China's Cultural Revolution, a totalitarian system?

A literature study of the Cultural Revolution based on Hannah Arendt's theory of totalitarianism

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SUMMARY

The aim of this literature study is to find out to what extend totalitarian characteristics, as Hannah Arendt describes them, can be identified in the Chinese society at times of the Cultural Revolution in China. This is significant, because these totalitarian traits have a destructive impact on culture, societal organization and the individual. If totalitarian traits can be identified, they could have a lasting influence on any society. Thus, this thesis might help us understand the current Chinese society better. In order to place the Cultural Revolution into context the turbulent history of China is described from the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911 to the end of the Cultural Revolution with the death of Mao in 1976. Next the thesis describes the theory of Hannah Arendt on totalitarianism. The most important characteristics of totalitarianism follow from that description. These are: the precondition of the masses, the role of ideology, ongoing movement of the totalitarian system, the existence of objective enemies, the existence of a totalitarian type of power and total domination of the individual and the world. Finally, this thesis looks for those traits in the Cultural Revolution decade in China. The final, general conclusion that is reached is that some totalitarian characteristics can be found in the Cultural Revolution, like: the existence of objective enemies, of a 'mass' as Hannah Arendt defines it and of systemic totalitarian power. Yet, many characteristics show that totalitarianism during the Cultural Revolution, if it was there, was certainly not complete. Doubt rises with regard to the following traits: total domination and the role that the laogai camps play in this process, the presence other types of power, the impermeableness of the ideological story and the extent to which an ongoing movement had been created.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

China is usually portrayed by the media as a force to be reckoned with and an upcoming 'superpower'. Less attention is paid to the controversial and turbulent recent history of the country. It has only been about forty years ago that the Cultural Revolution under communist reign of Mao Zedong in China came to an end (Zhou and Hou 1999). One of the estimates from a Hong-Kong researcher is that nearly two million Chinese were killed and 125 million were persecuted or subject to struggle sessions during the Cultural Revolution alone (Cheng Min 1996, as found in Yongyi 2012). The period was one of turmoil in the streets, caused by popular action among the urban youth. It had been instigated by leader Mao's call for opposition towards all those in authority that fail to be revolutionary and those that take the capitalist road (Crespigny 1975, Karl 2010). Yet, the number of casualties as well as other historical facts of that time remain a point of contestation, especially since the government does not reveal official information on this matter.

When I travelled to China in 2010 I experienced that it is not common to talk about the Cultural Revolution within China, nor about other parts of recent history and politics. Yet, some stories are finally coming out. The story about a Chinese former Red Guard (the main active youth group) that still struggles to make sense of the violence (Branigan 2012). A story about a son's guilt, because he had denounced his mother which caused her death. These stories show that some kind of discussion on the past is emerging. Some students from Shanghai recently have even become interested in Hannah Arendt, but whether they link her theory to their country's past is not known (Yuanfan 2014). Outside of China more books have been published on personal experiences of the century under Mao and the Cultural Revolution in particular, for example: 'Wild Swans' by Jung Chang, 'Life and Death in Shanghai' by Nien Cheng and 'Surviving the Storm' by Chen Xuezhao (Taylor 2011). As we shall see in this thesis, this type of discussion in society is impossible in a totalitarian system.

In the current literature the Cultural Revolution is often titled a 'Holocaust', a period of totalitarian terror or a dictatorship (Baehr 2010a). When I was in my third year of college I was introduced to the theory of Hannah Arendt on totalitarian systems. Hannah Arendt talks of Nazi-Germany and Stalinist-Russia, but I wondered where Maoist-China would fit in this picture of totalitarianism. I saw that a totalitarian regime had far reaching results for the society under that regime. These social outcomes, which I will explain later, go far beyond the ones in any dictatorship. If characteristics of totalitarianism had been present in the Cultural Revolution they could have had a huge influence on today's Chinese society. Thus, with this thesis, which is a literature study, I try to distil the essential characteristics of totalitarianism from Hannah Arendt's theory of totalitarianism. My final goal is to take these essential totalitarian characteristics and analyse the Cultural Revolution with them. Therefore my research question is:

To what extend can totalitarian characteristics, as Hannah Arendt describes them, be identified in the Chinese society at times of the Cultural Revolution in China?

In order to answer the main question, the following sub-questions should be clear:

o   *What are the preconditions for the totalitarian system as Hannah Arendt describes them?*
o   *What are the mechanism of the totalitarian system as Hannah Arendt describes them?*
o   *What could be the social consequences of a totalitarian system on a society according to Hannah Arendt?*
o   *What did Chinese politics and society look like at the time of the Cultural Revolution in China?*
o   *To what extent can the Cultural Revolution be understood from the theory of Hannah Arendt?*

The societal relevance of this study is related to the relevance of understanding history in order to understand the 'now'. My expectations are that some totalitarian traits can be found in the Cultural Revolution. Some of them might have had a lasting impact on society. Moreover, one can wonder if these characteristics also pertain into the current political system and society and how much has changed since the Cultural Revolution. However, this is a discussion which is beyond the scope of this literature study. Ultimately, history is there to be learned from. As far as I know, two other writers have added to the debate whether China was totalitarian or not at the time of Mao. One of these studies (Guo 1995) did not use Hannah Arendt's theory, the other (Baehr 2010a) did. This thesis adds to the study of Baehr by providing an analysis of Hannah Arendt's theory that serves as the justification for choosing the most important aspects of totalitarianism. Moreover the analysis will focus on the Cultural Revolution instead of the whole of Mao's reign.

To be able to place the Cultural Revolution in historical context, the next chapter will give an overview of the contemporary history of China from 1920 to 1976. 1976 demarcates the death of Mao and the official end of the Cultural Revolution. Chapter two will deal with the theory of Hannah Arendt quite elaborately. It describes why the totalitarian system could be envisaged as a system and what its characteristics and social consequences are. The third chapter is the final analysis of the Cultural Revolution in relation to a totalitarian system. Characteristics of the totalitarian system as distilled from chapter two will be used to see to what measure the period of the Cultural Revolution complies with these. The thesis will end with a discussion and conclusion.
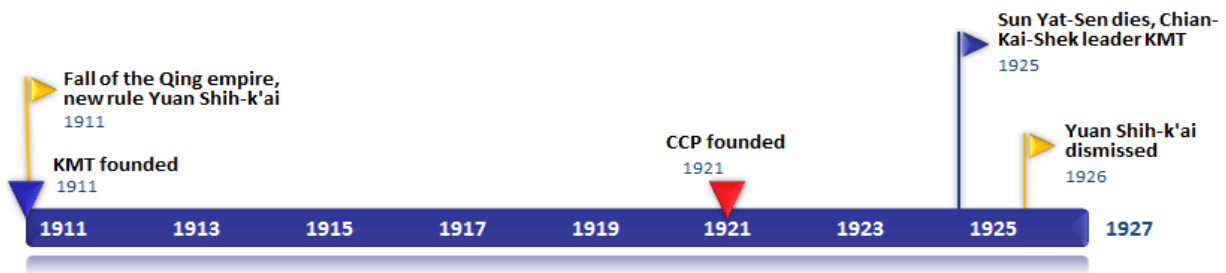
CHAPTER 2: THE HISTORY OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, FROM THE FALL OF THE QING GOVERNMENT TO THE FALL OF MAO ZEDONG

To get a better grip of the specifics of the Cultural Revolution it is useful to get a picture of the turmoil of the century that it was situated in. It was certainly not a boring time. I start this chapter with the twenties of the twentieth century, because that is when the two big political players: the Kuomintang (KMT) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) make their appearance. From a period of war with Japan and civil war within the country, we will move on to the time of the People's republic under reign of the CCP from 1949 onwards. Special attention will be paid to the Great Leap Forward, because so many Chinese people died in that period. This leads us into the Cultural Revolution (officially from 1966 to 1976). Finally the ending of Mao Zedong's reign and his succession will be discussed briefly.

I say briefly, because many books could be written on this century as there have been. For that reason, the historical account will not even attempt to be exhaustive, but serves as a general background of political history. The focus will be on questions of power, the impact of politics on society and the popular response of the Chinese people. Of course, power shifts in history are important to observe when trying to classify the governance of a country. We are more or less trying to classify the way the Communist Party reigned during the Cultural Revolution. It shows us how the Party was established in China and enables us to make a comparison with Hannah Arendt's theory on the emergence of totalitarianism. Moreover, we can't focus solely on shifts of power, but we should also look at what they mean for a society. What type of policy do the different governments install? How do different events influence their decisions? Most of all this chapter attempts to give an overview of the time.

This chapter has been limited by the available resources and time. The text on the first half of the twentieth century is mostly based on literature from around the seventies. One has to keep in mind the implications this has for the ideological influence of the writers. Furthermore, Chinese history is known for its ambiguity. When going into the details, many things could be discussed.

2.1 THE PRELUDE (1920- 1927)

Sun Yat-Sen dies, Chian-Kai-Shek leader KMT
1925

Fall of the Qing empire, new rule Yuan Shih-k'ai
1911

KMT founded
1911

CCP founded
1921

Yuan Shih-k'ai dismissed
1926

| 1911 | 1913 | 1915 | 1917 | 1919 | 1921 | 1923 | 1925 | 1927 |

In order to understand the civil war and the development of the Communist Party that would play a big part in the 20th century , we have to take a look at the period that led up to it. This is a period of big change, with the Manchurian rule coming to its end. Afterwards the strife commenced between the regional warlords and the nationalist Kuomintang of which a small part was the Chinese Communist Party.

After World War One the Marxist thought spreads among intellectuals in China (Stam 1968). This is the time when the Chinese Communist Party (hereafter: CCP) was founded. The CCP adhered to the ideals of Russian Marxism, but they found out that these ideas should be adapted to the large proletarian population of China. The Kuomintang (hereafter: KMT) already existed for ten years in 1921 when the CCP officially joined them in their anti-imperialist efforts. The Kuomintang had been founded by Sun Yat-Sen as a countermovement against the Manchu reign in China and became nationalistic in its nature. The three principles that the Kuomintang is based on are: nationalism, democracy and welfare. The USSR has had a hand in merging the CCP and KMT and Stalin even supported the KMT, because he thought this was the only way to overcome the warlords and create an environment for communism (Crespigny 1975). The KMT was not exactly in line with Marxist-Leninism, even though it had been slightly socialist (Stam 1968).

For a long time the Manchus had ruled China as an empire. The last empress that was actually old enough to rule the country was empress Cixi. In her time there were many challenges to the imperial reign (Dillan 1979 as found in Wikipedia d. n.d.). After the opium wars with Great Britain which ended in 1860, there was some struggle to modernise the country and a lot of foreign pressure to facilitate open trade relations. The outcome of this pressure was an unequal trade agreement in favour of Great Britain. Moreover, the Manchu reign had become quite disconnected from the people and all through their reign they had discriminated against Han-Chinese. Soon, there was a conspiracy against empress Cixi and the Qing Dynasty came to an end in 1911 (Crespigny 1975).

After the Qing dynasty had fallen, the Republic of China takes its place. Warlords held their regional positions of power as Yüan Shih-k'ai, a trustee of empress Cixi, was installed as prime minister (Crespigny 1975). However, his only ambition was to destroy the Manchu domination and now that had been done, he showed no clear plans for the future. Rebellion takes place and he dies in 1926. Afterwards, the KMT organised a military march to the North to unify China and rid the country of the warlords. They succeeded partly and managed to obtain half of China this way. What helped is the farmers' sympathy towards the KMT and CCP, contrary to their dislike of the warlords. Already the KMT had become quite wary of the CCP, especially because they were supported by Russia and feared a Russian supported coup. From 1926 the leader of

the KMT and president Chiang Kai-Shek, started to tighten control on the CCP share of the KMT. Still, the CCP went on with their goal of organising the farmers and factory workers.

All in all, this period had been characterised by a change from empire to 'Republic' preceded by a long erosion of imperial rule. Still, strife continues within the country as we will see in the next section.

2.2 CIVIL AND FOREIGN WARS (1927- 1949)
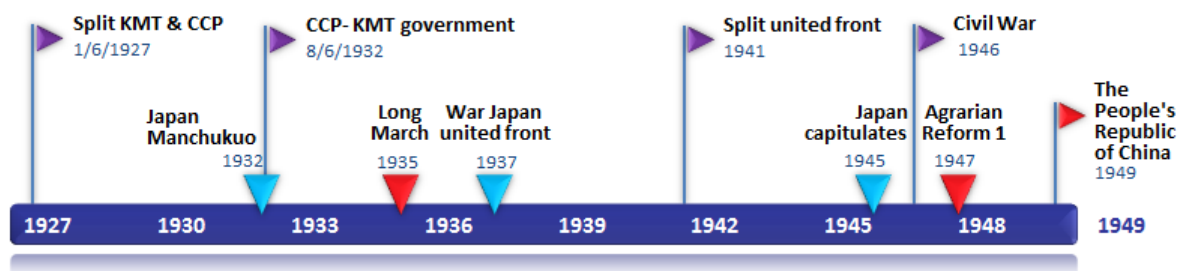
This is a relatively long period in the modern Chinese history. Stabilisation of regime after the Manchus is still not obtained. In 1928 the old government is mostly defeated and the nation is unified for the first time in a long while. But the time hereafter is characterised by civil war between the CCP and KMT as well as war with Japan during the second World War. During which the brand new communist Mao Zedong slowly starts to take the stage.

In 1927 the KMT and CCP split up after continuous oppression of the CCP. After the failed Autumn Harvest Uprisings against the Kuomintang, Mao fled to a mountainous area in Hunan together with some military force (Stam 1968). Strife between the nationalists and communists continues. Meanwhile in the remote mountainous hideout of the communists under Mao, he starts to gain more local power and the group moves to Kiangsi. At the end of the year 1930 they are under attack from the nationalists once more. In 1931 the threat of the Japanese in Manchuria grows (Crespigny 1975). This seemingly provides a distraction for the nationalists and opportunity for the communists in Kiangsi where Mao proclaims himself Chairman of the Chinese New Soviet Government. Mao was not recognised as such by many within the party though.

Both Chiang-Kai-shek, Sun Yat Sen's successor, and Wang Ching-wei, official leader of the CCP, decide to make an attempt at reconciliation at the 25th of January 1932 (Crespigny 1975). The nationalist Lin Shen becomes president and a communist Wang Ching-wei was appointed as prime minister. However, there is reason to believe Chiang Kai-shek still had ultimate control. In the same year, China lost Manchuria to Japan. They renamed Manchuria Manchukuo. This was not the only problem, but probably the biggest that the new government faced. They also had to fulfil the expectations of the people. Many people, in the countryside, were predominantly occupied with trying to feed themselves. Farmers had growing debts and land reform was needed according to Crespigny (1975, pg 107). Landlords and regionally even some militaristic lords kept their position under the nationalist-communist government, even though nationalist policy pointed towards modernisation of the country. The nationalists had more support in the urban areas.

The government in Japan at the beginning of the thirties did not support the aggressive actions on Manchuria, but that government fell in 1931 (Crespigny 1975). A nationalist, militaristic and radical Japanese government took its place. The policy of Japan towards China was one of intimidation and carelessness for the people. At the beginning of the 1932 the nationalist central Nanjing government was under attack and had to move. In 1933 there were some negotiations for peace, but afterwards Japan withdrew from the League of nations and the peace negotiations were off the table.

The threat of Japan was not enough for Chiang Kai-shek to stop him from battling the communists in Kiangsi at the same time (Crespigny 1975). In 1935 the communist tried to escape once more, this is called the Long March. A march that has been retold many times and is symbolic of the strength of the communist party. From the time of the establishment of the Chinese Soviet government until July 1934, authority had declined although he persisted to be a figurehead. In January 1935 his power was officially restored and he becomes Chairman of the Politburo. In 1936 a nationalist military group had crossed over to the communist side and Chiang Kai-shek flew there to bring them back into line. By this time, many people felt, just like the nationalist traitors, that it made no sense to continue the civil war. Chiang was caught by the communists and was forced to agree to a united front with the communists against Japan at last.
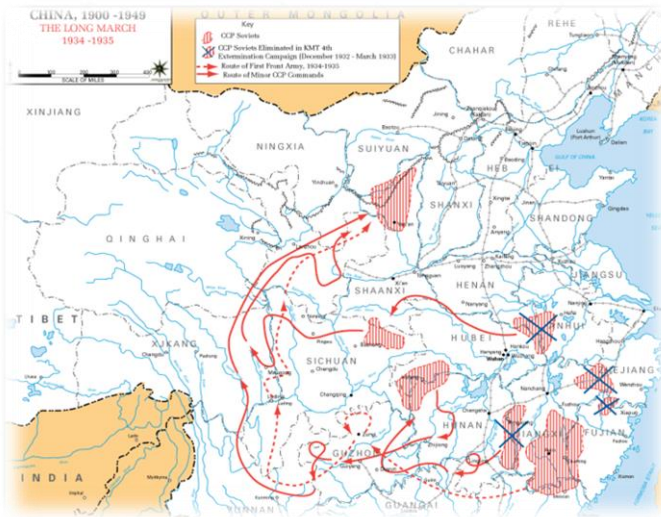

Figure1: The Long March (USMA n.d)

In July of 1937, Japan started full on war with China (Crespigny 1975). In December the capital Nanking fell, whilst other parts had already been claimed with ease. At the end of '38 the Japanese Kwantung Army controlled the Yellow Plain, the Mao's Yangtze valley and the eastern coastal area. After a failed negotiations the Japanese troops kept on moving west, pushing the Chinese people ahead of them. There were reports of rape and shooting of civilians as well as houses that were burned and looted. The communists on the other hand started to expand and made Yenan their new capital in 1937.

Notwithstanding, Chiang Kai-shek did not want to surrender, nor was his policy of battle very forward. The few negotiations that were held at the beginning of the Japanese war stranded, because Chiang did not think the terms were acceptable. In March 1940 communist leader Wang Ching-Wei was sick of the conservativeness of the nationalists regarding the war with Japan and started negotiations with the Japanese by himself (Crespigny 1975). The outcome was that he became part of a new government under control of the Japanese. This government was not really recognised by the Chinese people.

In the 40s finances of the nationalists were really bad and the Chinese situation became worse (Crespigny 1975). Not only was there a lot of war expenditure, there was also a high inflation, because of the printing of money and currency competition with Japanese currency. In addition there was corruption by landlords and state offices, which took its toll from the middleclass that had mostly supported the nationalist regime and policy. In 1941 once again, the united front against Japan was destroyed when nationalists attacked the communists. By this time, Mao Zedong had acquired one of the highest positions among the communists.

After 1941, Japan started to get interested in colonies from European countries. From that point on China received some sympathy for their side of the war from the western countries. During negotiations with the West, Japan bombed Pearl Harbour. This caused some battle on the mainland of China with help of Western military forces. But it was only until the nuclear bombings of Nagasaki and Hiroshima on the 6th and 8th of August 1945 that Japan went down. After some ten years of conflict with the Japanese the two Chinese groups were now free to battle each other again. Thus, in 1946 the civil war over who would rule China started again in all severity (Stam 1968). In 1948 the weakened and corrupted Kuomintang was finally beaten by the Red Army and Chiang Kai-Shek exiled to Taiwan. On the first of October in 1949 Mao proclaimed the People's Republic of China (Chesnaux 1979).

Thus, this phase ends with a new start. The defeat of Japan with the help of foreign forces and the defeat of the nationalists when they were at their weakest, made room for a new communist regime. The country finally had a stable government, or had it?

2.3 REFORM AND CAMPAIGNS (1949- 1957)
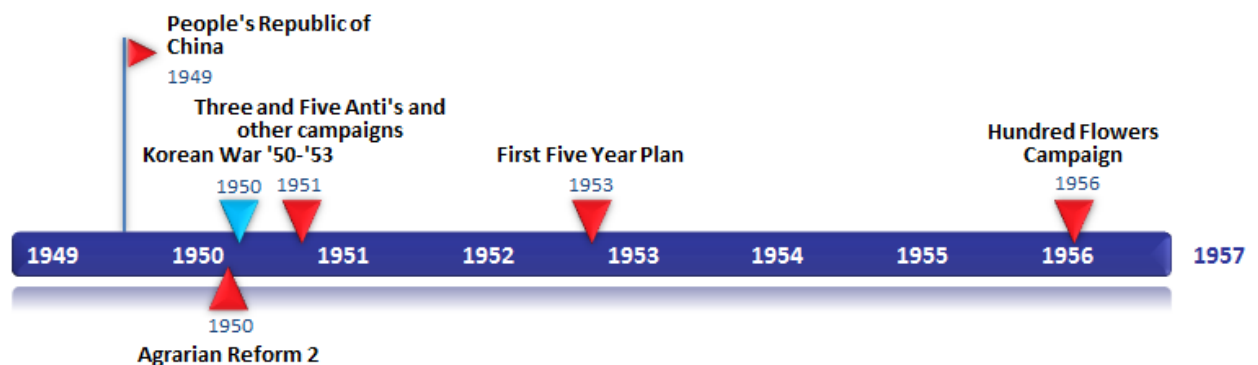
A new start, yes. Everyone is full of expectation, but the country is in ruins. Is communism the answer to the countries problems? An attempt is made to develop the country by focussing on Land Reform, accepting aid from Russia and launching the first economic Five Year Plan. Specific social movements and programs started following, with the goal of purging rightist elements. Later on in the fifties, groups of people were already being targeted for labels like: being nationalist, capitalist, bureaucratic and authoritarian. This was followed up by the Hundred Flowers campaign. Which will be elaborated on later.

It was the year of 1949. The Party comes out of the Chinese Revolution and civil war with some prestige (Chesnaux 1979 and Crespigny 1975). The CCP largely consisted of peasants (Chesnaux 1979). Some people did not recognise the Marxist ideology of the party as such, because in the beginning the communists were still associated with nationalism. But at that point any mind-set against foreign forces would do. The bigger bunch of people had taken up Marxism in everyday life in a more practical, applied way (Chesnaux 1979). Yet, values systems like the hierarchical Confucianism and feudalism are also ever so woven into the lives of the people in 1949. At this point the Communist Party's goal is to recover from the wars. Especially the economy was in a bad state. Inflation in parts of China that had been under Kuomintang control had risen outrageously. China was very dependent on import and export: there was no national market. There was a lot off unemployment, no raw material, nor the equipment to use it, a bad infrastructure and China was prone to natural disaster. Finally, the 'hazardous' capitalism has started to make its way into the economy and society.

In the fifties there is a build-up of tension between the USA and China (Chesnaux 1979). From 1950 till 1953 the Chinese troops that have been sent to Korea fight in a complex war against the South of Korea and the allied forces (Buzo 2007). After the war within Korea, the government of Peking stops being recognised by the Western forces (Crespigny 1975). Because China is quite exhausted from the war with Japan, the war in Korea doesn't do much good for the country's development and aid is offered by Russia (Chesnaux 1979). There was much coordination of the economy by the state, but some small private businesses survived. In 1950 the communists embark on a new Agrarian Reform. It was softer on landlords than the one in 1947. In the land reform in 1947 the peasants were encouraged by the government to overthrow the landlords, it had been quite violent (Wikipedia b n.d.) The reforms in 1950 were less devastating, because the Party kept in mind the goals of keeping the productive capacity

and feeding the cities. The tenant class was abolished, but even so there was difference in quality and size of land between big peasants and small and medium peasants. In some parts of society land reform was more radical, because the people took advantage of the reform to settle some old scores (Crespigny 1975). The landlords were stripped of the rights that protected them. In 1950 another change was the new marriage law, which gave women significantly more freedom of choice in marriage affairs.

A trait of the society under Mao was that mass movements and programs were sparked to get people involved in politics and to console new ideological values (Chesnaux 1979). Examples of these are; the movement of 1951 for increasing production and being more economical and the first movement against counterrevolutionaries in the same year. The goal of the last-mentioned was to punish agents of the Kuomintang, secret societies and sabotaging groups and people that were hostile to the current government. The Three Anti's and Five Anti's of 1951-52 attempted to defeat capitalist and modernists tendencies as described above, also within the party. The people were collectively 'investigated' by each other to see if they were the objects of these campaigns. The Three Anti's was aimed at high cadres that profited from their position by corruption, wastefulness and authoritarianism. Whereas the Five Anti's was plainly aimed at capitalists.

Both Chesnaux (1979) and Crespigny (1975) see the cracks in the Communist Party between supporters of radical and moderate change starting to come up in the early years 1950-52. From 1953 until 1957 Mao thought the country was ready for the first Five Year Plan (Chesnaux 1979). This entailed a shift in economic focus similar to a USSR strategy, namely a focus on heavy industry and an improvement of agriculture by creating co-operatives and collective farming. The Plan did bring some advantages, but the restriction of private enterprise (however small these had been) caused a drop in farming and national income. At the end of the campaign most big enterprises were nationalised and small ones taken up by cooperations. During the timespan of this plan many other campaigns set in and the government also started an attack on Taiwan.

The end of this period was marked by a very special and seemingly liberal campaign; 'the Hundred Flowers campaign' (1956—57). In this campaign Mao explicitly asks for critique (Twitchett and Fairbank 2008). Although many people are wary, at some point people that had seen their prestige and autonomy declined felt encouraged to speak out, also on political matters. These were mostly intellectuals, students, 'democrats' and professionals. What they did not know at that time is that Mao would follow this campaign up by an anti-rightist campaign in 1957 saying: 'the masses demand the silence of the critics'. Soon, many of the critics had to confess, some were mistreated and still others felt the pressure to identify classmates or colleagues as rightists. This is when doubt of regime first entered the masses trough the wary intellectuals (Twitchett and Fairbank 2008, pg 704). Even so, according to Crespigny (1975) it is possible that the general attitude towards the government was still positive.

2.4 A JUMP INTO FAMINE (1958-1965)

In order to speed up the process of becoming a communist country, Mao had been contemplating a new campaign. At first sight it has the characteristics of an economic campaign. With it Mao created a society in which people flee to every type of means to make survival possible (Dikötter 2011) as will be shown at the end of this section.

Mao did not want to lag behind the Soviet Union with regard to the development to a communist society. Shen and Xia (2011) show how Mao kept adjusting his goals for the Great Leap to economically outdo first Britain, then the USA and finally the Soviet Union. He believed the following could be done: from 1958 to 1960 a socialist society would be achieved and 1961 to 1963 a communist society. He wanted to achieve a surge in agricultural production by merging industry, agriculture, commerce, education and culture and the people's militia into communes. The second phase was to fuel heavy industrialisation.

Mao adopted different techniques to obtain his goals: digging out irrigation canals, mass killing of sparrows, overplanting crops and ploughing so deep that all fertile soil was gone (Dikötter 2011). In 1959 the grain production, the main element of Chinese diets, had dropped by 15 percent and the next two years another drop of 16 percent took place (Li and Yang 2005). The estimates of premature death in this time of famine are 16.5 to 30 million. The official state explanation for this remains the bad weather, but it seems unlikely. The reduction of labour in the countryside and the loss of incentives to work, because ones situation would not improve in the communes by working harder, will also have played their part in the drop of production (Li and Yang 2005). Communes were supposed to use mechanised techniques to farm and thus gain produce, this surplus would go to the industrial growth that was necessary according to Mao. Because of the pressure on the communes and cadres the actual production was overestimated more than two times the actual size.

In consequence, the government thought it was already time for the second phase of the Great Leap (Li and Yang 2005). In 1958 many farmers were relocated to the factories. In 1957 to 1958 more pressure was put on the remaining farmers by the new policy that said everybody had to have a furnace to melt iron in. Additionally, the government told the communes to sow more cash crops, which led to an even bigger decline in grain production. Only when the government realised their faults in 1961 they started reversing their policy; proclamations were lowered, they started importing grain and sending people back to the countryside. The material consequences of the Great Leap Forward were a waste of resources, worthless inferior goods, massive decline in livestock and a rotting stock of food, because the infrastructure could not serve the production, deforestation, destruction of homes and other buildings and neglect of the water infrastructure (Dikötter 2011).

It is unbelievable what this time has done to the lives of people. When one reads 'Mao's Massacre' by Frank Dikötter they'll be astonished by the monstrosities that took place. He is indeed right to say that the mere term famine is an incredible understatement. The total amount of deaths is estimated by him at 45 million people in 4 years, many of them died from hunger but by far not all. People had gone into survival mode and with it the moral structure of society became hollowed. Whatever physical crime one can think of, it is in his book. 'The rules and laws that played a part in the system were so abundant and complicated that power could be conducted to one's own interpretation.' (Dikötter 2011, pg. 239). He talks of families turning against each other in order to survive, women that 'lost' (read left) their children, stealing and selling of children or adults for that matter. Some people even resorted to cannibalism. Moreover crimes that were completely 'useless', like sexual abuse, violence, martyring and more were all part of life especially in the countryside. It is truly appalling. Dikötter (2011) even suggest the emergence of a self-containing system that operates over the heads of the people in the Great Leap Forward: 'common people's survival strategies established something that no one had meant and few could really recognise' (pg 15).

Dikötter (2011) also describes a few reasons why he thinks organised rebellions were exceptions in this time, even though they did grow in number. Any type of resistance was successfully beaten down by security forces and the national army (the PLA) (Dikötter 2011, pg 271-273). There was no real alternative for the CCP rule. A military coup had been rendered impossible by cleansing of possible enemies within the army by army officer Lin Biao. Lastly, on a more psychological level, people kept on believing in Mao. They were clinging on to all the hope they had and were not willing to give up the thought that the local cadres were just doing a bad job at interpreting Mao's commands (Dikötter 2011, pg. 273).

2.5 REVOLUTIONARY VIOLENCE (1966-1969)
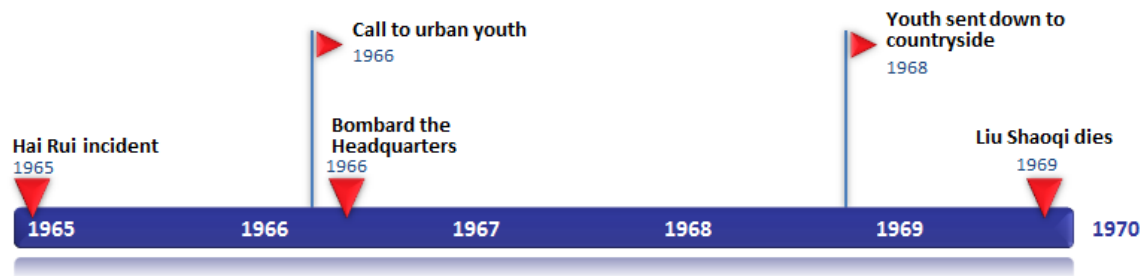
A few years after the Great Leap Forward disaster China is already almost recovered economically. Yet another decade of chaos begins, induced by Mao himself. Dikötter (2011) believes the reason for starting this period was that after the Great Leap Mao saw the party cadres turn against him slowly. He had to turn the country into chaos by this new campaign; the Cultural Revolution, in order to stay in power. Yet, other writers might find other causes for the start of the Cultural Revolution.

The Cambridge History (2008) for example claims Mao had withdrawn from his formal leadership after the Great Leap in 1958. After this time he started to lose his influence in the Party and noticed that some policy decisions were not according to his original plans. They headed in the direction of revisionism and capitalism and he felt the need to react. The intention of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was to change men's ways of thinking and adept their culture and background to the quest for revolutionary purity (Crespigny 1975, Twitchett and Fairbank 2008). Maoism became the replacing culture of the revolution (Karl 2010). At some point during the Cultural Revolution Maoism became pointed at the party and its leadership. The result of this was that 'at the end of 1966 political institutions of many of Chinas most important cities were in collapse' (Twitchett and Fairbank 2008, pg 112).

In order to get the revolution started Mao reacted to a play called Hai Rui (Karl 2010). Before he liked the play a lot, but now the play supposedly criticised Mao. Mao took Peng Zhen, a politburo member and others to task about the mild reaction towards the Hai Rui incident. The May 16th directive further verified the thought that there were bourgeois elements in the party cadres. Purge of bourgeois intellectual elements from the cultural circles and rightist opportunists within the party in the cities was now demanded (Karl 2010). In 1966 the Central Cultural Revolution Group took over the national culture and communication policy. (Karl 2010, Crespigny 1975)

Relatively early, in August 1966 Mao made a call to all urban youth to oppose all those in authority that fail to be revolutionary and those that take the capitalist road (Crespigny 1975, Karl 2010)This was very exciting for the youth, because Mao had 'selected them to play a leading role' in the Revolution (Crespigny 1975, Twitchett and Fairbank 2008). They also stood up against the bourgeoisie: teachers, intellectuals and professors who were accused of reproducing the bourgeoisie (Karl 2010). The faith of those criticised by the Red Guards, as the students called themselves, was not too rosy. They were prone to self-criticism sessions, struggle sessions, harassment and beatings, sometimes even to death. All to show the hollowness of authority.

In the years '66 and '67 the movement gradually broadened in scope (Crespigny 1975). Tension between new social demarcations and discontent led to a bigger group of people that were willing to join. Some campaigns followed once more, like the four olds campaign to erase old ideas, old culture, old customs and old habits. But also a lot more attention was paid to bloodline and other class determinants. With the campaign 'Bombard the headquarters' the masses were actively challenged to criticise the current CCP cadre. This was Mao's way to get rid of his 'enemies' within the party like Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping (Karl 2010).

Already in 1966 there start to be cracks and divisions within the Red Guard. They divide into the conservatives and radicals. Mao was not so pleased with this split in his revolutionary power (Karl 2010). He thought the Red Guards to be less useful now. At that point the only ideologically true institution, the only one he could trust now, was the People's Liberation Army (PLA) under Lin Biao. Mass violence and critique of the cadres started to get a little out of hand and after discouragement of activism did not work the army was drawn in. This created a lot of resentment against the army and party cadres. Yet, not all of the masses could be suppressed (Karl 2010, Crespigny 1975) So, 17 million Red Guards, mostly youth were sent to the countryside in order to take some pressure off of the cities. Some of them voluntarily went there, but most of them were forced. Once they were there, the picture that ideology had shaped from the countryside was nowhere to be found and many tried to return to the cities (Twitchett and Fairbank 2008). Those that did, caused a crime wave in the seventies.

It was true that two separate worlds had developed; that in the cities and that in the countryside villages. For the most part, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was an urban one (Crespigny 1975, Karl 2010). In the cities there was an amazing popular response (Karl 2010). In the countryside it was only in the year '65 that the four clean ups campaign, aimed at cleaning up the rural cadres, started (Karl 2010, Twitchett and Fairbank 2008). The bad classes in the countryside were the landlords, naturally, the rich peasants, counterrevolutionaries and 'bad elements' (Twitchett and Fairbank 2008). In 1966 the Mao cult was introduced to the villages, but only in '67 the local urban politics was controlled by the Red Guards as they started to organise themselves there. According to the Cambridge History there were two significant rural campaigns that followed. The 'Cleansing of the class ranks' in 1968, 'to punish disrupters of law and order during the anarchic phases' and the 'One Hit Three Anti' in 1970, 'against counterrevolutionary elements, fraud, profiteering, extravagance and waste' (Twitchett and Fairbank 2008, pg 664 and MacFarquhar & Schoenhals 2006 as found in Wikipedia c n.d.).

This period has been characterised by the violent popular action of the youth and later others joined them. In the next phase of what is still called the Cultural Revolution Mao focusses on normalisation and internal struggle in the party leadership.

2.6 SHIFTS IN AUTHORITY (1970-1976)

In 1969 the Red Guards were dismantled completely by the army and the time of popular action seemed over. In the following years up till Mao's death, there are many power shifts in the leadership. The military and commander Lin Biao, who had been on Mao's side for a long time, had come out of the rebellions with more power than before (Twitchett and Fairbank 2008). After the 9th Congress of the Communist Party this was further reinforced, for Lin Biao was appointed as the official successor to Mao. Getting a successor is something that is on Mao's mind as his health gets worse throughout the seventies (Karl 2010).The successor had to be someone that favoured the Cultural Revolutions and the ones to come. He always stressed that more Cultural Revolutions would be necessary in the future (Twitchett and Fairbank 2008). One year after the Ninth Congress Mao decided he wanted to abolish the position Head of State. Lin Biao opposes this. It brings suspicion into the mind of Mao. This suspicion grows with time and in 1971 Lin Biao's plane crashes and he dies. There is some discussion on the cause of the crash and preceding events.

There are some consequences to the Lin Biao affair. It enabled the purge of some military leaders in the Politburo, who had been Lin Biao's enemies. Twitchett and Fairbank (2008) see how the literal fall of Lin Biao also spread disillusionment with the Cultural Revolution outside of Mao's closest friends. Resulting in an emerging need for Mao to re-establish ties to the rest of leadership. To this end he 'rehabilitates' some officials that he had earlier expelled, most notably Deng Xiaoping, a former CCP secretary and Zhou Enlai, who had been more of a moderate. Another consequence of the crash is that Mao now had to find a new reliable successor. This was a hard task as the Party was ageing. He chose the younger Wang Hung-wen, who proved unsatisfactory in 1973.

One of the last campaigns was 'criticize Lin Biao, criticize Confucius' in 1974 with the purpose to undermine power of one of the last officials that pushed for modernisation: Zhou Enlai (Twitchett and Fairbank 2008). Who had fallen ill with cancer during the campaign. Even though Mao disliked Zhou, Zhou had been a stable force in the party and thus Mao needed a replacement. In the meantime the radical- leftist faction of the Party, including Mao's wife Chiang Ching, were labelled the Gang of Four. They were constantly in search for power and opposites of Deng and Zhou. Mao became detached from the Gang. He even seemingly started to support Deng Xiaoping, one of his former enemies, with his policy and texts that were 'revisionist' according to the Gang of Four.

In 1975, Mao could hardly speak. His health was affected by Parkinson, cataract and bronchitis (Twitchett and Fairbank 2008). Nevertheless, he took a strike at Deng Xiaoping, of whom Mao also got suspicious. When the popular Zhou Enlai passed away in 1976 once again he was without successor. Hua Kuo-feng was appointed, a relatively unknown name in that time. The Gang of Four was furious. This all led up to the Tianmen Square Incident. People were mourning over Zhou on the square. The 5th of April the period of mourning was abruptly distorted by the army when the people started outing some critique on the Gang of Four. The campaign against Deng was still going on and the Gang of Four had fallen from grace with their hungry search for power. In 1976 Mao died. Hua Kuo-feng did not reign long as Mao's successor. He was challenged by Deng Xiaoping. In 1977, after some lobbying, Deng was reinstated in his old powerful positions. He proposed the use of 'genuine Maoist thought taken as an integral whole' (Twitchett and Fairbank 2008, pg. 374). He has played an important role in different positions within politics throughout the seventies and eighties.

And so the story of the Cultural Revolution ends with Mao's death. His fears of modernising forces in the government did not prove themselves unfounded. As when he died, it did not take long for those forces to take over control. The next section will summarize some general trends throughout the history of the twentieth century.

2.7 SUMMARY

In what follows I will give a short summary of what has been described before. Interpretations and generalisations are unavoidable in this case. In 1911 the Manchu empress Cixi fell and an end comes to the long range of foreign rulers in China. The Kuomintang under Sun Yat Sen tries to establish itself, but there are still regional warlords. Part of the KMT is the Chinese Communist Party, a very small group.

When the war with warlords is mostly over the CCP and KMT enter into strife. This continues for a long time until the Japanese war forces them to join forces. Meanwhile the CCP has grown by enlisting peasants. And after the Japanese capitulation, the CCP enters battle once again with KMT. Victory is on the communist side and in 1949 Mao Zedong, a communist that had quickly risen to high position, proclaimed the People's Republic of China.

At that point China was in a bad state from civil war and foreign war. Economic campaigns and social campaigns start to emerge like the Five Year Plan, the Three and Five Anti's and the One Hundred Flowers blossom campaign. When change in the direction of a communist country did not go fast enough, Mao decided to start a larger and more radical campaign, both economic and social in its effects: the Great Leap Forward. As described in paragraph 2.4 the consequences of this campaign ,that lasted from 1958 to 1965, have been tremendous.

After some of these measures had been reversed, Mao fell out of grace for a while and Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping take over temporarily. At some point Mao finds their policy unacceptable and he starts the Cultural Revolution. The first part of the Cultural Revolution is characterised by the active youth groups that attack among others hierarchical figures and rightist elements. It was hard to tell who would go unharmed. The second part of the Cultural Revolution, after Mao had put the Red Guards in line by using the PLA in 1969, was rife with changes in the leadership. Some leaders were denounced, some rehabilitated, some died. Just like Mao, he died in 1976. First his leadership was taken over by Hua Kuo-feng who was followed up by Deng Xiaoping.

CHAPTER 3: HANNAH ARENDT'S POLITICAL THEORY ON TOTALITARIANISM

Hannah Arendt is a very 'big' name in political theory, political philosophy, philosophy in general and she is probably popular in other areas of study as well. I've chosen to use Hannah Arendt's theory for my analysis for different reasons. Her theory is based on facts of the totalitarian regimes, but does not stop there. She really tries to figure out how systems like this happen and does not settle for simple explanations of it. She sheds a new, critical light on modernity. And finally her analysis of the effects on society and individuals are quite fascinating. In what follows the main focus will be on her study of totalitarianism. First, the chapter will discuss the background and theoretical position of Hannah Arendt. Then it will go into detail on her theory of the totalitarian movement by subsequently looking at what led up to it, its shape, its direction, the totalitarian means to achieve these ends and the main consequences for society. The end of this chapter will be in the form of a short summary. A good overview of her theory will lead to the characteristics of totalitarianism as she understood them. This allows for a comparison of the Chinese Cultural Revolution to these totalitarian traits in the next chapter.

3.1 ABOUT HANNAH ARENDT

This section will provide background information on Hannah Arendt and her theory. First I will take a look at her personal background, then at her view of the political and subsequently her view of power.

Background

Hannah Arendt was born in Hanover Germany in 1906 (The Hannah Arendt Centre n.d.). She went to university in 1924 where she has become acquainted with Heidegger, by whom she is still influenced. In 1929 she did her doctoral philosophy at Heidelburg Universities. Hannah Arendt was a Jew, but this might not be the focus of attention when looking at her. It is not necessary something that one has to know to value her work (Achterhuis 2012). Hannah Arendt has been active in a Zionist organisation, for which she did some research when she was arrested by the Gestapo. She was able to flee to Paris together with her husband. In 1940 she was just in her second marriage when Hannah was imprisoned again in the Southwest of France. Again she escaped with her second husband and moved to New York.

In America she taught at different universities and at Princeton she became the first woman awarded a full professorship (The Hannah Arendt Centre n.d.). In the 1950s she published her major works: the Origins of Totalitarianism an the Human Condition. Hereafter she published her thoughts on the Eichmann process in Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil, which caused much upheaval. This did not at all stop her, she continued to publish subsequently; On Revolution, Men in Dark Times and Crisis of the Republic. Arendt died of heart failure in 1975, but she did manage to complete the first two volumes of her trilogy The Life of the Mind, on Thinking and Willing, and beginning work on the final volume Judging.

The political

Because Hannah Arendt's theory focusses on the political, some explanation is needed of her vision of the political. This enables us to look at her theory more critically. Hannah Arendt's ideal of politics reaches back to the Greek idea of the polis (Achterhuis 2012). It is safe to say that not many people conceive this form of politics as ideal. Forst (2013) explains Hannah Arendt's ideal as distilled from her work 'The Human Condition'. Arendt ideally envisions a split between the social and the political. The political should not intervene in social matters, they can be solved objectively, like administrative issues. And social antagonisms cannot exist in the political realm. The political realm is a realm of deliberation on the common good. One could wonder what would be left for politics to deal with once social questions are removed. Well, the political realm is mostly engaged in trying to sustain itself. In order to do this they have to cover, among others, questions on war and peace and questions on the constitution. Hannah Arendt mentions an alternative to all current forms of governance that flows from this view of the political: a council system democracy. Here groups in society put forward a delegate that sets himself apart from

other people by searching for the common good. We can conclude here that Hannah would probably not be happy with the way we carry out politics right now nor the way it was carried out just before the totalitarian system set in. That Hannah Arendt's view of the political is so radically different than most of us, might pose a problem for the applicability of her theory on the specific political phenomenon of totalitarianism. Her strong judgement of 'good' politics leads to a more critical view of totalitarianism. She might notice more political 'evils' in a totalitarian system than another person would.

Power

Her idea/ideal of the political is intimately linked to her idea of power. Politics and power are concepts that are often mentioned together. Hannah Arendt does not explicitly mention in which way she uses the concept of power in her theory on totalitarianism. Yet, Brunkhorst (2008) explains how the different notions of power intermingle in several of her theories. This is important, because apparently there is a different type of power present in a totalitarian system than in other types of governance. This section will show that totalitarianism is in essence a system. This way of envisioning totalitarianism maybe be pretty abstract and even more so if one associates power purely with actors and not with systems. I hope the next bit will make clear that systems can generate power too.

As will be shown in the next paragraph, power in a totalitarian system is the direct opposite of the type of power Hannah envisions. This becomes clear particularly in the article of Brunkhorst (2008). Brunkhorst (2008) divides the concept of societal power into four different types. First, there is the type of power that is repressive from an action point of view (1). With regard to power the action point of view means that actors are actively engaging in the creation of power. Whereas in the system point of view an individual actor has no say in this creation of power. It is institutionalised without individual intention for this to happen. In a hierarchy one actor has the power to impose binding decisions on another actor against its will. In Brunkhorst's (2008) table this is represented by power nr. 1.

Point of view → Type of Power ↓	Action	System
Repressive	1. Power to make binding decisions *(Weber)*	*3.* Structural power / ideology *(Offe/Marx)*
Constitutive	2. Empowerment / communicative power *(Arendt/ Habermas)*	4. Founding productive power *(Parsons/Foucault)*

Table 1. Types of societal power (Brunkhorst 2008)

The second type of power (2) is constitutive instead of repressive and perceived from an actor perspective as well. This is the kind of power that Hannah Arendt endorses. She claims power is created when equals act in collective deliberation (Peeters 2012). This view accentuates the need for the political debate or discursive space. Her particular interpretation is that this type of power should be with the polis. Here Hannah Arendt discovers a problem, because it is difficult and potentially dangerous to make this kind of discursive power sustainable and durable

(Brunkhorst 2008). At this point she introduces authority to complement power and make it more durable (Peeters 2012). For further reading of Hannah Arendt's idea of power and authority I recommend reading Peeters.

To get back to the different sorts of power; the third and fourth type of power as distinguished by Brunkhorst (2008) are both perceived from a structural perspective. The fourth type is a constitutive power generated by a system. It is enabling in a positive way, but also restricted by the system. Structural constitutive power can be thought of as the type of power of an institution. This kind of power was mentioned by Foucault too. The third type of power can be found in a totalitarian system. The power that this system inhibits is repressive instead of constitutive. 'Power within totalitarianism, lies solely in the power that is produced by the organisation' (Arendt 2005, pg 234) .

'Totalitarianism [..] has found a means to control people from the inside out and terrorise them. This way [..] totalitarianism creates a situation in which power and lust for power [..] play only a secondary role.' (Arendt 2005, pg 93).

Yet when totalitarianism is not complete, hierarchical repressive power might also be present. The leader might have started the system or movement and gained some power this way, but is also part of the system like any other and therefore susceptible to the power of it (Brunkhorst 2008 and Baehr 2007 and Arendt 2005, pg 93). This fourth type of power can also be spotted within imperialism. Which was a system that imperialistic countries and colonies were part of. We all know that the colonies were suppressed. Hannah Arendt argues that the power of imperialism resembles the power of totalitarianism. This will be explained in the next paragraph.

Imperialism

Brunkhorst (2008) finds traces of systemic, suppressive type of power from the Treaty of Tordesillas onwards. From this time on he finds traces of totalitarian origins of the reflexive power-accumulation; the gaining of power for power. This is also characteristic of the totalitarian system; it keeps accumulating power by expanding its reach. During imperialism this structural power

(table 1, type 4) was aimed at the colonies that were considered as property and resources that could be depleted. For the people in those colonies the colonisation felt like a system that operated over their heads. Yet, imperialism could also be envisioned from an actor perspective, when one thinks of a country as the first actor imposing its will on another country (thus actor). This could be represented by the first type of power in the before mentioned table. When the totalitarian system is emerging in Europe and the USSR, it becomes clear how weak the nation state actually is against totalitarian type of power, it does not offer protection any longer (Pijnenburg 30 June 2014). Characteristics of imperialism would later on also show in totalitarianism; a disdain for other citizens, exploitation of the own country and ruling the own country like a colony (Peeters 2005).

3.2 LEADING UP TO TOTALITARIANISM

The series Hannah Arendt published her theory of the totalitarian in, existed of two other parts as well: anti-Semitism and imperialism. These will not be discussed here, but since the series is called 'On the origins of totalitarianism'. I would like to make some remarks on what Hannah Arendt sees as the conditions that allow for totalitarianism, because her theory is not only about the characteristics of totalitarianism itself. It is mostly also a critique on modern society and politics in Europe. It is important here to emphasize that the preliminary state that is described here does not automatically lead to totalitarianism. In other words, the creation of the masses were a precondition of totalitarianism, but could also have led to a different form of government. It should be there or created though, for an totalitarian movement to catch on.

The masses

According to Hannah Arendt this new structure is not enough to explain the adherence to totalitarianism. 'Totalitarianism is only possible, Arendt claims, in societies in which classes have dissolved into masses, where party politics has been reduced to ideological posturing, and where the responsibilities of citizenship have succumbed to apathy on a large scale' (Baehr 2007, pg.12). The creation of masses of individuals that feel superfluous is a symptom of the modern times (Forst 2013). With every change sections of society become superfluous (Voegelin 1953). Changes that can be thought of here are economic as well as social. Capitalism is an excellent mechanism for exclusion and together with the consequences of the first World War and class disintegration many people had lost their feeling of purposefulness in Germany and became 'selfless' (Baehr 2007 and Arendt 2005, pg 80). Where these masses do not exist as was the case in the Soviet Union, they could also be created.

Where masses exist democratic government functions among a population that tolerates it without enthusiasm (Peeters 2005). 'The people can't be integrated into any organisation with a common goal', for example class, union and party (Arendt, pg 74). Among these masses there is a lack of 'world' or meaning (Baehr 2007). In an ever changing, unreasonable world the masses have reached the point of believing all and nothing at the same time. Everything could be possible and nothing is true (Arendt 2005). To be sure, they feel no solidarity with the mass, only opposition towards the current system. 'The masses actually exist of atomised individuals, this way the totalitarian movement can demand total loyalty'. The individuals hardly have bonds (Arendt 2005, pg 91).

As Borren (2012) states, in the modern world there is no norm only exceptions. The people that make up the masses need a 'new world' with a moral, norms and meaning. This gap is filled by the totalitarian leader who lends the mass a new form of being (Baehr 2007). So, Hitler's 'rigorous, ruthless and apodictic adherence to one postulate was deeply attractive' under conditions of social atomization and the fragmentation of judgement (Baehr 2010b, pg 25). Support of totalitarianism comes neither from ignorance nor from brainwashing, but adherence to the fantasies created by totalitarianism (Baehr 2007). As Hannah Arendt says; it is not ignorance and stupidity that results in the popularity of the totalitarian leaders (Arendt 2005, pg 70). When the system had taken place of the old government, the people in society were still necessary for the totalitarian movement, but numbers matter. If there are not enough people

that can be 'sacrificed' for the gain of power the system stabilizes into a dictatorship (Arendt 2005, pg 72).

3.3 THE SHAPE OF TOTALITARIANISM

In this and the next two sections we will take a look at Hannah Arendt's theory of totalitarianism. In this section the shape of totalitarianism is described. For heuristic reasons, totalitarianism will be envisioned as a system rather than an actor. This system doesn't exist on its own, but it has also not come into being solely by the visions and actions of people (Pijnenburg 23 June 2014).

The first trait of the shape of totalitarianism is that it's in continuous movement. A totalitarian movement precedes a totalitarian government. But unlike expectations, after a revolutionary revolt, the movement does not stabilize and no new national rule sets in. As Hannah Arendt explains: 'Reign as the totalitarian movement sees it, mainly the permanent domination of each individual in all the spheres of their lives, could never be reached either by a nation-state or purely by armed forces; they require a constantly kept movement' (Arendt 2005, pg. 94). This has to do with one of the directions that the system moves in, that will be discussed later on; worldwide domination. The system disregards borders, feels disdain towards the nation and shows neglect towards the national interest (Baehr 2010b). This movement entails a difficulty for totalitarianism; for the movement and the state to co-exist (Arendt 2005, pg 205). It has to keep avoiding the creation of a set system and therefore has to keep expanding the state. State institutions as had existed before the movement, would indicate some kind of stability, so they could not co-exist. One example of this is the leadership principle. It can never become a hierarchy, because a hierarchy implies authority and authority does not comply with totalitarianism (Arendt 2005, pg 219). Authority is too stiff a relationship for the totalitarian movement.

This leads to the next trait of the shape of totalitarianism; it is not hierarchical like a dictatorship. The totalitarian system could be depicted as a spiral with a dot in the middle (De Vriese, lecture 09-2013). This relates to the type of power that Hannah Arendt observes in totalitarian regimes. Whereas in a dictatorship the most power clearly is with the dictator, the totalitarian leader has some power, but most of it resides with the system. People that are part of the state apparatus have no personal power. Nobody actually knows what the position of others and themselves is within the system. In section 5 of this chapter I will get back to the consequences of this anti-hierarchy. The seeming 'shapelessness' has the consequence that many people describe the totalitarian system as anarchic, chaotic and radical (de Vriese lecture 11-09-2013, Baehr 2010b and 2010a).

That this system comes across as chaotic might also be so, because of the anti-utilitarian characteristics of it (de Vriese 11 September 2013). People that consider the system chaotic are right, because as Hannah Arendt explains: 'both Hitler and Stalin promised stability up until the end in order to hide that they had planned to create a permanent condition of instability' (Arendt 2005, pg 204). People tend to judge the functioning of a system by its utility and utility seems absent in many of the 'decisions' that the leadership has come to. Think in this case about the waste of lives in concentration camps (De Vriese lecture 09-2013). Hitler actually couldn't lose this manpower if he wanted the war to succeed. War was just a means to a different end; spreading totalitarianism further. Winning the war was not the point. In the case of totalitarianism many of 'our frames of judgement have been rendered obsolete' (Baehr 2010b, pg 4).

3.4 THE DIRECTION OF TOTALITARIANISM

Strictly speaking, when we look at totalitarianism as a system, there is no real goal of a system in the sense that an individual could think of a goal. That is why I avoid the term goal in this section and prefer to use direction instead. Even though it gets quite confusing when it is Hannah Arendt that   does use the term 'goal' when she talks about totalitarianism; 'totalitarianism that is in power uses the state administration for its long term goal [..]'(Arendt 2005, pg. 206). Hannah Arendt observes that the system drives towards a worldwide domination and the destruction of the individual, with accompanying creation of a new type of human being, that is actually more like an animal (Baehr 2010b).

The ongoing totalitarian movement was not limited to national borders as history has shown us. But this was no conventional war. The war was solely devoted to keeping the movement going (Peeters 2005). War in itself was not the motivational force. In other words; war and victory would not have been enough to sustain the system. To be sure however, the movement was not going to stop until the whole world had been encompassed by it, but the other condition that is necessary for the movement to stop, is total destruction of the individual, or terror.

The ultimate outcome of the totalitarian system is absolute terror. It is a very complex, intriguing mechanism. Here once again the totalitarian system crosses borders by intruding into the being of an individual. The next two sections will deal with the way this is accomplished. The destruction of the individual would lead to the total control over a completely conditioned human being, comparable to the notion of bare life (Agamben). In this totally totalitarian society there are no social bonds and no spontaneity. 'The only freedom people have is in keeping the human species preserved.' (Arendt 2005, pg 262).

3.5 THE MECHANISMS OF THE TOTALITARIAN STATE

This section will not be exhaustive of all the mechanisms that make the totalitarian state function and keep totalitarianism going. However, these are the four main mechanisms of a totalitarian system that are distinctive and the ones Hannah Arendt elaborates on thoroughly. Ideology and propaganda, duplication of the organisational structure, the role of the secret police and most importantly the camps.

Ideology and propaganda

Section 2 of this chapter already spoke of the masses and how the totalitarian movement appeals to them. Under conditions of social atomization and the fragmentation of judgement, Hitler's 'rigorous, ruthless and apodictic adherence to one postulate was deeply attractive' (Baehr 2010b, pg 25). Here we will elaborate a little bit more on the role that ideology plays in the functioning of the totalitarian state. For in itself ideologies are innocent, non-critical and random opinions (Arendt 2005, pg 289). Yet, when people start believing in them radically and organizing their society around them, that is when they become dangerous. It reduces the truth, which is normally multiple, to one narrow sighted vision of the truth. Only after leaders of the mass have risen to power, they are able to 'convert reality into their propagandistic lies' (Arendt 2005, pg 137). 'Before that happens they already show a deep disdain for the facts.'

What is important concerning totalitarian ideology is that it must be a coherent and consistent story. Total control over the media must have played a part in maintaining this story, but Hannah Arendt does not mention it. No other thoughts are accepted. In totalitarian rule this story is characterised by the believe of the totalitarian leader that he has some extraordinary insight into the supra natural processes of nature and history (Peeters 2005). One example of the fiction that these stories consists of is the Jewish world conspiracy. What scared Hannah Arendt about this is that to see 'history as something that can be made', implies that men are only 'disposable objects of nature'(Baehr 2010b, pg 7). That it could be designed and manipulated by a single person.

The ideology serves the ongoing movement of totalitarianism well (Arendt 2005). This has to do with the objective victim. The people that are victimised did not do anything to make themselves suspicious or criminal. They have certain characteristics that make it easy to build a story around them that the masses follow and fits into the general ideology. This meant that groups of people could be picked out to become 'objective victims'. To keep the movement going infinite groups would follow. When one group is 'finished' the next group will be defined and dominated. The ideology will have to adapt to these changes.

Duplication

Duplication of state services and any organisation in society is a hidden mechanism that can be discovered in the totalitarian state to make it function. In the first phases of the totalitarian movement, when they were not in power just yet, a duplication of all organisations takes place. Whether it be unions, schools, research institutes, any form of organisation was duplicated. The idea behind this is that every form of organisation is a threat to the totalitarian rule, because it enables a constitutive type of power (table 1, power 2) (Arendt 2005, pg 163). Organisation is a

positive form of power, namely the type of power as described in the table by constitutive power from a personal perspective. In order to obtain the goal of total submission, there can be no such power.

In later stages, when the totalitarian regime has replaced the old regime, this continues. Some of the enemies of the new regime are actively pursued. Yet, most of the old positions are kept in place to create the illusion for the non-totalitarian world that not much has actually changed with the new regime (Arendt 2005, pg 210). In the state apparatus every function of the state administrations were duplicated by the party apparatus (Baehr 2010a). The first was rather powerless compared to the later. However, this structure could easily stabilise into a structure again (Arendt 2005, pg 213). Added to this was the fact that one could never know what the place of the different authorities was and even within the services this was not known. Orders were vague on purpose, for everybody in the state apparatus was expected to be able to fulfil the 'will of the leadership', which leaves room for some interpretation. This insecurity of authority serves the purpose of defying any hierarchy and that way any stability. One of the most profound effects of this uncertainty is that people become afraid to express things to each other, in case this person might be 'wrong'. This erodes the discursive space to which I will return in the last section of this chapter. The duplication also had some side-effects. The services compete with each other and the leader makes use of this by giving them different orders. One of these orders is the one that has to be carried out eventually, but because other options are also prepared this makes a shift in policy very easy and quick. Also, thanks to the continuous competition between the services, there is hardly any space for an effective opposition or sabotage (Arendt 2005, pg 219). On the other hand, the administration becomes very large this way and responsibility and competence are destroyed (Arendt 2005, pg 224). The social consequences of this system of duplication and uncertainty of authority will be addressed in the next section of this chapter.

Secret police

The secret service has some type of power within the system. This instead of the army, which Hannah Arendt thinks doesn't work against the own people (Arendt 2005, pg 238). This secret service has a different job and different position from secret services in other political frameworks. Normally the position of the secret police is a threat to the leadership and elite, because they obtain secret information which can be used against leaders (Arendt 2005, pg 244). In a totalitarian system this information can't be obtained by the secret services, because they don't know where authority lies and who to target. At first, when there is still political opposition, secret enemies are tracked down and former opponents are cornered. This phase ends with the liquidation of every organised form of public and secret opposition (Arendt 2005, pg 240). Hereafter the role of the secret services changes.

Opposite to what people expect; when the state enemies are eliminated, the terror increases. This is when the objective enemies, as defined by the ideology, start being pursued for what they are. Consequently only the leader knows which groups of people and individuals will be selected to become the victims of the secret services. Spontaneous action and provocation can no longer be used by the secret agency to consolidate and improve their position (Arendt 2005, pg 244). Their purposefulness is completely in the hands of the leader. And so their actual

power (1) is thoroughly subjected to the power that is present in the totalitarian system(4) (table 1).

Camps

The camps are an unmistakable part of the mechanisms of the totalitarian state. They have become their 'trademark'. They are terribly horrifying and interesting at the same time. 'They are the laboratories where the fundamental belief that everything is possible is verified'; the change of human nature itself (Arendt 2005, pg 290). They are built to practice the experiment with domination and take it to the maximum level (Arendt 2005, pg 260). This maximum level of domination strives to organise the endless plurality and differences of human beings as if humanity was one individual (Arendt 2005, pg 261). It strives to eliminate spontaneity and condition individuals so they'll become 'walking corpses' as Hannah Arendt describes it (Arendt 2005, pg 262). All signs of individuality have gone away at that point and people have been completely destroyed before their actual destruction leads to their death. 'The horror of concentration camps exist outside of life and death' (Arendt 2005, pg 270).

Hannah Arendt explains the destruction of the individual in three phases; destruction of the juridical person, destruction of the moral person and destruction of the individuality of the person (Arendt 2005, pg 261-285). The consequences will be described in the next section. The geographical isolation of the camps, the harsh physical conditions, the unification of the appearance of the prisoners; these are only examples of methods to achieve this goal. Not all people in the camps were objective enemies, some of them had actually been identified as criminals and surprisingly they were in a better position than the non-criminals (Arendt 2005, pg 275). At least, because they had been identified as criminals they had 'some certainty of keeping their juridical person', whereas all right had been taken from objective enemies (Arendt 2005, pg 267). In the end, totalitarian power is at its high point in the camps (Arendt 2005, pg 262, 286).

3.6 IMPACT ON SOCIETY

Hannah Arendt discerns the consequences that the before mentioned mechanisms and totalitarianism in general have on society and discusses them, though not always explicit. The destruction of the individual takes up most of her attention in her theory of totalitarianism, because she believes this is of an unprecedented form in the totalitarian system. The consequences for culture, societal organisation and the individual will be examined in what follows.

On culture

Even when thinking of culture in its most encompassing form, we see that ideology takes up a large part of it in a totalitarian society. As we have encountered, the ideology can only take the place of 'common sense', when there are masses that have lost their values and system of meaning. The way people live, their values and norms, their morals in the end are all dictated by ideology. There are also rituals that come with this. Hannah Arendt gives the example of processions as an important ritual (Arendt 2005, pg 175). But one could also think of the parades.

An exception might be the Nazi elite. Hannah Arendt describes how they were expected to be able to tell the difference between reality and what was fed as ideology to the rest of the people (Arendt 2005, pg 178). Still, they also live by the standards of the overarching ideology. Of course we also know that there was no space for (cultural) pluralism in the totalitarian system. This becomes obvious when looking at the persecutions of whole cultural groups in society, like the Jews. In a more radical form, pluralism is ended in the camps where individuality is ended.

On societal organisation

Besides complete takeover of culture in the totalitarian society, societal organisation is seriously affected. All kinds of bonds between people are distorted. As has been mentioned, first organisational power has to be annulled, because it is a threat to totalitarianism (Arendt 2005, pg 163) Then the mechanism of duplication makes it almost impossible to unite into political opposition. Even though theoretically speaking, even in a totalitarian system the choice of opposition is possible. (Arendt 2005, pg 254).

On a more personal level, nobody knows whom to trust and whom to suspect (Baehr 2010a). This distrust and the eroding of former hierarchical relations are a consequence of the non-hierarchical characteristics of the totalitarian state (Arendt 2005, pg 252). Which makes it impossible to know ones status in society or whom to address to realise certain goals. Everything somebody says could mean something else (Arendt 2005, pg 251). Everybody is found suspicious by the police on grounds of being able to think. Someone that is able to think is able to have second thoughts too. In totalitarian countries the mutual distrust and suspicion penetrate all social relations and create an all-embracing atmosphere (Arendt 2005, pg 250). To illustrate the extensiveness of the destruction of personal relations, even memories of the people that have fallen victim to the system must disappear from the survivor's world. It must be like they have never existed (Arendt 2005, pg 256).

Moreover, the cruelties that are conducted are a secret (Arendt 2005, pg 258). Everybody knew it was the biggest crime to ever speak about the secrets. Considering that a person is dependent on the understanding and verification of other people for their understanding, it loses its character of truth. The discursive space that Hannah Arendt sees as essential for power is completely gone (table 1, type 2). Added to this is a mechanism that makes everybody feel complicit in the crimes of the government (Arendt 2005, pg 252). This goes together with the destruction of the moral person that will be discussed below. The totalitarian regime does not offer people a choice between right or wrong, good or bad. It does not leave people the choice to act on their conscience. Nobody is able to do good any longer and this fades the distinction between victim and punisher. The fact that they may not have had a choice to do good, does not make a difference to the feelings of the person that committed 'the crime'. Finally, Hannah Arendt acknowledges that in their attempt to prove that everything is possible, totalitarian regimes have discovered that 'there are crimes that people can't forgive nor avenge' (de Schutter 2012).

On the individual

The last level of the impacts of mechanisms of the totalitarian system is the level of the individual. To me this is the most intriguing part of her explanation of totalitarianism. It provides us with the main argument why totalitarianism is indeed different from other types of government. It is intriguing to see how easy Hannah Arendt thought the destruction of an individual to be. It offers some explanation of the seeming meekness with which people entered the gas chambers. Hannah Arendt makes three steps visible in the destruction of the individual. She stresses that part of it can only be accomplished with the use of the camps. Destruction of the individual is necessary for the total domination. When people are more than an animal like reaction and more than the implementation of a function, they are completely useless for totalitarian regimes (Arendt 2005, pg 287).

The first step is to destroy the juridical person. This is accomplished by keeping certain groups of people outside of the law, by forcing the non-totalitarian world to recognise this lawlessness, by locating concentration camps outside of the legal punishment system and select prisoners without a trial and without legal procedures (Arendt 2005, pg 275). In the camps prisoners become outlawed and can no longer claim civil rights (Arendt 2005, pg 280).

The second step is killing the moral person (Arendt 2005, pg280). As explained before, this is achieved by making the distinction between the martyr and torturer disappear. Decisions that can be made with the conscience like: 'dying as a martyr is better than living as a murder', are made totally dubious and ambiguous (Arendt 2005, pg 282). There is no choice of doing either the right thing or the wrong thing, the good or bad thing. Even though this depiction is quite black and white and choices might have been more nuanced.

At this point the only thing that is left is the individuality, the uniqueness of people (Arendt 2005, pg 283). This is the hardest to destroy. The SS tries to manage it by destroying the human body and conduct endless ways of suffering. People are transformed into nihilistic animal like beings, their individuality and spontaneity is destroyed. This might be an explanation for the wondrous

meekness with which prisoners could be guided towards the sites of destruction, the gas chambers (Arendt 2005, pg 285). What is left is the transformation of human nature itself. (Arendt 2005, pg 290). Here it is not clear what Arendt means by human nature and discussion about this is still going on in the academic world. Possibly here she refers to spontaneity as a core characteristic of human nature.

3.7 SUMMARY

Well, that was the theory on totalitarianism in a not too small nutshell. Hannah Arendt's work on the totalitarianism is not so very ordered. All elements are interconnected, which makes it a clever piece of thinking, but also a tough one to dissect. In this summary I will highlight some of the things that should really be understood about totalitarianism as described by Hannah Arendt.

First of all, the totalitarianism could be envisioned as a system. There are multiple types of power to be found in it, but the overarching type of power is systemic destructive power. The role of the leader in this will always be a complex one, but the decisions that he is still able to make inside of the system usually seem non-utilitarian. They make your normal frames of reference shake.

Secondly there is a seeming shapelessness of the regime in the system, characterised by continuous movement, the absence of hierarchy and resulting insecurity of authority.

Thirdly, there is a precondition formed by what Hannah Arendt calls 'the masses'. One must keep in mind here that these are not just masses in the sense of a big group of people, but they have specific characteristics that are explained in the above mentioned.

Then, fourthly, there are means to keep the mechanism going, like the secret police, ideology, the targeting of objective enemies, propaganda, control over the media, duplication of services and the use of camps.

The direction that this drives in is very scary. We have seen how society gets affected by the system. A totalitarian system would like to see every single person dominated to the very soul. We must be glad to say that we have not seen this total end (yet?).

CHAPTER 4: TOTALITARIAN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POLITICAL SYSTEM IN THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION

What we are looking at in this chapter is whether the cultural revolution has, what I think are important, totalitarian traits. This way we imply that there can be a degree of totalitarianism, not just a completely fulfilled state of totalitarianism. That there are different types of totalitarianism. Totalitarianism is never complete, because then the elites should be affected by the system as well (Pijnenburg). Sujian Guo (1995) has created a model to assess when a society can be deemed totalitarian. Yet for our ends, it doesn't matter whether a regime is totalitarian or not, but which characteristics might be found. For, I believe, even though the characteristics intertwine, all of the characteristics individually could still have their consequences. In this chapter I will occasionally enter into discussion with Baehr (2010a), who also tried to discover totalitarian traits, but within the whole of the revolution. As well as with Guo (1995), who even believes the post-Mao government is totalitarian, albeit he doesn't follow Hannah Arendt's concept of totalitarianism. Hannah Arendt herself has also very briefly mentioned China in the preface she added to the book of totalitarianism. There she is hesitant with calling the Chinese Revolution totalitarian, because '[t]otalitarianism is the only form of governance with which people cannot live. Therefore, we must carefully handle the term' (Arendt 2005, pg 49).

What are these characteristics that I perceive as important? They are what distinguishes a totalitarian system from any other type of governance. Let me start with the masses. Hannah Arendt tells us that without the masses there will be no totalitarian system. So we'll have to see if such masses existed in China before the communists came to power in '49 or before the cultural revolution. The next important trait of totalitarianism is the role that ideology plays in the system. We have seen that this also affects the culture of a society. Therefore, the second section will deal with the way ideology functions within the Chinese society. Thirdly, I have identified ongoing movement as an important characteristic. To what extent is the Chinese state apparatus in ongoing movement? Can people still rely on their judgement of people's status in society? Without ongoing movement, the country would stabilize into a dictatorship (Arendt 2005). Fourthly, objective enemies are an indispensable characteristic of totalitarianism. It keeps the system moving from one group of victims to another. It facilitates the expansion of the system. One might already have recognised the persecution of some of these objective enemies in the large amount of campaigns described in chapter two. In this chapter it will be investigated further. Hannah Arendt elaborately discusses the role of the secret police in the system. They were key in carrying out the leadership's ideas on objective enemies and state enemies in the beginning. Another characteristic discussed here is the presence of the totalitarian type of power, a systemic characteristic that is harder to decipher. Totalitarian power emerges with the before mentioned mechanisms of totalitarianism. This chapter will also try to investigate whether in the Cultural Revolution other types of power still existed. Finally, this chapter will try to see to what extent the destruction of the individual was conducted. This is one of the main goals of totalitarianism and a symptom of totalitarianism. In that section there is room for discussing the role of camp-like places in China in the destruction of the individual.

4.1 MASSES

The masses are not as much a characteristic of totalitarianism, as it is a precondition for it. As has been elaborated on in the previous chapter, Hannah Arendt discerns the creation of a type of masses that precedes the totalitarian system. The people in these masses don't feel like they belong anywhere, their interests are not represented, they feel unhappy about current politics, but also don't associate themselves with the others in the masses necessarily. In the German case this feeling of superfluousness was caused by among others modernisation, war and exclusive capitalist mechanisms.

What we saw in the prelude up to the founding of the PRC resembles this story. The empress Cixi was pushed to introduce some reforms at the end of the 19th century, but China was far from modern at the beginning of the 20th century. Under Manchu reign the Han-Chinese had continuously been a minority. The distant, discriminating ruling of the empress might have given reason for some sort of discontent masses to arise. But, was this enough for the people to feel utterly superfluous and frustrated? Maybe not. Additionally, there had been many wars that accompanied the British struggle for export of opium and the Japanese War, which led to humiliating defeat of the Chinese (Karl 2010). The legitimacy of the Qing was seriously doubted by intellectuals and commercial classes of China at this point. Also, local rebellions were a reaction towards the endemic famines. So there were multiple reasons for people to rebel against the Qing and local rule. After the fall of the Qing dynasty, the rule of warlords is still in place (Crespigny 1975). They were resented by most of the population.

As nationalist and communist freed the country from them, communism seemed to spread quite easily among the people in the countryside. The cities were mostly left to the nationalists (Crespigny 1975). If we would follow Hannah Arendt's theory then many traditional values had lost their attraction among the people after the fall of the dynasty and thus the new 'world' of the nationalist and communist ideology took their place. Hannah Arendt also talks of the erosion of class as a cause for masses to develop. Of course, this was one of the ideals of communism; classlessness. As we have seen in chapter two Mao has also acted upon this ideal with land reform to get rid of the landlords and other campaigns to erase favoured classes. So there is reason to call the Chinese people before the Revolution 'masses', although we have to be cautious because it is hard to tell what the line is between a dissatisfied population and Hannah Arendt's masses. We might even say that Mao actively continued to create masses after he came to power in 1949.

Because of the vast Chinese population, the masses were large and served the revolution and ongoing movement well. Hannah Arendt also recognises the existence of the large amount of people within these masses as an indication of possible totalitarianism (Arendt 2005). It has allowed for the ongoing sacrifices that the totalitarian system makes in Germany and Russia, even though Russia had the advantage here and Germany had to keep expanding for this cause. Mao showed little concern about the amount of people that had been killed during his reign. He thought of the deaths as necessary and insignificant (Baehr 2010a). But, during the Cultural Revolution, the masses changed in character and also tended to organise themselves against the regime and each other in popular response (Karl 2010). This is not something that would have happened in Nazi-Germany. So the evolved masses also posed a threat in the last period of Mao's regime.

4.2 IDEOLOGY

As has been mentioned before, ideology plays a big part within the totalitarian system. The general ideology helps constitute a 'world' for the masses. It is the story woven to obstruct reality and serves the purpose of picking the next objective enemy. In the beginning the communist ideology developed together with the nationalist ideology in China. Communism only became a total ideology when it had beaten the nationalists in war. It leads all through the Revolution. Today, the ideology of the Cultural Revolution is officially called false communism by the government (Gao 2002). In what follows my intention is not to give a complete account of Maoist- Communist thought, but rather how it functions within the governance.

Communism has some characteristics that adhere to totalitarianism. This does not mean, however, that it was meant to be used in a totalitarian system. Nor is it the only ideology that could be used as a totalitarian ideology. It is useful for totalitarianism if an ideology can easily adapt to new categories of objective enemies. Communism under Mao asked for a permanent revolution until a classless society was obtained. This meant that new 'classes' should be eliminated continuously allowing for new groups of objective enemies to be invented all the time. Communism follows an 'inherent logic' or as Hannah Arendt calls it 'law of history' which makes it suitable to totalitarianism and gave authority to the leader to act on this logic (Kohn n.d., pg 2 ; King and Stone 2008; Arendt 1958, pg 463). The ' [..] law of history [tells us] that in a class struggle certain classes 'wither away'' (Arendt 1958, pg 464). This law becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy (Kohn n.d).

The campaigns that followed from the ideology in order to put it into practice, were targeting different objective enemies as well as real enemies of the state every time. For example the campaign to eradicate the Four Olds: old ideas, old culture, old customs and old habits (Karl 2010). These four cultural aspects were seen as the tools of the bourgeoisie. And the bourgeoisie ideology was of course not in line with the practical needs of the masses. People that were considered spreaders of bourgeois thought were: teachers, professors and intellectuals, but also foreigners. They had been hit hard in the Cultural Revolution.

What would be expected and was actually a goal of the Cultural Revolution was to change the mental outlook of the whole society (Twitchett and Fairbank 2008). Even though Gao (2002) denies intentional destruction of culture, the Sixteen Point Decision on the Cultural Revolution do describe the overthrowing of bourgeois, capitalists and exploiting classes as well as '[a] transform[ation] of education, literature and art, and all other parts of the superstructure that are not in correspondence with the socialist economic base' (Twitchett and Fairbank 2008, pg 140).

But, in my opinion the Cultural Revolution ideology failed to complete these goals and also to keep up the ideological story. Guo (1995) agrees with me, stating 'Totalitarianism was neither able to eradicate the old society altogether, nor fully to realise the new one' (pg 140). Even though I won't call the Chinese Revolution totalitarian just yet. The media in the Cultural Revolution were controlled by the party (Guo 1995). This did not prevent the urban youth from discovering the truth once they had been sent to the countryside. For most, the reality there did not compare to what ideology and propaganda had thought them and they became disillusioned (Karl 2010). This can be seen as a failure of the ideological story to be consistent. Moreover, also in the countryside, patterns of traditional life continued on (Twitchett and Fairbank 2008).

Even when the Red Guards were founded in the villages, old traditions continued in the households. The newly erected modern public rituals were not popular. The Cambridge History (2008) would even go as far as to say that all moral foundations for rural socialism that had been there, were now gone because of the Cultural Revolution.

4.3 ONGOING MOVEMENT

When Sujian Guo (1995) describes hierarchical, centralized, bureaucratized and personalistic leadership as characteristics of totalitarianism, he does not follow Hannah Arendt's concept of totalitarianism. As described above the totalitarian system as Hannah Arendt sees it can be envisioned as being in a state of ongoing movement. The moment it crystallises into a hierarchy, the movement stops and it's not totalitarian anymore, but becomes more like a dictatorship (Arendt 2005). Total domination is no longer possible at this point. In this sense the fact that all positions of power were controlled by the party leaders (Guo 1995) could be seen as a form of stabilization. For, in a far reaching totalitarian system, even people that are the closest to the leader have no certainty of their position and have no power. However, Mao did conduct several purges in the top of the CCP in the second phase of the cultural revolution. Among these were Lin Biao, Peng Zhen (mayor of Beijing) , Liu Shaoqi (president of the republic) and Liu Ruiqing (General of the army) (MacFarquhar and Schoenhals as found in Wikipedia a n.d.). Mao really felt threatened by these men, even though it is not always certain he had to be. So, these purges might not have been as random as shifts in the hierarchy in Nazi-Germany.

Yet there is also reason to believe that the characteristic of continuous movement was present in the Cultural Revolution. The Revolution could be understood as one big campaign (Baehr 2010a). As we have seen in the previous part of this chapter, ideology must be able to explain the sense of the new campaigns. The ideology is adapted to condemn a new group of people: the objective enemies. I will go deeper into this in the next part of this chapter. Another hint at continuous movement could be found in the countryside. There was a fast rotation of local cadres (Twitchett and Fairbank 2008). Every time a new campaign started, work teams would look for people that were very supportive of the campaign. The old cadre would be criticised and dismissed. 'Mao was determined to pursue class struggle – destroying all structures including CCP bureaucracy that were impediments to his rule and brakes on the Party' (Baehr 2010a, pg. 275) Brakes on what? Maybe on the continuous movement and search for total domination.

But again, the question here is, did he succeed in obtaining a continuous movement, or did it actually stabilize along the way? In any case, Mao struggled to destabilize the party and create continuous movement without losing control over this process.

4.4 OBJECTIVE ENEMIES AND THE SECRET POLICE

As was mentioned in the previous section of this chapter, different categories in Chinese society had to be rendered harmless or eliminated for Mao's project to be successful. However, what Hannah Arendt says about this in her preface is that '[t]here was no growing body of objective enemies, when the organised opposition had ceased.' (Arendt 2005, pg 47). In my opinion, the different political categories that existed in the Cultural Revolution might not have looked like categories of objective enemies, but in fact they were. The categories were more fluid than the ones in Nazi-Germany and less fixed on what you were, so they might look like categories of people that would really threaten the state by their various actions. When actually, most people that were threatened were not at all that dangerous to the system. Added to this is even more insecurity for the victims, because they could hardly know in which category they would fall. In this sense, the picking of 'foes' of the state was just as arbitrary as in Germany. In Germany too, there were some groups of people, like the Jews that actually knew they were under attack and others that might have felt more 'safe' that were arrested anyway.

The divisions of society in the Cultural Revolution were influenced by the class status system, foe quotas and invented labels like rightist, revisionist and capitalist roader (Baehr 2010a). The Cultural Revolution was particularly aimed at purges of bourgeois elements and rightist opportunists (Karl 2010) as has also been explained in section one of this chapter on ideology. That bloodline influenced ones class status, meant that the majority of the old revolutionaries came under suspicion (Karl 2010). The core of the Communist Party body had been the educated youths from the cities and children of rich parents. In the countryside the specific bad or black categories were: landlords, rich peasants, counterrevolutionaries and 'bad elements' (Twitchett and Fairbank 2008). These categories are rather vague, but during the 1960ies they became more or less fixed. This was positive for the people that belonged to the 'good' categories and not so positive for others. Overall in the Revolution under Mao, rules and procedures for trial were no longer valid (Twitchett and Fairbank 2008), think in this case of the destruction of the juridical individual described in the previous chapter. The faith of those people that had been tagged with such a label could be imprisonment, torture, death (Baehr 2010a) and one's whole family could soon be affected.

A few authors have talked about how these victims could be redeemed in China (Baehr 2010a, Karl 2010). Mao is said to have stated that those who made mistakes should be offered a way out (Karl 2010) However, who is to say that this is not just as arbitrary as the picking of the victim in the first place? Moreover, when the labels started to get more fixed in the sixties, this redeeming is getting more exceptional. Before, 'in previous Maoist practice, if one had a revolutionary consciousness and acted upon it, one could overcome background or class to become part of the people (Karl 2010).'

China's state apparatus did possess a secret service. It was a department of the 'Social Affairs Department'; the 'Central Case Examination Group'. It was divided into three different offices that were directly accountable to Mao (Schoenhals 1996). Within these offices one could find the 'case groups'. Their tasks were to interrogate the 'suspect', collect evidence on them and document this. The targets were picked by acting on the suspicions of Mao about anyone. This raises the question how much power the secret police in China possessed during the Cultural Revolution. The people in the offices were all people from the top of the government, but they

were still accountable to Mao in the end. It is not clear to me after reading the literature whether the Chinese Central Case Group fits into the picture Hannah Arendt paints of the secret service in a totalitarian system.

4.5 POWER

This part of the chapter could be compared with 3.1 (on power) and the 3.6 (on societal organisation). There we have noticed four different types of power (table 1). The type of power that disappears in Hannah Arendt's concept of totalitarian is type two: communicative power. But in its place there will be the power of a totalitarian system, which is of course repressive. In a uncompleted totalitarian system there will be some repressive personal power for the leader and elites as well.

In case of China whether this kind of systemic totalitarian power was present, is hard to tell. Although Hannah Arendt did not elaborate on how totalitarian power arises and how it can be ended I believe that totalitarian type of power is generated by the mechanisms that operate the system. These mechanisms that keep the system going are mostly present in China as we have seen in the previous sections of this chapter. By keeping the system going it gathers more and more totalitarian power. Unfortunately, it is beyond the scope of this literature research to ask whether the system still went on after the death of Mao. What we do know, is that Mao and his fellow rulers had some personal repressive power. Probably there were also some other smaller power holders in the country, because as many citizens figured out, power in the Cultural Revolution was 'eminently corruptible by those who could work the system' (Karl 2010, pg 136). This is not really comparable to the situation in Germany, where less people had repressive power themselves, this mostly belonged to the leader or the system. Yet, to Mao, state power was never a goal in itself, it should only serve revolutionary purposes (Karl 2010). This is also what Hannah Arendt describes of Hitler's regime. He does not aim for power or status. As long as the movement keeps going that is enough.

Officially, in the Cultural Revolution the Party leadership would not recognise any moral and ritual authority that was independent of their approval (Guo 1995). Everything has been decided beforehand by policy of the national Party Cadre. There is no place for discussion. Even though the a Hundred Flowers Blossom campaign did ask for discussion, it did not as Hannah Arendt said 'acknowledge the existence of non-antagonistic opinions between classes and the government and the people' (Arendt 2005, pg 47). The people who were actually critical were denounced later, so the acknowledgement was never put into practice (Twitchett and Fairbank 2008). This planning is characteristic of communism and especially noticeable in the economic sector. For example in the countryside, land reform decided how many land one owns, quotas decide how much one should produce and workgroups or communes decide how to do this. When the scholars were rebelling they had numerous debates, but these were by no means free communicative spaces. The debates could only be on correct politics and interpretation of the thought of Mao (Karl 2010). The topic was set and I could imagine that the fear of saying the wrong thing and getting accused by your colleagues was also big, further delimiting the way that could be spoken about these topics.

On the other hand, Mabo Gao (2002) even talks of the possible creation of a new public sphere that was non-existent in traditional society. A place where new cultural and sports practices were abundant. He claims that these activities, that he actually only witnessed in his own village, created a 'sense of discipline and organisation and created a public sphere where meetings and communications went beyond the traditional household and village clans.' (Gao 2002, pg. 428). It is doubtful whether his findings have been characteristic for all of China's

villages. Another account as found in the Cambridge history (2008) tells us that nothing has been organized. This caused people to organise themselves with family and close friends, instead of organising radical affairs that the radicals desired. This meant that family ties were strong in the first period of the Cultural Revolution, but frustration grew, because family goals (like a child getting into college) were not easily met. As described before suppressive power was still there in the more local areas. This is also shown by the fact that personal relationships could benefit someone still (Twitchett and Fairbank 2008).

Finally, what comes across from most of the sources is that the organised groups like the Red Guard might have lacked discursive power, but they made up for this in power to organise and take action. The urban youth had some sort of freedom, whereas they hadn't had that before with strict hierarchical traditional patterns (Twitchett and Fairbank 2008). It seemed to me they had too much power for Mao's liking, but the next section will deal with this topic of discussion.

4.6 TOTAL DOMINATION

The subject of total domination is spread throughout the thought of Hannah Arendt. If we look at the previous chapter it could be found in the first section on power, because total domination implies a shift in power as well; in section four about world domination; in section five on the role of the camps and finally in section six: the impact on society. So, that already shows us total domination is a pretty important aspect of totalitarianism. Take it out, and what is left may be a dictatorship with less social impact.

When reading the literature on the Chinese Revolution, many writers talk about far reaching control over society in that time and during the Chinese Revolution in general. Not specifically the Cultural Revolution which I will look at. For example in this quote by Guo (1995): 'As long as the totalitarian power structure and constitutions remain in place, the regime can employ whatever means necessary to preserve its ideological commitment, monopolistic power and control over society'. This has also become clear in the previous section on 'power'. The aim of the Cultural Revolution was to be '[a] revolution that touches people to their very souls' (Karl 2010, pg 121). This does not go as far as to say that there needed to be a radical change of their very souls. Surely, this would not be something ever admitted towards the people. Still, there is a difference between control over a society and the intense totalitarian domination that can only fully be achieved in camp like places.

To commence there is proof that points towards a drive towards worldwide domination. Many quotes can be found of Mao that point towards this end. Mao was competitive when it came to Russia. He thought of displacing the Comintern and instigating a world revolution under the leadership of China (Baehr 2010a). He showed a disdain toward old 'national' culture. However, Hannah Arendt responds to this quite differently. She thinks nationalistic feelings that arose during the Chinese Revolution were enough to keep totalitarian aspirations within boundaries (Arendt 2005, pg 48).

The existence of total domination or terror in China, similar to terror in Nazi-Germany was also doubted by Hannah Arendt. She thought that 'if there was terror, then it was terror of a different kind and the population was not decimated.' (Arendt 2005, pg 48). There are several arguments to support this point of view. In general there was less control over the flow of events by the government, they merely guided them (Twitchett and Fairbank 2008). There were certain areas of China, especially the rural ones, where there was only an indirect impact of the Cultural Revolution. Karl (2010) also stresses the Cultural Revolution was mostly an urban phenomenon. Most illustrating to the argument that there was no such total domination, is the fact that Mao called back the Guards in 1968, because their actions got out of hand (Guo 1995). This shows that the leadership was losing control. How can the individual be destroyed in the way Hannah Arendt has described it, when the individual and masses can't even be tamed?

On the other hand, there were groups in society that suffered way more than others in the Cultural Revolution, particularly in the cities. Once you had been marked it was very hard to cleanse your background. There were neighbourhood watches, workgroups and of course the groups of youth that kept a close eye on everything you did that might seem rightist (Taylor 2011). These groups under attack were mostly the intellectuals or well off people, but as we have seen in the end it could be anyone. The people under suspicion and persecution were

treated by the rest of society as 'subhuman' or pathologic (Wei-ming 1996, pg 29). They were virtually closed off from social society. 'Literally hundreds of millions were caught up in the whirlwind of accusation, counteraccusation, self-criticism, and criticism of others' (Kleinman and Kleinman 1994).

Of course the abuses by Red Guards and other radical groups at the time of the Cultural Revolution inflicted physical injuries upon the individual. It also caused a moral breakdown in society as a whole, where violence was widely encouraged (Wei-Ming 1996). It became harder to tell right from wrong, as is shown by the active means of violence employed by Red Guards. The juridical person of persecuted people was destroyed, because there were hardly any trials, an accusation would do, the victims felt guilty and the victimizers were not held accountable (Wei-Ming 1996, pg 4). The individual was further reduced to 'one man, similar to others' by taking away and destroying personal belongings that gave expression to their 'self'. They had to wear the same clothes, do the same things as the rest, think the same things as the rest. No expression of individual characteristics was safe. Furthermore, any type of discussion is disabled in this context of fear. People did not dare to speak out anymore, it's not a risk they could take (Wei-ming 1996, pg 22, Gold 1985). This way, many people were not able to make a judgement and put this judgement up for critical public review (Pijnenburg, 20 July 2014).

Regarding camp like places, the laogai or laojiao are the only places that could maybe come close to camps. In general it is difficult to say whether economic motives and the need for accommodation for all the 'enemies of the state' dominate over motives for total control. Baehr's (2010a) viewpoint regarding the camps is that this was not the case and they mostly had the function of 'creating identical subjects, fearing the same fears, believing the same creed, repeating the same slogans, accepting their own superfluity'. The laojiao had the goal of re-educating through labour and the laogai were meant to reform through labour (Hualing 2005). Deckwitz (2012) discovered that overall the outlook of the day-to-day practices in the laogai and laojiao were quite similar.

People were sent to the laogai after trial by court, whereas people in laojiao were arrested by the police and without criminal process put in the camp. '[Laojiao] should be applied to those who cannot be convicted and sentenced, who are not politically reliable and thus cannot retain their posts, and who would increase the burden of unemployment if released to society.' (Hualing 2005, pg 4). The laojiao grew enormously, because the incarceration used to be indefinite (Hualing 2005). However, in 1960 the government changed the rules and the inflow diminished. During the Cultural Revolution both the laojiao and laogai were almost gone, due to students that attacked these camps. So, although inmates of laojiao might had to work in harsh conditions, they can't be called the 'extermination camps of the Cultural Revolution'.

Or can they? Both laojiao and laogai were removed from society and situated in remote places. This is one of the characteristics of camps according to Hannah Arendt. Even though some people did get a trial, we can assume that not many 'criminals' could keep their legal person, because they were objective enemies following from campaigns. Another hint at possible destruction of the individual is thought reform, or the term most Westerners have used for it: brainwashing (Deckwitz 2012). Thought reform was preformed throughout society, but in the camps it was the most intense. Thought reform 'consisted out of confession and re-education.' (Deckwitz 2012, pg 63). This indicates a change of individuality, but still it feels less permanent

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than the destruction of the individual as Hannah Arendt describes it. Pretending to be reformed, thus temporarily changing attitude, even though this must have been hard, is still easier than pretending not to be a Jew. There is no escaping that label.

Still, if one follows the steps of Hannah Arendt's destruction of the individual: destruction of the juridical person (by not giving some people 'fair' trials and taking away their rights), destruction of the moral person (in the Chinese case by making people accuse each other) and the destruction of individuality (by among others making Chinese people think the same, dress the same and destroying personal ties) the conclusion might be that destruction of the individual in the laogai did take place. Whether or not a new type of human being without spontaneity is created in these reform camps through thought reform is dependent of what exactly Hannah Arendt view of 'human nature' is. This did not surface in the literature.

If we weigh all of this, one might come to the conclusion that some aspects of domination were there during the Cultural Revolution, but was not total yet. The system might have been pushing in the way of total domination through different mechanisms. But, it seemed like some groups in society had more control, like the Red Guards. This thesis can't be decisive on the nature of the camps in the Cultural Revolution. More inside information is needed.

DISCUSSION

This discussion precedes the conclusion so the reader is able to take some points of discussion into account when reading the conclusion. Thus, adding some nuance. This literature research has some shortcomings, like I suppose all research does.

The most obvious one is the ambiguity of some the resources. Some events in the modern Chinese history have multiple 'true 'stories and even more interpretations. When writing about this time, one must continuously ask oneself; what seems more likely? It is even harder to envision how people have experienced the time under Mao. I have yet to find a book focusses on people's experiences. Yes, there are personal stories, but one person's story could hardly be representative of all the people in such a large country. That is why there might be a lack of information about the experiences of 'the people'. Fortunately, Hannah Arendt also used more general political trends to describe her theory. Especially in case of the laogai and the destruction of the individual I believe these stories could have made a contribution to this analysis. In order to avoid a Western bias, I have tried to use as many 'Chinese' sources as possible, but there have been some complications in this attempt. Many history books are Western and people that write about the Cultural Revolution and have a Chinese nationality are most likely not to living in China anymore to avoid being persecuted.

In addition, this literature research may be limited by the use of just one theory, that of Hannah Arendt. Even though there are other theories of totalitarianism, I have chosen to use the one of Arendt, in the first place because I thought I could see similarities with Germany, Russia and China. On second thought also, because her way of addressing the issue of totalitarianism seemed so out of the box to me, treating it as a system and not solely focussing on the 'evil' leader(s). Later I've come to think of other reasons her theory is useful and these have been described in the third chapter. However, Hannah Arendt's view of politics was very radical as has been discussed. Not much is needed to violate her idea of the ideal political world. This might have caused her to judge some governments harsher than other people might. Yet, she keeps telling us that basically one should not mess around with the term totalitarian and that it entails more than most people have in mind.

She also made sure everyone knew that her theory was not sociological, so I wonder what she would have thought of my analysis. I did catch myself maybe using her theory to much as a blueprint and less as a guideline. This could have caused me to overlook certain important aspects of the Cultural Revolution that would have contributed to an insight about the time. Moreover, from the outset this research has sought for similarities, which is affirmative. There is a possibility that important differences have been overlooked. Hannah Arendt has also written many other theories besides the one on totalitarianism. Reading these theories might help us understand her even more. I'm sorry to say that this was also beyond the scope of this thesis.

Finally, when I was writing about the history of the 20th century my attention was also drawn to the Great Leap Forward. In that period, the resistance was even lower and the people's lives even harder. Sadly, researching this period was not the intention nor in the scope of this literature research. I started wondering how the period of the Great Leap Forward might be analysed with Hannah Arendt's theory.

CONCLUSION

At the beginning of this thesis I posed a question: To what extend can totalitarian characteristics, as Hannah Arendt describes them, be identified in the Chinese society at times of the Cultural Revolution in China? In what follows I shall try to phrase my thoughts on the conclusions regarding this question. As discussed above, these conclusions must be looked at with some consideration for the ambiguity of Chinese history, a limited amount of literature used and other obstructions to meaningful research.

Before reading the literature I had made the assumption that if any totalitarian traits could be found in the contemporary history of China, this would be the most likely in the Cultural Revolution. I though terror would be largest here, because of the control that Mao had over society. After reading Yung Chang's book 'Wild Swans', I assumed everyone was caught up in denouncing each other. In addition I presumed the Cultural Revolution had a grasp on the whole country. I had no idea about the underlying mechanisms of the terror or how far Mao's influence reached.

With regard to Hannah Arendt's theory I expected the following characteristics to be the most important: non-utility of the decisions made within a totalitarian system, the continuous movement of such a system, insecurity of authority within the system (in other words; no body know what his or her position is within the system), the central role of ideology and the objective enemies and finally the destruction of the individual as the most important social outcome of totalitarianism. Some additions were made to these assumptions. I found out that the presence of a mass as Hannah Arendt describes it, is an important precondition for totalitarianism. Another addition is the presence of totalitarian type of power, a systemic characteristic that is harder to decipher. The last supplement to the before mentioned important characteristics of totalitarianism is the role of camp-like places in the destruction of the individual. Imbedded in these characteristics are the effects that totalitarianism has on society, subsequently on culture, society and the individual.

This leads us to the conclusions on the main question. These are based mostly on chapter three, where I have made an analysis of the Cultural Revolution with the most important aspects of the theory of Hannah Arendt. It was suggested that each of the chosen characteristic has its own consequence for Chinese society and thus it does not matter as much whether a society is completely totalitarian or not. Instead, the following will look for the characteristics individually.

First, there is the presence of the masses before totalitarianism. An important aspect of the masses is psychological, a state of mind. It is hard to assess what the state was of the people in China at the time of the end of the Qing empire. Still, many arrows point towards an absence of 'world' among the masses. The difficulty in this case is where to start looking for the creation of the masses. There was a large amount of change before the communists came to power in 1949. This may have contributed to a creation of a mass, but the Cultural Revolution was almost twenty years later. What happened in the meantime? Mao also maintained the masses for as far as they had existed, with the elimination of various classes in society.

Second, ideology is presented as the inevitable course of history. At least that was the intention. Yet, it feels like ideology is not total in the way Hannah Arendt envisions it. There were some

gaps in the Maoist story that the students found. In some places, especially the rural areas ideology is not adopted and followed up as fiercely as for example in the cities during the Cultural Revolution. Where it did hold up, it seemed to work pretty much the way Hannah Arendt has showed us. Together with the picking of objective enemies it kept the system going.

Thirdly, although some officials were aware of their position and had some type of stable power, Mao actively tries to destabilise hierarchies by purges. However, it seems like he could not stay in control over this proves of destabilisation.

Fourthly, in contradiction to Hannah Arendt I believe groups of objective enemies did increase during the Cultural Revolution, although many lists should be made to prove this with numbers. The role of the Central Case Examination Group of persecuting 'suspects' was shared with the Red Guards. I am not conclusive about their place regarding the theory of Hannah Arendt just yet.

Fifthly, there are some indications that the type of power in the Cultural Revolution was various. There are some hints that the types of power other than totalitarian and supressing power of the leader were present. Some local leaders and citizens in general were able to use the system and corrupt it for their own gain. This gives them a type of power that had not existed in totalitarian systems, because one was never sure where to knock on the door and who could actually do something. It also suggests that some of the older ties, like family ties and friendships could still be utilized. Furthermore, there was some power to organise oneself, just look at the Red Guard. This was clearly not Mao's intention as he called them back in 1968. In many places, however power to discuss was non-existent thanks to the government. Some sort of systemic totalitarian power can be recognised in the way people started to control each other. This kind of power is the outcome of before mentioned mechanisms of a totalitarian system.

Finally, Mao made it no secret that he had aspirations to conquer the world with the Maoist version of communism. Whether he had total control over individuals in his own country was a different question. Mao did not control all events within the Cultural Revolution, in fact he was struggling through it. Some people that were under heavy attack from the campaigns might have been completely dominated individuals. With the literature used in this thesis, no conclusion can be reached on whether the camp-like place in the Cultural Revolution had totalitarian traits. One of the issues here is; how far did thought reform go? Another is, what did Hannah Arendt mean by the change of human nature?

What does this mean for the way we look at China? What does Hannah Arendt's theory reveal? Part of this question can only be answered by doing some further research on the long term effects of particular characteristics of totalitarianism. The Cultural Revolution shows some of these aspects of totalitarianism. It might be interesting to find out how people have processed this history if they have at all. Another interesting question is; how much has the political system changed since then? The current government has partly based its legitimacy on the Maoist period. If it had been totalitarian in any way, what does this mean for the legitimacy of the current government? I think in any case, Hannah Arendt's theory has proven itself a good tool to see beyond a leadership's supposed 'mastermind' decisions. Her theory can bring us a little closer to an answer on why and how such a large number of people could be engaged in such a damaging system and how hard it is to get out of it. It shows us how dangerous it can be to

eliminate discursive power. With certain caution we could conclude that the Cultural Revolution was moving in the direction of totalitarianism, but it was never really completed. The case of the Revolution shows that totalitarianism is not at all a self-evident outcome and change that comes from within the country could bring a halt to the movement, which is hopeful. Hannah Arendt also ends on a hopeful note 'Beginning is the supreme capacity of man, this beginning is guaranteed by each new birth; it is indeed every man.'

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