

# The formation and disintegration of Hong Kong Maoists in the 'Fiery Era' (1970-1981)

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**Abstract** In 1976, the end of the Cultural Revolution quickly resulted in disillusionment among Hong Kong's Maoists, with organisational disintegration following soon after. However, most scholarship has overlooked the multiple factors resulting in the rise and fall of Maoist activism in Hong Kong. In order to investigate this conjuncture, this article centrally explores the early formation and internal structure of the Maoist community in Hong Kong, as well as the external factors of the political changes it experienced, such as the crucial moments of the 5 April Tiananmen protest, the fall of the Gang of Four, and the post-Cultural Revolution transformation, which is likely to have led to their final disintegration. Compared to other studies of global Maoism, the history of Maoism in Hong Kong remains largely unexplored. This article provides some details, describing Maoist internal life and giving an account of its ideological disputes with opponents, such as Hong Kong's Trotskyists, in order to further understanding of its unknown history.

**Key words** Maoist movement, Hong Kong, Cultural Revolution

## Introduction: Fiery Era Maoists

The 'Long 1970s', also known as the Fiery Era (火紅年代), was a period during which both the western new left and the Chinese Cultural Revolution exerted a significant impact on Hong Kong's social move-

ments and student activism. As Law Wing-sang, a Hong Kong studies scholar, has pointed out, the Fiery Era was a crucial moment, a period during which local post-war baby boomers launched their own initiatives, distancing themselves from the traditional camps of both the left and the right, and claiming politico-ideological autonomy.<sup>1</sup> And during this time – when Hong Kong was experiencing these political changes, and a number of new social movements were emerging – activities also increased among young Maoists.

Before exploring Maoist activism during the Fiery Era, it is important to briefly introduce Hong Kong's previous political dynamics, which were based on a 'two-camp' political division, and took place within the context of continuing British rule in Hong Kong. From the early stages of the Cold War, especially after 1949, the year of the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) on the mainland, and the retreat of the Republic of China (ROC) to Taiwan, Hong Kong's political arena was primarily divided between the pro-PRC, pro-Chinese Communist Party (CCP) left-wing presence and the pro-ROC, pro-Kuomintang (KMT) right-wing base; this was understood as the continuation of the Chinese Civil War, or 'Chinese politics on Hong Kong soil'.<sup>2</sup> Both camps sought political influence among Hong Kong's population; and British colonial rule was partly responsible for this dynamic.

Since 1949, Hong Kong's British colonial administration had been aware of its own vulnerability on Chinese soil. Because of that vulnerability, it adopted a pragmatic policy of non-confrontation and neutrality, which tacitly tolerated the local presence of both pro-PRC and pro-ROC establishments – unless they offered an overt challenge to the colonial order.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile, PRC policy-makers recognised that 'leaving Hong Kong alone' would be of considerable value to its new China regime, and they therefore chose to tolerate British colonialism in their backyard.<sup>4</sup> During the post-war period, the left-wing camp in Hong Kong exerted a palpable pro-PRC influence among sections of the local Chinese population, through a variety of civic channels including publishing houses, newspaper agencies, schools, film companies and trade unions.<sup>5</sup> The Hong Kong and Kowloon Federation of Trade Union (FTU) was exceptionally influential, particularly during the 1967 anti-British riots organised by the left-wing camp, which led to large-scale violence and

casualties, and significant disruption to daily life.<sup>6</sup> Later, during the 'long 1970s', and despite the colonial government's crackdown during the 1967 riots, the left-wing camp continued making inroads into civil society and its organisations – through activities such as increasing enrolment in pro-PRC primary and secondary schools, providing loans to farmers through 'communist-controlled' banks, and organising holiday picnics and dinner parties for workers.<sup>7</sup> British colonial intelligence observed at the time that the influence of pro-PRC leftists was 'already far greater than their strength implies'.<sup>8</sup>

However, many new young actors emerged in Hong Kong's political arena during the Fiery Era – which was an era of social movements, and a longing for social justice and reforms. During the 'long 1970s', as a way of addressing the grievances and social problems that had been exposed in the 1967 riots, the colonial government was forced to gradually introduce a series of social reforms. Consequently, despite making no reforms in the political arena, the colonial government's efforts to re-establish communication channels between rulers and the ruled, and its investments in social welfare, improved Hong Kong's standard of living to an extraordinary degree.<sup>9</sup> These visible changes created a relatively tolerant social environment that allowed the younger post-war generation to campaign to draw attention to the many unsolved issues regarding social injustice and inequality; and this passion for social justice broke through the binary divisions of two-camp politics through its expression in a series of reform-oriented social movements. As Law Wing-sang also pointed out, at this stage, young political actors were trying to claim their own identity and autonomy, rather than subordinating themselves to one of the existing camps of the political establishment.

Fiery Era actors were mainly made up of university students and graduates. These were divided into the Maoist faction (國粹派), who were heavily influenced by the Cultural Revolution, and the social-action faction (社會派), which was influenced by a wide range of political ideologies, including liberalism, anarchism, western Marxism and Trotskyism. Outside the campuses, intellectual Maoists were active and aligned with the student Maoist faction, but separate from them. Trotskyists and anarchists, on the other hand, who were engaged in a

series of anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist protest actions as interventions in local political life, were considered close to the student social-action faction. The division between these two student factions provoked continuous and tedious ideological debates throughout the Fiery Era, especially between Maoists and Trotskyists.

The difference between Hong Kong student Maoists of the Fiery Era and the orthodox leftists of the pro-PRC camp is not immediately obvious to the outside observer. The terminology and political history of Hong Kong Maoists remains unclear and under-studied: 'Maoists' are often seen as identical to 'pro-PRC leftists', with little distinction made between the two. However, for some Fiery Era Maoists the distinction was clear. Zhou Luyi (周魯逸), a self-proclaimed Maoist who was involved in the student movement during the Fiery Era, has pointed out some differences:

It's hard to tell if I was affiliated with the traditional left-wing camp, or if I was a western-like 'new left'. My intellectual structure is typically built upon a new left trend ... but my political and familial background derives from a classic left-wing camp. As I became more leftist-inclined when I grew up, I started to self-proclaim and categorise myself as a Maoist [rather than an orthodox leftist]. Not many people have regarded me as a pro-PRC left-winger, but they call me 'Maoist'. A Maoist could join the communist party or could stand outside of party organisation.<sup>10</sup>

Zhou's words clearly demonstrate that Maoists and pro-PRC leftists in 1970s Hong Kong overlapped, and could be categorised as the same group of political activists, as they were both heavily affected by the ongoing Cultural Revolution. However, Zhou consciously regarded himself as a Maoist rather than an affiliated member of the left-wing camp, thereby indicating that his Maoist activism, or intellectual Maoism, was not solely the product of pro-Chinese communist influence: it also partly came from the western new left. Thanks to the latter, Fiery Era Maoist young people had more autonomy than the pro-PRC leftists, such as affiliated trade unionists, who always followed instructions from Beijing.<sup>11</sup>

As Zhou indicates, a certain degree of political autonomy distinguished the young Maoists of the 1970s from the leftists in pro-PRC institutions. And such a distinction also calls into question the assumptions of previous studies on Hong Kong's pro-PRC presence, which saw an organisational homogeneity between young Maoist groups and the traditional left-wing camp, and thought that there was no major difference between the two – both being heavily influenced by the Cultural Revolution and CCP's policies. This article explores how the formation and disintegration of the Hong Kong Maoists reflected the CCP's influence on Hong Kong, as well as the internal and external factors that led to this shift within local left-wing activism.

In late 1976, Hong Kong Maoists suddenly became silent, especially on campus. This has often given the impression that the Maoist movement entirely vanished from Hong Kong in 1976, due to the termination of the Cultural Revolution. However, this assumption ignores the internal and external complexities that contributed to the disintegration of local Maoist groups. The rest of this article is divided into four sections that investigate these complexities. Section 1 gives an overview of the emergence of intellectual and student Maoists in response to local changes in Hong Kong politics, particularly the Baodiao Movement (保衛釣魚臺運動, Defend the Diaoyu Islands). Section 2 emphasises the complex internal principles of the student Maoist faction, as reflected in its principles determining lines of action, organisational life, and emotional identifications, which facilitated the construction of an enclosed community which is likely to have contributed to later disillusionment and disintegration. Section 3 maps the ideological disputes between Maoists and Trotskyists on the question of the 5 April Tiananmen protest, as well as the reverberations of the fall of the Gang of Four. Section 4 asserts that, despite the disintegration of the student Maoists following the end of the Cultural Revolution, some intellectual Maoist circles in Hong Kong resisted disintegration and made (unsuccessful) attempts to reinterpret Maoism in the late 1970s.

This study is based upon primary and secondary sources from the Hong Kong Public Records Office and various university libraries in Hong Kong, including academic works, published and unpublished memoirs, cultural and political periodicals published by Maoists and

their opponents, local newspapers, and accounts from British-colonial documents; these offer diverse perspectives and evaluations on the development of Maoist activists and their allies and opponents. A lack of written records means that the internal life of the Maoist community is largely unrecorded, but this absence has to some extent been redressed through research based on oral history. A small number of oral accounts, such as interviews conducted by the co-authors of this article, and filmed public lectures, has allowed the neglected voices of the Maoist group to be heard, and this helps deepen an understanding of its internal dynamics.

### **The birth of autonomous Maoists**

In 1967, against the backdrop of the rise of the Cultural Revolution on the mainland, large-scale anti-British riots were launched by the pro-PRC left-wing camp in a challenge to British colonial rule in Hong Kong. This led to a massive crackdown on pro-PRC leftist groups.<sup>12</sup> As a consequence, the left-wing camp was forced to keep a low profile. A 'fear of the left' was created among a large section of the Hong Kong population as a result of the way the violence and disruption caused by the riots was framed by the British administration's anti-communist propaganda.<sup>13</sup> Yet within two years a new form of radical leftism had emerged, in local circles of intellectuals and students, under the banner of Maoism.

In this context of a 'red scare' in Hong Kong, what were the factors that enabled the birth of an autonomous Maoist movement amongst local intellectuals and students, relatively independently of pro-PRC leftist activities? Our view is that one key factor in the rise of Hong Kong Maoism in the 'long 1970s' was the influence of imported new left ideologies, which was often stronger than that of local Chinese communism. A small number of young Chinese intellectuals who had been abroad in the late 1960s had learnt about the global new left movement and adopted Maoist ideology, and had then played a leading role in the emergence of Hong Kong Maoist activism during the Fiery Era.

One of these young intellectuals was Bao Yiming (包奕明), who had grown up in Taiwan and was the son of a KMT senior official.

When studying at National Taiwan University in the early 1960s, Bao had been detained by the KMT authorities due to his involvement in politics, and after his release had left for the United States to continue his studies at Columbia University. During his stay in the US he was exposed to the Civil Rights Movement and became strongly supportive of new left organisations such as the Students for a Democratic Society and the Black Panthers. It is believed that he became a Maoist during this time. In 1968 he came to Hong Kong and began to write politically for local cultural periodicals and newspapers, such as *Pan Ku* (盤古) and the *New Evening Post* (新晚報). Gu Zhaoshen (古兆申), who was an editor of *Pan Ku* at the time, recollected that Bao ‘had influenced us a lot’: ‘While everyone was criticising the Cultural Revolution and leftist ideas [in Hong Kong], he brought leftist ideas back from the US, where the left-wing movement was reaching its climax.’<sup>14</sup>

Bao’s writings introduced both new left and Maoist ideas from the west, and attracted the attention of dozens of young Hong Kong intellectuals and student leaders; and this increased the appeal of new left tendencies, particularly Maoism. Zhou Luyi, for example, who became a leading figure in the Baodiao Movement, was one of Bao’s closest followers from the late 1960s. The reason Bao succeeded in introducing Maoism to a group of intellectuals and student elites even in the midst the post-1967 ‘red scare’ atmosphere in Hong Kong was that he was able to re-package Maoist ideas without employing orthodox pro-PRC leftist language or using passages from Mao’s writings. In his well-known article, ‘Discussing the status quo of overseas Chinese concerning three main problems – the separation of China, unification, and anti-independence’, Bao offered a crucial insight, namely that many overseas Chinese were unsure which China (ROC or PRC) they identified with, and this had led to an identity crisis. To handle such a crisis, Bao suggested, the post-war generation in Hong Kong should actively intervene in social life by consulting the masses, interpreting their opinions, enforcing social reforms through actions, and identifying with a China regime that better served the masses.<sup>15</sup> In other words, through this investigation of the problem of the identity crisis of overseas Chinese, Bao had reinterpreted the Maoist mass line. Moreover, he also encour-

aged the younger generation to search for the root causes of the 1967 riots and other social problems.

In 1968, Bao organised a small pro-Maoist intellectual salon through private meetings and discussions in his apartment, which was located in Ha Keng Hau Village.<sup>16</sup> This can be seen as the first coming together of intellectual Maoists. Young intellectuals and members of the student elite from the Ha Keng Hau Village salon later went on to take leading roles in the editorship of *Pan Ku*, which was a key – and autonomous – cultural and political journal-platform for intellectual Maoists, and introduced a broad range of Maoist ideas to its local, young, readership in the early 1970s.

Another important intellectual Maoist monthly journal was *The Seventies* (七十年代月刊), founded in February 1970 by Li Yi (李怡), a prominent local intellectual. During the early years of *The Seventies*, the majority of its writers came from *Ta Kung Pao* (大公報), a local newspaper under the direct sponsorship of the CCP.<sup>17</sup> Because of this *The Seventies* has often been categorised as a cultural journal of the traditional pro-PRC left rather than a journal of autonomous intellectual Maoists. However, according to Li Yi's autobiographical accounts, although they employed the same group of writers as CCP-sponsored newspapers, and were funded by the Shanghai Book Company (a pro-PRC printing firm), the editors and writers of *The Seventies* had a greater degree of autonomy than those writing for other media outlets affiliated with the pro-PRC leftist establishment, such as *Ta Kung Pao* and *Wen Wei Po* (文匯報); moreover, Li himself was not a CCP member.<sup>18</sup> Instead of reiterating official PRC propaganda, the journal's editorial vision – 'learn about the world, study the society, and understand life' – set a neutral tone for its publications and placed more emphasis on international politics than on China. Due to its novelty, *The Seventies* gained a significant readership both in leftist circles in Hong Kong and across Southeast Asia. As Li recalled, 'Initial sales surged unexpectedly, and thus, re-publication was needed'.<sup>19</sup> All this suggests that, as an intellectual Maoist journal, *The Seventies* enjoyed a relatively high degree of autonomy, and did not always strictly follow the party line, as other media outlets had to do. Moreover, the greater degree of autonomy of *The Seventies* offers



a partial explanation for its liberal turn in the late 1970s, which is discussed later on in this article.

While intellectual Maoists were supervising the publication of *Pan Ku* and *The Seventies*, more action-oriented Maoists were energetically engaged with Hong Kong's social movements. One of the most important political movements of the Fiery Era was the Baodiao Movement (i.e. Defend the Diaoyu Islands), in which a group of autonomous Maoists played a leading role.

In September 1970, Japan and the US reached an agreement that the US would end its administration of the Ryukyu Islands, which had been in place since Japan's military surrender in 1945, and would return it to Japan; the Diaoyu Islands, over which both China regimes claimed sovereignty, were included in this agreement.<sup>20</sup> This immediately incensed overseas Chinese students, who insisted that sovereignty over the Diaoyu Islands belonged to China. From late 1970 onwards, a series of peaceful Baodiao demonstrations were initiated in the US, organised by overseas Chinese student groups.<sup>21</sup> These demonstrations in the US subsequently gave rise to the spread of Chinese patriotism amongst a substantial proportion of Hong Kong's baby-boomer generation, and helped launch Hong Kong's own Baodiao Movement from February 1971 to May 1972, the social significance of which was long-lasting and significant. This movement brought numerous local young people into politics and nourished their activism throughout the Fiery Era.

There were three organisations mainly responsible for organising the Baodiao protests in Hong Kong: the Hong Kong Federation of Students (HKFS), the United Front (UF) of 'Defend the Diaoyu Islands', and the Baodiao Action Committee (BAC). Different Baodiao groups had different emphases. The HKFS was a representative student body, which had eight affiliated university students' unions and represented over 10,000 university students.<sup>22</sup> It vigorously organised Baodiao protest actions, borne along by the idealistic nationalist sentiments of its members. The UF was formed by a cadre of local new left radicals who had been heavily affected by the global new left movement and its ideological tendencies; it maintained a strong anti-colonial, anti-imperialist position. Participation in the Baodiao Movement was seen as the adoption of a movement line based on anti-colonial activity, and thus as a way

of challenging the British-colonial order and publicising its anti-colonial views.<sup>23</sup> The BAC was a semi-Maoist Baodiao group led by key members of the Ha Keng Hau Village salon, including Bao Yiming, Zhou Luyi and other self-proclaimed Maoists. Its involvement in the Baodiao Movement was an intellectual Maoist endeavour that sought to turn the theoretical Maoism they advocated into actual political practice. The BAC promoted a line of 'identifying with the socialist motherland', which suggested that mass participation in the Baodiao Movement was a key component of socialist China's anti-imperialist and unification project.<sup>24</sup>

Under the influence of the BAC, many university students participated in the Baodiao Movement. Furthermore, when in October 1971 the PRC replaced the ROC in the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council, a considerable number of Hong Kong students decided to embrace a socialist China they had hardly known previously. This event also prompted students' unions such as Hong Kong University Students' Union to hold a variety of 'Know China' cultural activities, including seminars, lectures, student forums and cultural exhibitions, which introduced and discussed the PRC's current socialist developments against the backdrop of the Cultural Revolution, and included the organisation of student tours to the 'socialist mainland'.<sup>25</sup>

'Know China' activities were promoted by students' unions at many local universities and colleges, and it became widely recognised and well-known; and this in turn facilitated the formation of an autonomous pro-PRC student Maoist faction in 1972 or at around that time. From then onwards, the student Maoist faction devoted itself to introducing the PRC's 'socialist successes' and organising campaigns on campus to help students 'identify with the motherland'; the aim was to encourage local students to know their 'socialist motherland', and thus to recruit student activists.<sup>26</sup> Though the traditional pro-PRC leftist establishment sponsored 'Know China' activities and kept close ties with student organisations, as confirmed by colonial intelligence, the British colonial administration was not convinced that 'communists' – i.e. the traditional pro-PRC leftist camp – entirely controlled these student activities.<sup>27</sup> This can be seen as a British understanding that, compared to the pro-PRC groups affiliated to the old left-wing camp, the newly-emergent student Maoist faction was able to operate semi-autonomously.

As the Baodiao Movement declined in late 1971, its young activists began to seek new ideas for furthering Hong Kong's social movements and bringing about political reforms. While student Maoists found redemption in Maoism and the pro-PRC line of 'identifying with socialist motherland', dozens of the young new left radicals who had been involved in the UF-launched Baodiao protests travelled to the west, especially to France, where they were in close contact with Trotskyists from the French branch of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International. They also had contact with prominent but exiled Chinese Trotskyist pioneers, such as Peng Shuzhi (彭述之) and Wang Fanxi (王凡西). Under the dual influence of French and veteran Chinese Trotskyists, most of these new left activists gradually shifted their politico-ideological positions to Trotskyism. When they returned to Hong Kong in 1973, they founded their own small Trotskyist youth collectives with the hope of entering the local political arena. From then onwards, adopting the same stance as orthodox leftists, student Maoists considered Trotskyists their most dangerous enemy within Hong Kong's leftist circles. From 1974 to 1976, the ideological dispute between the two camps intensified, which later helped bring the Maoists to disillusionment. But before that can be discussed, the internal political life of the student Maoist group must be elaborated upon.

## **The formation of an enclosed community: examining the internal principles of the student Maoists**

### *1. The principles determining lines of action – no more anti-colonialism*

When student Maoists first emerged on Hong Kong campuses in 1972, they discussed aligning the anti-British colonial line with their own 'Know China' agenda. However, the more they understood the PRC's position on Hong Kong, the less inclined they felt to adopt action based on an anti-colonial line. Ever since the establishment of the PRC, its top leaders, including Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai, had recognised that the British colony of Hong Kong was a vital economic corridor that allowed mainland China to receive significant financial assistance

and helped rejuvenate its economy, while also hoping to utilise Hong Kong to alleviate external pressure in a Cold War environment.<sup>28</sup> Chinese communists had thus for a long while followed a pragmatic and non-confrontational policy on Hong Kong, referred to as 'long-term planning and full utilisation'. Under these guidelines, the pro-PRC leftist camp was not interested in overthrowing British rule in Hong Kong, but instead sought to co-exist with it, regarding it as an important economic and political buffer. A 1966 talk by Wu Dizhou (吳荻舟), a former leader of Hong Kong's traditional pro-PRC establishment, illustrates the policy the PRC believed Hong Kong leftists should follow:

We cannot liberate Hong Kong right now because of America. If we do not resolve the problem with the US, the Hong Kong issue will not be settled. Today, American imperialism encircles us, while Soviet revisionism from the north has closed its doors to us. Under such circumstances, if we take Hong Kong back, it will be meaningless, like only getting a Huangpu or Qingdao ... Hong Kong is a place that has wide global influence, while it is a bridgehead for us to connect with the world. If we take it back, we will close our doors to the world, which is not good for us at all. From Hong Kong, we can have a better understanding of the weaknesses of imperialism, which we can exploit. If we hold on to it long enough, we can fully take advantage of it. It is better than taking it back.<sup>29</sup>

After the 1967 riots were suppressed, the left-wing camp had to re-employ a non-confrontational strategy towards the British colonial order, in order to secure its future survival. Although anti-British propaganda remained in circulation, this approach meant that leftists carefully avoided direct confrontation with the colonial authorities. And colonial intelligence recognised the leftist camp's re-adoption of a moderate line. For example, it noted that 'open confrontation with the Government is discouraged' amongst the leftist trade unions.<sup>30</sup>

Nevertheless, during the Baodiao Movement campaign, a group of Maoists within the BAC had publicly condemned the colonial government's suppression of the Baodiao protests, and thus had showed itself to be resolutely anti-imperialist.

In spite of this shift, the orthodox left-wing camp, through its established ties with student Maoists on campus, continued to exert a strong ideological impact on the student movement, and the influence of Bao Yiming and other autonomous Maoists from the BAC started weakening. As Zhou Luyi has pointed out, the autonomous Maoists were split over a number of issues. These included: the degree of emphasis on Maoist theory; the direction to be taken by social movements (taking up direct actions or not); what constituted the acceptable level of autonomy; and the extent to which there should be submission to the local orthodox leftist line (both organisationally and strategically). The majority usually took the course of acting covertly and passively within the movement. Most of them were uninterested in taking direct action but zealously accepted their agenda from the local leftist camp. A minority, in contrast, advocated 'overt' activities. The latter primarily consisted of key organisers and participants in the Baodiao Movement.<sup>31</sup>

Zhou points to the tension between many of the radical autonomous Maoists – particularly the small group of intellectual Maoists led by Bao – and the majority of student Maoists. Eventually, in 1972, Bao and his close allies retreated from political practice, and student Maoists took a leading role in advancing pro-PRC activities, particularly amongst university and college students. Moreover, they also made use of Maoist-controlled cultural platforms, such as *Pan Ku*, expressing the view that they were not willing to directly challenge British rule, or even to temporarily acknowledge it. For example, drawing on the Three Worlds Theory promoted by Mao, which argued that Britain belonged to the 'Second World' camp, some Maoist writers suggested in *Pan Ku* that the PRC should form a 'united front bloc' with a number of capitalist countries from the Second World – including Britain – to oppose the First World hegemony represented by the US and the Soviet Union; and this led them to argue for consent to British rule in Hong Kong, at least temporarily.<sup>32</sup> From 1972 onwards, the anti-colonial agenda in local social movements became an unimportant one for student Maoists. As Hong Kong scholar Lam Wai-Man has pointed out, the student Maoist faction had to subordinate its anti-colonial agenda to its agenda of 'identifying with the motherland'.<sup>33</sup> Following this logic, any action that might create tension with the colonial government was discouraged.<sup>34</sup>

An anti-corruption campaign later brought to the forefront a dispute over movement strategies: 'identifying with the motherland', as advanced by the student Maoist faction, was in direct opposition to the anti-colonialism that was being advocated by newly organised Trotskyist groups and the student social-action faction. In the late summer of 1973, when Chief Superintendent of the Hong Kong police Peter Godber was revealed to have enriched himself considerably from receiving bribes, a small group of young new left radicals, including Trotskyists and anarchists, held a series of street protests and petitions against governmental corruption that included a strong anti-colonial sentiment. The student Maoists neither advocated nor participated in these protests; they warned that they might provoke a direct challenge to the colonial order and regional stability. The Maoists' reluctance to take part in any anti-British actions in the 1970s was often ridiculed by their opponents as the 'revolution in the safe house'.<sup>35</sup>

Student Maoists' response was to defend their position of non-involvement in overt anti-British activities. First, they warned that the student movement should learn from the 1967 riots – 'non-confrontation' gave the British no excuse to crack down on Maoist activities. They also emphasised the importance of 'media and publicity work' at the current stage of the student movement.<sup>36</sup> More importantly, they underlined that the PRC's strategic planning over Hong Kong – 'long-term planning and full utilisation' – was highly instructive, and could eventually help resolve Hong Kong's status as a British colony. They claimed that anti-British protest actions, such as the anti-corruption campaign, were organised in a rash and aggressive manner, since non-Maoist protesters did not understand what PRC guidelines and collectivism meant.<sup>37</sup> This perhaps also reveals the rigid principles of internal life to which the Maoists adhered – collective conformity within the organisation.

## *2. The organisational principle of student Maoists – collective conformity*

Collective conformity was an important principle of Maoist internal life. The suppression of the 1967 riots was a fresh, painful memory for many, and they did not wish to experience another clampdown on their activities. From the early 1970s, young student Maoists began to

consciously imitate the covert actions of their communist predecessors in Hong Kong both before and after the PRC was established. Unlike the Trotskyists and social-action students, they seldom proclaimed themselves Maoists in public, instead focusing on infiltrating student work and gaining control of several student representative bodies, such as the HKFS, the Hong Kong University Students' Union, and the Chinese University Students' Union, through participation in autonomous student elections. They believed that their covert work in the student movement could face suppression by the colonial authorities at any time, and so they rigidly enforced collective conformity, which was understood as a necessary means of organising the internal life of their faction of the left. This was why they organised internal reading groups of Mao Zedong Thought and studied the selected works of Mao and official party newspapers, in an effort to understand and grasp the current struggle line of the Cultural Revolution.<sup>38</sup> Student Maoists constantly stressed the importance of their members' submission to organisational disciplines. Any individual scepticism was discouraged. They believed that the more questions the members asked, the greater the possibility that internal information could be leaked to opponents, such as the Trotskyists, which might in turn lead to the suppression of Maoist groups.<sup>39</sup>

This Maoist logic of retaining collective conformity explains why student Maoists opposed the anti-colonial action line advanced by others. Their adherence to the guidelines of 'long-term planning and full utilisation' not only signified their loyalty to Maoism and Beijing, but was also a manifestation of their organisational conformity. Within the student movement, student Maoists were seen by their anti-colonial opponents as blind followers of Beijing's policies. However, according to Yang Baoxi (楊寶熙), a former key figure of the student Maoists and ex-chairman of the HKFS, they were not 'blind followers' merely waiting for revolution; rather, they had self-consciously accepted and collaborated with Beijing's line.<sup>40</sup>

The student Maoists' pursuit of rigid collective conformity led them to form an enclosed political community. As well as having faith in Beijing, and later collaborating closely with the leftist camp, this faction was profoundly antipathetic towards the anti-British campaigns organ-

ised by Trotskyists and others, and this disconnected them from wider social movements in Hong Kong.

### *3. Emotional connections within the circle – revolutionary moralism*

Revolutionary moralism played a key role in student Maoist activism. Building moralism within the student Maoist circle was aimed both at instilling the core values of Maoism and strengthening emotional ties amongst its young members, particularly given that Maoists believed the value-system of capitalism was prevalent in Hong Kong society.

The principle of moralism built upon students' guilt about behaving like the 'petit-bourgeoisie'. It was believed that many student Maoists retained, to varying degrees, a number of 'petit-bourgeois characteristics and behaviours', ranging from gambling and drug abuse to attending dances or not obeying organisational disciplines. Under the Maoist principle of moralism, a transition from 'depraved petit-bourgeois characteristics' to a 'new proletarian morality' was necessary. This would be developed through self-education in two main ways.

The first was to study well-known 'red literature', such as the *Song of Youth* (青春之歌), and the *Red Crag* (紅岩), which would help the students recognise why it was wrong to preserve personal 'petit-bourgeois characteristics', and would foster an understanding of 'proletarian morality'. As Yang Baoxi recalled, the *Song of Youth* was amongst their 'must-read' literature because its story described a great personal transformation in its protagonist: a bourgeois landlord's daughter devotes herself to the communist revolution and submits to party discipline. Through reading these 'red novels', student Maoists were enabled to empathise with their comrades, and commit to gradually eliminating their 'petit-bourgeois behaviours' and becoming 'genuine proletarian fighters'.<sup>41</sup>

The second way of developing revolutionary morality was to organise Maoist classic 'criticism and self-criticism' activities. During these activities, the participants were asked to eliminate the 'bourgeois characteristics' they still retained, and to reveal their 'petit-bourgeois guilt' to their peers by telling individual and family stories. Yang Baoxi illustrated this with several examples:



One student's family owned a grocery store. They thought the ownership of a store was a kind of capital. Hence, this student regarded himself/herself as a petit-bourgeoisie and constantly self-criticised his/her bourgeois element endowed by his/her family ... Another student's family ran a business that rented dance venues ... so he began to self-criticise, as his family possessed business capital.<sup>42</sup>

The self-criticism required of student Maoists concerned not only what they had done, but also the class to which their families belonged: the idea of 'bourgeois guilt' was largely based upon their personal and family experiences. Only after the new revolutionary morality had taken hold amongst them could they be saved from the old capitalist world. It was therefore necessary for them to cleanse themselves from their bourgeois elements and take a step towards the new morality – to reform themselves under the direction of the organisation.<sup>43</sup>

Besides fully endorsing Beijing's Hong Kong policy and whole-heartedly studying Mao Zedong Thought, there were various other student activities for self-education, such as 'visiting the poor' (訪貧問苦). This was a local version of 'Down to the Countryside' (上山下鄉), which was required of young people during the Cultural Revolution in mainland China. There were also 'visiting tours to the motherland', which were tailored towards self-education and gaining a better understanding of socialist China.<sup>44</sup>

The first student tour to mainland China was organised by the Hong Kong University Students' Union in early December 1971. Through seeing 'socialist achievements' (namely the grand infrastructure projects), and speaking with a number of patriotic intellectuals who had devoted themselves to questions such as the PRC's development of science and education, student representatives were impressed by socialist developments in China and strengthened their emotional ties with Maoism. After their return to Hong Kong, many travellers were confirmed in their belief that the path of the PRC was the right one to follow.<sup>45</sup> The first tour was a huge success, and encouraged the students to organise more 'Know China' activities on campus, and more student tours to the PRC; and it also helped construct a moral vision for student

Maoists, who now sought to become new men and women of the revolution, and to play their part in building the future of socialist China through self-education.

Above all, the construction of revolutionary moralism was intended to strengthen emotional ties between the students, and to solidify their moral attachment to Maoism, which would lead to their further immersion in the internal life of the faction, and help consolidate collective conformity.

Directed by these three key principles, an enclosed Maoist community was created. However, this meant that student Maoists within this community focused more on its internal life than on the political changes occurring outside of their circle. When they saw external social transformations, their principles could not adequately explain what was really happening.

## **The road to disintegration: changing political dynamics after the 5 April Tiananmen protest**

Since the late 1920s there had been incessant ideological conflict between Trotskyists and other communists over the interpretation of orthodox Marxism. Chinese Trotskyists had been critical of the CCP's bureaucratisation, both during and after the revolution, and had been among the loudest voices of opposition within Chinese leftist circles.<sup>46</sup> Hong Kong Trotskyists in the 1970s were no exception, despite their marginal existence. In January 1974, Trotskyists established their own press in Hong Kong, the *October Review*, in which they put forward anti-colonial and anti-capitalist views while also engaging in sharp criticisms of the CCP regime and its local leftist establishment. Trotskyist writers particularly attacked left trade unions for their long-term non-confrontational policy: they condemned the FTU, Hong Kong's largest trade union and an affiliate of the traditional left-wing camp, as being 'one of core pillars of maintaining the colonial order', and as 'a bourgeois agent in the proletariat'.<sup>47</sup> Unsurprisingly, Trotskyist criticism of the CCP and the British colonial state was suppressed by both pro-PRC forces and the British. It was also difficult for Trotskyists to

gain much support from within the left. As the young Trotskyist leader Wu Zhongxian (吳仲賢) complained, Hong Kong Trotskyist groups were politically isolated within the local social movements of the time.<sup>48</sup>

On 5 April 1976, a mass protest erupted at Tiananmen Square, Beijing, against the background of the internal battles that were taking place within the PRC at the end of the Maoist era. The demonstrators sought to commemorate the late Premier Zhou Enlai and to express their discontent with the Gang of Four.<sup>49</sup> The Tiananmen Incident, as this protest became known, had a hugely transformative effect on the political dynamics between leftists in Hong Kong. On 8 April, the *People's Daily*, an organ of the CCP, officially labelled the Tiananmen protest as a 'counterrevolutionary act', deliberately designed to 'split the leading body of the party'.<sup>50</sup> A few days later, Hong Kong leftists, following Beijing's instructions, strongly condemned the 'Tiananmen counterrevolutionary riots'.<sup>51</sup> In contrast to this, the *October Review* published a statement in support of the protest, claiming that the Chinese 'worker-peasant revolutionary masses' had been awakened to a new understanding of the state of affairs in China, and calling upon them to stand up and fight for their rights and duties, since they were the 'masters of the country'.<sup>52</sup>

Hong Kong's Trotskyist groups, together with other new left factions, student groups and human rights organisations, also pronounced their solidarity with the Tiananmen pro-democracy demonstration. On 2 May, four small Trotskyist organisations and one anarchist group signed a joint statement entitled 'Let people stand and speak', in support of the protest.<sup>53</sup> The statement denounced Beijing's suppression of the demonstration and demanded that all those arrested should be unconditionally released, and guaranteed freedom of expression and other civil rights.<sup>54</sup> On 12 May, in an effort to support the Tiananmen protest, new left-adjacent organisations, including three Trotskyist youth groups, submitted a petition to the Hong Kong branch of the Xinhua News Agency (XNA), which represented the local leftist camp.<sup>55</sup> However, the agency refused to take it.<sup>56</sup> On 16 May, the tenth anniversary of the Cultural Revolution, the same Trotskyist groups organised a pro-Chinese-democracy rally at Victoria Park, which attracted between 600 and 1000 people.<sup>57</sup> During the rally, a Trotskyist speaker told the audi-

ence that the Tiananmen Incident was 'a righteous revolutionary act', and that 'the goal of socialist democracy must be achieved'.<sup>58</sup> The rally was soon disrupted by pro-Beijing supporters, however, chanting slogans such as 'long live Chairman Mao', and attacking press photographers.<sup>59</sup>

The Trotskyists' solidarity actions infuriated pro-PRC leftists and student Maoists. Their affiliated press and trade unions, as well as student organisations led by Maoists, accused the Trotskyists, among other things, of being 'anti-China' and 'anti-communist' in action; of having historically been 'German-Japanese fascist collaborators'; and as constituting 'a special detachment of imperialists, Soviet revisionists and counterrevolutionaries' in the present.<sup>60</sup> Some of the local pro-KMT press, such as *China Magazine* (中國雜誌) and the *Hong Kong Times* (香港時報), reported and praised the 16 May rally, even though it had mainly been organised by local Trotskyists.<sup>61</sup> This offered the Maoists a pretext to heap further accusations upon the Trotskyists. *Pan Ku* writers asserted that Trotskyists were forming a 'sacred triple alliance' with Soviet revisionists and pro-KMT groups in Hong Kong, whose aims were 'anti-China, anti-communism'.<sup>62</sup> (This was to overlook the fact that Trotskyists were ideologically and politically opposed to the Soviet and KMT regimes, and had also made vehement criticisms of Soviet 'bureaucratic dictatorship' and the KMT's 'capitalist' rule.<sup>63</sup>)

Trotskyist voices remained weak in the dispute with Maoists and orthodox leftists, but they continued to argue their case in the *October Review*. They stated that all the accusations against Trotskyism were based on a leftist or Maoist conception of history.<sup>64</sup> Most of the arguments against them were either selected from the Soviet textbook, the *Short Course*, compiled during the Stalin era, or from the CCP's ideological attacks on Soviet revisionism during the Sino-Soviet split in the 1960s. They argued that these accusations lacked theoretical or historical substance, and that no solid evidence had been provided for their claims that Trotskyism and Trotskyists were anti-communist 'evils'. Such attacks, they alleged, were designed to smear Maoism's potential ideological competitors on the left. According to the Trotskyists, this construction of their tendency as enemies implied that, apart from the selected works of Mao and official documents from 'two newspapers and one journal', the student Maoists were lacking in any concrete

theoretical foundation or research.<sup>65</sup> For example, as a student writer later pointed out in the *Undergrad*, a student-edited journal based at the University of Hong Kong, many student Maoists had no understanding of what Maoist politics actually meant. Their accusations were largely drawn from ahistorical conspiracy theories specifically intended to keep them cloistered away from political reality, and to maintain their organisational unity on campus.<sup>66</sup> Indeed, this lack of theoretical depth later paved the way to disillusionment for many of them.

Six months after the 5 April demonstration there was a crucial moment of disillusionment within the Maoist student faction: the death of Mao Zedong in September and arrest of the Gang of Four in October led many of them to a reconsideration of the nature of the Cultural Revolution and the Maoist practices in which they had been so deeply involved. Some student activists would have already been confused by the CCP's internal struggle, which was reflected in the Tiananmen protest. One Maoist article in the *Chinese University Student Paper* (中大學生報), written in response to that uncertainty within the Maoist student movement, seems to indicate that the party line of the Cultural Revolution was being questioned, and that Trotskyist oppositional voices, in support of the Tiananmen demonstration and critical of the CCP's bureaucracy and the Cultural Revolution, had been circulating amongst young Maoists.<sup>67</sup>

This confusion and ambivalence intensified after the arrest of radical Maoist leaders in Beijing, and there was more chaos within the Hong Kong student Maoist faction. It is likely that the fall of the Gang of Four was a turning point that led many student Maoists to disillusionment. It is worth noting, too, that mass disillusionment among the student Maoists could also be attributed to the collapse of revolutionary moralism within their enclosed community. As mentioned above, student Maoists, following the principle of revolutionary moralism, had striven to eliminate the 'bourgeois elements' that they still perceived as persisting among them. Hence it had been important for them to seek socialist role models from 'red literature', or from the material reality of PRC success, to help them complete their personal transformations from men and women with lingering petit-bourgeois characteristics to become new socialists. For example, Fang Yuanhua (房遠華), a former student

Maoist leader at Chung Chi College, Chinese University, recalled that Jiang Qing, a member of the Gang of Four, had been regarded as one of these socialist models, 'We always looked up to Comrade Jiang. She was a heroic figure to us'.<sup>68</sup> In October 1976 Jiang was arrested: the party disclosed her 'counterrevolutionary crimes' and exposed her as a key 'bourgeois' figure within the CCP. There was consequently a complete collapse of the image of Jiang as a moral revolutionary leader. Students began to ask questions such as 'Why did revolutionary role models use public property for their own corrupt capitalistic enjoyment?'<sup>69</sup> From this point onwards, they began to discover current instructions from official documents that were inconsistent with previous ones. Many of them simply lost all trust in Beijing or Maoism.

As we have discussed, the enclosed student Maoist community had become dependent upon the construction of an internal revolutionary morality. The collapse of internal moralism thus resulted in immediate disorder, which fractured its collective conformity. According to Fang, after the fall of the Gang of Four, internal life fell apart. The student Maoist faction were supposed to inform members when study meetings had been organised in response to their current confusion, and to maintain the unity of the group, but nothing happened, and members were subsequently further demoralised.<sup>70</sup> As a consequence, significant political changes in mainland China undermined the positions of student Maoists in Hong Kong. Many of them left the organisation, while some of them avoided any discussion of the changes in the PRC.<sup>71</sup> The faction disintegrated shortly afterwards.

To sum up, the 5 April mass demonstration at Tiananmen and the subsequent solidarity actions organised by the Trotskyists and others planted the seeds of doubt among members of the Maoist student movement in Hong Kong. Later, the collapse of the Gang of Four created an unexpected earthquake within Maoist circles. These external changes led to the moral disillusionment and organisational disintegration of the student Maoists group in late 1976. The disillusionment and disintegration perhaps show that student Maoists cannot be simply equated with the pro-PRC leftists who were deeply rooted in local society; student Maoists had existed as a group for less than five years (1972-1976). Had they not had a different outlook, student Maoists would not have ceased

their activities, but instead would have been eventually assimilated into the leftist camp.

### **The reinterpretation of Maoism by intellectual Maoists and their liberal turn**

There was, however, a group of intellectual Maoists who refused to fall apart in late 1976; and the main factor that kept them together was their closer connection to the local leftist establishment, including the Hong Kong XNA branch, after Bao and other more autonomous Maoists had left the circle. As Li Yi has discussed, whenever there was a key political change in the PRC the XNA branch would organise a series of political study workshops for its affiliated members of staff, in order to study the new instructions from above and help retain their faith in Beijing's party leadership.<sup>72</sup> When the Cultural Revolution neared its end in late 1976, the leftist establishment repeated this practice. Though Li did not positively state that *The Seventies* had received political education from the orthodox leftists, from his commentary it can be deduced that intellectual Maoist forums such as *The Seventies* had a more intimate relationship with the local leftist network than the student Maoist faction had done; and this once more points to the relatively high degree of organisational autonomy among student Maoists.

The intellectual Maoist group were quick to adopt Beijing's official line of denouncing the Gang of Four, and took advantage of events to reinterpret Maoism for its local readers. In Li Yi's article on the arrest of the Gang of Four, published in *The Seventies*, he explained that the overthrow of the Gang of Four should not be equated with the rise of an anti-Maoist current within the party hierarchy, given that the new party leadership under Hua Guofeng continued to abide by the Maoist line.<sup>73</sup> Such an interpretation of Maoism under Beijing's new leadership was advocated by many within Hong Kong's intellectual Maoist circle. They immediately endorsed the new party line of building 'four modernisations', and considered it a policy designed under the guidance of Maoism.<sup>74</sup> This orthodox interpretation was able to sustain the intellectual Maoists' ideological attachment to Maoism.

Moreover, intellectual Maoists from *Pan Ku*, who had closer ties with the student Maoist faction, also reinterpreted Maoism, following the orthodox line of 'class struggle'. While condemning the Gang of Four, they also argued that during the great transformation in socialist China, class enemies – local KMT groups, imperialists, colonial compradors and others – had swept in and spread misinformation in order to fuel fears of communism among the masses. This meant that Maoism was the only appropriate, or indeed effective, ideological weapon for counteracting the anti-China influences imposed by its enemies.<sup>75</sup>

However, these reinterpretations of Maoism did not represent any advance beyond the old Maoist directives during the Cultural Revolution. And when Beijing later made more explicitly negative criticisms of the Cultural Revolution, and admitted Mao's mistake in launching it, the intellectual Maoists in Hong Kong were completely unable to further reinterpret or revitalise Maoism. It is likely that Beijing's negation of the Cultural Revolution opened the minds of many intellectual Maoists, so that they could begin to tolerate and accept new ideas from non-Maoist ideologies. This paved the way for their subsequent liberal turn.

As early as the collapse of the Gang of Four, scepticism about Maoism had emerged within the intellectual Maoist circle, and this later contributed to the demise of *Pan Ku*. Liu Peiqiong (劉佩瓊), one of the main editors at the time, recalled that the journal had been severely criticised by its peers for the orthodox Maoist line it had taken since late 1976, and that its editors could not reach a consensus regarding its future publishing policy.<sup>76</sup> Because of this, the journal eventually came to an end in July 1978, a few months before the party leadership began the era of reform and opening-up.

*The Seventies* continued publishing, however, but from the last quarter of 1978, it was no longer fully aligned with Beijing's policies. In May 1978, an article entitled 'Practice is the sole criterion of truth', published by one of the party organs, *Guangming Daily*, generated considerable discussion regarding the 'liberation of the mind' in mainland China, which was widely regarded as one of the first moves towards opening-up.<sup>77</sup> In discussing the definitions of concepts such as 'liberation of the mind' and 'practice', writers at *The Seventies* began to reassess the Cultural Revolution in ways that differed from the official line. In



August 1978, in another article from *The Seventies*, Li Yi labelled the Gang of Four an ‘ultra-left’ faction within the party leadership, rather than defining them as ‘left in form, right in essence’, a phrase consistently adopted by party organs.<sup>78</sup> This re-definition of the left-right paradigm implied an opposition to previous intellectual Maoist practice.

In 1979, reportage from *The Seventies* became more liberal, and it began covering more reports on China’s Democracy Wall Movement. Furthermore, some overt criticism of the CCP also appeared during this period. From September 1979, the journal covered the trials of several Chinese Democracy activists, such as Wei Jingsheng (魏京生) and Wang Xizhe (王希哲), which is likely to have infuriated local orthodox leftists. In August 1981, the leftist establishment stopped funding the journal. This meant it had to raise funds from its readers, who later on largely consisted of a local circle of liberal intellectuals, including Situ Hua (司徒華).<sup>79</sup> In September, the editorial board announced that the journal would become more ‘independent and objective’, effectively meaning that it would no longer followed Beijing’s line and had completed its liberal turn.<sup>80</sup> From that time onward, all intellectual Maoist platforms in Hong Kong had ceased to exist.

### **Concluding remarks**

It is commonly assumed today that the end of the Cultural Revolution resulted in the collapse of Maoism in Hong Kong. However, this fails to recognise the internal and external complexities that caused the disintegration of local Maoist groups. For example, through rigidly transforming the complex Maoist principles of non-confrontation, collective conformity and revolutionary moralism into separate internal and external practices, student Maoists built themselves an enclosed political community, and established a system of strong conformity within their organisation. Nevertheless, it is still the case that external political changes in China, in particular the crucial political moments of the 5 April Tiananmen protest and the fall of the Gang of Four, caused political earthquakes within that enclosed community and gravely shook its internal unity. The collapse of revolutionary moralism

and other founding principles of the student Maoist faction led to mass disillusionment and, eventually, complete disintegration. Intellectual Maoist circles, however, remained intact until their liberal turn in 1981.

Although there is a wide range of research on the rise and fall of the global Maoist movement, the history of Maoism in Hong Kong remains largely unknown due to the inward nature of its organisations.<sup>81</sup> Despite sharing many similarities with small Maoist and radical left groups worldwide, the Hong Kong Maoists were characterised by a locally specific inward-facing focus on a constructed community and ideological orthodoxy, rather than involvement in a wider socio-political movement outside of their circle. As political actors, they were too endocentric to adapt to reality. Eventually, they even distanced themselves from addressing Hong Kong's existing social injustices and colonial problems, which remained central concerns for other leftist movements. Previous studies of Hong Kong's contemporary history have often categorised all the Maoist groups together, and regarded them as all securely fixed within the pro-PRC leftist camp. But such studies have overlooked the new left influence introduced by Bao Yiming and others into the Maoist circle during the Fiery Era, as well as the relatively high degree of autonomy of certain of its cultural and political activities.

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This article uses the Pinyin system of romanising Chinese except when mentioning historical and academic figures, Hong Kong's Street names and local-printed publications that are better known in Wade-Giles spelling.

## Notes

- 1 Law Wing-sang, 'The past and present of Hong Kong's local consciousness', in *Reflexion*, No 26, 2014, p123.
- 2 Alexander Grantham, *Via Ports: From Hong Kong to Hong Kong*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1965, pp158-59.
- 3 Chi-kwan Mark, *Hong Kong and the Cold War: Anglo-American Relations 1949-1957*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, pp12-39; Steve Tsang, 'Strategy for survival: the Cold War and Hong Kong's policy towards Kuomintang and Chinese communist activities in the 1950s', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol 25, No 2, 1997, p311. Furthermore, as Tai-lok Lui and Alan Smart have pointed out, as long as the British side confirmed that both pro-PRC or pro-ROC camp endangered the colonial regime, 'political repression could be justified as a necessity for the survival of freedom [of the colonial state]'. Tai-lok Lui and Alan Smart, 'Learning from civil unrest: state/society relations in Hong Kong before and after the 1967 disturbances', in Robert Bickers and Ray Yep (eds), *May Days in Hong Kong: Riot and Emergency in 1967*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009, p152.
- 4 See the PRC's Hong Kong policy in note 28.
- 5 For the civic penetration of the pro-PRC leftist camp in Hong Kong society see Man Cheuk-Fei, *Partisan Journalism in an Enclave: A Case Study of the Hong Kong Leftist Press, 1947-82*, Hong Kong: MA thesis, Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1998; Lu Yan, 'Limits to propaganda: Hong Kong's leftist media in the Cold War and beyond', in Zhang Yangwen (eds), *The Cold War in Asia: The Battle for Hearts and Minds*, Leiden: Brill, 2010, pp95-118. Tai-lok Lui, 'Connecting politics with football between China and Hong Kong: Cold War, football politics and Hong Kong society' in Zhang Shaoqiang, Liang Qizhi and Chen Jiaming (eds), *Hong Kong, Narratives, Media*, Hong Kong:

- Oxford University Press, 2013, pp1-20; Jiang Guansheng, *Chinese Communism in Hong Kong, 1949-2012*, Hong Kong: Cosmos Books, 2012, pp324-393.
- 6 See more details about the 1967 riots in Gary Ka-wai Cheung, *Hong Kong's Watershed: the 1967 Riots*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009.
  - 7 For example, the civic penetration of the left-wing camp in Hong Kong society is evidenced in declassified British-colonial documents housed in the Hong Kong Public Records Office: Special Branch New Territories, 'Communist activities in the NT', 1971, HKRS 534-4-28; 'Intelligence report No 1 (25)/69: left-wing activities in Tsuen Wan District', 29 Dec 1969, HKRS 734-4-1; Special Branch, 'Communist influence in resettlement estates', 22 Oct 1971, pp1-10, HKRS 734-4-1; 'Left-wing activities - Mui Wo sub-division, 1967-1972', HKRS 915-1-2.
  - 8 'Communist activities in the N.T.', p4, HKRS 534-4-28.
  - 9 For the colonial government's implementation of reform policies and its results see Ambrose Yeo-chi King, 'Administrative absorption of politics in Hong Kong: emphasis on the grass roots level', *Asian Survey*, Vol 15 No 5, 1975, pp422-39; Ian Scott, *Political Change and the Crisis of Legitimacy in Hong Kong*, London: Hurst, 1989, pp82-127; John Carroll, *A Concise History of Hong Kong*, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007, pp160-62.
  - 10 Zhou Luyi, *Commemorating Bao Cuoshi (Bao Yiming) and Discussing the Global Changes* (Cantonese), Part 2, Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pJPM2HqhxkU> (accessed 15 October 2021).
  - 11 Ibid.
  - 12 Zhou Yi, *The History of Leftist Movement in Hong Kong*, Hong Kong: Lixun Publishers, 2002, pp316-8.
  - 13 Xu Chongde, 'Winning the hearts: the Hong Kong government's propaganda policy in the 1967 riots', *The 21st Century*, No 147, 2015, pp64-81.
  - 14 Lu Weiluan and Xiong Zhiqin, *The Round Trip: The Personal Experiences and Reflections on Chinese-Western Cultures, 1963-2003 – Interviews with Gu Zhaoshen*, Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 2010, p147; See also Zhou Luyi, *Commemorating My Dear Friend and Teacher Bao Cuoshi (Bao Yiming)*, unpublished, 2018, pp1-28.
  - 15 *Pan Ku*, 25 January 1968, pp2-16.
  - 16 Zhou Luyi, op cit, pp4-5.
  - 17 *Apple Daily*, 3 May 2021, pA12.

- 18 *Apple Daily*, 21 October 2016, pA14; *Apple Daily*, 21 December 2014, pE05.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 *People's Daily*, 29 December 1970, p1; Seokwoo Lee, 'Territorial disputes among Japan, China and Taiwan concerning the Senkaku Islands', *Boundary & Territory Briefing*, Vol 3, No 7, 2002, pp11-12.
- 21 For more details about the Baodiao Movement in the US, see Zhou Daji and Liu Peibao, 'An overview of the Baodiao Movement held by Chinese students in the US in the 1970s', *The Journal of Studies of China's Resistance War against Japan*, No 3, 2006, pp215-249; Lu Minghui, 'The Chinese student movement of the Baodiao in the US and the peaceful reunification of China', *Overseas Chinese History Studies*, No 4, 2009, pp52-60.
- 22 Around 1972, the HKFS claimed to represent over 12,000 university and college students and had eight affiliated students' unions. In mid-1975, it was reported that the HKFS represented more than 17,000 students in Hong Kong, which demonstrated its strong potential for mobilising. See 'Annex A: Hong Kong Federation of Students (HKFS)', p1, HKRS 934-3-30; 'The Hong Kong Federation of Students (HKFS)', 8 July 1975, p2, HKRS 890-2-36.
- 23 For example, the UF straightforwardly claimed what it demanded in its slogans: 'Colonialist, we are shouting aloud to awake you: ruse to sabotage the great consolidation of the Chinese People will be completely smashed.', 'The translation of an open letter to the Acting Governor of Hong Kong from the H.K Protect Tiaoyutai United Front', 25 October, 1971, Date of Translation, 28 October, 1971, HKRS 163-9-717.
- 24 *Pan Ku*, April 1971, pp2-4; Lei Jingxuan, 'The very first Baodiao Movement in Hong Kong', in Guan Yongqi and Huang Zicheng (eds), *The Way We've Passed*, Hong Kong: Cosmos Books, 2015, p205.
- 25 For example, see 'Know China Movement', 20 August 1973; 'Memo: The Know China Movement', 17 December 1973, by the Special Branch, Royal Hong Kong Police; 'The Know China Movement', 10 January 1974; 'Know China Movement', the Office of the City District Commissioner, 28 November 1974; HKRS 890-2-36.
- 26 It is hard to estimate the total number of student Maoists, as they were always mindful of not revealing their Maoist beliefs publicly. However, the influence of the student Maoist faction was significant, reflected in youth participation of the Know China Movement. In 1973, over 10,000 people went to see the 'China Week' exhibition organised by

- the student Maoists. See 'The scene of the first China Week', in *The Reviews of the Hong Kong Student Movement*, Hong Kong: Wide Angle Publishing, 1983, pp79-80.
- 27 'Know China Movement', 20 August 1973; 'Memo: The Know China Movement', 17 December 1973, by the Special Branch, Royal Hong Kong Police; 'The Know China Movement', 10 January 1974; 'Know China Movement', the Office of the City District Commissioner, 28 November 1974; HKRS 890-2-36.
- 28 Xu Jiatusun, *Xu Jiatusun's Hong Kong Memoirs*, Volume 2, Taipei: Lianjing Press, 1993, pp473-74; Chi-Kwan Mark, *Hong Kong and the Cold War: Anglo-American Relations 1949-1957*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, p28; Jin Chongji, *The Biography of Mao Zedong, 1893-1949*, Beijing: Central Academic Press, 2005, p948; Jin Yaoru, *A Secret Record of the CCP's Hong Kong Policy*, Hong Kong: Tianyuan Books, 1998, pp4-5. Furthermore, owing to mutual economic interests, despite being under the pressure from the Cold War, Anglo-Chinese trade ties since the founding of the PRC had remained significant. For British and Chinese considerations on Anglo-Chinese economic relations in the early 1950s, see James Tang, *Britain's Encounter with Revolutionary China, 1949-54*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1992, pp148-69.
- 29 Wu Dizhou, 'A talk with the Hong Kong and Macau workers' delegation of visiting tour', in Cheng Xiang, *The History of the 1967 Riots in Hong Kong: Deciphering Wu Dizhou*, Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 2018, pp482-5.
- 30 Hui Ki-on, Director of Special Branch, 'an intelligence report on communist activities in New Territories', 10 December 1974, quoted from Jiang Guansheng, *Chinese Communism in Hong Kong, 1949-2012*, Hong Kong: Cosmos Books, 2012, p368.
- 31 Zhou Luyi, 'Hong Kong student movement and its ideologies', in *The Reviews of The Hong Kong Student Movement*, op cit, pp281-2.
- 32 *Pan Ku*, 1 November 1975, pp1-7; 1 January 1976, pp33-6.
- 33 Wai-man Lam, *Understanding the Political Culture of Hong Kong: The Paradox of Activism and Depolitization*, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2004, p209.
- 34 For example, colonial documentation confirmed the non-confrontational action line adopted by student Maoists and stated that they 'would cause no security problem in the short term'. See Home Affairs and Information Branch, 'Note of a meeting of the steering group on student affairs held on Friday', 25 October 1974, HKRS 890-2-36.

- 35 A Bing, 'Understanding your incomprehension: the debate concerning the anti-corruption campaign', in *The Spring and Autumn of the Hong Kong Student Movement*, Hong Kong: Reviews of Far East Affairs, 1982, p66.
- 36 Lie Bing, 'A discussion with Tulong regarding the problems of Hong Kong', in *The Spring and Autumn of the Hong Kong Student Movement*, op cit, p78-80.
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 An Oral Interview with Yang Baoxi, 15 May 2019, conducted by Pik-ka Lau.
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 Ibid.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 Ibid.
- 44 For more details about the Down to the Countryside Movement during the Cultural Revolution see Michel Bonnin, *The Lost Generation: The Rustication of China's Educated Youth (1968-1980)*, Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2013.
- 45 Jiang Guansheng, *Chinese Communism in Hong Kong, 1949-2012*, Hong Kong: Cosmos Books, 2012, p284.
- 46 For more details about the history of Chinese Trotskyism see Gregor Benton, *China's Urban Revolutionaries: Explorations in the History of Chinese Trotskyism, 1912-1952*, New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1996, and *Prophets Unarmed: Chinese Trotskyists in Revolution, War, Jail, and the Return from Limbo*, Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- 47 *October Review*, February 1974, p22.
- 48 Wu Zhongxian, *Great Causes Unfulfilled – Collected Essays of Wu Zhongxian*, Hong Kong: Lewen Books, 1997, p478.
- 49 The Gang of Four was a group of four leading radical Maoist figures within the CCP leadership during the Cultural Revolution, including Jiang Qing, Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wenyuan, and Wang Hongwen. For more details about the rise of the 5 April protest see Frederick Teiwes and Warren Sun, 'The first Tiananmen Incident revisited: elite politics and crisis management at the end of the Maoist era', *Pacific Affairs*, Vol 77, No 2, 2004, pp211-35.
- 50 *People's Daily*, 8 April 1976, p1.
- 51 For example, see *Pan Ku*, 1 May 1976, pp5-6; see also a resolution on the Tiananmen Incident passed by the Maoist-controlled HKFS in *Undergrad*, 3 May 1976, p6.

- 52 *October Review*, 15 April 1976, p3.
- 53 Four of the small local and overseas Trotskyist groups were the Revolutionary Marxist League (RML), the Young Socialist Group (YSG), the Young Militants, and the Re-awaken, a London-based pro-Trotskyist Chinese youth group. Another anarchist group that jointly signed the statement was the 70s Front.
- 54 'Let people stand and speak', in *We Demand Democracy and Freedom*, Hong Kong: Lianhe Press, 1976, pp7-9.
- 55 The three Trotskyist groups were the RML, the YSG, and the Young Militants. And at that time, the Hong Kong branch of the Xinhua News Agency not only represented a state press office of the PRC, but served as a *de facto* PRC consulate (1949-1997) in the territory when Hong Kong was under British rule.
- 56 *Rive Gauche*, June 1976, p2.
- 57 *Hong Kong Standard*, 17 May 1976, p1; *Sing Tao Jih Pao*, 17 May 1976, p27; *South China Morning Post*, 17 May 1976, p1.
- 58 *October Review*, June 1976, p3.
- 59 *South China Morning Post*, 17 May 1976, p1; *Hong Kong Standard*, 17 May 1976, p1; *Sing Tao Jih Pao*, 17 May 1976, p27; *Ming Pao*, 17 May 1976, p9; *Rive Gauche*, June 1976, p2; *China Magazine*, June 1976, pp92-93.
- 60 *New Evening Post*, 16 May 1976, p4; *Wen Wei Po*, 17 May 1976, p4; *Ta Kung Pao*, 17 May 1976, p4, 18 May 1976, p4; *New Learning Monthly*, August 1976, pp4-7; September 1976, pp42-5.
- 61 *China Magazine*, June 1976, pp89-94; *Hong Kong Times*, 20 May 1976, p2; 27 May 1976, p2.
- 62 *Pan Ku*, 1 August 1976, p3.
- 63 For example, see Trotskyists' criticisms of the Soviet and KMT regimes in *Combat Bulletin*, July 1975, p7; *October Review*, November 1975, p9.
- 64 *October Review*, July 1976, pp4-9; August 1976, pp4-8; September 1976, pp11-8; October 1976, pp7-13, 15, etc.
- 65 'Two newspapers, one journal' referred to the CCP organs: the *People's Daily*, the *People's Liberation Army Daily*, and the *Red Flag*.
- 66 *Undergrad*, 4 March 1978, p3.
- 67 *Chinese University Student Paper*, 17 July 1976, p5.
- 68 An Oral Interview with Fang Yuanhua, 21 May 2019, conducted by Pik-ka Lau.
- 69 *Ibid.*
- 70 *Ibid.*
- 71 *Undergrad*, 4 March 1978, p9; Zhong Wen, 'The student movement in



- recent three years', in *Hong Kong Student Movement: Introspections and Reviews*, Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong Students' Union, 1978, pp223-4.
- 72 *Apple Daily*, 21 June 2007, pE12; 28 April 2021, pA16.
- 73 *The Seventies*, November 1976, pp4-7.
- 74 *Pan Ku*, 1 April 1977, p10-11. 'Four Modernisations' meant the CCP's goals of building 'modernisations' in the fields of agriculture, industry, national defence and science and technology.
- 75 *Pan Ku*, 1 May 1977, pp26-32.
- 76 Liu Peiqiong, 'The growth of the first post-war generation: the publishing activities of the Chinese Student Weekly and Pan Ku', in Guan Yongqi and Huang Zicheng (eds), *The Way We've Passed*, op cit, p64.
- 77 *Guangming Daily*, 11 May 1978, p1, reprinted in *People's Daily*, 12 May 1978, p2.
- 78 *The Seventies*, August 1978, pp15-19.
- 79 *The Seventies*, August 1981, p3; *Apple Daily*, 3 January 2011, pS5.
- 80 *The Seventies*, September 1981, p3.
- 81 For more details about global Maoism see Julia Lovell, *Maoism: A Global History*, London: Vintage, 2020.