a mixture of adaptive and oppositional elements. And there is also the oppositional position that points to the possibility of the viewer decoding the message in a "globally contrary way." S/he "detotalizes the message in the preferred code in order to retotalize the message within some alternative framework of reference" (Hall, 1980c: 138).

In Hall's account, both the negotiated and oppositional positions imply the existence of "the struggle in discourse" between dominant and subordinated meanings. But he stresses that the alternative interpretation is very limited when compared with the overwhelming ideological "effect" of the media messages.

The American variant of cultural studies, typically John Fiske's (1987) study of television, seems to offer a more optimistic or perhaps naive version of the decoding practice. However, it is necessary for our purpose to draw some relevant propositions about the audiences' resistance in media reception when his theoretical limitations are properly
pointed out. Fiske takes television viewing itself as "playfully resistant to the ideological control" (Turner, 1990: 221). The possibility of making oppositional meanings on the part of the audience is mainly explained by the polysemic\(^2\) nature of the texts, the different social status of the audience and the pleasure of playing with ideological rules. He incorporates these elements to explore the potential resistance towards the dominant ideology embedded in mass media messages.

The theorizing on decoding of specific texts to explain the potential for resistance demonstrates its weakness in at least two respects. First of all, it assumes that everything in the mass media should be resisted, that it is certainly not true. Secondly, oppositional reading as it exists is momentary and individual; it cannot be regarded as conscious and collective resistance towards the ideological conceptions of the political and social system as a whole (Lembo & Tucker, 1990).

This thesis will attempt to avoid these shortcomings by applying Q-methodology to address the theories of resistance. What is at issue for our study is not determining the extent of resistance in making specific oppositional interpretations out of media texts. Rather, it is to discover the potential resistance reflected in people's subjective structure, i.e.,

\(^2\) In Fiske's account (1987), polysemy is another word for multiplicity of meanings that a media text provides (p. 15).
their general attitudes and perceptions towards the society and culture where media reception constitutes an important part of their lives.

In this regard, we will also draw our propositions from the important notion of play. To Fiske (1987: 19), pleasure results from producing meanings of the world and of self that are felt to serve the interest of the reader rather than those who dominate. And he likens the process of pleasure producing to the act of play, i.e., the reader playing a text as one plays a game.

What is at issue here are the rules of the game. Here rules are recognized as the ideological force through which the dominant try to win the consent of the subordinate (Fiske, 1987: 325). Therefore, in Fiske’s sense, the rules should also offer a chance for free play of the readers to their own situation and conditions. Pleasure then arises from their control of the rules and their making of meanings. Furthermore, oppositional meanings may occur, constituting resistance.

This is a misunderstanding of Huizinga’s notion of play (1968). Huizinga was the first contemporary writer to relate play to culture. Reviewing his theory of play helps us to see that television viewing itself is a false play which may contain all the appearance of play but nothing of the sort (Huizinga, 1968: 205). In this sense, if an audience voluntarily accepts the rules and orders (Fiske, 1987: 234)
for the false play as given, it seems impossible that their play will ever break the rules. Huizinga's play theory for media reception, however, does not only imply the flexible interpretations of the media but it emphasizes the spirit of play, the ability to recognize the unfairness of the game and the possibility of making "a new community with rules of its own" (Huizinga, 1968: 12). Therefore, this recognition of play elements in a culture should also be included in the study of media reception in terms of ideological discourse.

Theoretical propositions reviewed within cultural studies approaches and elsewhere will be addressed in an abductive manner through the application of Q-Methodology. The fundamental objective of the thesis can therefore be achieved by dealing with the following three aspects.

First of all, this study attempts to discover potential oppositional meanings by probing into the subjective structures of the readers. Here, the specific meanings of the texts and the different interpretations of the texts, which have become the primary focus of cultural studies, are not our major concern. To put it simply, it is possible for one person to oppose some media messages out of his or her own interest, all the while supporting basic capitalist values wholeheartedly. In contrast, what is crucial in this study are the audiences' opinions about and attitudes towards their actual environment, wherein media practices take place. It is believed that these subjective areas of media reception should
be relatively consistent, although people's interpretations can vary greatly from one text to another and from one moment to another.

The investigation of subjective structures through the application of Q-Methodology makes it possible to discover if there is any potential cultural meaning oppositional to the dominant ideology. In particular, the subjective acknowledgment of the existence of play elements in a culture will imply the potential for actions which would break the ideological rules in favour of more radical social changes.

Secondly, the concern over media reception will be addressed through the use of humorous forms as a methodological device, i.e., cartoons circulated in the mass media. The media representation and reception of humorous forms, like any other signifying practice, are full of struggles between the dominant ideology and the oppositional cultural meanings.

Studies have been done to analyze humour as an important tool for conveying dominant ideology, especially in stereotyping and marginalizing certain subordinate groups without appearing to have serious consequences (Mulkay, 1988, Powell, 1988, Husband, 1988). Paton (1988), for example, sees comedians as conveyers of social morality. Some scholars, however, find there are resistant elements in humorous forms which can help to break through ideological conceptions (Benton, 1988, Davies, 1988, Kellner, 1979). Often humour is
perceived as a paradoxical phenomenon, both as social control and resistance (Powell, 1988).

In either case, humorous forms such as cartoons, like any other media product, seek to represent the complication of the world in every sphere of social life. Hence, a set of cartoons selected from mass media as a Q-sample for this study will approximate the structure of the mass media to generate new meanings of the respondents about their environment.

Thirdly, this thesis will apply cultural studies' approaches within the context of the Chinese environment. Just as liberalism became the dominant ideology of Western societies in order to stabilize and legitimate bourgeois class rule, a blend of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ideology has been officially celebrated in China, constituting its special form of social control for the benefit of the "socialist" elite (Kellner, 1978). Also because of the different cultural, political as well as ideological backgrounds, resistance and oppositional meanings as exist take on different forms. It is the hope of the researcher that the examination of the subjective structure of media reception in the cultural environment of China will draw relevant implications for "audience studies" within cultural studies approaches.

The basic structure of the thesis is as follows: The first chapter mostly reviews in detail the literature within cultural studies approaches to conceptualize the idea of media reception in terms of ideological struggle. Also play
theories of culture and communication are incorporated into the discussion of oppositional meanings inside a culture greatly affected and controlled by dominant ideology. All of these will result in some basic propositions about media reception and oppositional meanings.

Chapter two is a discussion of humorous forms, including cartoons circulated in the mass media. From different perspectives, it draws on some important discussions about the characteristics of humour. It attempts to justify the use of cartoon as a methodological device to probe into the underlying subjectivity of media reception because cartoons are typically paradoxical of media products: they can be used to promote ideological definitions as well as to express potential resistance.

Chapter three focuses on the Chinese cultural resistability. It analyzes the epistemological basis of Confucianism, which had been the dominant ideology of the Chinese dynasties for over two thousand years before the cultural empire faced the threat of extinction from Western industrialized nations. The contradictions of this ideology as well as the powerful co-existence of Taoism, considered to be the subordinate ideology, constitute "passive resistance" towards the dominant ideology (Yang, 1991, Berger, 1963). The unique form of Chinese resistance is characterized as avoiding direct social confrontations and resorting to subjective opposition. It leads to periodic social upsurges and forces
the people in power to change their policies and strategies. The present Chinese culture under Xiaoping Deng can also be perceived by this characteristic.

The forth chapter introduces the principle and the technique of Q-methodology. The theoretical propositions reviewed about potential resistance existing in media reception will be used in the methodological design of a Q-sample and the conditions of instruction. As well, the analysis of the results will be guided by these theories.

Chapter five interprets the Q-sort results, assisted by the interviews of the five respondents. The theoretical propositions reviewed will also help in understanding the subjective structure of media reception in China, especially the potential of resistance demonstrated through people’s interaction with the media products in Chinese society.

The last chapter will conclude the study in two ways. Firstly, it will demonstrate the existing oppositional meanings that the audiences have when interacting with mass media in Chinese culture. Secondly, it will suggest that further studies be conducted to explore how oppositional meanings -- beyond specific media texts -- can be encouraged so as to constitute a real challenge to the dominant ideology.
CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL PROPOSITIONS

1.1 Media Representation of the Dominant Ideology

An investigation of media reception within ideological discourse has to be primarily grounded in the theoretical propositions of the media's role in circulating the ideology and securing dominant social definitions. For this purpose, we will start with a brief review of the evolving concept of ideology within the British cultural studies approaches and then relate it to the unique media practice of representation and signification.

The use of "ideology" in cultural studies' analysis of media has benefited from the legacy of the Marxist theories. Originally in Marxist historical materialism, the definition of ideology was limited to the forms of consciousness, such as ideas, meanings, conceptions, theories, beliefs, etc (Hall, 1977: 320). An ideology, as Corcoran puts it:

reflects a systematic orientation of thought, a point of view derived from the conditions of existence and the forms of thought and feeling of a particular group (1987: 6).

Although different social groups or classes can have their own ideology, the ideology of the "ruling class" became the dominant one because of its ruling material force (Hall, 1977: 321). The dominant ideology is therefore a "false consciousness" which veiled the eyes of the working class and
disguised their "real" relations to the world around them (Turner, 1990: 25).

These Marxist formulations of ideology have been challenged by British cultural studies, most noticeably in Stuart Hall’s work. Hall accepts Althusser’s reformulation of ideology which is defined as a system of representations, images and concepts and "it is above all as structures that they impose on the vast majority of men" (Hall, 1977: 326). Here, ideology operates not explicitly as consciousness which one can choose to accept or reject rationally. Rather, it is a "new form of unconsciousness" (Hall, 1977: 326). It is not false either, but the "real" framework "through which men interpret, make sense of, experience and 'live' the material conditions in which they find themselves" (Hall, 1980a: 33).

The unconscious and taken-for-grantedness nature of ideology is exemplified by the form of common sense:

The residue of absolutely basic and commonly-agreed, consensual wisdom -- helps us to classify out the world in simple but meaningful terms. Precisely, common sense does not require reasoning, argument, logic, thought: it is spontaneously available, thoroughly recognizable, widely shared (Hall, 1977: 325).

Considering commercialism as the most important part of dominant ideology the capitalist societies, Hall says that people do not accept it through their conscious conceptualization. But the act of constantly watching television and being persuaded by commercials to buy things they don’t really need is the very experience of ideological
control. Hall therefore argues that, "ideologies are the sphere of the lived -- the sphere of experiencing, rather than of 'thinking'" (1977: 326). It is from this point of view that ideology is considered at the level of "ideological practice" within a social formation.

Social formation, according to Althusser, is "an ever pre-given structured complex whole" (In Hall 1977: 327) working at different levels -- economic, social political and ideological etc. Hall warns that one should not take the simple determination of one level (e.g. the economic) over all the others. Rather, practice at each level contributes its different effects and the interplay of these practices results in a single conjuncture structured in dominance. In this sense, ideological practice, like other practices, has its relative autonomous functions, and possesses its own mechanisms and articulations in overall social formation (Hall, 1982: 83-85, 1977: 326-327).

Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci's concept of "hegemony" has provided a seminal framework for cultural studies approaches, within which to analyze the function of the dominant ideology in modern societies:

Hegemony implied that the dominance of certain formations was secured not by ideological compulsion, but by cultural leadership. ... Hegemony is understood as accomplished, not without the due measure of legal and compulsion, but principally by means of winning the active consent of those classes and groups who were subordinated within it (Hall, 1982: 85).

The term "hegemony" illustrates the characteristic changes of
the dominant ideology in capitalist societies, as well as the modern world in general. For one thing, the ruling class whom the dominant ideology favours is no longer limited to the social group with dominant material force. Instead, Gramsci speaks of a dominant class alliance or ruling bloc in the position of cultural leadership. They are able to bring about not only a unison of economic and political aims, but also intellectual and moral unity according to their own long-term interests (Hall, 1980b: 35).

The second aspect of the change, within Gramsci's perception of hegemony, concerns the increasingly important role ideology plays as the "cement" in a social formation (Hall, 1977: 333). The dominant alliance, after achieving direction over the "decisive economic nucleus," is able to expand this into social, political and cultural leadership and authority throughout civil society and the state, attempting to unify and reconstruct the social formation (Hall, 1982: 85). In this process, the term "hegemony" aides in understanding the fundamental function the dominant ideology plays in mobilizing and winning the consent of the masses around "an organic tendency which favours the development and expansion of the dominant social and productive system of life as a whole" (1982: 85).

In Chinese social formation, ideology also plays a crucial role. Although the dominant ideology performs a hegemonic function in order to win the consent of the people,
this function seems to be more complicated comparing with that of the Western world. Marxism, once a theoretical guide for the revolutionary movement, degenerated into the dominant ideology, which as Kellner points out:

became an instrument of hegemony, or what Oskar Negt calls a "legitimation science," serving the interests of the new socialist ruling elite by legitimating the institutions of the emerging socialist societies (1978: 47).

In China, the social system is believed to be based on the public ownership of the production force (Li, 1989). The Communist Party is supposed to represent the interest of all the working groups; it persuades and mobilizes the masses to work towards the ultimate goal of communism.

However, the hegemonic function has two important differences from that of Western societies. Firstly, the coercive function works side by side with hegemony. If people have any objection and fail to hide it, they will have to face ideological oppression of various forms. The coercive function is justified because it is part of official deception that there exists a life-and-death line dividing our friends and enemies in the ideological arena. Therefore, you have to take the right stance, or you will turn yourself into the camp of enemy at whom dictatorship of the proletariat is targeted.

Secondly, scholars have agreed that hegemony tends to

3. Chinese society is not really a socialist one although it is called so. This is as if Western societies, called democratic, are not really democratic. This study is therefore designed to let the audience give their own meanings of their culture and society through their interaction with the mass media.
incorporate aspects of old residual ideologies and emergent radical ideologies (Williams in Hall, 1977: 332, Kellner, 1978: 51). This is especially the case in China where traditional moralities and Western influence are both present in the official ideology, to win the consent of the people. The Confucian ideology which dominated the country for over 2,000 years is still being practised by the present government, although it has been severely condemned in terms of theory (Fye, 1968). And an "Open Door" policy implemented since the early 1980's is the most evident attempt by the Communist Party government to make its ideology more "flexible, adapting to changing historical conditions and oppositional struggle" (Kellner, 1978: 51). These helped to comfort oppositional groups and keep society stabilized.

Hence, despite the differences between Chinese society, and Western capitalist society, hegemony is the main form taken by the dominant ideology. The hegemonic nature of ideology can be demonstrated through its special mechanisms and articulations.

Following Althusser and Volosinov, Hall (1982) brings to light the symbolic and linguistic character of ideological discourse. The production of social knowledge takes place through a process of representation and signification within a language system or other system of signs that generate meaning. Signs are the material registration of meaning:

A sign does not simply exist as a part of reality - - it reflects and refracts another reality.
Therefore it may distort that reality or be true to it, or may perceive it from a special point of view, and so forth. Every sign is subject to the criteria of ideological evolution (Volosinov in Hall, 1977: 329)...

It follows, in cultural studies approaches, that the signifying systems such as language and others are the privileged sphere of ideological articulation. It is asserted that wherever a sign is present, ideology is present too. One gets the meaning of a sign because s/he has access to the codes and conventions which govern the signifying process and are commonly shared in a linguistic or cultural community. In this sense, meanings can definitely be arranged through codes within the sign system. The formula "the universe of ideologies arranged in codes and sub-codes within the universe of signs" (Eco in Hall, 1977: 330) describes the process whereby ideologically preferred meanings are ceaselessly produced. Through this process of ideological articulation, the different areas of social life, the different levels and kinds of relation and practice, appear to be "held together" in social intelligibility by the web of preferred meanings (Hall, 1977: 328-331).

These preliminary explanations of ideology have led British cultural studies to focus its attention on the ideological analysis of the media. The media are referred to as "ideological apparatuses" because of their "decisive and fundamental leadership" in the cultural sphere of modern societies. Through production and consumption of "social
knowledge," the media accomplish their role of ideological domination (Hall, 1977: 340).

As signifying agents, the media are engaged in producing meanings and messages. This practice of meaning, like any other social practice at the level of politics and the economy, operates within the over-all power structure of the social formation -- of dominance and subordination. The media function, in the domain of meaning, as an "ideological model of power," which, in turn, have their societal effects and consequences on the social formation in general (Hall, 1982: 64).

More specifically, by producing meanings and messages in the form of sign-vehicles of a specific kind, media are not simply reflective or expressive of a particular power model. Instead, by actively and selectively presenting what is "real," they participate in defining the social reality, which favours and legitimates the existing structure of social formation (Hall, 1982: 64). In the words of Stuart Hall, the work of the mass media is a movement towards "shaping the whole ideological environment:"

This movement -- towards the winning of a universal validity and legitimacy for accounts of the world which are partial and particular, and towards the grounding of these particular constructions in the taken-for-grantedness of "the real" -- is indeed the characteristic and defining mechanism of "the ideological" (Hall, 1982: 65).

It has to be noted that the media's power of "shaping perceptions, cognitions and preferences" implies an attempt to
sustain a specific range of subjectivities in favour of a specific social order. And it is this socially constructed subjectivity within the ideological environment that this thesis turns to address. In the next section, some theoretical propositions of audience-based research within cultural studies' approaches will be drawn to reach some basic understanding of media reception in terms of ideological struggle.

1.2 Media Reception of the Dominated

The shift of attention to audience studies in British cultural studies was marked by Stuart Hall's article "Encoding and Decoding in the TV Discourse." In this work, consumption of messages as well as production of the messages are considered as two linked but distinctive moments to complete a process through which the ideological role of the media is sustained.

In the unique practice of the media, meanings and messages are carried through the operation of codes in the form of sign-vehicles. In terms of the transposition into and out of this mode of symbolic exchange, the first moment, "encoding" as it is called by Hall (1980c), involves employing codes to yield meanings and messages. And this must be

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followed by the other moment, of "decoding," in which the message is confronted and understood by the audience. Although each of the moments has its own conditions of existence, they are related within the operation of naturalized codes through which the ideological value is fixed (Hall, 1980c: 130):

Certain codes may, of course, be so widely distributed in a specific language community or culture, and be learned at so early an age, that they appear not to be constructed -- the effect of an articulation between sign and referent -- but to be "naturally" given. ...Actually, what naturalized codes demonstrate is the degree of habituation produced when there is a fundamental alignment and reciprocity -- an achieved equivalence -- between the encoding and decoding sides of an exchange of meanings (Hall, 1980c: 132).

However, due to the structural difference of relation and position between encoder-producer and decoder-receiver, the "lack of equivalence" could arise between these two sides of the communicative exchange. In order to elaborate the complex process of decoding and variant articulations in which encoding/decoding can be combined, Hall offers three hypothetical propositions for some possible decoding positions (Hall, 1980c).

The first position suggests an ideal-typical case of "perfectly transparent communication," where the audience takes meanings of a media text "full and straight" and decodes the message in terms of the reference code in which it has been encoded in a hegemonic manner. The negotiated position of decoding, according to Hall, contains a mixture of adaptive
and oppositional elements:

It accords the privileged position to the dominant definition of events while reserving the right to make a more negotiated application to "local conditions," to its own more corporate positions (Hall, 1980c: 137).

And in the last hypothetical position, Hall points to the possibility of the viewer to decode the message in a "globally contrary way." In this position, the viewer "detotalizes the message in the preferred code in order to retotalize the message within some alternative framework of reference" (Hall, 1980c: 138). Both the negotiated and oppositional positions seem to imply the existence of "the struggle in discourse" between dominant and subordinated meanings. Although the alternative interpretation is very limited compared with the overwhelming ideological "effect" of the media messages, the encoding/decoding model provides a new research source for inquiries into the potential of the dominated in the practice of media reception. Many researchers within cultural studies tradition have exploited this area of interest, most typical being John Fiske, perhaps the leading proponent of the American variant of cultural studies.

Fiske's account of television reception relates to the ideological struggle by emphasizing the potential power of the audience in resisting the dominantly preferred meanings. Though it is not strictly defined, the term "resistance" is a pivotal concept around which Fiske evolves his arguments in his book *Television Culture* (1987). He refers to Gramsci's
notion of hegemony, which is not a monolithic and final achievement, but

a constant struggle against a multitude of resistances to ideological domination, and any balance of forces that it achieves is always precarious, always in need of re-achievement (Fiske, 1987: 41).

This grants resistance an important role in the concrete practical analysis of ideological formations within cultures. Emphasizing this side of the ideological coin, Fiske explains how "the dominant ideology, working through the form of the text, can be resisted, evaded, or negotiated with, in varying degrees by differently socially situated readers" (Fiske, 1987: 41). And since resistance is categorized into two main types: the power to construct meanings, pleasures, and social identities, and the power to construct a socioeconomic system, Fiske seems to focus on the former, the semiotic power. Therefore, resistance, in his writing, concerns the power to make meanings which are oppositional to ideologically preferred ones and which "validate the social experience of the subordinate but not their subordination" (1987: 19). It also concerns the pleasure that results from "the production of meanings of the world and of self that are felt to serve the interests of the reader rather than those of the dominant."

In an attempt to explore resistance in terms of the power to make oppositional meanings, Fiske basically develops his arguments from two angles concerning audiences and texts. For
television audiences, Fiske (1987) makes a distinction between socially and textually produced subjects. Following Morley (1980), Willeman (1978) and Neale (1977), he remarks:

The social subject has a history, lives in a particular social formation (a mix of class, gender, age, region, etc), and is constituted by a complex cultural history that is both social and textual. The subjectivity results from "real" social experience and from mediated or textual experience. The actual television viewer is a primarily social subject. This social subjectivity is more influential in the construction of meanings than the textually produced subjectivity which exists only at the moment of reading (1987: 62).

In a word, the understanding of the reading activity should go beyond the reading activity because it is subjected to a wide variety of social determinations. Here, Fiske (1987) is concerned about socially situated individuals who have different experience in social relationships and different interests. It is therefore impossible that they will always construct meanings identical to the ideologically preferred ones. To put it another way, Fiske says:

The subordinate may be disempowered, but they are not powerless. There is a power in resisting power, there is a power in maintaining one's social identity in opposition to that proposed by the dominant ideology, there is a power in asserting one's own subcultural values against the dominant ones. There is, in short, a power in being different (1987: 20).

When talking about reading texts, Fiske draws attention to the polysemic and flexible nature of television. He characterizes television texts as:

a state of tension between forces of closure, which
attempts to close down its potential of meanings in favour of its preferred ones, and forces of openness, which enable its variety of viewers to negotiate an appropriate variety of meanings (1987: 84).

The polysemy or openness of the television, to Fiske, is constituted by a series of textual devices including irony, metaphor, jokes, contradiction and excess, etc. The common character of these devices is that they always involve more than one discourse. While some discourse is definitely preferred, the texts cannot control the meanings in producing "a unified and singular position for the reading subject" (Fiske, 1987: 87). Therefore, the polysemy or openness of the texts gives readers a chance to produce alternative meanings which connect with their social experience.

In addition to Hall's model of encoding/decoding, Fiske's theory further extends the potential for making subordinate oppositional meanings. However, before this can be drawn upon propositions in this study, some problems have to be pointed out and critiqued.

First of all, the theorizing on audience reception seems to assume that everything in the mass media should be resisted, which is certainly not real. But what are the audiences resisting, or what should they be resisting? The American variant of cultural studies approaches has never made this clear. Therefore, their discussions are limited to whether there exists resistance and the extent of resistance. This thesis, however, attempts to extend the scope of the
present study to look for expressions of such resistance as they exist. Those potential oppositional cultural meanings discovered in the audience's underlying subjectivity will suggest how the dominant ideology can be resisted and how alternative ways of viewing media as well as society are possible. It is believed that only through this effort, can we support British cultural studies' original thesis of criticizing the dominant ideology and promoting changes in modern society.

Secondly, because media texts are bound to be polysemic, alternative or even oppositional readings are fully expected and well confined within the ideological parameters. Oppositional reading as exists towards one text at one time according to one's interest in society does not necessarily guarantee his or her opposition towards other texts at other times. Consequently, the oppositional meanings aimed towards specific texts cannot be regarded as conscious resistance towards the ideological conceptions of the political and social system as a whole. It only exists at a perceptual and momentary level, rather than at a conceptual and decisive one.

Related to this, the analysis of the possible "resistant reading" or "oppositional meaning" mainly emphasizes the diversity of social relations and identities in accounting for oppositional readings (Lembo & Tucker, 1990). When age, gender, region, occupation, family background and economic status etc. are all taken into account for one's position
within the structure of social relations, we will find that every individual actually belongs to different social groups. Therefore, if s/he happens to have an oppositional meaning, one cannot be sure if this is shared by a certain social group. As a result, resistance at an individual level rather than the collective level cannot constitute a threat to the dominant ideology.

These problems which range from assuming that all mass media content should be resisted, to assuming that resistance does exist, if not dealt with properly, might cause cultural studies approaches to lose their critical standing.

Cultural studies approaches are understood to reveal how capitalist societies work and how to change them (Turner, 1990: 5). But Fiske’s theory, for example, does not seem to be strongly motivated by this goal. Capitalism in his account is a social system which has been able to produce a variety of voices in response to a diversity of social groups. In a capitalist society such as America, "the subordinate groups have retained a remarkable diversity of social identities" (Fiske, 1987: 310). Against this background there is the television industry, which Fiske says exists

on one hand, to make profit for, and promote the ideology of, the few, but on the other hand, to promote an oppositional, intransigent, or at least different cultural meanings (Fiske, 1987: 20).

If the ideological domination and the resistance to this domination can be happily, and almost automatically reconciled within capitalist culture, what is the need for talking about
change? From Fiske's point of view, it can only be acknowledged that the resistance, if there exists any, or the power to make oppositional meanings on the part of the subordinate is actually part of the working of the dynamics of capitalism. As a result, Fiske accepts the very principles of the society that he wishes to criticize (Lembo & Tucker, 1990: 97). The result of his isolated and fragmented semiotic resistance may just assist in maintaining the capitalist social system and in preventing any changes.

Up to this point, we have reviewed Hall's model of encoding/decoding and Fiske's notion of resistance in television viewing, with appropriate critiques. In order to avoid all these problems while still drawing on the basic propositions about peoples' potential for resistance in media reception, we should take further steps towards the people. Through the investigation of their underlying subjectivity rather than their specific interpretations of certain media texts, we can have a better understanding of what they want to and should resist and how they resist at perceptual or conceptual levels, and at individual or collective levels.

To look for these expressions of oppositional meanings in people's underlying subjectivity of media reception, we will use another important notion in the next section.

1.3 Play as Resistance

Resistance has been connected with the notion of play on
some occasions (Fiske, 1987, and Barthes in Fiske, 1987). For instance, John Fiske regards TV viewing as "playfully resistant to ideological control" (Turner, 1990: 221). His notion of play here, just as his concept of resistance, is limited within the TV viewing activity. Following Barthes (1977), Fiske (1987) attempted to associate pleasure with resistance and subversion in television media reception. He remarks:

Pleasure results from the production of meanings of the world and of self that are felt to serve the interest of the reader rather than those of the dominant. ...Pleasure requires a sense of control over meanings and active participation in the cultural process (1987: 19).

The process of pleasure or resistance is likened to the act of play, i.e., the reader playing a text as one plays a game:

Games and texts construct ordered worlds within which the player/readers can experience the pleasures of both freedom and control in particular, for our purpose, playing the text involves the freedom of making and controlling meanings (Fiske, 1987: 230-231).

What is at issue are the rules of the game. Here rules are recognized as the ideological force through which the dominant try to win the consent of the subordinate to the control of their "unruliness" (Fiske, 1987: 325). However, according to Fiske, these rules do not totally confine readers to the domain of preferred meanings but offer the chance for free play by the readers. In play, the player or the reader can adopt a role of his or her own choosing, which might be different to what is prepared for him or her in reality. With
this positioning, s/he can thus exert control over rules, roles and representations to reach their own meanings. Thus play produces the pleasure of rule-breaking and is therefore resistant in nature. Fiske further explains:

The play may not in itself be resistive or subversive, but the control or empowerment that it entails produces a self-esteem in the subordinate that at least makes resistance or subversion possible (Fiske, 1987: 232).

However, the connection between play and culture could be explored further. In the domain of subjectivity, play should be viewed as a kind of attitude rather than a mere activity.

To reach this understanding, we will review Huizinga’s notion of play (1968). He was the first contemporary writer to relate play to culture. In his term, play is "a given magnitude existing before culture itself existed, accompanying it and pervading it from the earliest beginnings right up to the phase of civilization we are now living in" (Huizinga, 1968: 4). His argument that play is the base of a culture is elaborated through the main characteristics of play.

First of all, play is not "ordinary," "real" or "serious", it is "standing quite consciously outside "ordinary" life as being "not serious." Secondly, play is free activity with its participants voluntarily joining in. This brings out the third characteristic, that play is held by commonly-agreed and voluntarily-obeyed rules. And finally, play is "an activity connected with no material interest, and no profit can be gained by it" (Huizinga, 1968: 9-13).
In Huizinga’s account, cultural forms such as law, war, diplomacy, business, marriage, education and the arts, all arise in the form of play because play marks itself off from the course of the natural process and creates some temporary abolition of the ordinary world. Although animals play, they can never play beyond nature. Human beings, on the other hand, started their long journey of civilization from play. "Something which was originally play passed into something which was no longer play and could henceforth be called culture" (1968: 46).

However, Huizinga’s notion of play has been misunderstood in many places. In the case of Fiske’s account, since play is essential to all cultural forms, then television might as well be happily referred to as play. What is neglected here is that Huizinga makes a distinction between pure, genuine and fair play and false play. The latter may well be "used consciously or unconsciously to cover up some social or political design" (p. 205). By this, Huizinga suggests that some play forms in modern societies have all the appearance of play but are nothing of the sort:

Modern social life is being dominated to an ever-increasing extent by a quality that has something in common with play and yields the illusion of a strongly developed play-factor (1968: 205).

This is to say that speaking of play-element in culture does not mean that among the various activities of civilized life an important place is reserved for play (Huizinga, 1968: 46). Quite the contrary, there exists false play where the essence
of play is threatened with extinction (Huizinga, 1968: 199). It can be understood that with power and interests involved in modern societies, the rules of false play have become social control for the benefit of a few people at the expense of others.

We can also conclude that the television industry is false play. When audiences watch television, the rules and order are supposed to be "voluntarily accepted by them" (Fiske, 1987: 234). Although orderliness is never total, it is always within the limits of ideological control.

The most significant implication of Huizinga’s notion of play for media reception lies in its distinction between play as a kind of mental state and as an activity. Play-spirit in a culture does not necessarily appear in the real act of play. Ironically, it sometimes can appear in rejection of false play or by staying away from false play. That is what Huizinga called a "spoil-sport" who "shatters the play-world" and "robs play of its illusion" (1968: 11). "Spoil-sports" are also named by Huizinga as "innovators," "prophets" and "conscientious objectors," etc. (Huizinga, 1968: 12). They are the ones who see through the rules of the game, and it sometimes happens, they are determined to "make a new community with rules of its own."

Following this line, what we should turn to is the possible existence of "spoil-sports" as the real source of resistance rather than Fiske’s players in the false play of
television viewing. The real essence of play does not mean the actual viewing of television programs; it concerns the attitudes one holds towards the conceptions of how mass media and television industry works. Only if the rules of the game or the ideological conceptions are seen through and alternative ways of life are brought into perspective, is it possible to resist the false play of the mass media. In this sense, the existence of resistance can be indicated to some degree by the existence of play elements, which are characterised as original, free, non-serious, non-profitable and voluntary.
CHAPTER 2: HUMOUR AS RESISTANCE AND CONTROL

In the first chapter, we drew mainly from cultural studies approaches to discuss how dominant ideology is represented in the media and how this process is not without contradiction and struggle. Along the same line, it was explained that audiences sometimes construct their oppositional meanings towards ideology when they encounter media products. And it has also been noted, by analyzing Huizinga’s play theory that resistance can be identified with oppositional cultural meanings collectively held by the dominated. Resistance at this level consists of more of a threat to the dominant ideology than are individual different interpretations towards specific ideological messages.

This thesis proposes to discover oppositional cultural meanings of Chinese audiences, especially through their appreciation of cartoons. In this chapter, therefore, we will proceed to deal with the symbolic forms of humour. We will start with an analysis of Koestler’s theory of humour (1963) and others to find out the pattern underlying all humorous forms including cartoons. Like other symbolic forms in general, humorous varieties should also be considered a site of ideological struggle. So the second section of this chapter will review discussions of humorous forms as both ideological control and resistance to the control. And
finally, theories will be drawn in to delineate why such resistance as exists, can be discovered in people's subjectivity through their media reception, i.e., humour reception and appreciation.

2.1 The Theories of Humour

When Arthur Koestler (1963) proposed a theory to explain the act of creating, he started with the phenomenon of humour. He attempted to outline a pattern of humour in the term he coined as "bisociation." He wrote:

The pattern underlying all varieties of humour is "bisociative" -- perceiving a situation or event in two habitually incompatible association contexts. This causes an abrupt transfer of the train of thought from one matrix to another governed by a different logic or rule of the game. But certain emotions, owing to their greater inertia and persistence, cannot follow such nimble jumps of thought; discarded by reason, they are worked off along channels of least resistance in laughter (1963: 95).

How is this pattern of humour different from other patterns of symbolic representations? We might reach an understanding by applying Koestler's formula to analyze a Chinese joke.

(A scene in a medical ward)

Doctor: Heated wine hurts your live and cooled wine hurts your lung. Why not just stop drinking?

Drunkard: It hurts my heart if I don't drink.

In this joke it is obvious that the patient is addictive to drinking and might go on drinking despite its harmfulness. However, this is not the statement directly made or
illustrated. It is through a unique pattern that implicitly structures the situation. The tension is raised by the doctor giving the warnings, but it never reaches a point where the patient would expectedly have to agree to quit drinking, his favourite habit. Rather, the tension is brought to an abrupt end by the patient's unexpected reaction: he would be even sadder if he stops drinking than by his health being hurt.

What is crucial here is that the situation is described "in two self-consistent but habitually incompatible frames of reference" (Koestler, 1963: 35). In this joke, one frame of reference is that drinking alcohol is harmful to one's health. The other frame of reference involves the degree of addiction. Each of these two frames of reference is completely logical in itself and incompatible to the other. The emergence of the second frame, though, causes a clash between them by contradicting with or negating the first frame. The description of the situation happens to rely on this clash; "it is not merely likened to one associative context, but disociated with two" (Koestler, 1963: 35). Metaphorically, the pattern of humour was referred to by Koestler (1963) as the working of thought on two or more planes which clash at a certain point and join into one unit.

At the same time, Koestler (1963) noted that there must be an assemblage between these two originally unrelated contexts to cause them to intersect. It is "the discovery of hidden similarities" (Koestler, 1963: 27) that disociates the
two frames of reference. This can find roots in the eighteenth century idea of "incongruity" first elaborated by Scottish poet and philosopher James Beattie, who wrote:

Laughter arises from the view of two or more inconsistent, unsuitable, or incongruous parts of circumstances, considered as united in complex object or assemblage, or as acquiring a sort of mutual relation from the peculiar manner in which the mind takes notice of them (Beattie in Piddington, 1963: 167).

In the above-mentioned joke, for instance, the comic effect is established because the use of the word "hurt" bisociates the consequences of both "stopping drinking" and "going on drinking."

So far, the pattern of humour has been analyzed within a single point of culmination. The high forms of sustained humour, Koestler points out, "do not rely on a single effect but on a series of minor explosions or a continuous state of mild amusement" (Koestler, 1963: 37). This is true in the case of the situation comedy or even a small joke. The same is true in cartoons: the different frames of reference do not present themselves only in narrative, but also in pictures, captions or dialogues which are combined to make clashes possible.

In order to further explain how humour is represented, Koestler (1963) introduced an important pair of concepts: matrix and code. The frames of reference, or planes of thought, and associative contexts are alluded to as "matrix" governed by a "code" of fixed rules.
The matrix is pattern before you, representing the ensemble of permissible moves. ...The code is the fixed, invariable factor in a skill or habit; the matrix its variable aspect. The two words do not refer to different entities, they refer to different aspects of the same activity (Koestler, 1963: 40).

Here let's return to the joke. Either the doctor's warning or the patient's reaction is logical to us because we are, consciously or unconsciously, familiar with different codes, i.e., sets of rules governing each of them. However, the emergence of the second matrix, the patient's reaction, somewhat breaks the exclusiveness of some code as it proves to be operating at the same time in two contradictory or opposite matrices.

In a general process of symbolic representation, certain codes are expected to generate a certain range of meanings and to project an interpretative perspective. In humorous forms, though, certain code seems to present two or more meanings which necessarily conflicting with each other. When one meaning is sustained there are always other meanings, not just being alternated, but being rejected or contradicted. For instance, when the patient reacts, the doctor's warning is no longer valued as much as when it stands alone.

Koestler's pattern of humour, in Mulkay's analysis, is called the duality of humour. A humorous form depends on its capacity to convey that "one interpretation is unexpectedly replaced by another internally consistent and understandable, yet incongruous, interpretation" (Mulkay, 1988: 28). The
second frame of reference or matrix is usually what we refer to as punch line. Mulkay (1988) explains:

An effective punch line introduces a new perspective which deviates from the rest of the text, yet which retains some kind of interpretative coherence. However, the new meaning supplied by the punch line is never made fully explicit. In other words, the punch line of a standard joke is always allusive (p. 29).

Here, in order to have the comic effect, the emergence of the second frame, the punch line, is necessarily made to deny what has gone before. The punch line, in this sense, introduces the "preferred meaning" (not just ideologically preferred) in a humorous text.

Based on the previous discussion, two conflicting tendencies can be perceived. On one hand, humorous forms exist by denying or ignoring the conventional rules in daily life that include the elements of the dominant ideology. So the use of humorous forms can be critical and progressive in nature. Because of the same characteristic, on the other hand, humorous forms can be used to convey serious ideological messages by way of the punch line or implicit interpretations they suggest. In this sense, the use of representation of humour can also be conservative, reflecting and strengthening social norms of the status quo.

For the former, those humorous works should have the least threat to the dominant ideology so that they can be allowed in the mass media. Consequently, humorous forms circulated in the mass media are part of the mechanism to
promote hegemonic ideology. And this constitutes the focus in the next section.

2.2 Humorous Forms in Mass Media

Humorous forms, like any other symbolic forms, cannot avoid being exploited to the advantage of powerful groups. Powell (1988) sees the use of humour as "a social control device in the service of what is believed to be a universally shared and superior social morality" (Powell, 1988: 98). According to him, humour works towards "norm enforcement" because its formation is a process of assessment with highly context-bound social assumptions. Through the unique pattern of bisociation or duality, humour possesses an "initial defining mechanism which clarifies and differentiates for the users the "normal" from "abnormal" or "socially deviant" (Powell, 1988: 99). That is to say, humour can be used, through a punch line or as the result of humorous texts to reinforce a dominant ideological position.

...humour can either be conceptualized as elucidating group norms or negotiating and maintaining group, i.e. shared, notions of reality. At the more macro and formalised mass media level, humour is more to do with some ideas concerning over-all social values and "normal views" or reality (Powell, 1988: 93).

Powell (1988) equates humorous texts with formal intelligence tests because they invite one to respond appropriately so as to demonstrate one's social competence and understanding of the way things are. As a result, humour helps to provide the
correct answers to the tests, to construct a map of meanings, through symbolic forms, about the social relationship in dominant structure.

Some scholars (Husband, 1988, Palmer, 1987) have especially attempted to reveal how humour is used to strengthen stereotypes of minority people and support the dominant social structure. For instance:

A. how many X (Chinese, feminists, or blacks) does it take to screw in a light bulb.

B. Three. One holds the bulb standing on a table and the other two turn the table around.

This joke does not just describe the event of screwing in a light bulb; the underlying meaning is that the group of people are so abnormal and stupid in doing things.

Davies (1988), however, seems to have analyzed the nature of racist jokes on a higher level. He attempts to find out the correlation between the increased popularity of ethnic jokes about allegedly stupid minorities and the rationality of the industrial society (Davies, 1988: 3). It is suggested by dominant ideology that modern societies should be organized rationally through impersonal forces of the market place, bureaucracy and modern science. Jokes are a minor form of upholding modern society, for jokes about other peoples' stupidity are meant to strengthen the rationality of our own race (Davies, 1988: 27).

Jokes about stupid outsiders as an affirmation of the value of rationality, efficiency and applied intelligence on the part of the joke-tellers, for any failure to live up to and conform to these
qualities is ascribed to outsiders and then subjected to severe ridicule. It is they who are comically stupid and irrational and we who are intelligent, skilled and organized (Davies, 1988: 4).

Jokes of this kind always exploit people's stereotypical conceptions of certain ethnic groups: because their ways of doing things are different from ours, they are considered to be stupid. As previously discussed, in a humorous text, some frames of reference ought to be denied by the others. When stupidity tends to be the kind of frame to be targeted, rationality, the "normal" way of doing things, is preferred every time a joke is told. Therefore, jokes of this kind offer a temporary release from the anxieties and tensions caused by rationality and a reinforcement of rationality.

Thus, the predominant ethnic jokes of the Western industrial societies serve the cause of rationality by denigrating its opposite - stupidity - and by defusing the various anxieties of those who live in the modern rational world. As such, they constitute a minor form of social control (Davies, 1988: 9).

Kellner (1979) has a similar view when he explains the conflict/resolution model. According to him, television situation comedies centre on a conflict or problem that is resolved neatly within an expected time period. By this, it suggests that all problems can be solved within the existing society and eventually this typical comical resolution of an everyday moral conflict would reinforces conventional morality (Kellner, 1979: 19).

It seems, however, that any theory regarding humour's
ideological and social function cannot avoid mentioning the paradoxical nature of humour. Humorous forms, according to some scholars (Kellner, 1979, Davies, 1988, Palmer, 1987), do express resistance even, to some extent through the mass media.

Davies (1988) mentions that while jokes in modern societies are an expression of the values of rationality "they are also a protest against the perceived irrationality of the dominant modes of political authority and coercion" (Davies, 1988: 21). This is especially the case in Eastern European countries and China where groups holding political power, rather than ethnic minorities, become the targets of charges of stupidity. Because humorous forms are always covert in their implication, some criticism of the social system does get under way into the media. But also because of this covertness, and the superficially non-serious nature, humour does not promise a significant threat to the social system.

When Kellner (1979) states that part of popular culture can be emancipatory because of the contradictions within hegemonic ideology, he refers to comedy and satire as typical examples:

Emancipatory comedy provides insights into the nature of the society that break through ideological conceptions. Emancipatory laughter suspends the logic of everyday reality, it is surreal and helps one to see above ideological preconceptions in order to recognize the workings of everyday life. It could foster critical awareness by enabling one to laugh at a miserable life -- and to see that life could be different (Kellner, 1979: 28 - 29).
Benton (1988) thinks that political jokes are the response of the dominated to the state's efforts to standardise their thinking and to frighten them into withholding criticism and dissent. Therefore, they are circulated mainly outside official channels. But once permitted into the mass media, their threat is very limited. That is why Benton (1988) concludes his study by saying:

(a) political joke will change nothing. It is the relentless enemy of greed, injustice, cruelty and oppression -- but it could never do without them. It is not a form of active resistance. It reflects no political programme. It will mobilise no one. ...It has the virtue of momentarily freeing the lives of millions from tension and frustrations to which even the best organized political opposition can promise only long-term solutions; but its impact is as fleeting as the laughter it produces (p.54).

Power (1988) also states that humour, in George Orwell's term a "tiny revolution," can be used as a subordinate's control strategy or resistance. But this is like some behaviours which are permitted to be slightly "inappropriate" in any given social situation but fundamentally unthreatening to the social system in general. They are only used to suggest that "normal social relations" are tenuously balanced (1988: 86).

Given that there exists critical content and forms of resistance in mass media, they can also have contradictory social effects (Kellner, 1979: 31). Like any ideological messages, in the audience's decoding process, subversive messages can also be rejected or interpreted in an unintended way. Therefore, to fully understand the potential of
resistance in the reception of humorous texts, both directions have to be treated: how is it possible for people to resist the ideologically oriented humorous texts? And how is it possible for people to understand those subversive elements represented in some humorous texts? This brings us to the next section which will focus on the audience's reception and appreciation of humorous forms.

2.3 Resistance in Humour Reception and Appreciation

As we have learned because of the paradoxical nature of humour, it is more a demonstration of the ideological struggle in symbolic process. But how is the struggle displayed through its reception and appreciation? Or could audiences sometimes have their own interpretations, or simply ignore the messages? All these questions concern the topic of humour's "effectivity" (Palmer, 1987): at what point does a joke or a cartoon become or cease to be funny?

The effectivity and limit of humour is explained in Palmer's theory of humour appreciation which focuses on a key notion -- the logic of the absurd. It postulates that humour functions by bringing discourses into relation with each other, in an absurd way. It maintains, if one appreciates a joke or a cartoon, s/he must have obtained a balanced degree of plausibility and implausibility, and the latter is necessarily more than the former (Palmer, 1987: 43).

According to Palmer, the process of humour, verbal or
visual, has two important moments, the preparation stage and
the culmination stage. The peripeteia of comedy is the
construction of a shock or surprise acknowledged through the
narration of the texts (Palmer, 1987: 40). The second moment,
also referred to as the syllogism, involves simultaneous
presence of two modes of reasoning leading to contradictory
conclusions concerning plausibility and implausibility

The distinction made for the process of humorous
reception has its strength in two respects. Firstly, it can
be used to understand that the process of humour does not
complete itself with its production of form. The utterance or
the reception of humour should be brought to the centre of
attention (Palmer, 1987: 203). Secondly, the articulation of
these two moments makes humour not only a signifying process
but also a social one as it involves people of different
social backgrounds in its production and reception.

These conform to British cultural studies exploration of
potential resistance in media reception which views signifying
practice as consisting of both production and reception and
locates them within a specific historical and cultural
context. Fiske’s analysis (1987) in particular takes into
account both the nature of the text and the audience, using
social context. Following his theoretical procedure, we will
attempt to reach an understanding of audience’s reception of
humour.

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As implied by the first moment of peripeteia, a shock or a surprise is provided by the inherent nature of the humorous text. It is the result of the contradiction of knowledge, or values, or expectations about the outside world that the audience may be assumed to derive from their ordinary everyday experience of the outside world - this may be summarised under the heading of the discourses of the social formation (p.44).

In the process of social formation, we hold some commonplace expectations. When it comes to humour, these expectations -- knowledge, or values are expected to be broken through in some unexpected way. Therefore, intentions of humour have to be realised by disrupting the social order to a certain degree (Palmer, 1987: 212), or reconstructing some elements to strengthen the social order on the whole.

At any rate, in order to offer a surprise or a shock in a humorous text, some conventional rules must be interrupted in favour of others. In this way, audience are presented with two or more exactly opposite discourses. Although meanings are already "preferred," audiences will still be able to make the interpretation of their own choice and laugh for very different reasons.

The second moment of humour appreciation describes the pattern of how audiences eventually decode a text of humour or "get" the joke. This process, Palmer points out, is not a conscious, verbalised one on the part of the spectator: "it is a spontaneous, intuitive reaction of which the two syllogisms are an elaborated, analytic form" (1987: 43). These two modes
of reasoning engaged here in perceiving the peripeteia (the surprise or shock) include:

"a) that the process is implausible; b) that the process has a certain degree of plausibility, which is less than the implausibility" (Palmer, 1987: 43). These contradictory conclusions are necessary for the audience to feel absurd about a humorous text. Absurdity consists, according to him, of some person, situation, object or value being given attributes that are more implausible than they are plausible and to be accused of something implausible implies a reduction in status (Palmer, 1987: 206).

Again, let's recall the joke about what happened in the doctor's office. The patient's reaction is supposed to be more implausible than plausible in the context of the situation for the joke to work. Because of this, the doctor's warning, the scientific convention, may be reduced in status. However, how the audience decodes the text and interprets it can be a different story. Some of them may feel persuaded or justified by this joke for alcohol drinking. Quite the contrary, some others may take the doctor's warning seriously and laugh at the ignorance of the patient. Further more, those who are addicted to drinking alcohol may not laugh at all, taking this as discrimination and control from other people directed their personal habit.

Now the problem is: how is it possible for different groups of people to see entirely different things in the same artifact? The logic of the absurd is able to point to the
possibility of different subject positions that can be taken up by different audiences for humour. Nobody except the audience can eventually decide if there is a balance between plausibility and implausibility and if the implausibility they perceive is greater than the plausibility. Audiences reason and judge by mobilizing any past experience and value systems necessary. Therefore, in humorous text, more than in any other symbolic forms, shared knowledge plays a crucial role in the decoding process. Humorous forms have to work by making use of people's common sense knowledge; people depend on their attitudes towards the rules in common sense to selectively appreciate humorous forms. The intention of humour has to go through this negotiation between interested parties; the outcome of such negotiation may bring out very different interpretation or simply state the failure of humour (Palmer, 1987: 21).

It is also in this sense that we insist that people's resistance towards the dominant ideology does not happen by chance in encountering a text, it exists in people underlying subjectivity which consistently guides people's reading activity and is ready to enrich itself through this process.

In examining the decoding process of humour, we recognize there are two different but related directions involved. One concerns reception: people can sometimes have different interpretations out of humorous texts or they can laugh at different places. This seems common to the decoding process
of other symbolic forms. The other direction may be unique in decoding humorous form: the decoding of humorous forms has to be referred to as both reception and appreciation, simply because some jokes or cartoons may simple fail to be appreciated. Also based on the logic of the absurd, Palmer states that humour can fail through offensiveness and through banality, as

the identity of the speaker and the audience are essential: the audience must accept that what is asserted to be plausible and implausible in fact are such, and refusal to accept this will result in comic failure, often in the form of finding the joke insulting rather than funny (Palmer, 1987: 184).

Offensiveness can be caused by the inappropriate degree of implausibility felt by audience. The success of a joke or a cartoon has to rely on subverting certain inhibition, but as Palmer points out, "the inhibitions in question have been proof against their attempted subversion" (Palmer, 1987: 220). The existence of this dilemma indicates that audiences have a say about what inhibitions they are ready to subvert. The inhibitions here may not all be conservative in nature. Alternative ways of thinking held by the subordinate may also be taken as "inhibitions" to be subverted in a joke for the sake of dominant ideology.

The topic of the joke may also become the reason for comic failure. For example, the joke about screwing in the light bulb will hardly find a receptive audience in those minority groups and those who regard these people as having
equal status. Many feminists, for example, will find sexist humour unacceptable.

Banality is another major reason for comic failure. Some intended jokes or cartoons may simply strike people as banal because of poor inventions or incomprehensiveness (Palmer, 1987: 20). The intended messages therefore may fail to be conveyed. Palmer explains:

Banality can be accounted for in the logic of the absurd by referring either to the fact that the joke in question is so hackneyed that it has lost its power of arousal for the audience in question, if not for other audiences -- it no longer seems to them to contradict anything or to cause any surprise -- or because the topic of the joke, the discourse or discourses, have no real meaning for the audience in question (Palmer, 1987: 206).

Some studies have concluded that humour is not an effective means of persuasion and learning (Markiewicz in Brown & Bryant, 1983). The reason for this is that humorous forms are basically informal and non-serious. To convey some serious ideas will make humour appear to be banal and thus fail the intention. This is especially true in the case of those jokes which attempt to convey some social norms but cannot offer any surprise by subverting certain inhibited values.

So far we have discussed that in decoding humorous texts, audience can have different interpretations or oppositional meanings because of the nature of humorous representation and the audience’s social status and interest. And also we explained that sometimes audiences can have resistance toward humorous texts by simply not appreciating them.
This may have well answered the questions we asked in the beginning of this section. But as we discussed earlier, progressive or resistant messages can sometimes pass "censorship battles" (Kellner, 1979: 29) and become part of the media mechanism. So the question still has to be faced, i.e., how could those resistant humorous materials bring people to laugh together for the same reason?

The logic of the absurd is also responsible for explaining this. Since the success of humour relies mainly on shared knowledge and audience's association with their life experiences, resistant humorous materials can be appreciated if the creators and audience have similar subjective foundations. A lot of cartoons circulated in the Chinese mass media do not have anything to do with specific criticism of the system, but they can arouse in audience similar associations about the environment they live in. In other words, to realize humorous intentions, more than anything else, depends on participants' (creators' and audience's alike) similar attitude in life experience.

This is why Freud (1953) in his later years regarded humour more as a kind of attitude rather than an aggressive and releasing mechanism. In a humorous attitude, one does not simply afford gratification or in so doing provides an outlet for aggressive tendencies. Rather, Freud explains:

It refuses to be hurt by the arrows of reality or to be compelled to suffer. It insists that it is impervious to wounds dealt by the outside world, in fact, that these are merely occasions for affording
it pleasure (1953: 217).

Therefore, humour to him is a liberating element, which is not resigned, but rebellious in the face of the unsatisfying real circumstances. The account of humorous attitudes points to the possibility of "the denial of the claim of reality" (Freud, 1953: 217) given the participants have similar experience in real life. And in the next chapter, we will turn to the environment of Chinese culture, where the life experience of Chinese humour takes place.
CHAPTER 3: CHINESE CULTURAL RESISTIBILITY

Throughout this thesis, we have been emphasizing that meanings oppositional to the dominant ideology should not be limited to the reading of specific media texts. Rather, like our present efforts, media and their reception should be used as a site to engage people in conversations where expressions of resistance to the dominant ideology, if they exist in a culture, will hopefully emerge.

Since the dominant ideologies in different cultures come out of different epistemological bases, resistance towards them are also different. This chapter, therefore, is devoted to providing background knowledge about Chinese culture, which to some extent, will explain how resistance could possibly occur within the environment.

Besides a long history of five thousand years and a large population of 1.2 billion, China distinguishes herself from countries of the Western world by her lack of science and religion. Except for the basic inventions of paper, printing, the compass and fireworks, it seems that Chinese culture has been reluctant to develop a strong technological science. And it does not have an indigenous metaphysical religion. What holds one fifth of the world's population together is a set of ethical philosophies, which are called a religion of common sense by Yutang Lin (1937: 91).
Russell (1961) advises that to reach a better understanding of both Western and Chinese cultures, it is important that we "dwell for a moment on the historical origins of the two civilizations" (p. 543). He takes Plato, the Old Testament and Galileo as representing three elements of Western culture, i.e., Greek culture, Jewish religion and ethics and modern science and industrialism. For Chinese culture, he refers to the philosophical systems of Confucius and Lao-tzu who belong to the sixth century B.C. and "have already the characteristics which we should regard as distinctive of the modern Chinese" (Russell, 1961: 552). In addition, Maoism is the modern version of ethic philosophy, bearing heavy traces of residual tradition although it claims Marxism and Leninism as its basis (Starr, 1973; Jin, 1983; Li, 1989). Therefore, a review of these three important thought systems will help to understand the Chinese cultural environment.

In terms of ideological discourse, as we have mentioned earlier, there are contradictions within those thought systems. For example, Confucianism has been employed, distorted, and transferred into the dominant ideology for centuries. But its philosophy also helped people to observe and judge authoritarian control. As another example, Maoism, the once progressive and revolutionary ideology, turned into "an instrument of hegemony" (Kellner, 1978: 47). Its ideological practice, ironically, has been going against its
original intention. This is the case in Western societies too where an ideal form of liberalism-pluralism might not pose grave problems by itself. However, it can become an obstacle to the fulfilment of common humanity when it is used to orient people’s thinking in certain ways which benefit privileged groups.

One of the tasks of this chapter is therefore to analyze the epistemological basis and the main concepts of the Chinese thought systems. By such doing, we hope to find some explanations for Chinese cultural resistibility -- the possibility or potential of resistance. The second task of the chapter is to introduce the present Chinese cultural environment, especially changes occurring in the last decade, commonly referred to as the "Post-Mao Era." All these will provide a groundwork for interpretation of the study’s results.

3.1 Confucianism

Confucius (551 - 479 B.C.) is not a god but has been regarded as "the Most Saintly Teacher" throughout Chinese history. Born into a peasant family and never having obtained formal education, he was an ordinary person in every respect. The jobs he held included herding sheep, collecting taxes and playing music for guests at funerals. Living during the time when imperial rule was breaking down, he travelled extensively throughout China and campaigned among the local lords for
reform programs. As his efforts to restore a unified China failed, Confucius devoted the last twenty years of his life to tutoring and book editing.

Confucian philosophy, with an emphasis on personal character, family values, and state governing, is an ethical system aimed at harmonizing human relations. It is not true knowledge about nature but about human nature, xin, that is the centre of concern in the Confucian system of thinking. He said:

Truth does not depart from human nature. If what is regarded as truth departs from human nature, it may not be regarded as truth. (Confucius in Y. Lin, 1947: 1).

To him, the essence of nature can only be approached "by living in a harmonious world where every individual performs his own virtue" (Wang, 1968: 15). According to him, human beings are born as good individuals with intuition and native intelligence which can be developed to the fullest extent for the attainment of virtue. He remarked: "Is it that virtue lies afar? I desire virtue, and virtue is right at hand" (Confucius, 1979: 89). Therefore, human beings do not need any saviour from heaven but self-cultivation in the real world. Virtue can be attained through education -- through learning, pondering and living. As C. Cheng articulates, virtue lies in knowledge -- real life experience.

Knowledge, in this sense, is the construction of values that fulfill the humanity of all men in society... It becomes the conspicuous experience of life endowed consciously and enriched continuously by an individual person's understanding of its importance and meaning (C. Chen, 1987:29).

During this process of acquiring knowledge, an individual of virtue knows how to maintain a balance between ęd (logic, reason, conventions, propriety, rationality), and qing (sentiments, irrationality). These twin concepts are also used to describe the different aspects of xin (human nature).

Li is the form of xin or the pattern in which xin represents itself (T. Cheng, 1947: 35), for it gives instruction to human beings so that they can distinguish themselves from other animals and adjust the relationship among themselves. And qing, on the other hand, is the individual unit of the broader human nature xin. It is a mental attitude such as sentiments, emotions or affection (T. Cheng, 1947: 422). When li attempts to represent collective sentiments, i.e., human nature, it might restrain individuals' sentiments, qing. Therefore, Confucius warned that qing and li should be balanced in perfect harmony. As Lin points out:

For a Chinese it is not sufficient that a proposition be logically correct, but it must at

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' According to T. Cheng (1947:34), Li has originally three connotations: 1) it means ceremony and ritual; 2) it means propriety, a body of rules or conventions or some prescribed behaviours between different family members and social roles; 3) it means rational reasoning which marks the line between near and distant relations, distinguishes what is the same from what is not, and clarifies the distinction between right and wrong. It is the second and the third connotation that retains its popularity among Chinese people.
the same time be in accord with human nature (Lin, 1947: 91).

As indicated in the familiar phrase "qíng lí," which the Chinese almost daily employ, qíng is placed first and regarded as the "better half" in one's conduct and judgement (T. Cheng, 1947: 42). This, in a sense, entitles each individual the right to judge the validity of knowledge according to his/her own sentiment in changing situations.

What is implied in "qíng lí" is the spirit of reasonableness, which has given birth to the Doctrine of the Golden Mean', the central doctrine of Confucianism (Y. Lin, 1947: 92). Golden Mean discourages any excesses of theory and conduct. Along this line, for instance, logically all human beings should be virtuous, but practically, Confucius noticed that nobody can obtain all the virtues. Besides, human conceptions of virtue may change from time to time. Therefore, Confucius noted that every one should take filial piety as the most basic kind of virtue to start with. He sees filial piety as having the most stable quality:

Because it is tied closely with human nature, we understand its implication far better than those of many other virtues. If our people could be taught to enlarge the scope of filial love to include all humanity, he reasoned, then the whole world would live as harmoniously and happily as the family (Wang, 1968: 19).

However, this is only a good intention. Since the ruling

7. Golden Mean is a wise way to make a choice between two extremes, which is in accordance with both reason and sentiment. It falls somewhere between insufficiency and surplus (A Great Chinese Dictionary, 1990: 4463).
class in China started to employ Confucianism as the dominant ideology, in the Han dynasty around 200 B.C., it has been very much distorted and dogmatized. In Confucius' mind, the Golden Means, and filial piety in particular was made to imply a non-radical mental attitude and a hierarchical relationship among people, a relationship of authority and obedience (Lin, 1947: 111).

The situation of a state is actually modeled by that of a family* and the concept of the state is veiled through the concept of a family. By the same token, the ruler, represented by the emperor, is supposed to love his subjects like his own children, in exchange for their genuine affection and loyalty (Yang, 1990: 202). This idea of "government by virtue" has been undertaken to prescribe the relationship between the ruler and the ruled:

Lead the people by laws and regulate them by penalties and the people will try to keep out of jail but will have no sense of shame. Lead the people by virtue and restrain them by the usage of decorum, and the people will have a sense of shame, and moreover will become good (Confucius, 1949).

This hierarchical bureaucracy of empire was based on a competitive nation-wide examination system. Open examinations were held at different levels to select virtuous gentlemen to be government officials (Jin, 1983: 6). Consequently, all officials shared a common ideological orientation based on the

* In Chinese language, state is actually a phrase combined by both guo (state) and jia (family).
Confucian tradition and were supposed to run the post on the basis of personal virtue. However, the all-embracing power bestowed on the rulers did not mean that the subjects did not have the potential to judge them or even to oppose their control.

The ruler's prescribed conduct, li, should be taken as an indication of true love and affection, qing, towards his/her subjects so that he can expect their genuine loyalty and trust in return. In reality, however, it is believed that prescribed conduct can be performed on both sides without evoking genuine feelings, qing. In this case, qing is only assumed to exist (Yang, 1990: 200).

Throughout the history of Chinese politics, in order to win heart-felt trust from the people, a government or ruler would attempt to convince subordinates that s/he could improve their lives and that s/he placed the country and its people's interests ahead of his or her own. H.G. Greal has noted that genuine conformity is harder to achieve in a conformist society like China's than it is in an individualistic society like that of the United States because it requires the ruler to invest private and genuine emotions (Greal in Yang, 1990: 205).

This is because in China, the conduct of authority is judged not only by law or rules, i.e., li, but also by qing, the real feelings of subordinates. When the conduct and practice of the rulers fail to show their genuine qing and when there is only assumed qing left, resistance on the part of the subordinates will ensue. Most of the time, a mistrustful
feeling or a negative emotion is suppressed without leading to radical action. On other occasions, it is only expressed in idle gossip or many different forms of discontent:

When the authority is watching, one can obey orders with no enthusiasm; when the authority is not watching, one can do nothing at all; or, one can do just the opposite of what is demanded in an effort to undermine the command. The Chinese often refer to these tactics as passive resistance or rebellion (Yang, 1991: 205).

Pye (1968) too shares a similar view by stating that conformity and rebellion are the breath of Chinese politics. When conformity provokes opposition, they "take on complex implicit meanings, and ... there is a great deal of shadow play and pretense" (Pye, 1968: 31). There are always times, though, when people's mistrusts have been aroused but are not dealt with properly or at all, and the intensity and groundswell of emotion can result in violent revolt (Yang, 1991: 204).

3.2 Taoism

In contrast with orthodox Confucian culture, Taoism is considered China's heterodox culture and it survives in a subordinate ideological framework, despising the restraining social rules and pretensions of people in power. So Berger (1963) regarded Taoism as the theory of resistance to social control in Chinese history (Berger, 1963: 132). Its basic ideals of egalitarianism always helped to mobilize peasant rebellions when the tensions under the dominant ideology
became unsolvable (Pye, 1988: 40).

The founder of Taoism, Laotzu (570 - 460 B.C.) was about twenty years older than Confucius. He spent most of his life tending a library and refused to take any government position. A 5,000-word book was the only work he ever left to explain his philosophy. Later his ideas were developed by his disciple Chuangtze, who followed up "with brilliant satires against moral restraints and Confucian hypocrisy and futility" (Lin, 1947: 116).

In Taoism, there is no such thing as human nature, as Russell interpreted Laotzu’s idea:

He held that every person, every animal and everything has a certain way or manner of behaving which is natural to him, or her, or it, and that we ought to conform to this way ourselves and encourage others to conform to it. (Russell, 1961: 548)

The way or manner Laotzu called Tao is the great principle regulating the course of nature as well as human beings. Tao is described as something which cannot be seen, heard, or felt; it has neither substance nor form; it is timeless and spaceless (Suzuki, 1959).

Tao literally means "a path," or "a way, " or "a course," but it is more than a map for orientation schematically drawn up for the traveller to follow. The Tao is our actually walking on this "way or coursing on or through it. No, it is more than that. It is the walking itself, or the coursing itself, which is Tao. The Tao is not where we follow the way as indicated in the map. We are the Tao, the walker and the Tao are the same (Suzuki, 1959: 13).

Therefore, every human being can get close to this great principle and discover the true wisdom of living by
acquainting himself or herself with its qualities. In *Tao Te Ching* (Text of Taoism), the essence of Tao reveals itself mainly through three phases of expression in the form of relativism and is the antithesis of Confucianism. They are: Tao’s normalcy, naturalness and doing-nothingness.

**Normalcy** It is the antithesis of that which is artificial, uncommon, extraordinary (Wang, 1968: 62). Laotzu states that it is only normal that nature has its own rhythm and movement. In fact, we have enough knowledge about the nature of normalcy for our existence. It is normal that autumn is followed by winter and spring by summer; it is normal that rice is to be planted in winter. In accordance with Tao, commoness and normalcy must prevail in human relations as they do in the invisible rhythm of nature. However, we seem to do exactly the opposite when it comes to human affairs.

In contrast to Tao, human beings act in the way that nature avoids and gradually detach ourselves from nature’s invisible but all-embracing rules. Instead of regarding normalcy as the most stable influence in the world, we begin to prize the exceptional, the unusual, and the uncommon. As such, serious problems start to occur. As Laotzu observes:

> When all in the world know what the beautiful is, the idea of ugliness also arises. When all the world know what the virtuous is, the idea of evil also exists (Laotzu in Lin, 1988: 37).

Here Laotzu does not take the presence of human values as a progressive sign of civilization; he regards them as the very
proof of pathological characteristics in human society. Artificial standards divide humanity into two camps -- "the virtuous few and the evil majority" (Wang, 1968: 64). Within the confinement of these values, human beings cannot live in harmony with one another.

The significance of describing this quality of Tao lies in the relativism being revealed here. Laotzu (1959) reminds people that moral standards and values are always man-made; those who have the power to create and institutionalize the moral standards create sins and crime as well. Therefore Laotzu satirized, "Sages no dead, robber no end" (Lin, 1947: 118)." He proposed that people have the ability to find their own resources by following the intrinsic laws of nature, which are intrinsic in all. We do not need to be taught or to be fooled with man-made illusions (Wang, 1968: 65).

Naturalness Laotzu (1959) suggests that as a particle in the universe, human beings share with other forms of matter the same quality of naturalness. Unfortunately, he said, we have further and further detached ourselves from this quality by accepting artificial sages' findings into our way of living (Wang, 1968: 53). How, then, can we follow the natural pattern of living? Laotzu remarks, simply and directly: "Be like the infants!" Laotzu (1959) observes that infants reflect the ways of nature in their simple, innocent and

\[\text{Literally it means: "As long as judges exist, criminals will stay on." Here Lin ignores English grammar on purpose so that the forceful terseness of the original remarks can be conveyed.}\]
It seems that babies, having neither the faculty of appreciating our artificial ways of life nor the opportunity of acquiring them, possess more tincture of Tao than the grownups. Furthermore, infants' interest in life is enormous. They smile, they jump, and they are happy because their sense of humour is simple, innocent, and devoid of sharpness and complicated feelings (Wang, 1968: 66).

An interesting association can be made between Laotzu's notion of naturalness and Freud's twin concepts of the pleasure principle and the reality principle. According to Freud, from our childhood, we gradually sacrifice pleasure principle to accept the reality principle given by society so that we can survive and establish ourselves successfully in a civilized world, with delayed pleasure. Life in civilization requires constraints on individuals' original instincts in order to progress (Marcuse, 1969: 21-78).

Laotzu's thesis, then, is that of resisting socialization of any kind. The implications of his philosophy for modern times are that we human beings should take responsibility for our own natural growth, both physically and mentally: "Hold onto the unique qualities of your nature and never depart from them" (Laotzu in Wang, 1968: 66). Under this, we have to check any questionable social moral values because they may hurt our original qualities and mould us into socially acceptable persons.

Nothingness This quality of Tao is considered the outstanding characteristic of Laotzu's philosophy. Tao
governs the universe rhythmically and automatically, so no effort is required (Wang, 1968: 69). In terms of human life, the same principle should be applied. Laotzu recommends that except for conforming to Tao, we should do nothing ambitious and produce nothing artificial. By this, he also means that everything can be accomplished without working for it (Wang, 1968: 69).

However, the advice of being effortless should not be taken superficially. A real "do-nothing-ist," Laotzu says, is the one who has learned the essence of Tao and "conducts his life with such skill and finesse that s/he glides through life without exertion and mishaps" (Wang, 1968: 70). What lies behind the phenomenon of nothingness or effortlessness is the strength of poise, confidence, wisdom.

The implications of nothingness can be drawn from two aspects with regard to the social power structure. In the first place, nothingness should be regarded as a strategy for self-protection of the subordinate. Lin points out:

It taught laissez faire and passive resistance, it taught also the wisdom of stupidity, the strength of weakness, the advantage of lying low, and the importance of camouflage (1947: 119).

On one hand, "do-nothing-ism" is "a quality which is weak without but strong within" (Wang, 1968: 71). Water, for example, appears to be soft, passive and rambling. Its strength, though, lies in its very place of weakness. It can cut through rocks and form valleys. The Chinese would always regard the subordinates as having the strength of a river and
the ruler as the boat on the river. Kunzi, another famous Chinese philosopher observes: "Common people are like water in the river; it can float a boat but it can also sink a boat" (in Yang, 1991: 202). On the other hand, "do-nothing-ism" emphasizes the effect of a cause rather than the cause of an effect. On the surface, subordinates do not possess the power to cause something to happen. But they do have a share in judging the effects and therefore participate automatically in the general situation of events.

In the second place, Laotzu recommends that government of virtue or government of law should be replaced by the government of "doing-nothing." This, again, cannot be taken superficially. Considering when the government or ruler "has no invariable mind of his own; he makes the mind of the people in his mind" (Laotzu, 1959: 139), whatever he does for the people only appears to be effortless and natural. He remarks:

In the highest antiquity, (the people) did not know that there were (their rulers). In the next age they loved them and praised them. In the next they feared them; in the next they despised them. Thus it was that when faith (in the Tao) was deficient (in the rulers) a want of faith in them ensued (in the people) (Laotze, 1959: 108-109).

So, Laotzu does not believe in governments' ambitions and promises arising from their ambitions. From time to time, Taoism prepared theoretically for the people to revolt against their authoritarian ruler, when they found that the ruler did not live up to their own ideals. An old Chinese expression goes: "The ruler makes us rebel. We have to rebel." From the
dissatisfaction to the actual rebellion, Taoism has acted as a tactic as well as an awareness of social control. By encouraging people that "it is right to rebel," Maoism is also considered to have followed Taoist idea of resistance to some degree (Pye, 1968).

3.3 Maoism

Theoretically speaking, Maoism, which includes Marxism, Leninism, and Mao Zedong’s own thoughts, has dominated China’s ideological sphere for over forty years. But before the Communist Party became the ruling class of the country, Maoism emerged in the first place as a subordinate ideology against the so-called "three big mountains":

imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism. At that time, it represented relatively rational, progressive, and systematic programs of social reconstruction (Kellner, 1978: 45). This section will examine the philosophical basis of this thought system and how it fosters awareness of ideological conceptions including those of its own creation in later years. Before doing so, we should have some basic information about the background of the emergence of Maoism.

In 1840, the cultural empire of China faced the threat of extinction from the industrialised European countries.

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10. The term "three big mountains" is used to describe the domination of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic-capitalism in Chinese society before the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949.

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British colonialists invaded China, precipitated by the government's prohibition of opium importing. The war started a series of aggressive wars and a process of turning China into a "semi-feudal and semi-colonial nation" (Gong, 1989: 68).

Amid crises, the bourgeois revolution took place in 1911, overthrowing the Qing Dynasty and setting up a bourgeois republic. The ending of feudalist society, however, did not ensure a strong new social system.

Facing different oppressive ideologies from both domestic privileged groups and foreign invaders, the Chinese intelligentsia sought new ideas and organizational techniques for restoring the integrity of China. Karl Marx was one of several Western social theorists studied by Chinese intellectuals. Lenin's elaboration of Marx's theories, advancing an interpretation of the phenomenon of imperialism (Starr, 1973: 22) also had an influence on them. The October 1917 Revolution in Russia convinced many intellectuals, including Mao and his colleagues to accept Marxism-Leninism as an applicable "scientific theory."

However, it is wrong to assume that Mao has passed on a Marxist and Leninist tradition intact (Harris, 1980); the new social system is by no means free of traditional traces. The Chinese revolution led by the Communist Party from the 1920's to 1949 represents not only a process of founding a new republic but also a process, wherein an old outlook of the
world was transformed and a new ideology was established. By this very process, Mao and his colleagues selectively and successfully imported Marxism and Leninism and at the same time inevitably preserved some traditional elements. Raymond Williams (in Hall, 1977: 332) has stated that dominant ideology would always selectively incorporate and exclude elements of both residual and emergent forms of a culture. Maoism's early existence proves that a subordinate and progressive ideology should also employ this as a necessary strategy.

Mao Zedong (in Gong, 1989) defines his movement as anti-imperialist and anti-feudal mass culture under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. But Mao stresses that new culture could only grow from the old ancient culture and by learning from foreign progressive cultural elements. He talks about his attitudes toward Western culture:

China should absorb on a large scale foreign progressive culture as the raw material for its own cultural food. But all the foreign things, like the way we treat food, must go through the chewing in the mouth and the digestion in the stomach, so that they would be divided into two parts: the essence and the dross. Only by discarding the dross and absorbing the essence can our bodies be benefited. We must not blindly absorb everything (Mao in Gong, 1989: 81).

And this "dross and essence" model is also applied when he talks about traditional culture. In sum, Mao suggests that the new culture "should have its own form and that is the national form and it should have Chinese style and Chinese manner liked by ordinary Chinese people (Mao in Gong, 1989: 81).
The basic philosophical principles which underlie Mao's form of Marxism and which inspire the subordinate people can be outlined by examining two essays entitled "On Contradiction" (Mao, 1967) and "On practice" (Mao, 1969). Mao's first essay "On Contradiction" advocates the ability to identify the contradictions in a dynamic ever-changing reality and to participate in correct action in support of revolutionary change. The second essay reveals the relationship between theory and practice. And it emphasizes people's participation in production and ideological struggle as the most fundamental practical activities.

"On Contradiction" The idea of contradiction and of the dialectical process in the development of things is not unique to Hegel and Marx in Western thought, nor to Mao in Chinese thought (Starr, 1973: 25). The dialectical way of perceiving situations and taking direction for action had always been the powerful method of the Communist Party either in their military action or in ideological struggle. Therefore, the idea of contradiction occupies a more central position in Mao's thought than it did for either Lenin or Marx (Starr, 1973: 25). But how does Mao's version of contradiction differ from that of Marxism? And how do these differences enable the Chinese to apply it in the practice of resistance?

Originally, Hegel applied the dialectical process to the realm of ideas: the conflict of opposite ideas -- the thesis
and antithesis -- gives rise to a new idea -- the synthesis -- that combines the best, most progressive elements of the opposing ideas from which it has sprung (Starr, 1973).

Marx developed this into a materialist perspective that it is the conflict among things, elements of the material world, that brings about development and progress. He saw certain contradictions as characteristic of certain periods of history, and the resultant conflict will move history in a forward direction. He then discovered the law of capitalism and predicted that communism will result from the contradictions in the capitalist system.

Although Mao sees himself as having inherited from Marx a materialist view of social development, Starr (1973) argues that Mao's thought was more influenced by the dialectical strain in ancient Chinese naturalistic philosophy. The idea of the conflict of two opposites as basic in things is deeply rooted in the primitive mind of China. The Chinese phrase for contradiction "mao dun," literally means spear and shield, two contradicting things. It comes from an ancient story about a man who sells both spear and shield at a market. Because the inevitable contradictions involved in promoting both spear and shield at the same time, he is laughed at by the passers by.

In Golden Means, when two extremes of a situation or a thing are present, it is suggested that the people should always try a middle ground as a pleasant way out. Additionally, the dialectical mode also pervades the basic
doctrines of Taoism: relationships between beauty and ugliness, between weakness and strength, for example.

As we can see the results of conflicting opposites are very different. It can be something laughable as the story of spear and shield, or something harmonious as in Golden Means. But in both of these instances, the common emphasis is the position of the subject, i.e., how the conflict of opposites is perceived by the subject.

Starr argues that the position of contradiction in Mao's thought results in his seeing the world in a tripartite manner instead of bipartite (Starr, 1973). Attention should be given to a few lines in Mao's works: "Who are our enemies? Who are our friends? This is a question of the first importance for the revolution" (Mao, 1972: 13).

Implicitly, however, he divides the world into three camps, not two. ... Read carefully, these sentences suggest a tripartite division of the world as between "ourselves," "our friends," and "our enemies." This is important because of its implicit treatment of "ourselves" as separate from the conflicting parties -- our friends and our enemies (Starr, 1973: 25).

Starr calls the third party an ultimate arbiter. This is only right in the fore-mentioned sense that the subject is encouraged to judge the nature of the contradictions in a given period of time -- to draw a boundary between "our friends" and "our enemies," for example. However, this ultimate arbiter does not have to stand outside the conflict. As a matter of fact, s/he has to be an active participant as one of the conflicting parties.
As a result, Mao's version of contradiction, under the influence of the Chinese dialectical strain, also has an emphasis on position of the subject. Therefore, the consequence of the conflict of opposites is not only decided by the inherent nature of both sides as usually indicated in Marxist theory, but also by the side which stands in alliance with the majority of people, has fine judgement of the situation, and takes the right actions.

In other words, to describe contradictions is not to prove a law, but subjective judgement made by the participant in a given situation. The synthesis, then, is not prediction of an inevitable consequence, but the resolution, or the subjective intention of the participants for practical purposes:

This dialectical world outlook teaches us primarily how to observe and analyze the movement of opposites in different things and, on the basis of such analysis, to indicate the methods for resolving contradictions (Mao, 1967: 315).

According to Mao, such analysis should be made by examining two important aspects of the concept of contradiction: universality and particularity. By the universality or absoluteness of contradiction, Mao implies twofold meaning as he points out:

One is that contradiction exists in the process of development of all things, and the other is that in the process of development of each thing a movement of opposites exists from beginning to end (Mao, 1967: 316)

As a permanent feature of social life, contradiction does not
end in any social form, but continues to exist right through
the socialist stage of historical development and even into
the utopian stage of communism. Because processes change, old
processes and old contradictions disappear, new processes and
new contradictions emerge, and the methods of resolving
contradictions differ accordingly (Mao, 1967: 322).

This brings out the nature of particularity. When there
are many contradictions at a given stage of a complex process,
one of them is necessarily the principal contradiction whose
existence or development determines the existence and
development of the other contradictions (Mao, 1969: 51). This
suggests that participants from different social groups should
be able to reserve their differences and unite together to
solve the principal contradiction for their common goal.

And, when examining particularities of the contradictions
at each social stage, Mao suggests, that we must also
distinguish between two aspects of each contradiction (1969:
54). This involves which side of the contradiction one
positions himself or herself on. The subordinate group might
be the minor aspect of the contradiction in the beginning.
But because they represent the majority of the people, their
struggle will result in changes:

... the new aspect changes from being minor to
being major and rises to predominance, while the
old aspect changes from being major to being minor
and gradually dies out (Mao, 1969: 55).

With Maoism as the subordinate ideology, the majority of the
people were united in resolving their contradictions with
imperialists and later with the country’s bourgeoisie and bureaucratic government. After the founding of the new republic in 1949, the Communist Party, once leader of the subordinate people in their struggle against domination, became the power of domination itself. Maoism turned into the dominant ideology serving the interests of the "socialist" elite (Kellner, 1978). It gradually failed to perceive the principal contradiction from the standpoint of the mass people and therefore became the antithesis of them in social contradiction. Ironically, in this process, Mao’s concept of contradiction, which fostered people’s awareness of their position in society with respect to power and domination, is seen to continue to have its implications for the subordinate people in their ideological resistance.

**Practice and Theory** Since the capability to judge contradictions and to find resolution involve one’s experience and knowledge of the world, Mao (1969) elaborated on the relationship between theory and practice. The basic idea is that knowledge is not a fixed entity but changes with practice. The experience of that new world, in turn, improves old theories. Mao argues that cognition involves a three-stage process giving rise to two different kinds of knowledge.

**Starr summarizes Mao’s argument as:**
The first stage involves empirical observation through action in the world, or practice. The product of this observation is perceptual knowledge. The second stage is that of the formation of concepts based on this perceptual knowledge, or theory. The third stage - which, in Mao’s view, cannot be dispensed with -- is that of
revolutionary practice, bringing conceptual knowledge back to the realm of action with a view toward changing the world (Starr, 1973: 29).

And again, emphasis is put on the subject's initiation in the process of cognition because this three-stage process does not imply a division of labour: everyone is at once observers, theorists and practitioners ... Rather, people are encouraged to participate in all spheres of social practice which include not only production but many other forms such as political and ideological struggle, scientific and artistic pursuits. Practice should be the primary concern, as the starting point as well as the aim. This can be elaborated in three ways.

Firstly, all kinds of knowledge are inseparable from practices which are the direct experience of a certain class (Mao, 1969: 3). Only from direct experience, can we acquire valid knowledge to change reality. In Mao's words, "If you want to know the taste of a pear, you must change the pear by eating it yourself" (Mao, 1969: 3). Even if we cannot directly experience everything, we can have knowledge which comes from indirect experience -- the direct experience of other similar classes. Therefore, the experience of the European proletariat was important to the subordinate people in China because they shared the common ground of exploitation. And their experiences should be taken into account in our generation of theory. In a word, social practice is the only criterion of the truth in pursuing knowledge of the external world (Mao, 1969: 5).
Secondly, the knowledge acquired has no value if it is not used in practice. Knowledge does not stop at the generation of theory. Since complete knowledge comes from practice, there exists a direct relationship between the questions of knowing and doing (Cushman, 1987: 59). Cushman points out:

This means that to a Maoist the solution of the important problem of logical knowledge does not stop with understanding a law of the objective world, but, rather, requires that one apply that understanding to change the world. The importance of logical knowledge or theory is that it can be used to guide action (Cushman, 1987: 60).

Although Mao rejects agnosticism, he recommends that cognition is not absolute, but formed by historical conditions. He makes it sure that to know is to do something according to our own will; knowledge should be useful to social practice. In other words, the subordinates should acquire that kind of knowledge which can help to change the world around them and to make their life better.

Thirdly, practice is the only place where the validity of knowledge can be tested and verified. That is to say, the only way to judge our knowledge of objective reality, Mao holds, is to see if it helps achieve the expected results in the process of social practice which may be material production or class struggle (Cushman, 1987: 60). If the knowledge does not guide us to achieve the anticipated results, then the knowledge must be not correct and more practice is required to improve it.

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Mao's distinction between perceptual knowledge and conceptional knowledge is of great importance. In the process of practice, we can only see at first the phenomenal side, the separate aspects and the external relations of things. This is called the perceptual stage of cognition, namely, the stage of sense perceptions and impression (Mao, 1969: 297).

As social practice continues, things that give rise to man's sense perceptions and impressions in the course of his practice are repeated many times; then a sudden change (leap) takes place in the brain. The process of cognition, and concepts are thus formed (Mao, 1969: 298)

These concepts, Mao stresses, can grasp the essence, the totality and the internal relations of things. And this is the stage of conception, judgement and inference -- the stage of rational knowledge.

The promotion of "personal participation in the practice" (Mao, 1969: 2) has several significant implications in people's potential resistance towards the dominant ideology at any given time. In order to maintain the status quo, the dominant ideology attempts to confine people's thinking and acting within a certain framework. However, when people acquire their knowledge through practice, it can be very different from or opposite to the dominant ideology. What the dominant ideology recommends therefore can be proved invalid in people's real life experience. At the same time, our knowledge about society should not stop at the perceptual level and should generate and improve theories which can eventually help to arouse awareness of the subordinate people
in their struggle against ideological control.

3.4 Post-Mao Era

After Mao's death in late 1970's, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) faced the serious choice of sticking to Mao's policy of isolating China from the rest of the world and implementing a strict state planning economy or making policy changes rebuild the economy and to win the new trust from the people. Deng, Mao's successor, strongly advocated economic reform as long as the Communist regime was maintained as stable and this has caused tremendous changes in the last decade. Hence, this section is devoted to a brief review of the ideological re-orientation and its consequences, including mass protests staged by the Chinese people, especially university students.

In 1977, there was a call from the government for restoring Mao's "most precious theoretical legacy," which was most represented in Mao's two essays: "On Contradiction" and "On Practice." The former implies that according to the changing situation, the main contradiction of society changes. Therefore, economic construction rather than class struggle should become the main task facing the Party and the people. And the essence of "On Practice" was summed up in the slogan shishi qiushi (seek truth from facts) (Schramm, 1984: 3).

The year 1978 is considered a turning-point when Deng made a speech at a meeting of the State Council, urging people
to "observe economic laws, speed up the four modernizations" (Shramm, 1984: 4). This marks the ascendance of Deng Xiaoping's "pragmatic" policies. His famous doctrine is, "It doesn't matter whether it is a black cat or a white cat, as long as it catches mice."

Under the programme of so-called "readjustment, reform, rectification, and improvement," a number of remedial measures were taken. For example, in 1979 the People's Communes were abolished, followed by the introduction of the agricultural responsibility system and the expansion of the rural market.

In the industrial sector, some state-owned enterprises were encouraged to take part in a contractual responsibility system, allowing them to share the profit with the state. Meanwhile, private enterprises gradually came onto the scene. Part of the appeal of reform has been the "Opening to the outside" policy which allowed foreign goods and foreign ideas into the country.

However, the process of the reform was not without twists and turns. As Moody observed:

"Modernization" became a slogan not only for developing the economy but also for restoring legitimacy to the system. But this tactic raises its own problems of legitimacy (Moody, 1988: 161).

The motivation for the reform was no doubt a desire by the Party for greater economic growth leading to increased

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11. Four Modernizations include modernization of agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defence.
stability and legitimacy for the regime. But the reform removed peasants and workers, to a certain degree, from the direct control of the Party (Moody, 1988). Intellectuals and students, under the influence of Western ideas, demanded more democracy and freedom. And greater economic spontaneity also brought the possibility of greater general spontaneity in politics and culture which were the unintended side effects of the reform.

The Party's government under Deng could not for long afford to see the emerging threat to it's control. In the spring of 1985, Deng reiterated the theme of "spiritual civilization" to match a modernized material civilization. He demanded that people cultivate socialist morals, discipline, and faith in Marxism and communism. It is doubted if Marxism and Communism are still guiding the Party's policy in practice, but

CCP are not openly abandoning Marxism-Leninism because it has been the basis for the establishment and building of the Chinese Communist regime; abandoning it would be tantamount to negating the legality of Communist rule (Moody, 1988: 156).

Deng insisted on the so-called "Maintenance of Four Cardinal Principles" of Marxist-Leninist Mao Zedong Thought, the socialist path, the leadership of the Communist Party, and the proletarian dictatorship.

The contradictions in the Party's ideology and policy, the dissociation between economic reform and political and cultural reforms caused "dislocation, disillusion and doubt"
(Brugger & Kelly, 1990) on the Chinese people, which became, in Moody's words, a "spiritual crisis."

Amid the crisis, resistance has prevailed in its different forms. As mentioned earlier, Chinese people tend to express their discontent in an indirect way or in private, avoiding open confrontation with authority. Chinese intellectuals12 are typically used to "appearing with one's own voice and face while claiming that one is still wearing the prescribed mask" (Brugger & Kelly, 1990). Although they claimed themselves in public as Marxists, they constituted an important force "in conscious opposition to the regime qua regime" (Brugger & Kelly, 1990) and remained very popular among more radical political dissents and radical students. The maintenance of Maoist or Marxist perspectives became a protection for these intellectuals and gave them more room to speak out on their own points of view.

For example, Quangtao Qin, a Chinese cyberneticist and a leader of a school known as "Towards the Future," deliberately abandoned economic determinism in favour of a systems approach in which the political, economic, and ideological structures are seen as interacting subsystems (Jin, 1983). His elaboration caused a tremendous effect on other intellectuals.

12. In the Chinese context, the term "intellectuals" (zhishifenzi) refers to a category of people who normally have a background of high education and who work in cultural and educational institutions in a wide variety of professions, such as arts and literature, teaching and research, mass media, and science and technology (Lee, 1991: 184).
because it implied that ideological oppression could be as serious as an economic one, even in a socialist country like China. Another Marxist, Ruoshui Wang, examined Marxist works and proposed implicitly that alienation exists in socialist society in different forms -- ideological, political, and economic (Brugger & Kelly, 1990: 142).

On the other hand, college students openly confronted authority, fighting from time to time against the Party's ideological control. Some of them even sacrificed their lives in the military crackdown in 1989.

In fact, college students were one of the social groups which received immediate benefits from the reform. It was the reform that restored the nation-wide entrance examination to universities so that they could compete equally to obtain the opportunity of high education. The students would be guaranteed a job upon their graduation, to serve the country. They came from different parts of the country with various social backgrounds, well-informed of situation of the reform. For these reasons, they share "a sense of mission" (shiming gan) -- strong intention to contribute to more radical changes to the country.

As they were influenced by Western ideas and the most progressive thoughts of the Chinese intellectuals in academic fields, they were extremely unsatisfied with the Party's ideological control. The students' protests and demonstrations constantly occurred along with the reform
process. But earlier movements had been well confined within the campus environment by the government.

In 1980, the government started experimenting with local congress election, with the Party appointing the nominees. Some students wanted to run their own campaigns but failed to be nominated. They staged demonstrations around campus areas to protest against the Party, urging that elections should be run outside of the Party's manipulation. As a result, eleven students from different universities were elected into the local congress (Fu, 1989: 77).

1985 was the 40th anniversary of the end of World War II. Students at Beijing University used the occasion to protest against the massive import of Japanese products, viewing it as allowing Japan's continuing invasion in economic terms. Underneath the surface, this was also an outlet for students' anger towards the government's control (Fu, 1989). They demanded freedom of speech and planned to hold an open demonstration on Tienanman Square. But thousands of demonstrators were stopped in front of the campus gate by the military police.

In the 1986's movement, the students were more specific about their demands. They stated that the existence of the Communist Party in China had become an obstacle to the development of democracy (Fu, 1989). Students from universities across the country were raising the same voice for abolishing the one-party dictatorship, allowing a free
press, and so forth. The students discussed asking for support from other social groups, but the movement was again suppressed before expanding.

The students' movement in 1989 eventually turned into a mass anti-government protest. It started with the death of Hu Yaobang, the former secretary of Communist Central Committee. Hu was fired from the position because his decisions made in the early period of reform were considered too liberal (Fu, 1989: 226). The students held a memorial ceremony for Hu at Tienanmen Square, demanding the government correct its accusations on Hu.

In mid-May, the students staged a hunger-strike at the Tienanmen Square. Before the government could respond, journalists, factory workers and public service workers all joined in demonstrations across the country. The students asked for a dialogue with Party officials to request changes in the political system. The public shared the students’ views, especially with regard to government corruption. Because the economic role of the state remained very strong, some privileged government officials had exploited their positions for their own benefit.

In summary, the Party’s government intended to implement reform policies in order to strengthen its legitimacy. However, they didn’t want to make substantial changes in the political system and ideological sphere, which would directly threaten their legitimacy. This created its own dilemma and
aroused people’s resistance in various forms. And the students’ movement was certainly an important part of the resistance force.

3.5 Concluding Remarks

In Chapter 1, we discussed the hegemonic nature of the dominant ideology and the media’s role in circulating and securing dominant ideological definitions and representations. We also reviewed theories about the possibility of making oppositional rather than ideologically preferred meanings in media reception. In the present chapter, therefore, we have been attempting to explain Chinese cultural resistibility by analyzing the three main thought systems in Chinese culture.

In Confucianism, for example, there is not a metaphysical god of any kind. It recommends self-cultivation in the real world. This gives an individual a chance to acquire knowledge through his or her own life experiences. In the process of acquiring knowledge and cultivating one’s own character, s/he is supposed to apply both qing (sentiments, emotions) and li (logic, reason) to perceiving the world around him or her. This is of importance in terms of our discussion about resistance towards the dominant ideology. Because the hegemonic ideology contains both rational and emotional elements, the twin concepts of qing and li, to some extent enable people to recognize the limitation of ideological conceptions and practice. Theories which are perfectly
logical might not be considered as in accordance with human nature, while the logic behind the efforts to win people's consent might be seen through. Wherever the dominant ideology is present, there always exists judgement of the people within that historical and social context. That is why genuine conformity is hard to achieve in Chinese culture (Greal in Yang, 1990). In this sense, we attribute in part the potential for resistance to the epistemological basis of Confucianism.

Taoism is considered the subordinate ideology in Chinese culture. Its main concepts have helped people in recognizing the confinements and repression on human nature by social rules and ideological control. Laotzu, the founder of Taoism, reminds people that moral standards and values are always man-made for the benefit of the privileged few. He suggests that we should rely on our intuition and take responsibility for our own natural growth. His concept of "nothingness," in particular, has encouraged "passive resistance" which implies an uncooperative attitude towards the current social system.

Maoism, the third thought system we discussed in this chapter, arose as a subordinate ideology against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism in the "semi-feudal and semi-colonial" nation of China. Mao suggests that a new culture can be formed by absorbing the essence of both traditional culture and foreign culture and discarding the dross of them. His essays on contradiction and practice
encourage people to identify and resolve the social contradictions for a better society and to actively participate in social production and ideological struggle.

Mao stresses that contradictions exist in any social form. But the principal contradiction, which mostly represents the conflict between people in dominance and their subordinates, differs from time to time because social conditions are different. The subordinate people should be able to judge the principal contradiction of the time and unite themselves in alliance against oppression and domination. In addition, Mao encourages people to acquire first-hand knowledge by participating in social production and ideological struggle. At the same time, new theories should be constructed and reconstructed along with the changing social situation.

Maoism has played an important role in guiding people's action against ideological control. In the post-Mao era, the government attempted to implement new economic policy as a way to regain people's consent. But on the other hand, people have been showing their resistance in various forms as they realized that a principal contradiction has arisen between two parties, with the socialist elites on one side and the majority of people on the other. Intellectuals are representative of the resistance in the sense that they have attempted to incorporate elements from traditional and Western culture in forming a subordinate ideology and bringing other
possibilities of life into perspective. The students, however, represent open confrontation with the government.

This chapter has hopefully explained the ability and possibility of resistance in Chinese culture. In the following space, we will apply Q-methodology to finding out the actual expressions of resistance by probing into the subjective structure of the Chinese media reception.
CHAPTER 4: Q-METHODOLOGY

This is not the first time that Q-methodology is used to study media reception in terms of ideological discourse. O’Brien (1992), for example, attempted to study audiences’ decoding activity through the application of Q-methodology. In support of Hall’s encoding/decoding model (Hall, 1980c), the results of his study suggest that different positions exist in the decodings of the news texts by readers.

In a similar manner, this thesis uses Q-methodology to discover the subjective diversity of cultural resistance with cartoons circulated in the Chinese mass media as its methodological device. Below, we are going to review the basic principle of Q and then design the study through applying its techniques.

4.1 Principles of Q-Methdology

Q-methodology, invented and developed by physicist and psychologist William Stephenson, offers an alternative approach to the study of human communication as it focuses on how an individual defines himself/herself and the topics under discussion, instead of how others define them. The strong emphasis on subjectivity distinguish Q from other scientific inquires in terms of human communication.

Goldman (1990) notes that communication research in the
U.S. has been conducted primarily in the objective framework, as a message-centred approach rather than a meaning-oriented one. In this respect, Stephenson's Q-methodology and its introduction into communication research have ushered us into a "new worthwhile direction" (Brown, 1980: 1) inside a subjective framework where the patterns and meanings of natural expressions of self-reference exist (McKeown, 1991).

The objective mode emphasizes the information and messages which can predictably change people's behaviour and thus change the outside world. The subjective mode, the primary concern of Q-methodology, is directed toward "our thoughts, wishes, emotions, opinions, fantasies, dreams, beliefs -- in a word our 'mind'" (Stephenson in Goldman, 1991).

Q-methodology, with its advantage of being able to enter the colourful yet much neglected world of subjectivity, will help us to probe the "inner possibilities" of a culture (Spengler, 1967: 15) and draw a "map of meanings" for them. The essential task of Q-methodology, as Goldman points out, is to illustrate how the subjective underpinnings of culture can be explicated by employing mass communication research in the context of subjective science principles. This will, in the main, render psychosocial understandings of "a way of life and patterns of significance," as Carey (1979) would have it (Goldman, 1990).

The discovery of the diversified pattern of subjectivity has a scientific foundation which is influenced by the developments in modern physical and behavioral science
(Stephenson, 1961). Q states that society consists of experiencing subjects and thus Q "embraces the quantum world view of intersubjectivity, interdeterminism and complementarity" (Goldman, 1990). Based on contemporary quantum theory, Q provides a means by which communication researchers can empirically examine subjective realities. This is in contrast to the objective framework greatly influenced by the dominant Newtonian mechanistic paradigm, which sees individuals as atoms whose behaviour can be predicted and measured as the effect of the mass media.

Stephenson therefore called for a return to a more important role for abductive inference, which has been neglected in the dominant hypothetico-deductive framework (Stephenson, 1961: 8). In Q methodology, attempts are made "to bring unexpected but not unsuspected results to light, that is to make discoveries" (Stephenson, 1961: 8).

Abduction is not only regarded as a matter of inference; it is also a matter of methodology itself. In Q, theory and law are used in an abductive and pragmatic way (Stephenson, 1961: 7). Researchers ought to look for facts which can be explained by theory and law. Its technique provides "the facts -- such as Q-sorts, leading to factors -- in which case explanations are discoveries and not merely conclusions to deductive inference" (Stephenson, 1961: 9). Combining a fact and an explanation, Stephenson asserts that it is "sufficiently distinctive to warrant it being called a new
kind of argument in science" (Stephenson, 1961: 6).

Prior to this chapter, a diverse literature produced by scholars on the subject of resistance in media reception of humour has been reviewed. In addition, we also analyzed the epistemological basis in Chinese culture for possible resistance on the part of the people. These theoretical propositions or opinions can be put into an endless list of statements and they constitute what is called concourse.

To put it simply, concourse is "a collection of self-referent statements about any idea, concept, object, dream, or whatever" (Goldman, 1991: 344). The concourse theory of communication, the Q-methodological equivalent, also proposed by Stephenson, assumes that there is a universe of "statements" for any context or situation (McKeown, 1990, Stephenson, 1978a). In other words, "statements" or opinions in a concourse all bear meanings relevant to the same topic under discussion. Although the statements in a courcourse are infinite, operationally they can be modeled into a sample which "insures representativeness of the range of opinions on the topics" (McKeown, 1991: 13).

A concourse, or its operational form of Q-sample is crucial in Q-methodology because it involves communication action with self or others through "sharing of knowledge" (Goldman, 1991: 344). Stephenson explains as follows:

Everyone in a culture can understand something of each statement in a concourse (of communication). Yet each statement may mean something different to everyone, and something different to the same

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person in different circumstances.... (Stephenson in McKeown, 1990).

Therefore, both the commonality and uniqueness of individuals' subjective meanings can be made manifest on operant factor structures which resulted from the respondents' sorting of a Q-sample. A concourse, in this sense, does not provide respondents with meanings but is used to bring out meanings of the respondents, i.e., the final explanation of the subject matter in the subjective domain.

4.2 Q Technique

According to Q technique, the design of the study involves two important steps: the first step is to structure a Q-sample and the second is to provide some conditions of instruction. Both of these are ways through which theories are introduced (Goldman, 1991: 349). Within this set of designed procedures, a respondent can thus express his/her own attitudes and feelings in relation to the topics under discussion (Brown, 1980).

From different angles, we have reviewed theories concerning our topic of resistance in media reception, and humour reception in particular. The first chapter revealed the ideological nature of mass media and the limited possibility of oppositional meanings in mass media societies. In addition, we especially pointed to the spirit of play, whose presence in a culture might be an indication of existing resistance. In the second chapter, we discussed at length
humorous forms as contestation of meanings. Humour's media representation and reception, like any other media practice, are the site for ideological struggle. And finally, chapter three is devoted to providing background knowledge about Chinese culture with a focus on the epistemological basis for potential resistance.

In this process, we went through a great deal of theoretical propositions which constitute statements of a concourse (Stephenson, 1978a, Goldman, 1991). Mostly they can be "grouped logically into classes" (Goldman, 1991: 346) to cover the different aspects of the theories. However, as Goldman reminded us, "the statements from the concourse, or operationally its Q-sample, are not always verbal" (Goldman, 1991: 347). With this in mind, when Goldman (1990) conducted his investigation of underlying subjectivity of the narcissistic culture, he placed the concourse directly into the mass media by way of photos in Time magazine. As photos represent all spheres of social life, they can be used factorially to develop a Q-sample.

Along the same line, cartoons, a popular humorous form circulated in mass media, can also be viewed as a visualization of Chinese cultural life and an approximation of the discourse with which we are concerned. For this purpose, about seven hundred one-panel cartoons which appeared during the years 1990 to 1991 in the Chinese journals were clipped.

Newspaper index topic such as Family, Politics, Ethics,
Medicine, Leisure, Arts, etc. represent different social areas which mass media normally attempt to cover and to induce people into daily conversations. Thus, cartoons depicting these categories were used to structure the Q-sample to approximate the cultural environment (Table 1).

On the other hand, the Q-sample should also be able to address some characteristics of the cartoons. Most of the time, cartoons are characterized as "funny" or "not funny." But since a cartoon can make one person laugh hysterically but gives no hint of the emotions of another, it is hard for a researcher to decide whether a cartoon is funny or not. However, it is possible for one to approximate the basic feeling that a cartoon tries to convey, such as "positive," "neutral" and "negative." The divisions of such feelings should also be taken into account in structuring the Q-sample.

As a result of these considerations, a Q-sample size of n=60 was selected, photocopied and replicated twice in the 10 X 3 design. The cartoons were randomized and numbered. Eventually, the Q-sample was structured in a Fisherian design as shown in Table 1.

It has to be noted that the categorization of the Fisherian design is only a way of organizing the Q-sample so that other researchers can replicate it when doing studies of the same topic. Therefore, the researcher is "ultimately uninterested in the logical categories of the Fisherian design" (Goldman, 1991: 349). And since the structure of the
Q-sample is invisible to respondents, it will not effect the way the respondents sort the cartoons.

Table 1: Fisharian Design for Cartoons in the Q-sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Culture</th>
<th>Family/Children</th>
<th>Politics</th>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>Ethics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science/Medicine</td>
<td>Leisure</td>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>Arts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>h</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Valency (feeling)</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>K</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>m</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of the conditions of instruction, the other step in designing the study, Goldman observes:

Theory is introduced in Q by way of the structured Q sample, but also in another important manner, that is, as conditions of instruction for Q sorts. The logic pertaining to the conditions of instruction is that they are the so-called independent variables that are fundamental to experimentation in Q. More significantly, however, they are hypothesis-inductive and hence used to induce lawful behaviour (Goldman, 1990).

Here, both theories and laws come in as a guide to supply conditions of instruction, which, in our context, are related to the theoretical propositions, the literature review of humour, and the description of the Chinese cultural environment.

As we have mentioned in Chapter 1 and again in Chapter 3, the forming of a dominant ideology as a central system of
practices, meanings and values, is a process of incorporation. Although the "residual" forms and "emergent" forms of culture mostly represent alternative or oppositional meanings and values, they can be partially "incorporated" into the dominant structure (Williams in Hall, 1977, Kellner, 1978) for the sake of hegemony. On the surface, we found that when the residual ideologies of Confucianism, and the emergent ideologies of Western culture have been officially condemned and despised. Ironically, as we discussed, the government has also been incorporating some elements of those ideologies into its practices and value system. Our concern, then, is how people are aware of this situation. Is it possible that they are incorporating some other elements of the residual ideologies and emergent ideologies into their subjective domain to resist the dominant ideology? In condition one, three and seven, we intend to present the complexity of the ideological situation in the Chinese cultural environment. The respondents are expected to express self-referential opinions about Chinese tradition, present Chinese culture and Western culture.

From the chapter about the representation and reception of humour, we have learned that people laugh for different reasons and those who laugh for the same reason may have similar experience, and interests in life. Our second concern can therefore be addressed in conditions two and five which serve to reveal how individuals identify themselves with other social groups' definitions of reality as referenced by
him/herself. The government officials are those who benefit from the dominant ideology; the students are those who would sacrifice their lives to challenge the present social system. As pointed out in Chapter Three, the points of view of those two social groups are believed to be at the two extremes of the ideological discourse.

Our previous attempt to incorporate Huizinga's (1955) notion of play into critical theories has brought us some explanations about why the presence of play elements in a culture can indicate, to some degree, the existing resistance. Thus, we also include this aspect in the sixth condition of instruction, which will allow the respondents to identify play elements and to express their opinion about play.

Besides the theories addressed in the conditions of instruction, some laws will also assist as a pragmatic function in inducing lawful behaviours (Stephenson, 1980: 22; Goldman, 1990). Conditions four and eight will reflect Rogers' law, which suggests that behavioral adjustment can be decided by looking at one's operant subjectivity, whether there exists congruity between one's self concept and one's ideal conception of one's self (Goldman, 1990).

Consequently, the eight conditions of instruction are constituted as follows, all on a scale from +5 (most representative) to -5 (least representative):

1. Describe the Chinese tradition.
2. Describe the point of view of the Chinese government.
3. Describe the present Chinese culture.
4. Describe your ideals.
5. Describe the point of view of students in the pro-democracy movement.
6. Describe a playful attitude.
7. Describe Western culture.
8. Describe you, yourself.

In terms of the selection of the respondents, Oksenberg analysed occupational groups in Chinese society (1968). He indicated that there are six main groups of people in Chinese society, including: peasants, industrial and commercial workers, intellectuals, students, party and government bureaucrats and the military. This division has not changed very much with the passing of time. The ideal would be to invite people from these different social groups to participate in the study; but there are some limits to this investigation because it cannot be conducted in China proper. However, we invited five Chinese living in Ontario to join in the Q-sorting. These people, whose ages range from late 20s to late 30s, were socialized in China before they came here no more than three years ago. In the analysis of the sorting results, we will find that each of them has had experiences in one or more of those social groups.
CHAPTER 5: FIVE INTERPRETATION OF Q-SORT RESULTS

Under each of the 8 conditions of instruction, 5 respondents rank-ordered the Q-sample of 60 cartoons along a continuum (Stephenson, 1953: 20) based on their feelings and points of view. This frequency distribution is designed in a quasi-bell-shape (Table 2) in which a few items are placed at extreme ends and a greater number of items fall somewhere in the middle. The convention it follows is that in responding to certain topics people only feel strongly about a few issues (McKeown, 1991). Through this loading activity, the cartoons of the Q-sample received different scores under different conditions. The raw Q-sorting result would be all of these 8 arrays of scores for each case.

A PCQ computer program specially designed to process data for Q studies correlates and factor analyzes the raw Q-sort results. Using varimax rotation, the program also subsumes and reduces the factors to represent the "simplest structure" (Stephenson, 1953: 41) of the loadings. In this structure, different conditions, if sorted in a similar fashion, will cluster together on one factor. A loading in excess of .33 is considered to be significant. The number of factor

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13. The standard error for a zero factor loading is given by the expression 1/n. Here n = 60, the number of cartoons in the Q-sample. SE is 1/60 = .13. Therefore, loadings of 2.58(SE) = .33 are significant at the 0.01 level (Goldman, 1991: 351).
solutions is decided upon with reference to the statistical significance. Also it should help us to see with clarity and simplicity the interrelationship between each factor loading under different conditions of instruction.

Table 2. Q-sort distribution (N = 60). X indicates Q-sample cartoons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most representative</th>
<th>Least representative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+5      +4      +3      +2      +1      0      -1      -2      -3      -4      -5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a result, two or three factors have emerged from the data for each case. Some conditions of instruction will load on the same factor while some others will load on more than one factor. The gross factor structure so achieved will provide a sketch of a person's subjectivity. They are operant factors which reveal the lawful behaviour of the respondents, though they were not aware of the result when they rank-ordered the cartoons according to their own feelings. For example, if a person loads the self with the students' point
of view, it is very likely an indication that s/he understands cartoon in a similar manner to the students. More importantly, as the appreciation of humour depends on shared knowledge, it could also be asserted that the same sentiments towards social issues are commonly held by the students and the respondent.

However, factor analysis of this kind only constitutes one of the two major steps in the interpretation of Q-sort results. The other step concerns the sample analysis (Stephenson, 1953: 45), which will help to add details to the discovered subjective world. For each of the factors, the 60 cartoons of the Q-sample have a loading score ranging from +5 to -5. A number of cartoons, if their loading scores are at least three piles away from the loading scores on other factors, would become discriminating items which distinguish that factor from the rest of the other factors. All of the discriminating items for a factor can be lined up (from +5 to -5) to bring to light the implicit meanings of the factor. Aside from the factor arrays, it is also helpful to check the items with highest or lowest loading scores for the characteristics and explanations of the factor.

For the remainder of this chapter, we will first look at the gross factor structure of the five single cases. This will assist in exhibiting the subjective dimension of Chinese humour and communication regarding their relations to ideological discourse. To assert the theoretical propositions
further, two of the five cases will be dealt with in-depth through the sample analysis, namely, the interpretation of the discriminating items.

Some known laws will be used to guide the interpretation of the Q-sort results. Three important laws normally involved for Q purpose include James' law, Rogers' law, and Parloff's law. James' law offers its psychological implications in Q studies, that there is a distinction between what is me and what is mine. The factors resulting from different conditions of instruction may indicate this distinction with some factors reflecting one's "me" and others referring to something which is "not me" or only "mine."

Rogers' law is derived from the psychoanalytic notions of ego and superego (ego-ideals). There is a difference between what a person wants himself/herself to be and what the person really is. Therefore behavioral adjustment reflects "a concordance between one's self concept and one's ideal conception of one's self" (Goldman, 1991). One's operant subjectivity may give a significant indication of whether self adjustment exists.

Parloff's law holds that overt behaviour is likely to be associated with "me," and not merely "mine." Self-referred factors will display the possible courses of action while others would only indicate some knowledge of the given situation.

Interviews have been conducted in this study so that the
respondents could view the factor structures constructed by them and associate themselves with the factor arrays to generate new meanings.

5.1 Case A

She is in her early 30's and a master's candidate in social science at a Canadian university. Her Q-sorting resulted in three factors as shown in Table 3. The significant loadings are indicated by the use of parentheses. And a bipolar factor means it has negative factor loadings (-) on it, and loadings appearing on more than one factor are confounded factors.

Table 3: Gross Factor Structure for Case A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions of Instruction</th>
<th>factor A</th>
<th>factor B</th>
<th>factor C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tradition</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>(59)</td>
<td>-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>(41)</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Culture</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-12</td>
<td>(-59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideals</td>
<td>(77)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>(40)</td>
<td>(-51)</td>
<td>-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>(-75)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Culture</td>
<td>-5</td>
<td>(-70)</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>(74)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated by the gross factor structure, Self, Ideals and Students' View loaded on the same factor. According to Roger's law, the factor shows there is an adjustment between herself and her ideals. In the interview, she admitted that
she is a very flexible and reasonable person. "Dreaming anything which is not workable is a torture," she said, "and I will never put myself in that position." But that doesn’t mean that she has no ideal; only it should not come from others. She explained that she had a wonderful job in China as a teacher in the most prestigious university, which would be considered very ideal by others. Then she chose to go abroad and experience the outside world. Considering all the troubles she went through in dealing with the bureaucratic procedures for the trip, she said, "it is worthwhile because I stick to my own ideals and hope to reach my potential."

Also as this factor indicates, she sees the students’ point of view as a part of herself, and as a matter of fact, a part of her self-ideal (James’ law). And as Parloff’s law implies, she would take the students’ point of view as her practical course of action. Case A’s experience confirms this factor. She pursued both her undergraduate and her first graduate program in the same university where she later became a lecturer teaching general English to students of various majors. And that is the university from which every contemporary students’ movement in China originated. Having been a teacher and being among the students for over ten years, she acknowledges that she shares a lot of common ground with them. During the students’ movement in 1989, she was very supportive of their demands and actively participated in several demonstrations. Daily visits were paid to her
students who waged a hunger strike at Tiananmen Square to protest the Party’s government. They were subsequently suppressed in the military crackdown.

On Factor B, Western Culture, Students’ View loaded negatively with Tradition and Government’s View. According to her, the present role of the government in China has not changed very much from a thousand years ago. The rulers of ancient dynasties attempted to win the emotional support of the people by promising to improve their lot. There was no legitimate way of getting people involved in decision making. The Party’s government today also advocates “mass line,” which calls for people’s participation in politics. But this only serves to justifying its ideological control. Ordinary people do not have a say when it comes to their own life.

In her judge, the students are in favour of Western values of individual freedom and social democracy which they have been exposed to through reading Western philosophy. The Chinese tradition has received severe criticism from the students partly because the government is still practicing it. In order to bring about changes, it is only natural, she said, for the students to seek albeit idealistic alternative Western concepts of freedom and democracy. This factor reveals that Case A is very well aware of the logic behind the government’s ideological practice and students’ intention to resist its control.

Case A does not see play as part of herself. But she has
knowledge of play as it loaded on Factor C along with Present Culture, both perceived negatively. She seems to be hesitant in identifying positively what is representative of the present culture and what is playful. Instead, Case C reveals on Factor C that she does not see any play element in anything which is not representative of the present Chinese culture. In the interview, the discriminating items for Factor C were lined up for her. When checking the negative side of the factor array, she identified collectivism, patriotism and moralism (cartoons 31, 34 and 22) which she considers part of the Party’s propaganda to legitimize its ideological domination. Also on the negative side, there exists some traits of commercialism, most representative of Western society (Cartoon 57) and also some traditional residues (Cartoons 14 and 54). These elements presented negatively, according to her, are not representative of the present Chinese culture and are not playful either. In other words, what is representative of present culture is play.

She said that present Chinese culture cannot simply be represented by tradition, Western influence, or the government’s ideals. Instead, play, which implies non-seriousness, cynicism, and a kind of detachment from the situation, could be viewed as one of the unique features of today’s China.

In summary, Case A’s factor structure reveals her tendency of resistance. She sees students’ view as part of
herself (James's law) and takes it as her course of action (Parloff's law). She has awareness of the hegemonic nature of the government's ideological control both traditionally and in the present day, while she understands the students' intention of importing alternative ideas as a solution. And finally, she identifies, in a double negative manner, the existence of play elements in the present culture. According to the theories we reviewed earlier and her own interpretation, play implies an attitude of looking for new alternatives (Ruizinga, 1955) and being cynical and detached is a form of passive resistance (Berger, 1963, Yang, 1991).

5.2 Case B

Case B was born into a poor peasant's family in a remote countryside in the mid 60's. He became a foreign language student through the national entrance examination to universities.

Table 4: Gross Factor Structure for Case B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions of Instruction</th>
<th>factor A</th>
<th>factor B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tradition</td>
<td>-6</td>
<td>(44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>-26</td>
<td>(-36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Culture</td>
<td>-18</td>
<td>(47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideals</td>
<td>(51)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>(55)</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>(37)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Culture</td>
<td>(44)</td>
<td>-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>(76)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As Table 4 shows, Factor A contains Self, Ideals, Students’ View and Western Culture. There is an adjustment between his self and his ideals (Roger’s law). On the same factor, he idealizes the students’ point of view and what is characteristic of Western culture, which could well lead to his practical cause of action (Parloff’s law).

This can be confirmed by the fact that Case B was a student activist when he studied at a foreign language institute in Beijing. He was once under police detention for the leading role he played in an anti-government demonstration in 1985. He also joined the movement in 1989 as a journalist and was pressured to write several versions of confession about his involvement. Both these student movements were condemned by the Chinese government as misleading Western liberalism.

As a foreign language student, he has acquainted himself with Western culture through reading a lot of its philosophy and literature. He internalized the idealistic notions of democracy and freedom. According to him, Montesquieu’s separation of powers was his ideal when he, along with his fellow students, demanded that the government change the political system.

Factor B contains Tradition, Present Culture and Play along with Government’s View which loaded negatively. There is a perceived congruity between tradition and present culture, both of which contain playful elements.
According to Case B, China used to be a cultural empire with Confucianism as its dominant ideology, binding Chinese and other minorities together for thousands of years. Economic prosperity had never been the primary goal of the empire. Self-sufficient production was conducted within family units to maintain social stability and individual contentment. In that environment, reading classical literature, writing poems and frequent interpersonal communication were the main social activities. Therefore, Case B sees the cultural tradition as having an abundance of playful elements. However, the empire faced a threat to its existence from the industrialized Western world at the end of the 19th century. To survive the crisis, young intellectuals imported progressive Western theory such as Marxism to found a nation state in China.

The Communist Party has been attempting to eliminate traditional residues which created obstacles to national economic growth and its leadership. In this sense, Factor B indicates that the play elements of the Chinese culture, in both traditional and present culture are at odds with the government’s points of view. In other words, the ideological domination of the Chinese government caused suppression of the play elements which were part of Chinese tradition and are still active in present Chinese culture.

The absence of Self on this factor indicates that Case B keeps a distance from playful culture, only seeing them as
"mine" but not "me" (James’ law). In Case B’s interpretation, play implies an attitude which is non-serious and non-cooperative to goal-oriented actions. But at the same time, play also implies tolerance and compromise. He said, "It (play) won’t help the Party’s government; it won’t fundamentally help subordinates either." To end the oppression, he still believes, serious actions should be taken.

On a whole, Case B’s factor structure suggests that he internalized Western concepts of democracy and freedom, standing in striking opposition to the Party government’s ideological promotion. He sees play as as resistant element in the culture, but prefers a more radical opposition stance.

In the interview with him, Case B spoke critically of Western culture as well as Chinese culture. He tended to rebuke inhumane elements in each culture by praising the other’s progressive elements. The contradiction, in his point of view, does not bother him. The Chinese idiom "What is too long for an inch can make up what is too short for a foot" is used by him to describe his state of mind when he makes comparisons between both cultures. For Chinese people, he said, it is important to look to the outside world for other possibilities. Therefore, it is only natural for him to idealize, to a certain degree at least, the Western concepts of democracy and freedom while risking the accusation of being "a worshipper of the West."

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5.3 Case C

The result of the factor analysis of Case C's Q-sorting is displayed in the factor structure (Table 5). Both factors are bipolar.

Before examining the factor structure, it is necessary to have some information regarding Case C's background. Case C came from an army family. His father was dismissed from the army because of his negligence during the Vietnam War in the early 1970s. Now in his mid-thirties, he has never attended any post-secondary school. Instead, he learned Chinese traditional medicine and breathing exercises from a former imperial master. He earned money by treating patients and running a Chinese medicine export company. With the money he earned, Case C came to Canada for English language training at his own expense. Then he settled in Canada, running a Chinese herb store in a border city. He is quick-minded and outspoken, showing a good sense of humour.

Table 5: Gross Factor Structure for Case C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions of Instruction</th>
<th>factor A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tradition</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>(71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>(-86)</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Culture</td>
<td>(72)</td>
<td>-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideals</td>
<td>(76)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>(76)</td>
<td>(-35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td>(76)</td>
<td>-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Culture</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>(-37)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>(89)</td>
<td>-15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

115
Factor A is loaded with six out of the eight conditions including Self, Ideals, Present Culture, Students' View, and Play with Government's View loaded negatively. On Factor B, Students' View is confounded, and together with Western Culture, it loaded negatively with Tradition.

As Factor A shows, there is an adjustment between Case C's self and his ideal (Roger's law). He said, jokingly, "I never aim myself too high. That's why I have no problem with achieving ideals, one after another."

On Factor A, it is indicated that Case C has internalized what is most representative of present culture, the students' view and the government's (negatively). According to him, present culture has provided the best opportunity for the young generation to bring their potential into full play. He expressed his satisfaction with his life in the past decade when he "caught up with the tide" and earned money by running his own business.

However, he did not give any credit to the government's "open door policy" which caused his good fortune. As is indicated on the factor, he insists that the government's view runs against what is most representative in Chinese present culture, his self and his ideals. To him, the new leaders such as Deng could not have done any better to win the consent of the people than the late leader Mao did. That is why they had to change their policy and open the door to the outside world. He prospered through his personal efforts while the
children of high ranking officials only benefitted from their parents’ privileges.

Case C became very supportive of the students’ movement because it raised the public voice against the corrupt government. He participated by donating money to the students when they held a demonstration in the spring of 1989.

Also indicated by Factor A, Case C takes play as part of himself (James’ law) and his practical strategy (Parloff’s law) in dealing with his environment and the Party’s ideological control. "In today’s society," he said, "the one who survives is the one who plays the best" (The term he used in Chinese: "Wan Zhe Shen Cun" is a play on words of Darwin’s "Survival of the fittest"). Play to him, he said, means "playing my own game using others’ rules." As a matter of fact, his success in business and medicine is a result of his "playing around" with the policy. Private business has never been allowed to export Chinese medicine from China, but he made that happen by manipulating the government’s policy. This confirms Berger’s notion of manipulation as a kind of resistance towards social control:

Here the individual does not try to transform the social structures nor does he detach himself from them. Rather he makes deliberate use of them in ways unforeseen by their legitimate guardians, cutting a path through the social jungle in accordance with his own purposes (1963: 134).

The loadings on Factor B reveal the relationship among Tradition, Student’s view and Western culture, perceived by
Case C as "not me" but only "mine" (James' law). He has knowledge about what is typical of Chinese tradition. At the same time he understands that students' views are in the same line of Western culture which is the opposite of this tradition. Although it is apparent from Factor A that Case C shares the students' points of view against the Party's government, Factor B does not suggest that Case C relates himself directly to their anti-tradition and pro-West sentiment. He said that there are a lot of good things to be treasured in the tradition which we should never part from. The ultimate goal of any individual pursuit is to give honour to his ancestors and benefit the younger generation rather than to serve religious faith or personal fulfillment. With no exception, Case C claims he is still a traditional man. He wants to have more than one child in Canada and raise them to become scholars who will be fluent in both Chinese and English.

Case C's situation is very typical of an ordinary man in China with no higher education. They are aware of the government's control, but avoiding direct confrontation with it. Instead, they live their own lives and take actions when there is an opportunity.

5.4 Case D

In order to get a fuller picture of Chinese media reception of humour in terms of ideological discourse, the
following two cases are to be dealt with in depth. After the gross factor structures were checked, the discriminating items were spread out so that the respondents could give their associations to the factor arrays in the interviews.

Case D is a male in his mid 30s. He is a graduate in Western oil painting from the most prestigious fine arts academy in China and is among the most promising artists in the country. He draws cartoons as his hobby and freelance. His Q-sort resulted in the gross factor structure located on Table 6.

Table 6: Gross Factor Structure for Case D

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions of Instruction</th>
<th>factor A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tradition</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>(54)</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>-11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Culture</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>(-34)</td>
<td>(-63)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideals</td>
<td>(82)</td>
<td>-22</td>
<td>-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>(64)</td>
<td>-16</td>
<td>(-72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>(-69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Culture</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>(-65)</td>
<td>-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>(73)</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Factor A displays the existing adjustment between Self and Ideals (Roger's law). Case D confirmed in the interview, "I don't dream for the sake of dreaming. If I dream, that means I have already started working towards realizing the dream." At the same time, the presence of the Students' View on the factor indicates that Case D idealizes the students and
takes their point of view as his practical course of action (Parloff's law). He was also an active participant in the students' movement in 1989. A caricature depicting the paramount leader Deng as a crowned emperor was created by him and carried onto Changan Avenue and Tienanmen Square where over a million students and civilians demonstrated against the government. Entitled in both Chinese and English: "The Last Emperor," the name of that year's Oscar winning movie, the large poster caused a big stir and received heavy media coverage. He was cheered and thrown into the sky by the crowd as a hero. But he paid a high price for this action. Severe punishment was imposed from the authorities for the effects his poster caused at home and abroad. For two years he was not even allowed to leave the city where he worked.

Factor B is bipolar where Present Culture and Western Culture loaded negatively with Tradition. Being a Chinese artist who does Western style oil painting, Case D has personal knowledge of both Chinese and Western culture. On the one hand, he acknowledges the fact that present Chinese culture has diverted from its tradition and become more "Westernized," a tendency that the Party's government would do everything to stop.

But on the other hand, according to Case C, there will be a world of integrated cultures. It is his belief that the joining of the Chinese culture to the world community will add a healthy ingredient into the transformation of civilization
as a whole. China has much to offer besides gun powder, paper and printing. At the present time, it seems as if Chinese culture is influenced by Western culture in terms of modern science and technology. In the long run, he said, the humanistic elements of the Chinese cultural tradition will influence the Western culture when science and technology are fully recognized as unable to solve all the human problems. It is in this dialectical manner that he perceives the present culture as being along the same lines as Western culture.

Factor C is also bipolar. Both Students’ View and Present Culture, along with play elements, are perceived negatively with Government’s View. As the factor shows, Case D sees that the government is working against the main trends of the present culture and the kind of attitudes held by the students. At the same time, play is compatible with the present culture and the students’ view. According to Case D, a person having a playful attitude in life is able to recognize the limitation of social rules and to always try to manipulate them. The Party’s government, on the other hand, attempts to protect its own interest through these social rules. To a certain degree, therefore, play elements in a culture will constitute a threat to the power domination.

Over all, Case D relates himself to the resistance force, the students’ view; he sees present culture as moving towards more “Westernization,” that we understand from our previous discussions is in the opposite direction of the government’s
ideal. And he also identifies the existence of play elements as a way to break through the ideological control. In relation to the theories reviewed earlier, these are the general meanings we discovered in the factor structure. In Q, it is also the researcher’s task, though, to interpret "the themes running through the factor and qualify what has been created by the Q-sorter" (Goldman, 1991: 351). In the following space, therefore, the discriminating items for Case D’s three factors are reported on Table 7, 8, and 9 respectively. And in the interview, Case C was asked to associate himself with these factor arrays so that new meanings could emerge about each factor.

Factor A defines Case D’s self, his ideal and what is held in common between himself and the students. On the positive side of the discriminating items, Case D expressed his appreciation of the beauty in every day life (Cartoon 44) and the spirit of adventure (Cartoon 5). His tolerance over a sports offender is also indicative (Cartoon 3). On the negative side, he demonstrated his resentment towards the Party’s efforts to win people’s consent by making a nation as a big ship with the Party as the captain (Cartoon 52 and 7). Dissatisfaction is also directed towards ethical issues (Cartoon 14, 34 and 54). These meanings are overt.

On a covert level, there is a feeling of individual freedom running through the positive side of the discriminating items. This seems to be a trace of Taoism’s
notion of normalcy which suggests that the individual should think and act according to his or her own intuition without being influenced by artificial standards (Wang, 1968). As cartoon 44 shows, one can take notice of the beauty even in an over-crowded apartment building without being reminded of the socially accepted moral standards. The offender in a tennis game (Cartoon 3) is indicative of the limitation of man-made rules which can never cover the diversity of real life.

Table 7: Discriminating Items for Case D’s Factor A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>44. apartment building</td>
<td></td>
<td>+5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. scientific discovery</td>
<td></td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. an unfriendly mistake by tennis player</td>
<td></td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. selling milk directly from cow</td>
<td></td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. poorly made tv dramas</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. child chained to piano</td>
<td></td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>+4</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. spider web and chess game</td>
<td></td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>+4</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. information man can’t hear well</td>
<td></td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. children sending money to disaster area</td>
<td></td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. who should take the seat</td>
<td></td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>+5</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. cleaning up social residues</td>
<td></td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. Opinion box</td>
<td></td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. production is sky rocketing</td>
<td></td>
<td>-5</td>
<td>+4</td>
<td>+5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. big ship like big country</td>
<td></td>
<td>-5</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Since individual freedom is not emphasized in social norms, or in the dominant ideology, there is a tendency for Case D and his ideal as well as the students to transcend reality by seeking spiritual freedom within limitations. For Case D as an artist, the act of artistic creation in particular can also bring individuality into full play despite all the moral confinement. However, Case D notes that individuality should always be enhanced directly or indirectly among social relationships so that it won’t lead to extreme individualism. Individual adventure is significant as in scientific discovery, through which one can contribute to the progress of society (Cartoon 5).

The negative side of the discriminating items, on the other hand, describes a sense of collectivism and moralism. Case D said he is not personally against the ethical standards which are the commonly agreed upon cultural rules and customs. For instance, being considerate of others (Cartoon 14), or getting rid of pornographic materials circulated in society (Cartoon 34) is good for the stability of a culture. What he rejects then is that when the Party takes these ethical standards as part of its strategy for ideological domination, the moral standards become bondage to individual freedom. As a result, the harmonious social relationship is replaced by a situation in which everyone feels that they are spied upon. This confirms with Moody’s discussion that morality in China has been highly politicized; the public’s increasing doubts
may indicate a process of "delegitimizing" the ideological control (Moody, 1988).

Through the above analysis of Factor A’s discriminating items, it is clear that in Case D’s underlying subjectivity, there are perceived conflicts between freedom and conformity, and between individualism and collectivism. In relation to the theories we discussed in Chapter One, although the hegemonic ideology attempts to promote conformity and collectivism through morality, Case D’s operant factor shows that what he internalized as part of himself is just the opposite of the ideological requirements.

Factor B describes how Case D perceives the relationship among traditional culture, present culture and Western culture. The discriminating items for Factor B (Table 8) express Case D’s strong concerns over issues of family (four out of nine cartoons) and of arts (two out of nine cartoons). On the positive side, two cartoons (21, 11) repeat the same theme about the Chinese traditional culture: children are very much spoiled at a young age and they can still be very dependent on their parents even when they become adults. To Case D, that a surgeon discovers a spider web brain signifies a need to replace an out-dated and stubborn mind, which is typical of a traditional mentality.

The negative side of the discriminating items tends to describe what is most like the present Chinese present and Western culture. There is a sense of equity and democracy
Table 8: Discriminating Items for Case D's Factor B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15. brain surgery</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>+5</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. married couple eating parents food</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. our buddy coming home</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. watching tv with headphones on</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. each has his own position</td>
<td>+5</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. family democracy by lot</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. animal forest protection</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. actress asked to change costumes</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. modern composer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-5</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

between men and women and among family members (Cartoon 41 and 1). And there is also Case D's projection of modern art (Cartoon 28) and commercialization of art (Cartoon 48).

Overtly, throughout the factor, changes of situation from past to present are described in regard to family and art issues. Covertly, Case D admits family is the basic unit of Chinese culture and society. The changes of the situation in family can be used to perceive the transformation of culture. As we mentioned in Chapter Three, a nation means a "state family" in Chinese language. To run a country is like running a family with the government as the parents. In other words, citizens, while being protected by the government, do not have much autonomy for themselves (Cartoon 21 and 11).
tradition has led to a rigid way of thinking at its worst (Cartoon 15). This is why, Case C states, this culture should turn to different alternatives. And changes certainly have been perceived by him. The present culture is actually very much Westernized as reflected in family relationships. There is increasing emphasis on family democracy (Cartoon 41) and decline in male chauvinism (Cartoon 1). If the situation in a family has been changed this much, then, the same applies to the "family state" and the culture. In today's China, the ideological resistance can therefore metaphorically be seen as the subordinate people, in a position of the children, demanding equality from the Party's government as parents.

In summary, Case D perceives the clashes between tradition and present, Chinese and West. And he sees the influence from the Western culture as being good for the Chinese to revitalize their culture, although it has been a direct threat to the existence of the dominant ideology.

Factor C reveals the relationship among government, present culture and the students and how play functions in the culture. Its discriminating items (Table 9) contain cartoons describing almost every sphere of social life. The positive side tends to reflect the government's view which is a series of promotions of the collective economy under the leadership of the Party's government (Cartoon 38), the state-owned insurance system being a part of the social production process (Cartoon 37), and a whole-hearted contribution to
Table 9: Discriminating Items for Case D’s Factor C.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Factor A</th>
<th></th>
<th>Factor B</th>
<th></th>
<th>Factor C</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>violin played collectively</td>
<td>-5</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>insurance as one pillar in production</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>+4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>contribution to the asian games</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>+4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55.</td>
<td>doctor’s uniform</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60.</td>
<td>suicide in a slow way</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>blowing old man’s one hair</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-5</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>stop for inspection</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>+4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>winners between better and worse</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>triangle debt</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>-5</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>drinking and playing cards kill time</td>
<td>+4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57.</td>
<td>barber’s shop bargaining</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46.</td>
<td>grandpa and grandson both first place</td>
<td>+4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.</td>
<td>key becomes the lock</td>
<td>+4</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>funeral for dead trees</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>reporter asking for longevity secret</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+5</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>belt loosened for inspection tour</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>-5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>super way of fishing</td>
<td>+5</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>unexpected gain in fishing</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>-5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Asian Games held in China (Cartoon 22).

The negative side of the discriminating items represents present culture, the students’ view and playfulness. There is an emphasis on the importance of talent and opportunity,
instead of hard work or obedience (Cartoon 40 and 16). And the change of function between a key and a lock gives him a sense of freedom from a passive position of the lock to a positive position of the key (Cartoon 50).

The implicit stream of feeling running through the factor is that of conflict between rule-setting and rule-breaking, or between repression and resistance. The review of the theories has pointed to the polysemic nature of media products, typically reflected in humorous forms. On the one hand, humorous forms may contain critical and progressive elements by denying or ignoring the conventional rules in daily life (Kellner, 1979, Benton, 1988, and Powell, 1988). On the other hand, it can also be used as "norm enforcement" by clarifying and differentiating the "correct" from the "incorrect" (Davies, 1988, Husband, 1988, Palmer, 1987, and Powell, 1988).

As the positive side shows, the government keeps sending messages as carried in those cartoons (38, 37, 22), which are rules for "correct actions." On the negative side, Case D shows his tolerance to situations which do not appear in their normal forms (Cartoon 40, 16, 42 and 35). These cartoons, to him, represent the mainstream of present culture and the students' view, which constantly break through the officially accepted rules which cause repression on the part of the people. And they all represent a playful attitude to Case D.

Although Case D states that a playful attitude held by people consists of potential for resistance to ideological
repression, he personally does not consider it as his course of action as indicated by the absence of Self on the factor (James' law and Parloff's law). He gives the acts of creation and innovation a higher place in transforming a culture. According to him, the cartoon of the Party leader Deng Xiaoping produced by him during the 1989's movement was in response to the pervasive playful attitude of the people who were already ready to accept the message it carried. When millions of people take on a playful attitude, it shows the lack of cooperation of the masses with the people in power. It is time for a change of any kind.

5.5 Case E

As a result of Case E's sorting, the loadings for eight conditions of instruction split up equally on two factors (Table 10) which can be viewed as representing different types of attitudes held by Case E and the students respectively.

On Factor A, it is indicative that there is adjustment between Case E's self and his ideals (Roger's law). This factor structure makes Case E the only person who loaded self with the government and tradition. He internalized them as part of himself (James' law) and idealized them (Roger's law). He confirmed in the interview that he agreed with and acted according to what is treasured in the traditional culture and what is required by the Chinese government.
Table 10: Gross Factor Structure for Case E

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions of Instruction</th>
<th>factor A</th>
<th>factor B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tradition</td>
<td>(36)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>(42)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Culture</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>(48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideals</td>
<td>(88)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>(48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>(35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Culture</td>
<td>-28</td>
<td>(55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>(66)</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Case E, in his late 30s, is a medical practitioner on his teaching trip to a Canadian college. He became a Communist Party member when he was an army doctor in the early 80’s. He said that the government as a whole has not changed its strategy of governing the country by moral standards. He has no objection towards this strategy and has been sticking to his goal of being a "moral person," acting according to traditional moral standards (Parloff’s law). To him the government officials are not perfect human beings. If they take advantage of their positions for personal benefit, they cannot avoid being judged by people’s moral standards. But the way of governing the country by moral standards should not simply be disposed of because of the corrupt acts of some officials.

In our previous discussions, it has been pointed out that the dominant ideology incorporates residual elements as part of its practice (Hall, 1977, Kellner, 1978). The residual
Confucian ideology suggests that the ruler should attempt to win people's consent and trust through demonstrating his/her personal virtue (Yang, 1991). Factor A reflects this aspect of the ideological hegemony in effect. Case E has shown no resistance towards the dominant ideology, instead, he takes what the dominant ideology suggests as personal ideal and his practical course of action (Parloff's law).

On Factor B, Present Culture, Student's View, Play and Western Culture consistently load together. He said play is something interesting, free and rare. Since the students supported the import of Western influence into China to make the present culture lively, he sees that as a healthy tendency and a playful act. He said he agrees with students' views to an extent, that Chinese society needs reform and some government officials are exploiting their privilege for their personal interests. But he could not appreciate the way they expressed their opinions. The demonstrations and the sit-ins will not solve the problems of China, he said, but could only cause mental confusion and social instability. As we mentioned earlier, students in China represent the resistance force and present culture is moving in the opposite direction of the ideological ideals. Case E has personal knowledge of the existing resistance in the culture, but he personally chooses to follow more traditional morals and the government's point of view, as that factor only represents "his" but not "himself" (James' law).
In what follows, we will turn to discover the implicit meanings inherent in the factor arrays. The discriminating items for Factor A (Table 11) show distinctive concerns over his career, his perception of moralities and patriotism. Cartoon 25 seems to have recorded the real experience he had in his profession. He recalled once he went to visit patients in wards which did not have with air conditioners, and family members of the patients would fan for him.

Cartoon 55 also reflects his personal image as a devoted doctor who is very serious about his job but also possesses a sense of humour in order to get along well with his patients. To Case D, who wins in a competition is not important as long as everyone is happy in a group (Cartoon 46). Cartoon 14 and I remind him of Confucius' saying, "Don't impose on others what you do not want." Case E explained in the interview, "In the other way around, you should compromise when you want something that someone else is also in need of." A strong sense of patriotism is revealed in Cartoons 22, 38, 52 and 7. To Case E, the founding of the nation saved every individual from living under the oppression of Western powers. What is important for a nation is also important for an individual.

On the negative side of the discriminating items, Case E recognizes societies' ignorance of environmental issues (Cartoons 59 and 39), its blind pursuit of material wealth neglecting spiritual comfort, (Cartoons 47, 6, 57 and 48), and the decline of moral standards (Cartoons 24 and 42).
Table 11: Discriminating Items for Case E’s Factor A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25. patients flapping fan for surgeons</td>
<td>+5</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55. doctor’s uniform</td>
<td>+5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. contribution to the asian games</td>
<td>+4</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. violin played collectively</td>
<td>+4</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. grandpa and grandson both first place</td>
<td>+4</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. who should take the seat</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. watching tv with headphones on</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. big ship like big country</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. production is sky rocketing</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. super way of fishing</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. triangle debt</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. stop for inspection</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. winners between better and worse</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. movement keeps you fit</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. key becomes the lock</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. modern composer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. selling milk directly from cow</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58. stomach drum</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. unexpected gain in fishing</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. actress asked to change costumes</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. cooked chicken flies its way out</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59. what a tree is</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
24. old man hanging himself

57. barber's shop bargaining

39. earth chained by pollution

36. drinking and playing cards kill time

51. child chained to piano

6. high material and low cultural life

47. toothpaste's price up

42. belt loosened for inspection tour

The underlying stream of feelings in this factor indicate Case E's preference for collectivism over individualism, and spiritual comfort over material well-being. In Case D's perception, an individual cannot amount to anything without living and interacting inside a collective group. In the official ideology of China, patriotism is the extension of collectivism. Case D internalized this well. He agreed that one should not only seek individual goals alone, s/he should support the government's policy which is made to keep its people together, working towards common goals. The former is impossible without the latter. Also evident is his concern over spiritual life. Using a Chinese idiom "Human desires are like a bottomless valley," Case E suggested, "contentment in life can be reached by very limited material conditions as long as the society is run for mutual benefit with united efforts." It is noted that these ideas, as the factor structure suggests, are consistent with what the government
promotes in the mass media and daily life.

The discriminating items for Factor B are located on Table 12. It reflects what is perceived by Case E as representative of present culture, Western culture, the students' point of view, and playful attitudes. On the positive side, it displays a series of individual activities with emphasis on talent, wisdom and opportunity (Cartoons 16, 28, 58, 50 and 40). There is also an emphasis on practical goals and material interests (Cartoons 10, 48, 47 and 6). On the negative side, national interests have no place in the individual's concern (Cartoons 52, 38, 7 and 22). Consideration for others and cooperation between each other are no longer appreciated as virtue (Cartoons 46, 14, 25 and 1).

Implicitly, Case E perceived Western influence on present Chinese culture, as having led to a more individualistic society and to the decline of traditional moral values. At the same time, he considered these as existence of play elements, which could result in some very contradictory consequences in Chinese culture. It could be a good thing as play implies to him something free and rare. The opening up to the outside world has freed a lot of taboos in China and brought in some rare but healthy phenomena in China. But on the other side of the matter, Case E said, a playful attitude also suggests irresponsibility and ignorance of common rules. As a hard working and considerate person, he expressed his
Table 12: Discriminating Items for Case E’s Factor B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>super way of fishing</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>modern composer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>winners between better and worse</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>selling milk directly from cow</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58.</td>
<td>stomach drum</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.</td>
<td>key becomes the lock</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>cooked chicken flies its way out</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>unexpected gain in fishing</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48.</td>
<td>actress asked to change costumes</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>high material and low cultural life</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>earth chained by pollution</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57.</td>
<td>barber’s shop bargaining</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59.</td>
<td>what a tree is</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>+1</td>
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<td>47.</td>
<td>toothpaste’s price up</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55.</td>
<td>doctor’s uniform</td>
<td>+5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>old man hanging himself</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>drinking and playing cards kill time</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>watching tv with headphones on</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51.</td>
<td>child chained to piano</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>belt loosened for inspection tour</td>
<td>-5</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>patience flapping fan for surgeons</td>
<td>+5</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>movement keeps you fit</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
22. contribution to the asian games +4 -3
12. stop for inspection 0 -3
14. who should take the seat +3 -4
46. grandpa and grandson both first place +4 -4
27. triangle debt 0 -4
52. big ship like big country +3 -5
38. violin played collectively +4 -5
7. production is sky rocketing +1 -5

Concern over the present situation in China which, to him, might lead to cultural crisis.

Through analysis of Case E's factor structure and the factors' discriminating items, we can conclude that Case E's perceptions and preferences consist of strong influence from the dominant ideology. This may relate to his experience of having been in the army which is considered as "a big school of Marxism and Maoism" (Li, 1989). Moreover, as suggested in Chapter 1, it is through social moralities and daily life experiences that the hegemonic ideology sustains "a specific range of subjectivity in favour of a specific social order" (Hall, 1982). The dominant ideology does not force Case E to think and act in certain ways, but by voluntarily attempting to be a moral person, Case E meets the ideological requirements. Case E's factor structure is therefore a demonstration of how the repression of the dominant ideology is realized through hegemony.
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS

This thesis started with a basic assumption in cultural studies' approaches that individuals in modern society have been oriented by mass media messages to perceive the world through an ideological framework which benefits a few people at the expense of the others. Then it turned to the new center of attention in cultural studies which focused on the possibility for these individuals to have different interpretations of the media rather than ideologically preferred meanings. We have been attempting to discover the expressions of these oppositional cultural meanings and to explain, within the context of Chinese culture, why there exists potential for resistance towards the dominant ideology.

We argued that examining different interpretations of specific texts for opposition is inadequate in pursuing these goals. Q-methodology provided us with a powerful way to reach people's real life experiences and their interaction with media products, particularly humorous forms, by probing into people's underlying subjectivity.

Cartoons, one of the most popular humorous forms circulated in mass media, were clipped to form a concourse for the Q-study. Humour's formation, like any other symbolic practice, is full of ideological struggle and a site for contestation of meanings. It is especially relevant for our purpose because reception and
appreciation of humour, more than anything else, depend on subjective conditions of the audience, their shared knowledge, and their general attitude towards reality. Using cartoons as a site to engage people in discussions, therefore, helped us to understand the oppositional meanings in a culture, which go beyond the interpretations of specific texts.

To locate this study, we have also examined the environment of Chinese culture with a special emphasis on the three main thought systems. In light of the epistemological basis, this has hopefully brought some primary understanding about Chinese cultural resistibility. And finally, we conducted a study of five single cases. The results and the analysis of the results have discovered the subjective expressions of this resistibility in a self-referential manner.

To conclude the study, we will summarize some important relationships and aspects revealed throughout the overall subjective structures of the respondents. In so doing, we will attempt to suggest further studies in the area and draw relevant implications for Western societies as well as cultural studies approaches.

**Self and Self Ideal: Students’ View vs. Government’s View** In the study, we used cartoons to approximate the structure of mass media where, according to cultural studies approaches, the dominant ideological definitions and representations are circulated and secured (Hall, 1977, Hall, 1980c). We also used Government’s View
and Student's View as two of the conditions of instruction. The
former represents the ideological control and the latter represents
the resistance force towards that control. As the factor
structures of the respondents show, four of them internalize the
students' view as part of themselves (James' law) and three of them
locate the students' view as directly opposite to the government's
view.

This does not only mean that they interpret the media texts in
a similar way that the students do, or they have oppositional
meanings to those ideologically preferred by the texts, as
suggested by Fiske. Since reception of humour, we pointed out
early, depends on shared knowledge, those results can also be
viewed as an indication that these respondents share a similar
attitude to the students towards the environment where media
reception takes place. We can therefore conclude there are
oppositional meanings present in Chinese culture instead of media
reading activity alone.

According to Parloff's law, those self-referred factors with
loadings from Students' View display the possible courses of
action. And this is confirmed by the four respondents' previous
experiences. They have, in one way or another, supported the
students' demonstrations against ideological control.

However, it should be noted that in three of those four factor
structures which show resistance, factors about students' view are
confounded. Although they perceive the students' view as in direct
opposition to the governments' view, they (except Case C) do not place themselves in such a distinctive disagreement with the government's view. This may not be entirely consistent with cultural studies approaches but it confirms the propositions about Chinese cultural resistability, which does not encourage open confrontation, but recommends subtle distinctions made between authority's conduct, li and its intention, qing, and passive resistance.

Despite the existing resistance, one exception is Case E. Although he recognizes the presence of resistance in society, he sees the government as part of himself and idealizes what the government has "recommended." Case E's subjectivity is an ideal example of how the hegemonic ideology can, through the mass media, sustain a specific range of subjectivity in favour of a specific social order.

A common phenomenon about the five respondents is that there is adjustment in all their cases. To some extent, when self ideal is held together with self, it is an indication that a person can distinguish self ideal from social standards and maintain a balance between socialization and self-fulfillment. Hence, this should also be an indication of the respondents' potential for resistance to the dominant ideology.

Present Culture: Tradition vs. Western Culture We have discussed previously that the dominant ideology tends to incorporate the elements of residual culture and emergent culture
as part of hegemonic functions (Williams in Hall, 1977, Kellner, 1978). People might also use some elements from residual and emergent culture to assist their resistance. Here Chinese tradition represents the residual elements and Western culture represents the emergent elements. Present culture is the dynamic where all these elements meet and interplay in the ideological struggle.

Three of the respondents make sharp distinctions between Western culture and traditional Chinese culture. Two of them, both resistant Case D and non-resistant Case E consider that present culture has been moving towards "Westernization." Western ideas, in present Chinese culture, are viewed as progressive and democratic concepts; their influence consists of a threat to the government's ideological domination. The student movement in 1989, which ended in a tragic crackdown, was said to have resulted from "Western liberalization." In this sense, recognition of Westernization is an indication of existing resistance to a certain degree.

One of them, however, sees a congruity between traditional culture and present culture. Case B considers that in two ways. For one thing, some traditional elements, like play, are still active in present culture and consist of obstacles to national economic growth and the Party's leadership. For another thing, he considers that the present culture is not Westernized enough.

No matter whether the present culture is moving towards
Westernization or remains traditional, it is not perceived by any of the respondents as a culture of the government's ideals. Rather, as explicitly indicated in all the factor structures, the students become the mainstream of the present culture and they look for alternatives as a way of resisting ideological control.

All of the respondents agree that the students are importing some Western concepts in order to bring in new changes to the culture. Although the government has allowed Western technologies and management methods into the country, it cannot tolerate Western concepts of freedom and democracy to be present in the culture. That is consistent with the fact that throughout each factor structure, none of the respondents perceives the Chinese government in the way of Western culture.

Despite the consensus on these, opinions are split over the government's relationship with tradition. Three of them, Case A, Case D and Case E, think the government is practicing tradition. But their perceptions are expressed in a different manner. Case A and Case D criticize the dominant ideology as still exploiting social morals to perform its hegemonic function as recommended in tradition. Case E, on the contrary, agrees that it is right to govern a country by moral standards. What is involved here is not just a matter of individual preference, it reveals whether s/he has awareness of and resistance towards the existing hegemonic ideology. It is therefore obvious that the former two respondents are resistant and the latter one is submissive.
Play Elements We have attempted to incorporate Huizinga's theory of play (Huizinga, 1968) into basic propositions about media reception in cultural studies approaches, arguing that play is not merely an activity of media reading, but it is spiritual and a kind of mental attitude. The existence of play can therefore be used as an indication of resistance. As suggested by the spirit of play, only the rules of the game or the ideological conceptions are seen through, and alternative ways of life are brought into perspective. It is possible to resist the false play of the mass media.

All of the five respondents observe the existence of play elements in the culture in one way or another. Three of them identify play elements directly in the present culture. And two of them, Case A and Case D, acknowledge that those which are not representative of the present culture are not playful. In addition, Case B sees Chinese tradition as being playful because it is free and non-profitable. And Case E recognizes Western culture as having play elements as it brings to the Chinese culture "new and rare elements."

The government's view has been commonly recognized as the opposite to play elements, even non-resistant Case E does not see the government as having play elements. Students' view is identified clearly with play by three of them. Despite the common recognition of existing play elements, most of them (except Case C) do not take play as their course of action. For example, Case B who identifies himself with Western culture believes that in order

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to end oppression, serious actions should be taken. Case D, too, gives the acts of creation and innovation a higher place than play in transforming a culture. Because they have defined play differently, their opinions about how much play represents resistance are also different. But it is obvious that they associate the existence of play elements with the resistance force instead of the dominant ideology. This is also consistent with our propositions made earlier that play, as a kind of attitude, is resistant, but it is not necessarily the action of resistance itself.

On the whole, through analyzing the factor structures and discriminating items of two cases, we can see that the hegemonic functions that the dominant ideology performs in Chinese culture. On one hand, as especially indicated by Case A and Case D, the Party’s government is still practicing the traditional way of winning the consent of the people through social moralities, such as collectivism, and patriotism. On the other hand, Case C realizes that the government also imports some elements of Western culture into its theory and practice to strengthen its regime’s overall legitimacy. Case E, who internalizes the Party’s ideas as part of himself, (James’ law) is a typical example of how the hegemonic ideology can successfully shape people’s perception and preference to sustain a specific range of subjectivity for a specific social order.

It is the mass media that are responsible for “shaping the
whole ideological environment" (Hall, 1982). We used cartoons circulated in the mass media to represent the concourse of our study. Q-methodology enabled us to reach the subjective domain of humour reception. Here, the specific interpretations of the cartoon texts were not our primary concern. It is through people's interaction with and association with texts that we discovered the expressions of resistance towards the dominant ideology. These expressions do not tell us specifically if different interpretations were made towards "ideologically preferred" meanings in the cartoon texts. But in a broader sense, they revealed the respondents' general attitudes towards the ideological environment where the media reception takes place.

As we discussed in Chapter 1, the dominant ideology would incorporate residual ideology and emergent ideology into its theoretical system and practice. Corresponding to this, it is evident that most of the respondents have conceptual knowledge about this nature of the dominant ideology. At the same time, they also look to their cultural tradition, and especially Western culture, for alternative ways of life. We see Mao’s influence when he talks about how the subordinates should absorb the essence of both traditional and foreign culture and discard the dross of them in order to form a new culture. Therefore, the resistant elements indicated throughout the study can be described as the ability to select and distinguish among complicated ideas, that which is best for bringing about changes. As typically observed through Case D’s
factor structure, collectivism and moralism are criticized while individualism and liberalism are praised, because the promotion of the former as part of the dominant ideology has become an obstacle to further transforming the culture.

The respondents have also observed the existence of play elements in the present Chinese culture. Play here does not merely imply the activity of reading media texts. To Case A and Case D, it means a mental attitude of "non-seriousness," "uncooperativeness with the existing rules," and detachment from reality. Case C, who takes play as his practical course of action, sees play as playing his own game by using others' rules. His situation can be best described by Berger's notion of manipulation as passive resistance towards social control. At any rate, their acknowledgement is consistent with Huizinga's notion of play. Huizinga sees play as the "given magnitude," the base of a culture. We conclude that the existence of play elements in a culture indicates, to a certain degree, the presence of resistance and oppositional meanings outside of the dominant ideological framework.

In terms of the implications of the study for cultural studies and Western culture itself, a few points can be made. Firstly, resistance is not an individual argument over self interests, but preference for creating cultural meanings which constitute a threat to the dominant ideology and which best represent the vision shared by the majority of social groups for a new culture. Instead of showing the possibility of specific opposition towards some
specific texts, researchers should attempt to discover the real subjective expressions of audience's resistance towards the dominant ideology, at a conceptual and collective level.

Secondly, the dominant ideology in a culture, as the Chinese case shows, is a complicated and subtle system and practice with incorporation from residual and emergent cultural elements. It cannot be gotten rid of by merely targeting it. But as the Chinese case shows, people's awareness of ideological conceptions can be aroused and resistance can be aroused by introducing progressive theories and bringing alternative ways of life into perspective. It does not seem there is enough effort, within cultural studies approaches, to show the subordinate people how people of other cultures live their lives and struggle at an ideological level for better societies.

As we have noted earlier, an ideal form of collectivism or liberalism-pluralism might not pose grave problems by itself. It is its exploitation by the dominant ideology that constitutes a force of control over people. Therefore, oppositional cultural meanings can only arise from deconstructing those ideological conceptions, and more importantly, from reconstructing alternative ways of thinking. For example, collectivism and moralism are exploited by the dominant ideology in China and it is perceived as so by most of the respondents in this study. As another example, liberalism-pluralism is an important part of the dominant ideology in Western society. It is interesting, though, to see that Chinese
people, especially the students, have been incorporating concepts of freedom and democracy to construct their subordinate ideology against the dominant one.

Loci of power and domination in modern societies attempt to confine people's concepts of their life and the world within certain ways for the interests of a privileged few. It is the task of researchers engaged in basic issues of culture and communication to bring to light how happiness of life has been deprived by living among the dominant ideologies of communism and capitalism alike. There are many other possibilities to make life more meaningful. Only by constantly enlarging our understanding and life experience outside the dominant ideological framework, can we work towards uniting people to laugh together in a harmonious world community.
REFERENCES


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APPENDICES

1. Q-SORT SCORING SHEET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Representative</th>
<th>Not Representative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+5</td>
<td>+4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

158
2. THE CARTOONS OF THE O-SAMPLE

1. (Family/Children -- positive)

2. (Politics -- neutral)

3. (Sports -- negative)

4. (Ethics -- positive)

5. (Science -- neutral)

6. (Leisure -- negative)
13. (Sports -- positive)

14. (Ethics -- neutral)

15. (Science/Medicine -- negative)

16. (Leisure -- positive)

17. (Economy -- neutral)

18. (Arts -- negative)
19. (Environment -- positive)

20. (Miscellaneous -- neutral)

21. (Family/Children -- negative)

22. (Politics -- positive)

23. (Sports -- neutral)

24. (Ethics -- negative)
25. (Science/Medicine -- positive)

26. (Leisure -- neutral)

27. (Economy -- negative)

28. (Arts -- positive)

29. (Environment -- neutral)

30. (Miscellaneous -- negative)
31. (Family/Children -- positive) 32. (Politics -- neutral)

33. (Sports -- negative) 34. (Ethics -- positive)

35. (Science/Medicine -- neutral) 36. (Leisure -- negative)
37. (Economy -- positive)

38. (Arts -- neutral)

39. (Environment -- negative)

40. (Miscellaneous -- positive)

41. (Family/Children -- neutral)

42. (Politics -- negative)
49. (Environment -- positive)

50. (Miscellaneous -- neutral)

51. (Family/Children -- negative)

52. (Politics -- positive)

53. (Sports -- neutral)

54. (Ethics -- negative)
55. (Science/Medicine -- positive)

56. (Leisure -- neutral)

57. (Economy -- negative)

58. (Arts -- positive)

59. (Environment -- neutral)

60. (Miscellaneous -- negative)
3. THE EXPLANATIONS OF THE CARTOONS

1. This man puts headphones on when watching his favorite game so that his wife won't be disturbed. If he gets excited, he will shake the board, which reads "Cheer up! well done!" (Family/Children -- positive)

2. The information desk needs someone who is experienced enough to sit on the information desk. But he is at same time to old and cannot hear well. When asked for information, he asks back: What did you just ask? (Politics -- neutral)

3. An unfriendly mistake. Rule might not be able to judge this foul. (Sports -- negative)

4. The old man wants to look nice despite his old age, having his hair blown though there is hardly any left. (Ethics - positive)

5. It takes risk to make scientific discovery. Get ready in case of emergency... (Science -- neutral)

6. High material life, low cultural or spiritual enhancement. (Leisure -- negative)

7. The production is sky rocketing as gift to celebrate the National Day. (Economy -- positive)

8. The old saying goes: "After you read ten thousand books (means to read a lot), your pen will write like magic." This guy is saying to himself: "I am only two books away from the destination. (Arts -- neutral)

9. Funeral to dead trees. (Environment -- negative)

10. Selling milk directly from cow. A good way to attract consumers. (Miscellaneous -- positive)

11. Their only son is coming home. Mom knows this from the football breaking through the window. (Family/Children -- neutral)

12. Long bureaucratic procedure in getting anything done. There are too many inspectors who have to stand in line

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14. The explanations of the cartoons were made by the author for the sake of easy comprehension. The respondents made their own interpretations while they were interacting with the cartoons.
to check the driver's license and documents. (Politics -- negative)

13. You should always find a way to exercise yourself. (Sports -- positive)

14. The two men are having hard time deciding who should take the seat. So they just leave it unoccupied. (Ethics -- neutral)

15. A brain can be found to have such a problem if it is never used. (Science/Medicine -- negative)

16. This is a super way to do fishing. (Leisure -- positive)

17. Competition can decide which is better and which is worst. (Economy -- neutral)

18. This is to criticize some poorly made TV dramas. Sometime trace of modern vehicles are shown in an ancient scene. The gentle men is escorting his fairlady: "Miss, I have to leave you here. Just go straight on this highway and catch No.5 bus ahead." (Arts -- negative)

19. Animal’s forest protection alliance. (Environment -- positive)

20. That’s the way how life starts and ends. (Miscellaneous -- neutral)

21. This couple are still eating at their parents’ even they have set up their own family. (Family/Children -- negative)

22. In China, the organization of big event such as Asian Games is not a business matter. The government requires the whole-hearted contribution of citizens. (Politics -- positive)

23. In a football game, each team member has his own position and duties. (Sports -- neutral)

24. The crowd are oblivious about the man who is hanging himself. "Look, this old man. What could have upset him so much..." (Ethics -- negative)

25. Cooperation. The patience is flapping the fan for the surgeons conducting an operation on him. (Science/Medicine -- positive)

26. The chicken being cooked flies its way through the
air extractor. (Leisure -- neutral)

27. Triangle debt. It is believed that owing to each other among enterprises is no good for the progress of the national economy. (Economy -- negative)

28. Modern composer. He uses his slingshot to compose. (Arts -- positive)

29. Too small the earth, too big the population. (Environment -- neutral)

30. Helicopter comes to rescue a thirsty desert traveller with a life buoy. (Miscellaneous -- negative)

31. Children try to send money to people who suffer from natural disasters. (Family/Children -- positive)

32. These two are most likely relatives and come a long way for a gathering. The one who appears to be a government official surprises the other by not taking a car while the one who appears to be a farmer makes a surprise too as he doesn't come on a donkey's back. (Politics -- neutral)

33. The last year's champion. The credits from the past might become burden on one's future success. (Sports -- negative)

34. The public security man is cleaning up social residues including gambling, phonographic stuff and superstition. (Ethics -- positive)

35. Reporter: "What is the secret of your longevity?" Old Man A: "I never drink and smoke." Old Man B: "I always drink and smoke." (Science/Medicine -- neutral)

36. Drinking alcohol and playing mahjongg (a kind of domino game now most popular in China) kill time and waste one's life. (Leisure -- negative)

37. Insurance is symbolized as one of the pillars along with production, supplies and sale for an enterprise. (Economy -- positive)

38. Violin may be played in this way through collective efforts. (Arts -- neutral)

39. We human beings are chaining ourselves by heavy pollution. (Environment -- negative)
40. Unexpected gain. Fish jumps on the bank itself. (Miscellaneous -- positive)

41. Deciding by lot. Mom gets "watching TV," and Dad gets "dishwashing." (Family/Children -- neutral)

42. Tomorrow he is going to inspect government-owned factories. He is getting ready, loosening his belt for all the meals to be provided. (Politics -- negative)

43. In some kind of Gongfu, one is able to reduce his weight as light as a feather. (Sports -- positive)

44. This might be a crowded apartment building in China. The different things the residents hang out can be seen as a nice outfit. (Ethics -- Neutral)

45. Manager: This new machine can extract five more grams of oil out of one ton of beans. (Science/Medicine -- negative)

46. Grandpa and his grandson both got the first place, by quality or by quantity. (Leisure -- positive)

47. This guy tries to use as much toothpaste as possible because the price of it will be raised soon. (Economy -- neutral)

48. The man to an actress in ancient costumes: "Please change you costumes." (Arts -- negative)

49. Frogs are united to protest against human beings. (Environment -- positive)

50. Key becomes the lock. (Miscellaneous -- neutral)

51. A lot of Chinese parents push their only child to learn musical instruments or painting. (Family/Children -- negative)

52. This big ship symbolizes the country sailing into the future with the Party as its captain. (Politics -- positive)

53. Champion’s style. (Sports -- neutral)

54. Opinion box. This guy is matching the footprints on the ground, trying to figure out who ever raised any opinions against him. (Ethics -- negative)

55. Ophthalmologist’s uniform. (Science/Medicine -- positive)
56. It has been a long time since one of them made the last move on the chess board. The spider web grows between them. (Leisure -- neutral)

57. Barber: "Five dollars for cutting and another dollar and half for binding up your wounds (which are the result of the barber's poor skill.)" (Economy -- negative)

58. When the drum is broken, he beats his stomach instead to let the show go on. (Arts -- positive)

59. Sometime in the future and on top of a high-rise building, a boy asks: "Grandpa, can tell me what a tree is?" (Environment -- neutral)

60. Committing suicide in a slow way. (Miscellaneous -- negative)
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VITA AUCTORIS

Min Zheng was born on November 12, 1962 in Fuzhou, a coastal city in south China. In 1986, she graduated from Fudan University with dual bachelor's degrees in International Politics and International News Reporting. In the same year, she started working as a staff writer for China Feature of the Xinhua News Agency, which provides feature articles for English journals outside of China. Shortly after that, she became the first correspondent in China for the Hollywood Reporter. She had been on these two positions till she came to study at the University of Windsor for a Master's degree in Communication Studies in February 1990.