sincere, and if Wang Mang thus thought himself to be in possession of the cure-all to the problems besetting this world, could he not be a sincere Confucian even while machinating to obtain the power necessary to implement his plan? Didn’t even the sages of Confucian lore compromise their moral integrity when noble dynastic ends justified doing so? Or, conversely, was Wang Mang not a hypocrite all along, building up his popularity by deftly assuming the attitudes of "Confucian humility" and seeking to maintain this popularity by giving the appearance of wishing to introduce a "Confucian" utopia while actually pursuing strongly centralizing policies for his own imperial ends? I do not wish by these questions to suggest any answer to the problem Rudi Thomsen has set himself, only to point out that Rudi Thomsen’s analysis of Wang Mang does not solve them.

Wang Mang is known for his sweeping administrative and economic reforms. Without stating explicitly the grounds on which he passes judgment, Rudi Thomsen rightly corrects several of Bielenstein’s attempts to defend Wang Mang as a statesman, attempts that often appear far-fetched. Rudi Thomsen argues that as a statesman Wang Mang was a total failure.

In conclusion, Ambition and Confucianism should only be read by those interested in the issue of evaluating Wang Mang as a moral being and as a statesman - those intent on deepening their historical knowledge of Wang Mang and his time are offered little not readily accessible elsewhere.

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There are by now numerous studies on the topic of opposition and protest movements in China after 1949. The major waves of protest and disidence activity include the Hundred Flowers Movement of 1957, the Cultural Revolution in 1966-1969, the Democracy Wall
Movement of 1978-1979 and of course the student demonstrations in the spring of 1989. There are other incidents where opposition and protest were openly expressed, but they were limited in scale and duration and have therefore attracted less attention, although they cast illuminating light on the phenomenon of protest and dissidence in China.

One of these incidents, namely a wall poster campaign in the summer of 1974 in Beijing, is the subject of a new book by Göran Leijonhufvud. The book carries complete translations of 28 posters and excerpts from six more of the 1974 posters. A hundred page introduction attempts to write the history and background of wall posters, especially big character posters (dazibao), in China. The introduction is of particular importance since it is one of the few lengthier discussions available on this important medium for expressing and popularizing dissent and opposition.

Leijonhufvud argues that the big character poster is a modern successor to various forms of registering complaints against the emperor and the administration which are known from an early stage of Chinese history (p. 23). In ancient China there was a practice of placing boards on the side of the road on which the people could record their criticism of the administration. These public posters or commentary boards were called feibangmu or bangmu. Another early form of the big character poster was the lubu, which originally were official proclamations or imperial edicts written on a piece of cloth, but later also denoted an "unsealed letter" by a scholar or official raising opinions about public affairs (p. 33). The lubu sometimes took the form of an anonymous letter or poster (niming jietie).

Previous studies on the role and history of the dazibao do not all agree with Leijonhufvud's attempt to root the origin of the dazibao in imperial times. To be sure, Godwin Chu claims that posters of different kinds have been known in China for many hundred years. The emperor's official edicts were, for example, often written and posted on the city wall. Similarly, Barry Broman asserts that dazibao date from imperial times. But Poon convincingly argues that although the appearance of the dazibao can be traced back to the days when imperial edicts were posted on the city walls, it was the Chinese Communists who first began to use the dazibao as a major
communication medium, notably during the Hundred Flowers period and the subsequent anti-rightist campaign in 1957.\textsuperscript{4} Frederick Yu goes a step further and unequivocally states that \textit{dazibao} is a "new term coined by the Chinese Communists" and that it was first used on a large scale during the Hundred Flowers Movement in 1957.\textsuperscript{5} In short, in viewing the \textit{dazibao} as as phenomenon which originated in imperial times Leijonhufvud is not alone, although most studies appear to stress the socialist and contemporary context of the \textit{dazibao}.

Leijonhufvud's emphasis on the past leads him to the argument that most of the participants in the democracy movement in China saw themselves as assuming the traditional role of remonstrators, not only loyal to the state but forming an integral part of it (p. 82).\textsuperscript{6} They stopped short of attacking the socialist system and in fact many of them professed to support it, only wishing to perfect it. In the opinion of the present reviewer the argument seems to be overstated and it does not take into consideration that the democracy movement of 1978-1979 consisted of different groups with different perceptions of their role vis-à-vis the authorities and the system. One major group, the socialist democrats, formulated a critique which originally did not go beyond the present socialist system and in this sense could be perceived as loyal opposition from within the system. But another major group, the abolitionists, sought a complete transformation of the existing order in China. In their opinion China was a class society ruled by a new class which had emerged rooted in the special privileges of the bureaucratic and technocratic strata. Thus, this group had a clear anti-state orientation and they wanted to abolish the dictatorship of the proletariat and called for a multiparty system.\textsuperscript{7} The abolitionists were a minority in the initial phase of the democracy movement in 1978-79, but when the authorities in the spring of 1979 began to crackdown on the movement the loyal opposition increasingly turned abolitionist.

Furthermore, events surrounding the student demonstrations and their suppression in June 1989 also appear to contradict Leijonhufvud's claim that dissent in China is always loyal and within the confines of the system. Many students were not loyal to the regime as such, but rather enlisted on the side of one faction within the
leadership, namely the reform faction. Thus, they were loyal to certain leaders and certain policy positions and strongly disagreed with others. The confrontation between the non-reformist parts of the leadership and the students was clear for all to see when Premier Li Peng on May 18 met a group of student leaders among others Wu'er Kaixi, Wang Dan and Chai Ling. This was not a meeting between the ruler and his loyal remonstrators; it was a clear confrontation between unbridgeable attitudes and points of view.

Leijonhufvud claims that the Li Yi Zhe poster from November 1974 was the result of individual initiative whereas the 1974 Peking posters, studied in this book, probably were initiated by one of the competing factions in the leadership (p. 75). Here Leifonhufvud indicates that opposition movements and wall poster campaigns in China are closely related to power struggles. Thus, one could argue that the formulation of protest is a function, to a high degree, of vertical cleavages among the elite in the sense that if the interest of protest movements coincide with those of a definite faction in the party they will be tolerated, perhaps even encouraged. For example, in November 1978, Deng Xiaoping commented on the wall poster campaign in Peking at that time by saying: "The masses putting up big character posters is a normal thing, and shows the stable situation in our country" (p. 77). Leijonhufvud sees Deng's comments on the posters as an example of the emperor "widening the road for speech."

The present reviewer tends to agree that protest movements and factional struggle in China are related. But how? Merle Goldman has shown that the possibilities for intellectuals to express dissenting views or criticism are dependent on the support from a leader with high status/prestige or support from the military or bureaucratic apparatus. In this sense criticism or protest is sponsored from the top of the system. Jeremy Paltiel disagrees with the implication that Chinese dissent is primarily factionally based. He argues that Chinese dissidents have often used the factional conflict to their own advantage by formulating ideas and demands, which surpass the limits set by elite factional conflict. Thus one could argue that the Chinese dissidents often have used "the mobilizing efforts of the party for their own instrumental purposes." David Strand talks
about administered political participation claiming that it is in the interest of the party to secure administered or state authorized political protest and critique.\textsuperscript{10}

Clearly the presence of protest movements indicates a horizontal cleavage (masses versus the leadership) rather than just a vertical cleavage (intra-party confrontations). In fact, recent protest movements in China appear to be part of a emerging civil society, which has created an area of independent activity outside the state and party in an increasing autonomous social sphere. If it is possible to associate post-1949 protest and opposition movements with the emergence of interests and activities outside the state and Party, it is even more problematic to argue that Chinese dissent is best understood from the perspective of loyal remonstrance.

Leijonhufvud largely ignores the issues sketched above. A regrettable consequence is that he never explains why he focusses on a relatively minor wall poster campaign from 1974 - is it because these wall posters have never been translated before or is it because they tell us something important about the political process in China? The reader is left in the dark.

In conclusion, Leijonhufvud deserves praise for a valuable addition to a limited but growing number of case studies on specific wall poster campaign in China.\textsuperscript{11} His book and especially the many expert translations of wall posters covering the bulk of the volume will be of great value in the continuing debate on the nature and history of Chinese dissidence and protest movements. It is a debate which has become even more important after the tragic events in Tiananmen square in June 1989.

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NOTES


4 David Jim-tat Poon, "Tatzepao: Its History and Significance as a Communication Medium," in Godwin C. Chu, ed., Popular Media in China (Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1978), pp. 184-221. James Seymour takes the same position and writes that although the wall poster predates socialist China, the medium developed into an important means of political communication only in 1957. See Seymour, The Fifth Modernization, pp. 5-6. Poon also points out that in the Soviet Union, in the 1920s and 1930s, posters in hand- or typewritten form were a fundamental feature of the Soviet press system and that Mao was strongly influenced by the Soviet experience in this area. James Markham concurs in the assumption that the emergence of wall poster in China is inspired by Soviet experiences. See James W. Markham, Voices of the Red Giants (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1967).


6 See also Nathan, Chinese Democracy, p. 24.


8 Merle Goldman, China's Intellec-


10 Strand, "Political Participation and Political Reform in Post-Mao China."