

Selected Letters of Zhang Chunqiao

Chunqiao Publications

Proletarians of the world, unite!



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LONG LIVE MARXISM-LENINISM-MAOISM!

Publication Note

Zhang Chunqiao was one of the most important Marxist theoreticians in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. He played a key role in the organizing of the Shanghai Workers' Revolutionary Rebellion General Headquarters and the Shanghai People's Commune. After, he served as the founding Chairman of the Shanghai Revolutionary Committee. Before Mao Zedong's death, Zhang was considered as the next premier of the People's Republic of China, the successor of Zhou Enlai.

After the counter-revolutionary coup in October 1976, Zhang, along with the rest of the so-called "Gang of Four", were arrested and put in jail. Zhang kept absolutely silent to show his contempt towards the revisionists during the whole so-called "trial" in 1980, and even remained silent for the upcoming 22 years in prison. According to Zhang's daughter Zhang Weiwei, he could barely speak when the authorities finally allowed his relatives to visit him. In 2015, the book '*Zhang Chunqiao's Home Letters from Prison*' was published in Hong Kong, consisting of 58 letters and one long interview with his eldest daughter Weiwei. Because of the strict censorship imposed by the so-called "Communist" Party of China, most of the contents concerned everyday subjects; the excerpts featured in this book are among the few exceptions.

This new and updated edition of our previous publication features additional letters, thorough and accurate translations, corrections to previous mistakes, and, finally, the complete extended interview with Zhang Chunqiao's eldest daughter, Zhang Weiwei. We believe that this interview serves as an important piece to understand the extensive life of Zhang Chunqiao.



























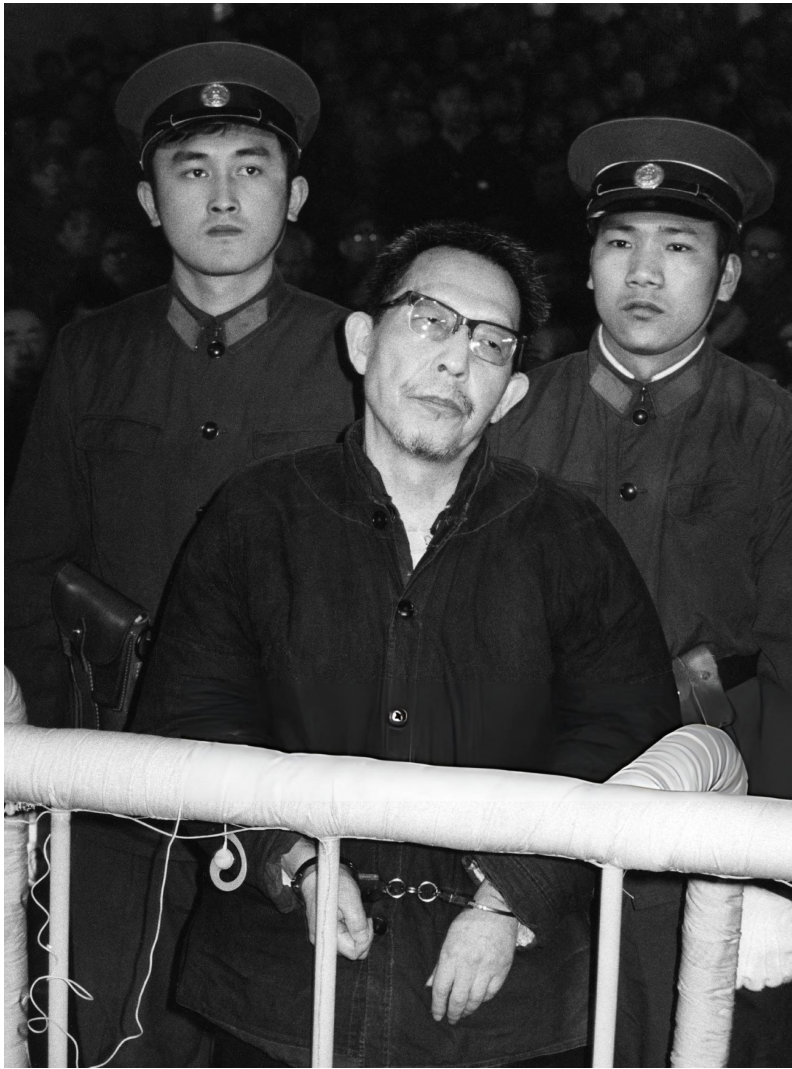




Table of Contents

August 2 1987 To Weiwei	1
December 17 1988 To Weiwei	2
December 16 1989 To Weiwei And Maodi (Zhang's Sole Son) . . .	3
July 27 1990 To Weiwei	5
February 18 1991 To Xiaomei (Zhang's Youngest Daughter)	6
April 22 1991 To Zhang's Eldest Grandson	8
January 21 1992 To Xiao Xu (Zhang's Little Sister)	11
December 20 1992 To Weiwei	13
January 10 1993 To Weiwei	16
December 12 1996 To Weiwei	20
September 20 1998 To Weiwei and Maodi	22
December 20 1998 To Weiwei	25
January 20 1999 To Weiwei	28
May 16 1999 To Weiwei	31
June 20 1999 To Weiwei	34
July 17 1999 To Weiwei	36
October 16 1999 To Weiwei	39
November 20 1999 To Weiwei	41
December 31 2001 To Weiwei	44
Zhang Chunqiao In The Eyes Of His Daughter	49
Introduction	49
I. My Father's Self-Positioning And Personality	51

II. Childhood	59
III. Meeting Chairman Mao Twice	69
IV. Kangping Road Incident	79
V. The Middle And Late Period Of The Cultural Revolution	87
VI. Arrested And Imprisoned	99
VII. After Being Released From Prison	105
VIII. My father's Public Trial And Imprisonment	111
IX. Evaluation of the Cultural Revolution	119
X. Family Relationships	125
XI. Death	133

August 2 1987 To Weiwei

On the 50th anniversary of the July 7th Incident¹, many things come to mind. This month also marks the 50th anniversary of the August 13th incident². It seems like yesterday to me, when Chinese soldiers were fortified near the North Railway Station, and Japanese soldiers were strutting their stuff in North Sichuan Road. For you, it's a story in a history textbook, just as it's hard for Anonymous (the eldest grandson) to remember the past in the same way as it is for you. It's inevitable. There are some things that are no good to talk about, but it is better to educate people with facts. 50 years ago, nobody thought that China would be like this today, and what will it be like 50 years from now? I won't see it, but I hope you will. Young people like Anonymous (the eldest grandson), will see it, and by then it can't be a new world of imperialism. Maybe some countries will take over instead of the US and the Soviet Union, but they will have to perish.

Labour insurance, public health care, have traditionally been the subject of increased production and saving costs. Then there is water and electricity saving, and it's all about the people saving every drop of water and every kWh of electricity. It was also publicised how the Japanese company Panasonic saves every envelope. In the minds of these people, it is hard to tell what the difference between themselves and Panasonic is.

¹ The July 7th Incident is often referred to as the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, and was the event that sparked the second Sino-Japanese war.

² The August 13th Incident was when the Imperial Japanese Army attacked Shanghai, starting the battle of Shanghai.

December 17 1988 To Weiwei

I really didn't expect that you have to go through so much trouble to move your house. I knew a little bit about how difficult it was to get things done for normal citizens, but only a little. The popular story in the press was that there was a conflict between the old and the new system, but I think it was the design of the jigsaw puzzle that didn't match the reality. They thought that by taking a piece from Japan, borrowing one from the United States, renting a few from Western and Eastern Europe, and adding their own "good traditions" or "bad traditions", would be able to create a jigsaw puzzle with a lot of character, but they found that the jigsaw puzzle did not take shape. Instead of summing up the actual experience and going from the masses to the masses, they ask this professor for advice one moment and then bow to another president the next. As they go on, it becomes more and more complicated, and the conflict cannot be put to rest. What can be done so that the "deficit efficiency theory" and the "three balances" do not conflict with each other? I think it is understandable that there is a lot of grievance in society at the moment and that it cannot be resolved. Practice is a great school where people are educated and learn to understand and transform the world.

The food here is still "consistent", more expensive, less substantial, but no improvement in taste. (This was Churchill's ration during the war, you know?) This standard is higher than I had before I was thirty, and higher than you have, so you don't need to worry about me. I, on the contrary, cannot help worrying about you all. Of course, this is not a family matter. The middle Chinese and the bottom Chinese all have difficulties. I don't believe that the higher Chinese will understand these things, even though they sing "Love on earth" every day, but they curse the Chinese people every day for being ignorant, barbaric, closed-minded and lazy. They even cry out in waves that Chinese people should learn from Japan to be united, and so on. I really don't know what percentage of truth there is in this. In the past, it was said that the People's Daily was a public opinion platform and anyone could post on it. Now I'm afraid it's all about who has the power and who has the money. When I watch the TV, I wonder who runs it. It seems that whoever pays more for advertising is the one who owns it. Even the non-commercial programmes are run by the advertisers.

December 16 1989 To Weiwei And Maodi (Zhang's Sole Son)

...not to mention the social-imperialist policies of the Soviet Union towards the Eastern European countries, which had caused disturbance among the local people for years. Do you think the Chinese would be happy if there were hundreds of thousands of foreign troops stationed on Chinese territory?

I'm afraid it would be difficult to find anyone who would support a permanent foreign military occupation, except for the likes of Fang Lizhi³ and Liu Xiaobo⁴, who are comprador bourgeoisie. The contradiction exists objectively, but the leadership is in the hands of the pro-Western political forces. However, I still think the same way: we Chinese want to liberate Taiwan, we supported the reunification of North and South Vietnam in the past, we support the reunification of North and South Korea today, why don't we dare to insist on the reunification of East and West Germany? If a strong and united German Empire emerges before American imperialism, it will be difficult for him to subdue it. Soviet Revisionists would be more than that, they would be terrified. It was therefore probably a good thing that the spheres of influence drawn up by Yalta were broken. Germany and Russia, which had contributed thinkers like Marx and Lenin, might well have contributed another proletarian thinker.

Maodi's letter talks about the promotion of national products. This was an important programme of the Chinese national bourgeoisie. It served to mobilize the masses. But it was never really implemented because the capitalists themselves adore the foreign goods, their clothing, food, housing and transport were all foreign. ...Maodi doesn't need to be confused by the promotion of national goods, take it as a social phenomenon and you will find many jokes. It is a common disease that words do not match actions. Unfortunately, the newspapers are full of criticism of the people and the so-called "national inferiority". The former is a slap on the hips of the people, the latter is a slap on the face of the whole nation. Whether it's foreign worship or pandering to foreigners, it's the bigwigs who are leading the way, or at least not doing their duty to educate others. I have never blamed the workers for the problems among the working masses, and it would be strange if there were no problems.

³ Chinese-American astrophysicist, former CPC member, liberal rightist.

⁴ Chinese intellectual, liberal rightist, famous for his Nobel Prize award in 2010.

July 27 1990 To Weiwei

Zhao Ziyang peddled a whole lot of the “survival of the fittest and elimination of the unfit” theory, essentially bringing what happens in the animal world into human society. In fact, human society has its own laws. Hitler was once in the stronger position, while Stalin was in the weaker position. And what happened? The weaker position was transformed into the stronger position, and Stalin eliminated Hitler. The proletariat throughout the world is currently in the weaker position. One day, it will eliminate the bourgeoisie. Looking at this world, to forget the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the contradiction between imperialism and oppressed nations, and the contradictions among the imperialist powers themselves, and to say things like “no one in the whole world can do without anyone else”—that is either self-deception or talking in one’s sleep. Fortunately, many people have now opened their eyes. Although they are still few in number, this is where the real hope lies.

February 18 1991 To Xiaomei (Zhang's Youngest Daughter)

In today's world, there seems to be more and more reliance on "ego". In the countryside, when a peasant falls ill, he used to have someone to look after him, but now he has to rely on himself. The publicly funded healthcare system is also being "reformed", but the changes are always about how much the workers pay for themselves, and they say this is a big step forward. It is said that more people are tending to be hospitalised because the bill is still publicly funded while the outpatient clinics are "self-funded" at 20 per cent. I really don't know what the policymakers have in mind. Shanghai's housing reform plan has been published in the newspapers and is said to be quite "unique", with most people in favour. I don't see what the special features are, but it is just an "international practice", i.e., a reworking of the current Western approach. Some people praised Shenzhen for its successful experience in wage reform, personnel reform and housing reform, which made me understand the direction of the so-called "deepening" reform.

The problems of the factories are not new this year. It is the result of a policy that has been in place for many years. The problem of revitalizing large and medium-sized enterprises does not refer to three capital⁵ and private enterprises, but to state-run large and medium-sized enterprises. The state-run or national enterprises mentioned here are actually not the original "state-run", but state-owned and operated under private contract. Over the years, the policy is to give preferential treatment to the three capital enterprises, private enterprises and individual enterprises, and to improve their "environment", but the original large and medium-sized enterprises are stuck in the siege of foreign capital and private capital, and there is no way out. What is the way out? From the root, Shanghai's solution is the "grafting" that Zhao Ziyang has been boasting about for a long time, that is, the former state-run enterprises should enter into joint ventures with foreign capital and township enterprises. This approach is not likely to work, because foreign capitalists will not show mercy to China. Moreover, the result of this "grafting" will directly affect the nature of these enterprises.

In the days of May 1st, when I asked people around me, no one could tell me: How did May 1st come about? Why is May 1st commemorated? But those

people were so familiar with the singers and sports stars. The danger in China is that political apathy has become widespread. This is the result of a peaceful evolution and it is preparing the conditions for a public “peaceful evolution” to the level of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

⁵ i.e. Sino-foreign joint ventures, Sino-foreign cooperative ventures and wholly foreign-owned enterprises.

April 22 1991 To Zhang's Eldest Grandson

You have read “Ode to the Eighth Company,” haven’t you?⁶ One great figure was very fond of reciting from it: “When the army and the people unite as one, who in all the world can stand against them?” Another great figure went to inspect the Good Eighth Company and, pointing to the “Ode to the Eighth Company” on the wall, said, “The last two lines are the most important.” Is that a correct understanding? I don’t think it is, at least not completely. The Ode begins by asking, “Why?” The answer is: “Because their will is firm.” Wherein does that firmness lie? “For the people, for decades. Resist corruption, never become tainted. Therefore they are called the Good Eighth Company.” This is very clear and should not be misunderstood. Of these things, “for the people” is the most important. Without “for the people, for decades,” how could there be the army and the people united as one? There are many people in the world with a “firm will.” Chiang Kai-shek remained reactionary to the end; can one say that his will was not firm? But he was against the people. The firmer he was, the more reactionary he was. Yesterday I heard on the radio that they were once again boasting about how frugal Toyota and Panasonic are, and praising the oil tycoon Rockefeller for not paying even a penny more than necessary on small bills. A waiter asked him why he would not give more. He said, “It is precisely by doing this that I became a millionaire, and that I did not end up in your position!” The propaganda apparatus in China today is in the hands of precisely these muddle-headed people. They cannot distinguish between working for the people and opposing the people! Between working for the exploiting classes and working for the exploited classes! If they cannot distinguish this fundamental fact, they cannot possibly understand the “Ode to the Eighth Company” or the people and affairs of the world. Only by working for the people can one achieve those eight “fear-nots.” “Fear neither the emperor nor the bandit”—only Communists and genuine patriots can do this; there is no traitor to his country who does not fear imperialism.

Your birthday is easy to remember: it comes just after “May Fourth.” Therefore, I hope you will read the two articles Chairman Mao wrote commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement. They raise the question of young intellectuals joining with the workers and peasants, and say that this is the sole criterion for distinguishing revolutionary, non-revolutionary, and coun-

ter-revolutionary youth. I also hope you will read “Talks at the Yan’an Forum on Literature and Art.” There the questions of whom literature and art are for and how they should serve people are raised, with particular emphasis on serving the masses of the people, first and foremost the workers, peasants, and soldiers. This “first and foremost” is a fundamental issue not only for literature and art but for all work. In recent years, this view has not only ceased to be promoted, but has also been subjected to relentless criticism. They constantly talk about serving humanity, yet dare not say serving the majority, serving the workers, peasants, and soldiers, serving the proletarians and oppressed nations and exploited people throughout the world; they even say this is “ultra-left,” and false, grandiose, and empty. From becoming separated from the workers and peasants, to taking the side opposite the workers and peasants, they have become representatives of the bourgeoisie. The so-called peaceful evolution may take many forms, but it always begins with becoming separated from the workers and peasants and evolves into bourgeois dictatorship. Without a class perspective, it is impossible to understand the changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, impossible to draw lessons from the experience of the bourgeoisie seizing political power there, and impossible to correctly observe China’s national conditions. “Analyze well; it is greatly beneficial.” Only under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism can China’s past, present, and future be correctly analyzed. “Coldly I face a thousand fingers of accusation; meekly I bow my head, willing to be the ox for the little children”—this is the different attitude Lu Xun adopted toward the enemy and toward the people after studying Marxism, moving from the theory of evolution to class theory, and analyzing China’s national conditions.

You are sixteen now. In another two years, you will enter young adulthood. The road ahead is still very long. The twists and turns you encounter may be even greater than those of these first sixteen years. But although difficulties certainly bring people distress, they also give people training. You are still a “little child” now. I hope you will grow up in good health, serve the masses of the people, first and foremost the workers, peasants, and soldiers, and become a “willing ox” who is useful to the people.

⁶ “Ode to the Eighth Company” is a mixed-line-length poem written by Mao Zedong on August 1, 1963. The full text of the poem is: “The Good Eighth Company is renowned throughout the land. Why? Its will is firm. For the people, for decades. Resist corruption, never become tainted. Therefore it is called the Good Eighth Company. The People’s Lib-

eration Army must learn from it; the whole army and the people must stand on their own. Fear neither pressure nor oppression; fear neither knives nor halberds; fear neither ghosts nor demons; fear neither the emperor nor the bandit. Extraordinary sons and daughters, like pine and cypress, rise to the heavens and stand proudly against frost and snow. Good discipline, like an impregnable fortress; good military preparedness, like a thunderbolt; good political work, first-rate; good thinking, capable of analysis; good analysis, greatly beneficial. Wherein lies the benefit? In the power of unity. When the army and the people unite as one, who in all the world can stand against them?"

January 21 1992 To Xiao Xu (Zhang's Little Sister)

You mentioned in your letter that people do not understand the dissolution of the Soviet Union. This is indeed a major question. Different countries, classes, and political groups have reached different understandings of it. Some have been jubilant, some pessimistic and disappointed, and some happy at first and worried afterward. We need not follow others; we should look at the question from the standpoint of the proletariat. We should not look only at appearances, but at the essence. As early as after Khrushchev came to power, our Party pointed out: the coming to power of the Khrushchev group was the coming to power of the bourgeoisie. This is not a matter of casually putting a label on them; it is a fact. They themselves declared that the Soviet Union was a “state of the whole people” and that the CPSU was a “party of the whole people.” In other words, they were no longer a socialist state under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Although they did not change the names, when a state and a party oppress the proletariat and the working people of all nationalities domestically, while pursuing great-power hegemonism abroad, where is there any socialism left? As early as the 1960s and 1970s, we openly called them imperialist countries flying the banner of socialism. I still remember how, at state banquets in the Great Hall of the People, whenever we mentioned the term “social imperialism,” the Soviet ambassador and his followers would hurriedly get up from the dining table and leave while still eating, looking utterly embarrassed. Gorbachev and Yeltsin merely played the roles of Khrushchev the Fifth and Khrushchev the Sixth, openly and comprehensively implementing reactionary bourgeois dictatorship.

It is said that in cities such as Moscow and Leningrad, small cars are still everywhere and traffic remains crowded; nightclubs still operate throughout the night; expensive shops have everything; and the lives of the Russian bourgeoisie remain extremely comfortable. The ones suffering are the millions of workers and peasants, as well as lower-level cadres and petty intellectuals, and once they become unemployed, their situation is even more miserable. The Soviet people were taken in; they were deceived. I find Yeltsin quite likeable. He openly declared his opposition to communism and moved vigorously to carry out privatization and establish a market economy. Unlike Gorbachev, who was coy and hesitant and dragged his feet, Yeltsin did not conceal the fact that he was establishing capitalism behind slogans such as the Soviet Union, the CPSU, and

“humane, democratic socialism.” The likeable thing about Yeltsin is that he can help the Soviet people see clearly and awaken their consciousness. Of course, he still concealed his true face; otherwise, he would have been exposed long ago.

December 20 1992 To Weiwei

The first time I met Chairman Mao was at a party in early 1938. Later, like many Yan'an people, I was able to have the opportunity to hear him give a presentation. The first time I spoke to him was in early 1939. I was the head of the propaganda section of a public school in northern Shaanxi, and he came to the school to give a lecture and asked me to investigate the students' thinking beforehand. I can't remember what he talked about. At that time, he wrote me some words, and this inscription, which I took behind enemy lines, was taken away by the Japanese during an anti-sweeping campaign.

The second time we talked, it was 1958. Nearly twenty years had passed. In the meantime I had seen him many times and knew that he had commented on some of my articles, but we had never spoken. At the beginning of 1958, the Shanghai Party Congress was in session. On the second day of the Chinese New Year, he suddenly asked Ke Qingshi to come to Hangzhou, and specified that he wanted the drafters of the political report to come with him. At Liu Zhuang in Hangzhou, he came out of his bedroom with the draft report in his hand. After sitting down, his first words were: "You guys supported me!" At that time, he did not give any explanation. He asked about my hometown and work, and when he learned that I was only a member of the municipal party committee without a specific position, he said offhand: "White clothes Shang Shu⁷", and made me an "official". He went on to hold meetings for several days. I saw him every day and talked about issues over meals. The mood was high and when the prime minister reported his determination to fix the Three Gorges Dam in 15 years, he counted on his fingers: "I'll be 80 years old! Good, by then I'll go swimming!" Of course, no one expected so many twists and turns, and the Three Gorges has not yet emerged from the flat lake.

When he came back from Hangzhou, the Shanghai party congress was held. After that, it was the Great Leap Forward. It was not until October that I went out to see what was going on. From then on, I was under his direct command in Beijing, Tianjin, Zhengzhou, Suiping, Fanxian and Wuhan, and saw with my own eyes how he compressed the frenzied air. I often think that the heroes and heroines who mocked the Great Leap Forward did not understand 1958 at all. In a few days, it will be his birthday again. I have only spent one birthday

with Chairman Mao. It was on December 25th 1966. When I walked into his house, he was talking to Li Ne and Li Shi⁸. The air was lively. When he saw me enter, he said, "You want to go back to your old nest, eh!" I had no idea what he was referring to until he said, "The situation in Shanghai is very good, the Red Guards are up, the workers are up, the organs are up, they are beating down, they are burning down, they are criticizing, the policy is good, so you can go back and have a look". As I went on, I was surprised to find that he was much more familiar with the situation in Shanghai than I was. He was good at summarising bits and pieces of material. During the meal, there was less talk and the air seemed less lively. Chen Boda raised his glass to "wish Chairman Mao a long and prosperous life!" He simply said in return, "Long live you all" and put the glass down. It seemed that no one had anything lighthearted to say. After a while, noodles were served. He suddenly stood up, raised his glass, and said, "To all-out civil war!" Everyone raised their glasses, but I never fully understood the meaning of that toast. In fact, many of the things that happened afterward were already contained in those words.

From then on, I never again celebrated a birthday together with him. Every year on that day, the Premier would host a gathering of the Politburo comrades at the Great Hall of the People, where everyone would have a bowl of noodles. The last time was in 1975. I had just returned from Cambodia, and Deng Xiaoping came to the airport to meet me and said, "Let's get together at the Great Hall." It snowed in Beijing that day, and I had just come back from the tropics, so I was not at all accustomed to it. The meal was even more somber. Only Deng and I drank a few toasts together. Although everyone wanted to say a few cheerful words, it was difficult to change the atmosphere of the time.

I saw an article of literary criticism saying that contemporary films "turn Mao from a god into a human being, and Jiang from a ghost into a human being." Apparently, this is considered a great achievement. I have not had the opportunity to see these great works, so I dare not comment on them. But this proposition is fundamentally incompatible with the images of Mao and Jiang in my mind. Mao was never a god in my mind, and Jiang was never a ghost in my mind. They were always human beings. But what is a human being? A human being is the sum total of social relations. Therefore, Mao was the leader of the people, while Jiang was the enemy of the people. If one does not discuss this fundamental distinction, but speaks abstractly of gods, ghosts, and human beings, one can only lead readers and audiences into the quagmire of the bour-

geois theory of human nature. There was a report saying that, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Mao's birth, a film would be made about Mao's "three handshakes": one with Sun Yat-sen, one with Chiang Kai-shek, and there was a third one whose identity I did not hear clearly. It seems that Mao has once again been returned to the position of a cross-party figure from before 1927. In the hands of these bourgeois artists, the image of a revolutionary leader seems to be something they can shape however they please. But I believe that, in the hearts of the people, their images cannot be changed.

You and I are both students of Chairman Mao. Aren't there workers where you are who are very envious that you have met Chairman Mao? Forty is not old. I did not truly understand a little about the affairs of the world until after I was forty. Regardless of how others treat you, you must keep your spirits up and do whatever things the circumstances allow you to do and that you are capable of doing. During the long revolutionary journey, Mao and his comrades, even in those days when "not even a ghost would come to the door," always strove to do things that were beneficial to the people. This is the spirit we should learn from. I wish you even greater achievements during the next forty years of your life.

⁷ The ancient Chinese intellectuals wore white clothes before the acquisition of any official position, Shang Shu was an official position equals to a minister in modern days.

⁸ Mao Zedong's daughter and nephew.

January 10 1993 To Weiwei

In your last letter, you mentioned Lu Xun's discussions of national character, and said that you had gone back and looked through Lu Xun's books again and understood a great deal. You gave several examples—trains smashing into cars, someone killing another person with a knife while no one pays any attention, and so forth—and then asked: Are Shanghainese the most selfish? Has national character returned to what it was in the 1930s? —This question is indeed worth studying, and it has been debated continuously for decades. A few years ago there was also continual discussion in the newspapers and periodicals, and some people even put forward such bizarre theories as that China's national character would require two hundred years of colonial rule before it could be transformed. More recently, there has been the sophisticated theory that only a market economy can transform national character.

The concept of "citizen" can be interpreted in different ways. Apart from such expressions as "national economy" and "national education," which include activities involving the entire citizenry, we generally do not use the word "citizen." Sun Yat-sen liked to use the term "citizen," and Chiang Kai-shek inherited these names: the Kuomintang, the National Government, the National Assembly, the National Revolutionary Army, and so forth. In order to distinguish ourselves from Chiang, and also to be more scientific, we adopted such names as the People's Government, the People's Congress, the People's Republic, the Great Hall of the People, and so forth. Interestingly, after capitalism was restored in the countries of Eastern Europe, they all abandoned the word "people."

In Lu Xun's early writings, there is quite a lot of study of national character; it almost became the center of his concerns. His change from studying medicine to studying literature was also for the purpose of transforming China's national character. What he said about national character covered a very broad range, but in my view, he never figured it out clearly. Therefore, you too find it difficult to understand. Precisely because of this, some scholars often seize upon the weaknesses in Lu Xun's early thought and develop them further, attacking Chinese national character. They say that the Chinese are ignorant and unenlightened and fit only to be slaves of a conquered nation; or they say that only education can save China, or industry can save China, or science can save Chi-

na. Yet they do not mention how many Chinese citizens were crushed to death by the three great mountains of imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucrat-capitalism. Only revolution can save China; only revolution can transform China's national character.

Lu Xun was different from these people. He had an extremely profound understanding of Chinese society. He hated Fourth Master Lu and the "Fake Foreign Devil," while toward the people he was filled with passionate feeling. The first person in the history of Chinese literature to declare that the feudal system was a system that "eats people" was Lu Xun, in his *Diary of a Madman*. Today, if one wants to understand Chinese society before and after the Xinhai Revolution, Lu Xun's works are extremely vivid and extremely important source material. The "citizens" he portrayed were precisely the peasants and petty urban residents of that time. He did not look down on them; rather, in his own words, he "grieved for their misfortune and was angered by their failure to fight." In other words, at that time he was still a bourgeois democrat. Although he stood at the very forefront of his era, he could not see China's hope, nor could he see the strength contained among the Ah Qs. This was also understandable. At that time, the Chinese proletariat was still very weak. The "terrorist activities" in which Ah Q took part—the spontaneous struggle of the peasants, that is, the revolution that "did not permit revolution"—could not enable Lu Xun to see hope. His ideological weapon at that time was still Darwin's theory of evolution. He believed that humanity would progress, that each generation would be stronger than the one before it, and he placed his hopes in the youth. But what he saw was this cruel fact: among young people, including some of his own students, all of them being young people, why did some of these young people kill other young people? Lu Xun was extremely pained in the course of studying national character, and for a long time could not find an answer. When reading Lu Xun's early works, one must understand the social environment of his early period and his political and intellectual circumstances; otherwise, they are very difficult to understand.

Lu Xun's transformation from a bourgeois democrat into a communist came later. These conditions promoted his transformation: the failure of the First Great Revolution and the Creation Society's criticism of him caused him to calmly reflect upon the road he had traveled, seriously read Marxist works, and use Marxism as a dissecting knife to dissect society, dissect others, and also dissect himself. He did not come to believe in communism lightly. Rather, Chiang

Kai-shek's massacres, the facts written in blood, educated him; Marxism educated him; and the arduous struggle of the Communists educated him. These things made him believe: "Only the proletariat has a future," and he struggled for this for the rest of his life.

If you are interested, you can find several articles in which he himself describes the transformation of his thinking and read them, such as the prefaces to *Two Hearts* and *Three Leisure Collections*, as well as Qu Qiubai's *Preface to Selected Essays on Random Thoughts* by Lu Xun. This was the first article to correctly analyze Lu Xun's thought. In these past few years, no one has mentioned these articles anymore, because they all discuss Lu Xun's process of transformation from the theory of evolution to the theory of class. What the bourgeoisie fears most is precisely this kind of transformation among intellectuals. Lu Xun, armed with Marxist class theory, was completely transformed in his analysis of society and his criticism of his opponents. He no longer remained in the position of merely "grieving for their misfortune and being angered by their failure to fight"; instead, he stood together with the proletariat, and his articles consequently became sharper. If you find his polemical articles with Professor Liang Shiqiu, it will not be difficult to see that he had already stopped discussing national character in general terms. Someone said that Liang Shiqiu opposed proletarian literature and was a lackey of the capitalists. Liang was extremely dissatisfied and angrily went to consult the large English Webster dictionary. Learning that the proletariat was nothing more than some ignorant poor people, he wrote an article mocking the slogan "proletarian literature," saying how ridiculous it was. Lu Xun then wrote an article criticizing Liang, entitled *The Capitalist's "Feeble" Lackey*, mocking this great professor for not even understanding what the proletariat was and saying that he could only count as a "feeble" lackey! Lu Xun's judgment was extremely accurate, to the point that even today, when I see the content of certain anti-Communist writings so impoverished, I cannot help thinking of this title.

Human beings are divided into classes; this is an objective fact. To speak only of national character and not of class character can only make it difficult for oneself to analyze things correctly, as was the case with the early Lu Xun. Look at the very first article in *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*: it analyzes the classes in China. It not only acknowledges classes, but also makes a concrete analysis. For a given class, it analyzes the big, middle, and small; the upper, middle, and lower; the Left, Center, and Right; and it also analyzes its manifestations under

different circumstances, and so forth. This kind of analysis is carried through consistently in all of Mao Zedong's writings. To speak of seeking truth from facts, one has to speak of these "facts" and "seek" the "truth" in them. This is what Mao did.

It is now the 1990s, not the 1930s. China's national character today is also different from that of the 1930s. You see people being selfish and numb; this is a fact, but people's manifestations are still different. Before the Russian writer Ehrenburg became anti-Stalin, he said a very famous sentence: "On one side, debauchery and shamelessness; on the other, solemn work," using it to describe Western capitalism and socialist Soviet Union. In China today, amid one "fever," one "tide," and one "great battle" after another, those people are certainly not numb. Among those bystanders, there are also the revolutionary heroes of yesterday or tomorrow. The law of the unity of opposites is a fundamental law. National character contains the unity and struggle of opposites. There are oppositional struggles within classes and within political parties. The advanced, the intermediate, and the backward always exist. They will not all be advanced, nor will they all be backward; it is quite possible that there will still be a small number at both ends and a large number in the middle. Our family once had a photograph of Mao speaking from the Tiananmen Gate. Facing a million cheering people, he nevertheless calmly said: "If the Left can make up ten percent, that is already remarkable!" And it is here that hope lies.

December 12 1996 To Weiwei

The word “century” became the most used word. “New Century”, “trans-century”, “turn of the century”, and even, as is customary in Europe, “new century” and “new millennium”. There are also many articles looking back on the 20th century and forward to the 21st.

I have read several articles by great and small literary figures. I don't know why, but in their eyes, they seem to see everything but the past and the future revolution. I thought there were two greatest events of the twentieth century: one was the October Revolution and the other was the Chinese Revolution. The former resulted in the first socialist state, the Soviet Union, and the latter in the People's Republic of China. Their common outcome was the triumph of socialism among more than a billion people in a dozen countries and the planting of the red flags on all five continents. How happy the people were then, and how wretched the reactionaries were.

I was one of those happy people. I was born before the end of World War I and before the outbreak of the October Revolution. It was still a dark China. Yuan Shikai was dead and the Beiyang warlords still ruled China. I knew the term “October Revolution” a long time later.

I'm happy for you, Weiwei. You were born in a bright place, in a time of revolutionary development. I am honoured to have been the first to see you born and to hear your first cry of joy. Poor, yes we were, but the Communist Party is most fond of children. The standard of provision for babies exceeded that of cadres. All the uncles and aunts around you cared for you. Back then, it was a fish and water relationship. It was a brighter corner of dark China.

I am happy for you since you grew up together with the revolution. In 1949, you arrived in Shanghai. We lived in the Kong family's general manager's office and slept at the desk. That was a fashion at the time. Not far from here, to the east, is the Huangpu River. By this time, the imperialist warships were no longer visible on the river and the skyscrapers of the Bund were back in the hands of the people. By that time, Shanghai was a new Shanghai where people wouldn't need to close their doors at night. I am also happy for you that you,

like your sister and brother, joined the ranks of the workers, peasants and soldiers, studying and working hard in the factories, on the farms and in the army, and contributing your life to the revolutionary cause. History is made by the people, by workers, peasants and soldiers. Without workers working, peasants farming and soldiers on sentry duty, the world, whether developed or undeveloped, would come to a halt in all its activities. The other day I read an article in memory of Gorky, saying that “one can say goodbye to the Soviet Union, but not to Gorky”. He seemed to have forgotten that Gorky’s greatness lay in his contribution to workers’ liberation and to the Soviet revolution. Does “farewell to the Soviet Union” mean farewell even to the October Revolution and the Great Patriotic War? What we oppose is the social-imperialist policy of the Soviet Communist leadership, the hegemony of the great powers. The “farewell to the Soviet Union”, like the “farewell to the revolution”, is nothing but a hoax.

“The revolution is dead, long live the revolution!” - Marx said that after the failure of the French Revolution. As long as the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat exists, revolutions exist. Two major revolutions took place in the twentieth century, how many will take place in the twenty-first century? I am not a fortune-teller, I do not know. But I am sure that it will happen. On your 50th birthday, may you have a better next 50 years and see for yourself the revolutions of the 21st century.

September 20 1998 To Weiwei and Maodi

The troubles encountered by these two tigers, Yeltsin and Clinton, are much more grievous.

Back then, when Yeltsin commanded tanks to defend the “White House,” how glorious he looked! The bourgeoisie of the whole world cheered him on. The fruits of the Soviet people’s decades of struggle were divided up in a very short time by the bureaucrats, warlords, and comprador bourgeoisie represented by Yeltsin. Capital from many countries poured into Russia to seize the market. The Russian working people returned to the abyss of capitalism. They were not ideologically prepared for it. Ever since Khrushchev, they had constantly trumpeted the state of the whole people, the party of the whole people, and peaceful transition, yet they never spoke of the possibility of the restoration of capitalism. This is not surprising. If he had spoken of these things, his business of restoring capitalism would have been rather difficult to talk about and rather difficult to carry out. After all these years of evolution, Russia really has been “turned upside down.” Even the last tsar was reburied in Tsarskoye Selo. The double-headed eagle of the Russian Empire’s coat of arms stands at the seat of the new tsar, Yeltsin. It seems that everything is ready and victory is about to be celebrated. But the laws governing historical development are ruthless; they do not obey Yeltsin’s command. The repeated reshuffling of governments does not merely demonstrate Yeltsin’s hooligan nature; above all, it reflects the rise and fall of the strength of Russia’s many classes, many political groups, and many economic groups. Although the newspapers and periodicals also divide Russia’s many factions into Left, Center, and Right, in reality this division is not accurate, and it is constantly changing. Take Primakov, for example. Originally an alternate member of the CPSU Politburo, he followed Gorbachev’s “reform line” and was labeled “Left-wing”; he was the intelligence chief and sympathized with Iraq, and was then labeled a “conservative”; now he has taken office as prime minister in the capacity of a “non-party person” and has become a “centrist”—you see, how comical. The so-called Left, Center, and Right objectively exist. People have left and right arms and left and right legs; when an army is deployed, it has a left wing and a right wing. Some people deny the Left and Right tendencies and want everyone to stop dividing things into Left, Center, and Right. How compassionate, how merciful, what a loving world.

Unfortunately, no one in the world listens to his teachings. Yeltsin has also had no choice but to seek a balance among the Left, Center, and Right. Find a so-called centrist to serve as prime minister, add a left-wing force such as the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, and “weather the difficult times together.” Perhaps in the short term, after a redistribution of power among the various forces, this can be maintained for a period of time. But a situation and momentum like that of the beginning, when he won more than 60 percent of the vote and was elected president, can never reappear. Yeltsin’s problem is not simply old age and poor health. Rather, the various groups of Russia’s big bourgeoisie need to expand their own power; the redistribution of property and power is the center of the struggle. Yeltsin has already changed from a real tiger that ate tens of millions of Russian people into an exhausted, sick tiger. Nevertheless, beware: he will still eat people.

The United States has decided to publish the detailed material concerning Clinton today. With matters having developed to this point, I am afraid that even this debonair president will find it difficult to cover it up by shedding tears. What was originally a minor matter has somehow been turned into this sort of affair; Clinton could never have imagined it. His aides can only blame themselves for failing to devise sufficiently clever strategies. Whatever the outcome, it is a very good thing. This matter not only blackens Clinton’s reputation; it also makes everyone who cares about the fate of the world stop and think: What is going on? Isn’t capitalism paradise? Isn’t America the paradise of the world? Isn’t America leading the trend of the world? With so many things happening in the world, why don’t they take care of them? Rich countries helping poor countries, rich people helping poor people—why don’t they help? Is it worth spending tens of millions of dollars investigating a scandal? —People have raised all kinds of questions, and there are also all kinds of answers. The reason I say it is a good thing is precisely that it makes people use their brains. The financial crisis that began last year has already spread throughout the world. Even now, there is still no clear indication of where it is heading. The fluctuations in the United States and the Soviet Union are also its reflection. At this time last year, people were still talking about the wonderful Asia-Pacific century, the turn of the century, the new century, and even making arrangements for a “new millennium”—what a millennium for the capitalist world! Recently, the market for this kind of grand talk seems to have shrunk, and it is not heard very much anymore. I find it strange. Have those scholars who liked to make grand pronouncements gone off to recuperate? Why don’t they talk to us about the crisis of capitalism?

Why do hundreds of billions of dollars flow into Southeast Asia today and then change direction toward Latin America tomorrow? Why do they flow only toward places where money can be made, rather than toward places where it is needed? Is this freedom the free economy that you praise? Why does Wall Street in the United States oppose only the planned economy and not the free economy? People are thinking about questions of this kind. Practice is the sole criterion for testing truth. Practice is a great school, and people will come to know truth through practice.

December 20 1998 To Weiwei

When the year draws to a close, everyone talks about looking back and looking ahead. However, these past few days have been thrown into chaos by the Americans. Listening to it, it sounds rather like having entered a farmers' market, with everyone shouting their own thing: "a multipolar world."

There is one issue that everyone is afraid to discuss, yet cannot avoid discussing, so we can only approach it indirectly and say a little. That issue is revolution. I admire Yeltsin; he is relatively forthright. On the anniversary of the October Revolution, he said in the tone of a tsar: "The revolution is gone forever." He had already ordered the abolition of the October Revolution holiday, so why does he keep dwelling on the October Revolution and cursing it every year on this day? What he thinks in his heart, we do not know. I think this is merely a form of self-consolation, as though, once he has said it with his own golden mouth, the revolution will really have gone forever.

I think that if Yeltsin's words were altered somewhat, they might be closer to reality, closer to the truth. I think they should be put this way: bourgeois revolution is gone forever; proletarian revolution has only just begun.

As for bourgeois revolutions, historians all say they should begin with the Dutch Revolution, but the ones that truly had an impact were the English Revolution, the American Revolution, and the French Revolution. The French Revolution in particular, known in history as the Great French Revolution, had an especially far-reaching influence. "La Marseillaise" is still sung by many revolutionary masses to this day. These revolutions were all revolutions led by the bourgeoisie against the feudal system. The difference was that in England, the bourgeoisie and the new nobility allied themselves against the king, the nobility, and the Church. The masses participated, but received no benefits; the peasants in particular received no land. The American Revolution won national independence and established the United States of America, but those who benefited were the great feudal landowners; the status of the Indigenous people and Black people did not change. The commander-in-chief of this revolution, Washington, was himself a large plantation owner belonging to the revolutionary right wing. Jefferson, who belonged to the left wing, was the drafter of the Declaration

of Independence. He declared that all people were born equal, but he did not oppose slavery, and he himself had many slaves in his household. In France, not only did many leaders of the Enlightenment emerge, but the basic program of bourgeois revolution was also put forward and publicized among the people for a long time, becoming relatively deeply rooted in popular consciousness. The French bourgeois revolutionaries did not ally themselves with the nobility, but with the masses. More and more people from the masses participated, the revolutionary upsurge rose higher and higher, and the leaders of the revolution were replaced batch after batch, with the new leaders becoming increasingly radical. Under their attacks, the king fled from place to place and was eventually sent to the guillotine. We have all seen films and read novels about this, and they still move people today. The masses not only directly participated in the struggle, but also obtained tangible benefits, chiefly that the peasants obtained land. This was originally the most important task of a bourgeois revolution, but the English and American revolutions failed to resolve it; only the French Revolution accomplished this task. However, when the revolution reached its climax, the bourgeoisie leading the revolution became frightened when they saw that the masses wanted to continue moving forward. The bourgeoisie had obtained the greatest fruits of victory in the revolution: they had gained political power and wealth, abolished the feudal system, and obtained the freedom to develop capitalism. They no longer wanted to move forward. When the people wanted to move forward, they came into conflict with the bourgeoisie. The left-wing leaders of the French Revolution—Marat, Danton, Robespierre, and the person who proclaimed the slogan, intolerable to the bourgeoisie, that “where one class oppresses and exploits another class, equality is empty talk”—were all assassinated or sent to the guillotine. After the Thermidorians came to power, the revolution came to an end. During the revolutionary upsurge, people addressed one another as “citizen”; now the old form of address, “monsieur,” was restored. After that came “Napoleon” taking power, restoration, and counter-restoration. I think the French Revolution was extraordinarily rich in content and can almost be called the model for all subsequent bourgeois revolutions. In particular, the relationship between the bourgeoisie and the masses is a key issue that deserves greater attention. When they are together with the masses, they have strength; when the interests of the masses come into conflict with their own, they immediately turn around and oppress the masses. This is almost a universal law. In today’s world, the demands of the masses often conflict with those of the bourgeoisie, so how can the bourgeoisie still lead a mass revolution? Once a revolution touches the interests of the bourgeoisie, they will feel that “the revo-

lution has come back to bite them.” They then turn around and cooperate with the enemy, opposing yesterday’s allies. The bourgeoisie of every country does this without exception. They can no longer lead; they have become opponents of revolution, people who “bid farewell to revolution.” Yeltsin was right when he said, “The revolution is gone forever”—only the word “bourgeois” needs to be added in front of it.

The proletariat, however, is different. Marx was right: what the proletariat loses in revolution is its chains, and what it gains is the whole world. Every genuine revolution creates conditions for the final liberation of the proletariat. Therefore, the proletariat is the most thoroughgoing revolutionary force. Even during bourgeois revolutions, it repeatedly saw through the nature of the bourgeoisie, freed itself from bourgeois influence, and independently led the revolution. The Paris Commune of 1871 and the October Revolution of 1917 were both examples of this. The restoration of capitalism does not prove that the Russian proletariat should not have made revolution in the first place; it only proves that the Russian proletariat lacked experience and did not carry the revolution through to the end. Beginning with Dante’s writing of the *Divine Comedy*, the bourgeoisie took several hundred years to establish the capitalist system throughout the world, and it has now developed to its highest stage. The problems facing the bourgeoisie are ones they cannot solve—not a single one of them. Only the proletariat has the ability to solve them. Since the October Revolution was able to break through the chains of imperialism, why should it not be able to break through them once again? This is only the beginning, not the end. Yeltsin was wrong.

Recently, I have also been reading *A General History of the World*. The more I read, the clearer it becomes that, as Marx said, the development of history is a natural historical process. There is no God who can make it turn backward. A temporary setback is merely a brief rest in the course of moving forward. The bourgeoisie’s grumbling and chatter will only make people tired of listening.

January 20 1999 To Weiwei

As I write these few lines, one of the world's hegemon, Clinton, is delivering his State of the Union address in the United States. Apparently, he has a lot of new language with which to blow away the shadow cast by the impeachment, while this afternoon his lawyers will be conducting a continuous twenty-four-hour defence. Another hegemon who is no longer able to act like one, Yeltsin, has once again been admitted to hospital. It is said that this is his fifteenth hospitalisation in recent years.

Both events have two sides. For them, they are unfortunate; for the people, they can help people see things more clearly. The bourgeoisie are having an increasingly difficult time, and are becoming increasingly rotten. In the United States, when Johnson was impeached previously, it was still over how to deal with the Southern slaveholders—that was a struggle over political programmes, lines and policies. This time, however, it is over the Lewinsky affair, and it has thrown the whole country into a state of chaos. Is this all the intelligence and ingenuity the bourgeoisie has to offer? What has happened with Yeltsin also proves that the Russian bourgeoisie, which so aggressively seized the fruits of decades of revolution and construction by the Soviet working people, are a bunch of fools as well. They handed a perfectly good socialist country over to the bourgeoisies of Europe and America to divide up among themselves. Life has become increasingly difficult, and even this executioner, whose hands are stained with the blood of the Soviet people, has become utterly exhausted. Of course, they are unwilling to accept defeat; they will continue to go mad. But no one can save them from their demise. Apart from the United States and Russia, not one of Britain, France, Germany, Italy or Japan dares to say that things are going very well for them.

Compared with the end of the previous century, we can see that capitalism had then already divided up the entire world. Capitalism had established its dominance throughout the world—in the political, economic and cultural spheres. The major powers were preparing for a world war in order to redive the world. Whatever one says about them, they still had some energy then: it was a matter of life and death, each side fighting to win. Now, however, they are at a loss as to how to rule this planet. What is interesting is that both Clinton and Yeltsin

are supposedly on the left in the political life of their respective countries. Of the thirteen countries in the European Union, nine have left-wing parties in power. Britain has “New Labour”; Italy has the “Democrats of the Left,” reorganised from the former Italian Communist Party; France, Sweden and other countries have Social Democratic parties. —Hasn’t this achieved “peaceful transition”? Haven’t they all become socialist countries? Have the programmes of the Second International and Khrushchev become reality? Many theorists have offered various explanations for this, even using it to prove how erroneous Marxist-Leninist theories of the state supposedly are, how the bourgeoisie can adjust its structures and achieve the self-perfection of capitalist society, and so on. I think all you need to do is put the four words “bourgeois” in front of these left-wing parties. They belong to the left wing within the bourgeois camp and wave flags such as “democracy.” For example, Clinton frequently says that his party represents workers, young people, women and Black people, and he frequently introduces some policies beneficial to these groups. The two largest labour organisations in the United States, the AFL and CIO, both support the Democratic Party. Clinton still has a support rating of over 60 percent, which does show that their deception has had some effect. But their true nature will inevitably be exposed. They cannot genuinely represent the working class. They can only carry out a little social reform and give workers a few minor benefits, but they can never change capitalism’s private ownership system, nor can they eliminate the antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. In the United States, the two parties take turns governing; in Russia, Yeltsin changes prime ministers as if he were running a revolving-door show. Neither can resolve the fundamental contradiction of capitalism. On the surface, organisations such as the Social Democratic parties seem better than the right wing at winning people over and deceiving them, but ultimately they cannot deceive people for very long. Today, in the countries of Europe and America, you cannot even see a decent party representing the working class. History has seen situations like this many times. Sun Yat-sen’s Tongmenghui was founded in 1905—who could have imagined that the Xinhai Revolution would break out only six years later, in 1911? In 1898 China was still experiencing the Boxer Movement, while the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party had only just been founded, and Lenin’s Bolshevik Party did not yet exist. Yet at the beginning of the twentieth century, revolutions broke out in both China and Russia. This is the inevitable course of history. At the end of *A General History of the World* there is a “Chronology of Major Events.” It shows the major events from the end of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth, and I found it particu-

larly interesting. Comparing it with the events unfolding before us is especially thought-provoking. A hundred years pass in the blink of an eye. Who dares say that the beginning of this century will not once again see a revolutionary high tide? During the French Revolution, a workers' leader once said bitterly: "We destroyed an old society, but did not obtain a new society. The bourgeois revolution is over; now it is our turn, the working class." —This was said before Marxism had appeared. How remarkable! The revolution of the working class has already begun. The Paris Commune and the October Revolution were the greatest experiments of the last century; the twenty-first century will see an even greater historical serial drama unfold! —This is my wish at the beginning of 1999.

May 16 1999 To Weiwei

In my last letter, I mentioned that I was going to begin reading Zhao Jibin's *A New Inquiry into the Analects*. I have now finished it. If you ask me what I think of it, my answer is: Confucius must be criticised; but bringing "Old Second Kong" down is not easy.

Confucius has had such a profound influence, not because he was some perfect saint whose learning surpassed everyone else's and whose teachings could suit every age for thousands of years. Rather, in summing up how the first exploiting class in Chinese history dealt with the contradictions between slave owners and slaves, as well as among different groups of slave owners, and how it sought to consolidate a declining slave-owning system, he did quite a lot of work. His thinking was idealist and did not meet the needs of the newly emerging feudal aristocratic landlord class at the time, so although his teachings were propagated everywhere, they found little acceptance. But as class contradictions in feudal society became increasingly acute, Emperor Wu of Han began to realise that Confucius's doctrines were very useful to the feudal ruling class. After all, they were both exploiting classes, so adapting his teachings was not particularly difficult. Thus, over the long centuries, from the rise of feudal society all the way to its final period, Confucius's reputation grew ever higher. He was consistently an object of opposition for reformers and a tool of conservative forces. In modern times, this struggle continued. Eighty years ago, the May Fourth Movement once again brought the struggle to a climax. Criticising Confucius once again became an item on the agenda.

Recently, I have read several articles commemorating the May Fourth Movement. Most of them acknowledge the necessity of criticising Confucius, but they place greater emphasis on how the criticism of Confucius at that time went "too far." Almost none of them mention the necessity of criticising Confucius today. In conversations, many people instead say that we should worship Confucius, attack the May Fourth Movement's criticism of him, and discuss how we should inherit Confucius's teachings—as though Old Second Kong were himself the representative of the Chinese nation. When I say that criticising Confucius is not easy, it is because the words of Old Second Kong have misled so many people. His teachings originally served to defend the interests of

the slave-owning class, yet many people believe that he was serving the whole population. “The humane person loves people” has been interpreted by many philosophers as meaning that “people” means all human beings, so that loving people means loving everyone.

To clarify this point, Zhao Jibin undertook painstaking and meticulous research. He pointed out that “ren” (人, people/persons) and “min” (民, the common people) are two different concepts in the Analects: “ren” refers to the slave-owning class, while “min” refers to slaves. The Analects speaks only of “making the people work” (shi min); nowhere does it speak of “loving the people” (ai min).

“Education without discrimination” (you jiao wu lei) is another saying for which many people praise Confucius. Zhao Jibin demonstrates that the word “lei” here refers to different clans or tribal groups, because the slave-owning class included aristocrats belonging to different clans, and within each clan there was still a distinction between slave owners and slaves. One cannot interpret this saying as meaning that everyone should be educated regardless of class. There are also a number of questions that have been debated endlessly in academic circles over many years, and Zhao Jibin analyses all of them. The whole book is 320,000 Chinese characters long, packed with quotations from classical sources, and it is quite difficult to read. I think that the kind of Criticism of the Analects produced by workers, peasants and soldiers—vigorous and blunt, crack, crack, crack—is useful. But we also need the kind of meticulous criticism undertaken by Zhao Jibin. On this basis, we still need to produce books written in language that ordinary people can easily understand, and bring the Marxist view of Confucius to the masses. That is easier said than done! Zhao’s work also has shortcomings: it is not written in an accessible style. It is limited to highly educated people in academic circles, and therefore has its uses. But without the participation and acceptance of the broad masses, it is difficult to achieve much. Zhao began teaching the Analects in 1944, and the New Inquiry was published in 1975—he spent thirty years on it. I think someone must continue this work. Surely, a thousand years from now, we cannot still be living in the Kingdom of Confucius.

For many years, people have generally felt depressed; even May Day has seemed to lack any spirit. But people also believe that as long as contradictions exist, they will eventually come into conflict. American missiles bombed Yugoslavia for so many days, yet it seemed like someone else’s affair. The bombing of

Sudan and Afghanistan was even more readily dismissed as if it were merely background noise; nobody wanted to come out and protest. Their heads were filled with the idea that America was heaven—freedom, equality, fraternity, democracy, human rights. This time, things are different. As many people have said, the bombing⁹ has awakened them somewhat. The roar of the bombs has temporarily silenced many people who used to praise America. But there are also people who have been frightened senseless by the bombs, saying things like: American weapons are so sophisticated; science and technology can see objects on the ground the size of matchboxes; one can defeat an enemy country without even sending in troops; and so on. The theory that weapons are decisive has resurfaced. What can now be foreseen is that without ground forces occupying the territory, no amount of bombing can destroy an enemy country. Iraq proved this, and Yugoslavia has proved it again. Ground forces are decisive; the nature of the war is decisive. These propositions have not become outdated. I think facts will continue to prove this. Neither Clinton nor Yeltsin has the ability to change this law.

Yugoslavia's real difficulty is that it lacks a Communist Party based on Marxism-Leninism. Nationalism is a banner for resisting foreign enemies, but it is difficult to sustain for long. This is because national contradictions can rise to become the principal contradiction, but they cannot eliminate class contradictions. Class struggle remains contained within the national struggle.

Tito's nationalism collapsed not long after his death. The current leadership does not even dare to retain a party name such as the "League of Communists." Can it really sustain a difficult struggle against imperialism? I hope that the war will create a new Communist Party—a Marxist-Leninist party.

⁹ This refers to the bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Yugoslavia by NATO, led by the United States, on the night of May 7, 1999 (Beijing time, May 8). Three Chinese journalists were killed.

June 20 1999 To Weiwei

Two things impressed me the most: to solve any problem, one has to work hard. It took Marx 40 years to write *Das Kapital*. Last time I mentioned that it also took Zhao Jibin 30 years to write *A New Inquiry into the Analects of Confucius*, and Morgan¹⁰ another couple of decades. He said that it would have been better if the Spaniards had studied the subject when they first arrived in America, when all kinds of material from ancient societies were still alive and well. It is not easy to find now. He had a good idea, but the Europeans were plundering the Indians at the time, so they wouldn't have cared about ancient societies.

And again, there is a law of social development, otherwise, it would not have been from barbarism to civilisation, from primitive communism to capitalism, on every continent. Even the procedure of emergence is the same. It is always the internal contradictions of the former form that prepare the conditions for the transformation into the latter. Now, isn't capitalism also preparing the conditions for communism? If the original commune produced private ownership, why can't private ownership produce public ownership?

It is interesting to say that Clinton never imagined that his new weapons would not only blow up the buildings in Yugoslavia but also many illusions of the people. It left the bourgeoisie of the world open-mouthed and at a loss for words. Before this, they had made up a theory that, though deceptive, could still fool people. Now, it is difficult. With NATO and Russia being a strategic partnership, it seems that they can unite to dominate the world, and the call for world integration spreads all over the world, as if the contradictions between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, between imperialism and the oppressed nations and exploited peoples, and between imperialism are no longer alive, and the world has entered paradox-free heaven. The outbreak of the Yugoslav crisis has exposed the lies of the bourgeoisie and slapped them in the face.

I do not want to underestimate the power of the bourgeoisie, which is still dominant throughout the world. In particular, every social democratic party in each country still work to defend the interests of the bourgeoisie. In the so-called NATO, more than half of the countries are ruled by social democratic parties, and this time none of them voted against the invasion of Yugoslavia. On the

contrary, they followed the US more closely than the Conservative Party, for example, the UK Labour, a so-called left-wing party, which is more conservative than the Conservative. Last year's general election, when the social democratic parties came to power in many countries, was welcomed by some. In my view, this shows on the one hand that the bourgeoisie wants to change their horses, and on the other hand that the masses still have illusions. In the recent European parliamentary elections, the social democratic party lost votes and changed from the first to the second-largest party. In the Indonesian elections, Suharto also lost. Elections cannot solve the problem of proletarian power. But it can educate the people and polish their eyes. One day they will do a little better than the Paris Commune and the Petersburg martyrs and really liberate themselves.

¹⁰ Lewis H. Morgan, a pioneering American anthropologist and social theorist, author of *Ancient Society*, which influenced Engels' *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*.

July 17 1999 To Weiwei

Yesterday, China Central Television devoted such a long segment to the Indonesian elections, especially praising Suwarati and, for the first time in many years, speaking favorably about the situation in Indonesia.

In my previous letters, I have mentioned Indonesia many times. After Suharto stepped down last year, I thought that orphans and widows were now in fashion as election candidates. Many wives, princes, and princesses have been elected president or prime minister. Indonesia putting forward Suwarati is nothing new, nor is her victory. The question is: what will the Indonesian people get from it?

On July 1, I finished reading Five Documents of the Central Politburo of the Communist Party of Indonesia, which I had found in a pile of old books. These were adopted in 1966, after Suharto launched his counterrevolutionary coup and overthrew Sukarno, under severe White Terror. The main content was the Central Committee of the Indonesian Communist Party's self-criticism, pointing out that the PKI had committed a right-opportunist error by handing leadership of the revolution over to the Indonesian bourgeoisie. I do not know how this self-criticism was carried out amid the White Terror inside Indonesia. Was it before or after Aidit and the members of the Politburo were killed? And how was it transmitted abroad? I believe that after Aidit's death, the PKI's contacts with the outside world were cut off. But in any case, with millions upon millions of people being killed, the Indonesian Communists were finally awakened. Reading these documents again thirty years later, after Suharto's downfall, gives them a very different significance.

I have both hopes and worries. The Suharto regime, which came to power through a counterrevolutionary armed coup, relied on the support of the country's right-wing forces—the landlord-comprador bourgeoisie—and on the support of U.S. imperialism abroad. It imposed fascist dictatorship and suppressed all the revolutionary forces of the Indonesian Republic. It is said that, until Suharto's fall, the identity cards of more than a million people still carried marks such as “pro-Communist,” and they were kept under surveillance everywhere. Some people praised Suharto for maintaining national stability, developing the economy, and improving people's living standards. In fact, without the kill-

ing of all the members of the PKI Politburo and without fascist dictatorship, he could not have consolidated his regime. The so-called economic prosperity was merely the prosperity of bureaucratic capital. Suharto went from being a divisional commander to a billionaire. Meanwhile, the impoverished workers and peasants did not decrease; they increased. Precisely because Suharto was so divorced from the people and opposed to the people, an economic crisis caused a split within the ruling class, and he too had to “lose his job,” handing power over to his successor.

Now Suwarati has won the election, but she did not receive a majority. Even if Miss Sukarno became president, the situation would not change greatly. This is not the result of a people’s revolution; it is merely the bourgeoisie using the people’s sentiments to change its strategy of rule. The army is still in the hands of the reactionaries. But these are not what I mean by my worries. What worries me is that, to this day, there is still no sign of the PKI. I do not know whether they are still following behind the bourgeoisie, serving as the bourgeoisie’s tool.

The difference between Old Democracy and New Democracy lies precisely in whether leadership belongs to the proletariat or to the bourgeoisie. It is not a matter of rejecting the united front; rather, the Communist Party must maintain its independence within the united front, both uniting and struggling with the bourgeoisie. The first Chinese revolution failed because Chen Duxiu abandoned leadership and handed the revolution over to Chiang Kai-shek and Wang Jingwei. During the War of Resistance against Japan, cooperation was resumed. Wang Ming dressed himself up and went to Wuhan, willingly becoming Chiang Kai-shek’s “maidservant,” declaring that “everything must submit to the united front,” that is, submit to Chiang Kai-shek. Had this not been corrected quickly, it would not merely have meant losing the New Fourth Army headquarters and several thousand troops; even the Eighth Route Army could not have been preserved. Many people took pride in wearing Kuomintang uniforms; they even printed Kuomintang military ranks on their business cards. The Red Army, in their minds, was no longer an honorable title. The PKI documents criticized themselves for errors similar to those of Chen Duxiu. I do not believe that the PKI was completely wiped out. Why have they not raised their banner? Even if the Party organization is operating underground, surely it cannot have no open work at all. Could it be that, after paying such a heavy price, they still have not truly learned the lesson? People often go through repeated twists and turns before recognizing the truth. The fact that some people have recognized it

does not mean that everyone has recognized it. Mao Zedong's How to Analyze Classes and Chen Duxiu's The Bourgeois Revolution and the Revolutionary Bourgeoisie existed side by side. So I need not worry needlessly; the Indonesian Communists will eventually find a way forward. After all, Suharto has fallen, and the Indonesian people may be able to obtain greater freedom.

I have also finished reading Ancient Society. Throughout history, new things have always replaced old things.

October 16 1999 To Weiwei

I don't know if you saw it, but the Xinmin Evening News ran a piece of short news saying that the BBC had conducted a poll among internet users as to who was the greatest thinker of this millennium? This is similar to Lin Biao's claim that only one genius will emerge in a thousand years. Surprisingly the first was Karl Marx.

The first thing that interested me about this story was that it was published by the BBC, which is an old anti-communist institution. If it had been issued by a communist institution, it would not have been very interesting. Why did this old anti-communist institution name Marx as its "chief thinker" when the bourgeoisie all over the world is rampantly screaming "Marxism is dead"?

Secondly, the voters it cited were not communists either. Why did these people also elect Marx?

I think that this is somehow a reflection of the fact that the whole capitalist world is in political, economic and cultural crisis and is desperate to find a way out. After looking around, it seems that Marx was more relevant than other thinkers.

In the crisis of capitalism, it is the working class that suffers the most. In Europe, the old capitalist world, scientific and technological advances have enabled the capitalists to find ways of cutting back on workers, wealth is increasingly concentrated in the hands of the big capitalists, and tens of millions of workers are unemployed and living on the dole. The calculations of the capitalists are clear: it is much more economical to pay out a little relief than to use more of the surplus value earned by the workers. The capitalists use every means to paralyse the class consciousness of the working class and make it seem to them that the Social Democratic Party and the Labour Party are working for the benefit of the workers. The fact that 10 of the 15 countries in the European Union are ruled by social democratic parties shows how deceptive the old bourgeois parties can be when they are replaced by a group of bourgeois parties under the banner of "socialism". However, there has been a change recently, as the PSF in France have lost a series of elections, showing that the eyes of workers and la-

bour have been opened a little. The recent call by the PCF for a march, in which the French General Workers' Union, which has always followed the PCF, announced its refusal to take part, is also an unusual manifestation of the French working class. Perhaps it is these conditions that have led people to Marx again.

However, the European and American working classes may continue to be deceived. The European and American bourgeoisie have invented something called "Western Marxism". It has been described in the press for a few years as being different from "Eastern Marxism", but their findings on the new phenomena of capitalism also have merit. I do not believe that there is any such thing as Eastern Marxism or Western Marxism. Marx studied the West as well as the East. His slogan was "Workers of the world, unite!" The emancipation of the proletariat is global in nature. This is why I think that Marx's appointment as "chief thinker" was perhaps intended to turn Marx into "Western Marx" and "Western Marxism" in the service of the bourgeoisie. I am afraid that this is the reason why the BBC is so active.

Marxism is a science, a complete system of thought, a world view of the proletariat. It serves only the proletariat. The bourgeoisie can cherry-pick a few words to deceive people, but they cannot turn Marxism into a tool of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie, therefore, wants to change the nature of Marxism, but only wants to deceive people with pseudo-Marxism. Such ideas cannot be put into practice. A few years ago somebody said that Marx advocated "individual ownership" in a socialist society, i.e. private ownership. Before long, this claim was exposed and refuted. What the BBC intends to do, we have no way of knowing. If, by announcing its selection of the "chief thinker," it ends up attracting workers to study Marxism and understand the principles of the liberation of the working class, then that certainly would not be what they intended.

November 20 1999 To Weiwei

In my last letter I mentioned that a French Marxist wrote a book in the 1970s, *Class Struggle in the Soviet Union*, the whole line in four volumes, of which I have only the first, analysing the period from the October Revolution to Lenin's death. The book is very lengthy, with few facts and many arguments, and not easy to read. However, there is one thing that caught my interest. This is that it focuses on the class situation during this period, which classes the CPSU's policies favoured, the attitudes of the various classes towards the CPSU, and the changes in relations between the various classes as a result of the struggle. As far as I can see, his views are in line with Leninism. Lenin always insisted on class analysis and proposed and revised the party's policies. I don't know what happened to this author, but at the time he praised Mao in his book.

In order to check whether this book was in line with reality, I went back to the "History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)", which was reviewed by Stalin. Because the two books had different positions, views and approaches, the results were different.

It was a popular saying in the press that Lenin was "not afraid to break the rules of heaven" and dared to abandon Marx's principle that a socialist revolution could only be won in a few large countries and advocate that one country could win. Lenin was indeed brave, but he argued that one country could be the first to win, but not the last. He simply said that there is always a weak point in the capitalist chain and that the proletariat could be the first to win at that weak point. After the October Revolution, how eagerly Lenin wished for a victory in France, but the revolutions in France and Hungary failed. The building of socialism in one country was not Lenin's choice, but the result of the development of the situation, and Lenin always saw the victory in Russia as a base for the socialist revolution all over the world. So it is nonsense to say how Lenin discarded the basic principles of Marx out of nothing.

Lenin said it was not yet the final victory, as I recall. What about Stalin? It seems he was of the opinion that a final victory was possible, otherwise, how could he have said that a country could build communism in one country? When I read the History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), I realised

that Stalin also thought that it was not the final victory. The problem was not “final victory”, but the reason he thought that it was not a final victory was that the Soviet Union was under the siege of capitalism and could be interfered with or destroyed at any time. In practice, Stalin approached internal and external policy from this point of view. It was necessary to stress the external encirclement, and it was dangerous to forget the encirclement by hostile forces because of the victory. However, the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union had external as well as internal causes. The encirclement of world capitalism, the class struggle on an international scale including that of the Soviet Union and imperialism, was always intense. But the fortress was most easily broken from within, and the fall of the Soviet Union and the fall of the CPSU occurred simultaneously.

The reasons for the demise of the CPSU and the Soviet Union were analysed by various political factions in various countries. Some said that the economy had not done well, while others said that they should not have competed with the United States for hegemony. I thought that, fundamentally, it was the result of the class struggle within the Soviet Union. The October Revolution had overthrown the bourgeois regime, but the newly established proletarian regime was under siege not only by the foreign bourgeoisie but also by the domestic bourgeoisie. As Lenin said, the bourgeoisie was driven out through the front door then came back in through the back door. The Soviet organs are full of bourgeois elements. The cadres trained by the proletariat are surrounded by the bourgeoisie as soon as they arrive at their posts. This is true in the cities as well as in the countryside. Small production gave rise to capitalism and the bourgeoisie every moment — Lenin held this Marxist principle from first-hand experience.

Can the proletariat, which is already a minority, really withstand the immersion of such a large number of bourgeois elements? Is there only one way of perishing for the party and the country? No. When Lenin was alive, the conditions were extremely complicated, and the Bolsheviks never forgot the class struggle. Stalin did not completely abandon the class struggle but focused his attention on the struggle against external forces, and when something happened at home, he said it was foreign spies and agents, without paying attention to the class contradictions at home. We all know that he expanded the purges, arrested way more counter-revolutionaries and adopted a policy of killing people. He also failed to acknowledge for a long time that there were internal contradictions in the Soviet Union, did not pay attention to the class struggle in the political

and ideological sphere, or paid attention to certain incidents without distinguishing between the two types of contradictions, treating many ideological issues as political issues and pushing the middle forces into the hostile camp, as has also been pointed out. I think that he has long ignored the principle of “small production every day and every hour”, thinking that he was training proletarian fighters and that they were all fighting for the Soviet Union. Thus, at the Twentieth Congress, Khrushchev was already representing the domestic and foreign bourgeoisie, standing at the rostrum of the Soviet Communist Party and delivering an anti-communist speech, and by then people who wanted to oppose him were powerless to do so. It is not easy for the proletariat to recognize these problems. But since the world develops through contradictions and class struggle continues, Khrushchev’s successors will eventually fall. Otherwise, Marxism really would not work.

December 31 2001 To Weiwei

This month, whenever we watch Kangxi¹¹, we keep hearing that line, “I really wish I could live another five hundred years.” It makes no sense. What does it mean? If Emperor Kangxi really lived for five hundred years, would we still have to kneel before this emperor? How absurd! Still, it is hardly surprising. In today’s world, there are plenty of people who want the exploiting classes and the system of exploitation to live another five hundred years. Talk of a “new millennium” has been heard without end. Especially in the first few years, everything we saw and heard was about how capitalism had found a way to “perfect itself,” and how Marx was wrong in his assertion that capitalism would eventually perish. Facts do not deceive. After four airplanes crashed on “9/11,” it became difficult to keep repeating such myths. The world economy has stagnated. Even Greenspan, who had been praised to the point of near-mythical status, was left dumbfounded. Argentina’s politics and economy are in complete chaos. In France, even the gendarmes went on strike; that too can be counted as one of the sights of the new century.

Of course, the bourgeoisie can find ways to deal with the situation, and capitalism will not collapse immediately. But capitalism really has a history of five hundred years, counting from the sixteenth century. It probably wants to live another five hundred years and usher in a new millennium. But I think their fate will probably not be any better than Emperor Kangxi’s; perhaps they will be replaced by socialism without having to wait that long. The exploiting classes and the system of exploitation will inevitably be replaced by communism. The true “long live” belongs to communism, to the people, and to those of us who struggle for communism. Not many people say these things anymore, but I still want to say them to my daughter, as a birthday gift for 2002. I hope you will cherish this gift.

¹¹ In the letter, “Kangxi” refers to the television drama Kangxi Dynasty (康熙王朝). “I really want to live another five hundred years” is a lyric from the show’s theme song, Borrow Another Five Hundred Years from Heaven (向天再借五百年). The original lyric is “I really still want to live another five hundred years.”



Zhang Chunqiao In The Eyes Of His Daughter

Introduction

Chunqiao Publications Note:

The following is an extended interview of Zhang Weiwei, the eldest daughter of Zhang Chunqiao. It was conducted by Kai Di in 2015 and serves as an important piece to understand the life of Zhang Chunqiao. Due to time constraints arising from the publication of other works, we have decided to use the existing translation of this interview for the vast majority of the text. This translation was produced by Nick G., Chairperson of the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist). We have reviewed the translation and believe it is sufficiently accurate for publication. Section 9 onwards has been translated by us.

Translator's Preface:

Please note that there are two sets of footnotes – those that accompanied the original, and those that I have added, identified as being by me as translator.

Interview Preface:

When I went back to Shanghai to visit my family during the spring break, the only task my father assigned to me was to accompany him out for dinner. At that dinner, I met Gan Qi, the president of the Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, and Zhang Chunqiao's eldest daughter Weiwei. My father spent several years writing a biography of Zhang Chunqiao. During the writing process, he met Weiwei and learned about and saw a batch of letters Zhang Chunqiao wrote to his family in prison. In 1981, Zhang Chunqiao did not say a word during the public trial, which was shocking and puzzling. Zhang Chunqiao passed away in 2005, and the most touching thing was his silence for nearly 30 years. Therefore, these letters from prison are particularly precious. The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press is preparing to organize and publish these letters. Gan Qi asked Weiwei to write something for the family letters as a preface

or postscript. Weiwei said that it was difficult for her to start writing: for many things, she could not continue after writing a beginning. So, I suggested that maybe we could do an interview and attach it to the letter home, and expressed my willingness to undertake this task.

I don't know much about the Cultural Revolution and Zhang Chunqiao. I volunteered because I am very interested in the relationship between Zhang's father and daughter. I want to know: What kind of father is Zhang Chunqiao in his daughter's eyes? In those critical historical moments, from Zhang Chunqiao's promotion to his later public trial and imprisonment, how did his daughter experience, think, and respond?

The three weeks in Shanghai were very busy, and the interview with Weiwei could only be arranged before leaving. In her home with flowers, plants and vegetables planted on the balcony, we talked for two mornings, a total of less than six hours. Because I am not an expert in the history of the Cultural Revolution, and the time for this interview was limited, many things were only touched upon and not discussed in depth. But Weiwei was refreshing and quick-talking, which was beyond my expectation.

Perhaps because she and my father had known each other for a long time, and because she found out that we were also alumni of Fudan High School, the interview was more like a fasttalking chat. During the conversation, Weiwei was very emotional at one point, which also moved me. Many emotions and tears are common to all human beings. I hope that this interview, together with Zhang Chunqiao's prison letters, can reflect the extremely real parent-child relationship of that era and that family. For me, listening to Weiwei talk about her father made me truly feel the meaning of "perseverance" and made me understand what it means to bear a heavy cross for an ideal.

May 25, 2015 in London

Zhang Chunqiao In The Eyes Of His Daughter

I. My Father's Self-Positioning And Personality

Question: You are Zhang Chunqiao's eldest daughter. How do you position your father? How does he position himself?

Answer: I was born on January 6, 1947, and I am 70 years old this year. I am the eldest in the family. My eldest sister is less than two years older than me, my youngest sister is five years younger than her, and my younger brother is another five years younger than my youngest sister.

My father has no personal ambition. He positioned himself as Chairman Mao's secretary, listening to Chairman Mao and helping Chairman Mao do things, that's all. So, if Hua Guofeng wanted to use him, he would continue to help him. If he didn't want to use him, there was nothing he could do. Of course, he would not worship Hua Guofeng¹ as much as he worshipped Chairman Mao. He would give Hua Guofeng suggestions, and Hua might feel uncomfortable. Wu Dalang opened a shop and hired someone shorter than himself.² Hua certainly didn't want to listen to him.

But my father would never disrespect Hua Guofeng. This is not in line with my father's consistent organizational principles and work style. But it is impossible for him to worship Hua Guofeng from the heart.

How do I define him? I think he is a communist fighter, Chairman Mao is the flag bearer, and the flag says "Proletarian Vanguard". My father is not a flag bearer, that is something he cannot do, he is willing to be a flag bearer and a fighter of the vanguard. This is my understanding of him. The Communist Party is the vanguard of the proletariat. Only with the Communist Party can the proletariat organize, awaken and fight. My father joined the Communist Party of China to be a vanguard fighter. During the Anti-Japanese War, he went from Yan'an, crossed the enemy's blockade to the enemy's rear, and did battlefield

propaganda. After that, he has been working diligently and enthusiastically to publicize the party's policies, educate the people, and boost morale. After the proletariat seized power and established the Republic, how to continue on the road ahead is a new issue that every communist has to face. But there are too few people who think this way. Even fewer people want to explore this issue. Chairman Mao is such a prophet and foresighted person. I think it is the greatest happiness and honour of my father's life to be able to study and work beside Chairman Mao.

Q: Do you think he is an intellectual?

A: He was indeed a journalist. When he was young, he sold his writings for a living. Later, he also wrote a lot of articles. I once joked with him: "What kind of intellectual are you? You only went to junior high school. You are not good at mathematics, and you have never studied physics and chemistry." He would argue: "No matter, I am still an honorary professor of Fudan University. I am self-taught and have read a lot of books." In the 1950s, Fudan University did hire him as an honorary professor. He mentioned self-study in several letters.

He was a party worker and did propaganda. Therefore, his task was to educate the masses. For example, he would seriously revise the works written by some worker writers at that time. He would tell them why they should praise the working class, where the advanced nature of the proletariat is, and that these advanced natures should be expressed through literary and artistic works to educate the masses. Later, he wrote in a letter that a certain writer began to curse the Communist Party, and father couldn't understand it because the writer was a winner of the Stalin Prize. This is also why he enthusiastically assisted Jiang Qing in developing modern Peking opera and modern dance drama.

Q: Your father admires Mao Zedong so much, so how did Mao Zedong see him?

A: I also want to know this question, and I have asked many people. I want to know whether Chairman Mao has ever said anything bad about my father. The answer is that Mao never said anything bad about my father. My feeling is that Chairman Mao should have regarded my father as a bosom friend, and Mao felt very relieved to have him around. When I was in Jiangyin, my father told me that Chairman Mao had talked to him individually many times to understand

his personal and family situation. He also talked to him about the history of the struggle between the two lines in the party before the Seventh National Congress³. Including the Red Army period, how Mao was deprived of power and expelled from the party, how the three antiencirclement and suppression campaigns were fought, and how he stood aside during the fourth and fifth anti-encirclement and suppression campaigns. These are all played in TV dramas now, but at that time, cadres like my father did not know. My father later told me that Premier Zhou represented the Central Committee at that time and said that Chen Yi was very powerful at that time. He also said that Ye Jianying got the secret telegram from Zhang Guotao and they went north overnight. Ye made a great contribution. Chairman Mao also told him that the Zunyi Conference did not establish Chairman Mao's leadership position in the party, but only let him participate in military command. Chairman Mao once said: "Fortunately, Zhang Wentian listened to me."

In a letter dated December 20, 1992, my father wrote in detail about a conversation he had with Chairman Mao in Hangzhou on the second day of the first lunar month in 1958, as well as his subsequent work. My father felt that Jiang Qing was indeed very capable in literature and art. But he never helped Jiang Qing with his work, including the model operas and writing "Comment on Hai Rui Dismissed from Office".⁴ He told me that Chairman Mao had told him several times: "Help Jiang Qing, helping her is helping me." Of course, Chairman Mao did not just want my father to help Jiang Qing. He also said to the staff around Jiang Qing: "Comrade Jiang Qing is in poor health and has a bad temper. You have to help me take care of her. Thank you." After Jiang Qing was elected as a member of the Politburo, Chairman Mao said to her: "You, like other members of the Politburo, cannot come to my place casually." Therefore, Jiang Qing moved to Diaoyutai, not because she had a bad relationship with the Chairman.

So I think they also made personal sacrifices for the smooth progress of the Chinese revolution. Chinese history is a very heavy process. My father really carried a cross for Chairman Mao. When I went to the Vatican in Italy and saw the picture of the crucifixion of Jesus there, I felt like history was repeating itself. My father carried such a heavy cross for his ideals. So, when I was a child, I didn't listen to him and thought he was nothing special. In the end, I really respected him.

Q: Can we say that his communist beliefs were always firm until his death?

A: Yes, he did not lose his communist beliefs right to the end. His political viewpoint was to believe that the ultimate goal and highest program of mankind was to realize communism, and the lowest program was to realize socialism. Moreover, he believed that the proletarian revolutionary cause was an international movement, not just belonging to China. On my 55th birthday, he wrote to me in a letter that communism would definitely be realized. At the end of the letter, Dad wrote: “The exploiting class and the exploiting system will always be replaced by communism. The real long live is communism, the people, and those of us who fight for communism.”⁵

So, I think we should now summarize what path we have taken? What work have we done to reach this height? These are what the participants at that time should summarize.

Q: How do you comment on your father’s character? Some people say he is “cunning and sly”, some people say he is “stubborn and arrogant”, what do you think?

A: My father is a very straightforward person. He said: “There are newspapers in Hong Kong saying that I am cunning and sly. Strange! In fact, I am too straightforward.” I think he only knows how to work and is a workaholic. Reading is work, watching movies and plays is work. There is nothing else except work. Once I saw an article saying that after Lin Biao escaped on September 13, they played cards in the Great Hall of the People. I still felt strange and asked him: “Do you also play cards?” He said: “Everyone was locked in the Great Hall, no one was allowed to go out, so we played cards. I don’t know how to play cards, I only know how to compare the size of the cards.” So, when he plays cards, he compares the size of the cards with others. He doesn’t know how to play, and when he is asked to exercise, he will only walk in the yard, and he likes to walk fast. In Jiangyin, as long as his body can move and it doesn’t rain, he will walk fast in the yard. He insists on walking for thirty to forty minutes.

He was very disciplined. He would never say anything he shouldn’t say, and would never interfere with things he shouldn’t interfere with. It was also when we were in Jiangyin that we talked about my second uncle.⁶ He said that at the time, Li Na⁷ was going out to join the armed forces, and he was worried about

her safety, so he got her a reporter's pass from the Liberation Army Daily, because the Liberation Army Daily had reporters' stations in various places, hoping to help her. He didn't know how Li Na later went to the Liberation Army Daily to seize power and overthrow Zhang Qiuqiao. Because it involved his brother, it was even harder to intervene. My father didn't say a word from beginning to end. My father felt that Chairman Mao said let the fire burn, so everyone could burn in the fire and undergo the test. I think about it. During the Cultural Revolution, there were people around me who encouraged me to do this and that. In other words, I don't know who was around Li Na. I learned a lot of lessons, and I was afraid of causing trouble for my father, so I "disappeared".

My father is nearsighted, and the degree of myopia in his two eyes is very different, and it is difficult to correct it with glasses. I am also nearsighted. Sometimes people see me and say hello, but I don't see them. So, some people used to say that I am arrogant or aloof, but in fact I just didn't see them. Later, I saw another friend with severe myopia saying hello to everyone, please forgive me, and then I realized that I am not the only one who has this problem. People with good eyesight can't understand it.

Q: Do you think your father is considerate?

A: My father is very considerate. He can understand others and put himself in their shoes. For example, when we lived in the Haige Building,⁸ one day, I saw the hostess across the street wearing a white gauze pyjamas. I thought she looked like Cinderella's stepmother, very vivid. At that time, I read a lot of Western literature. At that time, I wondered how she could dress like that, but I didn't dare to ask adults. Later, after arriving in Jiangyin, I talked about this with my father. When I talked about the doubts at that time, my father said: "Of course it's different. Her family is an authentic Inner Mongolian prince. She came out to revolutionize, which is a great betrayal of her family. The requirements for her are different."

There was also a family living upstairs from us. The wife also dressed up in a green and beautiful way. Her hair was a fake and tied up at the back. I also thought at that time, how could she still have such beautiful hair at such an old age? Later I found out that it was a fake hair. I felt very strange and didn't dare to tell the adults. Later I talked about this with my father. My father said: "She is in the literary and artistic world. Isn't her work environment different?"

So, he would consider people according to their environment. He would not make too high demands on others or let others out of the environment. He can understand others, absolutely understand.

When we lived in Gaisikang,⁹ there was an alley nearby where many celebrities lived. Zhou Xiaoyan and Yuan Xuefen lived there¹⁰. I had a classmate who could play the piano and lived there. I went to my classmate's house to play, and when I got home, I told my father about the celebrity alley. He said he knew about the alley. I asked him how he knew it. He said that sometimes when the meeting was late, he would send a car to take those celebrities back. He had a good relationship with them.

Q: But during the Cultural Revolution, these cultural figures were attacked. Is he responsible?

A: He had no choice. Some of the things that happened during the Cultural Revolution were not what he wanted. What he wanted was to “target the capitalist-roaders in the party.” But some people started to target these cultural celebrities and wanted to divert the general direction of the struggle. My father could only emphasize the capitalist-roaders in the party, but many things were beyond his control, and not everyone listened to him. Some people wanted to muddy the waters as soon as possible. And in class struggle, of course someone will become a victim. No matter who it is, in order to seize power and maintain his ruling position, he must eliminate opponents. Another point, I have always believed that Chairman Mao and my father, everything they did was definitely not for their own interests.

¹ Hua Guofeng was appointed Premier of China by Chairman Mao following the death of Zhou Enlai. Following Mao's death, Hua became Chairman of the CCP, and within a month had arrested the Gang of Four. Deng Xiaoping was critical of Hua's failure to firmly enough switch to the capitalist road, and had him removed from his posts. He was replaced as Premier by Zhao Ziyang in September 1980, was replaced as Party Chairman by Hu Yaobang and was replaced as chairman of the Central Military Commission by Deng himself in 1981 – Translator.

² This relates to a story in the classical Chinese novel “Water Margin”. Wu Dalang was a short, ugly person less than 5 feet tall. His parents died when he was a child, and he raised his brother Wu Song with hard work. He made a career of selling cooking cakes but banned

anyone taller than himself from entering his store, so his business collapsed. The meaning of the phrase is that some people are jealous of the ability of others and dare not use people with a higher level of ability than themselves, for fear that people with a higher level will rob him of his job. It is used to satirize those who are cautious and do not strive to improve their abilities, but are blindly jealous of others. – Translator.

³ The 7th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party was convened April 23 - June 11, 1945, in Yan'an, Shaanxi. It took place near the end of the Second Sino Japanese War during a period of uneasy truce between the Kuomintang and Communist parties, with each maintaining their headquarters in different regions of China. During the 7th National Congress, Mao Zedong delivered his April 1945 report On the Coalition Government – Translator.

⁴ Refers to the joint planning of Jiang Qing and Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wenyan's article "Commenting on the New Historical Drama 'Hai Jui's Dismissal'"

⁵ See Zhang Chunqiao's letter to Weiwei dated 31 December 2001.

⁶ Zhang Qiuqiao, the second brother of Zhang Chunqiao, was the director of the reporter and deputy editor-in-chief of the People's Liberation Army Daily.

⁷ Li Na was the only child of Mao Zedong and Jiang Qing. She was born in Yan'an in 1940 – Translator.

⁸ Located at No. 370 Huashan Road, the Haige Building was built by the German Hagrid in 1925, and became the office building of the Shanghai Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China after the founding of the People's Republic of China, and was rebuilt into the Jing'an Hotel in Shanghai in 1977.

⁹ Gaisikang Apartment, also known as Huaihai Apartment, is located at No. 1202-1218 Huaihai Middle Road, built in 1935.

¹⁰ Zhou Xiaoyan is a famous soprano singer; Yuan Xuefen is one of the "Ten Sisters of Yue Opera" and pioneered the art of the Yuan School.

Zhang Chunqiao In The Eyes Of His Daughter

II. Childhood

“He would come home early in the morning every day. He would be asleep when we got up, and we could hardly touch him.”

Q: Can you talk about your childhood memories? When did your family arrive in Shanghai?

A: I was born shortly after Chiang Kai-shek began to attack the liberated areas in 1947 and the troops retreated to Mapeng Village, Fuping County, Hebei Province. It was a very difficult period. After Shijiazhuang was liberated, my father was sent to Shijiazhuang to run the New Shimen Daily,¹¹ and my mother took me with her, and we went into the city again. The supplies were much better. Of course, these are not my memories, I have heard them many times.

My father also recalled this period of life in a letter.¹²

My earliest memory is when my family just moved to Shanghai. I was probably three years old at that time. As soon as we arrived in Shanghai, we were taken to Yan'an East Road, where my father worked, which was the former Shenbao Building. After the liberation of Shanghai, my father was sent to Shanghai to take over three newspapers. He was the military representative of the Press and Publication Department of the Military Control Commission. He worked there during the day and slept on the big desk in the former general manager's office at night. So, my earliest memory of him in Shanghai is a big desk, and he slept on it. After we arrived in Shanghai, we were assigned a house, in an alley next to Zhou Mansion on Sinan Road, the same as the house in Zhou Mansion, in a row behind it.¹³ Later, my grandparents came to Shanghai to visit us and lived in the inner balcony. There was a big room inside, where my parents lived. When my mother gave birth to the third child, she lived in that room. I went there recently and it seems to be a very high-end place for dining and leisure.

As soon as I arrived in Shanghai, my parents sent me to a nursery called the Women's Federation Nursery. I was in full-time care and could only go home once a week, so I don't have much memory of my home at that time. I stayed in that nursery until I started elementary school. The nursery used the Soviet Union's educational methods. We all wore flowered skirts, tied big bows, sang Soviet songs, and danced the "Troika" dance.

My oldest sister was born in Jinan. In the second half of 1948, Jinan had been liberated. My third uncle came to Jinchaji and took me and my mother to Jinan from Shijiazhuang.¹⁴ My grandmother and her family were quite feudal. When they saw that it was a girl, they were unwilling to help raise her, so we all returned to Shijiazhuang. Because I was in poor health when I was a child, my parents left me with them, but my oldest sister was sent to the home of a wet nurse. The wet nurse's son had just died. The wet nurse often had to sell vegetables in the vegetable market. Sometimes she took my younger sister with her, and sometimes she kept her at home. Therefore, my oldest sister's intellectual development in her early years was very poor. She was brought back to Shanghai just after she settled down. After she came back, she was sent to the full-time kindergarten of the Jiefang Daily.

Q: What was your impression of your father when you were a child?

A: My earliest impression was that my father was very busy. His hair was very long and could be tied into a pigtail. At that time, newspapers were all typed with lead type and would not be completed until almost dawn. He was the deputy editor-in-chief and editor-in-chief, and he had to review all the manuscripts before he could go home. Therefore, he would not come home until early in the morning every day. When we got up, he was sleeping, and we could hardly touch him. Moreover, he had no holidays or weekends.

When our family first moved to Shanghai, we lived in a house allocated by Xinhua News Agency on Sinan Road. Because my mother worked at Xinhua News Agency, people living upstairs and downstairs were all from Xinhua News Agency. Later, the house allocated to my father by the Liberation Daily was on Xiangshan Road, a set of rooms outside the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall. There were also people from the Liberation Daily, such as Wang Wei and Feng Gang, who lived with us.

Q: I remember when I first arrived in Shanghai as a child, the Shanghai kids would sing: “Country people, come to Shanghai, can’t speak Shanghainese, eat pickles all the time.” Did you also feel that Shanghainese people were more xenophobic at that time?

A: When I was in the nursery, many children were children of cadres, so I didn’t feel any difference from other children. Moreover, my father was not a senior cadre, so there was nothing special about me.

We are not from Shanghai, which really makes me feel different from others. My parents originally wanted me to go to primary school a year earlier. There is a primary school next door to my house. My parents sent me to that school, but the school didn’t accept me. I didn’t understand why they didn’t want me at the time, but later I realized that it was because everyone in the school spoke Shanghainese, which I didn’t understand. The next year, when I reached the legal school age, my father sent me to the No. 1 Central Primary School in Xuhui District. The school is at the intersection of Shaanxi Road, Xiangyang Road, and Jiashan Road. We live in Luwan District, and actually going to this school is across districts, but my father likes this school very much, and the school is very happy to accept me as a student. The principal of the school is Yan Huiru, whose husband is a revolutionary martyr. After school started, my homework was very bad, and my mother was surprised, saying that my little girl was very smart, why was her homework so bad. In fact, it was because I couldn’t understand Shanghainese. Most of the children were from Shanghai, so they spoke Shanghainese in class. I had no idea what the teacher was saying in class. I also didn’t know why I couldn’t understand the words.

The First Central Primary School was far from my home, and I went to school and came home by myself every day, with no one to pick me up. I studied at the First Central Primary School for one year, and then I transferred to another school because my father’s job changed again and we moved.

Q: What changes did your father’s work undergo in 1955?

A: Dad became the editor-in-chief of the Liberation Daily in October 1951. In 1955, he left the Liberation Daily and was transferred to the Municipal Party Committee Propaganda Department. Now I have read some materials and learned that when my father worked at the Liberation Daily, he published

too many mass opinions and letters from the people, and Chen Yi did not like him.¹⁵ Later, I talked about this with my father, and he said that Pan Hannian¹⁶ personally talked to him at that time, and Pan Hannian told him that Chen Yi said that we should not let others think that we cannot tolerate others at all. Because my father was transferred from the Eighth Route Army, he was not from the New Fourth Army system. I asked my father, do you still know Pan Hannian? Dad looked at me and replied, “Of course.”

But at that time, we didn't know anything. We only knew that my father had been transferred from the Liberation Daily, so we could no longer live in the newspaper's house, so we moved to the Haige Building, No. 33 Yan'an West Road, which is now the Jing'an Hotel. At that time, it was where the ministerial-level cadres of the Municipal Party Committee lived. After the move, the original school was too far away from home, so from the second grade, I transferred to the First Normal School Affiliated Primary School, which was the First Normal School Affiliated Primary School. The First Normal School Affiliated Primary School used Mandarin for teaching, so my homework became better.

Q: Your father no longer ran a newspaper. Was his work and rest schedule normal? Could you see him more often?

A: Dad still came home in the middle of the night and went to bed in the morning. We didn't see him. At that time, it felt like there were no adults at home. My mother had gone to study at the Party School in Beijing. There was only an aunt at home who cooked for us every day. My father was in charge of publishing in the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee,¹⁷ so there were many books and comic books¹⁸ at home. They were all sent to him for review. There was no furniture in our living room. It was probably the same for all cadres' families at that time. It was very simple. The furniture was the most basic things provided by the government. Two long benches and a palm mat made a bed. The aunt took care of us children. During the winter and summer vacations, the floor of our house was full of children from various families. They all came to my house to read comic books. People often borrowed or took them away, so eventually there were no more.

I also played in the big yard and climbed trees. I was very good at climbing trees. There were many big camphor trees in the yard. The branches became thinner as I climbed up. But I could climb up along the thin branches until I reached the

top and stuck my head out from the leaves. No one cared about me at that time. I was like a wild child who was free to fend for myself, but I had a strong vitality. Once I broke my leg. It happened to be summer, and there was a swimming pool in the yard. I went to the swimming pool to wash it. But the wound rotted later. It was very deep. It took several days for my father to find it and take me to the infirmary to change the dressing. So I still have a deep scar. I was only in the second or third grade at that time, about nine years old.

Q: As you grow older, your memory of your father will be more profound, right?

A: When I was in elementary school, I really didn't have any impression of him. The deepest impression of him was when we celebrated our birthdays. He always attached great importance to our birthdays. On our birthdays, he would take us out to buy food and go to the Harbin Food Factory on Huaihai Road to buy chocolate. That was the happiest time. Another impression is when he went to Beijing for a meeting, because every time he came back from Beijing, he would always bring us shrimp cakes and fruit leather to eat. So, at that time, our impression of Beijing was shrimp cakes and fruit leather. In addition, when walnuts were on the market, he would also take us out to buy walnuts. That is, go to the store opposite my house to buy a big bag of walnuts, the kind with shells, and then the children in our family would use the door to crack the walnuts and eat them. Imagine such a high-end door, being used by us to crack walnuts. These memories seem to be related to food.

Q: You didn't live in Haige Building for a long time, did you? Were you going to transfer to another school?

A: Yes, we lived in Haige Building for more than a year. Later, it became the office building of the Municipal Party Committee, so we moved to Gaisikang Apartment, which is on Huaihai Road, opposite the Conservatory of Music. It is now called Huaihai Apartment. It is also where the families of the ministers of the Municipal Party Committee live, and Ruihua Apartment is where the families of the directors live.¹⁹ When I moved to Gaisikang, I had to transfer to another school. The original school was too far away, and we had to walk to school by ourselves in the morning. So in the fourth grade, I transferred back to the First Central Primary School of Xuhui District. Fortunately, the teachers there also started to speak Mandarin. My older sister and I were in the same

school, but she was also very independent and did not go to school with me. She had her friends, and I had my friends. We all walked with our classmates and managed ourselves. We were still very naughty. We would jump down from the building with an umbrella. We did all these things. I thought I was quite different at that time. The most memorable time for me was when I went to school with a white bow on my head, which was a Russian custom. My classmates asked me if someone in my family had died. I said no, so why did you say someone in my family had died? They asked me why I was wearing a white bow. I then learned that only people who had died in their family would wear white decorations on their heads. This left a deep impression on me. Our family's economic conditions were not bad at that time. My mother had a high salary and my father had royalties. Because our family's cloth coupons were all handed in, my mother liked to buy large Russian tablecloths as bed sheets. I also wore Russian embroidered clothes, which did not require cloth coupons. I wore very flowery clothes, which was also different from others, but I didn't care much about what others said about me.

Q: How did the teacher treat you?

A: The teacher probably thought I was different. When I was in the fourth grade, I was elected as a team member and a labour member. During the general cleaning, I had to follow the teacher to check. I don't know if it was because of my father. There is another strange thing that I still don't understand. I think the teacher deliberately gave me some difficult questions to solve. It was also when I was in the fourth grade, about eleven years old. The teacher gave me a meeting notice and asked me to go to the Youth Palace alone for a meeting. I didn't know the place at all, but I didn't dare not go. I took the meeting notice and couldn't ask my parents because I couldn't see my parents, so I went by myself. I took the tram, which clanged all the way. After searching and going around, I really found the Youth Palace. I went in and saw that it was full of adults. I didn't know what the meeting was about, and I couldn't understand what I was listening to. I didn't know what I should do, so I left. After I got out, I was lost in the direction, and I didn't know which bus to take or which direction to go. I only knew it was a tram, so I got on one. I rode for a while, and it got dark. The bus arrived at a place I didn't recognize at all. It was actually Shiliupu, which was a mess at that time. After I got off, I didn't know the way and had no money, so I had to call a tricycle. I said, "Uncle, take me to Huaihai Road." He took me to the Gaisikang Building. Now there is a high-end cloth-

ing store under that building, but it was a barber shop at that time. We usually get our hair cut there, so the people in the barber shop knew me. The shop was closed, so I went to the door to borrow money. The barber lent me fifty cents and asked me to pay the tricycle driver. After that, I quickly ran upstairs and knocked on the door. My father was at home that day and asked me why I came home so late and where I had been.

They hadn't noticed that I was not at home yet, and they hadn't thought of going out to look for me. After listening to my experience, he was shocked. He said, "The social order is really good. They didn't kidnap you." Hurry up and ask the aunt to return the money to the barber shop. The adults said that you are a very brave child. I really didn't panic at the time, and I wasn't afraid. Maybe I was really brave. Anyway, I came back in the end. Until now, people in my family often talk about it. I still don't understand why the school sent me there like this. But my parents didn't blame the school at the time.

Q: When you were in the fifth grade, the Great Leap Forward should have started, right?

A: Yes, when the Great Leap Forward just started, we still lived in Gaisikang Apartment, where we were smelting steel, eliminating the four pests, killing rats, and chasing away sparrows. I remember that we even went to the 12th floor of Gaisikang to beat gongs to chase away sparrows, and we wanted to tire them to death. I was still studying in the first half of the fifth grade at the No. 1 Central Primary School in Xuhui District, and in the second half, we moved to Dongmiao Village No. 2.²⁰ At that time, Ke Qingshi wanted cadres to get along with workers, so we all moved to Dongmiao Village No. 2. On this side were the city leaders, and on the other side were the workers' families. The so-called workers were actually grassroots cadres in the factory. At that time, a new primary school was built in Dongmiao Village No. 2. There were many children of cadres in the classes of this primary school.

Q: Did the children of workers and cadres get along well in Dongmiao School? Could you communicate?

A: Most of the kids I was close to were from intellectual and cadre families. The children of cadres are different from the children of workers. Classes were very lively, and the principal often stood at the door of the classroom. My father told

me to learn more from the children of workers and to make more friends with them. But there was a gap. For example, the families of cadres from the municipal party committee lived in two or three houses, and our family lived in two houses. The workers' families live in one house, and two or three families lived in one house. The Gaisikang apartment where we used to live had waxed floors, while the Dongmiao Village No. 2 had painted floors; the houses in Gasikang had cast iron bathtubs, while the Dongmiao had terrazzo bathtubs. In comparison, the houses in Dongmiao were so broken and simple. For the families of cadres, they used to have hot water supply, but now they had to boil water by themselves, and the hot water would cool down immediately when poured into the terrazzo bathtub. So, they felt that they had lowered their status. But for the workers, their homes were empty before, and moving here was like heaven. At this point, I felt that people's lives were so different. I wanted to get close to them, hoping to blend in, but the result was not necessarily what I wanted, and integration was still difficult.

Q: How long did you live in Dongmiao Village 2?

A: I lived there for a year. Later, Ke Qingshi's actions were criticized by Zhou Enlai, who asked if we were going to move out of Zhongnanhai. So, we all moved back to the city. This time, we moved to Aitang on Kangping Road.²¹ At that time, I was in the sixth grade of elementary school.

¹¹ On November 18, 1947, New Shimen Daily was launched, with Zhang Chunqiao as editor-in-chief. In January 1948, Shimen was renamed Shijiazhuang, and "New Shimen Daily" was renamed "Shijiazhuang Daily".

¹² See Zhang Chunqiao's letter to Weiwei, 12 December 1996.

¹³ Zhou Mansion is the former site of the Shanghai Office of the Communist Party of China, located at No. 73 Sinan Road, where Zhou Enlai lived and worked.

¹⁴ See Zhang Chunqiao's letter to Xiaomei, 22 November 1992.

¹⁵ Chen Yi (1901 – 1972) was a Chinese communist military commander and politician. He served as Mayor of Shanghai from 1949 to 1958 and as Foreign Minister of China from 1958 to 1972. He is one of Ten Marshals of the People's Republic of China. During the Cultural Revolution, Chen was one of the most vocal leaders in the February Countercur-

rent, which criticized the Cultural Revolution for creating social disorder and undermining China's leadership. As a result, he was required to request a leave of absence and undertake self-criticism, but he was never dismissed, so Zhou Enlai performed the duties of foreign minister in his place. After Lin Biao's death in 1971, he was restored to favour, although not to his former power. Mao Zedong attended Chen's funeral in 1972. This was Mao's last public appearance and his first appearance at anyone's funeral during the Cultural Revolution – Translator.

¹⁶ Pan Hannian (1906 – 1977) was a major figure in the Chinese Communist intelligence by the early 1930s, and worked for a time in Shanghai and Hong Kong. He took part in the Long March, and was made a Deputy Mayor of Shanghai in 1949. In 1955, he disclosed that he had been forced to meet with Japanese puppet Wang Jingwei, as a result of which he was imprisoned until his death in 1977 – Translator.

¹⁷ From 1955 to 1957, Zhang Chunqiao served as director of the Literary and Art Department of the Shanghai Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China and a member of the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee.

¹⁸ Not to be confused with Western comics, these were often illustrated stories of traditional novels and historical romances published in that format because for many centuries most Chinese were illiterate – Translator.

¹⁹ Ruihua Apartment is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Changshu Road and Yanqing Road.

²⁰ In 1958, Ke Qingshi, the first secretary of the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee, ordered the construction of Dong'an (Dongmiao) New Village in the southern suburbs, with the first village as a workers' residence and the second village as a cadre's residence. In 1959, Ke led all the leaders of the East China Bureau and the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee to move in. In 1960, Ke and others moved out and moved into the dormitory of the Kangping Road Municipal Party Committee.

²¹ Aitang Apartment, No. 165 Kangping Road, is the seat of the General Office of the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee.

Zhang Chunqiao In The Eyes Of His Daughter

III. Meeting Chairman Mao Twice

“At that time, I felt that he was a great man, so tall, his hands were so big, so warm, that was the feeling, excited, happy.”

Q: Which junior high school did you go to? How was your relationship with your father?

Answer: I went to No. 51 Middle School, also known as Weiyu Middle School, at Fuxing Road and Xiangyang Road, very close to my kindergarten. I lived at home during junior high school. My mother was very busy. After returning from the Party School, she went to the Municipal Party Committee Office to help leading cadres write articles. She was very busy and rarely took care of family affairs. During this period, I had more contact with my father and communicated a lot. We often talked about various topics. I would talk to my father about school. I felt that some of my classmates didn't like me. I couldn't figure it out, so I asked him: “Do some of your colleagues who work with you also dislike you?” He said of course, and he said to me: “Then you should check from two aspects. One is whether what they said is right. If they are right, then you should correct it. If they are wrong, then you can also demand more strictly of yourself because of it.” He told me that this is “correct it if there is any, and encourage it if there is none”, “the speaker is not guilty, but the listener should be warned”. These two sentences are also my standards for being a person in the future. No matter what others say about me in the future, I will try my best to “the speaker is not guilty, but the listener should be warned”. This is what my father taught me at that time.

I also realized that some of your things are impossible for others to understand, because they don't have that situation, don't have that existence, and can't have that consciousness, it must be like this. This is the materialistic way of thinking. So, in the future, with such ups and downs in life, I can be very open-minded

and I don't care. My open-mindedness is not what others say, that you need to rely on Zen or Buddhist scriptures to be open-minded. If you can understand the essence of things, you can let go. The essence is: why do you want others to understand you?

Cultural life was quite rich at that time. We often showed movies in our small auditorium, during holidays or weekends, so I watched many movies, and more than once. I also like reading very much. I read a lot of books at that time. I don't like classical novels such as "Romance of the Three Kingdoms" and "Investiture of the Gods". Apart from these novels, I like to read everything. There are a lot of books in our house because my father is in charge of publishing and has many books as gifts. Chinese works include "Red Sun", "Red Flag", "Song of Youth", etc. There are also a group of books by Russian writers, "Resurrection", "The Course of Suffering", Dostoyevsky's books, and American novels, "Sister Carrie", "Girl Jane", "Genius", and books about the early struggles of the bourgeoisie. I read them all. I especially like Maupassant's novels, such as "Thermae" and "Life". His books can still make me think and influence me, making me see life very clearly and indifferently. Speaking of the impermanence of life, Maupassant wrote so deeply. At that time, we also had all the literary journals at home, such as "People's Literature" and "Harvest", etc. I would read them word for word.

Q: Does your father also like reading? Do you often exchange your reading experience?

A: My father is very busy at work and he has no time to read novels. I will ask him what he thinks of the author or the book. I remember that when I got Ba Jin's "Fog, Rain, Lightning" trilogy, I was very excited because I admired Ba Jin very much. But after reading this trilogy, I was quite disappointed. I felt that the young people he wrote about did not take the road of revolution. So I said to my father that Ba Jin did not seem to be a proletarian revolutionary fighter. My father looked at me and could not say anything. Later, he introduced to me the meaning of the pen name Ba Jin.²² My father had a lot of contacts with Ba Jin at that time. Later, he really felt that Ba Jin was a representative of the bourgeoisie, and he later hated model operas.

Q: In a letter, your father patiently taught his grandson how to write a good composition.²³ Did your father teach you when you were in school?

A: Yes, my father would often talk to me about how to write a good composition. In school, everyone recognized that I wrote well, was very good at writing, and was very good at association. My composition was often used as a model by the teacher. But I don't like what my father wrote. Our junior high school Chinese textbook used the teaching reform textbook. Among them, there was an article by my father in the "Increase Reading" content, which was about the Eighth Company on Nanjing Road, an essay, which I didn't like.²⁴ I don't like essays, and I don't like Lu Xun's essays in the textbook. Like the human blood steamed bun in "Medicine", I felt uncomfortable when I read it. I was very attentive to reading. Later, as I grew older and gained more experience, I understood Lu Xun. People who have not experienced suffering will not understand.

Q: In addition to reading and watching movies, did you have other activities? Did your father take you out to play?

A: My father often took me to watch dramas. Watching dramas was his job. My father was in charge of a wide range of areas at that time. In addition to publishing, he was also in charge of literature and art. Therefore, he always had two tickets for the theatre. I don't like Peking Opera very much and I don't understand it, but I like watching dramas. I have watched the dramas rehearsed by the People's Art Theatre many times. Because they have to be reviewed again and again, my father always asked me to go with him.

It was also when I went to see a play that I met Chairman Mao. I was fourteen years old, in the second year of junior high school. They had just finished a meeting in Hangzhou, and Chairman Mao came to Shanghai to invite the leaders of the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee to watch a play. Many people brought their children to watch the Peking Opera "Fishing and Killing the Family". I sat in the row behind Chairman Mao, and Jiang Qing sat next to him. I couldn't understand what was being sung on the stage, and my eyes were fixed on Chairman Mao, who kept beating the drums with his hands on his legs.

After meeting Chairman Mao, I felt that I must join the League,²⁵ so I went to talk to the teacher and wrote a report to join the League. I also felt that I must work hard, study hard, be strict with myself, be a good student, and never whisper in class again. Soon, I joined the League, and I was wearing a red scarf and a League badge on my chest. I was very happy. At that time, I was really carefree.

Q: Did you enter Fudan High School in high school?

A: There was a movie called “Spark of Life” at that time, which was about the Xinjiang Construction Corps. After watching it, when I graduated from junior high school, I wanted to go to Xinjiang. I thought I couldn’t just talk and not do anything. I wanted to go to the frontier and go to a difficult place immediately. At that time, I probably had some rebellious thoughts about my family, I guess during adolescence. I didn’t listen to what my parents said, but I did listen to what my teachers said. My dad also said, “You kid, why don’t you listen to us, but only listen to what the teacher says? Don’t you know that the teacher also listens to us?” I was very dissatisfied in my heart. Why should the teacher listen to you?

I insisted on going to Xinjiang, and I didn’t listen to my parents’ persuasion. Later, the secretary of the Municipal Youth League Committee came to talk to me. He told me that you must first learn skills well before you can build the motherland. He said, you have to go to Xinjiang now, Xinjiang doesn’t want you yet. So, I gave up the idea of going to Xinjiang. Now think about it, I wanted to go to Xinjiang at that time, maybe because I wanted to get away from my family, didn’t want to live under the influence of my parents, and wanted to be myself.

I didn’t make it to Xinjiang, so when I was in high school, I was determined to live in the school and leave home. Fudan High School had just started to recruit students from outside, and I became one of the first students. Yang Xiguang lived next door to us, and he came to talk to me and told me, “Living in the school is very hard.”²⁶ I was secretly happy, because I wanted to go to a hard place. Fudan High School at that time was not like the current high school, and there was no playground. The current playground was a grassland at that time, with grass everywhere. We had to pull weeds and repair the playground, carry soil, lay soil, lay cinder bricks, and pull a big stone roller. It was all heavy physical work, so we built the big playground. My shoulders hurt so much, but I was very happy and felt very proud, which is something that children today cannot understand. We lived in an old barracks left by the Japanese, four people in a room, the room was very small, and there was room for two bunk beds. I consciously chose the upper bunk. It was a wooden bed with many bedbugs. I stayed in the high school for a total of five years, three of which were living in the school, and two years during the Cultural Revolution when I went home to

live. I went in 1963 and came out in 1968. When I was in the Affiliated High School, my homework was always good, and I didn't have to work too hard. In my senior year, I became the president of the Affiliated High School Student Union, and I had to take care of many things. I went home every Saturday, but it was always very late when I got home, and I usually didn't bring my schoolbag home. As soon as I got home, I would look for new books. Even when my eyes were tired in the middle of the night, I would still read. After lunch the next day, I went back to school to do my homework. At that time, I rarely met my parents and didn't communicate much.

Q: When you were in high school, the Cultural Revolution had already begun, right? Did you know that your father had joined the Central Cultural Revolution Group?

A: When the Cultural Revolution began, I was still in the Affiliated High School, in the third year of high school, 18 years old. At that time, I had already joined the Party. One day, we were looking at the big-character posters posted in the school, and a classmate suddenly shouted at me: "Look, look, there's your father, your father!" Only then did I see that the big-character poster said that my father was the deputy leader of the Central Cultural Revolution Group. I had no idea what was going on. That was also the first time I knew that my father was involved in the Central Cultural Revolution Group, but I didn't know the extent of his involvement. Later, Wang Lin, the party secretary of Fudan University, called me to his office and asked me what I knew. I said I really didn't know anything.

I know that my father helped with the model operas. I remember one time when I came home, I saw him borrow a phonograph and a black record, listening to it. He said he had to first understand the singing styles of Xipi and Erhuang. He also asked me, "Do you understand?" I said I didn't.

The piano I played was Western. There was also the criticism of "Hai Rui Dismissed from Office". I saw Chen Pixian and my father walking around in the yard, talking about something very mysterious. Later, they criticized "Hai Rui Dismissed from Office".²⁷

Q: How did you get involved in the Cultural Revolution? What was the story of going to Beijing to find your father?

A: After the Cultural Revolution began, the Red Guards student organization was established in Beijing. We also set up a combat team in school called the “Red Flag Company”, and the leaders were basically the children of military cadres. They started writing big-character posters and criticizing, and they all said that I was the instructor of the “Red Flag Company”. The teachers didn’t care about anything, and I had to take charge of many things in the school, including the parade to the Cultural Square, which was indeed organized by me. At night, I also had to organize classmates to work the night shift, guard the school, and patrol back and forth on the playground. Every day, I had to cook a big pot of soaked rice and make some pickled mustard for the students on duty at night.

In August 1966, my classmate Zhang ○○ in the attached middle school encouraged me to go to Beijing because Chairman Mao had just received the Red Guards at the Tiananmen Gate Tower in Beijing on August 18. Zhang ○○ was the son of Tao Yong, the commander of the East China Sea Fleet. His original name was Tao Zhu. Because he had the same name as the famous Tao Zhu, he changed his name to Zhang ○○. Tao Yong’s original surname was Zhang. One night, August 25 or 26, Zhang ○○ came to me at school and said, “Come to my house, let’s go to Beijing together.” At that time, all the boys liked to play with me. I was a bit like a tomboy, and no one treated me as a girl. At that time, I had never been to Beijing before, and I must be very happy to be able to go to Beijing. So, I went with him.

My dad was in Beijing at that time, but I didn’t know where he was. I didn’t contact my dad in advance, so I took a military plane with Zhang ○○ and flew from Shanghai. It was my first time to take a plane, and I didn’t expect it to be a military plane. There were not many people on the plane, and it flew low, so I could see the beautiful mountains and rivers of the motherland below. It was the first time I saw the beautiful mountains and rivers, and it was also my first time to go to Beijing, so I was very excited. After getting off at Nanyuan Airport, a military car took us to the Navy compound. I looked around and saw that the Navy compound was full of big-character posters. I secretly took a few glances and saw that the big-character posters said “Su Zhenhua drank the blood of soldiers”²⁸ and so on. I was really shocked. How could there be such big-character posters? At that time, the internal contradictions and struggles had already burned very fiercely. We outsiders had no idea what was going on. Zhang ○○ asked me if I knew where my father was. I really didn’t know. We stayed at the

home of a deputy commander or chief of staff of the Beijing Military Region, whose surname was Zhang. Anyway, we had nowhere to go and didn't know where to stay, so we went to his home.²⁹ His home was in an alley under the city wall next to Xizhimen. I remember that the car drove a long way. The alley was very deep and there was a large courtyard inside. His home was also very simple, a typical cadre family, and there were several jujube trees in the courtyard.

The next day, we said we would go to Tiananmen Square to take a look. Anyway, we didn't know where else to go. There was a reception station for the Central Cultural Revolution in Tiananmen Square, so we went up. The person in charge of the reception station saw a few children running over and asked us what we were doing. One of my classmates said, "She is from Shanghai. She is Zhang Chunqiao's daughter and is looking for her father." Of course, no one believed us, so they ignored us.

We went back to the Zhang family, but they looked at us strangely, and we couldn't stay there forever. I remembered that I knew Yang Yongzhi's daughter Yang ○○.³⁰

She was one year older than me and was studying at Beijing International Studies University at the time. I decided to go find her.

I didn't know if she was in school, but I still took the bus to No. 2 Foreign Language School by myself. I thought, I'll ask around when I get there. She was a rebel in the school, and she was quite famous, so I found her quickly. I asked her, "Do you have a way to find my father?" She said she seemed to have heard that the Cultural Revolution Working Group was staying at the State Guesthouse. There was a State Guesthouse on College Road, at the back door of the Aviation College. We went to the State Guesthouse and asked, "Is the Central Cultural Revolution Working Group here?" They looked at us and said, "What working group? How can there be one?" and sent us away. We were at our wits' end again, and Yang ○○ suddenly remembered that there was also a State Guesthouse at Diaoyutai. We took the bus to Baishiqiao, the north gate of Diaoyutai. When we got there, we said we were looking for the Central Cultural Revolution Group. They asked us who we were looking for, and I said, "Looking for Zhang Chunqiao. I'm from Shanghai, and I'm his daughter." I was chubby at that time, and I didn't look like him. They looked at us, didn't believe it, but they didn't dare not to believe it, so they simply ignored us. No one paid

attention to us, and we didn't leave, because we really had nowhere to go. We stayed there and waited for a long time. They looked at us and didn't think we were scammers, so someone came out and asked more specific questions.

Then the report was submitted. Of course, the report had to be submitted level by level, and each level had to decide whether to report it to the higher level. If the blame was passed down, it would be a loss of their official hat. After half an hour, they let me in. Yang ○○ couldn't go in, but I said she wanted to go in too, she and I were good friends, my father knew her, etc. I had to drag her in, but they were ruthless and didn't let her in. I could only say goodbye to her.

I went in from the north gate alone, and I couldn't figure out the direction. I came to a building. My father and his friends happened to come down to have snacks, and I saw him. My father asked, "Why are you here?" I told him what happened, and I felt that I was quite capable. He asked me if I had eaten, and I said no, I seemed to have not eaten for a few days. They made me food. He told me not to look for the children in the army anymore, and he already knew that the situation in the army was quite complicated. This time I listened to him and didn't go back to look for Zhang ○○ and his friends. I said I heard that Chairman Mao would meet with the Red Guards again on August 31, and I wanted to meet Chairman Mao. Dad said, "How could you go to Tiananmen Square?"

Q: Did you meet Chairman Mao this time?

A: When I met Chairman Mao in Shanghai when I was fourteen, I didn't shake his hand, which was very regretful.

At that time, I felt that it was not good to rely on my father to meet Chairman Mao. I always thought that it would be best if I could become a model worker and be received by Chairman Mao. I always hoped that there would be such a day. So, when Chairman Mao met the Red Guards, I was looking forward to going to the Tiananmen Tower and shaking his hand. But my father said that, and I was helpless. I knew that my father would definitely not take me up, and I didn't dare to have any hope. I knew that it was impossible to rely on my father. I could also go to the square with other people, but then I would definitely not be able to shake hands. On August 31, I went to the Tiananmen Gate Tower. At that time, Xie Fuzhi³¹ was the secretary of the Beijing Municipal Party Committee. Someone reported to him that Zhang Chunqiao's daughter had come from

Shanghai. He went to ask my father if it was true. My father said, "Yes, she has come and has found me." Xie Fuzhi took me to his place and had dinner at his house. He also said, "I specially added a dish because you are here today." His children were not at home, and his daughter was studying at Harbin Institute of Technology. He asked me to write a speech because Chairman Mao was going to meet the Red Guards for the second time. He asked me to speak on behalf of the Red Guards in Shanghai. I felt that I was not qualified to be the representative and I could not speak. I was quite sure of this. He said it was okay, and I said I absolutely could not. He said okay, I will take you to Tiananmen Square. He took me up, and I shook hands with Chairman Mao.

It was so exciting and happy. Many people surrounded him, all vying to shake his hand. There was no time to say anything more, but I still told Chairman Mao that I was from Shanghai.

At that time, I felt that he was a great man, so tall, his hands were so big, so warm, that was the feeling, excited, happy. When I shook hands with Chairman Mao on the tower, my father was there too, and he saw me. I also saw Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, and Tao Zhu.

I met Chairman Mao, shook his hand, and my father didn't have time to take care of me anyway, so I prepared to go back to Shanghai. At that time, you didn't need a ticket to take the train, but the train was very crowded, and I almost stood all the way back to Shanghai.

Q: Did you think your father was a big shot at that time?

A: I never thought about it that way. My father was just a staff member. He was on the Tiananmen Gate Tower, but his identity was a staff member. I didn't think he was a big shot at all. Dad is just Dad. I never thought he was anything special.

²² Ba Jin's original name was Li Fugan, and when he was young, he admired the Russian anarchists Bakunin and Kropotkin, and took one word from each of them as a pen name.

²³ See Zhang Chunqiao's letter to his second grandson, 22 July 1992.

²⁴ That is, “Praise “Nanjing Road Good Eight Companies”, which was later included in Zhang Chunqiao’s anthology “Longhua Collection”.

²⁵ The Communist Youth League was a mass organisation for young people aged 14-28 – Translator.

²⁶ Yang Xiguang, then Secretary of the Party Committee of Fudan University.

²⁷ Chen Pixian, then first secretary of the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee and secretary of the Secretariat of the East China Bureau.

²⁸ Su Zhenhua (1912 - 1979), was a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, the first secretary of the Shanghai Municipal CPC Committee, the secretary of the Guizhou Provincial CPC Committee, and the first political commissar of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army Navy. During the “Cultural Revolution”, Su Zhenhua was declared a “three-anti element” and “Deng Xiaoping’s time bomb in the navy”. In May 1972, Su Zhenhua returned to serve as the first deputy commander of the Navy, and in March 1973, he was reappointed as the first political commissar of the Navy. After the smashing of the Gang of Four, he became the main supporter of Hua Guofeng within the armed forces. In August 1977, he was elected as a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee. He died suddenly in Beijing on February 7, 1979 – Translator.

²⁹ The “surname Zhang” is Tao Yong’s subordinate Zhang Yunlong, deputy chief of staff and deputy commander of the Beijing Military Region.

³⁰ Yang Yongzhi, then head of the Propaganda Department of the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee.

³¹ Xie Fuzhi (1909 –1972) was a Chinese Communist Party military commander, political commissar, and national security specialist. He was Minister of Public Security from 1959 to 1972. He was a member of the Cultural Revolution Group, and in 1967 was elected Chair of the Beijing Revolutionary Committee. Following the Wuhan Incident in July 1967, when he was detained by a right-wing Red Guard organisation, he returned to Beijing and distributed arms to left-wing Red Guard factions, including the supply of 500 rifles to the Jinggangshan Commune of Beijing’s Teacher’s University. After the smashing of the Gang of Four in 1976, the revisionists declared him posthumously to be an “anti-Party element” and had his ashes removed from the Babaoshan Revolutionary Cemetery – Translator.

Zhang Chunqiao In The Eyes Of His Daughter

IV. Kangping Road Incident

“How did the relationship between my father and the Shanghai Municipal Committee break down? Who abandoned whom first? How did the team selection work? In fact, it was the Shanghai Municipal Committee that threw us out.”

Q: What happened after you came back from Beijing? In September 1966, the Shanghai Red Guard Headquarters was established, right?

A: In early September, I returned to Shanghai from Beijing. I should have graduated from high school. I graduated in 1966. At that time, Shanghai had already begun to be in chaos, and many students from Beijing came to make trouble. There were huge crowds of people at the gate of No. 33 Yan'an West Road.

One day, Wei ○○, the son of Wei Wenbo, the secretary of the East China Bureau, suddenly came to me and said to me: “Zhang Weiwei, we are going to establish the Shanghai Red Guard Headquarters. I have looked around the school and your Red Flag Company is the purest. It best meets our requirements, so we want you to join.”

Wei ○○ and I were classmates in Dongmiao Village No. 2 Primary School, and later we went to Fudan High School. We didn't talk much when we met in school. He suddenly came to me and scared me. He said that Shanghai was going to establish a Red Guard organization and asked me to go, so I went with him to the building at No. 200 Renmin Avenue.³²

Most of the members of the Shanghai Red Guards Preparatory Group were children of cadres from Nanyang Model Middle School, including Liao ○, son of Liao Zhengguo, commander of the Shanghai Garrison District, Han ○○, son of Han Zheyi, secretary of the East China Bureau, and Wei ○○, son of Wei Wenbo. They were the main ones. Then they found students from Fudan High

School, Shanghai High School, Jiaotong University High School, Songjiang No. 2 Middle School, etc. to participate.

Everyone lived in a relatively concentrated area, and they were all children of cadres living in Lane 265 and Lane 100 of Kangping Road. People from Fudan High School wanted to make me the political commissar of the “Shanghai Red Guards Headquarters” because I was a party member. But there were many people who wanted to be the political commissar among these people. I didn’t want to be the political commissar. I just went there to watch the excitement.

The Shanghai Garrison District supported the preparation of the Red Guards and gave them several motorcycles. The coolest time was when I went to Xinzhuang. Xinzhuang established the Red Guards Headquarters, and I sat in the pocket of the motorcycle. That was the only time I rode a motorcycle and drove there to attend a meeting. There was a canteen for meals, and the security personnel in the garrison area helped you serve rice and dishes.

Zhang ○○ also participated and held a position in the Red Guard headquarters. Then there were fights in society, such as destroying the four olds and cutting trouser legs. The Public Security Bureau gave Zhang ○○ a list and asked him to take people to search houses, and I went with him. So, I was ordered to search houses. The people on the list were all in garden houses³³, and the Public Security Bureau asked us to check whether they had guns or radios. So, I went to these people’s houses to search boxes and cabinets, smash walls and tiles. I really did it, but it was only that one time, and the Public Security Bureau asked us to go. How did we know what to destroy of the four olds?³⁴ We did find a KMT letter of appointment behind a family’s photo frame.

One night, a group of Red Guards pulled a man in from outside and beat someone downstairs, so I ran downstairs to see. I only heard that the man was a hooligan and someone was beating him. That night when I returned home, or maybe it was the next morning, my father called from Beijing and asked “Did you beat someone in Shanghai?” Someone had already gone to complain that I beat someone in Shanghai. I said, “No, I saw them beating people, how could I beat someone myself?” “Get out of here!” He said sternly. I realized that the matter was quite serious, and the next morning, I told them that I wanted to quit. It was probably the night I quit the party. Liang ○○, the daughter of Liang Guobin, the municipal party secretary, was also there. She was from Nanyang

Model Middle School. She went home with me. Our homes were very close. In the evening, Liang ○○ said that her father wanted to see me, so I followed her to see Liang Guobin. He asked, "What did your father tell you? Why didn't you join the Red Guards?" I said that they said I beat people, but I didn't, so my father asked me to quit.

Q: Your father wanted you to withdraw and didn't want you to continue to join the Red Guards. Was he trying to protect you?

A: He probably wanted to protect me, but the most important thing was that he didn't want me to cause trouble for the Central Cultural Revolution Group and Chairman Mao.

After I withdrew, Wei ○○ also withdrew. At that time, the big linking-up³⁵ had already begun, so we went together. We wore red armbands and went to the train station. Anyway, we didn't need tickets, so we went to whichever train was empty. The first time we went out to link-up, there was a girl from the Fuzhou Military Region, a girl from Shanghai Middle School, and two boys. There were six of us in total. We went to Fuzhou together, and then to Guilin. We didn't have any money, but we didn't have to pay for food and transportation anywhere. We just went to play, and also went to the university to read the big-character posters. We wandered around for two weeks and then returned to Shanghai.

After the first reaction to the link-up, I returned to school and the rebels came to talk to me, saying that I was a free-spirited person and why didn't I actively participate in the revolution. I thought we had a good talk and we even shook hands after the talk. But when I went out, I saw a big-character poster about me. It was really strange. I couldn't figure out what I said was wrong. So, I didn't want to go to school anymore. When I got home, there were still many books at home, so I read them by myself and really felt that I was free and happy. Dad didn't care that there were fewer books given away after the publication, but he used his own royalties to buy many books. At that time, I read the complete works of Shen Yanbing,³⁶ as well as books like "Red Flag Flying" and "Sparks Spreading Across the Prairie".

Around October, the group of us who had gone out together went out for the second time to join the movement. We first went to Hangzhou and stayed at the

home of the Propaganda Minister of the Zhejiang Provincial Party Committee. His children had all left, and the house was empty. After we stayed at his house for two days, they took us to Yunxi. I went to Yunxi a while ago and saw that it was different. At that time, it was just a forest and mountain. There was a production team of the army there, growing tea and other things. There was also half a cave there. We lived in it, helped them write Chairman Mao's quotations, and then played in the mountains. After living there for a week, they took us to Qiaosi Farm, which was a labor reform farm. The labor reform prisoners had all been transferred to Jinhua. The entire labor reform farm was empty, except for a few people who stayed behind, and there were a few stray dogs. We went to grow broad beans and bought a bundle of sugar cane for 28 cents. I remember very clearly that every day I was there, chewing sugar cane, shaking, growing broad beans, and watching stray dogs. The people who stayed behind hung up the dogs and beat them to death, and roasted the dog meat for food, but we didn't eat the dog meat. Meals were one cent per bowl of vegetables. A month passed like this. One day, they suddenly said, "You can go back." A car came to take us back to Hangzhou, and we were put on a train back to Shanghai. This was very strange and bizarre.

Q: You were in the mountains for that month, and the Anting Incident must have happened outside, right?

A: Yes, it was after the Anting Incident happened,³⁷ when we came back from Qiaosi, it should have been close to the end of 1966. After leaving Laobei Station, I saw two banners on the house opposite, hanging from the roof to the ground, with Zhang Chunqiao and Wei Wenbo written on them.

Q: Did you talk to your father about this later? What did he say?

A: I talked to my father about this. But he never made any comments. I also told this to many people, but no one wrote about this. Later, when I was locked up, I was asked to write about things related to the January Revolution and how I experienced the first Kangping Road Incident. I definitely wrote about this. But no one paid attention to this incident.

After leaving the train station, Wei ○○ said goodbye to me. I went home by myself. I was a little surprised. Logically, he should have gone with me because we lived in the same compound. I was very familiar with the road from the train

station to my home because I took this road home from Fudan High School. At that time, my father was of course not at home. My mother was in the Four Cleanups Work Team of Jiangnan Shipyard and lived in the factory and did not come back. My two younger sisters went out to join the movement. My younger brother had just started elementary school and played with a bunch of kids all day, so he was not at home either. Only my grandparents and aunt were at home. When I returned home, they told me who had come to join the movement. Just like I went to join the movement to join others, someone also came to join my family. My family also provided big pot dishes and big pot meals for other children, just like I was at someone else's house. I felt very sorry because I did not meet many old classmates and good friends.

At that time, I really felt that the yard was empty and no one came to see me. But because each household did not visit each other at that time, I did not pay much attention to the changes in the neighbours' homes. I also went back to Fudan High School once. Seeing that I was back at school, the rebels held an urgent criticism meeting and criticized me. They said that I was a Communist Party member, but I was escaping the revolution, a free-spirited person, and a die-hard conservative. They also said that I went to Guangzhou with Liu Shaoqi's daughter, etc. I had never been to Guangzhou at that time. I only went with my husband once two years ago when he went to a meeting. I knew in my heart that I could not participate, but I could not tell others about it.

Q: Did you defend yourself during the struggle session?

A: What did you want to defend? I was not allowed to defend myself. So I could only keep silent. Actually, I felt very uncomfortable. These rebels were mainly children of workers. They scolded me so much, which made me most uncomfortable. Because I had helped them before, and I always wanted to be friends with them. So I said that I could not integrate with the workers. Later, I reflected on whether my help to them at that time also hurt their self-esteem. For example, I gave them draft books and exercise books, let them use my ink, and use the money they saved to buy stationery in the store to give to their classmates. By doing this, I might have hurt their self-esteem, because they felt that we always have it, and it is not strange to give it to them. But they don't know that this is also the money I saved from my 15 yuan living expenses. After being criticized that day, I walked home. Then the Kangping Road incident came.

Q: Can you describe your memory of the Kangping Road incident in detail?³⁸

A: It was around the end of December 1966. Suddenly one day, red flags were flying downstairs and many people came to Kangping Road. I hurried downstairs. At that time, I didn't know that all the houses were empty. I saw that they were all Red Guards, holding flags, from this factory and that factory. They filled the building opposite where the ministers lived. I saw that no one lived in that building. There was another building next to them where they worked, which was also filled with red flags. The people who used to work there were gone. At that time, I noticed that there was no one in our building, upstairs or downstairs. Only our family and Ke Qingshi's family were still there. Ke had passed away at that time. The Red Guards came to ask me, "Who lives in your house?" I told them. They asked me who else lived upstairs and downstairs, and I told them which house was Cao Diqu's,³⁹ Wei Wenbo's, Ke Qingshi's, Chen Pixian's, and who else lived downstairs next to us. I was very surprised that all these houses were empty. They sent two people to guard Ke Qingshi's house and not disturb them.

Our house was open to the public, with many people coming in and out, taking a look, looking for my dad, and even looking under the bed to see if he was there. We didn't have much stuff in the house, and no one would take books. My grandparents were very scared and locked themselves in the room. I was socializing with the Red Guards outside, boiling water for them to drink, and chatting with them. I asked the Red Guards why they came to Kangping Road, and they said they were a revolutionary mass organization, and told me that Cao Diqu had asked them to meet at three o'clock in the afternoon. Cao Diqu was not there, and no one came out to meet them, so I was there to meet them. Later, thinking about it, it was obvious that Cao Diqu had instigated this matter. Later, someone called and asked if our house had been searched. In a broad sense, it should be a search and find and confiscation of property.

Q: Between 1967 and 1968, there were two large-scale attacks on Zhang Chunqiao by college and high school students in Shanghai, and many people were punished afterwards. What did your father think of this incident later?

A: Regarding the incidents after the two attacks on Zhang Chunqiao by college and high school students in Shanghai, my father clearly said not to arrest anyone, not to investigate, and not to pursue. However, it is hard to say whether

the mass organizations had any actions or done anything to each other, and it may be inevitable. But as far as I know, the Red Guards who were arrested for the attacks were released quickly after my father found out.

Therefore, I did not ask him about this matter later, because in my mind, no one was arrested.

³² That is, the office building of the Standing Committee of the Municipal People's Congress, which is now the People's Building, the seat of the Shanghai Municipal Government.

³³ Garden house: In Shanghai, the Garden House used to refer to a detached bungalow or a two- or three-story building with a garden lawn and garage. Each garden house was equipped with a garden, and this foreign architectural style residence is called a garden house – Translator.

³⁴ The Four Olds were 'old ideas', 'old culture', 'old customs', and 'old habits'.

³⁵ Between September 1966 and march 1967, students were encouraged to go to Beijing and other places to "link-up" with each other, share experiences and promote the Cultural Revolution. All train fares for "linkingup" were free, and food and accommodation were provided – Translator.

³⁶ Shen Yanbing is the writer Mao Dun.

³⁷ As the Cultural Revolution unfolded in Shanghai, tensions arose between the Headquarters of the Revolutionary Revolt of Shanghai Workers, led by Wang Hongwen, a textile worker, and the Municipal party Committee led by Chen Pixian. In November, the Headquarters demanded the removal of the old Municipal Committee which led to a three-day siege at Anting. Zhang Chunqiao was sent back to Shanghai by Mao and successfully negotiated an end to the siege based on a recognition of the Headquarters group. In January, 1967, revolutionary workers and students led by Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wenyuan and Wang Hongwen overthrew the Shanghai Municipal Committee of Chen Pixian, Wei Wenbo and Cao Diqu, and established the Shanghai People's Commune on 5 February 1967. Mao warned against the use of the term "People's Commune" for such a large city and it was renamed the Shanghai Revolutionary Committee – Translator.

³⁸ The Kangping Road Incident was a large-scale armed struggle between the Shanghai General Administration of Industry and the Red Guards at the end of 1966.

³⁹ Cao Diqu, then mayor of Shanghai.

Zhang Chunqiao In The Eyes Of His Daughter

V. The Middle And Late Period Of The Cultural Revolution

“If you are killed, what should we do?”

“I don’t know. Who told you that you are Zhang Chunqiao’s daughter?”

Q: After you lived with your fourth uncle in Beijing for a while, did you start working when you returned to Shanghai?

A: The resumption of classes and the revolution had nothing to do with us, because we had already graduated. We were first sent to the Port Authority Material Supply Company to work for half a year. We went to the Shanghai Port District 7 Supply Station, which was near Bailianjing in Tangqiao. When the stationmaster came to select students, he knew that I was Zhang Chunqiao’s daughter, so he selected me. The stationmaster told me that because he thought their position was the most difficult, it was on the dock, and he wanted to see if Zhang Chunqiao’s daughter could endure hardship. When we got there, we were assigned work every day, working as a porter on a small three-wheel truck or a ten-wheel truck. It was all heavy physical work, transporting cement, yellow sand, steel bars, steel plates and other items needed at the dock. After working for half a year, I learned to drive a truck. I learned to drive from a driver who had been demobilized from the army. He drove very hard. I once drove a three-wheel truck on Pudong Avenue, and once I didn’t know how to brake and almost rushed into the Huangpu River. My classmates were assigned to different material supply stations, and some even followed the ships on the Huangpu River. This experience made me know Shanghai better.

After working like this for half a year, I was officially assigned a job. Xu Shiyu⁴⁰ once asked me to join the army, but I felt that I was not suitable for the army. I was quite liberal and had my own opinions. I would never obey the orders of the

squad leader or platoon leader and would not listen to their orders. Moreover, I was nearsighted. If there was an emergency call, I would make a fool of myself. Therefore, I did not want to join the army. Moreover, my older sister wanted to join the army. The Nanjing Military Region was recruiting female soldiers in Xuhui District, so she went there with Ke Qingshi's second daughter. I did not want to go to the countryside either, because when I was in the attached middle school, we would go to Luodian⁴¹ to work, and stay there for three weeks. When I was in the first year of high school, my parents arranged for me to work in a factory for a month, installing radios. The simple and repetitive work allowed me to understand the life of the workers. Therefore, I really wanted to work in a factory. When the job was assigned, my father was not in Shanghai, and my mother did not care about us. I did not want the school to assign me a job, because I would leave my classmates and I did not want to stay in Shanghai. I called people to find connections. I called Wang Hongwen, and he arranged for me to work in the Shanghai Instrument Factory. This factory had a cooperative mission with the Third Front. At that time, they had a branch factory in Guizhou. After the workers completed their three-year apprenticeship training, they would be sent to work in Guizhou.

I thought it was a good idea, because I really didn't want to stay in Shanghai.

Q: Why did you have to leave Shanghai?

A: Because I felt that everyone in Shanghai knew me, and wherever I went, people would think I was someone's daughter. I didn't want to be tied to my family all the time. I wanted to leave and go to a place where no one knew me. So when I started working in the factory, I changed my name to Li Qun, the "qun" in "masses". I wanted to become an ordinary member of the masses. I thought that I could hide my identity and no one would know who my father was. How naive. I tried to keep a low profile and restrain myself. I was really cautious because I knew everyone was staring at me. I never took sick leave and never missed work. Pregnant women can go home early, but when I was pregnant, I never went home early. Even so, everyone would still stare at you and find fault with you. I worked in this factory for eight years until something happened.

Q: You worked in a factory, so you should have paid attention to the political events going on outside, right?

A: At that time, everyone was very concerned about national affairs, and there were political studies every day. Apprentices could live in the factory, so I lived in the factory in my first year and did not go home. Later, the female worker in my dormitory got married, so I gave my dormitory to her and her husband, and I went home every day. I was kind enough to help her, but other people in the dormitory blamed me for letting men live in the female workers' dormitory, so I simply gave up the dormitory, and as a result, my husband who shared the dormitory with me could not move in, and the couple was particularly enthusiastic when they criticized me later.

At that time, my father was often in Shanghai, and I had more contact and communication with him. When he lived on Xingguo Road, I would sometimes go there on Saturdays. He would have supper every night, and I would get up, and we could talk for a while, chatting about this and that. He and I could discuss all kinds of things. Then he would say, "Okay, okay, you go to bed, I'm going to start working." Then he would start writing until the next morning. He usually started working in the afternoon, went to bed in the morning, and got up at noon. His work and rest time actually followed the Premier, who always went to bed in the morning and got up at noon. And my father had been working in a newspaper, so he was also used to this work and rest time. Chairman Mao would sleep when he wanted to sleep and get up when he wanted to, without any rules, which confused others.

But we knew nothing about their power. We didn't read their documents. Of course, we would occasionally see the big headlines. What I remember most clearly is the Lin Biao incident. At first, we didn't know what happened in detail. Later, I recalled it. My younger sister was in the Fourth Air Force, and she was under surveillance. I was in the 22nd Institute of the Aerospace Administration, participating in the three-in-one combination, and was seconded from the Instrument Factory. I worked with them on the autopilot of the Hongqi-4 missile. When I participated in scientific research activities, there was a military representative, a person from the Fourth Air Force. He talked to me, stared at me, and asked me why my eyes were yellow. It was funny, as if he wanted to understand my characteristics. In fact, he came to identify me, and if something happened, he would arrest me. After the Lin Biao incident, I said to my father: "Next time if you have any problems, you have to tell us something, otherwise we will die without knowing how we died." My father didn't say anything.

Q: Your father didn't tell you about these things, was it to protect you?

A: That's their discipline, they shouldn't tell their children. Now some people, their wives and children write memoirs, and they say it in a very clear way, as if they know everything, which should be impossible, or their husbands and fathers violated the organizational principles and told them things they shouldn't say. I really don't know a lot of things. I also know a lot of things from the Internet, but what is said on the Internet is not necessarily correct.

Q: At that time, it was time for you to get married. Did your parents have any suggestions?

A: My father wrote a letter to me and my older sister about our relationship, asking us to decide for ourselves, to have freedom of marriage, without parental interference. His advice to us was that it would be best to find someone from a working-class family. I didn't want to find someone who was a cadre's child. There is a sense of intimacy between cadres' children, the kind of intimacy between brothers and sisters, who know each other very well and have similar strengths and weaknesses. My mother asked me to find a worker, but I said that it would definitely not work because the educational level was too different and we wouldn't have a common language. Later, I met my husband, who is a doctor with his own expertise and a very studious person. But there were many things that we couldn't communicate with each other. Of course, I accepted these things and didn't communicate if we couldn't communicate. For example, he didn't read novels. At the beginning, I wanted to cultivate his interest in reading and bought him comic books like "Dream of Red Mansions". But he fell asleep after reading three pages. He is a doctor and his work is very tiring. How could he have the leisure to read such things? He has his business. I talked to him about reading, but he didn't know anything, so we stopped communicating. He liked to watch me knitting and making clothes for children, and thought that I was wasting my time reading. Also, I am from the north, and he is from the south, a Shanghai man. I watch crosstalk, but he wants to listen to comedy, Yue opera, and Shanghai opera, so I also developed an interest in this area. Also, when it comes to food, when we first got married, we ate dumplings at home, but he really didn't want to eat them, and he asked my mother if she had soaked rice.

Q: During the 10th National Congress in 1973, your father became a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee. Later, he divorced your mother and he never returned to Shanghai. Have you ever seen him in Beijing?

A: I have been to Beijing several times, all on business trips, never on my own. Our instrument factory provides instruments for satellite launches, and I often go to Beijing on business trips. I usually live where I work, and I will go to accompany my father on Sundays, or stay for two more days after my colleagues leave after work. My father never tells anything about the central government because he has organizational discipline.

There is one incident that left a deep impression on me. My habit was to look for books everywhere. One Sunday, I went to see him and found a memoir of Zhang Guotao⁴² at his place. This was incredible. I was very interested in this book and wanted to read it. So I took it to read. I stayed in a standard room in the adjacent annex building. Of course, I didn't dare to take the book out. When I went back to work on Monday, I left the book next to my pillow in the room. A week later, when I came back, the book was gone. I looked for the book everywhere, but my father didn't say a word. I was afraid that the book was lost, so I asked him if he had seen the book. He said nothing, not a word. It was not until he was about to die that he told me: "The Premier sent someone to take the book back." I asked him why, and he was speechless again. I told him that I had been worried that I had lost the book, which made me feel guilty for so many years. The book might have been published in Hong Kong, or they might have published a few copies internally, and I didn't know who distributed them. Later, the Premier found out and took them all back.

Later, I tried my best to recall that Zhang Guotao⁴³ was so capable and able to speak and write when he was young. I especially wanted to know whether the last secret telegram existed. During the Long March, Ye Jianying said that he hijacked a telegram saying that Zhang Guotao was going to take action against Mao. Whether that telegram existed or not, I always wanted to know what Zhang Guotao himself said about this matter. Regarding this matter, I haven't seen the answer yet, and the book was taken away. So, I still don't know the answer. Until now, I haven't found the definite answer. Until now I haven't found a definite answer, and of course some people say that he didn't send that telegram at all, including Li Xiannian, who said no, and isn't that Ye Jianying's business

again.⁴⁴ There are too many things like this about Ye Jianying. At that time, my father was in Beijing and rarely went out. He didn't want to go out because he said it was too time-consuming and costly, and every time he went out, he had to mobilize a lot of people. The Politburo Standing Committee members were like this. Once, the guard asked me to mobilize my father to go out for a walk because he was locked up all day. I told him, and he agreed to go to Yuquan Mountain. After we got there, he said to me: "Look at that mountain, there are guards everywhere. As soon as I move, there are so many guards." I said I also wanted to go to Lugou Bridge.⁴⁵ He said: "Do you really want to go? Forget it."

Q: In 1976, Zhou Enlai, Zhu De, and Mao Zedong died one after another, and China's political landscape was bound to change. When your father talked about his own health in a later letter home, he mentioned that he participated in the medical team of three elderly people, right?⁴⁶

A: Yes, my father was in charge of the medical team for Premier Zhou and Chairman Mao. I don't remember clearly whether there was another medical team for Kang Sheng. My father was very dedicated to their treatment. For Zhou Enlai, I admired him very much, just like all Chinese people. I also loved him very much. It's true. On the day Zhou Enlai died, I heard the news after I arrived at the factory. I immediately rode my bicycle back home and changed my scarf. I usually wear a red scarf because I ride a bicycle to and from work, and that scarf is thick. So, many people say that no one wore red during the Cultural Revolution, which is not true. I went home and changed to a scarf with a blue background and black stripes. That scarf was very thin, so I took a white nylon scarf to line it. After we were arrested, a group of people from Beijing came and said we were against the prime minister. I said it was absolutely impossible. I didn't understand why they said we were against the prime minister. They insisted that we were against the prime minister, which made me think more.

Many years later, our former party secretary came to see me and told me that one of my crimes was that I was against the prime minister and did not attend the memorial service. He also defended me, saying that there were photos of me attending the memorial service, wearing a blue scarf, and colour photos were just beginning to be available at that time.

Q: What was the matter with criticizing the Premier at that time?

A: When I heard that there was really such a thing as criticizing the Premier, I was also shocked. I asked my father. He said that Ping-Pong Diplomacy opened the door to Sino-US dialogue and dealt with the Americans. After Kissinger came, it seemed that he wanted to establish a hotline. The Premier's handling of the situation at that time caused Chairman Mao's concern. Chairman Mao said: "When fighting, we must guard against the left, and when negotiating, we must guard against the right." What he meant was that when fighting, we must not overthrow everything, and when negotiating, we must not lose our vigilance and must not forget that "the intention to destroy us will never die." Chairman Mao said: "Are there not enough such lessons in the history of our party?" During the first cooperation between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party, Chen Duxiu gave up his autonomy and listened to Chiang Kai-shek in everything, which eventually led to the "April 12" massacre, with rivers of blood. During the second cooperation between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party, Chairman Mao went to Chongqing for negotiations. Liu Shaoqi presided over the work and proposed "listen to the central government." Chairman Mao said: "I have told him (the Premier) so many times, why did he still make such a mistake?" This is what my father said to me later, which is his understanding of Chairman Mao. Because Premier Zhou had a high prestige among the people, he was busy with many things, presided over all the big and small things of the country, and his image was deeply rooted in the hearts of the people. Because of this, the Premier's slight deviation in thinking would have a huge impact. Chairman Mao was too perceptive. He was old and seriously ill, but he was still so worried about the fate of the country. He was highly responsible to the Chinese people. Therefore, Chairman Mao held a criticism meeting for the Premier.⁴⁷

I have read some other details online and have asked some people who are familiar with the situation. Someone told me that it was my father who stopped the criticism of the Premier early. He said that the Premier was not in good health and asked him to go back and rest. It was heartbreaking that this incident turned into the "April 5th Incident" in 1976.⁴⁸ I think that if everyone can correctly understand Chairman Mao and see the essence of the matter, then we will be more confident and clear-headed in the subsequent struggle with the international capital giants, and the interests of the people will be better protected.

Q: How did the "April 5th Incident" develop later?

A: After the “April 5th Incident”, I went to Beijing once, and my father showed me many big-character posters written by others, some of which were against Chairman Mao. This was unexpected, and the spearhead was not only directed at the Gang of Four. They crossed the line, so they were caught by Mao and turned against him. At that time, of course, we didn’t know that it was Deng who was behind the “April 5th Incident”, even my father didn’t know.⁴⁹ When I went to Beijing, Chairman Mao had already spoken, and the whole incident had been turned around. So this matter was over.

Q: Your father later became a member of the Politburo Standing Committee and a vice premier. In terms of his political career, he was able to rise to prominence. Weren’t you happy for him?

A: My father moved up step by step, becoming a member of the Politburo and then a member of the Politburo Standing Committee. I didn’t feel relaxed or happy at all. Because he became the target of public criticism, what was there to be happy about? He himself was not happy either. During the February Countercurrent, those old marshals scolded him like a grandson. Who looked up to him? It wasn’t that he looked down on himself, but those people looked down on him. Those people didn’t dare to scold Chairman Mao, so they all scolded him. And he was made like that by Lin Biao.

In 1975, Chairman Mao insisted on appointing him as the Director of the General Political Department of the People’s Liberation Army. I said to my father: “Chairman Mao insisted on giving you the job of the Director of the General Political Department, which shows that he trusts you. You go and do it.” He said: “Who will listen to me if I speak?” Of course, Chairman Mao appointed him, and he had to do it. After the appointment, he went to the army to speak, he made reports, he talked to this and that, but no one did what he said. Instead, he aroused jealousy, saying that he had reached out to the army again, and some people said that they should “cut off the claws of the devil.” My father knew that he would not have a good ending. When the power of the Politburo members was seized at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, when the members of the Central Cultural Revolution Group became political figures, he should have felt it. Chairman Mao said to them, you have seized power, and took a photo together. Chairman Mao once again emphasized the five things not to be afraid of, such as “not being afraid of losing your head.”⁵⁰

Q: Did he know that he was in a dangerous situation?

A: Dad was also very vigilant. For example, when he left the room and came back, he would not drink the water in the cup and would change it. He was definitely on guard against something, but he never said who he was on guard against. I think he was probably on guard against Wang Dongxing. Of course, I saw many things on the Internet later, and I don't know whether they were true or false. After the Second Plenary Session of the Ninth Central Committee, Chairman Mao was unwilling to replace Wang Dongxing, saying that he was used to him. Therefore, the facts were not what Wang Dongxing said later. Our classmates later asked me: "Whose words are the most untrustworthy?" I said it must be Wang Dongxing, because he burned things. Now I have seen the materials saying that Deng Yingchao and Wang Dongxing burned the materials, and Chairman Mao asked them to do so.

But they didn't burn it when Chairman Mao asked them to. If they burned it later, wouldn't that be destroying evidence?

My father once said to me: "Look, my safe is empty. Whatever documents come in, I read them, circle what I should circle, and take it away. I don't keep anything here."

He was ready to be arrested at any time. We also discussed how he got arrested and he said, 'It's very simple, they just had a meeting. They asked me to go to a meeting and I couldn't not go.' And then that's really how they operated, so I wasn't surprised at all.

Q: Do you remember the last time you saw your father before he was arrested?

A: It was in the summer of 1976. I went to Beijing on a business trip and went to see him. We discussed some issues. The issues we discussed included the working class and how China would develop in the future. Zhou Enlai and Zhu De had both passed away, and Mao was seriously ill. We discussed a lot of issues. And I asked him, 'What will you do?' He said, 'What do I do? Death by a thousand cuts.' I thought he had said that himself, but later I realised that someone else had said that he would be cut to pieces, and he was repeating what they had said. He said, 'It doesn't matter if I get another cut. Chairman Mao has said that there were five things communists should not fear.' The "five

things not to fear” are not to fear divorce, not to fear being expelled from the party, not to fear losing one’s head, not to fear being imprisoned, not to fear being dismissed from office, etc. He said that, so I asked him, “If you are cut into pieces, what will we do?” He said, “I don’t know. You are Zhang Chunqiao’s daughter.” It was all said to that point. The situation was too clear. So, when he was arrested, I was not surprised or nervous at all. Instead, I felt relieved. I felt like, “It’s coming, it’s really coming.” It was a very strange feeling, but I knew there was nothing we could do.

Q: Since you have talked to that extent, did you feel like saying goodbye during that meeting?

A: There was a feeling of farewell, but it was not very obvious. He said that it depends on the development, and that maybe there will be a result by the end of the year. I didn’t expect that there would be a result in October.

⁴⁰ Xu Shiyou, then commander of the Nanjing Military Region.

⁴¹ Refers to Luodian Town, Baoshan District, Shanghai.

⁴² Refers to Zhang Guotao’s *My Memories*, which was serialized in *Ming Pao Monthly*, Hong Kong, from 1971 to 1974 and published in 1974.

⁴³ Zhang Guotao (1897 –1979) was a Chinese revolutionary who was a founding member of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and rival to Mao Zedong. He left the party in 1938. Zhang eventually retired to Canada – Translator.

⁴⁴ As to the authenticity of the telegram, there is no conclusive conclusion in the academic community.

⁴⁵ Lugouqiao (Lugou Bridge), also known as Marco Polo Bridge, is a famous landmark in southwest Beijing. On July 7, 1937, Japanese troops from occupied Manchuria attached the Guomindang’s 29th Army of the National Revolutionary Army, precipitating the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War, which can also be taken as the real start of World War 2. Today there is an adjacent Museum to the War of Resistance Against Japan – Translator.

⁴⁶ See Zhang Chunqiao to Weiwei, 15 February 1987.

⁴⁷ According to the second volume of *The Annals of Zhou Enlai (1949–1976)* (Beijing: Central Literature Publishing House, 1997, p. 634), on 17 November 1973, Mao Zedong mistakenly believed that Zhou Enlai had said the wrong thing in his talks with U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, based on unreliable reports. On the same day, Mao talked to Zhou about his views on the matter and proposed that the Politburo hold a meeting to discuss it. That evening, Zhou presided over a meeting of the Politburo to convey instructions and brief the talks. The next day, he reported to Mao twice a week in writing on the meeting, saying that he had “not done enough” in the Sino-US talks. From November 21 to early December, the Politburo held consecutive meetings to approve the week according to Mao’s opinion.

⁴⁸ On April 5, 1976, during the Qingming Festival, a large-scale mass protest in Tiananmen Square to commemorate Zhou Enlai and oppose the Gang of Four.

⁴⁹ After the April Five-Year Incident, the Politburo characterized it as a counter-revolutionary political event, believing that Deng Xiaoping was the general backstage of the event.

⁵⁰ According to Wu Lengxi’s recollections, the “five fears” were put forward by Mao Zedong in 1957 when he talked to him, specifically referring to: first, not afraid of dismissal, second, not afraid of expulsion from the party, third, not afraid of divorce from his wife, fourth, not afraid of imprisonment, and fifth, not afraid of being killed. See Wu Lengxi, *Memories of Leaders and Comrades-in-Arms*, Beijing: Xinhua Publishing House, 2006, p. 129.

Zhang Chunqiao In The Eyes Of His Daughter

VI. Arrested And Imprisoned

“When I was in prison, I hated my father very much. Because he didn’t tell me anything, and because I didn’t know what was going on with him.”

Q: When did you hear that the Gang of Four were arrested? Did you think it was very sudden?

A: We probably knew about it a few days earlier. That day, my father’s secretary suddenly came and said that something had happened and that they could not be contacted. The Shanghai Municipal Party Committee could not contact them. The place began to get chaotic. Some people said that they would start an uprising and organize workers. They had to appease them and asked Ma Tianshui to go.⁵¹ Ma Tianshui went and told everyone here not to move, saying that they would make a decision after he came back. After Ma Tianshui left, people here continued to argue about what to do. I was very calm. I thought it was useless to make a fuss. It was nothing more than a group of people dying like in the Paris Commune, and then there would be another Paris Commune Wall. I said that if this really happened, then we would die. If it didn’t happen, then we wouldn’t die. But we didn’t know whether we would die or not. But it was not something we could decide. My husband was away at the time. When China launched the atomic bomb, he went on a business trip to Beijing. He was a medical worker in that team. So I sent my son to my mother-in-law. He was a little over one year old at that time. I thought no matter what, I had to make arrangements for the child first. As for the rest, I would wait for Ma Tianshui to come back and tell me what happened.

When Ma Tianshui came back, he wanted to cut ties with them. Then he arrested my mother. During the second Kangping Road incident, many people flocked to my house. No one cared about us, and we were cut off. This time, the house was completely turned upside down, in a mess. But for some reason, they

put a seal on my room, saying it was the children's room, and then sealed it. The other rooms were almost looted. The most interesting thing is that Xu Shiyou once gave my family a leopard. After eating it, the skin was processed and placed in the box. Later, the leopard skin disappeared. Why was this thing searched away? Was Xu Shiyou eager to draw a line with us? Later, Yang Chengwu said in his memoirs that Xu Shiyou told Yang Chengwu that he and Zhang Chunqiao had always had a bad relationship. Xu shot a leopard in Taihang Mountain and gave it to Yang Chengwu, but only shot some pheasants and rabbits for Zhang Chunqiao.⁵² But the fact is that in 1973, Xu Shiyou did kill two leopards, one for my father and one for Yang Chengwu. My father was not in Shanghai at that time, but the security and secretaries were all there, and the team was on Xingguo Road. Xu Shiyou sent the leopards, and the chef cooked a large table of them. Several people from the garrison were also invited. My mother didn't dare to eat it, but we all ate it, and it tasted like beef. There was also a four-speaker Japanese radio in my room, which was not taken away, so it seems that their purpose was not to search for your secrets.

Q: Who was there when they came to search the house?

A: People walked into the Kangping Road compound, no one stopped them, and more and more people came. This scene was not unfamiliar to me. It can't be said to be a house search. My grandfather had passed away. My mother had been arrested, and my aunt had escaped and no one knew where she went. My grandmother was there at first, and then she went to my uncle's house at the intersection of Hengshan Road and Gao'an Road. My aunt had passed away at that time. My uncle's house was very close, only one street away from our house, so my grandmother went there by herself. But my uncle refused to let her in. This uncle was a very bad person. He used to be a member of the New Fourth Army, and later he was a retired cadre or something. My uncle didn't let my grandmother in, so my grandmother walked along Kangping Road and arrived at Lane 100. There was a relative living in that lane, who was my fifth aunt's mother. My grandmother didn't dare to knock on the door, so she sat on the side of the road. There is another complicated relationship here. The father of this aunt, that is, my grandmother's father-in-law, committed suicide during the Cultural Revolution.⁵³ He was originally the deputy secretary-general of the East China Bureau. In his early years, he worked underground in Shanghai with Kang Sheng and Zhou Enlai. He was a rich young man and had a very beautiful facade as a cover. After liberation, he first served as the deputy governor of Shan-

dong Province. After the establishment of the East China Bureau, he came to Shanghai. He had some problems with Yang Shangkun, and when Zhou Enlai was fighting against traitors in Shanghai, he probably also had some problems, so he committed suicide during the Cultural Revolution. My aunt's mother, my grandmother's mother-in-law, was also from a big landlord family in Shandong. She took my grandmother in. But after my father got into trouble, this aunt divorced my fifth uncle, saying that she wanted to save the political lives of three people. When her father committed suicide, my fifth uncle did not divorce her, but she later chose to divorce to protect herself. Therefore, there is no right or wrong in people. It's just that people choose different ways to deal with different positions and situations.

Back to my family, after my grandmother passed away, only my younger sister and I were at home. My younger sister was in the Air Force and was studying in the Foreign Language Department of Fudan University, so she had dormitories in both the Air Force Fourth Army and Fudan University. But so many things happened at once, so she came home to take a look. My older sister is married and lives in Yangpu District, so she rarely comes back. My younger brother is on the farm. There are more and more people at home, and no one cares about us. Most of the people who come are ordinary people who have never been here before. They come to see what our family looks like. Driven by curiosity, groups of people come. But I can see that there are plainclothes officers in the crowd. They don't look like they are just there to watch the fun. They look calm and composed, and they don't leave. They must be plainclothes officers from the army and the public security bureau. Later, someone came up to us and said, "You can leave now. What are you doing here all the time?" Come to think of it, there were rumours outside that Zhang Chunqiao's daughter was in there, so more people came in to watch the fun.

Q: What were you thinking in that situation? Were you panicked? Were you scared?

A: I didn't feel panicked or scared at all. I just handled things very calmly. Someone told my sister and I to leave, so we came out and prepared to leave. We didn't take anything. Then four or five people appeared beside us and protected us. There were more people protecting us along the way, and I didn't know who they were. We walked out of Kangping Road, and more and more people followed us. Most of them wanted to watch the show. We started running, ran

to Wukang Building, went around the back door, went upstairs, and came to a family we didn't know at all. My sister's shoes came off, so the family gave her a pair of shoes to wear. Later I learned that the man in the family was a doorman in a new village. When I came out again, I parted company with my sister, and someone gave me a small note, telling me their name and saying that they could help us if needed. I didn't expect that this small note would harm someone later. After I was locked up, this piece of paper was discovered.

My younger sister decided to go back to school, so I went to my older sister's house. I was in a very excited state at the time. At night, I decided to go back to Kangping Road to see what was going on. I rode my bike back. My sister's house is on Xuchang Road in Yangpu District, which is quite far away. The house was in a mess. I took a few clothes and put them in a small bag. When I walked out, another group of people rushed out and surrounded me, saying that I was transferring evidence. These people were students from Jiaotong University. They asked me to open the bag and see, so I opened it, and there were just a few clothes. Some onlookers said: They just took two pieces of clothes. So, I went back to my older sister's house. The next morning, I was arrested.

Q: Can you tell me about your life in prison?

A: It should be before October 20, 1976. The Public Security Bureau sent people to my eldest sister's house and arrested me. This was an order from Ma Tianshui. He said it was to protect me. I said I didn't want your protection, but it was useless. They insisted on protecting me. But a few days later, Ma Tianshui and his men were also arrested. If the people who arrested me were arrested, then no one would release me. They first locked me up in the prison on Chifeng Road. At first, I was temporarily locked up in a large south-facing room. That room seemed to be used to lock up foreigners. There were many English, Japanese, and Korean words on the wall, all left by former prisoners. The room should be about ten square meters. Later, I was moved to a very small room, about four or five squaremeters, facing north. The thick wood outside the window was newly nailed. In the spring, I was moved to another house. It was a formal prison cell with a toilet and a basin, about eleven or twelve square meters.

At that time, there was no news about my father. But I knew that my mother was imprisoned here. Later, we were all moved to a prison on Hami Road near Xijiao Park. My ears are very good and I can hear voices. I can judge who is

in there. For example, I can recognize the voices of Wang Hongwen's wife Cui Gendi and Wang Xiuzhen.⁵⁴ There were also people I didn't know. I could also smell the smell of Chinese medicine, and I knew that my mother was taking Chinese medicine again. I started my "magical life" in prison. I first taught the people who guarded me how to light the coal briquette stove, because the weather had started to get cold, and the guards were temporarily transferred from various places. They used to work in government offices and didn't know how to light the coal briquette stove. I was the most capable. Later, I taught them to knit sweaters and do other things. They saw that I was their child, so they would have more time to go out for exercise, and someone would follow me around in the yard.

Q: Do you feel relieved knowing your mother is there?

A: I didn't feel relieved because I didn't know what's wrong with my mother.

⁵¹ Ma Tianshui, then secretary of the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee.

⁵² Yang Chengwu was the first commander of the Beijing Military Region and acting chief of the general staff of the People's Liberation Army.

⁵³ Zhang Weiwei's fifth aunt's father was Li Yuchao, who served as vice governor of Shandong Province and deputy secretary general of the East China Bureau, and died in 1968.

⁵⁴ Wang Xiuzhen, former secretary of the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee and deputy director of the Shanghai Municipal Revolutionary Committee.

Zhang Chunqiao In The Eyes Of His Daughter

VII. After Being Released From Prison

The person who accompanied me said to my son, “This is your mother.” My son looked at me and said in Shanghainese, “My mother is dead.”

Q: What reason did they give when they released you?

A: They released me on December 28, 1977. Just as there was no reason for my release when I was detained, there was no reason for my release either. They simply said, “It’s okay, you can go out.” They had already checked everything, and there was really no reason to detain me again. During the Cultural Revolution, I never fought against teachers, and I didn’t do anything bad. When Fudan High School held its first homecoming event after the Cultural Revolution, I didn’t go. Principal Jiang Gongshen even asked my classmates to tell me, “The door of Fudan High School is always open to Zhang Weiwei.” The school certainly had nothing to say about my performance. I was the president of the student union, and I was responsible for organizing all extracurricular activities. I not only organized sports meets and singing competitions, but also took the lead in participating. I joined the instrument factory in 1968, and I worked there for eight years and almost never took sick leave or personal leave, and I was never late or left early. I worked hard during the day, and after get off work, I did the work of the Youth League Committee, attended meetings, and studied. I have always been enthusiastic in carrying out the tasks assigned to me by the Party branch, such as talking to people, helping the masses, and arranging home visits by the trade union, etc., and this is obvious to all.

Q: When you were released, did anyone come to pick you up? What was the situation at home?

A: No one came to pick me up at home. The people who were investigating me sent me home. At that time, my brother was isolated on the farm, my younger

sister interrupted her studies at Fudan University and returned to the army to be isolated, and my husband was isolated in the hospital. He was investigated because of me. Although I was released, he was still not allowed to go home. Later, the people who investigated me felt that it was too inexplicable, so they went to his unit to talk to him. After more than a month, they let him go home. My older sister was still at home, and I met her once. I didn't see my younger sister and brother until a long time later. The people who investigated me accompanied me to see my son. When I was locked up, the child was only one and a half years old. The person who accompanied me said to my son: "This is your mother." My son looked at me and said in Shanghainese: "My mother is dead." My feelings at that time can be best expressed by a Shanghainese phrase, which is "touching the heart sutra."⁵⁵ When I was in prison, I missed my son very much. When I was out for exercise, I picked up two small bamboo strips outside and split them, and sharpened two knitting needles outside the windowsill. Then I took out the elastic bands in the pants, pulled out the elastic bands, made a very thin belt, and wrapped it around the needles to make two circular needles. I knitted two pairs of pants for my son. They were not made of wool, but two pairs of chloroprene cotton pants. I took the cotton pants apart one by one and connected them together to make two pairs of pants for him. After he was released, he wore them, and they fit him well and looked good. This was also a comfort to me. The guards all came to learn from me, so it can be said that I had a wonderful life in prison. Later, I took apart my sweater and knitted a new sweater with the circular needles.

Q: What happened with your grandma's suicide?

A: They moved our family to Dong'an New Village when I was in prison. That's where my grandma committed suicide. Speaking of my grandma, she was a very capable housewife, thrifty and frugal. She had a great influence on my father, and my father was very kind to her. Grandma was five years older than grandpa, who was the second child in the family. In a feudal landlord family, the eldest child was valued, but the second child was not. The eldest child went to Peking University. Although the second child was better in academics, the family did not have the ability to raise two college students. Although grandpa also passed the entrance exam to Peking University, his family did not let him go, so he always felt very frustrated. Grandpa later went to Shandong to study at a medical college. Grandpa's family was a ruined landlord family, and the family's financial situation was getting worse and worse. Southwest Shandong was originally very

poor. The family married him to my grandma. Grandma's family was a rising wealthy middle peasant family with several brothers. She was also very precious. She was neither high nor low, and she got married very late. My father's uncles were very protective of my grandmother. When my father went to Yan'an, it was several uncles who sent him there. Later, my grandmother gave birth to many children, and her family continued to support our family. My grandmother was a very capable person. She was not afraid of anything. When she was in Jinan, she stayed at home to guard the house when there was artillery fire outside, and she did not run away.

After we were all arrested, she couldn't stay in other people's homes for long, so she moved to Dong'an New Village. She was over 80 years old and lived there alone. If she had a grandson or granddaughter around, she might not have committed suicide. Before she committed suicide, my grandmother wanted to see my brother, but they wouldn't let her. My grandmother had more than 100 yuan with her at the end, and she wanted to give it to my brother. Later, my cousin went to see her once, and my grandmother gave the money to her granddaughter. No one buried my grandmother, so they went to find my uncle, but he refused to pay for the funeral expenses.

We only know that my grandmother is gone, and we don't know the details of how she was handled in the end. The only thing that is clear is that the funeral expenses were finally charged to my mother. After my mother was released, the government deducted my grandmother's funeral expenses from the living expenses she received.

Q: When was your mother released?

A: My mother was detained for three or four years. After she was released, her health was very poor. She was first admitted to Huadong Hospital. We didn't know about it yet. Later, the police came to us and asked us to take her home. We didn't know what her problem was, so we said to the police: "You said she had many problems and couldn't go home. Now you want us to take her home. What's going on?" The answer was: "She has historical problems. It has all been concluded before."

Q: Some articles say that your mother is a "traitor" or has committed major acts of betrayal. What is the truth?

A: Between 1982 and 1983, after my mother returned home, the special case team of the Public Security Bureau came to our house and told her the final conclusion. I was there, and I took a look at her conclusion. It said: There is “treason” in historical issues. I also know what “treason” means.

“Treason” is different from “traitor”. If you are a traitor, you must have betrayed the organization and betrayed your comrades. She did not do that. She went from the office to the county to serve as the propaganda minister of the county party committee. When the Japanese raided, there was no time to retreat, and the entire county party committee was arrested together. My mother was arrested when she was injured and fainted. This conclusion about her was made in 1945, and she rejoined the party in 1949.

At that time, the Organization Department had a unified opinion. Some people said that she wrote articles to serve the Japanese invaders and her name was Li Shuwen. That was a mistake. In my mother’s family, people of her aunt’s generation all had the word “Shu” in the middle of their names. In a family, there were eight or nine people named “Li Shumou”. People of my mother’s generation all had the word “Ruo” in the middle of their names. My mother’s name was “Li Ruowen”. My cousin’s book “Zhigu Family” has a clear record of this.

Q: What was your job after you were released?

A: When I was released, my salary from the factory was returned to me. I made about 40 yuan a month. As for work, the police asked me, “Where are you going to work? Do you want to go back to your factory?” I said, “How can I go back to my factory? It’s a military factory, so it has to be kept secret.” The person who interrogated me said, “Oh, you are quite self-aware.” I thought to myself, “How can I know the Communist Party worse than you do?”

They arranged for me to work in a small factory in an alley, the Fifth Surgical Instrument Factory. This factory is in Xuhui District, near Dapu Bridge, on Xiexu Road, and it is very rundown. Now there is a building for immigration, but it was a small vegetable market on Dange (Bullet) Road at that time.⁵⁶ Because they didn’t let me have much contact with people, the factory arranged for me to work in a workshop in an alley on Zhaojiabang Road. The roof of the workshop was made of reed strips and covered with tiles. It was very hot in the summer, and sometimes we had to climb up to the roof and pour water on

the tiles to cool down. When I came out, I was in poor health, but I got used to the work very quickly. I worked very quickly. On the first day, an old worker asked me to weld a plug, and I finished it in a short time. When they saw that I did a good job, their opinion of me changed. The workers judged a person by whether you did a good job with your hands. Later, I helped them solve some technical problems. After I finished my own work, I helped others prepare. An old worker said to me: "Can you do it slower? You do it so fast, and we have to increase our quota." A batch of products was returned and said to be not up to standard. I found that it was due to the temperature change, so I explained the reason to everyone and re-adjusted the products together. They all came to me, Master Li, for help, and several young people wanted me to teach them. After returning home, I dug out the textbooks I used to use when I was in the "July 21 University" and went to work an hour earlier every day to teach them.⁵⁷ In this way, I entered this small collective unit. This used to be a street production group, and most of the workers were aunts and mothers. They would give me the food they brought and teach me how to cook. They gave me warmth.

Later, the factory was closed and the workers were reassigned. I wanted to find a job that was more suitable for my major and to be closer to home. At that time, my husband worked as a handyman in the People's Hospital, cleaning toilets, washing urine bottles, pushing carts, and mopping floors every day. He was not allowed to be a doctor. My father-in-law had gastric bleeding and my mother-in-law was in poor health and could no longer take care of our children. My son was three years old and had to be picked up and dropped off at kindergarten every day. I wrote a letter to the Instrument Bureau, telling them about my situation, and because I had performed well before, they arranged for me to work at the Shanghai Medical Electronic Instrument Factory.

The conditions in this factory were much better. I started in the general assembly workshop. Later, because I had to take turns to work the morning and afternoon shifts, I couldn't pick up my children. After I raised my difficulties, the factory arranged for me to work as an inspector for incoming components in the quality inspection department. I should say that they were very considerate. I worked very hard and went to the production factories to learn by myself, such as the transistor factory and the cathode ray tube factory, to improve the inspection methods and make many technical innovations. For example, the thermal pen on the electrocardiograph had a high return rate at that time, which caused a large number of customer letters. I found that the inspection method was

wrong, improved it, and the problem was solved. So, when the factory wanted to set up a radio measurement room, they asked me to prepare. I had never done this kind of work. When I was studying at the “July 21 University”, I always made records and calculations, and didn’t like to operate instruments and meters. At this time, I ran to the science and technology bookstore to understand the nature and content of the work, and then went to the factory that produced oscilloscopes, signal generators, etc., and slowly carried out this work. Our group later became the radio electrical measurement station of the Medical Bureau.

When I have free time, I still like to read books. I became good friends with the person who was in charge of the library. At that time, she would tell me when the library had new books such as Harvest, Zhongshan, and Huacheng, and she would also keep the books I wanted to read for me. Later, when my son grew up, I read martial arts novels by Gu Long, Liang Yusheng, and Jin Yong with him.

⁵⁵ “Touching the Heart Sutra” means astonishing and piercing pain

⁵⁶ Bullet road refers to a paved road with cobblestones and small stones.

⁵⁷ “July 21 University” was a workers’ university established in response to Mao Zedong’s instructions in the late Cultural Revolution, with a duration of two to three years.

Zhang Chunqiao In The Eyes Of His Daughter

VIII. My father's Public Trial And Imprisonment

“Seeing that Dad didn’t say a word and had a very hard attitude, I think we should think that this is the kind of person he is.”

Q: Did you also watch the TV broadcast when the Gang of Four was publicly tried in November 1981?

A: My mother had already returned home when the public trial took place. We had just bought a 12-inch black-and-white TV at that time. It was our first TV. It is still in my husband’s office and he refuses to throw it away. At that time, you still needed a ticket to buy a TV. When the factory was issuing tickets, an old worker heard that I also wanted to buy a TV and said in front of everyone: “You still want to buy a TV? Don’t you have a lot of TVs at home?” I told him that my family didn’t have a TV and that our children also watched TV in the yard. I still have a photo of my son watching colour TV in the yard because colour TVs were rare at that time, so I took a photo of him. He said: “That was a rumour spread by someone outside.” He was kind enough to go to the factory union to help me get a TV ticket. He also accompanied me to Zhongbai Company to buy it. No one notified us about the public trial. We learned about it from the radio and newspapers like all ordinary people. At first we didn’t want to let my mother see it, fearing that she would be upset because she had a bad heart. But later we let her see it. When we first saw my father, we were quite shocked. How could he be tortured like that? The last time I saw my father was when I went to Beijing in the summer of 1976. Four years had passed.

Q: In the four years from when he was arrested to the public trial, did you have any contact?

A: Of course there was no contact, no news, nothing. So, during the public trial, we saw that his beard was untidy and grey. At that time, we thought he would

definitely refuse to trim it. He must have thought: I am like this, you made me like this, so I will come out like this. Moreover, he didn't know what happened to us at all, didn't know if we were implicated, and how our lives were. Later, when we went to visit him in prison, he said he didn't know anything about our situation.

Q: How did you feel when you watched the public trial on TV?

A: My older sister lives in Yangpu District. Apart from her, everyone else in the family watched the public trial together. Seeing that my father didn't say a word and had a very hard attitude, I think we should think that he is just that kind of person. We don't want to see a spineless person. He didn't say anything, and I think it's best that way. Otherwise, what can I say? How can I say it? Anyway, for me, seeing that he is not a spineless person is the greatest comfort. I feel that my tense heart has relaxed, and there is no sadness.

After the public trial, people from the Public Security Bureau came to the factory, and there were many people in the Organization Department. They asked me if the public trial was right. My answer was: "I am not part of the Gang of Five, so how would I know what the Gang of Four did? If you think I am part of the Gang of Five, then just arrest me too. It's enough for you to feel that your public trial is right, why do you have to force me to admit that you are right?" Later I said, "It's fine if you implicate me, but it's too much to implicate my husband. Why don't you let him continue to be a doctor?" Perhaps my words were of some use, because a week later, my husband was notified to return to the department to work.

Q: Did you expect the verdict?

A: We felt that they didn't dare to execute Jiang Qing. Jiang Qing was sentenced before my father. If Jiang Qing didn't die, then my father wouldn't die either. That's how it's done.

Q: When did you meet your father again? What was the situation at that time?

A: I met my father again in November 1984, after not seeing him for eight years. The first time I went to see him was when my brother and I went together. He was transferred from Qincheng Prison to Fuxing Hospital because of

prostate hypertrophy. The doctor who treated him had treated the Premier and knew my father. He later performed surgery on my father and the operation was done very well. These doctors were very kind to my father because they had all treated the Premier. During the Premier's treatment, my father was serious and responsible, and the doctors saw it for themselves.

The Public Security Bureau came to ask us to go to Beijing. I had a strong sense of organization, so I said to them, "If you ask me to go, I will go. I am a member of the Communist Party and I have a unit. If you ask us to go to Beijing, you must first tell my unit." They had no choice but to come to my unit. In this way, the fact that I went to Beijing to see my father was made public. Because at that time, it was rumoured everywhere that Zhang Chunqiao had died in prison. Even my classmates came to ask about it and cut out newspapers and sent them to me. Some classmates also suggested that I sue the Hubei Digest because it published the news that Zhang Chunqiao had died, as well as a newspaper in Hong Kong. I wanted the Public Security Bureau to come to my unit to find me and ask the unit to agree that I could go to see my father. My purpose was to let everyone know that my father was not dead. Moreover, the unit knew that it was the Public Security Bureau that asked me to go, so they would give me less trouble in the future.

The first time we went to see him, it was arranged by the Public Security Bureau. They let us stay in a basement hotel next to Fuxing Hospital. The next day after arriving in Beijing, we went to the hospital to visit my father. We saw him in a very shabby little room. There was a table and two benches with backrests in the room. Later, this room was renovated and it was quite beautiful. There was a big mirror in this room, which was used for surveillance. I didn't cry in front of him, but I cried a lot after returning to my residence. At that time, he couldn't hear his voice when he spoke. He had lost his voice because he hadn't spoken for eight years. In prison, he didn't talk to anyone. Recently, his last speech was circulated on the Internet, and some people asked me how the recording was leaked. There was no such thing. He really didn't speak, let alone any recording.

He asked us how we were, "How are you? You came to see me? How are you?" His voice was hoarse, his vocal cords were stiff, medically called "disabled". He hadn't heard from us for eight years, and didn't know our situation, so he was surprised to see us. That time I went to visit him, I could see him three times, each time for more than two hours. The prison asked us to arrange the time for

these three visits ourselves, so we went to see him every other day, each time from 9 to 11:30 in the morning. He was very weak, so this arrangement allowed him to rest for a day. We mainly talked about the situation of our family and our own lives. At this time, we hadn't started writing letters yet.

Q: Were you able to visit your father often in the future? How many times a year could you see him?

A: When he was in Beijing, I visited him once a year at first, and then two or three times a year. At first, the Public Security Bureau agreed that we could reimburse our travel and accommodation expenses, but later, since we went there frequently, they stopped reimbursing us, saying that we were married and no longer considered family members.

The second time I went to Beijing to visit him was after he had surgery, and I went alone that time.

After that, the children went to visit him separately, and whoever was free went. I also actively sought business trips. Sometimes they wanted to stop us from seeing each other, but since we had already traveled thousands of miles to Beijing, they reported and asked for instructions and let us see each other. I also took my son there, and my brother took his daughter there.

In 1996, my father was almost 80 years old, and someone told me that they could apply for medical parole for him.

After 1996, I accompanied my mother to Beijing twice and asked someone to deliver the letter. They made one thing very clear: if my father was granted medical parole or probation, he would not be allowed to enter Shanghai. In 1998, his application for medical parole was approved, and they set up a "home" for my father in Jiangyin. There had to be someone in the "home", so they sent my mother there, but in fact they imprisoned my mother and my father together. My mother was willing to give up her life outside and stay with my father. At that time, my mother lived with my brother and sister-in-law. She didn't have to do anything, and everyone took care of her. She gave up all these and went to Jiangyin alone to stay with my father. After my parents moved to Jiangyin, my father certainly still had no personal freedom. The walls of their residence were very high, higher than those of ordinary people's houses, and the upstairs were

full of people from the Public Security Bureau. They couldn't go out the door or see outsiders, and they were completely isolated. We were not allowed to stay overnight when we went to see him. We went there more often then. We could go once a month, and we took turns going. But we had to contact the Wuxi Public Security Bureau first and get permission before we could go.

Q: Your father had been in prison for such a long time. Do you think he was isolated from the outside world?

A: Although he had been in prison, I don't think he was isolated from the outside world at all. He still paid close attention to current affairs. He was not stuck in the time tunnel, and he definitely cannot stay in the past. He could read the People's Daily and Guangming Daily. Later, when he went to Jiangyin, he could also read the Xinmin Evening News. He worked in the newspaper business, so my father knew all the details about how to layout newspapers and where to put certain news. He could not only read what was written in the text, but also understand many things behind the text. In 1985, when I visited him in prison, I bought him a radio with the money I saved. The people who were guarding him saw it, but didn't say no. For many things, you can't ask the prison for instructions. If you ask for instructions, reporting to the prison level by level will definitely not work. They didn't explicitly tell me not to buy him a radio, and didn't explicitly stipulate that he couldn't listen to the radio, so I bought it for him. The people who were guarding him didn't say anything. After a while, I bought him a shortwave radio so that he could listen to the Voice of America, BBC and other radio stations. Once, he happily told me that he had found a French radio station. This is how he followed China and the world. But the people who guarded him were also very mean, because the radio needed batteries, and when the batteries ran out, they would not give him batteries. When I went to visit him in prison, I would bring him batteries.

Q: Your father often talked about the weather and the impact of climate on him in his letters, as well as his habit of planting flowers and raising fish. Is it because he has plenty of time in prison that he has more leisure time?

A: Every letter he wrote was subject to censorship, so he couldn't write about his political views in his letters. Moreover, his political views were already very clear, and we all knew them very well, so of course he didn't need to write to us again. He was indeed very sensitive to the climate because he had tracheitis. He always

liked planting flowers and raising goldfish, which may have been influenced by my grandmother. Because my grandmother came from the countryside, she always liked to plant things. She planted them in the yard in Shanghai, and she was very good at it. Whatever she planted grew, whether it was eggplant or tomato, and they all bore fruit. So my father always liked to plant things. I like it too. You can see that on my balcony, in addition to flowers, there are many edible things, such as chicken feather vegetables, coriander, cherry tomatoes, etc.

Q: Then he must have known about major events, such as the June 4th Incident in 1989, right?

A: He knew about all of Deng Xiaoping's tricks. What does it matter whether the cat is black or white, or crossing the river by feeling the stones? What shocked him the most was the shooting of students on June 4th. In July 1989, not long after the June 4th Incident, I went to Beijing to see him. Fuxing Hospital was located in Muxidi, where the worst fighting took place. Of course, he knew about what was happening outside. He was particularly moved and told me that he could hear the sound of helicopters and gunshots overhead. The staff in the hospital, those who were in charge of them, changed their uniforms because they were afraid that others would know that they were in the army, so they had to change their appearance. He also knew that the injured students and citizens were carried in below, and he could hear many people shouting, "Help, doctor, help me!" No one bandaged them, and there was no emergency treatment. Some people bled out and died. He said they didn't even know how to stop the bleeding. He said: Deng Xiaoping was really cruel!

At this time, my father told us: During the "April 5th Incident" in 1976, the Central Political Bureau held a meeting to discuss what to do. Wu De was there, and Deng Xiaoping was also there. At the meeting, someone proposed to mobilize the army to suppress it. It was my father who went there and said that the army could not be used, so the army was not sent. My father suggested restoring the loudspeakers in the square to carry out propaganda and evacuate the masses.

After a day, most people had left, and only a small number of people were left at the Monument to the People's Heroes, so workers were sent in.

Q: From his letters, it seems that he was also concerned about international events, such as the disintegration of the former Soviet Union. Is that right?

A: Yes, he was also concerned about international events, such as Iraq and Saddam. Will the United States win if it attacks Iraq? My father said at the beginning that Saddam would definitely not be able to defeat the United States because he did not have Mao Zedong Thought and did not have a proletarian party.

Of course, he was also concerned about the disintegration of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and he expressed this a lot in his letters. But this did not shake his beliefs, but made his understanding deeper. He used the basic principles of Marxism to analyze what was happening in the world and found that Marxism was indeed “universally applicable.” He never gave up those statements, such as “class struggle,” “proletarian revolution,” “standpoint, viewpoint and method,” “dialectical materialism,” “historical materialism,” “communism will definitely replace capitalism,” etc. He found that using these views to analyze the world situation was still very accurate. He felt that the disintegration of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe was inevitable, just as the cause of communism in China is now at a low ebb. He still adheres to the dialectical materialist view of history. He believes that the road is tortuous and long, but one day, the masses will awaken and continue to move forward. There will be high tides and low tides. He said that the proletarian revolution will struggle repeatedly for hundreds of years. After the great waves, new leaders will emerge.

Zhang Chunqiao In The Eyes Of His Daughter

IX. Evaluation of the Cultural Revolution

“Deng Xiaoping completely negated the Cultural Revolution, which is unfair.”

A: The Cultural Revolution was certainly a failure. The leaders and executors were all overthrown. How could it not be a failure? However, the masses were still educated. For the cause of the proletarian revolution, Chairman Mao raised the flag and rushed to this height during this great revolution. When he died, the flag fell down, and all the people who protected the flag died. Of course, my father did not want such an ending. But he always believed that the proletarian revolution would win, and now is the low point of this cause.

In my memory, he always said, “Believe in Chairman Mao, believe in Mao Zedong Thought”; “Believe in the masses, believe in the Party.” Later, he emphasized more, “Believe in the people, believe that the masses are the creators of history.” In 2000, his hands were shaking badly, but he still copied down many of Chairman Mao’s poems, including “He Xinlang: Reading History”. Later, through treatment, the shaking condition improved. In 2001, on the 25th anniversary of Chairman Mao’s death, he copied “He Xinlang: Reading History” again. When I went to see him, he gave it to me and explained it to me with great interest. Looking back on these, I think he had a deeper understanding of Mao Zedong Thought. His view of historical materialism was also more firm: history is created by the people. The Cultural Revolution was Chairman Mao’s enlightenment education for the masses to continue the revolution under the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat, an experiment, and another Paris Commune. It’s just that we didn’t die in front of the wall of the Paris Commune like the people at that time.

Q: Many people also want to know, if your father and his team had succeeded at that time, what would China be like now? Would there be the same economic development? Does your father admit that the people’s lives are much better

now than before? A: My father certainly admits that the people's lives are much better now than before. However, if they continue to move forward according to the path they planned at that time, the people's lives will also be much better. Society will always progress. They also need to develop production, grasp the revolution to promote production, and it is not just Deng Xiaoping who wants to develop production. Moreover, my father and his team planned to take the path of common prosperity, not to let some people get rich first.

In 1976, when my father and I met for the last time before being imprisoned, we discussed how to do our work better and more perfect. I came from the grassroots and knew the lives of the people. I changed my name to Li Qun, which means to get into the lives of the masses. I am qualified to provide opinions from the masses, and my father also hopes to hear my views. For example, I once discussed the problem of residents' housing difficulties with my father. In the factory, I was responsible for the project of housing difficulty investigation and visited many families to investigate housing conditions. For example, some families of four live in a small room, and when they sleep, their heads are exposed. There are many similar situations. My father and the others realized that housing conditions needed to be improved. They also sent people to Nanshi District to conduct surveys to determine how many new homes needed to be built, and construction of new housing had already begun. There was also the issue of the countryside. My father and the others had realized long ago that China's problems were indeed fundamentally peasant problems. To make the peasants prosperous, relying solely on agriculture would not be enough. Therefore, they also envisioned developing township enterprises, with factories sending people to the countryside to help the various communes establish enterprises.

In the fields of culture and the arts, many things had already begun to thaw in the later period of the Cultural Revolution. My father had always told Jiang Qing that just eight model operas could not possibly satisfy the people's needs. Therefore, apart from the model operas, many other theatrical works were already waiting to be released. Various types of opera and theater had also begun recruiting and training new performers again. The dubbing studio was translating foreign films, and various magazines were beginning to resume publication. For example, Shi Ximin, director of the Publishing Bureau, wanted to resume publication of People's Literature and asked Chairman Mao to provide an inscription for it. My father even went to Mao to have him write the inscription.

The art academy also proposed doing nude figure studies, and my father agreed to that as well. There was also education. For example, the “July 21 University” trained so many workers in the factories, enabling them to study and improve their educational level. I myself graduated from a “July 21 University,” and the standard of education there was not inferior at all. For our basic courses, we had mathematics and physics teachers from East China Normal University; for our specialized courses, we had teachers from Northwestern Polytechnical University and Harbin Military Engineering Institute. After graduating ahead of schedule, we immediately went to the front lines of production. We also participated in the design of a first-stage rocket, including the gyroscope used for automatic satellite positioning, and we even went to Beijing to report our work to Qian Xuesen. As for myself, I was a product of the educational policy of that time. I was a worker who had socialist consciousness and was well educated. Moreover, everyone was so enthusiastic about working and studying at the time. No one was concerned with fame or personal gain, and there were no summer or winter vacations.

There were also achievements in industry and science and technology. Take the large aircraft project, for example. Under such difficult conditions at the time, the technical personnel built a large aircraft without counting their working hours or worrying about remuneration. It had already reached the flight-testing stage and had already flown across the Himalayas. Test flights had even been conducted several times in Tibet. But after Deng Xiaoping came to power, he immediately ordered the large aircraft project to be terminated, and its funding was cut off at once. Bo Yibo said that flight testing could not continue and that the project had to be terminated, because if flight testing continued, wouldn't that amount to acknowledging the achievements of the Gang of Four?

Therefore, Deng Xiaoping completely erased all of these achievements and refused to acknowledge any of them, claiming that everything had collapsed. That was unfair.

Q: If the Cultural Revolution marked a low point for the proletarian revolution in China, did he feel that, after Deng Xiaoping came to power, capitalism was being implemented in China?

A: No⁵⁸, he did not think that China had become capitalist. In the summer of 1976, I discussed this issue with him. I asked him whether China would restore

capitalism in the future. He said that China would not be restored to capitalism, because China had never had capitalism in the true sense of the word. China would only return to a state of bureaucratic comprador capitalism in a semi-colonial, semi-feudal society. My understanding was that, if China's bourgeoisie wanted to build the liberal capitalist society they envisioned, they would have to contend with both the country's feudal traditions and the intrusion of international capital.

Moreover, the revolution led by the Chinese Communist Party was, to a considerable extent, a peasant revolution. The working class in China was a disadvantaged group to begin with, and its level of political consciousness was not high enough, because many of the rights and benefits Chinese workers obtained were not won through their own struggles. As a result, they did not know how to defend those rights and benefits and took them for granted. For example, the eight-hour workday was won by workers in the United States and Europe through strikes and other struggles. The Chinese working class did not have as high a level of political consciousness as workers in the United States or Europe. This is something I have always told my father. I have worked in factories all my life, so I know Chinese workers very well.

Q: What did your father think of Deng Xiaoping?

A: Regarding Deng Xiaoping, my father always said that he was very capable when it came to getting things done. My father later told me: "When Deng Xiaoping was first reinstated and returned to Beijing, he found a place to live by himself as soon as he got back. Unlike us, the Premier arranged everything for us and had us stay at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse." As soon as Deng Xiaoping began holding meetings, he produced a list of more than a hundred people and wanted to arrange jobs for them. But at that time, all the government departments were being streamlined. My father said: "The Chairman asked me to brief him on the situation, but he simply wouldn't listen." My father also said that when Deng Xiaoping was directing the Xisha naval battle, he was extremely proficient and decisive in his command; each order was exceptionally clear. So when Deng Xiaoping returned to work, it was somewhat like a veteran warhorse with many achievements coming back to lead the way. Unfortunately, the result was that the old horse knew the road—but it turned back.

Deng Xiaoping completely repudiated the Cultural Revolution, and that was unfair. The Cultural Revolution was launched and led by Chairman Mao af-

ter careful consideration. Its system of governance was based on the principle of “three-way integration,” a model established through the participation of hundreds of millions of workers, peasants, soldiers, intellectuals, and members of the commercial sector. It placed cadres’ power under the supervision of the masses and was intended to prevent revisionism and guard against the restoration of capitalism. Deng Xiaoping overturned this entire model as well. When he overturned and repudiated all of this, Deng Xiaoping said, “No debate.” He even staged a kind of “public trial” involving a group of people who had absolutely no understanding of the truth about the debates within the Central Committee of the Party. Faced with all this, was my father supposed to say nothing?

Deng Xiaoping was unwilling to debate, but I would like to ask him one question: Didn’t Marx say that the Communist Party is the political party of the proletariat? Didn’t Marx say that he stood on the side of the proletariat, and didn’t he also discuss class struggle? Could it be that we translated *The Communist Manifesto* incorrectly? If we didn’t translate it incorrectly, then why do you, Deng Xiaoping, insist on calling yourself a Communist Party member? If you have the courage, change the name, as European countries have done. Stop calling yourselves the Communist Party; you could call yourselves a Social Democratic Party instead.

Q: Did your father ever comment on the other members of the Gang of Four?

A: He rarely commented on other people, and he had virtually nothing to say about the downfall of the Gang of Four. As for matters concerning the Mao family, he said absolutely nothing. He believed that even if you were suffering physical pain, you had to endure it. Aren’t Communists made of special material? What is there that they cannot endure?

Q: What do you think of the current state of research on the Cultural Revolution?

A: More and more people are now beginning to pay attention to and study the Cultural Revolution. I am also making an effort to learn more about it, hoping to develop a clear-headed understanding of it myself.

Q: It seems that your father is gradually becoming popular again, and some people are now studying him as well. What do you think about this?

A: My father didn't know how to play cards; he only knew how to compare which card was higher. Interestingly, I feel that my father himself is now a card—and a face-up card lying openly on the table. People on the left, in the center, and on the right may all make use of him. But whether they want to use this particular card depends on what cards they themselves are holding.

⁵⁸ The summer of 1976 was before the arrest of Zhang Chunqiao and the others. The view was understandable at the time, and in the next two decades, Deng and the revisionists did open China to foreign capital and exhibit the character of compradors. Restoration can lead a less-developed socialist economy to a semi-colonial status. But China became a capitalist, and eventually, social-imperialist country because it had strong State and private monopolising capital, a developed financial sector, and a concentration of state power and armed force – Translator.

Zhang Chunqiao In The Eyes Of His Daughter

X. Family Relationships

“What they are entitled to enjoy is not what we are entitled to enjoy, and the suffering they are supposed to endure is not ours to endure either. We shouldn’t always be tied together.”

Q: Let’s talk about the relationship between your father and mother. How did they meet, and how did they become involved in the revolution?

A: My parents met in the Shanxi-Chahar-Hebei Border Region. My mother was very talented, and her family background was also very good—much better off than my father’s family. Beginning with her grandfather, her family had been running a liquor business in Tianjin. Her father was among the earliest people to work for the Bank of China, which at the time was known as the Daqing Foreign Firm, and he eventually rose to a very senior position. Her family was genuinely bourgeois; one could also describe them as an emerging landlord family, that is, landlords who were taking the capitalist road. A cousin of mine in Tianjin has recently put together a genealogy called The Zhuigu Family, and he even found records showing that my mother’s family already had a car and a telephone at the time. Her family was also quite fashionable, so my mother knew how to swim and ride a bicycle from an early age.

My mother had an older sister who was very progressive, so my mother also joined the Socialist Youth League when she was 14. My mother was exceptionally intelligent and was good at mathematics, physics, and chemistry. She was a talented young woman, a good writer, and had very beautiful handwriting. She later passed the entrance examination for the journalism department at Yenching University. After the Cultural Revolution, everyone was making up missed lessons and preparing for examinations. Once, when my mother was already in her seventies, she went into a small shop to buy something and saw someone working on a geometry problem. The person

couldn't solve it, so my mother went over and taught them how to do it. They even asked her whether she was a teacher. She just smiled and said no.

So, both my father and mother accepted communism on a theoretical level. Communism was the ideal they aspired to, and it was because of this ideal that they joined the revolution. This was very different from people whose families were so poor that they had nothing to eat and who joined the Communist revolution simply to get a meal. Neither of them cared about material things at all; they simply didn't place any importance on them. My mother once said, "If I cared about these things, why would I have come out to join the revolution?" They remained this way throughout their lives. They didn't want material possessions; whatever they had, they gave to others. It never occurred to them to set aside some money for themselves or anything of that sort. They simply had no such concept.

My father once said that if he had been doing it for himself, in order to gain an official position or make a fortune, then why on earth would he have joined the Communist Party? I also once asked my mother, "Why did you join the Communist Party? The Communist Party is the party of the poor. Why did you betray your own class to join this party?" I analyzed it for them: given their family backgrounds, it would have been very difficult for people to fully accept them, and they would always have been in the position of having to be "reformed." My mother said that she had an intense hatred of feudal families. Her father died when she was twelve. Although her grandfather doted on her, when he was sixty he took an eighteen-year-old as a young wife, which was a tremendous shock to her. She felt deeply disgusted by that kind of society and those kinds of people. She also said that she joined the Communist Party because the Communists were genuinely fighting the Japanese. She said that after she arrived in the Shanxi-Chahar-Hebei base area, she would run freely all over the mountains and plains and truly felt liberated. When there was nothing to eat, she would go into the mountains to pick sour jujubes. My father had no cigarettes to smoke, so he would pick up some dry leaves from the ground, roll them up himself, and smoke them, choking terribly. But they were very happy.

Q: They joined the revolution because of an intellectual and rational understanding of it. Did that make their convictions more steadfast? Did they ever regret it? Did they ever doubt themselves?

A: They worked in propaganda, which was different from doing other kinds of work. This path represented the ultimate expression of their spiritual aspirations. They were very steadfast and never believed that they had made the wrong choice.

Q: How was the relationship between your parents? With so many brothers in your father's family, your mother must have had to deal with many complicated family relationships, right?

A: My father and mother never argued. Our family was always very democratic and free. The domestic helpers in our household always ate together with us, and they ate exactly the same food as we did.

My mother was especially considerate of the interests of the family as a whole. My father was the eldest of six brothers, so naturally he had greater responsibilities. After Liberation, my parents sent my paternal grandparents 40 yuan every month for their living expenses. My mother also sent living expenses to one of her aunts-in-law.

Of my father's six siblings, the eldest three started working relatively early, and my aunt, who was the fourth child, also started working relatively early. Among the three younger brothers, my fourth uncle attended Shanghai Institute of Finance and Economics, and my father supported him throughout his university years. My fifth uncle joined the army after Liberation and became financially independent. My fifth aunt later divorced him. My sixth uncle was initially supported by my second uncle, Zhang Qiuqiao, who worked for the PLA Daily.

After 1960, my grandfather retired early. During the Great Famine, ordinary people in Jinan genuinely had nothing to eat, so my grandparents came to Shanghai and thereafter lived at our home. Because my grandparents were there, my aunts and uncles also came frequently. Often, as soon as the door opened, five people would walk in, and they would eat and drink at our house. My mother never complained.

By traditional moral standards, my parents were absolutely exemplary. You couldn't find anyone better than them. They never cared about their own interests at all. When my fourth uncle was at university, my parents gave him 30 yuan a month for spending money, and they also bought him clothes and

shoes. He only needed to take one bus to get to our home. I, on the other hand, attended an affiliated secondary school and lived at school; coming home required taking two buses, and I only had 15 yuan a month. My mother later even said, “Why was I actually more tight-fisted with my own daughter?”

So, the uncles with whom our family was closest were my third and sixth uncles. Now, only my fifth and sixth uncles are still alive.

Q: Xu Jingxian, a member of the leadership of the Shanghai Revolutionary Committee, mentioned in his memoirs that in late 1975 or early 1976, your father had considered divorcing your mother because he might be appointed Premier by Chairman Mao. He also asked Xu Jingxian to find him a partner in Shanghai.⁵⁹ Did this actually happen?

A: As for the matter of their divorce, I really don't know the specific circumstances. I only heard about it later; neither my father nor my mother ever spoke to me about it directly. But there definitely was no legally issued divorce certificate. Later, when my grandmother's funeral expenses had to be paid by my mother, and when my father was granted medical parole, my mother was also required to go and accompany him. Would you really call that getting divorced?

I know that the idea of making them divorce for political reasons was extremely, extremely painful for both of them. When my father was a child, after my grandfather had my father and my second uncle, he went to Kaifeng, found a minor job at the post office, and took a young lover. When my grandmother found out, she took the two brothers to Kaifeng, paid the young woman off to make her leave, and brought my grandfather back to Shandong. This had a profound impact on my father, so he had an intense hatred of men being unfaithful to their wives. My mother was the same. When her grandfather was sixty, he took a young second wife, which completely shattered the emotional sense of security my mother had placed in the family. Therefore, both my parents had a deeply rooted aversion to divorce. They would never have chosen to divorce of their own accord.

Q: It is clear that, as the eldest daughter, you had a very close relationship with your father. In a letter he wrote to you, he listed all the roles you held, saying, “You are now a wife, a mother, an older sister, a daughter-in-law, a daughter, an aunt, and soon-to-be an aunt on your father's side as well.”⁶⁰ This gives the

impression that he both cherished you and felt great concern for you, while also being very proud of you. Do you think he was satisfied with you?

A: My father was quite satisfied with me. After all, I was his daughter. All of us children were very filial toward him. When we were in Jiangyin, we all tried our best to visit him as often as possible. When he was critically ill, I made one phone call, and my younger brothers and sisters immediately came. Of course, like children in other families, we always reported good news and not bad news to him, telling him that we were doing very well. It was only many years later that I told him how we had actually managed to get through those years, because by then those things were already in the past. I wanted him to know how strong our capacity to endure had been. After he learned the truth, he was very comforted and also rather proud, feeling that we really were his children.

Of course, he did not necessarily fully understand my circumstances, and the two of us might have had different judgments about things. I did not necessarily agree with everything he said, either. When we were in Jiangyin, everyone was much more relaxed. When we chatted, I told him that I had read this book and that book, and he was surprised. He even said, "So you've read so many books?" After I left the factory, I told him how I had tried to make money and help support the family. I joked with him that I was going into business and becoming a capitalist myself, and that I wanted to see for myself how the capitalist road worked. He was very surprised. He looked at me and said, "Oh, you're doing that too?" I said, "If I become a capitalist, then I'll be the second Engels." I told him that all the money Engels made as a capitalist was used to serve the communist cause. Without Engels, Marx's entire family would have starved to death. My father fell silent. I had my own way of dealing with him; he couldn't do anything about me.

He certainly had his own views about what I was doing, so I told him, "You are a great man—you never bend or give in. I am a great man too; I know when to bend and when to stand firm." Given the circumstances at the time, could you really refuse to bow your head under any circumstances? You still had to survive, didn't you? And there were children to raise. If people saw that you were living well, they would have something to say; but if they saw that you were living badly and were poor, they would be even more sarcastic: "Look at her. She only got by because of her parents. Now that her parents have fallen from favor, she's become a worthless nobody." People would look down on you that way too.

So I told him, “I don’t rely on my parents. I rely on myself. I want to live with dignity, and I want to live well. I’m the eldest in the family, and many things at home depend on me to shoulder the responsibility.”

Q: When we were children, our parents were the ones who sheltered and cared for us. Once we became parents ourselves, our relationship with the older generation also began to change: we became the ones who had to take care of them and became their emotional support. Did you have that feeling as well?

A: Yes. We were too sheltered when we were children. I once said to my father, “The way you educated us made us too innocent.” We all became flowers raised in a greenhouse. We had no idea what society was really like. Just look at what happened to some of Chairman Mao’s children in the end. After Jiang Qing got into trouble, one of my relatives happened to see Li Na alone in a hospital. She went to the pharmacy to get a bottle to buy soy sauce, but nobody paid any attention to her. It was my relative who found a bottle for her. Of course, compared with the Mao family’s children, we had at least always been at the grassroots level, so we had developed practical life skills much earlier. But it would have been better if our parents had educated us to be a little more worldly and better prepared for the complexities of society.

You can see how my relationship with my parents evolved just by looking at my birthdays. As the eldest daughter in the family, my birthday was always considered important, and I also took my birthday very seriously. When I was little, every time my birthday came around, my father would take us out to buy chocolate and a cake. On my seventeenth birthday, he gave me a collection of newspaper clippings and wrote me a letter, saying that he would no longer give me candy and cake. On my eighteenth birthday, he gave me a set of Selected Works of Mao Zedong, and wrote those words to me on the flyleaf. There was a sense that he was placing a spiritual hope in me and making certain demands of me. I understood that, and I consequently kept holding myself to increasingly strict standards.

Unexpectedly, when I turned twenty, I suddenly made a serious mistake. He severely criticized me and made me write a self-criticism. That was the first Kangping Road incident. Then, when I turned thirty, an even greater blow came: I was imprisoned. While I was inside, I blamed him, and my heart was filled with resentment and a sense of injustice. By the time I turned forty, the

roles had been reversed. I took my mother to visit him, went to Beijing to look for people who could help, and tried to arrange for him to receive medical treatment outside prison. By then, I no longer had any expectations of him. Instead, I wanted to give him some comfort, to take care of him, and to take care of my mother. Indeed, every time the several of us children went to see him, it was a great source of comfort to him. Even the guards said that his mood would improve considerably afterward.

Q: You have mentioned many times that you have always wanted to get away from this identity and distance yourself from your family. You also had a sense of being different from others from an early age, yet the impression you give people is that you are straightforward and speak your mind. How do you see yourself?

A: I was actually a very conflicted person. I cared deeply about how other people saw me and was always afraid that they would have a bad impression of me or judge me negatively. When I was in school, I was also very competitive. I wanted to be the best academically, and the best in sports and physical labor as well. Later, I gradually became more self-aware. I knew that people would take advantage of me. So I wanted to change my name and sink myself down to the very lowest level. I had to sink down; I absolutely couldn't allow myself to rise back to the surface.

I have some close friends whose backgrounds are quite similar to mine, and they have never been able to escape from their parents' shadows. I have always urged them: "No matter what our parents are like, we have no choice about who our parents are. We have to know who we are. Our parents are our parents, and we are ourselves. We must never tie ourselves too closely to them. What they are entitled to enjoy is not what we are entitled to enjoy, and the suffering they are supposed to endure is not ours to endure either. We shouldn't always be tied together." I tried every possible way to break free, but the facts of all these years have shown that I have no way of completely breaking free. In this lifetime, I have gone through quite a few tests. But spiritually, I feel that I am independent. At the end of the day, I really am a very unconventional person. I am simply myself.

⁵⁹ See Xu Jingxian, *Ten Years in a Dream: Memoirs of the Cultural Revolution by the Former Shanghai Municipal Party Secretary*, Hong Kong: Times International Publishing Co., Ltd., 2003, pp. 389–409.

⁶⁰ See Zhang Chunqiao's letter to Weiwei, January 25, 1985.

Zhang Chunqiao In The Eyes Of His Daughter

XI. Death

“This dream of my father’s reveals the relationship between Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping, as well as the relationship between my father and Deng Xiaoping.”

Q: Your grandson was born while your father was still alive. Was he especially comforted and happy to see the fourth generation of the family?

A: My father had four children and four grandchildren, one in each of our families. He was already very comforted and happy simply to see his grandchildren. There was only one great-grandchild, in my family. When my great-nephew was 100 days old, my parents gave him a gift. It was 100 yuan, all in one-yuan coins. They had saved it themselves, and I don’t know how long it had taken them to save it. They said these were “100 flowers,” because there was a flower design on the reverse side of the coins. My son still keeps those 100 yuan today.

Not long before my father passed away, we took the great-grandchild to see him. Of course, he was very happy. At first, my daughter-in-law was reluctant to let me take the baby there because he was so young. Later, when my mother was ill and staying in a hospital in Shanghai, my father told me that I should let my mother see the great-grandchild, saying that she would surely be very happy. So while my mother was in the hospital, we took the baby to see her. She absolutely adored him and kept her eyes fixed on him the whole time. We even took photographs. My father himself never said that he also wanted to see the baby. That’s how men are—they don’t say such things out loud, but I’m sure he really wanted to see his great-grandchild. So I said to my son, “Your grandfather isn’t doing well. Let’s take the baby to let him see him.” So we brought the baby to him.

When my father saw the child, he paused for a moment and said, “When I was little, when my great-grandfather was nearing the end of his life, they also

brought me to him so that he could see me.” He actually said that! Of course, seeing the fourth generation was a great comfort to him. He said to the child, “Grow up well. Grow up well.”

Q: What was his condition like before he passed away? I heard that when he was critically ill, he even had a dream about Deng Xiaoping. What happened?

A: At the beginning of 2005, my father fell ill shortly before the Spring Festival. He was sick from January through April. I was fully aware of his condition, and I kept trying to get him transferred to Shanghai for treatment, but the authorities would not agree. So he stayed in a hospital in Jiangyin, and the guards watching him slept in the hospital bed right next to his.

My grandson was two years old at the time. The father of the woman who was looking after him became ill and took leave to go home, so I also had to look after my grandson. In any case, I was constantly running back and forth between the two, and I was terribly anxious.

While my father was in the hospital in Jiangyin, the guards would occasionally bring me the bills and show me how much money had been spent on him. Eventually, when they said that hundreds of thousands of yuan had been spent, I couldn't take it anymore. I told them, “If you let me take him back, I don't need you to spend a single penny. I can take him away right now, and then you won't have to spend any more money.” After that, they stopped showing me the bills.

My father had a very clear understanding of life, aging, illness, and death. He said, “I'm not afraid of death, but I'm not looking for death either.” He also understood the process of illness in old age, because he had been responsible for the medical care of three elderly people. In the end, I signed a document stating that no tracheotomy should be performed and that he should not be resuscitated. When he was critically ill, all of us children were by his side. I watched him take his last breath.

Toward the end, my spouse asked me to ask my father whether there was anything else he wanted to say to us. But I couldn't bring myself to ask him. Although I tried my best to hide it, my father still understood that he was critically ill. At one point, when he was critically ill, he said to me: “Chairman Mao said

that when an elderly person dies, there should be a celebration meeting, and that they should also be cremated. All of that was put in writing and signed. But Hua Guofeng did neither of those two things. He did, however, hold a celebration meeting for me—and it was in Tiananmen Square, with so many people and on such a grand scale. I later saw it on television too. I really never expected that he would do that for me. I've had a good enough life."

Here, my father was referring to the mass rally held in Tiananmen Square in October 1976 to celebrate the overthrow of the Gang of Four.

Also during the period when he was critically ill, he told me about a strange dream he had:

"I've been having the same dream a lot these past few days. I dream that Deng Xiaoping comes to find me. I say to him, 'Aren't you in the Pacific? How did you get here?' Deng Xiaoping says, 'I have nowhere to go now. Nobody wants me. I went to Chairman Mao, and the Chairman said, "I've been very busy these past few days. What is there to say about him? Isn't it just a matter of whether a cat is white or black? Let's wait and see."' Jiang Qing runs over and curses, 'Deng the Traitor!' I then go to find the Premier, but the Premier also says there's nothing to talk about. The Premier says, 'You cursed me too, and I cursed you too. What is there left for the two of us to say?' Deng Xiaoping then says to me, 'The Chairman listens to you now. Please put in a good word for me.' I say to Deng Xiaoping, 'The Chairman hasn't asked me to go to him now. Even if I did go, what could I possibly say on your behalf?'"

I recorded these words at the time in the address book I carried with me, and over the past couple of days I found the original notes. Now that I know more about what happened, I can understand them a little better. In other words, this dream of my father's reveals something about the relationship between Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping, as well as the relationship between my father and Deng Xiaoping. If the "April Fifth Incident" had not happened, history might have turned out completely differently.

Q: Who attended your father's farewell ceremony?

A: The farewell ceremony was held in Jiangyin on April 28, 2005. My fifth uncle and his daughter attended; my third uncle came with his four children; and

everyone from our family went as well—my son, daughter-in-law, and granddaughter; my three daughters, sons-in-law, and grandchildren. It was all family members.

Q: Finally, what would you say in summary about your father?

A: My father left us on April 21. On April 24, I returned to Shanghai from Jiangyin. That night, I couldn't sleep, and many words and phrases came flooding into my mind. I wrote them down at the time. I have found all of them now, and they can be regarded as my final assessment of my father.

Falling ill, he ultimately passed away, yet still
believed that the affairs of the world were of
great consequence, and that adversity was as
formidable as Mount Tai;

With Marxism-Leninism in his heart, he
still believed that the working people would
prevail, and greeted the rising sun with a smile.

Unyielding and persevering, he was prepared
to spend his entire life behind bars;

Unwavering in his loyalty, he never wavered in
his commitment to his ideals.

Ninety years through wind and rain, the spirit
of a scholar;

Through thousands upon thousands of years
of sun and moon, upright, open, and radiant.

One person spreads a rumor, and ten
thousand people pass it on as truth; A heart
wholly devoted to the cause, to be judged by
generations to come.

After the farewell ceremony was held in Jiangyin on April 28, I returned to Shanghai with my father's ashes. I still could not sleep, and I wrote:

Firmly believing in Marxism-Leninism and following the Chairman, he spent sixty years wielding the written word with fervor; Confined to a humble room, his convictions remained unshaken, and for thirty years he uttered not a word.

In memory of my father, Zhang Chunqiao.